

# Athena Swan Ireland Bronze Application: Departments

## Applicant information

Name of institution	University College Cork
Name of department	School of Clinical Therapies
Date of current application	30/11/2022
Level of previous award, if applicable	n/a
Date of previous award, if applicable	n/a
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Name of department	School of Clinical Therapies

Section	Words used
Section 1: An introduction to the department's Athena Swan work	3,274 /2,000
Section 2: An assessment of the department's gender equality context and, where relevant, wider equality context	7,090 /8,000
Section 3: Action plan	N/A
<b>Overall word count</b>	10,364 /11,000* (1,000 word extension granted)

\* For information on text included in the word count, please see our [Word Allocation Guidance](#). **Do not remove application headings or question text from your application document. Doing so may invalidate your application.**

Hi Nicole

Many thanks for your email on behalf of the School of Clinical Therapies at University College Cork and your explanation for your request for additional words.

I am happy to confirm that we can offer an extra 1000 words, which has been noted in our records. You can also copy and paste this email into the front of your submission, to indicate this extension has been granted.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch should you need any further advice as you prepare your application.

Best wishes

Sarah

**Sarah Fink**

Head of Athena Swan Ireland (Acting)

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## Glossary of Terms

<b>A/B</b>	Above the Bar
<b>AHP</b>	Allied Health Professional
<b>AS</b>	Athena Swan
<b>ASD</b>	Autism Spectrum Disorder
<b>ASSERT</b>	Application of Science to Simulation based Education and Research on Training
<b>AU</b>	Audiology
<b>AWDM</b>	Academic Workload Distribution Model
<b>B/B</b>	Below the Bar
<b>BHSC</b>	Brookfield Health Sciences Complex
<b>BSc</b>	Bachelor of Science
<b>CAO</b>	Central Applications Office
<b>CID</b>	Contract of Indefinite Duration
<b>CIRTL</b>	Centre for the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning
<b>CKCH</b>	Cork Kerry Community Healthcare
<b>COMH</b>	College of Medicine and Health
<b>COPD</b>	Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
<b>CPD</b>	Continuing Professional Development
<b>DARE</b>	Disability Access Route to Education
<b>DCU</b>	Dublin City University
<b>DEIS</b>	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools
<b>DISCS</b>	Disciplines Inquiring into Societal Challenges
<b>DLD</b>	Developmental Language Disorder
<b>DPR</b>	Deputy President and Registrar
<b>DS</b>	Down Syndrome
<b>EA</b>	Executive Assistant
<b>EC</b>	Executive Committee
<b>EDI</b>	Equality Diversity and Inclusion
<b>EDIC</b>	Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee
<b>FTE</b>	Full Time Equivalent
<b>HE</b>	Higher Education
<b>HEA</b>	Higher Education Authority
<b>HEAR</b>	Higher Education Access Route
<b>HEI</b>	Higher Education Institution
<b>HESA</b>	Higher Education Statistics Agency
<b>HOD</b>	Head of Department
<b>HOS</b>	Head of School
<b>HR</b>	Human Relations
<b>HRB</b>	Health Research Board
<b>HSE</b>	Health Service Executive
<b>IMI</b>	Irish Management Institute
<b>IPL</b>	Interprofessional Learning
<b>IRC</b>	Irish Research Council
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology
<b>KPI</b>	Key Performance Indicator
<b>LGBTQI</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (Questioning), and Intersex
<b>MSc</b>	Master of Science

<b>NB</b>	Non-binary
<b>NUIM</b>	National University of Ireland, Maynooth
<b>OSOT</b>	Occupational Science Occupational Therapy
<b>OT</b>	Occupational Therapy
<b>OVPRI</b>	Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation
<b>PBL</b>	Problem Based Learning
<b>PDP</b>	Performance Development Plan
<b>PDR</b>	Performance and Development Review
<b>PDRS</b>	Performance and Development Review System
<b>PE</b>	Practice Education
<b>PEC</b>	Practice Education Coordinator
<b>PG</b>	Postgraduate
<b>PGR</b>	Postgraduate Research
<b>PhD</b>	Doctor of Philosophy
<b>PI</b>	Primary Investigator
<b>PMS</b>	Professional, Managerial and Support
<b>PMSS</b>	Professional, Managerial and Support Staff
<b>PPI</b>	Public-Patient Involvement
<b>PT</b>	Physiotherapy
<b>PTut</b>	Practice Tutor
<b>RA</b>	Research Assistant
<b>RPF</b>	Regional Placement Facilitator
<b>RSS</b>	Research Support Services
<b>SAG</b>	Student Advisory Group
<b>SAH</b>	School of Allied Health
<b>SAT</b>	Self-Assessment Team
<b>SCT</b>	School of Clinical Therapies
<b>SEA</b>	Senior Executive Assistant
<b>SHS</b>	Speech and Hearing Sciences
<b>SL</b>	Senior Lecturer
<b>SLT</b>	Speech and Language Therapy
<b>SMART</b>	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound
<b>STEM</b>	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
<b>T&amp;C</b>	Teaching and Curriculum
<b>ToR</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>UCC</b>	University College Cork
<b>UG</b>	Undergraduate
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>UL</b>	University of Limerick
<b>ULT</b>	University Leadership Team
<b>UoG</b>	University of Galway
<b>VL</b>	Visiting Lecturers
<b>VP</b>	Vice President
<b>WG</b>	Working Group

# Section 1: An introduction to the department's Athena Swan work

In Section 1, applicants should evidence how they meet Criterion A:

- + Structures and processes underpin and recognise gender equality work and, where relevant, wider equality work

Recommended word count: 2,000 words

## 1. Letter of endorsement from the head of the department

Insert (with appropriate letterhead) a signed letter of endorsement from the head of the department. The letter should comment on:

- + the link between the Athena Swan Ireland principles and the department's strategy;
- + leadership of the head of department in advancing equality, including any involvement in the self-assessment or specific actions;
- + evidence of how the department's equality work is led and supported by the department's senior management;
- + key priorities, achievements and challenges relating to gender equality as discerned from the self-assessment;
- + where relevant, key priorities, achievements and challenges relating to additional equality grounds, as discerned from the self-assessment;
- + priority actions to address the issues and opportunities identified.



Dr Sarah Fink  
Head of Athena SWAN Ireland  
Advance HE  
First floor, Napier House  
High Holborn  
London WC1V 6 AZ  
UK

1<sup>st</sup> December 2022

Dear Dr Fink,

As Head of School of Clinical Therapies, I wholeheartedly endorse the School's Application for an Athena Swan Bronze Award. The School has expanded significantly in recent years, a process which involved challenges in securing staffing, programme approvals, regulator and professional accreditation, and welcoming new student cohorts. This process of expansion has also brought the Athena Swan agenda to the fore in our four distinct disciplines of Audiology, Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Speech and Language Therapy. All four disciplines are represented on the SAT, which was established in January 2021, and three (of five) members of the School's Senior Management Team are SAT members. My role in the SAT was as part of the Working Group that addressed the overview of the School and was responsible for the data collection and analysis of staff and students. Our self-assessment process has crystallized several priorities relating to equality, diversity and inclusion.

A substantial proportion of colleagues in our School hold positions dedicated to the delivery of Practice Education. These roles are a prerequisite for regulator and professional accreditation. However, their designation by the University as administrative roles without access to promotion creates inequality in the workplace and a lack of professional and career development pathways. Moreover, these positions are predominantly female. We strongly believe that now, at the tail-end of a global pandemic which has led institutions and individuals to question established ways of doing business, it is time to challenge this status quo. The Head of School will lead engagement with HR, other Schools who have similarly categorised Practice Education (PE) staff, and the University Leadership Team to work towards a review of PE staff categorisation and to identify steps towards establishing viable career pathways. This will also involve benchmarking against other Irish and international HEIs with similar programmes (**AP 2.3.1; 2.3.2; 2.3.3**).

Three of the four disciplines in the School are strongly female dominated in the workforce, which is reflected in our current student body and staffing. Increasing gender diversity (and diversity beyond gender) has therefore been identified as a priority. Engagement with secondary schools will raise awareness about our disciplines and enable us to better understand how to target greater diversity for our student intake. At the same time, doing research among our current students from minority backgrounds (including males in Audiology, OT, SLT) will increase our understanding of motivating and facilitating factors in their career choices (**AP 2.1.1; 2.1.2; 2.1.5**;

**2.1.6; 2.4.4).** Our goal is to start with increasing the gender diversity of our students so that in the longer term, the gender representation of our post-graduate researchers and staff will start to become more balanced.

Lack of access to promotion among academic staff has been a serious concern in the School over the past decade. All the School's current Professors and Senior Lecturers were appointed, rather than promoted internally. It is an accreditation and regulatory requirement that core teaching staff be registered clinical professionals, and typically lecturers spend years in clinical practice before embarking on a PhD and an academic career. The importance of clinical work experience for teaching, curriculum development and research prioritisation cannot be overstated. However, recognition of the value of clinical experience is lacking from the University's recently revised criteria for progression and promotion. Therefore, a further priority in our action plan is support for academics with clinical backgrounds to achieve progression across the merit bar (**AP 2.1.7; 2.2.2**), and promotion to Senior Lecturer (**AP 2.2.3; 2.2.4; 2.2.6; 2.4.14**). This will require advocacy on behalf of our colleagues at College and University level and the Head of School will lead engagement with HR, University Leadership Team and Establishment and Promotions Board to lobby for the inclusion of discipline-specific norms that acknowledge the importance of clinical and professional experience and expertise as part of promotion criteria.

Our Action Plan also aims to improve the wellbeing of all staff at work, and to create and maintain a culture of inclusion, connection and mutual respect (**AP 2.4.1; 2.4.10**). The increased workloads and pressures of delivering university programmes and research during pandemic conditions have highlighted the importance of whole-life balance (**AP 2.2.5; 2.4.11**), manageable workloads (**AP 2.2.7; 2.4.16**) and family leave (**AP 2.4.14; AP 2.4.16**) for staff wellbeing and long-term sustainability of programmes.

As we embark on our continued Athena Swan journey, we will establish an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee in the School to not only address our Action Plan from this application, but to broaden the scope of our EDI work. As Head of School I will support this initiative by ensuring that this committee has financial and administrative support to carry out its work and by recognising the work of committee members when addressing workload and supporting promotion.

The information in this application, in the form of both qualitative and quantitative data, is an honest portrayal of our findings from the self-assessment process and an accurate reflection of our School. I hope our application for an Athena Swan Bronze award reflects our commitment to improve inclusiveness, fairness and equality in our School.

Sincerely,



---

Prof. Nicole Müller

**Confirm the following:**

The information presented in the application (including qualitative and quantitative data) is an honest, accurate and true representation of the department.

## 2. Governance and recognition of equality, diversity and inclusion work

- a. Provide a description of the department's structures to advance equality. This should include:
  - + information on where the department is in the Athena Swan process.

This is the School of Clinical Therapies' (SCT) first application for a Bronze Level Athena Swan (AS) award. To achieve this, a self-assessment team (SAT; outlined below) was established in January 2021 and signed the AS Charter in November 2022.

**Figure 1**

*Head of School and Members of the SAT signing with AS Charter in November 2022*

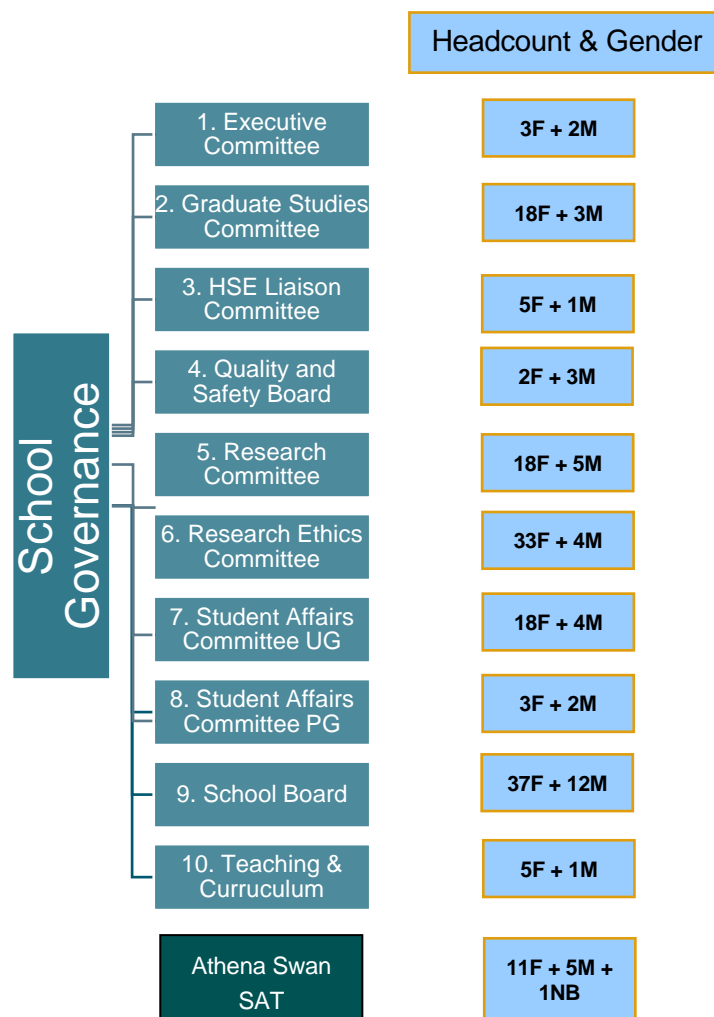


To extend the School's commitment to advancing EDI, a School Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committee (EDIC) will be formed from January 2023 which will be responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the action plan (**AP 1.3.3**).

- + an organigram of the department's key management and/or committee structures, with headcount by gender, that includes the formal reporting structures in place to carry out and support Athena Swan activity and, if applicable, wider EDI work.

**Figure 2**

*Organigram of the School's Key Management and Committee structure*



The Chairships of all committees are predominantly female (9/10) which reflects the gender distribution in the School (80% female). Committee membership also reflects the School's gender balance, apart from School Board, which includes staff from external contributing departments such as Anatomy, Physiology and the Library. The Executive Committee (EC), as the senior management team, is the decision-making body for the SCT. It consists of five Managers (3F, 2M): the Head of School (HOS), each Head of Department / Discipline (HOD) and the School Manager. All committees report to the School Board, which annually reviews the School's overall activity. AS was placed as a standing item on the agenda of all School committees shortly after formation of the SAT so that they could be updated on AS self-assessment progress and proposed actions. However, as the AS SAT is not a formally constituted School committee, the SCT have prioritised the formation of a formal School EDIC (AP 1.3.3) to ensure equal status with other committees in the School.

- + information on the relationship of department structures with institutional Athena Swan structures and, if applicable, EDI structures, including mechanisms for sharing the findings of self-assessment as well as good practice;

Most members of the School's EC (3/5) are on the SAT, including the SAT Deputy Chair who updates the senior leadership team on the progress of the AS at their fortnightly meetings. A member of the EC also sits on the University's Equality Committee. The Chair and Deputy Chair of the SAT sit on the College of Medicine and Health (COMH) AS Steering committee, which meets four times per year. Here they report on the School's AS progress, seek guidance and support and discuss examples of good practice from other AS award-holding schools.

- + information on support provided by the institution for the application;

The SCT promoted the self-assessment exercise and encouraged all staff to take part in data-gathering. They provided administrative support for the SAT and supported the Chair by reducing additional workload to prepare the final application.

- + information on formal processes in place to resource, distribute, recognise and reward Athena Swan and, where applicable, EDI work, referencing institutional-level policies where appropriate;

In order to manage the workload associated with the AS application, it was scheduled across a timeframe that did not include another major review exercise (such as programme accreditation). Representation on the School's SAT was distributed across all Department/Disciplines and staff categories in the School. EDI and AS work are recognised as contribution to university citizenship as part of promotion criteria for academic and PMSS staff. The contribution of student members of the SAT was acknowledged by furnishing them with a reference from the HOS and Chair of the SAT committee.

- + Information on resource provision for the action plan and associated activities to ensure effective implementation;

The action plan will be implemented and monitored via the School's EDIC. This committee will receive administrative support from the SCT, including support for the SCT website to promote EDI activities and to finalise future AS applications. The action plan requires predominantly staff time to ensure effective implementation and this will be achieved by allocating a 0.1 FTE School administrative assistance and future teaching buy-out of the AS SAT Chair through funding from the School's part-time pay budget and/or overheads. The administrator will create and manage a Gantt chart to monitor progress on the actions, follow up with action owner and take minutes of all EDIC/AS SAT meetings among other tasks.

#### **AP 1.2.1: Dedicate administrative support (0.1 FTE) and ringfence financial resources to successfully maintain EDIC and future AS applications**

- + any other relevant structure and organisation information, such as the department's relationship with community partners;

The SCT has a history of working to advance equality through strong relationships with community partners. For example, there are three in-house Health Service Executive (HSE) clinics of Audiology, Occupational Therapy (OT) and Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) in purpose-built facilities in Brookfield Health Sciences Complex (BHSC) which provide

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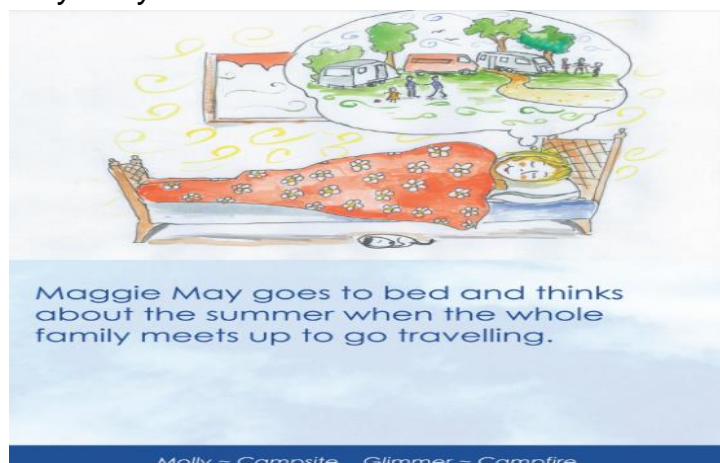
community clinical services, and placements for students. Furthermore, staff from the SCT are involved in designing and developing the Autism Friendly University Initiative and the first 'Changing Places' toilet facility in the country which allows people with complex disabilities to manage self-care and engage with wider community activities with dignity (Figure 3a).

**Figure 3a**  
*Changing Places Toilet Facility, UCC*



Many staff are involved in the Inclusion Health initiative that aims to address how marginalised groups access healthcare and how professionals are prepared for this work through our curriculum. For example, staff worked with the Travellers of North Cork to produce a children's book 'Maggie May's Day' about life in the Travelling community using terms from their language *Cant*, which won the EDI Narratives of Equality Award in 2019 (Figure 3b).

**Figure 3b**  
*Page from 'Maggie May's Day'*



The School works with community partners that support people living in poverty/disadvantage (e.g., *Let's Grow Together*, *Happy Talk*), with acquired conditions (e.g., *Headway*, *Parkinson's Ireland*) and migrants (e.g., *Direct Provision centres*) (See Figure 4).

**Figure 4a**

*Delegates at the Down syndrome Research Forum (Community Partners: Down Syndrome Ireland)*



Members of these organisations are regularly invited and paid to provide guest lectures and workshops for students, facilitate clinical placement and collaborate on grant applications.

**Figure 4b**

*Audiology students at hearing screening for Special Olympics Athletes (Community Partners: Special Olympics Ireland)*



For example, the SCT recently secured a HEA North-South grant for €200K called ENhancing Social Participation across IREland for people with communication Disabilities (ENSPIRED).

**Figure 4c**

Poster for the UCC Aphasia home Café (Community Partners: Health Service Executive/ Headway & General Public)



Staff and student in the SCT also work with our partners to fund and organise conferences and fundraising events.

**Figure 4d**

Students at Developmental Language Disorder Awareness Day Bake Sale (Community Partners: Raising Awareness of DLD, Ireland)



- + confirmation that staff and students are recorded as the gender with which they identify in this submission.

Staff and students are recorded as the gender with which they identify as in line with UCC's Gender Identity & Expression Policy (2018).











### 3. The self-assessment process

- a. Provide information on the preparation and delivery of this application by the department. This should include:
  - + a description of the self-assessment team (SAT), including comment on the roles and responsibilities of individuals, and how these were assigned. The gender of SAT members, their professional/student role in the department, and their specific role in the SAT should be noted in a table;




The SAT is made up of eleven members who identify as female, five as male and one as non-binary (Table 1).

