



**QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST**



ATHENA SWAN

Gold University Application

November 2023



 **AdvanceHE**

Member 23-24



**Athena
Swan**
Silver Award



**Race
Equality
Charter**
Working Towards

Applicant information

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Section 1: An overview of the University and its approach to GE

1.1 Letter of endorsement from the head of the University



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28 November 2023

Dear Athena Swan Review Panel

I am delighted to unreservedly endorse this application for an Institutional Athena Swan Gold Award. Equality is a longstanding principle in Queen's, embedded in our 1845 Charter. In 2000, we committed to tackling gender inequality, and I am proud of our sustained, longitudinal progress that I shared at a recent Townhall event for staff.

As an anchor institution in Northern Ireland (NI), our leadership in GE has shaped a vibrant landscape of public sector and external sector organisations with shared equality goals. Our impact across the island of Ireland, the UK, and globally, is transforming GE in academia and beyond. We are privileged to have walked with other organisations to their EDI successes.

Since our Silver renewal, all 15 of our Schools now have Athena Swan Awards. In 2019, we appointed our first female Chancellor, Secretary Hillary Clinton, an international champion for the empowerment of women and girls. I am personally invested in gender equality (GE) and EDI. Over the last 24 months, I have worked with Senate to develop a new leadership structure in which EDI is woven into all our work. All our Pro Vice Chancellors and new Vice-Presidents have responsibility for EDI, both within their portfolios and across the university. I am pleased that Senate and the University Management Board remain gender balanced.

To reach our Gold ambition, I increased resourcing to the Queen's Gender Initiative (QGI) who lead our Athena Swan/GE programme (from 2.6 FTE to 5.2 FTE). We also consolidated funding for School Swan programmes by annual budget resource.

I am delighted that our Silver targets were met - many were reached early and are now exceeded with an ongoing upward trajectory. We aimed to have 27% female Professors by 2023 and this was 31% in the application (census August 2023). I am proud that today, this is 34% due to Academic 2023 Progression outcomes; 31 new Professors (20 women, 11 men) from a total of 69 women and 47 men promoted. Our target of 45% female Senior Lecturers is exceeded. It is encouraging that annual Progression applications have doubled; women are now at least as likely to apply as men and have higher success rates.

We recognised the huge contribution from staff during the pandemic through two additional annual leave days in 2021 and an additional payment. The 'Engendering Solutions' project reported impacts of lockdowns on working and wellbeing. We introduced a Covid-Pandemic-Research Enabling Fund, implemented an EDI-framework for laboratory re-entry, launched Agile working and increased our wellbeing portfolio.

Inspiring future female leaders is paramount. At our recent Good Friday Agreement Conference, the Chancellor awarded Civic Leadership medals to 25 female leaders. We hosted public events with high-profile women, including leading academics, former President of Ireland, the US Ambassador to the UK, the former First Minister of NI, former Deputy First Minister of NI, and Head of the NI Civil Service.

We intentionally increased the visibility of women through the conferment of honorary degrees, naming campus rooms after women, and the installation of new portraits/artwork. I have approved commissioning of five new portraits of prominent women for 2024.

At Queen's, we know that culture enables realisation of our GE goals. Listening to staff is a personal priority. The 2023 Staff Survey achieved a 68% response rate with 70% agreeing that Queen's is a great place to work. We recently enhanced our portfolio of family-friendly policies with new Menopause and Fertility Treatment policies, which were well-received, attracted significant media attention and have become a reference resource for other organisations.

Queen's joined the Race Equality Charter in 2020 and opened a Racial Equity Programme. The Gold self-assessment and intersectional analysis illuminates disadvantage experienced by women from minority ethnic backgrounds. Key actions in the intersectional Gold programme also align with the Racial Equity Programme's objectives.

Strategy 2030, places people at the centre; moreover, the Gold Action Plan articulates Queen's GE aspirations. I am particularly keen to develop an Athena Swan programme in our Directorates with a PTO application in 2026. I am confident that we will reach our new target of 40% female Professors within five years and will achieve progress across each of the new Priority areas.

We will add to our support for students through the development of a Student Carers' Passport, support for female entrepreneurship and new cost-of-living initiatives.

New staff developmental programmes including, 'Reaching Reader', 'Beyond Reader', 'Active Inclusion', Daphne Jackson Fellowships and a Professional Services Academy will further enable career progression. Phase 2 of QGI will see a new Queen's Global Institute for Women's Leadership, which will improve access to higher education for disadvantaged schoolgirls, integrate GE research across Queen's and launch international leadership programmes.

Finally, I confirm that the application and appendices are an accurate and honest representation of our GE context, and that it has been developed through extensive consultation across Queen's. The application has not only my complete and unreserved support, but also the support of all the leadership team and the wider university.

Yours sincerely



Professor Sir Ian Greer
President and Vice-Chancellor

1.2 Description of the University and its context

1.2.1 Overview of the University

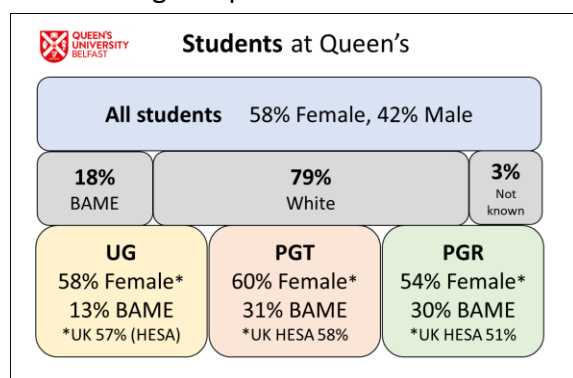
Queen’s University Belfast (Queen’s) has a distinguished heritage and history, founded in 1845 by Royal Charter (Figure 1). Equality has been embedded in Queen’s for more than a century with ‘equality of opportunity for all persons’ enshrined in its Charter. Queen’s is recognised as a sector-leader in Gender Equality (GE) in higher education (HE) and civic society.

Queen’s is one of three universities in Northern Ireland (NI), a Russell Group member, and in the top 200 world universities (26th in UK¹).



Figure 1. Queen’s University Belfast.

With around 26,000 students (58%F) from 96+ countries, our student body engenders a rich and exciting campus.



Queen’s students have higher ethnic diversity vs. the NI population (18% Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) students vs 3.4% NI²).

Undergraduate (UG), Postgraduate Taught (PGT) and Postgraduate Research (PGR) students by sex and ethnicity are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Infographic of student communities at Queen’s by sex and race/ethnicity.

¹ <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-University-rankings/2023/world-ranking>

² <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/system/files/statistics/census-2021-main-statistics-for-northern-ireland-phase-1-statistical-bulletin-ethnic-group.pdf>

Around 4,300 staff (54%F) from 98+ countries work as Academics, Professional Services (PS) or Researchers (Figure 3).

Queen’s staff have higher ethnic diversity vs. NI population, particularly Academics and Researchers (11% and 22% BAME respectively).

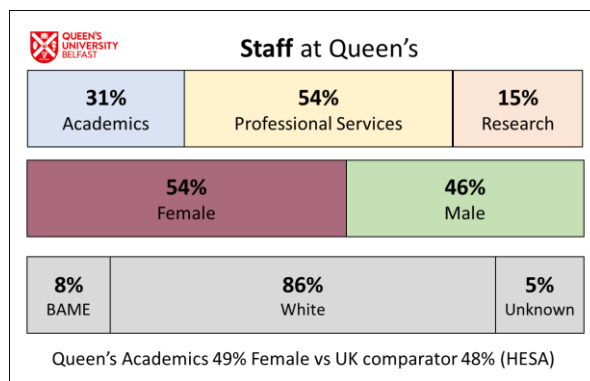


Figure 3. Infographic of staff populations at Queen’s by role, sex and race/ethnicity.

Queen’s contributes £3bn to the UK economy annually, where every £1 invested in Queen's generates £8.20 (vs. £5.50, average Russell Group³). Figure 4 outlines HE-related key facts about Queen’s.

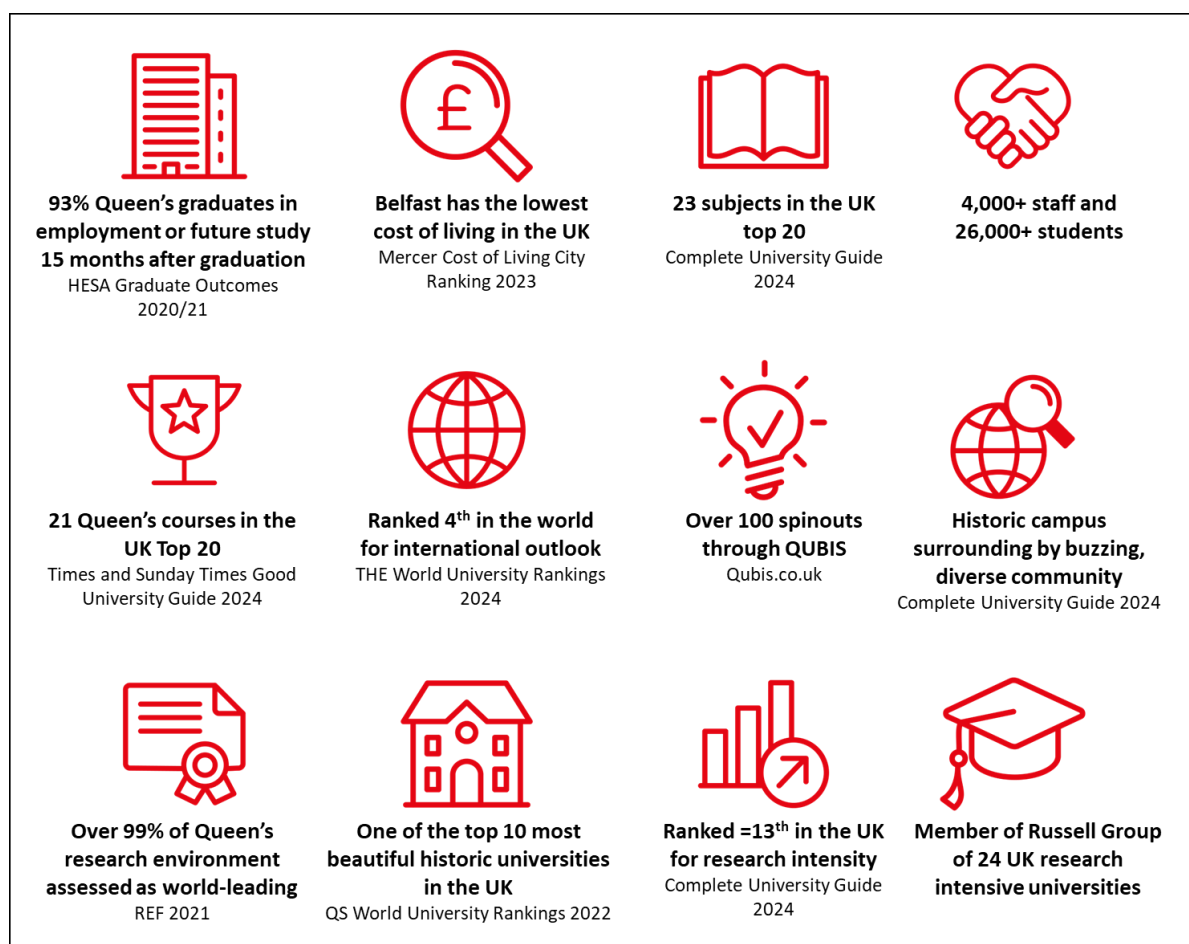


Figure 4. Key HE-related facts about Queen’s.

Queen’s partners with a diverse range of local, national and international organisations. There are 120+ global university partnerships. Civic/community collaborations align with Queen’s Social Charter (2017).

³London Economics Report 2022 https://www.qub.ac.uk/home/media/Media_1589724.smxx.pdf

1.2.2 Queen's Campus

Queen's is located across several sites in Belfast (Figure 5).

A new Student Centre opened in 2022 (£42m capital investment) integrating Student Services, the Students' Union, study and social spaces.

'The Pantry', a new initiative to mitigate cost-of-living challenges, provides free groceries and toiletries for students in need.

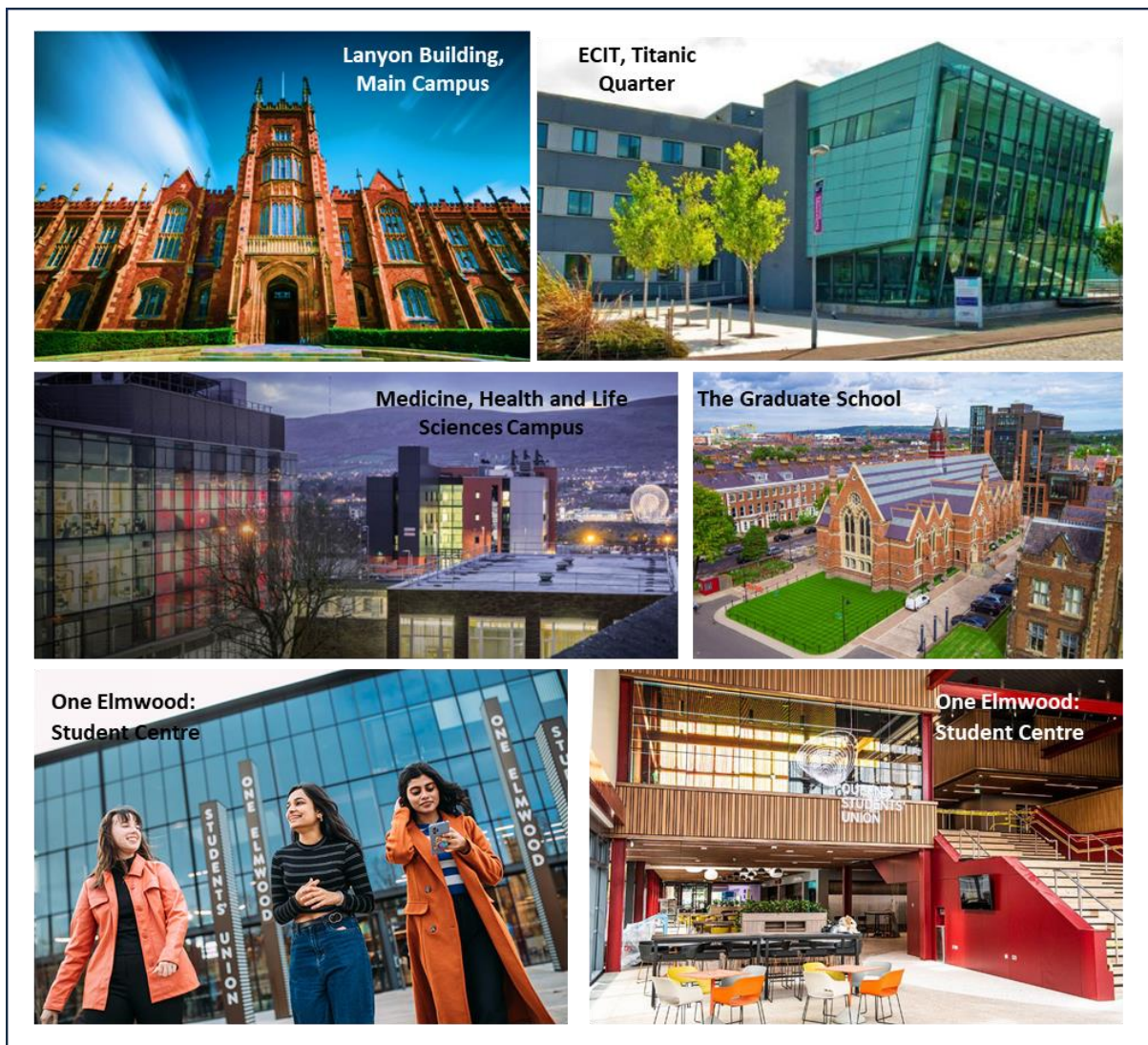


Figure 5. Photographs of Queen's Campus.

1.2.3 Leadership

Queen’s Chancellor is Secretary Hillary Clinton. Queen’s is led by the President and Vice-Chancellor (VC), Professor Sir Ian Greer.

Senior academic leadership is given by six Pro-Vice Chancellors (PVC, 3F, 3M).

Following extensive engagement with Schools, Directorates, Faculties, Senate and its committees, a new leadership structure was implemented in 2022 to optimally align operational delivery with Strategy 2030 objectives.

The new University Management Board (UMB) merged former University Executive Board and University Operating Board. New leadership roles were introduced, including a Provost/Deputy Vice-Chancellor (M), University Secretary (M) and four Vice-Presidents (2F, 2M) (Figure 6).

These changes have already enhanced embedding GE and EDI across senior leadership and governance. The Provost/Deputy VC has overall EDI responsibility and is a member of the Athena Swan Institutional Self-Assessment Team (ISAT). All senior roles have EDI within their portfolios.

The Vice-President & Chief People Officer leads the People & Culture (P&C) Directorate with a remit including enhancing EDI and belonging.

UMB has ISAT representation through the Deputy VC and a PVC, who act as sponsors for Swan papers.

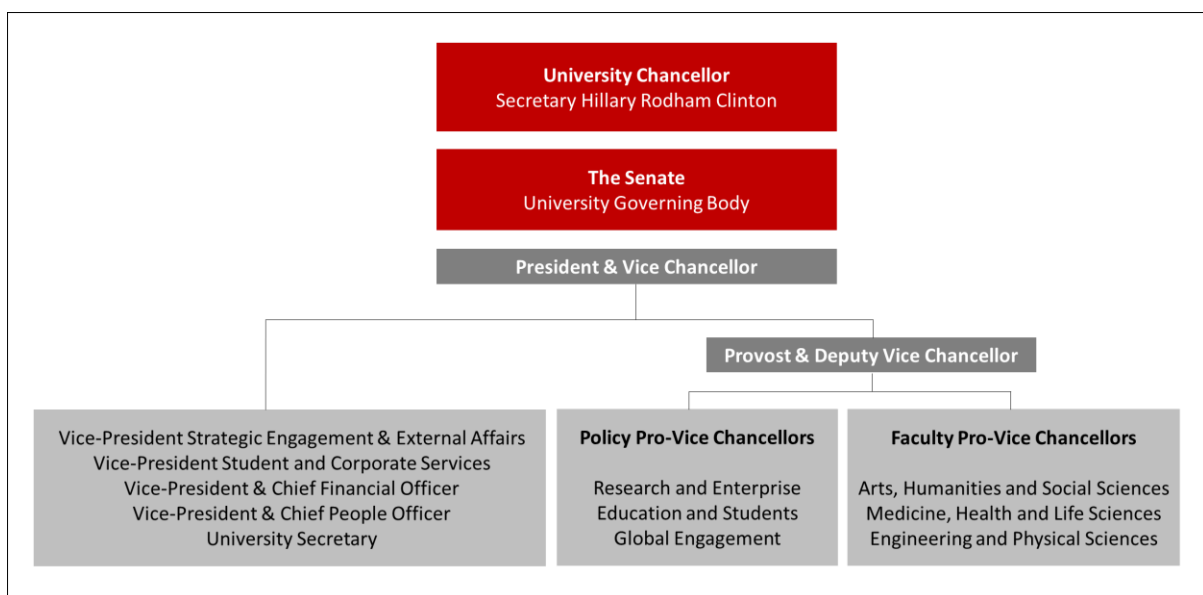


Figure 6. Queen’s New Leadership Structure.

