

Athena Swan renewal application form for departments

Name of institution	University of Oxford
Name of department	Physiology, Anatomy & Genetics
Date of current application	28 November 2025
Level of previous award	Silver
Date of previous award	30 September 2020
Contact name	Louise Cotterell
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Section	Words used	Word limit
An overview of the department and its approach to gender equality	2,496 + 735 for organisational restructure = 3,231	2,500 + 750 for organisational restructure = 3,250
An evaluation of the department's progress and issues	2,994 + 355 for Covid-19 = 3,349	3,000 + 500 for Covid-19 = 3,500
Future action plan*		
Appendix 1: Consultation data*		
Appendix 2: Data tables*		
Appendix 3: Glossary*		
Overall word count (Please see information on word limits overleaf)	6,580 (including 355 for Covid-19 and 735 for organisational restructure)	6,750 (including 500 for Covid-19 and 750 for organisational restructure)

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

Word limits

Additional word allowances	Agreement
<p>Covid-19 pandemic (500 words): these words can be used to discuss practical impacts on the self-assessment process, on action plan implementation, or to address gender equality impacts of Covid-19 more broadly.</p>	<p>Yes - I confirm this is our first application since March 2020.</p>
<p>Faculty application (1000 words): these words should be used to analyse and reflect on any departmental or discipline-specific differences. Applicants are encouraged to disaggregate their data by sub-unit wherever possible to support this analysis.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Clinical and non-clinical staff (500 words): these words can be used to analyse and reflect on any differences between the two staff groups. Applicants are encouraged to disaggregate their data for clinical and non-clinical staff to support this analysis.</p>	<p>No – the department includes a very small number of clinical staff (below data-sharing threshold). Data has therefore been aggregated and additional words not used.</p>
<p>Organisational restructure (750 words): these words can be used to reflect on the impact of the restructure to the applicant’s gender equality work or application (eg. arising from changes to their staff or student demographic profile, policies, or context).</p>	<p>Yes - I confirm an organisational restructure has taken place since our last application.</p>
<p>Exceptional Circumstances: If additional words have been approved by AHE due to exceptional circumstances please paste the approval email in below this table</p>	<p>No</p>

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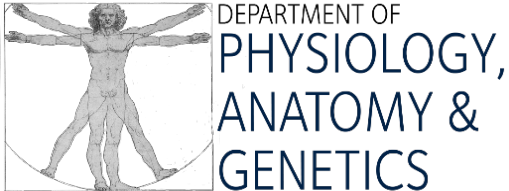
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Section 1: An overview of the department and its approach to gender equality

Letter of endorsement from the Head of the Department

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD



Head of Department

David Paterson D.Phil D.Sc
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17th November 2025

Dear Athena Swan Review Panel,

I am delighted to endorse our application for renewal of our Athena Swan Silver Award. As Head of the Department of Physiology, Anatomy and Genetics (DPAG) since 2016, I am proud of our achievements and our commitment to making the Department an inclusive, diverse, and welcoming place. This underpins our world-leading science and education (QS World University Rankings: 1st for Anatomy & Physiology 2025; Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) Gold). The information presented in the application is an honest, accurate and true representation of the Department.

DPAG is a large department (297 staff/114 students at 2024 data point) supporting undergraduate education in the pre-clinical medical and biomedical sciences, postgraduate research supervision and training, and discovery research across a broad sweep of themes from the molecular to the systems level. Personally, I have focused on promoting equity, and prioritising career development; the retention of female researchers and academics at senior level has been a particular priority. I meet individually with senior researchers in the Department every year to discuss their career aims and understand the challenges they are facing, providing personalised guidance and mentoring. With my leadership team, I review senior salaries and grades at least annually, and take action to address discrepancies. I support applications to the central University for recognition of academic distinction through award of professorial title and merit pay and it is extremely gratifying to celebrate with our female academics who achieve such success in these schemes.

Since the last submission, we have made seven appointments (two post October 2024 data point) to senior academic positions; five awarded to female candidates. Three appointees are female researchers from within the Department: this is a source of great pride and an inspiration to our young researchers. We also made a flagship professorial appointment (F) in the John Black Professor of Bionanoscience, introducing exciting, multi-disciplinary science and translational and commercial opportunities that are novel for our Department, with a renowned and high-profile female leader. We have a strong pipeline of emerging female leaders among our researchers, achieving gender balance in competitive mid-career fellowships in the cardiac sciences. The neuroscience community is slower

to achieve gender balance but two recent female professorial appointments (one internal) will provide an important contribution to female representation among the senior neuroscience faculty and exciting role models for young female researchers in the field.

Gender equality and EDI issues are a key thread in departmental life. The Departmental Committee, which I chair, has a standing item on EDI and includes representatives of all staff groups and graduate students. Since our last AS award, we have made the EDI Manager role permanent and invested in administrative and operational support for the full range of EDI activity. We established four EDI working groups who each do valuable work in their areas of responsibility: Anti-Racism, Outreach and Public Engagement, Training and Career Development, and Disability, each with membership from a variety of roles across the Department. Thanks to the work of these groups, we have seen activities as varied as a seminar on Parenting in Academia; the launch of Disability Check-ins; the creation of our Respectful Behaviours Framework; and the popular Lunch and Learn series of talks on all aspects of career progression, and professional development.

Our People, Culture and Engagement Working Group (PCEWG) has driven a number of social and wellbeing initiatives under the banner of ‘Doing Well at DPAG’. I have been delighted to lend my support and celebrate our community, most notably with our popular summer Street Party where we join neighbouring departments at academic year end. The PCEWG has also drawn together our EDI and research culture work to tackle the issues that matter most to our research student and staff community: introducing initiatives including our fortnightly Community Gazette which spotlights EDI, community and culture.

Our 2025 surveys secured an impressive 79% response rate among staff and 53% among students. 80% of staff and 85% of students believe the Department is committed to promoting EDI. This reflects the resources and hard work that goes into supporting the working lives of our colleagues, and I am pleased to see this reflected in improvements in many areas from our previous survey results. However, there have been challenges, including the significant organisational change (explored below), which impacted delivery of our previous Action Plan, and the changing funding landscape, both of which have an ongoing impact.

The Athena Swan and EDI agenda has touched all aspects of departmental life since the last application and our culture is richer and stronger as a result. However, as I approach the end of my term as HoD, I recognise that there are ongoing challenges for the Department. We have developed an ambitious 5-year action plan, focusing on the key issues that affect our colleagues’ experience. I am confident that our enduring commitment to Athena Swan, combined with the collective efforts of our EDI committee and associated working groups, will enable us to make meaningful, sustained progress towards our equality objectives

Yours sincerely,



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*Oxford Anatomy and Physiology ranked #1 in the QS World University Rankings by subject
2017, 2018, 2020 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 & 2025*

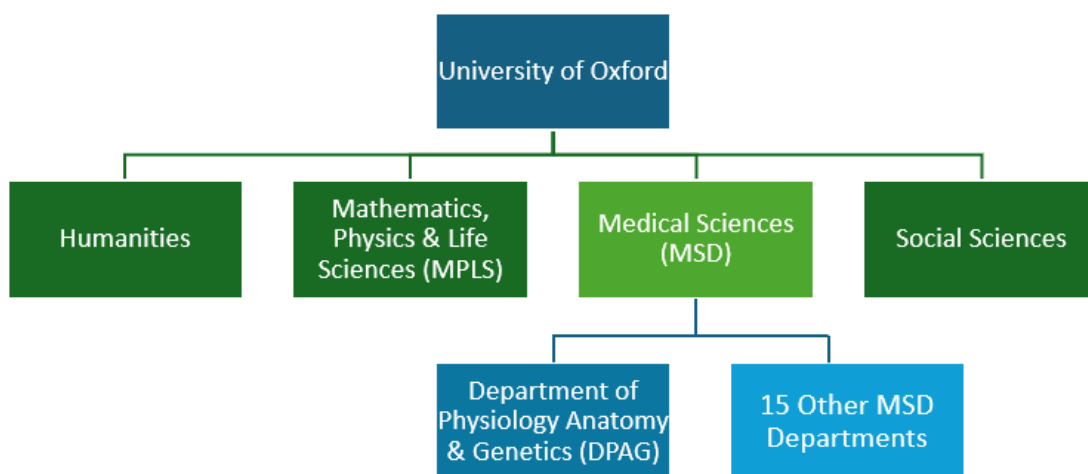
Note: Our surveys and focus groups differed in how people were asked for their sex or gender (eg. female/male/woman/man). For consistency and ease of review, female (F), male (M), non-binary (NB), or prefer not to say (PNTS), are used throughout this application.

Description of the department and its context

The Department

The Department of Physiology, Anatomy, and Genetics (DPAG) is a pre-clinical department within Oxford University's (Oxford) Medical Sciences Division (MSD) (Chart 1). 'Pre-clinical' refers to the foundational stage of education and research that occurs before direct patient contact or clinical training. DPAG is an internationally recognised centre of excellence for biomedical and clinical research and teaching, ranked first for Anatomy and Physiology in the QS World Rankings for the last 6 years.

Chart 1. Organisational Chart showing DPAG's position within Medical Sciences Division and the University of Oxford.



Our vibrant, international, staff and graduate student community are key to our mission to empower discovery in the physiological sciences to improve health and educate the next generation of doctors and biomedical scientists. We are home to renowned research groups addressing major questions in biomedicine and provide high-quality research training for our graduate students and Early Career Researchers (ECR). Although responsibility for undergraduate students sits with the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, our staff undertake most of the pre-clinical teaching for Oxford's medical and biomedical degrees.

Table 1. DPAG Staff and Student numbers by biological sex as at October 2024.

	Female	%F	Male	%M	Total
Graduate Students	62	54%	52	46%	114
Researchers	98	52%	89	48%	187
Academics	18	41%	26	59%	44
PTO/PSS	41	62%	25	38%	66
Total	219	53%	192	47%	411

We have 54 research groups (19F:35M Group Leaders), split into seven broad themes: Bionanoscience, Cardiac Science; Cell Physiology; Development and Cell Biology; Functional Genomics; Metabolism and Endocrinology; and Neuroscience. Our work is multidisciplinary and our researchers often work across multiple themes.

DPAG is located across two main sites (Figure 1): Oxford Science Area and Old Road Campus (ORC). **Sherrington Building** is the primary DPAG building, accommodating research groups, core administrative teams, Head of Department (HOD), Head of Administration and Finance (HAF), teaching spaces and most shared departmental resources. Our other research groups are accommodated within **Tinsley Building** (Centre for Neural Circuits and Behaviour (CNCB)), **Dorothy Crowfoot Hodgkin Building** (Kavli Institute for NanoScience Discovery (Kavli)), and **IMS-Tetsuya Nakamura Building** (Institute of Developmental and Regenerative Medicine (IDRM)).

Figure 1. DPAG Location Map - University Science area and Old Road Campus

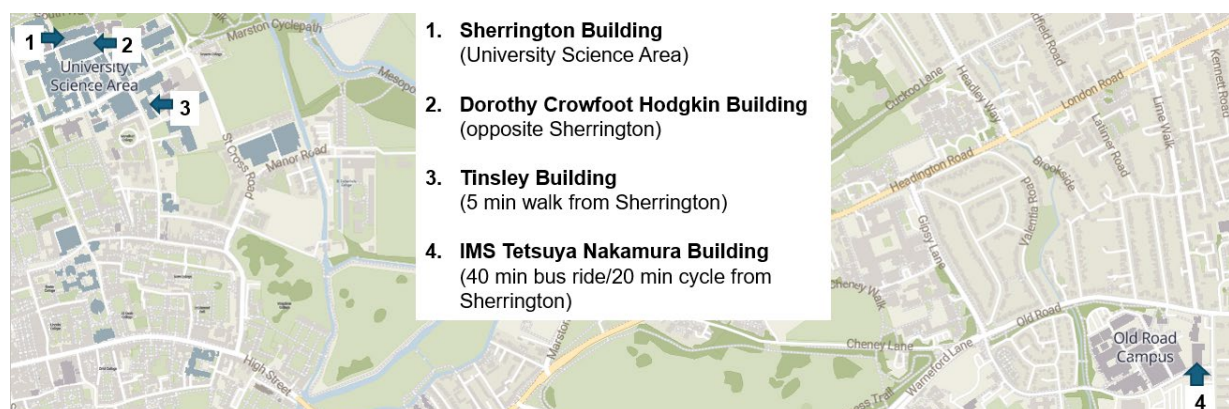


Figure 2. DPAG buildings, clockwise from top left: Sherrington Building, Dorothy Crowfoot Hodgkin Building, IMS-Tetsuya Nakamura Building, and Tinsley Building.

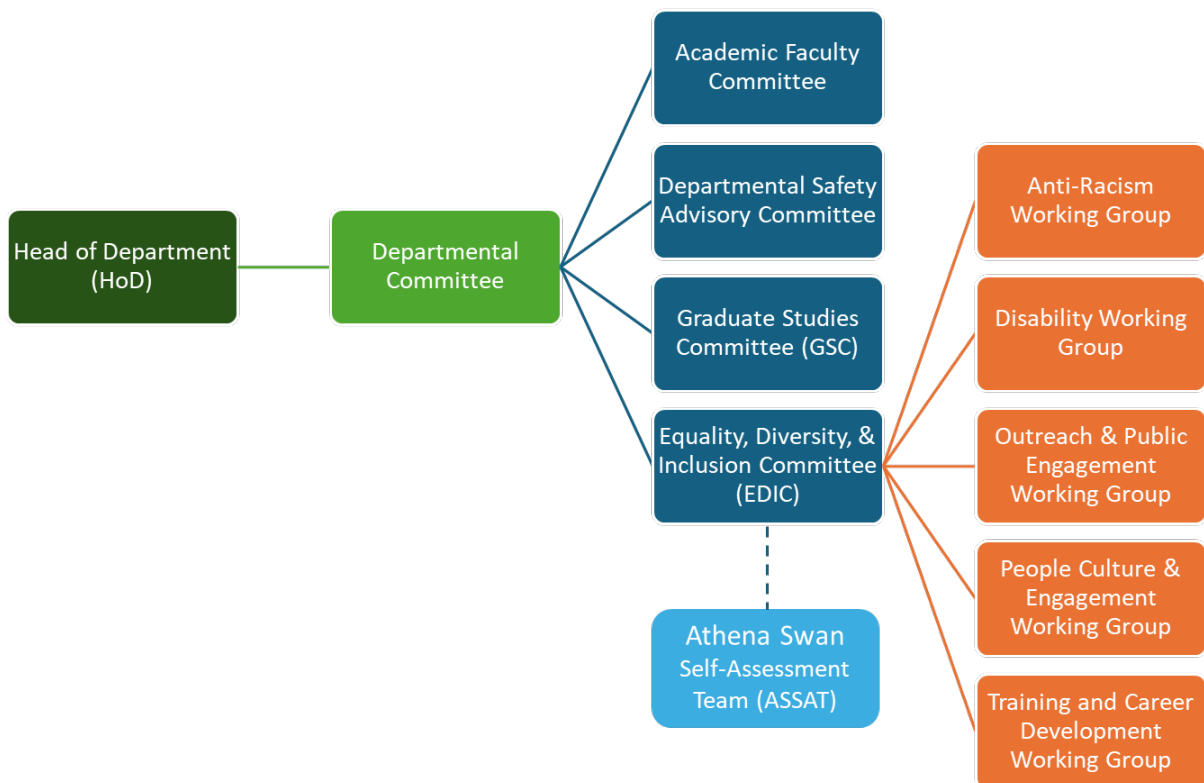


The Head of Administration and Finance (HAF) (F) has a key leadership role within DPAG, and is an ex-officio member of both the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) and Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team (ASSAT). The HAF has operational responsibility for delivery of the Department's strategic aims, supported by 66 (62%F) professional services staff (PSS). PSS teams are responsible for all Departmental financial, facilities, HR, research facilitation, IT, teaching, technical, and graduate student support.

DPAG Governance

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) and Athena Swan (AS) are embedded within our committee structure, with additional EDI-related Working Groups focussed on specific themes (Figure 3). Academic, Research, and PS staff, and Graduate Students, have representation within all key committees and Working Groups.

Figure 3. DPAG Governance Structure



There is strong leadership commitment to AS and EDI, with senior PSS and Academic faculty well-represented within both the ASSAT (Table 2), and EDIC. Members of the EDIC and ASSAT actively participate in other departmental committees and working groups to ensure that EDI principles are embedded across all departmental activities. Both the Departmental Committee and the Academic Faculty Committee include a standing agenda item dedicated to EDI matters, presented by the DPAG EDI Academic Leads (EDIALs).