**Table 1**  
*School of Clinical Therapies' Self-Assessment Team*

Name	Role in SCT	Role on SAT
Dr Ciara O'Toole  Gender Identity: F	Lecturer (A/B) in Speech and Language Therapy	<b>Chair of SAT</b>  SCT Representative on CoMH AS Steering Group  Chair of School overview WG; member of Student Advisory Group & Culture, inclusion and belonging WG
Dr Joseph McVeigh  Gender Identity: M	Senior Lecturer and Head of Discipline of Physiotherapy	<b>Deputy Chair of SAT</b>  SCT Representative on CoMH AS Steering Group  Chair PMSS careers WG and Student Advisory Group
Ms Anne O'Sullivan  Gender Identity: F	School Manager	Member School overview WG
Prof Nicole Müller    Gender Identity: F	Head of School and Head of Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences	Member School overview WG

<p>Mr. Eoin Gorman</p>  <p>Gender Identity: M</p>	<p>Lecturer (B/B) and Undergraduate Programme Director in Occupational Science Occupational Therapy</p>	<p>Chair of Culture, inclusion and belonging WG</p>
<p>Dr Siobhán Laoide-Kemp</p>  <p>Gender identity: F</p>	<p>Lecturer (B/B) in Audiology Co-Ordinator of MSc Hearing, Balance and Communication Programme</p>	<p>Chair of the Academic careers WG</p>
<p>Mr Declan O'Sullivan</p>  <p>Gender Identity: M</p>	<p>Lecturer (B/B) in Physiotherapy</p>	<p>Member of the Academic careers WG</p>
<p>Dr Eithne Hunt</p>  <p>Gender Identity: F</p>	<p>Lecturer (A/B) in Occupational Science Occupational Therapy/ Academic Advisor to UCC Graduate Attributes Programme</p>	<p>Member of the PMSS careers WG</p>
<p>Ms Kerrie O'Grady</p>  <p>Gender Identity: F</p>	<p>Practice Education Coordinator for Speech and Language Therapy</p>	<p>Chair of the Practice Education careers WG</p>

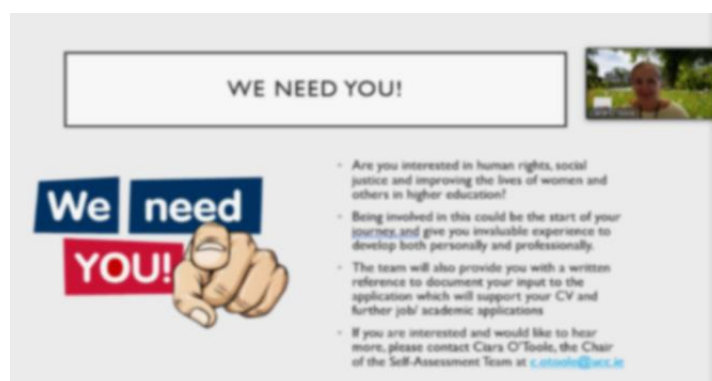
<p>Mr John Hastings</p>  <p>Gender Identity: M</p>	<p>Occupational Science Occupational Therapy Practice Tutor</p>	<p>Member of the Practice Education careers working group</p>
<p>Ms Una Martin</p>  <p>Gender Identity: F</p>	<p>Clinical Administrator for the SCT</p>	<p>Member of the Culture, inclusion and belonging WG (until April 2022)</p>
<p>Ms Johanne Kelly</p>  <p>Gender Identity: F</p>	<p>Clinical Administrator for the SCT</p>	<p>Member of the PMSS careers working group (since August 2022)</p>
<p>Mr Darragh Browne</p>  <p>Gender Identity: M</p>	<p>PG taught student</p>	<p>Member of Student Advisory Group (Until Sept 2022)</p>
<p>Dr Allison Mula</p>  <p>Gender Identity: F</p>	<p>PG research Student</p>	<p>Member of Student Advisory Group (Until Sept 2022)</p>

<p>Ms Abbie Moloney</p>  <p>Gender identity: F</p>	<p>UG Student</p>	<p>Member of Student Advisory Group (Until Sept 2022)</p>
<p>Ms Laoise Fahy</p>  <p>Gender Identify: F</p>	<p>UG Student</p>	<p>Member of Student Advisory Group</p>
<p>Mx Charlie O' Reardon</p>  <p>Gender Identity: X</p>	<p>UG Student</p>	<p>Member of Student Advisory Group</p>

The HOS asked for expressions of interest in December 2020 from all staff, and a core group of the Chair and Deputy Chair of the AS SAT, the HOS and School Manager reviewed these. Following advice from the EDI unit, four staff were invited based on their interest and expertise in EDI, and another four staff were invited to take part based on role and responsibility in the School. We ensured that each Discipline and staff role/grade was represented, and that there was gender representation within the team. In order to include student views in the application, we circulated a short video about the AS application to all undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate (PG) students in the School (Figure 5). From this call we formed a Student Advisory Group (SAG) of three UG and two PG student volunteers (3F, 1M and 1NB). The SAG were invited to all SAT meetings, reviewed the action plans and met to discuss student issues.

**Figure 5**

Screenshot from video about the AS application for students and how they can be involved



Each member was allocated to one working group on a voluntary basis (apart from the Chair and Deputy Chair) and each group selected their own Chair. The working groups (WG) were in the following areas:

1. School overview
2. Academic careers
3. PMSS careers
4. Practice Education careers (*for staff involved in supporting clinical placements*)
5. Culture, inclusion and belonging
6. Student advisory group (SAG)

- + information on how the chair was appointed and on what supports or resources the institution and/or department has given the chair to lead the self-assessment process;

Ciara O'Toole has been a member of staff since 2004 and volunteered to be Chair of AS SAT. Joe McVeigh was nominated as a Deputy Chair to support the Chair and ensure that the AS agenda was represented at the senior management level. Ciara was supported in her role and to complete this work by removing other administrative and committee workload such as SLT Programme Lead. The School SAT worked closely with the University EDI unit through the AS Project Officer and Data Analyst. The EDI unit aided on all aspects of the application, such as SAT formation, timelines and supporting documentation on how to complete the application. The SAT were regularly in contact with the EDI unit with queries on aspects of the application. The EDI unit also helped to formulate consultation exercises including designing, collating and analysing the staff survey responses and running the focus group and provided financial support (€2,000) which was partly used to buy out teaching time for the SAT Chair and to fund administrative assistance to support the editing and formatting of this application.

- + comment on whether the self-assessment team is representative of the department, including if there is adequate representation of senior staff.

The SAT is representative of all Disciplines/ Departments within the School, is representative of the gender balance in the school and includes staff and students with a diverse range of personal experiences and career histories. Three SAT members including the HOS, School Manager and Head of Physiotherapy (PT) represent the School's EC. Programme Leads from

Occupational Science Occupational Therapy (OSOT) and Audiology are also represented. Other members of the SAT include lecturers, PMS and PE staff. The School does not regularly employ research staff (only one RA was in place at the time of SAT formation who declined to take part) so the current SAT does not have representation from research staff. In addition, sessional teaching staff (all of whom are Problem Based Learning (PBL) Tutors) declined to participate as they did not have the capacity to take part due to their clinical commitments outside of the University. The SCT will continue to invite representation from research and teaching staff on future AS SATs and the EDIC and ensure they are consulted and updated on this work.

**AP 1.3.1: Establish a consultation channel between the EDIC and teaching and research staff**

- b. Outline the process of self-assessment undertaking in preparation for this application. This should include:
  - + an overview of the approach taken to evidence-gathering and analysis. Details of consultation response rates, disaggregated by gender, should be provided;

The first meeting of the School’s SAT was in January 2021 which was attended by the UCC AS Project Officer and Chair of the School of Pharmacy SAT, which holds a Bronze AS award. The requirements of the AS application were reviewed and the application discussed, subsequently a staff survey was developed with the assistance of the EDI unit. The SAT Chair secured ethical approval to conduct the survey which was circulated via email to 63 staff members. The survey took place between April and May 2021 when many staff were working remotely due to the Covid-19 pandemic. A response rate of 71% was achieved and included 45 participants (35 female, 8 male, one who self-defined and one who preferred not to say). Table 2 outlines the response rate based on role and gender. The staff who self-defined their gender or preferred not to say are not included in the data to protect anonymity, however, any qualitative comments they provided were included. The EDI unit facilitated the data analysis and disaggregation by gender and role. As PE staff are categorised as administrative in the University’s HR system, their data is included in the PMSS section (Section 2.3).

**Table 2**  
*Staff participation in the survey*

Role	Female	Male	% Female respondents
PMSS	7	0	100%
Academic	15	5	75%
Teaching (PBL Tutors)	4	0	100%
Practice Education	9	3	75%
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>81%</b>

Based on responses gathered from the staff survey, the EDI unit facilitated a staff focus group to explore School culture and environment, career progression and promotion and support for flexible working in more depth. The focus group took place in March 2022 and included seven women and two men across academic, PE and PMSS roles. The data from the focus group was summarised by the data analyst in the EDI unit and subsequently analysed by the

working groups. Student views on how the School addresses gender and EDI issues more broadly were gathered from the Student Advisory Group (SAG) through an anonymous survey to which 5/6 responded. The SAG identified a need to consult all students on gender and wider EDI issues, which will be achieved in future through the annual university-wide EDI student survey (**AP 1.3.2**):

### **AP 1.3.2: Encourage students in the SCT to participate in the University EDI survey and respond accordingly**

Benchmarking data was identified through the Higher Education Authority (HEA) and Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA, UK) databases, with the assistance of the AS Project Officer. However, HESA benchmarking data was not available disaggregated by discipline in order to benchmark the Audiology programme. Anonymous data from other institutions with Schools with similar disciplines was also obtained including the University of Galway (UoG) which has UG OT and SLT students in their School of Health Sciences and the University of Limerick (UL) which has PG OT/ SLT and UG/PG Physiotherapy programmes in their School of Allied Health (SAH). There is no other Audiology programme in Ireland.

- + information on plans for evaluating progress, including action plan implementation, over the coming four-year period. This should make reference to how often the SAT will meet, and how SAT succession and turnover will be planned and managed;

The self-assessment process and commitment to the AS principles led to discussions around the need for an EDIC to focus more broadly on EDI issues, while keeping the gender agenda to the fore. Staff also noted that it is important for the SCT to commit to meaningful change, such as the comment from one survey respondent who said that the SCT *“needs to take ownership of fairness and equality rather than seeing it as a ‘box ticking’ exercise”*. Therefore, the School has committed to forming an EDIC which will subsume the AS SAT (**AP 1.3.3**). The EDIC will progress the action plans from AS and address EDI issues more generally across the School. Membership of the EDIC will be drawn from the current AS SAT and the wider School.

### **AP 1.3.3 Convene an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee**

The EDIC will have a Chair and two co-Chairs (one of whom will be from the School EC) who will report on the progress of AS to School and College/University level committees. The terms of reference of the EDIC will be developed at the first meeting of the committee and send to the COMH for approval. The EDIC will meet twice per semester and monitor the implementation of the AS action plan according to the key milestones and success indicators. The EDIC will also identify and consider any new EDI issues arising. The Chair of the EDIC will contact the ‘person responsible’ for each AS action monthly for an update on relevant actions to report to the EDIC with the assistance of the EDIC administrator. Membership will be reviewed in January each year and specific arrangements for rotation of members will be included in the terms of reference. For example, student members who graduate will be replaced with volunteers. The current Chair of the AS SAT will become Chair of the EDIC and when she finishes her term in January 2024, a co-Chair will become Chair for a period of three years before the next rotation. A second Co-Chair will then be nominated and either the Chair/

or co-Chairs will always be a member of the School's EC. Rotation will be managed by replacing anyone that steps down and to ensure that no more than 50% of committee members are rotating on/off the committee in any given year to maintain continuation. It will be ensured that the gender distribution is reflective of the wider school and that all staff roles and disciplines are represented on the committee, and that there is student representation on the committee.

- + information on how the findings and activity of the self-assessment team are, and will continue to be, communicated to senior management and the wider department.

AS will be replaced with EDI as a standing item on the agenda of all School committees and Department/Discipline-level meetings. The Chair/Co-Chair of the EDIC as a member of the EC will communicate progress to senior management. A section related to EDI will be created on the School's website and notice boards to communicate progress on the AS action plans. An AS information day for all staff was held in November 2022 to mark the School's commitment to the AS Charter and to communicate the main action plans to the school. It is planned to hold similar events on an annual basis to communicate progress on the action plan (**AP 1.3.4**) and collect anonymous feedback via a virtual 'suggestion box' on our website in order to gather responses throughout the year.

**AP 1.3.4: Create an EDI page on the SCT website and noticeboards with updates on AS and other EDI related issues**



## Section 2: An assessment of the department's gender equality context and, where relevant, wider equality context

In Section 2, applicants should evidence how they meet Criterion B:

- Evidence-based recognition of the issues and opportunities facing the applicant

Recommended word count: 8,000 words

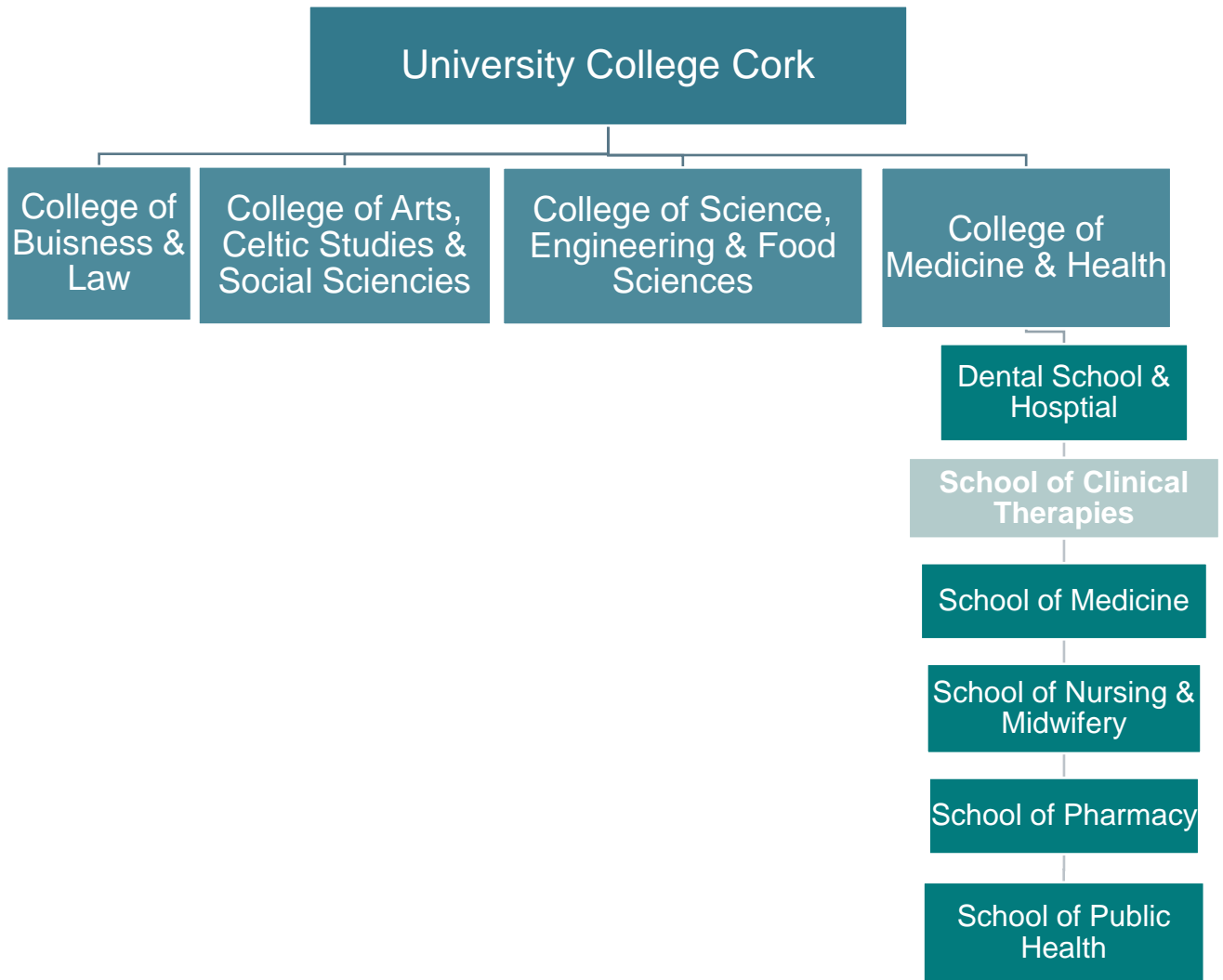
### 1. Overview of the department and its context

- a. Provide a brief introduction to the department, including any relevant contextual information. This should include information on:

- + teaching and research focus, including discipline coverage and any areas of specialism;

University College Cork (UCC) has four Colleges, and the College of Medicine and Health (COMH) has six Schools, one of which is the SCT (see Figure 6).

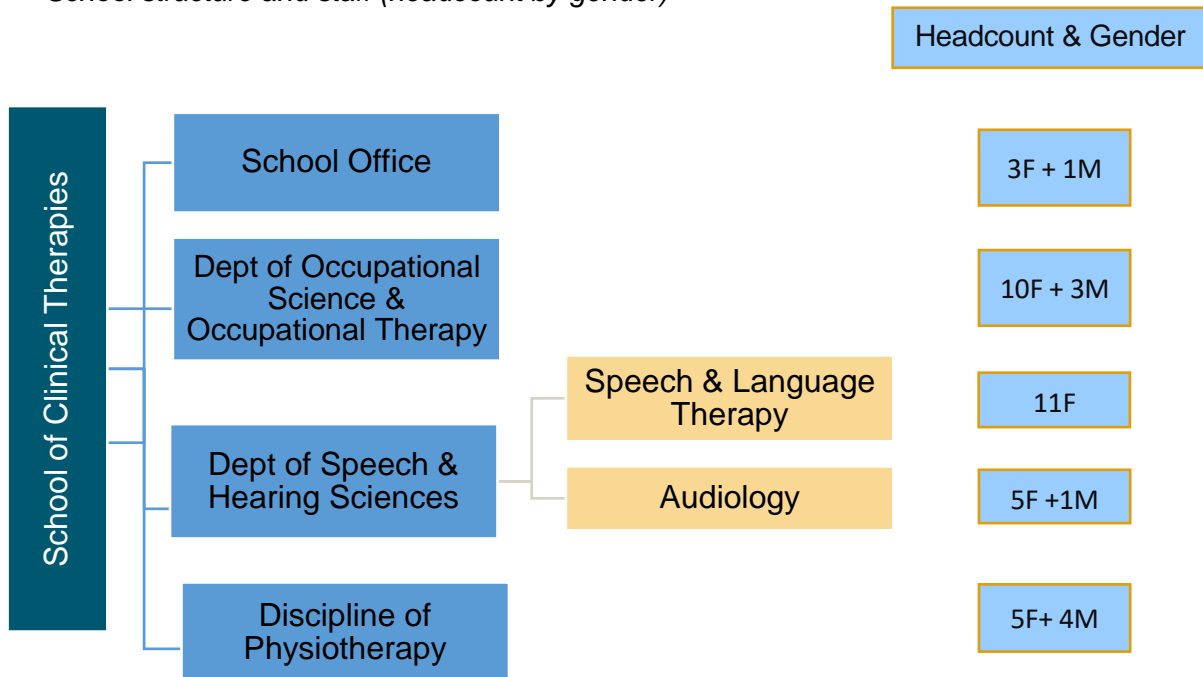
**Figure 6**  
*Organigram of the College of Medicine and Health, UCC*



The SCT comprises a) School Office, b) Department of OSOT c) Department of SHS (incorporating SLT & Audiology) and d) the Discipline of Physiotherapy (Figure 7).

**Figure 7**

*School structure and staff (headcount by gender)*



The SCT was established in 2003 following the Bacon report (2001) which identified the need for more training places for the clinical professions in Ireland. The School initially developed UG courses in OT and SLT but has since expanded to include Audiology in 2013 and Physiotherapy in 2018.