1.2.4 Academic Structure

Queen’s has three Faculties, each headed by a PVC, and together are home to 15 Schools (Head of School, HoS, 33%F). There are nine PS Directorates (Directors 67%F) (Figure 7).

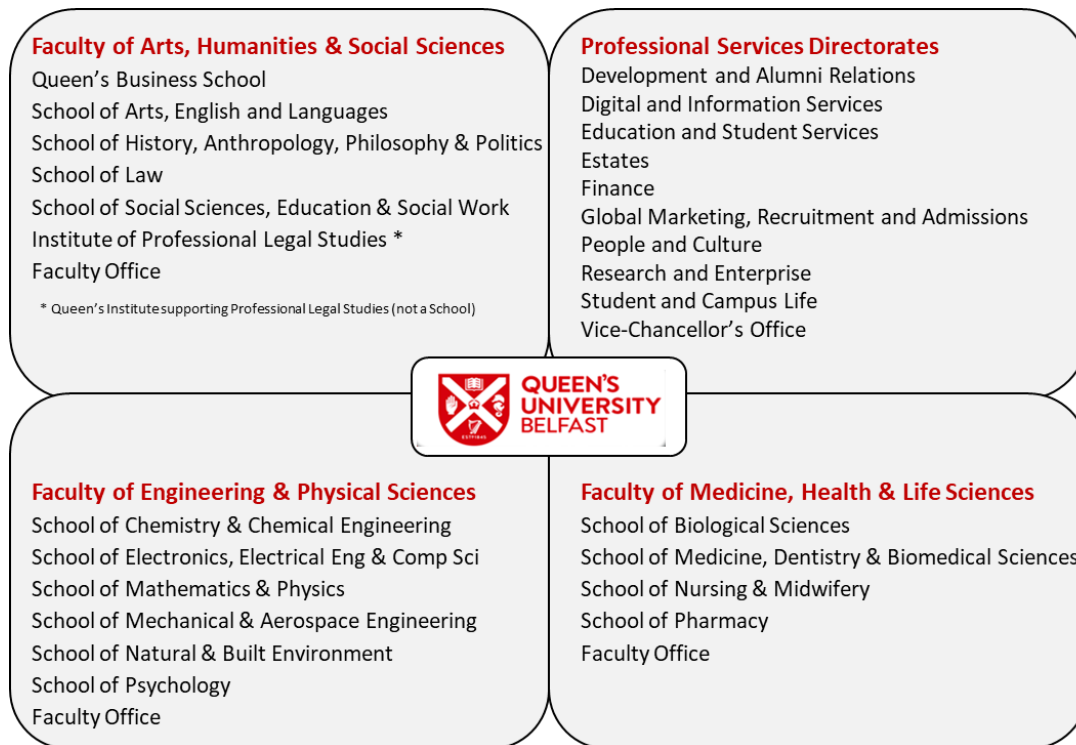


Figure 7. Queen's Faculties, Schools and Professional Services Directorates.

All Schools have Swan awards (3 Gold, 6 Silver and 6 Bronze). Queen’s has had Institutional Swan Silver since 2007 (Figure 8).

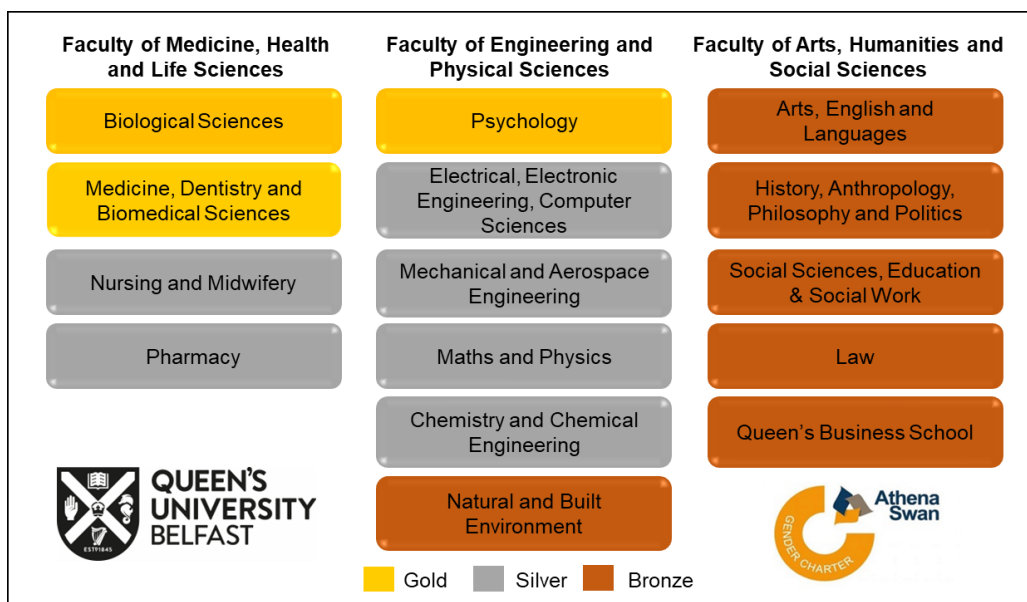


Figure 8. Current Swan Awards in Queen’s Schools (2023).

1.2.5 Gender Equality at Queen's

Queen's has a long history of commitment to GE, with photographs from 1886 showing female graduates. (Figure 9).



Figure 9. Graduation ceremony at Queen's in 1886 with eight female graduates at a time when few women were able to access higher education.

A women's college was established in 1927. Riddel Hall (now Queen's Business School) was built as a residence for Queen's female students and teachers, from a gift by two philanthropists, Eliza and Isabella Riddel (Figure 10).



Figure 10. The Riddel Hall Chronicles Film and Podcasts – a digital storytelling of a former residence for female students and staff at Queen's built by a generous gift from Belfast philanthropists Eliza and Isabella Riddel.

Queen's Gender Initiative (QGI) was established in 2000 to improve GE. QGI provides leadership on women's equality at Queen's and in wider society. QGI has led delivery of the Swan programme since the Charter's formation. Its remit expanded in 2020 to lead the Racial Equity programme.

The QGI Director is a Professor (0.6FTE to QGI) and the team include an administrator (1.0FTE), projects/comms coordinator (1.0 FTE), data analyst (1.0 FTE) and project managers (2.2FTE) for Swan and the Race Equality Charter (REC). QGI's work is underpinned by a specific budget from Queen's. The QGI Executive Committee is chaired by a Pro-Chancellor (Member of Senate) ensuring priorities are raised with Queen's governing body.

As a female-focussed entity promoting participation, progression and visibility of women, QGI's contribution has been transformative over the last 23 years (Section 2.2):

- Launched initiatives and projects.
- Influenced policy e.g. flexible working, family-leave portfolio, menopause and fertility treatment leave.
- Academic and PS Mentoring Programme for women.
- Academic Progression Workshops.
- Celebrating women through public lectures, high-profile events e.g. Chancellor's Awards at our Good Friday Agreement Conference (2023) (Figure 11), portrait commissions, videos, blogs, social media.

Importantly, QGI's impact is mainstreamed, benefitting all, e.g. promotion of flexible-working opportunities and normalising family/caring leave for both men and women.

Following engagement with senior colleagues in 2022, QGI launched a new peer-support Senior Women's Network. In 2023, QGI responded to feedback by introducing two new mentoring programmes to support BAME colleagues.

The impact of QGI's work is referenced throughout the application.



Figure 11. The Chancellor’s Awards for Civic Leadership were awarded to 25 influential women at our Good Friday Agreement 25 Conference recognising the pivotal role of women’s leadership in politics, peace-making and public life (2023).

1.2.6 Key contextual changes since our last award

(a) Our first female Chancellor

In January 2020, Secretary Hillary Clinton became the University’s 11th and first female Chancellor (**Figure 12**). As an international champion for women’s rights and the empowerment of women and girls, the Chancellor spotlights women at Queen’s and beyond.

The Chancellor engages with students at graduation ceremonies and with school pupils at specific events.

[Image cropped from original for publication]



Figure 12. Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton’s installation as Chancellor of Queen’s.

Secretary Clinton’s long-standing commitment to the NI peace process included personally meeting local female peace campaigners/politicians. At the Chancellor’s installation, four former female NI politicians were awarded honorary degrees (**Figure 13**).

During our 2023 Good Friday Agreement Conference, the Chancellor led events highlighting the important and under-recognised contribution of women to the peace process and civic leadership.



Figure 13. Honorary degrees were conferred by the Chancellor to four former female politicians pictured here with QGI Director (centre). The 2000 QGI Art Installation ‘Women Emerging from the Shadows’ by local artist, Michelle Rodgers is visible in the background.

(b) Strategy 2030

Strategy 2030 is the University’s 10-year ambition to shape a better world through life-changing education and research. It was co-created by senior leaders (academic and PS) in a collaborative process incorporating listening exercises and focus groups.

The central focus is on people with the ambition to be a leading institution for EDI with a culture that supports and empowers students/staff (**Figure 14**). Strategy 2030 is synergised by a P&C Plan (2023-2026) and is supported by a new Staff Charter (2023) aligned with Core Values.



Figure 14. Strategy 2030 infographic illustrating the centrality of People and the Staff Charter.

(c) Race Equality Charter at Queen’s

Queen’s joined the Race Equality Charter in 2020, prompted by staff and students who raised awareness of issues faced by individuals from BAME backgrounds. This aligned with ongoing work in the 2019 Swan Silver Action Plan (AP) to interrogate staff/student data with intersectional approaches to inform a new EDI Programme.

QGI established a Racial Equity programme, building on EDI expertise, methodology and practice gained from GE work.

The inaugural ‘Race Equality in Higher Education’ conference (Figure 15) was held in Queen’s in September 2023 (around 90 attendees).



Figure 15. Keynote and panel speakers (students/staff) at the inaugural Queen’s ‘Race Equality in Higher Education’ Conference.

1.3 Governance and recognition of equality, diversity and inclusion work

1.3.1 Overview of EDI programmes at Queen’s

EDI is operationally organised into work programmes or focus areas (Figure 16). These are delivered in partnership by committees, Schools, Directorates, staff networks and the Students’ Union.

Staff networks providing EDI-related support, include the Senior Women’s Network, iRISE (international and BAME staff network), PRISM (LGBTQ+ network), Parents’ Network and Carers’ Network.

	EDI Programmes or Focus Areas			
	Women’s leadership, progression and representation	Athena Swan Programme for Gender Equality	Racial Equity Programme and REC Charter	LGBTQ+ Equality Staff Wellbeing, Disability Carers Passport Statutory data reporting Equal pay audit
Delivered in partnership by	Queen’s Gender Initiative (QGI) Athena Swan Institutional SAT (ISAT) Swan Champions Network REC Champions Network School SATs and EDI committees Senior Women’s Network iRISE (international and B.A.M.E. staff network) Students’ Union and Student Societies			Diversity, Inclusion & Wellbeing Unit PRISM (LGBTQ+ network) Parents Network Carers Network School EDI committees Students’ Union & Societies

Figure 16. EDI Programmes and Focus Areas at Queen’s.

1.3.2 EDI leadership and structures at Queen’s

Bottom-up and top-down structures ensure that voices across all Schools and Directorates drive the dialogue (Figure 17). Transforming actions are delivered within local contexts by colleagues who work there. This is particularly important in our 15 Schools where Swan Champions lead delivery of Swan APs, working in partnership with staff and students across Swan, REC and EDI priorities.

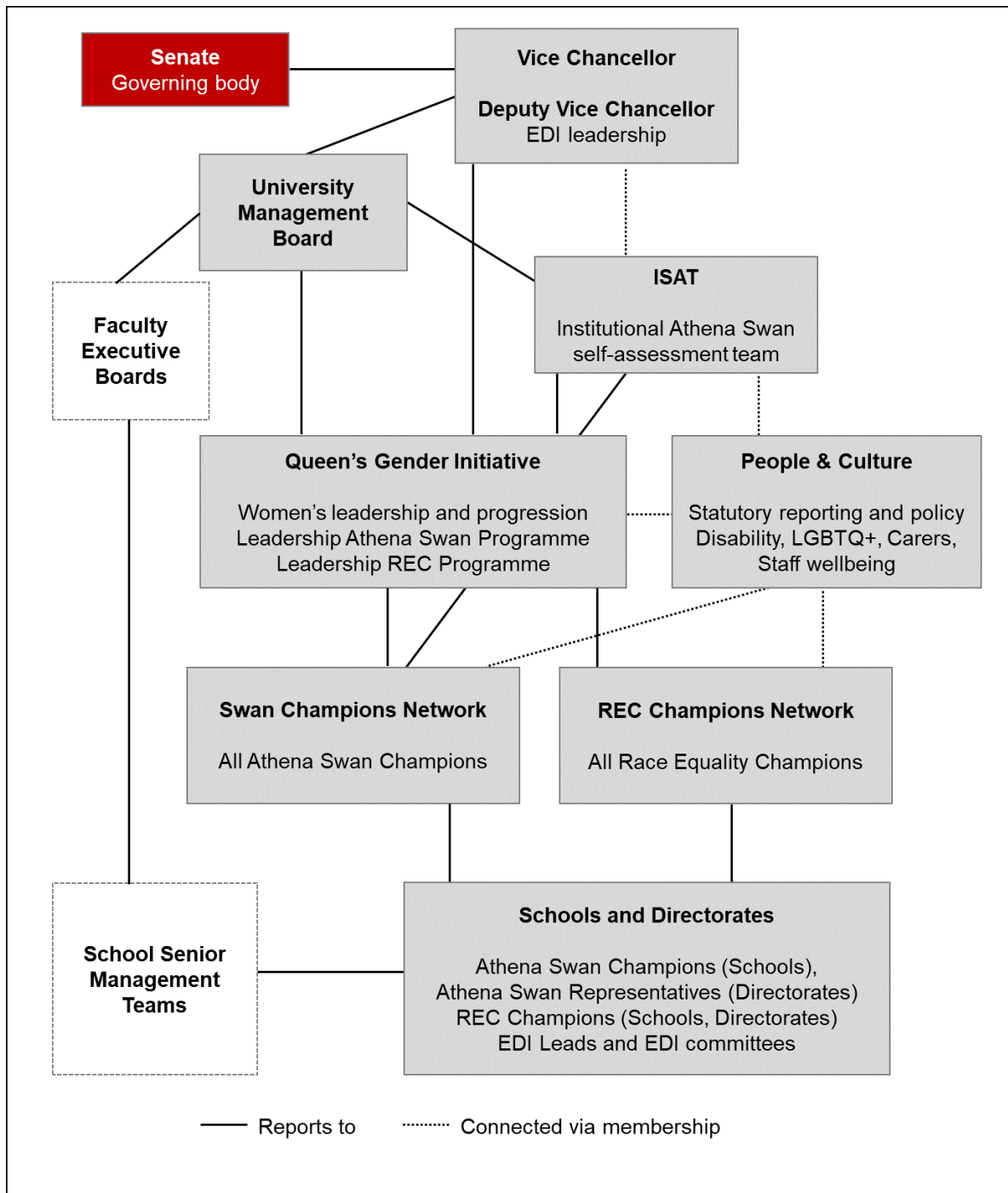


Figure 17. Summary schematic of formal EDI structures in Queen's.

Champions for Swan and REC, and EDI leads are embedded within Schools and Directorates and chair local EDI committees/SATs reporting to the HoS or Director.

Some subjects have specific EDI leads for UG curricula or postgraduate programmes. These are members of School EDI committees/SATs e.g. Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing/Midwifery and Pharmacy.

Importantly, local Swan/EDI groups are responsive, delivering within context. Each School has £5K annual budget for Swan/EDI work. Faculties and Schools provide additional resource for specific events. QGI reviewed budgets with Champions (2023) who confirmed sufficient resource.

EDI committees/SATs report to the Swan Champions Network (Figure 18, chaired by a Swan Champion) or the REC Champions Network (chaired by REC Project Manager).

These networks are coordinated by QGI, meet 6-weekly, integrating EDI work across Queen's, sharing best practice and co-creating/co-delivering initiatives and programmes. Communication is maintained via MS Teams, chat and shared files. The Swan Champions Network reports to the QGI Executive Committee and to ISAT.



Figure 18. Swan Champions Network at Queen's.

Athena Swan ISAT

ISAT's membership profile and governance ensures strong links to university leadership. ISAT reports to the VC and UMB. The QGI Director (also Academic lead for Swan and REC Charters) chairs ISAT and reports directly to the VC. The DVC and a PVC are members of ISAT and UMB (Section 1.5).

ISAT leads a cohesive programme, synergising GE and intersectional priorities. It benefits from connectivity with academics, PS, students and the Swan Champions Network.

Delivery of wider EDI activities

The Diversity, Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing Unit (DIU) within P&C supports LGBTQ+ equality, staff wellbeing, disability, Carers' network, and leads statutory equality data reporting. DIU is resourced by 5.69 FTE. The Head of DIU is a member of ISAT; DIU team members attend Champions Network meetings.

EDI is embedded across Schools and Directorates. For example, the Research & Enterprise Directorate (R&E) has an 'EDI in Research' AP. A DIU colleague works 0.2FTE with R&E supporting this activity. A new Daphne Jackson Fellowship Programme (2023/24) supporting research-returners following a career break will launch ([Action D5.1](#)). Queen's signed up to the Knowledge Exchange Concordat (KEC), which has a key principle of 'ensuring ethical and transparent KE' which is being extended to EDI and sustainability.

1.3.3 Statutory responsibilities

Statutory requirements on NI public authorities include annual progress reporting of Queen's 5-year Equality Scheme. This incorporates actions linked to institutional EDI APs including Swan, REC, Diversity Mark, Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, and the Disability AP.

The 2020 Equal Pay Audit showed there are no significant⁴ equal pay gaps by gender in 8/13 Grades. Total salary equal pay gaps (significant) occurred at Grades 2, 4 (more males avail of additional hours) 10, and the Professoriate. The Professorial Pay Gap, a focus of the 2019 AP, is narrowing (11.4% in 2014, 10.5% in 2017, 7.6% in 2020).

Since 2019, Academic Progression includes the Professoriate, replacing the former triennial Professorial Salary Review. More frequent salary increases now occur, improving the Professorial Pay Gap. The 2023 Equal Pay Audit will report January 2024 ([Actions E5.1 and 5.2](#)).

1.3.4 Recognition and reward for EDI work

Queen's recognises EDI successes through celebration events and campus-wide communications. The role of Swan Champion or EDI lead is profile-raising and recognised as a leadership position whether academic or PS. Many colleagues deliver EDI work while carrying out a specific role in Queen's (except QGI or DIU teams). For academics, School Swan Champion is recognised within the 'Citizenship' domain of Academic Profiles (Education, Research/Pedagogy and Citizenship). This is recognised in Personal Development Review (PDR) and Academic Progression.

⁴ In line with advice issued nationally and as per Equality Commission for NI guidance, overall equal pay gaps of 5% have been considered significant and worthy of further investigation.

Work Allocation Model (WAM) 'tariff' for Swan Champions states 0.5 days/week in a non-submission year, up to 1.5 days/week during a submission year (may be shared between 2 Co-Champions).

REC Co-Champion(s) have 80 hours per year within WAM (academics) reflecting that REC is currently a University-level programme.

PS Swan and REC Champions have EDI activities included within role hours, with workload adjustment by line managers.

