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| **Ref.** | **Priority Area** | **Objective** | **Rationale** | **Actions/Milestones** | **Timeframe** | **Person(s) responsible** | **Measures of success** |
| **Section 1.2: Governance and recognition of equality, diversity and inclusion work** | | | | | | | |
| 1.2.1 | GE1 | To further extend engagement with Athena Swan among all academic departments and professional, managerial and support (PMS) units, and among all genders and staff categories | To continue to build a culture of equality and achieve maximum impact, it is essential that all academic departments engage with the departmental level process.  While there has been increased engagement in AS surveys since 2019 (+16%), engagement from men with the staff consultation process was lower than that of women; 36% of respondents to 2023 survey were men and only 23% of focus group participants were men. | Monitor the existing timeframe for remaining academic depts engaging with the self-assessment process to ensure full engagement by 2026. Continue to provide adequate institutional support to depts carrying out self-assessment processes.  Create a decision-making matrix to support PMS units in identifying their eligibility/benefit to apply for an AS award. Through this, identify key PMS units and create similar plans and timeframes to support these units through the process. | Apr 2024 - Dec 2026  Jun 2024 | VP for EDI; Athena Swan Officer  EDI Manager; Athena Swan Officer | 100% of academic departments have submitted a Bronze application by 2026. At least one Silver departmental award attained by 2028.  A clear plan and timeframe are in place to support PMSS units through the process, with ≥2 PMSS Bronze award attained by 2028. |
| Conduct an Athena Swan/EDI survey with all staff every two years. Leverage other University-wide surveys (such as DCU HR Engagement Survey) to gather EDI-related feedback from staff, where appropriate.  Carry out pulse surveys as specific issues/opportunities arise. | Apr 2025; biannually thereafter  Ongoing | Athena Swan Officer  EDI Unit | Two AS surveys conducted, with survey participation increased from 56% to 65% by 2028.  Pulse surveys carried out as required, and findings incorporated into relevant action plans as necessary. |
| Continue to engage as a project partner on the HEA-funded *Engaging Men in Gender Equality* initiative (led by MTU) and roll out project plans as appropriate.  Hold a focus group with male employees on the barriers to engaging with GE/EDI in DCU, and develop actions based on findings.  Create a targeted campaign on engaging men with GE/EDI work, with key leaders acting as role models. | Ongoing  Q1 2025  Q2 2025 | Athena Swan Officer; EDI Manager  Comms Manager; EDI Unit | One male focus group held and appropriate actions developed and implemented.  Male engagement in Athena Swan surveys increased from 36% to at least 46% by 2028.  Male engagement with future AS focus groups increased from 23% to at least 35% by 2028. |
| 1.2.2 | AEG1 | To ensure an improved and robust EDI governance and operational structure is formalised and implemented to support the progression of EDI strategy and frameworks, including AS | There is a growing need to ensure a cohesive approach to EDI from the staff and student perspective. At present, there is no active University committee which seeks to manage and progress EDI from both staff and student perspectives.  There is a need to redistribute EDI work more broadly; and build on progress already made at faculty level.  62% of survey respondents agreed that University Leadership is committed to EDI; and 66% agreed that leadership in their dept is committed to EDI. | In line with new proposed governance/operational structures for EDI *(Figure 1.3)*, establish an EDI Steering Committee, ensuring representation from stakeholders involved in the management and implementation of EDI initiatives from staff and student perspectives. Develop new Terms of Reference (ToR) for the committee. | Q3 2024 | VP for EDI | An EDI Steering Committee operational with adequate representation from relevant stakeholders across the University and ToR in place.  An increase from 62% to at least 70% in respondents agreeing that University Leadership is committed to EDI by 2028. |
| Develop key Working Groups (WGs) to lead on the implementation of relevant frameworks, including an Athena Swan WG, ensuring representation from across the University. This WG will lead on implementation of this action plan.  Develop specific ToRs for these groups. Other groups proposed are Race Equality WG, Dignity, Respect & Sexual Violence Prevention WG, Disability WG. | Q3 2024  Q3 2024 | VP for EDI  WG Chairs | Athena Swan WG, alongside 3 other WGs, operational to support the advancement of EDI frameworks.  Successful implementation of SAP, with all actions progressed over the four-year period. |
| Ensure that the role of EDI Lead in each Faculty is maintained, and that there is adequate resourcing of EDI activity locally.  Develop an approach to identifying AS/EDI Leads within PMS departments to ensure the formalisation of EDI/AS structures locally *(in line with HEA 2nd national review recommendations)*.  Establish an internal network of EDI Leads to allow for collaboration across the University, meeting quarterly. | Q2 2024; and ongoing  Q2 - Q3 2024; and ongoing  Q1 - Q2 2025 | VP for EDI  VP for EDI; EDI Unit  EDI Manager | EDI Leads in place for each of the five faculties, with EDI Committees operational at this level. EDI Leads in place for relevant PMSS departments.  Internal network active, and cross-University collaboration taking place.  By 2028, at least 75% agree that leadership in their department is committed to EDI. |
| Develop and provide training for EDI Leads in academic and PMS departments annually to support them in their role.  Develop and launch *Guidelines for Embedding EDI at DCU* to support local units. | Q4 2024; annually thereafter  Q2 2025 | Head of L&OD; EDI Manager  EDI Manager | Training developed and held annually for EDI Leads, with at least 80% in attendance each year.  Guidelines for Embedding EDI at DCU developed and launched with evidence to show utilised locally. |
| 1.2.3 | AEG2 | To ensure that robust data pertaining to staff demographics including ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, and caring responsibilities is collected and analysed so that gaps can be identified and proactively addressed. | At present no HR data can be disaggregated on grounds except for gender. It is important that the University encourages staff to self-disclose so that data can be analysed using additional equality grounds. This action is of high importance to ensure we can progress with several other actions in this plan.  Currently we have a 31% participation rate with the Core Portal diversity screen, which was launched in June 2023. | Develop an *‘I Am’* campaign to showcase diversity within the DCU Community.  Run month-long promotional campaigns once per semester to encourage existing staff to self-disclose their personal data using Core diversity screen; utilising EDI structures throughout the University to support campaigns.  Monitor participation rates quarterly and report to the EDI Steering Committee and other relevant stakeholders on a biannual basis.  Establish and implement ‘roadshows’ to areas with low engagement to encourage staff participation in providing their data. | Q3 2024  Oct 2024 & Feb 2025; annually thereafter  Q4 2024; quarterly thereafter  Q2 2025; and ongoing | EDI Unit; HR Director; with support from Comms & Marketing  HR Systems and Data Manager; EDI Unit  HR Director; HRBPs; with support from the EDI Unit. | Campaign developed and launched; with biannual campaigns running successfully.  At least 60% participation rate with the Core Portal diversity screen by 2028.  Demographic data available to allow for monitoring of staff profiles across the protected grounds.  Roadshows take place regularly, where needed, with increase in engagement evident as a result.  University can meet reporting requirements across several EDI priorities. |
| Update the new employees ‘Starter Letter’ template to include information and instructions on updating personal information to help ensure all new staff are disclosing upon commencement of employment.  Incorporate the engagement with the diversity screen at probation to help increase uptake. | Q2 2024  Q4 2024 | HR General Team Lead  HR Director | Inclusion of information and instructions on all Starter Letters issued from May 2024 onwards.  At least 60% of all new starters complete the Core Portal diversity screen by 2028.  Inclusion of information at probation and PRD meetings. |
| Commence reviewing career pipeline data through an intersectional lens as more robust demographic data becomes available.  Consider and implement approaches to reducing gaps in diversity of employees as they arise. | Q1 2026; and ongoing as data increases | HR Director; HR Systems and Data Manager; EDI Unit | Trends in pipeline identified and evidence-based targeted actions created, where necessary. |
