Athena SWAN: Bronze and Silver department applications

Contents

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

AAPR	Annual Academic Planning Review
ADA	Academic Development Appraisal
AS	Athena Swan
CoS	College of Science
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
FT	Full time
HoS/dHoS	Head of School/ Deputy Head of School
HR	Human Resources
LTAC	Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee
PDR	Postdoctoral Researcher
PG	Postgraduate
PGR	Research Postgraduate
PGT	Taught Postgraduate
PT	Part-time
REF	Research Excellence Framework
RSC	Research Strategy Committee
SLS	School of Life Sciences
SLSSAT	School of Life Sciences Self-Assessment Team

SMT	School Management Team	
TR	Teaching & Research	
TSPP	Teaching, Scholarship and Professional Practice	
UG	Undergraduate	
UoL	University of Lincoln	
UoA	Unit of Assessment, as relates to REF	
WG	Working Group	

Word Count

Department application	Bronze	Word count
Word limit	**10,500**	**10,473**
Recommended word count		
1.Letter of endorsement	500	472
2.Description of the department	500	636
3a. Covid impacts on the self-assessment process	500	387
3b. Self-assessment process	1,000	1,001
4. Picture of the department	2,000	1,713
5. Supporting and advancing women's careers	6,000	6,264
6. Case studies	n/a	0
7. Further information	500	0

COLOUR CODING

Key Challenges are identified in grey boxes   and by grey bold text

Actions are identified in teal boxes   and by teal bold text

COVID-19 impacts are identified in red boxes

School Culture Survey 2020 results are presented in blue boxes

Name of institution	University of Lincoln
Department	School of Life Sciences
Focus of department	**STEMM**
Date of application	Nov 2021
Award Level	**Bronze**
Institution Athena SWAN award	**Date: November 2014 (Bronze)**
Contact for application Must be based in the department	Dr Jenny Dunn
Email	JDunn@lincoln.ac.uk
Telephone	01522 835845
Departmental website	https://www.lincoln.ac.uk/home/lifesciences

1. Letter of endorsement from the head of department

Recommended word count: Bronze: 500 words

26th Nov 2021

Dear Dani Glazzard,

I am delighted to endorse the School of Life Sciences Athena Swan Bronze Award application as Head of School. Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are essential in all aspects of the School's day to day activities, from teaching and learner support to research, outreach, scholarship, professional practice, staff recruitment, development and recognition. The diversity of our community is our strength, and we value it. Our Athena Swan committee has become the SLS EDI Committee to focus more broadly on the EDI agenda, EDI is a standing item in our other committee meetings and informs decision making at every level within the School.

Our dedicated Self-Assessment Team comprises members from all grades and role profiles within the School and as a committee have developed this application. I would like to express my thanks to them all for their hard work and drive to make a difference.

We have been working hard on establishing inclusive practices throughout the School and routinely consider and address areas for improvement. The pandemic response has been a particular challenge in terms of maintaining our supportive environment, and we have been very mindful to minimise/remove inequalities arising from the situation for students and staff such as balancing caring responsibilities alongside learning or working from home.

The culture of the School is very much an open one where colleagues are able to express their views, both constructive and laudatory, and be heard in a respectful manner at all times. Teamwork within the School is highly valued, with collegiality a key facet of our working relationships. We strive to encourage a positive atmosphere, recognising good practice and commit to doing the best possible for our staff and students regardless of their background.

The University has a One Community ethos, and we fully subscribe to it. I am particularly proud that academic, technical and professional services staff feel equally encouraged and able to contribute. The self-assessment identifies our good practice, but also areas where we can and want to improve. For example, we already have an above sector-average female student ratio, but going forward we are keen to address that there are comparatively few women in academic, especially senior, roles. Work-life balance proves challenging in light of the constant pressures of metrics and targets in academia, and needs working on for the benefit of everyone's wellbeing. Our action plan is challenging, but necessary, to thrive as a School that reflects the diversity of society at large. I am encouraged that staff have taken so positively to this agenda. In the longer term we must also develop and progress our plans towards intersectionality.

I am committed to championing EDI throughout the School and providing equality of opportunity, thus unconditionally support this application. The information presented in the application is an honest, accurate and true representation of the School.

Yours sincerely,

Word count: 472

2. Description of the department

Recommended word count: Bronze: 500 words

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

Please note: throughout this application we report HESA/HEFCE data, which assumes binary genders. However, as a School we recognise that gender is a spectrum and we champion gender diversity.

Please note: the data presented in this application are correct to the best of our knowledge. Where discrepancies have been identified, these have been corrected where possible, and an Action initiated to improve the accuracy of our data monitoring.

The School of Life Sciences (SLS) was formed in 2012 after the merger of the School of Natural and Applied Sciences and the Department of Biological Sciences, coinciding with the move by the University to a College-based structure. The University has been growing in size and student numbers,- achieved the TEF Gold award in 2017, and is the Modern University of the Year 2021 (The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2021).

Our School brings together academic staff and students (see Table 2.1) in a vibrant community with world-class facilities, and aims to provide a supportive and stimulating environment. We have been actively engaging with Athena Swan since 2014.

As of 2020, we are the largest School within the College of Science, with over 1,000 students. The percentage of female students (68%) is higher than in the University and the sector benchmark in SET subjects, as well as in Biological Sciences (65%) according to HESA data in 2020.

Table 2.1: Staff and students in SLS by gender

	Total	M	F	SLS %F	University of Lincoln (%F)	National SET subjects (%F)
All staff	66	38	28	**42**	52	55
Academic	52	36	16	**31**	42	43
Professional and technical services	14	2	12	**86**	62	63
All students	1085	352	733	**68**	56	53
UG	925	297	628	**68**	53	57
PGT	61	16	45	**74**	59	59
PGR	99	39	60	**61**	55	45

SLS offers the full spectrum of Life Science disciplines (7 UG programmes; 3 PGT programmes; PGR) and delivers research-informed teaching in partnership with our students (Student as Producer initiative). We are committed to supporting students in preparation for further study or employment,

making learning and assessments as inclusive, accessible and authentic as possible. The ability to question and to explore scientific methodology and discovery is developed through a mixed curriculum of theory and practical work, including national and international field trips (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1: Finland Field Course at the Kevo subarctic field station, 2019

The College of Science operates a devolved management system, with SLS maintaining its own School Management Team (SMT); Research Strategy Committee (RSC); and Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee (LTAC) to govern key functions. SLS (Figure 2.2) is successful in both teaching and research. In the recent NSS, 4 of the 5 subject areas we return were in the top 5 for overall satisfaction, and 1 was in the top 10. Our strong REF2014 result, ranking 2nd (of 29) and 10th (of 94) for outputs in the two Units of Assessment to which staff were submitted, is expected to be bettered for the 2021 REF.

We have 52 members of academic staff on either Teaching and Research (TR) or Teaching, Scholarship and Professional Practice (TSPP) role profiles (Table 2.2). The percentage of our female academic staff (31%) is lower than in the institution and in SET subjects in the sector (as well as in Biosciences specifically [46%; see **Actions** under **KC5** and **KC6**]). We also have fewer female professors than in the SET sector (22.6%; see **Actions** under **KC6, 11, 12, 15-17**). SLS employs Associate Lecturers for specialist skills and knowledge on an hourly basis to complement our provision (but this is a minor component of our delivery, and we do not operate zero hours contracts), and demonstrators (typically PGR students) for practical support. Dedicated technical and professional services teams support SLS in all key outputs and operations, where the ratio of women is higher than in the sector (Table 2.1).

Figure 2.2: School of Life Sciences Team

Table 2.2: Academic staff may be appointed at grades ranging from Lecturer to Professor on either TR or TSPP role profile. Technical and professional staff are appointed according to University-wide role descriptors.

Description	Job Title	Grade
Academic (TR or TSPP)	Professor	Senior Management Grade
	Deputy Head of School	10
	Associate Professor	9
	Senior Lecturer	8
	Lecturer	7
Technical	Technical Manager	8
	Senior Technician	7
	Technicians	4 - 6
Professional Services	Senior Administrator	5
	Administrators	4
	Clerical	3
Associates	Lecturers	Hourly Paid Lecturer
	Demonstrators	

Since being awarded a Bronze Athena Swan award in 2016, SLS has developed considerably, and we have seen much change. We routinely consider EDI and address areas for improvement. Following feedback from an unsuccessful Silver application in November 2019, we have decided to reapply for a Bronze Athena Swan award while we work to put in place the measures that will put us in a strong position to apply for a Silver award in the future.

Word count: 636

3. The self-assessment process

Recommended word count: Bronze: 1000 words (plus 500 for Covid-19 impacts)

Covid-19 impacts on SLS, and on the self-assessment process

"COVID-19 related stress is not ideal for maintaining the work-life balance currently" male PGR

"[Lack of work-life balance] is exacerbated by COVID" male Academic

The impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on ways of working within SLS, the volume of work, and work-life balance cannot be understated, but these are not unique to SLS. Uncertainty around ways of working and the changes these require, have been managed through increased communication within SLS, through, for example, frequent catch-up meetings and the initiation of a School-wide Teams site that enables staff to ask any questions that may crop up in the course of their work. This also allows a casual communication with colleagues, which while not replacing a social element does enable an open and supportive line of communication. Social activities have been negatively impacted, as has work-life balance – with any existing work-life imbalance exacerbated by the effects of Covid-19.

It has been difficult to disentangle the Covid-19 situation from pre-Covid-19, but we have conducted our self-assessment based on the current situation, as this is where we consider the starting point for our Action Plan to be.

"Covid has been challenging, but regular catch-ups have helped keep a sense of community within the school" female Academic

However, a lot has changed during the period of self-assessment. In particular, our UG/PGT student consultation has not been completed as planned and we highlight this fact as one of our key overarching challenges - the need to design an additional School Culture Survey for UG and PGT students going forward.

We highlight several actions identified specifically in response to Covid-19-related changes (highlighted throughout our application in pink boxes) that can be further investigated and implemented: these are summarised in Table 6 of our Action Plan. Some of these Actions may become unnecessary if we move back to a fully in-person work setting, but most are considered likely to stand. We have highlighted throughout our application where things have changed as a result of Covid, and identify – where possible – Actions to address these. However, we do note that where changes are due to financial limitations, for example the removal of individual pots of money to cover staff career development, and a lack of funding for maternity cover at the University level, that it may not be possible to replace these in the near future.

Word count: 387

Describe the self-assessment process. This should include:

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

Table 3.1. SLS SAT membership 2020-21

CATEGORY	REPRESENTATION
Gender	9 female, 6 male
BAME	13% (2 male)
Academic grade	All grades (including PDRA)
Contract type	87% permanent, 13% fixed-term (1 female, 1 male)
Working mode	93% full-time, 7% part-time (1 female)
Professional/support staff representation	13% (2 female)
Student representation	7% (1 PGR, female)

The SLS self-assessment team (SLSSAT) comprises 16 members of staff and students (Table 3.1), encompassing a range of backgrounds and experiences – both professional and personal (Table 3.2). Formerly the Athena Swan committee, the SAT was revamped in summer 2020 and renamed the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) committee, to reflect SLS's commitment to wider diversity and inclusion issues beyond gender alone and allow a more intersectional approach. In summer 2020, several committee members took the decision to step down, and new members were nominated by the Chair of the committee to reflect the diversity of SLS at all levels, as well as including individuals with strong interests in EDI issues. Participation was optional, allowing for differing workloads. An open call for membership was circulated around SLS and self-nomination encouraged.

Table 3.2. SLS SAT membership 2020-21

SAT MEMBER	GENDER AND PRONOUNS	SCHOOL ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES	SAT ROLE	EXPERIENCE RELEVANT TO SAT
Dr Jenny Dunn 	Female, she/her	Senior Lecturer (ECR), F/T, permanent	Chair since August 2020	Keen interest in EDI, member of external E&D working group (WG) (British Ornithologists' Union)
Dr Sheena Cotter 	Female, she/her	Senior Lecturer, F/T, permanent	Member since November 2015	Member since 2015, Chair of SAT 2017-2019, EDI rep on RSC (2017-2018 and 2019-present) and LTAC (2017-2020).

Dr Iain Stott 	Male, he/him	Senior Lecturer (ECR), F/T, permanent	Member since August 2020	Co-chair E&D WG at previous institution; founding member, British Ecological Society (BES) E&D and LGBT+ WG; BES E&D Champion 2020.
Ms Alex Aitken 	Female, she/her	Senior Technician F/T permanent	Member since January 2019	Coaching/ mentoring qualification. Strong belief that everyone has equal opportunities and support to achieve the best they can.
Dr Beatrix Fahnert 	Female, she/her	Deputy Head of School, Associate Professor, F/T, permanent	Member since February 2018	Keen interest in EDI; routinely considering EDI aspects in context of student and staff experience and supporting aspiration and achievement
Dr Graziella Iossa 	Female, she/her	Lecturer (ECR), P/T, fixed	Member since February 2016	Keen interest in EDI and ECR; Founding chair of ECR committee (2017-2019); senior mentor for returner to science (BES 2018-2019)
Prof. Oliver Burman 	Male, he/him	Professor, F/T, permanent	Member since August 2020	Keen interest in EDI; academic mentor (University Pipeline Scheme).

Prof. Mat Goddard	Male, he/him	Professor, F/T, permanent	Member since 2019	School Research Lead. Keen to promote and instigate institutional procedures that ensure transparency and fairness.
Dr Franklyn Nkongho	Male, he/him	PDR (ECR), F/T, Fixed Term	Member since September 2020	Keen interest in EDI and ECR.
Dr Carol Rea	Female, she/her	Associate Professor, F/T, permanent	Member since October 2020	School representative on Lincoln Equality of Attainment Project, UCU vice chair
Miss Bethany Williams	Female, she/her	PhD student, F/T	Member since July 2020	Passionate about EDI resulting in a sense of community for staff and students within SLS.
Dr Ambrose Tinarwo	Male, he/him	Senior Lecturer, FT, Permanent	Member since September 2020	Keen interest in EDI. Experience in Self Assessment. Experienced Coach and Mentor in the Workplace.

Dr Teresa Romero	Female, she/her	Senior Lecturer (ECR), F/T, Permanent	Member since August 2020	EDI Deputy-rep on RSC. Keenly interested in working to address systematic disadvantages faced by underrepresented groups
Dr Paul Eady	Male, he/him	Associate Professor, FT, Permanent	Member since Nov 2015	Keen interest in EDI, fairness and transparency.
Stephanie Berezina	Female, she/her	Senior Administrator, FT, Permanent	Member since 2017	Keen to make a positive difference to EDI by implementing best practices, ensuring students and staff feel safe and supported.

(ii)   an account of the self-assessment process;

Since achieving a Bronze AS award in 2016, there have been many structural changes within SLS, in terms of School-level management, and more recently management of the EDI committee. Several members of staff involved in leading the former Athena Swan committee have either left the University or stepped down from their leadership roles for personal reasons. Several initiatives from the 2016 action plan have been implemented successfully (for example, ensuring gender balance in our SLS seminar series), which are highlighted as areas of current good practice in the relevant sections of this application, but several areas need revisiting as progress has not been as hoped, either due to previous Actions not being implemented, or not being successful. We have re-evaluated these Actions here. Actions to initiate change, alongside Actions to ensure continuation of good practice and the assessment of outcomes, are detailed in our revised Action Plan.

At the inaugural meeting of the EDI committee (July 2020) the SLSSAT was established (see above) and has met on an approximately monthly basis since then. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, meetings have been via Teams and apposite communication via email and the use of shared drives to enable the collective review of documents.

The University of Lincoln adopts a broad, collaborative approach to EDI which is led by a cross-University EDI centre – The Eleanor Glanville Centre (EGC, Fig. 3.1)
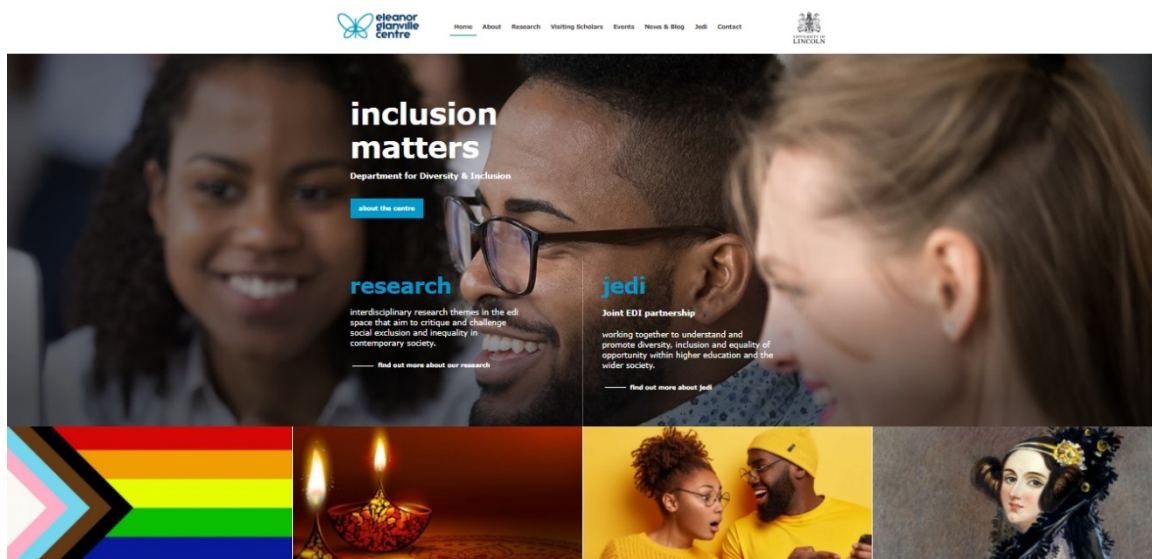
Fig. 3.1 *The Eleanor Glanville Centre, founded in 2017, is an interdisciplinary centre for inclusion, diversity and equality at the University of Lincoln. The overarching purpose of the Centre is to drive cultural change across the institution to further the strategic ambitions of the University in terms of inclusion and diversity.*

The EGC coordinates institutional engagement with the Equality Challenge Unit's Athena Swan/Gender & Race Equality Charters and provides centralised support (including a centralised data repository), and sharing of best practice, across all academic schools. The SLSSAT is part of the wider University EDI Forum (comprising all Athena Swan School Committee Chairs and College 'Equality Champions'), and feeds into the University's EDI Communication and Evaluation Network (EDI-CEN) (**Fig. 3.2).**
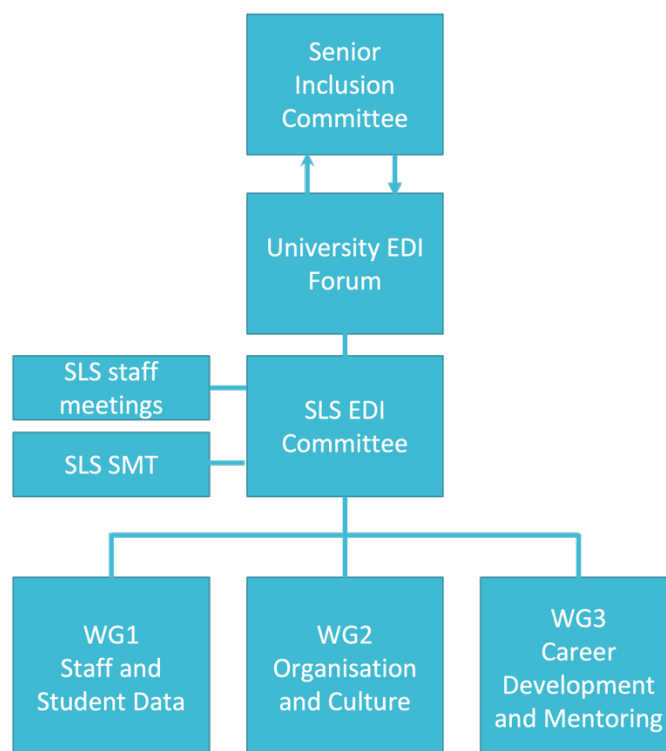

Fig. 3.2 *Overall structure of the SLS EDI Committee (self-assessment team) and how it connects within and beyond SLS*

Throughout the self-evaluation and application processes, the SLS EDI Chair (Dr Jenny Dunn) has attended the monthly meetings of the University EDI Forum, where key information is shared, and discussions of best practice are held. This information has been fed back to the SLS EDI committee and is a standing item on the SLS staff meetings. We have sought critical feedback from both inside and outside the University on our practices and culture, in preparation for our submission.

The chair of the SLS EDI committee has overall responsibility for the implementation of the self-evaluation process, the production of the Action Plan and compiling the information into the application towards the Bronze award submission. However, she has support from a dedicated team who are committed to EDI. To ensure a fair workload distribution in the preparation of the application, the SAT have self-apportioned to one of the three working groups (staff & student data, organisation & culture and career development & mentoring) with each group reporting back to the central SLS EDI committee (Fig. 3.2).

Communication relating to the Athena Swan application is via standing agenda items on two key communication and decision-making committees within SLS: the SLS Staff Meeting (for wider communication and engagement) and the Senior Management Team (SMT; decision-making committee). The SLS staff meeting is attended by all academic staff and select support staff (e.g. Senior Technical & Professional Services Staff) and is a forum for the EDI Chair to communicate the findings of the self-evaluation process and discuss proposed changes to School practices, as detailed in the Action Plan. The EDI committee recognise that successful implementation of EDI initiatives and specifically the AS Action Plan will require the engagement of SMT. Thus, three members of the EDI committee are also members of SMT.

"Thank you to those who have put together this survey, it covers very important issues

" – Male PGR student

To gain further insight into the needs of SLS, the EDI committee redesigned the SLS Culture Survey, and this was launched in late-2020 aimed at all staff (academics, administrators, technicians and PDRs) and PGR students. This redesign means we cannot compare data with previous surveys, and thus we consider these data our new baseline. Of 77 respondents, 47% identified as female, 45% as male, 1% non-binary and 6% did not disclose. Results were discussed and considered by the Organisation & Culture working group, which reported back to the EDI Committee in its preparations for the AS Action Plan; results of the Culture Survey are reported throughout the application in **blue** boxes.

