



Department Application Bronze and Silver Award



Guidance for Athena SWAN Assessment Panels on Open University submissions

This is a standard Guidance document that has been agreed by Athena SWAN to accompany all OU submissions. Please note that it is not included in the word count.

The Open University (OU) provides flexible, open and distance learning that delivers nearly 200 qualifications and 400 modules, and as such the OU's model of teaching, staffing structure and student body are different from that of a conventional university. This guidance gives additional background information to assist the Athena SWAN panels in completing their assessment of OU submissions.

The Open University has its headquarters in Milton Keynes with national offices in Belfast, Cardiff and Edinburgh, and student support / administrative centres in Manchester and Nottingham. With students spread across the UK, Ireland and 151 countries, the OU does not have a typical campus-based environment. Following the 2012 tuition fee increase and changes in the funding structure in England, student numbers have declined. Hence, the OU has gone through many organisational changes in recent years. In 2016, the University's academic structure was changed, with the seven former Faculties, plus two Institutes, merging to form four much larger Faculties made up of several Schools (of which we informed Athena SWAN); and in 2017, the People Services Transformation involved a restructure of HR functions. Regional offices in England closed in 2016, when England-based Regional Academics became homeworkers.

1. Open University Academic Staff

OU academic staff fall into two categories: academic staff and Associate Lecturers (ALs). The majority of academic staff (Central Academics) are employed at the Milton Keynes campus. Regional Academics (also known as Staff Tutors) and Associate Lecturer (AL) staff are mainly home-based. Most academic and research staff carry out research and scholarship as well as teaching and, together with Research Associates and Fellows, they form the OU's research base. However, since the OU is a distance-learning institution, the teaching role of academics is different from other universities. Regional Academics also have specific management and administrative duties and have less allocated time for research and scholarship.

Rather than teaching students directly, Central Academics develop teaching materials (usually working in module teams) and manage the delivery and assessment of the modules they have written. Direct teaching of students is the responsibility of Associate Lecturers.

Associate Lecturers (also called tutors) support student learning through online and face-to-face tutorials and provide formative and summative feedback on assignments. Regional Academics are line-managers to ALs, and they also lead

the AL recruitment and their professional development. The OU employs more than 4,000 ALs to carry out direct teaching of undergraduate and taught postgraduate students. They are located across the UK and Ireland and play a vital role in the delivery of OU course material to our students. ALs are currently appointed on fixed-term part-time contracts on a module-by-module basis with many holding substantive posts with other employers. However, the University is in the process of introducing a new AL contract which will change the nature of these appointments to 'open ended' aligning with the terms and conditions of our Central Academics. The AL role does not include production of course materials or research, and ALs are managed at Faculty level rather than by Schools, so there is limited scope for focusing on gender inequalities in promotion and progression for this staff group. As ALs are the main point of contact for students, we have provided separate gender composition data for ALs, but the majority of our academic data presented is for Central and Regional Academics given they are on academic contracts.

2. OU Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Students

The OU is the largest UK university, with 128,322 students (undergraduate and postgraduate students), based in all parts of the UK, Ireland and beyond. The OU operates an open access policy, meaning there are no traditional university entry qualifications for the majority of its courses. Most Open University students are in employment and are mature students (only 6% are under 20). In addition, 20% of OU students have declared disabilities.

Study mode

Students are taught via the OU's unique model of learning known as 'supported open learning'. Course materials are a blend of printed texts, online readings, interactive and audio-visual resources. Students are allocated an AL who provides academic guidance and feedback individually and in tutor groups. Tutor groups meet online as well as in face-to-face tutorials, which usually take place in the evenings or at weekends. Some modules include residential schools. Full-time funded PhD students are based at the Milton Keynes campus while part-time research students (mostly self-funded) can attend supervisions, and often seminars, either face-to-face or remotely.

Modules and Qualifications

Historically, OU students registered on discrete modules to build up credits towards a qualification. In 2012, the OU started to move towards qualification-based, rather than module-based, degrees, with students registering for a named qualification from the outset. However, as students may take up to 10 years to complete an undergraduate degree there are still a number of students who are part way through a module-based pathway. Moreover, individual modules may be common to several different qualifications, as well as contributing to the interdisciplinary Open Degree (which is studied by around

one-fifth of all students). For these two reasons, panels should note that the Athena SWAN applications may consider and reflect on student data at module level, as well as on qualification outcomes in some sections.

ATHENA SWAN BRONZE DEPARTMENT AWARDS

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

ATHENA SWAN SILVER DEPARTMENT AWARDS

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

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

COMPLETING THE FORM

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

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

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

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

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

WORD COUNT

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

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

We have provided the following recommendations as a guide.

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

Name of institution	The Open University	
Department	School of Engineering & Innovation	
Focus of department	STEMM	
Date of application	20 May 2020 (April 2020 round)	
Award Level	Silver	
Institution Athena SWAN award	Date: November 2016	Level: Bronze
Contact for application <small>Must be based in the department</small>	Dr Nicole Lotz	
Email	Nicole.Lotz@open.ac.uk	
Telephone	+44 (0)1908 653618	
Departmental website	https://www.open.ac.uk/stem/engineering-and-innovation/	

Glossary

AL	Associate Lecturer
AMS	Awards Management System
AWM	Academic Workload Management
Applaud	Accrediting & Promoting Professional Learning and Academic Development (the Open University's AdvanceHE-accredited professional development programme)
BAA(n)	Bronze Action Achievement and n = number
BAME	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnicity
BoS	Board of Studies
CDSA	Career Development and Staff Appraisal
CIWM	Chartered Institution of Wastes Management
CSC	Chairs' Sub-Committee
CWG	Chairs' Working Group
DPP	Development, Policy and Practice
Deputy HoS	Deputy Head of School
E&I	School of Engineering & Innovation
EDIA	Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity and Accessibility
EDIAG	Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity and Accessibility Group
ELQ	Equivalent or Lower Qualification
eSTEEeM	OU centre for STEM pedagogy
FPG	Faculty Promotions Group
FTC	Fixed-Term Contract
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GESG	Gender Equality Steering Group
GSN	Graduate Support Network
HEA	Higher Education Academy (AdvanceHE)
HEBCIS	Higher Education Business and Community Interaction Survey
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
HoS	Head of School

MCT	Mathematics, Computing and Technology
OMIL	Open Media and Informal Learning
OU	The Open University
PI	Principal Investigator
RAE	Research Assessment Exercise
REF	Research Excellence Framework
SAP(n)	Silver Action Plan and n = number
SAT	Self-Assessment Team
SDPWG	Staff Development and Promotions Working Group
SMT	School Management Team
SRSC	Student Recruitment and Support Centre
SST	Student Support Team
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
WES	Women's Engineering Society
WiE	Women in Engineering

1. Letter of endorsement from the head of department

Recommended word count: Bronze: 500 words | Silver: 500 words

As Head of the School of Engineering & Innovation (E&I), I am delighted to support our Athena SWAN Silver award application. I confirm that the information contained within (including qualitative and quantitative data) is an honest, accurate and true representation of the School.

I have led E&I for six years, having previously been Deputy Head for three years. Throughout this time, we have placed a strong emphasis on making the School a more inclusive environment for all colleagues. Developing our previous Athena SWAN Bronze award application, and implementing the Bronze Action Plan, has been central to this. It has enabled us to reflect on gender equality and wider equal opportunity issues, and has provided a transparent framework for generating a positive change in culture to the benefit of all.

The Open University's mission is to be "open to people, places, methods and ideas"; this is an ethos to which we fully subscribe within E&I, recognising the immense value that a diverse staff and student population can bring. We are committed to increasing the number of female students, whether studying on our distance-learning modules or carrying out research degrees, and supporting them to reach their potential; we are also focused on improving the gender balance in our staffing, and ensuring all colleagues, irrespective of background, have equal opportunities for career progression. To these ends, we are particularly proud of the following achievements: an increase in the proportion of female engineering students at Stage 1, from 11% in 2012 to 19% in 2019; the instigation and growth of our annual Women in Engineering student conference, with over 80 participants in 2019; an increase in the proportion of female full-time research students to 47% in 2019; the implementation of fully gender-balanced interview panels and the subsequent equal numbers of women and men appointed to academic positions since 2015; the strong representation by women on the School's decision-making committees, and the part this has played in four female academic promotions.

To help identify ways in which we could improve further, we introduced an "E&I culture survey", to supplement the annual institutional staff survey. Pleasingly our survey highlighted many positive aspects regarding the School's culture, such as 91% of both women and men agreeing E&I is a great place to work/study. However, it also revealed some gender-specific issues that need addressing; for example, feelings of being uncomfortable or disadvantaged because of any protected characteristic (e.g. disability, race, age) are more prevalent among women.

Our Silver award application looks to build upon our Bronze award plans and achievements, extending initiatives we already have in place, and implementing new actions to help us meet our ultimate aim of ensuring equality of opportunity for all students and staff.

I would like to thank the self-assessment team, led by Dr Nicole Lotz, for producing this application and associated action plan, and for their hard work

and dedication in striving to provide all colleagues with a more inclusive working environment.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Sharp". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Professor David Sharp

[495 words]

2. Description of the department

Recommended word count: Bronze: 500 words | Silver: 500 words

The School of Engineering & Innovation is a multidisciplinary community of academic and professional services staff, leading the OU's teaching and research in Engineering, Technology Management, Design, Systems Thinking and Environment. This breadth of coverage leads to a vibrant and diverse team, with students benefitting from the interdisciplinary nature of much of our teaching material. E&I sits in the Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).



Figure 2.1: Some members of the School of Engineering & Innovation.

The School comprises 53 Central Academics, 16 Regional Academics, 7 Research Fellows, 32 full-time and 22 part-time PhD students. These staff and students are supported by 4 senior managers, 5 administrative staff, 12 curriculum managers and assistants, and 15 technical staff.

Our Central Academics are similar to lecturing staff at other universities, with responsibility for authoring teaching and assessment material, managing module presentations to students, and carrying out research and scholarship.

Our Regional Academics make similar contributions to teaching (and sometimes to research/scholarship) but are also responsible for line-managing Associate Lecturers (ALs), generally splitting their workloads 50:50 between AL management and academic duties; E&I has 705 AL contracts associated with its modules, 242 held by women (34%) and 463 by men (66%).

As at other institutions, our Research Fellows are primarily focused on research, but some also contribute to teaching. Similarly, our full-time PhD students are, as at other universities, based on campus. Some part-time PhD students are also campus-based, but most study from home.

Our managerial, administrative and technical staff provide similar support to that found in any university. Meanwhile, our curriculum staff manage the production and presentation of distance-learning modules, delivered at scale to our large student body. Although these professional services staff are closely aligned with the School, they are line-managed at Faculty level.

As a distance-learning institution, all our undergraduate and taught postgraduate students study from home, with most studying at a part-time rate. Currently we have approximately 10,000 students on the School's undergraduate and taught postgraduate modules.

An overview of the School constituency with gender breakdown is shown in Figure 2.2, with a detailed analysis given in Figure 2.3.

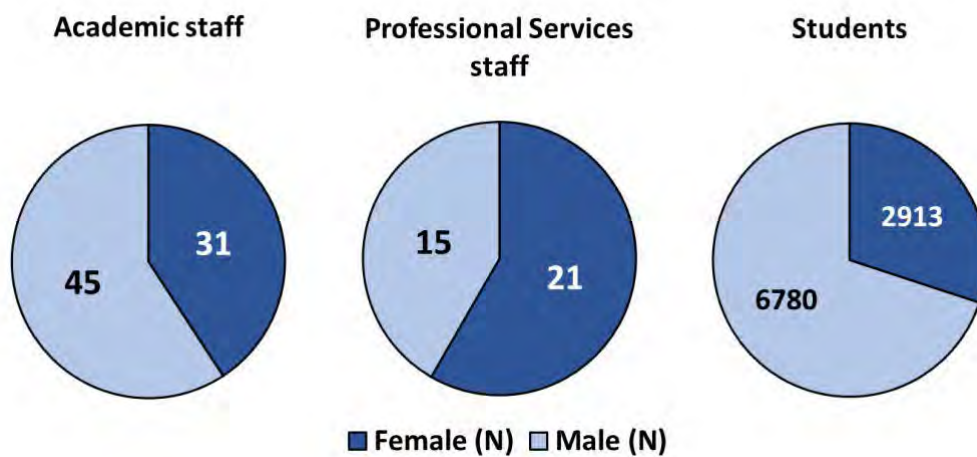


Figure 2.2: Overview of students and staff in the School of Engineering & Innovation by gender (March 2019).

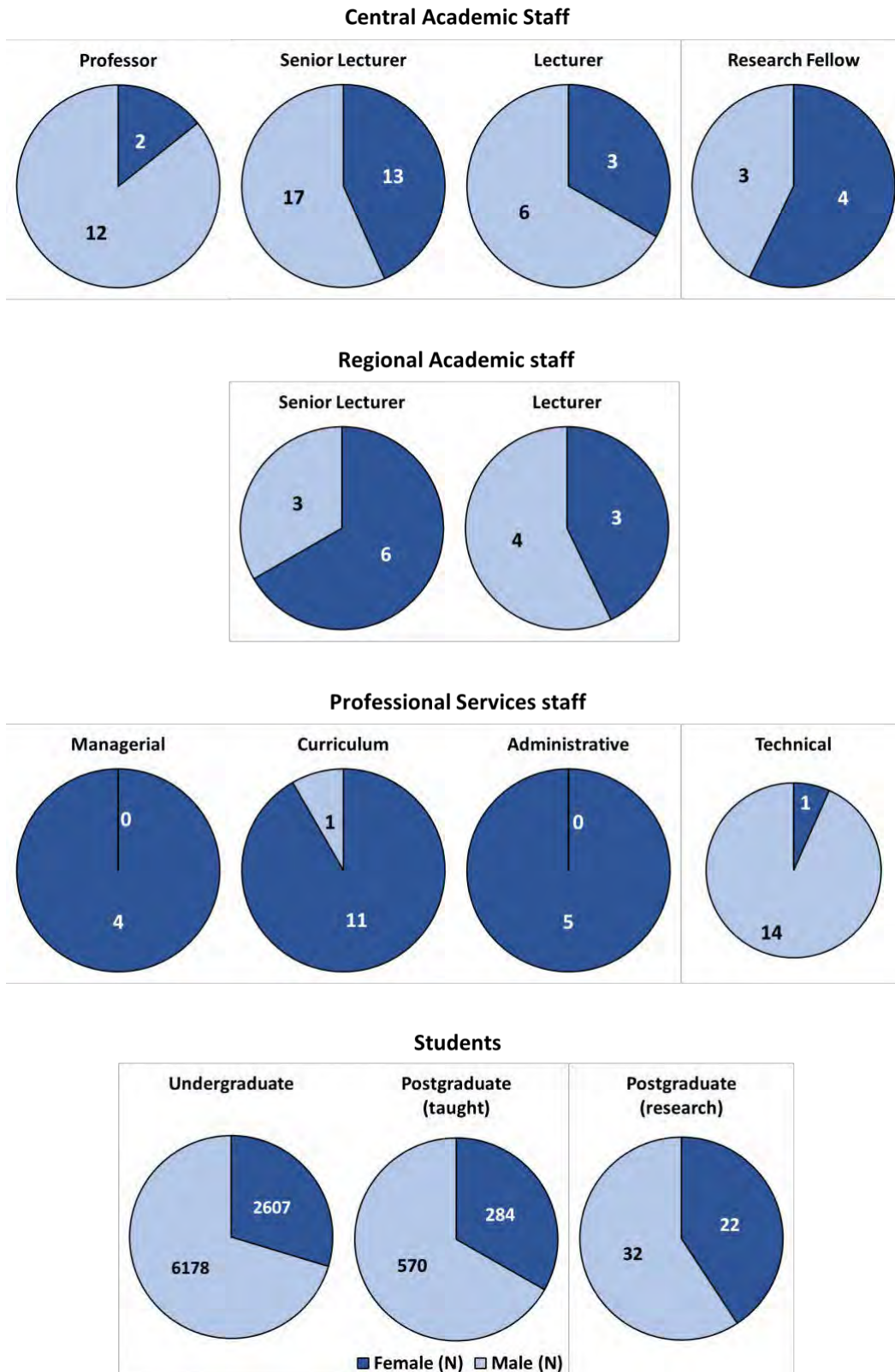


Figure 2.3: Detailed breakdown of students and staff in the School of Engineering & Innovation by gender, staff type and grade (March 2019).




[341 words]





3. The self-assessment process





Recommended word count: Bronze: 1000 words | Silver: 1000 words

Describe the self-assessment process. This should include:

- (i) a description of the self-assessment team

	Name and Job Title	Experience
	<p>Dr Stephen Burnley</p> <p>Senior Lecturer</p>	<p>Member of University's Senate</p> <p>Member of REF appeals panel</p> <p>Assessor for University's HEA Fellowship professional development programme ("Applaud")</p>
	<p>Professor Matthew Cook</p> <p>Professor of Innovation</p>	<p>Technology Management taught postgraduate Qualification Lead</p> <p>Leader of Future Urban Environments Research Team</p> <p>Member of Editorial Board of Urban Planning</p>
	<p>Teresa Cox</p> <p>Senior Manager Qualifications</p>	<p>Faculty Lead for Valued Ways of Working project</p> <p>Aurora Leadership Programme participant</p> <p>Works flexibly; [REDACTED]</p>

	<p>Alice Fraser-McDonald</p> <p>PhD student in Environment and Waste Management</p>	<p>Previously worked in Faculty of Business and Law as Curriculum Assistant and Programme Administrator</p> <p>Completed part-time Open University Masters qualification</p>
	<p>Dr Toni Gladding</p> <p>Senior Lecturer in Environmental Engineering</p>	<p>Qualification Lead for MSc Environmental Management until 2019</p> <p>E&I Director of Research from 2019</p> <p>Fellow of CIWM and Chartered Environmentalist</p>
	<p>Derek Jones</p> <p>Senior Lecturer in Design</p>	<p>Co-editor/author "EqualBITE: Gender Equality in Higher Education" (University of Edinburgh Athena SWAN engagement)</p> <p>Design Research Society International Advisory Council Member</p>
	<p>Dr Nicole Lotz</p> <p>Senior Lecturer in Design</p>	<p>SAT Chair</p> <p>University Gender Equality Steering Group (GESG) Member</p> <p>Leads networking project for Mexican female scientists and entrepreneurs</p> <p>Works flexibly</p>

	<p>Sharon Lumbers</p> <p>School Office Manager</p>	<p>Joined OU in 1991 [REDACTED] working full-time</p> <p>Studied in evenings to gain administration qualifications enabling career progression</p>
	<p>Dr Alice Moncaster</p> <p>Senior Lecturer in Engineering</p>	<p>Guest-edited journal special issue "Gender and intersectionality in engineering"</p> <p>[REDACTED] works flexibly from home</p>
	<p>Professor Carol Morris</p> <p>Deputy Head of School</p> <p>Professor of Engineering Education</p>	<p>SAT Chair 2014-2018 (now Deputy Chair)</p> <p>Aurora role model</p> <p>E&I Staff Development and Promotions Working Group Chair</p> <p>University GESG member</p>
	<p>Dr Catherine Rolph</p> <p>Post-doctoral Research Fellow</p>	<p>Early career researcher in Environmental Engineering</p> <p>Works flexibly and is on a fixed-term contract</p>

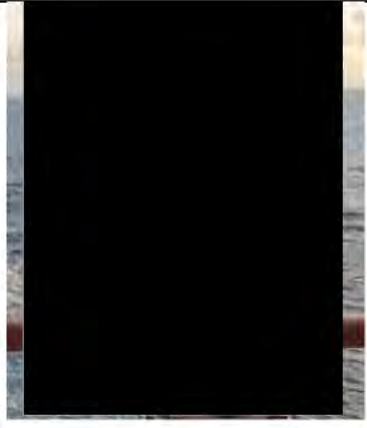

	<p>Senior Manager for Teaching</p>	<p>Manages curriculum support staff</p> <p>E&I Board of Studies Secretary</p> <p>Member of STEM Rewards Advisory Group for academic-related staff</p>
	<p>Professor David Sharp</p> <p>Head of School</p> <p>Professor of Musical Acoustics</p>	<p>School and Faculty Promotions Groups since 2011</p> <p>Chair of European Acoustics Association Musical Acoustics Technical Committee</p> <p>Regular outreach in schools</p>

Table 3.1: E&I self-assessment team.

The self-assessment team (SAT) membership is chosen to reflect the various roles within the School. Four of the current SAT were on the Bronze award team; other members joined subsequently. We aim to rotate membership to ensure a flow of new ideas and experience.

SAT members are allocated time to carry out Athena SWAN activities, and the membership of the Head of School (HoS) ensures leadership engagement and support.

The SAT constituency is designed to ensure a good balance of professional and personal experience. However, we have identified that the diversity of the team needs improving, with more male, BAME and junior staff members needed.

SAP-3.1: Co-opt more male, BAME and junior staff members as part of the rolling refresh of SAT membership.

(ii) an account of the self-assessment process

Following our Bronze award, the SAT met quarterly to monitor progress on the Bronze actions. Over the past year, the frequency of meetings has increased, initially to monthly intervals, before moving to fortnightly meetings in the final months before this Silver award submission.

Each Bronze action had a lead person responsible for reporting on progress at SAT meetings. The SAT Chair reported overall progress at School meetings and School Management Team meetings.

BAA-3.1: Establish an annual cycle of reporting at School meetings on Athena SWAN/gender equality issues.

IMPACT: Staff are aware of E&I equality and diversity initiatives. 88% of staff report they are treated with fairness and respect; 90% believe the School values individual differences.

The SAT Chair and Deputy Chair are members of the University's Gender Equality Steering Group (GESG) which advises on University policies. The Chair is also on the University SAT. This helps keep the School's and University's action plans aligned.

A new SAT Chair was appointed in 2018; the previous Chair continues as Deputy Chair, enabling a smooth transition.

BAA-3.2: Highlight and maintain the visibility of the SAT and ensure succession planning for team members.

IMPACT: New members have joined the SAT and a new Chair appointed, bringing fresh perspectives and ideas.

The self-assessment process was based on observations made while implementing the Bronze Action Plan, our E&I culture survey, focus groups, and analysis of student data, ensuring all Silver actions are evidence-based.

The survey was emailed to staff and PhD students during summer 2019. It included ten multi-part questions on perceptions and experiences within the workplace, and several demographic questions. There were 87 responses; 46 from women, 38 from men (3 chose not to give their gender). The 46 responses from women include 6 (13%) who identify as BAME, and 8 (17%) who consider themselves to have a disability. The 38 responses from men include 8 (21%) who identify as BAME, and 3 (8%) who consider themselves to have a disability.

Focus groups provided further insight regarding the working environments of Regional Academics and professional services staff. The survey and focus group results informed the action plan.

The Silver application was created collaboratively by the SAT. Feedback on drafts was obtained from external critical friends and GESG members, and final editing was carried out by the SAT Chair, HoS and Deputy HoS.

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

A key priority is to continue to increase the positive perception of Athena SWAN activities, and equality and diversity awareness, among School staff. A talk on

Inclusive Engineering Curricula by Dr Jan Peters at the December 2018 School meeting (Section 5.6) was so well-received it inspired **SAP-3.2**.

SAP-3.2: Establish a regular motivational talk or workshop on Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity and Accessibility at the School's annual December meeting.

An Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity and Accessibility Group (EDIAG) will be established, chaired by an EDIA Lead who will become a full member of the School's decision-making committees. EDIAG will oversee the SAT, meeting monthly to ensure the delivery of Silver actions.

SAP-3.3: Appoint an EDIA Lead to chair a newly-established Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity and Accessibility Group (EDIAG), which will oversee the SAT as part of its remit, and drive the delivery of Silver actions using a project management approach.

[549 words]

4. A picture of the department

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

The School of Engineering & Innovation was created in August 2016 from the former Department of Engineering & Innovation during internal restructuring which saw the MCT Faculty merge with the Science Faculty to form the STEM Faculty. The main change in transitioning from the Department to the School of Engineering & Innovation was the departure of the Development, Policy and Practice (DPP) Group (14 academic and research staff) to the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. Despite this reduction in staff numbers, E&I is still one of the University's larger academic units.