Graduate Student Representatives (GSR) are elected annually to ensure that the views of graduate students are effectively represented within the Department. DPAG also has an active Researcher Society, led by Postdoctoral Research Scientists (PDRS), which provides a forum for research staff to engage with departmental life. Representatives from both groups sit on all key departmental committees, ensuring that the voices of research staff and students are heard in decision-making processes. They organise regular social and career development events for their peers, supported by departmental funding.

DPAG Research Group Leaders and Heads of PSS teams are invited to the termly Academic Faculty Committee, chaired by the HoD. This meeting provides a forum for discussion, networking, and the sharing of departmental updates, which attendees

then cascade to their respective teams to enhance communication across the Department. Members of the PSS community are invited to a termly PSS Coffee Morning with the HAF, offering an informal space to share information, raise matters of interest, and strengthen connections.

Organisational Restructure

DPAG underwent significant change during the last award period, elements of which are ongoing:

- 2021-2023: A building was decommissioned, relocating 7 research groups, 6 individual academics, and 6 PSS.
- 2021: Kavli, a new research institute, was launched. 2 research groups (c.80 DPAG staff, students and visitors) relocated.
- 2021-2028: Major refurbishment and development programme commenced in Sherrington Building (scheduled completion 2028), relocating shared resources, with temporary or permanent moves for many PSS and research groups, which are ongoing.
- 2022: IDRМ, a new research institute, launched. 5 research groups (c.60 DPAG staff, students, and visitors) relocated.
- 2023: Professor Dame Molly Stevens joined as John Black Professor of Bionanoscience, relocating her research group from Imperial College London (95 staff, students, and visitors); a sizeable increase to our community.

IDRM and Kavli provide new purpose-built, high-quality laboratory and write-up space and extensive support services. Colleagues appreciate the scientific benefits and opportunities for collaboration and community provided by modern facilities, but some feel a sense of disconnection from DPAG. These new research institutes are dedicated to building their own identity, culture, and community which adds complexity to our aims to improve integration and belonging.

The changes impacted delivery of our previous silver action plan (SAP20) as we concentrated on making DPAG a great place to be, through improving workplace culture to benefit everyone, wherever they are located. For example, we:

- Created a 'Doing Well at DPAG' term card listing upcoming social, wellbeing, and professional development activities, distributed to staff and students in all locations by email, in the newsletter, and using posters.
- Introduced an anonymous feedback form which can be used for anything. It's signposted on posters, electronic screens, in newsletters, and on our intranet. Prompt responses are shared via our intranet and newsletter for transparency and to share information with others that may have similar questions or issues.
- Delivered a successful 'Parenting in Academia' event, created a Parents and Carers Teams site, and launched a Parents and Carers Network.
- Set up a Menopause Support group, providing peer support supplemented with talks from a GP.
- Introduced mental health workshops, delivered in ORC and the Science Area, to equip people with tools to manage their mental health, and to support colleagues and students.
- Created a Respectful Behaviours Framework to empower people to call-out unacceptable behaviours. This has been well-received and subsequently adopted by other Oxford departments.
- Introduced Disability Check-ins with the EDI Manager (EDIM) and Head of HR (HoHR) for anyone that would like one, initially offered to anyone with a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) in any building. This enables staff and students to speak in confidence about their challenges, and receive help to ask for the adjustments they need.
- Introduced a Buddy Scheme to welcome new staff members in all locations.
- Introduced a Mentoring Scheme for Researchers across locations.

Feedback has been positive about each new initiative. Mentoring has been particularly valued by our female researchers, (2024: 7F:10M mentors, 16F:4M mentees). Our mentoring guide and agreement have been adopted by The International Society of Vascular Behavioural and Cognitive Disorders for their new Early Career Mentoring Scheme, following a presentation to them by a DPAG mentor (F).

To improve communication and ensure that staff and students across our different locations receive important information, we redesigned our weekly online newsletters to alternate between science news and community news. The Communications Officer (CO) established contacts at each DPAG site to help promote key messages.

We also introduced 'Lab Drop-Ins' where HR and EDIM attend scheduled research group meetings across all sites to share timely information on training, development, and wellbeing support. This initiative has been positively received by researchers.

To ensure equitable access to in-person support, HR and IT staff work regularly on-site at the ORC, which has been well received by colleagues:

“I'm located at IDRM, and finding having HR and IT stationed here once a week enormously helpful, positive and productive for our work. Can this be extended to finance and research services?” (Anonymous feedback, 2024).

In response, members of Finance and Research Administration teams now also regularly work on-site at ORC, ensuring consistent access to in-person support across all departmental locations.

Bringing colleagues together remains challenging, with travel between sites particularly difficult for those running time-sensitive experiments. This impacts networking and socialising opportunities, as well as seminars and training activities. We aim to broaden our online/hybrid options where possible, and to vary activity locations when practicable, to improve access.

Athena Swan self-assessment process

Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team (ASSAT)

Following our previous award, the ASSAT was incorporated into a new EDIC in 2021, taking a broader view of EDI. The EDIC and EDIM took responsibility for delivery, monitoring, and evaluation of our previous action plan (SAP20).

A new ASSAT ([Table 2](#)) (6F:3M) was convened 12 months prior to submission of this application. Three ex-officio members (3F PSS) have formal responsibility for AS within their roles. Although this results in over-representation, their roles are essential

for data provision and analysis, consultation, and decision-making. The remaining roles were recruited via a call for volunteers. The ASSAT is co-chaired by the EDIALs (1F:1M), and includes researchers (1F:1M) and Graduate Students (1F:1M). Male PSS were consulted at key points during the self-assessment process to ensure representation and buy-in.

Membership of ASSAT and EDIC is recognised and rewarded through the Oxford Reward and Recognition Scheme, within regrading criteria, and when applying for academic promotion.

Table 2. Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team

Name	Departmental Role	SAT Role
Louise Cotterell	EDI Manager (EDIM)	Ex officio – Data analysis, staff and student data, and consultation. PSS representative.
Sophia Evans	Head of HR (HoHR)	Ex officio – Staff data and HR policies and procedures. PSS representative.
Armin Lak	Associate Professor of Neuroscience & EDI Academic Lead (EDIAL)	SAT Co-Chair, EDIC Co-Chair, Academic Lead.
Ritika Mukherji	Graduate Student (GS)	Graduate Student representative.
Thomas Nicol	Postdoctoral Research Scientist (PDRS)	Researcher representative.
Andia Redpath	Postdoctoral Research Scientist (PDRS)	Researcher representative.
Sally Vine	Head of Administration and Finance (HAF)	Ex officio – DPAG operational lead. PSS/Leadership representative.
Kerry Walker	Associate Professor of Neuroscience & EDI Academic Lead (EDIAL)	SAT Co-Chair, EDIC Co-Chair, Academic Lead.
Aaron Jiashuo Zhang	Graduate Student (GS)	Graduate Student representative

From November 2024, ASSAT met monthly, online for accessibility, to:

- Review and analyse staff, student, and survey data;
- Review and RAG-rate SAP20;
- Identify key future priorities;
- Propose and agree an action plan to address priorities (SAP25);
- Write and edit this application.

An ASSAT Teams site was created as a shared workspace for data, application drafts, meeting agendas, and minutes.

ASSAT reviewed all mandatory and additional staff and student data (Appendix 2: Data Tables), alongside relevant data from the extensive staff and student consultations carried out between 2021-2025 (Table 3, and Appendix 1: Consultation Data). This informed evaluation of previous actions and identification of future priorities.

Table 3. Staff and Student Consultation 2021-2025

Consultation Format	Demographic	Date	Responses (rate where available) <i>Response breakdown by sex/gender</i>
Anti-Racism Survey	Staff & Graduate Students	2021	89 62%F, 35%M, 3% PNTS
Skills & Training Survey	Staff & Graduate Students	2021	67 58%F, 36%M, 6% NB/PNTS
Staff Experience Survey (SES21)	Staff Only	2021	178 (76% response rate) 54%F, 44%M, 2% PNTS
Departmental Graduate Student Survey (GSS22)	Graduate Students Only	2021	59 (63% response rate) 49%F, 42%M, 10% NB/PNTS
Departmental Graduate Student Survey (GSS22)	Graduate Students Only	2022	49 (41% response rate) 59%F, 35%M, 6% NB/PNTS
Staff Experience Survey (SES23)	Staff Only	2023	157 (68% response rate) 55%F, 41%M, 3% PNTS
Departmental Graduate Student Survey (GSS24)	Graduate Students Only	2024	49 (43% response rate) 65%F, 31%M, 4% PNTS

Departmental Disability Survey	Staff and Graduate Students	2024	23 66%F, 30%M, 4% PNTS
Respectful Behaviours Focus Group	Staff and Graduate Students	2024	7F volunteered - 1 Academic, 1 Researcher, 1 Technician, 2 PSS, 2 Graduate Students.
Staff Experience Survey (SES25)	Staff Only	2025	240 (79% response rate) 51%F, 46%M, 3% PNTS
Divisional Graduate Student Survey (GSS25)	Graduate Students Only	2025	70 (53% response rate) 59%F, 34%M, 7% PNTS
Graduate Student Focus Group	Female/Gender Non-Conforming Graduate Students	2025	8F volunteered - 6 graduate students, 2 senior PDRS.

Central to our consultation strategy is the sharing of post-survey reports with the DPAG community, each inviting ongoing feedback and suggestions to address issues raised and this has been used as a template of good practice across Oxford.

Feedback is also explored within Working Groups and Committees which helps us to better understand the experiences underlying the data.

Our anonymous Feedback Form is regularly used by staff and students to provide feedback, ask questions, or make suggestions. Our published responses provide a mechanism for us to convey important information, alongside any planned actions. For example, as a result of feedback, we introduced free menstrual products, added a more accessible water cooler, and highlighted access to lightweight cotton lab-coats for those experiencing menopausal symptoms.

Our ongoing consultation with staff and students helps us to appreciate what is important to our community and has informed our [Key priorities for future action](#).

Support for Future Gender Equality Work

In acknowledgement of the importance of EDI and AS to the Department, the EDIM was made a permanent staff member, and re-graded, which ensures ongoing leadership support for EDI. Recognition has been further enhanced with dedicated time from an additional administrator, and an annual EDI budget (c.£8,500 p.a.).

Ownership of SAP25 actions is delegated to those with responsibility for EDI, or for the subject, within their job description. This avoids placing additional burden onto voluntary members of the EDIC and improves accountability, ensuring that AS tasks are prioritised alongside other role-specific objectives. Initiatives will still involve other members of DPAG, for example through Committees, Working Groups, Focus Groups, or short-term Task-and-Finish Groups.

SAP25 will be overseen by the EDIC which will regularly review activities, outcomes, and impact, with reference to staff and student data, over the next 5 years. The EDIC will continue to meet quarterly, online and in-person, to ensure continuous monitoring. In addition, the EDIM will meet with HAF, HoHR, and EDIALs, monthly to review AS and EDI activities, discuss current issues, and identify new areas of activity where appropriate.

SAP25 will remain a live document which may change over time in response to internal and external needs.

Response to previous panel feedback

Panel feedback for our 2020 application was positive, although there were points for consideration. We have embraced the recommendation to consider championing and promoting our best practice initiatives to the wider community and developing beacon activities. The EDIM is a key member of the University's EDI Community of Practice, and EDI Facilitator's network, and regularly shares activities, and their outcomes, with colleagues. HoHR and HAF regularly share DPAG EDI initiatives with their peers, and invite collaboration.

Beacon activities, including our regular Lunch & Learn programme, Leadership & Management programme, Respectful Behaviours Framework, Lab 'drop-ins' and Working Groups model, have all been shared with other departments across the University. Several were showcased in the 2025 DPAG Annual Report, and Oxford's 2023-24 EDI Report. In recognition of our work, EDIM was invited to present initiatives demonstrating the integration of EDI with research culture at the 2025 Oxford Research Culture Symposium. This was well-received by research-focused colleagues with an interest in adopting similar initiatives, and our Respectful Behaviours Framework has subsequently been implemented by others. The EDIM

was a key member of the organising committees for both the 2022 Advance HE/Oxford 'Diversity Interventions' Conference, and the 2024 Oxford EDI Community of Practice Training Conference. The latter offered important learning and development opportunities for people engaged in EDI and AS work at Oxford, and the conference content (recordings and slides) provides a useful induction for those new to EDI roles at Oxford.

The EDIM has been seconded (20% FTE) to another MSD department since 2023 to share best practice and advise on initiatives relevant to their context.

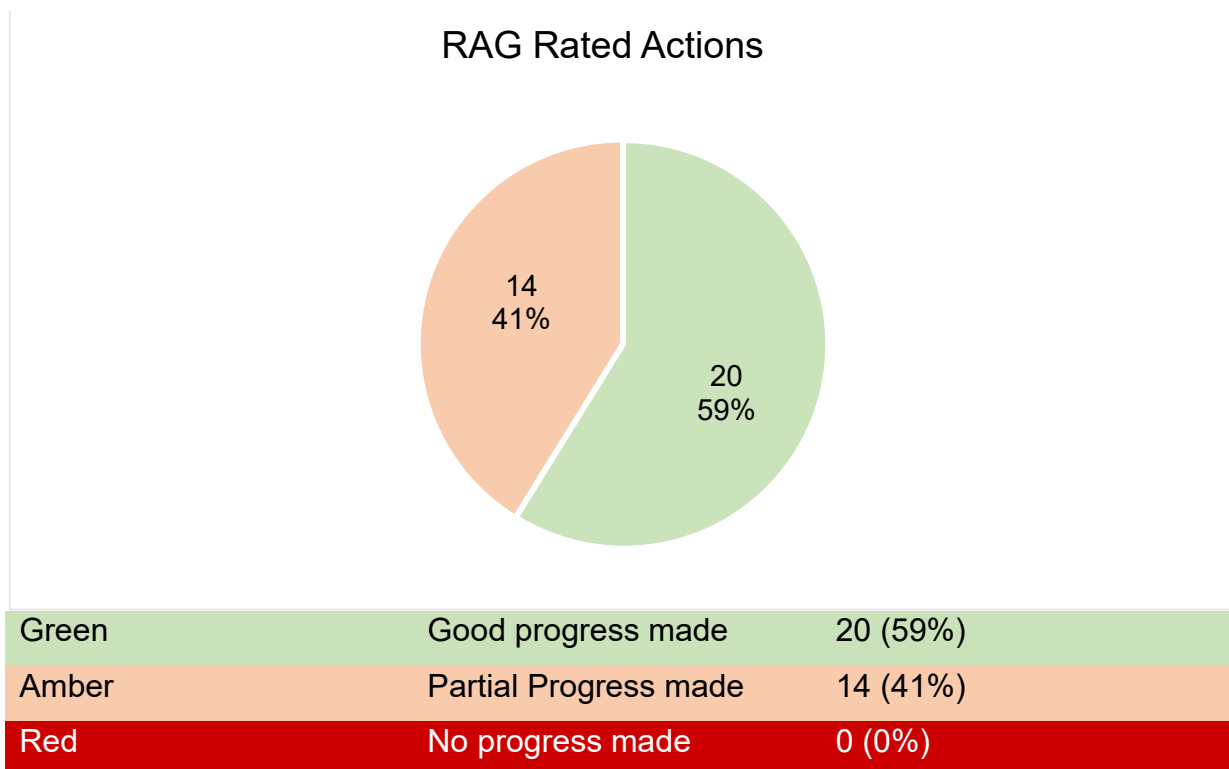
Whilst the panel commended us on our representative SAT membership, they encouraged reflection on the fact that all ex-officio members are female PSS. This remains the case as responsibility for EDI/AS is built into these roles, and role-holders remain the same as for the last application. We continue to encourage male colleagues to take an active role in EDI and AS and now have a male Academic Co-Chair of the EDIC and ASSAT. Membership of each also includes male academics, researchers, graduate students, with male PSS on the EDIC.

Section 2: An evaluation of the department’s progress and issues

Evaluating progress against the previous action plan (SAP20)

SAP20 comprised 34 actions across 4 core themes; all actions are underway or completed.