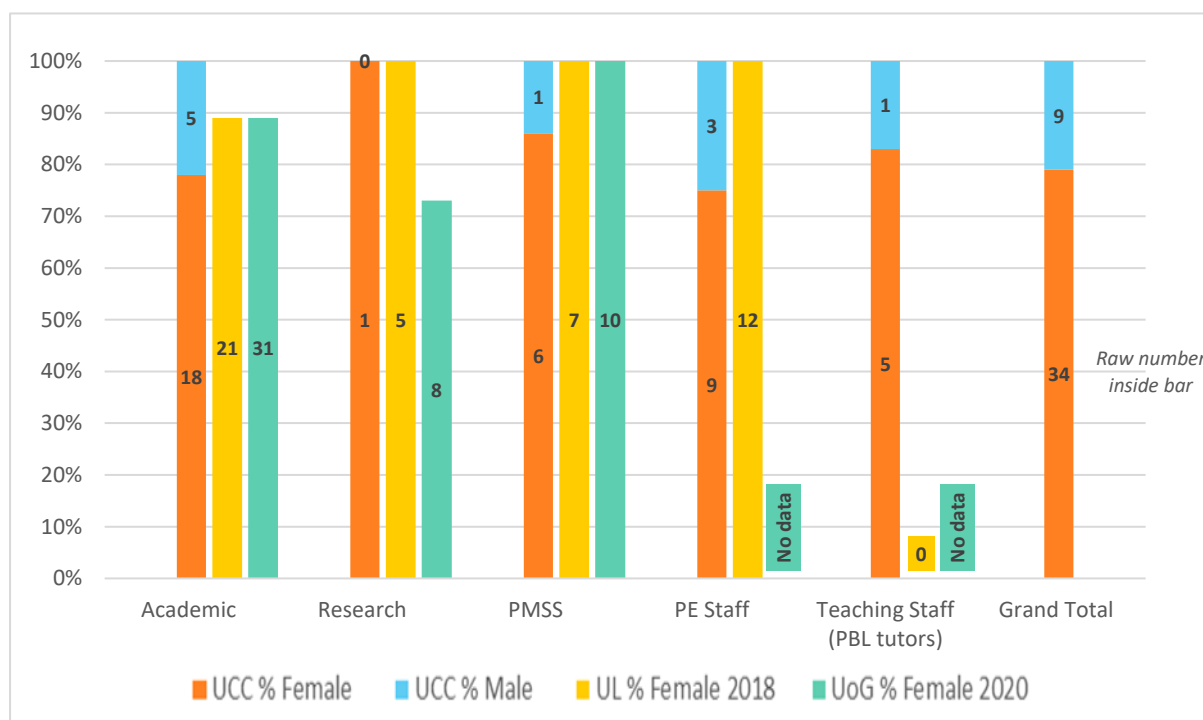
All academic and practice education staff within the School are Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) and most have extensive clinical experience before they enter academia. The career structure of AHPs is such that few would obtain a PhD before entering academia, consequently staff undertake their PhD part-time while working as lecturers. This non-traditional entry into academia has placed staff at significant disadvantage in the University's promotion schemes relative to other disciplines which we plan to address (**Section 2.2.c & AP 2.2.4 & AP 2.2.5**). Moreover, the initial focus of the School was on programme development and achieving professional accreditation, meaning that a research focus came later and is gradually building through successful grant applications over the last 5-10 years.

The focus in the School is to provide high quality, research-led education for audiologists, OTs, physiotherapists, and SLTs to inform practice and policy for health care professionals. Staff within the School have expertise in working with people with a broad range of developmental and acquired physical, sensory and intellectual disabilities, mental health issues, degenerative, and long-term conditions. Staff also have experience of working with diverse populations including families experiencing deprivation, neurodivergent and LGBTQI population among others. These topics are addressed in our curriculum and students carry out in-depth research in these areas in our MSc and PhD by research programmes. For example, the SCT is currently running a European Joint Doctorate PhD programme in OSOT with eight PhD students addressing play in an inclusive childhood environment.

+ the total number of staff by gender and category of post;

**Figure 8**

*Staff By Contract Type, Grade and Gender (September 2020)*

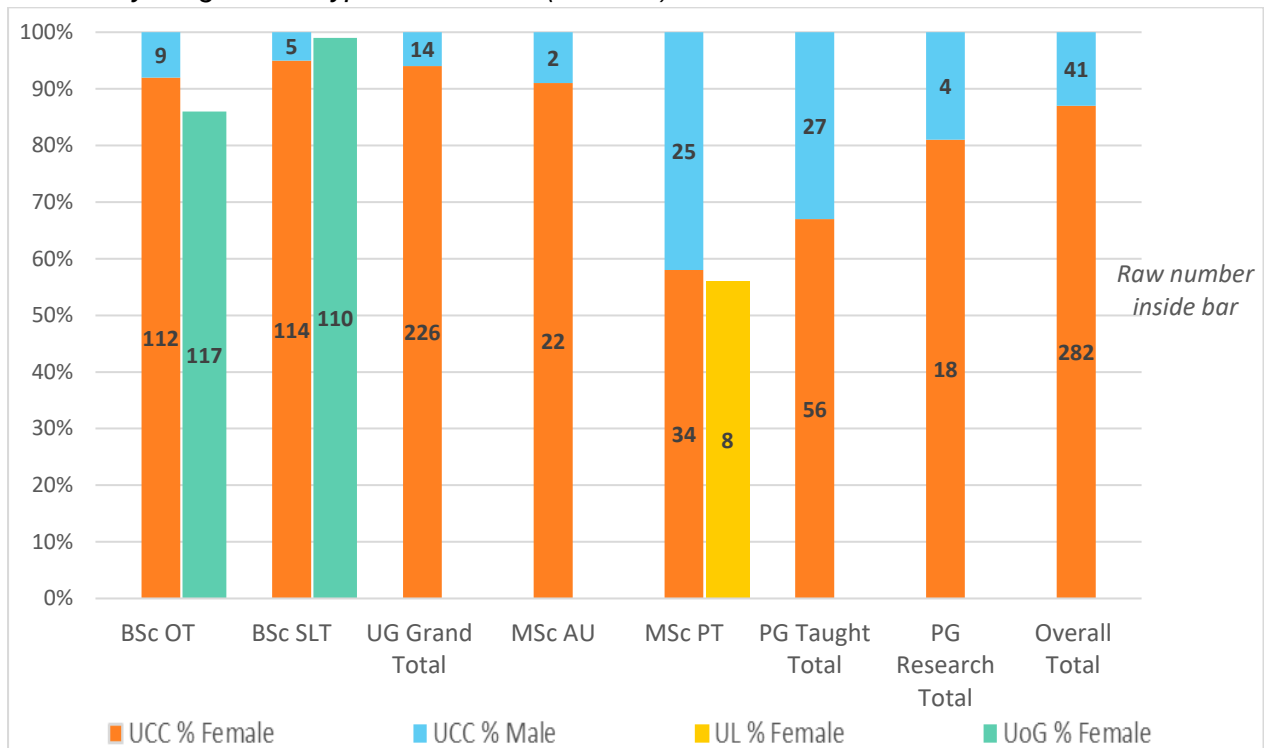


The School has predominantly female staff in all roles (this profile remains in November 2022). However, this is in keeping with benchmarking data from similar Schools such as the University of Limerick (UL; with OT, SLT and PT programmes) and University of Galway (UoG; with OT and SLT). In September 2020 there was only one research staff member (RA) in the School and we generally have a very small number of research staff employed (e.g., currently two RAs employed in November 2022). PE staff are responsible for the sourcing of placements, providing support to students and placement providers as well as teaching and assessment of practice education. Teaching staff run the SLT PBL programme. These are practicing clinicians who are mentored and supported by academic staff to facilitate tutorial groups during the teaching term to support the curriculum. Their teaching role is ancillary to their main clinical careers outside of the University.

+ the total number of students by programme type and gender;

**Figure 9**

*Student by Programme Type and Gender (2019-20)*



In keeping with disciplinary norms, students across the School are predominantly female, although the MSc Physiotherapy programme has more of a gender balance (58%F, 42%M). Comments from the staff survey highlighted that efforts are needed to promote and attract a mixed gender profile: *“The gender issue needs to be on the agenda for our School ... we need to attract more male students to our programmes” (Female)*. There has traditionally been a stereotyped view that therapeutic professions are female-oriented (Figure 10).

**Figure 10**

*Irish Press Advert for SLT course in 1969*



Our CAO application figures from 2016- 2020 revealed low numbers of male applicants. In OT, 11-14% of applicants were male, and in SLT 5-7% of applicants were male. Addressing male underrepresentation in our student body is a priority for our action plan (see Section 2.1e below).

+ information on location/s.

The School’s Departments/Disciplines are located across Brookfield Health Sciences Complex (BHSC), ASSERT and Nano Nagle Place (Figure 11).

**Figure 11**

*BHSC & ASSERT (left) & Nano Nagle Place (right)*



Gender and EDI issues are considered at all locations across the School with ‘all gender’ bathrooms and accessibility for people with physical and sensory disabilities. Due to the challenges of having split locations, all of the AS SAT meetings and many opportunities to collaborate (e.g., through Research Seminars) are held online to increase accessibility. Other meetings such as School Away Days are held off-site, mid-way between both locations and social activities are alternated between both locations to enable staff to attend (**AP 2.4.10**).

b. Analyse three years of data on undergraduate students by:

- + gender and degree programme, with reference to discipline-specific benchmark data;

**Table 3**

*Undergraduate students by gender and programme*

		2017/2018			2018/2019			2019/2020			UoG (2019/20)
Course	Year	Female	Male	%F	Female	Male	%F	Female	Male	%F	%F
OT	1	27	3	90%	27	2	93%	31	1	97%	90%
	2	25	5	83%	29	3	91%	29	1	97%	86%
	3	25	2	93%	25	5	83%	29	3	91%	86%
	4	29	1	97%	22	2	92%	23	4	85%	83%
	<b>Total</b>		<b>106</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>92%</b>
SLT	1	29	0	100%	28	2	93%	28	2	93%	100%
	2	31	1	97%	28	0	100%	26	2	93%	100%
	3	30	2	94%	32	1	97%	27	0	100%	96%
	4	29	4	88%	29	2	94%	33	1	97%	100%
	<b>Total</b>		<b>119</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b>UG Grand Total</b>		<b>225</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>93%</b>

The UG student profile across the School is predominantly female, which is similar to other Schools used as benchmarks. Most UG OT and SLT students enter through a highly

competitive CAO point system, however, up to five spaces are offered for students that enter through the mature student route based on previous education, experience and interest. Five spaces are also available to students who wish to apply via the University's Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) and Disability Access Route to Education (DARE), which offer places at reduced points and/or extra supports to school leavers from disadvantaged backgrounds or with disabilities. Although the School's control over admission to the programmes is limited, plans are in place to improve the diversity of the UG students across the School, initially focusing on an increase in the number of male applicants (Section 2.1e & AP 2.1.1/ AP 2.1.2).

Both UG programmes are full-time only programmes with no options for part-time study.

- + gender and degree attainment.

**Table 4:**  
*Undergraduate degree attainment by grade and gender (2018-2020)*

		1H1				2H1				2H2				Pass			
		UCC			UoG	UCC			UoG	UCC			UoG	UCC			UoG
Course	Year	F	M	%F	% F	F	M	%F	%F	F	M	%F	%F	F	M	%F	%F
BSc OT	2018	19	1	95%	100%	10	0	100%	88%	0	0	0%	100%	0	0	0%	100%
	2019	10	1	91%	100%	11	1	92%	94%	1	0	100%	100%	0	0	0%	67%
	2020	10	1	91%	75%	11	3	79%	91%	0	0	0%	33%	0	0	0%	0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>74%</b>
BSc SLT	2018	4	1	80%	100%	17	1	94%	85%	6	1	86%	0%	2	1	67%	0%
	2019	1	0	100%	100%	20	2	91%	93%	7	0	100%	0%	0	0	0%	100%
	2020	3	0	100%	100%	25	0	100%	100%	4	1	80%	100%	0	0	0%	0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>100%</b>
	<b>2019</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>84%</b>
	<b>2020</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>92%</b>

Table 4 demonstrates that grade achievement across the School by gender, reflects the pattern in institutions with similar programmes such as UoG. Due to the small number of men across programmes it is not possible to determine if females/males achieve higher grades as a proportion of their overall gender, but overall, no issues of concern arise.

- + gender and foundation courses.

Our programmes do not include any foundation courses.

c. Analyse three years of data on postgraduate taught students by:

- + gender and degree programme, with reference to discipline-specific benchmark data;

**Table 5***Postgraduate taught students by gender and degree programme (Full Time)*

		2017/18			2018/19			2019/20			Benchmark
Course	Year	F	M	%F	F	M	%F	F	M	%F	UL (2018)
MSc AU	1	11	0	100%	10	2	83%	12	0	100%	
	2	12	0	100%	10	0	100%	10	2	83%	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>92%</b>	
MSc PT	1	0	0	0%	15	15	50%	19	10	66%	50%
	2	0	0	0%	0	0	0%	15	15	50%	47%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>58%</b>	
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>23</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>67%</b>	

The MSc Audiology is predominantly female, while there is more gender balance in the MSc Physiotherapy. The MSc in Audiology is the only programme of its kind in Ireland and an average of just 10% of applicants are male, which we plan to address in our action plan (see Section 2.1e below). The data from the MSc in Physiotherapy is mostly in keeping with benchmarking data. For example, the MSc Physiotherapy in UL had between 29-75% female students between 2016-2018 and HESA (2019/20) data shows that 60% of PG Physiotherapy students were female. Benchmarking data for the MSc Audiology students was not available disaggregated by discipline in the HESA data.

+ gender and degree attainment.

**Table 6***Postgraduate taught degree attainment by course and gender*

		1H1			2H1			2H2		
Course	Year	F	M	%F	F	M	%F	F	M	%F
MSc AU	2017/18	10	0	100%	2	0	100%	0	0	0%
	2018/19	3	0	100%	7	0	100%	0	0	0%
	2019/20	10	0	100%	0	2	0%	0	0	0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
MSc PT	2017/18	0	0	0%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
	2018/19	0	0	0%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
	2019/20	0	0	0%	15	15	50%	0	0	0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
Grand Total	2017/18	10	0	100%	2	0	100%	0	0	0%
	2018/19	3	0	100%	7	0	100%	0	0	0%
	2019/20	10	0	100%	15	17	47%	0	0	0%
<b>Total</b>		<b>23</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>

The MSc Audiology is a new programme and predominantly female, therefore there are too few male students to provide insight into degree attainment. The MSc Physiotherapy had the first graduating cohort in 2020 where an equal number of men and women received 2H1 degrees. Benchmarking data from UL for UG Physiotherapy demonstrates



that females outperformed males during three years of their programme. As it is too early to determine any patterns in the UCC MSc Physiotherapy data, degree attainment will be monitored over the coming years.

**AP 2.1.3: Monitor degree attainment patterns by gender for the MSc in Physiotherapy**

- d. Analyse three years of data on postgraduate research students by:
  - + gender and enrolment;

**Table 7**  
*Postgraduate research students by gender and enrolment*

		2017/18			2018/19			2019/20		
Course	Year	F	M	%F	F	M	%F	F	M	%F
MSc Clinical Therapies	1	0	0	0%	1	0	100%	0	0	0%
	2	0	0	0%	0	0	0%	0	1	0%
MSc OSOT	1	1	0	100%	1	0	100%	0	0	0%
	2	2	0	100%	0	0	0%	3	1	75%
MSc SHS	1	1	0	100%	2	0	100%	2	0	100%
	2	2	0	100%	1	0	100%	2	0	100%
PhD OSOT	1	1	0	100%	4	1	80%	9	0	100%
	2	2	2	50%	3	2	60%	0	2	0%
PhD SHS	1	1	0	100%	1	0	100%	0	0	0%
	2	1	0	100%	1	0	100%	0	0	0%
	3	0	0	0%	1	0	100%	0	0	0%
	4	1	0	100%	1	0	100%	1	0	100%
	5	1	0	100%	1	0	100%	1	0	100%
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>81%</b>

PG research students across the School are also predominantly female. Benchmarking data from UL showed that between 71% (n=5) and 100% (n=6) of students enrolled in their PhD programmes were female. There were no PG research students in Audiology or Physiotherapy programmes during the period of review. By targeting gender imbalance in the UG and PG (Audiology) programmes, it is hoped that the gender imbalance at the PG research level will begin to be addressed (**See Section 2.1 a & AP 2.1.2**).

- + gender and application, offer, and enrolment, with comment on how this data is collected and evaluated by the department, and on any gender disparities in student funding;

All post-graduate research students were self-funded during the review period, and many were academic and PE staff working in the school. For example, in 2019/20 six of the 22 PGR students were staff (2F, 4M). Staff members who are undertaking PG degrees can avail of the University Staff Fee Concession, and occasionally a Departmental staff bursary is available. Staff in the final stages of their PhD are supported by having reduced teaching load. Students are supported to apply for external scholarships such as the PG scholarships offered by the

Irish Research Council (IRC). The data on the number of IRC applications from PG students in the School is not routinely collected, however, this is now included in the action plan **AP 2.1.4**:

**AP 2.1.4: Gather data on postgraduate student applications, offers and enrolment by gender for research degrees annually**

- + gender and completion rates.

**Table 8**

*PG Research Completion Rates (2017-2020)*

	Registered	Graduated On Time	Graduated Late	Did Not Graduate
<b>PhD (OSOT)</b>	2	1	1	
<b>PhD (SHS)</b>	5	4		1
<b>MSc (OSOT)</b>	6	4		1
<b>MSc (SHS)</b>	4	4		

Due to the small number of male students (n=2) the data have not been disaggregated as individuals are potentially identifiable. The data suggests that most students graduate on time, however as one student was a full-time staff member, they graduated late and another student withdrew due to personal circumstances.

- e. Comment and reflect on the relationship (if any) between the department’s outreach, engagement, and support activities and issues or opportunities in the student pipeline. This should include comment on how the department recognises staff and student contributions to these activities and monitors the gender balance of those involved.

All of the programmes in the SCT are heavily over-subscribed and competitive at both the UG and PG level and it has not been difficult to attract students. To date, the outreach activities have been in line with those organised by the University and COMH, including UG and PG Open Days. However, due to the systematic underrepresentation of men as students on three programmes in the School, and in the professions more generally, it has been identified as a priority area for our action plan with the following actions:

**AP 2.1.1: Complete research into potential reasons for low applications by men and students from diverse backgrounds to Audiology/ OT/ SLT**

This action has already started and involved the adaptation of a survey developed for students in the UK to explore factors that affect career choices in clinical therapy professions. The survey has been updated and adapted to the Irish context and data collection across schools in Munster is underway. The results of this survey will help toward developing the next action:

**AP 2.1.2: Develop a series of targeted outreach activities male students and other underrepresented groups in the Audiology, OT and SLT programmes**

Up until now, the School has not had a systematic approach to attracting male applicants to our programme, and outreach was not prioritised due to oversubscription to all programmes.

However, increasing the diversity of the School's student cohort is now a priority action which we plan to address.

In addition, all staff members are involved in student support and pastoral care, however, gender-specific support is not provided and it is planned to consult male students to determine if this is needed, and about their view on recruiting more male students in general.

**AP 2.1.5: Consult current male students in the School about their views on recruitment and support on the programme**

The final action relates to the gender profile of staff and student contribution to outreach activities. Students who participate in outreach receive a financial reward for their contribution and academic staff engagement is recognised in the UCC promotion schemes. However, we do not monitor the gender profile of contributors which will be an ongoing action.

**AP 2.1.6: Monitor and improve the gender representation of staff and student contribution to outreach activities**

- f. Provide data for academic and research staff by gender and grade. Analyse and benchmark the career pipeline.