The self-evaluation process highlighted a number of strengths (Table 3.3A), along with **Key Challenges** (KCs; see Action Plan for the full list). These identified **KCs** led to the development of five key over-arching actions (OAs; Box 1), each of which will address multiple **KCs** identified during the self-assessment process (Table 3.3B), as well as additional **KCs** (detailed in **grey** boxes throughout) that will be addressed through specific **Actions** (see Action Plan, and **Actions** detailed in **teal** boxes throughout).

A) Strengths (practices to be continued)
• A concerted effort has been made to ensure gender balance in the SLS Seminar Series, which stands at 50% female, 50% male
• Supportive policies are in place for before, during and after maternity, paternity and adoption leave
• High level of support for grant writing and submission within SLS and at the University level

B) Over-arching Actions (OA)	Key Challenges addressed (see Action Plan)
OA1: Embed Athena Swan practices in School culture	
OA2: Ensure accurate and comprehensive monitoring data	KC2, KC3, KC4, KC5, KC8, KC10, KC12, KC20, KC21, KC25, KC29, KC33, KC36, KC37, KC42
OA3: Understand School culture	KC1, KC2, KC4, KC5, KC8, KC9, KC12, KC20, KC21, KC22, KC29, KC32, KC36
OA4: Develop and establish a School-level Coaching (mentoring) scheme	KC13, KC23, KC27, KC29, KC32
OA5: Re-establish the SLS Early-Career Researcher (ECR) committee	KC20, KC23, KC25,

Table 3.3. A) Strengths and B) Over-arching Actions identified as part of the self-assessment process. For B), Additional Key Challenges are addressed through separate Actions (see Action Plan, and green boxes throughout the application)

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

The SLS SAT are all members of the SLS EDI Committee. Post Bronze Award submission the EDI Committee will continue to meet **monthly** where it will oversee the implementation of the AS Action Plan against the proposed timeline (**Over-Arching Action (OA)1**), and continue to identify how to improve broader EDI, both within SLS, and with issues that can be raised at the University level via the University EDI forum. The staff and student data subgroup will work to identify a more efficient and streamlined system for the routine collection and assessment of school-level monitoring data (**OA2**), and the organisation and culture working group will analyse these alongside annual Culture Survey data pertaining to staff (separated into Academic, Technical, and Professional Services) and students (which we will expand to include PGT and UG students) **annually** (**OA3**), identifying and reporting on trends that relate to EDI, and seeking further feedback on specific issues pertaining to annual survey outcomes through **focus groups**. Several specific Actions highlighted a lack of effective mentoring opportunities (**OA4**), which the career development and mentoring subgroup will address through the development of an SLS Coaching Scheme, already developed and due to be implemented in **late-2021**. We also identified the re-establishment of the Early-Career Researcher (ECR) committee as a potential mechanism to improve support and communication for ECRs within SLS (**OA5**), which we plan to develop by the **end of 2021**. Areas where improvement is significant will be highlighted, whereas Actions that do not bring about the desired outcomes will be revisited and amended as appropriate. EDI will continue to be a standing agenda item on SLS RC, LTAC and SMT Meetings and SLS staff meetings, with an EDI representative embedded on each committee (**Action DA2**). Such a presence will serve to embed EDI in key decision-making across all aspects of SLS's remit. The SLS EDI Committee Chair will continue to engage with the College and University EDI Forum, sharing best-practice across the University.

Word count: 1,001

4. A picture of the department

Recommended word count: Bronze: 2000 words

A. Student data

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

The College of Science offers a Science Foundation Year (SFY) course as a route to SLS BSc courses in Animal Behaviour and Welfare, Biomedical Science, Bioveterinary Science, Biochemistry, Biology, Ecology and Conservation and Zoology. The course was new for 2017 with late advertising, hence low numbers of students in this year. There are currently 44 students (59% female; Fig 4.1) on the SLS stream of the SFY course, which is lower than the benchmark for HE students (Veterinary Science, Agriculture and allied subjects at 78%F (HESA, 2021) but comparable to the HESA Benchmark for Biological Sciences (65%F) and closer to gender parity than both. The Foundation Year intake currently constitutes 15% of the total 1st Year undergraduate cohort, which is significantly above the benchmark of 7% (HESA, 2019/20 Other Undergraduate).
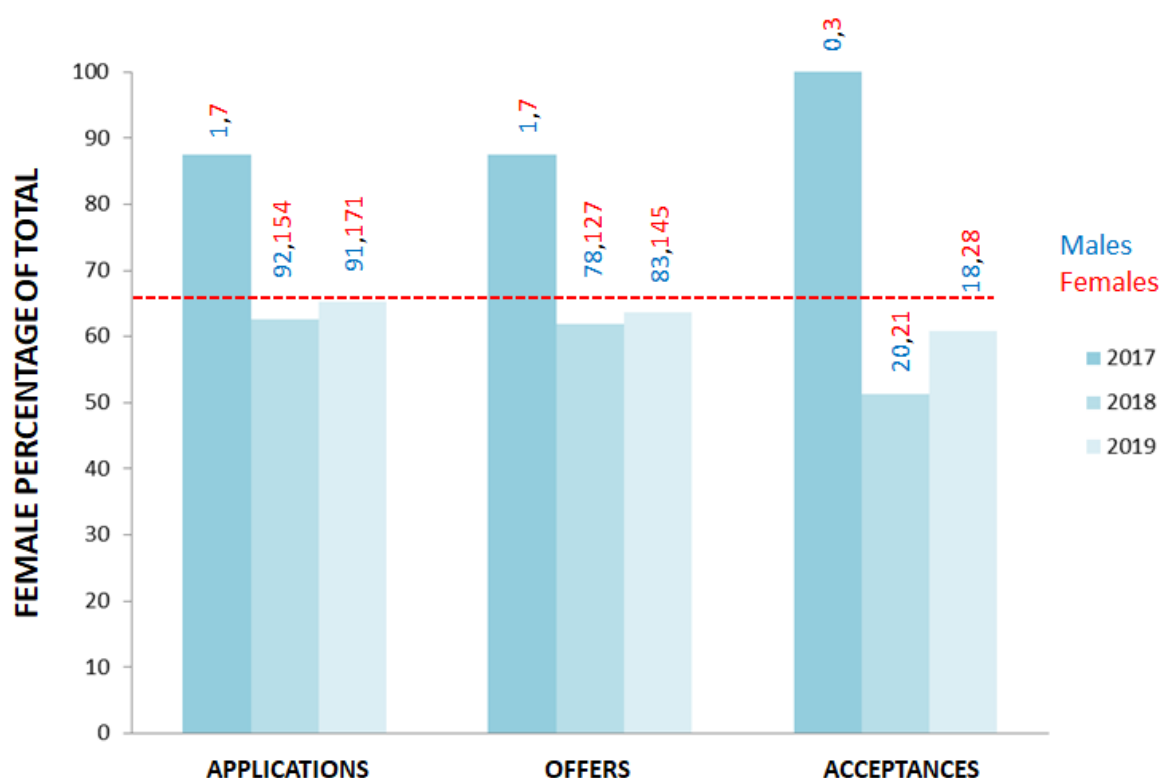

Figure 4.1: *The number of foundation course applications received from females, places offered and accepted (2017-19) as a percentage of the total number of applications, offers and acceptances. The science foundation course started in 2017 and is full time. Numbers above the bars indicate the absolute numbers of applications, offers and acceptances by year from males (blue) and females (red). The red line represents the HESA Benchmark for Biological Sciences (65%F).*

(ii)   Numbers of undergraduate students by gender.

Full- and part-time by programme. Provide data on course applications, offers, and acceptance rates, and degree attainment by gender.

"All students voiced that they had the opportunity to succeed regardless of background" – Student rep

SLS has 748 undergraduate students of whom 68% are female. This reflects the current HESA Benchmarks for Biological Sciences (65%F), but is lower than for Veterinary, Agriculture and allied subjects (78%F). Overall, a slightly lower proportion of females compared to males accept than apply to or are offered places (Fig 4.2), which appears to be driven primarily by the Biomedical science and MBio programmes, which attract the largest student numbers. We identify the need to further understand this trend as **KC1**, which we will address through continuing to evaluate the trend (**A1.1**), and seeking to identify why female students choose to accept degree offers within SLS through focus groups, as well as attempting to identify underlying reasons for the underrepresentation of genders within specific degree schemes in relation to national benchmarks (**A1.2**).
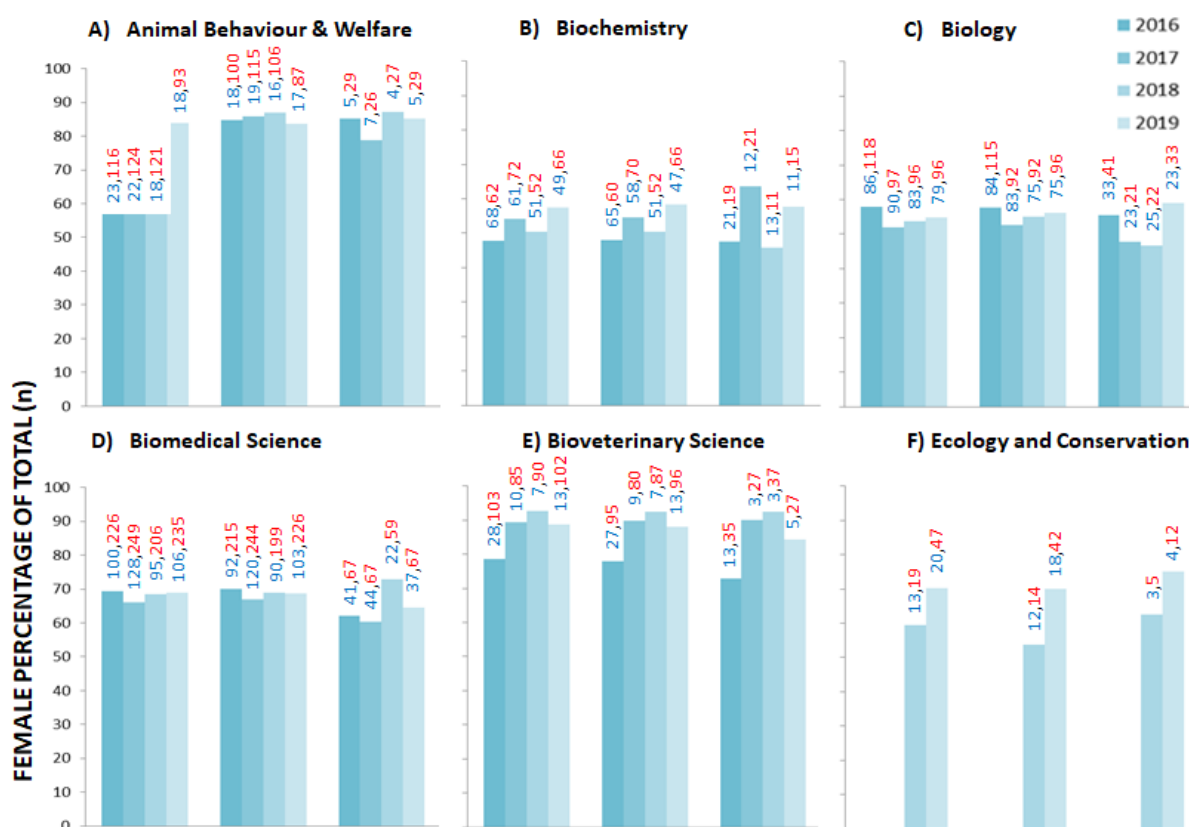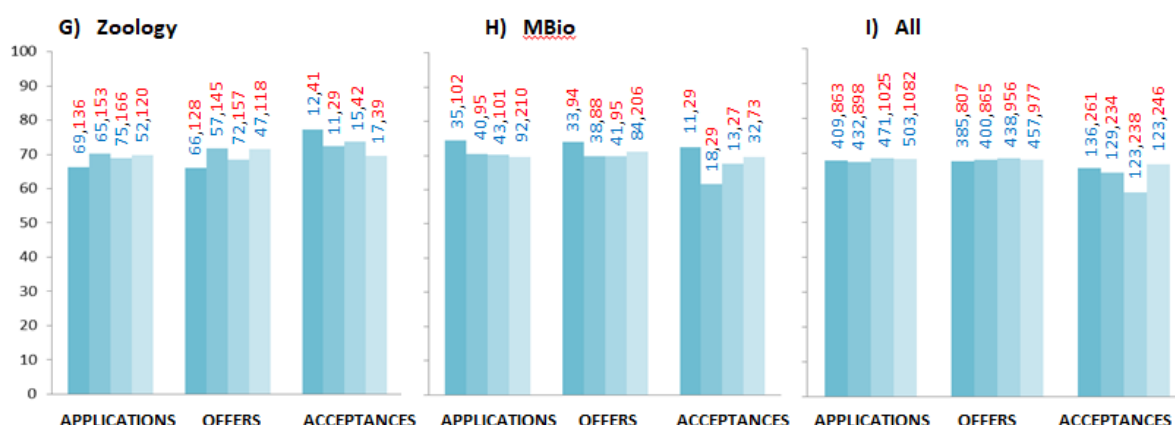
Figure 4.2: *The number of undergraduate applications received from females, places offered and accepted (2013-19) as a percentage of the total number of applications, offers and acceptances, for each degree programme. Numbers above the bars indicate the absolute numbers of applications, offers and acceptances by year from males (blue) and females (red). The red line represents the HESA Benchmark for Biological Sciences (65%F). All courses at UG level are full time. The Ecology and conservation course commenced in 2018. Data by programme are only available from 2016.*

> *"Students are able to achieve their educational goals through well taught lectures and high levels of available support" – Student rep*

A slightly higher proportion of female students go on to achieve good degree classifications (1st and upper 2nd Class) than males at BSc level overall (Fig 4.3A) whereas a similar percentage of males and females achieve distinction and merit for the 4-year MBio degrees (Fig 4.3B). Data from the Lincoln Equality of Attainment Project (LEAP; https://lheri.lincoln.ac.uk/leap) analysis suggest our largest programme-level awarding gender gap is 18.5% in BSc(Hons) Bioveterinary Science (which has very low numbers of male students; Figure 4.2), with females being awarded higher than males. LEAP data suggest most awarding gender-gaps for SLS programmes decreased between 2018/19 and 2019/20. Whilst not directly within the Athena Swan remit, LEAP also examined disability-gaps and ethnicity-gaps given this is a known issue across the sector, and did not identify any significant awarding gaps across SLS programmes. As part of **KC1** we will continue to examine any trends in awarding gaps in relation to wider diversity as well as gender.

> *"Staff are very helpful, easy to contact and we often have course meetings and tutorials [to] discuss any issues" - Biology UG student*
>
> *"The university atmosphere is welcoming and I feel like I can approach anyone if I ever had an issue" - Biomed UG student*

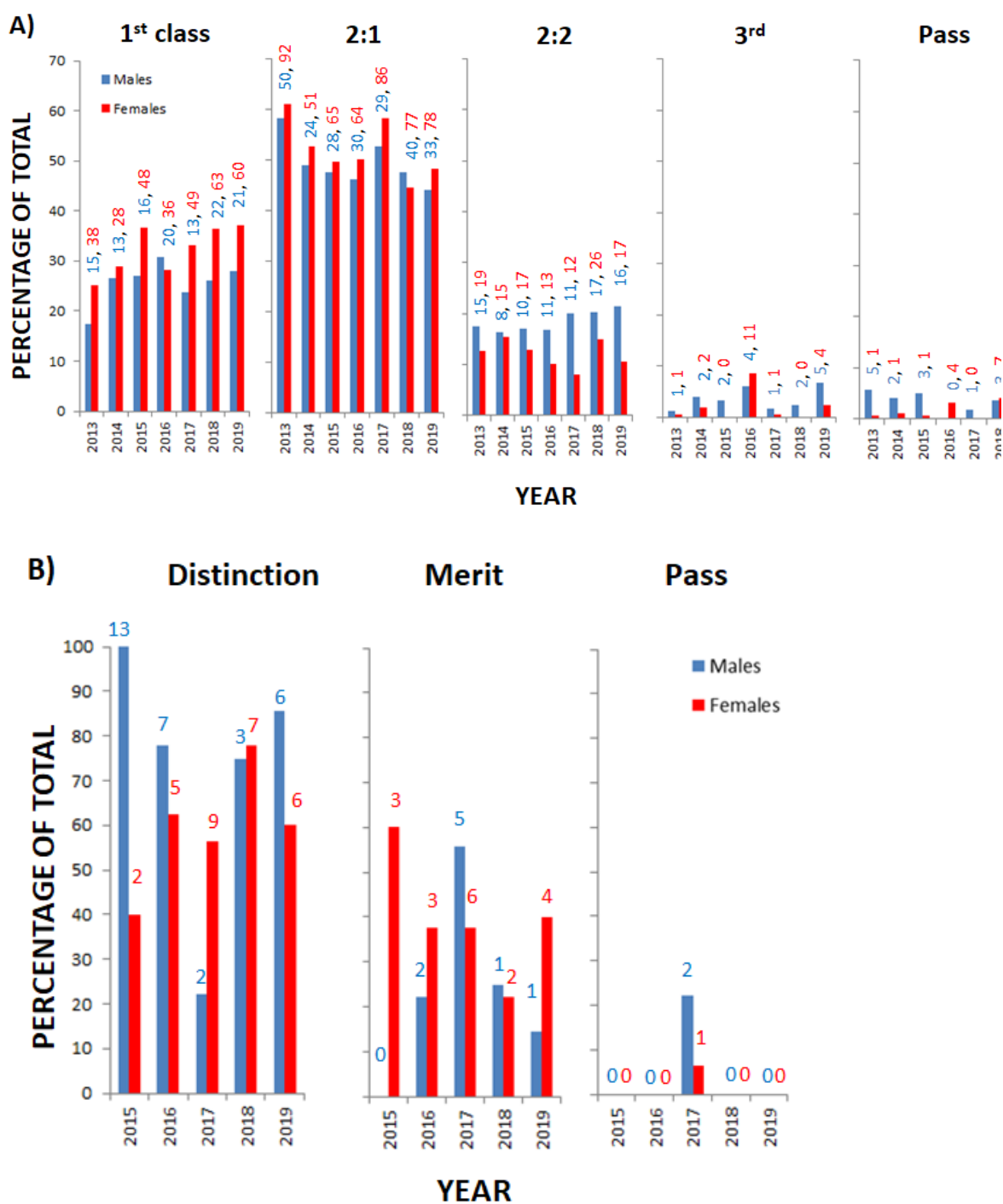**Figure 4.3:** *Degree awards by gender for A) undergraduate 3-year degrees and B) MBio 4-year degrees. Each figure shows final degree achieved for males and females as a percentage of the total number of males and females graduating for academic years commencing in 2013-2019 (UG degrees) and 2015-2019 (MBio degrees). All courses are full time. The numbers above each bar represent the number of individuals in each group.*

> *"I met you when I had already heard from so many admissions tutors, and others, that I would never cope at university due to my having young children. You were the very first person at university level to tell me that parenthood was not a barrier to higher education and for that I am so incredibly grateful. I may have had a few blips along the way, and giving birth twice during my degree definitely meant having to adapt, but now I'm sat here with a 2:1 in Medical Biosciences and I know that without that first conversation with you I would have probably decided everyone was right and maybe it wasn't for me"* **– extract from student e-mail to HoS**

We regularly seek input from UG students on their experiences of teaching and assessment in the school. Every member of staff runs 2 hours of 'office hours' during the semester which are open to students who need help or wish to feedback on aspects of the course. Every degree programme has a course rep who acts as a contact point for students to raise issues with. Student reps are then invited to contact staff directly about issues or to raise them at the monthly subject committees, where concerns are minuted, actioned and resolved. In response to the reduction in face-to-face teaching due to Covid-19, all UG programmes initiated additional programme-level tutorials to provide extra student support, and tutors were regularly encouraged to actively check in on tutees' wellbeing, and signpost them to Student Wellbeing's services if needed (https://studentservices.lincoln.ac.uk/). Every module runs a module evaluation survey at the end

of teaching where students can rate aspects of the course and provide feedback. This feedback is reflected on by module leaders, with responses provided directly to students via the VLE and in the module action plan to improve future teaching. **OA3** will design a Student Culture Survey to incorporate UGs and PGTs, to consult students specifically on their experiences of EDI-related issues on an annual basis (this was not carried out earlier due to Covid-19).

COVID-19 impact
→ Additional pastoral support instigated through extra tutor check-ins and extra programme-level tutorials
→ UG/PGT Culture survey not developed as planned

Representation of SLS at outreach events and Open Days is vital to encourage diverse student recruitment. Collecting data on the gender distribution of both staff and students at Open Days is addressed by **DA4**, and **A 4.2** will ensure gender balance among staff and students at Open Days and Offer Holder Days, whilst ensuring that under-represented groups are not over-burdened. Ensuring visibility of role models within SLS seminars, and at Outreach events is considered by **KC41** and **KC42**

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

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

SLS currently offers three postgraduate degrees: Clinical Animal Behaviour, Biotechnology, and Microbiology. Only the Clinical Animal Behaviour MSc (MSc CAB) is available for both full-time and part-time study so is considered separately in the figures below.

For Biotechnology and Microbiology programmes, although national averages for Biological Sciences are female-biased (68.2%), the percentage of applications, offers and acceptances has been gender-balanced in SLS (Fig. 4.4A), except for 2016-2017 and 2017-2018, when there were below average percentages of female students.