Chart 2. Proportions of SAP20 RAG Rated Actions



DPAG Silver Action Plan 2020-2025 (SAP20)

1. EDI Engagement					
DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
Introduce induction to EDIC to improve awareness of AS aims, remit and role responsibilities	There is annual turnover of student representatives, alongside ad-hoc staff changes. Whilst we attract new members, they are not always fully aware of their responsibilities as an EDIC member.	1.1 Produce an induction document for new EDIC members to be delivered by an existing member. (September 2020)	EDIC (SAT)	Induction in place by October 2020 ready for new student representatives.	Induction document created and used for all new EDIC members since 2021. Positive feedback on usefulness.
To ensure smooth transition when new EDI Academic Lead appointed	To ensure continuity of vision, knowledge transfer, and consistent support of the AS Action Plan, a thorough handover is required.	1.2 Introduce protocol for change of EDI Academic Lead (EDIAL) to include early advertising of role, shadowing, and retention of previous Academic Lead on EDI Committee (EDIC) for at least 6 months. (August 2020).	EDI Academic Lead (SAT) HoD	Incoming EDIAL(s) have a handover and are fully informed and aware of AS Action Plan. Current EDIAL remains on EDIC for 6 months.	Incoming EDI Academic Leads (EDIAL) meet with incumbent EDIAL and EDI Manager (EDIM), and attend EDIC meetings as part of an extensive handover. Previous EDIAL(s) remain on EDIC during handover period.
To close the feedback loop and ensure	Anecdotal comments suggested that staff think feedback is pointless as nothing happens.	1.3 Report feedback to staff and students after each survey/consultation	EDIM (SAT) CO	Feedback summarised and shared with the	Pre-survey communications focussed on 'You said, we did' to demonstrate that we act on

1. EDI Engagement					
DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
that AS aims, actions and initiatives are widely communicated	To show that feedback is important to drive change, we have started to report what we are doing in response at key points and through the year.	exercise, highlighting DPAG actions planned in response to feedback. (June 2020 & after each consultation).		DPAG community after each consultation exercise. 70% staff/ 60% students believe the department promotes EDI (2025 surveys). No significant gender difference.	feedback. Post-survey and focus group reports are shared, linking to previous actions and future plans. “My department is committed to promoting EDI”: Staff Experience Survey 2025 (SES25): 80% staff (78%F:84%M AcaRes & 80%F:83%M PSS) Graduate Student Survey 2025 (GSS25): 85% students (78%F: 100%M:60%PNTS).
To understand the views and experiences of staff and students working within DPAG	To ensure that staff and students are continually consulted about life within DPAG and to provide a means of monitoring change over time.	1.4a Conduct regular staff and student consultation. (From November 2020). 1.4b Promote each survey and focus group to encourage participation. (From November 2020).	EDIC (SAT) EDI Academic Lead (SAT) CO	Staff survey with >75% response rate (gender-balanced) in 2023 and 2025 (76% 2018, 67% 2020). Student survey with >72% response rate (gender-balanced)	Regular staff and student surveys, additional focus groups and other feedback opportunities (Table 3). Focus groups have achieved 5+ participants, but not gender balance. Staff survey success measure not met for SES23 (68% response rate, 55%F). Student survey success measure was unrealistic.

1. EDI Engagement					
DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
				<p>from 2021 (24% 2018, 72% 2020).</p> <p>5+ participants per focus group – gender as appropriate to issue.</p>	<p>SES:</p> <p>2021 – 76% response rate, 54%F. 2023 – 68% response rate, 55%F. 2025 – 79%, 51%F:46%M.</p> <p>GSS:</p> <p>2021 – 63% response rate (49%F). 2022 – 41% response rate (59%F). 2024 – 43% response rate (65%F), 2025 – 53% response rate (59%F).</p>
<p>To maintain balanced gender, and role, representation on SAT</p>	<p>To ensure full representation of the constituents of DPAG on SAT and ensure that burden of EDI work is not falling on women</p>	<p>1.5 Announce SAT vacancies via AS communication platforms with focus on maintaining gender and role representation. <i>(From May 2020).</i></p>	<p>EDIC CO (SAT)</p>	<p>SAT vacancies are filled within 6 weeks of advertising.</p> <p>Gender and role representation maintained each year (allowing for ex-officio roles).</p>	<p>ASSAT is gender representative for GS, Academic, and PDRS. 100%F PSS due to ex-officio roles. Agreed not to address this due to impact on role representation. Male PSS in EDIC and consulted on AS application and Action Plan (SAP25).</p> <p>EDIC is open to all to improve engagement and activity. Good role representation, but not gender balance (11F:6M) due to ex-officio roles (4F PSS).</p>

1. EDI Engagement					
DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
To strengthen links between SAT and wider departmental and divisional decision-making bodies	<p>It is important that the DPAG Head of HR and/or HR Manager has a role on the Departmental Committee, DPAG’s key decision-making committee, alongside the HAF and EDI Academic Lead(s).</p> <p>EDIM to broaden involvement in MSD and University EDI networks, to ensure a consistent joined-up approach to embedding AS activities at all levels of DPAG.</p>	<p>1.6a Head of HR (HoHR) appointed as a member of the Departmental Committee (July 2020).</p> <p>1.6b EDI Manager (EDIM) links with MSD AS/EDI practitioners and networks to take an active role in divisional E&D activities (August 2020).</p>	HR Manager (SAT)	<p>HoHR is ex-officio member of DPAG’s Departmental Committee.</p> <p>EDI including AS, more prominent focus for DPAG’s decision-making committee.</p> <p>Wider MSD AS strategy feeds into DPAG strategy (and vice-versa).</p>	<p>HR Manager and HoHR are members of Departmental Committee.</p> <p>EDI is a standing agenda item for Departmental Committee.</p> <p>EDIM closely collaborates with MSD and Oxford EDI practitioners and leaders and shares DPAG initiatives.</p>
Improve staff/student awareness of, and engagement with, Athena Swan activity	<p>Staff engagement and awareness is vital for embedding AS principles. Staff consultation and involvement will improve transparency around decisions and actions whilst also demonstrating that feedback is valued. This should</p>	<p>1.7a Share AS application and APlan on intranet. (June 2020)</p> <p>1.7b Publish termly APlan progress update on intranet. (December 2020 & termly)</p>	CO (SAT) EDIC (SAT)	<p>80% of staff and students (gender-balanced) aware of AS activities in 2023 and 2025 surveys.</p>	<p>All actions delivered. Awareness of AS activities was not asked about. 80% staff (78%F:84%M AcaRes & 80%F:83%M PSS - SES25) and 85% students (100%M, 78%F, 60%PNTS – GSS25) believe DPAG is committed to promoting EDI.</p>

1. EDI Engagement					
DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
	enhance engagement with AS principles.	<p>1.7c Produce annual AS newsletter, publish on intranet, and print for common areas. (November 2020 & annually).</p> <p>1.7d Include questions about awareness of, and engagement with, AS in staff and student surveys. (From 2022 surveys).</p> <p>1.7e Publish SAT meeting minutes on the intranet (June 2020 & quarterly).</p> <p>1.7f Include AS highlights and impacts in the weekly newsletter. (From June 2020).</p>			Engagement with EDI initiatives has increased through the development of EDI-related working groups (36 members across 4 groups).
To continuously improve Athena Swan	Data collection has been challenging due to staff turnover and lack of recording mechanisms. Although this was	1.8a DMWG to meet and review data as per data collection and analysis schedule. (From July 2020)	EDIC (SAT) SAT WGs	Data sets available annually and for next application.	DMWG disrupted due to COVID-19 and staff turnover. It was decided that data review was better handled by EDIM and EDIC.

1. EDI Engagement

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
data collection and monitoring	outside of the control of the SAT, we will ensure robust data collection, monitoring and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data to enable prompt action to address gendered issues.	1.8b Report AS data to SAT annually to inform APlan. (From July 2020). 1.8c SAT to review APlan termly and implement actions with the support of the working groups (WGs) (Michaelmas term 2020 & termly).		Data issues and gendered trends identified at early stage for action. Ensure APlan is a living document and updated in response to data and feedback.	Data regularly reviewed by EDIM, with trends shared with EDIC. APlan reviewed and updated annually by EDIM and EDIC.

2. Supporting our Students

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
To maintain gender balance of graduate students at all stages of admissions process	The imbalance in F:M acceptance rates in 2018 (67%F:33%M) suggested the need for monitoring and action taken to limit rejection of offer where possible. We don't currently formally connect with potential students post-offer and	2.1a Increase communication, by email, with applicants post-offer to create a connection with DPAG to aim to improve acceptance rates, particularly male. (February	DGS (SAT) GSA DMWG	Admissions data reviewed annually from 2020. Gender balance (or equal to national averages if appropriate) at all	Improvement in proportion of male graduate students admitted, from 33% in 2018 to 45% 2020-2025 (Benchmark 41%M). Significant post-Covid drop (29%M) in 2021/22 but achieved gender parity since 2023.

2. Supporting our Students

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
	believe increased communications may improve offer uptake.	<p>2021 & after each offer round)</p> <p>2.1b Survey new students annually to find out why they chose DPAG and record reasons for non-acceptance to enable prompt action to be taken should gender disparity occur. (November 2020 & annually)</p> <p>2.1c Annual review of admissions data, (gender focus) and compare to national data. Adjust actions as appropriate (Jan-Jun 2021 & annually)</p>		stages of admissions 2021-2024.	Proportions of applications, offers, and acceptances fluctuate over time and numbers are small. Overall gender balance has improved at all stages of the admissions process although it is noted that more offers are made to males (63%) than females (57%) (as a proportion of applications), and of those offered a place, 56% of males accept compared to 51% of females.
Increase career development advice	2017 Student barometer data suggested that DPAG female students scored 'advice on careers' lower than their male	2.2a Monitor SDTA through regular feedback and use to develop and enhance SDTA	DGS GSA	>85% students (no significant gender difference) report satisfaction with	Too few responses to the 2022 Student Barometer survey to report. Local surveys suggest awareness of

2. Supporting our Students

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
<p>opportunities for students</p>	<p>counterparts (58%F:77%M). We have since delivered career events with a focus on women and by 2018 satisfaction had increased to 85%F:84%M. 2018 student survey data indicated that 43%F:52%M graduates found Senior Doctoral Training Advisors (SDTA) useful. We set a target to improve this to 75% by 2020 (APlan2018) and have exceeded that (85% - 95%F:86%M - 2020). We need to continue to monitor SDTA to ensure that it remains a useful tool in career progression for graduates.</p>	<p>scheme. (February 2021 & annually)</p> <p>2.2b Run student career events and monitor feedback to maintain levels of satisfaction, particularly for women. (November 2020 onwards)</p>	<p>Graduate Studies Working Group (GSWG)</p>	<p>careers advice in 2022 student barometer survey. >85% of students (no significant gender difference) report that that SDTA is useful (2022-2024 surveys).</p> <p>>85% satisfaction with advice on careers, gender balanced (2022-2024 student surveys).</p>	<p>the development opportunities available to students has improved, particularly amongst females (39%F:79%M GSS21 to 71%F:75%M GSS25).</p> <p>SDTA (now Graduate Student Forum (GSF)) has been regularly reviewed and revised with input from Graduate Student representatives. However, students continue to be dissatisfied with the programme, with only 39% (no gender difference) finding it useful (GSS25). The programme will continue to be refined, in consultation with graduate students and supervisors, to better meet expectations.</p>

3. Career Development, Progression and Representation

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
<p>Identify and support senior researchers to achieve AP or Professor titles to address under-representation at each level</p>	<p>Data indicates that there is gender imbalance in applications and awards for RoD and conferment of titles (TP 0F:6M awarded, TAP 7F:4M awarded 2015-19). A pilot scheme (2018) to increase female TAP was successful, demonstrating that underrepresentation can be addressed through support and guidance.</p>	<p>3.1a Publicise TP awards to raise awareness of the requirements and increase transparency (as per TAP) (July 2020 & annually).</p> <p>3.1b Identify eligible AcaRes at PDR (August 2020 & annually).</p> <p>3.1c Provide mentoring and panel review for AcaRes in preparation for future titular applications, with particular focus on F applicants to TP (September 2020 & annually).</p> <p>3.1d Review community/ committee roles of F/M AP, collected during PDR and staff survey, to ascertain whether unequal service</p>	<p>HoD (SAT)</p> <p>HR Manager (SAT)</p> <p>SC (SAT)</p>	<p>Successful applications at each level by 2024:</p> <p>TP - 4F:2M.</p> <p>TAP - 2F:2M.</p> <p>1F:1M current TAP achieves APTF.</p> <p>Successful applicants provide mentoring and panel review from 2022.</p>	<p>DPAG HAF on Steering Committee for Oxford Academic Career and Reward Framework Project (RoD & Conferment of Title process review) (2023-2026).</p> <p>Calls for each award promoted in emails, and newsletter. Line managers encouraged to nominate and support those meeting the criteria. Annual Lunch & Learn on this since 2022, with invitation to contact HR for support.</p> <p>No gendered disparities for committees. SES25 - 51%F:50%M AcaRes are members of internal committees, working groups or panels. 29%F:29%M are members of external committees, working groups or panels.</p>

3. Career Development, Progression and Representation

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
		<p>burdens leading to inability to meet titular criteria (From August 2020).</p> <p>3.1e Request feedback from awards panels to help identify shared issues/barriers to success and use this to support unsuccessful applicants to re-apply, as well as new applicants (July 2020 & annually).</p>			<p>Actions were successful but we didn't quite meet our ambitious targets, hence amber rating.</p> <p>TP - 2F:3M (100% success rate)</p> <p>TAP - 2F (100% success rate):3M (50% success rate).</p> <p>TAP appointed to APTF - 2F:1M.</p>
<p>Ensuring those on fixed term contracts are aware of their options and well-supported in advanced planning for</p>	<p>The majority of AcaRes (97%F:98%M) are on FTCs. 2018 survey comments suggest that staff feel their posts are 'insecure' and FTCs are 'unsettling'. We need to improve clarity around FTCs/EoFTC procedures to improve staff awareness,</p>	<p>3.2a Publish guidelines on fixed term contracts (FTCs) to improve clarity around what they mean in practice and how to prepare (September 2020).</p> <p>3.2b Contact AcaRes at least 6 months prior to EoFTC and offer career</p>	<p>HR Manager (SAT)</p> <p>HAF (SAT)</p>	<p>All AcaRes on FTC are contacted at least 6 months prior to EoFTC and offered a career conversation.</p> <p>No negative open text comments regarding FTCs in</p>	<p>Significant progress but amber rated as we didn't meet the stated success measures.</p> <p>Standardised guidance not produced due to University and Union requirements, and the potential to reduce flexibility in support for staff on FTCs.</p>

3. Career Development, Progression and Representation

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
the end of their contract	improve career planning and provide early notice.	conversations with Senior AcaRes, HAF or HR (October 2020 & monthly).		2022 and 2024 staff surveys	Annual career conversations offered to all staff to discuss future options. HR Team restructured to each manage a portfolio of groups/teams and provide more personalised support to those approaching EoFTC. 10F:10M AcaRes converted from FTC to open-ended contract (OEC) or Permanent contract in 2024.
To better understand where leavers are moving on to and their motivations for leaving	Leavers don't always provide complete information and this is exacerbated by the options available on central systems. We therefore don't have a full picture of why they leave or where they go to (destination unknown for 24%F:12%M leavers). Consistent data recording will enable analysis of this data, facilitating	3.3a Develop consistent approach to leaver data collection and entry. (December 2020). 3.3b Review leaver data annually to ensure that quality data is being recorded and trends can be identified. Adjust data collection if appropriate and feedback trends to SAT for	HR Manager (SAT) EDIC (SAT)	Leaver data accessed from central systems is reliable by August 2021 allowing for detailed analysis by gender. Destination unknown reduced to <10% (no	Leaver data now input reliably for all staff, and supplemented by local data collection by HR through standardised leaver questionnaire, and exit interviews (offered to all). Destination unknown is now 3%, with no gendered difference (2020-2024). Main gendered disparity in reason for leaving:

3. Career Development, Progression and Representation

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
	<p>identification of trends and subsequent actions.</p>	<p>action-planning. (October 2020 & annually).</p> <p>3.3c HR to encourage leavers to outline their plans to better understand those that choose 'Not known' or 'No destination' as a destination. (June 2020 onwards).</p> <p>3.3d Review maternity leave return data alongside leaver data to identify any trends or obstacles leading to high leaver rates amongst new parents. (October 2020 & annually).</p>		<p>gender difference) by 2022</p>	<p>7.3%F:4.2%M Researchers and 25%F:10%M PSS identified personal or family reasons as the reason for leaving.</p> <p>This will continue to be monitored to better understand the specific reasons (eg childcare or caring responsibilities, or something else).</p>
<p>To encourage parity in the numbers of female and</p>	<p>In the period 2016-2019 more women applied for (59%F) and were appointed to (70%F) G6 AcaRes posts.</p>	<p>3.4a Survey G6 new starts to find out if there are any gendered reasons for the</p>	<p>HR Manager (SAT)</p>	<p>100% of recruitment panel members</p>	<p>Mandatory Implicit Bias and Recruitment & Selection training implemented.</p>