Staff reward schemes (STAR awards and Staff Excellence Awards) are also used to recognise EDI work e.g. preparation of a School Swan application, delivery of EDI events e.g. International Women's/Men's Day.

Contribution of ISAT members is recognised within their WAM or workplan. Membership of university-level committees is specifically recognised in PDR/Academic Progression.

1.4 Development, evaluation and effectiveness of policies

1.4.1 Policy development/ review and equality screening

Equality screening of new policies is undertaken by policy leads/authors prior to governance/approval processes. Screening considers the likely impact on equality of opportunity and inclusivity of all protected characteristics: age, racial group, gender (including gender reassignment), marital/civil partnership status, sexual orientation, religious belief, political opinion, disability and dependants.

Equality screening clinics and a dedicated webpage provide a step-by-step process, templates and guidance ([Figure 19](#)).



Figure 19. Queen's guidance and resources for Equality Screening.

Policy leads must specifically consider impact on people with multiple characteristics and how potential intersectionality inequalities will be addressed.

Timely monitoring and evaluation are incorporated to evaluate policy effectiveness.

Should a screening or monitoring exercise identify any major adverse impact, a more robust and detailed **Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)** is conducted to determine the extent of any differential impact of the policy. This includes further consultation with staff, students and external stakeholders.

1.4.2 Overview of consultative approaches

The University routinely consults with staff groups, including Swan and REC Networks, iRISE, PRISM, Carers' and Disability Networks, Trade Unions, HR Business partners (HRBPs), the Staff Forum and external groups. Consultation with students takes place through Student Union Officers and elected student representatives including School Student Voice

committees. This comprehensive approach provides voices for people with different life experiences.

The Staff Forum ([Figure 20, Section 4.1.1](#)), chaired by the VC, has shaped several policies and practices at Queen’s including replacement of former Appraisal with a new PDR and new Academic Progression (2019).



Figure 20. The Staff Forum, established 2018, is an effective, proactive consultative group.

Consultation methods include surveys, written feedback, focus groups, roadshows and Townhalls ([Table 2](#)).

1.4.3 Impact of policies

Assessing/measuring impact of policies occurs within formal policy reviews, surveys, evaluations, focus groups and feedback. EDI lenses are routinely used. Queen’s Equality Survey (QES, 2023, [Appendix 1](#)) explored views on policies/guidance ([Figure 21](#)).

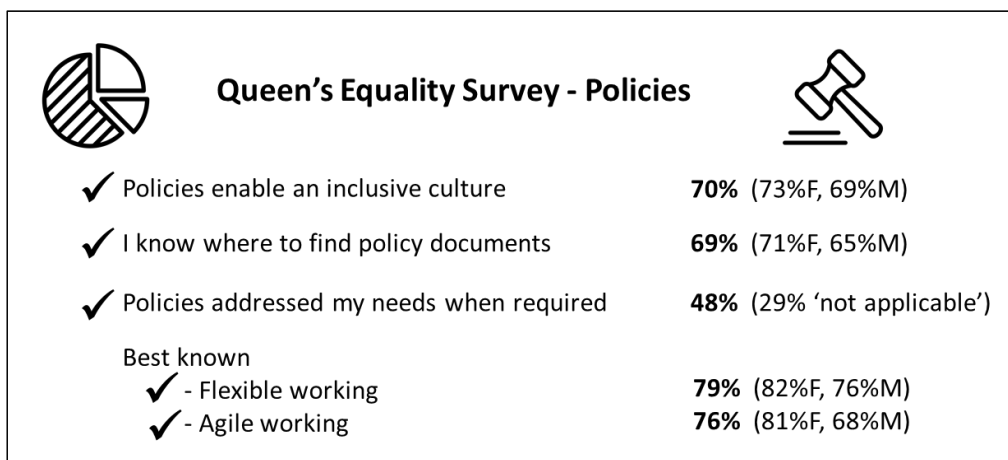


Figure 21. Infographic from QES showing evaluation of policies, extracted from [Appendix 1](#).

Higher levels of disagreement were noted from BAME women (Section 4.2). Focus group discussions clarified concerns relate to policy implementation particularly around values and behaviours (Action A2.1).

Carers' Passport (launched 2022) evaluation revealed that unexpectedly but encouragingly, the need for this diminished due to subsequent roll out of Agile Working (Section 3.1).

Fertility Treatment Leave Policy (August 2022) has been welcomed and to date, 8 staff have availed of the provision.

Menopause Policy (August 2022) has been welcomed with 100+ staff attending Menopause Awareness sessions this year (Figure 22). 100% attendees rated sessions - Excellent/Very Good. 40+ attended line manager sessions.

“Being able to talk to actual GPs was brilliant and knowing other staff were experiencing the same things as me was a huge relief and support.”

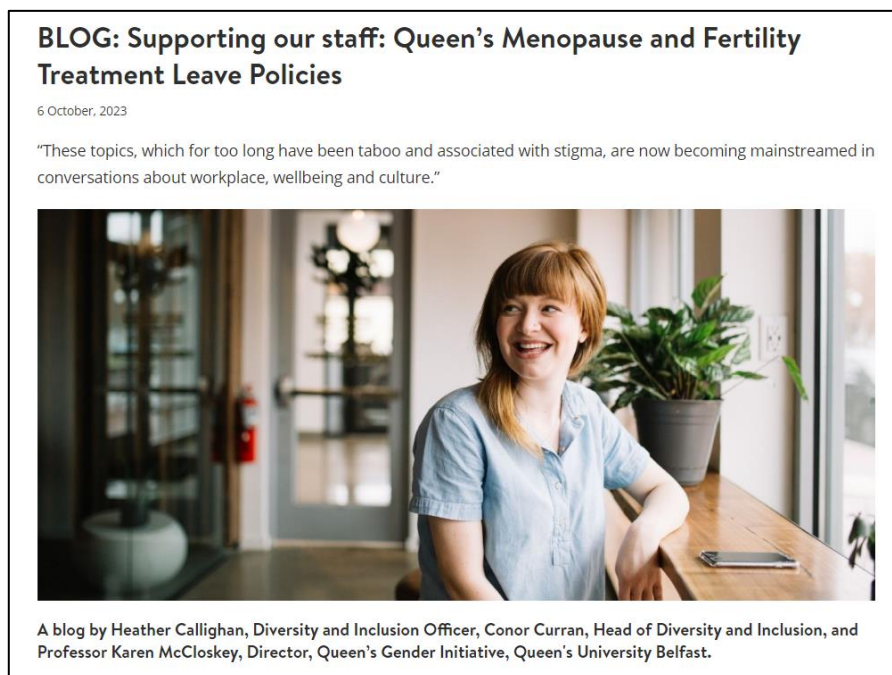


Figure 22. Recent blog article at Queen's marking World Menopause Day (2023).

1.5 Self-assessment process

Queen's obtained a Royal Society Athena Award (2003) and was a founding member of the Swan Charter (2005) holding Institutional Swan Awards since 2007 (Figure 23). We are one of 29 UK universities to hold Institutional Silver.

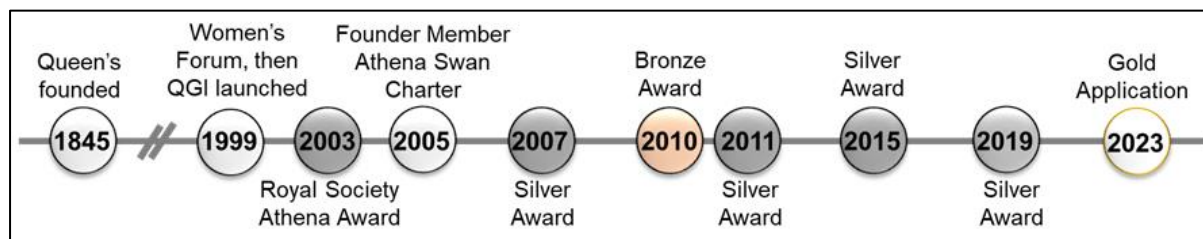


Figure 23. Longitudinal Athena Swan and GE programmes at Queen's.

1.5.1 Overview of the Self-Assessment Team

ISAT reflects staff profile by role, sex, caring responsibilities, part-time working and international staff (Figure 24)⁵. ISAT's collective expertise enabled effective self-assessment, evaluation of the impact of previous APs and identification of priorities. ISAT is supported by a data analyst and QGI coordinator.

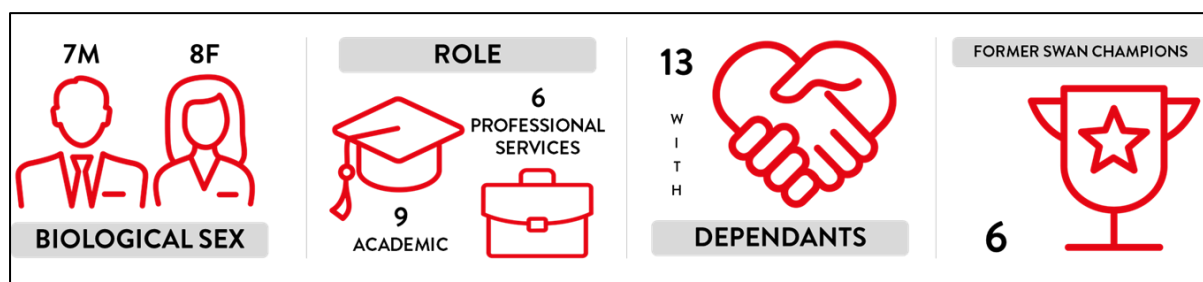


Figure 24. The Institutional Self-Assessment Team (ISAT).

ISAT Terms of Reference outlines stability and flexibility in membership with *ex-officio* and nominated members. Members require sufficient seniority to effect change. Several members are former Swan Champions (Table 1). ISAT members engage with colleagues, across different grades and University domains. This ensures a joined-up approach, avoids silos, so issues are escalated to ISAT, interrogated and actioned.

As ISAT meeting agendas have matters where it is inappropriate to have students in attendance, ISAT engages with students through School Swan Champions, meets with elected Student Union Officers, and specific Focus Groups e.g. during the present self-assessment to explore their views on GE at Queen's and to co-create actions for the Gold AP (Section 4.1).

⁵ Trans status and gender identity were considered. Of note, Queen's demographic data indicates fewer than 10 colleagues prefer to self-describe gender identity in another way. Trans staff may have opted to have their post-transition gender identity recorded within female and male categories.

[Information redacted for publication]

Table 1. Membership of ISAT.

1.5.2 Recognition of the work of Institutional SAT members

The work of ISAT members is recognised and rewarded as described in [section 1.3](#).

1.5.3 Summary of self-assessment process

- ISAT met 6-weekly during term-time since 2020, monthly from January 2023 and fortnightly from April 2023 during preparation of this submission.
- Meetings continued over summer via MS Teams.
- Key periods of data collection, analysis, writing, review, action planning and parallel processes of sub-group work and wider engagement.
- The ISAT MS Teams channel and Sharepoint folders were used to share data, qualitative information and edit 'live' drafts.
- At meetings, the Swan Project Manager (PM) presented a RAG status of the AP.
- A flexible approach to AP implementation was adopted, whereby activity was targeted to particular actions.
- Sub-groups (task and finish groups) tackled specific issues ([Section 2.1](#)).
- Gender and intersectional lenses were used in analysis.

In December 2022, Queen's hosted a visit from the Advance HE Swan team, which included roundtables with UMB and ISAT to discuss progress towards Institutional Gold. The visit coincided with a University-wide celebration of 11 Schools renewing/upgrading Swan awards during the pandemic ([Figure 25](#)).

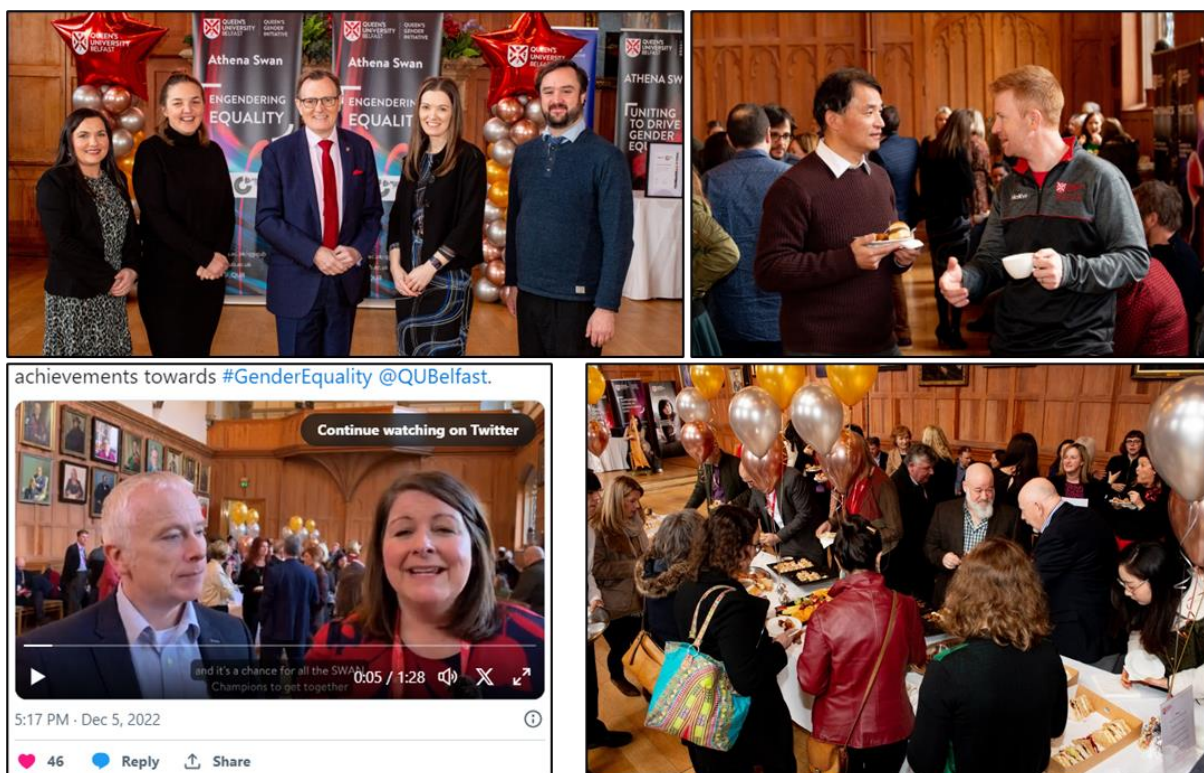


Figure 25. Photographs from the Queen's Athena Swan Celebration and visit from Advance HE colleagues, December 2022.

1.5.4 Sources of data for Self-Assessment

The self-assessment was informed by analysis of multiple quantitative/qualitative datasets (Table 2). snip

Year	Source	Engagement	Details
2011-2023	Queen's data HESA, HEIDI	Quantitative demographic data	Students, staff, contract type/function, job family, recruitment, progression, equal pay audit, UK comparators.
2023	Townhall meeting for all staff	~200 attendees	Hosted by VC and QGI. Update on Silver AP and new Gold priorities. Recording available. (October 2023).
2023	Staff, student, external delegates	~90 attendees	Staff and student panels. Q&A sessions at 'Race Equality in Higher Education Conference' at Queen's (Sep 2023).
2023	Queen's Equality Survey (QES)	31% (61% F, 34% M ⁶)	Designed and implemented by ISAT sub-group ⁷ with extensive consultation. Analysis group comprised ISAT members, REC team, EDI expert academics.
2023	Focus Group with BAME women	6 attendees	Post-QES to better understand issues and inform new actions (July 2023).
2023	Focus group	7 students	Discussed student experience of GE at Queen's (Oct 2023) and informed actions.
2023	Meeting with Student Union officers	Elected student officers	Discussed priorities for Students' Union for GE, intersectionality and EDI.
2023	Professional Services staff and Directorates	40-50 PS/Directorate attendees	Dialogue and feedback during Swan information session for PS and Directorate colleagues (March 2023). Directorates representatives attended Swan Champions Network meeting (June 2023).
2022	Survey of Senior Female Academics	51% of female Readers and Professors	Designed and implemented by ISAT SFAL sub-group ⁸ .
2022	Pulse Survey on Work-Life Balance	66% (58%F, 42%M)	P&C Survey to understand post-pandemic employee experience.
2021	Pulse Survey on Changing	62% (59%F, 40%M)	P&C Survey to understand pandemic working experiences.

⁶ Fewer than 5% of respondents preferred not to disclose their sex, with 0.1% of respondents identifying as other.

⁷ Prof Karen McCloskey, Dr Susan Clarke, Paula Dougan, Claire Owens

⁸ Sub-group for Senior Female Academic Leadership (SFAL): Prof Aaron Maule, Prof Teresa McCormack, Paula Dougan

	Working Environment		
2020	Engendering Solutions Covid-19 Survey	30% (68%F, 31%M)	QGI-led holistic survey with Psychology, P&C and MHLS Faculty Swan Champions to understand how the pandemic lockdown affected Queen's Staff work and wellbeing.
2023 2019 2016	Staff Survey	68% 64% 61%	All Staff Survey (P&C). 2023 Survey data being analysed at time of writing.
2023	National Student Survey (NSS)	77% (81%F, 72%M)	Overall satisfaction score, 76%. Student evaluations at institutional and school level.
2023	Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES)	N=889 (65%F, 35%M, <1%Trans)	Overall satisfaction score, 80%. Student evaluations at institutional and school level.
2023	Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PTES)	N=608 (58%F, 42%M, <1%Trans)	Overall satisfaction score, 83%. Student evaluations at institutional and school level.

Table 2. Summary of data sources informing this application.

1.5.5 Co-creation of the AP

From Aug-Oct 2023, stakeholder groups across Queen's met with ISAT to co-create the Gold AP, including Student Wellbeing staff, Organisational Development, DIU, HRBPs, HR Services, Employee Relations, Technician Commitment Steering Group, female BAME focus group, and a student focus group.

1.5.6 Consultation on the draft application and new AP

From May-Sep 2023, consultation was held with Senate, Senior Leaders Forum, three Faculty Executive Boards, Trade Unions (UCU, NIPSA and Unite), and newly-elected Students' Union officers.

The all-staff virtual Townhall (October 2023) shared Silver AP progress and new Gold priorities. Feedback was received during Q&A, chat function and a dedicated mailbox.

Regular updates were presented to UMB, with final approval given in November 2023.

1.5.7 ISAT response to panel feedback on 2019 application

ISAT welcomed the panel feedback on the 2019 Silver renewal and responded by implementing changes and sharing learning across Queen's (Table 3).