4.1. Student data

E&I is responsible for 9 undergraduate and 5 postgraduate qualifications, comprised of 24 undergraduate and 11 postgraduate modules. Undergraduate qualifications are offered in three disciplinary areas: Design, Engineering, Environment. Taught postgraduate qualifications are offered in four disciplinary areas: Engineering, Environment, Systems, Technology Management.

For reporting purposes, the analyses in this section follow the convention of academic years starting in October. This provides complete data for 2012/13 to 2017/18; at the time of writing, complete data for 2018/19 were not available¹.

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

The OU's Open Entry policy means any student can enrol on any Stage 1 module. Most other undergraduate and taught postgraduate modules (Stage 2 onwards) are also Open Entry, although some require evidence of prior learning to support better student attainment.

The Open Entry policy means the School does not have specific access or foundation courses, although a range of alternative materials are offered for students. Instead, each undergraduate discipline area has a designated Stage 1 'entry-point' module.

The starting populations for these modules are shown in Figure 4.1. All three disciplines show a small reduction in male student registrations over the six-year period, while female student registrations have remained stable or risen slightly. This is reflected in the female/male ratios on the three entry-point modules, which after a small drop (between 2012-2015 for Design and Environment; between 2012-2014 for Engineering) have then consistently increased.

¹ Due to the OU's scale, complete student data for a given academic year are not available until ~6 months after year end.

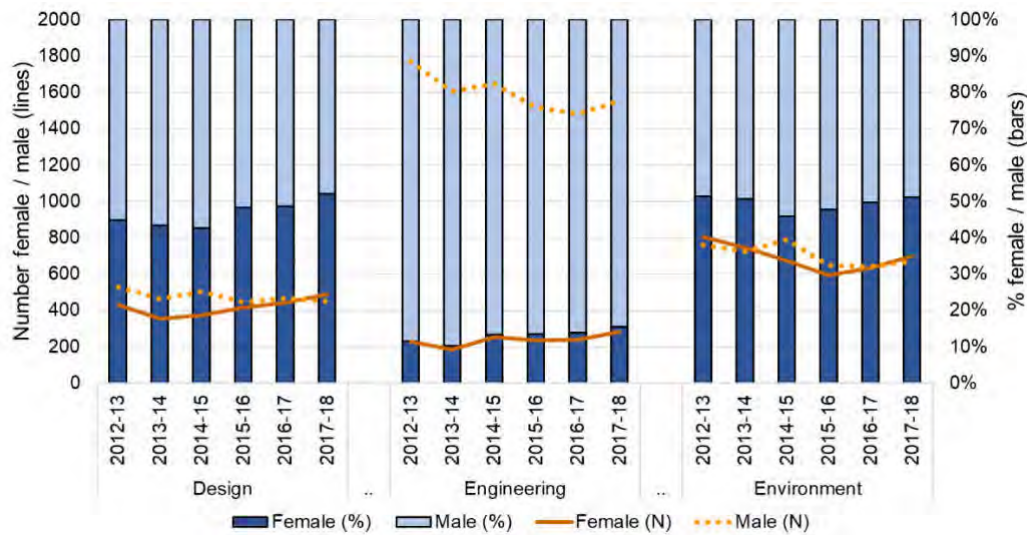


Figure 4.1: Student starting numbers, Stage 1 entry-point modules, by gender, year and discipline area.

Figure 4.2 compares the female populations on the Design and Engineering entry-point modules with HESA data² (no equivalent HESA benchmark exists for Environment). The percentage of women on both entry-point modules has grown year-on-year while the corresponding national average has remained relatively constant.

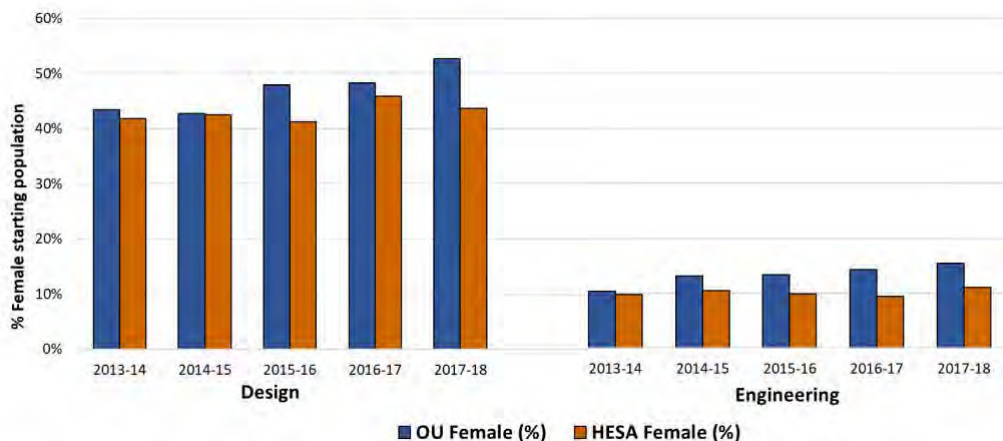


Figure 4.2: Female population (%), OU Stage 1 entry-point modules / HESA benchmark.

For the Engineering entry-point module, preliminary 2018/19 data indicate the trend is continuing, with the proportion of women increasing to 19%.

BAA-4.3: Investigate the decrease in the proportion of female students at Stage 1.

IMPACT: Engineering has shown a significant increase in the proportion of women on the entry-point module (from 11% in 2012 to 19% in 2019).

² <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/sb252/figure-14>

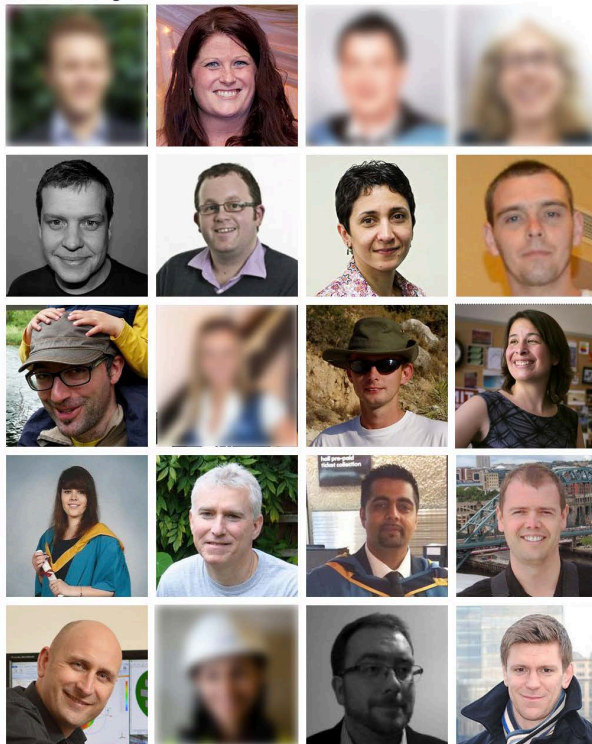
To attract and retain more women, the Engineering entry-point module was rewritten in 2016, improving accessibility and broadening the representation of Engineering. Examples of changes made include:

Engineers' wall – an interactive showcase of Engineering roles and people, including OU Engineering student stories (Figure 4.3);

Broadening of case studies – examples from different subject domains, locations, socio-economic contexts, stakeholders;

Application of tone and content – developing the OU's existing policies and approaches to appropriate text (e.g. gender-neutral).

Select an engineer



Anette (Peko) Hosoi



Anette (Peko) Hosoi is a professor of Mechanical Engineering at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She received her PhD in Physics from the University of Chicago and went on to become an NSF Postdoctoral Fellow in the MIT Department of Mathematics and at the Courant Institute, NYU. Her research interests include fluid mechanics, bioinspired design and locomotion, with a focus on optimization of crawling gastropods, digging bivalves, swimming microorganisms and soft robotics. Her work is being used, in collaboration with Schlumberger-Doll Research, Bluefin Robotics, and Boston Dynamics to guide the engineering design of robotic crawlers and other mechanisms.

Figure 4.3: Screenshot of the Engineers' Wall, an interactive activity in the entry-point Engineering module.

Figure 4.4 shows pass rates by gender for the Design, Engineering and Environment entry-point modules from 2012/13 to 2017/18, while Table 4.1 shows average pass rates since 2015.

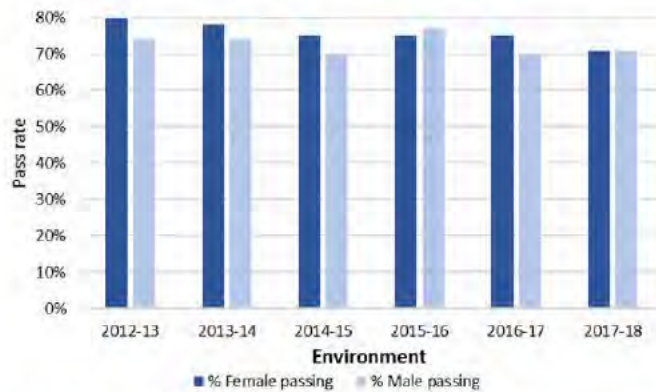
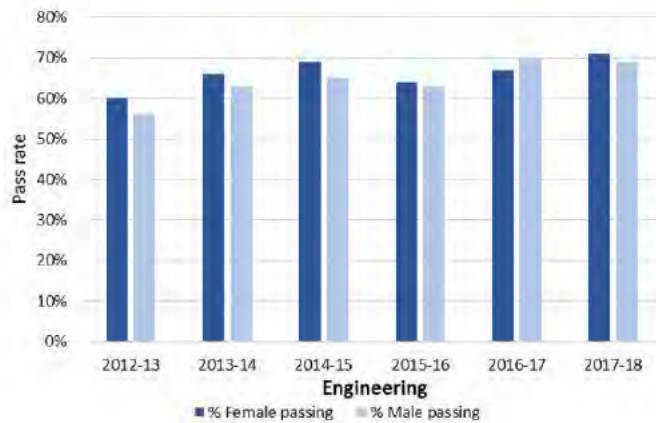
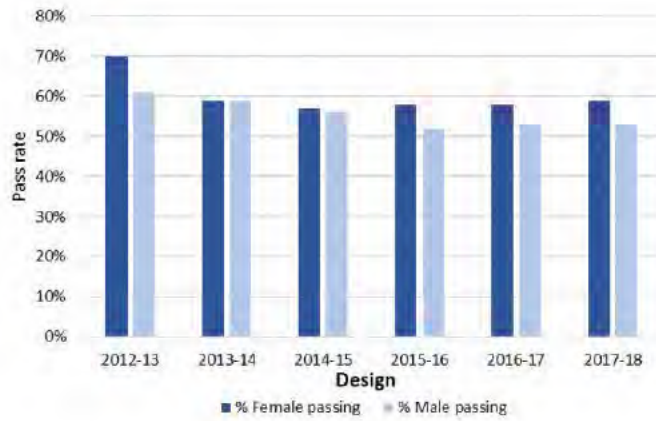


Figure 4.4: Percentages of female and male students passing Stage 1 entry-point modules.

	Female	Male
Design	58.0 %	52.4 %
Engineering	67.4 %	67.1 %
Environment	73.6 %	72.7 %

Table 4.1: Average pass rates for Stage 1 entry-point modules by gender (2015/16 to 2017/18).

For all three entry-point modules, from 2012-2015 female students had higher pass rates than their male counterparts, leading to **BAA-4.1** and **BAA-4.4**.

BAA-4.1: Determine whether the differences in pass rates for entry-point modules by gender are statistically significant, and if so, investigate reasons for the differences.

IMPACT: Between 2015-2018 no significant differences were found between female/male pass rates for the Engineering entry-point module (Table 4.1). A small difference in favour of female student outcomes can be seen for the Design and Environment entry-point modules.

BAA-4.4: Carry out an investigation into female student intentions at Stage 1 through an online survey, together with focus group and interviews.

IMPACT: A research project revealed that many female students are well-qualified career changers. Better understanding of student motivation has informed curriculum changes, the WiE conference agenda and improved industrial internship opportunities.

SAP-4.1: Continue to monitor the starting population and pass rate for women studying on the entry-point Engineering module, and explore the effect of informed curriculum changes and other interventions on them.

SAP-4.2: Provide input to the training and development for frontline student advisers on equality and unconscious bias so that they are better placed to advise students across all curriculum areas.

(ii) Numbers of undergraduate students by gender

In 2017/18, across all E&I undergraduate modules, 25% of student registrations were female. However, the proportion of women varied significantly with discipline. For Design and Environment modules, the percentages of women were 42% and 41% respectively, whereas for Engineering modules the percentage was much lower at 13% (although with the increase in the proportion of women on the entry-point Engineering module, this figure is anticipated to rise over time).

Figure 4.5 shows the student numbers across all E&I undergraduate modules over the past six years. Generally, the Engineering and Environment discipline areas have seen an increase in student numbers over the period, while Design has seen a decline. The steep increase in Engineering student numbers since 2015/16 (with similar percentage increases for both women and men) is likely

related to changes around Equivalent or Lower Qualification (ELQ) funding; from September 2015, tuition fee loans for certain STEM courses became available to students in England already holding a higher-level qualification, helping existing graduates to re-skill.

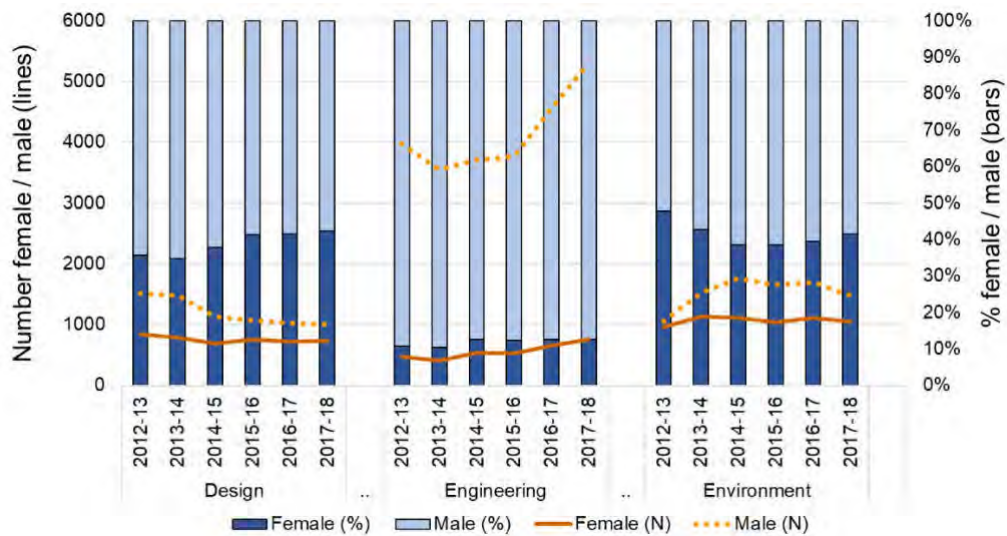


Figure 4.5: Student numbers, all undergraduate modules, by gender, year and discipline area.

SAP-4.3: Investigate the hypothesised link between the increase in Engineering student numbers and the ELQ funding changes to inform targeted marketing of potential female students holding prior HE qualifications.

Figure 4.6 compares the female populations on all Design and Engineering undergraduate modules with HESA data³ (again, there is no equivalent HESA benchmark for Environment). For Design, the female population has tended to be slightly less than the national average, whereas for Engineering it is generally around five percentage points higher.

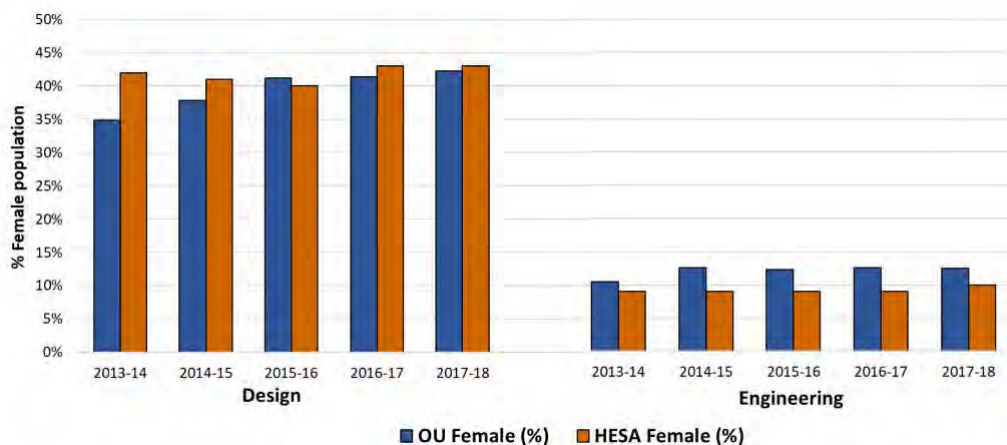


Figure 4.6: Female population (%), OU undergraduate modules / HESA benchmark.

³ <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/sb252/figure-14>

Figure 4.7 shows pass rates by gender across Design, Engineering and Environment undergraduate modules from 2012/13 to 2017/18, while Table 4.2 shows average pass rates since 2015.



Figure 4.7: Percentage female and male students passing undergraduate modules.

	Female	Male
Design	63.9 %	66.3 %
Engineering	70.6 %	72.7 %
Environment	70.0 %	71.3 %

Table 4.2: Average pass rates for all undergraduate modules by gender (2015/16 to 2017/18).

Figure 4.7 reveals a decline in pass rates on Design modules, and to a lesser extent on Environment modules, while pass rates on Engineering modules show a general improvement. It is difficult to spot any gender differentials from Figure 4.7, but Table 4.2 suggests a small difference in favour of male outcomes in all three discipline areas since 2015/16. (This is in complete contrast to the Stage 1 entry-point module outcomes in Table 4.1.)

Although the differences in Table 4.2 are small, they are worth discussing as they were also observed in our Bronze submission. A module's pass rate is a conflation of the module completion rate and the success rate on the module's assessments. At a conventional university, module completion rates are usually close to 100%. For a distance-learning institution, where study is primarily part-time, module completion rates are usually somewhat lower, due to the impact on study of life-events, caring responsibilities, work pressures etc.; we hypothesised that these may affect women disproportionately.

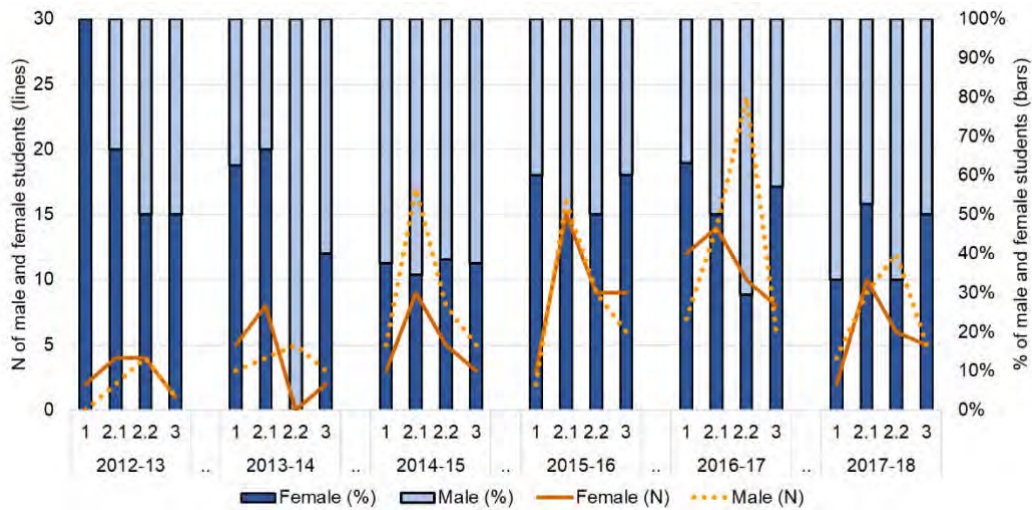
BAA-4.2: Investigate potential gender imbalance of withdrawal from study.

IMPACT: No gender-specific patterns were found in the formal withdrawal data (in withdrawal surveys, women and men reported similar reasons for withdrawal and in similar proportions).

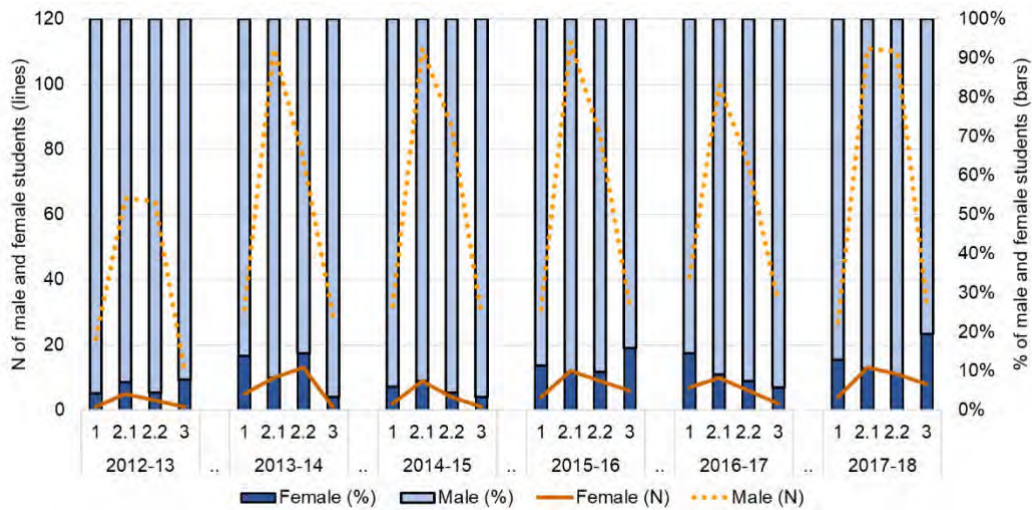
Only a small number of student withdrawals are formally notified; the majority are passive withdrawals, with no notification or reason given to the University.

SAP-4.4: Investigate further the potential gender imbalance of withdrawal from study through an analysis of passive withdrawals over a sample of E&I modules.

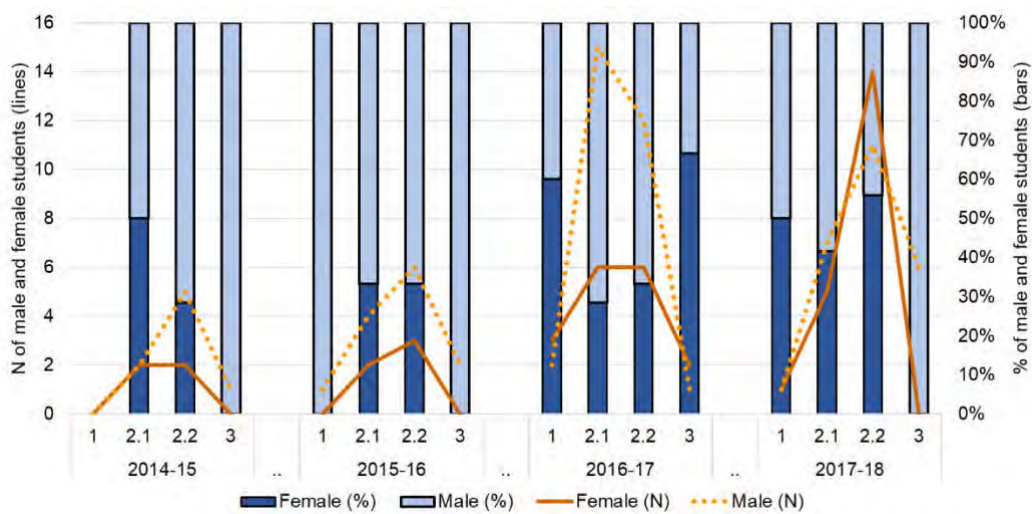
Figure 4.8 shows degree classifications by gender for E&I's three main undergraduate qualifications from 2012/13 to 2017/18. No obvious gender-related trends can be observed for any of the qualifications. The proportions of women and men graduating with each classification broadly mirror the proportions studying in the respective discipline area (Figure 4.5), with neither gender systematically achieving significantly more favourable results than the other.



BA/BSc (Hons) Design and Innovation



BEng (Hons)



BSc (Hons) Environmental Management and Technology

Figure 4.8: Degree classifications by gender from 2012/13 to 2017/18 for E&I's three main undergraduate qualifications. (The first students on the BSc (Hons) Environmental Management and Technology did not graduate until 2014/15.)

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

In 2017/18, across all E&I postgraduate modules, 34% of student registrations were female. As with the undergraduate modules, the proportion of women varied with discipline: Engineering (17%), Technology Management (26%), Systems (39%), Environment (50%).