3. Career Development, Progression and Representation

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
<p>male applicants, interviewees and appointments at all levels</p>	<p>In the same period, there were two recruitments at G8 and 9 (18%F applicants and no F appointments). We need to address disparity at both ends of the scale if we are to improve gender balance across the career pipeline.</p> <p>Recruitment of 4 APs and 2 SPs is planned and will ensure that the recruitment process is gender balanced to improve numbers of women in senior positions.</p>	<p>disparity in applications. (April 2021 and 2022).</p> <p>3.4b Review recruitment data biannually, particularly at senior levels and highlight any gendered issues to SAT for action. (February 2021 & biannually thereafter).</p> <p>3.4c Use recruitment data to influence the process for future vacancies to encourage gender balance at each stage. (February 2021 & biannually thereafter).</p> <p>3.4d Identify internal/ external talent and encourage appropriate applications to address</p>	<p>EDIC (SAT) DMWG</p>	<p>completed training 2020-2024.</p> <p>>40%F applicants and at least 1F shortlisted for all senior recruitments 2020-2024.</p> <p>2F recruited to APTF roles (increasing %F from 31%-44%) and 1F to SP role (increasing %F from 0-33%) by 2024.</p> <p>Improved gender parity for applications at G6 (45%M) by 2024.</p>	<p>Job descriptions reviewed for gendered language. Inclusion statement in all job advertisements, and positive recruitment statement encouraging BAME and women to apply for AP positions. EDI-related essential criteria added for all roles. Recruiting managers encouraged to advertise flexible working as standard.</p> <p>DPAG Further Particular template shared with MSD as an example of good practice.</p> <p>35%F applications to Academic roles.</p> <p>3F:2M APTF appointed 2020-2024 (+ 2F in 2025).</p> <p>1F RSIV appointed (equivalent seniority but research only role)</p>

3. Career Development, Progression and Representation

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
		<p>underrepresentation where applicable. (September 2020 onwards).</p> <p>3.4e Reinforce mandatory training for all panel members: Implicit Bias and Recruitment and Selection. (May 2020 onwards).</p> <p>3.4f Review job adverts and job descriptions to ensure there is no gendered language and that our flexible working practices are reflected. (November 2020 onwards).</p> <p>3.4g Continue to ensure that there are no single-sex interview panels to avoid complacency. (May 2020 onwards).</p>			<p>APTF increased from 33%-36%F.</p> <p>SP roles are no longer held departmentally due to funding restrictions.</p> <p>34%M applicants at G6 (14%M appointments).</p> <p>Good progress but didn't meet success measures.</p>

3. Career Development, Progression and Representation

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
<p>Support AcaRes on FTCs to obtain permanent contracts at DPAG or elsewhere</p>	<p>There are a limited number of permanent positions available in DPAG. 98%F:97%M AcaRes are on externally funded fixed term contracts and we therefore need to support staff to obtain permanent positions in DPAG or elsewhere.</p>	<p>3.5a Support internal applicants to APTF and SP posts through talent nurturing and mentoring (from November 2020).</p> <p>3.5b Support applicants in planning their careers, for example through mentoring (2021 & annually).</p> <p>3.5c Run career development workshops to help AcaRes identify alternative opportunities (May 2021 & annually).</p> <p>3.5d Record whether staff leave for permanent positions within leaver questionnaire (June 2020 onwards).</p>	<p>SC (SAT)</p> <p>HoD (SAT)</p> <p>Training and Career Development WG</p>	<p>1F internal candidate appointed to APTF or SP post by 2023.</p> <p>1F AcaRes attends mentoring annually from 2021.</p> <p>Improvement in proportion (no gendered difference) of AcaRes moving to open ended or permanent contracts between 2021-2024 (data collected from June 2020).</p>	<p>2F internal candidates appointed to APTF (+1F in 2025).</p> <p>Oxford women’s networks promoted, and internal researcher mentoring programme introduced in 2024 (7F:10M mentors, 16F:4M mentees).</p> <p>10F:10M AcaRes moved from FTC to open ended or permanent contracts in 2024.</p>

3. Career Development, Progression and Representation

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
To ensure line managers are supported in managing their team and have the opportunity to develop their knowledge and practice	<p>86%F:76%M AcaRes and 88%F:100%M PSS managers would like to enhance their leadership & management skills.</p> <p>48%F:52%M Acares and 21%F:25%M PSS (2020) have been given opportunities to develop their leadership experience in their current roles.</p> <p>Ensure that all staff receive the best possible management support by supporting those new to managing people and/or new to DPAG as early in their tenure as possible.</p>	<p>3.6a Create and deliver new line manager induction process for those new to DPAG and new to managing staff (May 2021).</p> <p>3.6b Roll-out new UoO Manager training to all line managers (August 2020).</p>	<p>HR Manager (SAT)</p> <p>EDIC (SAT)</p> <p>July 2020 and ongoing</p>	<p>100% of new line managers complete induction by 2022.</p> <p>>80% of all managers, no gendered or role difference, report that they have been given opportunities to develop leadership experience in their current role (2025 survey).</p>	<p>HR team developed and piloted line manager induction 2022 but engagement was low and therefore not fully implemented. Instead, invested in DPAG-specific Leadership & Management Programme.</p> <p>HAF (F PSS) attended Oxford's Professional Services Leadership Programme (2023-24) and 1F:2M Academics have participated in MSD Inclusive Leadership Programme.</p> <p>SES25: 84%F:89%M AcaRes and 100% PSS managers have taken opportunities to develop leadership experience in their current role.</p>
Increase awareness of and transparency around	<p>In 2018, only 36%F:29%M AcaRes and 60%F:67%M PSS said they were clear about the process of regrading a post. We therefore promoted career</p>	<p>3.7a Continue to communicate promotion and progression processes to all staff, including internal vacancies, R&R, titular</p>	<p>HR Manager (SAT)</p> <p>EDIC</p>	<p>Awareness of promotion and progression opportunities improves to 76%</p>	<p>Academic title processes, and Reward & Recognition (R&R), are advertised at appropriate times both via newsletters and direct emails to all staff. Line Managers are</p>

3. Career Development, Progression and Representation

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
regrading and reward and recognition (R&R) schemes	<p>progression and awareness has improved 47%F:61%M Acares and 76%F:67%M PSS 2020. Whilst regrading for AcaRes is broadly gender balanced, R&R favours women (88%F). For PSS, there were 3F:4M(43%F) regrades and 5F:6M(45%F) R&R which is disproportionate to the population (61%F). Communication of career progression should therefore continue to be shared.</p>	<p>awards and regrading (June 2020 onwards).</p> <p>3.7b Provide line managers with promotion and progression guidance and encourage consideration at PDR (November 2020 & annually).</p> <p>3.7c Communicate the disparity in PSS gender representation for R&R/regrades to PSS line managers and encourage F applications (November 2020).</p>		<p>(all staff, no gendered difference) in 2025 survey.</p> <p>For PSS, improve %F R&R awards and regrades to reflect gender of PSS population by 2024 (current population of 61%F would require at least 6F:4M awards and regrades 2020-2024).</p>	<p>encouraged to consider these opportunities for their staff at key points during the year, and again during Career Conversations season.</p> <p>Annual Lunch & Learn delivered by HR since 2022 focussed on titular awards, regrading and reward and recognition. Increase in applications following each session.</p> <p>14F:6M (70%F) PSS successfully applied for R&R, and 9F:9M (50%F) PSS were regraded (2020-2024). Despite progress, 48%F:51%M AcaRes / 56%F:54%M PSS aware of regrading and R&R (SES25).</p>
Ensure that staff are aware of training and development opportunities	<p>Although there is engagement with training, there is room for improvement, particularly amongst men. 264 PSS (64%F) and 343 (68%F) AcaRes</p>	<p>3.8a Poll each staff group to identify specific training needs and mode of delivery preference (to identify gendered differences) and</p>	<p>BR (SAT) CO (SAT) TCDWG</p>	<p>Men's engagement with training improved (Jul 2022).</p>	<p>2021 Training & Development survey suggested no significant gendered differences in training needs. 3 themes emerged – career progression, communications, and</p>

3. Career Development, Progression and Representation

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
<p>and provide local training where an operational or common need is identified to increase engagement with training, particularly by men</p>	<p>completed UoO training 2017-2019. The new Career Conversation system will allow for better recording and reporting of training needs, and that alongside polling of different staff groups will enable identification of more relevant courses.</p>	<p>implement actions to improve uptake (M). (December 2020).</p> <p>3.8b Monitor training attendance and explore gendered differences through feedback and survey. (April 2021 & biannually).</p> <p>3.8c Produce biannual report from PDR system and use alongside staff survey feedback to monitor training needs and deliver appropriate training. (August 2020 & biannually).</p> <p>3.8d Develop and arrange local courses where possible, targeted at</p>		<p>PSS engage with ‘Work Learn Develop’ (WLD) and gain a professional qualification (at least 1 attendee per year) 2021-2024.</p> <p>At least 4 workshops (topics according to identified need) held in-house per year 2021-2024 with >15 attendees (at least 45%M).</p>	<p>leadership & management - delivered through local Lunch & Learn programme. 5-6 sessions per term and average 26 attendees, per session (no significant gendered difference). 57 sessions delivered (as at July 2025).</p> <p>WLD promoted widely - 6F:6M PSS have completed professional qualifications through this scheme (2020-2024).</p>

3. Career Development, Progression and Representation

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
		<p>specific staff groups where appropriate (August 2020 onwards).</p> <p>3.8e Create training section on intranet to promote training and development and share via newsletter and all-staff/targeted emails for specific roles where appropriate. (June 2020 onwards).</p> <p>3.8f Promote 'Work Learn Develop' professional development and training programme to staff and their line managers to provide accredited, funded, training opportunities to support career development (July 2020 & termly)</p>			

3. Career Development, Progression and Representation

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
<p>Improve uptake of PDR among all staff as it is linked with development and career progression</p>	<p>PDR was introduced in 2014, accompanied by on-site training. (90% academic:62% PSS PDR uptake, 83% academic:95% PSS found it useful). A significant decline was reported in 2018 and this trend continues in 2020 (56%F:60%M AcaRes and 61%F:78%M PSS PDR uptake, 81%F:77%M AcaRes and 80%F:33%M PSS found it useful).</p> <p>PDR is an HR led process and the drop may reflect HR understaffing in 2017/18. As PDR is interlinked with training and development and career progression, this needs to improve.</p>	<p>3.9a Promote PDR/Career Conversations through targeted emails, newsletter, poster, and at coffee mornings (September 2020).</p> <p>3.9b Reinforce PDR/Career Conversations for all staff and ensure all staff are offered one (September 2020).</p> <p>3.9c Arrange PDR/Career Conversations training for all staff, including all line managers, with online training as an alternative, to ensure that PDR/Career Conversation is effective and that training and progression opportunities</p>	<p>HR Manager (SAT)</p> <p>EDIC (SAT)</p> <p>CO (SAT)</p>	<p>Career Conversation training with >50% uptake (no gender difference).</p> <p>100% of staff offered a PDR/Career Conversation by December 2020.</p> <p>95% of staff have a PDR/Career Conversation and >80% find it useful, no gender difference, (2023 & 2025 surveys).</p>	<p>PDR revised in April 2021. 'Career Conversations' introduced 2023, based on feedback to focus on supportive professional development discussions.</p> <p>Online and in-person training was delivered but uptake was very low.</p> <p>100% of staff are offered a Career Conversation but uptake remains low, despite significant promotional activity, including personalised emails. We know from discussions that many people have regular career focussed discussions with their line manager but they don't record them.</p> <p>Staff survey responses suggest 58% (2023) and 61% (2025) had a review in previous 24 months. 68% found it useful.</p>

3. Career Development, Progression and Representation

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
		<p>are discussed (November 2020 & biennially).</p> <p>3.9d If no improvement in take up or usefulness in 2022 survey, poll staff or focus group to find out why (September 2022).</p>			
<p>To raise awareness of UoO mentoring schemes and their suitability for all staff groups and increase numbers signed up as mentors and mentees</p>	<p>2018 and 2020 staff survey comments indicate that there is interest in mentoring but there is limited uptake of the MSD mentoring scheme by staff either as mentors (6F:2M AcaRes no PSS), or mentees (29F:9M AcaRes and no PSS) 2014-2019.</p>	<p>3.10 Widely promote mentoring opportunities to all staff groups and find ways to encourage participation in UoO schemes, particularly by PSS and men (August 2020 onwards)</p>	<p>EDIC (SAT) CO (SAT) TCDWG</p>	<p>Increased number of mentors and mentees by 2023, across all role groups.</p>	<p>MSD mentoring scheme ended 2021. Oxford PSS Mentoring Scheme launched 2021.</p> <p>DPAG Researcher’s Mentoring Scheme launched (2024). 17 mentors (7F:10M) and 20 (16F:4M) mentees in first year. Rated 4-5/5 for usefulness by all mentors & mentees.</p> <p>SES25: 41%F:35%M AcaRes & 30%F:30%M PSS have been mentored since taking up their role.</p>

3. Career Development, Progression and Representation

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
<p>Increase access to career progression discussions and networking opportunities for AcaRes and students</p>	<p>92%F:95%M AcaRes (2020) say they take time to plan for career development and comments suggest that staff and students value career progression advice and support. However, 72%F:79%M are clear about the opportunities available to them. As women appear less clear, we need to find alternative ways of sharing information that may appeal to women. We have a variety of visiting speakers who could share their experiences, as well as a diverse, successful Alumni and should utilise this resource for career talks. We also have a number of successful PIs whose knowledge would be invaluable to early career researchers and students.</p>	<p>3.11a Request that select visiting speakers are available for informal discussions to discuss their career trajectory, work-life balance and challenges overcome and advertise widely (from May 2021).</p> <p>3.11b Arrange talks by successful Alumni, with a focus on women, to share career path and advertise widely (August 2021).</p> <p>3.11c Set up talks by PIs for staff and students to share knowledge around fellowships, funding and career paths (October 2021).</p>	<p>NS (SAT) MR (SAT)</p> <p>AS Lead (SAT)</p> <p>TCDWG</p> <p>Seminar Organisers</p>	<p>>80% AcaRes, no gender difference, are clear about development opportunities (2025 staff survey).</p> <p>>80% students, no gender difference, (62%F:75%M 2020) are clear about development opportunities (2025 student survey).</p>	<p>Staff and students are invited to join visiting speakers over lunch or for informal coffee. PIs and Alumni have given regular talks about careers, fellowships, funding, and career paths through our Lunch & Learn Programme since 2021.</p> <p>SES25: 70% agreed their Career Conversation (3.9 above) included opportunities for career-focussed discussions.</p> <p>“I am clear about the training & development opportunities available to me”:</p> <p>SES25: 57%F:48%M AcaRes, 55%F:38%M PSS.</p> <p>GSS25: 71%F:75%M</p>

3. Career Development, Progression and Representation

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
Provide targeted training and development talks under the 'Lunch and Learn' banner	Staff state that they don't have time to attend full courses (8F:10M AcaRes and 3F:1M PSS) and the provision is not suitable (4F:7M AcaRes and 3F:3M PSS), alternatives are therefore required. A pilot 'lunch and learn' short session in 2019 was positively received in 2019 and will be expanded upon and replicated for other staff groups.	<p>3.12a Survey staff and students for topics for Lunch & Learn (from September 2021).</p> <p>3.12b Collate suggested topics and deliver those suitable for short sessions.</p> <p>3.12c Plan Lunch and Learn programme and promote widely (Termly programme from September 2021).</p>	<p>AP (SAT) AS Lead (SAT)</p> <p>TCDWG CO (SAT)</p>	>15 attendees (gender-balanced) at each event with positive feedback attendance	<p>Termly L&L programme launched 2021, informed by staff & student feedback. 1 hour, lunchtime, on Teams or hybrid for accessibility. Sessions open to all DPAG staff and students, and other local departments.</p> <p>57 sessions delivered (as at July 2025), averaging 26 attendees per session. Gender balance in panellists and chairs. No significant gendered disparities in attendees. Excellent feedback for all sessions.</p>
Strengthen support for fellowship and grant applicants, with a focus on women, to support our	Academic independence relies on achievement of independent research funding. There is gender disparity in fellowship applications (31%F:69%M), although fellowship success rate is 25%F:23%M. As research independence is an important	<p>3.13a Encourage planning of fellowship submissions one year in advance to ensure applicants receive full support to optimise success. (From September 2022).</p> <p>3.13b Advertise process</p>	<p>HAF (SAT)</p> <p>NS (SAT) BR (SAT) ResAT Manager</p>	<p>Gender parity in fellowship applications achieved by 2024.</p> <p>Fellowship success rate increases to 35%, no gender difference, by</p>	<p>Focus group not convened but fed into 2022 Oxford project on equity in grant funding and fellowships.</p> <p>External fellowship applicant webpage created (2023). Internal 'Fellowship Framework' created to guide fellowship applicants through</p>

