

Athena Swan renewal application form for departments

Applicant information

Name of institution	University of Edinburgh
Name of department	The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies
Date of current application	29 th November 2024
Level of previous award	Silver
Date of previous award	2018
Contact name	
Contact email	
Contact telephone	

Section	Words used
An overview of the department and its approach to gender equality	2552
An evaluation of the department's progress and issues	2717
Future action plan*	
Appendix 1: Culture survey data*	
Appendix 2: Data tables*	
Appendix 3: Glossary*	
Overall word count	5269

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

Overall word limit: 5500 words

Table of Contents

Application information	1
Section 1: An overview of the department and its approach to gender equality	3
1.1 Letter of endorsement from the head of the department	3
1.2 Description of the department and its context	5
1.2.1 Overview	5
1.2.2 Organisational Framework and Culture	6
1.2.3 Students at the R(D)SVS	9
1.2.4 Staff at the R(D)SVS	10
1.3 Athena Swan self-assessment process	15
Section 2: An evaluation of the department's progress and issues	19
2.1 Evaluating progress against the previous action plan	19
2.2 Key priorities for future action	52
Section 3: Future action plan	55
Appendix 1: Culture survey data	70
Appendix 2: Data tables	96
Appendix 3: Glossary	119
Appendix 4: Terms of Remit	120

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

1. Letter of endorsement from the head of the department



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
The Royal (Dick) School
of Veterinary Studies

The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies
The University of Edinburgh
Easter Bush
Midlothian
EH25 9RG

Athena Swan Committee

21st October 2024

Dear Athena Swan Panel,

As the newly appointed Head of the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies and the only female Head of an accredited veterinary school in the UK, it is my great pleasure to offer my strongest support for this Athena SWAN Silver renewal application. This application marks my first year in this role and I am deeply committed to advancing equality, diversity, and inclusion within our School, ensuring these principles are integral to our strategic objectives and daily operations.

Our dedication to the Athena SWAN Charter is unwavering. The initiatives we have implemented since our 2018 Silver award have significantly enhanced the experiences of our staff and students, fostering an inclusive and supportive environment. Notably, our close partnership with the Roslin Institute, a Gold Award holder, has allowed us to share best practices and further embed these values across campus-wide clinical, research and educational activities.

Key achievements since our last submission include:

- The completion and operational success of the campus nursery, which supports our staff and students with young children.
- A substantial increase in female academic promotions, with the number of successful applications increasing to 87-100% between 2018/19-2023/24, compared to 60-77% for the previous period (2014/15-2017/19). This includes the promotion of 35 female applicants from lecturer to senior lecturer, and 8 female applicants from senior lecturer to professor.
- Top ranking among UK veterinary schools for student satisfaction in the 2024 National Student Survey, with 91.9% of students responding positively, representing a 4.27% year-on-year difference.
- Highly positive campus culture, with 77% and 76% of respondents agreeing that they belong and that their contributions are valued.
- Extension of the Family Support Award to include all Professional Services and Support Staff.
- Continued investment in leadership programs such as Dare to Lead and Aurora, ensuring senior female academics receive leadership training.

These accomplishments reflect our collective commitment to creating a diverse and inclusive community where everyone can thrive. Our data-driven approach and continuous feedback from staff and students guide our efforts and validate our progress.

The pandemic has underscored the importance of adaptability and support for our community. We have ramped up our support activities and adapted our working practices to meet the needs of those disproportionately affected by Covid-19, ensuring that our efforts in promoting equality and diversity are resilient and responsive to changing circumstances.

Looking ahead, we are committed to advancing our efforts in equality, diversity, and inclusion within the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies. As we continue our journey towards excellence, we recognise the importance of setting ambitious goals and implementing innovative strategies to further promote gender equity and diversity. Our collaboration with the Roslin Institute has strengthened our resolve and provided valuable insights into effective practices. Moving forward, we are excited to explore new opportunities for extension of our already highly successful cross-campus efforts and knowledge-sharing, with the aim of submitting a joint Gold Athena SWAN application at the next renewal date. By harnessing the collective expertise and dedication of our staff and students, we are confident that we will achieve our shared vision of fostering a supportive and inclusive environment where everyone can thrive.

Information presented in the application (including qualitative and quantitative data) is an honest, accurate, and true representation of the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies. I am privileged to lead the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies at this exciting time and fully endorse this Silver renewal application. Our ongoing dedication to the Athena SWAN Charter is a testament to our School's values and our commitment to fostering a supportive, inclusive, and equitable environment for all.

Yours sincerely,

Professor [REDACTED]

Head of Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies and Dean of Veterinary Medicine
Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies
The University of Edinburgh

1.2. Description of the department and its context

1.2.1 Overview

The **Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies (R(D)SVS)** at the University of Edinburgh was founded in 1823, and enjoys an international reputation for excellence in teaching, research and clinical service. The School is situated on the Easter Bush (EB) Campus, and is structured to include eight Academic Divisions, in addition to the Veterinary Teaching Organisation (VTO, the administrative teaching structure) and the Roslin Institute (the School's research arm).

The R(D)SVS **eight core academic divisions** are:

- Veterinary Biomedical Sciences
- Veterinary Pathology
- Production Animal, Food Security, Public Health and Epidemiology
- Equine Sciences
- Companion Animal Sciences (including Anaesthesiology and Diagnostic Imaging)
- Veterinary Medical Education
- Animal Welfare and Conservation Medicine
- Global Academy of Agriculture and Food Systems (GAAFS)

The vast majority of the School's research is based within the Roslin Institute and GAAFS. All research active clinicians have 'Clinical Associate' membership of the Roslin Institute and have access to core facilities, space and support.

This Athena Swan submission encompasses the eight Academic Divisions and the VTO. For the purpose of this submission, the Roslin Institute is excluded. The Roslin Institute currently holds an Athena Swan Gold Accreditation, renewed in 2024. We plan to submit a joint application for an Athena Swan Gold Accreditation at the time of the next renewal, reflecting the seamless collaboration between the R(D)SVS and the Roslin Institute on Easter Bush campus.

The School is part of the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine within the University of Edinburgh as shown in **Figure A**. The School consistently ranks in the top 10 Veterinary Schools internationally in both QS and Shanghai subject rankings, and **1st in the UK by the Guardian and The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide metrics**. In the most recent Research Excellence Framework (**REF2021**) assessment, the School was ranked **first in the UK** for Veterinary Sciences based on research power.

The R(D)SVS' major objective is to benefit society and the environment by educating veterinary surgeons to become members of global public and professional health care teams; and to advance veterinary and comparative medicine through research into disease and disease processes with the goal of improving the health and welfare of both animals and humans. As such, we have three pillars: **Education, Research, and Clinical Service**. The pillars are closely linked and all have equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) values at their core, as championed by our Head of School.

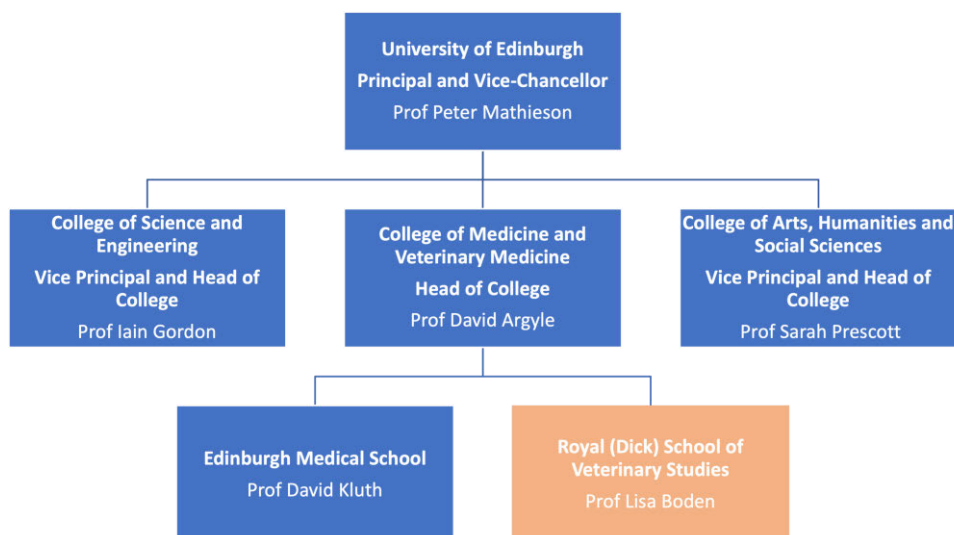


Figure A: Position of the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies [R(D)SVS] within the University of Edinburgh and College structure.

1.2.2. Organisational Framework and Culture

The governance structure of the R(D)SVS is headed by the School Executive Team (SET) on which the head of each division sits. This is the decision-making body of the school (**Figure B**).

All members of staff at the R(D)SVS in leadership roles attend **leadership training** which includes University of Edinburgh Leadership training, Aurora programme, and the Dare to Lead programme ([Dare to Lead Hub - Brené Brown \(brenebrown.com\)](#)), introduced in 2022.

In recognition of our commitment to EDI and research culture, in 2023 we appointed a campus **Culture and Engagement Manager**. The major purpose of this role is to develop an employee experience programme for R(D)SVS and the Roslin Institute that fosters a positive and rewarding work environment. This is the first post of this nature at a School within the University of Edinburgh and reflects our strong commitment to leadership in this area.

The Culture and Engagement Manager works with staff from the R(D)SVS and Roslin Institute, and with our EDI and Career Development Committees (CDC, **Figure C**) to deliver aspects of the Action Plan (AP) and to analyse data from surveys to inform our activities. The committees, with SET, are responsible for delivery of the AP.

In 2019, an additional committee was set up to lead a series of focus groups with a remit to understand the outcomes of the 2018 University Staff Survey, and to address areas of ongoing concern relating to culture on the EB Campus. This **Campus Experience and Culture Committee** (CECC) collaborated with the SET. After extensive discussion around the composition of the focus groups, it was determined that an independent external review of Campus culture would be preferential to an internal process, which could be subject to bias. This review was carried out in late 2020/early 2021 by The Culture Builders. Their report contained a series of recommendations (**Appendix 1.1**) which are embedded in the FAP.

Led by the Roslin Institute's deputy director for Culture & Diversity and R(D)SVS Associate Dean for EDI, Professor [REDACTED], and based on the recommendations from The Culture Builders, the CECC developed a **Culture Action Plan**. This plan closely aligns to the R(D)SVS Athena Swan Silver Action Plan and Roslin Institute Athena Swan Gold Action Plan. Thus, the CECC have had significant input into the delivery and assessment of the R(D)SVS Athena Swan Silver Action Plan. In recognition of this work, in 2023 the CECC was nominated and shortlisted for a College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine **Staff Recognition Award** in the category: EDI.

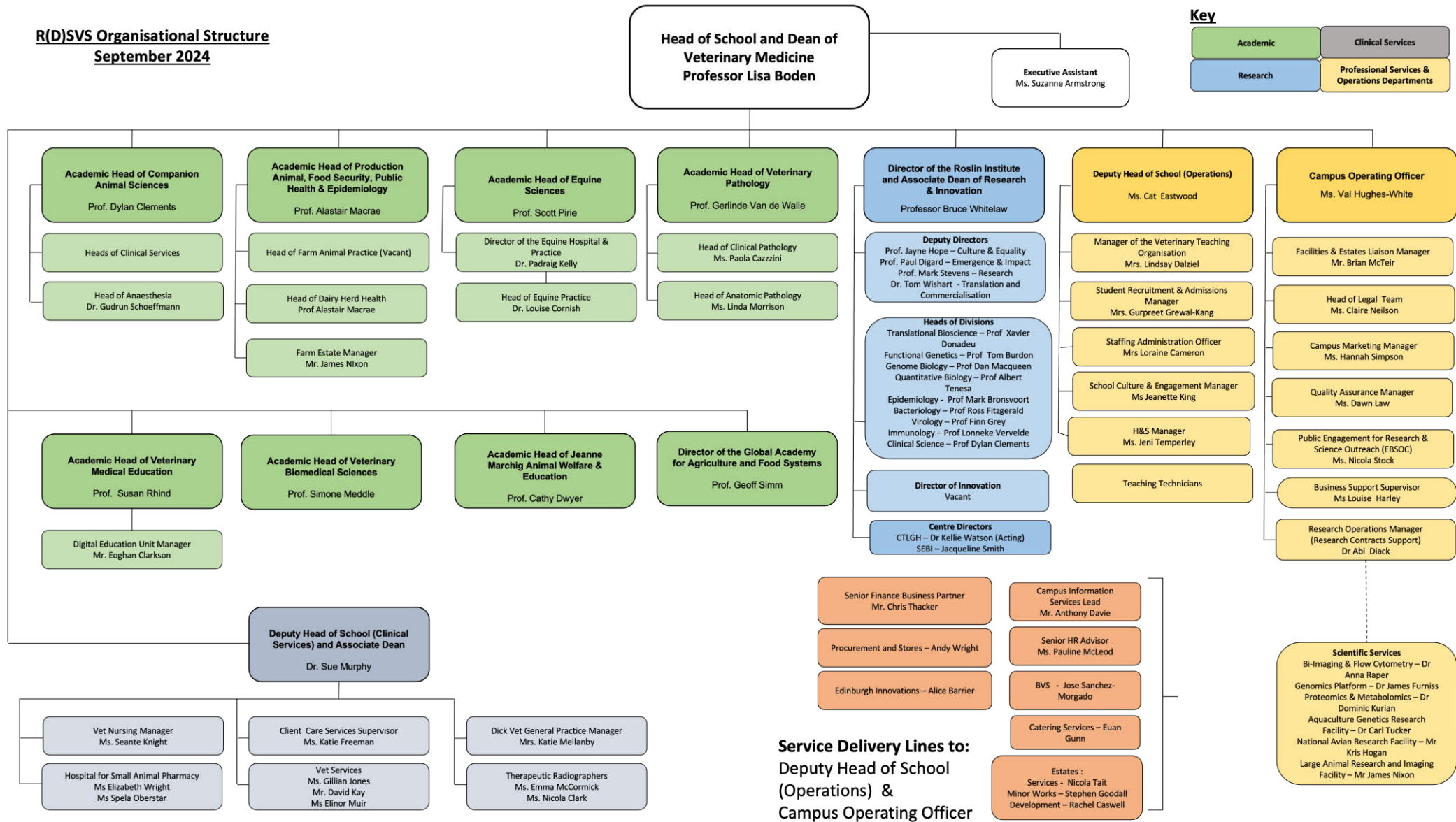


Figure B: Governance Structure of the R(D)SVS

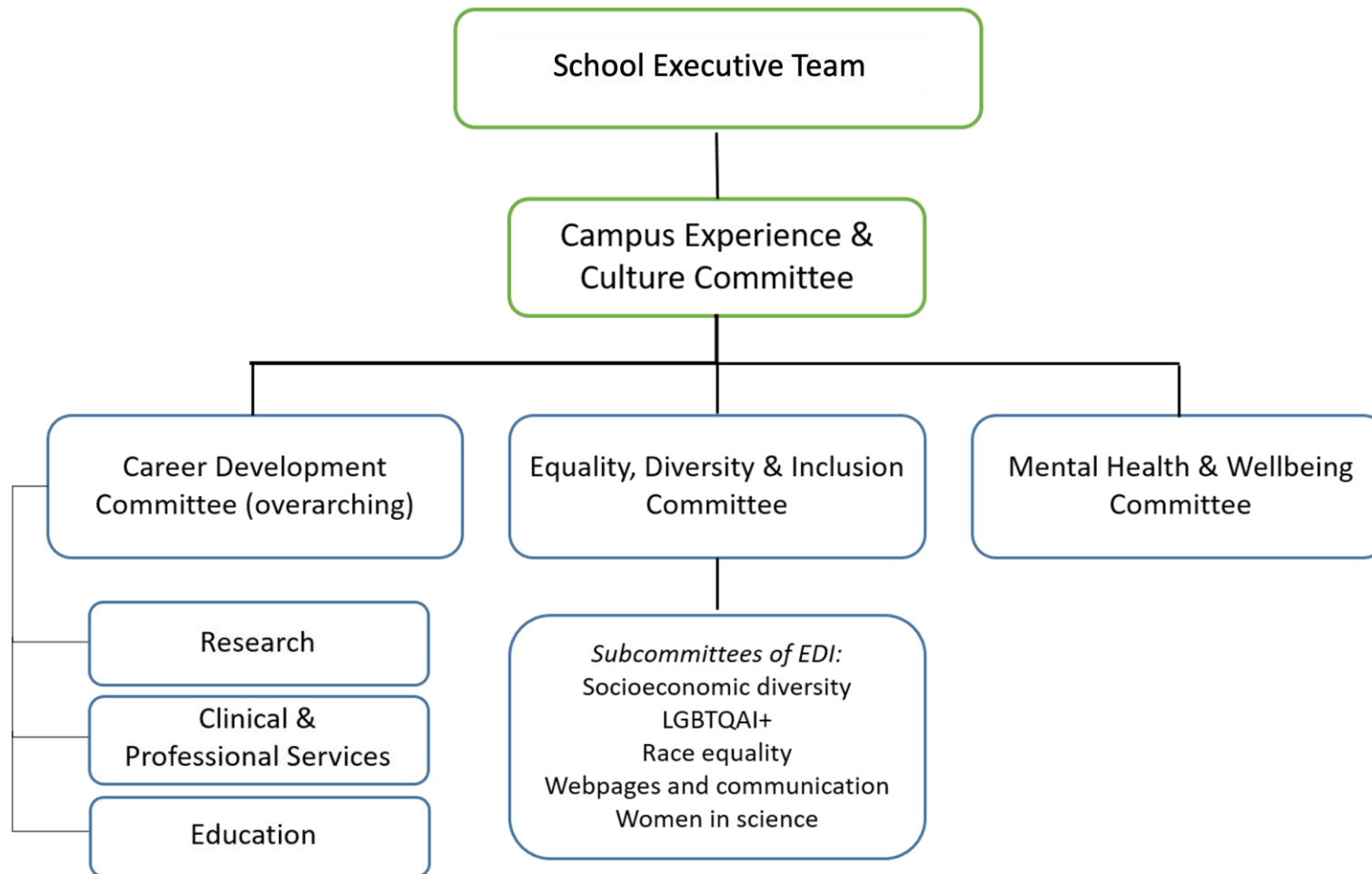


Figure C: Relevant committee structures at R(D)SVS

1.2.3. Students at the R(D)SVS

The School teaches **806 undergraduate (UG) students** (86% female) and **741 postgraduate (PG) students** (80% female) (**Figure D**). In the annual UG National Student Survey, **91.9% of those graduating 2023-2024 were satisfied with the quality of the course**. The School is held as an exemplar of student experience within the University.