Figure 4.9 shows student numbers across all E&I postgraduate modules over the past six years. All four discipline areas have seen a significant increase in student numbers, with the female/male ratios for each area showing some fluctuation but remaining broadly constant.

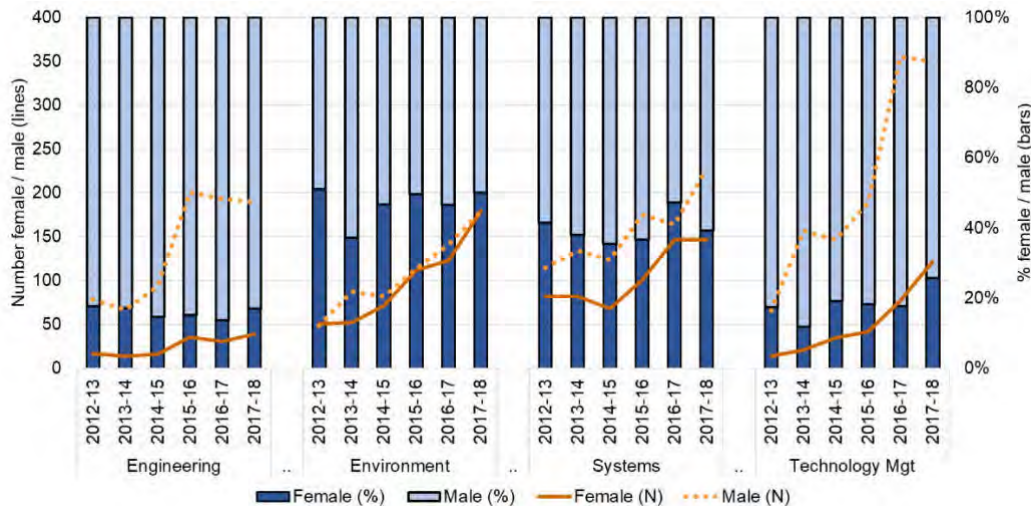


Figure 4.9: Student numbers, all postgraduate modules, by gender, year and discipline area.

At 34%, the proportion of students on postgraduate modules who are women is nine percentage points higher than on the undergraduate modules. This trend was noted in our Bronze submission leading to **BAA-4.7**.

BAA-4.7: Investigate why the postgraduate curriculum appears to be more attractive to women than the undergraduate curriculum.

IMPACT: OU female students were found to be more likely than men to be motivated by career-change. This has informed curriculum strategy with a new Level 7 Systems Thinking in Practice degree apprenticeship and an integrated Masters in Environment being developed.

Figure 4.10 shows pass rates by gender across Engineering, Environment, Systems and Technology Management postgraduate modules from 2012/13 to 2017/18, while Table 4.3 shows average pass rates since 2015.

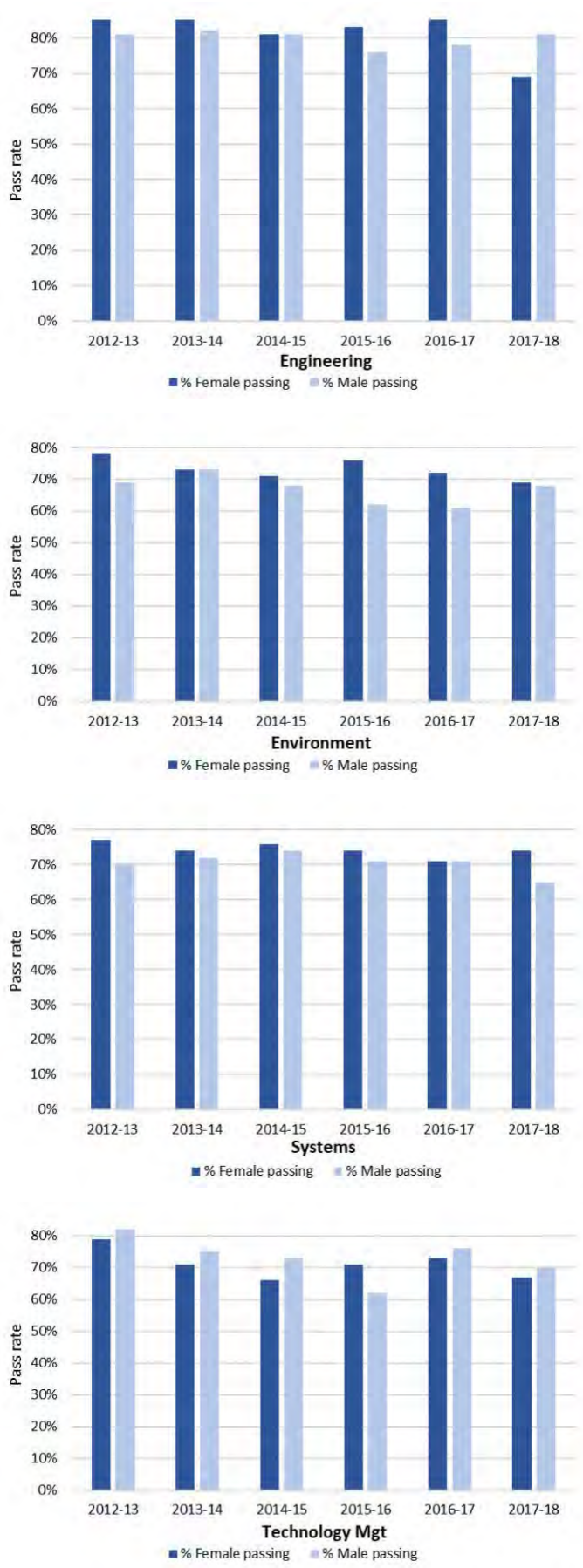


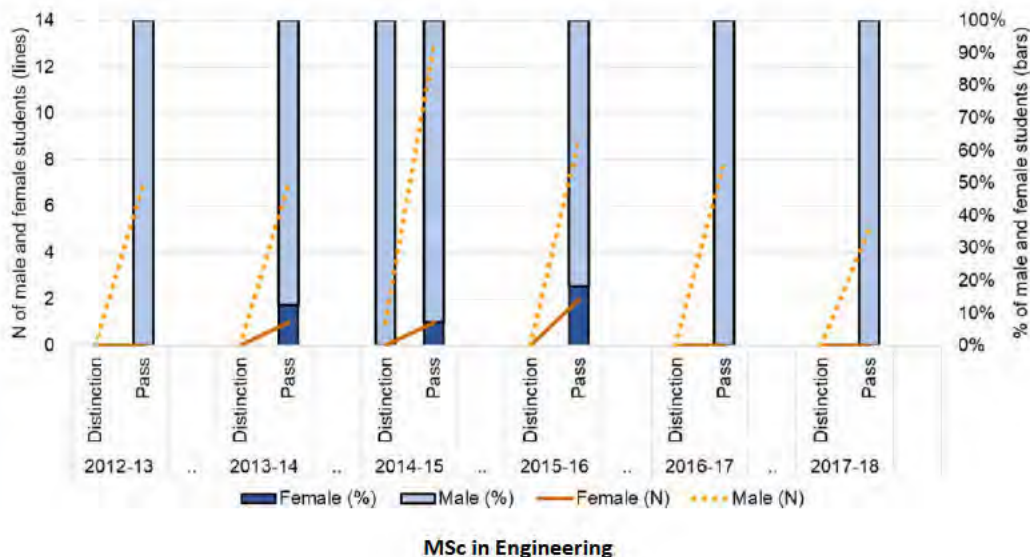
Figure 4.10: Percentages of female and male students passing postgraduate modules.

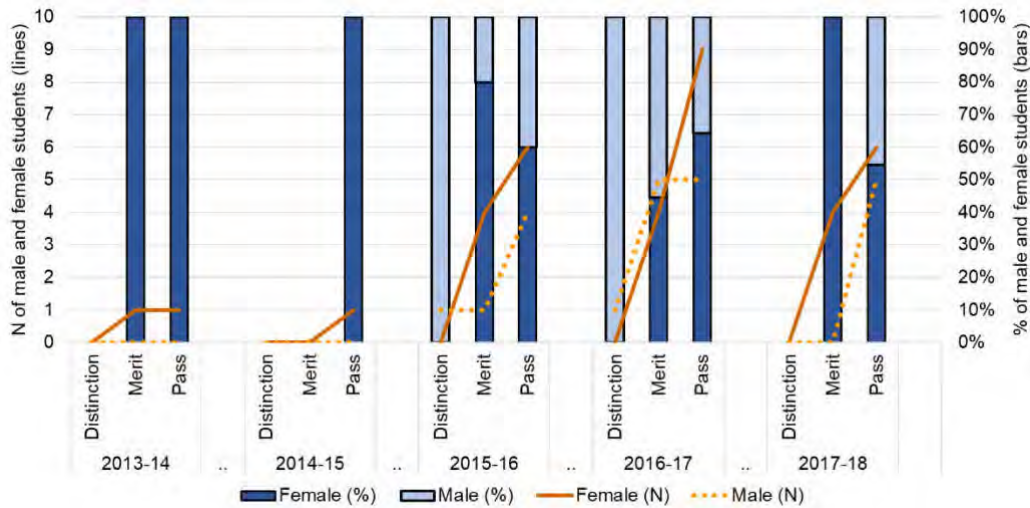
	Female	Male
Engineering	80.2 %	78.4 %
Environment	72.4 %	63.7 %
Systems	72.9 %	69.6 %
Technology Mgt	70.4 %	70.8 %

Table 4.3: Average pass rates for all postgraduate modules by gender (2015/16 to 2017/18).

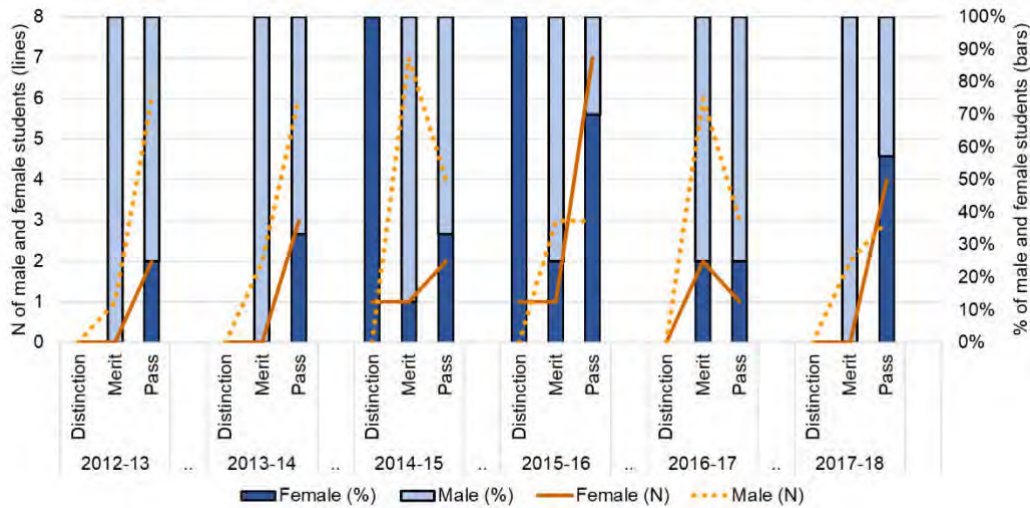
It is difficult to spot any gender differentials from Figure 4.10, although there is the suggestion that female pass rates on Engineering, Environment and Systems modules may generally be higher than male pass rates, while the opposite may be true for Technology Management modules. This is borne out by Table 4.3, with the difference in favour of female outcomes most pronounced for Environment modules.

Figure 4.11 shows degree classifications by gender for E&I's four main postgraduate qualifications from 2012/13 to 2017/18. As at undergraduate level, no obvious gender-related trends can be observed for any of the qualifications. The proportions of women and men graduating with each degree classification broadly mirror the proportions studying in the respective discipline area (Figure 4.9), with neither gender systematically achieving significantly more favourable results than the other.

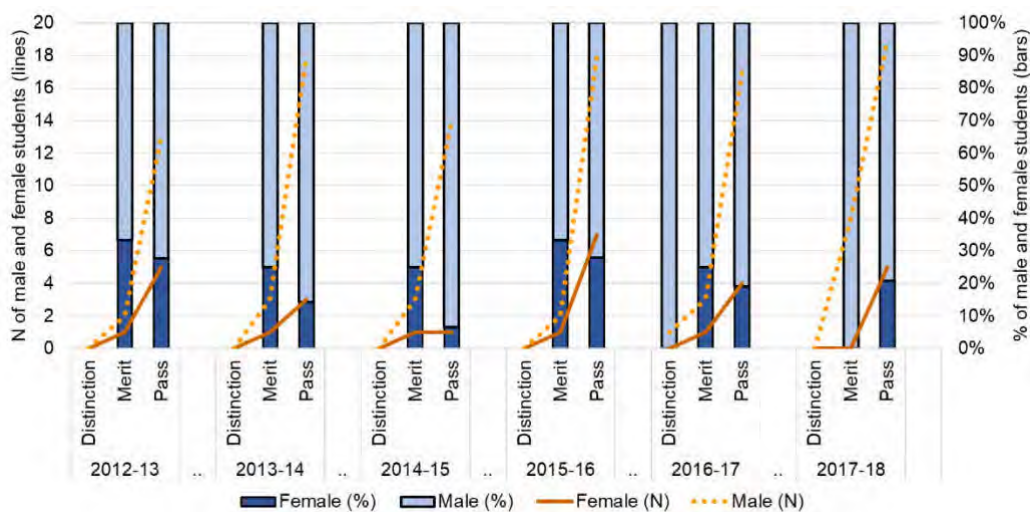




MSc in Environmental Management



MSc in Systems Thinking in Practice



MSc in Technology Management

Figure 4.11: Degree classifications by gender from 2012/13 to 2017/18 for E&I's four main postgraduate qualifications. (The first students on the MSc in Environmental Management did not graduate until 2013/14; the MSc in Engineering only has 'distinction' and 'pass' classifications.)

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

The School currently has 54 postgraduate research students, of whom 41% are women. There is a better gender balance among the full-time students than the part-time students (Table 4.4).

	Female	Male
Full-time	15 (47%)	17 (53%)
Part-time	7 (32%)	15 (68%)

Table 4.4: Current postgraduate research students by gender and study mode (as of March 2019).

Figure 4.12 shows how the proportions of female E&I PhD students studying full-time or part-time have varied over the last three years and compares with HESA enrolment data⁴.

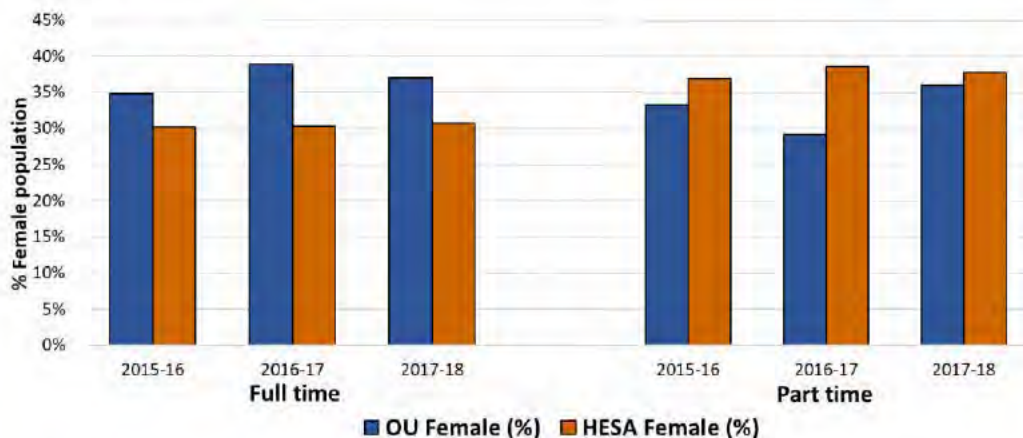


Figure 4.12: Female population (%), E&I PhD students / HESA benchmark.

For full-time PhD study the proportion of female E&I students has consistently exceeded the national average, whereas for part-time study the female population has been lower than nationally.

SAP 4.5: Investigate differences in motivation with respect to full-time and part-time study amongst E&I female PhD students.

Many E&I research students are self-funded, particularly those studying part-time. The remainder gain funding competitively by securing either an internally-funded studentship or an externally-funded studentship. Figure 4.13 shows application, offer and acceptance rates for these students over the past four years.

⁴ <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/students/whos-in-he> (combining 'Engineering and technology' and 'Creative arts and design' subject categories)

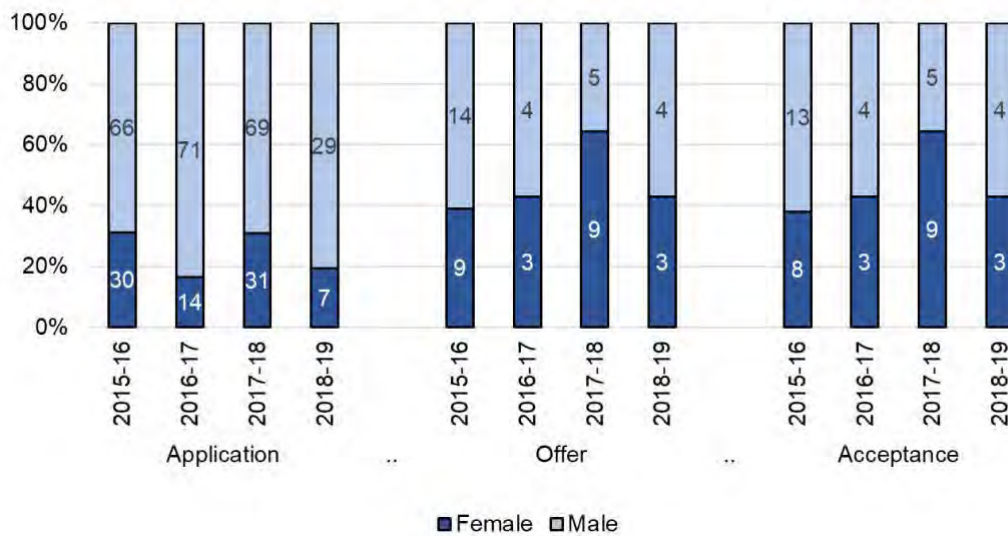


Figure 4.13: Application, offer and acceptance rates for postgraduate research study by gender and year.

BAA-4.8: Monitor and report application, offer and acceptance rates for competitive postgraduate research studentships by gender.

IMPACT: Since 2015, although there have been significantly more applications for PhD study from men than women, the offer and acceptance rates show a much better gender balance, with women making up 47% of students accepted for PhD study over the period (Figure 4.13).

Between 2015 and 2018, 31 students successfully completed PhDs. 32% (10) were women, which is in line with the proportion of female PhD students registered between 2009 and 2015 (and thus expected to complete between 2015 and 2018).

Figure 4.14 shows PhD student completions by study intensity and gender over the three years, while Figure 4.15 compares E&I completion data with HESA data⁵.

⁵ <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/students/outcomes> (combining 'Engineering and technology' and 'Creative arts and design' subject categories)

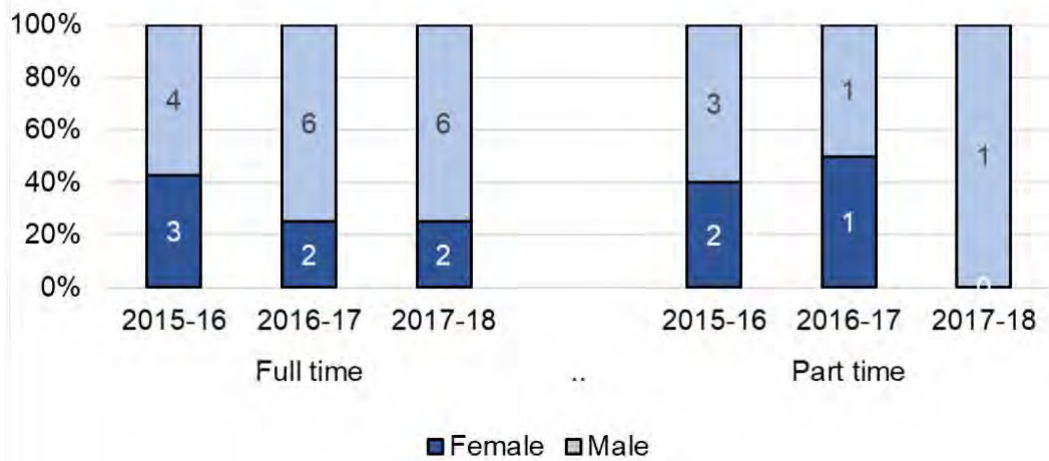


Figure 4.14: E&I PhD student completions by gender and year.

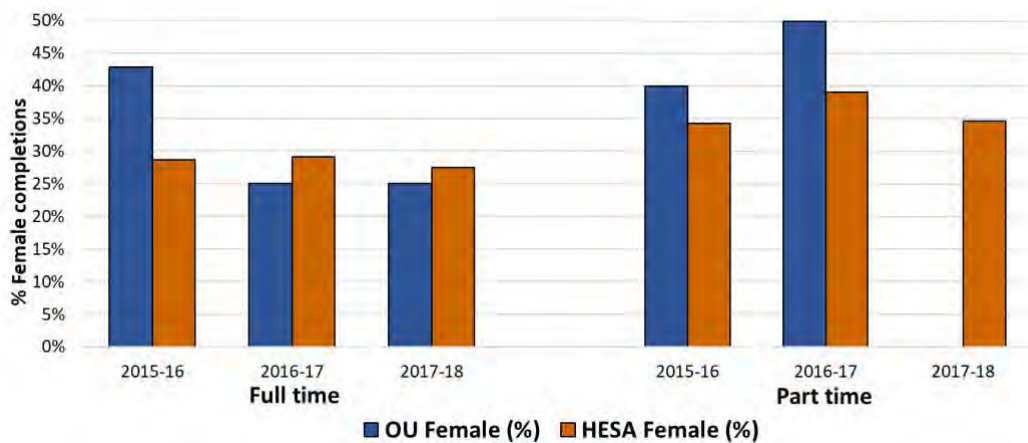


Figure 4.15: Female completions (%), E&I PhD students / HESA benchmark.

BAA-4.9: Ensure records held in the School for completion of research degrees are accurate and up-to-date to enable the monitoring of differences between part-time and full-time completion rates.

IMPACT: PhD completion data has been recorded. There are currently no gender-related differences between part-time and full-time completion rates.

(v) Progression pipeline between undergraduate and postgraduate student levels

Undergraduate to postgraduate progression is different at the OU compared with conventional institutions. The distance-learning aspect of our taught provision and the duration of study both impact on the pipeline.

Nevertheless, many OU students do progress from undergraduate to taught postgraduate study. Figure 4.16 shows the percentages of women and men registering on E&I's four main postgraduate qualifications since 2014 who already held a previous OU qualification.