In contrast, the percentage of female students in the MSc CAB programme is approximately equal for FT students but higher for PT students when compared to the for Agriculture and Related Subjects (78%) (Fig. 4.4B). Although numbers are low and males are still under-represented in this programme, since 2016 there has been an increase in the number of male applicants that has resulted in an increase of male students from 8% in 2016 to 15.2% in 2019. We will continue to assess data and reflect on emerging trends to identify underlying reasons for underrepresentation of genders within specific degree schemes (A1.1-2), while ensuring inclusive practice in student recruitment (A2.1-5).

We will collect data on degree outcomes by gender on an annual basis to ensure complete and accurate data are available to analyse and reflect on current trends to identify underlying reasons for the underrepresentation of genders within specific degree schemes (A2.1-2, DA4).
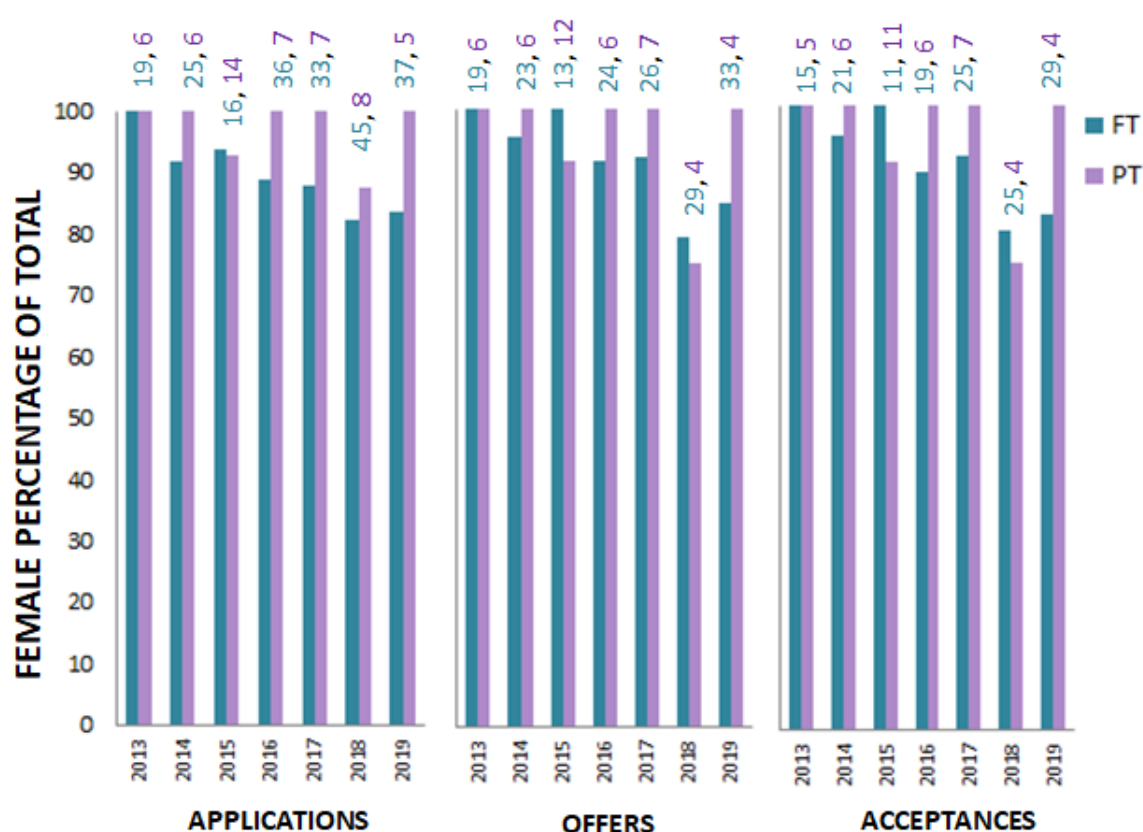
A) Postgraduate taught – Full Time

B) MSc Clinical Animal Behaviour

		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
FT	M	0	2	1	4	4	8	6		0	1	0	2	2	6	5		0	1	0	2	2	5	5
	F	19	23	15	32	29	37	31		19	22	13	22	24	23	28		15	20	11	17	23	20	24
PT	M	0	0	1	0	0	1	0		0	0	1	0	0	1	0		0	0	1	0	0	1	0
	F	6	6	13	7	7	7	5		6	6	11	6	7	3	4		5	6	10	6	7	3	4

Figure 4.4: *The number of taught postgraduate applications received from females, places offered and accepted (2013-19) as a percentage of the total number of applications, offers and acceptances. (A) Data represent MScs in Biotechnology and Microbiology (only available FT). The numbers above the bars indicate the absolute numbers of applications, offers and acceptances by year from males (blue) and females (red). (B) Full and part time separately for MSc in Clinical Animal Behaviour. Numbers above the bars represent total number of students on full time (blue) and part time (purple) degrees. The table below gives the breakdown of student numbers by male (blue) and female (red) for each degree route.*
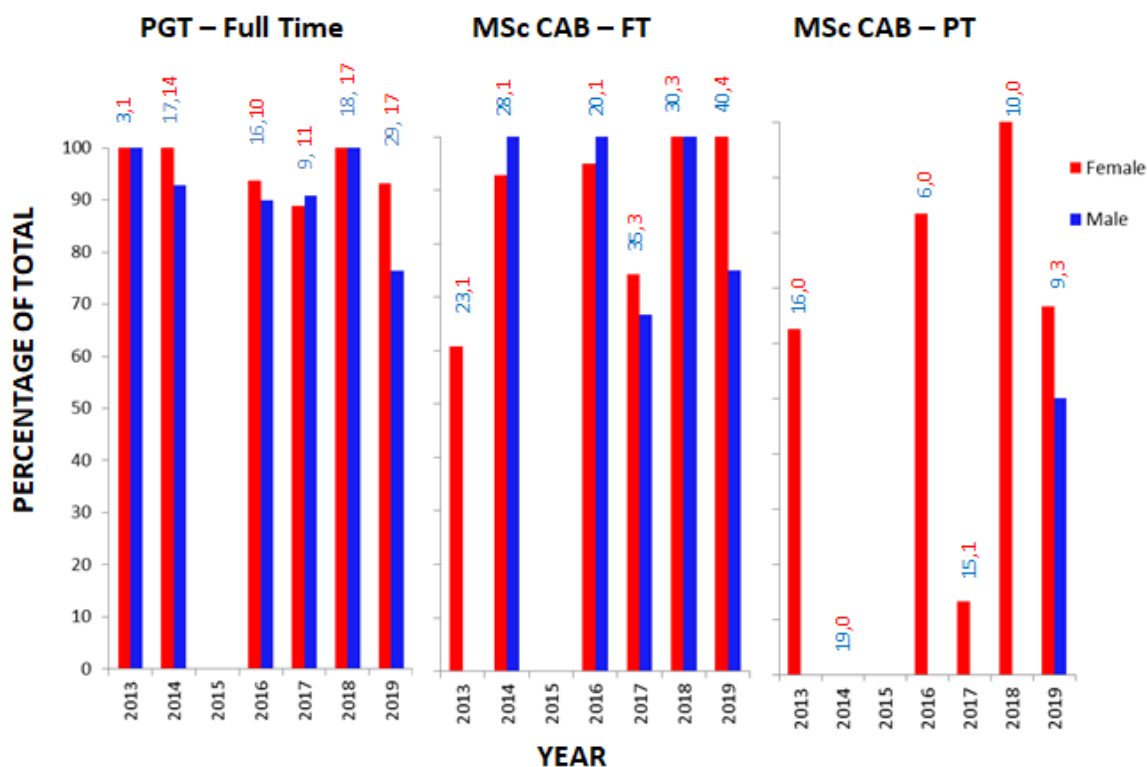
Figure 4.5: *Degree completions (2013-2019) by gender for taught postgraduate courses except for MSc in Clinical Animal Behaviour (MSc CAB), and for full and part time separately for MSc in Clinical Animal Behaviour (MSc CAB), the only PGT programme with a PT option. The numbers above the bars represent the total numbers of students in each category.*

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

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

The gender distribution of PGR students has been fairly consistent over the last years [2013-2019, average Female: 53.2%] and close to the national benchmark (59.6%). The number of female and male applicants has also been similar except for 2017 and 2018 (Fig 4.6) when more females than males have applied to our PGR programmes (average 2017-2018: 67.3% female applicants). We will continue to analyse the data annually (**A1.1**) and ensure that the recruitment material produced by SLS promotes inclusivity as well as our commitment to the Athena Swan charter (**A2.1-5**). Conversion rates are similar for female and male applicants (Fig. 4.6), with similar proportion of offers made to female (63.3%) and male applicants (64.3%), and similar proportion of offers accepted by females (86.5%) and males (87.7%). SLS funds a small number of both MSc and PhD students in addition to those funded through external grants, with 47% awarded PhD scholarships going to females (total n=17) and 33% awarded MSc scholarships going to females (total n=6), which does not reflect the overall gender balance in these cohorts and needs further investigation to identify the reasons

> *"The staff members in the School of Life Sciences and PGR community have helped me to develop the skills needed to progress in the future and challenged me to be the best I can." – Chelsy Cliff, SLS funded PhD student*

underlying this trend (A1.2). However, we do not have data on applications for this funding by gender, which we will address as part of over-arching Action DA4.

Very few PGR students in our school are part-time (n=9, 2013-2019), with the majority of these being female students (90%).

The completion rate for PGR students in SLS is close to 100% over the period 2014-2020: 98.9% (n=90) students completed their PhDs and 100% (n=56) completed their MSc by Research within the 4 year/18-month deadline set by HEFCE. The one non-completed PhD was a male student.
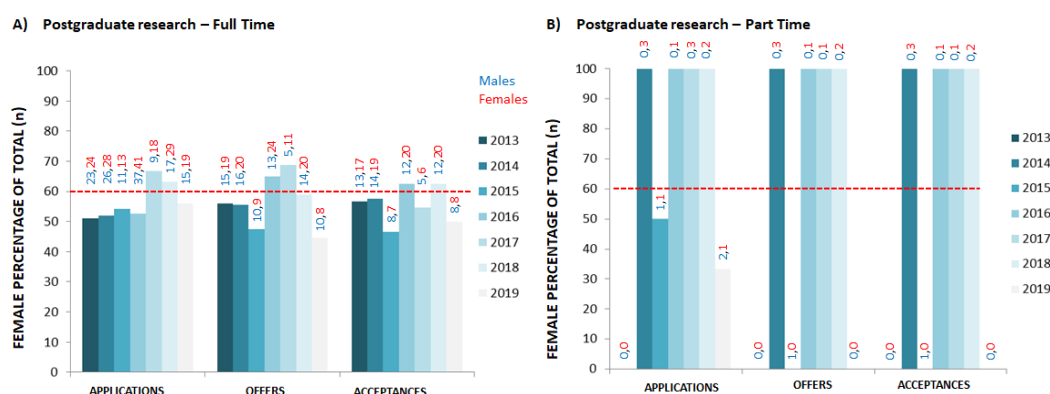
Figure 4.6: *The number of postgraduate research applications received from females, places offered and accepted (2013-19) as a percentage of the total number of applications, offers and acceptances. The red line represents the HESA benchmark for Biological Sciences (59.6%). Data represents (A) all full time courses and (B) part time courses. The numbers above the bars indicate the absolute numbers of applications, offers and acceptances by year from males (blue) and females (red).*

> **Key Challenges**
>
> **KC1**: Improve understanding of the associations between gender, offers, acceptances, degree programme, and outcomes in degrees awarded
>
> **KC2**: Continue inclusive practice in student recruitment
>
> **KC3**: Data for PGT completion rates are incomplete

Actions

A1.1: Continue to actively assess student applications, offers, acceptance and degree outcomes for fluctuations in gender balance across the School, at UG, PGT and PGR levels, in relation to national benchmarks where available, on an annual basis

A1.2: Identify underlying reasons for underrepresentation of genders within specific degree schemes in relation to national benchmarks, if applicable

A2.1: Ensure all UG, PGT and PGR recruitment advertisements produced by SLS use gender neutral language and images, and advertise our commitment to the Athena Swan charter

A2.2: Investigate whether taught MScs can be offered as part-time where this is currently not done and ensure all degrees available for part-time study are clearly advertised as such

A2.3: Include information on EDI in UG and PG School literature

A2.4: Ensure a balanced mix of gender for students and staff at University Open days and Offer Holder Days without over-burdening under-represented groups. Reallocate workload as required

DA4: Collect data on gender distribution of staff and students at Open Days and Offer Holder Days

DA4: Ensure complete and accurate data for PGT completion rates by gender

DA7: Update Action plan as any issues are identified

Progression pipeline between undergraduate and postgraduate student levels

(v) *Identify and comment on any issues in the pipeline between undergraduate and postgraduate degrees.*

The percentages of female students in our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes are similar (UG: 68%, PG: 66%, Table 2.1) suggesting our progression pipeline supports both female and male students. We already encourage UG students to attend University-wide events and seminars and advertise relevant events to students through our VLE and through social media, which we will continue (**A4.1-4.2**). However, the numbers of students progressing from our UG programmes to study in one of our PG programmes are currently not available. Thus, we identify quantifying progression as **KC4**, which we will address for **A4.3**.

Key Challenges
KC4: Quantify level of transition from UG to PG study by gender

Actions
A4.1: Encourage UG students to attend university-wide events and seminars
A4.2: Advertise events through Blackboard and social media
DA4: Ensure data are collected on levels of UG students progressing to PG study by gender
DA7: Analyse data and update Action Plan as required

B. Academic and research staff data

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

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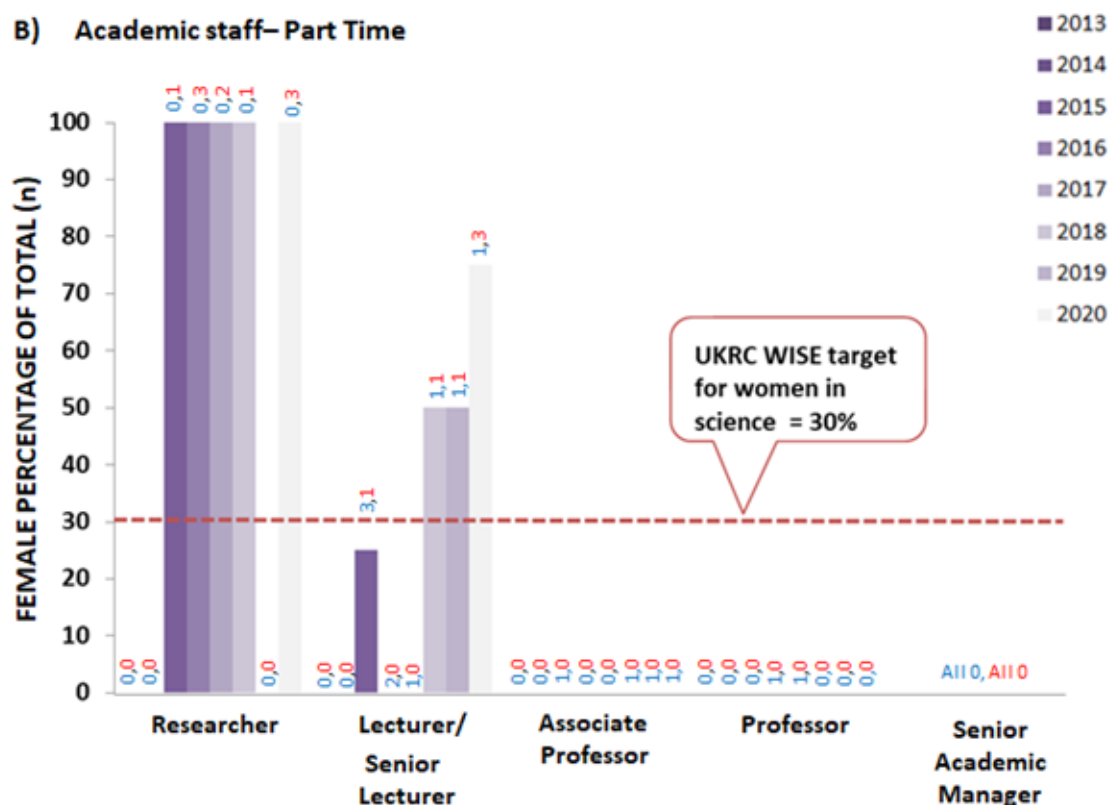

A)   Academic staff– Full Time
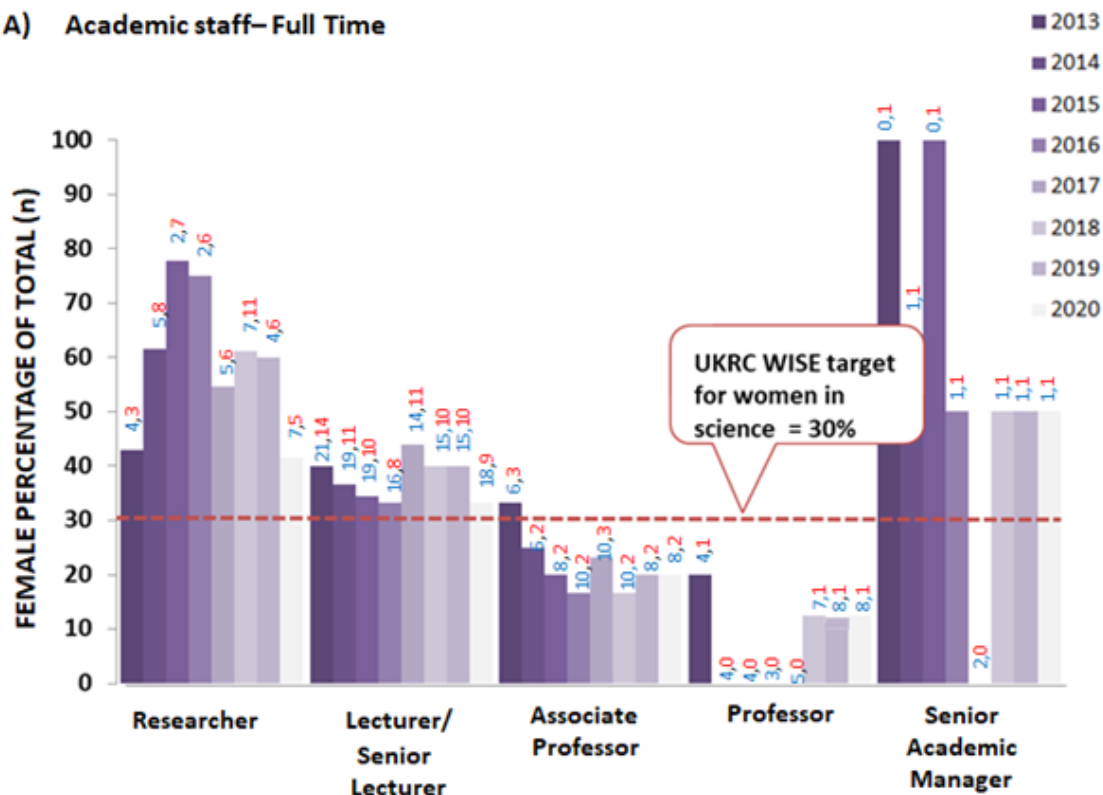
Figure 4.7: *The number of female staff at each grade (2013-20), (A) for full-time and (B) for part-time staff, plotted as a percentage of the total number of staff at that grade (indicated above each bar). The numbers above the bars indicate the absolute numbers of males (blue) and females (red) at each grade.*

The proportion of female academic staff in SLS sits above 50% at researcher level but drops to 30-40% at lecturer/senior lecturer level which is within the UKRC WISE target for women in science (Figure 4.7). Progression from Lecturer to Senior Lecturer is automatic at Lincoln, and so we have combined these categories in Fig 4.7 due to small numbers of Lecturers. However, at Associate Professor level this drops to around 20%, below the UKRC WISE target, and further at Professor level with only one of nine Professors being female. We identify this as **KC5,** which we recognise is not a straightforward or quick challenge to resolve. **A5.1** to address this key challenge will attempt to increase rates of recruitment and promotion for female academics, through specific mechanisms detailed further in the recruitment and promotion sections (**A10.1-10.5, 11.1-11.2, 14.1-14.3, 15.1-15.3, 16.1**), and to continue to assess the gender balance within the department (**DA4**) to evaluate the efficacy of these Actions and revise the Action Plan as necessary (**DA6**). The senior academic management team is currently at gender parity with a male HoS and female DHoS.
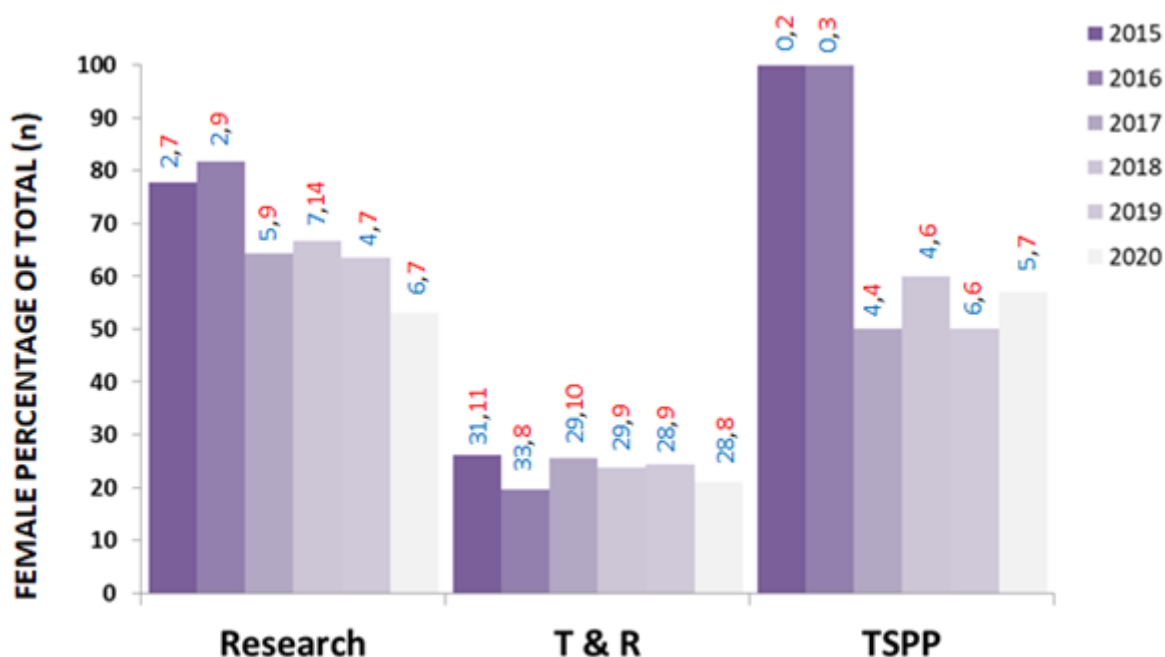
Figure 4.8: *The number of female staff by contract function (2015-20), plotted as a percentage of the total number of staff in each group (numbers above each bar). Research includes PDRs only.*

The proportion of female researchers (PDRs only, as SLS has no research-only academics) has remained relatively stable at ~65% over the past three years. However, this does not translate into T&R permanent staff, with only 20-25% T&R staff identifying as female (although TSPP staff have reached gender parity over the last 3-4 years). We are unsure of the mechanism driving these consistent patterns, and identify this as **KC6**, with **A6.1** to attempt to understand the drivers of the patterns and identify any barriers that may lead to women occupying TSPP rather than T&R roles, or that may prevent men from occupying TSPP roles. However, other Key Challenges identified later lead to Actions through which female staff will be supported in research through, for example, ensuring administrative load and workload more broadly is equal between genders (**A2.4, A35.2, A37.1, A41.2**), ensuring visible role models (**A32.1, A40.1, A40.2**), and supporting grant applications (**A28.1, A28.2, DA8**).