| 1.3.1 | GE1 | To ensure all staff are aware of AS progress and updates as we implement the Silver action plan, and as local action plans progress | While great strides were made to increase communication and awareness of AS in our BAP, it’s important that we enhance our ability to provide regular and consistent ways to update staff that go beyond the use of staff emails. 86% of staff were aware of AS in 2019, and this dropped slightly to 75% in 2023.  Additionally, 40% and 36% currently recognise how the principles of Athena Swan are embedded into the culture and working of DCU and their departments respectively. | Update the DCU Athena Swan webpages to allow for greater interactivity and the ability to provide quarterly update reports online. Communicate these to all staff via email, the internal communication portal, at Heads & Deans monthly meetings within ‘Key Messages’ document, and by leveraging the EDI governance structures at all levels in the University.  Hold an annual Athena Swan information session on each of the three teaching campuses to provide staff with key progress and updates. Incorporate updates/progress into announcements at DCU Coffee mornings, where feasible.  Embed the practice of publishing School/Unit applications and action plans, as soon as award is announced, to allow for shared learnings and awareness of priorities and plans. This will support in achieving school/unit award targets as per SAP 1.2.1. | Q2 - Q3 2024; and then quarterly thereafter  Q4 2024; annually thereafter  Q2 2024; and ongoing | Athena Swan Officer; with support from DCU Comms & AS WG Chair  VP for EDI; EDI Unit  Athena Swan Officer | Awareness levels of AS is maintained at ~85% by 2028.  At least 65% of staff indicate that they understand the AS principles and can see how they are embedded into the culture of DCU by 2028.  At least 60% of staff indicate that they can see how the principles are embedded into their school culture by 2028.  All successful applications/action plans published and shared with our staff/student community within three months of award attainment. |
| **Section 2.1: Overview of the institution and its context** | | | | | | | |
| 2.1.1 | AEG4 | To support greater access and participation for staff with disabilities | Currently 3.39% of staff have declared a disability via CoreHR and 7.40% via survey. In the disability pulse survey *(Mar 2023)*, 49% agreed that they are fairly treated in DCU regardless of their disability, but women were less agreeable than men (46%w v 59%m). 45% of respondents are comfortable disclosing their disability to their line manager, while 34% believe a disclosure would have a negative impact on their career. Additionally, 26% of disabled respondents were aware of the ability to request reasonable accommodations. | Develop DCU’s new Disability Policy and Toolkit in collaboration with a Disability Working Group.  Launch policy and build an awareness raising approach to ensure employees and managers are aware of their rights and responsibilities under the new Policy and Toolkit to normalise disclosure of a disability. | Q2 - Q4 2024  Q1 - Q2 2025; and ongoing | HR Director; EDI Adviser  HR Director; EDI Unit | Disability policy and toolkit in place; with at least 60% of staff aware of the policy by 2028.  At least 60% of respondents agree that they are fairly treated in DCU regardless of their disability, and at least 60% agree that they are comfortable disclosing their disability to their line manager; with little difference in responses by gender.  10% of staff have declared their disability to HR via Core Portal by 2028. |
| Review all HR procedural documents (applications for recruitment, promotion, family leave, etc) and move them to an online application system while ensuring full accessibility of all forms. | Q2 - Q3 2025 | HR Service Delivery Managers | All HR procedural documents are online and fully accessible by 2028. |
| Develop and provide training on supporting employees with a disability (including information on reasonable accommodation and how to receive disclosures) to relevant stakeholders such as Line Managers and HR representatives annually. | Q1 2025; annually thereafter | Head of L&OD; EDI Unit | Training developed and held annually. At least 80% of line managers and HR representatives trained on supporting employees with a disability by 2028. |
| 2.1.2 | GE2 | To ensure that inclusive representation is considered, monitored and increased on all University-level seniorleadership committees, and that EDI-related guidance is provided to committees at all levels | The key governance and senior leadership committees are gender balanced (GA, EMT, SMG, Academic Council). Four out of six additional influential committees are not gender balanced.  A broader EDI audit was conducted, and baseline data across all protected grounds captured for each of the ten committees.  As part of our BAP, plans were in place to develop a guidelines document for the operation of University committees, including ensuring inclusive representation and addressing issues of rotation of membership. *(BAP 5.15-5.16)*. These were not progressed.  50% agreed that there is a fair distribution of workload associated with committee work in their department in 2019 survey; with gendered differences evident (48% of women agreed versus 55% of men). Similarly, 36% agreed that there is a fair distribution of workload associated with committee work at university level, with 35% of women agreeing versus 40% of men. | Monitor gender representation on all senior leadership committees annually and report to the EDI Steering Committee and other relevant stakeholders for consideration and action, where needed.  Request that Chairs of Committees consider gender in each renewal of membership. | Dec 2024; annually thereafter  Q2 2024; and ongoing | Athena Swan Officer  VP for EDI | 100% of the ten senior leadership committees identified in this application are gender balanced by 2028. |
| Conduct an EDI audit on the ten identified University Committees within this application annually to monitor representation from across the nine protected grounds, using 2024 findings as baseline. Benchmark against university-wide data as its captured *(linked to SAP 1.2.3)*.  Disseminate findings to Committee Chairs annually for insight, tracking and consideration.  Develop an approach to specifically target members of these committees to self-report on CoreHR to reduce the percentage of blanks in the next audit *(aligned to SAP 1.2.3)*.  Develop targeted actions and set appropriate targets to address emerging/continuous gaps, where feasible. | Q1 2026; Q1 2028  May 2024; and annually  Ongoing  Ongoing, as required | VP for EDI; with support from EDI Unit | EDI audit conducted at least twice by 2028. Actions developed and implemented based on findings, and appropriate targets set and achieved by 2028. |
| Launch the *University Committees Policy* related to gender composition which mandates university-level senior committees to ensure that *“In determining the composition of the Committee no more than 60% of the membership should be of any one gender”.* The policy will be updated to account for broader representation once more established data on our gaps is produced.  Launch the *University Committee Guidelines* document to ensure that there is a consistent approach to how committees at all university levels operate, particularly in terms of membership and rotation of roles. This will include a specific protocol to support them in ensuring broader representation in addition to gender *(follow on from BAP 5.15 - 5.16)*. | Q2 2024  Q3 2024 | Chief Operations Officer; with support from EDI Unit | Clear guidelines in place to ensure a consistent operational approach to university committees.  At least 65% of respondents agree that there is a fair distribution of workload associated with committee work in their department; and at least 60% agree that there is a fair distribution of workload associated with committee work at university level. |
| **Section 2.2: Supporting and advancing academic and research staff careers** | | | | | | | |
| 2.2.1 | GE3 | To achieve and maintain gender balance across all academic and research grades, particularly at senior levels | While great strides have been made in addressing gender imbalances across all academic grades, there is still lower than 40% representation of women at senior academic levels (38% Prof and 36% Full Prof).  There is also a leaky pipeline evident for female researchers with female representation at the Senior Research Fellow and Research Fellow grades lower than 40%. | Introduce more regular monitoring, on a quarterly basis, of academic and research statistics to ensure no significant negative change on representation after recruitment and/or promotional calls. Annual reports will be shared with the EDI Steering Committee, University Exec. and relevant stakeholders for consideration and actioning. | Q2 2024; and quarterly thereafter | HR Director; EDI Unit | Formal quarterly monitoring is established, with gaps/trends being identified as they emerge. |
| Embed the flexible cascade model through positive action measures to ensure that female applicants are shortlisted for interviews, where they meet the minimum essential criteria, for all recruitment calls to Professor and Full Professor grade, and for calls to Research Fellow/Senior Research Fellow. | Q3 2024; and ongoing | HR Director; HR Service Delivery Managers | A process is embedded to ensure positive action measures are taken with regards to gender parity in recruitment and appointments of academic and research grades.  At least 40% female representation at each senior academic grade and at senior research grades by 2028. |
| Where opportunity arises, apply for further SALI posts to increase the number of women represented at senior academic levels. | Ongoing, as funding becomes available | HR Director | Funding for SALI posts applied for where applicable, with a positive impact on female representation at senior academic levels. |
| Conduct systematic reviews and consultations with female researchers at all postdoctoral levels, aligned with plans within the HR Excellence in Research action plan, to identify and understand the specific barriers to their career progression. Develop a targeted action plan to support the increase of women in these roles. | Q2 2024 - Q2 2025 | Head of L&OD; EDI Unit | Barriers to female research career progression identified and key actions developed and implemented. |