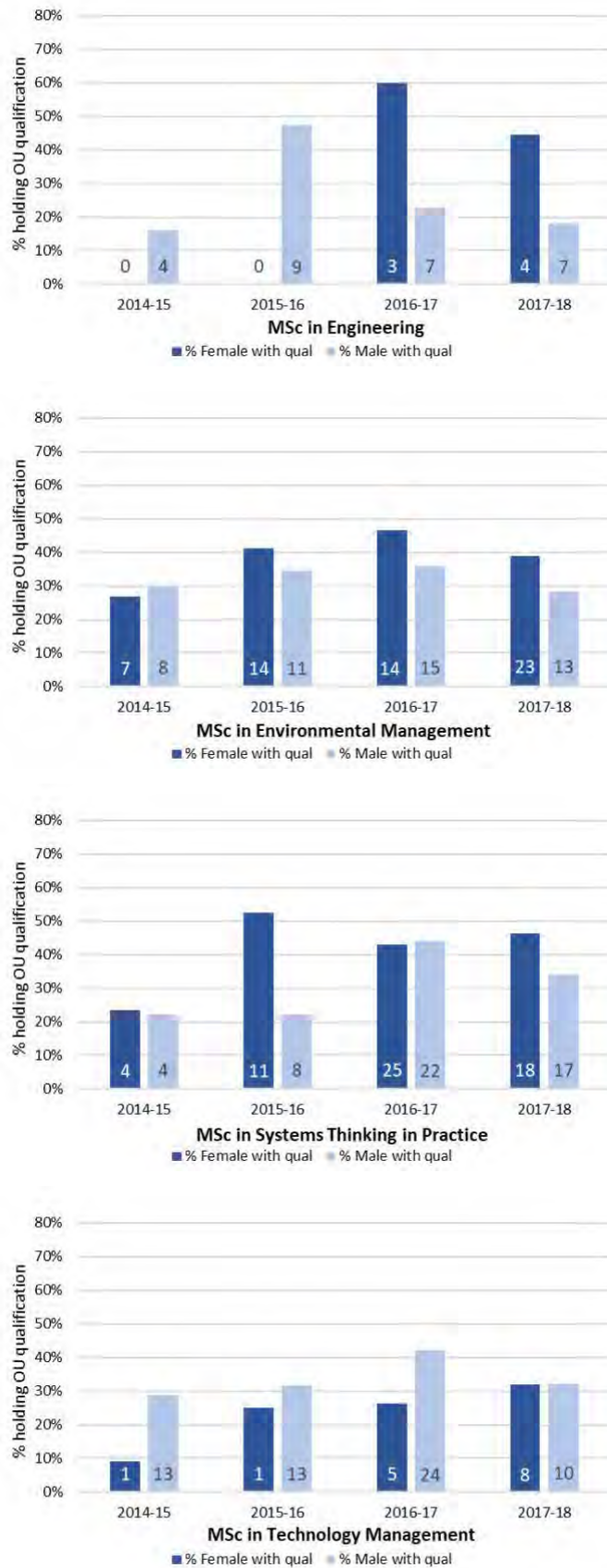


Figure 4.16: Percentages of female and male students on E&I's four main postgraduate qualifications who already held a previous OU qualification, by year of registration. (Actual numbers of female and male students holding a previous qualification also shown.)

There appears to be a slightly greater tendency for female students on the Environmental Management and Systems Thinking postgraduate qualifications to hold a prior OU qualification, while on the MSc in Technology Management the opposite is the case. However, the numbers involved are small, so it is difficult to draw firm conclusions.

BAA-4.10: To carry out an investigation to identify the scale and nature of student transition from undergraduate to postgraduate study within the School.

IMPACT: The progression from undergraduate to taught postgraduate study may be more prevalent amongst women in the Environmental Management and Systems Thinking discipline areas, and amongst men in the Technology Management discipline area (no obvious trend is apparent for Engineering).

SAP-4.6: For each discipline area, investigate the reasons and motivations why more women than men (or vice versa) progress from undergraduate to taught postgraduate study.

Some students also progress from OU taught study (undergraduate and postgraduate) to postgraduate research. Of our 54 current PhD students, 11 (20%) have previously gained OU taught qualifications. This progression is more common amongst part-time students with 32% (7/22) holding an OU qualification, compared with 13% (4/32) of full-time students. However, there is no gender bias, with 23% (5/22) of female PhD students holding an OU qualification, compared with 19% (6/32) of male students.

4.2. Academic and research staff data

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

E&I comprises 76 academic and research staff, of whom 41% are women. This compares very favourably with the 2017/18 sector average of 18.2% for Engineering and Technology departments⁶. In the following figures, the data for Lecturers and Senior Lecturers are separated out into Central Academics and Regional Academics as these two staff groups are employed on different terms and conditions; all current E&I professorial staff are Central Academics.

Figure 4.17 provides a snapshot of the staff numbers by gender. Women account for 48% of Senior Lecturers and 38% of Lecturers. However, in March 2019, only 14% of Professors were women. Although comparable with the 2017/18 sector average of 11.8% for Engineering and Technology departments⁷, the proportion is much lower than we would like, particularly when compared

⁶ <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/staff/areas>

⁷ <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/staff/salaries>

with the overall proportion of female academics in the School. This issue is covered in Section 5.1(iii).

Figure 4.18 shows how staff numbers by gender have changed over time. Between 2016 and 2017, the overall proportion of female academic and research staff increased from 36% to 41%. This change was largely a result of the DPP Group moving to another Faculty, when 3 women and 11 men left the School. Since then, the overall proportion of female academic and research staff has remained constant at 41%.

It is difficult to spot any trends amongst the specific categories/grades of staff over this period. In most cases, the staff numbers (women and men) have remained fairly static, although the proportion of female Central Academics at Senior Lecturer grade has consistently increased over the past four years, while the proportion of female Regional Academics at Lecturer grade has consistently decreased. The proportion of female researchers has fluctuated, associated with turnover of fixed-term contract staff.

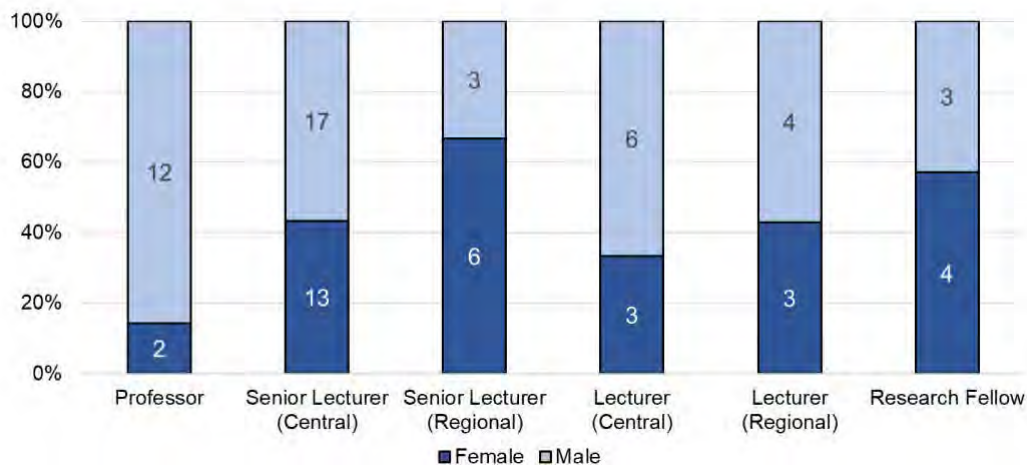


Figure 4.17: Academic staff numbers in the School of Engineering & Innovation by gender and academic role (March 2019).

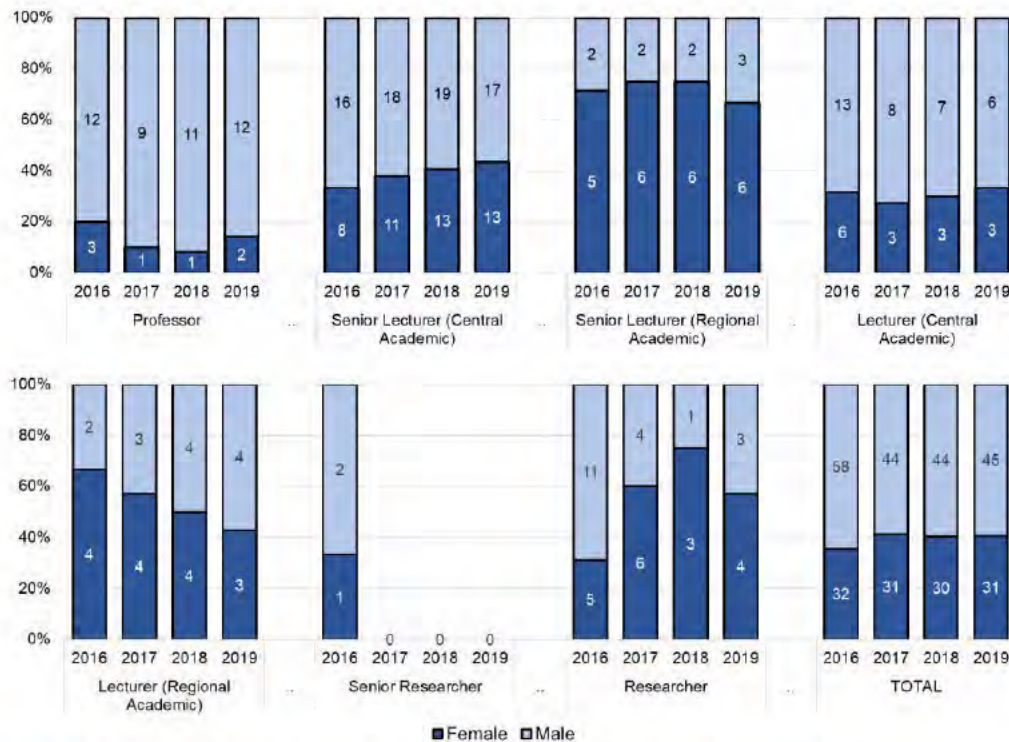


Figure 4.18: Academic staff numbers in the School of Engineering & Innovation by gender, over time.

SILVER APPLICATIONS ONLY

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

Our technical staff tend to be highly qualified, often with in-depth specialist knowledge. As a result, the transition between academic and technical roles, although not frequent, occurs in both directions.

In the past, three Project Officers transitioned to the role of Central Academic (starting as Lecturers and progressing to Senior Lecturers).

More recently (during the current reporting period), a former PhD student and then E&I post-doctoral researcher has become a member of technical staff, applying her specialist high-level expertise to supporting and developing our Materials Engineering research.

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

No E&I staff are on zero-hours contracts.

The majority of Central and Regional Academic staff are employed on permanent contracts, the exceptions being short-term appointments to cover maternity/paternity/adoption leave and secondments. However, research staff

are mostly on fixed-term contracts (FTC) supported by grant funding. Fixed-term and permanent contracts by gender are shown in Table 4.5.

	Mar 16			Mar 17			Mar 18			Mar 19														
	Female		Male	Female		Male	Female		Male	Female		Male												
	FTC	Permanent	% FTC	FTC	Permanent	% FTC	FTC	Permanent	% FTC	FTC	Permanent	% FTC												
Professor		3	0%	1	11	8%		1	0%	1	8	11%		1	0%	2	9	18%		2	0%	2	10	17%
Senior Lecturer (Central)		8	0%		16	0%		11	0%		18	0%		13	0%		19	0%		13	0%		17	0%
Senior Lecturer (Regional)		5	0%		2	0%		6	0%		2	0%		6	0%		2	0%		6	0%		3	0%
Lecturer (Central)	2	4	33%	2	11	15%		3	0%		8	0%		3	0%		7	0%		3	0%		6	0%
Lecturer (Regional)		4	0%		2	0%		4	0%		3	0%		4	0%		4	0%		3	0%		4	0%
Senior Researcher	1		100%		2	0%																		
Researcher	3	2	60%	11		100%	4	2	67%	4		100%	2	1	67%	1		100%	4		100%	3		100%

Table 4.5: Staff contract types (fixed-term and permanent) in the School of Engineering & Innovation.

Given the small numbers on fixed-term contracts, it is difficult to draw conclusions, but there are no obvious gender issues.

Meetings are held with fixed-term staff 6 months and 6 weeks before end of contract. These meetings focus on career progression and future employment possibilities within the OU and externally. Staff who are 6 months from end of contract are guaranteed an interview for any internal post where they meet the essential criteria.

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

Table 4.6 shows the number of leavers by grade and gender between March 2016 and March 2019. This data is collected both within the School and by the University's People Services team.

	Mar 16 - Mar 17				Mar 17 - Mar 18				Mar 18 - Mar 19			
	Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male	
	Leaver	% Total	Leaver	% Total	Leaver	% Total	Leaver	% Total	Leaver	% Total	Leaver	% Total
Professor	2	67%	3	25%		0%		0%		0%		0%
Senior Lecturer (Central)		0%	2	13%	1	9%		0%		0%	2	11%
Senior Lecturer (Regional)		0%		0%		0%		0%	2	33%		0%
Lecturer (Central)	1	17%	3	23%		0%		0%			1	14%
Lecturer (Regional)		0%		0%		0%		0%		0%		0%
Senior Researcher		0%	2	100%		0%		0%		0%		0%
Researcher		0%	6	55%	2	33%	4	100%	1	33%		0%

Table 4.6: Turnover of staff within the School of Engineering & Innovation by grade.

The large number of leavers between 2016 and 2017 was mainly due to the move of the DPP Group, with five Professors (2 women, 3 men), two Senior Lecturers (2 men), three Lecturers (1 woman, 2 men), a male senior researcher and three male researchers departing. The other leavers during this period were due to fixed-term contracts ending (1 male Lecturer, 3 male researchers) and one retirement (male senior researcher).

Between 2017 and 2018, the Senior Lecturer (Central Academic) leaver was a female retirement, while the six researchers (2 women, 4 men) came to the end of their fixed-term contracts.

Between 2018 and 2019, there were four retirements; one male Senior Lecturer (Central Academic), two female Senior Lecturers (Regional Academics), one female researcher. Two Central Academics moved to different institutions, gaining promotion in doing so (1 male Senior Lecturer, 1 male Lecturer).

[2665 words]

5. Supporting and advancing women's careers

Recommended word count: Bronze: 6000 words | Silver: 6500 words

5.1. Key career transition points: academic staff

(i) Recruitment

The University's People Services unit is responsible for coordinating recruitment and advertising vacancies. The School provides a role description, person specification and advertisement text. All advertisements include the University's equality and diversity statement, highlight the School's Athena SWAN Bronze award, and are placed on the Women's Engineering Society (WES) website.

BAA-4.11: Ensure job adverts promote the School as supportive for women, mention flexible working and the proportion of women at senior levels.

BAA-4.12: Use 'women in science and engineering' networks to advertise jobs and actively encourage suitable women to apply.

IMPACT: The average application rate by women increased from 19% in the last reporting period to 26% in the current period.

"When I applied to the OU I was particularly attracted by the advert, which highlighted the School's Athena SWAN status and sought candidates who were committed to equality and diversity principles. Coming from a male-dominated engineering department, I was keen to find a more balanced working environment." (H.L.)

SAP-5.1: Use "Textio" or similar tool to ensure language used in job advertisements is gender neutral.

SAP-5.2: Extend targeted advertising (beyond advertising on WES website) to attract more female applicants to academic positions.

SAP-5.3: Promote diversity and equality initiatives on School website as well as on social media channels to attract more female academic job applicants.

Diversity is embedded in the University's recruitment and selection guidelines. Fair selection training is recommended for staff undertaking recruitment and is mandatory for interview panel chairs.

BAA-5.1: Ensure all staff on interview panels have undergone equality & diversity and unconscious bias training.

IMPACT: All E&I staff (not just panel members) have been encouraged to undertake relevant training. In the past 2 years, 45% have undertaken *Equality Essentials* and 61% have undertaken *Understanding Unconscious Bias* modules. 80% of staff have participated in inclusivity workshops.

SAP-5.4: Ensure all staff undertake the *Equality Essentials* and *Understanding Unconscious Bias* modules or equivalent alternative training.

Application and appointment rates by gender and job role for 16 academic positions recruited since 2015 are shown in Table 5.1. During the same period, several Research Fellows were also appointed, but full recruitment data was not collected.

SAP-5.5: Collect full data on gender balance of application, shortlisting and appointment for Research Fellow recruitments in the School.

	Mar 15 – Mar 16			Mar 16 – Mar 17			Mar 17 – Mar 18			Mar 18 – Mar 19														
	Female	Male		Female	Male		Female	Male		Female	Male													
	applicants	shortlisted	appointed	applicants	shortlisted	appointed	applicants	shortlisted	appointed	applicants	shortlisted	appointed	applicants	shortlisted	appointed									
Senior Lecturer (Central)				10	4	2	41	4	0				0	0	0	15	6	1						
Lecturer (Central)	18	9	2	33	6	2	9	5	1	53	8	2				4	2	1	30	5	0			
Lecturer (Regional)	3	2	1	16	3	0	21	3	0	31	4	1	27	3	1	40	7	1	6	1	0	24	4	1

Table 5.1: Application and appointment rates by gender and job role.

Table 5.1 reveals 98 female and 283 male applicants across the 16 academic recruitments. Further analysis shows that 30% (29/98) of the women and 17% (47/283) of the men were shortlisted. Subsequently, 28% (8/29) of shortlisted women and 17% (8/47) of shortlisted men were appointed.

Therefore, although initial application numbers were heavily biased towards male applicants, following shortlisting and interviewing, no gender bias was

observed in the final appointments. Similarly, no gender bias was identified in the grade or type (Central/Regional Academic) of the appointment.

BAA-5.2: Work towards ensuring that interview panels for academic positions have at least two women and two men.

IMPACT: Since 2015 all interview panels for academic positions have either had an exact gender balance or have comprised more women than men.

Subsequently, there have been 3 Senior Lecturer and 13 Lecturer appointments. Of these 8 were women and 8 were men.

"I was pleasantly surprised by the diversity of the interview panel. The interview questions further demonstrated the emphasis on supporting diversity." (H.L.)

By job role, between 2015 and 2019, 34% of applications for Regional Academic positions were from women, compared with 19% for Central Academic positions. In comparison, in the previous (2012-2015) period, 22% of applications for Regional Academic positions were from women, compared with 18% for Central Academic positions.

BAA-4.14: Explore and understand why women appear to be disproportionately attracted to Regional Academic role.

IMPACT: Focus group discussions revealed the enhanced flexibility of the role makes it particularly attractive for staff with caring responsibilities, which may have a bigger impact on women.

BAA-4.16: Monitor the effect of major institutional restructuring, which will disproportionately impact on Regional Academic staff as they formally become homeworkers, on the recruitment and career progression of those staff.

IMPACT: The percentage of applications for Regional Academic roles from women increased from 22% to 34% over the reporting period, reinforcing the findings of BAA-4.14.

(ii) Induction

The OU has a comprehensive induction process, which the School follows.

E&I's three-month induction programme comprises:

- Prior to start the new employee is contacted by the School Administrator to ensure necessary resources and equipment are provided.
- On arrival the new employee is introduced to key School/Faculty colleagues, and shown around the campus.

- Meetings are held to discuss probation, training and appraisal and the new employee undertakes an induction programme.

New staff are allocated a probation supervisor (responsible for initial workload planning, career development advice and setting probation targets) alongside a mentor who acts as a work buddy.

New employees are required to undertake training in diversity, GDPR, counter-terrorism and safeguarding. Policies relating to caring responsibilities, nursery provision and flexible working are provided.

Induction is monitored via completion of a pro-forma by the new employee and their probation supervisor. Probation records are maintained by People Services.

The E&I culture survey showed that only 3% (1/37) of Central Academics disagreed their probation was well-managed. However, for Regional Academics this figure rose to 14% (2/14), revealing a potential issue with probation management when staff member and probation supervisor are not co-located.

SAP-5.6: Provide training for probation supervisors and mentors so that the roles and responsibilities are clear to all parties, with a specific focus on probation management of homeworkers.

(iii) Promotion

Promotions process and associated support

There is a two-stage standard process for identifying potential promotion candidates. First, CVs of non-professorial academic staff are examined each December by the School's appraiser team, and candidates for promotion to Senior Lecturer, Senior Research Fellow or Chair are identified. The candidates are notified and each develops a written promotion case, under the guidance of their appraiser or another senior colleague.

The second stage of the process varies depending on the level of promotion. For promotions to Senior Lecturer or Senior Research Fellow, the written cases are evaluated by the E&I Staff Development and Promotions Working Group (SDPWG) at three meetings (February-May) to enable improvement and development. Following this, SDPWG recommends which cases should go to the Faculty Promotions Group (FPG) meeting in June for final decisions.

For promotions to Chair, the written cases are considered by the Faculty's Chairs' Working Group (CWG). Following an iterative process of improvement, CWG recommends which cases should go to the University's Chairs' Sub-Committee (CSC) which meets three times a year to make final decisions on Chair promotions.

There are four promotion profiles: teaching, research and teaching, research, knowledge exchange. Senior Lecturer and Senior Research Fellow promotion candidates are required to demonstrate excellence in the key criteria associated

with their chosen profile, along with evidence of excellent academic leadership. Meanwhile, Chair promotion candidates are required to demonstrate an outstanding record against the key criteria, along with evidence of outstanding academic leadership.

The promotion profiles and criteria were drafted in consultation with the University's GESG. They specify reductions in expectations for staff who have taken parental leave, have other caring responsibilities, work part-time, or have other individual circumstances. The FPG and CSC include members appointed for their expertise in equality and diversity who help determine any requirements that should be reduced due to individual circumstances.

BAA-5.3: Provide training for staff in understanding the new promotions criteria and preparing for promotion cases, including gaining HEA Fellowship.

IMPACT: The promotions processes have been communicated to staff annually at School meetings, as well as individually by appraisers. The number of promotions has increased from an average of 5 per year (33% women) in the last reporting period to 5.25 per year (48% women) in the current period.

For every staff member at Lecturer grade (AC3), support and mentoring are provided by their appraiser to ensure they are generating relevant evidence for a future promotion case (see Section 6 for examples of staff who have been supported to achieve promotion to Senior Lecturer).

For Senior Lecturers (AC4), a peer-support group meets quarterly to highlight career development opportunities and support colleagues in developing Chair promotion cases. These meetings are also attended by the HoS and two other Professors who sit on the Faculty's CWG and the University's CSC.

BAA-4.15: Encourage and monitor Regional Academic staff progression to professorial grade.

BAA-5.5: Ensure that each Regional Academic at Senior Lecturer grade has a balanced workload which permits them to spend time on academic activities appropriate for a professorial promotion case.

IMPACT: Although none of the four professorial promotions during the reporting period were current Regional Academics, one staff member (female) who spent 20 years as a Regional Academic, and regularly attended the peer-support group, was promoted to Professor.

Despite the above, evidence suggests that greater support is needed for Regional Academics at Senior Lecturer grade to help them towards Chair promotion, as the Regional Academic focus group revealed that the promotion criteria may be harder to achieve for those staff.

SAP-5.7: Work on a one-to-one basis with Regional Academics who express an interest in professorial promotion to help them fulfil promotion criteria.

Promotions success rates

	Mar 15 – Mar 16				Mar 16 – Mar 17				Mar 17 – Mar 18				Mar 18 – Mar 19			
	Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male	
	cases	% success	cases	% success	cases	% success	cases	% success	cases	% success	cases	% success	cases	% success	cases	% success
Central Academic	0	-	4	75%	2	100%	3	100%	1	100%	2	100%	1	100%	0	-
Regional Academic	0	-	0	-	3	33%	0	-	0	-	0	-	2	100%	1	100%
Researcher	1	100%	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-

Table 5.2: Lecturer/Research Fellow to Senior Lecturer/Senior Research Fellow (AC3 to AC4) promotions in the School of Engineering & Innovation, Mar 2015-Mar 2019.

Table 5.2 shows Senior Lecturer/Senior Research Fellow promotions between 2015 and 2019, broken down by staff category. (N.B. most E&I researchers are employed on external grants held by academic staff; they are not independent researchers, in the sense that they did not secure their own funding. They have the same promotion opportunities as Central Academics, Regional Academics and independent researchers, but are less likely to meet the academic leadership criteria.)

Across all three staff categories, over the four-year period there were eight women promoted and nine men, so the average number of promotions per year were 2.00 for women and 2.25 for men. For context, the average number of women on the AC3 scale during this time was 10.8 while the average number of men was 14.3. So, on average, 18.6% of women at AC3 were promoted per year, compared with 15.8% of men.

Although the numbers of promotions involved are relatively small, it appears there was no gender imbalance in terms of AC3 to AC4 promotion success rates.

Over the same period, there were three unsuccessful promotion cases (two women, one man). The candidates each received detailed feedback and were supported by their appraisers and other senior colleagues to generate further evidence; all three subsequently achieved promotion within the next two years.

As a final note on Senior Lecturer/Senior Research Fellow promotions, in addition to those achieved through the standard process described above, one further male staff member was promoted via the University's fast-track procedure over the four-year period, having received a job offer from another HEI.

With respect to Chair promotions between 2015 and 2019, two women and two men were promoted to Professor via the standard process. Therefore, the average number of promotions to Chair per year were 0.5 for women and 0.5 for men. For context, the average number of women on the AC4 scale during this time was 15.5 and the average number of men was 22.3. So, on average, 3.2% of women at AC4 were promoted per year compared with 2.2% of men.

As the numbers involved are small, it is difficult to draw statistical conclusions, but the figures suggest no gender imbalance in terms of Chair promotion success rates via the standard process.

However, in addition to the four professorial promotions achieved through the standard process, two men were promoted to Chair via the University's fast-track procedure over the period, having received Chair offers from other HEIs. Together with the aforementioned male Senior Lecturer fast-track promotion, this may indicate a gender bias associated with this promotion route.