> ### Key Challenges
> **KC5**: Low percentage of female senior lecturers, associate professors and professors
> **KC6**: Disparity across genders in relation to TR and TSPP roles

> **Actions**
>
> **A5.1**: Furthering measures to increase rates of recruitment and promotion for female academic staff (See detailed Actions **A11.1 – 11.5, 12.1 – 12.2, 15.1 -15.3, 16.1 – 16.3, 17.1**)
>
> **DA4**: Continue to collect annual staff data to evaluate by grade, full-time and part-time hours, contract function, contract type, and gender
>
> **DA7**: Analyse data and update Action Plan as necessary
>
> **A6.1**: Investigate the drivers of the disparity across genders in relation to TR and TSPP roles

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

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

SLS does not use zero hours contracts for academic positions, and makes minimal use of fixed term contracts for academic staff on either a TR or TSPP role profile. Since 2014, SLS has employed 1 female lecturer on a fixed term contract in 2014-15, and 1 female lecturer on a fixed term contract in 2017-18. Both positions were for a single academic year. For the 2017-18 position, this was to provide teaching experience to an internal candidate for a full-time permanent position who lacked large group teaching experience when interviewed; the reason for the 2014-15 appointment wasn't recorded. PDRs are employed on fixed-term contracts. We recognise a wider key challenge within the sector, of **KC7**, where continuity of employment can be challenging within HE, so **A7.1** will ensure the continuation of existing good practice whereby SLS does not use zero-hours contracts and minimises the use of fixed-term contracts.

In line with University policy, SLS uses Associate Lecturers for delivery in some instances for provision of specialist expertise or to cover staff absence at short notice. Examples include clinical expertise for BSc Biomedical Science, veterinary expertise for BSc Bioveterinary Science or BSc Animal Behaviour and Welfare, as well as 'in-country' expertise for International field trip provision and provision of field skills. Associate lecturers are paid on an hourly basis plus preparation time including additional provision for marking of student work if required. For 2019, 47% of Associate Lecturers were female (total n=15) and for 2020 64% were female (total n=11). For laboratory demonstrators 45% were female in 2019 (total n=27) and 64% were female in 2020 (total n=11). Total numbers were reduced in 2020 due to Covid-19 leading to the cancellation of field trips and a reduction in the numbers of practical sessions delivered. Associate demonstrators are typically drawn from the PGR pool and these figures will vary depending on how many MSc and PhD students are available on a yearly basis. These data are not readily available by gender, meaning we cannot compare the gender distribution of Associate demonstrators with the available PGR pool, which we identify as **KC8**. This will be addressed by overarching actions **DA4** and **DA6**.

> **Key Challenges**
>
> **KC7**: Address the challenge of continuity of employment
>
> **KC8**: Data on gender distribution of Associate demonstrators in relation to gender distribution of PDR and PGR pool of available candidates are not available

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

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

School Culture Survey 2020

- 48% of academic staff are currently (18%) or have previously (30%) planned to leave SLS (78% female, n=9, 38% male, n=24; excludes 5 prefer not to say)

- 27% of professional services staff are currently (0%) or have previously (27%) planned to leave SLS (33% female, n=9, 0% male, n=2)

Staff turnover within SLS has been low by sector standards over the last 3 years (HR, personal communication). HR offer each staff member a voluntary confidential exit interview, although the contents of this are not fed back to SLS, and data are not available split by gender or grade when requested due to anonymity concerns, which we identify as **KC9**. The available School-level data provide grade and gender of leavers, and reasons for leaving as provided to the HoS (Table 4.1). These data show a 50:50 gender split, comprising 5 male and 5 female members of staff. While the mix of academic staff within SLS is currently 70% male and 30% female, these numbers are too small to show a statistically significant difference by gender. However, we recognise that individuals may be uncomfortable disclosing their reasons for leaving to HoS, so **A9.1** will be to offer exit interviews with an independent member of staff for all future leavers (although these will be voluntary). Given the relatively low staff turnover, and the anonymity difficulties of extracting HR exit interview data, and following on from the culture survey data which suggests nearly 20% of academic staff are currently planning to leave SLS, we also plan to implement a retention survey (**A9.2**) in order to identify why staff remain within SLS and why staff may look to leave. Destination data for staff, as well as for PDRs and PGRs, are not routinely collected, and we identify this as **KC10**, addressed through **DA4**.

Key Challenges

KC9: Low uptake of exit interviews; data by gender and grade not available through HR

KC10: Destinations of staff, PDRs and PGRs not routinely collected

Gender	Grade	Rationale for Leaving SLS
Female	Senior Lecturer	Change of School, remained at University of Lincoln
Male	Senior Lecturer	Moved to another University as a Senior Lecturer
Male	Senior Lecturer /Programme Lead	Moved to another University as a Senior Lecturer only
Female	Head of School	Promotion to PVC, University of Lincoln
Female	Senior Lecturer	Change of job to one outside academia
Male	Associate Professor	Retirement
Male	Senior Lecturer	Moved to another University as a Senior Lecturer
Male	Senior Lecturer	Left the country due to partner's family commitments
Female	Senior Lecturer	Left the country due to family commitments
Female	Professor	Moved to another University for research facilities
Female	Senior Lecturer	Moved to another University as a Senior Lecturer

Table 4.1: *Reasons for leaving SLS for all permanent academic staff since 2015*

Actions

A9.1: Provide exit interviews with an independent (not in the line-management hierarchy of the individual) member of staff for all SLS faculty and researchers

A9.2: Given difficulties in establishing high uptake of exit interviews with accessible data by grade and gender, design and implement an annual School retention survey

A9.3: Analyse data from annual retention survey

DA4: Maintain a database of staff, PDR and PGR destinations

Word count: 1,713

5. Supporting and advancing women's careers

Recommended word count: Bronze: 6000 words

A. Key career transition points: academic staff

(i)   Recruitment.

Break down data by gender and grade for applications to academic posts including shortlisted candidates, offer and acceptance rates. Comment on how the department's recruitment processes ensure that women (and men where there is an underrepresentation in numbers) are encouraged to apply.
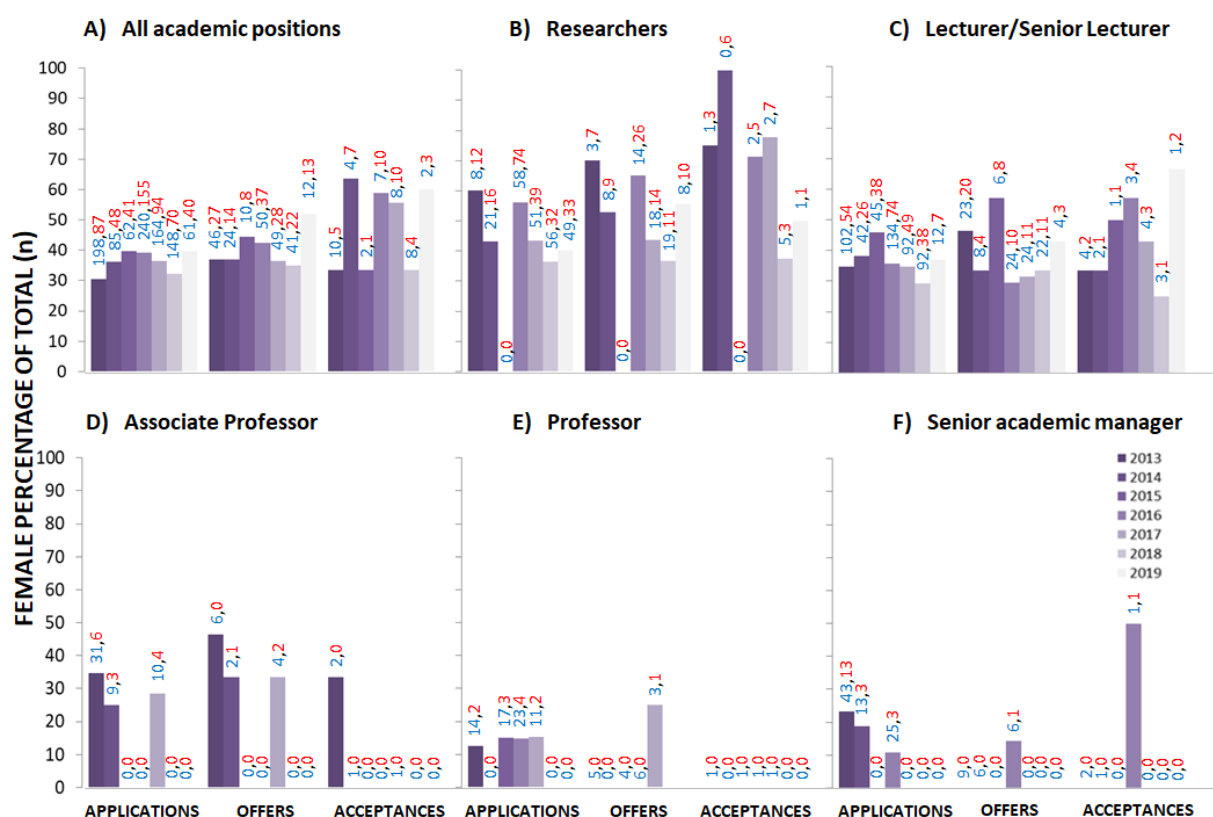
Figure 5.1: *Applications received from females, shortlisted for interview and offered academic positions (2013-19) as a percentage of the total number of applications, shortlistings and offers. Data shown are for (A) all academic positions, (B) Researchers, (C) Lecturer/Senior Lecturers, (D) Associate professors, (E) Professors and (F) Senior academic managers. The numbers above the bars indicate the absolute numbers of males (blue) and females (red) at each grade.*

> **School Culture Survey 2020**
>
> - 52% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that SLS takes positive action with external recruitment to the department, in areas where there is currently a gender imbalance (47% female, n=36; 57% male, n=35)

In general, SLS has received fewer female than male applicants with this gender gap widening since 2016 (Figure 5.1A): **KC11** is to address this gender gap. This pattern is mirrored on offers made to candidates, and reflected within SLS opinion, with only 52% of SLS staff surveyed perceiving that SLS takes positive action to recruit female staff. This gender gap is amplified for senior positions where females have constituted less than 20% of applicants for Associate Professor, Professor and Senior Academic Manager roles in the past 3 years (Figure 5.1D,E,F). There has been a tendency for a higher proportion of females than males to accept offers made by SLS, but this has also been in decline since 2016 with a lower proportion of females than males accepting offers in 2019 at most levels. Even fewer offers were made to female applicants for senior posts, which we identify as **KC12**. We have identified several actions to ensure SLS jobs are advertised to the widest possible pool of candidates **(A11.1, A11.5),** that women are actively encouraged to apply (**A11.2 - A11.5**), and that recruitment panels have undergone recent EDI training (**A12.1**): recruitment panels generally include at least one male and one female member of staff, and we will ensure this good practice continues (**A12.2**). Furthermore, we will introduce a "pause for thought" exercise after any recruitment round which receives a low number of female academics, or the shortlist doesn't include women, to reflect upon any potential reasons for this having occurred. This exercise can lead to a review of the recruitment strategy for future recruitment rounds (**A12.3**). We anticipate our actions will lead to an increase in the proportion of female staff being recruited to the department, especially at senior levels, and we will continue to collect and assess data annually (**DA4**), updating our Action Plan where we identify additional positive actions we can implement, or where we identify actions that do not seem to be working (**DA6**).

Key Challenges

KC11: Low proportion of female applicants for academic jobs, especially at higher levels

KC12: Low success rates of applications from women for academic positions, especially at higher levels

Actions

A11.1: Work to develop job advertisements that are more attractive to females, e.g. gender-neutral language, emphasising the strong collegiate atmosphere and inclusiveness of the School. Specifically encouraging applications from female applicants

A11.2: Ensure School EDI information easily accessible to potential applicants

A11.3: Continuing to highlight SLS commitment to the Athena Swan charter in all job adverts

A11.4: Continuing to use gender bias decoder software to ensure gender-neutral language in job advertisements

A11.5: Target networks and social media groups (e.g. Academic Women's Network) to ensure adverts are widely accessed by potential female applicants

A12.1: Ensure that all staff sitting on recruitment panels and chairing presentation panels have undergone recent (past 3 years) training in (i) equality and diversity and (ii) understanding unconscious bias

A12.2: Ensure all recruitment panels are gender balanced and contain a minimum of one female interviewer

A12.3: Introduce a 'pause for thought' when advertising for Senior Academics (or any academic post) if there are a low number of female applicants, or the shortlist does not include women, and a review of the recruitment strategy will then be conducted

DA4: Continue to collect data on applications, shortlisting, offers and appointment by gender

DA7: Evaluate data to inform further actions and update Action Plan as necessary

(ii) Induction.

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

Induction begins at the point at which an offer is accepted, and SLS's Senior Administrator and PA to HoS contacts new appointees by e-mail before they start at Lincoln and introduces themself, and can direct appointees to advice on relevant issues, e.g. childcare and schooling, through to help with renting and housing. Once appointments are confirmed this is communicated to staff through our weekly newsletter in advance of a candidate's arrival together with a picture of the new staff member. Staff are encouraged to make contact if they are likely to be closely aligned to the new staff member. In this way new staff are recognised as soon as they start, while existing staff are all aware of new appointments.

As academic appointees often move for work, the University offers academic appointments a relocation package, and the University partners with a relocation services firm. This company can help with specific housing needs (especially family units), orientation within the chosen area including GP surgeries, dentists and local amenities, as well as a school search. This takes the onus off the appointee and should relieve stress at an ordinarily stressful time of starting a new job and moving to a new place, especially for those with specific needs and caring responsibilities.

Upon starting, new appointees have introductory meetings with HoS, DHoS, Director of Research and Programme leader as a minimum, with monthly meetings with SLS's Senior Administrator for the first four months. The HoS meeting offers an opportunity to discuss any health- or mental-health-related workplace adjustments the appointee may require. Upon starting, candidates are given the opportunity (as per the Equalities Act 2010) to declare such disabilities and request reasonable workplace adjustments to account for them. These could be, for example, physical adjustments to the workspace, flexible working, or contingency plans in the event that health concerns reduce the appointee's working capacity. Few people do declare such circumstances, though feedback from recent appointees has enabled HR to recently revise such processes.

SLS appoints a probation mentor for each new starter at lecturer level and above. The availability of broader mentoring is upon request, which we identify as **KC13**. One of our over-arching actions will address this challenge by introducing a flexible SLS Coaching (mentoring) scheme (**DA7**); an additional action will create a list of "go-to people" willing to help with specific aspects or processes within the department (**A13.1**).

The academic probation model lasts 1 year, including meetings with the line manager in months 1, 3, 6 and 9 and final probation sign off at 12 months. This enables the appointee and line manager to collaboratively agree expectations, including training and development needs. From discussing potential improvements to the induction process with recent (<5 yrs) new starters, we have identified that the sheer volume of processes and document repositories can be difficult to navigate (**KC14**). Consequently, **A14.1** will see the construction and dissemination of a Staff Welcome Pack to all new starters.

> ### Key Challenges
>
> **KC13**: The availability of mentoring opportunities for new starters may be limited unless specifically requested
>
> **KC14**: Determining the requirements of School processes can be difficult, as there are many processes and multiple repositories for information

(iii) Promotion.

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

The academic promotion criteria and procedures are accessible to all staff via the HR website. Applications must show strength in the area relevant to their role profile commensurate with the grade applied for under either TSPP or TR profiles. Each staff member has a range of opportunities to discuss career paths and strategies to achieve these in the workplace, including in the AAPR, and informal discussions with the HoS and dHoS, and research leads. However, the recent school survey suggests a number of staff are not aware of process relating to promotion, which must be addressed (**KC15**). This is an issue at the University level, which we will address through consultation with the University EDI Forum (**A15.1**). Currently staff feel there is a relatively short turnaround between the opening and closing of applications, which may deter those with caring commitments or with a heavy workload at that time of year from applying. Therefore, **A15.2** is, in conjunction with the University EDI Forum, to see whether this time window can be extended.

School Culture Survey 2020

- 76% of staff who have been through the process relating to promotion/regrading agree that the guidance related to these processes are clear (100% female, n=3; 71% male, n=14)

- 26% of staff who have not been through the process relating to promotion/regrading agree that the guidance related to these processes are clear (22% female, n=18; 29% male, n=19)

There have been 14 successful promotions from 27 applications in SLS since 2013 (Table 5.1). People identifying as female had a 67% success rate compared to a 44% success rate from those identifying as male, but this is not significantly different (Fisher's Exact test, p = 0.419). Given current school academic staff numbers and gender ratio (Table 2.1), there appears a slightly greater rate of promotion applications from those that identify as male (~48%) than female (~41%) across this period, but again this is not significant (Fisher's Exact test, p = 0.79). Thus, on the face of there is no evidence for a discrepancy in successful promotion applications between genders, although there is a strong suggestion of a bias in successful applications in favour of females over males; however, given the

COVID-19 impact
→ No promotions round in 2020
→ Extenuating circumstances affecting work-related productivity in relation to promotion criteria is likely to have disproportionately affected those with caring responsibilities

under-representation of females at higher levels, we do not identify this as an area of concern. The rate of applications from females may be lower, which we identify as **KC16**. The overall sense is that females

take time to craft a better proposal, so the slightly fewer they submit are slightly better and achieve promotion more readily than applications from males. Gender differences in promotion applications are well recognised within the sector and more widely, with women tending to wait until they are confident they fulfil all necessary criteria before submitting an application, which seems to be reflected in our data. With this in mind, we will offer mentoring to those wishing to apply for promotion (**DA7**) and ensure promotion and career development are discussed at all AAPRs (**A16.1**). We will also actively encourage and support all staff within SLS to apply for promotion (**A16.2**) at a suitable time if they wish to do so, with encouragement from line managers where this is considered appropriate in terms of providing staff with the confidence to submit an application. Finally, where applications are unsuccessful, appraisers will continue to offer feedback to the candidate, as well as support in devising a plan to overcome any identified shortcomings to continue our existing good practice (**A16.3**)

Table 5.1: Academic promotion applications with successes by gender (2013-2019). All applications were from academics in full time positions.

Year	Gender	Associate Professor		Professor		Total	
		Applied	**Successful**	**Applied**	**Successful**	**Applied**	**Successful**
2013	**Female**	0	0	0	0	**0**	**0**
	Male	2	2	1	0	**3**	**2**
2014	**Female**	2	1	0	0	**2**	**1**
	Male	2	0	0	0	**2**	**0**
2015	**Female**	0	0	0	0	**0**	**0**
	Male	1	1	0	0	**1**	**1**
2016	**Female**	2	2	1	1	**3**	**3**
	Male	2	1	1	1	**3**	**2**
2017	**Female**	1	1	0	0	**1**	**1**
	Male	1	0	2	2	**3**	**2**
2018	**Female**	1	0	1	1	**2**	**1**
	Male	2	0	1	1	**3**	**1**
2019	**Female**	1	0	0	0	**1**	**0**
	Male	2	0	1	0	**3**	**0**

We have no data from HR on the breakdown of promotion applications by other protected characteristics.

The Covid situation and resultant budget constraints meant the University had to postpone the 2020 promotion process until 2021. Given that the general impact of the pandemic on productivity is thought to have affected women and those with caring responsibilities disproportionately, it has been highlighted that the promotions process does not currently take into account any extenuating

circumstances (**KC17**). Whilst this cannot be addressed at SLS level, we will liaise with the University EDI Forum to investigate whether extenuating circumstances can be incorporated into the promotions process (**A17.1**)

Whilst not required for a bronze AS award, we are aware that the University does not currently offer promotions for staff on technical role profiles, which we identify as **KC18**. As we progress towards a silver AS award, and in the interests of equality for staff in all roles, we will start to address this by delivering on the Technician Commitment for technical staff recognition and reward (**A18.1**), including engaging with wider University activities (**A18.2**) and making use of the merit and reward Scheme (**A18.3**). We will also identify opportunities for technical staff to engage with additional professional development and accreditation (**A18.4**).