3. Career Development, Progression and Representation

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
<p>Postdoctoral Researchers, to attain academic independence.</p>	<p>criterion for career progression, we need to support our F AcaRes to apply for early career fellowships.</p> <p>29% of grant funding applications are submitted by women. This limits their eligibility for senior posts and titular awards. We need to identify barriers to research grant submissions by women and take action to support female applicants.</p> <p>Grant funding success at £500K+ is 28%F:31%M.</p>	<p>and support for external fellowships on website to encourage F applicants that may not otherwise put themselves forward. (From October 2022).</p> <p>3.13c Provide guidance and mentoring for grant and fellowship applicants, alongside application review and mock interviews (where required). (From November 2020).</p> <p>3.13d Conduct focus group (F AcaRes) to examine reasons/obstacles for fewer F applicants. (December 2021).</p> <p>3.13e Implement actions based on focus group</p>	<p>November 2020</p>	<p>2024.</p> <p>Grant submissions increase to 40%F by 2024, with no significant gendered difference in value applied for.</p> <p>Grant success rates improve to 37%F:37%M by 2023.</p>	<p>the process, including access to review and mock interviews (2023).</p> <p>Annual Lunch & Learn sessions on fellowships and grant funding.</p> <p>2020-2025 funding data: Female applicants submitted 41% of all funding applications, and received 45% of awards. Success rate: 28%F:23%M.</p> <p>Female applicants submitted 44% of fellowship applications, and received 58% of awards. Success rate: 33% F:20%M.</p> <p>Male applicants submit 70% of funding applications for £500K +. Success rate 30%F:26%M.</p> <p>“I am enabled to apply for grant funding as a project lead or co-lead,</p>

3. Career Development, Progression and Representation

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
		feedback to support F fellowship applicants. <i>(January 2022).</i>			where funder eligibility rules allow (AcaRes staff)": SES23: 43%F:57%M SES25: 64%F:67%M Significant improvement for F applicants but remains amber as success measures not met.

4. Culture and Working Environment

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
Improve onboarding to DPAG by introducing a buddying scheme	Although we have now introduced a process that ensures all new starters are provided with an induction, 57%F:67%M 2020 (53%F:54%M 2018) feel integrated into DPAG. A new starter focus group (4F:1M) felt that some information and	4.1a Pilot buddy scheme with 2 research groups and hold feedback session after 3 months <i>(January 2021)</i> . 4.1b Share feedback and introduce buddying to DPAG <i>(April 2021)</i> . 4.1c Roll out to all areas if appropriate <i>(June 2021)</i> .	SN (SAT) MR (SAT) HR Manager (SAT) Training & Career	New starters find the buddy scheme useful, no gendered difference. Increase in new starters, no gendered difference, feeling	Buddy Scheme introduced 2023 with positive feedback Improvement across all staff groups in response to "I feel integrated into my department": SES23: 57%F:49%M AcaRes, 60%F:67%M PSS SES25: 61%F:65%M AcaRes, 73%F:79%M PSS

4. Culture and Working Environment

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
	introductions were lacking during their early weeks.	4.1d Repeat new starter focus group and redefine action plan if appropriate to ensure gender and role parity (January 2022).	Development Working Group (TCDG)	integrated into DPAG (staff survey 2025).	
To improve onboarding process in DPAG and increase uptake of E&D training	Whilst ensuring newcomers feel welcome, we also need to ensure that they meet key people and undertake mandatory training during their probation. This will ensure that new staff are aware of DPAG policies and levels of compliance should remain high	4.2a Create an information sheet for all new starters based on focus group feedback (eg. Key contacts & roles, core hours, main room names and locations) (November 2020). 4.2b Build on the success of Newcomers lunch – share key contacts, and trial welcome sessions. (November 2020).	BR (SAT) HAF SAT EDIC	100% of all new starters complete mandatory training during probationary period by 2022. >75% of new starters, no gendered difference, find induction/welcome events useful.	All new staff complete EDI-focussed online training. Positive feedback on welcome sessions, and information sheet. SES25: 83% (no significant gendered differences) found induction useful.
Reduce barriers to, and stigma around, staff	A 2015 maternity leave focus group revealed that participants felt uncomfortable discussing their leave and	4.3a Ensure that information for those expecting a child remains current and includes health	AP (SAT) HR Manager (SAT)	2024 focus group report satisfaction with information provided and	Focus group not held. Instead 'Parenting in Academia' symposium delivered, including sessions from HR, Oxford's Research Services, Oxford's

4. Culture and Working Environment

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
<p>discussing maternity, paternity and SPL with line managers</p>	<p>cover with their line managers. A 2019 focus group (APlan 2018) indicated that there had been some improvement but that some staff still felt awkward and information gaps remained. We need to ensure that staff can access the information they need (eg. H&S information) whilst also ensuring that line managers are aware of policies and procedures, particularly in terms of funding, to reduce the potential difficulty in discussing the situation with staff.</p>	<p>and safety advice, particularly for those working in laboratories. (September 2020 & review annually).</p> <p>4.3b Provide up to date information on maternity, paternity, and shared parental leave policies to line managers. (From May 2021).</p> <p>4.3c Create funder guidance document to raise awareness of different funders' support for parents' leave and cover during leave. Ensure it is available to all grant holders. (November 2020).</p>	<p>ResAT Manager EDIC</p>	<p>easier conversations with line managers (gender-balanced).</p> <p>Knowledge of where to find information at >80% for all staff in 2025 survey, no gender difference.</p>	<p>Childcare Services, an external funder, and a networking lunch.</p> <p>Annual Lunch & Learn sessions on having a family in academia.</p> <p>Written funder guidance not created as it is too variable. Personalised advice provided to grant-holders, and expectant parents, by HR & Research Administration teams. Family friendly policies highlighted on intranet and newsletters.</p> <p>Departmental Parent/Carer's Teams site created (2022), and support group started (2025).</p> <p>"I know where to find information that is important to me (for example parental leave, safety information, etc)":</p> <p>SES25: 77%F:83%M AcaRes, 85%F:83%M PSS.</p>

4. Culture and Working Environment

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
		4.3d Repeat focus group to gauge whether actions have been successful (<i>March 2024</i>).			Good progress but success measures not met.
To promote shared parental leave in order to improve gender equality in the workplace.	<p>APlan2015 recognised a need to promote the new SPL policy. Data revealed that few staff took SPL (6: 2014-2018). In 2019 we widely promoted and explained SPL and, as a result, 97% of AcaRes and 100% PSS men know where to find info on SPL. In addition, since the promotional activity HR have received 8 (3F:5M AcaRes) enquiries from staff about taking SPL. As this is vital to promote a culture change around childcare, we need to ensure that SPL continues to be promoted as</p>	4.4 Continue promotion campaigns for SPL and ensure it is raised in HR discussions around pregnancy. (<i>September 2020 onwards</i>)	<p>CO (SAT)</p> <p>HR Manager (SAT)</p> <p>EDIC (SAT)</p>	<p>Increased uptake of SPL (6F:6M 2020-2024)</p>	<p>Video featuring female and male staff who have taken SPL and found it beneficial, created and shared – available on intranet. SPL discussed with all prospective parents by HR team, and information available on intranet.</p> <p>1F:7M took SPL 2020-2024. This remains amber as, although M taking SPL increased, we didn't achieve the stated success. This may reflect the challenge of taking SPL for partners working outside of Oxford/HE.</p> <p>3 months paid paternity/partner leave introduced by Oxford (2025). This may impact on future uptake of SPL.</p>

4. Culture and Working Environment

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
	an option for female and male employees.				
Promote flexible working opportunities for staff and encourage those with caring responsibilities to apply for DPAG roles	The 2014 staff survey revealed that only 26%F:25%M were aware of flexible working. We took action to promote flexible working and the 2020 survey suggests 89%F:94%M now know where to find this information and 74% AcaRes (no gender difference) and 66% PSS (81%F:50%M) work flexibly. To extend our family-friendly culture, and support work:life balance, we need to continue to promote this mode of working.	<p>4.5a Further promote family friendly/flexible working opportunities to staff, including publishing case studies to demonstrate how it works in practice. (February 2021).</p> <p>4.5b Ensure that opportunities for flexible working are clearly promoted within job advertisements and roles are advertised as suitable for part-time work where appropriate.</p> <p>4.5c Ensure that opportunities for working remotely are clearly promoted within job</p>	<p>BR (SAT)</p> <p>HR Manager (SAT) EDIC (SAT) CO (SAT)</p>	>80% AcaRes and >70% PSS work flexibly, gender balanced (2023 and 2025 surveys).	<p>All recruiters encouraged to advertise flexible working opportunities where operationally viable, and line managers support informal requests where possible.</p> <p>“My department enables flexible working”:</p> <p>SES25: 88%F:84%M AcaRes, 83%F:83%M PSS GSS25: 80%F:86%M</p>

4. Culture and Working Environment

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
		advertisements where appropriate.			
To improve transparency and representation in decision making within DPAG	In 2014 43%F:55%M agreed that management and decision-making processes were clear. Despite activity to address this, in 2020 37% of staff (36%F:46%M AcaRes and 33%F:18%M PSS) agree decision-making processes are transparent. We need to demystify the decision-making process by sharing information where possible.	<p>4.6a Advertise committee meeting dates and share minutes on intranet and link from newsletter. (From May 2020).</p> <p>4.6b Pilot coffee mornings or annual ‘Town Hall’ style meeting for specific groups of staff and students, hosted by HoD or HAF. (November 2020).</p> <p>4.6c Introduce anonymous feedback form for any questions or suggestions. (From January 2021).</p> <p>4.6d HoD introduction for the first newsletter of each month to share upcoming</p>	<p>AP (SAT) SC (SAT)</p> <p>HAF HoD</p>	<p>Information on Board and committee membership, meeting dates, and minutes available on intranet for every meeting.</p> <p>2025 staff survey shows increase in staff agreeing that decision making is transparent to 65% (gender-balanced).</p>	<p>Committee details, meeting dates, and minutes available on the intranet. HoD introduction in first newsletter of each month.</p> <p>Termly coffee mornings with Academics, weekly coffee with HoD, and Town Hall meetings trialed for Researchers but low engagement.</p> <p>PSS termly coffee with HAF successfully introduced. PSS away-day introduced (2024).</p> <p>Responses to anonymous feedback published in newsletters and intranet for transparency.</p> <p>“Management and decision-making processes are clear and transparent”: SES25: 23%F:35%M AcaRes, 33%F:33%M PSS</p>

4. Culture and Working Environment

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
		activities. (From October 2020).			GSS25: 39%F:52%M. Reduction in positive survey responses, perhaps because people feel remote from institutional-level decisions that affect them. This remains a priority (Priority 3).
Reinforce DPAG’s zero-tolerance policy on Bullying and Harassment (BH) to ensure that BH does not become the accepted culture, and ensure that everyone feels supported in	A programme of interventions and activity from 2012-2016, showed a corresponding reduction in experiences of, and witnessing of, BH. The 2018 survey saw an upsurge (9 experiences (78%F) in 2016 to 18 experiences(83%F) in 2018). Staff also reported that they don’t feel comfortable raising BH issues and only 2F reported BH to Harassment Advisors (HAs) 2016-2018. We took action to raise awareness of BH and support for those	4.7a Ensure all staff complete mandatory BH training (December 2020) . 4.7b Introduce mandatory BH training for all new staff during induction/probation (September 2020) . 4.7c Monitor gendered aspects of those witnessing and experiencing BH and investigate rise experienced by men to identify reasons/trends and action accordingly (2022 survey) .	HoD (SAT) EDIC (SAT) HR Manager (SAT)	>85% of staff, gender-balanced, complete mandatory BH training by December 2020 (56% May 2020). 100% new starters complete mandatory BH training during probation. Monitor B&H experienced and	All existing staff completed BH training by December 2020. New staff complete BH training during probation. Anonymous reporting introduced by Oxford 2024. 10% of staff (SES21-25) experienced BH. Gendered disparities for PSS but no trends. Marginal decrease for graduate students (-3 percentage points 2021-2025) but more female than male GS experience BH (GSS25: 4%M:21%F).

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DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
dealing with BH	experiencing it. Numbers increased again (19 (58%F) 2020 survey and 3 (2F:1M) approaches to HAs since late 2019), possibly due to raised awareness. Whilst it remains a largely female issue, the numbers of men, stating that they have experienced BH has increased (3 in 2018 to 8 in 2020). We need to continue to raise awareness to ensure that everyone understands what BH is and how their behaviours impact on others.	4.7d Investigate anonymous reporting mechanism provide an alternative outlet for those experiencing or witnessing BH whilst enabling any BH trends to be spotted and addressed (February 2021).		witnessed by gender and implement appropriate actions to address.	More F than M witnessed BH: SES25: 25%F:14%M AcaRes, 30%F:17%M PSS. GSS25: 29%F:9%M. Although this aligns with our awareness raising activities, BH remains a priority (Priority 2). DPAG Respectful Behaviours Framework launched 2024. 2025 surveys: 76% of staff/77% students believe the department sets clear expectations of behaviour (62% in 2023 staff survey).
To ensure that women are well represented on key committees, but not overburdened	Data hasn't routinely been collected on committee and citizenship workload but staff comment that women are overburdened with committee and pastoral roles. Initial data (2020 survey) doesn't suggest	4.8a Gather data about committee participation and citizenship roles at PDR and monitor annually for committee burden. (October 2020 & annually).	AP (SAT) HR Manager (SAT) EDIC (SAT)	Actions implemented to ease gendered burden if indicated. Proportional representation on	SES25 responses suggest only minor gendered disparity for PSS but this reflects the staff profile (gender and role-type). "I am a member of a departmental,

4. Culture and Working Environment

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
	a gendered burden but we will capture and analyse this data annually. As citizenship forms part of eligibility for UoO promotion/progression, we will encourage under-represented groups to participate in internal and external committees to share workload, raise profile, and gain experience.	<p>4.8b If indicated, implement actions to address issues of burden including wider advertising of committee roles, role rotation (every 2-3 years), reduced number and duration of meetings. (October 2020 & annually).</p> <p>4.8c Ensure under-represented groups are supported to participate in key internal and external committees. (March 2021).</p>		committees, internal and external. (2025 staff survey).	<p>college, or University committee, working group, or panel”: SES25: 51%F:50%M AcaRes, 53%F:46%M PSS.</p> <p>“I am a member of an external committee, working group, or panel”: SES25: 29%F:29%M AcaRes, 21%F:13%M PSS.</p>
Organise social activities in the department to ensure accessibility to	Since 2014 we have introduced a number of events for staff and students. 72% (69%F:74%M) staff and 73% (55%F:94%M) students feel included in DPAG social and	<p>4.9a Run and support existing events and groups. (From May 2021).</p> <p>4.9b Deliver alternative events, at varying times, to</p>	EDIC (SAT) Departmental Culture Working	>80% (gender balanced) of staff and students feel included in DPAG social and networking	Departmental financial and administrative support for Researcher, Graduate Student, and PSS focussed activities, as well as at least 4 annual social events (Garden Party, Street Party, End of Year Party, and Start of

4. Culture and Working Environment

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
all staff and students	networking events. We need to vary our activities to encourage wider participation.	provide opportunities for more staff and students, particularly women, to participate and network. <i>(From March 2021).</i>	Group (DCWG)	activities by 2025 surveys.	Academic Year Lunch) for all staff and students (Garden Party welcomes family and friends). Activities were impacted by Covid-19, and subsequent changes to working patterns have had a lasting effect. Ongoing challenges of engaging people within a multi-location department, and those that work remotely or have a long commute. Survey responses remain similar to baseline. “I feel included in my Department's social/networking activities”: SES25: 63%F:70%M AcaRes, 68%F:67%M PSS GSS2025: 63%F:92%M
Improve visibility of women in DPAG	Due to our heritage, the images on our walls are predominantly male. To raise the visibility of women, we aim	4.10a Call for nominations of key DPAG women to feature on our walls and	CO (SAT) DCWG	10 additional images of DPAG women displayed	New ‘Women in DPAG’ webpages launched June 2021 celebrating 54 former & current staff and students. 11 Women also selected for portraits