SAP-5.8: Expand the communication to staff of the standard annual promotions cycle and processes (BAA-5.3) to include the fast-track route to promotion.

SAP-5.9: Investigate the reasons why women appear not to take the fast-track route to promotion.

Although no gender bias was found in the success rates via the standard Chair promotion process, the current picture in E&I shows only 2 female Professors compared with 12 male (Figure 4.17). However, there are approximately equal numbers of male (20) and female (19) Senior Lecturers (Central and Regional Academics combined), and we are committed to ensuring this gender balance feeds through to the professorial cohort.

SAP-5.10: Continuously monitor the Chair promotion rates for women and men, and the resultant balance of female and male Professors within the School, and ensure that female staff have access to the same opportunities to gain the relevant experience and achieve promotion.

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

93 E&I staff (33 women, 60 men) were eligible for consideration for REF2014 (comprising all Central Academics, Regional Academics and independent

researchers on the census date). 46 (14 women, 32 men) were submitted, accounting for 42.4% of eligible women and 53.3% of eligible men.

This picture changes if Regional Academic staff are omitted. As noted elsewhere, Regional Academics spend half their time line-managing Associate Lecturers. Although some carry out research, the majority focus their remaining time on teaching and scholarship. When Regional Academics are removed from the calculations, 63.6% of eligible female Central Academics/independent researchers and 59.3% of eligible male Central Academics/independent researchers were submitted to REF2014.

It appears therefore, at least among Central Academics and independent researchers, that there was no gender imbalance in the percentages of eligible female/male staff returned in REF2014.

We no longer hold RAE2008 data for comparison.

For REF2021, the OU Code of Practice states that all staff who spend >15% of their time on research will be submitted, meaning most Regional Academics will be excluded.

SAP-5.11: Interrogate the REF2021 submission process to determine whether the final gender balance of staff being submitted reflects the gender balance of the School.

SILVER APPLICATIONS ONLY

5.2. Key career transition points: professional and support staff

(i) Induction

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

The induction process for professional services staff is compulsory and occurs every time the staff member is appointed to a new role. The Faculty provides an induction plan typically consisting of an Induction Guide (introducing the role, how it fits within the structure, job requirements, further information), meetings with key colleagues, a work buddy (from the local team) and a mentor (from the wider Faculty).

A focus group discussion on the induction process revealed that curriculum staff considered the STEM Curriculum Manager Induction Guide exemplary. The E&I culture survey showed that only one of 15 respondents felt induction did not give the information needed.

(ii) Promotion

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

The only route for career progression for professional services staff is to apply for a higher or identical grade job. Focus group members agreed they would initially seek support from their line-manager when seeking progression. Participants were aware of personal development opportunities (e.g. career planning workshops and secondments), which were felt to be very positive.

Within the period, four Grade 7 professional services staff (three women, one man) successfully applied for Grade 8 posts elsewhere in the OU.

5.3. Career development: academic staff

(i) Training

The University provides a comprehensive professional training programme, with specific courses for academic and research staff. Online modules in 'Professional Skills for Research Leaders' are aimed at early-career researchers and all researchers are encouraged to access the online Researcher Development Framework. Further modules are provided for 'Distance Educator Career Development', 'Leadership and Mentoring', and 'Scholarly Career Development'.

Between 2016 and 2019, 96% of female and 94% of male academic staff undertook some form of online training.

HEA Fellowship is supported through 'Applaud', the University's AdvanceHE-accredited professional development programme. The School actively encourages and supports academic staff who wish to apply for HEA Fellowship at all levels (Table 5.3).

	2015		2019	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Associate Fellow of HEA	0	0	0	1
Fellow of HEA	4	2	5	3
Senior Fellow of HEA	2	6	7	8
Principal Fellow of HEA	0	1	1	2

Table 5.3: HEA accreditation of E&I staff by gender (2015 snapshot and 2019 snapshot).

BAA-5.3: Provide training for staff in understanding the new promotions criteria and preparing for promotion cases, including gaining HEA Fellowship.

IMPACT: HEA Fellowships have increased from 15 (40% women) in 2015 to 27 (48% women) in 2019.

The School supports AdvanceHE's Aurora programme for female staff and encourages Senior Lecturers to undertake development through AdvanceHE's Leadership Foundation.

BAA-5.7: Encourage uptake of various leadership development programmes for Senior Lecturers.

IMPACT: Two female mid-career Central Academics have undertaken Aurora resulting in one becoming OpenSTEM Laboratory Director (a Faculty leadership role). Additionally, two Senior Lecturers (one female, one male) have undertaken AdvanceHE/Leadership Foundation programmes leading to Faculty and University level roles. The female Senior Lecturer was subsequently promoted to Professor.

SAP-5.12: Work in conjunction with the Faculty and University to diversify the source of leadership development programmes in which women's participation could be encouraged.

E&I culture survey responses were positive regarding the availability and relevance of training opportunities. 69% of respondents felt they had been actively encouraged to take up career development opportunities, rising to 85% for female Central Academics.

BAA-5.6: Monitor uptake of academic staff training and development in a systematic way.

IMPACT: The University's 'My Learning Centre' was introduced in 2017 enabling systematic monitoring of internal training uptake and identification of gaps.

SAP-5.13: Develop a School method to comprehensively monitor staff training provided externally, currently only collected on an individual basis through confidential appraisal records.

(ii) Appraisal/development review

Career Development and Staff Appraisal (CDSA) for academic and research staff takes place each May. Appraisals are conducted by E&I senior academics and enable staff members to review their achievements and set objectives for the coming year. CDSA is an opportunity for longer-term career planning and to identify training and development needs. Appraisal outcomes feed into workload planning for the following academic year. Engagement with CDSA is a requirement for any rewards or promotion cases.

Each E&I staff member is assigned an appraiser. Careful consideration is given to appraiser/appraisee pairings with either party able to request a change at any time. All appraisers undergo training before being allocated appraisees.

CDSA engagement is very high with close to 100% completion annually. The E&I culture survey revealed 77% (43/56) of academic and research staff agreed the CDSA process was useful in developing their career, with only 3 respondents (5%) disagreeing.

(iii) Support given to academic staff for career progression

Career progression is supported through the University's induction and appraisal processes outlined in Sections 5.1(ii) and 5.3(ii), and through the University's promotions process outlined in Section 5.1(iii). Workload planning (Section 5.6(v)) is also key to ensuring all academic staff have an appropriate balance of teaching and research/scholarship activities to facilitate career progression.

The production of OU distance-learning material is always a team effort. Module teams, who author the teaching material, usually consist of 3-6 academic staff thereby enabling mentoring support for inexperienced staff. New academic staff join a module team as soon as possible to gain experience of how teaching material is produced and presented to students. Newly-authored teaching material is peer-reviewed and supportive feedback given to authors.

BAA-5.8: Monitor and review membership of module teams to ensure a better gender balance.

IMPACT: 32 out of 35 module teams have at least one female academic, supporting a more inclusive curriculum. (There has been no adverse impact on teaching workloads of women, and module team membership has contributed positively to promotion cases.)

PhD supervision is also carried out in teams, enabling staff new to supervision to be paired with an experienced colleague.

Grant applications are peer-reviewed by colleagues, enabling post-doctoral researchers to benefit from the same support mechanisms as lecturing staff.

The OU teaching model does not enable day-to-day contact with undergraduate students but post-doctoral researchers are encouraged to become Associate Lecturers and apply for teaching posts at our residential schools.

BAA-5.9: Promote opportunities for research staff to gain teaching experience.

IMPACT: Four researchers on fixed-term contracts have secured permanent lectureships over the past four years; three had gained teaching experience at residential schools.

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

Each student on taught modules is assigned to an Associate Lecturer (AL) who provides tutorial support, as well as marking and feedback on continuous assessments. Student surveys show consistently high levels of satisfaction with the support received from ALs. Telephone and email guidance are also provided by subject-specialist Student Support Teams.

Postgraduate research students are supported in a more conventional manner. All PhD students have at least two supervisors and are allocated a third-party monitor (an independent staff member they can approach for guidance); female students are entitled to request a female supervisor or monitor. In 2019, 13/15 full-time and 7/7 part-time female PhD students have a female supervisor and/or third-party monitor. The School also has five postgraduate tutors who oversee PhD student support; two are women.

The Graduate School Network (GSN) is an online portal leading to resources and training opportunities (face-to-face and online), including sessions on teaching skills for higher education, career progression, and research skills. Through the GSN, students can also access the Researcher Development Framework, where they can assess and record their skills and competencies. This is reviewed in the skills audit component of the upgrade assessment at the end of the first year.

Within E&I there are monthly seminars where research students present to their peers and academic staff. Students also have the opportunity at these sessions to raise matters of concern with the postgraduate tutors.

The monthly sessions provide a forum for promoting teaching and outreach opportunities to research students. For example, students are encouraged to apply to teach at OU residential schools; for the past 3 years, three PhD students per year have done this. They can also gain teaching experience in secondary schools via the national Brilliant Club charity.

Female students can participate in the Milton Keynes Soapbox Science event in which women in science present their research to the public. This provides an opportunity to build communication skills and network with other researchers (internal and external); so far one woman has taken up this opportunity.

"I have been a Brilliant Club tutor and took part in Soapbox Science. They were great ways to promote my research to a much wider audience and helped me to

develop confidence in presentation skills. I was lucky to have been told about these opportunities by my supervisor and think they should be promoted more widely within the School.” (A.F-M.)

SAP-5.14: Advertise outreach programmes such as the Brilliant Club and Soapbox Science more widely to PhD students within the School to increase the number of students involved in these activities.

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

All academic staff can bid for research funding. The process involves drafting the bid as required by the funder, costing it in conjunction with research administrators and submitting via the University’s Awards Management System (AMS). The bid is approved within AMS, first by the HoS (or Director of Research), then by Finance and the Associate Dean (Research).

The School encourages a rigorous peer-review of bids prior to submission. Unsuccessful bids are recorded, with further analysis undertaken by the bid team.

	2016-2017		2017-2018		2018-2019	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Number of bids	14	43	9	33	9	35
Successful bids	5	11	4	7	3*	11*
% success rate	36%	26%	44%	21%	33%*	31%*

Table 5.4: School research bid applications and success rates by gender (*so far recorded, not all yet resolved).

Table 5.4 shows that during 2016/17, 57 bids were made of which 16 were successful; of these, 14 were made by 9 different female Principal Investigators and 5 were successful. During 2017/18, 42 bids were made of which 11 were successful; 9 were made by 6 different female PIs, with 4 being awarded. In 2018/19, 44 bids were made; 9 from 5 different female PIs⁸. There were also female Co-Investigators on bids throughout the period.

Over the three years, women were responsible for 22% of bids, despite accounting for 33% of Central Academic staff (as noted previously very few Regional Academics carry out research so have not been included). However, it is notable that the bid success rates for women have been consistently higher than for men.

⁸ Data on success rates for 2018/19 are not yet finalised.

Teaching loads influence the amount of time staff have for research and E&I has had an intense period of module production in the past three years, accounting for the downward trend in bids for both women and men.

SAP-5.15: Investigate the reasons for fewer grant applications from women (pro-rata) compared with men and develop tailored support strategies for women to encourage more bidding.

SILVER APPLICATIONS ONLY

5.4. Career development: professional and support staff

(i) Training

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

Professional services staff training needs are assessed by the line-manager through monthly 1:1s and annual CDSA.

The University provides a comprehensive programme of optional and compulsory training through the 'My Learning Centre' online portal. Between 2016 and 2019, 90% of female and 100% of male professional services staff undertook some form of training.

Informal on-the-job training and development take place continuously in response to new and revised policies, procedures, systems and initiatives introduced at University or Faculty level. All staff participate in these activities as appropriate, and evaluation is monitored through performance and informal feedback.

Professional services staff have the same opportunities to develop through Applaud and Aurora as academic staff and are encouraged to do so. Since 2016, one woman has gained SFHEA via Applaud and another woman has been on the Aurora programme.

SAP-5.16: Raise awareness amongst professional services staff of the advantages of the Applaud and Aurora programmes in terms of career progression.

The accessibility and effectiveness of professional services staff training were discussed at a focus group. All welcomed the extensive training provided, relating both to their role and general career development. All felt that they could request training if needed.

“As a new OU employee I found the induction and subsequent training available to be both comprehensive and supportive. Access to the learning centre encourages personal and professional development and the updating and learning of new skills. With added flexibility and inclusivity of online learning plus a choice of times and dates to attend workshops, there is wide-reaching scope for all to benefit from OU education and knowledge.” (H.P.)

(ii) Appraisal/development review

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

CDSA for professional services staff takes place in July. Appraisals are conducted by senior managers in the School and enable staff to review achievements and set objectives for the coming year. CDSA is an opportunity for longer-term career planning and identifying training and development needs.

As with academic staff, CDSA completion is close to 100%. However, the E&I culture survey revealed only 47% (7/15) of professional services staff agreed the CDSA process was useful in developing their career.

SAP-5.17: Investigate why professional services staff appraisals are felt to be less useful for career development (compared with the feedback received on academic staff appraisals).

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

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

The support given to professional services staff for career progression was discussed at the focus group. Participants said they would initially seek support from their line-manager; the E&I culture survey showed that only one respondent out of 15 was dissatisfied with the pace and extent of their career progression.

5.5. Flexible working and managing career breaks

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

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

Once a staff member has informed the HoS that she is pregnant, a conversation takes place to ensure that the support offered during pregnancy, maternity

leave and return to work is fully understood. Advice on the University's maternity leave policy is also provided by People Services.

A similar approach is taken when a staff member informs the HoS they are adopting a child.

When the likely duration of maternity or adoption leave is known, a process is initiated to provide cover for teaching, research and other commitments. Maternity/adoption cover is typically offered as a 12-month fixed-term contract.

In 2019, E&I established a 'buddy' scheme to advise and support women prior to maternity or adoption leave. The SAT Chair, who has taken maternity leave twice, is a 'buddy' and has advised three women so far. The planning for Keeping-in-Touch days and the entitlement to focus on research activities immediately after return were the most discussed topics, together with being more assertive in requesting a transition into leadership roles upon return to enhance career progression. The feedback was unanimously positive; participants commented that they would not have thought of asking for such support, and they felt more knowledgeable and empowered as a result.

BAA-5.11: Establish a Buddy scheme for individuals prior to maternity or adoption leave.

IMPACT: A Maternity Buddy scheme was established in 2019. The buddy has advised two women prior to their maternity leave and one on return, including one from another School. Initial feedback has been extremely positive.

SAP-5.18: Monitor effectiveness of Maternity Buddy scheme and share good practice across the University.

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

Staff on maternity or adoption leave are typically absent from the workplace for 6-12 months.

The HoS agrees a workload plan, ensuring that cover is in place for when the individual stops work, and that clarity is obtained on which areas of work they will resume. The focus of workload planning is to ensure alignment with career development objectives and that a balance of teaching, research/scholarship and other activity is maintained on return.

Keeping-in-Touch days are agreed with the staff member and have been used by the five women taking maternity and adoption leave over the reporting period.

One woman commented:

"I was chairing a module production before maternity leave and was worried initially, but my mind was put at rest when excellent cover for chairing the

module production was provided. I planned to return early, after 4 months. But I had no clue as first-time mum, and when the time came I extended my maternity leave for another 2 months using my accumulated annual leave. My Head of School and many other colleagues were very supportive in providing backfill for my work throughout my maternity leave and on my return to work.” (F.H.)

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

The School is committed to ensuring that any staff member returning from maternity or adoption leave is fully supported to continue to develop in their role. This has been achieved to date on an individual basis as we have had few staff on maternity/adoption leave.

BAA-5.12: Head of School and staff member taking maternity/adoption leave to agree clear plan for Keeping-in-Touch days.

BAA-5.13: Work with staff on an individual basis to ensure a smooth return to work and enable them to pick up their research/scholarship and teaching as appropriate for career progression.

IMPACT: Feedback from returnees to the Maternity Buddy confirms that the use of Keeping-in-Touch days and return to work planning enabled them to resume their career without detriment.

(iv) **Maternity return rate**

Two members of academic staff, one researcher and two members of professional services staff took maternity leave in the past four years. All returned to work and have remained in post since their return. The researcher, whose fixed-term contract ran out during her leave, had her contract extended on her return to work.

SILVER APPLICATIONS ONLY

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

Three women returned from maternity leave in 2015/16 and are still in post today. Two women took maternity leave during 2018/19; both have now returned and remain in post.

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

The University paternity leave policy allows the relevant partner to take 2 weeks' paid leave if they have 12 months' continuous service.

A shared parental leave policy was introduced in 2015, enabling staff with caring responsibilities for babies or newly-adopted children to share up to 50 weeks' leave and up to 37 weeks of shared parental pay.

BAA-5.14: Ensure all staff are aware of statutory entitlement to paternity, shared parental, adoption, and parental leave.

IMPACT: Staff are aware of entitlements and policies; one man has taken paternity leave and one woman has taken shared parental leave in the reporting period.

SAP-5.19: Capture and communicate case studies of paternity and shared parental leave to raise awareness amongst staff and increase uptake.

(vi) Flexible working

The University and the School have a strong culture of flexible working. Most academic and research staff are employed on a full-time basis, but Table 5.5 shows the breakdown by gender and role of those working part-time. Their contracts vary from 0.2 to 0.8 FTE.

During the reporting period, all requests to work part-time have been agreed and supported.

	Female	Male
Professor	0	5
Senior Lecturer (Central)	0	0
Senior Lecturer (Regional)	1	0
Lecturer (Central)	1	1
Lecturer (Regional)	2	0
Researcher	2	0

Table 5.5: E&I staff on part-time contracts by gender and role (March 2019).

Informal flexible working is practised by E&I academics. As the OU does not have face-to-face lectures there is significant flexibility around working hours. Staff frequently work from home and at hours which fit around commitments such as child-care, other caring responsibilities and school hours. A flexible working culture has evolved due to the distributed nature of the University and its staff. Staff are issued with laptop computers, using them to access University systems and join meetings remotely via 'Skype-for-Business'.

"I have two young children, am employed full-time and often work flexibly 2-3 days from home, which makes school and nursery runs hassle-free." (N.L.)

"I have developed a chronic autoimmune illness over the last couple of years which has made it very difficult to travel to the office. The School have been very supportive, rearranging some of my duties, enabling me to join meetings online, and most importantly making me still feel valued." (A.M.)

However, the E&I culture survey shows that 17% of academic staff on homeworking or part-time contracts disagree that they have the same opportunities as those who work on campus or full-time. The disagreement is most pronounced in Regional Academics (75% of respondents). The Regional Academic focus group indicated that the homeworking policy introduced in 2016 has impacted negatively on their progression.

SAP-5.20: Investigate approaches and strategies to more fully and inclusively address the needs of staff working remotely.

In 2014 the University introduced a formal 'agile-working' policy for professional services staff enabling them to request flexible working for a variety of circumstances. Uptake among curriculum support staff has been high (57%); 8 agile-working requests have been made and granted (7 women, 1 man) during the reporting period.

Several professional services staff have requested a change to part-time working following maternity leave and these have always been granted (two in the current period).

"My son has recently transitioned from nursery to school and during the settling-in period I was able to combine working flexibly from home with taking half day's leave to support him with the change in his routine." (N.R.)

BAA-5.15: Ensure that all staff are fully aware of the agile-working policy.

IMPACT: Qualitative and quantitative feedback indicates staff are aware and make good use of the agile-working policy, with all agile-working requests granted.

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

The University has always been supportive of staff moving from part-time to full-time roles after a career break. The return to full-time duties is discussed in one-to-one meetings with the HoS. The agile-working policy specifically recognises that part-time arrangements may not be permanent and a return to full-time work will always be an option.

Mechanisms are in place (e.g. for promotion cases and REF submissions) to avoid disadvantaging those whose outputs are reduced through career breaks or part-time working.

We have many examples of staff (of all categories/grades) moving between part-time and full-time working to meet their individual circumstances.

“The agile-working policy has been invaluable to me in achieving a good work-life balance.” (J.B.)

5.6. Organisation and culture

(i) Culture

The School actively promotes a culture of mutual respect amongst colleagues, and embraces the Athena SWAN Charter principles. This is evidenced in responses to the E&I culture survey.

BAA-5.16: SAT to review annually the results of the institutional ‘Pulse’ survey to identify and act on any gender specific issues.

IMPACT: ‘Pulse’ no longer provides School-level gender-disaggregated data, to prevent identification of individuals. Instead E&I ran a culture survey to explore gender-related issues. The return rate was high (87 responses) aiding identification of gender-specific issues and informing Silver Actions.

The survey revealed that most respondents would recommend E&I as a great place to work/study, with only 2% (2/87) disagreeing. Similarly, most agreed they were treated with fairness and respect and that the School values differences, with only 3% (3/87) disagreeing.

However, the survey revealed that feelings of being uncomfortable or disadvantaged because of a protected characteristic are more prevalent in women (33%, 15/46) than men (11%, 4/38), particularly among female Central Academics (62%, 8/13); see Table 5.6. This suggests a significant intersectional effect. However, when asked if they have themselves experienced, or been aware of others experiencing, workplace discrimination, only 15% of women and 8% of men agreed, suggesting that the reported feelings of discomfort or disadvantage may stem from something other than direct discrimination.

SAP-5.21: Explore with staff the factors and intersections that cause ‘feelings of discomfort’ at the workplace to inform steps to address any issues.

In 2019, E&I secured Royal Academy of Engineering funding for a three-year Visiting Professorship on Transforming Engineering Culture. Alongside helping develop new undergraduate materials, Dr Jan Peters has led sessions on equality, diversity and inclusion at a School meeting (informing **SAP-3.2**) and at undergraduate residential schools.

	Female (all staff)		Male (all staff)		Female (Central Academics)	
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	Number	% Total
Age	2	4%	1	3%	1	8%
Caring responsibility	2	4%	2	5%	0	0%
Disability	5	11%	1	3%	2	15%
Gender	6	13%	0	0%	4	31%
Gender reassignment	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Pregnancy	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Race	2	4%	0	0%	2	15%
Religion	1	2%	0	0%	1	8%
Sexual orientation	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
One or more of above	15	33%	4	11%	8	62%

Table 5.6: Experiences of feeling uncomfortable or at a disadvantage in the workplace amongst female staff, male staff, and female Central Academics (E&I culture survey results).

(ii) HR policies

The HoS has regular meetings with People Services representatives, who update on policy changes and ensure that good practice is followed. This information is cascaded to the School Management Team (SMT).

Potentially difficult staff issues are flagged, so People Services can provide guidance and ensure that policies are applied consistently. Problems are generally anticipated and resolved without the need to invoke formal procedures.

The School adheres to the University's Bullying and Harassment Policy. Over the reporting period there have been no formal complaints requiring disciplinary action amongst academic staff and one instance amongst professional services staff.

The E&I culture survey revealed 2% (2/87) of respondents had themselves experienced bullying or harassment in the workplace, while 9% (8/87) were aware of others being bullied or harassed. Further analysis revealed no gender bias, but that instances of bullying and harassment were experienced primarily by professional services staff. 87% of academic staff reported that they were aware of how to report instances of bullying, dropping to 80% for professional services staff.

SAP-5.22: Ensure all staff (particularly professional services staff) are aware of the bullying and harassment policy and are confident to report any instances.