| 2.2.2 |  | To continue to ensure that no gendered disparities in those holding temporary contracts across all grades is evident. | The % of men and women holding temporary academic contracts at most grades is equal, ~3% difference overall. However, at Assistant Prof BB, a clear disparity emerges with significantly more men (74%) holding temporary contracts than women at that grade (39%). | Capture and monitor this data annually to establish any continued or newly emerging trends.  Identify key actions to address any gendered trends that emerge through annual monitoring. | Q4 2024; annually thereafter  Ongoing, as required | HR Director | ≤3% disparity in the percentage of men and women at each academic level holding temporary contracts by 2028. |
| 2.2.3 | AEG4 | To strengthen recruitment practices to attract candidates from more diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups. | At present there is no data collected to show candidates’ personal details beyond gender. It is important that such data is collected to allow the University to identify and address gaps. | Develop a system to collect information through an *Equality Monitoring* form via PeopleXD Recruitment at application stage of the recruitment process to allow for the demographic monitoring of candidates and for the transfer of information to CoreHR for new starters going forward. | System developed Jan 2024; monitoring ongoing | HR Systems and Data Manager | At least 70% response rate to the Equality Monitoring form at the application stage of the recruitment process by 2028. |
| Monitor data collected via this form quarterly to identify key demographic gaps across the nine protected grounds in our applicants and establish baselines after year 1.  Develop actions to work towards reducing gaps identified, monitor the impact of such actions, and set appropriate targets for future years. | Q2 2024; quarterly thereafter  Q1 2025 | HR Director; HR Systems and Data Manager; EDI Unit | Improvement in the diversity of applicants by 2028 based on baseline and targets set after year 1. |
| Review the sources in which we advertise our positions, and proactively identify diverse talent pools. | Q2 2024; quarterly thereafter | HR Service Delivery Managers | Sources of advertisements expanded and more diverse. |
| Include both offers and acceptances when capturing and monitoring recruitment data, disaggregated by gender and additional equality data (where feasible), to ensure trends are identified *(this is a follow on from BAP5.2)*. | Q2 2024 | HR Systems and Data Manager | Data on offers and acceptances are captured, monitored, and gendered trends established and addressed. |
| 2.2.4 | GE4 | To ensure there is clarity on all promotional criteria and processes in DCU to increase perceptions of fairness and transparency | 27% believe promotional processes are fair and transparent, and 40% believe that the promotion criteria is fair and transparent. Additionally, focus groups have highlighted issues with transparency, particularly regarding *Targeted Promotions*.  Feedback suggested that more promotions are done via targeted than the formal APC competition, and academics would prefer a more balanced approach to the two processes.  Only 23% of respondents agree that it’s clear how career breaks are considered in promotion decisions. | Develop an informational sheet showcasing all the promotional routes in DCU; with explainers of each route and links to policies and detailed procedures. Distribute this via email, through Faculty Management, and via website.  Continue ongoing promotion and raising awareness around the Academic Development and Promotion Framework which outlines the clearly-defined expectations regarding standards for academic career development and progression. | Q4 2024  Ongoing | HR Director  HR Director; Head of L&OD | An increase in the percentage of survey respondents who agree that the promotional processes in DCU are fair and transparent from 27% to at least 50% by 2028.  An increase in the percentage of survey respondents who agree that the promotional criteria are fair and transparent from 40% to at least 65% by 2028.  At least 75% of staff feel informed going through the promotion process.  Annual reports published, and case studies collated and available to all staff.  Marking schemes in operation by all APC members.  An increase in the percentage of respondents who agree that it’s clear how periods of leave are taken into consideration in promotion decisions, from 23% to at least 50% by 2028.  Training established for relevant Managers and held annually; with at least 85% in attendance each year. |
| Continue to implement a regular timetable of annual calls for promotion to Associate Professor. Where feasible, commit to annual calls related to the other academic grades. | Ongoing | APC Chair; HR Director; Executive Deans |
| Continue to publish an annual report on promotions across the University, broken down by Faculty/ School, and by gender, by grades and by targeted/competitive process. This will be shared with Executive Deans for consideration when making promotional appointments from a gendered perspective, with the goal of achieving gender balance across faculty promotions annually.  Gather and disseminate ‘case studies’ after each promotional call, particularly at Associate Professor level, to showcase the different career journeys of successful candidates. | Q4 2024; annually thereafter  Q4 2024 - Q1 2025 | APC Chair; HR Director; Executive Deans  APC Chair; HR Director |
| Increase the number of promotions to Associate Professor made via APC process from 8 to 15; maintaining the appropriate gender quotas annually. | Feb 2024 | APC Chair; HR Director |
| Emphasis the marking scheme (including the three domains and sets of dimensions under each domain) for those reviewing APC promotion applications to ensure full utilisation.  Update the APC policy and all related promotion documentation and criteria to explicitly reference how periods of approved long-term leave are considered in the scoring system. This will also be included in the FAQ section on the HR website. | Q1 - Q2 2025  Q1 - Q2 2025 | APC Chair; HR Director  APC Chair; HR Director |
| Provide training for relevant managers, such as those in Head of School and Dean roles, in providing meaningful, supportive, robust and direct feedback as part of promotional outcomes. Utilise training already developed for Managers in conducting PRD reviews. | Q2 - Q3 2025 | Head of L&OD |
| 2.2.5 | GE4 | To ensure that researcher career path is clearly articulated and accessible to all researchers in DCU, and that all available supports are clearly understood and utilised effectively | Feedback from the researcher focus group indicated that the researcher career path is unclear. 34% of research respondents agree that there are opportunities internally for them to progress in their careers, with men slightly less agreeable than women (30%m v 38%w).  20% of researchers are currently aware of the PRD scheme, and 48% agree that they would benefit from the scheme. Male researchers are less agreeable, with 43% agreeing that they would benefit versus 54% of female researchers. | Review, and update where necessary, the Researcher Career Framework *(linked to strategy for HR Excellence in Research Award)*.  Promote this Framework amongst all researchers through regular communication and via the annual PRD scheme. | Q2 2024 - Q2 2025  Ongoing | VP for Research; HR Director  VP for Research; HR Director | RCF updated, operational and communicated to all researchers regularly.  At least 60% of researchers agree that they utilise the Researcher Carer Framework by 2028.  At least 50% agree that there are opportunities to support their development and career progression by 2028, with less than 5% disparity by gender. |
| Capture and track career progression data for all researchers annually to understand accurate progression through the Framework. | Jun 2024;  biannually thereafter | HR Director | Data captured and monitored regularly, with clear progression trends identified. |
| Enhance the ‘Researcher Development Hub’ to ensure that all researcher career and development supports are accessible via one webpage and communicate this Hub to all new researchers joining DCU upon induction.  Develop an ‘induction template’ to support faculties/schools in providing a standardised induction locally upon commencement of role. | Q2 2024; and ongoing  Q4 2024 - Q1 2025 | Head of L&OD  Head of L&OD; Heads & Deans | Researcher Development Hub active, updated regularly and used by researchers; with at least 60% are of, and use, the Hub by 2028.  Standardised induction in operation locally for researchers by 2028. |
| Ensure PIs and Supervisors utilise the PRD scheme to identify appropriate training and development requirements for researchers *(linked to strategy for HR Excellence in Research Award)*. | Q2 2024; and ongoing | Head of L&OD | At least 65% of researchers agree that PRD is beneficial to them by 2028. |
| 2.2.6 | GE4 | To enhance career development opportunities for all staff (academic, research, PMSS) through engagement with the newly relaunched Staff Mentoring Programme | Approx. 7% of employees have engaged with the mentoring programme since 2019 (81% were women). Academic and PMSS men are not engaging with the scheme at the same rate as academic or PMS women (24% of academics and 14% of PMSS engaging with the programme were men). Research and Technical staff in particular are underrepresented. | Relaunch the newly improved staff mentoring programme and build an awareness-raising campaign to encourage staff to participate as mentors and mentees.  Run promotional campaigns twice yearly to encourage engagement. Specifically, tailor messaging to target and encourage underrepresented cohorts to engage effectively with the scheme.  Monitor mentor and mentee uptake of the scheme, by gender and category of post, biannually. | Jan 2024  Q3 2024 and Q1 2025; biannually thereafter | Head of L&OD | Scheme relaunched and in operation. 25% of staff are engaging with the mentoring programme (as mentors or mentees) by 2028; with proportionate engagement across the three staff categories, and with less than 10% gender disparity for each category of staff. |