Key Challenges

KC15: The process of and support available for the promotion process is not clear to all staff

KC16: Relatively fewer female staff are applying for promotion

KC17: Extenuating circumstances are not taken into account in the promotion process

KC18: There is a lack of opportunities for technical and professional services staff to take on additional roles to gain the requirements for promotion

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Actions

A15.1: In discussion with the University EDI Forum, ensure a consistent, accessible and inclusive process promotions applications

A15.2: In discussion with the University EDI Forum, look into extending the window between promotion applications opening and closing

DA8: Offer mentoring to those who wish to apply for promotion but who need further personal development to reach the criteria required, especially female staff

A16.1: Promotion/career development to continue to be discussed at all staff AAPRs

A16.2: Actively encourage and support all staff within the School to consider applying for promotion

A16.3: Where an application for promotion has been unsuccessful, appraiser to continue to offer support to candidate in terms of feedback, identify a plan to overcome the shortcomings and encourage the candidate to reapply

A17.1: Investigate whether extenuating circumstances (including, but not limited to, Covid-19) can be accounted for in the University promotions process, in discussion with the University EDI Forum

A18.1: Deliver on technician commitment for technical staff recognition and reward.

A18.2: Engage with the University activities towards the technician commitment

A18.3: Make full use of the merit and rewards scheme to recognise staff excellence

A18.4: Identify additional opportunities for professional services staff to improve employment prospects, such as offering all technical staff the opportunity to apply for AFHEA, and offering support to become chartered scientists

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

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

The broad nature of research conducted by SLS meant staff were returned across two Units of Assessment (UoA) along with staff from other schools for the REF2021 submission: UoA 3 (Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy) and UoA 6 (Agriculture, Food and Veterinary Sciences), both in panel A. Since the return of SLS staff was split across two UoAs, that also included staff from other schools, it is not possible to provide UoA specific data in a meaningful manner. However, at the School level all 38 REF returnable academics (those with a 'post with significant responsibility for research') within SLS were returned. Overall, 26% of REF returnable staff in SLS identify as female (8 of 38), which we identify as **KC19**. Gender proportions for REF2021 return are more male-biased than those returned for REF2014 where 34% were female. The School was formed in 2012 and so there are no REF2008 data for comparison. On reflection, the gender balance change observed reflect the change in SLS's research active academics. Strategies to enhance the equal recruitment, retention and promotion of female research staff (**A11.1-11-.5, 12.1-12.2, 15.1-15.3, 16.1-16.3, 17.1**), as well as providing additional career development support for female staff on TR profiles will allow this imbalance to be redressed in coming REF cycles (if REF exists in the future).

> ### Key Challenges
> **KC19**: Small numbers of REF returnable female staff (see KC5)

> ### Actions
> **A19.1**: See recruitment and promotion Actions

b. Career development: academic staff

(i) Training.

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

> **School Culture Survey 2020**
> - 64% of academic staff agreed or strongly agreed that career development opportunities were available for them at Lincoln (70% female, n=10; 62% male, n=29)
> - 51% of staff agreed or strongly agreed that they were supported in taking up career development opportunities or identified self-development opportunities (60% female, n=10; 48% male, n=29)
> - 26% of staff agreed that training in equality and diversity at UoL had helped with their work relationships (33% female, n=30; 19% male, n=31); excludes 12 staff who stated they had not undertaken training (n=6 female, n=4 male)
> - 41% of staff agreed that training in unconscious bias at UoL had helped with their work relationships (38% female, n=26; 43% male, n=30); excludes 16 who stated they had not undertaken training (n=10 female, n=4 male)

The University provides a range of training and development opportunities to Life Sciences staff (including ECRs/PDRs) via Organisational Development [Staff Development Programmes] (e.g. Consultancy Ninja Skills), the University Library (e.g. Better Stats: Making Your Statistics More Intuitive) and the Research and Enterprise Office (e.g. virtual ResearchFIRST week). These are advertised to School staff (including ECRs/PDRs) via email, general and specific websites (e.g. Staff News, Research Development, Human Resources 'Your Development'). Booking is online and all staff have access to an online learning resource (**My Learning**) to view and access training courses, as well as to assess and record their online training, thus supporting staff in undertaking career development at their own pace and time. Face-to-face training sessions are repeated throughout the year to give flexibility for attendance and are recorded within the central HR dashboard (**MyView**). Face-to-face training courses are evaluated centrally after each session via attendee feedback. In addition to optional training, there is also a suite of mandatory online training modules (e.g. Equality in the Workplace, completed by 86 staff) for all academic staff.

Leadership: Management and leadership training offered by the University is available to all academic staff to aid progression, and training courses can be focused towards all staff, or directly for managers (e.g. Emotional Intelligence – All Staff/Management & Leadership Roles). BAME staff are encouraged to engage with the Inspire programme for those wanting to develop leadership skills.

Early Career Researchers (ECRs) & Post-Doctoral Researchers (PDRs): SLS provides an encouraging environment for staff, where they can work alongside others to build skills and experience, either within or between Research groups. ECRs are encouraged to participate in the annual **ECR Week** (see 5.2.iii), organised by the UoL Research and Enterprise Office. For example, the Research Development Team run a Research FIRST funding surgery that provides an opportunity for post-doctoral researchers of all career stages to discuss any aspect of research funding and bid development with the team.

Training needs for academic staff are identified and encouraged as part of the annual Appraisal and concurrent Individual Research Planning (IRP) process – especially in terms of breaking potential

barriers to progression. In particular, all academic staff are expected to gain HEA recognition through the **Lincoln Academy for Learning & Teaching**. Clearly defined School 'roles' (e.g. Industrial Liaison, Outreach, Recruitment, International Lead) as well as opportunities to represent SLS on College/University committees, providing opportunities for staff to develop key skills and gain valuable experience whilst making an important contribution to SLS, CoS and UoL strategy.

Despite the availability of training courses, Culture Survey responses suggest that only 51% of staff felt supported in taking up these opportunities (**KC20**). To address this, we will increase awareness of the available training courses (**A20.1**) by continuing to embed this in the AAPR discussions (**A20.2**) and promoting staff career development opportunities (**A20.3**). In addition, we will increase the advertisement of PDR-specific opportunities through the ECR Teams site (**DA11**). Culture Survey responses also indicate that a high proportion of staff (21%) cannot remember undertaking EDI-relevant training (**KC21**). To address this, we will ensure staff are reminded regularly about the need to undertake this training (**A21.1**), ensure that >85% of staff have done so (**A21.2**), and continuing to assess the uptake of all training (**DA4**).

Key Challenges

KC20: Awareness of career development opportunities appears low; staff do not feel sufficiently supported to take up training and career development opportunities, this appears lower for males

KC21: A high proportion of staff cannot remember having done the Unconscious bias training or EDI training

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Actions

A20.1: SLS to increase staff awareness of training courses and encourage their completion, including workload allocation to allow time

A20.2: Include training and development needs as formal part of the AAPR, ensuring all staff know how to access training resources on HR webpages

A20.3: School to promote internal and external career development and leadership training, e.g. the Advance HE Aurora programme, and to make money available to support this if possible

DA11: Increased advertisement of PDR-focussed training opportunities through ECR-specific communications

DA4: Analyse participation in internal and external training opportunities by gender

DA7: Update Action Plan as necessary

A21.1: Regularly remind staff to complete the EDI-relevant training modules

A21.2: Ensure that at least 85% of all staff, PDRs and PGR students complete the diversity in the workplace e-course, and receive training in unconscious bias awareness

DA4: Collate data on completion rates of EDI-related training within SLS

(ii) Appraisal/development review.

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

<u>**School Culture Survey 2020**</u>

- 41% of academic staff agreed or strongly agreed that they found the annual appraisal process to be useful (60% female, n=10; 34% male, n=29)

- 51% of academic staff agreed or strongly agreed that SLS values the full range of an individual's skills and experience (40% female, n=10; 55% male, n=29)

The annual Appraisal scheme (ADA) is compulsory for all academic staff, and optional for PDRs (although only if >1yr). Uptake for PDRs is 70% for females (n=10) and 67% for males (n=6). TR academics also complete a yearly Individual Research Plan (IRP) and TSPP academics complete an Individual Scholarship and Professional Practice Plan (ISPP) programme, which help staff reflect on current progress and develop longer term goals in these key areas. The Appraisal process has recently (summer 2021) been updated to a new streamlined Annual Academic Planning Review (AAPR), which incorporates both the IRP/ISPP and the Appraisal.

Appraisers are senior academics appropriate to the research field of the Appraisee (e.g. within the same research group), but can be changed at the Appraisee's request. The Appraisee completes an online form that incorporates reflection about achievements in the previous year and plans for the future, incorporating the IRP or ISPP. The Appraiser reads the form prior to a one-to-one Appraisal Meeting. In the Appraisal Meeting, short- and longer-term plans for research, teaching, administrative duties, scholarship and professional practice are discussed in terms of career development, alongside any potential barriers to progression or areas to increase skills/experience, and these are then highlighted along with actions, e.g. training needs and/or research facilities, resources identified. Following discussion at this meeting, the Appraisee has an opportunity to amend their form, if required, before it is completed by the Appraiser. All appraisals are read and signed off by HoS. Professorial appraisals are carried out by HoS. Appraisals are recorded in the **My Learning** online resource. In addition to the above, the appraisal process encourages discussion of work-life balance and workload in general, providing the opportunity to raise additional ideas and/or concerns. Before the introduction of the new AAPR process, there appeared to be a disconnect between the appraisal process and its perception by academic staff, highlighting **KC22**, that only 41% of staff completing the Staff Culture Survey believe the ADA process was useful, and 51% believe that SLS values the full range of skills and experience individuals bring to their roles. As the process has now changed, we will assess the Staff Culture Survey responses relevant to the new AAPR going forward (**DA5**), and develop and update the Action plan accordingly as any issues are identified (**DA7**).

> *"I think the school itself does value that the role has lots of different parts to it but am not sure at College level or above this is quite so appreciated*
>
> *" – Male Academic*

The University is committed to ensuring that all staff AAPRs include discussions on mentoring opportunities, promotion and career path development. All Appraisers undergo mandatory training and there are also specific training courses (Organisational Development) in support of the

Appraisal process, with Appraiser/Appraisee Workshops and PDR Reviewer/Reviewee Training. Uptake of these courses is generally low, so **A22.1** will increase awareness of these courses. Given that only 51% of staff believe their full range of skills is valued, **A22.2** will ensure all skills development and tasks required for roles are workloaded appropriately.

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Key Challenges

KC22: Fewer than half of SLS staff believe that the ADA (Appraisal, now AAPR) is useful and only half of staff agree that the SLS values the full range of an individual's skills and experience, with females more likely to believe this

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Actions

A22.1: All staff to be made aware of, and encouraged to attend, AAPR Appraisee and/or AAPR Appraiser training workshops or PDR Reviewer/Reviewee Training as appropriate

A22.2: Ensure the workload model incorporates appropriate tariffs across the range of requirements of roles

DA5: Monitor the effectiveness of implemented changes through School Culture Surveys

DA7: Update Action Plan as necessary

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

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

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School Culture Survey 2020

- 74% of academic staff have taken up either official (21%) or unofficial (53%) mentoring opportunities (90% female, n=10; 68% male, n=28)

- 50% of academic staff who have taken up mentoring opportunities found these beneficial (55% female, n=9; 47% male n=19), and this did not differ between unofficial (50%) or official (50%) routes

- From four postdoctoral researchers who completed the survey, one had been able to access mentoring through unofficial mentoring channels and strongly agreed that they had benefited from this mentoring, two were aware of mentoring opportunities but had not taken them up, and one was unaware mentoring was available (n=4, 3 female, 1 male)

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Annual SLS 'Away Days' provide opportunities for all staff to contribute to the development of School strategy and network within and between research groups. We have a University-wide Pipeline Mentoring Programme that matches Mentors/Mentees based on the stated needs/requirements of the Mentee and expertise of the Mentor acting across Schools/Colleges. It provides mentoring support for a variety of development areas, including career progression, work-life balance and maternity. However, the Culture survey highlights that although mentoring opportunities have been taken up by 74% of academic staff within SLS, these are generally not through official channels (21% official, 53% unofficial) (**KC23.1**), and only 50% of academic staff found them beneficial (**KC23.2**). PDRs in particular do not seem to be taking up mentoring opportunities (**KC23.3**). We identify these three mentoring-related issues as **KC23**, which will be addressed by our overarching actions of developing a School-specific flexible Coaching (mentoring) scheme (**DA7**) and advertising the benefits of mentoring (**DA8**).

Progression to an independent academic career is one of the most challenging transitions to achieve, and within SLS is where the gender ratio shifts from female- to male-biased. The UoL is committed to Vitae Concordat for academic careers development and provides a range of tools through the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF). There are activities to support researchers and academics at School, College and University level. Every year, through the Research Office, an ECR Week is held for all ECRs across the University. This provides research-skills training across a range of themes (e.g. developing your first grant proposal; establishing a track record). In addition to this existing research support, SLS will distribute information about grant funding to PGR and PDRs (A22.1) and PIs will be encouraged to include PGR and PDRs on grant applications (A22.2). Teaching experience is also vital for career progression. SLS provides opportunities for PDRs to gain teaching and project-supervision experience, though these opportunities are not always adequately communicated (KC24). For example, both PhD students and PDRs can propose and co-supervise PGT research projects and we will offer PDRs direct contact teaching experience (A23.1) and encourage application to the HEA (A23.2). To improve communication, this information will be posted on a dedicated Teams site for PGR and PDRs (DA11).

Key Challenges

KC23.1: A large proportion of staff involved in mentoring do so on an unofficial basis, with few engaging in the official system

KC23.2: Only half of staff taking up mentoring opportunities found them beneficial

KC23.3: PDRs are either unaware of, or choosing not to take up, mentoring opportunities

KC24: PDRs are not regularly informed of relevant training or career development opportunities

Actions

DA8: Initiate a new School level Coaching (mentoring) Scheme and encourage staff and PDRs to participate as part of AAPR discussions.

DA8: Effectively communicate availability and benefits of mentoring

A24.1: Collect and distribute information on potential PDR funding sources to facilitate funding for support and retention of existing PDRs, as well as recruiting externally supported Research Fellows into SLS

A24.2: PIs to consider enhancing role of PDRs and PGRs when applying for grant applications (e.g. named Research Investigator on applications where permitted)

DA4: Collect and analyse data on the numbers of independently funded and project grant funded PDRs

DA7: Update Action Plan as necessary

A24.3: Formally offer PDRs up to 10 hours of direct contact teaching per year for development

A24.4: Actively encourage PDRs to apply for Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (HEA) award from Advance HE. Provide information and contacts for the application on the ECR Teams site

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

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

SLS embeds careers advice and guidance from the beginning of UG teaching, alongside formal support from the careers service. Students are assigned to tutor groups, with a member of academic staff as their tutor. Tutees meet their tutors during welcome week of their first year, and these pairings remain for the duration of undergraduate study. Tutors help tutees continually reflect upon and develop their skill set, with an iterative personal statement document. Fixed pairings allow tutors to provide personalised support, and personalised references upon completing studies.

COVID-19 impact
→ SLS Animal Internship and Technical Internship providing funded work experience no longer available

Students receive tailored rather than simply generic support: some of these careers sessions are specific to each individual degree programme, and a range of individual support including mock interviews, CV review and skills development are also available through the service. This personalised support continues to be available to alumni post-graduation.

"Without my role as an Animal Science Intern, I wouldn't have had the skills and experience I needed to be kept on as a permanent technician at the University. The role gave me hands-on experience of animal care, knowledge of behaviour and welfare research, and the opportunity to develop my interests. I thoroughly enjoyed my time as an intern and now have the practical and administrative skills I need to further my career" – female Technician, former SLS-funded Animal Science Intern

Taught MSc students receive career advice during tutorials and also via regular updates to relevant opportunities from their Module and Programme Leaders. Prior to Covid-19, SLS had a one-year University-funded 'Animal Internship', and a 'Technical Internship' to allow a Lincoln graduate to gain experience working alongside the technical team in support of teaching and research activities. This role has been filled by both UG and PGT graduates, although was not funded in 2020. We also have 'Clinical Scholarship' opportunities for graduates from the MSc Clinical Animal Behaviour to gain practical experience of work as a Behavioural Clinician whilst studying for a PhD.

Students on taught MBio degrees have a skills module as part of their studies, comprising a series of skills workshops ranging from behavioural observation and fieldwork techniques through labwork techniques to computational and programming skills. Each faculty member offers a workshop relevant to their research interests, which are iteratively improved based on feedback from students. MBio students maintain contact with their UG tutor as well as developing research skills through working with a project supervisor for the duration of their course.

PGRs have their own dedicated support through the PGR tutors (one male researcher and one female). These tutors organise a separate series of transferrable skills-based workshops tailored to PGR students, including critically evaluating academic papers, grant writing and problem-solving tasks. However, pathways for career progression for PGRs beyond their MSc or PhD may not be clearly accessible, which we identify as **KC25**. To address this, **A25.1** will compile a list of available scholarship awards, which will be publicised through the ECR Teams site (**DA11**), with applications to external schemes for funding supported and encouraged within SLS (**A25.2**). We will assess rates of student

academic career progression for PGRs by gender (i.e. rates of MSc to PhD and PhD to PDR; DA4) and identify additional Actions as required.

We also recognise that PGRs could be better supported to gain external recognition for transferrable (e.g. teaching) skills gained during their studies, especially for those wishing to pursue an academic career, which we identify as KC26. To address this, we will encourage PGRs to gain relevant demonstrating experience (A26.1) and apply for HEA associate fellow (AFHEA) status (A26.2).

PGRs frequently join SLS from other institutions, and thus do not have access to a mentor beyond their supervisor and the PGR tutors. We identify this as KC27, which we address as part of DA7 & DA8, allowing PGRs the opportunity to identify a mentor separate from their line manager. The re-formation of the ECR committee, to include PGR students, will provide a forum for discussion and exchange of information (DA11). SLS policy states PGR students can request an assessor of a preferred gender if they wish, but discussion with PGR students suggests that this is not widely known (KC28). This will be addressed through A28.1, whereby all PGRs will be consulted on their choice of assessor, and the policy will be made available through the ECR Teams site.

Key Challenges

KC25: Opportunities for academic career progression for PGRs are not easily accessible

KC26: PGR students could be better supported to acquire teaching experience and accreditation

KC27: Mentoring is not readily available to PGR students

KC28: Female PGRs are not aware they can request a female assessor where available

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Actions

A25.1: Compile a comprehensive list of all available University, Research Council, Industry and Charity graduate scholarship awards (irrespective of gender) in consultation with UoL Graduate office and Research Office, and publicise these on the School Blackboard site for internal students and on the website for external applicants

A25.2: Encourage and support applications for external fellowship schemes where appropriate, including supportive peer review prior to application submission

DA4: Continue to collect data and evaluate rates of career progression for PGRs, collect data on the number of applications for external fellowships submitted through SLS

DA7: Update Action Plan as necessary

DA11: Increased advertisement of PGR career progression opportunities

A26.1: Continue to encourage PGRs to register as an associate demonstrator and gain demonstrating experience

A26.2: Actively encourage PGR students to apply for Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (AFHEA) status during their studies

DA8: Actively encourage PGR and PDR participation in SLS Coaching Scheme, allowing an SLS mentor separate from their line manager

A28.1: Ensure all PGRs are consulted on their choice of assessor, including a female assessor on the assessment panel for female students if requested and if suitable expertise is available

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

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

> *"The support I have received with research grant applications since starting (just over 2 years ago) has been outstanding. The research office are knowledgeable, organised and approachable and senior members of research staff have provided much-needed flexible support and feedback" – Male academic, ECR*

We are cognizant that that the generation of research proposals is bespoke in every case. Given the array of other commitments that staff have, SLS attempts to create an environment that support opportunities for staff to develop research proposals and provide feedback on drafts with the aim of increasing quality. Each of SLS's 5 research groups holds regular meetings and members are encouraged to discuss and present grant proposals ideas for feedback. However, we are aware that we do not currently hold School-level data on submission and success rates, or funding amounts, by gender, and thus existing support for research grant applications may not be targeted as required (**KC29**). In addition to specific Actions detailed below, we plan to collect and analyse these data (**DA4**), updating our Action Plan as required (**DA6**).

SLS has a comprehensive 'grant submission' guide openly available that details the institutional requirements for the submission of grants. In addition, SLS peer review of all grants is strongly encouraged and any grants in excess of £100,000 are reviewed by the RSC. Informally, the lead of each of SLS's five research groups, and the DoR, mentor staff on grant development. This school level support is in addition to the support and guidance generally available at the central Research & Enterprise (R&E) office where dedicated officers for SLS are available; for example, R&E offer regular drop-in sessions for targeted support in preparing research grant applications (e.g. Bid development) as well as arranging events to foster collaboration (e.g. Speed Networking event (academics/ECRs)).

Prior to Covid-19, we had regular School funding initiatives for research to support career progression, including competitive schemes to fund pilot research as the basis for future grant applications (e.g. 'Seed-corn' funding), school-funded MSc and PhD Studentships, and travel support for conference

COVID-19 impact
→ Removal of school funding initiatives to support career progression

attendance. In 2019/20, the travel support and Pump-Priming schemes were merged to allow each academic member of SLS an annual individual pot of money to spend in a way that most benefitted their own research development. However, Covid-19 led to this being withdrawn due to financial constraints in the general University and thus School budget.