Panel feedback 2019	Summary of ISAT response
Moving forwards, the institution is encouraged to reconsider the success measures in the action plan, which sometimes read as actions themselves.	Addressed in regular RAG AP and data review. This feedback informed the Gold AP structure.
There is also scope to provide more detail in the plan.	Shared learning across Schools for their applications and APs. Implemented in Gold AP.
The panel also suggests that further use be made of survey data to inform self-assessment, evaluation and success measures.	Data from multiple surveys (2016 to 2023) has been extensively used to inform the self-assessment, evaluation and success measures (Table 2).
The panel recognises that much historic activity has been coordinated in quite a distributed manner, and Swan is not the only 'anchor initiative' (which presents some narrative challenges), whilst there is now a move to more executive ownership. Drawing different strands of work together will likely benefit the institution as a whole, particularly given the evident commitment of the new vice-chancellor, whilst broad ownership of the agenda is also a strength (as seen through the contribution of the staff forum, noted above); continued staff engagement should be a priority.	<p>Institutional leadership restructuring has strengthened EDI leadership, bringing cohesion.</p> <p>Expanded QGI remit of leading GE and racial equity and the associated Charters (Swan and REC). The team has grown alongside the remit.</p> <p>Staff engagement is now standard practice, evidenced in the sources of data and consultation in Section 1.4.</p> <p>Expansion in DIU team to include Staff Wellbeing.</p>
There could also be more attention to professional and support staff, e.g. around training and appraisal, where the purposes of provision in terms of career development could be more explicitly considered. For example, appraisal is noted as being "similar" to academic staff, but career structures are different.	<p>Major delivery since 2019 with decisive actions.</p> <p>New PDR and development opportunities.</p> <p>New actions including Job Shadowing, new Academies and Communities of Learning, and targeted actions for Technicians.</p>

Table 3. Summary of 2019 panel feedback and ISAT response.

1.5.8 Overview of 5-year plan to deliver and maintain GE activity

Current ISAT members will remain for at least 18 months post-submission to consolidate AP delivery. Rotations/replacements will be nominated as per [Section 1.5.1](#).

ISAT will meet 6-weekly to review the AP RAG status and data with gender and intersectional lenses, and lead delivery of actions by sub-groups across Queen's.

Consultation will continue via Surveys (Staff and Pulse), Focus Groups, Networks, Townhalls and other engagement activity ([Action B10.1 – B10.2](#)). A 2027 QES will evaluate and measure success and impact of the Gold AP. The Swan programme will extend into Directorates, with submission of a PTO application by 2026 ([Action F1.1 – F1.5](#)).

Section 2: An evaluation of the University’s progress and success

Note: Criterion E(3)⁹ is addressed in Section 1.4

2.1 Evaluating progress against the previous action plan

2.1.1 Overview of progress

The 2019 AP contained 43 objectives across five priority areas (Table 4).

88% (38 actions) are completed (green). Some were achieved early, two were revised (below). Five (amber) are continued in the Gold AP.

	Priority Area	No. of actions	Red	Amber	Green	% Green
1	Embedding Swan and GE in Queen’s	10	0	1	9	90%
2	Advancing recruitment and career progression of female staff	8	0	2	6	75%
3	Engendering Leadership	8	0	1	7	88%
4	Enhancing culture and life at work	13	0	1	12	92%
5	Improving the infrastructure for SWAN data	4	0	0	4	100%
	Overall	43	0	5	38	88%

Table 4. RAG status of the 2019-2023 AP by priority area

2.1.2 Methodology of action implementation, evaluation and iteration

ISAT led AP implementation and evaluation, through the Chair, Swan PM, data analyst and QGI team. QGI appointed a data analyst (2019), representing a new resource. Data interrogation, quantitative and qualitative, was critical for evaluation of actions. Several actions were embedded within Schools/Directorates. The Swan PM worked with local SATs to deliver actions.

Six-weekly ISAT meetings were critical touchpoints. ISAT avoided being an ‘island’ within Queen’s, rather, operated as a ‘matrix’ fostering collaborative working across the university.

Sub-groups partnered with Schools/Directorates:

- **Sub-group for Senior Female Academics in Leadership Roles** (SFAL, 2022). Surveyed senior female academics, to investigate under-representation in senior leadership

⁹ Policies are considered to be effective and appropriate by staff/students, and/or, evidence of the positive impact of policies on staff/students.

roles. It identified barriers and enablers and produced a report with recommendations for UMB/FEBS. The report informed the Succession Planning pilot in the MHLS Faculty and [Action C7.1-C7.8](#).

- **EDI/Swan data sub-group** (2022) brought together data owners, custodians, analysts and end-users, to improve infrastructure and data collation.
- **QES sub-group** (2022) led design and roll-out of QES.
- **AcadProg sub-group** interrogated recent/longitudinal progression data.

AP progress was reported quarterly to the VC during scheduled meetings with the ISAT Chair, and to UMB. Overall AP outcomes were communicated via an all-staff Townhall meeting, October 2023.

2.1.3 Contextual challenges to implementation of the AP

Covid-19 interrupted staff/students engaging with Swan. Staff induction events moved online, there was no Fresher's Fair nor many in-person events during 2020-2021. This impacted AP delivery in the early phase of the award cycle.

QGI partnered with academics from Psychology and the MHLS Faculty, and P&C colleagues to design and deliver the 'Engendering Solutions Covid-19 Lockdown Survey' (2020, [Figure 26](#)) to understand how lockdown affected staff working and wellbeing. Outcomes are described in [Section 3.1.6](#).

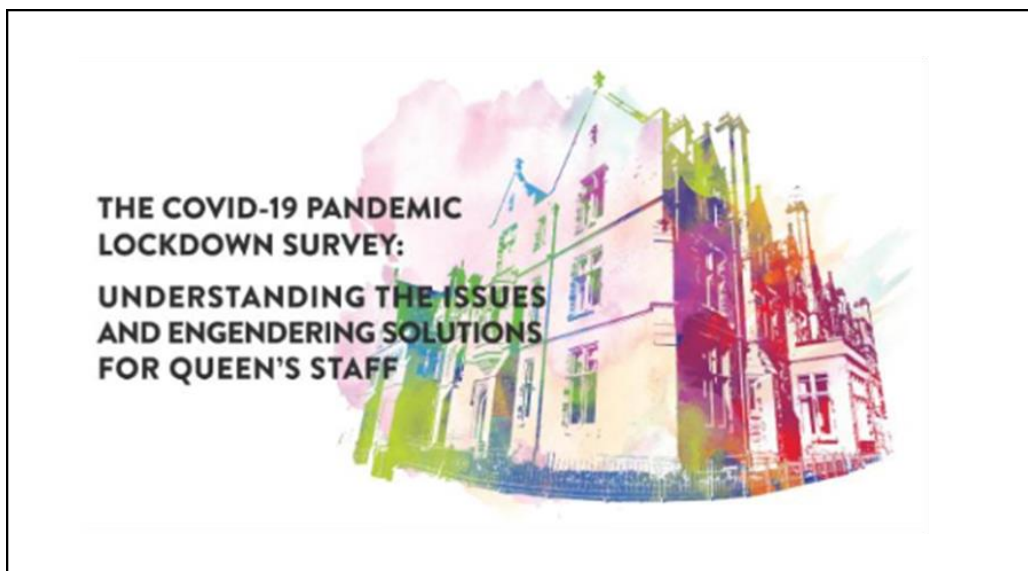


Figure 26. The Covid-19 Engendering Solutions Project and Survey.

2.1.4 Superseded actions

Two actions were superseded: Action 4.2 (identify a maternity/family champion) and Action 4.5 (appoint a Menopause champion) (see 2019 AP).

2.1.5 Amber actions & barriers to completion

Five actions are rated Amber (12%). These progressed; however, will be completed in the Gold AP. During evaluation, ISAT reflected on barriers to progress, and revisions needed going forward.

Action 1.6 aimed for 95% completion of two staff EDI-training modules. Currently, 'Unconscious Bias' and 'Think Difference Act Differently (TDAD)' are 89%, 79% respectively. Analysis indicated higher completion by permanent vs. fixed term staff¹⁰: Unconscious Bias, 93% v 77%; TDAD, 81% v 72%. ISAT concluded staff onboarding timings and fixed-term contracts would be better reflected in 90% completion (permanent staff) during a new-format staff induction ([Action A4.1 – Action A4.3](#)).

Action 2.3 aimed to enhance recruitment materials to attract women to academic/research positions, representing 40% of applications. Although 37% was reached, appointments to lecturer and researcher were gender-balanced ([Section 4.2](#)). [Actions C5.1 – C5.6, C6.1](#) will address female recruitment to Senior Lecturer, Reader and Professor.

Action 2.5 aimed for minimum 33% of one gender on recruitment/selection panels. Since post-pandemic recruitment restarted in 2021, 83% of panels complied. Some larger panels were not 33%, 5% of panels (small panels) were single-sex. The latter scenario occurred on the day of the interview and procedurally, a panel member substitution was not possible. [Action C5.6](#).

Action 3.4 aimed for gender balance on Faculty Executive Boards (FEB), minimum 40%F by 2023. This is on an upward trajectory:

- AHSS: 36% F (4/11) (33% previously).
- EPS: 36% F (5/14) (29% previously).
- MHLS: 40% F (6 /15) (29% previously).

FEBs are impacted by Deans (29%F) and HoS (33%F). Representation changes as roles rotate; ISAT reviews data annually and notes more men than women apply. [Actions C7.1 – C7.8](#) will progress recommendations from the SFAL sub-group.

Action 4.11 aimed to balance speaker lists by gender/ethnicity. Schools/Faculties reported it was challenging to collate information as it was not routinely requested/recorded. A new

¹⁰ Queen's staff is made up of 76% permanent staff and 25% fixed term staff

Diversity Monitoring Form (anonymous, online form) is being piloted in Schools through the Swan Champions Network [Action E4.1](#).

2.1.6 Key Learnings

- **ISAT sub-groups are highly effective** - understanding the 'why' and developing effective strategies.
- **Better collaborating across Queen's** – presentations by ISAT Chair, Swan PM and REC PM to School/Faculty Boards, Roadshows, Townhalls enhanced formal reporting structures. They fostered knowledge, mindset and illuminated new opportunities through 360° perspectives.
- **Intersectional work was synergised by Queen's REC programme** – whilst a standalone programme, it harnesses academic leadership and expertise from QGI. Co-delivery of ABT, Imposter Syndrome Awareness and Mentoring Programmes address gender/race intersectional priorities.
- **Senior buy-in and alignment of Swan with institutional strategy** - as Queen's leadership structure embedded, ISAT maintained visibility and position. The VC attended specific ISAT meetings enabling input, feedback and direction from the top of the University.
- **Building Communities of Practice** - evaluations from Swan events for Directorates and PS staff resulted in a call for Swan representatives from Directorates to join the Schools Swan Champions network. This sharing of GE and EDI work is building an even larger community of practice across Queen's ([Section 2.2, Figure 32](#)).

2.2 Evaluating success against the University's key priorities

All five action areas in the 2019 AP achieved significant success (Section 2.1 and RAG-rated AP).

Furthermore, several key priorities have compelling evidence of longitudinal improvement:

1. Increased %F Professors (Actions 2.2, 3.2).
2. Increased %F Senior Lecturers (Action 3.1).
3. Improved %F academic promotions (Actions 2.1, 3.1).
4. Development and career progression for PS staff (Actions 2.6, 3.3).
5. Enhancing culture and life at work.

Longitudinal improvements & enablers

2.2.1. Increase in % Female Professors

Longitudinal increase in %F Professors from 11%-31% (17-102F) occurred over 22 years with a sustained, upward trajectory.

The 2019 AP target of 27% by 2023 was reached 3 years early, now exceeded, **31%** (Figure 2.3b, Appendix 2). This compares to 30%F Professors nationally (HESA UK 2021-22, Russell Group average 26% (range 18%-31%, data from 17 institutions)). Figure 27 summarises how this was achieved since 2017.

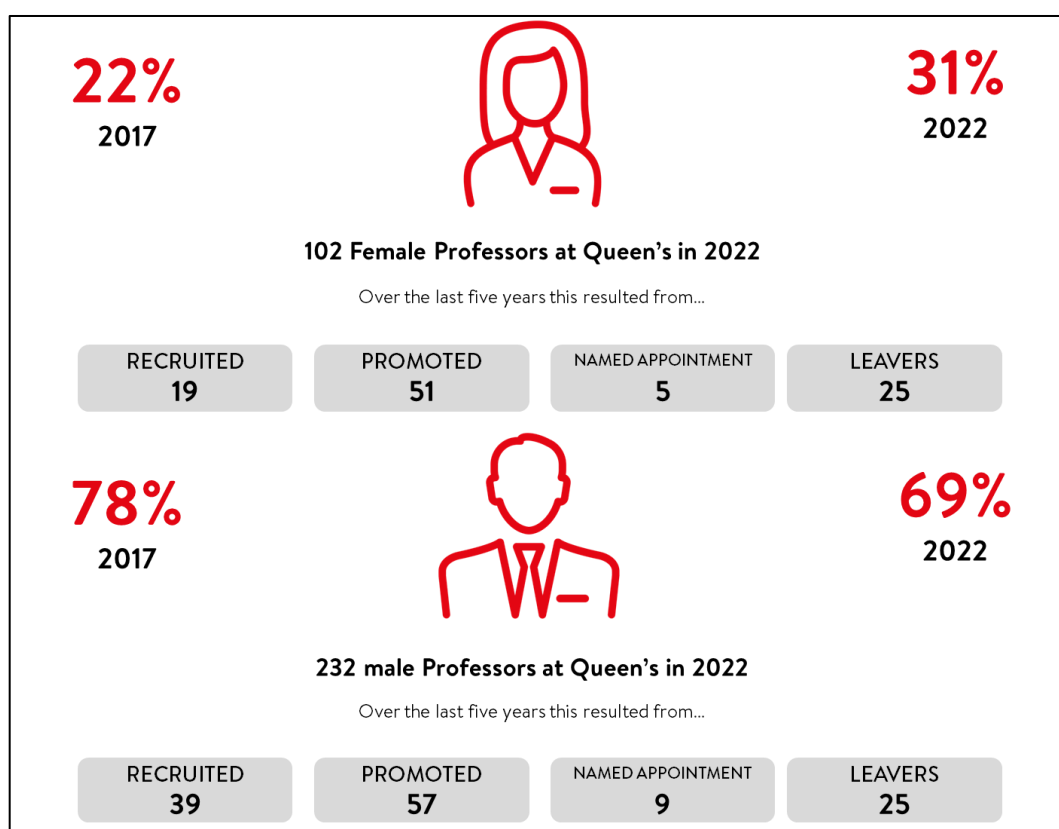


Figure 27. Infographic of how Queen's achieved 31% Female Professors (2017-2022).

Enablers include annual women’s Academic Progression workshops - delivered by QGI since 2002, and Faculty/School workshops (continued online during Covid-19).

Annual bespoke QGI Mentoring Programmes for female Academics (and PS staff), (since 2002), with 50 Mentor-Mentee pairings per year (25 each academic and PS) are impactful. Of the 93F Academic Mentees since 2017, 53% progressed; 32, 9 and 3 Mentees achieved 1, 2, or 3 grade increases respectively.

Longitudinal 7-year evaluation¹¹ (2022) revealed 84% of Mentees felt they benefitted, describing as a ‘great initiative’ and ‘a truly supportive scheme’, **Figure 28**).

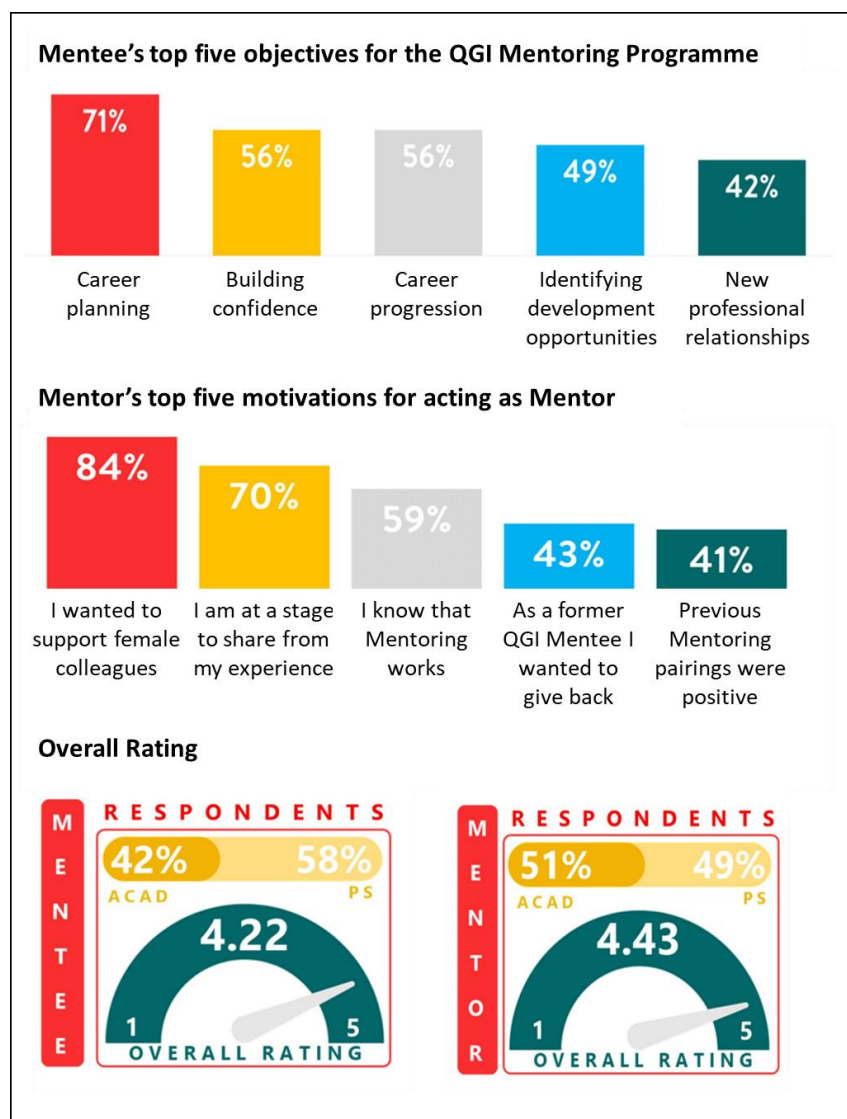


Figure 28. Excerpts from longitudinal evaluation of QGI Mentoring Programmes for women (2015-2022)

¹¹ QGI Mentoring Programme Longitudinal Evaluation – Feedback from Mentees and Mentors who have completed the programme in the past 7 years.

To support progression within the Professoriate which reflects salary uplifts, QGI Professorial Progression events for women were piloted in 2022 and are now mainstreamed. Application rates are similar by sex (20%F, 18%M), success rates are higher for women (87% vs 78%M) over the last 3 years (Figure 8.5a, Appendix 2).

“the real transformational moment for me took place in the confidential small group discussions, ...it was a profoundly positive experience that helped boost my confidence – as well as my ambition - and underpinned my subsequent Professorial Progression promotion.”
Attendee at QGI Professorial Academic Progression event.

2.2.2. Increase in % Female Senior Lecturers

Longitudinal, sustained increase in %F Senior Lecturers from 34% in 2014¹² to 46% in 2022 was achieved. The 2019 AP target of 45% by 2023 was reached early (Figure 2.3a, Appendix 2).

In Queen’s, academics are either Academic (Teaching & Research (T&R)) or Academic (Education (Ed)). Female Senior Lecturers (Ed) increased from 46% to 54% since 2014 (Figure 2.5c, Appendix 2). Since 2017-18, 33F progressed into the grade, 10 were recruited.

Female Senior Lecturers (T&R) increased 30%-42% during the same period (Figure 2.4c, Appendix 2). Since 2017-18, 35F progressed into the grade, 6 were recruited.

Support for academic women through the Aurora leadership programme (incorporates QGI Academic Mentoring), was targeted at Lecturer/Senior Lecturer level, underpinning planning for progression. Of the 39 participants since 2018, 19 progressed.