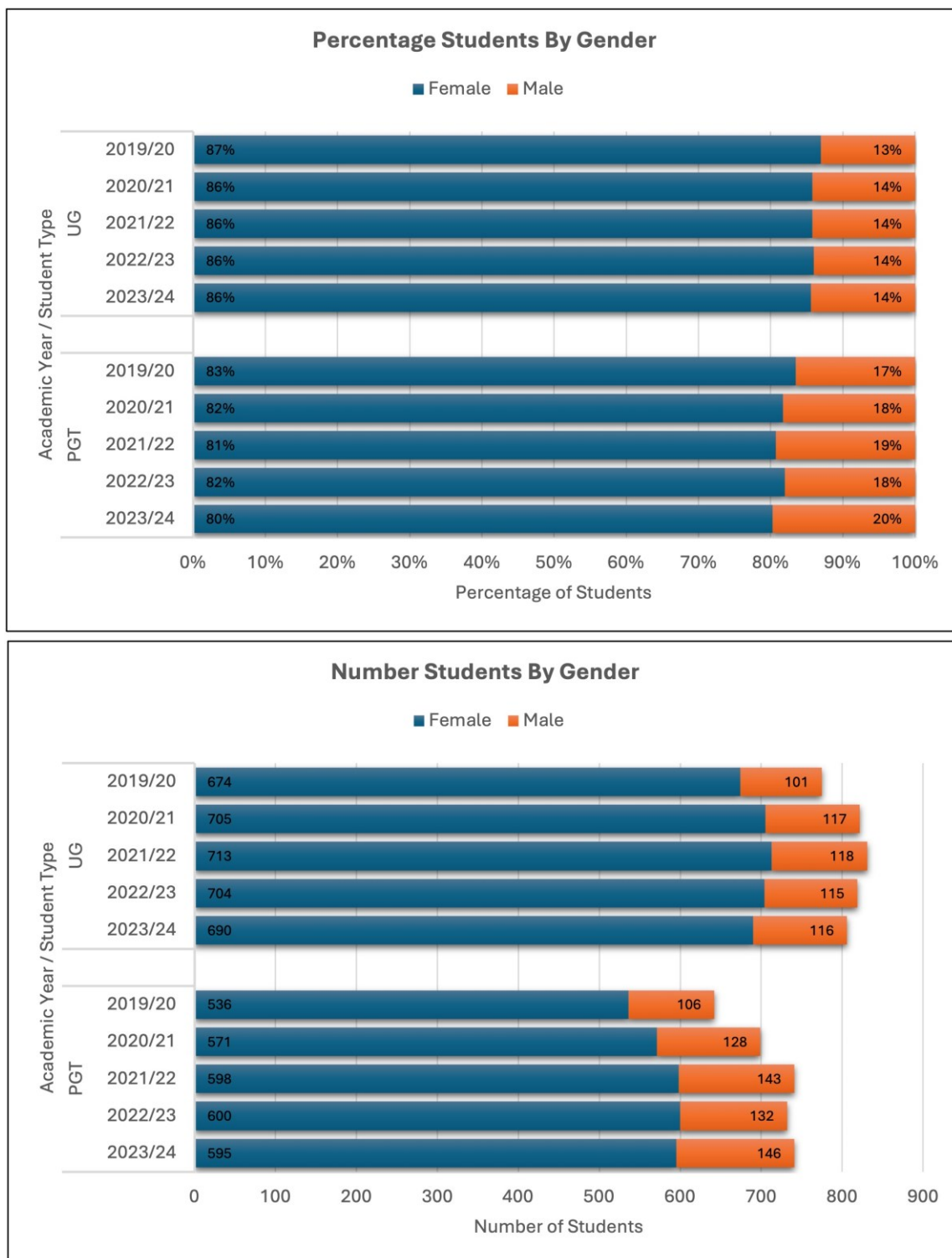
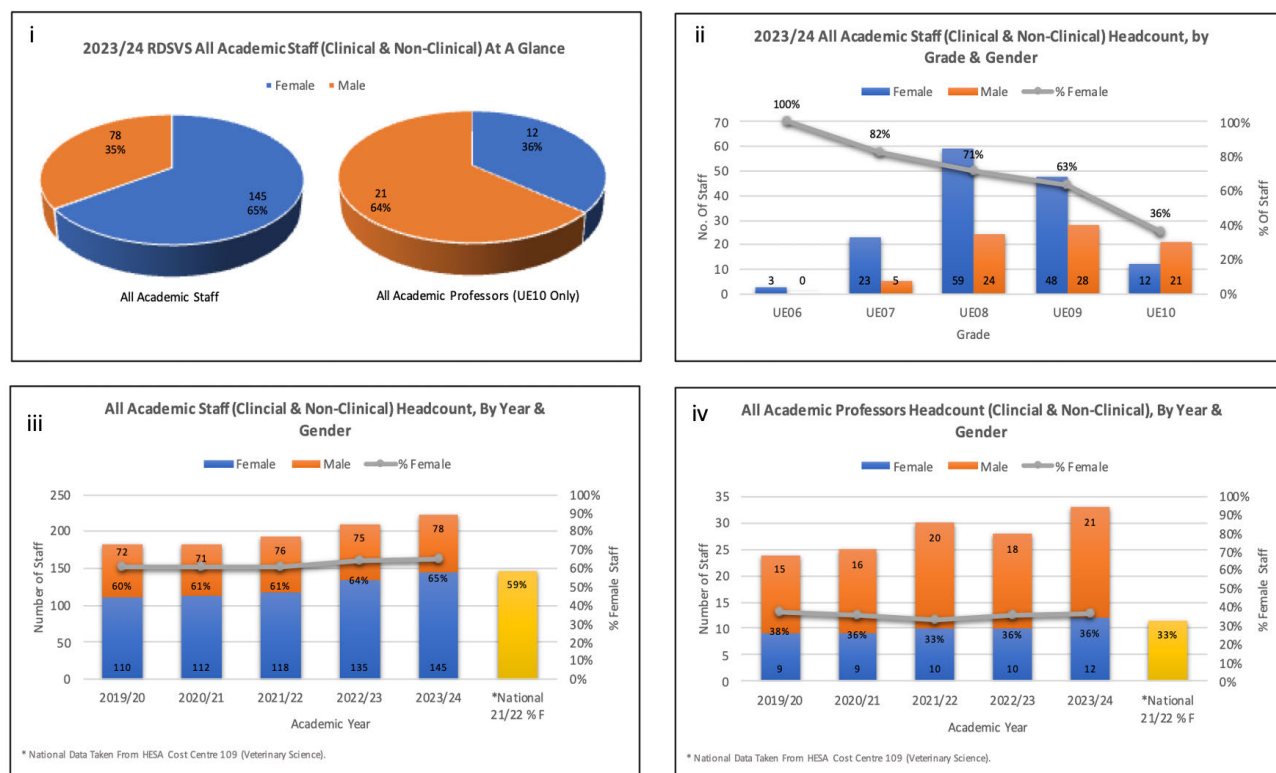


Figure D: Gendered summary of student numbers from 2018-2023

1.2.4 Staff at the R(D)SVS

Staff within the R(D)SVS are broadly classified as filling ‘academic’ (which includes clinical staff) or ‘professional services’ roles. The School employs **223 academic staff** who fulfil clinical and non-clinical roles on a full- or part-time basis (**Figure E**). Academic staff are involved in clinical veterinary work and/or teaching and/or research. The proportion of female academics has remained higher than the national average, particularly for 2022-2024. Generally, a lower proportion of our clinical academics are female compared to non-clinical academics.



Grade Title

UE06	Research Assistant
UE07	Teaching Fellow/Veterinary Clinician/Research Fellow
UE08	Lecturer (Clinical and Non-Clinical)
UE09	Senior Lecturer (Clinical and Non-Clinical), Reader
UE10	Professor, Personal Chair or Equivalent (Clinical and Non-Clinical)

Figure E: Gendered summary of academic staff employed at the R(D)SVS, presented as an overview (i), according to pay grade (ii), and by year (iii). Data pertaining to those employed as an academic professor are shown separately by year (iv).

Of note is the **underrepresentation of women at academic professorial level**. Whilst women make up 71% and 63% at academic UE08 and UE09 respectively, they represent only 36% at UE10. Addressing this gender disparity has been a longstanding priority at the R(D)SVS, and we have made concerted efforts to narrow this gap. Further discussion will be provided later in this report (See AP1.2 and 1.3).

The school also employs **416 staff** who fulfil professional service roles on a full- or part-time basis. There is a broad range of roles which encompass professional services, including (but not limited to) teaching, nursing, technical work, research, operations management, and student services/support (**Figure F**). Since 2018, the

proportion of female professional services staff members has steadily increased and in 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 was higher than the national average.

It is noteworthy that professional services staff are often in lower pay grades compared to academic staff members. Currently, the majority (71%) of academic staff are in grade UE08 or UE09, while most (83%) of professional services staff are in grade UE02-06. However, the University has recently improved this issue by **approving a revised pay grade scale**, effective from August 2024. This initiative will elevate all pay grades along the national pay spine and merge lower pay grades to match the November 2023 increase to the **Real Living Wage**. Additionally, in 2023 regrading was implemented for all veterinary nurses (UE05 to UE06), receptionists (UE03 to UE05) and animal care assistants (UE03 to UE04).

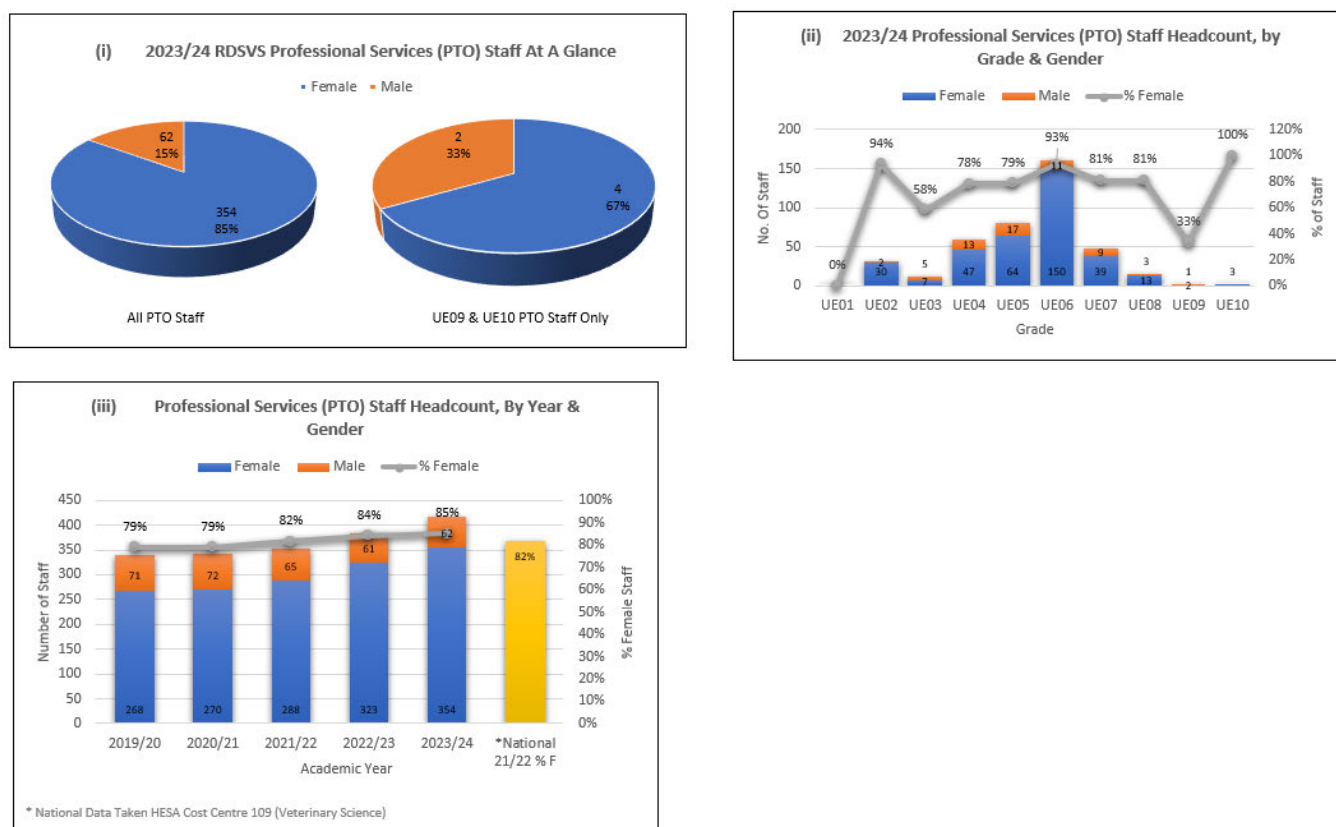


Figure F: Gendered summary of professional services staff employed at the R(D)SVS, presented as an overview (i), according to pay grade (ii), and by year (iii).

An important backdrop to the data and themes presented here is that the number of women entering the global veterinary profession has increased dramatically in the last three decades. Most **international veterinary student cohorts comprise ~80% females**. The latest demographics data published by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) in 2023 reports that **58% of veterinary surgeons in the UK are now female**, with younger age groups dominated by females (**Figure G**). The R(D)SVS undergraduate population mirrors that seen in veterinary undergraduate populations in the UK (**Figure I-L**). The School statistics also reflect this trend at entry level positions, i.e. UE07/UE08 (clinician/lecturer) (**Figure E**).

A similar pattern is seen with **veterinary nurses**, who comprise a large proportion of our professional services staff. Data from the RCVS register show that veterinary nursing is an overwhelmingly feminised career (**Figure H**).

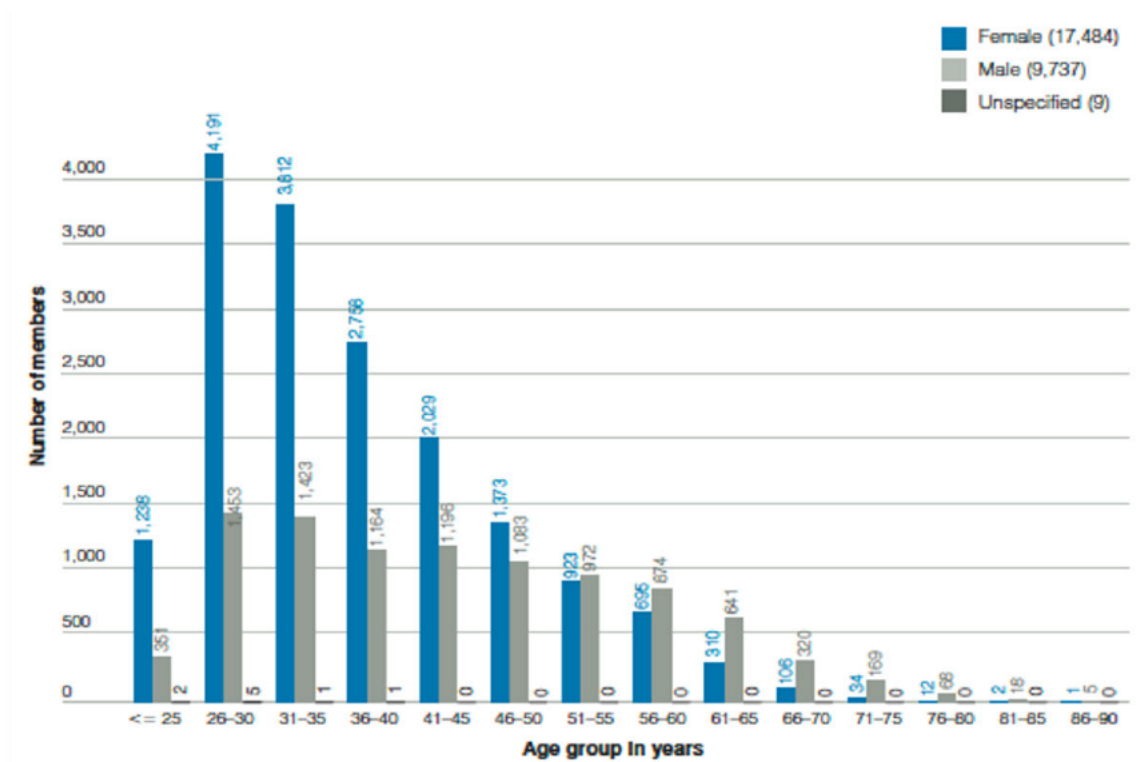


Figure G: UK-practising veterinary surgeons by age and gender, published by RCVS in 2023.

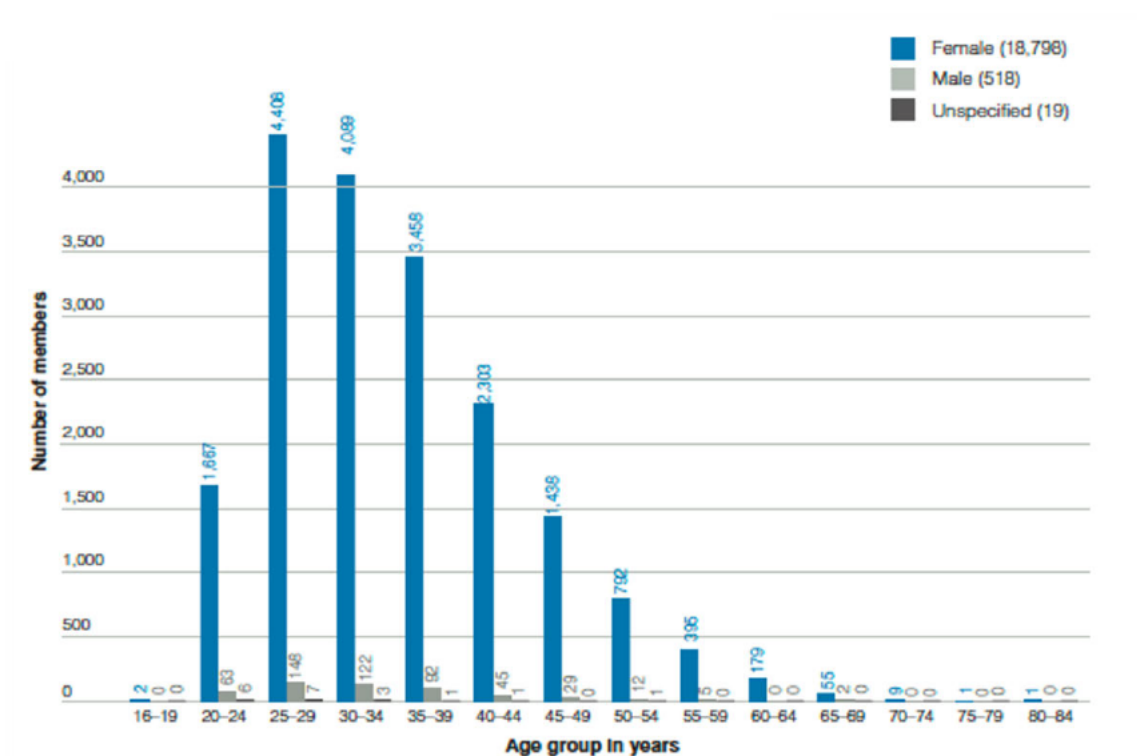


Figure H: UK-practising veterinary nurses by age and gender, published by RCVS in 2023.