**Table 9**

*Staff by Grade and Gender (2019-20)*

		UCC			UL	UoG
		F	M	%F	n (%F)	n (%F)
<b>Academic</b>	Lecturer Below the Bar	4	3	57%	3.5 (100%)	8 (75%)
	Lecturer Above the Bar	11	0	100%	7 (100%)	20 (90%)
	Senior Lecturer	1	2	33%	8 (86%)	3 (100%)
	Professor	2	0	100%	2 (100%)	4 (100%)
	<b>Total Academic</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>20.5 (95%)</b>	<b>35 (89%)</b>
<b>Research</b>	Research Assistant	1	0	100%	4 (50%)	7 (86%)
	Research Support Officer	0	0	0%	n/a	n/a
	Post-Doctoral Researcher	0	0	0%	7 (88%)	3 (33%)
	Senior Post Doctoral Researcher	0	0	0%	n/a	n/a
	<b>Total Research</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>11 (69%)</b>	<b>10 (70%)</b>

As can be seen, the SCT has predominantly female staff in all roles (data is similar in November 2022), which is in keeping with our student data. Our action plan to change this profile is by starting to attract more male students into the programmes which in the long term should change the profile of research and academic staff in the School. Seven staff members are 'below the bar' (B/B) which is the entry level appointment for academics. Moreover, 6/7 posts advertised in the School between 2017-2020 were at the 'below the bar' level. Unlike more traditional academics, many newly appointed lecturers in the SCT have extensive clinical and research expertise and experience but do not have PhD degrees. As this expertise is not always recognised, lecturers are generally appointed B/B, meaning that most new employees take a salary cut and then undertake PhD qualifications as a requirement of employment and for promotion above the bar (A/B). This creates a potential equality barrier to entry into the School and inhibits the SCT from attracting more diverse staff. Therefore, in order to

acknowledge previous clinical and research experience, and attract a more diverse staff cohort, it is planned to advertise all new posts ‘across the bar’ meaning that the appointment can be made above or below the bar based on the justifications of the recruitment panel. In 2022 we have been successful in advertising 2/2 new lectureships ‘across the bar’ and the one new appointment that has been made from these posts to date was at the ‘above the bar’ level (the other appointment will be made in 2023).

**AP 2.1.7: Advertise all lectureship posts in the SCT ‘across the bar’**

At senior level, both professors are female, although just 33% (1 of 3) senior lecturers (SL) are female. In October 2022, one female member of academic staff was promoted to SL through the retention process, increasing the proportion to 50% female. Benchmarking data from staff at similar Schools showed that proportionally more females were employed at the SL level. Therefore, a key challenge for the school is the underrepresentation of women at the SL grade (See **Section 2.2 b & AP 2.2.3 & 2.2.5**). Staff spend a significant proportion of time dealing with discipline-specific accreditation exercises, meaning that building a research profile can take longer than in other disciplines. The current academic progression/promotion schemes in UCC seem to place limited recognition or do not recognise clinical experience or the demands of pre-registration clinical programmes. Although the scheme has been revised and will be launched in December 2022, it will be important that this issue is addressed (**see section 2.2d**).

- g. Provide data for professional, managerial and support (PMS) staff by gender and grade. Analyse representation, benchmarking where possible.

**Table 10a**

*PMS Staff by Grade and Gender 2019/20*

	UCC			UoG	UL
	F	M	%F	n (%F)	n (%F)
Senior Executive Assistant	3	0	100%	2 (100%)	2 (100%)
Executive Assistant	2	0	100%	3 (100%)	3 (100%)
Admin Grade 5-6	1	1	50%	5 (100%)	3 (100%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>10 (100%)</b>	<b>8 (100%)</b>

The PMS staff are predominantly female, apart from one male at admin grade 5-6. This is reflective of the profile of similar Schools.

**Table 10b**

*Practice Education Staff by Grade and Gender (2019/20)*

	UCC			UL
	F	M	%F	n (%F)
Practice Education Co-ordinator	4	1	80%	2 (100%)
Practice Tutor	4	2	66%	4 (100%)
Regional Placement Facilitator	2	0	100%	6 (100%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>12 (100%)</b>

The Practice Education (PE) team comprises of the practice education coordinator (PEC) who co-ordinates practice education, regional placement facilitators (RPF) and practice tutors (PTuts) who support the students and supervising Practice Educators. PE staff are involved in a mixture of administrative work as well as teaching / assessment of practice education. Some work is based in the University, and some on clinical sites as needed. PE staff work both full time and part time with some RPFs/PTuts having ancillary clinical roles.

The majority of PE staff are female (66%-100%) which is similar to the profile found in other HEIs. Several PE staff are engaged in research, including PhDs. However, PE staff are categorised as administrative in the University HR system, and their salaries are aligned to the Senior Clinician pay scales in the HSE. They are precluded from access to progression and promotion pathways, which is a major issue for PE staff and is a barrier to recruiting more diverse PE in general. This issue is addressed with **AP 2.3.1/ 2.3.2/ 2.3.3** which aims to determine what pathways should be considered for PE staff and lobby the University Leadership Team (ULT) on the same.

- h. Provide data on staff on fixed-term contracts, contracts of indefinite duration/permanent contracts, and hourly-paid contracts by gender and staff category.
  - + whether or not numbers of fixed-term/hourly-paid contracts are representative of a typical year

Table 11 summarises the staff data from in 2019/20 which is representative of a typical year.

**Table 11**

*Staff by Contract Type and Full Time /Part Time Status and Gender 2019-20*

Staff Category	Contract Type	Female	Male	%F
<b>Academic</b>	Permanent	13	7	65%
	Fixed Term	3	0	100%
	Hourly Occasional	2	0	100%
<b>Teaching</b>	Hourly Occasional (PBL tutors)	5	1	83%
	Once-off Payment (Visiting Lecturers)	66	15	81%
<b>PMSS</b>	Permanent	6	1	86%
	Hourly Occasional	3	0	100%
<b>Practice Education</b>	Permanent	4	1	80%
	Fixed Term	3	1	75%
	CID	1	1	50%
	Hourly Occasional	3	0	100%
<b>Research</b>	Hourly Occasional	1	0	100%

- + Outline instances where fixed-term and hourly-paid contract types are used. This should include comment on:
  - + the rationale for the use of short-term contracts;

Short-term contracts are used for a variety of reasons. For example, the teaching staff (PBL tutors) are employed on an hourly-occasional basis to facilitate the PBL programme in SLT. These tutors are employed for the teaching portion of the academic year only, which they coordinate with external clinical careers. The once-off payment facility is also used to support visiting lecturers in areas of clinical specialism or to engage people with a lived experience of a condition or service. For PMSS staff hourly occasional payments are used for specific tasks such as assistance during accreditation exercises. Finally, short-term contracts are used in practice education to support clinical placements where there may be a shortfall in a given year.

- + the extent to which hourly-paid staff contribute to the teaching of core modules and/or services.

The PBL tutors (teaching staff) are clinically qualified SLTs who contribute to the delivery of PBL modules and are employed for less than 0.2 FTE. The teaching content for PBL modules is devised by academic staff and PBL tutors are supported to facilitate the tutorials through annual training and weekly mentoring. They are also offered Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities from the School and access to library to maintain their CPD which is required for their professional registration with CORU.

## 2. Embedding policy, practice and supports to advance academic and research careers

- a. Reflecting on recruitment practices in the department, answer the following:

	Yes	No
Recruitment to academic and research posts in the department adheres to institutional policy on recruitment, which includes gender-balanced panels and training for assessors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered 'no', please comment.

- b. Provide three years of data on application, shortlist, and appointment rates for recruitment by gender and grade. Where data suggests opportunity for improvement, comment and reflect. Include any other relevant information relating to recruitment processes and practice for academic and research posts in the department.

**Table 12**  
Academic Role Recruitment 2017-2020

Year	Competition	Recruitment Pay Scale	Applicants			Shortlisted			Appointed		
			F	M	%F	F	M	%F	F	M	%F
2017/18	Lectureship in OSOT	Lecturer B/B	3	3	50%	1	2	33%	0	1	0%
	Lectureship in PT	Lecturer B/B	9	9	50%	4	2	67%	0	1	0%
	Lectureship in PT	Lecturer B/B	4	2	67%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
2018/19	Lectureship in OT	Lecturer B/B	4	1	80%	2	1	67%	1	0	100%
	Lectureship in Audiology	Lecturer B/B	1	1	50%	1	1	50%	0	0	0%
	Head Of SCT	Professor	1	0	100%	1	0	100%	1	0	100%
	Lectureship in PT	Lecturer A/B	3	0	100%	1	0	100%	1	0	100%
	Lectureship in Audiology	Lecturer B/B	1	0	100%	1	0	100%	1	0	100%
<b>Total</b>			<b>26</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>67%</b>

(There was no recruitment in 2019/20)

**Table 13**  
Research Role Recruitment 2017-2020

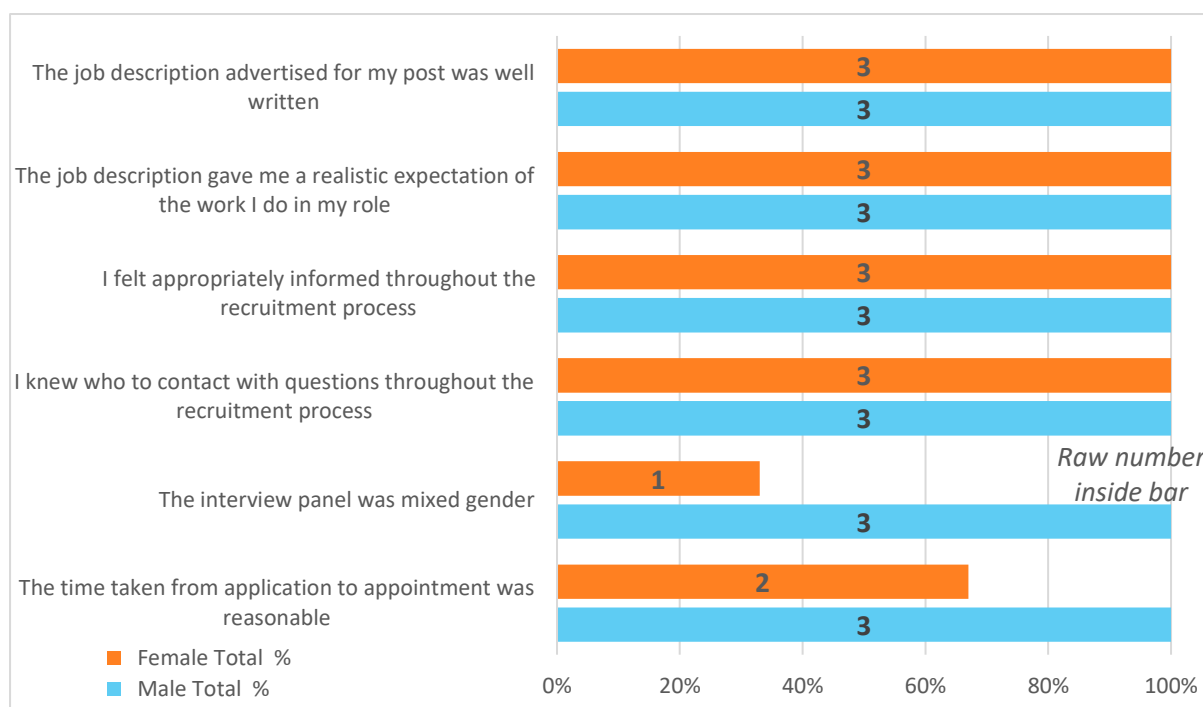
Year	Competition	Applicants			Shortlisted			Appointed			Success Rates	
		F	M	%F	F	M	%F	F	M	%F	F	M
2017/18	RA	1	1	50%	1	1	50%	1	1	50%	100%	100%
2018/19	RA	1	0	100%	1	0	100%	1	0	100%	100%	0%
2019/20	RA	1	0	100%	1	0	100%	1	0	100%	100%	0%
	RA	1	0	100%	1	0	100%	1	0	100%	100%	0%
	RA	1	0	100%	1	0	100%	1	0	100%	100%	0%
<b>Total</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Recruitment is a function of central University processes and posts are publicly advertised. Recruitment selection and equality training is now obligatory for members of selection committees. In the period 2017-2020 there were eight academic competitions offered, seven lectureships and one Head of School (Table 12). Five posts had predominantly female applicants (although two posts had just one applicant). Six posts were successfully filled with most of the lectureships offered at B/B. We aim to prioritise advertising new posts across the bar (**AP 2.1.7**) in order to appoint more staff above the bar and increase the diversity of our applicants. Research posts were dominated by female applicants (83%). The Primary Investigators (PIs) on each research project are responsible for ensuring that this University's Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers is followed and for keeping records on applicants, shortlisting and appointments.

Academic staff were questioned about recruitment in the staff survey (Figure 12).

**Figure 12:**

*Academic staff who agree/ strongly agree with statements regarding the recruitment process*



Staff responses indicated general agreement that the job description was clear and gave a realistic expectations of the work they would do. Equally, both female and male respondents indicated that they felt appropriately informed and would know who to contact during the recruitment process. However, just 33% (1) female respondents agreed that the interview panel was mixed gender. A review of members on recruitment panels in the School from 2017- 20 found that female membership ranged from 33%- 80%, although more recent data from 2020-22 indicates that the gender distribution has been 60/40%. This will be addressed by **AP 2.2.1**.

**AP 2.2.1: Ensure consistent gender balance on recruitment panels**

c. Reflecting on academic promotion in your institution, answer the following:

Academic promotion processes, including eligibility criteria, are managed centrally by the institution	Yes	No	N/A
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

d. Provide three years of data on application and success rates for promotion by gender and grade and present results from staff consultation by gender. Where data suggests opportunity for improvement, comment and reflect.

UCC operates a progression across the merit bar which is a non-competitive scheme where eligible staff B/B with at least three years' service are required to demonstrate that they successfully meet the criteria in the areas of teaching, administration and research. From 2018-2020 there was no call for progression. This compares to UL data where 10 lecturers (9F 1M) in the SAH progressed across the merit bar between 2015-2018. UCC's scheme was



relaunched in 2022 as a two-stage process consisting of shortlisting (stage 1) and full application (stage 2). Currently four staff in the SCT (1F 3M) are applying for progression and are mentored informally by their line manager. However, in order to develop a formal mentoring panel in the SCT and to include support from those who have previously progressed through this pathway for future calls, the School devised the following action:

**AP 2.2.2: Develop a School mentoring scheme to support lecturers to progress across the merit Bar**

Promotion to SL is a highly competitive process and there has been a cap on the number of staff who are promoted to SL in UCC. For example, in 2019 UCC offered 40 SL promotions, five for each of the four Colleges, with the other 20 distributed based on applicant ranking. The promotion was a two-stage process consisting of shortlisting (stage 1) and full application (stage 2). In 2019, just six staff from the COMH were promoted compared to 17 in the College of Science, Engineering and Food Sciences. Three females from the SCT applied and were successful in reaching stage 2. However, none were successful in promotion. No staff member in the SCT has ever been promoted to SL through the University’s promotion scheme to date. A similar promotion scheme is in place for promotion to professor (scale 2). There was one call for this scheme during the review period, although neither of the two eligible staff applied. Comments from the staff survey highlighted difficulties with the University promotion scheme. One female academic noted that:

*“...promotion is heavily biased towards the STEM disciplines [which] tend to be more male-dominated and bring in consistent, large research grants that are the best predictor of promotion at UCC. There aren't many opportunities for research funding within the SCT disciplines which hampers graduate student recruitment, publication and promotion.”*

UCC’s Governing Body have recently announced a more regularised schedule of academic progression and have removed the cap on the number of promotions. They are due to review and approve revised criteria for promotion to SL in December 2022. In order to support staff in the SCT to be promoted to SL we have devised the following actions:

**AP: 2.2.3: Review and respond to the revised criteria for promotion to SL to ensure it accounts for the expertise of academic in clinical programmes**

**AP 2.2.4: Develop a School mentoring scheme to support lecturers to apply for promotion to SL**

- e. Reflecting on opportunities for staff development reviews, answer the following:

The institution operates a development review process, or equivalent, for academic and research staff	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered ‘yes’, comment and reflect on the implementation of this institution-level process in the department. This should include:

- + data on uptake by gender;

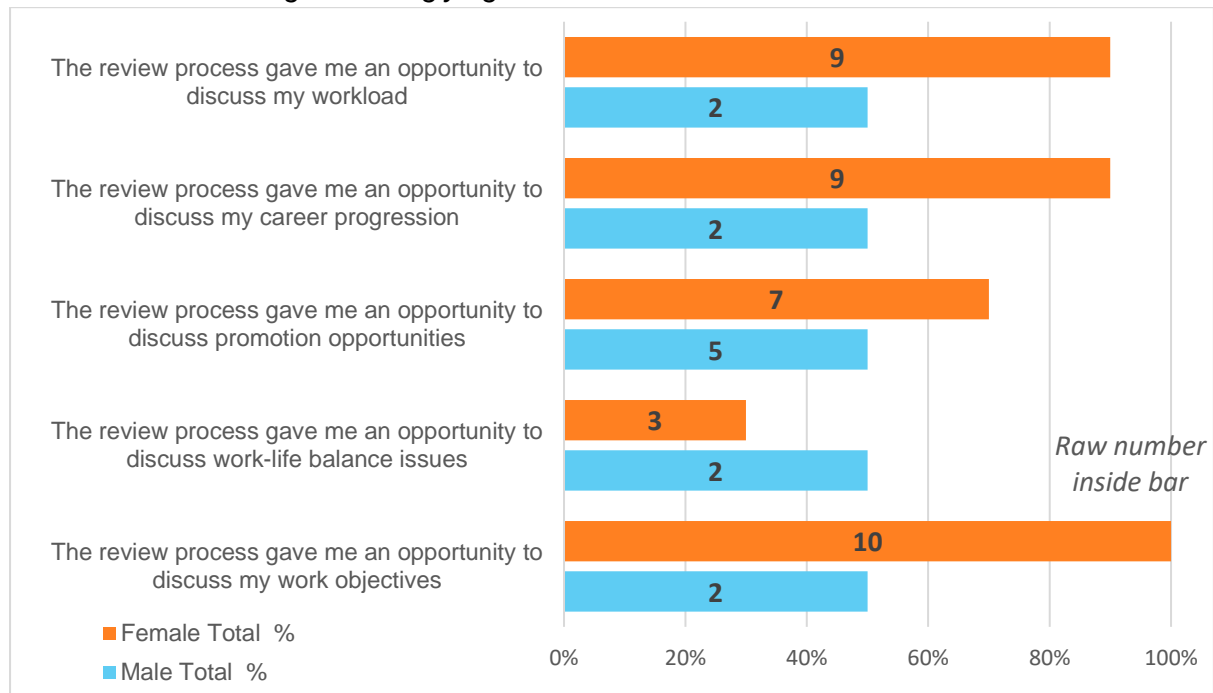
Performance and Development Reviews (PDR) take place every two years in UCC. During the 2018-2020 review, 100% of all eligible academic staff took part in reviews (13F, 3M) while 5 females and 1 male were exempt as they were still on probation or maternity leave.

+ results from staff consultation presented by gender;

Staff also responded to statements regarding the PDRS process (Figure 13).

**Figure 13**

*Academic staff who agree/ strongly agree with statements on the PDRS*



Most females and half of male academic staff felt that the review process gave them an opportunity to discuss workload, career and promotion, although they were less positive regarding work-life balance. Two respondents (1F, 1M) mentioned that the PDRS was a “tick the box” exercise in the staff survey and did not consider it to be valuable or conducive to open discussion around work-life balance. The University have committed to add work-life balance to the revised PDR form which will support our action:

**AP 2.2.5: Work-life balance to be added as an item for discussion on the Performance Development Review templates**

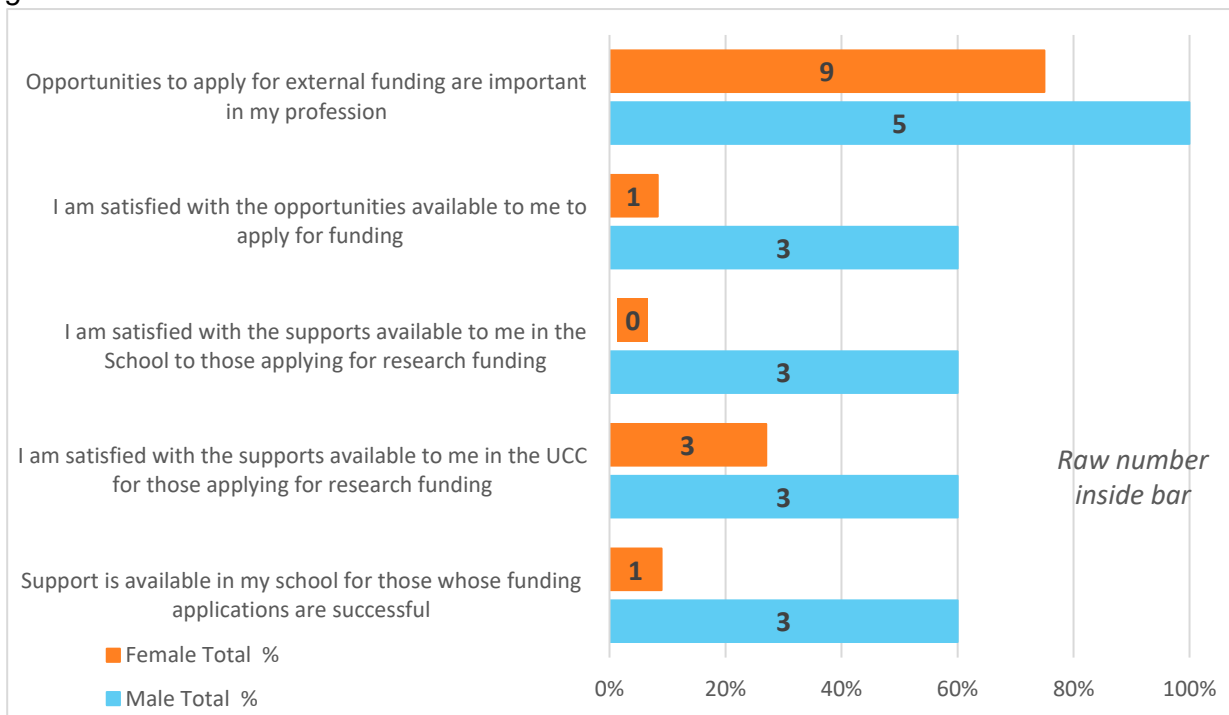
+ information on any additional department-level opportunities for staff to discuss professional development.