| Provide opportunity for those engaging to provide feedback on the scheme annually; and adjust scheme based on feedback as appropriate. | Dec 2024; annually thereafter | Head of L&OD | Four mentee/mentor surveys carried out by 2028 and feedback taken on board. |
| 2.2.7 | GE3 / AEG4 | To consider intersectional inequalities in access to career development opportunities by designing a new Talent Management and Development Strategy, with specific consideration for underrepresented groups | Intersectional disparities are evident in survey findings. For example, 41% of PMSS ethnic minority women and 17% of PMSS ethnic minority men agreed that they have opportunity to progress (compared to 53% of PMSS non ethnic minority women and 52% of PMSS non ethnic minority men). In a similar nature, we see disparities when looking at those with a disability and LGBTQ+ staff. | Develop and implement a Talent Management and Development Strategy, in line with the HR Strategic Plan, and proactively identify and address gaps within the University’s pipeline in underrepresented groups, including gender and with consideration of intersectionality.  In line with this strategy, consider a pilot sponsorship programme through which senior managers sponsor the career development of two staff members of the underrepresented gender in their area, and with particular attention paid to those who may be experiencing intersectional inequalities *(aligned with recommendations from the 2nd national review of gender equality in HE).* | Q4 2025 - Q2 2026  Q3 2026 - Q3 2027 | HR Director; Head of L&OD; Executive Deans | Talent Management and Development Strategy created and operational; with evidence-based, targeted action plans developed based on gaps identified.  Targets on appropriate gender representation met (SAP 2.2.1).  A new sponsorship programme for underrepresented groups developed and piloted; with engagement from all five faculties and PMSS units by 2028. |
| 2.2.8 | GE4 | To ensure effective career development opportunities are made available to all staff through enhanced suite of training and leadership development initiatives with increased engagement from all categories of staff | 59% of survey respondents agreed that they have access to the training they need to support their career aspirations (51% of academics, 64% of researchers and 64% of PMSS). Slight gendered differences are shown for academics where 49% women agree versus 54% men. There is a clear gender disparity for researchers with 57% of men agreeing compared to 73% of women.  Current data trends also show an average of 30% of training participants over the reporting period are men. There are imbalances evident particularly on leadership programmes. | Conduct a learning needs analysis annually across DCU to identify what development programmes are required to ensure that all academic, research and PMSS staff have the knowledge, skills and competencies required to successfully fulfil their roles.  Investigate as to why participation in training and development opportunities from male staff is less than female staff. | Q2 - Q3 2024; annually thereafter  Q1 2025 | Head of L&OD  Head of L&OD | Learning needs analysis conducted annually and used to create an L&OD offer that leverages a 70:20:10 model to all staff.  At least 70% of survey respondents indicate they have access to the training they need to support career aspirations, with relatively little differences based on gender or category of post. |
| Use data gathered to inform future actions to improve male participation in L&OD and EDI training / awareness activities. |  | Head of L&OD; EDI Manager | Increased male participation in line with the proportion of female attendees based on overall gender ratio of the University. |
| Develop a robust and targeted access strategy to work across academic, professional and research teams to identify and resolve any barriers to access to leadership programmes.  Monitor applications for leadership programmes annually to ensure a more balanced pool of academic and research men and women are applying for and participating in these programmes.  Set diversity targets within existing leadership programmes to ensure underrepresented groups are provided opportunities to participate. | Q4 2024; and reviewed quarterly thereafter  Q3 2024; annually thereafter  Q3 2024; annually thereafter | Head of L&OD  Head of L&OD  Head of L&OD; EDI Manager | A more balanced representation from all categories of staff and all genders on our leadership programmes annually; taking into consideration overall gender ratio within each staff category. |
| Work with relevant ERGs to consider the development of targeted professional development opportunities for underrepresented groups. | Q3 2025; and ongoing | Head of L&OD; EDI Manager | ERGs utilised to understand gaps in current development programmes for underrepresented groups, and consideration undertaken to enhance current offerings. |
| Ensure that all line managers are transparent in how they communicate the annual budget for training and development, and the process in which employees’ are approved for training. | Q4 2024; annually thereafter | Head of L&OD; HoS; Heads of Functions | Transparent training budget for each function. |
| 2.2.9 | GE4 | To continue to enhance the *Women in Leadership* *(WiL)* initiative as a comprehensive and inclusive offering for all female staff (academic, research and PMSS), with increased focus on intersectionality. | To support our work in advancing gender imbalances within the university, and particularly in senior/leadership roles, it is important that we continue to build on the WiL initiative offer. | Review the existing WiL lecture series and explore opportunities to enhance the diversity of backgrounds and experience represented by speakers.  Host two lecture series events annually; one per semester. | Q4 2024  Q1 2025 & Q3 2025; annually thereafter | EDI Unit  EDI Unit; University Events Team | WiL events taking place twice annually, with more diversity in speakers and focus on intersectionality. |
| Continue to offer places on the Aurora programme annually, identifying high potential, early-career female staff; with a more balanced pool of staff categories represented in the annual participant cohort. A particular focus will be on engaging more researchers and women from underrepresented groups on the programme.  Consider the creation of an Aurora budget, managed and maintained by the EDI Unit, to support small departments and/or underrepresented staff with participating in the programme. | Q3 2024; annually thereafter  Q3 2024; annually thereafter | Head of L&OD; EDI Unit  Head of L&OD; EDI Unit | Aurora programme offered annually; with engagement from all staff categories. In particular, an increase in the number of researchers applying for, and participating in the Aurora programme; with at least 10% of participants being researchers annually.  Aurora budget established and utilised annually where needed. |
| Identify ways to sustainably fund annual iterations of the Vista Mid-Career Programme nationally; or consider alternative programmes that target those at mid-career stage, using lessons learned from the Vista pilot. | Q3 2024 - Q2 2025 | Head of L&OD; EDI Manager | Funding for future Vista programmes (or alternative) sourced, and at least 2 iterations run by 2028. |
| Develop and implement a strategic senior leadership development programme to enhance our female future leader pipeline. | Q3 2024 - Q2 2025 | Head of L&OD | New programme is established and an annual offering for female leaders in DCU. |
| Provide female Associate Professors the opportunity to participate in the PAA programme annually.  Conduct evaluations with participants on the programme annually to understand their experience of participating on the programme and the impact it could potentially have on their career progression.  Monitor all faculty promotion calls to Prof/Full Prof annually to determine the success of the PAA programme for DCU participants. | Q2 2024; annually thereafter | EDI Unit | At least 10 female academics participate in the PAA programme by 2028; and 50% of delegates are successful in promotion within 12-18 months, based on timeframe of calls.  At least 75% of DCU participants annually feel more ready to apply for promotion as a result of participating in the programme. |
| 2.2.10 | AEG4 | To integrate DCU values, particularly the *‘Inclusive’* value, into all training design, and particularly within management and leadership programmes | While there are many specific EDI training offerings to staff, it is important for embedding EDI that the concepts are included throughout all trainings regardless of theme/topic. This will allow for an increased engagement with EDI. | Review content of all L&OD training to ensure EDI and DCU values are embedded throughout.  Update all leadership programmes (including Explore, PRSL) to incorporate a specific module on EDI.  Develop and introduce a specific ‘Inclusive Leadership’ module to be incorporated as part of DCU’s Essential eLearning suite of trainings. | Q4 2024; annually thereafter  Q1 - Q2 2025  Q1 - Q2 2025 | Head of L&OD; EDI Manager | All L&OD training content reviewed and updated to incorporate EDI.  Both leadership programmes have a specific module focused on EDI. |