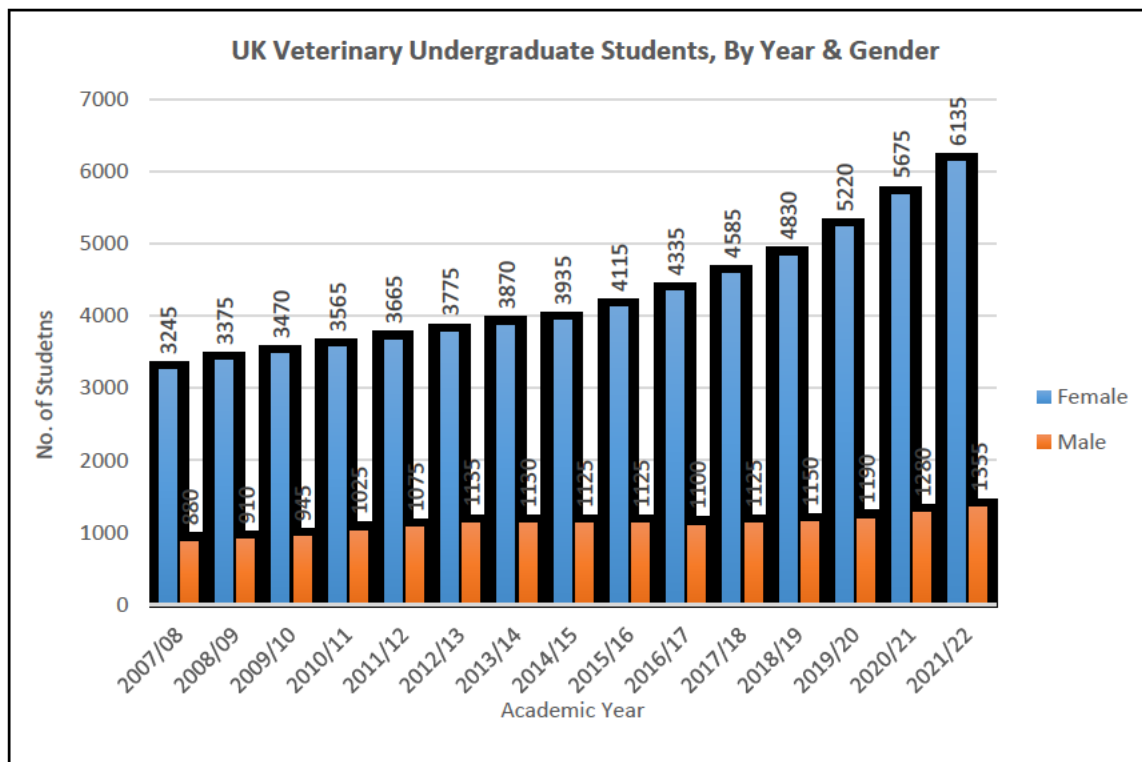


Figure I: 2007-2022 UK Veterinary Undergraduate Students, By Year & Gender

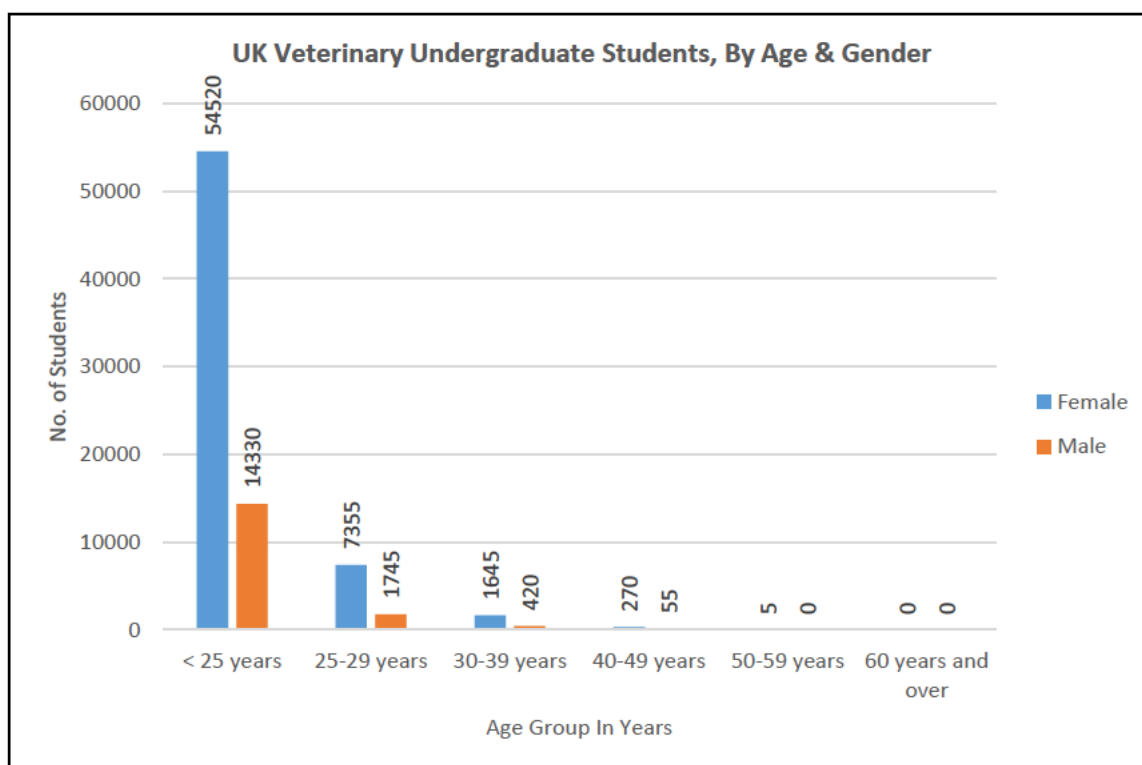


Figure J: 2007-2022 UK Veterinary Undergraduate Students, By Age & Gender

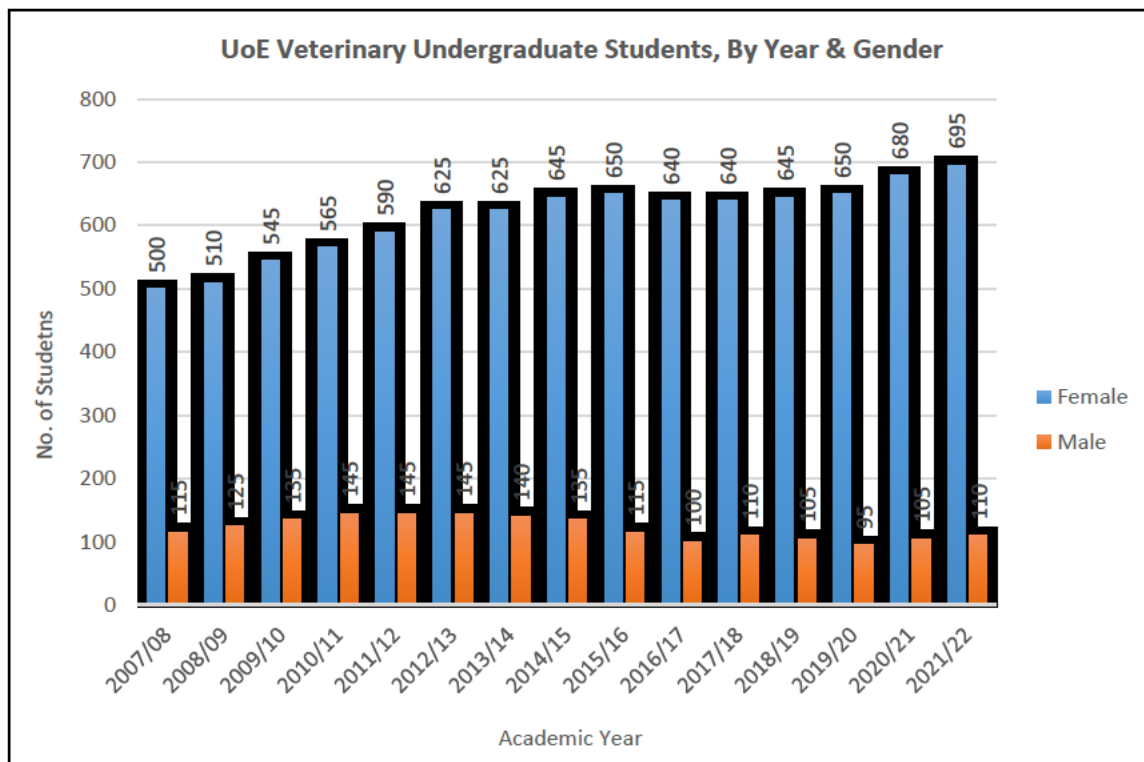


Figure K: 2007-2022 R(D)SVS Veterinary Undergraduate Students, By Year & Gender

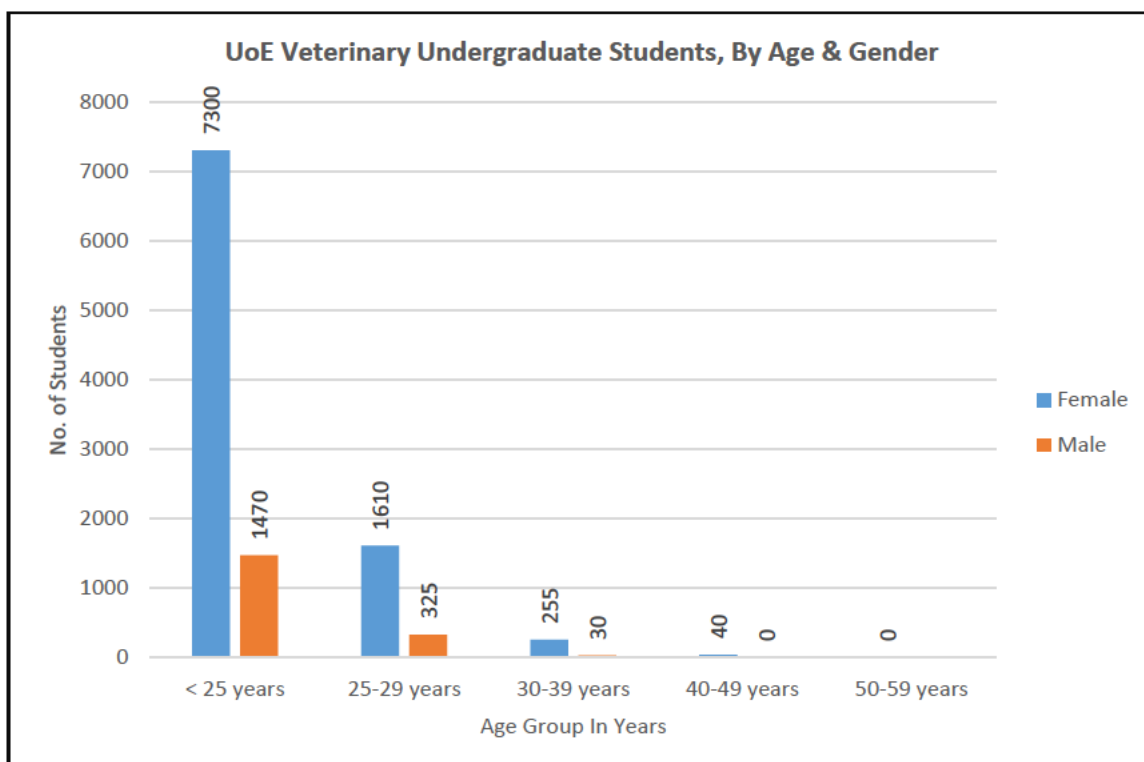


Figure L: 2007-2022 R(D)SVS Veterinary Undergraduate Students, By Year & Gender

1.3. Athena Swan self-assessment process

Self-assessment and development of the FAP for this Athena Swan submission was carried out by a subset of the **CDC (Table A)** and **CECC (Table B)**, with input from the **SET**.

The R(D)SVS CDC implemented the Silver Action Plan. The CDC comprised 5 male and 13 female members with **representation across grades and job descriptions**. Relevant chairs and co-chairs of campus committees were members ensuring that all groups are represented. Members acted as ambassadors for their peer groups and balance across roles/gender and inclusivity was a major goal. Members had a range of experience with respect to committee roles and relevant working patterns. Some had experience of parental or other relevant special leave for caring responsibilities. The committee had a range of staff of diverse nationalities, varying ages and with different experiences of academic or professional service careers. Members also had experience of part-time/flexible working.

Name (Gender)	Position	Role on Committee
(F)	Personal Chair in Small Animal Soft Tissue Surgery	Co-Chair (Clinical and Education), Teaching
(M)	Research Technician and Student Advisor	Co-Chair (Professional Services)
(F)	Nursing Manager	Nursing
(F)	Anaesthesia Assistant	ACAs/Grooms
(F)	Finance supervisor	Finance/Legal
(F)	Senior HR Partner	HR, Professional Services
(F)	Core Scientist (Research Technician)	Technicians
(F)	Research Technician	Technicians
(M)	Molecular Biologist	Research; Roslin Institute representative
(M)	Student Experience Officer	VTO/Administration/Student services
(F)	Senior Lecturer in Student Learning; Deputy Director of Student Affairs	VTO/Student services
(F)	Deputy Facilities and Services Manager	Facilities/IT/Stores
(F)	Campus Health and Safety Manager	H&S/Public Engagement
(F)	Resident in emergency and critical care	Interns/Residents
(F)	Intern in large animal anaesthesia and intensive care	Clinical academic
(M)	Personal chair of equine medicine	Senior Management Group
Rotating student	Undergraduate	Undergraduates
(F)	Reader	Research; Roslin Institute representative
(M)	Chancellor's Fellow	Research; Roslin Institute representative

Table A: Membership of R(D)SVS CDC to end 2022.

Data analysis of the required datasets for this Athena Swan submission was carried out by a further group, led by Professor [REDACTED], comprising three male and eight female members. Data (**Appendix 2**) was collated by HR and provided to the committee for analysis. Further data from internal surveys and external review (**Appendix 1**) was provided to the CDC and the CECC for discussion and development of actions. Gendered analysis of the 2023 University of Edinburgh Survey and 2024 interim staff survey, with specific focus on the R(D)SVS, was carried out by Professor [REDACTED], Dr [REDACTED], the Campus Culture and Engagement Manager, and the R(D)SVS Associate Dean for EDI.

Name (Gender)	Role on Committee
(F)	Co-Chair, RI DD (Culture & Diversity); R(D)SVS Associate Dean for EDI
(F)	Co-Chair, Campus Operating Officer
(F)	Senior HR Partner
(M)	EB Mental Health and Wellbeing Committee Chair; Union Health and Safety and Local UCU representative.
(M)	Chair Research CDC, UoE Concordat Implementation Group & UoE Research Culture Working Group, UoE elected Senate member
(F)	Chair Clinical and PS CDC & Teaching representative, UoE elected Senate member
(M)	Chair EB Postdoc Committee
(F)	Postdoc and neurodiversity representative
(F)	PGR Student Experience representative
(F)	PGR representative
(F)	Equine staff representative
(F)	Co-lead of ECR experience, CMVM Research Staff representative
(M)	Co-lead of ECR experience, CMVM Research Staff representative
(F)	Technician representative
(F)	Marketing and Communications representative
(M)	Professional Services representative
(F)	Professional Services representative
(F)	Technician representative
(F)	Culture and Engagement Manager
(F)	Academic Representative
(F)	Head of Marketing & Communications

Table B: Membership of CECC – as October 2024

The **CDC committee structure and membership changed in late 2022** to encompass the entire campus and promote synergy between the R(D)SVS and the Roslin Institute. The committees **now reflect greater inclusion across staff and students in the major areas of Research, Professional Services and Teaching**. The new structure comprises an overarching committee (**Table C**), chaired by the R(D)SVS Associate Dean for EDI, Professor [REDACTED], and including members representing HR, finance, communication, and public engagement alongside our Head of Postgraduate Research (PGR) alongside the Chairs of the three CDC branches (Research, Clinical & PS, and Education & Teaching (**Figure C**).

Name (Gender)	Position	Role on committee
(F)	RI DD (Culture & Diversity); R(D)SVS Associate Dean for EDI	Chair
(F)	Senior HR \Partner	HR representative
(F)	Head of Communications	Comms representative
(M)	Head of Finance	Finance representative
(M)	Core Scientist	Chair of Research CDC
(F)	Personal Chair, Veterinary Clinical Services	Chair of Clinical/Professional services (PS) CDC
(F)	Lecturer in Academic Development, Veterinary Teaching Fellow	Chair of Education & Teaching CDC
(F)	Head of PGR	PGR representative
(F)	Culture and Engagement Manager	Campus culture and engagement representative

(F)	Public Engagement with Research (PER) Manager	PER representative
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Table C: Current Membership of the Overarching CDC

The three CDC branches comprise members representing academic, professional services and PG students. They consist of 6 male and 6 female (Research), 10 female and 3 male (Clinical and PS), and 2 male and 6 female (Education and Teaching) members. Where possible, we have members to represent Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME), LGBTQAI+ and neurodivergent communities, but we recognise that this is an aspect that requires further improvement.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the CDCs (the overarching committee and its branches) and the CECC, along with other those of all other committees underwent recent review and updates. The new ToR (Appendix 4) for the CDCs and CECC includes provision for rotation of membership with terms of three years. Membership is by selection from volunteers who apply through open calls to all staff and postgraduate students on campus. The rotation of membership allows for a greater number of people to be involved over time and brings new ideas and perspectives to the committees. An important aspect is the identification of Co-Chairs and succession planning. Currently, the overarching CDC meets twice a year, with the 3 branches of the CDC meeting quarterly. The CECC meets bi-monthly: the timelines for these meetings are under constant review to maximise effective management and delivery of activities.

Members of the CDC branches with input from the CECC will review the Athena Swan Action Plan and evaluate progress towards delivery. The FAP will be subject to the traffic light system: where items remain in red or amber as their delivery dates approach, these shall be prioritised for action. The committee Chairs will interact with the senior leadership teams or other committees to drive actions forward in a timely manner. With the Culture and Engagement Manager, the CDC branch members and the CECC will analyse data from surveys and alter current (or implement new) plans. The data analysis subgroup will also monitor the staff and student datasets as they are made available (annually) and highlight where gender inequity is evident, or where additional granularity is required to understand imbalances.

Reflection on the panel feedback from the previous application

One of the major areas we have reflected on is the **underrepresentation of Professional Services (PS)** and the weaker PS-specific sections 5.2 and 5.4 of the previous Action Plan (AP). Between 2018-2022, we improved representation of PS on the CDC, including assigning the role of co-chair to both clinical and professional services staff members. After 2022, the **CDC restructure has ensured that PS has a stronger voice and is optimally supported**. This has been reflected in a series of initiatives, including the highly successful annual Technician's Day ([Technician Events | Support for Technicians \(ed.ac.uk\)](#)), which is led by members of PS and attended by members of the SET. Professional services staff including technicians are also represented on the CECC.

We also reflected on the focus of our previous Silver application being on female representation, rather than on gender equity: we have signalled this in our FAP and identified areas where there is **imbalance across genders**. Areas where **male students are under-represented or underperforming**, or where the data requires further analysis to identify imbalance for other groups were further investigated. There remains a lack of granularity in our data, reflected by collection and analysis methods. As a result, we are not able to understand intersectionality as well as we would like. The development of more effective and detailed methods for gathering metrics and their analysis is a key priority in our FAP, as is the definition of key outputs and milestones for each planned action.

We share the panel's concerns about **recruitment and retention**, and have worked to improve gender equity across pay grades. Career progression and promotion success are areas where we have improved monitoring, with an emphasis on achieving a better gender balance in both applications and successful appointments. However, we recognise that this remains an ongoing focus in our FAP.

We recognise that **promotion from UE09 to UE10 is a particular barrier for women** and have worked to address this by implementing a series of workshops and signposting. This is reflected by our greater

proportion of female academic professors compared to the national average, but we recognise that this could be improved further. Whilst out with the scope of the data we have analysed and submitted for this renewal, we did see 6/8 female promotions to UE10, effective from 1st Aug 2024, and we will be focusing on how we can utilise this cohort to showcase progression opportunities for women in future years. We now also have an active research mentoring scheme, with PS staff and CRAs involved, and plan to roll this out more widely. Other areas of improvement include **increasing proportional representation of women on key committees, expanding leadership opportunities, enhancing promotion support, and strengthening recruitment training**. These initiatives have been integral to our completed Action Plan and remain central to the FAP.

Finally, we have **increased engagement** for all staff and students through regular town hall meetings led by the Head of School, alongside the successful introduction of an annual BVM&S symposium. We also improved collaboration between the Vet School and Roslin Institute, further supporting our EDI goals.

Word Count Section 1: 2552

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

2.1 Evaluating progress against the previous action plan

We have summarised the progress against our previous Athena Swan Silver Action Plan below. Completed actions are highlighted as green **G** and those where significant progress has been made but not fully completed as amber **A**.

The R(D)SVS SILVER Action Plan 2018-2023/4: PROGRESS

1. Career Advancement								
Reference	Objective	Rational	Further action planned	Timescale	Person Responsible	Status	Success Measure (defined in 2018)	Progress
AP 1.1	Annual review: Maintain quality of the Annual Review process through continued excellence in level of staff engagement and completion. Improve uptake of "Understanding Annual Review" online course to 75% by 2020. Sustain and continue to enhance the high quality of our Annual Review.	The Annual Review is a formal recorded conversation where managers and employees can discuss career development and work life balance.	Monitor and continue to promote the "Understanding Annual Review" training course which was introduced as a formal part of the review process. We have focused efforts on E&D and Unconscious Bias training in the recent past, and now recognise the need to enforce "Understanding Annual Review" more robustly (it is now mandatory by policy). Continue to monitor Staff Survey results (and adjust survey questions accordingly) to evaluate knowledge and understanding of staff with respect to	From Jan 2019 Annually Annually	HR CSC/HR/Staff survey team HR	A	Increase uptake of Understanding Annual Review course to be at least in line with Unconscious Bias and E&D training uptake (75%). Increase proportion of staff who find Annual Review valuable in Staff Survey (80+ %).	<p>Ongoing 1.1: Refining our approaches to supporting Annual Reviews Over the last 5 years, due to revised practices during Covid and as a result of the implementation of a new HR system to hold and record online training, a number of changes have been made to our training delivery mechanisms and attitudes towards learning and recording of learning. As a result, directly benchmarking against goals set in the 2018 AP is challenging.</p> <p>Change 1.1a – The online "Understanding Annual Review" course ceased to be mandatory / available to staff after a review concluded it did not meet the needs of the University population as a whole. No record of completion is therefore available/relevant.</p> <p>Change 1.1b – Partly due to Covid and partly due to a change in approach, the University no longer runs face to face "Annual Review Skills" workshops.</p> <p>As a result of the above changes, some of the success measures stated in the previous action plan are no longer indicative of the University's approach to supporting the annual review process. The following approach is now preferred by the University;</p> <p>Progress 1.1a: Centralised "Toolkit" and resources hub for Annual Reviews Rather than one online course, there is now a broader and deeper resource hub available to staff and managers Conversations and Annual Reviews The University of Edinburgh. This resource is available to managers and staff throughout the year, to encourage a move to more regular and meaningful conversations that support both feedback and development conversations.</p> <p>Progress 1.1b: Access to new online resources</p>

			<p>the Annual Review process.</p> <p>Hold the University's longer face-to-face workshop "Annual Review Skills" on campus, as well as centrally, to facilitate staff attendance.</p>				<p>LinkedIn Learning now provides access to new courses to support the Annual Review process – completion of these is neither mandated nor monitored.</p> <p>Progress 1.1c: Additional training and resources Broader training and development resources are available to support skills development and career progression, for example Planning My Career - Home (sharepoint.com) and published information on Courses and Resources The University of Edinburgh</p> <p>The 2023 Staff Survey (Feb 2023, Appendix 1.2) indicated a decline in the percentage of staff who found their annual review helpful, dropping from 56% in 2018 to 50% in 2023. This decrease may be attributed to the recent introduction of new approaches and resources since February 2023. However, positive signs emerge from our interim 2024 survey (Appendix 1.3): 79% of staff agreed that their line manager supports their career development, and 65% felt they received useful feedback on their career development through performance reviews. While these figures fall short of our target of 80% for finding the Annual Review valuable, they still reflect early positive outcomes. We anticipate a clearer understanding of the impact of these changes with the next full staff survey in 2025.</p>	
AP 1.2	Build on our foundation of increasing the percentage of female professors and advancing senior career development.	37.5% of our professors are female (higher than national average).	<p>Continue with regular programme of Academic Promotion Workshops and Open Door Policy with HOS to discuss career development with senior staff.</p> <p>Establish two focus groups (one clinical and one non-clinical) dedicated to senior academic staff seeking either promotion or career advancement within their speciality and level.</p>	<p>Annually from 2018</p> <p>2019-2021</p>	<p>HR/HOS</p> <p>Chair, CSC</p>	<p>G</p>	<p>Increase proportion of UE10 females, particularly on clinical side, by 10% in next 5 years.</p> <p>Achieve yearly focus groups as outlined in this Action Point and feedback key issues to HR and SMG.</p>	<p>Progress 1.2: Academic Promotions – UE10 We have continued to offer our well-received annual workshop to support academic staff in preparing their submissions for the promotion panel. These workshops are now available in both in-person and hybrid formats, and recordings of the sessions have been viewed over 100 times, in addition to averaging 30-40 attendees each year.</p> <p>Since 2017/18, we increased the total number of female professors from 7 (comprising 33% of professors) to 16 (42%) in 2024. The increase in female professors at the UE10 level specifically on the clinical side was comparable, increasing from 2 (20%) in 2017/18 to 9 (41%) in 2024, indicating that continued and targeted focus and role modelling in this area has been successful.</p> <p>The planned focus groups intended to address promotion and career advancement strategies were delayed due to COVID-19. Instead, we have implemented new strategies through the ongoing work of the CDCs and our commitment to the annual Academic Promotions Workshop. Despite these challenges, these alternative approaches have allowed us to exceed our goal for the five-year period since our last Athena Swan application.</p>