“I also successfully applied for progression – twice.” Aurora participant

2.2.3. Improvements in % Female academic promotions

Women are now as likely to apply for Progression as men. Application rates increased from 2014-2022 (13% to 24%; men 16% to 19%). Success rates for women increased - 45% to 63%; men 46% to 53% (Figure 8.2a, 8.2b, Appendix 2).

The new Academic Progression, 2019, has been transformative. A holistic approach means excellence in one domain can compensate across another domain, recognising individual academic profiles. Panels comprise HoS, academics, Swan Champions and P&C representation.

¹² Prior to 2013/14, data was disaggregated by grades AC1-AC4. Senior Lecturers were captured within the AC4 grade as well as Readers and some Research Fellows. 2014 is therefore an appropriate longitudinal comparator date.

Increasing applications (Figure 8.2a, Appendix 2) suggest improved confidence. We note mixed experiences/perceptions in QES 2023; 37%F, 43%M agreed the current progression policy gives them confidence to apply, (Q8.2c, Appendix 1).

QES (Appendix 1) identified enablers: support from line manager/PDR reviewer and colleagues. Female respondents were more likely to agree the workshops delivered by QGI, Faculties and Schools were helpful (Q8.4, Appendix 1).

We aimed to increase the number of women achieving prestigious fellowships +4 by 2023. At least 15F/19M achieved this in 2017-2022 vs. 5F/11M in the previous 5 years. These include Academy of Social Sciences (5F, 1M), British Academy (1F, 1M), Royal Academy of Engineering (1F, 1M) and Royal Irish Academy (8F, 9M) (Figure 29).



Figure 29. Queen's Academics admitted to the Royal Irish Academy, May 2023.

The VC awarded a prestigious Regius Professorship to Queen's cybersecurity expert, Professor Máire O'Neill (Figure 30).



Figure 30. World leading cybersecurity expert, Professor Máire O'Neill, receives a prestigious Regius Professorship from the VC, January 2020

2.2.4. Development and career progression for Professional Services staff

Queen's does not have a formal PS Progression Process. Progression is achieved through appointment to a higher grade or, infrequently, upgrade of existing role.. We have evidence of progression over more than one award cycle (Figure 9.1, Appendix 2).

Of the 1,450F PS staff in 2021-22, 503F (35%) had at least one grade increase since 2017-18 (24% M). Academic-related, Clerical, Technical, Library Assistants and Operational groups all had grade increases for both women and men.

Of the 77 female PS Mentees in QGI PS Mentoring Programmes since 2019, 5 progressed to a higher grade.

In QES, 62% PS respondents agreed there were opportunities to develop professionally (63%F, 62%M) and they were encouraged to avail of them (65%F, 61%M) (Q8a, Q8b, Appendix 1).

Queen's Leadership Excellence Programme has supported PS and academics from 2009-2017 (12 each per year). The Connected Leaders Programme launched in 2018. PS staff shared that this has significantly enhanced career development.

“From the outset, the Excellence Course was totally different ... many of us were grappling with analogous situations ... in many ways we were not alone.” Leadership Excellence Programme Participant.

A PS Career Progression Working Group was established in 2019 following Staff Survey feedback. Its AP implemented an online career development hub, workshops, enhanced learning and development opportunities, including ‘Learning for all’ and LinkedIn Learning.

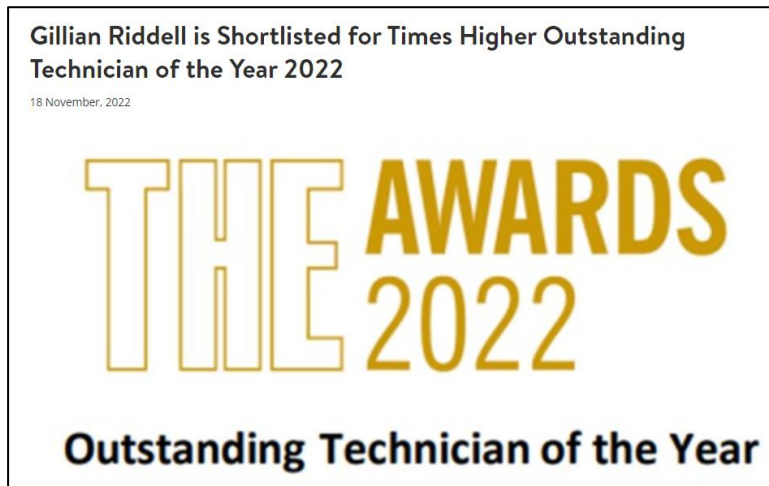


Figure 31. Gillian Riddell (Technician Commitment Coordinator) shortlisted for Outstanding Technician of the Year (2022).

Queen’s supported 33 PS women since 2017 to take Advance HE Aurora leadership programme. The QGI-Swan team worked with P&C to lower the grade eligibility for Aurora opening it up to female Technicians (Figure 31).

Aurora evaluation (2023) indicates participation prompted 55% to apply for an upward move; 55% believed Aurora strongly impacted the success of their application.

“It has encouraged me to think like a leader ... Aurora helped me to see my role as driving ideas forward and bringing others with me.” Aurora Participant.

Bespoke PS events (Figure 32) including a networking lunch (March 2022) and a Career Development Showcase (May 2022) are ongoing and remain in the Gold AP (Actions D2.1-2.7, D3.1-D3.6).

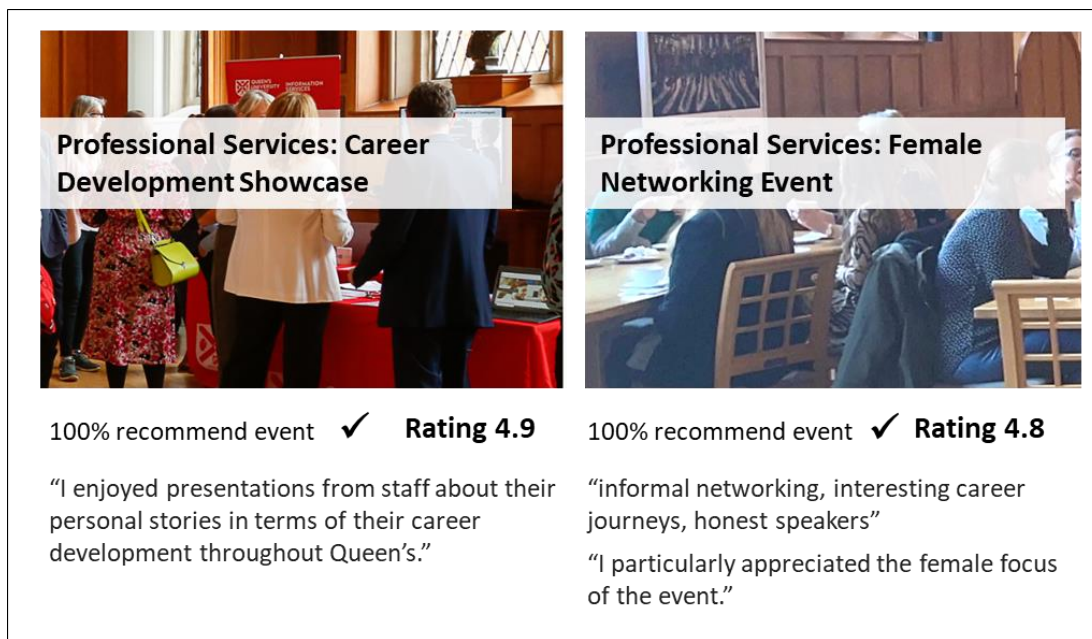


Figure 32. Professional Services Career Development Showcase and Female Networking Event with excerpts from participant evaluations.

A new Research&Innovation Professionals Network brings together all staff working within this portfolio (Action D3.6). Wellcome Trust funding has been secured to support establishment of a NI Research&Innovation Culture network.

2.2.5. Enhancing culture and life at work

Since 2000, there has been huge culture change at Queen’s, embedding GE and EDI. A key enabler was QGI and GE Strategy, approved by Senate, 1999.

In the 23 years since, Queen’s has shifted from traditional, academic culture towards a modern, progressive, inclusive workspace, with ambition to be a leading EDI employer (Strategy 2030). Core values (2016) and the Staff Charter (2023) have been instrumental.

Institutional policies including EDI, Menopause, Fertility Leave, Agile Working, Work Allocation Model, Carers’ Passport, Trans Equality, and Breastfeeding Welcome Here Scheme, underpin positive change.

New EDI training including ABT and Unconscious Bias, first introduced by the Swan Champions Network, supports continuing improvements.

Women are visible at Queen’s through digital publications, portraits, podcasts and named rooms. QGI’s 21st anniversary created digital content, including a video tour of the portraits of prominent women in the Great Hall (**Figure 33**).

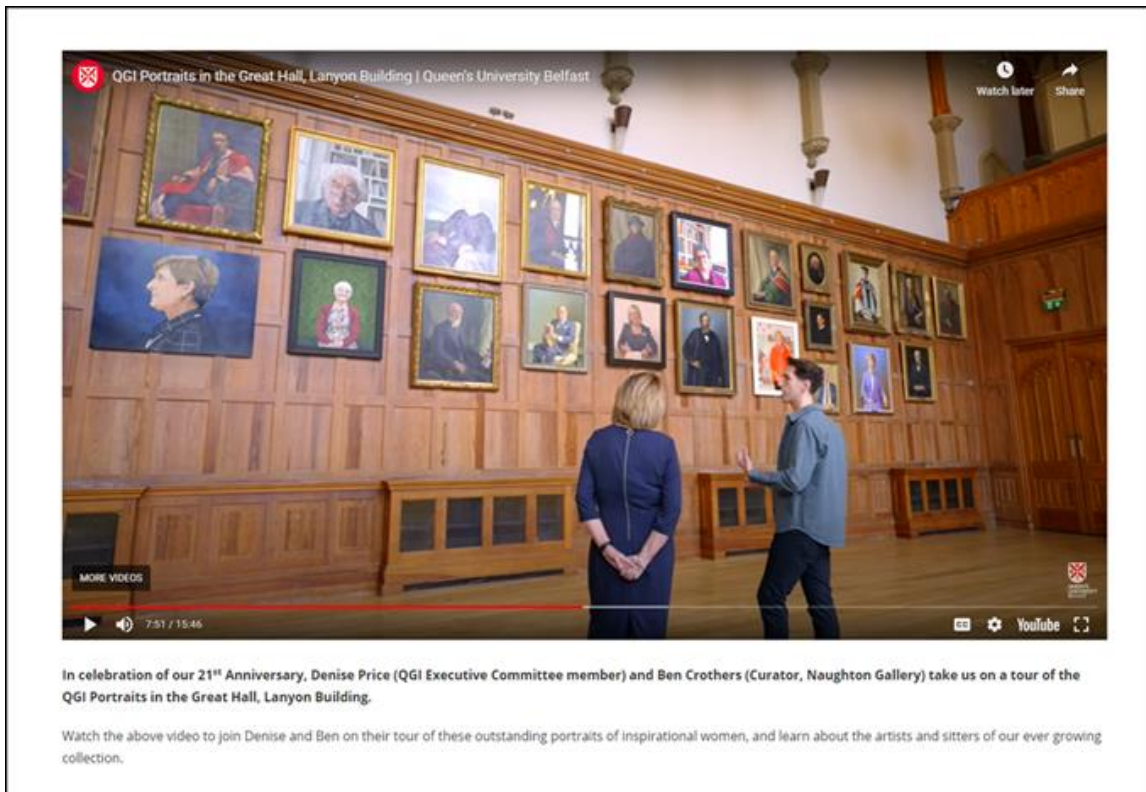


Figure 33. Queen's Naughton Gallery Curator, Ben Crothers and QGI Executive Committee member, Denise Price in a video tour of QGI Portraits of women in the Great Hall (2021).

Three rooms were named after women in Queen’s in the last two years. The policy is being updated to extend this (**Action B11.1**). In Maths&Physics, rooms were named for Sheila O’Brien (PS) and Professor Ruth Lynden-Bell (both retired) in March 2023. The Longley Room recognises the lifetime of poetry excellence from Professor Emerita Edna Longley and Michael Longley CBE (2021).

The Law School opened an Art Installation (2019) highlighting prominent female graduates (Figure 34).



Figure 34. Art installation in the School of Law, led by Swan Champions, highlighting former prominent female graduates (2019).

A new portrait of the first female Professor of Psychology on the island of Ireland (Figure 35) was unveiled (2022) bringing the number of portraits of women in the Great Hall to 11, vs one in 2000 of Queen Victoria who founded the Queen's College. New portrait commissions are underway (Action B11.2 – B11.3)



Figure 35. Professor Emerita, Carol McGuiness unveils her portrait in the Great Hall, June 2022. The joyous occasion was celebrated by colleagues, family and friends.

The 2019 action to increase visibility, voice and profile of BAME staff/students is significantly accelerated by Queen’s REC programme (Figure 36).

Demographic data shows growing race/ethnicity diversity at Queen’s over >1 award cycle, with BAME academics increasing from 8% in 2017-18 to 11% in 2021-22 (Figure 2.1b, Appendix 2), and BAME researchers 18%-22% (Figure 2.6b, Appendix 2).¹³

Visibility-enhancing activities included digital publications co-created by iRISE and QGI for International Women’s Day 2022 to particularly highlight women whose voices have been under-represented (Section 3.1).



Figure 36. Celebrating Race Equality Week at Queen’s (2023).

¹³ Local population identifying as BAME was 1.8% in 2017-18; 3.4% in 2021-22. Data NI Census 2021.

Queen's culture continues to evolve to be an inclusive, welcoming community for staff/students who are trans, gender non-conforming or exploring gender identity (Figure 37). Advice, support and understanding is provided. The Trans Equality policy (updated 2022) and practices seek to ease transitional periods.

Key diversity events/dates for trans visibility and inclusion are celebrated, including International Transgender Day of Visibility and IDAHO: International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia.

Trans, LGBTQ+ support and inclusion is described in Section 4.1.3.



Figure 37. Queen's Students' Union Pride Society.

Translating enablers of success to the Gold AP

Reflecting on the five longitudinal improvements, highly impactful enablers emerged. These are adopted in the Gold Programme.

- Swan and REC Champions Networks
- QGI, Faculty and School Academic Progression workshops.
- QGI Mentoring Programmes.
- Aurora Programme.
- Engagement across Queen's.
- Progressive, inclusive culture.
- ISAT oversight and subgroups.
- Senior Leadership buy-in, continued financial support from Queen's
- Fellowships supporting career development.

RAG rated Institutional Athena Swan 2019 Action Plan (as at October 2023)

Athena Swan Action Plan 2019 – 2023

Queen's University Belfast

Embedding Athena Swan and gender equality in Queen's
 Advancing recruitment and career progression of female staff
 Engendering Leadership
 Enhancing culture and life at work
 Improving the infrastructure for Swan data

Embedding Athena SWAN and Gender Equality in Queen's

Queen's has undergone significant structural change in the last 3 years with new Faculties, creation of new Schools and new Directorates. With the development of Athena SWAN's remit to include Professional and Support Staff, we have agreed Actions to embed Athena SWAN and Gender Equality across the Institution.

No.	Objective	Action to date/Rationale for Objective	Planned Actions	Measures of Success	Timeframe	RAG Status
1.1	Increase staff engagement with Athena SWAN.	Athena SWAN principles have been mainstreamed within policies however, further work will ensure effective communication of SWAN related work to all Queen's staff.	<p>Twice yearly e-newsletter communicating best practice and highlighting people, successes and challenges across the University</p> <p>SWAN Champions annual away day</p> <p>SWAN clinics with HR Business Partners and Recruiters for exchange of SWAN relevant information</p> <p>SWAN-related items on wide-screens in all areas and in University Team Brief</p>	<p>Circulation of the newsletter providing up-to-date information</p> <p>SWAN Champions to report on progress of work in Schools and submit report to ISAT</p> <p>Feedback to specific questions in 2022 Staff Survey and School SWAN Culture Surveys and report to ISAT</p>	<p>November and March annually starting Nov 2019</p> <p>April 2020 and annually</p> <p>November and March annually starting Nov 2019</p> <p>November 2020</p>	<p>Ongoing engagement with staff on Athena Swan including:</p> <p>Townhall on Swan for all staff hosted by the VC and Swan team (Oct 2023).</p> <p>Swan information stand at Staff induction (quarterly) and International Women's Day.</p> <p>Swan information at relevant events e.g. Celebration event for School Swan awards (Dec 2022), Imposter Syndrome workshops (Sep 2022, Nov 2022, Feb 2023), ABT, launch of Breastfeeding Welcome Here scheme (Sept 2023),</p>

						<p>Technician Commitment Showcase (May 2022), annual launch of QGI mentoring schemes.</p> <p>Swan Champions away day (April 2022 and upcoming January 2024). Regular Athena Swan updates in the university's weekly 'Round Up' comms issued to all staff.</p>
1.2	Support Schools to achieve higher Athena SWAN awards	Currently all Schools except Management hold an Athena SWAN award. Our ambition is that all Schools will work towards a silver award, or higher.	<p>ISAT will provide an Athena SWAN advisory service to Schools</p> <p>SWAN Project Manager to attend each School SAT meeting once per year</p>	<p>Queen's Management School will apply for Bronze</p> <p>By 2023, four Schools will apply for a higher Athena SWAN award</p>	<p>November 2019</p> <p>From May 2019 until April 2023</p>	<p>Between 2019 and 2023, four Schools applied for upgrades or new awards including:</p> <p>School of Law (applied for upgrade to Silver, Nov 2023)</p> <p>REDACTED LINE</p> <p>School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Science (upgraded to Gold, 2019/20)</p> <p>School of Management (applied for new Bronze award, 2019/20).</p>
1.3	Increase Professional & Support Staff participation in Athena SWAN.	Inclusion of P&S staff within the SWAN agenda is a welcome and recent development. It is important to increase awareness of Athena SWAN within the P&S	<p>Celebrate P&S female staff in Queen's with a networking event every March to coincide with International Women's Day</p> <p>Appoint Champion for P&S staff on QGI Executive Committee who is also on the Staff Forum</p>	<p>Feedback from annual P&S events will be collated, analysed and will inform planning of future events</p> <p>P&S Champion on QGI Executive Committee</p>	<p>March 2020 and annually until 2023</p> <p>October 2019</p>	<p>IWD networking event for P&S female staff held March 2022.</p> <p>Career Development Showcase for P&S staff, May 2022.</p> <p>Athena Swan Information session for P&S staff in Directorates, IWD March</p>

		cohort and promote engagement with initiatives.				2023. P&S colleagues from Directorates attended meeting of the Swan Champions Network June 2023. P&S staff representation (8 members) on QGI Executive Committee.
1.4	Encourage students to engage with Athena SWAN.	We want to increase engagement with students in areas relating to Athena SWAN. We will promote awareness at University and School level.	Include Athena SWAN on Student Union website Host a SWAN stand at key student events such as the Fresher's Fair Co-create an event for International Women's Day with students Set SWAN as a standing item on School Student-Staff Consultative Committees	Feedback from ISAT student representatives Measure student visits to SWAN stands Measure participation by students Review Committee Minutes and report to ISAT	October 2019 September 2019 and annually until 2023 March 2020 and annually until 2023 June 2020 and annually until 2023	Ongoing engagement with students on Athena Swan in Schools via Swan Champions and SATs. Focus group with students (October 2023) to discuss student experience of GE at Queen's and inform actions. Engagement with student officers in discussion on priorities for Students' Union for GE, intersectionality and EDI – including Carers' Passport for students (April 2022, Sept 2023). Delivery of Active Bystander Interprofessional Student training (Pharmacy, Nursing & Midwifery, Medicine students). Swan information stands across campus with cupcakes and merchandise for students on IWD (annual). Athena Swan Student poster competition: 'Who is your inspirational woman?' (April 2021).