All new appointments in the School are provided with an internal mentor for the first year of their appointment. The aim of this is to help the mentee develop their professional goals and skills, and is mentee led.

- f. Comment and reflect on department engagement with institution-level supports for academic and research staff career progression as well as any department-level support available. This should include results from staff consultation presented by gender and may include, but is not limited to, support given to staff to:
  - + apply for research funding;

Academic and research staff have access to research training programmes related to grant applications and funding provided by the UCC Research Support Services (RSS). The courses are advertised through the all-staff mailing list. During 2018-2020, over 40 programmes were attended by academic and PE staff in the school. The COMH also employs a Research Innovation Coordinator to help researchers identify grants and prepare proposals. The staff survey asked questions around support for funding (Figure 14).

**Figure 14**  
*Academic staff who agree/ strongly agree with statements on support offered for research grants in the SCT*



Most staff agreed that opportunities to apply for funding were important, but very few were satisfied with opportunities or support to apply for research funding, or with support with grants. Although the numbers are small, females were less likely to agree with these statements than men. With the reinstatement of the SCT Research Seminars in September 2022 we have started to address this action:

**AP 2.2.6: Provide supports to staff applying for research funding and for those with successful grants**

- + develop excellence in teaching and learning.

Newly appointed staff are strongly advised to undertake a PG Certificate in Learning and Teaching provided by the University's Centre for the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning (CIRTL). Four female academics and one researcher completed the PG Certificate in Teaching and Learning, one of these academics went on to complete a Master's degree in Teaching and Learning between 2017-2020. In 2020, three academic staff (2F, 1M) also completed the Digital Badge (a micro-credential qualification) in the Connected Curriculum in UCC, which aims to encourage staff to incorporate aspects such as inter-and transdisciplinary and civic and community engagement in their teaching.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, teaching moved online and staff feedback from the survey noted that this was challenging and time consuming. One female academic said: *"Perhaps because of the online element of work since Covid -19 started, I have found my workload increased hugely with new skills having to be acquired in a very short length of time"*. The University has since provided a lot of support for online teaching in the form of 'Teach Digi', with weekly webinars and tips on how to teach online which is available to all staff.

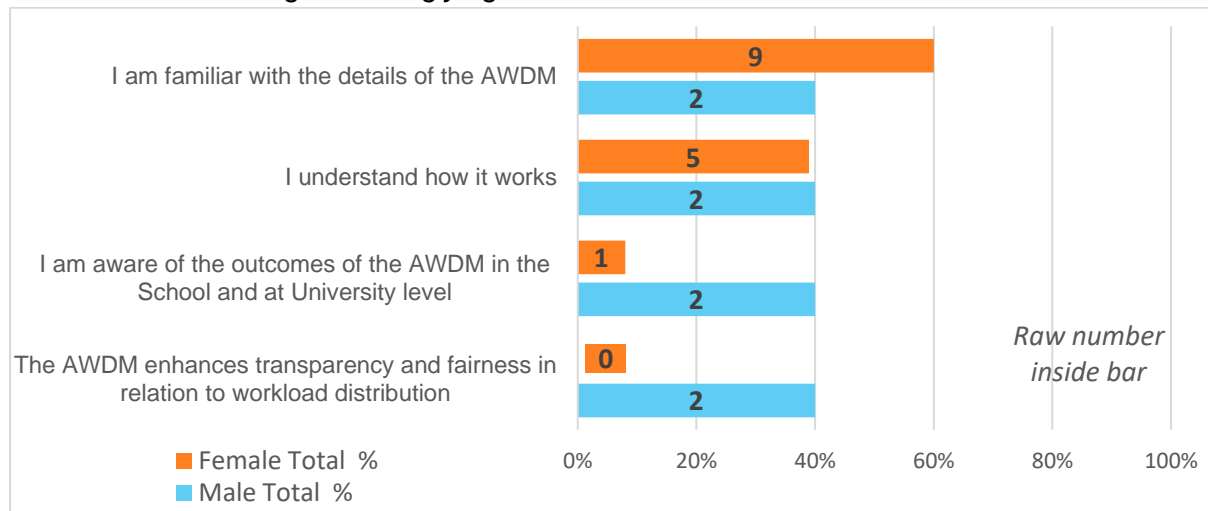
Staff in the school are also supported to develop leadership skills related to career progression. For example, UCC and the Irish Management Institute (IMI) provide leadership programmes for academic staff. Staff submit expressions of interest and development goals in order to gain a place, and the SCT provides partial payment for attendance. Between 2018-2020, five females and one male from the SCT completed the 'Aspiring Leaders' programme and one female the 'Current Leaders' programme. The University also offered a 'Successful Team Leaders Digital Badge' that was completed by two female academics during 2018-2020. Finally, the SCT supported three female academics to take part in the Advance HE Aurora programme between 2018-2020 to foster their leadership skills.

- g. Comment and reflect on how workload is allocated and managed in the department (e.g. via a workload allocation model). This should include information on how the breadth of academic and research roles and responsibilities are captured in workload planning and allocation and results from staff consultation presented by gender.

The University implemented an Academic Workload Distribution Model (AWDM) in 2010 to respond to internal demands for greater equity and transparency in the distribution of tasks and resources. UCC deferred the AWDM data collection during the Covid-19 pandemic and it is due to resume in 2023. Staff consultation on their level of agreement with statements regarding AWDM based on their experience of it in the School are below.

**Figure 15**

*Academic staff who agree/ strongly agree with statements on the AWDM*



As can be seen, although most staff are familiar with the model, few understand how it works, are aware of the outcomes or agree that the AWDM enhances transparency and fairness. Other schools in the COMH are trialling workload models which can be used as a guide for the SCT in the following action:

**AP 2.2.7: Develop and pilot a workload review model for academic staff in the SCT**

### 3. Embedding policy, practice and supports to advance professional, managerial and support staff careers

a. Reflecting on recruitment practices in the department, answer the following:

Recruitment to PMS posts in the department adheres to institutional policy on recruitment, which includes gender-balanced panels and training for assessors.	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

b. Provide three years of data on application, shortlist, and appointment rates for recruitment by gender and grade. Where data suggests opportunity for improvement, comment and reflect. Include any other relevant information relating to recruitment processes and practice for professional, managerial and support staff in the department.

We included Practice Education careers in this section as their roles are categorised 'Administrative' on the University's HR systems (see Section 2.3c below)

**Table 14***Professional, Managerial and Support Staff and Practice Education Recruitment 2017-2020*

Year	Competition	Applicants			Shortlisted			Appointed		
		F	M	%F	F	M	%F	F	M	%F
2017/18	Senior Executive Assistant (SEA)	6	2	75%	3	2	60%	1	0	100%
	Practice Education Coordinator (PEC)	3	1	75%	3	1	75%	1	0	100%
	Practice Tutor (PTut)	18	7	72%	8	0	100%	1	0	100%
2018/19	Senior Executive Assistant (SEA)	6	0	100%	4	0	100%	1	0	100%
	Practice Education Coordinator (PEC)	6	1	86%	5	0	100%	1	0	100%
	Practice Tutor (PTut)	4	1	80%	4	1	80%	1	0	100%
<b>Total</b>		<b>43</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100%</b>

c. (There was no recruitment in 2019/20)

During 2017-2020 there were two Senior Executive Assistant posts, two Practice Education Coordinator and two Practice Tutor posts. All panel members had undergone recruitment selection and equality training as outlined in section 2.2b above. The applicants were predominantly female as were those who were shortlisted and all appointees were female. For the PE posts, men and women were not shortlisted as they failed to meet the selection criteria required for educational qualifications (Master's degree or higher) or did not have required clinical and/or student supervision experience. As with the academic staff, the gender imbalance in PE staff will be addressed in the long term by firstly targeting the student cohort. Moreover, by prioritising the career development structure for PE staff, it is hoped that the School will attract more diverse PE staff (**AP 2.3.1; 2.3.2; 2.3.3**). When asked about recruitment practices in the survey we identified the following (no male PMS staff answered these questions):

**Table 15:**

*Professional, Managerial and Support staff & Practice Education staff responses to questions on the recruitment process*

	Agree/Strongly Agree		
	PMSS	Practice Education	
	F (%F)	F (%F)	M (%M)
The job description advertised for my post was well written	4 (100%)	4 (80%)	1 (100%)
The job description gave me a realistic expectation of the work I do in my role	4 (100%)	3 (60%)	1 (100%)
I felt appropriately informed throughout the recruitment process	4 (100%)	3 (60%)	1 (100%)
I knew who to contact with questions throughout the recruitment process	3 (100%)	4 (80%)	1 (100%)
The interview panel was mixed gender	3 (75%)	4 (80%)	1 (100%)
The time taken from application to appointment was reasonable	3 (75%)	4 (80%)	1 (100%)

Overall, we can see that the majority of PMS and PE staff were satisfied with the recruitment process.

c. Reflecting on progression in your institution, answer the following:

Career progression opportunities for PMS staff are centrally managed by the institution (e.g. internal vacancy competitions; regrading; promotions pathway).	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Although PE staff are 'categorised' as 'Administrative' on HR systems, the University does not have a career progression or promotion pathways available to them. Other programmes across the University that have PE staff have the same issue (e.g., Social Work, Dietetics). PE staff expressed frustration at this lack of career progression during the focus group. One female commented "*There are currently no further career progression possibilities open to Practice Education Staff as they are not placed on any Administrative or Lecturer scales*". PE posts in other countries (e.g., the UK) are categorised as clinical-academics/ lecturer-practitioners and structured within the academic career path. The lack of a career structure for PE staff has been raised by SCT through COMH AS Steering Group with the Deputy President & Registrar who has taken it to the University Leadership Team (ULT) to include as part of the University's strategic planning from 2023-2028. Schools in UCC with PE staff (e.g. School of Medicine, Food Sciences, Social Studies) are going to coordinate their efforts to establish appropriate career pathways for their staff. There is also a network of PECs within each discipline that coordinate their work across all Universities in Ireland that offer Physiotherapy, OT and SLT that can facilitate this work. We have therefore developed the following actions to address the issue of career development for PE:

**AP 2.3.1: Benchmark UCC practice education posts against similar posts within HEI programmes across Ireland and internationally**

**AP 2.3.2: Facilitate focus groups with practice education staff in the University to establish their preferences for career development and promotion.**

**AP 2.3.3: Lobby the University leadership team via the Registrar to follow through on a review of PE posts within the University through the upcoming strategic plan**

d. Reflecting on opportunities for staff development review, answer the following:

The institution operates a development review process, or equivalent, for PMS staff	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered 'yes', comment and reflect on the implementation of this institution-level process in the department. This should include:

- + data on uptake by gender;

During the 2018-2020 PDRS review window, 100% of eligible PMS Staff (6 F, 1 M; one female was exempt due to an upcoming retirement) and 90% of eligible PE staff (8 F, 2 M; one female was exempt as was less than 0.5 FTE), took part in a PDR.

- + results from staff consultation presented by gender;

5/6 PMS staff said they were aware of PDRS in the survey and 4/6 participated in the review process. Similarly, 5/8 female and 3/3 male PE staff were aware of, and took part in the PDRS programme. Staff were also asked to indicate their level of agreement with the following statements in our survey:

**Table 16**

*Professional, Managerial and Support staff & Practice Education staff responses to statements on the PDRS process*

	Agree/Strongly Agree		
	PMSS	Practice Education	
	F (%F)	F (%F)	M (%M)
The review process gave me an opportunity to discuss my workload	3 (75%)	5 (100%)	2 (100%)
The review process gave me an opportunity to discuss my career progression	4 (100%)	5 (100%)	1 (50%)
The review process gave me an opportunity to discuss promotion opportunities	2 (50%)	4 (80%)	1 (50%)
The review process gave me an opportunity to discuss work-life balance issues	1 (25%)	2 (40%)	1 (50%)
The review process gave me an opportunity to discuss my work objectives	4 (100%)	5 (100%)	2 (100%)
I benefited from my participation in the review process	2 (50%)	5 (100%)	2 (100%)

Most PMS and PE staff agreed that PDRS gave them the opportunity to discuss workload, career progression and workload objectives. However, work-life balance was an issue that three staff reported could receive greater emphasis in the PDRS review process. This was similar to responses from academic staff and is targeted in **AP 2.2.5**.

- + information on any additional department-level opportunities for staff to discuss professional development, where different to above (2.e).

Newly appointed staff at the SEA grade or above, and all PE staff are assigned a mentor at interview stage. This is a mentee led process whereby the new hire is matched based on experience with a mentor to address development needs identified at the initial interview. However, this system is currently not extended to EA roles. The University's AS Action plan has committed to a peer learning network which may fulfil this role, leading to the following action:

**AP 2.3.4: Encourage EA grade PMSS in the SCT to take part in the University's peer learning networks to enhance their career development**

- e. Comment and reflect on department engagement with institution-level supports for PMS staff career progression as well as any department-level support available, where different from above (2.f). This should include results from staff consultation presented by gender.



PMS and PE staff can avail of programmes for career progression. A survey of attendance at these programmes during 2018-2020 found that PMS and PE staff attended 49 (45F; 4M) Management and Leadership and Personal and Professional courses including the 'Successful Team Leader Digital Badge' (completed by 2F). Four females were supported by the school to take part in the IMI/UCC 'Aspiring Leadership' programme and one was supported to attend the Advance HE Aurora programme.

- f. Comment and reflect on how workload is distributed and managed. This should include information on how the breadth of professional, managerial and support roles and responsibilities are captured in workload planning and allocation and results from staff consultation presented by gender.

The survey asked staff to indicate their level of agreement with the following statements:

**Table 17**

*Professional, Managerial and Support staff & Practice Education staff responses to statements on workload allocation*

	Agree/Strongly Agree		
	PMSS	Practice Education	
	F (%F)	F (%F)	M (%M)
The School has a clear and transparent way of allocating workload	3 (50%)	3 (38%)	2 (66%)
The allocation of my workload aligns with my personal career development goals	3 (50%)	4 (50%)	3 (100%)
I discuss my workload activities with my line manager as needed	3 (50%)	2 (25%)	3 (100%)
Any work I do more than my contracted hours is recognised and appreciated by my line manager.	5 (83%)	4 (50%)	3 (100%)

Workload planning and allocation with the PMS and PE staff is completed on an individual basis with the line manager, although not all staff considered this to be clear and transparent or that it aligned with their career goals. Most PMS and all male PE staff agreed that any work outside of contracted hours was recognised and appreciated by their line manager. Female PE staff were less likely to discuss excess workload with their line manager but half noted that excess work was recognised and appreciated, while 38% neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. The data suggests that workload allocation needs to be made clearer to PMSS and that staff should be encouraged to discuss workload with their line manager. This will be addressed in **AP 2.3.5**:

**AP 2.3.5: Workload planning and allocation to be made clear and transparent for PMS/ PE staff and to be discussed with line managers**

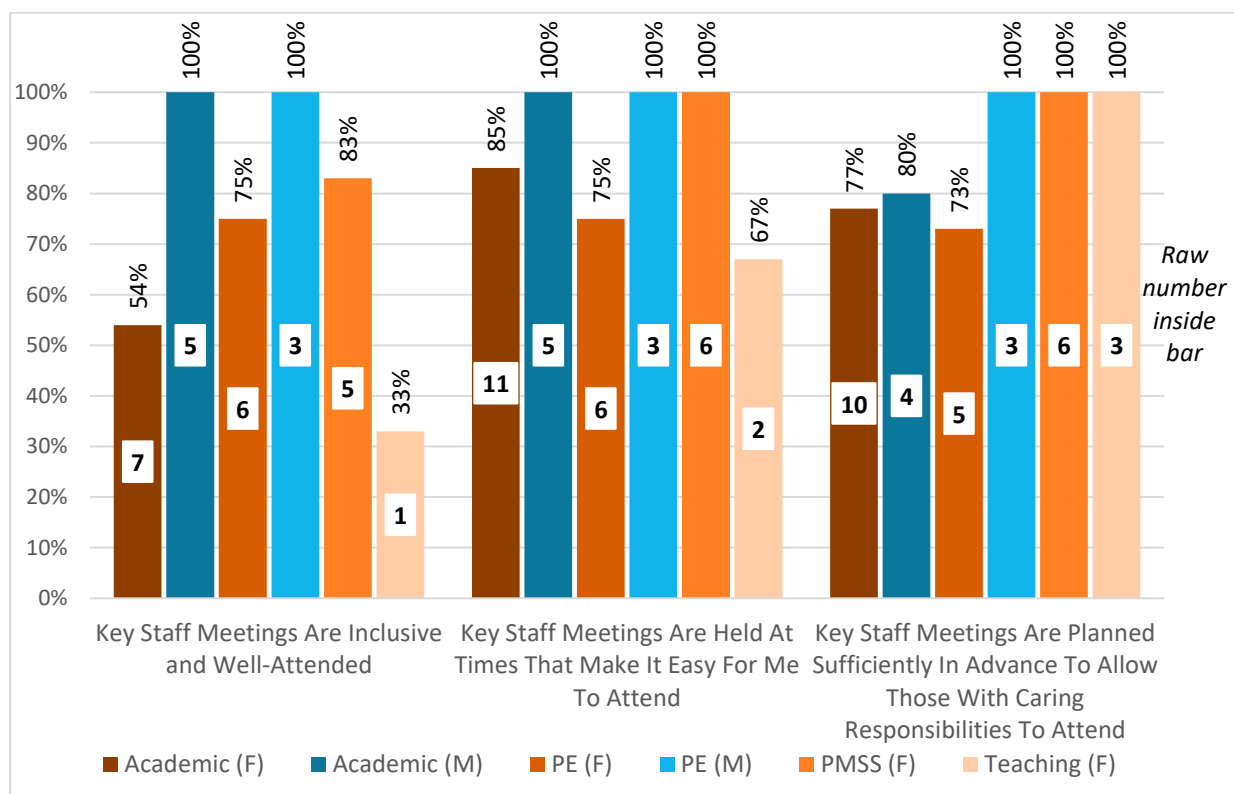
## 4. Evaluating culture, inclusion and belonging

- a. Provide information on how the department ensures that culture and practices support inclusion and belonging. This should include, but is not limited to, information on how the department actively considers gender equality, and EDI more broadly, in:

+ organisation of meetings and events;

**Figure 16**

Percent of survey respondents who agree/ strongly agree with statements regarding the organisation of staff meetings and activities



Responses showed that most agreed that staff meetings were inclusive and well attended and held at times that made it easy to attend, including those with caring responsibilities, although female academics were less likely to agree with this. Only one member of the PBL teaching staff agreed that staff meetings were inclusive and well attended. A qualitative comment from the survey noted that as the PBL tutors work clinically, they are not always included, and would welcome more inclusion “I find it a very supportive environment. Possibly PBL tutors are more removed from the general team, because a lot of us work other jobs, so more active inclusion would be good”.