AP 1.3	Proactive reduction in barriers to promotion of female staff.	Build on the promotional success of senior academic women in the last three years (UE07 onwards).	Sustain our highly successful programme of Academic Promotion Workshops.	Annually from 2018	HR/HOS	G	Strive for continued female promotional success to UE09.	<p>Progress 1.3a: Academic Promotions – UE08/09</p> <p>We have continued to deliver our well-regarded annual workshop supporting academic staff in preparing their promotion submissions. These workshops are now available in both in-person and hybrid formats, and the recorded sessions have been viewed over 100 times, in addition to averaging 30-40 attendees each year.</p> <p>In 2023/24, the proportion of female staff at academic UE09 has increased to 63%, up from 46% in 2017/18. For UE08, the proportion of female staff stands at 71% in 2023/24, down from 78% in 2017/18. Over the past five years, the proportion of female UE08s has consistently ranged between 71% and 76%.</p> <p>Therefore, this 5-year period has seen steady progress in women advancing from UE08 to UE09 and UE10 (professorships), although there is still considerable work to be done.</p> <p>Importantly, in our 2024 staff survey (Appendix 1.3), only 14% of respondents <u>disagreed</u> with the statement that career progression was unaffected by gender, and there was no statistically significance difference in response based on gender.</p> <p>Progress 1.3b: Academic promotion documentation</p> <p>The promotion form now has a section where impacts on career (parental leave, illness etc.) and part time roles can be documented so that these factors are considered when staff are assessed on their impact/delivery at the grade descriptors of the level for which they are applying.</p> <p>Progress 1.3c: Continued Approval of Onboarding Processes</p> <p>Feedback on onboarding and induction processes has evolved due to new working practices arising from COVID-19 and changes in People & Money (P&M) systems. We now have a comprehensive University-wide process that provides regular and detailed feedback on the onboarding experiences of new joiners to the Vet School. While this feedback does not break down by gender, the most recent report, covering 54 Vet School joiners since May 2023, shows that 90.7% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their joining experience was positive.</p> <p>In addition, internal funding was secured for development of a Clinical Lecturer Academic Network (CLAN), an auto-enrolling, inclusive, peer-mentorship group for clinical teachers in the first three</p>
			Accelerate investment and promotion of the Aurora programme for senior female academics.	2019-2021	CSC/HR		Increased participation in the Aurora programme by 2025 to five female academics per year.	
			Proactively signpost staff to the University's IAD seminar series and training programmes that are available to all staff and pertinent to women seeking career advancement. CSC will ensure wide circulation of notifications and timetables from IAD through digital and printed media.	2019 onwards with monthly notification updates.	CSC/HR/Staff survey team		Increase percentage of staff who find Annual Review helpful in Staff Survey to 80+%.	
			Continue to review and adjust the Staff Survey to evaluate the success of the Annual Review process for career advancement.	Annually	HR/CSC		80+% staff feel encouraged to take up career development opportunities as per Staff Survey (currently 74%).	
			Create case studies of female and male	2019 (next promotion round)	HR/CSC		Survey shows that over 50% of promotion applicants found the case studies helpful.	
							Increase female satisfaction	

			<p>academics who were promoted in the last three years, share these with all staff via our intranet and ensure they are promoted during the promotion launch. We will also seek feedback from new promotion applicants as to whether the case studies helped them to decide whether or not to apply for promotion.</p> <p>Continual review and renewal of our induction pack to ensure provision of optimal information and guidance on career development for all.</p>	Annually	HR		<p>with induction in line with overall average (90%).</p>	<p>years of their appointment. The objectives (to build community, research and teaching collaborations; to give agency in the direction of progress, and to understand obstacles to progress; and to foster investment in the process) have been well received and feedback from this dynamic group is positive.</p> <p>Ongoing 1.3a: Attendance at Aurora events</p> <p>While we remain committed to Aurora as a key sector-led development programme for women, our broader commitment has been to enhance access to management development programmes for our female population.</p> <p>Our attendance at Aurora programmes has been increased to four participants per year, excluding the initial COVID-19 period. In addition to Aurora, we have fully engaged with the University's Aspiring Manager, Manager, and Leaders' development programmes. UoE Leadership and Management Programmes The University of Edinburgh. Since 2019, 70 females from our campus have attended these three main University programmes. In addition, we have offered programmes from additional external providers (e.g. Dare to Lead), which have been attended by over 40 members of leadership teams.</p> <p>Ongoing 1.3b: Engagement with IAD</p> <p>The Easter Bush Campus CDC is actively engaged with the University's Institute of Academic Development (IAD). We regularly share information about available training programmes and highlight those specifically beneficial for women seeking career advancement. Despite not achieving the desired increase in Annual Reviews, this engagement has contributed to positive feedback in the interim survey 2024: 79% of staff feel supported by their line manager in career development, and 65% find the feedback on their career development through performance reviews useful. When analysing answers based on gender, there was no statistically significant difference between men and women respondents (Appendix 1.3).</p> <p>Ongoing 1.3c: Encouragement to take up career development opportunities</p> <p>The 2023 staff survey reflected a disappointing decrease in responses to the question "I am encouraged to take up training and development opportunities," with only 60% positive responses. This may be attributed to the impact of COVID-19, which significantly</p>
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							<p>reduced opportunities for courses, conferences, and training events. We will revisit this question in the 2025 survey. Meanwhile, interim survey results indicate more positive feedback regarding line manager support and useful career development feedback, particularly for men (Appendix 2.3).</p> <p>Ongoing 1.3c: Showcasing career development opportunities</p> <p>Over the past five years, we have implemented various approaches to highlight career paths and progression. In 2020, we published case studies on our Staff Career Development & Support web pages Dick Vet Staff Stories The University of Edinburgh. Promotions are celebrated by the Head of School and at the college level. In recent years, we have increased our use of social media platforms like LinkedIn and Instagram to communicate promotions and case studies. We recognise the need to maintain internal resources such as the intranet for easy access. Nonetheless, we are pleased with the recognition and celebration of success that these case studies provide, which also highlights the increasing number of women achieving promotion within the School.</p>
AP 1.4	Improve recording detail on the promotion pathway.	Current promotion data reflect success rate at College level, but not at School level.	Collate formal applications for promotion at School level to allow analysis of promotion success from initial application to final decision.	Initiate from October 2019 (next promotion round)	HR	G	<p>Collation and review of evidence of data capture for all formal applications at School level and anonymous feedback at annual promotions workshop to interested staff.</p> <p>Progress 1.4: Detailed promotions data gathered for all categories of staff</p> <p>We now gather comprehensive annual data on promotion outcomes across all staff categories, including clinical, non-clinical, professional services, and academic (which encompasses both clinical and non-clinical staff). This detailed data allows for a thorough analysis of promotion trends and outcomes (Appendix 2.1).</p> <p>Additionally, feedback is provided to unsuccessful applicants through the HR representative on each promotion panel. This feedback mechanism is designed to support staff in understanding and addressing areas for improvement.</p>
AP 1.5	Review and restructure promotion criteria to better reflect the contemporary academic's	In line with the ever-growing global priority for teaching excellence (e.g. TEF), we need formalised recognition of	In October of this year the Principal formally established a working group with the remit of exploring how teaching is rewarded in the	2019-2024 Ongoing	University, HOS, HR, CSC, Unions		<p>Formalise the recognition of teaching in promotion so that it has similar value to research.</p> <p>Progress 1.5a: Formalise the recognition of teaching in promotion</p> <p>Academic promotion criteria for grade UE08-10 now requires important contributions to five pillars: education, research, knowledge exchange, management, and leadership and citizenship. Exemplars of excellence in student education are provided for applicants. and</p>

	role and responsibilities.	teaching exemplars in the WLM and career advancement criteria (e.g. establishment of a sole teaching track).	promotions process. Building on from the above at School level, the WLM and Annual Review process will specifically address and recognise these criteria in staff's responsibilities.		HR	G	<p>Increase the percentage of staff who feel their teaching is recognised and valued by the School to 90% (currently 85%).</p> <p>School teaching awards (EUSA and Celebrating Teaching event) formally recognised in the promotions process.</p>	<p>include recognition of awards and "runner up" prizes from the University, School and external institutions.</p> <p>As part of the Vet School's commitment to education, all educators on the BVM&S programme are required to obtain a recognised teaching qualification. In August 2024, the School launched the R(D)SVS Mentee/Mentoring programme, a direct route to achieving teaching accreditation through Advance HE. Currently, over 20 mentors and 40 mentees participate in this programme. Additionally, the Institute for Academic Development (IAD) offers the EDTA HEA programme, which many colleagues utilise for teaching accreditation, with some also serving as mentors for the programme. The School monitors staff holding teaching qualifications through People & Money (P&M) and MS Form systems, ensuring accurate records are maintained for both academic and non-academic staff members.</p> <p>In support of this, the R(D)SVS actively enhances teaching and teaching support through the annual calendar of teaching workshops, the SupportEdu SharePoint launched in 2023, and two annual staff teaching symposia (UG and PGT/CPD). These initiatives provide opportunities for staff to expand their knowledge and highlight their teaching contributions, reinforcing the importance of teaching within the School's academic framework.</p> <p>Progress 1.5b: Recognise teaching in the Annual Review</p> <p>The R(D)SVS has also embedded teaching reflection in the annual review process and in the WLM. A mandatory section titled <i>"Reflection on Learning and Teaching Contribution, Evaluation, and Planning"</i> has been included, further cementing the significance of teaching as an integral part of academic progression and staff development.</p>
AP 1.6	Identify and develop more inclusive promotion criteria to acknowledge external activities in esteem,	There is minimal formal recognition of excellence achieved in related activities outside the University, resulting in	Promotional criteria are established centrally (i.e. CMVM) and reward policies are currently being reviewed at College level. However, the School will	2019-2021	HR / CSC		<p>Staff Survey feedback indicates increase in percentage of staff who feel valued by the School and/or who feel fairly</p>	<p>Progress 1.6a: Promotion criteria recognise leadership and community</p> <p>The promotion criteria have been reviewed and now explicitly include leadership and community engagement as key factors in promotion decisions.</p> <p>Progress 1.6b: Staff feel increasingly valued, but gender differences are apparent</p>

	leadership and community.	acts of leadership and community potentially remaining unrecognised.	<p>nominate representatives to help inform reward policies and criteria.</p> <p>Working with central College we will push for formalised recognition of activities of high esteem in leadership and community roles (e.g. national or societal awards; Queen's honours) so that they contribute to promotion criteria frameworks.</p> <p>We will emphasise the importance of logging outreach, public engagement activities, honours and awards in PURE for all academic staff (clinical and non-clinical) in order to maintain a record at School and College level of these activities and accolades.</p>	<p>2019-2021</p> <p>2019-21</p>	<p>CSC/HR</p> <p>CSC / EB Open Access Administrator</p>	<p>A</p>	<p>rewarded to 80%.</p> <p>An increase in logging of these activities in PURE across all academic staff.</p>	<p>When asked if their contributions to the University are valued, responses differed significantly by gender: 39% of women agreed, compared to 56% of men (Appendix 1). In 2018, the overall agreement rate was 47%, dropping to 40% in 2023. However, when staff were asked whether their contributions were valued by their direct manager, the responses remained more stable: 66% agreed in 2018, 65% in 2023, and 76% in 2024. This suggests that while broader University-level recognition may need improvement, there is a positive trend in local manager-level appreciation of staff contributions within the School.</p> <p>Change 1.6a: Logging of activities in PURE</p> <p>The number of recorded activities in PURE has decreased since 2018 (Appendix 2.2). While this decline is likely influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic, other changes in reporting procedures also play a role. For example, corrigenda, which were previously recorded as separate outputs, are now linked to their original output. Although we don't have many of these instances, this change has affected overall reporting numbers. Academic staff reporting the outcome of grants including papers and other measures of successful completion are being increasingly directed to other funder-led resources such as ResearchFish, rather than PURE.</p>
AP 1.7	Enhance collaboration between CSC and the two	Improved links and more coordinated approach would improve	Increased interactive engagement between the three committees	Ongoing	CSC/ CDCs		<p>Increase in campus-wide and campus-funded initiatives such</p>	<p>Progress 1.7 Enhanced Operational Effectiveness of Campus-Wide Committees</p> <p>In early 2023, we formalised the establishment of the "Campus Experience & Culture Committee" (CECC) at Easter Bush. This committee now provides comprehensive oversight, planning, and</p>


	other campus career development committees (Roslin Career Development Committee [CDC] and PSASS CDC).	sharing of good practice, increase speed of progress on joint initiatives and provide insight into (and knowledge of) local issues.	including inviting a new member of each of the CDCs to sit on the CSC, providing pivotal communication routes. Continue with regular formal meetings between Chairs of three committees.	Ongoing	Committee chairs, Campus operating officer	G	as coaching programmes and Unconscious Bias training days. Joint PSASS and Academic initiatives.	coordination of the key activities undertaken by all "people-related" groups and committees across campus. The creation of CECC was driven by the need to foster enhanced collaboration, communication, and the sharing of best practices across the various areas that significantly impact staff experience, career development, and progression—namely EDI, Wellbeing, and Career Development initiatives (Appendix 4) Meeting bi-monthly, the CECC ensures that plans are effectively coordinated and activities implemented across the campus. The integration of these initiatives is designed to have a positive and measurable effect on career development and progression outcomes for staff. The campus also benefits from the work of three distinct Career Development Committees (CDC) focused on different staff categories: Research, Teaching, and Clinical and Professional Services. One example of their collaboration is the highly successful International Day for Women and Girls in Science event, which, although spearheaded by the Clinical and Professional Services CDCs, has become a campus-wide celebration. For the past two years, this event has showcased the invaluable contributions of clinical and research staff working in our clinical environment and has attracted widespread engagement across all campus communities.
AP 1.8	Continued provision of equal opportunities for membership to CSC via regular rotation of members, including Chair.	Rotation enhances innovation and increases the opportunity for staff and student involvement in committee structure. The committee should be represented by the majority of staff grades and student levels. For	Rotate voluntary membership of CSC for each role every ~3 years. Continued acknowledgement of School committee memberships as an exemplar of community and leadership in career advancement criteria.	From January 2019 January 2019	CSC CSC		Successful rotation of each committee member after three years. Increase in new initiatives to support career development and gender equality. Successful nominations and hand-over to new Chair	Progress 1.8: Improved Equality and Opportunity for Committee Members Since early 2021, the Easter Bush (EB) Campus has implemented measures to enhance equality and opportunities for committee members across campus-wide groups. Each committee continues to maintain its own focus, remit and direction, with particular attention given to fostering inclusive participation and leadership. Each committee reports to the CECC (Appendix 4). The successful rotation of committee members after three years is a key goal, ensuring that new perspectives are regularly introduced while providing opportunities for career development and leadership. Chairs and deputy or co-chairs are nominated and transitioned smoothly, allowing for fresh leadership while maintaining continuity. This requirement is incorporated into each committee remit: these were also revised within the last 5 years.

		instance, our UG students contributed to this submission (visible role models).	<p>Current Chair will step down and nominations will take place for a new Chair and deputy (or joint co-Chairs).</p> <p>Ensure that membership remains active and open to all, while maintaining mix of staff levels, students (UG and PG) and genders.</p> <p>Regularly review current gender and grade balance. While currently representative, this should be regularly monitored in terms of active participation in meetings, in order to uphold a representative and accountable committee during decision making processes.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>January 2019</p>	<p>CSC</p> <p>CSC</p>	<p>G</p>	<p>and deputy (or joint co-Chairs).</p> <p>Committee members are a good blend of genders and roles.</p> <p>Regular and active attendance of CSC meetings by committee members (meeting attendances minuted).</p>	<p>Committees are encouraged to maintain a balance of genders and roles, ensuring diversity in perspectives. In 2023, for example, it was identified that technicians were underrepresented on the CECC, prompting a call for their formal inclusion. Volunteers with specific areas of interest are actively welcomed, ensuring that all voices are represented.</p> <p>Regular and active attendance at CECC meetings by committee members is recorded in the meeting minutes, further contributing to the accountability and effectiveness of these groups.</p>
AP 1.9	Promote and establish successful leadership, mentoring and coaching programmes.	We have no formal "in-house" mentoring scheme for researchers available on a regular basis.	<p>In addition to championing the University's established and ongoing Mentoring Connections programme we will: Forge more formal links between research active</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>From January 2019</p>	<p>CSC</p> <p>CSC/Head of Veterinary</p>		<p>Increase percentage of staff who feel they have useful mentoring opportunities to at least 80% (currently 72%).</p>	<p>Change 1.9: Mentoring Opportunities and Programme Updates</p> <p>The University staff survey no longer specifically asks about mentoring opportunities, leaving us without a formal mechanism to measure mentoring engagement at this time. However, the University's Mentoring Connections programme continues to operate, offering mentoring to all staff on campus and supporting career development across various disciplines. All staff are formally offered this opportunity at each Annual Review.</p>

			senior School academics and early career researchers or early career clinicians with research interests via a matching process of willing individuals.	Annually	Clinical Research	G	Strive for continued female promotional success to UE09 (and beyond).	We have a very successful teaching mentorship programme though EdTA and local networks. We currently have over 20 mentors and 40 mentees on our teaching fellowship programme.
			Sustain our commitment to investing £8K annually in the successful coaching programme.	Annually	HR/CSC		Increase in new initiatives to support career development and gender equality.	<p>Progress 1.9a: Introduction of a Researcher Mentoring Scheme</p> <p>In 2023, we launched a dedicated mentoring scheme for researchers on campus, which has been met with significant interest. In its first year, 25 mentees were successfully paired with mentors, surpassing initial expectations and highlighting the demand for this type of support. While no formal feedback has been gathered from participants thus far, the establishment of a clear cohort of mentors and mentees provides a strong foundation for future evaluation and enhancement of the programme. Moving forward, we will actively assess the benefits and outcomes of this initiative and explore ways to expand and evolve it.</p>
			Continue to invest in, and promote, the Aurora programme for senior females (UE08 and above).	Ongoing	HR/CSC			One immediate observation is that there is a gap in mentoring opportunities for Professional Services and Administrative Support Staff (PSASS), as the current scheme focuses on researchers. While the University-wide Mentoring Connections programme remains available, we are considering extending our local scheme to include PSASS staff as well.
			Invest in and actively encourage senior (UE08 and above) female staff participation in University's 4-day leadership course.		HOS/HR			<p>Progress 1.9b: Commitment to Varied Leadership Development Programmes</p> <p>We continue to prioritise leadership development opportunities, maintaining our participation in the Aurora programme with four attendees per year (excluding the initial COVID-19 period). In addition to Aurora, we have actively engaged with the University's Aspiring Manager, Manager, and Leaders' development programmes, offering a broad range of training opportunities for staff.</p> <p>A new initiative, the <i>Dare to Lead</i> programme, was introduced for senior leaders on campus in 2022/23, with 27 senior managers participating. This programme aims to foster leadership skills and enhance management capabilities across the campus.</p> <p>While Aurora remains a key sector-led development programme for women, our broader focus over the past five years has been on expanding access to management development programmes for our female population. Since 2019, 70 women from our campus have</p>

								participated in University-wide programmes, further supporting their professional growth and leadership potential.
AP 1.10	Ongoing review and clarification of career pathway for clinical veterinary academics (an identified action point in our 2015 Silver application)	Increase understanding of grade criteria and exemplars of excellence required within the veterinary clinical track.	The career pathway for clinical academic staff has been successfully established and significant ongoing progress has been made (see Section 6: Case Study – “I received my Chair promotion prior to my PhD award, exemplifying that promotion is supported and achievable on academic and clinical performance alone, which is untraditional for many Universities”. Inclusion of the WLM during Annual Review has led to greater emphasis and delineation of teaching, clinical and research duties/tasks. We will build on the above points to create a transparent infrastructure for clinical career development and engage with senior staff to provide insight and	2019 onwards	HOS/HR/ in consultation with CSC, staff and unions.	G	First three exemplars to be available online by December 2020 (see AP 1.3).	<p>Progress 1.10a: Clarification of clinical veterinary academic career pathways</p> <p>In 2018, the Veterinary Academic Role profile (for Grades UE08-10) was developed (All Grade Profiles (ed.ac.uk)) to enable clinical activities to be considered alongside the other key aspects of academic work such as teaching, knowledge transfer, and research.</p> <p>Progress 1.10b: Increased visibility of career pathways</p> <p>As part of our commitment to making grade criteria and exemplars of excellence more accessible, we have created and expanded our dedicated career development website (Dick Vet Staff Stories The University of Edinburgh) which now includes “Dick Vet Staff Stories”—inspirational career blogs from 16 staff members across a variety of grades</p>