1.5	Development of Athena SWAN webpages.	To communicate effectively Athena SWAN at Queen's and externally, we will develop a new website with feedback capabilities.	New Athena SWAN and QGI website	New website launched Record visits to website and report to ISAT Up-to-date website	October 2019 October 2021 October 2022 October 2023 Until April 2023	Green - actions complete. Growth in engagement on Swan via social media platforms. Twitter: 477 followers; LinkedIn: 227 followers (146 in May 2023, launched August 2022). Website analytics indicate that visitor numbers were highest in December 2022 (700+ users) coinciding with the Swan Schools celebration event.
1.6	Ensure completion of mandatory training modules on unconscious bias and equality are completed by all members of staff.	We have developed two eLearning modules – 'Unconscious Bias's and 'Think Difference; Act Differently' – which are mandatory for all staff. We want to build on our current completion rates of 80% for 'Unconscious Bias' and 64% for 'Think Difference' modules. We have added questions to the 2019 Staff Survey to ascertain staff knowledge of these areas.	Highlight these modules at local and University induction Quarterly review and reminders sent to staff, copied to Heads of School and Directors	Improvement in completion data to at least 95% (allowing for new staff) Queen's staff will be trained to ensure they are aware of equality legislation and understand the effects of unconscious bias	From June 2019 and ongoing review Ongoing as new staff join Queen's	Amber – partial progress. Current completion rates: UB 89%, TDAD 79%. Higher completion rates by permanent staff vs. fixed term staff: UB 93% v 77%; TDAD, 81% v 72%. Revised target of 90% completion (permanent staff) within a new-format staff induction is in the Gold AP (Action A4.1 – Action A4.3).

1.7	Complete 'Designing Inclusive Curriculum to improve Equality and Diversity' (DICED) Project	<p>Queen's is currently examining inclusivity and diversity in the curriculum and is using the Canvas platform to enhance delivery of education.</p> <p>We will develop a framework of equitable learning opportunities, through systems and core instructional practices that are delivered by a community that values diversity.</p>	<p>Design templates and self-assessment tools for staff</p> <p>Develop on-line resources on inclusive content and videos outlining best practice across Queen's</p> <p>Host workshops on inclusive curriculum design</p> <p>Develop Queen's guidelines, policy and disseminate across campus</p>	<p>Achievement of DICED Project objectives and launch of framework</p>	<p>January-April 2019</p> <p>May-July 2019</p> <p>August 2019 - February 2020</p>	<p>Project complete. 'EDI in the curriculum' toolkit shared. The toolkit is accompanied by workshops on the topics of Decolonising the faculty curriculum; Anti-racism through a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) lens; and Intercultural competency across disciplines.</p> <p>Project team were SEDA Research & Evaluation Small Grant Winners 2021 (Staff and Educational Development Association).</p> <p>Featured as a session in the Advance HE EDI Conference 2022 on Inclusive Institutions.</p>
1.8	Continue to reduce Professorial Gender Pay Gap.	<p>Queen's has reduced the Professorial Gender Pay Gap from 14.5% to 8.36%.</p> <p>We want to reduce this gap and to maintain progress. The most recent Equal Pay Audit (EPA) was carried out in 2017.</p>	<p>Professorial Salary Review to occur annually (not triennially)</p> <p>Holistic review of academic profiles</p> <p>New video communicating outcomes of the Working Group</p> <p>Report on current Professorial Gender Pay Gap biannually on website with longitudinal tracker</p> <p>Conduct institutional equal pay audit in 2020 in line with Queen's</p>	<p>Reduce Professorial Gender Pay Gap</p> <p>Revised academic profiles in place</p> <p>Launch video</p> <p>Launch website tracker</p>	<p>2020, 2021, 2022</p> <p>November 2019</p> <p>June 2019</p> <p>November and June, 2020-2023</p> <p>November 2021</p>	<p>The 2020 Equal Pay Audit: the Professorial Pay Gap is narrowing (11.4% in 2014, 10.5% in 2017, 7.6% in 2020).</p> <p>Since 2019, Academic Progression includes the Professoriate, replacing the former triennial Professorial Salary Review. More frequent salary increases now occur, improving the Professorial Pay Gap.</p> <p>The 2023 Equal Pay Audit will report January 2024. New actions (E5.1 and E5.2) will evaluate the findings and</p>

			Equality Scheme Action Plan (2018-2023)	Analyse pay audit for any gender inequalities, report to UOB, UEB, ISAT and take appropriate actions		develop an Equal Pay Action Plan with targeted actions where required.
1.9	Investigate reasons for Gender Pay Gap in Grades 2-4	The most recent EPA identified gender pay gaps at Grades 2-4. We want to understand the reasons for this.	<p>Conduct granular analysis of gender pay gap in Grades 2-4 and identify underlying reasons</p> <p>Address issues identified</p> <p>Conduct Institutional equal pay audit in 2020 in line with Queen's Equality Scheme Action Plan (2018-2023)</p>	<p>Submit report to UOB and ISAT</p> <p>Analyse pay audit for any gender inequalities, report to UOB, UEB, ISAT and take appropriate actions</p>	<p>April 2020</p> <p>November 2020</p> <p>November 2021</p>	<p>2020 Equal Pay Audit: equal pay gaps at Grades 2 and 4 have decreased since the 2017 audit by 2.1% (to 14.1% Grade 2) and 0.2% (to 8.1% Grade 4).</p> <p>This may be because of the University's continued commitment to develop and enhance its suite of family friendly / work life balance policies. However, significant equal pay gaps remain, with more males availing of additional hours (Grade 2: 69%F, 89%M; Grade 4: 28%F, 53%M).</p> <p>New actions (E5.1 and E5.2) will evaluate the findings of the 2023 Equal Pay Audit and develop an Equal Pay Action Plan with targeted actions where required.</p>
1.10	Advance staff representation on ISAT	ISAT currently is representative of staff and students at Queen's. We plan to advance this by increasing the numbers of senior academic men and	<p>Refresh ISAT every 18 months through rotation of positions and Expressions of Interest</p> <p>Appoint male Dean or Head of School</p>	ISAT membership will include a male Dean or male Head of School and a representative from iRISE	November 2020	Membership currently includes the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (M), one male Dean, one male PVC and the co-chairs of iRISE (international and BAME staff network).

		those from a BAME background.	Co-opt a staff representative from the BAME group, iRISE			
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Advancing Recruitment and Career Progression of Female Staff

Our data shows that women are represented in similar proportions as men up to AC3 but are significantly under-represented at AC4 (36%) and in the Professoriate (23%). Our ambition is to achieve 45% representation at AC4 and to increase representation to 27% in the Professoriate by 2023 (see also 4.1 and 4.2).

No.	Objective	Action to date/Rationale for Objective	Planned Actions	Measures of Success	Timeframe	RAG Status
2.1	New Institutional policies on appraisal, progression and promotion.	<p>The 2016 Staff Survey raised concerns around career transition points. Queen's has responded by setting up an Academic Career Pathways Review Steering Group and working sub-groups to propose new policies on appraisal, progression and promotion.</p> <p>Faculty HR Business Partners have been developed towards strategic rather than operational roles.</p>	<p>Steering group and working groups established and operational</p> <p>Consultation paper to all staff</p> <p>Implementation of new policies through Faculties and Directorates</p> <p>Business partners will support implementation through bespoke training packages relevant to the unit e.g. planning for leadership roles, career development, objective setting and enhancing career aspirations</p>	<p>Recommendations to Senate</p> <p>Staff input to proposals</p> <p>New policies in place</p> <p>Reviewed through School SWAN Culture Surveys and the triennial Queen's Staff Survey</p>	<p>April - June 2019</p> <p>September 2019</p> <p>November 2019</p> <p>Ongoing School Culture Surveys, April 2022</p>	<p>Personal Development Review (PDR) replaced appraisal. A new Academic Progression process was implemented.</p> <p>Feedback on PDR and new process for academic progression sought in QES 2023.</p>
2.2	Recruit more senior female Professors	The Professorial Gender Pay Gap Working Group recommended that each Faculty PVC should recruit at least 2 female Professors in	Professional recruitment agencies and internal search committees to identify potential candidates for Chair positions to with a focus on female candidates	6 of Range 3/4 (or remuneration equivalent) female Professors	From June 2019 to April 2023	<p>Target exceeded. Over the last 5 years, 19 female Professors were recruited.</p> <p>Of these, 8 were in Range 3/4 or remuneration equivalent: 3F PVC recruited;</p>

		Range 3/4 (or remuneration equivalent).				3F recruited at Range 3/4; 2F Named Appointments at Range 3/4. 11F were promoted to new Range of 3/4 (9M).
2.3	Ensure language used in recruitment advertisements with respect to job title, criteria and description is gender neutral and encourages female applications.	Overall, women account for 37% of applicants for academic/research positions. Queen’s manually checks language in advertisements and includes welcome statements where women (or men) are under-represented. Academic research indicates that language used can encourage or discourage female applicants. ¹⁴	Investigate software for creating gender neutral job advertisements Include information on Athena SWAN and family-friendly policies in recruitment materials Develop new recruitment materials including videos of female academics, testimonials from recently appointed staff and information on family life in Belfast/Northern Ireland	All job advertisements go out with language and material that serves to encourage female applicants Review applications data annually and report to ISAT Applications from women will exceed 40%	January 2020 By April 2023	Amber – progressing. Significant progress was made in reaching (and exceeding) targets around female representation at particular academic grades; however, applications from women did not exceed 40% (37%, Section 4.2). New Actions C5.1 – C5.8 are planned in the Gold Action Plan.
2.4	Research the efficacy of using search committees for recruiting women.	Queen’s currently use professional recruitment agencies and internal search committees for specific posts. A list of	Develop a research project focusing on Queen’s and other Universities on the island of Ireland to investigate this issue	Obtain data on efficacy of search committees Compile paper for University Executive Board	April 2020 January 2021	Since 2018, there have been 25 Executive Search recruitment exercises resulting in the appointment of 9F and 15M. Search Committees were used previously although no historic data

¹⁴ Equate Scotland, Recruitment Language Guide

		qualified female candidates is requested. However, it is unclear if these recruitment methods are effective in encouraging women to apply.	Obtain funding Execute research and analysis	Write research paper for peer-reviewed publication	January 2023	exists to show impact/ effectiveness. HRBPs suggest mixed perception of value. New actions in Gold Action Plan (C5.1-5.5).
2.5	Gender balance or at least 33% of one gender on recruitment and selection panels.	Currently Queen's ensures female representation on panels, however, this may not be a gender-balanced panel which are known to make better decisions. This can be challenging in some Schools due to staff gender representation.	Policy to be agreed for minimum 33% of one gender on recruitment panels where possible Invite senior external female panel member where relevant e.g. representation from professional bodies	All recruitment panels will be comprised of at least 33% of one gender	June 2020	Amber –progressing. Since recruitment restarted after Covid (Jan 2021), 83% of panels complied. Some larger panels did not reach 33% and 5% of panels (smaller panels) were single-sex. The latter scenario occurred on the day of the interview and procedurally, a panel member substitution could not be made. New action in Gold Action Plan C5.6.
2.6	Increase awareness of structures and opportunities for career progression (P&S staff).	P&S staff can progress their careers through moving to a higher graded post or in 15% of cases, having their current job regraded. Queen's has provided access to LinkedIn Learning in a pilot study.	Increased promotion of Learning & Development opportunities Improving awareness of toolkits for self-directed learning Promoting HR Hub Deliver 'Learning for all' workshops to help people manage their career aspirations	Review uptake of new training provision Create report from survey and focus groups on the usefulness of the LinkedIn Learning trial Make decision on whether to continue with LinkedIn Learning	June 2021 September 2019 January 2020	QES 2023: 62% PS respondents agreed there were opportunities to develop professionally (63% F, 62% M) and they were encouraged to avail of them (65% F, 61% M). Queen's Leadership Excellence Programme: supported Academic and Professional Services staff since 2009 (24 per year).

		People & Culture have launched a new website and HR hub where information on career progression and training is now more easily accessible.	Review usefulness of LinkedIn Learning platform			<p>PS networking lunch with keynote speaker (March 2022) and a Career Development Showcase (May 2022).</p> <p>A new Research & Innovation Professionals Network has been set up at Queen's bringing together all staff working within this portfolio.</p> <p>A PS Career Progression Working Group: established 2019 following feedback in the 2019 Staff Survey. Its AP implemented an online career development hub, workshops, enhanced learning and development opportunities, including 'Learning for all' and LinkedIn Learning.</p>
2.7	Understand why fewer women than men apply for promotion.	Our data shows that women are less likely to apply for promotion than men (37%, 2014-2018) although their success rates are higher. We wish to understand whether more women can be encouraged to apply.	<p>Design and conduct survey on decision-making around promotions applications with academic women and men</p> <p>Work collaboratively with partners in the EPSRC funded study 'Inclusion matters'</p>	<p>Paper to QGI and ISAT.</p> <p>Disseminate paper to academic staff with recommendations around career planning</p>	<p>June 2021</p> <p>January 2022</p>	<p>Women now as likely to apply for Academic Progression as men.</p> <p>Application rates have increased since 2014 (2014: 13%F, 16%M; 2022: 24%F, 19%M).</p>

2.8	Understand why people leave Queen's.	Staff turnover is a reality for all organisations. It is important for us to understand why people, particularly academic women, leave as this constitutes a leaky pipeline.	<p>Develop our exit survey template to include questions relating to 'why' people have made the decision to leave</p> <p>Offer opportunity for exit interviews with HR Business Partners</p>	<p>New exit survey</p> <p>Interim review</p> <p>Paper for University Executive Board and ISAT to inform follow up actions</p>	<p>September 2019</p> <p>March 2020</p> <p>April 2021</p>	<p>New Exit Survey launched Nov 2019 with new Qs/ response options on reasons for leaving.</p> <p>The most common reasons cited by F leavers are: New job: 60%F Lack of career prospects/promotion opportunities: 28%F End of fixed term contract/job uncertainty: 26%F</p>
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Engendering Leadership

Queen's are committed to developing leaders across all areas of business and recognises the need to increase the proportion of senior academic women.

No.	Objective	Action to date/Rationale for Objective	Planned Actions	Measures of Success	Timeframe	RAG Status
3.1	Increase the numbers of female AC4 academics.	We have invested in recruitment of AC3 staff over the previous Action Plan. Our ambition is to increase female AC4 academics to 45% . This will address our current pipeline issues.	<p>Encourage and support AC3 women to plan for promotion e.g. to AC4</p> <p>Hold promotions workshops in QGI and in Schools</p> <p>Focus recruitment strategy towards AC4 women and utilise personal and professional networks</p> <p>Continue with QGI Mentoring Scheme (Academic)</p> <p>Support 2 female academics per faculty to participate in Aurora programme</p>	<p>Deliver annual promotions workshops</p> <p>Sustained female AC3 applications for promotion</p> <p>Increase the number of female applications for AC4 posts by 10%</p> <p>Annual QGI Mentoring Scheme feedback</p> <p>Six female academics in Aurora programme annually (24 by 2023)</p>	<p>November 2019 and annually</p> <p>By April 2023</p> <p>November 2020</p> <p>June 2020 and annually</p> <p>By April 2023</p>	<p>Target of 45%F SL by 2023 was reached one year early following sustained increases over the previous nine years: 34% in 2014 to 46% in 2022.</p> <p>Aurora programme: targeted at Lecturer/Senior Lecturer level, underpinning planning for progression. 8 academics per year. Of the 39 participants since 2018, 19 have progressed.</p> <p>Annual bespoke QGI mentoring scheme: of the 93F Academic Mentees since 2017, 53% have progressed; 32, 9 and 3 Mentees achieved at least 1, 2, or 3 grade increases respectively.</p>
3.2	Increase the numbers of female Professors.	Currently, 23% of Queen's Professors are women. This figure has been maintained since 2011. Our ambition is	<p>Encourage and support AC4 women to plan for promotion</p> <p>Hold promotions workshops in QGI and in Schools</p>	<p>Deliver annual promotions workshops</p>	<p>November 2019 (annually)</p> <p>By April 2023</p>	<p>Target of 27% by 2023 was reached three years early and is now exceeded with 34%F Professors following the 2023 Academic Progression outcomes. Longitudinal increase from 11% in 2000.</p>

		to increase this to 27% by 2023.	<p>Focus recruitment strategy towards professorial women and utilise personal and professional networks</p> <p>Review survey data on why academic women leave Queen's</p>	<p>Sustained female applications for promotion to Chair</p> <p>Increased female applications from 21% to 30% for Professorial vacancies</p> <p>Report to ISAT, UEB</p>	<p>By April 2023</p> <p>November 2022</p>	<p>Over the last 5 years, increase largely due to progression: 51F promoted to Professor (47%); 19 recruited (33%). Recruitment: F applications for Prof roles have increased, although not yet at 30%. Over last 5 years, 24% F applications results in 33% F appointments. Shortlisting rate is 41%F and 29%M indicating quality applicants.</p> <p>Progression: application rates 20%F and 18%M. Progression success rates: higher for women (87% vs 78%). New QGI Professorial Progression workshops for women were piloted in 2022 and are now mainstreamed.</p>
3.3	Support P&S staff career progression.	<p>QGI is currently running a pilot mentoring scheme for P&S women.</p> <p>People & Culture are building mentoring capability across the University.</p> <p>To date, 2 P&S staff members have participated in the Aurora leadership programme.</p>	<p>Formalise and roll out the QGI Mentoring scheme (P&S)</p> <p>Deliver short skills courses and self-directed learning resources including toolkits/best practice guides for mentoring</p> <p>Increase funding for 2 P&S women annually, to participate in the Aurora programme</p>	<p>Feedback from QGI mentoring scheme to inform roll out of next Scheme</p> <p>Measure uptake of new resources and review feedback.</p> <p>Two P&S women in Aurora programme annually; 8 by 2023</p>	<p>June 2019, November 2019 and annually</p> <p>November 2020 November 2022</p> <p>By April 2023</p>	<p>QGI PS Mentoring Programme formalised: of the 77 female PS Mentees since 2019, 5 have progressed to a higher grade.</p> <p>Advance HE Aurora leadership programme: 33 PS women since 2017. Evidence of progression: of the 1,450F PS staff in 2021-22, 503F (34%) have had at least one grade increase since 2017-18 (24% M).</p> <p>Over the same time course, of the cohort of 99F technicians, 23 (23%) have had at least one grade increase since 2017-18 (45/159 M, 28%).</p>

						This item remains a key priority in the Gold AP (Actions D2 and D3).
3.4	Achieve gender balanced Faculty Executive Boards (FEB).	Currently the representation of women on our 3 FEBs is low. Queen's recognises the importance of gender balance in these influential decision-making groups. Our ambition is to achieve gender-balanced membership.	Faculty Deans were appointed from 2016 when Faculties were established. Roles will naturally rotate along with Head of Schools roles PVCs will have key performance indicators to encourage women to apply for these roles Female succession planning to help emerging talent acquire experience and potential to move into senior leadership roles	Progress towards gender balance (minimum 40% women) in FEBs through representation of women in Dean and Head of School roles	By April 2023	Amber – progressing. This is improving since 2017/18: AHSS: 36% F (4/11) with F Chair (33% previously) EPS: 36% (5/14) (29% previously) MHLS: 40% (6 /15) (29% previously) FEBs are impacted by Deans (29%F) and HoS (33%F). Representation changes as roles rotate; however, more men than women apply. Actions C7.1 – C7.8 will progress recommendations from the SFAL sub-group.
3.5	Increase the number of female members of Influential committees.	We wish to achieve gender-balanced membership in our Influential committees. Several of these do not reach minimum 40% female representation.	Committee chairs will rotate membership and encourage women to apply	By 2023, the female representation on these committees will be a minimum of 40%	April 2023	Senate: 62%F UMB: 42%F Senior Leaders Forum: 48%F Professional Services Management Group: 58%
3.6	Increase number of women holding prestigious fellowships or Royal Academy memberships.	Prestigious fellowships are a public recognition of academic excellence. We wish to increase the public and sectoral visibility of excellent	Identify key women and mentor them towards fellowships/memberships of e.g. Royal Irish Academy	Faculty PVCs to work with Heads of School to identify women for mentorship and application support; 4 by 2023	April 2023	Target exceeded. At least 14 women achieved this, including election to the Academy of Social Sciences (5F, 1M), British Academy (1F, 1M), Royal Academy of Engineering (1F, 1M) and the Royal

		female academics in Queen's.				Irish Academy (8F, 9M) (Figure 27). 15F/19M achieved prestigious fellowships in 2017-2022 vs. 5F/11M in the previous 5 years.
3.7	Counter a sense of Imposter Syndrome.	A key obstacle to women's leadership is a sense of Imposter Syndrome. SMDBS previously covered this topic in their Women's Early Career Academic Network and the Graduate School also ran a session.	Plan and deliver an Imposter Syndrome workshop open to all female staff	Measure update and review feedback from Imposter Syndrome workshop	June 2021	Three Imposter Syndrome online workshops held (Sep and Nov 2022, Feb 2023). 95 colleagues (86%F) have participated. Participants rated the workshops 4.7/5 (94%) with 96% feeling they have a better understanding of how Imposter Syndrome impacts behaviour (95%).
3.8	Provide media training for women.	Women are less likely to engage with media than men (external research). We wish to increase confidence of women in this activity which is in line with our Public Engagement Researcher Strategy and Social Charter.	Provide training to SWAN Champions through the 'Communication Clinic' Run media training workshops for female academic, research and senior P&S staff	Measure effectiveness through feedback and numbers of women engaging with the media	May 2019 November 2022	Communications Clinic held (2019). Media training for F staff held (March 2020). 'The Conversation' editors completed sessions with F colleagues. Queen's Communications team provide internal training for media on an ongoing basis.