(iii) Representation of men and women on committees

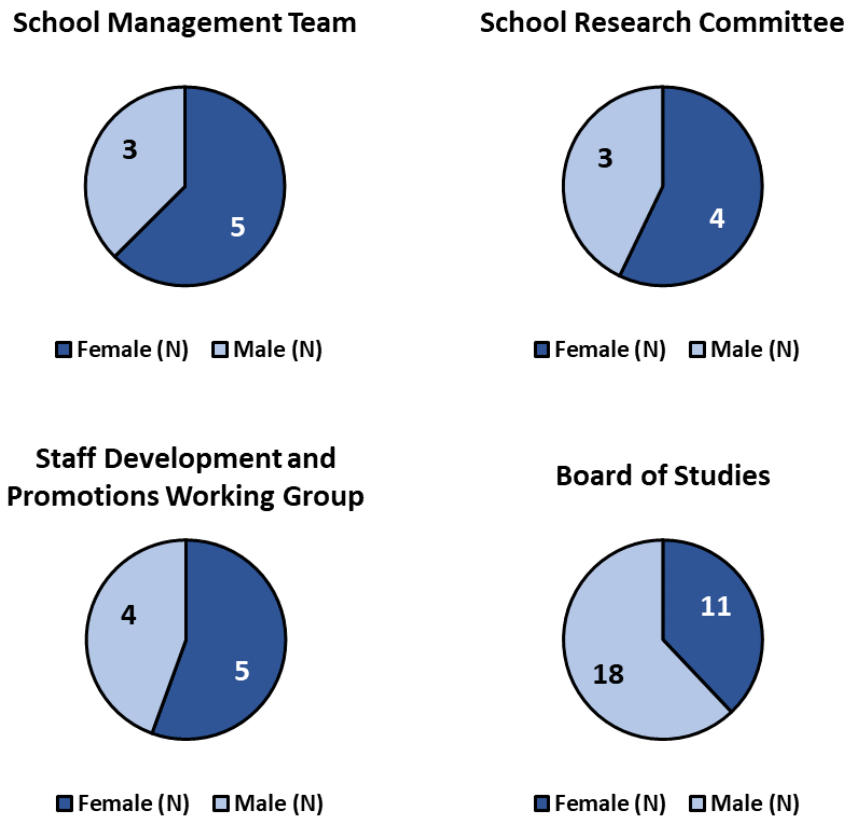


Figure 5.1: Female and male representation on key School decision-making committees.

Figure 5.1 shows the proportions of women and men on the four main School decision-making committees. The mechanisms for determining committee membership vary, with the constituency of some committees dictated by University requirements.

The SMT comprises eight staff members, each with particular areas of responsibility (Figure 5.2). There are different mechanisms for appointment to the senior roles within the School. The HoS, Senior School Manager, Director of Teaching and Director of Research each have an open application process against a person specification. Other roles have a less formal appointment process (reflecting the lack of additional remuneration) requiring an expression of interest and a short interview.

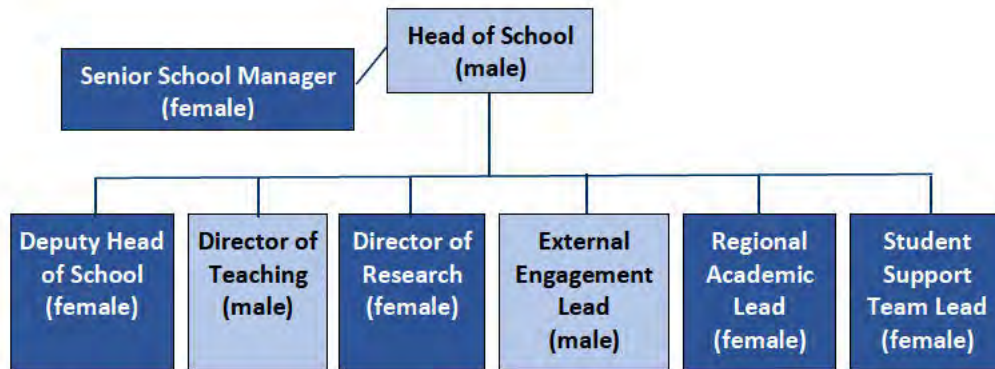


Figure 5.2: School Management Team (SMT) structure.

The Staff Development and Promotions Working Group (SDPWG) comprises most of the SMT along with two co-opted representatives (one Central Academic, one Regional Academic) and one E&I colleague who also sits on the Faculty Promotions Group. In selecting the co-opted representatives, consideration is given to the overall SDPWG gender balance.

The Board of Studies (BoS) membership follows University guidelines. The Board is chaired by the Director of Teaching; other members include the HoS, Qualification Leads, Teaching Managers, Regional Academic and Student Support Team representatives, the STEM Faculty Head of Student Success, Associate Lecturer and student representatives, the Director of Teaching from another School, and three external advisers.

The School Research Committee constituency is less formal, comprising the Director of Research, HoS, and research leaders from across the School.

Figure 5.1 indicates that the gender balance on three School committees (SMT, Research Committee, SDPWG) gives no cause for concern, with each committee comprising slightly more women than men, but being approximately balanced.

BAA-5.4: Monitor the appointment of staff to positions of responsibility, and ensure that women continue to be given appropriate leadership roles to assist with promotion, particularly to Professor.

IMPACT: Holding leadership roles within E&I has aided the promotion of four women (1 Professor, 3 Senior Lecturers) and one man (1 Professor) over the reporting period.

The BoS constituency reveals a greater gender imbalance (11 women, 18 men). Further investigation shows that this imbalance arises from the external representation on the committee. Of three student representatives, three AL representatives and three external advisers, only one is a woman.

SAP-5.23: At the ends of the terms of office of the student representatives, AL representatives and external advisers, seek to ensure that new appointments lead to a better gender balance amongst the external representation on the Board of Studies (which in turn will lead to a better gender balance overall).

The E&I culture survey indicates the SMT is perceived as doing a good job (72% agreeing, 2% disagreeing). However, the survey suggests that not all staff feel their opinions are taken on board or make a difference; 10% of staff disagreed their views were listened to, while 12% indicated they don't always understand or feel part of School decision-making. No gender bias was observed.

SAP-5.24: Invite a different observer from across the wider E&I staff base to attend each School Management Team meeting and each E&I Board of Studies meeting.

SAP-5.25: Circulate the minutes of School Management Team meetings around the School, either via email or via the School website.

(iv) Participation on influential external committees

Staff are encouraged to become external committee members at annual appraisals and through general calls when vacancies arise (Table 5.7).

	Female		Male	
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total
University committee	5	16%	8	18%
Influential external committee	7	23%	11	24%

Table 5.7: E&I academic staff membership of University committees and influential external committees, by gender.

University committee membership is frequently part of an individual's role; e.g. E&I's Director of Research (female) serves on the University's Research Committee. Other committee members are chosen for their particular expertise; e.g. one E&I academic (male) is Deputy Chair of the Academic Governance and Quality Committee.

E&I staff are also members of influential committees external to the University. For example, staff serve on EPSRC and AHRC peer-review colleges, boards of

professional institutions, journal editorial boards, and international advisory committees.

The gender balance of E&I academic staff serving on University committees mirrors the gender balance in the School, reflected in the similarity between the percentage of female academics (16%, 5/31) and of male academics (18%, 8/45) on such committees. The E&I representation on influential external committees is also proportionate in terms of gender, with 23% (7/31) of female academics and 24% (11/45) of male academics participating on such bodies.

BAA-5.18: Encourage female staff to seek opportunities to enhance external profile, via representation on national and international committees and bodies.

IMPACT: In the previous reporting period, E&I male academics were 1.5 times more likely than E&I female academics to serve on external committees.

Women are now just as likely as men to serve on external committees.

(v) Workload model

Workload planning is informed by Faculty and School objectives, individual career development needs as identified at appraisals, and a shared responsibility for teaching and research commitments. It is the HoS's responsibility (supported by SMT and appraisers) to ensure that staff have time to carry out activities beneficial to their career progression. The Faculty publishes recommended time allocations for certain activities (e.g. module team chairing, PhD supervision).

Preliminary workload plans for the following year (August-July) are completed in May and days allocated to different tasks are recorded on the University's Academic Workload Management (AWM) system. Actual days from the previous year are also recorded. Research/scholarship allocations are reviewed to ascertain funding or development requirements. A similar review is carried out to ensure that teaching commitments are covered.

The monitoring of gender distribution of workload is carried out annually at Faculty level by analysing 'actual' workloads from the previous year; this is reported to the University's GESG. The School carries out its own analysis to ensure a fair distribution of research and teaching time.

BAA-5.19: Analyse workload distribution by gender at School level to ensure an equitable balance.

IMPACT: The teaching/research/administration workload balance in E&I has been found to be consistently equitable for women and men across the reporting period.

The E&I culture survey revealed 20% (4/20) of female academics disagreed that work is allocated fairly and transparently, compared with 17% (5/29) of male academics, suggesting no significant gender bias. However, only 40% (8/20) of

female academics actively agreed that the workload allocation is fair and transparent, whereas 72% (21/29) of male academics actively agreed. A survey comment stated “I trust that it [workload] is fair, but I don’t know how the decision-making is done so couldn’t say it’s transparent.”

SAP-5.26: Trial a new approach to make workload allocation more transparent among staff, whereby the percentage of time allocated to a particular category of work is published by gender and staff grade/role.

The survey revealed that only 43% of Regional Academics (mostly homeworkers) feel they can strike a balance between work and home life, compared with 53% of Central Academics and 57% of all staff.

SAP-5.27: Investigate how the School can support homeworkers more effectively to achieve a better work/home life balance.

(vi) Timing of departmental meetings and social gatherings

School meetings are scheduled between 10am and 4pm to enable those with caring responsibilities to attend. Most meetings involve Regional Academics so are scheduled in clusters and planned well in advance to enable them to make appropriate travel arrangements. 84% (73/87) of staff actively agreed that formal meetings are completed in core hours (10am-4pm), with no-one disagreeing.

We also make extensive use of ‘Skype-for-Business’ to enable staff to join meetings remotely, allowing them to access presentations and contribute to discussions. All our meeting rooms are equipped with video conferencing facilities and training is given to chairs on conducting inclusive meetings involving remote participants.

The December E&I away-day includes social elements timed to enable as many people as possible to attend. Research seminars tend to be held at lunchtimes and there are often opportunities to socialise before and after. 75% (65/87) of staff actively agreed that social activities in E&I are welcoming to everyone, irrespective of role or any protected characteristic, with only one person disagreeing.

(vii) Visibility of role models

E&I holds two major annual student-focused events; our Women in Engineering (WiE) student conference, and our student Design exhibition.

Since 2016, we have held a successful WiE student conference, in which female engineers from industry are invited to talk about their work and act as role models for our students. Attendance has increased annually (from 25 in 2016 to 80+ in 2019) with many students returning each year. The conference has

inspired students to form a Women's Engineering Society (WES) affiliated group with over 100 members.

"The OU Women in Engineering initiative has made a big difference to my experience of the course. They've not only provided opportunities to attend and contribute to great conferences, but enthusiastically supported student-led initiatives like the Women in Engineering OU Student Society" (BEng student)



Figure 5.3: Images from WiE conferences. (i) Image captured from the WiE 2018 conference video, (ii) WiE 2019 networking meal, (iii) WiE 2019 delegates and speakers.

BAA-4.5: Organise a conference for women students on engineering qualifications to coincide in June 2016 with National Women in Engineering Day (NWED).

IMPACT: The success of the 2016 conference led to it becoming an annual event, with attendance increasing year-on-year. A WES-affiliated student group formed in 2017.

E&I hosts an annual Design exhibition to celebrate the project work of Design students at all stages of study (Figure 5.4). The exhibition has a high rate of female student participation and creates positive impact, with role models provided by female academic staff. In parallel, an online gallery and printed catalogue show the work to audiences who cannot attend in person. The winners of the ‘best design awards’ in 2018 and 2019 were women.



Overall winner -
Most innovative idea

Rebecca McFleat
T317
WC-Sphere - Product design

The jury selected Rebecca's work as the overall winner because of the innovative and well-communicated idea presented and how Rebecca tackled the difficult problem of sustainable human waste disposal in a thorough yet creative way.

The design for a human waste disposal unit that improves on hygiene through an automated flush system makes clever use of body weight to automate the flush system and removes the need for a separate flushing mechanism.

This is a complete redesign of the traditional shape and structure of a toilet for the flush system to work and enables a rethink of the traditional form of the toilet.

Consideration has been given to sustainable materials and the user experience and offers a complex and well realised design that has potential for development.

The visual detail and information in the poster communicate a sophisticated thought process and unique idea.

6
7

Figure 5.4: Images from student Design exhibition. (i) Students and their families visiting exhibition, (ii) one of the winning student designs.

As our teaching is delivered as distance-learning, E&I doesn't have a regular (undergraduate) student-facing seminar series, and most seminars for staff and PhD students are delivered by internal speakers (although external speakers are sometimes invited). No data is currently collected on the gender balance of the speakers at these internally-focused seminars.

Partly taking the place of student-facing seminars, the OU has 'Student Hub Live', an interactive online platform which enables students to engage synchronously with members of staff and learn about activities and events at the OU. The platform hosts live-streamed and recorded events focusing on specific curriculum areas, as well as generic study skills development. E&I staff regularly make contributions to Student Hub Live events (Figure 5.5).



Engineering and Innovation 1

Figure 5.5: Three E&I female members of staff taking part in a Student Hub Live live-streamed event.

E&I staff have also recorded 'Meet-us-Monday' videos, available for viewing on OU websites and on YouTube. To date, 12 E&I academics (6 women, 6 men) have recorded videos, talking about their career progression, and providing positive and diverse role models for students and colleagues alike (Figure 5.6).

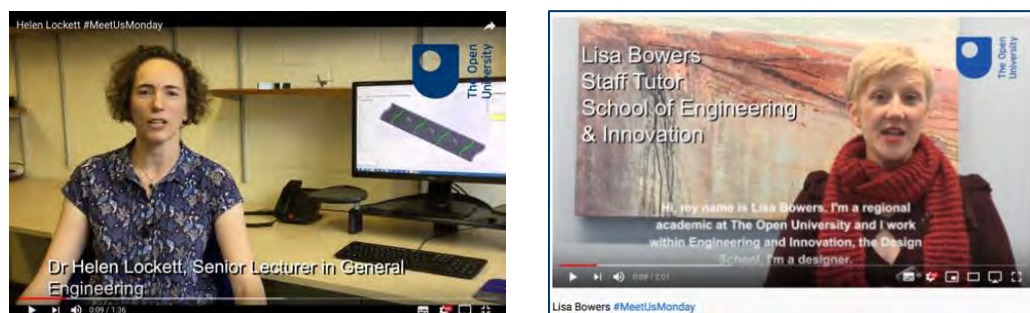


Figure 5.6: Examples of Meet-us-Monday videos featuring two E&I female members of staff.

We also use University, Faculty and School newsletters and websites to promote the achievements of staff, thereby increasing their visibility as role models; e.g. Professor Carol Morris was selected for a WES Top 50 Women in Engineering Award in 2018 (Figure 5.7).

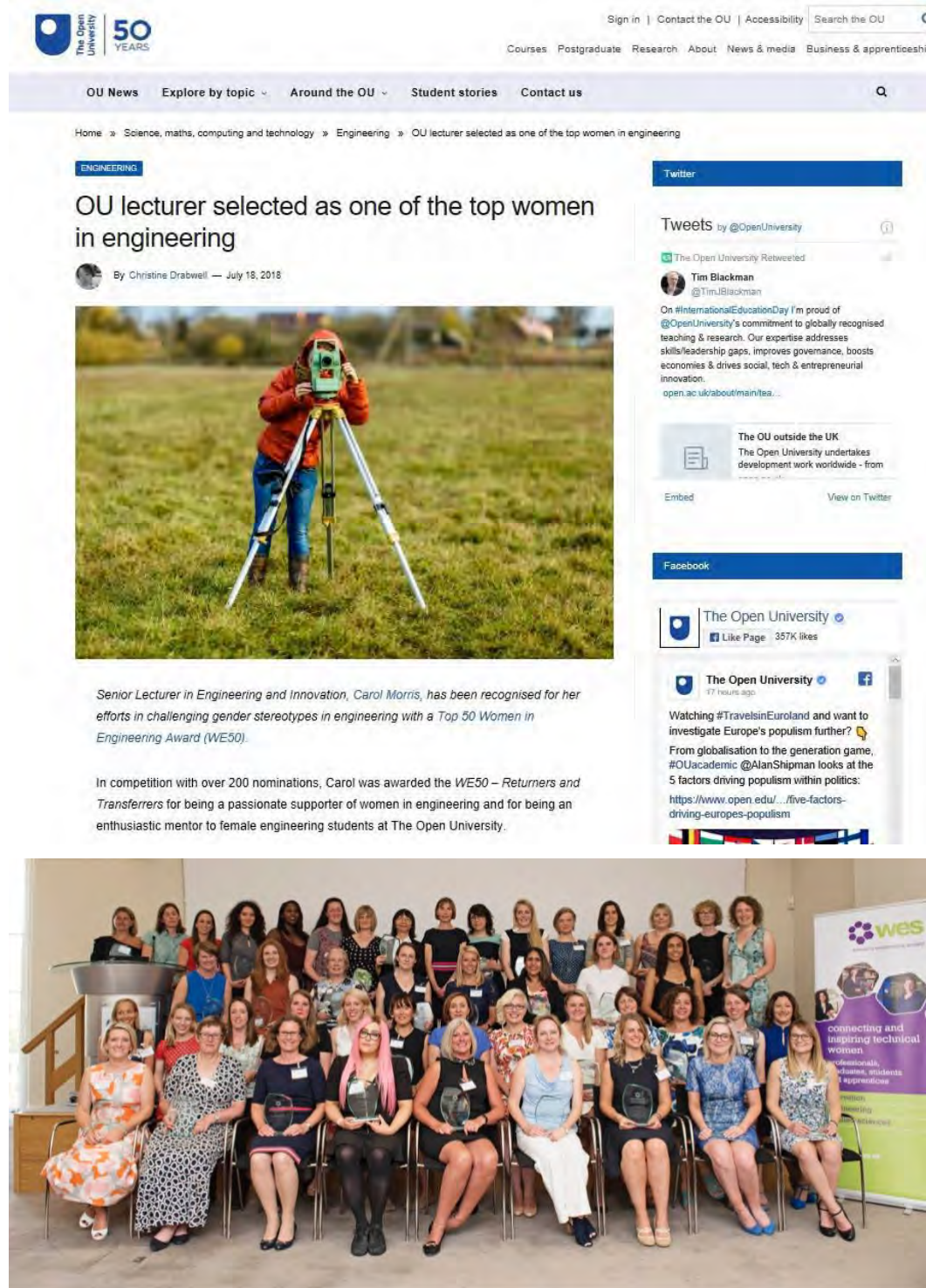


Figure 5.7: Prof Carol Morris selected for Top 50 Women in Engineering Award in 2018. (i) OU website promoting the announcement, (ii) at the award ceremony (front row, 2nd left).

We are currently updating the School website and are endeavouring to use images which reflect our diversity whilst avoiding stereotypes. Prospective students are more likely to access University, rather than School, websites; we work with colleagues who manage those websites to ensure images reflect the diversity of our student population.

BAA-5.21: Use the School website to showcase the School’s commitment and success in advancing the careers of women.

BAA-5.22: Increase the visibility of women role models in publications, advertisements and websites relating to E&I qualifications, research and other activities.

IMPACT: Since 2015, there has been an increase in high-quality appointable applications from women for academic positions and PhD studentships, and a year-on-year increase in the proportion of female students registering on E&I taught qualifications.

(viii) Outreach activities

The University monitors outreach activity via the Higher Education Business and Community Interaction Survey (HEBCIS). The last three years’ returns show outreach contributions from all academic staff⁹ grades and roles (Table 5.8). In 2016/17 and 2017/18, more men than women participated; the opposite was true in 2018/19. Over the three years, those women who contributed each delivered a greater number of activities than the men.

	2016/2017		2017/2018		2018/2019	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Professor	0	2	1	7	1	2
Central Academic	2	5	7	9	3	3
Regional Academic	1	0	3	3	2	1
Researcher	0	0	1	0	1	0
Total staff participants	3	7	12	19	7	6
Average number of events conducted per staff participant	9	6.4	7.25	3.2	6.8	3.8

Table 5.8: HEBCIS data (2016-2019).

⁹ PhD student outreach contributions were discussed in Section 5.3(iv), informing SAP-5.14.

BAA-5.23: Monitor outreach activity to ensure a gender balance at such events.

IMPACT: Gender balance of staff conducting outreach activity has been systematically recorded. Communications regarding outreach opportunities have resulted in a better gender balance.

Outreach events undertaken include public talks, science fairs, exhibitions and online campaigns. An example of the latter is our engagement with WES's social media 'Lottie tour', which demonstrated to children the diversity of engineering roles by photographing a doll in the working environment (Figure 5.8).



Figure 5.8: Examples of 'Lottie tour' images tweeted by the School.

The OU has a strong media presence through the Open Media and Informal Learning (OMIL) Unit, which is responsible for managing the production of free educational content delivered on the University's OpenLearn platform (50 million visits since 2006), and via YouTube and iTunesU (90 million downloads). E&I staff frequently provide teaching content for distribution via these channels.

OMIL also oversees the OU/BBC partnership, and E&I staff regularly contribute as academic consultants to BBC programmes.

It is difficult to obtain accurate data on the gender balance of the audiences for all E&I outreach events, particularly for online and broadcast activities.

However, staff have anecdotally reported a good gender balance at face-to-face events.

SAP-5.28: Investigate gender balance of audiences for all E&I outreach events, both those delivered face-to-face and those provided online or via television broadcast.

Contribution to outreach activities is recognised in workload planning and provides strong evidence for rewards and promotion cases (particularly against the knowledge exchange criteria).

SAP-5.29: Investigate how many promotion cases include evidence of outreach activity and whether this has a positive effect on promotion success rates.

[7184 words]

SILVER APPLICATIONS ONLY

6. CASE STUDIES: IMPACT ON INDIVIDUALS

Recommended word count: Silver 1000 words

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

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

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

Case Study 1: Dr Nicole Lotz

I started working in E&I in 2008 as a Lecturer on a temporary contract, and was delighted to be made permanent in 2010. I took maternity leave twice, in 2011/2012 and 2015/2016. The support I received before, during and after my maternity leave was fantastic. Initially, I intended to return after 6 months. Experiencing motherhood for the first time, I asked for more time with my newborn child and was supported in this request without question by taking longer maternity leave and returning for 4 months on a 0.5FTE role. I still often work from home to help with childcare arrangements, and this reflects the exceptional flexible working philosophy in the School. Without doubt the School's flexibility helped me to return to work without guilt or regret, and achieve an outstanding work-life balance.

The School's support also allowed me to refresh my research networks which are so difficult to maintain when on maternity leave. I used Keeping-In-Touch days to attend key international conferences during both maternity leave periods; E&I affords excellent opportunities by funding conferences and training during Keeping-In-Touch days. This helped me gain recognition at the Human-Computer Interaction 2012 conference, for novel and important research I was involved in before my maternity leave. I presented a paper while my baby had a nap in a sling on my back; many delegates congratulated me on my happy baby and excellent talk. Keeping-In-Touch days also helped me to successfully facilitate two workshops at the Design Research Society 2016 conference. This time I took my second child. A male E&I colleague entertained my baby during the workshops, which for me demonstrates the exceptional supportive, friendly and inclusive culture of our School.

The ability to keep my research going around my maternity leave kept my career on track and undoubtedly helped me achieve my promotion to Senior Lecturer in 2018.

E&I makes a healthy work-life balance in an inclusive and equitable working environment a real priority. For example, many outreach and extracurricular activities organised for our students and staff at weekends include incentives for

families to attend, such as funding journeys or integrating child-friendly activities. I've twice taken my daughter to such events. She loved seeing and taking part in what mum does, and hopefully I am becoming a role model for her.

Before my second maternity leave, I was a SAT member, and on my return in 2016 I was eager to re-join the team. I took on the role of E&I Maternity Leave Buddy, to share my experiences of advancing an academic career while also enjoying motherhood. I was proud to be considered for the SAT Chair role in summer 2018, and happily took on this prestigious responsibility.



Figure 6.1: Dr Nicole Lotz giving a presentation at HCI International Conference carrying her baby (who happily fell asleep during her talk) and enjoying fun and quality time with her two young children.

Case study 2: Dr Sally Caird

I joined the OU in 1992 on a one-year Teaching Fellow contract. Realising the importance of a PhD qualification for an academic career, when this contract ended I was delighted to secure a two-year research contract in the Faculty to pursue doctoral research in managing technological innovation. In retrospect I can see that it was not ideal to bring two babies into the world whilst doing a PhD. However, thanks to my hard work and the support of my OU supervisors I managed to complete my PhD in 1996.

Following the births of what I once called my 'Baby-Doc' children, I sought part-time employment opportunities at the OU and had a long period of short fixed-term contracts focused on my interests in researching the design, adoption, use and performance of low carbon/energy technologies in the built environment. Passionate about sustainable development I worked hard with colleagues on research and publications, whilst also becoming increasingly involved in OU teaching.

Encouraged by senior colleagues to seek more secure employment at the OU, I successfully achieved a permanent 0.6FTE research position in 2016 and then later a permanent 0.6FTE lectureship in 2017. After many years on short-term contracts the support and confidence of senior staff was invaluable for helping to develop my career in undergraduate and postgraduate teaching and research. The flexible working arrangements offered by the OU meant that I never felt forced to make difficult choices between work and family.