On reflection, going forward SLS sees an area for development in more strongly mentoring staff at the earlier phases of grant development and the strategic generation of pilot data (**DA7**). One of the

hardest steps is the initial one developing embryos of ideas and tentative support for these, and then targeting these to appropriate calls. This early stage is compounded by the Covid-19 situation which has meant a hiatus in research momentum for many staff. SLS intends to focus more on the earlier phases of grant development and put in place support for staff to help

COVID-19 impact
→ A hiatus in research momentum for many staff due to increased teaching commitments

rekindle research activities, which include the identification of funding sources and the development

of robust grant proposals. Initially this will take the form of stimulating more activity at the research group level (**A29.1**). On reflection, another area that would benefit staff is to attempt to more openly discuss grant rejections. Most grants are rejected, and typically this is not openly discussed beyond commiserations. The applicant whose grant was rejected as well as other colleagues may benefit from more open discussion of this experience and reasons for rejection: this may be cathartic for the applicants and simultaneously informative for others by learning from reviewer and panel comments. In addition, the applicants may benefit from advice on how to take the idea forward (**A29.2**).

Key Challenges

KC29: Support for research grant applications is not targeted where required

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Actions

A29.1: Stimulate activity regarding research proposal generation and review at research group level

A29.2: Encourage open discussion of grant rejection and reflection on this

DA8: Encourage staff to use the new Coaching scheme for research grant preparation

DA4: Collate data on grant submission and success rates, sources of funding and research outcomes by gender and grade to identify targets for support

DA7: Evaluate data and update Action Plan

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c. Flexible working and managing career breaks

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

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

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

SLS is highly committed to providing a flexible and supportive environment for new parents. During the early pregnancy and up to maternity leave, SLS offers flexible working to suit the needs and wellbeing of the staff. Moreover, the risk assessments and the Health and Safety of staff and students with regards to laboratory work during pregnancy are reviewed. Staff are made aware of SLS and institution family-friendly policies and practices before taking maternity leave, through information on the HR website, including the University-wide peer support groups, such as **Mums and Dads Club** and the **Carers and Parents Club.** These groups provide networking opportunities and support via shared experiences related to parental leave and advice about on-campus facilities.

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

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

"Knowing that I had the AR2F grant when I returned from maternity leave reduced my stress about my career and allowed me to focus on my baby" – Prof. Anna Wilkinson

As a general rule, SLS employs replacement staff to cover maternity or adoption leave, and if necessary, specific tasks are shared by other academic staff where specific expertise is otherwise unavailable. However, during the pandemic, two academic and one professional services staff have gone on maternity leave, and SLS has not been able to provide cover due to financial constraints, which we identify as **KC30**. The workload has been shared among the staff according to teaching specialism but not necessarily with consideration for existing workloads as this was arranged by the individuals going on leave in conjunction with the co-ordinators of the relevant modules. Thus, **A30.1** is to develop a policy on managing the allocation of cover under these circumstances with **A30.2** ensuring that this sharing of additional workload is spread fairly across genders and grades.

SLS offers 10 **Keeping in Touch (KIT) days** for all staff on maternity or adoption leave, in addition to maternity pay. Staff are also invited to key events in SLS calendar (such as Away Days) and one member of staff attended our School Away Day during her maternity leave. Holiday is still accrued during maternity leave, which new parents can take as fully paid leave on return to work, either as a block or in a phased manner.

Table 5.2: *Numbers of staff taking leave for adoption, maternity or paternity leave. All but three of the staff taking maternity leave were professional support staff. All but one of the staff taking paternity leave were academic staff.*

Year	Adoption	Maternity	Paternity
2013	0	2	0
2014	0	2	2
2015	0	1	1
2016	0	2	2
2017	0	2	2
2018	0	1	2
2019	0	2	0
2020	0	3	0

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

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

On return from maternity or adoption leave, SLS offers a phased return or a part-time contract if requested and informal arrangements for flexible working and working from home are common. The **Academic Returners' Research Fund (AR2F) provides the opportunity for staff to gain up to £10,000 to help sustain research activity before, during and/or after maternity**

> *"After my maternity leave my Head of School was very supportive and I was able to work from home twice a week for an initial period" – Prof. Anna Wilkinson*

leave. Applications can be received at any time and there is no cap on the number of awards. Since 2013, two SLS staff applied successfully to AR2F. A previously available scheme from which SLS staff have also benefitted is the **Back to Science** scheme, which was open to women and men who had taken extended career breaks to develop independent research projects within an established research group.

(iv) Maternity return rate.

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

Since 2013, **all but one member** of staff taking maternity and paternity leave have returned to work (Table 5.2). One professional services staff chose to leave to look after her family. On return from maternity leave, two other professional services members of staff are now **job sharing to help with caring responsibilities**.

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

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

Since 2013, we have had 90% uptake on paternity leave with one individual taking leave twice. Shared parental leave was offered to all parents since 2014 but has not yet been taken up.

> **Key Challenges**
> **KC30**: Financial constraints currently prevent replacement cover staff for those taking parental leave. SLS has no clear policy on how cover is allocated.

> **Actions**
>
> **A30.1**: Given the current absence of maternity cover for academics due to Covid, develop an SLS policy on how allocation of cover is managed before and during parental leave
>
> **A30.2**: Ensure workload to cover leave is spread equally between genders and fairly across grades
>
> **A30.3**: Ensure information on the available maternity funding policies (e.g. AR2F fund) is provided through the SLS EDI website.

(vi) Flexible working.

Provide information on the flexible working arrangements available.

> **School Culture Survey 2020**
>
> - 67% of academic staff agreed or strongly agreed that their line manager was supportive of requests for flexible working (40% female, n=10; 76% male, n=29)
>
> - 79% of professional and support staff agreed or strongly agreed that their line manager was supportive of requests for flexible working (75% female, n=12; 100% male, n=2)

Staff within SLS are signposted to the University's policies on flexible working and related family friendly policies and support, but these policies are currently not easily accessible, which we identify as **KC31.1**.

> *"I have benefitted hugely from flexible working (flexible both in where and when I work). It's been a godsend for me in certain circumstances" – Male academic*

Requests to focus teaching around the core hours of 10-5 are viewed sympathetically and applied where possible. All staff fill in a constraints form prior to timetabling to indicate their availability, although requests are subject to the availability of suitable timetabling slots. UoL, like most Post-92 universities uses the Post 92 National Contract, National Agreement and National Staff Handbook, which has built in flexibility around working hours as detailed in section 1.3 of the National

Staff Handbook. In addition to this there is a Formal Flexible Working Requests Policy, allowing staff with more than 26 weeks continuous service to make a formal request for flexible working. However, the staff culture survey suggests that awareness of this policy could be improved. The process is monitored by

> *"Very positive/supportive experience with flexibility to work at home when required" – Female technician*

HR with regard to outcomes. "The University commits to monitor the outcome of all Formal Requests for Flexible Working and this data will be reported on annually to help inform the future development of practice and support our equality and diversity monitoring." Within SLS, a relatively high proportion of both academic and professional and support staff agreed that management are supportive of flexible working requests, but this was consistently lower for female staff, which we highlight as the second part of **KC31**. To address this, **A31.1** will develop and clear policy on flexible working and advertise this to all staff through the EDI blog.

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

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

The policy on flexible working allows most staff to continue to work full time and we do not have any cases where staff have requested to return on a part-time basis and subsequently transitioned back to full-time working. Staff can request an increase or decrease to their fraction. This may be granted where the business need and budget allow.

Key Challenges

KC31.1: SLS policy on flexible working is not readily available

KC31.2: Apparent discrepancy between male and female staff in perceived support for flexible working

Actions

A31.1: Develop a clear policy on flexible working within the School and ensure all staff are aware of this flexibility

d. Organisation and culture

(i) Culture.

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

> *"Over the last two years have not been able to take over 30 days annual leave due to work pressure, I routinely work weekends in term time and probably 50-70 hours pw" – Academic, gender not disclosed*

SLS understands the importance of a positive and welcoming culture to daily life, for all staff. To make both professional and social opportunities accessible to all staff, and especially to accommodate staff with caring responsibilities outside of core hours, we promote an inclusive approach to running regular and one-off events. During the peak of Covid-19, teaching was necessarily scheduled every weekday (including Wednesdays) between 9am and 8pm, to accommodate reduced room capacities due to social distancing.

SLS teaching initially comprised a high proportion of 6-8pm delivery, but this was later reduced by SLS pressuring timetabling and has been removed since the start of the 2021-22 academic year from 2021-22 teaching. Formal roles such as Programme Leadership or Student Engagement Champion that could have an impact on career progression are advertised to all staff. Staff considering a role to speak to Head of School in advance of an application to discuss any concerns

COVID-19 impact
→ Increase in length of the working day, with teaching scheduled from 9am – 8pm every weekday negatively impacts the work-life balance of all staff, especially those with caring responsibilities

around the role, including workload, time commitments and extra-curricular requirements or any concerns that would be covered under the Athena Swan agenda. Weekend activities such as Open Days are on a flexible rota. Perceptions around work-life balance will continue to be monitored (**DA5**) as the Staff Culture Survey suggests work-life balance is a significant issue for many staff (**KC32**) and staff encouraged to take up the coaching scheme to help with this issue where appropriate (**DA8**). The staff appraisal scheme will also be used to address issues with work life balance (**A32.1-2**)

School Culture Survey 2020

- 90% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that inappropriate language or behaviour is not culturally acceptable within the department (89% female, n=36; 91% male, n=35).

- 80% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that management would act upon inappropriate language or behaviour (78% female, n=36; 83% male, n=35)

- 57% of academic respondents agreed or strongly agreed they have a suitable work-life balance (63% female, n=8; 56% male, n=27)

- 92% of professional services respondents agreed or strongly agreed they have a suitable work-life balance (92% female, n=12; 100% male, n=1)

- 56% of PGR/PDR respondents agreed or strongly agreed they have a suitable work-life balance (58% female, n=12; 50% male, n=4)

- From the respondents who did not perceive they had a suitable work-life balance, 78% perceived this to be a long-term situation (as opposed to temporary and Covid-related; 67% female, n=9; 86% male, n=14)

Communication is a key facet of our School culture. We have a newsletter called 'News and Nags' that contains formal and informal messages and items of note that staff or PGR students need to be aware of, including successes such as new publications or grant awards, reminders of deadlines as well as social announcements. Inclusion of a light-hearted quiz with a chocolate-based reward (tailored to dietary requirements where necessary) is well received and we use relevant gifs and images to illustrate points where possible. Staff are encouraged to submit items or notifications and have embraced this as a mechanism to share things with SLS that may otherwise have gone unnoticed. All staff are encouraged to promote their successes but we do not currently measure any gender discrepancy in this promotion (**KC33**). To address this and to ensure we enhance and celebrate the profiles of female academics we will collect data on SLS internal and external visibility (**DA4**). We already ensure gender balance for our seminar series and this will be maintained (**A41.1**- detailed later). In addition, we will continue to celebrate International Women's Day by inviting talks from female scientists (**A33.1**) as well as engaging with university wide celebrations.

Key Challenges

KC32: A high proportion of academics do not feel they achieve a good work-life balance, and do not agree that SLS emphasises the importance of work-life balance in the appraisal process.

KC33: Enhance the profile of female academics

Actions

A32.1: Use staff appraisal and research planning schemes to help all staff perform against expected criteria within the designated working hours

DA8: Encourage staff to use the new Coaching Scheme to manage workload and work-life balance

DA5: Continue to monitor perceived work-life balance through the School Culture Survey

A32.2: Address AAPR work-life balance recognition concerns (see Actions linked to **KC23**)

A33.1: Celebrate International Women's Day each year with a guest seminar from a leading female scientist in the field of Life Sciences, and talks from inspiring female scientists within SLS, with time for informal Q&A. Open to all but targeted at UGs, PGs, PDRs and ECRs

DA4: Collect and analyse data on representation of SLS by gender both internally and externally, in terms of conference attendance, invited external talks, etc.

(ii) HR policies.

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

School Culture Survey 2020

- 46% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the policies relevant to equality and inclusion (e.g. discrimination, parental leave, carer's leave, flexible working) were clear (50% female, n=36; 43% male, n=35)

- 75% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they felt confident to ask their line manager to deal with any instances of harassment, bullying or offensive behaviour (75% female, n=36; 74% male, n=35)

Monitoring of disciplinary, grievance (includes bullying and harassment), and improving performance is carried out at University level. Numbers of cases are reported by HR to the senior management team. The grievance policy states that this includes EDI monitoring. These policies are regularly reviewed in consultation with local lay officers or recognised trade unions and changes are ratified by the membership and where appropriate, regional committees with advice from paid officials.

Any investigations of student complaints or staff grievances strictly follow the institutional processes in order for the recommendations/decisions to stand. Complainants can request a review of the outcomes if they feel processes were not applied correctly. The College monitors the grounds and outcomes of complaints investigated. The University monitors overall.

"Whilst working with a fellow student I experienced sexist comments directed toward me - the issue was resolved quickly by my supervisor and was dealt with efficiently. I do not feel this would happen again within SLS as it was the individuals personal issue" – Female PGR student

HR Line is a regular newsletter, circulated to managers and cascaded to staff containing updates on HR issues, policies and procedures. There is an HR Business Partner allocated to the College who can advise managers and staff about HR matters. There is also a Concern Line for staff to report unacceptable behaviour. Links to policies are provided through the SLS EDI blog (https://lifesciencesedi.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk), but not all links to relevant policies are currently provided here. The Culture Survey highlights that awareness and understanding of these policies is poor, which we identify as **KC34**. To address this, we will ensure links to all relevant policies are placed on the EDI blog, and ensure regular reminders at School meetings (**A34.1**). We will also ensure the regular dissemination of information detailing the relevant mechanisms and procedures (**A34.2**).

The Culture Survey also highlighted a lack of confidence in line management to deal with any instances of bullying or harassment, which we identify as **KC35**, although the culture survey highlighted both positive and negative comments in this regard. Therefore, **A35.1** is to ensure that all managers have completed bullying and harassment training.

(iii)   Representation of men and women on committees.

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

Committee	Male	Female	% female (excluding vacant)
School Management Team	3	2	40
Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee	7	7	50
Research Strategy Committee	9	2	18
EDI committee	6	9	60

Table 5.3. Composition of the four main decision-making committees in SLS

Committees within SLS generally draw their membership based on role rather than through volunteers (with the exception of the EDI committee). The EDI committee is the only female-biased committee, with LTAC at gender parity, and SMT with 40% females. The RSC in particular is strongly male-biased. This is a reflection of the low proportion of female TR academics within the department, and the low proportion of female staff in senior roles. However, it also suggests that any provisions that may benefit females may be overlooked, and thus we identify this as **KC36**. Ultimately, addressing this challenge will involve systemic change, but **A36.1** will begin by SMT reviewing, in collaboration with the EDI committee and the EGC, what is a suitable gender balance for key decision-making committees within SLS, being conscious that for key decision-making committees the proportion of females on the committee should be closer to gender parity than the proportion of females within the department,

with appropriate workloading to ensure underrepresented individuals are not overburdened. With this in mind, our overarching Action **DA2** will ensure that each SLS committee has an EDI rep invited to all meetings, who will ensure that EDI is considered as an agenda item in all key decision-making meetings. Following on from this, **A36.2** will ensure an appropriate gender balance is maintained across committees without over-burdening female staff. This may involve reconsidering the role-based requirements of the RSC, for example, to allow representation from researchers and TR staff at a wider range of seniorities than currently. We will continue to assess the results of implemented changes (**DA4**), and update the Action Plan if further Actions are identified (**DA6**).

Key Challenges

KC36: All decision-making committees, with the exception of LTAC, are not gender-balanced.

Actions

A36.1: SMT to review what is an appropriate gender balance for decision-making committee membership in the School, in discussion with the EGC and the University EDI Forum

A36.2: Ensure an appropriate gender balance is maintained across committees without over-burdening senior female staff

DA4: Continue to monitor membership of key decision-making committees by gender

DA7: Evaluate data and update Action Plan

(iv)   Participation on influential external committees.

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

School Culture Survey 2020

- 66% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they had the opportunity to represent SLS externally and/or internally (58% female, n=31; 74% male, n=34)

Staff within SLS are encouraged to participate in influential committees as part of the AAPR process, although this may not consistently take place. A workload allocation is provided for committee membership. However, the culture survey suggests that one third of staff do not feel they have the opportunity to represent SLS on committees, which we identify as **KC37**. To address this, we will emphasise that discussions around committee membership should take place within the AAPR (**A37.1**). However, we also do not currently hold a database with staff membership of external committees, which we will address as part of **DA4** so that we can interrogate these data, seek staff feedback to identify the drivers behind any trends, and identify appropriate further Actions as necessary.

Key Challenges

KC37: One third of staff do not feel they have the opportunity to represent SLS on committees

(v)   Workload model.

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

"The Academic Workload Model provides a single framework for the allocation of academic workloads across the University and is designed to articulate a consistent approach to workload allocation.

> *"Workload calculation does not capture most of the activities we do" – Male Academic*

It sits alongside the provisions for the post-92 National Contract for Lecturing Staff and does not replace these provisions.

The Academic Workload Model (AWM) aims to provide sufficient flexibility to accommodate the diverse nature of the University's academic schools whilst providing a consistent framework for the management and monitoring of Academic Workloads."

School Culture Survey 2020

- 61% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that workload was equal across genders (69% female, n=36; 51% male, n=35)

- 37% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that workload was fairly distributed according to grade and job responsibilities (44% female, n=36; 29% male, n=35)

- 15% of academic staff agreed or strongly agreed that the workload model reflects the work that they do (10% female, n=10; 17% male, n=29)

- 10% of academic staff agreed that they perceived the workload model to be suitable to allocate the appropriate amount of time for the diversity of tasks required for their role (0% female, n=10; 14% male, n=29; none strongly agreed)

The AWM recognises a full range of academic duties. It includes minimum and maximum tariffs for a range of activities, which are adapted by managers to suit practice within their school. Managers should aim for staff to be within 80-85% of the maximum of 1561 hours normally, to allow for duties that don't have an allocated tariff and to have capacity to cover sickness absence and vacancies where necessary. The nature of academic work requires a degree of flexibility and application of judgement by managers, which has the potential for inequality and may explain the Culture Survey data suggestions that staff do not feel the workload is fairly distributed, or that the workload model is fit for purpose. We identify this as **KC38**. The available data do not support a bias with regard to gender or role profile currently (Figures 5.2, 5.3), which has improved since our last Bronze award in 2016. **A38.1** is to maintain this

balance and **A38.2** is to publish and analyse workload data annually. The AAPR should include the opportunity for staff to raise any concerns, and **A38.3** will allow for any identified imbalance to be addressed.

Figure 5.2 (left) and 5.3 (right): *Average workload split by gender for teaching, administration and*
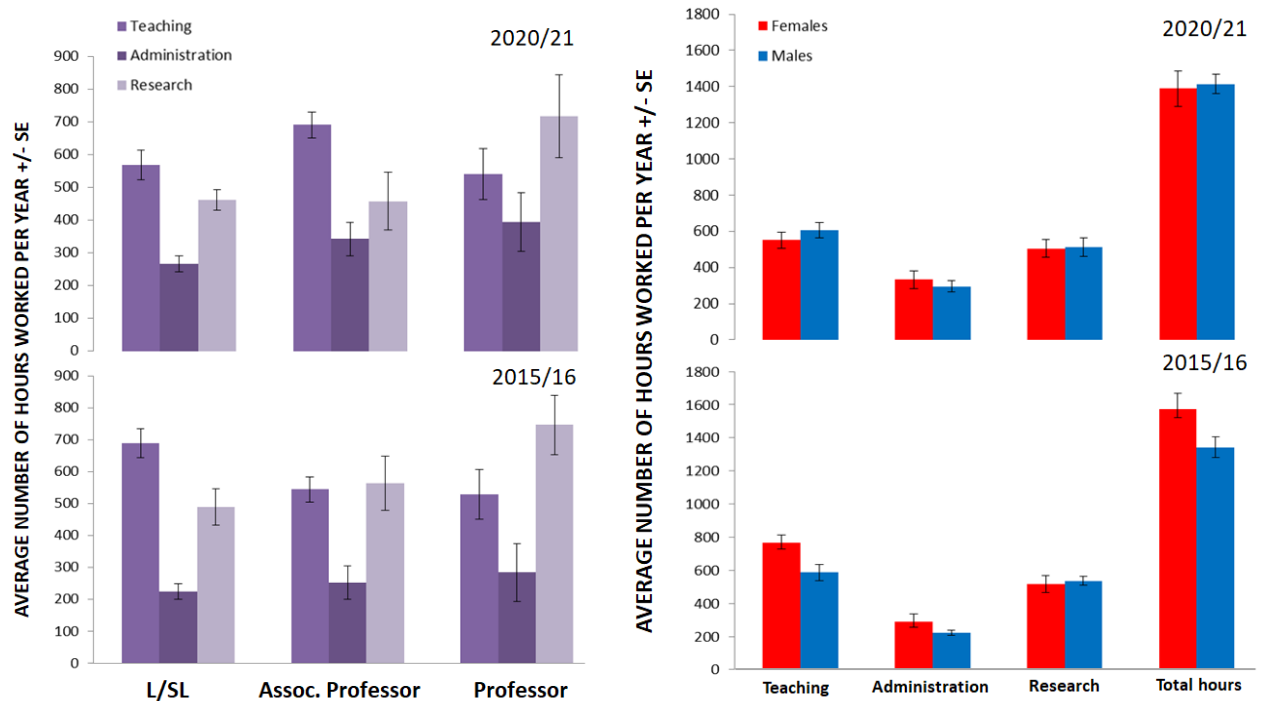
research split by grade (Fig 5.2) and gender (Fig 5.3). Data shown are for all academic positions, for males (blue) and females (red) at each grade for 2015/16 and 2020/21. Gender imbalances in workload distribution apparent in 2015/16 have now been equalised.

Workload analysis at the University level feeds into allocation of posts and recruitment of staff according to expertise required. UCU is currently negotiating changes to the workload process, in consultation with members; once these changes are determined, we will identify any School-level Actions to address the second part of **KC38**.