			exemplar routes for progression (e.g. drafting and publishing of career profiles available online to all relevant staff – see AP 1.3).					
AP 1.11	Formalise academic development of PSASS.	The School encourages academic progression of PSASS and offers routes via formal teaching or managerial roles. However, this process is not formalised.	We will instigate a formal mechanism to record progression of PSASS to academic, teaching or managerial roles.	2019	HR and CSC	G	Creation of a bank of more complete and accurate information regarding how many PSASS progress annually and which route they take (e.g. academic, managerial, teaching, further education, etc). This could be used to develop case studies to highlight possibilities to other PSASS and to guide promotions.	<p>Progress 1.11a Increased visibility of PS career success Career progression opportunities for PS staff are highlighted during our annual Technician's Day, and during the monthly CDC Open Hour events on campus. In addition, PS staff are included as case studies on our CDC website to highlight possible career pathways (Dick Vet Staff Stories The University of Edinburgh)</p> <p>Progress 1.11b Increased data collection for PS promotion Improvements in data collection have been made, so that PS-specific promotion and grading data are available (Figure F; Appendix 2.1)</p>
2. Striving for Work-life Balance								
Reference	Objective	Rational (motivation)	Further action planned	Timescale	Person Responsible	Status	Success Measure	Progress
AP 2.1	Reduce perceived and actual	2018 Staff Survey indicates	We will continue to promote flexible working through	Ongoing	HR		Encourage line managers to raise working	<p>Progress 2.1: Flexible working is supported During the COVID-19 pandemic, we successfully implemented flexible working arrangements to ensure the safety and well-being of</p>

	barriers to requesting flexible working.	reluctance of certain staff to request flexible working, particularly those with clinical or service duties.	<p>our "Support for Parents" booklet. This is given to all new staff / those going on carer-related leave and is also available online.</p> <p>Run another family friendly information workshop.</p> <p>Continue to review induction pack annually to ensure all family friendly/carer related information is up to date.</p> <p>To target perceived limitations of flexible working for clinical staff, we will arrange a Flexible Working Focus Group. This will encourage staff to voice their concerns and potential solutions to the CSC, whilst maintaining anonymity. The knowledge gained from this will be presented by the CSC to SMG.</p>	<p>2019</p> <p>2019 onwards</p> <p>By June 2019</p>	<p>Line managers</p> <p>HR</p> <p>CSC</p>	<p>G</p> <p>patterns and requirements during Annual Review process if appropriate, in order to ease perceived barriers of starting this dialogue from the employee's perspective.</p> <p>Increase proportion of staff who are aware of our flexible working policy to 75+% in next three years (currently 67%).</p> <p>Increase the proportion of staff who feel able to request flexible working (as assessed by Staff Survey) by at least 10% in next three years.</p>	<p>our staff. Clinic staff adapted to hybrid work models, combining remote and in-person interactions to minimise contact while accommodating varying schedules. This approach included flexible hours to meet individual needs and maintain operational efficiency. On campus teaching was transitioned to online platforms, utilising a range of digital tools to deliver content effectively. This shift to hybrid working where practicable has proved successful, and is now standard practice and actively role-modelled in all departments. Hybrid working has been further supported through regular hybrid meetings, allowing for both in-person and virtual participation, which has enhanced collaboration and inclusivity. The University Flexible Working Policy was updated in 2023 and our 2024 campus-wide survey indicates that 80% of respondents feel that flexible working arrangements are enabled (Appendix 1), reflecting a positive reception and effective integration of these practices into our daily operations.</p> <p>  flexible_working_policy_golden_copy1. flexible working policy golden copy1.pdf </p>
AP 2.2	Improve recording of flexible	Our data set captures successful requests for	Our Annual Review form includes a mandatory section requiring managers	Ongoing	HR	<p>Increase the proportion of staff who feel able to request</p>	<p>Progress 2.2a: Core working hours have been defined and set in place across campus.</p> <p>This is a new initiative (since 2022) at Easter Bush where meetings that involve key decision making are arranged on Tuesday-Thursday</p>

	working needs.	flexible working.	<p>to discuss future plans, career aspirations and personal/professional development needs.</p> <p>Managers are also required to complete a form in cases of rejection (such rejections are rare). We will annually review these forms to allow more regular analysis of all formal flexible working requests - not just those that are successful.</p>	2019	HR/Line managers	G	<p>flexible working (as assessed by Staff Survey) by at least 10% in next three years.</p>	<p>and between 1000-1600 wherever possible. This has been organised so that everyone can contribute and attend, especially those with caring commitments prior to and after work.</p> <p>Progress 2.2b: Line managers are supportive</p> <p>According to our 2024 interim staff survey, 79% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that their line manager is supportive.</p> <p>Ongoing 2.2: Recording Flexible Working Requests Accurately recording flexible working requests has been a challenge, primarily because these were previously tracked on paper and managed individually by line managers rather than being recorded centrally. With the introduction in 2022 of the University-wide HR and Finance system, P&M, a centralised dashboard has been implemented to streamline the recording of these requests, improving accuracy and accessibility. Unfortunately, data from the earlier HR system is not retrievable, which poses a limitation. Nevertheless, the new system represents a significant improvement and is expected to enhance the management of flexible working requests going forward.</p>
AP 2.3	Improve understanding and awareness of different types of parental leave.	Some staff seem confused about certain types of parental leave.	<p>As described in AP 2.1, continue to promote our "Support for Parents" booklet and run regular family friendly information workshops.</p> <p>Initiate a parental leave support group (voluntary members who have undertaken parental leave at the School), which can provide insight and advice to colleagues who intend to</p>	<p>2019 onwards</p> <p>2019 onwards</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>HR</p> <p>HR / Staff</p>	G	<p>Increase the proportion of staff who are aware of parental leave by at least 10%.</p>	<p>Progress 2.3: All family friendly policies are accessible from one site.</p> <p>A variety of leave, absence, and attendance options are available for staff, including a Returning Parents Coaching Programme. This information is now consolidated under the 'Family Friendly Policies' tab on the Easter Bush HR and Staffing page (Leave, Absence, Attendance, Returning Parents The University of Edinburgh), with additional links available through the CDC. We have discontinued the "Support for Parents" booklet due to its tendency to become outdated with changes in government, national, and local parental leave policies. By utilising webpages, we ensure that staff have access to the most current and accurate information. Our 2024 interim survey revealed that 72% of respondents felt adequately supported regarding caring leave, indicating positive feedback on our updated resources and support mechanisms.</p> <p>Family Friendly Workshops were not regularly undertaken between 2018 and 2024, largely because of the COVID pandemic. Instead, we have chosen to direct our efforts at signposting staff to the 'Returning Parents' Coaching Programme, which offers expert support to assist</p>

			<p>participate in the scheme. This could be run as part of the family friendly workshops.</p> <p>Emphasise and promote the University's pre-existing Parent Buddy Scheme through the family Friendly Workshops.</p>		HR/CSC			employees in transitioning back to work after Maternity Leave, Shared Parental Leave, or Adoption/Surrogacy Leave. All employees returning from these types of leave are eligible to apply for the programme, which provides four hours of one-on-one coaching with a dedicated expert.
AP 2.4	With our new campus nursery fully operational (Aug 2018) we will strategically evaluate its use, success and value to staff.	We anticipate that our state-of-the-art nursery will improve many aspects of working life (and life in general) for staff who are also parents.	<p>Add question to staff survey regarding the value-add of the nursery to staff. Monitor responses in Staff Survey.</p> <p>Monitor maternity return and retention rates and cross check any leavers or non-returners with exit questionnaire data to monitor reasons for not returning/leaving.</p>	<p>Annually from 2019</p> <p>Annually from 2019</p>	<p>HR/CSC</p> <p>HR/CSC</p>	G	<p>Over 60% of nursery customers (who are staff) agree that the new nursery has improved their work-life balance/workin g life.</p> <p>Bring percentage of PSASS returning and remaining following parental leave into line with academic staff.</p> <p>Increase the percentage of staff positively responding to questions relating to work life balance and working</p>	<p>Progress 2.4: The Campus Nursery is well received</p> <p>The campus nursery is now fully operational, providing care services to 78 children ranging in age from 3 months to the start of primary school. The Care Inspectorate conducted inspections of the nursery in December 2019 and January 2023, evaluating feedback from children, parents, and staff, as well as performing an in-person visit. On both occasions, all aspects of the nursery service were graded as 'good' or 'very good' (Appendix 1.4).</p> <p>An interim survey of parents conducted in April 2024 received responses from 32 families, including 11 University staff members and 1 University student. When asked why they chose the campus nursery, 16 families cited the quality of the facilities and staff, while 12 mentioned the convenient location. Several families also highlighted the benefit of the University's salary sacrifice scheme for paying nursery fees. The free-text responses were overwhelmingly positive (Appendix 1.4).</p>

						environment in Staff Survey (by ~10%).	
						Introduce additional questions relating to performance and voluntary feedback about the nursery in the Staff Survey.	
AP 2.5	Sustain and extend embedded family friendly initiatives from previous Silver and Bronze submissions, including the Family Support Award (Carers' Training Grants).	Upholding integration of AS principles.	<p>Promotion of open family friendly policies through our new "Support for Parents" booklet.</p> <p>Continue to support academic staff with the Carers Training Grant ("Family Support Award").</p> <p>Extend Family Support Award to PSASS.</p>	<p>Delivered to new starts monthly.</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>From 2019</p>	<p>HR</p> <p>HR</p> <p>HR</p>	<p>Bring percentage of PSASS returning and remaining following parental leave into line with academic staff.</p> <p>Increase the proportion of staff who are aware of parental leave by at least 10%.</p>	<p>Progress 2.5a: Carer leave The University provides up to 10 days' paid leave per calendar year (pro rata for part time employees) to help employees cope with unforeseen problems affecting their dependents and, from 1 April 2024, the University also introduced a new entitlement of up to 5 days (pro rata) unpaid carer's leave per year under the Special Leave Policy.</p> <p>Progress 2.5b: Baby changing facilities and breast-feeding facilities There are baby changing facilities available in three buildings within the Easter Bush campus (excluding the nursery, where additional facilities can be found) and a dedicated breast-feeding room with refrigerated storage facilities in the Hospital for Small Animals.</p> <p>Progress 2.5c: Financial assistance for childcare Our Childcare Costs for Conferences is detailed on the CDC website, and is advertised on campus intermittently. Since 2020, six applications were submitted and all were approved for a total of £1,252.17. Additionally, childcare fees for children at the on-campus nursery are funded via a tax efficient Workplace Nursery (salary sacrifice) Scheme.</p> <p>Progress 2.5d: Research into parental leave for residents In collaboration with the Royal College of Surgeons (Edinburgh) and Gender.ED, a cross-University hub for gender and sexualities studies from an interdisciplinary perspective, we are leading a body of research entitled, 'ECVS surgical training and parental leave: what is the current landscape and what can we learn to ease the transition?'</p>

3. Excellence in Organisation & Culture

Reference	Objective	Rational (motivation)	Further action planned	Timescale	Person Responsible	Status	Success Measure	Progress
AP 3.1	Further enhance our welcoming working environment to allow staff who are new parents to maintain contact during parental leave, should they so desire.	To facilitate parents' use of KIT days and attendance of social events/ seminars in the School.	<p>We plan to install a baby change facility in the Hospital for Small Animals (this is in addition to one already installed near our staff canteen within the School earlier this year).</p> <p>Establish reserve seating with extra space in seminars for increased accessibility with prams.</p>	<p>January 2019</p> <p>September 2019</p>	<p>HR</p> <p>CSC / Staff</p>	G	<p>Staff feel supported both during and after parental leave evidenced in the Staff Survey.</p>	<p>Progress 3.1a: Baby changing and breastfeeding facilities have been installed across campus (Appendix 2.3).</p> <p>Progress 3.1b: Seminars and lecture theatres have accessible and reserved seating for individuals with increased accessibility needs. Since COVID, all formal teaching is now recorded, and many weekly seminars and meeting are also available as hybrid sessions. This increases opportunities for attendance live or at a later time, which increases opportunity for engagement with carers.</p> <p>Progress 3.1c: Staff feel supported over caring leave In our 2024 interim staff survey (Appendix 1.3), 72% of staff agreed that they felt supported over caring leave. There was no difference in responses based on gender, but younger staff members were less likely to feel supported. Focus groups are planned to understand this variability in more detail.</p>
AP 3.2	Improve maternity return rates for PSASS.	Data on retention of PSASS is less positive compared to academic staff.	<p>Extend the Family Support Award to all PSASS.</p> <p>Monitor maternity return rates of PSASS in the wake of the campus nursery opening. Hold regular promotion drives for the College's parent buddy scheme to all staff. https://www.ed.ac.uk/medicine-vet-medicine/staff-and-current-</p>	<p>January 2019</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>HR</p> <p>HR/CSC</p> <p>HR</p>	G	<p>Increase percentage of PSASS returning following parental leave in line with academic staff return and retention rates.</p>	<p>Progress 3.2a: Financial assistance for childcare Family Support Award has been extended to all PSASS.</p> <p>Progress 3.2b: Return from maternity leave PSASS maternity return rates are now 96%, compared with 94% for Academic staff. Retention rates are favourable, with 81% and 91% of Academic staff and PSASS still in post 6 months after returning from maternity leave, respectively (Appendix 2.3).</p>

			students/equality-diversity/athena-swan/parent-buddy-scheme]					
AP 3.3	Improved recording of public engagement t.	Routes of documenting public engagement are not widely or consistently used, therefore currently limiting its recognition and impact.	Public Engagement activity has now been added to the WLM form. This will ensure that activities can be reported by gender in future.	2019 onwards	HR and Line manager	A	Reports can be created to highlight uptake of public engagement activity by gender.	Ongoing 3.3: Recording public engagement Improving the tracking of public engagements has been challenging due to the decentralised nature of staff-organised events, which are often not recorded or locally recorded. The introduction of P&M, in 2022 may enhance our ability to monitor staff contributions more accurately through a dedicated dashboard. However, this relies on individuals entering their data, and no historical data from the previous HR system has been transferred, complicating comprehensive reporting on public engagement prior to 2022. Despite these challenges, we have successfully recorded staff and student contributions to the Easter Bush Science Outreach Centre, including details such as job titles and pronouns. Additionally, we actively promote our public engagement efforts on social and printed media through our Marketing team, particularly large events such as the Royal Highland Show and BSAVA.

4. Recruitment Equality

Reference	Objective	Rational (motivation)	Further action planned	Timescale	Person Responsible	Status	Success Measure	Progress
AP 4.1	Detect and eliminate any biases in senior non-clinical recruitment.	Recruitment of senior (UE10) non-clinical females is very low.	Monitor non-clinical UE09 and UE10 recruitment data and promotion to highlight any trends in non-clinical senior appointments. Enhance recruitment procedure through formal review of outward facing images.	Annually from 2019 From 2019 Ongoing	HR/CSC HR/CSC HOS/HR		Increase number of non-clinical UE10 females at all stages of recruitment process with the ultimate aim of increasing those in post by 10% in next five years. 100% of SMG and Admissions team to have	Progress 4.1a: Female Representation at UE10 Recruitment data has been collected and analysed for academic and professional services staff (Appendix 2.4). As of 1st September 2024, we have achieved a notable increase in the number of female staff at UE10 level, bringing the total proportion to 42%, up from 33% in 2017/18. The proportion of non-clinical females at UE10 has remained stable at 40% for 2017/18 to 44% in September 2024. Although this figure has not changed significantly, it is important to note that the small size of this population means that fluctuations are less pronounced. Comparatively, this percentage is higher than the national average of 33% reported for 2021/22. More notably, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of non-clinical female staff at the UE09 level, rising from 53% in 2017/18 to 65% in September 2024.

			<p>Continue with promotions workshop programme; encourage open dialogues with line managers and HoS to discuss promotion prospects and allow reliable feedback.</p> <p>Provide specific E&D guidance when job descriptions/adverts are in preparation.</p> <p>Maintain mandatory Unconscious Bias training of all recruiters, including face to face Unconscious Bias training of senior management and admissions teams.</p> <p>Continue to review induction process following very recent changes to structure and induction pack.</p>	<p>January 2019</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Annually</p>	<p>HR</p> <p>HR</p> <p>HR/CSC</p>	<p>undergone Unconscious Bias training.</p> <p>Increase percentage of staff who have completed E&D and Unconscious Bias training to 90% (currently 73% and 64%, respectively) by 2020.</p> <p>Increase female satisfaction with the induction process in line with overall average (i.e. 90%) by 2020.</p>	<p>Of particular interest is the decrease in percentage of men shortlisted and then appointed compared to those that apply. This is apparent in academic and clinical cohorts, and further work is required to understand why the percentage of applicants who progress to shortlisting and appointment is not consistent between genders throughout the application progress.</p> <p>Progress 4.1b – Balanced Representation in Outward-Facing Images</p> <p>In the 2019/2020 academic year, the School Marketing & Communications team conducted a thorough review of all images used across web pages, social media, job promotion activities, and other resources. Since then, they have adhered to stringent guidelines to ensure balanced representation in all visual content, promoting diversity and inclusivity across all media. The University of Edinburgh have contributed outward-facing images to external organisations, including the listening service, Vetlife.</p> <p>Progress 4.1c: Academic Promotions Workshop</p> <p>We have maintained our well received annual workshop supporting academic staff as they prepare their submissions to the promotion panel. These are now recorded, as well as being in person /hybrid, and in addition to averaging 30-40 attendees each year, the recordings have been viewed over 100 times.</p> <p>In September 2024, we introduced additional informal discussion sessions led by recently promoted academics. These sessions provide a platform for sharing personal experiences and insights from the promotion process, offering practical support and guidance to colleagues navigating their own career advancement. This initiative, which will become an annual event, is designed to enhance peer support and transparency in the promotion process.</p> <p>Progress 4.1d: Comprehensive Equality and Diversity guidance now available</p> <p>In Nov 2022, the University introduced comprehensive new guidance on Diversifying Recruitment Diversifying Recruitment Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ed.ac.uk) This extensive toolkit of guidance and support covers the end-to-end recruitment process, as well as the preparation of job descriptions and adverts.</p> <p>Progress 4.1e: Continued Approval of Onboarding Processes</p>
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								<p>The approach to recording feedback on onboarding and induction has evolved significantly due to new working practices implemented during COVID-19 and changes in the P&M systems. A comprehensive University-wide process is now in place, designed to provide regular and detailed feedback on the onboarding experiences of new joiners to the Vet School. While this feedback is not currently broken down by gender, the most recent report, which includes feedback from 54 new joiners since May 2023, indicates that 90.7% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their joining experience was positive.</p> <p>Ongoing 4.1 – Unconscious Bias Training The "Challenging Unconscious Bias" and "Equality & Diversity Essentials" training courses are mandatory for all staff members across the campus and the wider University. The new HR system (P&M) means that compliance rates are not currently available, but efforts are ongoing to enhance the campus-wide reporting mechanisms for training completion rates, and currently managers mandate compliance locally during the Annual Review process. Future plans include formalising a regular refresher training cycle, likely every three years. This process will be supported by structured monitoring and automatic prompts from P&M to ensure compliance and timely completion of refresher courses.</p>
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5. Communication

Reference	Objective	Rational (motivation)	Further action planned	Timescale	Person Responsible	Status	Success Measure	Progress
AP 5.1	Evaluate and feedback on benefits of new campus-wide induction.	Campus induction for The Roslin Institute and the R(D)SVS is now combined, in response to feedback from staff (they used to be separate).	Measure effectiveness of campus-wide induction day through the creation of an induction evaluation survey.	From 2019 Staff Survey onwards	HR/CSC	G	Increase female satisfaction with the induction process in line with overall average (i.e. 90%) by 2020.	<p>Progress 5.1: Continued Enhancement of Onboarding Processes</p> <p>As stated in 4.1e, the approach to recording feedback on onboarding and induction has adapted to new working practices introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic and updates to the P&M system. The latest report indicates that 90.7% of respondents felt their joining experience was positive or highly positive.</p>