In 2019, I was encouraged to develop a case for promotion to Senior Lecturer based on my new teaching responsibilities chairing postgraduate module production and presentation, and the strength of my research and publications. I am delighted to say that my promotion case was successful thanks to the wonderful support from senior staff in E&I, helping me prepare for my new responsibilities.

So just as my children are leaving home my career continues to develop as a newly-promoted Senior Lecturer.



Figure 6.2: Sally's PhD Graduation ceremony with the 'Baby-Docs'.

[766 words]

7. Further information

Recommended word count: Bronze: 500 words | Silver: 500 words

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


[0 words]


Total word count: 12,000 words


(excluding headings, figure and table captions, Bronze and Silver action points, and URL reference footnotes; but including all other footnotes and all Bronze impact statements)

8. Action plan

(i) Silver action plan

Priority actions are highlighted in blue. 

3	The self-assessment process				
	Action and rationale (what is the objective and what evidence led to objective)	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)	Person responsible (include job title)	Success criteria and outcome Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound
3.1 	<p>Co-opt more male, BAME and junior staff members as part of the rolling refresh of SAT membership.</p> <p>With 9 female and 4 male SAT members, the team is currently gender imbalanced. The team is currently lacking any BAME representation, and anyone at Lecturer grade.</p>	<p>Advertise SAT re-formation in School meetings.</p> <p>Appraisers to encourage SAT membership in CDSA process/appraisal.</p> <p>Analyse workload plans to identify potential new members and approach directly.</p> <p>Re-form the SAT for a 4-year office with at least 4 members remaining in post.</p>	<p>May 2020 – September 2020</p> <p>May 2020 – July 2020 (and annually thereafter)</p> <p>June 2020 – August 2020 (and annually thereafter)</p> <p>September 2020 – October 2020</p>	<p>Head of School (HoS), SAT Chair</p>	<p>Increase gender diversity in SAT membership from 31% to 40% male, with at least one more BAME and junior staff member in the re-formed SAT.</p>



<p>3.2</p>	<p>Establish a regular motivational talk or workshop on Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity and Accessibility at the School’s annual December meeting.</p> <p>The inspirational talk given by Dr Jan Peters at the December 2018 School meeting was well-received by staff.</p>	<p>One EDIA focused talk or workshop a year.</p>	<p>December 2020 – December 2023</p>	<p>EDIA Lead</p>	<p>Increase the awareness and visibility of equality and diversity research, practice and its impact in E&I.</p> <p>Annual staff-focused inclusivity event established.</p> <p>By 2023, reduce negative responses in the E&I culture survey (currently 3/87) to questions around the perception of colleagues being treated with fairness and respect, and the School valuing difference.</p>
<p>3.3</p> <p></p>	<p>Appoint an EDIA Lead to chair a newly-established Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity and Accessibility Group (EDIAG), which will oversee the SAT as part of its remit, and drive the delivery of Silver actions using a project management approach.</p> <p>Quarterly SAT meetings left some Bronze actions vulnerable. A newly-established EDIAG will meet monthly to oversee the SAT and ensure more frequent reporting on Silver actions.</p>	<p>Appoint EDIA Lead.</p> <p>Constitute a new School EDIAG which will oversee the SAT as part of its remit.</p> <p>Adopt a project management approach to data collection and action implementation with clear and accountable responsibilities.</p> <p>SAT to report to EDIAG on a monthly basis.</p>	<p>September 2020</p> <p>October 2020</p> <p>October 2020 (onwards)</p> <p>October 2020 – March 2024</p>	<p>HoS</p> <p>EDIA Lead, HoS</p> <p>EDIA Lead, SAT Chair</p> <p>SAT Chair</p>	<p>EDIAG established and operational, with EDIA Lead a fully contributing member of School’s decision-making committees, ensuring EDIA scrutiny of teaching, research and staff development across the School.</p> <p>By 2024, no Silver action marked as Red; achieved by using a consistent and continuous action impact monitoring process, based on complete and trustworthy data.</p>


4	A picture of the department				
	Action and rationale (what is the objective and what evidence led to objective)	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)	Person responsible (include job title)	Success criteria and outcome Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound
4.1	<p>Continue to monitor the starting population and pass rate for women studying on the entry-point Engineering module, and explore the effect of informed curriculum changes and other interventions on them.</p> <p>A consistent increase in female pass rates on entry-point Engineering module was observed.</p>	<p>Analyse quantitative registration and pass rate data by gender. Examine historic and future end-of-module survey data, and identify free comments relating to the curriculum and learning design.</p> <p>Share best practice in learning design across the School, Faculty and University, e.g. eSTeEM conference talk.</p>	<p>April 2021 (historic data)</p> <p>April 2021 (and annually thereafter for future data)</p> <p>April 2022</p>	<p>Module chairs, Director of Teaching (DoT), University Data Analytics team</p>	<p>Correlate curriculum changes with increases in starting population and pass rate for women on entry-point Engineering module.</p> <p>Positive and constructive qualitative feedback on the learning design.</p> <p>Increased understanding of effectiveness of module learning design shared as good practice.</p>
4.2	<p>Provide input to the training and development for frontline student advisers on equality and unconscious bias so that they are better placed to advise students across all curriculum areas.</p> <p>With the restructuring of Student Support Teams during the last reporting period, BAA-4.6 was not achieved and will be carried forward.</p>	<p>Contribution to staff development session for Student Recruitment and Support Centre (SRSC) colleagues.</p> <p>Evaluate success of training (survey staff and students who receive information, advice and guidance (IAG) and analyse transcripts of IAG).</p>	<p>May 2021</p> <p>May 2021 – May 2023</p>	<p>EDIA Lead, Student Support Team (SST) Lead, Head of Student Support (SRSC)</p>	<p>Proactive guidance issued for female student enquirers.</p> <p>2% increase in female registrations and progression in all E&I disciplines by 2023.</p>

<p>4.3</p>	<p>Investigate the hypothesised link between the increase in Engineering student numbers and the ELQ funding changes to inform targeted marketing of potential female students holding prior HE qualifications.</p> <p>A significant increase in Engineering undergraduate student numbers overall, which was thought to be caused by the relaxation in September 2015 of ELQ funding rules for certain STEM subjects.</p>	<p>Survey student data (whether prior HE qualification held and funding source) between 2012 – 2020.</p> <p>Briefing to Marketing and Communications Unit.</p>	<p>December 2020</p> <p>February 2021</p>	<p>Engineering Qualification Leads, University Strategy and Information Office</p>	<p>Understanding of influences on students’ study choices and funding sources.</p> <p>Recommendations to Marketing and Communications Unit for targeting female students with prior HE qualifications to increase awareness of the opportunities offered by the relaxation of ELQ funding rules.</p>
<p>4.4</p>	<p>Investigate further the potential gender imbalance of withdrawal from study through an analysis of passive withdrawals over a sample of E&I modules.</p> <p>On average, female pass rates are slightly lower than male pass rates across E&I undergraduate modules. This may be due to the impact of life events affecting women disproportionately. However, no gender-specific patterns were found in the formal withdrawal data (in withdrawal surveys, women and men reported similar reasons for withdrawal and in similar proportions).</p>	<p>Analyse data already held on students who passively withdraw.</p> <p>Identify and then attempt to survey a sample of students who have passively withdrawn.</p> <p>Survey Associate Lecturers to elicit reasons for student passive withdrawals.</p> <p>Increase awareness amongst ALs and frontline advisers of the need to provide greater support for female students undergoing potentially disruptive life events.</p>	<p>December 2021</p> <p>June 2022 – September 2022</p> <p>September 2022 – December 2022</p> <p>September 2023</p>	<p>SAT member(s), Qualification Managers</p>	<p>Understand whether women passively withdraw from study at a disproportionately greater rate than men and, if so, why.</p> <p>Formulate and disseminate recommendations to ALs and frontline advisers to provide greater support for female students to decrease passive withdrawals.</p> <p>No gender differential in passive withdrawal and subsequent module pass rates.</p>

<p>4.5</p>	<p>Investigate differences in motivation with respect to full-time and part-time study amongst E&I female PhD students.</p> <p>There is a better gender balance amongst full-time PhD students (47% women) than part-time PhD students (32% women).</p>	<p>Analyse demographic data already held on current PhD students by discipline.</p> <p>Survey full-time and part-time PhD students to understand their study motivations.</p> <p>Develop guidelines for postgraduate tutors and potential supervisors to inform recruitment and progression (especially for part-time study).</p>	<p>May 2021</p> <p>October 2021 – December 2021</p> <p>January 2022 – March 2022</p>	<p>Director of Research, Postgraduate tutors</p>	<p>Better understand PhD study motivations to inform more targeted recruitment processes and supervision best practice.</p> <p>Improved information, advice and guidance given ahead of PhD recruitment interviews.</p> <p>Improved gender balance amongst part-time PhD students, with the target of increasing from 32% to 40% women by 2024.</p>
<p>4.6</p>	<p>For each discipline area, investigate the reasons and motivations why more women than men (or vice versa) progress from undergraduate to taught postgraduate study.</p> <p>There appears to be a slightly greater tendency for female students on the Environmental Management and Systems Thinking postgraduate qualifications to hold a prior OU qualification, while on the MSc in Technology Management the opposite is the case. However, the numbers involved are small, so it is difficult to draw firm conclusions.</p>	<p>Investigate qualitatively (interviews and focus group) the study motivations of female and male postgraduate students.</p> <p>Disseminate findings to frontline advisers and qualification teams, and brief Marketing and Communications Unit.</p>	<p>January 2021 – September 2021</p> <p>October 2021 – November 2021</p>	<p>Postgraduate Qualification Leads, eSTeEM</p>	<p>Improved information, advice and guidance given by frontline advisers.</p> <p>Findings inform the redesign of postgraduate qualifications where appropriate, and the marketing of those qualifications to existing undergraduate students and in the postgraduate prospectus.</p> <p>No gender bias in the progression from undergraduate to taught postgraduate study in all discipline areas.</p>

5	Supporting and advancing women's careers				
	Action and rationale (what is the objective and what evidence led to objective)	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)	Person responsible (include job title)	Success criteria and outcome Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound
5.1	<p>Use "Textio" or similar tool to ensure language used in job advertisements is gender neutral.</p> <p>While shortlist and offer rates are relatively good for female academic job applicants, the initial job application rates from women are still low in comparison.</p>	<p>Purchase of "Textio" or similar tool for use by School Office team.</p> <p>All Person Specifications and Job Advertisements being language-checked by "Textio" or similar.</p> <p>Review effectiveness of language-checking on the number of applications from women.</p>	<p>July 2020</p> <p>September 2020 (onwards)</p> <p>September 2022</p>	HoS, School Office Manager	<p>All job adverts language-checked.</p> <p>Increase in the proportion of job applications from women (compared with men) with the target of a 10 percentage point rise by 2023 (currently 26%).</p>
5.2	<p>Extend targeted advertising (beyond advertising on WES website) to attract more female applicants to academic positions.</p> <p>While shortlist and offer rates are relatively good for female academic job applicants, the initial job application rates from women are still low in comparison.</p>	<p>Identify appropriate platforms to post job adverts, such as websites of WISE (Women in Science and Engineering) and other professional networks, to reach more female applicants.</p>	September 2020	HoS, School Office Manager	<p>Advertisements posted on a more diverse range of websites/platforms.</p> <p>Increase in the proportion of job applications from women (compared with men) with the target of a 10 percentage point rise by 2023 (currently 26%).</p>


<p>5.3</p> 	<p>Promote diversity and equality initiatives on School website as well as on social media channels to attract more female academic job applicants.</p> <p>While shortlist and offer rates are relatively good for female academic job applicants, the initial job application rates from women are still low in comparison.</p>	<p>Redesign School website to ensure diversity and equality initiatives are prominent.</p> <p>Encourage and extend the participation in social media channels by female academics.</p>	<p>September 2020</p> <p>April 2021 (and annually at CDSA thereafter)</p>	<p>External Engagement Lead, CDSA appraisers</p>	<p>Exact gender balance in images and content shown on the School website and delivered by social media.</p> <p>Increase in the proportion of job applications from women (compared with men) with the target of a 10 percentage point rise by 2023 (currently 26%).</p>
<p>5.4</p> 	<p>Ensure all staff undertake the <i>Equality Essentials</i> and <i>Understanding Unconscious Bias</i> modules or equivalent alternative training.</p> <p>In the past 2 years, 45% have undertaken <i>Equality Essentials</i> and 61% have undertaken <i>Understanding Unconscious Bias</i> modules. 80% of staff have participated in inclusivity workshops.</p>	<p>Use the appraisal process to direct staff to ensure their equality & diversity and unconscious bias training is up-to-date.</p>	<p>April 2021 (and annually at CDSA thereafter)</p>	<p>HoS, EDIA Lead, CDSA appraisers</p>	<p>100% of staff have taken equality & diversity and unconscious bias training by 2024.</p> <p>By 2023, all staff agree they are treated with fairness and respect (currently 3% disagreement in E&I culture survey).</p>
<p>5.5</p>	<p>Collect full data on gender balance of application, shortlisting and appointment for Research Fellow recruitments in the School.</p> <p>Whilst recruitment data for academic posts is routinely collected, data for Research Fellow appointments is not currently centrally collected.</p>	<p>Establish School process for collecting and reporting application, shortlisting and appointment data by gender for Research Fellows.</p>	<p>September 2020</p>	<p>HoS, School Office Manager, People Services</p>	<p>Clear picture of applications, shortlisting and success rates by gender for Research Fellows to enable analysis which could inform actions.</p>

<p>5.6</p> 	<p>Provide training for probation supervisors and mentors so that the roles and responsibilities are clear to all parties, with a specific focus on probation management of homeworkers.</p> <p>The E&I culture survey revealed a higher level of dissatisfaction with probation management for Regional Academics compared with Central Academics, suggesting a potential issue with probation management when staff member and probation supervisor are not co-located.</p>	<p>Investigate challenges of remote probation management with probation supervisors and new staff under probation.</p> <p>Update guidelines and training of probation supervisors to improve probation management of homeworkers.</p>	<p>January 2021 – June 2021</p> <p>July 2021 – September 2021</p>	<p>HoS, Regional Academic Lead</p>	<p>By 2023, no dissatisfaction with probation management of homeworkers reported in E&I culture survey.</p>
<p>5.7</p>	<p>Work on a one-to-one basis with Regional Academics who express an interest in professorial promotion to help them fulfil promotion criteria.</p> <p>Although one staff member (female) who spent 20 years as a Regional Academic was promoted to Professor, no current homeworking Regional Academics were promoted to Chair over the last reporting period.</p>	<p>Provide additional Senior Lecturer Peer Support Group meetings with a purely Regional Academic focus.</p> <p>Pair Regional Academic promotion candidates with representatives from the Chairs' Working Group to develop a case and identify any missing evidence.</p>	<p>September 2020 (and regularly thereafter)</p> <p>September 2020 (onwards)</p>	<p>HoS, Deputy HoS, CWG reps</p>	<p>At least two Senior Lecturer Peer Support Group meetings per year with a Regional Academic focus.</p> <p>All prospective Regional Academic promotion candidates paired with CWG representatives.</p> <p>At least one Regional Academic actively working on case for promotion to Chair by 2022.</p>


5.8	<p>Expand the communication to staff of the standard annual promotions cycle and processes (BAA-5.3) to include the fast-track route to promotion.</p> <p>Only male staff have taken up fast-track promotion route in the reporting period.</p>	<p>Raise awareness of fast-track promotion route at School meetings.</p> <p>Raise awareness of fast-track promotion route through individual conversations during appraisals.</p>	<p>December 2020 (and annually thereafter)</p> <p>April 2021 (and annually thereafter)</p>	<p>HoS, Deputy HoS</p> <p>CDSA appraisers</p>	<p>Equal numbers of female and male staff taking fast-track promotion route.</p>
5.9	<p>Investigate the reasons why women appear not to take the fast-track route to promotion.</p> <p>Only male staff have taken up fast-track promotion route in the reporting period.</p>	<p>Conduct separate focus groups with female and male academics to gather their views on fast-track promotion route.</p> <p>Compare perspectives and motivations by gender.</p>	<p>October 2021</p>	<p>Deputy HoS</p>	<p>Improved and more transparent promotion guidance.</p> <p>Equal numbers of female and male staff taking fast-track promotion route.</p>
5.10	<p>Continuously monitor the Chair promotion rates for women and men, and the resultant balance of female and male Professors within the School, and ensure that female staff have access to the same opportunities to gain the relevant experience and achieve promotion.</p> <p>There are only 2 female Professors compared with 12 male. However, there are approximately equal numbers of male (20) and female (19) Senior Lecturers, and we are committed to ensuring this gender balance feeds through to the professorial cohort.</p>	<p>Annually review the Chair promotion data by gender.</p> <p>Hold annual meeting with newly promoted Senior Lecturers to advise them on developing a trajectory towards promotion to Chair and introduce them to the Senior Lecturer Peer Support Group.</p> <p>Appraisers work with female Senior Lecturers to identify opportunities which will support promotion to Chair.</p>	<p>September 2020 (and annually thereafter)</p> <p>September 2020 (and annually thereafter)</p> <p>April 2021 (and annually thereafter)</p>	<p>HoS</p> <p>HoS, CWG reps</p> <p>CDSA appraisers</p>	<p>Equal numbers of Chair promotion cases made by women and men by 2024.</p> <p>Equal numbers of successful Chair promotions for women and men by 2024.</p>

5.11	<p>Interrogate the REF2021 submission process to determine whether the final gender balance of staff being submitted reflects the gender balance of the School.</p> <p>Amongst Central Academics and independent researchers, there was no gender imbalance in the percentages of eligible female/male staff returned in REF2014.</p>	<p>Analyse gender balance of E&I staff submitted to REF2021.</p> <p>Reflect on whether the OU Code of Practice has helped ensure an appropriate gender balance in E&I staff submitted to REF2021.</p>	<p>January 2021</p> <p>February 2021 – March 2021</p>	<p>Director of Research</p>	<p>REF2021 submission reflects the gender balance of the School.</p>
5.12	<p>Work in conjunction with the Faculty and University to diversify the source of leadership development programmes in which women’s participation could be encouraged.</p> <p>Only a limited number of Aurora places are available to the University. Alternative leadership programmes are on offer or being developed.</p>	<p>Identify additional programmes, routes to funding and application procedures for leadership training.</p> <p>Continue to communicate leadership training opportunities to all staff.</p> <p>Actively inform and support applications from female E&I staff during appraisal.</p>	<p>May 2020 – September 2020</p> <p>September 2020 (and ongoing thereafter)</p> <p>April 2020 (and annually thereafter)</p>	<p>HoS, Deputy HoS</p> <p>CDSA appraisers</p>	<p>By 2023, increase the number of women participating in leadership programmes (from 3 in the last reporting period).</p>
5.13	<p>Develop a School method to comprehensively monitor staff training provided externally, currently only collected on an individual basis through confidential appraisal records.</p> <p>Internal staff training is systematically recorded, but external training undertaken is recorded in a more ad hoc manner.</p>	<p>Data of external training uptake extracted from CDSA records, workload plans, and requests for financial support; and recorded by gender in School log.</p> <p>Analysis of internal and external training data to examine any gender imbalance in requests for, and uptake of, training.</p>	<p>July 2020 – September 2020 (and ongoing thereafter)</p> <p>September 2022</p>	<p>HoS, Deputy HoS, School Office team</p>	<p>Comprehensive data on requests and uptake of internal and external training captured by gender.</p>

<p>5.14</p> 	<p>Advertise outreach programmes such as the Brilliant Club and Soapbox Science more widely to PhD students within the School to increase the number of students involved in these activities.</p> <p>Opportunities are currently promoted at monthly PhD seminar sessions but wider communication both to students and their supervisors is needed.</p>	<p>Include outreach opportunities in PhD student induction.</p> <p>Regular email updates of outreach programmes to students and supervisors.</p> <p>Monitor uptake through E&I culture survey.</p>	<p>October 2020 (and annually thereafter)</p> <p>October 2020 (and ongoing thereafter)</p> <p>September 2023</p>	<p>Postgraduate tutors</p> <p>SAT</p>	<p>By 2023, double uptake of outreach activities by E&I PhD students (previously one or two students in any given year).</p>
<p>5.15</p> 	<p>Investigate the reasons for fewer grant applications from women (pro-rata) compared with men and develop tailored support strategies for women to encourage more bidding.</p> <p>Grant applications overall and particularly by women have been decreasing, although bid success rates for women have been consistently higher than for men.</p>	<p>Separate focus groups with female and male academic staff to understand attitudes and motivations for bidding.</p> <p>Workshop with staff to share good practice and pitfalls in preparing bids to develop greater awareness of 'bidding culture'.</p> <p>Develop support mechanisms for female staff to increase bidding activity.</p>	<p>February 2021</p> <p>May 2021</p> <p>July 2021 – September 2021</p>	<p>Director of Research</p>	<p>Women to be involved in at least 30% of bids by 2024.</p>

<p>5.16</p>	<p>Raise awareness amongst professional services staff of the advantages of the Applaud and Aurora programmes in terms of career progression.</p> <p>Professional services staff have the same opportunities to develop through Applaud and Aurora as academic staff and are encouraged to do so, however uptake is still lower.</p>	<p>Ensure line-managers are fully aware of the benefits of Applaud and Aurora programmes.</p> <p>Include Applaud and Aurora in appraisal process.</p>	<p>April 2021 – August 2021 (and annually thereafter)</p>	<p>Senior Teaching Manager, Senior School Manager</p> <p>CDSA appraisers</p>	<p>By 2023, 50% increase in applications to Applaud and Aurora by professional services staff.</p>
<p>5.17</p> 	<p>Investigate why professional services staff appraisals are felt to be less useful for career development (compared with the feedback received on academic staff appraisals).</p> <p>E&I culture survey revealed only 47% (7/15) of professional services staff agreed the CDSA process was useful in developing their career.</p>	<p>Focus group with professional services staff to identify ways appraisals could better address career development.</p>	<p>February 2021</p>	<p>Senior Teaching Manager, Senior School Manager</p>	<p>By 2023, increase perceived usefulness of appraisal process for career development from 47% to 65% in the E&I culture survey.</p>
<p>5.18</p>	<p>Monitor effectiveness of Maternity Buddy scheme and share good practice across the University.</p> <p>Scheme has received positive feedback, but evidence about its effectiveness to support new mothers returning to work needs to be collected and analysed, and best practice shared more widely.</p>	<p>Returnees are interviewed about the effectiveness of support received for career progression 6 months and 12 months after return.</p> <p>Share best practice with Faculty EDIA Group and University's GESG.</p>	<p>June 2020 (and ongoing thereafter)</p> <p>June 2021</p>	<p>EDIA Lead</p> <p>EDIA Lead, SAT Chair</p>	<p>Maternity Buddy scheme continuously revised in light of feedback from interviewees.</p> <p>Maternity Buddy adopted elsewhere within the University.</p>

5.19	<p>Capture and communicate case studies of paternity and shared parental leave to raise awareness amongst staff and increase uptake.</p> <p>Very few staff officially take paternity or shared parental leave.</p>	<p>Interview staff who have been on paternity and shared parental leave to create short vignettes of benefits and challenges.</p> <p>With permission, share vignettes across School.</p>	<p>December 2020 (and repeated as cases arise)</p> <p>January 2021 (and regularly repeated)</p>	<p>SAT Chair</p> <p>HoS</p>	<p>Paternity and shared parental leave entitlement and associated example vignettes communicated across School at least once a year.</p>
5.20	<p>Investigate approaches and strategies to more fully and inclusively address the needs of staff working remotely.</p> <p>The Regional Academic focus group indicated that the homeworking policy introduced in 2016 has impacted negatively on their involvement with University and School life and their career progression.</p>	<p>Encourage all staff who chair meetings to undergo training on chairing inclusive meetings with remote participants.</p> <p>Design and hold a workshop with homeworking staff to explore and develop appropriate strategies.</p> <p>Instigate a scholarship project around the lack of serendipity in remote working and the adverse impact this brings.</p>	<p>July 2020 (and regularly thereafter)</p> <p>November 2020</p> <p>January 2021 – January 2022</p>	<p>HoS</p> <p>SAT Chair, Regional Academic Lead</p> <p>E&I staff member</p>	<p>By 2023, increase agreement in E&I culture survey amongst homeworkers that they have the same opportunities as those who work on campus (currently at 38%).</p>
5.21	<p>Explore with staff the factors and intersections that cause ‘feelings of discomfort’ at the workplace to inform steps to address any issues.</p> <p>The E&I culture survey revealed some feelings of being uncomfortable or at a disadvantage because of a specific protected characteristic, but when asked directly, fewer staff think discrimination does or may exist.</p>	<p>Conduct a follow up survey to investigate the feelings of discomfort, with an option to be contacted for an interview or to participate in a focus group.</p> <p>Investigate experiential training options and organise workshops to understand how disability affects the individual in the workplace.</p>	<p>January 2021 – April 2021</p> <p>April 2021 – December 2021</p>	<p>EDIA Lead, Deputy HoS as part of Securing Greater Accessibility (SeGA)</p>	<p>By 2023, overall decrease, and no gender imbalance, in the reported ‘feelings of discomfort’ because of protected characteristics in E&I culture survey (currently 33% of women compared with 11% of men).</p>