Key Challenges

KC38: A significant number of staff do not feel that workload is equally distributed. Most staff do not feel the workload model is fit for purpose to reflect the time required to complete tasks required as part of their role

---

Actions

A38.1: Ensure workload balance across genders and by role, across the spectrum of work activities

A38.2: Publish and distribute annual SLS workload data analysis by gender and grade

A38.3: Use these data to plan for redistribution of workload to address any imbalance

(vi)   Timing of departmental meetings and social gatherings.

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

School Culture Survey 2020

- 52% of respondents <u>with</u> caring responsibilities agreed or strongly agreed that <u>meetings and seminars</u> were scheduled to support staff with caring responsibilities (60% female, n=5; 50% male, n=18)

- 40% of respondents <u>without</u> caring responsibilities agreed or strongly agreed that <u>meetings and seminars</u> were scheduled to support staff with caring responsibilities (60% female, n=5; 30% male, n=10)

- 61% of respondents <u>with</u> caring responsibilities agreed or strongly agreed that work-related social activities were inclusive (60% female, n=5; 61% male, n=10)

- 67% of respondents <u>without</u> caring responsibilities agreed or strongly agreed that work-related social activities were inclusive (60% female, n=5; 70% male, n=10)

"There are very few opportunities to socialise. Whilst I welcome those that there are, I'm also painfully aware that they're usually later-in-the-day drinking type activities which exclude a fair few people. For e.g. xmas party, starting early in the day with a lunch and then moving to evening drinks would include more people" – Male Academic

Before Covid-19 restrictions, all staff committees and meetings took place within core hours (10:00-16:00), and research seminars are scheduled to finish before 16:30 to ensure staff with caring responsibilities are able to attend. Since the Covid-19 move to working from home, regular twice-weekly School catch-ups (initiated to increase communication amid Covid-related uncertainty, but maintained due to staff support) have been scheduled for 9am, and the Culture Survey suggests that overall, less than half of staff believe that meetings and seminars were scheduled to be inclusive, highlighting **KC39**. To address this challenge, school catch-ups will be rescheduled to occur within core working hours (**A39.1**) and we will re-emphasise that all meetings should be scheduled within core hours (**A39.2**).

COVID-19 impact
→ Not all meetings take place within core hours, twice-weekly catch-ups currently scheduled at 9am, potentially limiting attendance by those with caring responsibilities

SLS hosts multiple social events throughout the year for its staff. The most frequent pre-Covid event was 'Cake Friday' where SLS provided cake at 11am every Friday to bring staff together in an informal setting to promote discussion and celebrate anything of note. Since Covid-19, the opportunities for social interaction have significantly reduced, although the creation of a Virtual Social Space through Teams creates the opportunity for staff and students to socialise at 11am on Fridays. Some research groups have also set up regular social catch-ups to replace mid-morning coffee drop-ins.

"Need a wider variety of [social] events to appeal to all staff" – Female Academic

Other significant social events through the year have included distributing Easter eggs from SLS, a Summer social event to celebrate the end of the academic year (boat trip to a pub on the river, funded by SLS, a wood-fired pizzeria for a staff lunch) and a Christmas event. For all events we ensure we invite academic,

<div style="border: 2px solid red; background: pink;">
COVID-19 impact
→ Social activities have become more difficult to arrange, screen fatigue reduces participation
</div>

technical and professional staff so the entire school is involved and restrict these events to normal working hours where possible (the only exception is the Christmas meal, which is an evening event). Where possible, partners and children are invited to attend, such that caring responsibilities do not impact on individual staff attendance. Social cohesion is something that can make or break a department and we recognise that the reason most people enjoy their work is the engagement with their colleagues as much as the job itself. Since Covid-19, social events have become more difficult to arrange, partially due to screen fatigue reducing participation, and we recognise this as KC40. However, an online Christmas Quiz, scheduled during work hours to maximise participation, was well-received by those who attended, and A40.1 will establish an SLS Social Committee to organise social gatherings.

> **Key Challenges**
>
> **KC39**: Timing of departmental meetings and social gatherings is not currently within core hours.
>
> **KC40**: Social activities have largely ceased since the Covid-19 move to working from home.

> **Actions**
>
> **A39.1**: Amend timing of school catch-ups, which are currently outside core hours and likely to exclude staff with caring responsibilities
>
> **A39.2**: Re-emphasise within SLS that meetings should occur between 10am and 4pm
>
> **A40.1**: Establish an SLS Social Committee to organise social gatherings

(vii)   Visibility of role models.

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

> **School Culture Survey 2020**
>
> - 63% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that SLS includes a diversity of people to be visible role models (e.g. in staff inductions, invited seminar speakers, at recruitment events) (63% female, n=33; 63% male, n=38)

SLS is aware that visible role models are vital for assisting career progression for under-represented groups. This is especially important given the recognised gender disparity within academic staff. Thus, we see ensuring the visibility of role models as KC41. The SLS Research Seminar Series is our main event involving external speakers, where guests are invited to share their research with our community. SLS has made a concerted effort to invite a balance of academics in terms of gender and seniority, and over the last five years exactly 50% of our external speakers have been female. Gender diversity on the SLS website and within the SLS Brochure is well represented with 14 of 29 images (web) and 13 of 26 (prospectus) being female, split equally between staff and students (e.g. Fig 5.2). A41.1 is to maintain

this area of existing good practice, but our Culture Survey responses indicate that there is more we need to do. Therefore, to increase the visibility of role models from a range of under-represented groups, **A41.2** is to identify and celebrate in-school Champions.

Fig 5.2 *Example image (inside cover) from SLS's brochure*

Key Challenges

KC41: Establish positive role models for under-represented groups

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Actions

A41.1: Ensure the gender balance of SLS seminar speakers and images in the prospectus is maintained at 50% females

A41.2: Identify in-school champions for under-represented groups; celebrate these through EDI blog interviews

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      (viii)   Outreach activities.

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

SLS participates in outreach activities in its own right as well as part of College-wide and University-wide initiatives. SLS has a dedicated Schools Champion for Outreach, who co-ordinates all event requests and seeks staff to contribute to these. Activities have included the EU-wide LIGHTS event, national events such as Biology week and Science week, work experience events for local schools, and bespoke events with selected partners where staff either go out to schools, or schools are invited into

the labs to use SLS facilities. SLS has not historically recorded outreach hours, or outreach hours by gender or grade (**KC42**) but from 33 self-reported outreach activities taking place between October 2019 and June 2020, 22 (67%) were by male staff and 36% by female staff (including one run jointly by a male and female member of staff). This approximates the gender balance among SLS staff. This key challenge will be addressed by overarching action **OA2**, ensuring participation in outreach activities is recorded (**DA4**). To continue existing good practice, we will ensure opportunities are available to all staff (**A42.1**), recognising these in the workload model (**A42.2**) and mitigating any gender imbalance (**A42.3**).

Key Challenges

KC42: Poor recording of contribution to, and participation in outreach activities by gender

---

Actions

A42.1: Ensure outreach opportunities are made available to all staff, including PGRs and ECRs

A42.2: Ensure appropriate workloading of outreach activities (see section 5.4.5)

A42.3: Mitigate any gender imbalance as appropriate

DA4: Ensure standardised recording of outreach participation by gender and grade

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Word count: 6,264

6. Further information

Recommended word count: Bronze: 500 words

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

7. Action plan

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

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

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

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

7.1. Over-Arching Actions (OAs)

Section	Over-Arching Action	Action ID and Description of Action	Responsibility	Priority and timeline	Evaluation Measure
2.1	OA1: Embed Athena SWAN practices in School culture	DA1: The EDI committee will continue to meet every month after submission of the Athena SWAN application. Key briefing updates will be produced from each meeting for dissemination to staff and students via School Meetings and the EDI blog.	EDI Chair	High, monthly from Jan 2022	Monthly communication of progress against EDI targets to the School through School meetings and publication of a meeting summary on the EDI blog.
				High, annually from Nov 2022	Increase in proportion of staff aware of what SLS is doing to improve EDI (from the School Culture survey), from current levels of 50% agreeing to >80% agreeing by end-2025

		DA2: Establish a School policy to ensure that EDI is considered as an agenda item on all SLS committees, and that a designated EDI rep is invited to meetings of all SLS committees	EDI Chair	High, Jan 2022	Establishment of SLS policy for EDI reps on committees
		DA3: Make Athena SWAN submission available to all staff and ECRs	EDI Chair	High, Jan 2022	Athena SWAN submission available to all staff and ECRS through relevant Teams sites following submission
2.2	OA2: Ensure accurate and comprehensive monitoring data	DA4: Continue to develop the School system for record keeping in relation to staff data: e.g. annual committee memberships, workload data, grant applications and success, outreach activities and other activities, as well as records of more informal arrangements for staff with flexible working arrangements or taking parental leave	Administrative staff, EDI committee data subgroup	High, from Jan 2022	Co-ordinated system for regular collection and collation of relevant data, data analysed annually (leads to DA7)
2.3	OA3: Understand and evaluate changes in School culture	DA5: Conduct a School culture survey annually to cover staff, PDRs and PGRs. Distribute the results of the culture survey through staff meetings and Teams sites. Identify and address any issues, and invite additional feedback.	EDI committee Culture survey subgroup	High, annually from Nov 2022	Results of School culture survey published annually and fed into specific Actions
				High, from Sept 2022	Develop a system for anonymous reporting of School level EDI concerns, review concerns annually alongside culture survey results (leads to DA7)

		DA6: develop and deploy an annual culture survey for UGs and PGT students, timeline same as staff culture survey	EDI committee Culture survey subgroup	High, annually from November 2022	Culture survey for taught students developed and deployed annually, with data analysed and fed into specific Actions
		DA7: Identify areas of good practice, and areas needing improvement, and update the Action plan annually	EDI committee Culture survey subgroup	High, annually from Feb 2022	Action Plan updated annually as necessary
2.4	OA4: Develop and establish a School-level Coaching (mentoring) system	DA8: Develop and implement a flexible SLS Coaching scheme, available for staff, PDRs and students	EDI committee mentoring subgroup	High, ongoing from Jan 2022	A flexible coaching (mentoring) system to be in place and available to staff and PGR students within SLS
		DA9: Assess use and efficacy of SLS coaching scheme through formal and informal feedback, and through the School Culture survey	EDI mentoring subgroup, EDI culture survey subgroup	Medium, annually from Nov 2022	Increase in the proportion of Culture survey respondents agreeing that they have been able to access mentoring through official SLS channels (up from 12% to a target of 40% within 3 years of the Scheme launching)
	OA5: Re-establish SLS ECR committee	DA10: Re-establish the ECR committee within SLS, with a workloaded academic ECR lead role	HoS, ECR lead	High, by Jan 2022	ECR committee is re-established, and meets at least every two months
		DA11: Establish a Teams site for ECR-relevant communications and links	ECR committee	High, by Jan 2022	A Teams site is set up and used for all ECR-relevant communications

		DA12: Ensure all new ECRs, including PGRs, PDRs and ECR academic staff, are added to the Teams site	Administrative staff, ECR committee, PGR mentors	High, from Jan 2022	All new ECRs are added to the Teams site within 1 month of starting

7.2 Actions to address Key Challenges

Section	Key Challenge	Action ID and Description of Action	Responsibility	Priority and timeline	Evaluation Measure
4.1	KC1: Improve understanding of the associations between gender, offers, acceptances, degree programme and outcomes in degrees awarded	A1.1: Continue to actively assess student applications, offers, acceptance and degree outcomes for fluctuations in gender balance across the School, at UG, PGT and PGR levels, in relation to national benchmarks where available, on an annual basis	EDI data subgroup, Director of Learning and Teaching, Programme Leads	Medium, annually from Jan 2022	Data on gender balance are collected and evaluated annually for each programme at the offer, acceptance and degree outcome stages
		A1.2: Identify underlying reasons for underrepresentation of genders within specific degree schemes in relation to national benchmarks, if applicable	EDI data subgroup	Medium, from Nov 2023	Increased understanding of the reasons behind gender disparity within degree schemes allowing further Actions to be identified
		DA7: Update Action plan as any issues are identified	EDI data subgroup	Medium, annually	Action Plan updated annually as necessary

				from Jan 2022	
	KC2: Continue inclusive practices in student recruitment	A2.1: Ensure all UG, PGT and PGR recruitment advertisements produced by SLS use gender neutral language and images, and advertise our commitment to the Athena SWAN charter	Director of Learning & Teaching, Programme Leads	Medium, from Sept 2022, reviewed annually	All UG, PGT and PGR recruitment advertisements from SLS use gender neutral language and images, and state our commitment to the Athena Swan charter
		A2.2: Investigate whether taught MScs can be offered as part time where this is currently not done and ensure all degrees available for part-time study are clearly advertised as such	Programme leads	Medium, from Sept 2023, assessed annually	Offer part-time programmes where this is feasible, increased uptake of part-time degrees (where available) by April 2025
		A2.3: Include information on EDI in UG and PG School literature	Programme leads	Medium, from Sept 2022	EDI information is clearly included in the UG and PG literature from Sept 2022
		A2.4: Ensure a balanced mix of gender for students and staff at University Open days and Offer Holder Days without over-burdening under-represented groups. Reallocate workload as required.	Open Day Co-ordinator, EDI data subgroup, HoS	Medium, from Oct 2022	Open Days and Offer Holder Days are gender balanced in terms of staff and student representation from Oct 2022, without overburdening underrepresented groups
		DA4: Collect data on gender distribution of staff and students	Administrative staff, EDI data subgroup	High, annually	Data on gender distribution of staff and students at Open days and

		at Open Days and Offer Holder Days		from Jan 2022	Offer Holder Days are recorded and available from Jan 2022
		DA7: Analyse data and update Action Plan as required	EDI data subgroup	Medium, annually from Jan 2022	Action Plan updated annually as necessary
	KC3: Data for PGT completion rates are incomplete	DA4: Ensure complete and accurate data for PGT completion rates by gender.	School administrators, EDI data subgroup	High, from Sept 2022	Accurate data for PGT completion rates by gender are available and update annually from Sept 2022, and feed into A1.1
	KC4: Quantify levels of transition from UG to PG study by gender	A4.1: Encourage UG students to attend university-wide events and seminars	Programme leads	Low, from Jan 2022	Events and seminars routinely advertised to UG students through Blackboard
		A4.2: Advertise events through Blackboard and social media	Programme leads	Low, from Jan 2022	
		DA4: Ensure data are available on numbers of UG students progressing to PG study by gender	EDI data subgroup	High, from Sept 2023	Data on UG to PG progression are collected and available for analysis from Sept 2023
		DA7: Analyse data and update Action Plan as required	EDI data subgroup	Medium, from Feb 2022	Action Plan updated annually as necessary
4.2	KC5: Low percentage female senior lecturers, profs and associate profs	A5.1: Furthering measures to increase rates of recruitment and promotion for female academic staff (See actions A11.1 – 11.5,	HoS	High, from Jan 2022	Increased % female staff within the department, especially at higher grades and in TR roles. Target >30% female TR staff (up from

		12.1 – 12.2, 15.1 -15.3, 16.1 – 16.3, 17.1 Recruitment and Promotion)			22%), and >30% female staff in AP, prof and senior academic manager posts (up from 24%) by April 2025
		DA4: Continue to collect annual staff data to evaluate by grade, full time part time hours, contract function, contract type and gender	EDI data subgroup	Low, annually from 2022	Data collected and analysed annually to identify trends
		DA7: Analyse data and update Action Plan as required	EDI data subgroup	High, from Feb 2022	Action Plan updated annually as necessary
	KC6: Disparity across genders in relation to TR and TSPP roles	A6.1: Investigate the drivers of the disparity across genders in relation to TR and TSPP roles	EDI data subgroup	High, by Feb 2025	Drivers of disparities identified and additional mitigation measures put in place as necessary to address these
	KC7: Address the challenge of continuity of employment	A7.1: Ensure SLS maintains the current absence of zero-hours and restrict the use of fixed-term academic contracts	HoS	Low, from Jan 2022	No academic staff on zero-hours contracts; fixed-term academic contracts restricted to specific circumstances (e.g. postdoctoral positions, maternity replacement)
	KC8: Data on gender distribution of Associate demonstrators in relation to gender distribution of PDR and PGR pool of available candidates are not available	DA4: Collate and analyse data on gender distribution of Associate demonstrators in relation to gender distribution of PDR and PGR pool of available candidates	Administrative staff, EDI data subgroup, PGR lead	High, by Dec 2022	Data are collected and analysed annually by Dec 2022, proportion of female associate demonstrators equivalent to proportion of female PDR/PGRs by Dec 2023
		DA7: Update Action Plan with actions as required to ensure gender distribution of Associate demonstrators is representative	EDI data subgroup	Medium, annually	Action Plan updated annually as necessary

		of the pool of available candidates		from Feb 2023	
4.2.3	KC9: Low update of exit interviews; data by gender and grade not available through HR	A9.1: Provide exit interviews with an independent (not in the line-management hierarchy of the individual) member of staff for all SLS faculty and researchers	DHoS	Medium, from Oct 2022	Increased uptake of exit interviews (up to 40% by end-2025)
		A9.2: Given difficulties in establishing high uptake of exit interviews with accessible data by grade and gender, design and implement an annual School retention survey	EDI Culture survey subgroup	Medium, from Nov 2022	Retention survey circulated annually from Nov 2022
		A9.3: Analyse data from annual retention survey	EDI Culture survey subgroup	Medium, by Feb 2023	Data from annual retention survey analysed annually from Feb 2023, with results feeding into the Action Plan
		DA7: Update Action plan as required	EDI Culture survey subgroup	Medium, from Feb 2023	Action Plan updated annually as necessary
	KC10: Destinations of staff, PDRs and PGRs not routinely collected	DA4: Maintain a database of staff, PDR and PGR destinations.	HoS, Administrative staff, relevant supervisors / line managers	High, Annually from Jan 2022	Database in place and updated as staff, PDRs and PGRs leave
5.1	KC11: Low proportion of female applicants for	A11.1: Work to develop job advertisements that are more attractive to females, e.g. gender-	HoS and HR, with input from the EDI committee	High, from Jan 2022	Increased proportion of female applicants for externally-advertised jobs per post at all levels. Over four

		neutral language, emphasising the strong collegiate atmosphere and inclusiveness of the School. Specifically encouraging applications from female applicants.			years, we expect this to translate into increases in both offers to, and acceptances by, female applicants and a resultant increase in the proportion of female staff at higher levels by April 2025
academic jobs, especially at higher levels		A11.2: Ensure School EDI information easily accessible to potential applicants	EDI Chair	High, from Jan 2022	SLS EDI information on EDI blog, linked from main SLS website, from Jan 2022
		A11.3: Continue highlighting SLS commitment to the Athena SWAN charter in all job adverts	HoS and HR	High, from Jan 2022	SLS Athena SWAN commitment mentioned in all job adverts from Jan 2022
		A11.4: Continue using gender bias decoder software to ensure gender neutral language in job advertisements	HoS and HR	High, from Jan 2022	All SLS job adverts score as neutral using a gender bias decoder from Jan 2022
		A11.5: Target networks and social media groups (e.g. Academic Women's Network) to ensure adverts are widely accessed by potential female applicants	HoS and HR, with input from the EDI committee	High, from Jan 2022	SLS jobs are advertised widely, with an increase in the proportion of female applicants from Jan 2022 to a minimum 40% female applicants across all academic positions (currently averages 40% with disparity across levels)
	KC12: Low success rates of applications from women for	A12.1: Ensure that all staff sitting on recruitment panels and	HoS with HR	High, from Dec 2022	>85% staff to have completed both sets of training by Dec 2022

	academic posts, especially at higher levels	chairing presentation panels have undergone recent (past 3 years) training in (i) equality and diversity and (ii) understanding unconscious bias			After Dec 2022, staff to not sit on recruitment panels if they have not undergone recent EDI training
		A12.2: Ensure all recruitment panels are gender balanced and continue to contain a minimum of one female and one male interviewer	HoS	High, from Jan 2022	All recruitment panels continue to contain a minimum of one female and one male interviewer
		A12.3: Introduce a 'pause for thought' when advertising for Senior Academics (or any academic post) if there are a low number of female applicants, or the shortlist does not include women, and a review of the recruitment strategy will then be conducted	HoS	High, following recruitment rounds	Re-evaluation of recruitment strategy for academic posts if women are under-represented in applications or short-listing
		DA4: Continue to collect data on applications, shortlisting, offers and appointments by gender	Administrative staff, EDI data subgroup	High, from Jan 2022	Data collected and analysed annually from Jan 2022
		DA7: Evaluate data to inform further actions and update Action Plan as necessary	EDI committee	High, from Feb 2023	We expect this to translate into increases in offers to, and acceptances by, female and under-represented minority applicants by

					April 2025, with a target of 50% of offers to, and accepts from females
5.1.2	KC13: Availability of mentoring opportunities for new starters may be limited unless specifically requested	DA8: Set up flexible coaching system and encourage new starters to become involved as mentees or mentors	EDI mentoring subgroup	High, from Jan 2022	New starters engaging with SLS coaching scheme from Jan 2022, and to be encouraged to do so at induction meetings.
		A13.1: Construct a list of "Go-to" people willing to be approached for help	EDI mentoring subgroup	High, from Jan 2022	List of "Go-to" people to be available to all within SLS from Jan 2022
	KC14: Determining the requirements of School processes can be difficult, as there are many processes and multiple repositories for information	A14.1: Ensure clarity of School processes by providing a Staff Welcome pack with the relevant processes (i.e. teaching logistics and deadlines, research processes, etc.) detailed, along with where to find any extra relevant information	Administrative staff	Medium, from Jan 2022	Staff Welcome Pack provided to all new starters at the first induction meeting from Jan 2022
5.1.3	KC15: The process of and support available for the promotion process is not clear to all staff	A15.1: In discussion with the University EDI Forum, ensure a consistent, accessible and inclusive process for promotion applications	EDI Chair with University EDI Forum	High, by Nov 2022	Discussion with the University EDI Forum as to whether the promotions window can be extended to have taken place by Nov 2022
		A15.2: In discussion with the University EDI Forum, look into extending the window between promotion applications opening and closing			