| 2.2.11 |  | To further understand the factors potentially impacting research funding outcomes in DCU, and ensure active engagement from researchers with funding application supports | Although there is disparity observed in the data between male versus female research activity, the general trajectory of female activity over recent years has been positive. This needs to be monitored regularly, and further actions developed to enhance female engagement. | Continue to track and annually monitor funding application and outcome data, disaggregated by gender and funder type. Report findings annually to the EDI Steering Committee and other relevant stakeholders.  Create and maintain faculty-level researcher lists to allow for targeted communications with research cohorts, to support in tracking funding applications. | Q4 2024; annually thereafter  Q4 2024; and updated quarterly | RIS; with support from EDI Unit  HR Systems and Data Manager, support from ADRs; RD Team | Data tracked annually, and further trends or gaps identified and addressed through new actions.  Researcher mailing list established, in operation, and updated regularly, allowing for targeted communication. |
| Conduct further qualitative investigation with female researchers, via a focus group, to understand the observed gender disparities and to ascertain what factors may specifically be hindering female activity and/or engagement in applying for funding. | Q3 - Q4 2025 | EDI Unit; with support from RIS and ADRs | A female-specific focus group held with findings used to develop tailored actions to address issues. |
| Collect and monitor data, disaggregated by gender and faculty, on engagement with support and training provided by Research Development (RD) Team. Develop actions to address any gaps or trends identified through annual monitoring. | Q4 2024; annually thereafter | RD Manager | Training data captured annually, and trends or gaps identified and addressed. |
| Review the DCU research grant repository through a gender lens to understand who currently engages with the repository.  Update the repository to ensure equal representation from all genders.  Monitor engagement with repository, disaggregated by gender, annually.  Develop actions to address any gaps identified. | Q1 2025; annually thereafter | RD Manager; Faculty RD Officers | Research grant repository reviewed, updated and maintained with successful applications from both genders included. Engagement of grant repository monitored annually, and gaps identified and addressed through targeted actions. |
| 2.2.12 |  | To ensure no gendered disparities emerge in the uptake of sabbatical leave | At present, there is general gender parity on those availing of sabbatical leave annually across the University. To date, only uptake is monitored and not application for sabbatical leave. | Monitor applications for, and uptake of, sabbatical leave annually, by gender and faculty. Share report to Executive Deans annually for consideration.  Develop actions to address any emerging gendered gaps. | Q4 2024; annually thereafter  Ongoing | HR Systems and Data Manager; Executive Deans | Data captured and tracked annually, with trends established. |
| 2.2.13 |  | To ensure that information is systematically collected on reasons for employees leaving the University and continuously monitor leavers data for trends | At present, exit interviews are not conducted systematically and so no insight can be provided, based on reliable data, to understand the reasons as to why employees choose to leave.  *(follow up from BAP 4.7)* | Introduce exit interviews/exit surveys to capture and track data on reasons for exiting the University, disaggregated by gender. Use this information to make changes to policy or practice, where applicable, to support in retaining employees.  Produce unit-specific annual reports on leavers data and share with Heads and Deans. | Q1 2025  Q4 2024; annually thereafter | HR Director; HR Service Delivery Managers  HR Systems and Data Manager | Process for tracking exit information in place, and information more readily available.  Reports on leavers distributed annually for consideration. |
| 2.2.14 | GE4 | To ensure that all staff members in DCU have access and opportunity to effectively engage with annual performance review and development conversations through the new PRD scheme | 55% of survey respondents are currently aware of the PRD scheme; and 54% believe they would benefit from a PRD process. Men are less agreeable that they would benefit from the PRD process than women (49%m v 57%w). | Implement the full rollout of the PRD scheme to all units within DCU, with senior management across the University championing the scheme.  Provide targeted training to Reviewers to ensure that they are confident in their ability to conduct PRD meetings effectively. Training will also be provided to Reviewees.  Monitor the uptake of PRD annually, by unit and gender. Report on uptake to EDI Steering Committee and other relevant stakeholders for consideration.  Develop targeted actions to address any gaps/trends which emerge as the implementation of the scheme is embedded. | Oct 2023 - Apr 2024; annually thereafter  Ongoing  Ongoing  Ongoing, as required | Head of L&OD | PRD scheme is in operation annually; with 80% of staff engaging. No gender disparities evident.  At least 90% of staff are aware of the scheme by 2028.  At least 70% see the benefit of engaging with the PRD process; with an equal percentage of men and women agreeing that they benefit from the process. |
| 2.2.15 |  | To ensure issues of transparency within workload allocation is reduced with an effective WAM is in place across the University, and workload is distributed fairly and evenly, regardless of gender. | Clear transparency issues with workload among academics is evident from survey and focus group findings. 41% of academics agree that workload allocation is fair and transparent, and women are less satisfied here than men (35% of women agree versus 51% of men). Additionally, 54% of academics agree that there is active management of workload within their department. | Review the current ‘Workload Principles’ document to determine if it is fit for purpose and being utilised effectively. Consider the creation of a University-wide policy to address workload allocation, with the policy taking into account the different nature of work in different areas and disciplines. This aligns with plans within DCU’S Strategic Plan 2023 - 2028.  Implement WAM recommendations from the HEA 2nd National Review on Gender Equality, including local publications of WAMs, and annual monitoring to identify any gender bias. | Q4 2025 - Q1 2026 *(to be ready for April 2026)*  Q2 2026; annually thereafter | Deputy President; HR Director  HR Director; Heads & Deans | New University-wide WAM policy in place.  At least 60% of academics agree that workload allocation is fair and transparent by 2028, with less than 5% gender disparity.  At least 70% of academics agree that there is active management of workload in their dept by 2028, with less than 5% gender disparity.  By 2028, at least 60% of academics agree that workload is distributed fairly, regardless of gender, with less than 5% gender disparity evident. |
| 2.2.16 |  | To enhance the tool used to calculate the gender pay gap to allow for the disaggregation of data by staff category and role type. | At present, the tool used to calculate our GPG does not present us with stable data when disaggregating by staff category or role type. | Work with our provider (Makodata) to reconfigure the tool used to calculate GPG to allow for the disaggregation of data by staff category, role type, and department/unit.  Monitor this data annually, and present disaggregated data to key stakeholders for consideration. Develop actions as trends emerge to lower the GPG in specific areas where higher GPG is highlighted. | Q2 - Q3 2024  Q4 2024; annually thereafter | HR Systems and Data Manager  HR Director; HR Systems and Data Manager; EDI Unit | Tool used to calculate GPG updated to allow for stable data to be published by staff category, role type, department. More detailed data available for future AS applications.  Data monitored, trends identified, and relevant action developed and implemented. |
| **Section 2.3: Supporting and advancing PMS staff careers** | | | | | | | |
| 2.3.1 | GE3 | To increase male representation in PMS positions | Male representation in PMS roles is 34% overall. Male representation in admin roles is lowest at 25%. While recruitment trends show that the percentage of men applying and being shortlisted has increased since 2019, men are still underrepresented particularly in grades P2 - P5a. | Monitor gender breakdown of applicants for all PMS positions to identify trends and gaps. Develop a report annually, with data disaggregated by gender and grade. Share with relevant stakeholders for consideration and action.  Embed the flexible cascade model by introducing positive action measures to ensure that male applicants are shortlisted for interviews, where they meet the minimum essential criteria, particularly for recruitment calls to P2 to P5A grades.  Introduce new actions to address emerging or continuous gaps and monitor new actions for impact. | Q4 2024; annually thereafter  Q3 2024; and ongoing  Ongoing, as required | HR Director; HR Service Delivery Managers | Gendered data captured annually, gaps identified, and new actions developed.  Increase in % of men shortlisted for interviews as a result of flexible cascade model implementation.  Increase in the overall representation of men in PMSS from 34% to 40% by 2028. |