### AP 2.4.1: Ensure part-time teaching staff are included in the SCT

Staff were asked whether gender balance is considered in organising conferences, seminars and workshops. Responses indicated most females (55%; 16/29) across all roles neither

agreed nor disagreed with this, while most men (50%; 4/8) felt it was addressed. Despite this, the data (Table 11) also showed that 66/81 (81%) of visiting lecturers were female. Qualitative comments from the survey highlighted that diverse representation was important to dispel gender stereotypes in the School. For example, one male noted in the staff survey that *“representation matters not only for gender but for LGBTQ+ people, people of colour and minority groups in Ireland, namely anyone who has been other-ed can benefit from people representing ‘otherness’”*. We don’t at present monitor the gender balance or wider demographics of participants when planning events and so have included it as part of a wider action plan. It will be important not to over-burden underrepresented male staff and students when looking for volunteers for such events.

**AP 2.4.2: Achieve gender balance and consider wider demographic representation when planning conferences, seminars and workshops**

+ images and text used in department spaces and on the department’s website;

Staff in the SCT have signs on their office doors that demonstrate advocacy for gender equality and wider EDI issues. Examples include Proud Ally, Safe Zone, ASD has a friend in me, You can talk to me – Suicide awareness (below):

**Figure 17**  
EDI Images from SCT



A number of staff use email signatures to highlight EDI issues such as including pronouns with hyperlinks to informative websites, or to support flexible working arrangements. One student from the SAG noted *“I have recently noticed some lecturers...have begun to sign their emails using their preferred pronouns with the opportunity for students to learn why they have opted to sign their email using them through an embedded link”*. All staff will be encouraged to adopt and EDI message in their signatures as per **AP 2.4.3**.

**AP 2.4.3 All staff to be encouraged to include an EDI message in their email signature, such as pronouns, flexible working or the Athena Swan Charter logo**

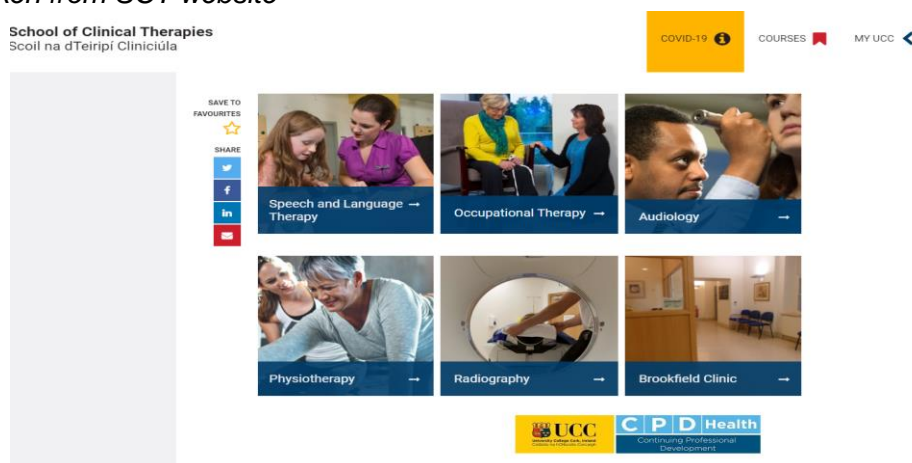
Conversely, 45% (13/29) of female staff respondents to the survey were ambivalent as to whether gender representation is considered in the school website and promotion materials, while 75% (6/8) of males felt that it was considered. One student noted *“On the website, there*

is not much touched on in terms of gender equality and diversity” (see Figure 18). The school website will be updated to include an EDI section (AP 1.3.4) and the following related action:

**AP 2.4.4: Review the School website to increase images of underrepresented groups such as men, people with disabilities and from different ethnicities.**

**Figure 18**

Images taken from SCT website



+ student curricula, pedagogy, and assessment.

Values of equality and inclusion underpin the School's collaborations with community partners (as described in section 2a pg. 13+) and are at the core of our student curricula. People with lived experience are invited to talk to our students, organise placements in related areas, and give students opportunities to research these areas in their dissertations (See Figure 19). The pre-registration programmes in OT, Physiotherapy and SLT are accredited by CORU, the statutory regulator for Health and Social Care professions in Ireland. Audiology, OT and SLT are accredited by their respective professional bodies. These organisations audit whether EDI are taught and assessed on all programmes during accreditation. For example, CORU requires that all graduates 'promote equality and respect without prejudice, and practise in a culturally competent, non-discriminatory and inclusive manner'. Each programme addresses this uniquely, such as providing case studies and related workshops that focus on working with multilingual/ multicultural clients and their families; embedding a human rights-based approach to healthcare such as cultural humility as a progression of cultural competence and collaborating with external organisations who support for children or adults with disabilities in student research.

**Figure 19**

*Staff, students and patients from Physiotherapy at a COPD patient support group during World COPD day*



Students noted that “Race, ethnicity, linguistic and cultural diversity, socioeconomic status, homelessness, disability, and neurodiversity all come up throughout placements” but “gender and gender identity, LGBTQI and sexual orientation issues aren’t covered as much as linguistic and cultural diversity for instance” during our consultation, leading to the following action:

**AP 2.4.5: Target sexuality awareness (encompassing sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression) on our School curricula**

Athena Swan was placed as a standing item on our annual curriculum review in 2022 and will be included within a broader EDI theme in future years. The Discipline of Physiotherapy invites members from stakeholder organisations (e.g. gender-balanced representatives from Arthritis Ireland, Parkinson’s Disease Ireland, Cork ARC Cancer Support House) to their annual curriculum review meetings to comment and advise on aspects of teaching and learning. Other Departments in the school are going to follow this model with support from UCC’s Public-Patient Involvement (PPI) Ignite Network:

**AP 2.4.6: Create a public, patient and carer involvement panel to contribute to the learning and teaching and research agenda of the SCT, with a particular focus on EDI**

- b. Comment and reflect on the department’s current understanding of, and capacity to identify and address, issues and opportunities relating to equality grounds in addition to gender, as well as capacity to identify and address intersectional inequalities for staff and students.

Staff and student consultation focused on mainly on the area of gender and although there is expertise in EDI issues in the School including disability awareness and linguistic and cultural diversity (see Section 1.2), the intersectionality of these potential inequalities was not raised. Part of the remit of the School EDIC will be to help staff understand and address intersectional inequalities through resources such as the Disciplines Inquiring into Societal Challenges (DISCS) Project. The DISCS project (a collaboration between UCC, DCU and NUIM) provides tools for HE educators to explore what it means to be gender-conscious, community-oriented,

and interculturally competent in higher education, and provides resources for educators to develop social justice orientations in their pedagogical practices and wider academic engagements. A self-assessment tool can be completed by individual staff to help them assess their own levels of competence and comfort in these areas. Depending on the responses, individualised readings and resources are then provided to help staff further explore these issues. Furthermore, the SCT will invite the Intersectionality Network, an organisation that addresses the lived experience of Black disabled women in higher education to address the school staff at our monthly research seminars about how we should be considering intersectionality for staff, students, in our curricula and research agenda.

**AP 2.4.7: Facilitate staff to develop a greater capacity to understand and address intersectional inequalities**

A survey on staff attendance at University level training programmes to improve understanding of inequalities between 2018-2020 indicated that seven female staff members (3 PE, 3 academic, 1 PMSS) had attended unconscious bias training, two females (1 PE, 1 PMSS) trans-awareness training and one female academic the Bystander intervention Programme. Moreover, in disciplines that are female dominant, it can be difficult to understand the importance of gender representation and inequalities, as one female in the staff survey commented *“training on where and how we should be thinking about gender would be welcomed”*. The action plan will address this through **AP 1.3.3**, **AP 2.4.7** and below:

**AP 2.4.8: Encourage staff to attend relevant training in gender equality and EDI as offered by UCC annually**

- c. Provide information on the department’s culture as it relates to gender equality and, where relevant, EDI more broadly, by presenting consultation findings by gender and staff category on the following areas:
  - + values and traditions of the department;

*Covid-19*

The staff survey took place in April-May 2021 when almost all staff were working exclusively from home due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which was addressed in our survey.

**Table 18**

Staff responses to question on SCT approach to Covid 19

	Agree/ Strongly Agree					
	Academic		Teaching	PMSS	Practice Education	
	F (%F)	M (%M)	F (%F)	F (%F)	F (%F)	M (%M)
The school responded appropriately to Covid 19	12 (86%)	5 (100%)	3 (100%)	6 (86%)	8 (100%)	3 (100%)
I have been supported while working from home	9 (64%)	3 (60%)	3 (100%)	6 (86%)	8 (100%)	3 (100%)
I am Satisfied with the Level of Communication with my Line Manager	7 (50%)	4 (80%)	3 (100%)	7 (100%)	6 (75%)	3 (100%)
I am comfortable returning to work	10 (71%)	4 (80%)	3 (100%)	4 (57%)	6 (75%)	3 (100%)
I would prefer a mixture of home and campus working	14 (100%)	4 (80%)	3 (100%)	7 (100%)	8 (100%)	2 (67%)
For some tasks, I can be more productive working from home	13 (90%)	4 (80%)	2 (67%)	6 (86%)	7 (83%)	3 (100%)

Most men and women across all roles agreed that the School responded appropriately to Covid-19, felt supported while working from home and were happy with communication from line managers and colleagues. One female noted in a qualitative comment in the survey, “*The Head of School is particularly convivial and welcoming and checks in regularly with the entire staff via informal emails*”. This tradition which started during Covid continues with staff sharing photo of pets, holidays and competitions for home-made chutney.

**Figure 20**

Images from weekly ‘checking-in’ emails from the Head of Department



Similarly, most staff felt comfortable returning to work and the majority reported a preference for a mix of home and campus working as they found some tasks more productive from home. Staff have been able to avail of the University’s pilot blended working policy since February 2022 and the plan is to monitor and gather feedback on this at the next staff survey.

#### AP 2.4.9: Survey staff on their views of blended working at the next staff survey

We also asked staff about the prevailing culture and atmosphere in the School, which the majority (>65% of all staff) agreed was inclusive and friendly. This was mirrored in the comments provided in the focus group where participants reported feeling welcomed when they joined the School and a sense of shared identity within their Department, but not necessarily as a School. This is partly due to the issue of split locations between disciplines in the School. One female commented that “*we need dedicated time throughout the year to meet*

as a School. For a sense of belonging that would be huge". To address this the School Away-Day was reinstated in June 2022, followed by a social event which was attended by thirteen staff and supported by the leadership team by providing refreshments (Figure 21). It is planned to make this an annual event in the School. The monthly School research seminars were also reinstated in September 2022 to help create a better connection across the school and increase the potential for transdisciplinary teaching and research. This is addressed in the following action:

**AP 2.4.10: Develop greater connections across Departments/ Disciplines in the School through social events and monthly seminars**

**Figure 21**

*Photo from 1<sup>st</sup> annual social event post-covid in June 2022*



- + formal and informal structures and interactions that characterise the working and learning environment of the department, including leadership practices and behaviours;

Some staff noted during the focus group that there were leadership work styles in the School and practices that promote overworking and undervalue work-life balance, with negative impacts on the School culture:

*"I feel there is definitely a division between junior staff and senior staff in terms of [...] work-life balance" (male)*

*"..[overworking] does not create a good environment or inspire those in more junior positions that it is possible to have a senior role in our school while also maintaining a work-life balance" (female)*

The staff survey also indicated the following views regarding work-life balance:



**Table 19**

SCT agree/ strongly agree responses to questions on work-life balance

	Agree/ Strongly Agree					
	Academic		Teaching	PMSS	Practice Education	
	F (%F)	M (%M)	F (%F)	F (%F)	F (%F)	M (%M)
I Am Satisfied With My Work-Life Balance	5 (39%)	1 (20%)	3 (100%)	4 (66.7%)	4 (50%)	2 (66.6%)
I would feel comfortable discussing work-life balance issues with my line manager/Head of Dept.	7 (34%)	3 (60%)	3 (100%)	6 (83.3%)	6 (75%)	3 (100%)
When Feasible, Key Meetings Should Be Held Between Specified Core Hours (e.g. 10a.m. - 4 p.m.)	12 (92%)	5 (100%)	3 (100%)	6 (100%)	8 (100%)	3 (100%)

Table 19 demonstrates that most staff are satisfied with their work-life balance, although this level of agreement was lower for male and female academics. Most staff were also comfortable discussing work-life balance with their line managers, apart from female academics. Moreover, almost all staff agreed that meetings should try to be held between core hours. Some qualitative comments on the staff survey indicated that *“I think this [AS] is an opportunity to step back and consider our values and how those in senior positions communicate these to others in the school. ... Not everyone can give 24/7 to the job and we need to change this atmosphere and ethos”*.

Addressing work-life balance is therefore a priority in our action plan (**AP 2.2.5**) as is the importance of flexible working (**AP 2.4.9**) and the following action:

**Action 2.4.11: Remind all staff that key staff meetings should be held between 10 and 4 where at all feasibly**

Staff also commented during the focus group around the culture of taking sick leave, and staff not feeling supported to take this when necessary. One member commented *“there was this culture that you know, it's grand, stay at home, do what you can do - but like, still work... There definitely is a culture of just ... get on with it and don't go down the official route [of taking leave] with stuff”*, resulting in the following action:

**Action 2.4.12: Inform and encourage staff to access and avail of necessary leave where required**

+ negative practices and behaviours and how these are managed by the department;

**Table 20**

*Staff survey responses on school behaviour by gender and role*

	Agree/ Strongly Agree					
	Academic		Teaching	PMSS	Practice Education	
	F (%F)	M (%M)	F (%F)	F (%F)	F (%F)	M (%M)
The School promotes clear values and expectations about how people should behave towards each other	7 (50%)	4 (80%)	3 (100%)	3 (50%)	6 (75%)	3 (100%)
The School encourages zero tolerance on harassment and bullying	4 (29%)	5 (100%)	2 (67%)	3 (50%)	6 (75%)	3 (100%)
At the level of the School, I am treated fairly, based on merit, without regard to characteristics of gender, civil or family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the traveller community	7 (58%)	4 (50%)	3 (100%)	4 (67%)	8 (100%)	3 (100%)
If I felt unfairly treated, I would feel comfortable reporting it	6 (53%)	4 (80%)	3 (100%)	5 (83%)	5 (63%)	3 (100%)
If I witnessed others treated unfairly, I would feel comfortable reporting it.	8 (57%)	3 (60%)	3 (100%)	3 (50%)	4 (50%)	3 (100%)
I feel reporting unfair treatment could affect my career negatively	10 (73%)	1 (20%)	0%	1 (17%)	2 (25%)	0%

Although most people felt that the school promotes clear values and expectations about how people should behave, only half of female academics and PMSS staff agreed with this. In addition, it was concerning that fewer females than men felt that a zero tolerance on harassment and bullying was encouraged. Furthermore, while many people would be comfortable reporting feeling unfairly treated, this was lower for females in all categories, as most felt that it could affect their career negatively. The majority of staff felt they were treated fairly and based on merit with regards to their background, although less so for female and male academics. Overall, zero tolerance on bullying and harassment and reporting of the same appears to be a problem in the School, particularly amongst female academics, and we have made this a priority action. We will take advantage of the existing University infrastructure to target this area, including Bystander Intervention training, the Speak Out Tool and the policy on the Duty of Respect and Right to Dignity in the following action:

**AP 2.4.13: Facilitate training for staff on identifying and reporting bullying and harassment**

+ flexible working opportunities in the department;

UCC has policies allowing for flexible working and the provision of career breaks for various reasons. The data indicated that during the three-year period from 2017-2020, one female PMSS staff was on a career break; one female academic and one EA had taken special unpaid leave; two female academics and one female PMSS had taken unpaid leave. No academic staff have taken sabbatical leave during any period of the School's history, which has implications for career progression as it provides dedicated time to support activities such as writing grant proposals and academic papers which are important for academic promotion. We have therefore developed the following action:

**AP 2.4.14: Develop and pilot a process that enable academic staff to avail of sabbatical leave**

Staff were asked whether they agreed with the following statements regarding flexible working.

**Table 21**  
*Staff responses to statements on flexible working*

	Agree/ Strongly Agree					
	Academic		Teaching	PMSS	Practice Education	
	F (%F)	M (%M)	F (%F)	F (%F)	F (%F)	M (%M)
Flexible working is supported in the school	9 (64%)	4 (80%)	3 (100%)	4 (67%)	6 (75%)	3 (100%)
I would be comfortable discussing flexible work arrangements with my line manager/Head of School	10 (72%)	2 (40%)	3 (100%)	6 (100%)	6 (75%)	3 (100%)
I am confident that if I sought flexible work arrangements, I would achieve a positive outcome	7 (50%)	2 (40%)	1 (33%)	5 (83%)	6 (75%)	3 (100%)

The data shows that most staff agreed that flexible working was supported and would feel comfortable discussing these arrangements with their line manager. Just two male academics agreed that they would be comfortable discussing or achieving flexible working (the rest neither agree/disagreed with these statements) but the numbers were too small to draw any definite conclusions. Most staff were confident that they could avail of flexible working, although the teaching staff were less sure about this, most likely as PBL tutors already work part time and on specific days as stipulated in the student timetable.

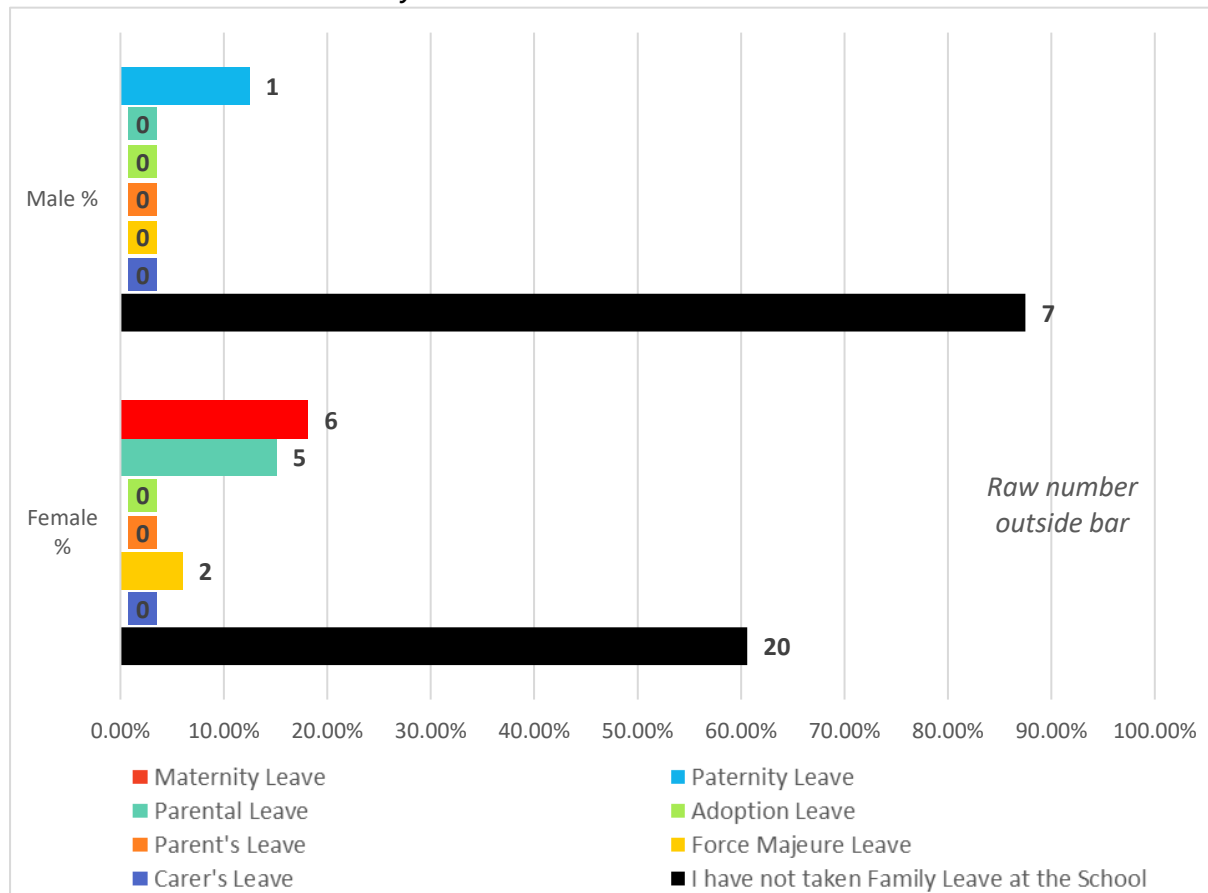
+ management of, and attitudes towards, family leave in the department.