							Monitor any differences in responses by gender.	
AP 5.2	Continue to use staff feedback to improve induction process.	There is a need to keep pace with a fairly dynamic working environment.	Regularly update and refresh our induction process in line with staff feedback from the evaluation survey highlighted in AP 5.1.	Annually	HR/CSC	G	Demonstration of induction process changes that map to feedback.	<p>Ongoing 5.2: Continued Enhancement of Onboarding Processes</p> <p>Local induction processes were relaunched post-Covid in 2022 and have not been formally reviewed since. We have recently initiated a local feedback survey on the in-person campus event and are using this feedback to enhance current satisfaction levels. Key areas for improvement include increasing interactive elements (e.g. workshops or flipped classrooms) because the current program is largely presentation-led.</p> <p>For clinical staff, the induction process is led by the Head of Clinics and is updated annually to ensure that new starters are familiar with the most up-to-date Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), e.g. CDCs/WHO/NHS-based infection control policies. For teaching staff, the induction ensures that they are current with the latest BVMS curriculum and feedback practices, promoting consistency in both clinical and teaching environments.</p> <p>Overall, the University's joiners feedback survey reports that 90.7% of new joiners agree or strongly agree that their joining experience has been positive.</p>
AP 5.3	Improve value of staff exit questionnaire.	To increase understanding of reasons for leaving.	The Staff exit questionnaire is administered by central College HR so we will liaise with them to seek re-design of specific questions in the questionnaire, the aim being to increase granularity of the reasons people leave.	January 2019	HR/CSC	G	More focused understanding of why staff leave.	<p>Progress 5.3: Continued Enhancement of Exit Questionnaire Processes</p> <p>The processing of staff exit questionnaires has undergone significant improvements with the introduction of the People & Money (P&M) system. An automated, online questionnaire is now issued to every departing staff member. Since 2023, we have received detailed biannual reports specifically for the Vet School, in addition to comprehensive University-wide reports, which facilitate broader comparisons and analysis.</p>
AP 5.4	To enhance knowledge and understanding	To evaluate personal perceptions of advantage and disadvantages	Introduce staff exit interviews.	2019	HR/CSC		Assessment of exit interview forms, and feedback to relevant parties	<p>Progress 5.4: Continued Enhancement of Exit Questionnaire Processes</p> <p>The processing of staff exit questionnaires has undergone significant improvements with the introduction of the P&M system. An automated, online questionnaire is now issued to every departing</p>

	ng of staff leavers.	of our working environment; to understand reasons behind the decision to leave.				G	in order to propose necessary actions.	staff member. Since 2023, we have received detailed biannual reports specifically for the Vet School, in addition to comprehensive University-wide reports, which facilitate broader comparisons and analysis (Appendix 1.5)
AP 5.5	Establish permanent suggestion s boxes as a tool to monitor staff satisfaction and to engage staff in the problem-solving process.	To build on the substantial success of our <i>ad hoc</i> suggestions boxes (previous Silver application AP 4.2).	We will establish quarterly staff and resident suggestions boxes in critical areas of the School, e.g. clinics, staff rooms.	2019	CSC	G	<p>Quarterly response rates and additions to the "You Said... We Did" feedback to staff.</p> <p>Increase the percentage of staff who feel morale in the workplace is good (to 80%).</p>	<p>Progress 5.5a: Continuous Improvement of "Suggestion Boxes" and Staff Feedback Mechanisms</p> <p>While physical suggestion boxes were effective for several years, their limitations became evident during the Covid period. In 2024, the process was transitioned to an online form system, which continues to operate, with questions and answers now published on the campus intranet and on walls in the Vet School atrium. However, we no longer monitor "quarterly response rates" as this process is no longer target-driven.</p> <p>Since 2023, staff satisfaction has been monitored through a more structured approach, alternating bi-annual University-wide staff surveys with local campus-wide surveys based on the standard Athena SWAN question set. Additionally, other targeted surveys, such as the recent Communications Satisfaction survey, are employed to gauge staff views on specific issues. The ongoing co-creation exercise for the Strategic Plan 2025 also reflects our commitment to staff engagement and collaborative decision-making.</p> <p>Progress 5.5b: Continuous Monitoring of Staff Engagement</p> <p>We no longer include a specific question about "morale," recognising it as too broad and subjective. Instead, we focus on a set of structured, standardised questions from the University and Athena SWAN surveys to track various indicators of staff sentiment over time. In the first post-Covid survey conducted in 2023, 70% of staff responded positively to a question about their "sense of belonging to the School." This slight dip was anticipated, given the pandemic's impacts. However, in the 2024 interim survey, the positive response rate rose to 77%, and we plan to continue monitoring this metric in 2025.</p>

6. Undergraduate and postgraduate students

Reference	Objective	Rational (motivation)	Further action planned	Timescale	Person Responsible	Status	Success Measure	Progress
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AP 6.1	Improve gender balance of UG students.	Continued female dominance in number of UG students and applicants.	<p>Monitor number and percentage of male UG applications following our new initiatives. This is likely to be another long-term vision.</p> <p>Ongoing review of MMI process in terms of gender neutrality of tasks/stations.</p> <p>Continue to seek feedback from candidates on MMI process.</p>	<p>2018-2021</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>Annually</p>	<p>Admissions</p> <p>Admissions and CSC</p> <p>Admissions</p>	A	<p>Increase proportion of male UG acceptances by 2021 (up to 5%).</p>	<p>Progress 6.1a: Male UG applications have remained static The number and percentage of male UG applications has remained roughly static at 12-18% between 2018-2023 (Appendix 2.5), which aligns with trends seen across other UK institutions and the profession as a whole (Appendix 6.1). The proportion of offers made to applicants is consistent with the gender distribution of those applying.</p> <p>Progress 6.1b: Continuous Feedback and Improvement of MMI Process Funding has been secured for a data analyst to work on the combined Multiple Mini Interview (MMI) and admissions data, as well as to analyse course performance. Gender is one of the key aspects being examined, with findings indicating little difference in performance between genders across the MMI stations (Appendix 2.6).</p> <p>Annually, candidates and their guests are asked to complete an anonymous questionnaire following the MMI day. The feedback is analysed and discussed at the Admissions Committee each spring, as well as during the MMI debrief with the admissions team. This feedback is integral to refining the MMI process and planning. For instance, an analysis was conducted to address concerns raised by some applicants regarding potential disadvantages for those in the second or third MMI circuit, where candidates wait longer for their interviews. The data revealed no significant difference in performance based on the circuit number, ensuring that the process remains fair and equitable.</p>
AP 6.2	Closely monitor the percentage of female residents.	There has been a gradual reduction in proportion of female residents since 2014.	<p>Establish more reliable and accurate benchmarks for this unusual cohort by liaising with other veterinary schools via the Athena Swan veterinary network.</p> <p>Raise this as a focus with the Clinical Scholars (residents) Committee.</p>	<p>2018-2021</p> <p>2019</p>	<p>CSC</p> <p>Clinical Scholars Committee</p>	G	<p>Proportion of female residents aligns with more accurate national benchmarks by 2021.</p>	<p>Progress 6.2a: Resident gender distribution is comparable with other institutions The number of resident (DVetMed) postgraduate students has significantly increased from 13 in 2018/19 to 38 in 2022/23. However, during this period, the percentage of female residents (DVMS) has remained stable at around 58-62%. Although this is lower than the undergraduate female population of 86%, it is comparable with other veterinary schools (Appendix 2.7). In response, we collaborated with GenderED, a cross-University hub for gender and sexualities studies from an interdisciplinary perspective, to examine gender disparities in publishing and specialist-level conferences, and to identify and explore the underlying reasons for these disparities. Our findings have been submitted for peer review publication (Silent Voices: Uncovering Women's Absence in Veterinary Surgery Publications).</p>

							<p>SSRN: https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4971776) and were presented at national and international conferences.</p> <p>Progress 6.2b: Exploring barriers to women applying for residencies</p> <p>The proportion of female residents largely reflects the proportion of women applying for these roles (54-71%). Work-life balance is cited as a common reason for women's reluctance to apply for residencies, particularly for surgical disciplines. Therefore, we are undertaking a comprehensive study in collaboration with the European College of Veterinary Surgeons, entitled 'ECVS surgical training and parental leave: what is the current landscape and what can we learn to ease the transition?' This two-year project will be linked to our FAP.</p>
AP 6.3	Improve accessibility of financial support information to UG (and PG) students.	The CSC identified lack of clarity in the type of financial support available to UG and PG students.	Liaise with School and College E&D committees and Postgraduate Support and Advisory Committee to improve communication of financial support options available to UG and PG students (e.g. through student handbooks, personal tutor system, student welfare week, Freshers' week).	From 2019	CSC in conjunction with UG and PG support teams	G	<p>Clearer pathways to financial support easily accessed in standard student information outlets.</p> <p>Sustain high level of student satisfaction in National Student Survey.</p> <p>Progress 6.3a: Financial support and communication</p> <p>The Easter Bush EDI committee was restructured in 2020 and now includes a 'Socioeconomic Diversity and Inclusion' subcommittee, which actively engages with staff and students to understand and address their needs. This subcommittee holds workshops to gather feedback about financial hardship and organise events such as clothing drives and food bank exchanges. The committee conducted a survey in 2023, in collaboration with the CECC, to evaluate staff responses relating to costs associated with childcare, transport and the campus canteens, and ongoing actions were implemented to address the concerns identified. Additionally, the EDI committee promotes finance-friendly policies throughout the school via email, poster boards, and meetings.</p> <p>The University financial support information for UG and PG students has now been consolidated into one webpage: University financial support Student Administration (ed.ac.uk). Additionally, students can access emergency loans and help with budgeting via the Edinburgh University Students' Association</p> <p>Progress 6.3b: Student satisfaction</p> <p>Student satisfaction in the National Student Survey 2024 was 91% (Appendix 2.8)</p>

AP 6.4	Investigate a means of providing financial assistance to distance learning students who are in <i>bona fide</i> financial difficulties.	There is no apparent hardship fund for distance learning students.	Liaise with College and the committees in AP 6.3 to investigate how we can better support distance learning student.	From 2019	CSC in conjunction with School's online distance learning team	A	Establish a reasonable and manageable financial support mechanism for distance learning students in genuine financial need.	<p>Given the current financial climate, international barriers created by leaving the EU, and need to best support our undergraduate students and staff, we were not reasonably able to establish a financial support mechanism for distance learning students and have no plans to do so.</p> <p>However, our Global Academy of Agriculture and Food Systems (GAAFS) has developed infrastructure to deliver world-leading online teaching to postgraduate students from around the globe. (Appendix 2.9). The option to apply for the "Richardson Davidson scholarship" has been pivotal in allowing several overseas students to complete Master's degrees (Appendix 2.9). Two of the R(D)SVS PGT programmes are approved programmes as part of the MasterCard Foundation Scholars programme: One Health and Global Food Security and Nutrition. Each year we have a number of students join on each programme, on the PG Diploma or MSc pathway: Impact stories Global (ed.ac.uk)</p> <p>Additionally, the Vet School offers six free short online courses on the subject of Animal Health and Welfare.</p> <p>Distance learning students also now have a central hub that connects to Student Support, Technical Support, and Wellbeing Services. Online Students The University of Edinburgh</p>
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7. Beacon activity

Reference	Objective	Rational (motivation)	Further action planned	Timescale	Person Responsible	Status	Success Measure	Progress
AP 7.1	Increase Beacon activities	We have begun to share our approaches and experiences more widely but we will adopt a more proactive position.	Participate in - and share good practice through - existing networks (University of Edinburgh, Veterinary Schools' network). Continue to contribute to International Women's Day.	From 2019	CSC		<p>Cross-pollination of ideas leading to sharing and fostering of tried and tested practices.</p> <p>Representation of our CSC at the annual Athena Swan</p>	<p>Progress 7.1a: Staff career development website</p> <p>We have developed a user-friendly website that serves as a central hub for staff and students, providing easy access to a wide range of resources and opportunities related to career development, pastoral support, and more Staff Career Development and Support The University of Edinburgh</p> <p>This website offers comprehensive information on career development courses, opportunities, and resources. It also includes details about available funding opportunities, such as the Career Development Event Fund and the R(D)SVS Childcare or Caring Costs for Work-related Conferences.</p>

						<p>Veterinary Schools' network meeting.</p>	<p>In addition to these resources, we have created a page featuring biographical career blogs contributed by 15 members of staff. These blogs represent a diverse range of roles, spanning all pay grades from technicians to professors, and including nursing staff and educational directors.</p> <p>Progress 7.1b: Open Hour and increased accessibility to resources/signposting Each month, a designated member from each of the CDCs (Clinical/Professional Services, Teaching, Research) holds an Open Hour on campus. During these sessions, staff members are invited to seek assistance and guidance on matters related to career development, EDI. They are also encouraged to share ideas, provide feedback, or discuss any issues they may be facing. The feedback received during these Open Hours is then taken to either the overarching Career Development Committee or the Campus Experience Culture Committee. Alternatively, staff members are signposted to the appropriate channels to access the support or resources they require.</p> <p>Progress 7.1c: Increased work with primary schools The R(D)SVS has organised a series of events to celebrate Beacon days and promote inclusion, diversity, and equality. These events include an annual celebration of the International Day of Women and Girls in Science, which features in-person visits to local primary schools for science workshops, as well as live lecture series on the history and future of women in science. Certain components of these events have been documented on our website, including an online 'Meet a Scientist' session and a 'Women in Science Exhibition', using positive images across genders. International Day of Women and Girls in Science The University of Edinburgh</p> <p>Furthermore, members of the R(D)SVS have actively participated in the Primary Science Teaching Trust's 'A Scientist Just Like Me' initiative. This initiative has received excellent feedback from primary school pupils across the UK.</p> <p>Progress 7.1d: Increased engagement with other colleges across the University We have fostered excellent relationships with other colleges across the University to align our work towards improving gender equality. For example, our collaboration with GENDER.ED and the Institute</p>
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							<p>for Advanced Studies in the Humanities at the University of Edinburgh recently culminated in an international event titled, 'Change the system, not the women: women's academic leadership in STEMM' In addition, members of the CECC, CDC and EDI committees sit on University and College-level committees, as well as the University Senate, to promote cross-collaboration and to link our Campus activities with the wider community.</p> <p>Progress 7.1e: Increased engagement with press and publicity Our Beacon days have been well received locally and nationally. Several press articles have been published, including:</p> <p>MRCVOnline Edinburgh University group inspires future women scientists</p> <p>The Underrepresentation of the Majority: Women in Veterinary Medicine GENDER.ED GENDER.ED is a cross-University hub for gender and sexualities studies from an interdisciplinary perspective</p> <p>International Day of Women and Girls in Science - Bulletin (ed.ac.uk)</p>
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Course	Date
Working effectively with Industry	17/09/2024
Conferencing and Networking	28/08/2024
Negotiation Skills for Researchers	28/05/2024
Wrangling your Workload	01/05/2024
Productivity at home	23/11/2023
Change and Cultural Change	01/11/2023
Research management	12/10/2023
Research Strategy and Vision	13/09/2023
Narrative CV	05/09/2023
Neurodiversity & Co-occurring Conditions	05/06/2023
Neurodiversity & Autism In the Workplace	12/04/2023
Stress and Resilience	15/02/2023
Make the Most out of your Postdoc	07/02/2023
Impostor syndrome workshop	25/01/2023
Autism awareness session	05/12/2022
Ideas2Impact event: Academia vs Industry	23/11/2022
Grant writing course	01/11/2022
Annie Fenwick visit to exchange ideas on gender equality	08/08/2022
Challenges, innovation and careers in the poultry sector	11/07/2022
Postdoctoral society trip to Fribush	01/05/2022
Science and ethics through film	23/03/2022
International Women's Day Seminar ()	02/03/2022
International Day of Women and Girls in Science	11/02/2022
Managing teams and collaborations	20/07/2021
Being a self-advocate	06/07/2021
Strategy and vision for Early Career Researchers	30/06/2021
Careers beyond Academia	22/06/2021
Career paths of women in science	10/06/2021
Giving effective feedback	07/06/2021
MultiMind Challenge	27/04/2021
Introduction to public engagement	25/03/2021
Coaching through Covid	04/12/2020
Consultancy: how can I benefit from it?	16/11/2020
Eureka! I have an invention... now what?	05/10/2020
Unconscious bias awareness	01/09/2020
Mental health and home working	27/08/2020
Translational research	03/08/2020
The secret lives of working dads	26/05/2020
Team dynamics	15/05/2020
BBSRC translational funding	05/05/2020
Marketing: Strategy & tactics for success	28/02/2020
Marketing: Why is it important to me?	07/02/2020
Emotional Intelligence	17/01/2020
Ease the load	19/11/2019
Getting what you want from your career	11/11/2019
Making the most of your postdoc	11/11/2019
Converge Challenge	01/11/2019
What is REF and what does it mean for me?	28/10/2019
Support for translational research	25/10/2019
ERAMUS+ for staff	10/10/2019
Seven principles of relationship management	27/09/2019
Queering science: the importance of LGBTQ+ diversity	04/09/2019
Collaboration & careers with Industry	27/06/2019
Understanding paternal mental health	23/06/2019
Careers beyond academic research	21/06/2019
Focus, plan, attack!	30/04/2019

Coaching for Success	25/03/2019
Digital Footprint training	13/03/2019
Enterprise drop-in and info sessions	11/03/2019
International Women's Day seminar	07/03/2019
Work/Life balance coffee & cake	06/03/2019
Grant writing course	22/02/2019
Mini-symposium on BBSRC Discovery Fellowships	06/02/2019
Visit by the Digital Skills Team	24/01/2019
Principal's medal at graduation ceremony	30/12/2018

Table D: Courses organised by the CDCs/CECC relevant to delivery of Silver Action Plan

Methodology of Implementation, Action and Evaluation

The **CECC holds the primary responsibility for executing the Action Plan and updates the SET on its progress**. The CECC includes members from all pertinent staff committees, such as the CDC and EDI committees. Their mandate is to foster active staff engagement to improve the overall staff experience, routinely review staff feedback and opinions, and utilise these insights to develop impactful campus-wide initiatives. Additionally, the CECC ensures that any significant concerns are communicated to the SET, along with recommendations or suggestions for remedial actions.

Going forward, **two Athena Swan sub-groups** will work to realise the actions in the FAP and report to the CECC. One subgroup will focus on quarterly **data analysis** of the compulsory datasets (**Appendix 2**) and survey data (**Appendix 1**). A second subgroup will work with the CDC, EDI committees and College committees to **monitor progress against the FAP and review timescales** as required. This sub-group will work closely with the CECC to carry out additional actions that may arise and revise the FAP accordingly. We will assess progress and the effectiveness of these actions through quantitative analysis of survey and engagement data, as well as qualitative analysis from focus groups and free-text survey comments.

Reflection on Amber Progress

Over 80% of the action points in our Silver Action Plan were completed as evidenced by green status.

We recognise that significant barriers have hindered the full implementation of some action points. A critical area for improvement over the next five years is the thorough analysis of local and University-wide surveys, alongside data on staff and student numbers, grades, applications, and promotions, with a specific focus on gender and other characteristics to evaluate intersectionality. Timely feedback is essential for enabling effective interventions, action implementation, and ongoing monitoring of the Action Plan. To ensure this, regular CECC meetings (every two months), overarching CDC meetings (quarterly), and updates to/from the SET through the R(D)SVS Associate Dean for EDI (quarterly) will be key moving forward. This collaboration will be seamless between the Vet School and the Roslin Institute, in recognition of our shared values and Easter Bush community, and in anticipation of a joint Gold Athena SWAN submission in 2027.

Additionally, increasing the frequency of data and metrics analysis, as well as conducting quarterly meetings with two joint Easter Bush Athena SWAN subgroups, will strengthen the effectiveness of delivering the FAP. These subgroups, alongside the CECC, will serve as our core Self-Assessment Team (SAT).

Another priority is understanding why survey responses differ between genders, age, grade and job type. To address this, we will collaborate with teams and consultancy groups to develop focus groups, gather qualitative data and guide targeted initiatives.

Barriers to Implementation

The most significant barrier to implementing our Action Plan was the COVID-19 pandemic. Teaching across the University transitioned entirely online. While the shift to virtual learning allowed for the continuity of education and originality in content development, practical hands-on training, especially for clinical year students, was significantly affected. To mitigate this, clinical educators operated in small, isolated bubbles to ensure that essential clinical teaching was minimally disrupted. The nature of this arrangement limited flexibility, particularly for staff with caregiving responsibilities, which may have disproportionately affected women. This likely contributed to the lower levels of career satisfaction and progression for some.

Overall, analysis of survey responses between 2018 and 2023 revealed a reduction in positivity across themes: this likely reflects the Covid-19 pandemic, cost of living crises etc. While we managed to adapt and innovate in some areas, the pandemic inevitably diverted focus from certain strategic goals, including aspects of our Silver Action Plan. It also had a major impact on staff and student mental health and wellbeing. The long-term effects of the pandemic on our success, as measured by publication rates, grant applications, and other professional measures, are not yet apparent. We will address potential impacts on applications for and success in promotions in the FAP, especially where gender-based and caregiving responsibilities, or other inequalities, intersect.

Main Learnings and Outcomes

1) Data Collection, Analysis and Self-Assessment can be improved

Our current ability to identify potential areas of bias in detail remains limited, a challenge compounded by the implementation of the new data collection system. This situation underscores the necessity for continuous refinement of our data collection processes to enhance our capacity for thorough analysis and self-assessment. While we can quantify gender inequality, assessing the nuances of intersectionality presents challenges that we aim to address.

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted our self-assessment of progress toward the Action Plan; however, recent structural changes, including the establishment of the Campus Experience and Culture Committee (CECC), and the appointments of the R(D)SVS Associate Dean for EDI and School Culture and Engagement Manager, have strengthened our framework for implementation and evaluation. We are re-establishing our self-assessment teams to meet regularly, providing feedback to the CECC, which will oversee action implementation in collaboration with the SET.

2) Gender inequality persists

While gender representation among our academic staff has improved, inequality remains, especially at the professorial level. This is striking given the global increase in female representation in the veterinary profession over the past 30 years. The trend extends to our professional services, particularly veterinary nursing, which is largely female-dominated. Further research is needed to attract more male nurses and veterinary students, potentially in collaboration with the RCVS.