4. Enhancing culture and life at work

Queen's is committed to listening to staff and enhancing the culture so that life at work is balanced with wellbeing and caring/family responsibilities.

No.	Objective	Action to date/Rationale for Objective	Planned Actions	Measures of Success	Timeframe	RAG Status
4.1	Develop an integrated support framework for pregnant staff, those on maternity leave and those coming back from maternity leave.	<p>Queen's has enhanced maternity provision and a range of policies in place for new and expectant Mothers.</p> <p>We would like to augment this provision with a new support framework that ensures support and a consistent experience of new and expectant Mothers from Managers.</p> <p>This will be based on consultation with staff.</p>	<p>Establish a pilot focus group to explore how we can best support the post-maternity return to work phase, and other related issues such as childcare, post-natal depression and support for new fathers</p> <p>Set up a buddy system for those about to go on maternity leave</p> <p>Add Maternity support and policies into 'Manager Essentials' training modules to ensure consistency of experience</p>	<p>Analyse the feedback from focus groups and put new measures in place</p> <p>Review after one year</p> <p>Feedback from buddy system</p> <p>Manager Essentials course includes maternity leave</p>	<p>January 2020</p> <p>January 2021</p> <p>January 2021</p> <p>April 2021</p>	<p>Feedback from staff told us that new policies were not required, but rather a reorganisation of existing information into a 'framework' structure that would be easier to access and 'join the dots'.</p> <p>Female researchers requested more tailored maternity info that addressed nuances of researcher contracts.</p> <p>New website content was developed that was easily accessible, addressed nuances of researcher contracts, including new guidance, FAQs and case studies.</p>
4.2	Identify a Maternity/Family Champion.	Queen's currently provides enhanced maternity/adoption/paternity leave and a portfolio of family friendly policies. Via the SWAN Champions, staff have instigated a plan for a Maternity/Family Champion to support staff around accessing Family-friendly	<p>Identify a Maternity/Family Champion</p> <p>Advise staff of this additional support</p> <p>*Action revised*</p> <p>Improved online resources and sign-posting to maternity and family leave information.</p>	<p>Maternity/Family Champion in post</p> <p>Report engagement with Champion annually to ISAT</p>	<p>April 2021</p> <p>April 2022, 2023</p>	<p>New online resources developed (as described at 4.1).</p>

		policies and informing development of new initiatives.	<i>(ISAT considered it would be more appropriate to have improved online resources to signpost staff, with a well-informed HRBP as the escalation point, rather than first point of contact: a go-to resource rather than a Champion)</i>			
4.3	Normalise taking family leave for all eligible members of staff.	Queen's has excellent family leave policies which are disproportionately taken by women. We believe in supporting men and women in their caring responsibilities.	Share case studies of men and women who have taken family leave and the benefits to them and their family	Run a Focus Group with staff who have availed of family leave to assess impact	November 2022	Data indicates increasing %M taking family leave suggesting normalisation: 2017/18: 613 instances of family leave (66% F, 34% M). 2021/22: 438 (59% F and 41% M). A decrease in overall instances of family leave in 2020/21 could be due to Covid, with the main drop being in staff taking dependant leave. The flexibility given by Agile Working may mean that staff do not need to access the different types of family leave.
4.4	Creation of a Carer's passport for staff.	Staff are encouraged to liaise with line managers in relation to issues of caring responsibilities. The availability of a formal Carer's passport through engagement with the Diversity and Inclusion Unit will facilitate	A 'Carers' passport' will be developed and all staff be advised on eligibility and relevant procedures for use	Run Focus Groups with staff who have used a Carer's passport to assess impact	April 2021, November 2022	Carers' network launched March 2022. Carers' Passport and associated guidance developed and launched during Carers' Week in June 2022.

		conversations with line managers.				
4.5	Appoint a Menopause Champion.		<p>Organise informal meet-up to allow women to talk about this issue and be supported</p> <p>Signpost women to appropriate support and information internally and externally</p> <p>Incorporate into HR suite of Management Training to advise on suggestions for reasonable adjustments to improve the working environment for pre and menopausal women</p> <p>*Action revised*</p> <p>Development and implementation of new menopause policy, associated web resources, staff communications, engagement and delivery of menopause awareness sessions.</p> <p><i>(ISAT considered it would be more effective to embed a Menopause policy in the</i></p>	<p>Collect feedback and track the number of women engaging with the Menopause Champion</p> <p>Review after 2 years</p> <p>Updated HR training materials</p>	<p>April 2020</p> <p>April 2022</p> <p>April 2022</p>	<p>Menopause Policy and associated guidance developed and launched August 2022.</p> <p>Extensive web resources, awareness sessions and a Menopause Fund providing financial assistance towards extra uniforms, desk fans, window blinds (3 applications, funding given).</p> <p>100+ staff attending Menopause Awareness sessions this year. 100% attendees rated sessions Excellent/Very Good. 40+ staff attended line manager sessions.</p>

			<i>University rather than appoint a Champion).</i>			
4.6	Develop and deliver Bullying and Harassment Training for staff.	Queen's is currently running training sessions on Bullying and Harassment awareness for staff. We are committed to ensuring that staff are equipped to effectively respond to allegations and deal with complaints effectively.	To deliver 3 training sessions per year in Schools and Directorates Train HR business partners to deliver training in Schools and Directorates.	Training will be delivered in Schools and Directorates Assess effectiveness of training sessions and update in response to feedback surveys from participants	Until November 2019 Biannual sessions from January 2020	Bullying and harassment training held 3 times annually. Network of anti-harassment advisors provide confidential information/support.
4.7	Increase the proportion of women giving Public Lectures at Queen's.	We wish to enhance the visibility of female role models at Queen's for staff, students and the public.	Review current invitations for Public Lectures in 2019 and work with relevant groups to ensure gender balance annually Nominate women and BAME people for the Annual Equality and Diversity Lecture	Gender balance across Queen's in Public Lectures Report to ISAT	November 2019 Review annually	Public lectures: 57%F speakers since 2018. Three gender/EDI-related Public Lectures delivered annually: Clare McMahon Lecture, Mary McAleese Diversity Lecture Series and the Dame Ingrid Allen Lecture (Annual Gender Equality Lecture). 12 lectures have been delivered from these series with 100%F speakers, of which 9 were White (75%), 2 B.A.M.E (17%) and 1 Unknown (8%).
4.8	Create a digital publication of QGI's work on gender equality for QGI's 20 th anniversary.	QGI has been working to advance women's equality in Queen's since 2000. A significant body of work has been completed including sharing good practice and	A researcher will work on archiving QGI's work over the last 20 years A book on the women in QGI portraits in the Great Hall will	Creation of a digital publication	June 2020	Green – actions complete. The QGI 21 st anniversary created digital content, including a video tour of the portraits of prominent women in the Great Hall.

		beacon activity. This will be published and celebrated.	be compiled, in collaboration with the University curator			
4.9	Publish an e-book of past and present women at Queen's.	Women have contributed significantly to the life and success of Queen's. An e-book showing this will celebrate the work of women and promote excellent role models.	A team of summer research students will work in QGI to access material from archives and to engage with current female staff for inclusion	Publication of an e-book by QGI	November 2022 Publish April 2023	The Riddel Hall Chronicles Film and Podcasts – a digital storytelling of a former residence for female students and staff at Queen's built by a generous gift from Belfast philanthropists Eliza and Isabella Riddel.
4.10	Increase visibility and profile of BAME staff and students.	Our data shows 12% of academic and research staff are BAME. We are keen to explore any intersectional issues from gender and ethnicity.	Engage with the new iRISE network (BAME) when planning public lectures and events Profile prominent BAME women in the QGI digital archive	Report on intersectionality in public engagement to ISAT Creation of a digital publication	September 2019 (annually) June 2020	Digital publications co-created by iRISE and QGI for International Women's Day 2022 to particularly shine a light on women whose voices have been under-represented. REC Reverse Mentoring Pilot (2022) REC Mentoring Programme (2023) REC ABT for students (intersectional approach) (2023) Inaugural 'Race Equality in Higher Education' Conference (September 2023) REC Podcasts (2023) featuring REC Champions and BAME students/staff.

4.11	Ensure balance on speaker lists for seminar series and conferences with respect to gender and ethnicity.	Schools and research groups hold regular seminar series and conferences. It is important that gender balance and ethnicity is considered when inviting speakers.	Schools to submit speakers lists to ISAT annually, disaggregated by gender and ethnicity	Annual review of speaker lists in Schools to be submitted to ISAT	September 2019 (annually)	Amber – progressing. Schools/Faculties reported it was challenging to collate this information as it was not routinely requested/ recorded. A new Diversity Monitoring Form is currently being piloted in Schools through the Swan Champions Network to collect gender and ethnicity data in an anonymous online Form. Action E4.1 in new Gold Action Plan.
4.12	Develop a guidance document on how research involving participants should be sensitive to Trans people.	Queen’s has implemented Trans awareness training. The importance of considering Trans people in research is relevant to many disciplinary research areas.	Consult with AHRC and/or other research bodies to learn from current practice Build on work already undertaken by the University Research Ethics Committee, to compile a comprehensive list of research guidelines	Creation of a guidance document Ethics committees to review success of policy after one year of implementation	June 2021 June 2022	Guidance document (2021) for staff and students on ‘Asking about Sex / Gender Identity’ based on feedback from trans and non-binary people’s experiences of forms at Queen’s.
4.13	Increase awareness of Transgender equality in the workplace.	Queen’s has implemented a Transgender Equality policy and has worked with an external organisation, Sail NI, to deliver Transgender Awareness training.	Continue to work with SAIL NI to deliver Transgender Awareness training for staff	Assess effectiveness of training sessions and update in response to feedback surveys from participants	November 2019 (annually)	Two Trans awareness sessions held per year (135 attendees in last 5 years). 100% would recommend to a colleague. A new web-resource (2021) with guidance/FAQ supports the Trans Inclusion Policy. Updated Trans Equality Policy (staff and students) in 2022.

5. Improving the Infrastructure for SWAN data

The importance of infrastructure to support engagement with SWAN related data was a key learning point from the preparation of recent SWAN applications, including this one. We will develop our data management systems to enhance capture of data for SWAN and other equality, diversity and inclusion processes.

No.	Objective	Action to date/Rationale for Objective	Planned Actions	Measures of Success	Timeframe	RAG Status
5.1	Identify a data analyst with responsibility for SWAN data in each Faculty.	The Faculty of MHLS appointed a data analyst in 2016, whose role included support of School SWAN applications. We will now extend this provision to our other Faculties.	Appoint a data analyst in AHSS Identify resource for data analysis in EPS	School SWAN Champions will report on the provision to FEBs, SCN and ISAT	January 2021 January 2022	Three Faculty data analysts (one in each Faculty) in post with responsibility for Athena Swan data.
5.2	Create an institutional wide database that records staff activities in relation to outreach, engagement and sharing of best practice.	Queen's is committed to engaging externally with school pupils, community groups, patients, the business sector and policy makers. We currently do not know whether this work is carried out on an equitable basis by women and men.	Collect information in a live excel document in a pilot exercise Establish a database to capture this data with capability of disaggregation by gender, grade and ethnicity	Completion of pilot Data collection system established Gender-disaggregated report to ISAT and UEB	September 2019 June 2020 January 2023	Analysis of existing PURE database indicates availability of data on outreach and engagement activities disaggregated by gender and ethnicity. Gender and ethnicity disaggregated report to ISAT Sept 2022 (engagement, outreach, media activities: 47%F, 53%M; 12% B.A.M.E, 88% White).

5.3	Collect information on staff media engagement by gender.	MRCI directorate actively encourages staff to engage with media requests. Media engagement activity is recorded but currently is not in a format that can be disaggregated by gender, and grade and ethnicity. It is important to show that the public face of Queen's is both female and male, and to take action if the data indicates otherwise.	Set up a new data collection system for media engagement. Annual equality reports produced	New data collection system in place Annual reports generated and presented to ISAT for review and action	January 2021 January 2022, 2023	<p>33F (31%) in the Queen's Expert Directory, a searchable database of academics who are interested in talking to the media about their areas of expertise and have had media training.</p> <p>Gender and ethnicity disaggregated report to ISAT Sept 2022.</p> <p>'Press/media' activities including expert commentary, public engagement and research: 48%F, 52%M; 10% B.A.M.E, 90% White.</p>
5.4	Intersectionality of gender and ethnicity data.	We are keen to further investigate issues related to the intersection of gender and ethnicity e.g. it is important that women from BAME background are not disadvantaged in recruitment and progression.	Develop a platform to retrieve data to enable evaluation of the intersection of gender and ethnicity	New data collection system in place Annual reports generated and presented to ISAT for review and action	January 2021 January 2022, 2023	<p>Intersectional analysis enabled by data collection, dashboards, and analysis tools.</p> <p>Annual reporting of data to ISAT including intersectional analysis.</p>

Section 3: An assessment of the University’s sector-leading activity

3.1 Maintaining good practice and innovation

Queen’s GE progress over 23 years has been intentional and substantial. Priorities in the first GE AP (2000) to increase participation/progression of women in Queen’s were inclusive so that measures supporting women e.g. family policies, flexible working etc. would be accessible to men.

The strategy has been to initiate pilot projects, evaluate effectiveness and impact, innovate to improve, communicate, and embed within structures/culture (Figure 38).



Figure 38. Strategy to develop, innovate and embed good practice.

Where practice is rated ‘good’ through evaluations, surveys, focus groups and data analysis, this is (1) replicated internally and (2) shared externally.

3.1.1 A Mentoring Mindset

Since the first QGI Mentoring Programme, 2002, Queen’s now has a Mentoring Mindset based on learning that ‘mentoring works’. New programmes develop on a needs-basis, informed through dialogue (Figure 39). We extend this Mindset externally e.g. to SistersIN initiative for schoolgirls (Section 3.2.2 and Actions H1.1-1.3).

- Annual QGI Academic and Professional Services Mentoring Programmes (Section 2.2).
- Mentoring Schemes in Schools for staff/students.
- Postdoctoral Development Centre group mentoring.
- Fellows Academy.
- REC Mentoring (2023).

‘...a positive experience, inspiring and the motivation I need at this point in my career’.
QGI Mentee

A pilot REC Reverse-Mentoring Programme ran in 2022-23 with BAME colleagues acting as Mentors for senior leaders (Figure 40). Evaluations were very positive with requests that the programme be extended. Furthermore, a new Student-Staff Reverse-Mentoring Programme is underway, based on this pilot.



[Image cropped for publication]

Figure 39. Mentoring and Coaching Programmes at Queen’s, including QGI Mentoring Programmes for Women and the Staff Coaching Service.

Queen’s Celebrates Race Equality Reverse Mentoring Pilot
31 January, 2023

“I also joined the pilot of the Reverse Mentoring Programme ... and was the mentor of a senior management colleague ...

This was a very valuable opportunity to share, understand and learn from each other in terms of some of the challenges encountered by early-career academics from a minority ethnic background.”

REC Reverse Mentoring (Mentor)

Figure 40. Mentor (left) and Mentee (right) at the REC Reverse Mentoring Celebration Event (2023). Testimonial from a REC Reverse Mentoring Mentor.

Following an individual request for Coaching following return from maternity leave, coaching was offered to maternity returners in 2023, and is available on request for colleagues returning from long-term leave ([Action D2.6, D2.7](#)).

3.1.2 Equality and Research Culture

Equality underpins Queen’s Research mission. Our 15 School Swan APs drive GE ‘locally’ implementing actions that support researchers. Research culture and environment was assessed in REF2021, Queen’s REF EDI committee ensured transparent, fair REF submissions.

Our Research Culture Action Plan (RCAP) aims to foster a “creative, inclusive and collaborative” research culture including a Research Culture Seed Fund. This supported establishment of the African Scholars Research Network.

RCAP’s ([Figure 41](#)) strategic priorities cross-cut EDI and research quality/ambition. It was shared across UK/Ireland through co-hosting events, and panel presentations e.g. Royal Irish Academy ‘Ensuring Inclusive Research Careers’.

RCAP was cited by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, P&C Strategy, as best practice. An all-island Research Culture Conference is scheduled for 2024 funded through Wellcome Trust Research Culture award ([Action H4.1](#)).