| 2.3.2 | GE4 | To support PMS with career progression opportunities, capture data on career progression among PMSS, and ensure the process of applying for an internal vacancy is transparent. | At present there is no formalised gathering of internal progression data for PMSS. 43% of PMSS survey respondents agreed that there are opportunities for them to internally progress (45% women and 40% men agreed).  52% of PMS respondents agreed that the process of applying for an internal vacancy is fair and transparent; men and women responding similarly. | Develop and implement an approach to effectively capturing internal progression among PMSS.  Monitor data annually and report to the relevant stakeholders. Publish report on progression rates, by gender and grade, for all staff to view (alongside academic and research progression rates).  Develop a toolkit on the new HR website to compile detailed information on the practical steps and advice needed on applying for internal vacancies and/or secondments to ensure internal candidates are aware of the process. | Q4 2024  Q4 2025; annually thereafter  Q4 2024 - Q1 2025 | HR Director; HR Service Delivery Managers; HR Systems & Data Manager  HR Service Delivery Managers | Clear data on internal career progression for all PMS staff is collected, analysed, and reported annually.  At least 65% of survey respondents agree that applying for an internal vacancy is fair and transparent. |
| Build an awareness-raising approach to support the increased awareness and understanding of the Professional Development Framework among staff; and ensure it is being utilised during annual PRD meetings. | Q3 2024; and ongoing | HR Director; Head of L&OD | At least 75% of PMSS are aware of the Professional Development Framework by 2028.  At least 60% agree that there is opportunity for them to internally progress in their careers; with less than 5% disparity based on gender. |
| Continue to roll out the Emerge programme annually to support those at grade P3 and P4 in developing their skills for career progression. | Q3 - Q4 2024; annually thereafter | L&OD | At least 60 eligible PMSS have participated in the Emerge programme by 2028, with 25% successful making progression/change within two years of completion of the programme. |
| Continue to ensure opportunity for PMSS to engage with mentoring and leadership programmes (SAP 2.2.6). |  | L&OD | PMSS engaging with mentoring and training programmes, with targets achieved as per SAP 2.2.6. |
| 2.3.3 | GE4 | To ensure that technical staff specifically feel supported in their career development and to ensure they have opportunities for development. | Technical staff responding to the survey were less favourable across statements linked to career progression and development than other cohorts of staff. For example, 37% of technical staff agree that they have access to training they need to support their career aspirations. | Commit to the new *Technician Commitment (TC)* Initiative being supported by the HEA to allow the University to carry out a more detailed analysis of the issues/barriers facing technical staff. | Q1 2025 | HR Director; in collaboration with TC WG | Self-assessment process as part of the TC complete, with a specific action plan developed and in implementation to support technical staff. |
| Review training and development opportunities for technical staff, aligned to the general learning needs analysis being conducted (SAP 2.2.8), to determine if there are opportunities to improve the offering specifically for this cohort.  Promote leadership development programmes to technical staff specifically to ensure they are aware of such programmes and apply to participate in these programmes where applicable. | Q2 - Q3 2024  As programmes are launched annually | Head of L&OD  Head of L&OD | Appropriate suite of training for technical staff in place.  At least 60% of technical respondents agree that they have access to the training they need by 2028.  Increase in the number of technical staff on leadership programmes such as Explore, Aurora |
| **Section 2.4: Evaluating culture, inclusion and belonging** | | | | | | | |
| 2.4.1 | AEG3 | To ensure that all staff are aware of, and can respond appropriately to, issues of Dignity and Respect and Sexual Misconduct as they arise | 50% of survey respondents agree that they know how to report bullying, and 48% agree that they know how to report discrimination. 52% of survey respondents are aware of how to report issues of sexual misconduct.  48% of survey respondents would be comfortable reporting issues of bullying and discrimination, and 59% would be comfortable reporting on sexual misconduct.  Awareness levels among staff of Speak Out Tool are low. 22% of respondents to the disability pulse survey and 28% of respondents to the race equality pulse survey are aware of the anonymous reporting tool ‘Speak Out’. | Create a communications strategy to support the delivery of key messages regarding the D&R and Sexual Misconduct policies and sets of procedures. Leverage the improved EDI governance structures to ensure that all staff engage with information.  Develop an ‘outreach programme’ to promote and increase awareness of our newly updated Dignity and Respect Policy and new Sexual Misconduct Policy and implement annually.  Develop and publish short, accessible infographic summaries of the two key policies that include an outline roadmap of reporting procedures. | Q3 - Q4 2024  Q1 -Q2 2025  Q3 - Q4 2024 | Dignity, Respect & Sexual Mis-conduct (DRSM) Response Manager; with support from EDI Unit | By 2028, at least 80% of survey respondents are aware of the D&R policy and at least 70% agree that they know how to report issues of bullying, harassment, and discrimination.  By 2028, at least 80% are aware of Sexual Misconduct Policy, and at least 65% of survey respondents know how to report incidents of sexual misconduct by 2028.  Outreach programme developed and implemented; with 30% of staff reached across all three teaching campuses each year.  At least 65% of survey respondents feel comfortable making a disclosure regarding bullying, harassment, or sexual misconduct by 2028. |
| Incorporate information on Speak Out into all communications relating to D&R and Sexual Misconduct Policies (including roadshow series of events). This will include specific clarity on what the tool is used for, and what alternative structures for formal complaints/reports there are. | Q3 - Q4 2024 | DRSM Response Manager; EDI Unit | At least 70% of survey respondents are aware of the Speak Out Tool by 2028. |
| Include D&R policy within the required list of policies that all new starters need to read ahead of starting in their roles. | Q2 2025 | HR Director | D&R policy read by all new starters going forward. |
| Continue to roll out targeted D&R-related training, facilitated by the EDI Unit, for schools/departments in DCU. Enhance engagement among and encourage all Heads and Deans with this by ensuring it is included on the agenda for H&Ds meetings not less than once per semester.  Develop an online Anti-Bullying and Harassment training available through Loop for DCU staff. Promote and monitor engagement levels annually; and consider incorporation into the Essential eLearning suite of training. | Q2 2024; and ongoing  Q3 2026 – Q2 2027 | VP for EDI; DRSM Response Manager  Director of Engagement & Innovation (Anti- Bullying Centre) | Targeted D&R sessions carried out with at least 25% of schools/ departments engaging annually.  A new Anti-Bullying and Harassment training developed and launched, with 20% of staff engaging by 2028. |
| Monitor awareness and confidence levels by conducting a specific D&R pulse survey every two years. | Q1 2025; Q1 2027 | DRSM Response Manager; EDI Unit | Two pulse surveys on D&R carried out by 2028. |
| 2.4.2 |  | To ensure a more equal gender representation at EDI training and awareness events | Male participation in EDI training is much lower than that of women (men currently represent 22% of EDI- specific training participants). | Include all EDI training as part of the learning needs analysis conducted as part of SAP 2.2.8 to ensure our EDI offerings suit the needs of staff.  Develop more opportunities for “in team” and “in departmental” training / awareness sessions as these have been proven to help ensure a more equal gender engagement as well as reaching staff who may not choose to self-refer for an EDI training opportunity. | Q2 - Q4 2024  Q2 2024; and ongoing | Head of L&OD; EDI Manager | Male participation increased from 22% to at least 40% by 2028.  EDI-specific training needs for staff identified with a more structured, coordinated suite of EDI training available. |
| Host specific events that raise awareness as to the role men play in progressing GE/EDI *(aligned to actions in SAP 1.2.1)*. | Q4 2024; annual thereafter | EDI Manager | One event held annually to engage men in gender equality. |
| Develop improved evaluation forms for participants of EDI training to allow for more robust tracking of impact of programmes. Consider additional longer-term tracking with short survey 6-12 months post-training. | Q4 2024 | EDI Manager | Improved evaluation in operation to track impact. |
| 2.4.3 | AEG4 | To continue to identify and address gaps in our policies and practices related to intersectional inequalities which impact employees’ experiences in DCU | Survey findings showed that intersectional issues are evident, particularly in area of dignity and respect. For example, 17% of women who identify as having an EMS status agree that they have experienced sexual misconduct compared to EMS men (3%) / non-EMS women (1%) / non-EMS men (1%).  EGRs will be valuable in providing opportunities for lived experiences to be captured and to support us in identifying gaps in current policy and practice. | Build on work undertaken to date to implement plans to establish Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), includinglaunching the Employee Resource Groups protocol/guidelines and supporting Leads in creating ERGs related to Cultural Diversity, Disability, and LGBTQ+ *(this links with our previous BAP3.4).*  Work collaboratively with ERGs to gather information and feedback on their experiences of policies and practices in DCU through focus groups/pulse surveys. | Q2 - Q4 2024  Q4 2024 - ongoing | EDI Manager; EDI Unit  EDI Manager | ERG Guidelines launched, and 3 ERGs created and in operation by 2028.  Focus groups held with 3 staff networks by 2026. Actions developed based on feedback and incorporated into this action plan where relevant. |