		KC16: Relatively fewer female staff are applying for promotion	DA8: Offer mentoring to those who wish to apply for promotion but who need further personal development to reach the criteria required, especially female staff.	HoS, appraisers	High, from June 2022	Female senior lecturers and above engaging with the new SLS coaching scheme from Oct 2022
			A16.1: Promotion/career development to continue to be discussed at all staff AAPRs.	Appraisers	Medium, from Sept 2022	All staff to be aware of promotion criteria and to have considered where they stand in relation to this, as reflected in Staff Culture Survey data (>70% of staff agree that the guidelines relating to the promotions process are clear (42% currently), fair and suitable (52% currently), by Sept 2023)
			A16.2: Actively encourage and support all staff within the School to consider applying for promotion.	HoS, appraisers	Medium, from Sept 2022	
			A16.3: Where an application for promotion has been unsuccessful, appraiser to continue to offer support to candidate in terms of feedback, identify a plan to overcome the shortcomings and encourage the candidate to reapply.	Appraisers	Medium, by Feb 2024	All staff who have applied for promotion agree that they have been supported through the promotions process, as reflected by a new question in the Staff Culture Survey from Nov 2022
		KC17: Extenuating circumstances are not taken into account in the promotions process	A17.1: Investigate whether extenuating circumstances (including, but not limited to, Covid-19) can be accounted for in the University promotions	EDI Chair with Universty EDI Forum	High, by Feb 2022	Discussion of incorporation of extenuating circumstances into the University promotions process to have taken place with the University EDI Forum by Feb 2022

		process, in discussion with the University EDI Forum			
	KC18: There is a lack of opportunities for technical and professional services staff to take on additional roles or gain the requirements for promotion	A18.1: Deliver on technician commitment for technical staff recognition and reward.	DHoS	Low, from Feb 2022	Improvement in staff Culture survey feedback on this aspect for professional services staff, with >80% technical staff agreeing that career development opportunities are available for them at Lincoln (up from 50% in 2020)
		A18.2: Engage with the University activities towards the technician commitment	DHoS	Low, from Feb 2022	
		A18.3: Make full use of the merit and reward scheme to recognise staff excellence	HoS, DHoS	Low, from Feb 2022	Keep track of number of achievements at the individual and team level
		A18.4: Identify additional opportunities for professional services staff to improve employment prospects, such as offering all technical staff the opportunity to apply for AFHEA, and offering support to become chartered scientists	HoS, DHoS	Low, from Feb 2022	An increase in technical staff with AFHEA accreditation or becoming registered or chartered scientists, target >75%
5.1.4	KC19: Small numbers of REF returnable female staff (see KC5)	A19.1: See recruitment and promotion Actions	Director of Research	Low	Increase in the proportion of REF returnees that are female (this may not be measurable within 4 years due to the timescale of REF - see A5.1)

5.2.1	KC20: Awareness of career development opportunities appears low; Staff do not feel sufficiently supported to take up training and career development opportunities, this appears lower for males	A20.1: School to increase staff awareness of training courses and encourage completion of them, including workload allocation to allow time	HoS	Medium, from June 2022	All staff encouraged to complete relevant training courses during their AAPR, links to training and development website circulated regularly via email and verbally at school meetings. >75% of staff to complete at least one training course each year
		A20.2: Include training and development needs as formal part of AAPR, ensuring all staff know how to access training resources on HR webpages.	HoS, appraisers	Low, from Sept 2022	
		A20.3: School to promote internal and external career development and leadership training, e.g. the Advance HE Aurora programme, and to make money available to support this if possible	HoS	Low, from Apr 2023	Increased uptake of internal and external staff development and leadership training, up from 1 staff member in 2019 and 0 in 2020, by end-2025, to >2 per year by end-2025
		DA11: Increased advertisement of PDR-focussed training opportunities through ECR-specific communications	ECR committee	High, from Jan 2022	All PDR-focussed training opportunities advertised through the ECR Teams site as they arise
		DA4: Analyse participation in internal and external training opportunities by gender	Administrative staff, EDI data subgroup	Medium, from Jan 2023	Data available on participation in internal and external training opportunities by gender and analysed annually from Jan 2023
		DA7: Update action plan as necessary	HoS, EDI data subgroup	Medium, from Feb 2022	Action Plan updated annually as necessary

	KC21: A high proportion of staff cannot remember having done unconscious bias training or EDI training	A21.1: Regularly remind staff to complete the EDI-relevant training modules	HoS	High, from Feb 2022	Target of >85% training across all staff for both training courses by Dec 2023
		DA4: Collate data on completion rates of EDI-related training within SLS	Administrative staff, EDI data subgroup	High, by Jan 2024	Data available on completion rates for EDI-related training within the staff, rather than absolute number of staff completing training courses each year, by 2024
		A22.2: Ensure that at least 85% of all staff, PDRs and PGR students complete the diversity in the workplace e-course, and receive training in unconscious bias awareness	HoS	High, by Dec 2023	Increase from 86 staff attending the Equality in the Workplace and 5 attending the Understand Unconscious Bias training courses over a four-year period, to target of >85% training across all staff for both training courses by Dec 2023
5.2.2	KC22: Fewer than half SLS staff believe that the ADA (Appraisal, now AAPR) is useful, and only half of staff agree that SLS values the full range of an individual's skills and experience, with females more likely to believe this	A22.1: All staff to be made aware of, and encouraged to attend, AAPR Appraisee and/or AAPR Appraiser training workshops or PDR Reviewer/Reviewee Training as appropriate	HoS	Medium, from Sept 2022	Increase in uptake of staff attending AAPR Appraisee and Appraiser training, from three staff attending Appraiser training (and none attending Appraisee training) to a target of 50% attendance by Appraisers (for the Appraiser training) and Appraisees (for Appraisee training) by March 2025

		A22.2: Ensure the workload model used by SLS incorporates appropriate tariffs across the range of requirements of roles	HoS	Medium, from Feb 2022	>75% of staff, and gender parity, in agreeing that SLS values the full range of an individual's skills and experience in the School Culture Survey (from 62% in 2020), by Nov 2023
		DA5: Evaluate the effectiveness of any changes through the School Culture Surveys	EDI Culture survey subgroup	Medium, by April 2024	>70% of staff agree that the AAPR is useful, assessed through the Staff Culture Survey (from 43% for the ADA in 2020), by April 2024
		DA7: Update action plan as necessary	EDI Culture survey subgroup	Medium, from Feb 2023	Action Plan updated annually as necessary
5.2.3	KC23.1: A large proportion of staff involved in mentoring do so on an unofficial basis, with few engaging in the official system	DA8: Initiate new School level coaching scheme and encourage staff and PDRs to participate as part of AAPR discussions	EDI mentoring subgroup	High, from Jan 2022	SLS Coaching scheme initiated by Jan 2022
	KC23.2: Only half of staff taking up mentoring opportunities found them beneficial				>50% of PDRs taking up mentoring opportunities as assessed through the Culture Survey (up from 25% in 2020) and >80% being aware of mentoring opportunities (up from 75% in 2020)
	KC23.3: PDRs are unaware of, or choosing not to take up, mentoring opportunities	DA8: Effectively communicate availability and benefits of mentoring			

KC24: PDRs are not regularly informed of relevant training or career development opportunities	A24.1: Collect and distribute information on potential sources of PDR funding to facilitate funding for support and retention of existing PDRs, as well as recruiting externally supported Research Fellows into SLS	Director of Research, with Research Office	High, from Oct 2022	Information on potential PDR funding sources is available to both internal and external PDR applicants via the SLS website and relevant Blackboard/Teams sites. Once data are available, we expect this to translate into a 15% increase in the number of independently funded and project grant-funded PDRs over 4 years
	A24.2: PIs to consider enhancing the role for existing PDRs and PGRs when applying for grant applications (e.g. named Research Investigator on applications where permitted)	PIs, Director of Research	High, from Oct 2022	
	DA4: Collect and analyse data on the numbers of independently funded and project grant funded PDRs	Administrative staff, EDI data subgroup	High, from Feb 2022	Data analysed annually
	DA7: Update action plan as necessary	HoS, EDI data subgroup	Medium, from Feb 2022	Action Plan updated annually as necessary
	A24.3: Formally offer PDRs up to 10 hours of direct contact teaching per year for development	PIs, ECR committee	Medium, from Jan 2023	PDRs to be offered up to 10 hours of direct contact teaching per year, policy available to all PDRs through the ECR Teams site from Jan 2023
	A24.4: Actively encourage PDRs to apply for Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy	PIs	Medium, by Feb 2025	Increased proportion of PDRs with, or intending to apply for, HEA associate status, target 50% of

		(AFHEA) award from Advance HE. Provide information and contacts for the application process on the ECR Teams site			PDRs with HEA associate status by Feb 2025, assessed by a PGR-specific survey. Information on the application process is provided on the ECR Teams site
5.2.4	KC25: Opportunities for academic career progression for PGRs are not easily accessible	A25.1: Draw up a comprehensive list of all available University, Research Council, Industry and Charity graduate scholarship awards (irrespective of gender) in consultation with UoL Graduate office and Research Office, and publicise these on the School Blackboard site for internal students and on the website for external applicants.	Director of Research, in collaboration with PIs, CoS Research Office and Graduate School	High, from Oct 2022	A comprehensive list of potential graduate funding sources is available to both internal and external applicants via the SLS website, and Blackboard. Once data are available, we expect this to translate into a 15% increase in number of applications for external fellowships submitted through SLS by 2025
		A25.2: Encourage and support applications for external fellowship schemes where appropriate, including supportive peer review prior to application submission	PIs, Director of Research	High, from Oct 2022	
		DA4: Continue to collect data and evaluate rates of career progression for PGRs, collect data on the number of applications for external	Administrative staff, EDI data subgroup	High, annually from Jan 2022	Data collected and analysed annually

		fellowships submitted through SLS			
		DA7: Update action plan as necessary	HoS, EDI data subgroup	Medium, from Feb 2022	Action Plan updated annually as necessary
		DA11: Increased advertisement of PGR career progression opportunities	ECR committee	Medium, from Jan 2022	PGR career progression opportunities to be regularly advertised through the ECR Teams site from Jan 2022
	KC26: PGR students could be better supported to acquire teaching experience and accreditation	A26.1: Continue to encourage PGRs to register as an associate demonstrator and gain demonstrating experience	PGR mentors, PIs	Low, by Sept 2023	>75% of PGR students registered as associate demonstrators by Sept 2023
		A26.2: Actively encourage PGR students to apply for Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (AFHEA) status during their studies	PGR mentors, ECR committee	Medium, from Oct 2022	PGR students engaging with HEA training and applying for HEA status, from Oct 2022
	KC27: Mentoring is not readily available to PGR students	DA8: Actively encourage PGR participation in the new coaching scheme, allowing an SLS mentor separate from their line manager	EDI mentoring subgroup	Medium, from Jan 2022	Regular reminders about the mentoring scheme are posted on the ECR Teams site, resulting in initial uptake of the new SLS Coaching Scheme by PGRs
	KC28: Female PGRs are not aware they can request	A28.1: Ensure all PGRs are consulted on their choice of assessors, including a female assessor on the assessment	PGR lead	Low, from Jan 2022	All requests for a female assessor met where suitable expertise is available, from Jan 2022. Policy to

	a female assessor where available	panel for female students if requested and if suitable expertise is available			be made available on the ECR Teams site
5.2.5	KC29: Support for research grant applications is not targeted where required	A29.1: Stimulate activity regarding research proposal generation and review at research group level	Director of Research, Heads of Research Groups	High, from Jan 2022	Research groups provide a monthly forum with the opportunity for discussion of grant ideas and development
		A29.2: Encourage open discussion of grant rejection and reflection on this	Director of Research, Heads of Research Groups	Medium, from Jan 2022	Research groups provide a monthly forum with the opportunity for discussion of grant rejection and feedback
		DA8: Encourage staff to use the new Coaching scheme for research grant preparation	Director of Research, EDI mentoring subgroup	Medium, from Jan 2022	Uptake of SLS Coaching scheme for research grant application support, from Jan 2022
		DA4: Collate data on grant submission and success rates, sources of funding and research outcomes by gender and grade to identify targets for support	Director of Research, with Research Office	High, from Jan 2022	Data on grant submission rates and success are collected and analysed annually. Targets for support are identified, and support measures (e.g. mentoring) put in place
		DA7: Evaluate data and update Action Plan	EDI data subgroup	High, from Feb 2022	Action Plan updated annually as necessary
5.3	KC30: Financial constraints currently prevent replacement cover staff for those taking parental leave.	A30.1: Given the current absence of maternity cover for academics due to Covid, develop an SLS policy on how allocation of cover	HoS, in collaboration with the EDI committee	High, by Jan 2022	Development of policy for allocation of work cover and publication on the SLS EDI webpage by Jan 2022

	SLS has no clear policy on how cover is allocated	is managed before and during parental leave			
		A30.2: Ensure workload to cover leave is spread equally between genders and fairly across grades	HoS	High, from Jan 2022	Work cover is allocated equally across genders, as evaluated through workload model analysis; 80% of staff agree that workload is balanced across genders in the Staff Culture Survey (up from 60% in 2020)
		A30.3: Ensure information on the available maternity funding policies (e.g. AR2F fund) is provided through the SLS EDI website	EDI Chair, EDI website coordinator	High, from Jan 2022	Maternity policies and additional funded support information is available on the SLS EDI website from Jan 2022
5.3.5	KC31.1: SLS Policy on flexible working is not readily available	A31.1: Develop clear policy on flexible working within the School and ensure all staff are aware of the policy	HoS and HR	Medium, by May 2022	All staff (100%) are aware of the flexible working policy through the EDI webpage, as assessed through the Staff Culture Survey
	KC31.2: Apparent discrepancy between male and female staff in perceived support for flexible working				All staff taking career breaks return successfully (where desired)
5.4.1	KC32: A high proportion of academics do not feel they achieve a good work-life	A32.1: Use staff appraisal and research planning schemes to help all staff perform against	HoS and appraisers	High, from Jan 2022	All staff to meet objectives corresponding to minimum academic standards

balance, and do not agree that SLS emphasises the importance of work-life balance in the appraisal process.		expected criteria within the designated working hours.			
		DA8: Encourage staff to use the new Coaching Scheme to manage workload and work-life balance	EDI mentoring subgroup	High, from Mar 2023	An increase in agreement from academic staff that they achieve a good work-life balance (target 70%, from 53% in 2020), and that SLS emphasises the importance of work-life balance in the appraisal process (target 50%, from 17% in 2020), by Feb 2025
		DA5: Continue to assess perceived work-life balance through the School Culture survey	EDI Culture survey subgroup	High, annually	
		A32.2: Address AAPR work-life balance recognition concerns (See Actions linked to KC23)	HoS	High, by Feb 2025	
	KC33: Enhance the profile of female academics	A33.1: Celebrate International Women's Day each year with a guest seminar from a leading female scientist in the field of Life Sciences, and talks from inspiring female scientists within SLS, with time for informal Q&A. Open to all but targeted at UGs, PGs, PDRs and ECRs	SLS seminar organiser, EDI Chair, with advertising support from the SLS social media lead	Medium	Meeting takes place and advertised widely to UGs, PGs, PDRs and ECRs. High level of attendance (>30 across all cohorts)
		DA4: Collect and analyse data on representation of SLS by gender both internally and externally, in terms of conference attendance, invited external talks, etc.	Administrative staff, EDI data subgroup	High, from Jan 2022	Data available and analysed annually from Jan 2022

	KC34: Most staff do not feel policies relevant to EDI are clear	A34.1: Ensure all staff and students are aware of the School's policy on harassment, equality, bullying, grievances and disciplinary procedures	HoS/Programme Leads	High, from April 2022	EDI policies are available on the SLS EDI website. >80% of staff are aware of the zero tolerance for bullying and harassment within the School Culture Survey, with all staff agreeing that inappropriate language or behaviour is not culturally acceptable within the department (up from 88% in 2020)
		A34.2: Disseminate information for staff and students detailing mechanisms and procedures of how to make a complaint in case of harassment, bullying, gender-based violence or other grievance	HoS, EDI committee	High, April 2022 and annually	
5.4.2	KC35: A significant number of staff do not feel confident to ask their line manager to deal with harassment, bullying, or offensive behaviour	A35.1: Ensure all managers have completed bullying and harassment training.	HoS, EDI committee	High, from Jan 2022	All managers to have completed bullying and harassment training. Details of HR's Concern Line to be available on the EDI blog. 100% of staff to feel confident to ask their line manager to deal with harassment, bullying or offensive behaviour by Feb 2023, as assessed through the Staff Culture Survey
5.4.3	KC36: All decision-making committees, with the exception of the EDI committee, are not gender-balanced	A36.1: SMT to review what is an appropriate gender balance for decision-making committee membership in the School, in discussion with the EGC and the University EDI Forum	SMT, in consultation with EGC and University EDI Forum	High, by Jan 2022	SMT to have determined an appropriate gender balance for key decision-making committees

		A36.2: Ensure an appropriate gender balance is maintained across committees without over-burdening senior female staff	HoS	High, from Sept 2023	Gender balance in administrative burden among academic staff
		DA4: Continue to evaluate membership of key decision-making committees by gender	Administrative staff, EDI data subgroup	High, by Jan 2024	Gender balance on all key decision-making committees approximating the outcome of A36.1
		DA7: Evaluate data and update Action Plan	EDI committee	Medium, from Feb 2022	Action Plan updated annually as necessary
5.4.4	KC37: One third of staff do not feel they have the opportunity to represent SLS on committees	A37.1: Ensure discussions around external committee membership within the AAPR process	HoS and appraisers	Low, from Sept 2022	Discussions around external membership form part of the appraisal process
		A37.2: Ensure that newly created or vacated roles are advertised to allow equal opportunity for expression of interest from staff. Ensure these are allocated on the basis of interest, expertise and workload. Conduct reallocation of other duties if necessary to balance workloads and allow equality of opportunity	HoS	High, from Jan 2022	Increase in positive culture survey responses relating to career development opportunities and opportunities for individuals to apply for posts, with 75% of staff feeling supported in taking up career development opportunities (up from 58% in 2020)
		DA4: Routinely evaluate staff membership of external committees by gender	Administrative staff, EDI data subgroup	High, from July 2022	Gender balance of staff involved in external committees representative of gender balance of staff in SLS

5.4.5	KC38: A significant number of staff do not feel that workload is equally distributed. Most staff do not feel the workload model is fit for purpose to reflect the time required to complete tasks required as part of their role	A38.1: Ensure workload balance across genders and by role, across the spectrum of work activities	HoS and EDI Chair, in consultation with University EDI Forum	Low, by Jan 2024	Increase in Culture survey scores relating to Workload, with targets of 80% of staff agreeing that workload is balanced across genders (up from 60% in 2020) and 60% agreeing that workload is balanced across grades (up from 35% in 2020) by Jan 2024
		A38.2: Publish and distribute annual workload data analysis by gender within SLS	Administrative staff, EDI data subgroup	Low, annually from Jan 2022	Workload model data continuing to show females and males have equivalent workloads with similar percentages of time spent on particular key activities.
		A38.3: Use data to plan for redistribution of workload to address any imbalance	HoS	Low, annually from Jan 2022	Improvement in Culture Survey scores relating to workload, target of 50% of staff agreeing that their perception of the workload model used by SLS is that it reflects the work they do (up from 14% in 2020)
5.6	KC39: Timing of departmental meetings and social gatherings is not currently within core hours	A39.1: Amend timing of school catch-ups, which are currently outside core hours and likely to exclude staff with caring responsibilities	HoS	High, by Jan 2022	All SLS meetings occur within core hours to ensure inclusion of all staff, by Jan 2022
		A39.2: Re-emphasise within the School that meetings should occur between 10am and 4pm			

	KC40: Social gatherings have largely ceased since the Covid-19 move to working from home	A40.1: Establish an SLS Social Committee to organise social gatherings	ECR committee	Medium, by Mar 2022	Establishment of an SLS Social Committee by Mar 2022. Increase in social gatherings to an average of 3 per year from 2023. improvement in School Culture Survey scores relating to social events
5.7	KC41: Establish positive role models for under-represented groups	A41.1: Ensure the gender balance of SLS seminars and images in the the prospectus is maintained at 50% female speakers	SLS Seminar Series organiser	Low, from Jan 2022 and assessed annually	Current gender balance of seminar speakers maintained
		A41.2: Identify in-school champions for under-represented groups; celebrate these through EDI blog interviews	EDI committee	Medium, by Feb 2024	In-school champions for under-represented groups publicised on School website and on the EDI blog by Feb 2024
					>80% of SLS staff aware of activities underway to improve EDI, as assessed through the School Culture Survey (up from 50% in 2020) by Feb 2024
5.8	KC42: Poor recording of contribution to, and participation in outreach activities by gender	A42.1: Ensure outreach opportunities are made available to all staff including PGR and ECRs	Schools Liaison Champion	Low, from Jan 2022 as opportunities arise	Circulation of all activities by School Liaison Champion when opportunities arise, from Jan 2022
		A42.2: Ensure appropriate workloading of outreach activities, see Section 5.4.5	HoS	Medium, by Sept 2022	Workload quota for outreach activities included in annual workload calculations by Sept 2022

		A42.3: Mitigate any gender imbalance as appropriate	HoS	Medium, by Sept 2022	Gender balance of diverse role models involved in outreach by Sept 2022 representative of the gender composition of SLS (so as to not overload underrepresented groups)
		DA4: Ensure standardised recording by gender and grade	Administrative staff, EDI data subgroup	High, by July 2022	Establishment of a database recording outreach activities by July 2022