4. Culture and Working Environment

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
	<p>to supplement these images with images and narratives celebrating the contribution of women to DPAG.</p>	<p>website (January & June 2021).</p> <p>4.10b Ensure even gender split in promotional videos for departmental initiatives and stories to ensure female voices are prominent and proportionately represented (From June 2020).</p> <p>4.10c Publish internal and external news articles featuring women in DPAG across a wide range of roles (From June 2020).</p> <p>4.10d Ensure women are well represented as presenters of events and training opportunities, eg</p>		<p>by September 2022.</p> <p>Staff & student consultation 2023 & 2025 shows women feel represented at DPAG.</p>	<p>on the walls of the Sherrington building; the core DPAG building (our other buildings don't generally have portraits).</p> <p>Gender considered for all videos and news articles, and events (eg. speakers, panellists, chairs).</p> <p>All staff and students encouraged to nominate speakers from historically under-represented groups for regular seminars and prize lectures.</p> <p>"I see people that I identify with represented in DPAG": SES25: 69%F:67%M AcaRes, 75%F:58%M PSS. GSS25: 85%F:83%M</p>

4. Culture and Working Environment

DPAG Objectives	Rationale	Actions & Timeframe	Owner (supporter)	Success measures	Progress Summary
		roundtables, workshops, etc (From October 2020).			
To recognise excellence in public engagement and encourage gender-balanced involvement in outreach	42% of staff (44%F:39%M) are currently involved in outreach and, as public engagement is important both for grant funding and for demonstrating citizenship, we are keen to build on this. Surveys show that only 42% of staff (41%F:44%M (2018)) feel outreach activities are appropriately acknowledged. We need to go further to acknowledge the excellent PE that our staff, particularly women, are involved in.	4.11a Recruit additional members to the OPEWG to increase representation and encourage participation in PE. (December 2020). 4.11b Introduce annual DPAG Public Engagement prize to recognise outstanding achievement in outreach. (May 2021 & annually).	Outreach Lead CO OWG	OPEWG numbers increased from 5 to 8 members by December 2020. Increased participation in outreach and public engagement from across the department.	OPEWG relaunched December 2021 with members across a variety of roles and groups. 2025: 1M Academic, 3F:1M Researcher, 1F:1M Teaching, 2F Grad Student, 3F PSS. PER Events delivered by OPEWG members and additional volunteers from across the department 2022-2025 with a regular pattern of one per term. Excellent feedback from volunteers and attendees. PER prize introduced Dec 2022. 1F staff & 1F student awarded prize, plus 1F staff & 1F student highly commended. Not continued as limited engagement with the process.

SAP20 progress was regularly reviewed by our EDIC, with the EDIM taking responsibility for monitoring and evaluation based on staff and student consultation and demographic data. Data was enhanced by discussions within Working Groups and Committee meetings, ensuring a range of voices were heard. Final review and RAG-rating was undertaken by ASSAT in 2024.

Thematic Review of SAP20

1. EDI Engagement

Green Rated Actions 6 (75%)	Amber Rated Actions 2 (25%)
1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7	1.4, 1.8

We implemented all actions across this theme, meeting 75% of success measures. This was facilitated by achievable, and ‘appropriately-owned’ actions, with ambitious but realistic goals. **SAP20-1.4** was delivered for staff surveys, but fell short for student surveys. On reflection, our success measure for the student survey response rate (>72%) was overambitious. Surveys are circulated to all students on our mailing list, although not all would consider themselves to be DPAG students. However, we achieved a 52% response rate (SS25), supplemented by a women/non-binary graduate student focus group that provided further insights. **SAP20-1.8** aimed to improve data collection and monitoring through a data monitoring working group. Although initiated, staff turnover and COVID-19 disrupted the review schedule so data review was managed by EDIM and EDIC, before transfer to ASSAT in 2024. We think this is a better solution and will continue.

2. Supporting our Students

Green Rated Actions 1 (50%)	Amber Rated Actions 1 (50%)
2.1	2.2

Although numbers are small, and variable across years, our aim to address gender imbalance for graduate student admissions (**SAP20-2.1**) has been largely successful, with 45%M admitted 2020-2025 (41%M benchmark). A recent admissions process review identified areas for improvement and sparked initiatives to extend student induction and introduce leavers’ interviews.

Our aim to increase access to career development advice (**SAP20-2.2**) remains amber. Our success measures were overambitious, and the national student barometer survey had low engagement. SDTA (now Graduate Student Forum) was revised in consultation with Graduate Student representatives, and will be reviewed again during the 2025-26 academic year to continue to improve usefulness. We launched our Lunch & Learn programme covering a range of professional and career development topics aimed at researchers at all levels. This has proved to be a valuable initiative, consistently achieving participant ratings of 4/5 or above. Female students in particular report greater awareness of the development opportunities available to them (39% in 2021 to 71% in 2025).

3. Career Development, Progression, and Representation

Green Rated Actions	Amber Rated Actions
6 (46%)	7 (54%)
3.3, 3.5, 3.6, 3.8, 3.10, 3.12	3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.7, 3.9, 3.11, 3.13

Our Training and Career Development Working Group (TCDWG), Lunch & Learn (L&L) programme, and HR team were instrumental in the success of many actions within this section. We piloted a manager-specific induction (**SAP20-3.6a**) to support early-career line manager development. As engagement was poor, we invested in a DPAG-specific Leadership & Management Programme. Following a 2022 pilot for Researchers, this annual training now includes PSS, focussed on those new to leading and managing teams. All participants found it useful, and valued the supportive network each cohort created. We will collaborate with local departments from 2026 to extend networking opportunities. Although not the primary aim, of the first cohort 2F:2M were awarded independent fellowships, 1M appointed to Senior Lecturer (outside Oxford), 1F appointed to APTF, and 1F awarded Associate Professor title.

Our L&L programme (**SAP20-3.12**), devised by our TCDWG, is a thriving initiative. Through this we delivered insights and guidance on many SAP20 topics, including titular award (**SAP20-3.1**), career progression and networking (**SAP20-3.5/3.11**), regrading and reward and recognition (R&R) (**SAP20-3.7**), training and development (**SAP20-3.8**), grants and fellowships (**SAP20-3.13**), parenthood in academia (**SAP20-4.3/4.4/4.5**), and more. These lunchtime sessions always receive positive feedback. We hold 5-6 sessions per term, online for accessibility, averaging 26 attendees per session (no significant gendered differences). As a result of L&L and improved PDR

(now Career Conversations), we saw significant increase in the proportion of F PSS that successfully applied for R&R or regrading (Table 4), surpassing our target of 6F:4M (SAP20-3.7).

Table 4. Extract from Tables 40 and 41, Applications & Success Rates for Reward and Recognition, and Regrading, PTO (PSS), 2020-2024

Reward and Recognition		Regrading	
F	M	F	M
14 (70%)	6 (30%)	9 (50%)	9 (50%)

Although not all success measures were fully achieved because they were overambitious or actions didn't have the desired effect (SAP20-3.4/3.7/3.9/3.11/3.13), many had some impact. For example, improving gender parity in academic titular award (SAP20-3.1), senior recruitment (SAP20-3.4), and supporting those on FTCs (SAP20-3.5). From a baseline of 0F:6M awarded title of Professor (TP) 2015-2019, 2F:3M were awarded during SAP20, (a further 1F:2M awarded in 2025). 2F (100% success) and 3M (50% success) were awarded title of Associate Professor (TAP) (Table 5). We aimed for 1F:1M TAP to achieve tenured Associate Professor with Tutorial Fellowship (APTF). 2F:1M internal TAP were appointed to APTF, (further 1F appointed 2025).

HoHR restructured the HR Team (2023) so that each member now manages a portfolio of research groups and is better able to proactively support those approaching EoFTC. In 2024 the contracts of 10F:10M AcaRes and 3F:0M PSS were converted from fixed term to open-ended or permanent. An annual contract review process has now been implemented (SAP20-3.7).

Table 5. Extract from Tables 36 and 37, Award of Title of Professor and Associate Professor, 2020-2024.

	Applied (% of total applications)		Successful (% of F/M applications)		Success Rate BMk (MSD)	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Title of Professor (TP)	2 (40%)	3 (60%)	2 (100%)	3 (100%)	63 (88%)	95 (91%)
Title of Associate Professor (TAP)	2 (25%)	6 (75%)	2 (100%)	3 (50%)	99 (77%)	104 (73%)

Recognising that independent funding is essential for academic career progression (**SAP20-3.13**), we appointed an additional Research Grant Facilitation Manager to strengthen applicant support, created a ‘Fellowship Framework’ step-by-step guide, produced an external fellowship webpage, and delivered regular funding themed L&Ls. The funding landscape became increasingly competitive in the same period and, although we have seen significant improvement in the proportion of female applications and awards, we didn’t quite meet our highly ambitious targets (**Table 6**). Nonetheless, this had a direct impact on female researchers, with numbers at G9+ increasing from 0 to 5. Gender balance at G8+ remains a priority (**Priority 5**).

Table 6. SAP20 3.13 Success measures, baseline data, targets & achievements (2020-2024).

SAP20 3.13 Success measures	Baseline	Target	Achievement
Fellowship applications	31%F:69%M	50%F:50%M	44%F:56%M
Fellowship success rate	25%F:23%M	35%F:35%M	33%F:20%M
Grant submissions	29%F:71%M	40%F:60%M	41%F:59%M
Grant success rate (£500K+)	28%F:31%M	37%F:37%M	30%F:26%M

4. Culture and Working Environment

Green Rated Actions	Amber Rated Actions
7 (64%)	4 (36%)
4.1, 4.2, 4.5, 4.7, 4.8, 4.10, 4.11	4.3, 4.4, 4.6, 4.9

64% of actions within this theme were successful, facilitated by highly engaged staff and students, including HR, Working Groups, and focus group participants; underpinned by senior leadership aims to make DPAG a great place to work and study.

We're proud of our 'Women in Physiology, Anatomy, and Genetics' project (**SAP20-4.10**) to redress the balance and recognise the women largely excluded from DPAG's history. This culminated in webpages celebrating the contribution of women past and present (**Figure 4**), and the addition of 16 photographic portraits of women to the Sherrington Building (**Figure 5**), a space previously dominated by images of male scientists.

Figure 4. Screenshot from DPAG website featuring 'Women in Physiology, Anatomy & Genetics'.



Figure 5. Sample of photographs featuring 'Women in Physiology, Anatomy & Genetics' in Sherrington Building.



Women’s portraits are now hung alongside their male counterparts as a matter of course. This hasn’t been replicated elsewhere as portraits don’t feature in our other buildings. We continuously consider gender representation in news articles, newsletters, and speaker nominations for seminars and Prize Lectures to ensure a diversity of voices.

We trialled the Buddy Scheme (**SAP20-4.1**) with positive feedback and this will continue to be promoted for new starters. We also conducted an onboarding process review and successfully implemented mandatory EDI training for new starters (**SAP20-4.2**). 83% of staff found induction useful, and increasingly feel integrated into the department (**Table 7**).

Table 7. Staff survey responses 2021 vs. 2025: I feel integrated into my department.

	Female		Male	
	2021	2025	2021	2025
Academic & Researcher (AcaRes)	31%	61%	55%	65%
PSS	59%	73%	52%	79%

Figure 6. Respectful Behaviours Framework poster and extract from full framework describing examples of positive and negative behaviours

CORE PRINCIPLE	POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS	NEGATIVE BEHAVIOURS
Integrity We hold ourselves and each other accountable to be honest and fair.	Encourage others and engage in constructive discussions. Speak up when something isn't right; be a responsible bystander. Admit mistakes, take action to resolve them, and learn from them.	Disparage or discredit others, directly or indirectly. Ignore, or show support for, negative comments or behaviour. Create a blame culture where people are concerned about admitting mistakes.
Respect We embrace diversity, value individual experience, and treat everyone fairly and with kindness.	Avoid personal or derogatory comments when making small talk. Value and respect people working in all roles, and at all career stages. Greet people when you see them. Value other people's time, no matter what their role is.	Gossip, telling jokes at others' expense or 'banter'. Not valuing or respecting those in other roles/at earlier career stages, or treating them as a servant rather than a colleague. Deliberately ignore colleagues when you see them. Take out your frustrations on colleagues. Issues with how a system operates should be addressed via the appropriate channel.
Collegiality We work together collaboratively and value everyone's contribution.	Acknowledge and credit everyone for their contribution(s). Listen to and explore diverse ideas and perspectives. Embrace and learn more about other cultures and backgrounds.	Take credit for someone else's work or idea. Belittle or don't acknowledge their contribution. Valuing only those ideas that reflect your own views. Disregard other cultures, or use cultural norms as an excuse for poor behaviour.
Empathy We consider the views and perspectives of others and treat each other with compassion and understanding.	Behave professionally; build strong networks and working relationships with colleagues. Seek permission before sharing images or content with others (eg. on social media). Encourage open and constructive conversations. Micro-affirmations – small gestures of inclusion and generosity. Acknowledge when people are doing their job and following policies and processes, even if not to your liking. Have difficult or personal conversations in private.	Exclude people from work or social gatherings. Blur professional lines in social situations. Share pictures of others without permission. React poorly to people whose views differ from your own. Microaggressions – everyday exchanges, often related to someone's identity. Taking out frustrations on the person carrying out a task, including tone of voice or email, being rude or disrespectful. Humiliate or intimidate people in front of others.
Leadership & Management We create a culture where everyone feels safe to speak up, admit errors, and challenge conventions.	Encourage open and constructive conversations. Agree policy on out of hours contact within your team, taking account of everyone's views. Provide support and regular constructive feedback to members of your team. Treat all projects and team members equally. Avoid bias. Allocate time and resources equitably.	Create a culture where people are fearful of admitting mistakes, and where people don't feel their views are valued or heard. Expect people to respond to messages or calls outside their normal working hours. Lack of supervision, feedback, and engagement. Show favour for one person/project over another. Pitch people against each other; provide more support to one.

We successfully met our bullying and harassment (B&H) related objectives (SAP20-4.7). In addition, following a 2024 staff and student focus group, we launched the DPAG Respectful Behaviours Framework (Figure 6) which has influenced others within and beyond Oxford:

“Months after seeing you and your colleague present DPAG’s Respectful Behaviours Framework poster at the Research Culture event in June, I am still thinking about it. I am writing to ask if it might be possible to share a copy of it with a small group of colleagues comprising two other universities and a research institution.” Oxford Staff Member (Oct 25)

As a result, belief that DPAG sets clear expectations of behaviour increased from 62% (2023) to 76% (2025) for staff. Students weren’t previously asked this. (Table 8).

Table 8. Staff and student survey responses 2025: My department sets clear expectations of behaviour.

	Female	Male
Academic & Researcher	71%	83%
PSS	75%	75%
Graduate student	66%	96%

Our EDIM trained as an accredited mediator in 2022, and we became a pilot department for the MSD Mediation Service in 2024. Subsequently, HoHR was also trained in this role, enabling us to benefit from their experience of facilitating conversations between staff and/or students in conflict.

B&H remains a gendered issue [data redacted] and is a priority for SAP25 (Priority 2).

We were unable to create funder-specific guidance for family leave due to significant variations between funders and schemes (SAP20-4.3). However, we regularly provide policy updates within our newsletter, and have ‘family friendly’ guidance on the intranet. We delivered dedicated L&L sessions on having a family in academia, and try to include parents of all genders as panellists and speakers in career-related sessions to share their experiences with others. We held a morning seminar on

'Parenting in Academia', with speakers including Oxford Childcare representatives, Funders, and HR, open to all MSD staff. We launched a 'Parent & Carers' Teams site, and a network who meet for coffee termly. As a result, there has been an improvement in staff knowing where to find information that is important to them (SES25: 77%F:83%M AcaRes/85%F:83%M PSS). Although Shared Parental Leave (SPL) features in all of the above, we didn't achieve our success measure (SAP20-4.4). 1F:7M took SPL, perhaps reflecting that it can be challenging for the partners of birth or adoptive parents to take SPL if they work elsewhere, and that some may not wish to.

Despite implementation of actions, staff and students remain dissatisfied with transparency of decision-making (SAP20-4.6), perhaps because many people conflate Oxford-level decisions with DPAG decision-makers which is reflected in our surveys. This remains a priority for SAP25 (Priority 3).