| Share relevant survey findings with institutional Working Groups *(as shown in Figure 1.3)* to support them identifying areas for action and to inform their next steps.  As part of upcoming work on a DCU Anti Racism Action Plan, investigate the unique issues experienced by women with an ethnic minority background and provide a safe space to explore actions that would address gaps which have been highlighted through our AS survey 2023. | Q4 2024  Q1 – Q3 2025 | Athena Swan Officer  Race Equality WG Chair; EDI Unit | All relevant findings shared with Working groups for consideration and action planning.  A specific and dedicated DCU Anti Racism Action Plan is in place and actively implemented and monitored against reporting requirements. |
| 2.4.4 | AEG3 | To ensure line management feels equipped in implementing D&R Sexual Misconduct, and Domestic Violence Leave Policies and appropriately manages disclosures. | Line management needs specific support to ensure that they can manage initial disclosures. | Design specific training for all staff with people-management responsibilities to ensure that they are aware of their role in the procedures and can appropriately respond to, and support, those who disclose. | Q2 – Q4 2025 | Head of L&OD; DRSM Response Manager | At least 80% of line management have participated in training by 2028. |
| 2.4.5 | GE5 | To ensure that all staff are aware of and have opportunities to avail of flexible working arrangements, including hybrid working, to support work-life balance | 56% of survey respondents indicated that there were flexible working arrangements available that suit their needs.  65% of respondents agree that they can work flexibly if they wish to do so (75% of academics and 78% of researchers agree with this, compared to 56% of PMSS).  47% of respondents agree that DCU facilitates a hybrid working approach that suits their needs (33% of PMSS staff agreed compared to 60% of academics and researchers).  51% of respondents agreed that they could strike a balance between work and home life. | Package all formal flexible working policies together on a new HR webpage and disseminate to Heads and Deans for sharing to all staff to increase awareness of policies and flexible working options. | Q2 2024 | HR Director | At least 75% of survey respondents are aware of the formal flexible working arrangement available to them by 2028.  At least 70% of survey respondents agree that there are flexible working arrangements available that suit their needs. |
| Conduct a benchmarking exercise to understand the flexible working offerings in all HEIs across Ireland, to better understand if there are current gaps in our offering compared to other institutions.  Carry out a pulse survey and subsequent focus group to evaluate staff experiences of flexible working options to identify opportunities to improve / refine the current policy offerings. This action will be aligned with plans to evaluate the remote working pilot.  Review and update related policies in line with feedback from further consultation process. | Q3 - Q4 2024  Q4 2024  Q4 2024 - Q1 2025; and ongoing as required | HR Director  HR Director; Head of L&OD  HR Director | Key gaps identified through consultation and actions developed and implemented to address these by 2028.  At least 70% of survey respondents overall agree that they can work flexibly if they need or wish to do so; with less than 10% disparity between staff categories.  At least 60% of survey respondents agree that DCU facilitates a hybrid working approach that suits their needs by 2028, with less than 10% disparity between staff categories. |
| Undertake equality monitoring of the flexible working policies to gain a clearer understanding of who is engaging with the policies and identify any significant gaps. | Q4 2024; annually thereafter | HR Systems and Data Manager; EDI Unit | Equality monitoring of uptake of flexible working policies conducted, data analysed, and appropriate actions developed to address any gaps. |
| Reinforce the expectations that university meetings should not be scheduled outside the core hours of 10:00 – 16:00 through inclusion of mandate in University Committee Policy and guidelines. | Sept 2024; biannually thereafter | Chief Operations Officer | At least 85% of survey respondents agree that meetings are scheduled within core working hours by 2028. |
| 2.4.6 | AEG4 | To ensure that there is continuous improvement to the built environment to allow for full accessibility for all staff and students | Findings from the disability pulse survey suggest that there are some accessibility issues with our buildings, particularly for those with a physical disability. | Share relevant data from the staff survey with key stakeholders (Office of the COO / DCU Estates) to inform ongoing and future work to improve the built environment at DCU for those with disabilities.  Leverage Disability ERG to further understand and monitor accessibility issues, with new actions being implemented as needed. | Q2 2024  Ongoing | Athena Swan Officer  COO; EDI Unit | Relevant information shared with key stakeholders, and appropriate actions implemented to address gaps/issues. |
| 2.4.7 | GE5 | To improve visibility and communication of family leave policies, while monitoring uptake to identify any significant gaps in who is availing of leave. | 63% of survey respondents are aware of the family leave entitlements available to them; with men significantly less aware than women: 52% of men are aware of the entitlements compared to 70% women.  While the numbers of men availing of family-related leave (particularly paternity leave) has grown since our last application, data shows that men currently constitute 12% of the parental leave uptakes, and 9% of parent’s leave uptakes.  45% of eligible employees returning from maternity leave in the last three years have availed of the teaching-free period. | Relaunch the updated family-leave policies and one-page summary sheet for distribution to all staff. Promote through annual information sessions on each of the three teaching campuses. | Jun 2024 | HR Director; HR Service Delivery Managers | Increase in the percentage of survey respondents who are aware of family leave entitlements from 63% to 80% by 2028; with less than 5% difference in awareness levels among men and women. |
| Monitor and report on applications for family-leave and uptake of family leave annually by gender, type of leave and other diversity demographics to identify any gaps in the practice of the policy. Develop actions to address any gaps identified through data monitoring. | Q4 2024; annually thereafter | HR General Office Team Lead; EDI Unit | Data captured, analysed and reported (to Athena Swan Working Group / EDI Steering Committee) annually; with clear trends identified. |
| Develop a Maternity Leave Support Pack, to complement the Policy Toolkit, that provides additional, more detailed information to staff on the practical steps in availing of this leave, including the additional benefits available to them (KIT days, etc.). This should be provided to them once they have notified HR of their upcoming leave. | Q1 2025 | HR Service Delivery Managers | New Support Pack developed and in operation. |
| Conduct a review of the additional supports in place for those availing of Maternity Leave (buddy scheme, KIT days, teaching-free period) to assess employees’ experiences. Make relevant changes to the operation of the supports, if required.  Develop a more systematic approach to capturing uptake of the additional maternity benefits centrally and monitor the uptake of additional support within the maternity policy, including the buddy scheme, KIT days and teaching-free period annually *(follow on from BAP 5.5 - 5.7)*.  Continue to provide appropriate funding support to schools towards teaching-free period scheme; and review costs annually to adjust budget as necessary. | Q3 - Q4 2024  Q3 - Q4 2024  Ongoing | EDI Unit  HR Director; EDI Unit; with support from HoS  Head of L&OD | Review of additional supports complete, with updates made where necessary.  100% of those availing of maternity leave are aware of the full level of entitlements by 2028.  Uptake of additional maternity benefits captured and monitored annually; with any negative trends addressed. |
| Conduct a focus group on family-leave supports and barriers specifically for men to identify key issues. Develop targeted actions to support increased uptake of relevant policies based on focus group findings. | Q1 2025 | EDI Unit | Actions developed, implemented and targets set as appropriate. |
| 2.4.8 | GE5 | To enhance our HR offer to employees at key life stages to ensure that they are supported to achieve their full potential at work | We have identified some current gaps in our family-related policy offerings. Additionally, research shows that those experiencing menopause can be impacted in their ability to perform, and an informal employee support network developed in DCU has advocated strongly for formal supports to be provided. | Develop additional policies to support employees, including a Fertility Treatment Leave Policy and a Surrogacy Leave Policy. | Q4 2024 - Q2 2025 | HR Director | Enhanced set of policies available to staff to support them through key life stages. |
| Aligned with DCU’s Wellbeing initiative, create a Menopause Support Guidance document, and develop an online support hub, accessible to all staff.  Continue to host annual training for Managers on supporting those experiencing menopause. | Q4 2024  Q4 2024; annually thereafter | HR Wellbeing WG Chair  Wellbeing WG Chair; Head of L&OD | Menopause Support Guidance established and utilised. An online support hub in operation and actively used by relevant staff.  Training for line managers held annually, with at least 70% in attendance annually. |