Although academic promotion success rates for men (100%) from 2019/20 to 2023/24 are high, women's success rates are lower (87-94%). This disparity raises questions about the small number of male applicants and the potential existence of gender discrimination. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has also hindered our focus groups aimed at addressing promotion and career advancement strategies; however, we have implemented new initiatives through our Career Development Committees (CDCs) and our commitment to the annual Academic Promotions Workshop.

Recent survey results show a decline in training and development satisfaction. This decline is likely attributable to the restrictions imposed by COVID-19 on access to training events. While perceptions of career progression are similar across genders, women report more support (54%) compared to men (44%), who also feel they receive less useful feedback. This indicates a need for equitable mentorship and development opportunities. Addressing these disparities and improving support for transgender staff will be essential moving forward.

3) The importance of career development through training, mentoring and promotion

Previous surveys and external reports highlighted gaps in understanding promotion policies and flexible working options. To address this, we have ensured that information about the promotion process and flexible working is widely disseminated. The 2024 interim survey showed that 80% of respondents feel their role allows flexible working, but only 53% believe promotion decisions are fair, indicating that further efforts are needed to enhance transparency in this area.

We have made significant strides in providing a wide range of training opportunities for our staff and postgraduate students (**Table E**), and we remain committed to continuing these initiatives.

4) *Wellbeing, and widening our support for this, is crucial*

There is growing evidence of the significant impacts of neurodiversity among our staff and students, highlighting the need for appropriate adjustments. This includes addressing gender and culture-related inequalities in the diagnosis and disclosure of neurodiversity. We also recognise the growing impact of socioeconomic inequity, particularly among students and staff at lower pay grades. To enhance our mental health initiatives, a campus-wide Mental Health and Wellbeing committee coordinates communications and training programmes.

5) *Culture is improving but barriers continue to impact our staff and students*

The 2019 Culture Builders research highlighted the need for a deeper understanding of how our institutional culture impacts both staff and students. While subsequent group and one-to-one discussions led by Culture Builders did not initially identify major concerns, analysis of the 2024 Interim Staff Survey (**Appendix 1.3**) revealed persistent gender-based differences in experiences of bullying and harassment. These findings have remained consistent with results from the 2018 and 2023 surveys, indicating limited progress in addressing these issues despite previous initiatives. This underscores the need for broader institutional change.

To address these challenges, we plan to increase engagement with the University Behaviours Charter (included below), ensuring all staff and students are aware of this resource and the support it offers. Additional training will continue to be provided for all staff, including essential programs like "Don't Cross the Line" and "Dare to Lead," which have already been introduced for managers. The current co-creation activities to develop the School's new Strategic Plan 2025–30 has undertaken workshops with staff to identify core values and behaviours for the campus and the future communication and delivery of the plan will offer an additional approach to allow us to reinforce expectations on our values and behaviours.



behaviours_charter.pdf

[PowerPoint Presentation](#) (Behaviours Charter link)

2.2 Key priorities for future action

We have thoroughly reviewed our data to assess progress on our current Silver Action Plan and to identify areas for further development. We have used this analysis and our main findings over the previous award period, in addition to 2023 and 2024 survey data, to identify five key priority areas.

Key Priority Area 1: Data Collection, Analysis, and Self-Assessment

We will conduct **biennial surveys in 2026 and 2028**, incorporating Athena SWAN-specific questions during the years when University-wide staff surveys are not held. Vet School-specific data from the **University staff surveys in 2025, 2027, and 2029** will also be analysed to track progress. All survey outcomes will be evaluated with a gendered lens, enabling the CECC and CDC to refine and adjust the Future Action Plan (FAP) as needed.

The **SAT will collaborate with HR partners** to enhance the analysis of intersectionality and other protected characteristics alongside gender, ensuring a more comprehensive understanding of equity challenges. Additionally, we will **improve the tracking of onward destinations and career progression** for staff through exit interviews and student success rates.

We will conduct regular assessments of all available data—spanning surveys, gender balance, promotions, and postgraduate student metrics—across pay grades and job types. To further our commitment to diversity, we will maintain gender balance on the SAT while increasing representation from BAME and LGBTQ+ communities.

Data will be presented annually at the new CECC Symposium to foster engagement, promote transparency, and encourage wider dissemination across the organisation.

Key Priority Area 2: Addressing Gender Inequalities

Our findings highlight **persistent gender inequalities**, particularly regarding the underrepresentation of females in senior academic roles and specific grades. Despite improvements in gender representation, inequities remain, **notably at the UE10 level**. Promotion application and success rates reveal gender imbalances, with women's success rates ranging from 87-94%, compared to 100% for male applicants between 2019/20 and 2023/24. This disparity suggests a need for focused action to understand and address the barriers women face in advancing their careers.

To tackle these inequalities, we will establish a series of initiatives including **workshops and training courses** designed to explore the reasons behind the gender gaps in promotion and senior representation. These initiatives will also include a **Library** of successful promotion applications, and tailored mentoring and career development programs to support staff in navigating the promotion process. We will also examine the **effectiveness of our recruitment practices** and make adjustments to ensure they promote diversity and inclusivity.

A **working group** will be formed, comprising female members of the Vet School Executive Team Team (SET), the Culture & Engagement Manager, and staff from UE08 and UE09 grades. This group will focus on **identifying barriers to career progression** and perceptions of the promotion process. Through internal workshops, we will investigate whether the gender disparity in success rates reflects broader issues such as the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on female staff. Where necessary, additional coaching, leadership training, and mentoring opportunities will be made available (see Key Priority Area 3).

In terms of **flexible working**, we will conduct a review of policies related to parental and adoption leave, with a focus on supporting those returning to work after career breaks. We will **improve communication to increase awareness** of these policies, particularly amongst younger members of staff and those at lower grades.

Furthermore, several future actions will address key challenges at various stages of the career pipeline for women, with an emphasis on **nurturing female talent into senior roles**. We will also improve recruitment strategies to attract more women externally. In addition, a **series of interactive sessions** will be held for staff interested in transitioning between Professional Services (PS) and academic careers. These sessions will feature insights from staff who have successfully made these transitions, providing guidance and support for others considering similar paths.

A **local survey**, planned for late 2025, will gather insights into training requirements. Early discussions suggest a preference for secondment opportunities in areas such as research operations and scientific services. This feedback suggests that case studies or interactive sessions between Professional Services (PS) and academic staff would likely be well-received. Future surveys will analyse responses related to training needs by gender to identify any disparities (see also Key Priority Area 3).

Key Priority Area 3: Career Development and Training

Our focus on career development and training will enhance mentoring opportunities and promote a more equitable environment. We will **expand our mentoring program** by training additional mentors, with a specific aim to increase the representation of male mentees to achieve a balanced cohort. The Career Development Committees (CDCs) will identify additional training needs for staff across academic, technical, and professional services roles, ensuring diverse representation within each committee. Prioritising mentoring and training for both mentors and mentees will be essential for the growth of academic and professional services staff.

To support promotion applications, we will organise workshops and targeted support sessions for all staff, ensuring that resources are accessible and equitable. Additionally, we will facilitate recruitment and promotions workshops tailored to the needs of academic and professional services staff.

Key Priority Area 4: Promoting Wellbeing and Inclusivity

The impact of gender on discussions surrounding mental health issues and the diagnosis and support for neurodiversity needs further assessment. We recognise that stigma and barriers to disclosure can significantly affect staff and students, and we are committed to implementing robust support mechanisms.

To strengthen improving mental health initiatives, we will **increase the number of trained mental health first aiders** on campus and provide comprehensive training for all line managers to ensure they are equipped to support their teams effectively. Additionally, we will host workshops specifically addressing **men's mental health issues**, recognising the unique challenges faced by this demographic. Our peer-support network will continue to thrive, providing safe spaces for open conversations across campus.

We will identify **neurodiversity champions** who will advise the Culture and Engagement Committee on Culture (CECC) and the broader community, and we will create dedicated quiet spaces and provide specialised equipment as necessary. Training will be offered for all staff and students, as well as those involved in recruitment processes, to foster a more inclusive environment.

Survey responses indicate that while female staff generally report positive experiences in managing work-life balance, there remains room for improvement, particularly in understanding the gender disparities in these perceptions. To support this, we will develop **tailored resources for individuals returning to work from parental or career breaks** and ensure that we meet the needs of **LGBTQAI+ and BAME communities**.

Furthermore, we will host **menopause workshops** for all staff and actively contribute to the continued promotion and evolution of a comprehensive menopause policy in collaboration with the University.

In addition to these initiatives, we will enhance communications to increase awareness of our trans equality policy. We will review reasonable adjustments for staff and students and conduct **disability building**

reviews (especially changing facilities for surgery within our hospitals) to ensure our environments are supportive and inclusive for all.

Key Priority Area 5: Fostering a Positive Workplace Culture

Our findings underscore the **persistent challenges around bullying and harassment**, and a general lack of satisfaction with how such issues are addressed. Despite previous efforts, survey results indicate that gender-based differences in experiences of bullying remain, and many staff still express low confidence in the current mechanisms for handling these concerns. We will introduce tools for anonymous reporting, including an online suggestion box, to ensure staff have a safe and confidential way to voice their concerns.

In line with the University of Edinburgh's dignity and respect policy, we will actively promote the **University Behaviours Charter as a guiding framework for setting cultural expectations**. This includes increasing staff and student engagement with the Charter, ensuring all members of the Vet School community are aware of the values it upholds.

A key element of our strategy will also involve **strengthening communication** around the reporting mechanisms and increasing the visibility of existing resources, such as the safe space on campus, where individuals can raise concerns.

Section 3: Future action plan

3.1 Action plan

Future Action Point (FAP)	Objective & Rationale	Actions and Timescale	Person or Team(s) Responsible for Leading	Measure(s) of Success
<i>1. Data collection, analysis and self-assessment</i>				
1.1	<p>Administer regular departmental surveys alongside university-wide surveys and monitor participation.</p> <p>The departmental and university surveys are crucial for our self-assessment process. Running them annually and ensuring high participation is key in ensuring a thorough self-assessment allowing assessment of gender bias and intersectionality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design, administer and analyse one campus-wide survey at least every other year (2026, 2028 using Advance HE/Athena Swan core questions as a basis). Participate in analyses of UoE-wide surveys in 2025, 2027, 2029 Monitor survey participation rates and collect gender/age/job/grade-disaggregated participation data within 3 months of each survey. Analyse survey results and provide outcomes assessed by gender to CECC for implementation of actions (by 6 months following each survey). 	<p>Self-assessment teams (SAT)</p> <p>Culture and Engagement Manager</p> <p>RI DD (Culture & Diversity); R(D)SVS Associate Dean for EDI</p>	<p>Administer campus-wide surveys and achieve greater than 50% participation in 2026. Survey participation to increase by (at least) a further 5% in 2028.</p> <p>Survey response rate to increase from 33% reported in the University survey 2023 to 50% by 2025 and at least a further 5% increase in each of 2027 and 2029.</p> <p>Maintain reflective representation of respondents between genders, age groups, job types, and pay grades.</p> <p>Receive data from each survey within 3 months of completion and finalise data analysis within 6 months. Compare trends between surveys.</p> <p>Provide a report to CECC and SAT to enable assessment of progress towards specific Action Points and implementation of further Actions as required.</p>

1.2	<p>Streamline data collection and conduct more granular analysis of data on job grades (academic, PS), promotions, application success rates</p> <p>In order to effectively carry out a continuous process of self- assessment and improvement, we need to improve the granularity of the data being made available. This will reduce the burden on our data analysis team and allow us to identify areas for targeted intervention and changes to the FAP as required. This will also allow us to assess intersectionality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust recruitment and interview data collection processes to enable easier reporting (by 2025). Report data for each grade rather than including two grades together in some reports (e.g., UE06/07 and UE08/09). Add role type for PTO staff for overall distribution across grades as well as genders, and for application and success rates for recruitment and promotions. Devise and implement core EDI data questions for grant applications, recruitment and promotions (by 2025). Review the exit interview and leaver's survey to allow recording of onward destinations (2025). 	<p>Culture and Engagement Manager</p> <p>HR Manager</p> <p>RI DD (Culture & Diversity); R(D)SVS Associate Dean for EDI</p>	<p>Data analysis can provide detailed assessment across grades, job types and account for gender as well as enable analysis of intersectionality (2025).</p> <p>Accurate reporting of leaver's information for staff and students (2025).</p> <p>Share good practice for EDI monitoring questions for grant success, recruitment and promotions (by 2025).</p>
1.3	<p>Improve training data collection and monitoring</p> <p>For compulsory training courses e.g., unconscious bias, it has been difficult to accurately record whether staff and PGR students have completed the training. This has traditionally relied on individual training records.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff to undertake compulsory training courses via the UoE LEARN system (each year starting from August 2024) and devise mechanisms to send annual training reminders and ensure compliance (by 2026). Review training data annually and monitor effectiveness of new system. 	<p>RI DD (Culture & Diversity); R(D)SVS Associate Dean for EDI</p> <p>Culture & Engagement Manager</p> <p>HR Manager</p>	<p>In each reporting year >90% completion rates for unconscious bias training.</p> <p>In each reporting year >90% completion rates for other EDI-related mandatory training courses.</p>
1.4	<p>Run regular self-assessment of the data</p> <p>Regular analysis of the data by the data analysis team/SAT will allow us to identify trends that require actions to be implemented through the FAP, or where the FAP requires modification.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data to be made available via a Sharepoint site that can be accessed by the self-assessment team (twice annually). Data analysis team/SAT to meet to review the data for gender-based trends (or other trends related to protected characteristics where the data is available). Report to CECC and use the analysis to inform and adjust the action plan where needed. 	<p>HR Team</p> <p>SAT</p>	<p>Self-assessment conducted and highlights/areas for implementation reported to CECC and to SET bi-annually.</p>

1.5	<p>Monitor progression and attainment of students</p> <p>There is overrepresentation of women, particularly in the undergraduate veterinary and nursing populations. This is reflective of the profession as a whole.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor student attainment rates, implementing actions to further support for male students if deemed necessary (annually). • Investigate barriers to female DVetMed student enrolment (end 2026). • Engage with RCVS, Vet Schools Council and other UK Vet Schools to lead work into understanding why men are less likely to become veterinary surgeons and nurses compared with women (end 2026). 	<p>Head of PGR and PGT RI DD (Culture & Diversity); R(D)SVS Associate Dean for EDI</p>	<p>Where PGT courses are run equal numbers of male and female passes, merits and distinctions.</p> <p>Perform body of research on barriers to women applying for residencies in collaboration with other leading institutions ('ECVS surgical training and parental leave: what is the current landscape and what can we learn to ease the transition?' planned in collaboration with ECVS and RCSed for (2025-2026)</p> <p>Raise awareness of the Staff Scholarship scheme (end 2025).</p> <p>Gather data for numbers undertaking Staff Scholarship awards (by 2026) and add data for analysis by the SAT.</p>
1.6	<p>Maintain balance on the SAT and CECC</p> <p>The SAT and CECC will review the FAP taking into account findings from the survey(s) and data provided by the data analysis team. The CECC is a large committee and represented currently by LGBTQAI+, BAME and neurodiverse individuals. Currently the balance of genders is ~50%.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain gender balance and representation of LGBTQAI+, BAME and neurodiverse individuals on committees. • Succession planning and recruitment of new members according to the ToR should take into account overlap of roles so that there are not gaps in analysis due to members leaving or changing roles (review ToR for all committees in 2026 and 2028). 	<p>CECC SAT</p>	<p>Review of CECC and SAT membership and recruitment of members as required.</p> <p>Maintain representation of LGBTQAI+, BAME and neurodiversity on CECC, and equal gender balance across committees.</p> <p>Succession planning for members, particularly for Chairs (by 2026).</p>

1.7	<p>Improve communication between CECC and the whole Easter Bush campus</p> <p>By promoting active dialogue and increasing visibility, we aim to create a more cohesive and inclusive culture across all committees and campus staff, ultimately improving engagement, awareness, and shared ownership of our cultural initiatives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host an annual Culture Symposium where heads of CDCs and EDI Committees present data from their committee's analyses and work over the past 12 months, benchmarked against the FAP and external criteria (e.g. Towards-a-Fairer-Future-1.pdf (vetschoolscouncil.ac.uk)) • Items would also include promotion of planned courses (e.g. career development or mental wellbeing courses), or socio-economic committee-led initiatives. • Ask "You said, we did" with feedback on action taken from previous symposiums. • Organise option for annual focus groups and gather staff feedback through these discussions. • Improve signposting for family-friendly policies, flexible working, and career development opportunities. • Continue monthly open hours for CDCs. 	<p>Culture and Engagement Manager CECC</p>	<p>Increasing Symposium attendance over the next 5 years and positive feedback on its usefulness (surveyed post-event).</p> <p>Improved communication reflected in staff questionnaire responses, with no difference in responses between genders, ages, job types or grades.</p> <p>Increased awareness of committees, leading to higher engagement from staff. Survey responses to improved signposting and access to these courses.</p> <p>Greater likelihood of co-creating culture initiatives (improved response to 'I belong' question in staff survey, with no difference in response between demographics).</p>
2. Supporting gender equity across all staff and students				
2.1	<p>Understand gender inequality in academic grades UE08 and above</p> <p>The number of female academic staff at Professor (Grade UE10) is still <50%, despite overrepresentation of women at UE09 and below.</p> <p>We wish to determine the factors that impact female staff applying internally for promotion to UE09 and UE10.</p> <p>There is a need to dissect the factors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run a series of 1:1 and focus group sessions with current staff in academic grades UE08 and above to discuss factors that influence their decisions to apply (or not) for promotion. Provide feedback (anonymised as requested by staff members) to the SET for review (2025). This will be conducted in collaboration with consultants from the School of Politics and Social Science, and Gender.ED, a cross-University hub for gender and sexualities studies from an interdisciplinary perspective. 	<p>RI DD (Culture & Diversity); R(D)SVS Associate Dean for EDI Culture and Engagement Manager</p>	<p>Identification of positive actions to address gender inequality at senior academic grades and development of an action plan.</p> <p>Implementation of coaching and mentoring for female staff at UE08 and UE09.</p> <p>Series of case studies available on our website and short talks delivered to EB staff and</p>

	underlying this including potential disparity in the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and put in place support strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devise a series of interventions based on the findings of the focus groups and individual discussions including further training, mentoring or additional support e.g., coaching or carers support (2025, 2026). • Run a series of short talks and publish case studies of individuals who have successfully been promoted or employed into senior roles. Particular focus will be placed on aspects of work-life balance (2024-2026). • Utilise role models and offer mentoring from SET or other females from across our network (ongoing). • Improve and embed AS ethos and our inclusive and family friendly culture on our website/recruitment pages (to increase applications), (2025). Monitor and update website annually. • Dissect data relating to time in post and/or time following promotion 		<p>students from role models in senior positions.</p> <p>Increase the number of external applications to SL/reader and Professorial positions from females by 20%. Increase internal applications for promotion to UE10 by at least 2 per year.</p> <p>Create a Sharepoint resource of successful promotion applications and CVs from recent years, with the opportunity for interested parties to connect with recently promoted individuals and develop mentor/mentee relationships.</p>
2.2	<p>Address gender inequality in staff members under the age of 26</p> <p>Improve gender balance and understand career progression for younger staff at the Easter Bush Campus</p> <p>Further assessment of the very strong female bias is required, and to further dissect the data to understand progression of our young staff within UoE and their onward destination as leavers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey staff under the age of 26 to assess support, engagement, and progression (2025). • Engage with Ruth Kelling, an Investors in Young People Practitioner who will run the survey and provide us with a report (2025). • Ruth Kelling (liYP) will run a session for all staff responsible for recruitment on attracting young people to the workplace (2026) • Monitor EDI characteristics and onward transitions of young staff members by survey and at exit interviews (as required). 	COO RI DD (Culture & Diversity); R(D)SVS Associate Dean for EDI	Enhanced recruitment of male staff under 26 (targeting 10% by 2028), improved career progression tracking, and increased retention of young staff.