Social and networking activities (SAP20-4.9) were stymied by COVID-19, the subsequent change to working locations and patterns, and further impacted by our split-locations. We provide financial and administrative support for staff and student-led events, and deliver at least four annual departmental social events for everyone, including one for family and friends. Engagement in departmental events is generally good, with excellent feedback. Gendered variation in positive survey responses continues (Table 9), possibly related to social activities within individual teams. We continue to encourage our staff and student representatives to consider alternative activities to address this.

Table 9. Staff and student survey responses 2025: I feel included in my Department's social/networking activities.

	Female	Male
Academic & Researcher respondents	63%	70%
PSS respondents	68%	67%
Graduate student respondents	63%	92%

Barriers to Progress

Changing context: SAP20 was developed in March 2020, when we had no notion of what lay ahead, including COVID-19 impact, funding challenges, popularisation of remote-working, changing EDI landscape, and internal restructuring. Collectively, they diverted our focus to broader EDI initiatives and Oxford priorities, whilst ensuring our community felt safe and supported.

Disparate Actions: There were too many distinct actions (34) which made SAP20 challenging to monitor and evaluate on a regular basis. We grouped actions thematically, with each theme regularly reviewed by EDIC. However, the disconnect between actions remained a barrier to maintaining momentum. For SAP25 we have identified overall success measures for each key priority, with relevant actions and milestones to achieve our objectives.

Success measures: SAP20 was ambitious in its objectives but some targets were unachievable.

Unsuitable 'ownership': Having a range of people responsible for actions created additional administrative burden in monitoring implementation and outcomes, and reallocation of tasks when role-holders changed. SAP25 actions are owned by those with responsibility for EDI, or for the subject, within their role.

Data: Most data is administered using Oxford systems which, although improved, remain challenging and time-consuming due to data-reporting mechanisms, and data inconsistencies. Centralisation of surveys resulted in changes to questions, making some success measures difficult to assess.

Organisational change: Focus shifted to ensure that staff and students were supported to thrive within our changing environment, whilst also responding to the challenges that a multi-location department can bring.

Facilitators of Progress

Engaged staff and students: We created a new EDIC in 2021, comprising ex officio members with responsibility for EDI, alongside interested volunteers. The HAF created a People & Culture Working Group focussed on the needs of staff and students post-COVID. We established EDI-related Working Groups (Anti-Racism,

Disability, Outreach & Public Engagement, Training & Career Development), open to DPAG staff and students. Our EDIC and Working Groups, Researcher Society, and Graduate Student representatives, have been key facilitators in delivering SAP20. They give voice to their peers, provide context to data, and promote EDI-related activities. DPAG benefits from a diverse group of people contributing to EDI efforts, whilst they benefit from skills development, and citizenship roles, which are increasingly emphasised in funding applications, regrading, and titular awards.

Dedicated resource: The EDIM role was made permanent, demonstrating Departmental support for EDI and AS, and ensuring continuity. Our new Events and Administration Officer (EAO), provides additional support to the EDIC and Working Groups. The EDIM, HAF, HoHR, Communications Officer (CO), and EAO have responsibility for EDI and AS within their roles, providing dedicated resource to effectively deliver actions.

Staff and student consultation: Survey responses enabled us to measure progress and evaluate SAP20, whilst highlighting current concerns. Response rates were achieved through varied campaigns, including personalised reminders to managers, and free ice cream to celebrate achieving response rate targets. Focus Groups and Working Group discussions provided context, enabling us to see beyond the numbers to identify ongoing challenges.

Lessons Learned

- SAP25 has a more defined scope, focussed on five key priorities with ambitious but achievable goals.
- SAP25 action ownership lies with individuals with responsibility for EDI, or responsibility for the subject of the action. Responsibility does not imply that the individual must carry out each task, just monitor and evaluate delivery. Activities will be supported by Working Groups, Focus Groups, and short-term Task-and-Finish groups.
- Data will be regularly reviewed, and SAP25 updated accordingly, to ensure it remains relevant and on target to meet milestones and overall objectives.

- Dedicated resource is essential for ensuring that undue administrative burden is not put onto volunteers.
- Focus groups and ongoing staff and student discussions are vital to understand the experiences underlying our data.
- Working Groups are important sources of support in promoting, delivering, and evaluating actions.

COVID-19 Impact

The pandemic was challenging for everyone. We quickly pivoted to remote working for those that could, supported critical research that was allowed to continue, and worked hard to keep our buildings safe and secure. It then became a priority for many of our research groups to get safely back on-site as quickly as possible to maintain momentum within their research. We changed our focus and redirected resources to keep people feeling safe and supported during this time, whether returning to on-site working, or adopting hybrid or remote working. Our efforts were rewarded with positive feedback from staff and students who felt that their needs had been met. Our approach was widely shared and replicated across Oxford, with the HAF invited to run workshops on safe return to work for departments who struggled to manage the process.

During the pandemic, it proved difficult to maintain a sense of community, and despite significant efforts from across our community, that has continued somewhat, exacerbated by the subsequent organisational changes. To bring people together, in 2022 we organised an interdepartmental 'Street Party' for the staff and students of DPAG and the neighbouring Biochemistry Department, and Kavli Institute ([Figure 7](#)). The event was a huge success and, by popular demand, has become an annual highlight in the departmental social calendar.

Figure 7. Inter-Department (DPAG, Kavli and Biochemistry) Street Party 2024.



Whilst the pandemic is now behind us, the challenges continue. It irreversibly changed the landscape of how we work, from fully onsite to hybrid/remote working, and hybrid teaching, which brings its own benefits and challenges. There has also been an ongoing impact to wellbeing, resilience, and expectations of support, particularly amongst our students, many of whom were undergraduates and school students during the pandemic.

There have of course been unintended benefits, including greater acceptance of flexible work-patterns which particularly helps disabled staff and students, those with caring responsibilities, and those with long journeys to work. This has proved particularly beneficial to many of our PSS who live outside Oxford City as their commuting time and costs have reduced. In addition, online meetings, training, and seminars have improved accessibility, and help us to maintain connections with staff and students across our various locations.

Key priorities for future action

ASSAT reviewed and analysed all mandatory data (Appendix 1: Consultation Data and Appendix 2: Data tables), alongside additional survey and demographic data, and feedback, to evaluate progress against SAP20 and identify future priorities. Although many SAP20 actions remain relevant, SAP25 focusses on recent data with gender-equality at its core. SAP25 builds on our progress to date, incorporating our lessons learned, and aims to address issues of greatest importance to our community, where we can make the most difference, through aspirational but realistic actions.

Our overarching aim is to ensure that DPAG is a great place to work, where people can thrive, and are supported to reach their full potential.



Priority 1. Improve satisfaction with supervision, particularly for female/PNTS graduate students, to ensure that all have an equally positive experience, regardless of gender.

Within student surveys, there is consistent gendered variation in experience of supervision. Female/PNTS GS, report lower satisfaction with all elements of supervision than male GS [data table redacted].

Our 2025 focus group helped us understand some of the underlying issues. Female and non-binary students were invited; 6 female students attended. Group discussions were facilitated by EDIM and female senior researchers, centred on: Supervisor Support and Career Development, and Inclusion and Culture.

Focus group participants reported disparity in the level of supervisory support provided, varied expectations of supervisors, and lack of clarity around expectations of students at each PhD stage. They felt there were limited options for networking and peer discussions, and they were unsure who to speak to for support. Male colleagues were perceived by the participants as having higher self-esteem, less concern about getting things wrong, and their views seemed more valued. Actions within this theme were proposed by Graduate Students in consultation with EDIM, and discussed and ratified at Departmental Committee, Academic Staff Committee, Graduate Studies Committee, and EDIC to ensure buy-in and support.

Key actions:

- Set expectations of supervisors and students at the start of the PhD.
- Introduce new touch-points for 1st year students to remind them of what stage they should be at, and who they can approach for support.
- Improve sign-posting of support mechanisms.
- Pilot award for outstanding supervision.
- Introduce exit interviews to review student experience.



Priority 2. Address gendered variation in experience and witnessing of bullying and harassment (B&H).

Despite ongoing efforts (SAP20-4.7), bullying and harassment (B&H) remains a gendered issue for staff and students [data table redacted]. Female PSS and female/PNTS students reported disproportionately high experience, and witnessing, of B&H (SES25/GSS25). Females in all roles are less confident that complaints will be dealt with seriously. Whilst there is still gendered disparity, there has been significant improvement in the belief that the Department sets clear expectations of behaviour and we will use our Respectful Behaviours Framework to regularly reinforce this message.

Key actions:

- Ensure that all staff complete mandatory harassment training every 3 years to reinforce expectations of behaviour.
- Provide regular responsible bystander training to empower people to address unacceptable behaviours.
- Repeat female/non-binary student focus group to gain insights into behaviours and solutions.
- Provide guidance to managers to deal with issues in their teams.
- Regularly signpost Respectful Behaviours Framework to set expectations of behaviour.
- Pilot Lab Handbooks to set expectations and improve communication within teams.



Priority 3. Improve transparency of decision-making, and awareness of feedback mechanisms, so that everyone feels that they have a voice in the Department.

SAP20-4.6 aimed to improve transparency but survey data suggests that staff and students still don't find decision-making processes clear and transparent [data table redacted]. Staff generally don't feel that they have an opportunity to share their views on changes that affect them, particularly for M PSS and F AcaRes. AcaRes, and F GS, don't believe they have a voice in the Department.

Some F staff and students feel less confident to raise concerns or question things, believing that they have less power to influence decisions than M staff and students.

Key actions:

- Raise the profile of staff and student representatives as a means of having a voice.
- Encourage Technicians to join committees to represent the interests of peers.
- Clarify decision-making processes for recruitment and progression, and regularly share information about where decisions are made and who by.
- Promote inclusive meeting etiquette to ensure everyone has an opportunity to be heard.
- Refresh committee structure and membership to ensure committees are relevant, and inclusive.



Priority 4. Improve access to, and awareness of, wellbeing support to address gendered disparities amongst staff and students.

2025 surveys suggest that M AcaRes are least likely to feel that their health and wellbeing are well supported in the Department, and least likely to know who to speak to about work-related stress or mental ill-health [data table redacted]. F students are less positive than M students [data table redacted] and are unsure where to start when seeking support as there is so much information available. 56% of staff have experienced work-related stress in the last year, and providing access to support is therefore a priority.

Key actions:

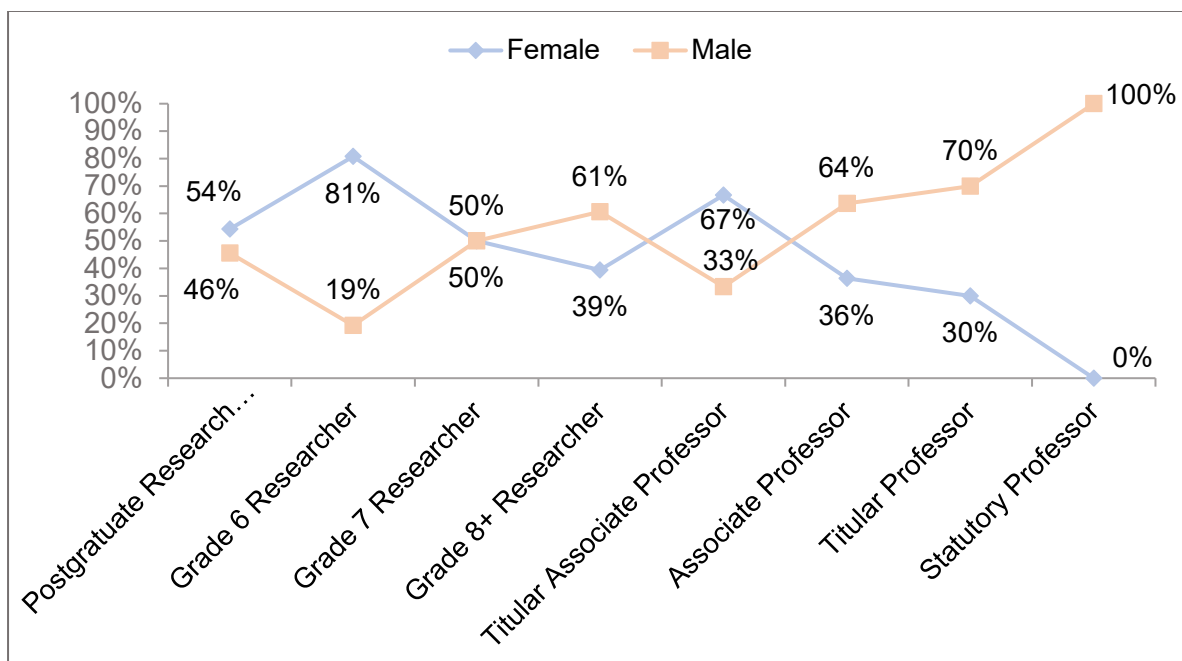
- Create and promote a new Departmental Wellbeing Support Group.
- Define and deliver DPAG Wellbeing Strategy in consultation with staff and students.
- Deliver in-house wellbeing training.
- Provide an intranet resource hub so that people can access the information they need without having to ask for it.



Priority 5. Address ongoing gender imbalance in senior researchers (G8+) and Academic faculty, with a focus on female staff.

SAP20 actions to address gendered disparities at senior level (SAP20-3), were successfully delivered, including 3F appointments to APTF, 3F awards of TP, 2F awards of TAP, and attracted 1F RSIV (professorial level) to the Department. Support for senior fellowships resulted in improvement in the number of female researchers at Grade 9+: 0 in 2020 to 5 in 2024. However, gendered disparity at senior Academic level persists [data table redacted] with a clear drop from Grade 8 (Chart 3).

Chart 3. Pipeline - Graduate Student to Academic Staff (2024 data point).



We have a good pipeline of researchers who are taking their first steps to academic independence and need to ensure that they are supported to progress, whilst also continuing to support females in more senior roles to attain tenured positions.

Key actions:

- Improve gender balance within senior fellowships, with a focus on female external applicants.
- Enhance mentoring and support for female AcaRes applying for titular awards.
- Proactive identification of talent with tailored mentoring and support.
- Implement recommendations from recent 'inclusive recruitment' pilot and evaluate impact.
- Use gendered data to address potential biases within recruitment and progression processes.