| 2.4.9 | GE5 | To ensure those with people management responsibilities can effectively support staff applying for, and availing of family-related leave | ~70% of survey respondents indicated that they felt supported before, during and on return from leave. However, findings from the family leave focus group indicate that employees’ experiences of taking leave can depend on how knowledgeable and supportive their line manager is. | Carry out a pulse survey with Heads of Schools/Units to understand the management perspective and experience of managing leave and to inform guidance/training.  Develop guidance/toolkit for line managers informed by feedback from focus group. | Q4 2024  Q2 - Q3 2025 | EDI Unit  Head of L&OD | Specific guidance/training in place for line managers to support staff in availing of family-related leave.  At least 85% of staff feel supported by their line managers in availing of leave by 2028. |
| 2.4.10 | GE5 | To ensure all staff feel re-engaged within the University upon return from leave; particularly long periods of leave | Feedback from the survey and family leave focus group suggest that returning from a period of leave can be overwhelming, and structured supports are not provided consistently by the University. 21% of survey respondents indicated that on return from leave, supports were put in place to facilitate their re-engagement. | Investigate further the issues surrounding low levels of satisfaction with re-engagement upon return from leave, to further understand the complexity of these issues.  In line with insight gathered, develop a ‘return to work’ orientation/induction programme for staff coming back from long periods of leave, such as maternity leave, carer’s leave. | Q2 - Q4 2025  Q4 2025 | EDI Unit  Head of L&OD | At least 60% of staff who have taken leave in the last three years feel that supports were put in place to facilitate their re-engagement by 2028. |
| 2.4.11 | GE5 | To ensure that there is a formal structure in place to provide adequate cover for those on long term family leave. | Survey findings indicated that: 60% agreed that colleagues took on some/all their responsibilities; 31% agreed that part-time or temporary staff were hired to cover some/all of their responsibilities; 41% covered some of their own responsibilities while on leave. | Carry out a review on the uptake of family-leave per school for the last three years and the approach taken in each of these Schools to cover this period of leave. This will help us gain clearer understanding of issues and gaps with approaches. | Q1 - Q2 2025 | EDI Unit | Review conducted and insights gathered. Standardised approach for the cover of leave established based on insights. |
| Introduce new questions in the next AS survey (2025) to gain further insight into the level of choice experienced by those who covered some/all their responsibilities. | Q1 - Q2 2025 | Athena Swan Officer | More detailed staff experiences captured effectively in future iterations of surveys. |
| Develop and implement actions based on findings from the review and next survey insights and set targets to work towards by 2028. | Ongoing | HR Director; EDI Unit | Targets identified and achieved by 2028. |
| Ensure HoS and Heads of Functions are aware of their responsibility to adequately cover periods of leave, through regular communication aligned to family-leave awareness and manager support plans (SAP 2.4.10). | Ongoing | HR Director; EDI Unit | All Heads are aware of their responsibility. |
| 2.4.12 | GE5 | To ensure all staff with caring responsibilities feel supported by their line manager in balancing work with caring responsibilities, regardless of gender and type of caring responsibility | 65% of respondents with caring responsibilities agree that their line manager is supportive of the need to balance their work with caring responsibilities (62% of women agree compared to 73% of men). Additionally, those with eldercare responsibilities are less agreeable with this statement (53%) compared to those with childcare responsibilities (69%). | Develop a toolkit specifically focused on supporting Line Managers with supporting their staff who have caring responsibilities *(aligned to SAP 2.4.9)*.  Hold annual *Caring for an Older Relative* training and promote the support workshops on offer via the EAP. | Jun 2024  Q2 2025; annually thereafter | HR Director  Head of L&OD | Toolkit developed and in operation. At least 65% of respondents with caring responsibilities agree that their line manager is supportive of their need to balance their work with caring responsibilities; with less than 5% disparity between genders and types of caring responsibilities.  Training held annually for relevant employees. |
| 2.4.13 | AEG4 | To review and update the Student Gender Identity and Expression Policy | With the new SIS programme and new related systems, it is important to review the current policy to ensure it is in line. | Review and make necessary updates to the current *Student Gender Identity and Expression Policy* and related procedures, particularly in the context of the new SIS programme and related systems. | Q2 - Q3 2025 | Dean of Students | Student Gender Identity and Expression Policy in operation which is up-to-date and in line with new system approaches. |
| 2.4.14 |  | To increase DCU student engagement with the HEA Equal Access Survey to allow for greater data to be available to DCU and wider HE sector. | DCU student engagement with the annual survey is currently at ~27%. | Actively promote the HEA Equal Access Survey and encourage students to engage with this data capture exercise to help improve the quality of equality data within the HE sector. Incorporate survey into registration and orientation programmes to support increased engagement. | Sept 2024; annually thereafter | Registrar / VP for Academic Affairs | At least 10% increase in engagement with Equal Access Survey by 2028.  Greater understanding of the demographic profile of our 1st year community, benchmarked against national trends. |
| 2.4.15 |  | To improve engagement with the *Discover Community e-Learning Transition to University* series to ensure all cohorts of students are participating. | Data on participation and completion rates is captured, but not easily by gender. It is important to monitor completion by gender to identify any emerging trends or gaps. | Update the records system to ensure participation rates can be tracked by gender.  Review and evaluate engagement annually in order to identify any gendered gaps in uptake and develop actions to reduce gaps. | Q4 2024; annually thereafter | Dean of Students | Increased engagement with the Discover Community e-Learning Transition to University series, with 60% completing at least one module by 2028, with less than 5% difference based on gender. |
| 2.4.16 | AEG3 | To ensure that DCU continues to be a safe and respectful environment for all students through ongoing educational campaigns | To ensure continued safe and respectful environments, it is important that relevant policies are reviewed regularly and updated when necessary. | Review relevant policies, including the Student Complaint Policy and Procedures, the Alcohol Use Policy, and Drugs and Substance Use Policy as necessary and update as required.  Run annual educational campaigns related to such policies to increase awareness and understanding. | Ongoing  Q3 2024 - Q1 2025; annually thereafter | Dean of Students | Review of relevant policies undertaken as necessary.  Three educational campaigns run by 2028 to support awareness raising. |
| 2.4.17. |  | To ensure that all students with caring responsibilities feel supported and can effectively engage in student life | The University recognises the challenges facing student parents and carers, and there is currently no formal policy in place to provide supports to this cohort. | Develop a new policy on Supporting Student Carers.  Establish a peer network of student carers.  Conduct a needs analysis for student parents/carers to understand the challenges and gaps they face and how to mitigate these through policy and supports. | Q4 2027 | Dean of Students | Needs analysis conducted with clearer understanding of issues and gaps identified.  Support Student Carers Policy in operation.  Peer Network of student carers established and in operation. |
| 2.4.18 |  | To ensure that there are appropriate spaces for staff and students with religious requirements | DCU is committed to supporting our staff and student communities from diverse faith and non-faith backgrounds, and it is important to ensure appropriate spaces are available. | Review our available prayer spaces to meet the needs of students and our staff community. | Q4 2027 – Q1 2028 | Dean of Students | Appropriate prayer spaces available to students from all religious backgrounds across our three teaching campuses |
| **Section 3.3: Evaluating local and discipline-specific progress and success** | | | | | | | |
| 3.3.1 | GE1 | To formalise and enhance the AS feedback process to ensure a streamlined and cohesive approach to AS priorities | While there are mechanisms in place to ensure communication between local and institutional committees on key AS priorities, this could be strengthened in several ways. | Include AS/EDI as a standing agenda item at all FMB meetings to allow for the Faculty EDI to provide progress reports.  Put a mechanism in place to allow AS Chairs/Convenors to present key findings from their self-assessment process and AP to the Athena Swan WG.  Present a quarterly update on the AS action plan to EDI Steering Committee; and distribute key updates back to Faculty Committees. | Q2 2024  Q3 2024  Q1 2025; quarterly thereafter | Faculty EDI Leads  Athena Swan WG Chair  Athena Swan WG Chair; Faculty EDI Leads | AS/EDI is a standing item on all FMB meeting agendas.  Presentations to EDI Steering Committee take place after each successful departmental application. |