Where data suggests opportunity for improvement, comment and reflect. This should include reflection on any gaps between institution-level policy and practice in the department, including if the institution's approach meets the requirements of department staff.

Staff were surveyed about whether they had taken periods of family leave including adoption leave, carer's leave and parent's leave.

**Figure 22**

*Staff who have availed of family leave at the school*



Most staff in the school had not taken family leave, and just one male had taken paternity leave. Six females (18%) had taken maternity leave and included academic and PE staff, and five (16%) had taken parental leave. Qualitative comments in the survey also indicated staff levels of satisfaction with family leave. One female said that *"I was able to choose how and when I took parental leave"*. One male noted that during his family leave that *"other staff covered my workload and my line manager was very helpful"*. The University provide an 'Academic Returners Grant' of €5,000 to support those returning from maternity leave to re-establish their research agenda which two staff members had availed of during 2017-20.

**Table 22***Staff responses to statements on family leave*

	Agree/ Strongly Agree					
	Academic		Teaching	PMSS	Practice Education	
	F (%F)	M (%M)	F (%F)	F (%F)	F (%F)	M (%M)
Taking family leave at the School would negatively impact my career	7 (54%)	1 (20%)	0%	0%	3 (38%)	0%
Taking family leave at the School has negatively impacted my career	4 (57%)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Taking family leave has negatively impacted the career(s) of my colleague(s)	6 (27%)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Responses to the statements around family leave indicated that female academics felt that taking family leave had negative implications for their careers and the careers of colleagues. The University now accounts for any period of family leave taken in all promotion schemes. During the focus group several participants reported that they had availed of parental leave, and although reported feeling supported to avail of this, described several challenges, ranging from concern about the impact on their research outputs, loss of income and the lack of reduction in their whole-time workload. Finally, one participant proposed during the focus group *“easier accessibility to [information about supports like parental leave] - just that [the supports are] actually available, and [reassurance] that [availing of them] won’t impact us negatively”* leading to the following actions:

**AP 2.4.15: Review the workload of staff taking family leave to ensure that it is reflective of their agreed working arrangements**

**AP 2.4.16: Line managers to inform their staff about the various family leave opportunities within the University**

## 5. Department priorities for future action

- a. Identify the department's key issues relating to gender equality and establish key priorities for action over the next four years:
  - Select up to five key priority areas where the department will strive for impact. Selected priorities should be justifiable and based on the quantitative and qualitative evidence presented in Section 2.
  - Specific action(s) to support progress in priority areas should be identified.

Our five priority areas are as follows:

1. To improve the career structure and promotion pathways for Practice Education staff, who are predominantly female (**AP 2.3.1; 2.3.2; 2.3.3**)
  2. To improve the gender diversity of the School by increasing the number of male UG and PG Audiology students (**AP 2.1.1; 2.1.2; 2.1.5, 2.1.6, 2.4.4**)
  3. To support academics from clinical backgrounds to achieve career progression (**AP 2.1.7; 2.2.2**) and promotion of female academics to the Senior Lecturer level (**AP 2.2.3; 2.2.4; 2.2.6; 2.4.14**)
  4. To improve culture and staff wellbeing by targeting 'whole-life balance' (**AP 2.2.5; 2.4.11**); workload (**AP 2.2.7; 2.3.5**) inclusion and connection (**AP 2.4.1; 2.4.10**); support for family leave (**AP 2.4.15; 2.4.16**) and communicating clear values and expectations about how people should behave (**AP 2.4.13**)
  5. To establish a School Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee to focus on implementing the AS Action plan and wider EDI issues (**AP 1.3.3; 1.3.4, 2.4.2; 2.4.6, 2.4.7; 2.4.8**)
- b. Outline how the department's gender equality priorities align with the institution's Athena Swan action plan and, where relevant, broader EDI initiatives in the institution and/or department. This should include comment on:

- + key institutional actions that have, or will, support the department's progress;

The University's AS action plan aligns with the School's priority actions in the following ways:

- The University aims to encourage application for promotions for all eligible staff, particularly underrepresented gender. They also have a target for a minimum of 40% of females to be promoted to SL level (*See SCT priority 3 & AP 2.2.2, 2.2.3*). This will be facilitated through a series of talks "Performing for Career Progression": based on criteria for progression and promotion which staff can avail of.
- The University has also devised an EDI communications plan to communicate the importance and benefits of engagement with various forms of EDI policy (*SCT priority 5 & AP 1.3.3*) culture, entitlements and responsibilities (*SCT priority 4 & AP 2.4.13*).

- The University has also developed a Digital Badge (free micro-credential) on EDI in Higher education (*SCT priority 5 & AP 1.3.3 & 2.4.7*) and on Bystander Intervention (*SCT priority 4 & AP 2.4.13*).
  - UCC will support and encourage engagement with internal coaching and mentoring programmes (*SCT AP 2.2.2, 2.2.4*) and will develop peer learning networks specifically for EA/ SEA staff (*SCT AP 2.3.4*).
  - UCC will implement training for line managers around their roles, responsibilities regarding family-related leave and flexible working and will develop a revised Flexible Working Policy (*SCT Priority 4 & AP 2.4.15, 2.4.16*).
  - UCC will broaden Performance and Development Review and Performance Development Plan templates and guidelines to explicitly address workload and work/life balance (*SCT AP 2.2.5*).
  - UCC will devise *Inclusive Event Guidelines* to help incorporate EDI into planning of events (*Priority 5 & AP 2.4.2*).
- + any gaps in institutional supports for achieving progress and impact in the department.
- UCC's AS action plan does not target developing promotion pathways for staff that are currently excluded. Although this is addressed in the University's 2017-2022 under the policy of 'no one left behind', it is unclear whether it will be taken forward to the new policy for 2023-2028. This will make it more challenging to address priority 1 for the (predominantly female) Practice Education staff who do not have access to promotion pathways at present.

## Section 3: Action plan

In Section 3, applicants should evidence how they meet Criterion C:

- Action plan to address identified issues

### 1. Action plan

Present the action plan in the form of a table (on the landscape page to follow).

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



Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
<b>An introduction to the department's Athena Swan work- Application Section 1</b>							
1.2.1	Dedicate administrative support (0.1 FTE) and ringfence financial resources to successfully maintain EDIC and future AS applications	Resources for administrative support and teaching buy out are required in order to support AS/EDI related activities & future AS applications	Identify SCT PMS staff member to support AS/EDI work & adjust workload  AS Chair teaching buy out for one semester at time of AS applications	Jan 2023  Sept 2026	Ongoing with EDIC work & future AS applications  Dec 2026	HOS/ SCT Manager & EDIC Chair  HOS/HOD	Administrative/ IT support provided to EDIC  AS Chair relieved of teaching for one semester to focus on AS application
1.3.1	Establish a consultation channel between the EDIC and teaching and research staff	Research/ teaching staff declined to participate in the SAT due to small numbers and other commitments  It is important that all staff categories are consulted in EDI work, and invited as Athena Swan SAT representatives	All staff categories to be invited to take part in the School's EDIC/ AS SAT  EDIC to appoint a liaison member for research and teaching staff  Research/ teaching staff invited to SCT annual gathering to discuss EDI issues and updates on AS action plan	Dec 2023  April 2023  Nov 2025	Annually (when reviewing membership)  Ongoing  Annually	HOS & Chair EDIC/SAT  Chair EDIC  HOS/ Chair EDIC	100% of staff invited to be on the EDIC/ SAT  100% of staff consulted on EDI/ AS surveys  100% of staff indicate awareness of progress on EDI and AS action plan at time of next survey
1.3.2	Encourage students in the SCT to participate in the University's annual	The SAG raised the importance of surveying all students on their views related to EDI	Send email reminder & allocate time in lectures for students to complete the	Oct 2023	Annually	Chair of EDIC/ Programme Leads for all Disciplines	60% of SCT students respond to University EDI survey annually

Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
	EDI survey and respond accordingly	<p>The University's action plan is to survey students on EDI issues related annually and share disaggregated results with Schools</p> <p>The SCT need to understand EDI needs/ views of the SCT student cohort in order to inform future AS action plans</p>	<p>annual University EDI survey</p> <p>Disaggregated SCT student data provided to School by EDI unit for analysis every two years</p> <p>Review SCT results from survey and share with staff and students</p> <p>Develop Action Plans for students based on survey responses</p> <p>Review student feedback on Action Plans through Student Affairs Committee</p>	Jan 2024	Biennially	EDI Unit	Feedback from University EDI survey analysed
				Dec 2024	Biennially	EDIC Co-Chair & SAG	Action plan modified in response to issues identified in student survey report as needed to address student EDI issues
				Jan 2025	March 2025	EDIC Co-Chair & SAG	
				April 2026	Ongoing	EDIC Co-Chair & SAG Chair of Student Affairs Committee & Class Reps	80% of students to indicate satisfaction with how EDI are considered in the SCT 2026 survey
1.3.3	Convene an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committee	The self-assessment process & commitment to AS principles raised to need to address EDI issues at a broader level.	Invite expressions of interest to participate in the EDIC, retaining Chair & Deputy Chair of the AS SAT and	Jan 2023	Feb 2023	Head of School	School informed of the EDI committee members

Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
		<p>It is important to progress the AS agenda into wider EDI issues at all levels of the School.</p> <p>It is important to raise the status of the AS SAT to a School-level committee</p>	<p>50% of current SAT members. Ensure all staff roles are represented</p> <p>Develop Terms of Reference for EDI committee (incorporating AS action plans)</p> <p>Submit to the COMH for approval</p> <p>Commit to meeting twice per semester to review AS progress and develop new goals</p>	<p>March 2023</p> <p>June 2023</p> <p>Sept 2023</p>	<p>May 2023</p> <p>August 2023</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Chair &amp; Co-Chairs AS SAT/ EDIC, HOS &amp; School Manager</p> <p>HOS/ Chair of EDIC</p> <p>Chair &amp; Co-Chairs of EDIC</p>	<p>Terms of Reference developed and circulated</p> <p>Approved Terms of Reference</p> <p>Progress on Action plans recorded and monitored</p> <p>Response to future surveys to indicate that SCT staff &amp; students consider that the SCT addresses EDI issues adequately</p>

Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
1.3.4	Create an EDI page on the SCT website and noticeboards with updates on AS and other EDI related issues	<p>It is important to keep staff updated on progress of the AS Action Plan &amp; EDI activities and to collect regular feedback</p> <p>Although 87% of staff surveyed had heard about Athena Swan, some were still unaware</p>	<p>Create a link on the School website for EDI with a virtual 'suggestion box'</p> <p>Create space on all school notice boards for AS/ EDI issues</p> <p>Update the website/ notice boards twice per semester with information on AS action plan and other EDI activities</p>	Nov 2022	Jan 2023	Co-Chair EDIC; IT analyst	Website & Notice Board space created for EDI
				Jan 2023	Feb 2023	Co-Chair EDIC; IT analyst	One news item added to website/ notice board space twice a semester
				April 2023	Ongoing Twice per semester	Co-Chair EDIC; IT analyst	100% of staff and 70% of students in the school will report that they are aware of SCT's Athena Swan action plan
<b>Overview of the department and its context – Application Section 2.1</b>							
2.1.1	Complete research into potential reasons for low applications by men and students from diverse backgrounds to Audiology/ OT/ SLT	<p>Men are underrepresented on 3/4 programmes in the SCT</p> <p>CAO and PG applications for these courses are also all &gt;85% female</p> <p>It is important to understand reasons for</p>	<p>Adapt existing survey regarding career choices in clinical therapy professions for use with school and UG students.</p> <p>Students to gather data related to UG/PG student views and write dissertation on the topic</p>	Jan 2021	Sept 2022	SAT/ EDIC discipline representatives	One UG and one PG final-year dissertation developed by students in the SCT
				Nov 2022	June 2024	SAT/ EDIC discipline representatives	Research findings analysed to inform the implementation of Action 2.1.2 into the future

Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
		underrepresentation of men so that we can start to improve the diversity of our students, starting with gender	Discipline Reps on EDIC & students to report to School on research findings	May 2022	May 2024	Students & Supervisors	
2.1.2	Develop a series of targeted outreach activities for male students and other underrepresented groups for the Audiology, OT and SLT programmes	<p>Men are generally underrepresented among our student body (11% of OT; 7% of SLT; 10% of Audiology students are men)</p> <p>Staff noted that a need to attract more male and diverse students in the survey</p> <p>The School has not previously had systematic approaches to attracting males and more diverse students due to oversubscription to our programmes</p> <p>It is important to improve the diversity of</p>	<p>Create a list of schools in the Munster region that are predominantly male/ mixed gender, DEIS, Educate Together and diverse schools</p> <p>Meet with guidance counsellors in four schools to inform them about these professions</p> <p>Develop a 30-minute, workshop to inform students about careers in OT/ SLT/ Audiology,</p> <p>One representative (staff and/or student) from each discipline (ensuring gender</p>	Jan 2023	March 2023	Programme Leads of all 3 disciplines	List of schools with gender and wider diversity created
				April 2023	Ongoing annually	Programme Leads and student representatives	Four Guidance counsellors informed about the professions
				June 2023	Ongoing annually	Programme Leads (with student input)	Workshop created to inform students about the professions with SCT student input
				Sept 2023	Ongoing annually	Programme Leads and student representatives	Workshop launched in 4 schools and participation rates

Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
		our students, starting with gender	balance) to attend four schools in Munster each year to run the workshop with transition year students.  Deliver the workshop for TY students at the COMH 'Prep for Med/Health' event held annually in March	March 2024	Ongoing annually	Programme Leads and student representatives	by gender and participant evaluation available  Increase in applications for OT/ SLT/ Audiology for male students by 10% by 2026
2.1.3	Monitor degree attainment patterns by gender for the MSc in Physiotherapy	To date only one year of MSc PT degree attainment by gender has been analysed as it is new  Benchmarking data shows gender disparity here so it will be important to monitor	Physiotherapy programme to review and provide an annual report to the EDIC on degree attainment by gender  Develop action plan to address any disparities should they arise	Sept 2023	Annually at MSc PT Exam Board	Head of Discipline of Physiotherapy; Chair EDIC	Degree attainment patterns in MSc PT monitored by gender and action plan to address any disparities
2.1.4	Gather data on postgraduate student applications, offers and enrolment by gender for research degrees annually	The SCT does not currently monitor applications for PG research degrees	Database created on School One Drive IT system  Staff reminded annually to complete information on	Jan 2024  May 2024	April 2024  Annually	School manager & Chair of Graduate Studies committee	SAT monitoring PGR application data annually and addressing disparities that arise

Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
			applications, offer and acceptances and gender of all student PG research scholarship applications				
2.1.5	Consult current male students in the School about their views on recruitment and support on the programme	Male students are underrepresented in 3/4 disciplines; we need to establish why this may be to improve our gender balance and to support male students as a minority group in the school	<p>Gather emails of current male students in Audiology/OT/SLT</p> <p>Create anonymous survey with input from SAG around recruitment and support for male students</p> <p>Produce a report of the findings</p> <p>Create action plan from report for recommended male support activities</p> <p>Survey male students on views about views on support in the School</p>	<p>March 2023</p> <p>April 2023</p> <p>Sept 2023</p> <p>Jan 2024</p> <p>Sept 2026</p>	<p>April 2023</p> <p>May 2023</p> <p>Dec 2023</p> <p>Nov 2026</p> <p>Nov 2026</p>	<p>Co-Chair of EDIC &amp; Programme Lead in Audiology/ OT/ SLT</p> <p>Co-Chair of EDIC</p> <p>EDIC committee</p> <p>Co-Chair of EDIC &amp; Programme Lead in Audiology/ OT/ SLT</p>	<p>60% of males in the SCT respond to survey</p> <p>Views on recruitment of males incorporated into future action plans</p> <p>Support structures identified and implemented for male students in the school</p> <p>Future survey responses to indicate 80%+ of male students' report feeling supported in the SCT</p>

Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
2.1.6	Monitor and improve the gender representation of staff and student contribution to outreach activities	We do not currently monitor the gender profile of contributions to outreach activities and to address male student underrepresentation we should aim for a 40-60% gender balance	Data base created and shared  Annual monitoring of staff/ student contribution to outreach activities  Ensure gender balance of staff/students at UCC PG Expo  Ensure gender balance of staff/students at UCC UG Open Days	Sept 2023  Aug 2024	Sept 2023  Annually	Department/ Discipline Administrators & Programme Leads  EDIC  Department/ Discipline Administrators & Programme Leads	Gender balance of the SCT at outreach activities (40%-60% male/female)
2.1.7	Advertise all lectureship posts in the SCT 'across the bar'	In appointing entry level staff, the University does not currently recognise clinical expertise & experience  Between 2017-2020 86% of new entry-level appointments were B/B	Lectureships to be advertised 'across the bar' meaning that an individual can be appointed above/ below the bar depending on their education and qualifications  HOS to advocate for applicants with significant clinical specialisms/ research	Sept 2022  Sept 2022	Ongoing  Ongoing	HOS  HOS	100% of new lectureship posts advertised 'across the bar'  100% of new lectureship appointments for staff with significant clinical specialisms/ research experience to be 'above the bar'



Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
			experience to be appointed above the bar				
<b>Embedding policy, practice and supports to advance academic and research careers – Application Section 2.2</b>							
2.2.1	Ensure consistent gender balance on recruitment panels	Just 33% (1) female agreed that interview panels were mixed gender  Female membership on recruitment panels ranged from 33-80%	HR recruitment training provided to all staff to ensure sufficient numbers are available for recruitment panels  Wider selection of staff members trained for recruitment panels	May 2023	Ongoing	HOS/ HR	Recruitment panels in SCT to be consistently 40-60% balanced for Male/Female gender
2.2.2	Develop a School mentoring scheme to support lecturers to progress across the Merit Bar	Currently 7/25 lecturers are employed below the merit bar  Current support models for progression are ad-hoc	The SCT to work with the wider COMH to devise a panel of potential mentors (staff who have previously progressed across the Merit Bar)	Jan 2024	Sept 2024	HOS in consultation with HOSs across the COMH	Panel of mentors devised willing to support those applying for progression across the merit bar
			HR training to be organised for mentors who volunteer	Oct 2024	June 2026	HOSs across COMH/ Head of COMH/ HR	100% of mentors trained
			Training to be provided to mentees applying for progression	Oct 2024	June 2026	HOSs across COMH/ Head of COMH/ HR	100% of mentees trained

Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
			At next call for progression, eligible applicants offered a match with a mentor above the bar with submitting application across the merit bar	Nov 2024	Ongoing with call	HOS/ HODs	Survey feedback showing staff feel supported when applying for progression across the merit bar
2.2.3	Review and respond to the revised criteria for promotion to SL to ensure it accounts for the expertise of academic in clinical programmes	<p>The SCT has 11 (100%F) staff at the Lecturer level, but just 1 (33%) at the SL level.</p> <p>No staff have been promoted to SL in the SCT since it's foundation in 2003.</p> <p>The current promotions schemes to SL need to reflect the expertise of academics from clinical programmes</p>	<p>Review revised criteria for promotion to SL (due December 2022)</p> <p>Should these not account for the work of academics in clinical programmes, write a submission to the Academic Promotion's Board regarding the nature of academic work in clinical programmes for consideration in future revisions to the criteria</p> <p>Response received from Board ensuring this will be considered in future revisions to scheme</p>	<p>Jan 2023</p> <p>March 2023</p> <p>May 2023</p>	<p>Feb 2023</p> <p>April 2023</p> <p>Sept 2023</p>	<p>HOS/ HODs</p> <p>HOS/ HODs</p> <p>HOS/ HODs</p>	Academic promotions board to be made aware of workload of academics from clinical professions and provide an acceptable response to the SCT on the inclusion of this in the SL promotion criteria

Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
2.2.4	Develop a School mentoring scheme to support lecturers to apply for promotion to SL	<p>0/3 lecturers were successful for promotion to SL in the school in 2019.</p> <p>There are proportionally fewer female SL staff in the school compared to benchmark schools.</p> <p>Staff expressed frustration in the survey and focus group about lack of promotion opportunities</p>	<p>The SCT to work with the wider COMH to devise a panel of potential mentors (staff who have previously been promoted to SL)</p> <p>Training to be provided to mentors who volunteer</p> <p>Training to be provided to mentees applying for promotion to SL</p> <p>All eligible academic staff to be supported by a mentor @SL level with submitting application for promotion to SL</p>	Dec 2023	Sept 2024	HOS in consultation with HOSs across the COMH	Panel of mentors devised willing to support those applying for promotion to SL
				Oct 2024	June 2026	HOSs from COMH/ Head of COMH/ HR	100% of mentors trained
				Oct 2024	June 2026	HOSs from COMH/ Head of COMH/ HR	100% of mentees trained
				Nov 2024	Ongoing with call	HOS/ HODs	Each staff to be supported by a mentor with their application for promotion to SL
2.2.5	Work-life balance to be added as an item for discussion on the Performance Development Review templates	Only 32% (6) of all female staff and 50% (3) of male staff agreed that PDRS provided an opportunity to discuss work-life balance	Line managers to ensure that revised PDR template with workload and work-life balance is used at the next round of Performance	Sept 2024	At all PDRs	HOS/HOD/ School Manager	80% of all staff to indicate that the PDR system gave them an opportunity to discuss work-life balance during

Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
		The University AS Action Plan is to add workload and work/life balance to a revised PDRS template	Development Reviews				our next AS staff survey in 2025.
2.2.6	Provide supports to staff applying for research funding and for those with successful grants	Just 24% of staff were satisfied with the opportunities available to apply for funding; 20% were satisfied with SCT supports for funding applications and 25% were satisfied with the supports available for grant holders	<p>Members of OVPRI to deliver information sessions on grant applications at monthly SCT research seminars</p> <p>Set up a peer-review group in the School for support when preparing grant applications, prioritising those with less experience</p> <p>SCT to survey staff with grants to determine level of support needed and plan accordingly</p> <p>SCT Research Away Day to explore ways that support can be achieved for those with grants</p>	<p>Sept 2022</p> <p>Jan 2024</p> <p>June 2024</p> <p>Dec 2024</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Sept 2024</p> <p>Ongoing at annual research away days</p>	<p>OVPRI/ Chair SCT Research Committee</p> <p>Chair SCT Research Committee</p> <p>Chair SCT Research Committee</p> <p>Chair SCT Research Committee</p>	<p>Staff to indicated increased satisfaction with opportunities to apply for funding and with SCT supports for funding (&gt;50% agreement at next survey consultation)</p> <p>Staff to receive peer-support and feedback on grant applications</p> <p>School to have a better understanding of types of supports required for grant holders</p> <p>Staff to indicated increased</p>

Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
							satisfaction with support for grant holders (>50% agreement at next survey consultation)
2.2.7	Develop and pilot a workload review model for academic staff in the SCT	Only 8% of women and 40% of men were aware of the outcome of the AWDM and 0% of women/ 40% men considered it to enhance transparency and fairness in relation to workload distribution	<p>SCT to review and adapt workload model used in other Schools in the COMH (e.g., School of Pharmacy)</p> <p>Pilot the model for one academic year</p> <p>Review results and gather feedback from staff</p> <p>Revise and respond to the same for future iterations of the model</p>	<p>April 2023</p> <p>Sept 2024</p> <p>Sept 2024</p> <p>Sept 2025</p> <p>Sept 2026</p>	<p>Sept 2024</p> <p>Sept 2025</p> <p>December 2025</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>HOS/ School Manager</p> <p>HOS/ School Manager</p> <p>Chair EDIC</p> <p>Chair EDIC/ HOS</p>	<p>Workload model developed to pilot in School</p> <p>Data on pilot model collected</p> <p>Results shared with staff and feedback gathered</p> <p>Increased staff satisfaction to over &gt;50% on future consultation regarding with transparency and fairness of workload distribution</p>
<b>Embedding policy, practice and supports to advance professional, managerial and support staff careers – Application Section 2.3</b>							
2.3.1	Benchmark UCC practice education	Practice Education posts exist across all	Investigate practice education posts	Feb 2023	May 2023	HOS/ PECs	Written report describing

Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
	posts against similar posts within HEI programmes across Ireland and internationally	<p>therapy programmes in Ireland and Internationally</p> <p>There is no standardisation across practice education posts with respect to terms and conditions or career pathway.</p> <p>It is important to provide UCC ULT with data to inform their decisions around career pathways for PE staff</p>	<p>within therapy programmes across Ireland.</p> <p>Benchmark posts against similar in the UK/ Internationally</p> <p>Review findings with existing PE Network that work across Irish Universities with across the four disciplines in the SCT</p> <p>Compile report for ULT incorporating findings from AP 2.3.2</p>	<p>June 2023</p> <p>Oct 2023</p> <p>Jan 2024</p>	<p>Sept 2023</p> <p>Dec 2023</p> <p>Feb 2024</p>	<p>HOS/ PECs</p> <p>PECs for each discipline</p> <p>HOS/ PECs</p>	<p>promotions track for each PE post prepared</p> <p>PE Network to agree and sign off on report for UCC ULT</p> <p>ULT to review and respond to report.</p> <p>Status of PE colleague in the SCT UCC and sector-wide to be regularised</p>
2.3.2	Facilitate focus groups with practice education staff in the University to establish their preferences for career development and promotion	<p>The staff survey did not interrogate PE staffs' views and preferences on potential PE career pathway.</p> <p>Other schools in the University have PE staff and it would be good to establish their collective views</p>	<p>Organise focus groups with relevant PE staff across the University</p> <p>Qualitatively analyse data from focus group.</p> <p>Compile report for ULT (2.3.1 above)</p>	<p>May 2023</p> <p>June 2023</p> <p>Sept 2023</p>	<p>June 2023</p> <p>Sept 2023</p> <p>Jan 2024</p>	<p>HOSs and PECs from across the University</p> <p>HR representative/ EDIC/ AS groups from schools that take part</p>	<p>Views of PE staff to be included in report to UCC University Leadership Team as per Action plan 2.3.1</p>

Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
2.3.3	Lobby the University leadership team via the Registrar to follow through on a review of PE posts within the University	The DPR has agreed to review PE posts as part of the University's strategic plan. It will be important to keep this on the agenda for ongoing discussions and the new strategic plan for the University	PE/ SCT staff to attend consultations regarding the new Strategic Plan to raise the issue of staff without promotion pathways	Nov 2022	Dec 2022	HOS/ School Executive	Status of PE staff considered by Strategic Planning Coordination Group for 2023-2028 UCC plan
			HOS to write direct submission to strategic plan committee to ensure PE staff careers are considered in next iteration	Nov 2022	Dec 2022	HOS/ School Executive	Strategic Plan 2023-2028 to address needs of PE and other staff without career progression/ promotion opportunities
			Strategic plan 2023-2028 reviewed and SCT to consider and respond to DPR/ Strategic Planning Coordination Group	Jan 2023	March 2023	HOS/ School Executive	University made aware of outcomes of AP 2.3.1/ 2.3.2 and way forward agreed
			Further lobbying to take place following outcomes of AP 2.3.1/ 2.3.2	Feb 2024	Ongoing	HOS/ School Executive	
2.3.4	Encourage EA grade PMSS in the SCT to take part in the University's peer	EA grade staff are not currently included in UCC's mentoring programme	Invite EA staff to volunteer to take part in action learning sets	April 2024	Jan 2025	SCT School Manager & Co-Chair EDIC	All EA staff who take part in action learning sets to indicate >80%

Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
	learning networks to enhance their career development	The University AS Action plan is developing peer learning networks for EA/ SEA staff	for PMSS in the University  Survey staff who take part on their views for supporting career development	April 2025	Sept 2025	Co-Chair EDIC	satisfaction with support for career development
2.3.5	Workload planning and allocation to be made clear and transparent for PMS/ PE staff and to be discussed with line managers	50% of female PMS and 38% of female PE staff considered workload allocation to be transparent in the staff survey  50% of female PMS and 25% of PE staff in our survey discussed workload activities with their line manager	Line managers to discuss workload allocation individually with staff  Workload activities to be discussed with line managers in order to align with career development goals for PMS/PE Staff	Sept 2024	December 2026	School Manager/ PEC/ HOS	>60% of PMS and PE staff to agree that workload allocation is clear and transparent, and is discussed with line managers in next staff survey
<b>Evaluating culture, inclusion and belonging – Application Section 2.4</b>							
2.4.1	Ensure part-time teaching staff are included in the SCT	Just 1/3 teaching staff considered key staff meetings to be inclusive and well attended;  Qualitative statements indicated that more inclusion would be welcomed	Part-time teaching staff to be included at key staff meetings (e.g. sharing of agenda/ minutes; invited to submit items for discussion and/or to attend as requested)	Jan 2023	Ongoing	HOS & Year coordinators of 4 Disciplines & Departmental Administrator	>80% of part time teaching staff will report feeling included in key staff meetings and the SCT in the next staff survey



Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
			Part-time staff to be invited to annual curriculum review  Following 12 months, staff to be consulted to determine if an improvement has been achieved and respond accordingly	June 2023  Jan 2024	Annually  Jan 2026	Programme Leads x 4 Disciplines  Chair of EDIC	
2.4.2	Achieve gender balance and consider wider demographic representation when planning conferences, seminars and workshops	55% of women and 50% of men were ambivalent as to whether gender and EDI issues are considered in planning conferences, seminars and workshops.  81% of VLs were female  Qualitative comments noted that the SCT need to increase the diversity of representation in our disciplines	EDIC to create a shared document where staff can suggest names for VLs, conferences and research seminars, ensuring a 40-60% gender balance and wider diversity issues such as ethnicity, race and sexuality  SCT research seminars to aim for gender balance  Use the University's <i>Inclusive Event Guidelines</i> as guidance for	Sept 2023  Sept 202  Sept 2023	April 2024  Ongoing annually  Ongoing annually	Chair EDIC & Discipline Programme Leads  Organiser of SCT Research seminars  Chair EDIC	Greater gender balance (40-60%) and diversity achieved for speakers at conferences and events and for VLs  Research seminars to have 40-60% gender balance  Report on gender balance and diversity available to EDIC to monitor inclusivity

Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
			organisers to consider when planning events  Audit the organisers of events and workshops annually to monitor progress	May 2025	Ongoing annually	Chair EDIC	of events and plan future actions  >80% of staff to agree that gender and EDI issues are considered in planning conferences, seminar and workshops at next staff survey
2.4.3	All staff to be encouraged to include one EDI message in their email signature, such as pronouns, flexible working, Athena Swan Charter logo	Some staff have adopted an EDI message which is welcomed by students; we need to ensure that this is more widespread across the School	An EDI message/ logo will be included in all email signatures	Jan 2023	Jan 2024	Chair of EDI Committee with the support of the HODs	90% of staff in the school will have adopted one EDI message in their email signature

Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
2.4.4	Review the School website to increase images of underrepresented groups such as men, people with disabilities and from different ethnic backgrounds	45% of females in the school were ambivalent as to whether gender representation was considered on the SCT's website and promotional materials according to our staff survey  SAG noted a lack of diversity in the SCT website	New photographs to be taken for website and promotional materials with greater gender/ demographic representation  These materials will then be updated with new images  Achievements of diverse staff and students to be added to website	April 2024  Jan 2025  April 2025	Jan 2025  April 2025  Ongoing	Discipline Administrators/ Programme Lead and SCT IT analyst  Discipline Administrators/ Programme Lead and SCT IT analyst	Future survey feedback for staff and students to indicate that gender representation and wider EDI is considered on our website and promotional materials (>80% agreement)
2.4.5	Target sexuality awareness (encompassing sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression) on our School curricula	Our student consultation highlighted this area as a gap in the curriculum  Staff in the school have expertise in this area and links to clinical specialists	Interprofessional Learning (IPL) session to be arranged for students in the school on sexuality awareness in conjunction with School staff and the HSE National Gender Service	Feb 2023	Annually	Chair of School T&C; Discipline Programme Leads	Student consultation to indicate that >50% of students agree that sexuality awareness is included in their curriculum
2.4.6	Create a public, patient and carer involvement panel to contribute to the learning and	Public, patient and carer involvement is critical to the success of our programmes.	SCT representatives to meet with UCC PPI Ignite Network to discuss and plan PPI panel	April 2024	April 2024	Chair EDI Committee & Discipline Programme	Public, patient and carer panel convened for the SCT and annual consultation

Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
	teaching and research agenda of the SCT, with a particular focus on EDI	Only 1/4 Disciplines includes PPI in curriculum design and review	<p>Identify 20 key partner organisations for the SCT</p> <p>Develop TOR in collaboration with PPI partners</p> <p>Convene annual meetings to discuss and develop curriculum and research agenda, including intersectional inequalities</p>	<p>May 2024</p> <p>Sept 2024</p> <p>Jan 2025</p>	<p>August 2024</p> <p>Oct 2024</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Leads; UCC PPI Ignite HOS/HODs</p> <p>Chair EDIC/ Discipline Programme Leads &amp; PPI Pane</p> <p>Chair EDIC/ Discipline Programme Leads &amp; PPI Panel I</p>	<p>completed on curriculum and research</p> <p>Curriculum updated annually to include the views of this panel</p>
2.4.7	Facilitate staff to develop a greater capacity to understand and address intersectional inequalities	Intersectional inequalities were not raised during our staff or student consultation	EDIC to share tools such as DISCS/ Connected Curriculum and encourage staff to complete self-assessment tools in order to improve understanding of intersectionality in their teaching and wider academic work	<p>June 2023</p> <p>Jan 2024</p>	<p>Sept 2023</p> <p>Ongoing annually</p>	<p>Chair EDIC/ HODs</p> <p>Chair of Teaching and Curriculum Committee</p>	>50% of staff and students to indicate understanding of and consideration of the concept of intersectionality in teaching and research in future surveys

Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
			School to invite the Intersectionality Network to provide an online seminar on intersectionality to all SCT staff during lunchtime seminar	Sept 2024	December 2024	SCT Research Seminar organiser	
			Recording made available on EDI section of School Website	Jan 2025	Jan 2026	Co-Chair EDIC/ IT analyst	
2.4.8	Encourage staff to attend relevant training in gender equality and EDI as regularly offered by UCC	Just 6 females and 0 men have attended unconscious bias and two females trans awareness training  Qualitative comments in staff survey indicated that training in this area was needed	SCT to develop a shared document with a list of EDI programmes including UCC's Digital Badge in EDI in Higher Education to increase staff awareness of training opportunities  SCT to monitor staff attendance at EDI training in conjunction with review of annual Health & Safety training	Oct 2023  Jan 2024	Dec 2023  Annually	Co-Chair EDI committee  School Manager/ Administrator	Database of EDI programme available on SCT One Drive  EDI added to list of recommended staff training  Email reminder sent to all staff  >50% of staff to have attended at least one training programme in the area of EDI over 3 years

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			Email reminders to SCT staff to complete one EDI course every 3 years	Jan 2024	Annually	School Manager/ Administrator	
2.4.9	Survey staff on their views of blended working at the next staff survey	100% of women and >67% of men reported a preference for blended working  Since Feb 2022 staff have availed of the blended working policy	Gather feedback from staff on blended working and respond accordingly	April 2025	Nov 2026	Line Managers of all staff	Staff views on blended working to be gathered and responded to in next AS Action plan
2.4.10	Develop greater connections across Departments/ Disciplines in the SCT through social events and monthly seminars	In the focus group, staff commented on the importance of connecting with staff in other departments both on a social level and for teaching and research.	Annual school away day (first held June 2022) to be followed by a social event at the end of the academic year  School social events to be alternated between BHSC/ Nano Nagle Place to increase staff attendance from all Disciplines/ Departments  Monthly research seminars (reinstated Sept. 2022) to	June 2022  June 2023  Sept 2022	Ongoing  Ongoing  Ongoing	School Manager/ HOS  School Manager/ HOS  Organiser of Research Seminar	One social event per year held for the School  Future consultation to indicate that connection for staff and teaching/ research has improved in the SCT  One representative from each discipline to attend monthly

Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
			develop greater connections across the School & monitor attendance				research seminars
2.4.11	Remind all staff that key staff meetings should be held between 10am and 4pm where at all feasible	92-100% of staff agreed that key meetings should be held between core hours	Circulate emails at the start of each semester reminding staff to keep key decision-making meetings between core hours of 10am and 4pm	Sept 2023	Ongoing	HOS/ School Manager	Consultation indicates that 80% of staff agree that key decision-making meetings are held between 10:00 and 16:00
2.4.12	Inform and encourage staff to access and avail of necessary leave where required	Focus group comments noted lack of support around taking sick leave	Reminder email sent by Line Managers to all staff at the start of the academic year regarding the types of leave available in the schools and procedures to avail of the same	Sept 2023	Annually	HOS/ Line Managers	Future staff survey to indicate increased staff satisfaction (>80% of staff) with information and access to leave and a School culture around supporting leave as needed
2.4.13	Facilitate training for staff on the identifying and reporting bullying and harassment	23% of women in staff survey did not agree and 29% were unclear whether the school encourages zero tolerance on harassment and bullying	A training session will be put in place specifically for SCT staff in conjunction with HR on the University's policy on bullying and	Sept 2023	Sept 2025	School Manager/ HR	80% of staff to have completed training on the UCC policy on bullying and harassment.

Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
		32% of women & 12.5% of men were not comfortable reporting bullying and harassment	<p>harassment (e.g. Duty of Respect and Right to Dignity Policy &amp; Speak Out Tool), including how to identify and report the same.</p> <p>Staff will be encouraged to enrol in the online Bystander Intervention Digital Badge</p> <p>Notices to be placed on staff bulletin boards around the Speak Out policy &amp; tool &amp; Link placed on SCT Website</p>	June 2023	Ongoing	HOS/ HODs	<p>50% of staff to have completed Bystander Intervention</p> <p>Future staff survey will indicate that knowledge of and comfort with reporting bullying and harassment will increase to 80% of women from previous survey.</p>
2.4.14	Develop and pilot a process that enables academic staff to avail of sabbatical leave	To date, the School has no systematic, School-wide process to enable sabbatical leave and no one has taken sabbatical leave in the history of the School which has implications for career	<p>Develop a plan to support applications for sabbatical leave in the SCT</p> <p>Support staff to develop plans and KPIs and to prepare application to</p>	Feb 2024	Sept 2024	HOS/ HODs School Manager	Sabbatical leave approved by SCT Executive committee
			Support staff to develop plans and KPIs and to prepare application to	Sept 2024	Annually (to 2026)	HOS/ HODs	One staff member to apply for sabbatical leave during annual call



Action No.	Description of action	Rationale	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
		progression and promotion	CoMH/UCC sabbatical leave committee  Identify cost involved in covering sabbatical leave, as well as any re-distribution of workload necessary  Budget for necessary resources (financial and staffing) and identify source of finance (e.g. grant overheads, budget allocation predictions)  Gather feedback from successful applicants after return from sabbatical leave in terms of KPIs and goals achieved  Review outcome of pilot and any adaptations needed	Sept 2024  Sept 2024  Sept 2025  Sept 2026	Annually (to 2026)  Annually (to 2026)  Sept 2026  December 2026	Academic staff/ HODs  Academic staff/ HODs  Academic staff/ HODs  HOS/ HODs School Manager	per year between 2023-2026  Budget prepared and backfills agree/ in place where required for teaching and committee work.  Budget to support sabbatical leave identified  Information gathered on whether KPIs & goals achieved from sabbatical leave and suggestions for future iterations  Address issues raised and plan for next iteration of sabbatical leave applications
2.4.15	Review the workload of staff taking family leave to ensure that	54% of female and 20% of male academics felt that	Workload of staff taking parental leave to be reviewed with	June 2023	Dec 2025	Line managers	Staff consultation to indicate that <20% of staff will

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	it is reflective of their agreed working arrangements	taking family leave would impact negatively on their career. During the focus group staff indicated a concern that their whole-time workload was not reduced when taking parental leave	line managers to ensure aligns with leave arrangements during next round of PDRs (2023-2025)				view parental leave as having a negative impact on their career
2.4.16	Line managers to inform their staff about the various family leave opportunities within the University	During the focus group participants called for easier access to information around family leave policies  UCC AS Action plan has targeted training for line managers around family leave/ flexible working	All line managers to avail of UCC training around family leave and flexible working  During induction and at PDRS reviews, line managers to inform staff about the University's family leave policies	Jan 2024	June 2024	All SCT Line managers  All SCT Line managers	100% of line managers to have attended UCC training on family leave and flexible working  90% of staff to indicate awareness of family leave policies in the School at our next survey