Section 3: Future action plan

Athena Swan Silver Action Plan 2025-2030 (SAP25)

DPAG Athena Swan Action Plan: 2025-2030 (SAP25)				
Priority 1	Improve satisfaction with student supervision, particularly for female/PNTS graduate students (GS), to ensure that all have an equally positive experience, regardless of gender			
Rationale	Female GS, and those that prefer not to state (PNTS) their gender, consistently report lower satisfaction with supervision than male GS. For the 2025 Student Survey (GSS25), this equated to a 20-percentage point difference between males and females across a range of supervision related questions [data table redacted]. Our 2025 focus group to explore the experiences underlying the data found that female students' expectations, and experience, of supervision were varied and they were largely unaware of their options, and the support available to them. It was suggested that the lower levels of satisfaction reported by female GS, and those that PNTS, across all student survey themes were underpinned by experience of supervision and group culture.			
Success Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in the gendered gaps in experience of supervision in DPAG by 2028 graduate student survey. • Female and PNTS Graduate Students are clearer about what to expect from supervisors, and the expectations of them as students, by July 2028. • Female and PNTS Graduate Students are clearer about the support available to them by July 2028. 			
Action No.	Action	Milestones	Timeframe	Action Owner
1.1	Expectation-setting for each new DPAG student cohort – all students and supervisors to review new DPAG Code of Conduct for Student Supervision and to complete a contract confirming regularity	Signed contract from new intake & supervisors returned to GSA by mid-December 2025.	December 2025 & each intake thereafter.	DGS (supported by GSA)

	of meetings, how and when to contact each other, who to contact when the supervisor is unavailable, etc.	Report to GSC on completion rate at the start of March 2026.		
1.2	Introduce 2 nd term 'touch-point' event for students, led by Graduate Student Representatives (GSR) as an opportunity for networking and peer support, and reminder of other sources of support outside their supervisory team.	Touch-point event delivered and evaluated January 2026. Touch-point event delivered annually, adjusted based on feedback January 2027 onwards.	January 2026 and annually thereafter.	GSA (supported by GSR)
1.3	End of 1 st year check-in delivered by two supervisors for all Graduate Students covering what stage students should be at, what to expect in 2 nd year, and reminder of support mechanisms available.	End of 1 st year event delivered and evaluated June 2026. End of 1 st year event delivered annually from June 2027, adjusted based on feedback.	June 2026 and annually thereafter.	DGS for Welfare (supported by GSA)
1.4	Enhance signposting of sources of support and who to contact for what, including academic progress, wellbeing, and B&H.	Poster created and circulated by April 2026. Comprehensive intranet site created and promoted by April 2026. Regular promotion of above from May 2026.	April 2026 and thereafter.	EDIM (supported by HR Team, CO)

1.5	Pilot 'Award for Outstanding Supervision' to recognise supervisors who go over and above to support their students, and share examples of best practice.	Define award criteria and request nominations by March 2027. Inaugural award at Departmental event July 2027.	March 2027 and annually thereafter.	EDIM (supported by GSR)
1.6	Pilot exit interviews for GS to monitor student experience and identify trends.	Exit interviews piloted from June 2027, and fully implemented if appropriate (based on uptake). Exit data reviewed biannually from November 2027.	June 2027 onwards.	HoHR
1.7	Review data to evaluate success/impact of actions in this section. Continue or adjust actions to meet objectives.	Data review conducted June 2028 and actions continued or adjusted as appropriate.	June 2028	EDIM (supported by EDIC)

Priority 2	Address gendered variation in the experience and witnessing of bullying and harassment (B&H).
Rationale	<p>There is gendered variation in the 2025 surveys for questions related to bullying and harassment (B&H) [data table redacted], with more F/PNTS GS and F PSS experiencing B&H than their peers, and more F (all roles) witnessing it:</p> <p>Experienced B&H: PSS 17%F:4%M, Graduate Student 21%F:4%M:40%PNTS.</p> <p>Witnessed B&H: AcaRes 25%F:14%M, PSS 30%F:17%M, Graduate Student 21%F:9%M:20%PNTS.</p> <p>55%F staff/49%F/40%PNTS GS are confident that the organisation would deal with complaints seriously.</p> <p>66%F GS believe that that the Department sets clear expectations of behaviour.</p>

Success Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in the gender gap in experiencing and witnessing of B&H, with fewer F/PNTS GS and F staff stating they have witnessed or experienced B&H in the previous year by 2029 surveys. Increase in confidence in how complaints are dealt with for all staff and students, no gendered difference, by 2029 surveys. Increased belief that the Department sets clear expectations of behaviour, particularly for F GS by 2029 surveys. 			
Action No.	Action	Milestones	Timeframe	Action Owner
2.1	Embed required harassment training for all staff and repeat every 3 years.	Minimum 80% completion rate by November 2026.	November 2025 onwards	HAF
2.2	Deliver Responsible Bystander training open to all staff and students. Repeat every 3 years.	Training delivered every 3 years from November 2025, with engagement from staff and students.	November 2025 and every 3 years	EDIM
2.3	Repeat women graduate student focus group to improve understanding of what is happening.	Women/Non-Binary Graduate student focus group with minimum of 6 student participants in June 2027 and 2029.	June 2027 and 2029.	EDIM
2.4	Provide additional guidance for managers to effectively deal with issues in their teams.	Create guidance for managers on managing issues, and promote 1:1 support, from July 2028.	July 2028	HoHR
2.6	Raise awareness of forms of support and reporting and regularly promote Respectful Behaviours framework to set expectations of behaviour.	Create slides, posters, and newsletter items by March 2026 and share termly.	March 2026	EDIM (supported by CO)

		Share information at 'Lab Drop-ins' termly from May 2026.		
2.7	Pilot 'Lab Handbooks' as a mechanism for setting expectations and improving communication in teams.	Pilot the use of Lab Handbook in a minimum of 5 Research Groups by October 2027. Expand to other groups based on feedback, aiming for 50% lab participation by October 2029.	October 2027	RSA (supported by EDIALs)
2.8	Review data to evaluate success/impact of actions in this section. Continue or adjust actions to meet objectives.	Data review conducted November 2028, and actions continued or adjusted as appropriate.	November 2028	EDIM (supported by EDIC)

Priority 3	Improve transparency of decision-making, and awareness of feedback mechanisms, so that everyone feels that they have a voice in the Department.			
Rationale	<p>Despite introducing a variety of mechanisms to share information, and provide feedback, our surveys suggest that staff and GS still don't feel that decision-making is transparent, and don't feel that they have a voice in the department [data table redacted]. There is a gendered element with F/PNTS GS and F staff least positive in 2025 surveys:</p> <p>Management & decision-making processes are clear and transparent: 23%F:35%M AcaRes, 33%F:33%M PSS, 39%F:52%M:40%PNTS GS.</p> <p>I can have a voice in my Department: 49%F:55%M AcaRes, 60%F:67%M PSS, 41%F:70%M:0%PNTS GS.</p>			
Success Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement in the proportion of staff and GS that believe management & decision-making processes are clear and transparent by 2027, achieving gender balance by 2029. 			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement in the proportion of staff and GS who feel they can have a voice in the department by 2027, achieving gender balance by 2029. 			
Action No.	Action	Milestones	Timeframe	Action Owner
3.1	Raise the profile of staff and student representatives as a means of having a voice in DPAG.	Create posters and intranet pages of representatives by October 2026.	October 2026 and termly thereafter	CO
3.2	Bring Technicians onto Departmental committees to represent technical colleagues.	Advertise committee membership opportunities to all technical staff and aim for at least 1 technician per relevant committee by January 2027.	January 2027	HAF
3.3	Promote inclusive meetings etiquette for use by everyone.	Share guidance on inclusive meetings and encourage uptake by January 2027.	January 2027	EDIM
3.4	Clarify decision-making processes for recruitment and progression and raise awareness of where decisions are made and who by.	Create intranet page of where decisions are made by November 2026 and promote regularly. Include information in promotion and progression emails.	November 2026	HOHR (supported by CO)
3.6	Refresh departmental committee structure, and membership to ensure committees are relevant to the department, and inclusive.	Review and refine committee structure and membership by January 2027, aiming for broad membership across roles with appropriate gender representation.	January 2027	HoD

3.7	Review data to evaluate success/impact of actions in this section. Continue or adjust actions to meet objectives.	Data review conducted March 2028 and actions continued or adjusted as appropriate.	March 2028	EDIM (supported by EDIC)
Priority 4	Improve access to, and awareness of, wellbeing support to address gendered disparities amongst staff and students.			
Rationale	<p>56% of staff experienced work-related stress in the last year (SES25), and there is a gendered disparity in terms of feeling supported and knowing who to speak to, with M AcaRes and F/PNTS GS least positive:</p> <p>57%M:66%F AcaRes, 61%F:71%M:40%PNTS GS feel that their health and wellbeing are well supported, and 51%M:60%F AcaRes, 54%F:88%M:60%PNTS GS know who to speak to about work-related stress or mental ill-health (60%F) [data table redacted].</p> <p>F GS also report not knowing where to start when seeking support as there is so much information available (2025 GS focus group).</p>			
Success Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement in the proportion of M AcaRes and F/PNTS GS that feel their wellbeing is supported by 2027. Improvement in the proportion of M AcaRes and F/PNTS GS knowing who to speak to about stress and mental ill-health by 2027. Overall improvement in staff and students feeling that their wellbeing is supported by 2029. 			
Action No.	Action	Milestones	Timeframe	Action Owner
4.1	Establish DPAG Wellbeing Support Group, comprising a range of staff and students and promote regularly to raise awareness.	Invite staff and students to become members of the new DPAG Wellbeing Support Group by January 2026 and promote details termly.	January 2026	EDIM (supported by EDIAL, HAF, HoHR)

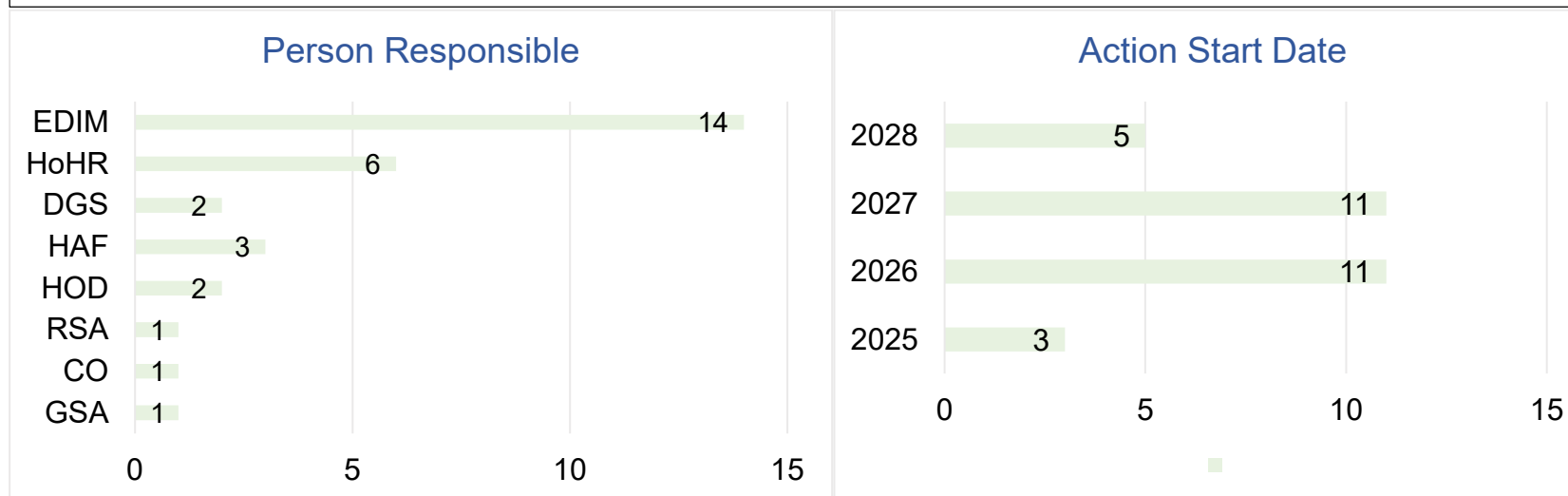
4.2	Define and deliver a DPAG wellbeing strategy in consultation with staff and students.	3-year Wellbeing Strategy plan created with Wellbeing Support Group by May 2026, for delivery by July 2029.	May 2026	HAF (supported by Wellbeing Support Group)
4.3	Deliver wellbeing training to support staff and students in the workplace.	Invite appropriate speakers to deliver annual wellbeing focussed training sessions from March 2026.	March 2026 and annually thereafter	EDIM
4.4	Create an intranet wellbeing resource hub for staff and students and publicise regularly to raise awareness.	Create an intranet site signposting support for staff and students by February 2026. Promote termly.	February 2026	EDIM (supported by HR Team, CO)
4.5	Review data to evaluate success/impact of actions in this section. Continue or adjust actions to meet objectives.	Data review conducted April 2028 and actions continued or adjusted as appropriate.	April 2028	EDIM (supported by EDIC)

Priority 5	Address ongoing gender imbalance in senior researchers (G8+) and Academic faculty, with a focus on female staff.
Rationale	We have been successful in improving the numbers of female academics appointed to APTF (+5, 2 post 2024 data point) and achieving Titular Professor (+3, 1 post 2024 data point), but the proportion of females in senior positions has not significantly changed: in 2024 36% APTF and 30% TP. Our support for fellowship applicants has significantly improved the proportion of female researchers at Grade 9+ from 0% in 2020 to 38% in 2024 and we need to expand this approach to proactively support eligible female researchers at Grade 7 to achieve their first independent fellowship to progress to Grade 8. In addition, we must continue to support female staff to achieve titular awards and APTF positions, and attract female Academics to DPAG.

Success Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved gender balance for researchers at Grade 8 and above by 2030. Improved gender balance for APTF by 2030. Improved gender balance for RoD TAP and TP awards by 2030. 			
Action No.	Action	Milestones	Timeframe	Action Owner
5.1	Improve transparency in senior fellowship process, with broader advertising and recruitment to better attract female external applicants, and greater involvement of departmental faculty.	Redefine senior fellowship process by November 2027 and raise awareness by promoting at least termly.	November 2027 and thereafter	HoD (supported by HoHR, EDIAL)
5.2	Enhance mentoring and support for applicants for Associate Professor and Professor title to improve gender balance.	Provide mentoring and support to potential applicants (identified during career conversations or on fellowship awards) for titular awards from May 2027.	May 2027 and thereafter	HoD (supported by SLT)
5.3	Implement new DPAG inclusive recruitment process. Monitor data and evaluate impact.	Ensure recruiting managers are aware of, and use, the new inclusive recruitment process from April 2027. Review and analyse recruitment data annually from April 2028.	April 2027 and thereafter	HoHR (supported by HR Team)
5.4	Use data to address biases in recruitment and progression. Share data on current gender imbalances before R&R, recruitment, RoD, etc.	Share data with each recruitment or progression round from March 2026 to highlight imbalances and encourage inclusive practice.	March 2026 and thereafter	HoHR (supported by EDIM, EDIAL, EDIC)

5.5	Introduce proactive identification of talent and targeted mentoring for G7-8, 3 years+ PDRS who are aiming for fellowships. Highlight opportunities for regrading on achieving independent funding.	PDRS aiming for fellowships are proactively provided with mentoring and support from January 2027. Potential regrading proactively identified on award of fellowships or relevant funding from January 2027.	January 2027 and thereafter	HoHR (supported by Research Administration Managers)
5.6	Review data to evaluate success/impact of actions in this section. Continue or adjust actions to meet objectives.	Data review conducted November 2028 and actions continued or adjusted as appropriate.	November 2028	EDIM (supported by EDIC)

- Most initial actions start in 2026-2027 to get them underway, with time to fully implement, evaluate and adjust as necessary before 2030.
- Responsible person either has responsibility for AS or the subject within their role. They do not have sole responsibility to deliver the action but to ensure actions are implemented, with support.



Appendix 1: Consultation data

The staff and student survey data presented reflect the questions that most closely align with the Advance HE (AHE) culture survey questions. Additional survey data is presented where appropriate to future priorities.

- Demographic data was self-selected and no questions were mandatory.
- Data presented as percentage of positive responses per question.

Staff Experience Survey 2025 (SES25):

Response rate: 79% (240)

Major role groups were pre-populated: Academic & Research (AR) and Professional Services (PSS). **Data redacted.**

Graduate Student Survey (GSS25):

Response rate: 53% (70)

Students were asked for the gender they identify with (woman/man/non-binary/prefer not to say). To align with other data presented in this application, and for ease of review, gender is presented as female, male, and prefer not to say. **Data redacted.**

Appendix 2: Data tables

Data redacted.

Appendix 3: Glossary

A glossary of abbreviations and acronyms used in the application.

AcaRes	Academic and Research
AP	Associate Professor
APTF	Associate Professor with Tutorial Fellowship (College)
ARWG	Anti-Racism Working Group
AS	Athena Swan
ASSAT	Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team
B&H	Bullying and Harassment
CO	Communications Officer
DCHB	Dorothy Crowfoot Hodgkin Building
DGS	Director of Graduate Studies
DPAG	Department of Physiology, Anatomy & Genetics
DWG	Disability Working Group
EAO	Events & Administration Officer
EAP	Employee Assistance Programme
ECR	Early Career Researcher
EDIAL	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Academic Lead(s)
EDIC	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee
EDIM	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Manager
F	Female
FTC	Fixed Term Contracts
FTE	Full-time equivalent
GSC	Graduate Studies Committee
GSF	Graduate Student Forum
GSS25	Graduate Student Survey 2025
GSR	Graduate Student Representatives
HA	Harassment Advisor
HAF	Head of Administration & Finance
HoD	Head of Department
HoHR	Head of HR
IDRM	Institute of Developmental and Regenerative Medicine
M	Male

MSD	Medical Sciences Division
NB	Non-Binary
OPEWG	Outreach & Public Engagement Working Group
ORC	Old Road Campus
PCEWG	People, Culture & Engagement Working Group
PDRS	Postdoctoral Research Scientist
PI	Principal Investigator
PNTS	Prefer not to say
PSS	Professional Services Staff
PTO	Professional, Technical & Operational
RoD	Recognition of Distinction
RS	Researcher Society
RSA	Research Staff Advocate
R&R	Reward and Recognition
SAP20	Previous Athena Swan Silver Action Plan 2020
SAP25	New Athena Swan Silver Action Plan 2025
SAT	Self-Assessment Team
SDTA	Senior Doctoral Training Advisors
SES	Staff Experience Survey (with year of survey, eg SES25 = 2025)
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
SP	Statutory Professor
TAP	Titular Associate Professor
TCDWG	Training & Career Development Working Group
TP	Titular Professor
Oxford	University of Oxford
WG	Working Group