2.3	<p>Address inequality in staff working part-time and increase understanding of flexible working arrangements. Provide support for career transitions.</p> <p>Investigate and address the underrepresentation of part-time and flexible working arrangements within the Vet School. This follows findings from the Roslin Institute, where fewer academic staff work PT compared to national averages. Although not previously part of the Vet School action plan, as we prepare for a joint application, we aim to assess whether similar trends exist within the Vet School and provide support for transitions between academic and PS roles, as well as flexible work options.</p> <p>Supporting our staff to transfer between academic and PS roles, and in redeployment as well as returning to work following extended breaks is an area we wish to support and further develop and it is applicable to all staff across grades and genders. Include monitoring in datasets in FAP 1.1.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct focus groups with younger staff members and with clinical staff to identify barriers to PT work or flexible arrangements (by 2025). • Include questions in surveys to dissect reasons why low number of staff take up PT roles or have flexible working arrangements (see FAP 1.1). Provide information on the website and via communications at local and College level regarding flexible working (by 2025) • Develop an online resource highlighting different career paths particularly where transferrable skills are key to a change in pathways (e.g., between PS and academia and vice-versa). Engage with staff who have changed career pathways and write case studies for our website (2025). Provide information for training resources and professional bodies (by 2027). • Develop a series of events, workshops, training and development with the CDC branches and with input from the EB Campus Technicians network in line with the Technicians Commitment (2026). • Reinstate regular meetings for staff at risk of redundancy and provide support and information relating to the redeployment register. Gather information (quarterly from early-2025). 	<p>CDC</p> <p>Culture & Engagement Manager</p> <p>HR Manager</p>	<p>Improvement in survey responses to over 85% having knowledge of, and feeling able to request flexible or PT working arrangements. Ensure that awareness of flexible working is increased amongst younger staff members.</p> <p>Updated website with case studies and resources.</p> <p>Ensure that the proportion of PT staff is close to the national average (increase females to 15%, and males to 8%) and implement targeted interventions to achieve this.</p> <p>Workshops and meetings delivered, leading to a greater understanding of the potential of career transitions (e.g. transferring between academia and PS), and of redeployment options.</p>
3. Career Development and Training				
3.1	<p>Increase representation of under-represented groups through fair and equitable recruitment processes</p> <p>Men at the Vet School are less likely to feel supported in their career development and progression compared</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff to undergo Unconscious Bias training (by end 2025) • Begin advertising vacancies across more social media platforms, targeting networks for under-represented groups (2025) 	<p>CECC</p> <p>HR Manager</p> <p>EDI Committee</p>	<p>Increase in male candidates progressing through shortlisting and appointments to levels proportional to applications (by 2028).</p>

	<p>to women. Additionally, men are less likely to be shortlisted and appointed compared to the number of male applicants. This highlights the need to ensure fair recruitment processes, equal access to feedback, and support across genders.</p> <p>While our current data does not enable sufficient granularity to identify specific numbers of BAME or LGBTQAI+ applicants we know that these numbers are low. We therefore aim to increase the number of applications regardless of protected characteristics.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and implement observer's programme so that individuals from CECC or CDC branches to observe the recruitment process, from shortlisting to interview, to improve confidence in decision making processes, report to SET (by 2027) • Review the essential criteria for academic and clinical roles, focusing on transparency and fairness in shortlisting (by 2025). • Add EDI selection criteria into job descriptions and monitor using EDI core questions (2026) • Implement mentorship programmes to improve career support and ensure access to feedback, regardless of gender (by 2026). • Run focus groups to understand why the proportion of women in residencies does not mirror the proportion of women undergraduates 		<p>Increase in male staff feeling supported in their career development to match female staff responses (by 2026). Increase in women applying for UE10 roles by 20% (by 2028).</p> <p>Increase in women appointed as residents by 10% (by 2028).</p> <p>Improved gender balance and increased representation of under-represented groups in recruitment.</p> <p>Publication of work exploring the effect of parental leave on residents.</p>
3.2	<p>Improve communication, support and transparency of the promotion process for academic and PS staff</p> <p>Our surveys, including the external survey run by the Culture Builders (Appendix 1) highlight that not all staff are aware and understand the promotion processes. A lack of transparency in selection criteria was identified as an area of concern.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to hold workshops for promotions across all academic grades, ensure these are communicated across campus by multiple methods, and that materials from these can be accessed online (annually, at least one month before promotion application deadlines) • Collate feedback on local annual promotions workshops and continually improve based on feedback to increase awareness/understanding (annually). • Ensure promotional materials and recruitment and selection follow best practice in terms of equality and diversity (2025). • Continue to run internal events such as the promotions workshop and "Pathways to 	Senior HR Advisor RI DD (Culture & Diversity); R(D)SVS Associate Dean for EDI	<p>Improvement at survey in respondents who are aware and understand the promotions process to >80%.</p> <p>Positive feedback from promotions workshops and alterations to the support provided as required through qualitative feedback assessment.</p>

		Professor” to support staff with promotion paperwork (annually).		
3.3	<p>Enhance the induction process and improve on-boarding for all staff and PG students</p> <p>The induction processes are viewed as beneficial for new starters and will also be important for those returning after extended leave or career breaks where re-induction is required.</p> <p>Our induction handbooks need refreshing and updating on a regular basis to reflect changes in committees and policies (etc.), particularly in clinical areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise the induction process for staff and PG students (early 2025) and continue to hold induction events each month Create and implement re-induction process for staff returning to work after extended leave (2025). Monitor effectiveness of re- induction through interviews following people’s return to work and review suggestions for improvement. Instigate a ‘buddy’ system for those returning to work to help with re-integration into the workplace after a career break (2025). Reinstate a carers fund to help returning staff to overcome barriers to returning to work (2025) Update induction handbooks. Make these available online (by early 2025) and update annually. 	<p>Culture and Engagement Manager</p> <p>Head of PGR</p> <p>Postgrad/postdoc committees with CDCs</p>	<p>Staff survey and local feedback surveys following induction indicates that 100% of all staff agree that they have received an appropriate induction for their role.</p> <p>Returning staff feel supported through the re-induction process and buddy system (assessed by individual feedback; where appropriate embed into mentoring discussions).</p> <p>Regular updates have been made to the handbooks.</p>
3.4	<p>Continue to build and extend the mentoring system</p> <p>Mentoring (e.g. CLAN, HEA-based mentor/mentee programme etc), is highly valued by our staff. More females than males are signed up as mentees and the schemes are very focused on academics: we wish to extend the programmes across both academic and PS staff. Provision of training for mentors and assessment metrics need to be initiated.</p> <p>PGR and PGT students in some programmes (e.g., those funded by Wellcome Trust) have pastoral mentors assigned as part of their thesis</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further develop guidelines for the mentoring scheme for mentors and mentees (by early-2025). Carry out mentor and mentee training, we will engage with an external trainer for this who provides mentoring training for several professional societies (biennial in late 2024, 2026, 2028). Run a workshop in November 2025 to showcase the mentoring scheme and gather feedback from mentees and mentors to identify ways to improve and extend the schemes, and to broaden out the pairings e.g. to more CRAs and PS staff. Promote the mentoring scheme internally 	CDCs	<p>All staff have been made aware of the mentoring scheme and >70% report awareness in surveys.</p> <p>Increase mentoring partnerships by a further 20%. Improve gender balance in mentees 50%.</p> <p>Deliver training to all existing mentors by mid-2025.</p> <p>Encourage more engagement with the mentoring scheme across PS and technical staff. Increase from one mentor/mentee pair to five within two years, and to ten by the end of the 5-year Silver award period.</p>

	<p>committee, we will investigate whether this can be embedded across all our PGR and PGT programmes.</p>	<p>through our committees and intranet to encourage mentors and mentees to sign up to the schemes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the balance of mentors and mentees using EDI core questions to ensure appropriate representation. • By survey and individual feedback monitor success of the scheme. Success measures to be agreed by the mentor-mentee pairs as part of the initial meeting as these will differ between academic and PS staff. Carry out surveys and gather feedback in November 2025 and November 2027 (two and four years into the scheme). • Host a bi-annual event to celebrate and promote the success of the scheme (2025). • Carry out an internal, informal survey of PG students to gauge interest and perceived value of pastoral mentors in addition to the supervisor and thesis committee arrangements already in place (March 2025). 		<p>Positive evaluation results from post-mentoring feedback survey with >70% staff reporting positive outcomes from the mentoring process (for both mentees and mentors).</p> <p>More than 85% of mentees and mentors report positive feedback on the scheme.</p> <p>Feedback gathered on the importance and impact of pastoral mentoring for PG students through informal discussion at Thesis Committee meetings. As required implement pastoral mentors for all PG students.</p>
3.5	<p>Continue to develop and deliver a series of career focused events, training and workshops for staff and PG students.</p> <p>Our CDCs have implemented a highly successful series of training events over the last 5 years (Table D) and some future events are already planned. We will continue to engage with staff and students through our committees to define an exciting campus-wide programme for the next 5 years, in collaboration with the RI.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that planning is a standing item on the agenda for each CDC branch (ongoing). • Ensure good communication through the overarching CDC to ensure that training and events are balanced for staff at all grades and job types, and for PG students (ongoing). • Ensure good communication continues between PG committees and the CDCs/CECC to prioritize courses and events (ongoing). • Secure a budget for externally provided training (by end 2025) • Work with the Communications Manager to advertise courses and events, and provide 	<p>CDCs</p> <p>Postdoctoral and PGR committees</p>	<p>At least 4 career- focused workshops per year will be offered to staff.</p> <p>Staff survey results show >80% of students and early career staff feel well supported and have access to useful career related events.</p> <p>The website is updated regularly with details of upcoming events, and short reports of successful events.</p>

		summaries of these on our website.		
4. Wellbeing and Inclusivity				
4.1	<p>Expand access to Mental Health Services, provide training and resources to support our staff and students.</p> <p>Mental health wellbeing is a facet of our campus that we take incredibly seriously. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in terms of mental health concerns was highly significant. Those on UE03-4 job grades, and clinical/academic job grades are less likely to feel that their mental health wellbeing is supported.</p> <p>We aim to increase our support networks through additional training of mental health first-aiders, provision of additional training for managers and to increase awareness of the support that is available.</p> <p>Specifically, we aim to understand why some groups (e.g., men) access mental health services less frequently, or feel less able to be open about their concerns.</p> <p>We will also extend our peer-support group to provide a safe environment where all staff and students can discuss aspects of work and home that impact their wellbeing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run a series of focus groups to better understand why some demographics feel that their mental wellbeing is less well supported, and identify action points to address this inequality (end 2025). • Train additional cohorts of mental health first-aiders and ensure there is no gender bias in the staff and students undertaking this training. Use EDI core questions to record who is undergoing training and focus on under-represented groups if required (by 2025) • Implement mental health awareness training for all managers (by 2026) • Organise men's mental health training sessions (2025, 2027, 2029) • Recognise the impact of suicide and mechanisms for discussion e.g., through ASIST training for SET (by 2028). • Increase signposting to University mental health and wellbeing resources, and external service providers (e.g. Vetlife and RCVS Mind Matters) (from end 2024). • Organise annual talks/workshops for all staff and students by Vetlife or RCVS Mind Matters (from 2025). • Organise events for International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day (annually). • Promote the peer-support network and increase membership through open invitation 	CECC Mental health subcommittee	<p>Increase the number of trained mental health first aiders to ~100 across the EB campus. Ensure there is no bias in those being trained.</p> <p>All managers have received training in mental health awareness and the SET have undergone ASIST training.</p> <p>Successful delivery of men's mental health training with positive feedback received by qualitative survey.</p> <p>>80% of staff and students report at survey that they feel supported in their mental health and wellbeing.</p>

		(by end 2025).		
4.2	<p>Ensure we are supporting our LGBTQAI+, BAME and neurodivergent staff and students.</p> <p>We need to improve our EDI monitoring (see above) to gain a clear picture of our staff and students with protected characteristics other than gender, and to make adjustments for neurodivergent individuals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advice on including pronouns in email signatures (early 2025). • Encourage staff to become BAME and LGBT allies through increased communications and the EDI race equality subcommittee (2026). • Provide training for all staff and students on neurodiversity awareness, extend availability of current training courses offered by Auticon. Identify neurodiversity champions and establish network (by 2028). • Implement training for managers and recruiters to enable reasonable adjustments for neurodiversity to be included e.g., by providing interview questions ahead of time and enabling flexible interview formats (2025). • Where practical make physical changes to provide quiet or low-lit rooms and provide additional equipment. Signpost to the staff and student disability network for further support (ongoing). • Ensure representation on committees. • Liaise with the University's Disability Office, the Learning and Teaching unit, and the R(D)SVS Digital Education Unit to ensure that all delivered material is as accessible as possible (ongoing). • Promotion ongoing work with the Learning and Teaching department to run annual workshops on decolonising and diversifying the curriculum (ongoing) 	CECC EDI committees	<p>Further BAME and LGBT allies identified and ensure representation on committees (by 2026).</p> <p>Training and support for neurodivergent staff and students.</p> <p>Additional training for all managers and recruiters and EDI monitoring in place to allow for adjustments to be made.</p> <p>Quiet spaces identified and modified (if needed) and equipment provided.</p> <p>Ensure all teaching staff have attended training on decolonising and diversifying the curriculum</p>

<p>4.3</p>	<p>Improve work-life balance.</p> <p>The difficulties of balancing work commitments with other aspects of life is a theme observed throughout our surveys and discussions, particularly for clinical and academic staff. We aim to provide adjustments and devise policies to minimise negative impacts.</p> <p>We also recognise impacts on students of the economic crisis and will increase awareness of available support through the socio-economic subcommittee of our EDI Committee.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run a series of focus groups to better understand why some demographics feel that their work life balance is less well supported, and identify action points to address this inequality (end 2025). • Ensure that all staff and students are aware of, and adhere wherever possible to, the core hours policy which incorporates inclusive meeting times (10am-4pm) (by end 2024 and annual reminders). • Encourage staff and students to send emails during the working day. Provide guidance including at induction on email signatures to indicate that individuals have different working patterns and replies are not expected other than within working hours (by 2025). • Consider a 'right to disconnect' policy which provides guidelines for reasonable expectations around working hours and email response times (by 2026). • Make all staff and students aware of the advance payments policy enabling bookings for work related travel, courses etc. 	<p>CECC</p> <p>RI DD (Culture & Diversity); R(D)SVS Associate Dean for EDI</p>	<p>At survey a sustained improvement in the frequency of staff reporting positively around work-life balance to >70% by 2028.</p> <p>The majority of meetings (>70%) are held within core hours, including seminars and training courses.</p> <p>Further discussion of a right to disconnect policy and implementation as appropriate by CECC.</p> <p>Raised awareness of socio-economic policies through communications from EDI Committee to all staff (including at the annual CECC symposium).</p>
<p>4.4</p>	<p>Provide support for staff and students for the menopause.</p> <p>Increasingly, the impact of the menopause is being recognised as a significant barrier impacting mental health and wellbeing. We will run an annual workshop to raise awareness of the impact of the menopause and to provide training for staff and students across genders. We ran a menopause workshop in September 2024 which was very well attended, although the majority of participants were female. We will continue to offer workshops and ensure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide menopause training workshop for staff and students which will be made available to all genders in 2025, 2027. Ensure engagement of a wide range of individuals. • Promote a regular series of online and in-demand/recorded sessions (run by College MVM HR) for managers titled "Navigating Menopause in the Workplace: A Manager's Guide" • Work with the University of Edinburgh to revise and roll out a menopause policy to allow for reasonable adjustments and incorporating the requirement for managers to be trained (by 	<p>RI DD (Culture & Diversity); R(D)SVS Associate Dean for EDI</p> <p>Culture & Engagement Manager</p>	<p>Menopause training workshop programme implemented. Improve participation of males to >20% by 2027.</p> <p>All staff and students made aware of the Menopause policy (by end 2026). Add survey questions in 2028 to provide metrics on knowledge and understanding of the policy.</p>

	that men feel welcome.	2026).		
4.5	<p>Increase outreach activity to target students from under- represented groups and widen participation.</p> <p>The Easter Bush Science Outreach Centre and our PER Manager interact with very large numbers of individuals to promote our science and engage with a wide range of audiences.</p> <p>The Skills Lab project involved both PS and academic staff and students with a wider range of backgrounds including those with a non-traditional route into science. This project, along with our annual Women and Girls in Science events, enabled schools in areas of socio-economic deprivation and/or rural isolation to participate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the Lab Skills activity to a wider range of schools selected following an open application process: priority will be given to schools in areas of socio-economic deprivation or rural isolation (by 2026). • Staff and students from a wide range of backgrounds will be encouraged to take part in this and other activities. Increase the proportion of staff from PS participating in PER activities such as Lab Skills (by 2028). • Ensure that the MMI process maintains fairness for all candidates, regardless of their gender, disability declaration, and contextual admission. 	<p>Head of PER</p> <p>All staff and PGR students</p>	<p>Percentage of PS/technical staff contributing to PER to increase to >25% by 2028.</p> <p>Continued high reporting of positive outcomes for contributing staff and students, and target audiences. Assessment of qualitative analysis including free text feedback.</p>
4.6	<p>Enhance awareness and communications on trans equality policy</p> <p>We identified a generational gap in awareness of the University's transgender policies, especially among staff aged 55-65. This requires amending to ensure a more inclusive environment for trans staff and students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase overall communications, regarding the University's trans equality policy, particularly to those aged 55-65 (2025). • Implement tailored training sessions to raise awareness among staff (2026). • Review and reword future surveys to ensure clarity of transgender-related questions to avoid confusion (2025). 	<p>CECC</p> <p>EDI committees</p>	<p>Increased awareness and engagement with the transgender equality policy among all staff, measured via follow-up surveys (by 2026).</p> <p>Reduction in unclear survey responses related to transgender-specific questions (2026).</p>
4.7	<p>Review and implement reasonable adjustments for disabled staff and students</p> <p>Ensure that staff and students with</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct disability building reviews to assess and improve physical spaces, particularly in surgery-related environments (by 2025). • Ensure that reasonable adjustments for 	<p>EDI committees</p> <p>Facilities management</p> <p>University Disability Office</p>	<p>Comprehensive disability building review completed by 2025, with improvements implemented by 2026.</p>

	disabilities are fully supported, especially within physical spaces like changing facilities for surgery. This is part of a broader goal of inclusivity and accessibility.	<p>disabled staff and students are reviewed and updated as needed (ongoing).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with the University's Disability Office to ensure all adjustments are appropriate and inclusive (ongoing). 		<p>Positive feedback from disabled staff and students on adjustments and facilities.</p> <p>Ongoing adjustments made to ensure inclusivity.</p>
5. Improving Workplace Culture				
5.1	<p>Develop confidence in reporting incidents of bullying and harassment or other inappropriate behavior and concerns.</p> <p>In response to concerns across the EB Campus we engaged with an external company to survey our Research Culture in 2019. One area highlighted was the ability to report anonymously, or to be able to discuss issues in 'safe spaces' with trusted individuals</p> <p>The 2024 survey indicated gender and age disparities in personal experience of bullying and harassment and confidence in the handling of these issues.</p> <p>Key findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 18% of staff did not know how to report bullying. - Only 42% agreed that management actively tackles bullying. - 31% were unsatisfied with how bullying was addressed. - 15% had experienced bullying in the past 12 months. <p>All line managers will receive training.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve current online resources for anonymous reporting by re-establishing the reporting system (online preferred) and informing all staff and students (by end of 2024). The Culture and Engagement Manager will monitor the suggestion box and report to the CECC and SET as appropriate. Encourage active engagement with the University of Edinburgh Behaviour Charter and Dignity and Respect Policy. Include references to these policies in annual appraisals (by 2027). Compulsory training for line managers in recognising and dealing with bullying and harassment, with an emphasis on leadership skills (by 2027). Provide additional training for mentors and peer-support group members to foster conversations around psychological safety (by 2028). Improve signposting of clear, transparent reporting procedures to ensure staff are informed of the process and expected outcomes (by end 2025). 	CECC SET HR Manager	<p>Online reporting systems in place and monitored regularly with comments fed back to CECC quarterly.</p> <p>By 2025, >50% of respondents know how to report incidents of bullying and harassment, increasing by 10% annually to >80% by 2029.</p> <p>Significant reduction in staff experiencing bullying and harassment (<5% by 2028).</p> <p>Increased confidence in reporting (50% by 2028, with gender parity).</p> <p>All staff are made aware of the Behaviour Charter and Dignity and Respect Policy in induction.</p> <p>All line managers complete 'Don't Cross the Line' training, and SET complete Dare to Lead training.</p>

5.2	<p>Increase recognition of staff contributions and citizenship</p> <p>Encouragingly, 77% of 2024 survey respondents agreed that they feel a sense of belonging, and 71% agreed that "people really care about me." However, women were less likely to respond positively to statements such as "People really care about me," "Communications are clear and relevant," and "I have experienced bullying in the past 12 months." While the reasons behind these differences remain unclear, this pattern is concerning. Further exploration through focus groups is essential to understand the specific challenges faced by women and to identify potential actions to address these issues. A deeper look into departmental or managerial support systems and their impact on gender-specific perceptions may provide insight.</p> <p>In 2022 and 2023, the Staff and Student Recognition Awards were expanded to include categories that allowed wider recognition of contributions, particularly for wellbeing, community, and citizenship. Over 15% of total nominations were in these categories.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include citizenship as a key area of recognition in staff and student awards, promotions and appraisals, and student thesis committees (by end 2024). • Continue the Staff and Student Recognition Awards annually, ensuring a broad range of categories to celebrate citizenship, wellbeing, and collaboration (ongoing from 2024). • Focus groups will be conducted to explore these gender disparities and identify actionable steps to address the specific challenges women face (by end of 2025). 	<p>CECC</p> <p>All staff and students</p>	<p>Focus groups conducted by 2025, with actionable steps identified to address gender disparities in feelings of being valued.</p> <p>All staff and students report that EB Campus has a positive culture and that they feel valued for their contributions.</p> <p>Citizenship included as a key area of recognition in staff/student awards, promotions, appraisals, and thesis committees by the end of 2024.</p> <p>Survey respondents report feeling valued for citizenship, wellbeing, and traditional success measures.</p> <p>Increase the numbers of survey respondents who feel valued to 80% by 2025 and 90% by 2029.</p> <p>Annual continuation of the Staff and Student Recognition Awards, with increasing participation and recognition (20% of nominations by 2026) for wellbeing and citizenship categories.</p>
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