<p>5.22</p> 	<p>Ensure all staff (particularly professional services staff) are aware of the bullying and harassment policy and are confident to report any instances.</p> <p>Analysis of the E&I culture survey revealed that bullying and harassment were experienced primarily by professional services staff and fewer staff in this category were aware of how to report it compared with academic staff.</p>	<p>Redistribute communications with links to policy, procedures and advice.</p> <p>Work with People Services to organise workshops aimed at academic and professional services staff, to build awareness of bullying and harassment and how to recognise and deal with instances.</p>	<p>June 2020</p> <p>January 2021 – December 2021</p>	<p>Deputy HoS, Senior Teaching Manager, Senior School Manager</p>	<p>By 2023, no experiences of bullying or harassment reported in E&I culture survey.</p>
<p>5.23</p>	<p>At the ends of the terms of office of the student representatives, AL representatives and external advisers, seek to ensure that new appointments lead to a better gender balance amongst the external representation on the Board of Studies (which in turn will lead to a better gender balance overall).</p> <p>Gender balance of academic and curriculum staff on Board of Studies is good, but overall gender balance is skewed by external representatives.</p>	<p>Ensure that new appointments lead to a better gender balance amongst the external representatives and advisers.</p>	<p>When new appointments are made</p>	<p>DoT, Senior Teaching Manager</p>	<p>No gender imbalance of Board of Studies members by 2024.</p>

5.24	<p>Invite a different observer from across the wider E&I staff base to attend each School Management Team meeting and each E&I Board of Studies meeting.</p> <p>The E&I culture survey revealed that some staff don't understand all aspects of School decision-making.</p>	Circulate open invitation to join core School committees for a session as an observer.	September 2020 (and every 6 months thereafter)	HoS, DoT	By 2023, increase understanding amongst staff of School decision-making processes (currently E&I culture survey indicates that 12% of respondents lack understanding of School decision-making).
5.25	<p>Circulate the minutes of School Management Team meetings around the School, either via email or via the School website.</p> <p>The E&I culture survey revealed that some staff don't understand all aspects of School decision-making.</p>	Publish minutes of School Management Team meetings (with any personal information redacted) so that they are available to all E&I staff.	September 2020 (and ongoing thereafter)	HoS	By 2023, increase understanding amongst staff of School decision-making processes (currently E&I culture survey indicates that 12% of respondents lack understanding of School decision-making).
5.26	<p>Trial a new approach to make workload allocation more transparent among staff, whereby the percentage of time allocated to a particular category of work is published by gender and staff grade/role.</p> <p>The E&I culture survey suggests that there may be a gender bias in the perception of the fairness and transparency of workload allocation.</p>	Analyse percentages of time allocated under all workload categories captured on the AWM system, by gender and staff grade/role, and provide a report for staff to view.	August 2020 (and annually thereafter)	HoS, Deputy HoS, Senior School Manager	By 2023, no gender imbalance among academic staff reported in the E&I culture survey, with respect to the perception that workload allocation is fair and transparent.

<p>5.27</p>	<p>Investigate how the School can support homeworkers more effectively to achieve a better work/home life balance.</p> <p>The E&I culture survey revealed that only 43% of Regional Academics (mostly homeworkers) feel they can strike a balance between work and home life, compared with 53% of Central Academics.</p>	<p>Hold workshop with Regional Academics to gain ideas and identify potential interventions to improve work/home life balance for homeworkers.</p> <p>Disseminate best practice and peer recommendations across the School.</p>	<p>November 2020</p> <p>February 2021</p>	<p>SAT Chair, Regional Academic Lead</p>	<p>By 2023, no difference reported in the E&I culture survey in the ability of homeworkers and campus-based workers to strike a balance between work and home life (currently only 43% of Regional Academics feel able to strike a balance compared with 53% of Central Academics).</p>
<p>5.28</p>	<p>Investigate gender balance of audiences for all E&I outreach events, both those delivered face-to-face and those provided online or via television broadcast.</p> <p>Although staff have anecdotally reported a good gender balance at face-to-face events, it is difficult to obtain accurate data on the gender balance of the audiences for all E&I outreach events, particularly for online and broadcast activities.</p>	<p>Encourage staff to record gender data each time they deliver face-to-face outreach events.</p> <p>Work with OMIL to capture gender data for E&I online and broadcast events.</p>	<p>September 2020 (and ongoing thereafter)</p> <p>January 2021 – June 2021 (and annual reporting thereafter)</p>	<p>Senior School Manager</p> <p>External Engagement Lead, Faculty Open Media Fellows</p>	<p>By 2024, be able to accurately report gender split of audiences at all E&I outreach events.</p>

<p>5.29</p>	<p>Investigate how many promotion cases include evidence of outreach activity and whether this has a positive effect on promotion success rates.</p> <p>Contribution to outreach activities is recognised in workload planning, and provides strong evidence for promotion cases.</p>	<p>Over the duration of the reporting period, analyse promotion cases to identify those which cite evidence of outreach activity.</p> <p>Investigate any correlation between inclusion of outreach activity and promotion success.</p>	<p>June 2020 – April 2024</p>	<p>HoS, Deputy HoS</p>	<p>Better understanding of the impact of outreach activity on promotion success.</p>
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(ii) Bronze action achievements (BAA)

Actions which were a priority are highlighted in blue.

Actions completed are green.







Actions partially completed are amber.







Actions not completed and carried forward are red.








Actions which became redundant are white.







3 The Self-Assessment Process				
Action	Objective	Impact and additional action if applicable	Sustainability and follow on actions	Status
3.1	Establish an annual cycle of reporting at School meetings on Athena SWAN/gender equality issues.	The SAT Chair reported overall progress at School meetings and School Management Team meetings. Staff are aware of E&I equality and diversity initiatives. 88% of staff report they are treated with fairness and respect; 90% believe the School values individual differences.	A motivational speaker on Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity and Accessibility was invited to a School meeting which led to a new standing item for the School's annual December meeting (SAP-3.2)	
3.2	Highlight and maintain the visibility of the SAT and ensure succession planning for team members.	New members have joined the SAT and a new Chair appointed, bringing fresh perspectives and ideas. The previous Chair continues as Deputy Chair, enabling a smooth transition.	Introducing more professional services staff on to the SAT skewed the overall female/male ratio. Consequently, more men need to be recruited to the team, along with more BAME and junior staff members (SAP-3.1).	
4 A picture of the department				
4.1 Students				
Action	Objective	Impact and additional action if applicable	Sustainability and follow on actions	Status
4.1	Determine whether the differences in pass rates for entry-point modules by gender are statistically significant, and if so, investigate reasons for the differences.	Between 2015-2018 no significant differences were found between female/male pass rates for the Engineering entry-point module. A small difference in favour of female student outcomes can be seen for the Design and Environment entry-point modules.	SAP-4.1 will continue to monitor the starting population and pass rate for women studying on the entry-point Engineering module, and explore the effect of informed curriculum changes and other interventions on them.	







4.2	Investigate potential gender imbalance of withdrawal from study.	No gender-specific patterns were found in the formal withdrawal data (in withdrawal surveys, women and men reported similar reasons for withdrawal and in similar proportions).	Only a small number of student withdrawals are formally notified; the majority are passive withdrawals, with no notification or reason given to the University. There are variations across individual modules. SAP-4.4 will identify and work with modules with larger withdrawal numbers or unusual patterns to uncover and address reasons and potential gender imbalance.	
4.3 	Investigate the decrease in the proportion of female students at Stage 1.	The female/male ratios on the three entry-point modules, after a small drop (between 2012-2015 for Design and Environment; between 2012-2014 for Engineering), have consistently increased. In particular, Engineering has shown a significant increase in the proportion of women on the entry-point module (from 11% in 2012 to 19% in 2019).	This has led to SAP-4.1 which proposes to continue to monitor the starting population and pass rate for women studying on the entry-point Engineering module, and explore the effect of informed curriculum changes and other interventions on them.	
4.4	Carry out an investigation into female student intentions at Stage 1 through an online survey, together with focus group and interviews.	A research project revealed that many female students are well-qualified career changers. Better understanding of student motivation has informed curriculum changes, the WiE conference agenda and improved industrial internship opportunities.	This was a discrete research project that is now completed, and the findings have been utilised and disseminated.	
4.5 	Organise a conference for women students on engineering qualifications to coincide in June 2016 with National Women in Engineering Day (NWED).	The success of the 2016 conference led to it becoming an annual event, with attendance increasing year-on-year. A WES-affiliated student group formed in 2017.	The conference will continue to be held annually. Livestreaming of the conference to those who cannot attend in person will be investigated.	


4.6	Develop information, advice, guidance (IAG) and training (including case studies) on gender issues for use with Student Support Team, Marketing and Regional Academic staff who advise potential Engineering & Innovation students at enrolment and during their studies.	With the continuing restructuring of the University's Student Support Teams, this action was not achieved and has been carried forward as SAP-4.2 .	SAP-4.2 will provide input to the training and development for frontline student advisers on equality and unconscious bias so that they are better placed to advise students across all curriculum areas.	
4.7	Investigate why the postgraduate curriculum appears to be more attractive to women than the undergraduate curriculum.	OU female students were found to be more likely than men to be motivated by career-change. This has informed curriculum strategy with a new Level 7 Systems Thinking in Practice degree apprenticeship and an integrated Masters in Environment being developed.	This was a discrete investigation that is now completed, and the findings have been utilised and disseminated.	
4.8	Monitor and report application, offer and acceptance rates for competitive postgraduate research studentships by gender.	Application, offer and acceptance rates for postgraduate research studentships were monitored by gender. Since 2015, although there have been significantly more applications for PhD study from men than women, the offer and acceptance rates show a much better gender balance, with women making up 47% of students accepted for PhD study over the period.	This was a discrete investigation that is now completed. The monitoring and recording of research studentship recruitment data by gender continues and is now normal practice.	
4.9 	Ensure records held in the School for completion of research degrees are accurate and up-to-date to enable the monitoring of differences between part-time and full-time completion rates.	PhD completion data has been recorded. There are currently no gender-related differences between part-time and full-time completion rates.	This was a discrete investigation that is now completed. The monitoring and recording of PhD completion data by gender continues and is now normal practice.	
4.10	To carry out an investigation to identify the scale and nature of student transition from undergraduate to postgraduate study within the School.	The progression from undergraduate to taught postgraduate study may be more prevalent amongst women in the Environmental Management and Systems Thinking discipline areas, and amongst men in the Technology Management discipline area (no obvious trend is apparent for Engineering).	SAP-4.6 will investigate the reasons and motivations why more women than men (or vice versa) progress from undergraduate to taught postgraduate study, for each discipline area.	






4.2	Staff			
Action	Objective	Impact and additional action if applicable	Sustainability and follow on actions	Status
4.11	Ensure job adverts promote the School as supportive for women, mention flexible working and the proportion of women at senior levels.	All job advertisements include the University's equality and diversity statement and highlight the School's Athena SWAN Bronze award. The average application rate by women increased from 19% in the last reporting period to 26% in the current period.	SAP-5.1 builds on this action by looking to use "Textio" or a similar tool to ensure language used in job advertisements is gender neutral.	
4.12 	Use 'women in science and engineering' networks to advertise jobs and actively encourage suitable women to apply.	All job advertisements have been placed on the Women's Engineering Society (WES) website, and suitable women have been actively encouraged to apply. The average application rate by women increased from 19% in the last reporting period to 26% in the current period	SAP-5.2 builds on this action by extending targeted advertising beyond advertising on WES website, to attract more female applicants to academic positions.	
4.13	Use the School website to showcase the School's commitment and success in advancing the careers of women.	Female role models have been promoted in University, Faculty and School newsletters, websites, advertisements and social media channels. Since 2015, there has been an increase in high-quality appointable applications from women for academic positions and PhD studentships, and a year-on-year increase in the proportion of female students registering on E&I taught qualifications.	SAP-5.3 will promote diversity and equality initiatives on School website as well as on social media channels to attract more female academic job applicants.	
4.14	Explore and understand why women appear to be disproportionately attracted to Regional Academic role.	Focus group discussions revealed the enhanced flexibility of the role makes it particularly attractive for staff with caring responsibilities, which may have a bigger impact on women.	This Bronze action has been completed and greater understanding has been gained.	
4.15 	Encourage and monitor Regional Academic staff progression to professorial grade.	Although none of the four professorial promotions during the reporting period were current Regional Academics, one staff member (female) who spent 20 years as a Regional Academic, and regularly attended the peer-support group, was promoted to Professor.	SAP-5.7 implements work on a one-to-one basis with Regional Academics who express an interest in professorial promotion to help them fulfil promotion criteria.	


4.16 	Monitor the effect of major institutional restructuring, which will disproportionately impact on Regional Academic staff as they formally become homeworkers, on the recruitment and career progression of those staff.	The percentage of applications for Regional Academic roles from women increased from 22% to 34% over the reporting period, reinforcing the findings of BAA-4.14 .	This Bronze action has been completed and greater understanding has been gained. This has informed SAP-5.7 , which has a focus on supporting Regional Academics towards gaining professorial promotion, and SAP-5.20 , which will investigate approaches and strategies to more fully and inclusively address the needs of staff working remotely.	
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5	Supporting and advancing women's careers			
5.1	Key transition points: academic staff			
Action	Objective	Impact and additional action if applicable	Sustainability and follow on actions	Status
5.1	Ensure all staff on interview panels have undergone equality & diversity and unconscious bias training.	A fair selection training module is recommended for staff undertaking recruitment and is mandatory for interview panel chairs. All E&I staff (not just panel members) have been encouraged to undertake relevant training. In the past 2 years, 45% have undertaken <i>Equality Essentials</i> and 61% have undertaken <i>Understanding Unconscious Bias</i> modules. 80% of staff have participated in inclusivity workshops.	SAP-5.4 will ensure <i>all</i> staff undertake both the online <i>Equality Essentials</i> and <i>Understanding Unconscious Bias</i> modules or equivalent alternative training.	
5.2	Work towards ensuring that interview panels for academic positions have at least two women and two men.	Since 2015 all interview panels for academic positions have either had an exact gender balance or have comprised more women than men. Subsequently, there have been 3 Senior Lecturer and 13 Lecturer appointments. Of these 8 were women and 8 were men.	This Bronze action has now become normal practice in the School.	


5.3 	Provide training for staff in understanding the new promotions criteria and preparing for promotion cases, including gaining HEA Fellowship.	The promotions processes have been communicated to staff annually at School meetings, as well as individually by appraisers. The number of promotions has increased from an average of 5 per year (33% women) in the last reporting period to 5.25 per year (48% women) in the current period. HEA Fellowships have increased from 15 (40% women) in 2015 to 27 (48% women) in 2019.	This Bronze action has now become normal practice in the School.	
5.4 	Monitor the appointment of staff to positions of responsibility, and ensure that women continue to be given appropriate leadership roles to assist with promotion, particularly to Professor.	Holding leadership roles within E&I has aided the promotion of four women (1 Professor, 3 Senior Lecturers) and one man (1 Professor) over the reporting period.	This Bronze action has now become normal practice in the School.	
5.5 	Ensure that each Regional Academic at Senior Lecturer grade has a balanced workload which permits them to spend time on academic activities appropriate for a professorial promotion case.	Although none of the four professorial promotions during the reporting period were current Regional Academics, one staff member (female) who spent 20 years as a Regional Academic, and regularly attended the peer-support group, was promoted to Professor.	SAP-5.7 implements work on a one-to-one basis with Regional Academics who express an interest in professorial promotion to help them fulfil promotion criteria.	






5.3	Career development: academic staff			
Action	Objective	Impact and additional action if applicable	Sustainability and follow on actions	Status
5.6	Monitor uptake of academic staff training and development in a systematic way.	The University's 'My Learning Centre' was introduced in 2017 enabling systematic monitoring of internal training uptake and identification of gaps. 69% of E&I culture survey respondents felt they had been actively encouraged to take up career development opportunities, rising to 85% for female Central Academics.	SAP-5.13 is intended to develop a School method to comprehensively monitor staff training provided externally, currently only collected on an individual basis through confidential appraisal records.	

5.7	Encourage uptake of various leadership development programmes for Senior Lecturers.	Two female mid-career Central Academics have undertaken Aurora resulting in one becoming OpenSTEM Laboratory Director (a Faculty leadership role). Additionally, two Senior Lecturers (one female, one male) have undertaken AdvanceHE/Leadership Foundation programmes leading to Faculty and University level roles. The female Senior Lecturer was subsequently promoted to Professor.	SAP-5.12 implements work in conjunction with the Faculty and University to diversify the source of leadership development programmes women could be encouraged to take up.	
5.8	Monitor and review membership of module teams to ensure a better gender balance.	32 out of 35 module teams have at least one female academic, supporting a more inclusive curriculum. (There has been no adverse impact on teaching workloads of women, and module team membership has contributed positively to promotion cases.)	This Bronze action has now become normal practice in the School.	
5.9	Promote opportunities for research staff to gain teaching experience.	Four researchers on fixed-term contracts have secured permanent lectureships over the past four years; three had gained teaching experience at residential schools.	This Bronze action has now become normal practice in the School.	
5.10 	Investigate the reasons for the fall in the number of female staff submitting grant applications.	Due to intensive curriculum production, E&I has experienced a downward trend in overall bids for both women and men. This action has been carried forward as SAP-5.15 .	SAP-5.15 will investigate the reasons for fewer grant applications from women (pro-rata) compared with men and develop tailored support strategies for women to encourage more bidding.	

5.5	Flexible working and managing career breaks			
Action	Objective	Impact and additional action if applicable	Sustainability and follow on actions	Status
5.11	Establish a Buddy scheme for individuals prior to maternity or adoption leave.	A Maternity Buddy scheme was established in 2019. The buddy has advised two women prior to their maternity leave and one on return, including one from another School. Initial feedback has been extremely positive.	The effectiveness of the Maternity Buddy scheme will be monitored and good practice shared across the University (SAP-5.18).	

5.12	Head of School and staff member taking maternity/adoption leave to agree clear plan for Keeping-in-Touch days.	Feedback from returnees to the Maternity Buddy confirms that the use of Keeping-in-Touch days and return to work planning enabled them to resume their career without detriment.	This Bronze action has now become normal practice in the School.	
5.13	Work with staff on an individual basis to ensure a smooth return to work and enable them to pick up their research/scholarship and teaching as appropriate for career progression.	Feedback from returnees to the Maternity Buddy confirms that the use of Keeping-in-Touch days and return to work planning enabled them to resume their career without detriment.	This Bronze action has now become normal practice in the School.	
5.14	Ensure all staff are aware of statutory entitlement to paternity, shared parental, adoption, and parental leave.	Staff are aware of entitlements and policies; one man has taken paternity leave and one woman has taken shared parental leave in the reporting period.	Case studies of paternity and shared parental leave will be captured and communicated to raise awareness amongst staff and increase uptake (SAP-5.19)	
5.15	Ensure that all staff are fully aware of the agile-working policy.	Qualitative and quantitative feedback indicates staff are aware and make good use of the agile-working policy, with all agile-working requests granted.	Some staff believe that working flexibly part-time or from home does not offer the same opportunities as working on campus or full-time. SAP-5.20 investigates approaches and strategies to more fully and inclusively address the needs of staff working remotely.	

5.6	Culture			
Action	Objective	Impact and additional action if applicable	Sustainability and follow on actions	Status
5.16	SAT to review annually the results of the institutional 'Pulse' survey to identify and act on any gender specific issues.	'Pulse' no longer provides School-level gender-disaggregated data, to prevent identification of individuals. Instead E&I ran a culture survey to explore gender-related issues. The return rate was high (87 responses) aiding identification of gender-specific issues and informing Silver Actions.	The E&I culture survey results have informed many Silver actions.	

5.17	Establish an up-to-date list of committee membership for School staff to enable monitoring of potential internal 'committee overload'.	<p>The gender balance on three of the School committees (SMT, Research Committee, SDPWG) gives no cause for concern, with each committee comprising slightly more women than men, but being approximately balanced.</p> <p>Women are achieving appropriate leadership roles within the School. Holding leadership roles within the School has aided the promotion of four women (1 Professor, 3 Senior Lecturers) and one man (1 Professor) over the reporting period.</p>	<p>The BoS constituency reveals a greater gender imbalance (11 women, 18 men). Further investigation shows that this imbalance arises from the external representation on the committee. SAP-5.23 will therefore, at the ends of the terms of office of the student representatives, AL representatives and external advisors, seek to ensure that new appointments lead to a better gender balance amongst the external representation (which in turn will lead to a better gender balance overall for the Board of Studies).</p>	
5.18 	Encourage female staff to seek opportunities to enhance external profile, via representation on national and international committees and bodies.	<p>In the previous reporting period, E&I male academics were 1.5 times more likely than E&I female academics to serve on external committees. Women are now just as likely as men to serve on external committees.</p>	This Bronze action has now become normal practice in the School.	
5.19 	Analyse workload distribution by gender at School level to ensure an equitable balance.	The teaching/research/administration workload balance in E&I has been found to be consistently equitable for women and men across the reporting period.	Although the workload allocation in E&I has been found to be equitable for women and men, the E&I culture survey suggested a possible gender bias in the perception of the fairness and transparency of workload allocation. SAP-5.26 will trial a new approach to make workload allocation more transparent among staff, whereby the percentage of time allocated to a particular category of work is published by gender and staff grade/role.	

5.20	Actively ensure the gender balance of speakers at the School monthly seminar series is maintained.	<p>The original Bronze Action became redundant. The School no longer has a monthly seminar series for staff; instead staff attend research and scholarship seminars throughout the University.</p> <p>In addition, as our teaching is delivered as distance-learning, E&I doesn't have a regular (undergraduate) seminar series; instead there are various online student-facing events, such as 'Student Hub Live', with a good gender balance among E&I staff contributors.</p> <p>However, the School does have a monthly PhD student seminar series in which students present to their peers and academic staff; the gender balance of the speakers therefore reflects that of the PhD student cohort.</p>	Although E&I no longer has a monthly seminar series for staff, it is now normal practice within the School to ensure that there is a good gender balance amongst speakers and contributors at all School events.	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.21	Use the School website to showcase the School's commitment and success in advancing the careers of women.	Female role models have been promoted in University, Faculty and School newsletters, websites, advertisements and social media channels. Since 2015, there has been an increase in high-quality appointable applications from women for academic positions and PhD studentships, and a year-on-year increase in the proportion of female students registering on E&I taught qualifications.	SAP-5.3 will promote diversity and equality initiatives on School website as well as on social media channels to attract more female academic job applicants.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.22	Increase the visibility of women role models in publications, advertisements and websites relating to E&I qualifications, research and other activities.	Female role models have been promoted in University, Faculty and School newsletters, websites, advertisements and social media channels. Since 2015, there has been an increase in high-quality appointable applications from women for academic positions and PhD studentships, and a year-on-year increase in the proportion of female students registering on E&I taught qualifications.	SAP-5.3 will promote diversity and equality initiatives on School website as well as on social media channels to attract more female academic job applicants.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.23	Monitor outreach activity to ensure a gender balance at such events.	Gender balance of staff conducting outreach activity has been systematically recorded. Communications regarding outreach opportunities have resulted in a better gender balance.	SAP-5.28 will investigate gender balance of audiences for all E&I outreach events, both those delivered face-to-face and those provided online or via television broadcast.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



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