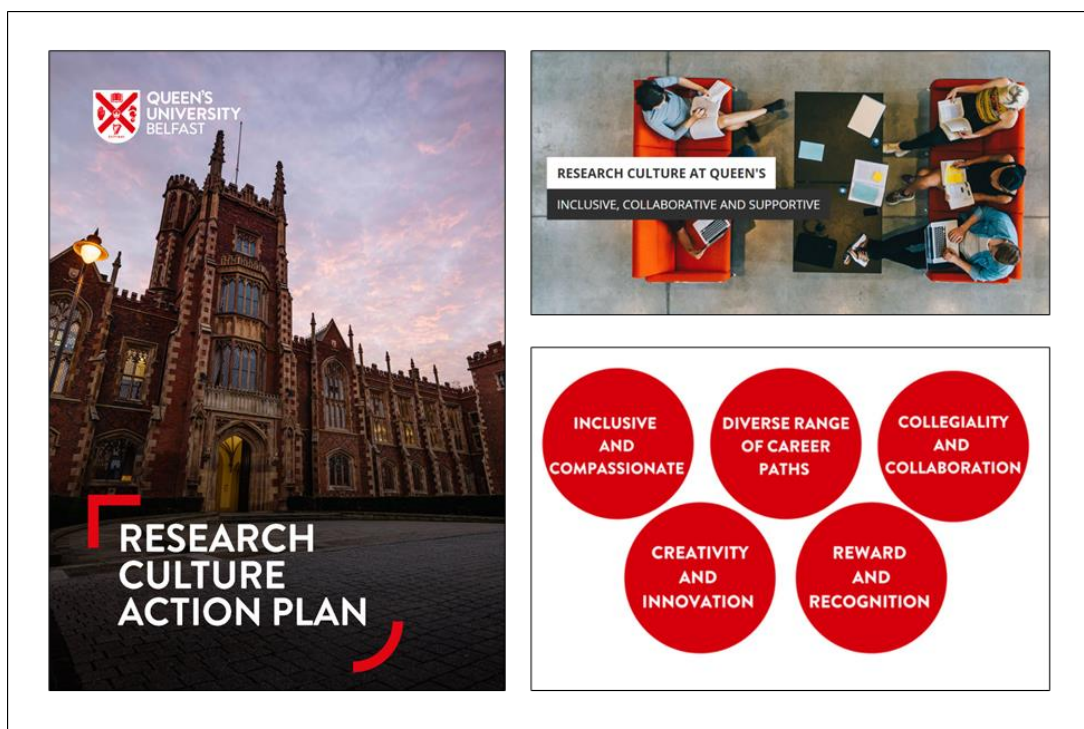


Figure 41. Queen’s Research Culture Action Plan (2021) and the five strategic priorities.

Recognising financial challenges faced by parents/carers when presenting at external research conferences, the **Carers’ Conference Support Fund** was launched (late 2023) after

pandemic-related delays. Staff can apply for up to £500 annually representing new financial investment in people by Queen's.

3.1.3 Wraparound support for students

Queen's continuously improves support for students. The Student Centre has extensive EDI and wellbeing provision and assistance for extenuating circumstances (Figure 42).

Students report positive experiences with Counselling Services which provide prompt care, bridging the gap until GP-led services are available.

The 'Report & Support' mechanism enables anonymous reporting of incidents or confidential, reporting with informal and formal structures for follow-up and action.

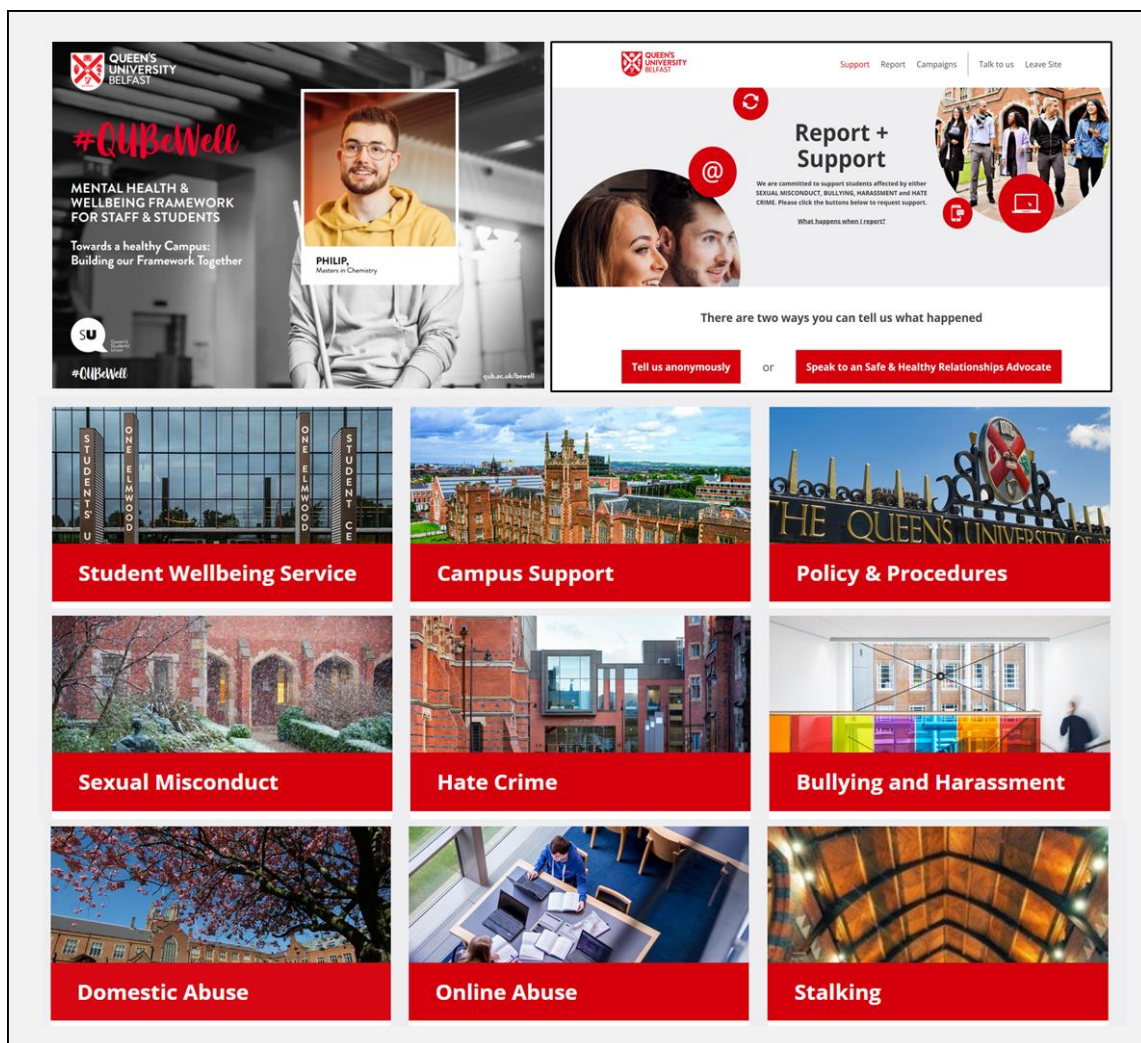


Figure 42. University Student Centre – Support and Wellbeing.

The Swan Champions network instigated pilots to address **Period Poverty**. Free products were placed in toilets in student locations, initially funded through School Swan budgets. Students welcomed the free provision. Subsequently, a grant from the Department for Economy NI, funded provision in the Students' Union, Library and Graduate School.

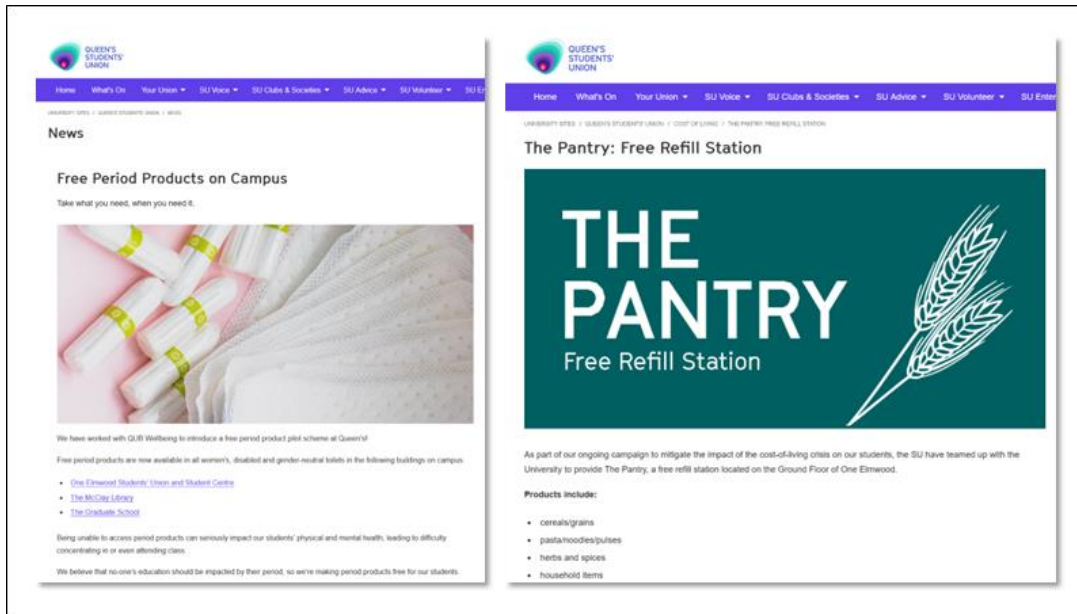


Figure 43. Provision of free Period Products for students in Queen’s.

Provision is now mainstreamed through the Estates Directorate (Figure 43). Free hygiene and food products are available in ‘The Pantry’ refill station in the new Students’ Union (Figure 43, 44).



Figure 44. Students’ Union President, Beth Elder (second from right) and Congressman Joseph Kennedy III at the opening of One Elmwood (Student Centre and Student’ Union).

We are alleviating financial pressures through food giveaways, setting up a Queen’s community fridge and Student Donation Station (Actions G7.1 – G7.3).

Trans or gender-curious students can avail of support at any stage of their transition journey. Counselling services through Student Wellbeing, in addition to one-to-one support enable transition while studying at Queen's (Section 4.1.3).

3.1.4 Facilities for families

Some students/staff require additional support as parents. Facilities for 'Nursing mothers and parents' was expanded with rooms in ten campus locations and a webpage for location/how to access. Additive language was adopted to be inclusive of all gender identities, replacing the former title of 'Breastfeeding rooms'.

Queen's extended its partnership with the Public Health Agency 'Breastfeeding Welcome Here' (Figure 45) to spotlight eleven public spaces/foyers where staff, students and visitors are welcome to breastfeed.

"Having the facility to express milk for my baby has made the transition back to work much easier than I had initially anticipated."

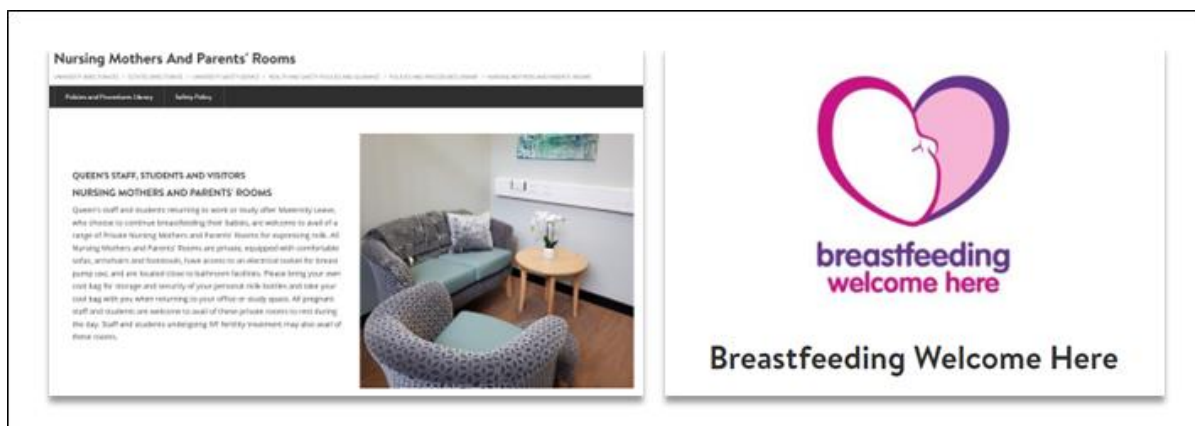


Figure 45. Queen's has expanded facilities for Nursing Mothers and Parents and extended its partnership with Public Health Agency /Breastfeeding Welcome Here' scheme.

Queen's childcare facilities opened in 1970 and today offer Creche, Out-of-School Club and Summer Sports Scheme (Figure 46). Special rates are available to student parents. > 50% of families using the Creche are international; staff provide advice/guidance on GP services, schools, family activities and culture. The Creche provides free laundry facilities to families to alleviate financial pressures.

"My daughter has had a wonderful time at Queen's childcare.... I would like to personally thank all your extremely dedicated and professional staff, who have cared for her so well."

[Image redacted for publication]

Figure 46. Queen’s Childcare facilities include a Creche, Out-of-School Club and a Summer Sports Scheme.

Queen’s is investing in new accommodation for families, building 152 apartments for students/staff with dependants (Action B2.1 – B2.3).

3.1.5 Expansion of training/awareness for GE, EDI and Intersectional approaches

Queen’s continues to expand GE, EDI and intersectional training and awareness programmes, also updating content in EDI training modules.

ABT was introduced through 11 externally-facilitated sessions (>200 attendees 2020-22) and is ongoing (Action A5.1). Sessions were co-created with staff/students designing scenarios that addressed protected characteristics (Section 4.1.3).

Imposter syndrome awareness workshops are offered twice annually. To date 95 colleagues have participated (Figure 47).



Figure 47. Feedback from Active Bystander Training and Imposter Syndrome Workshops.

“There were so many people attending the course that felt the same as me, it was comforting to know I wasn't on my own. I feel so much more confident about how I will approach situations that previously I found stressful and would avoid.”

Imposter Syndrome Workshop Participant.

The **intersection of gender and ethnicity** was selected as the primary focus in the 2019 AP. Staff are aware of this intersectional approach. In QES 2023, 76% agreed GE is embedded at Queen's and 72% agreed ethnicity/race equality is embedded ([Section 4.1](#)), ([Q5b](#), [Q5c](#), [Appendix 1](#)).

Intersectional work is synergised through Queen's REC programme:

- REC-EDI 5 (2023) five actions, five months is continuing ([Action B3.1](#)).
- REC Reverse Mentoring Pilot (2022).
- REC Mentoring (2023).
- ABT for students (intersectional approach) (2023).
- 'Race Equality in Higher Education' Conference (Sep 2023).
- Digital publication by iRISE and QGI for IWD 2022 to highlight under-represented women who work/study at Queen's ([Figure 48](#)).
- REC Podcasts featuring REC Champions and BAME students/staff ([Figure 49](#)).

Celebrating women at Queen's

8 March, 2022

For International Women's Day 2022, iRIse and QGI collaborated to shine a light on some of the brilliant women working and studying at Queen's.



For International Women's Day 2022, iRIse and the QGI team are shining a light on women who work and study at Queen's, particularly those women whose voices have been underrepresented in the past. Hear from a few of our inspirational [colleagues and students who share their stories](#), suggestions for how we can #BreakTheBias as well as the women they look up to.

Figure 48. Celebration of women who work and study at Queen's, IWD 2022.

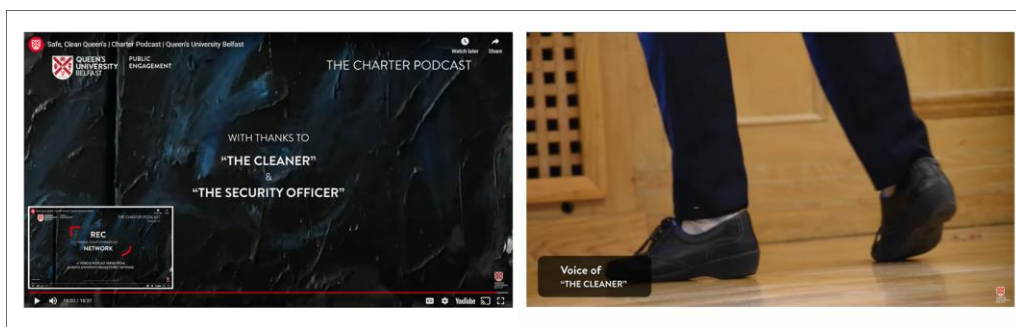


Figure 49. The Podcast Series #20 featuring ‘The Cleaner’ and ‘The Security Officer’ who anonymously shared their experiences of working in Queen’s and life in NI.

Queen's academics created student EDI workshops, to Queen’s students and visiting students in interactive sessions, including consortia-wide EU Horizon Marie-Curie PhD networks (Figure 50).

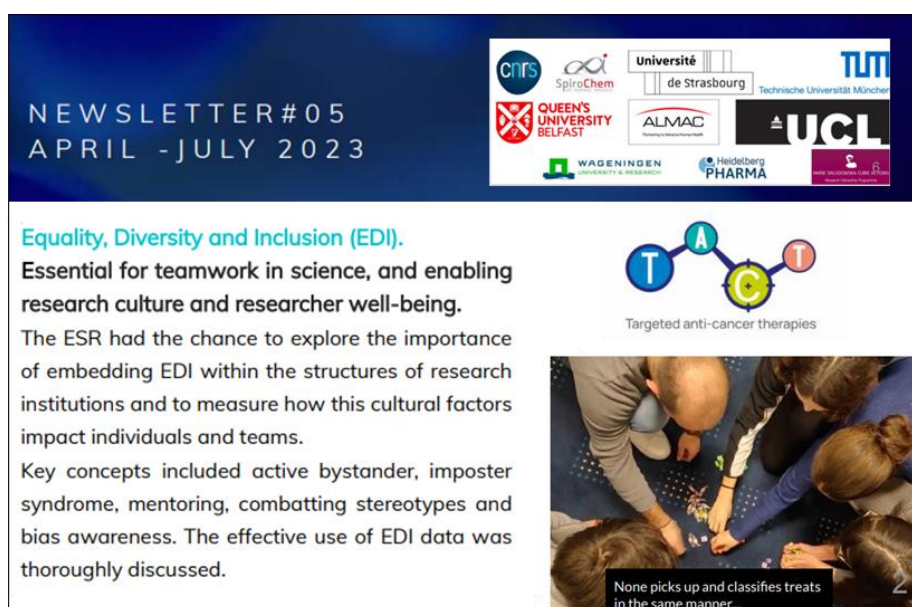


Figure 50. Extract from report in the Marie-Curie PhD ‘TACT’ Network Newsletter on EDI training at Queen’s.

3.1.6 Progressive Working Patterns and Wellbeing

Queen’s working patterns have holistic consideration of wellbeing (Actions B8.1 – B8.2 and B9.1 – B9.2). Enhanced Formal Flexible-Working Policy enables staff to apply for part-time working, adjusted hours etc. from day one (beyond legal entitlement >26 weeks).

The QGI ‘Engendering Solutions’ Project recommended that flexible-working during lockdowns, and trust in employees, should be extended on return-to-campus. The subsequent Agile Working pilot (Figure 51) created guidance and toolkits for colleagues and line managers. A Pulse Survey, 79% (84%F, 71%M) reported Agile Working positively

impacted wellbeing with 76% (78%F, 71%M) agreeing the approach works well. Agile working enables start/finish times to flex e.g. to accommodate school drop-offs, and flexibility during the day where appropriate.

Many colleagues avail of hybrid-working e.g. 60% or 80% on campus-working. This is transformative for many PS colleagues.

We renewed our commitment to core committee meeting hours of 10am-4pm, where possible.

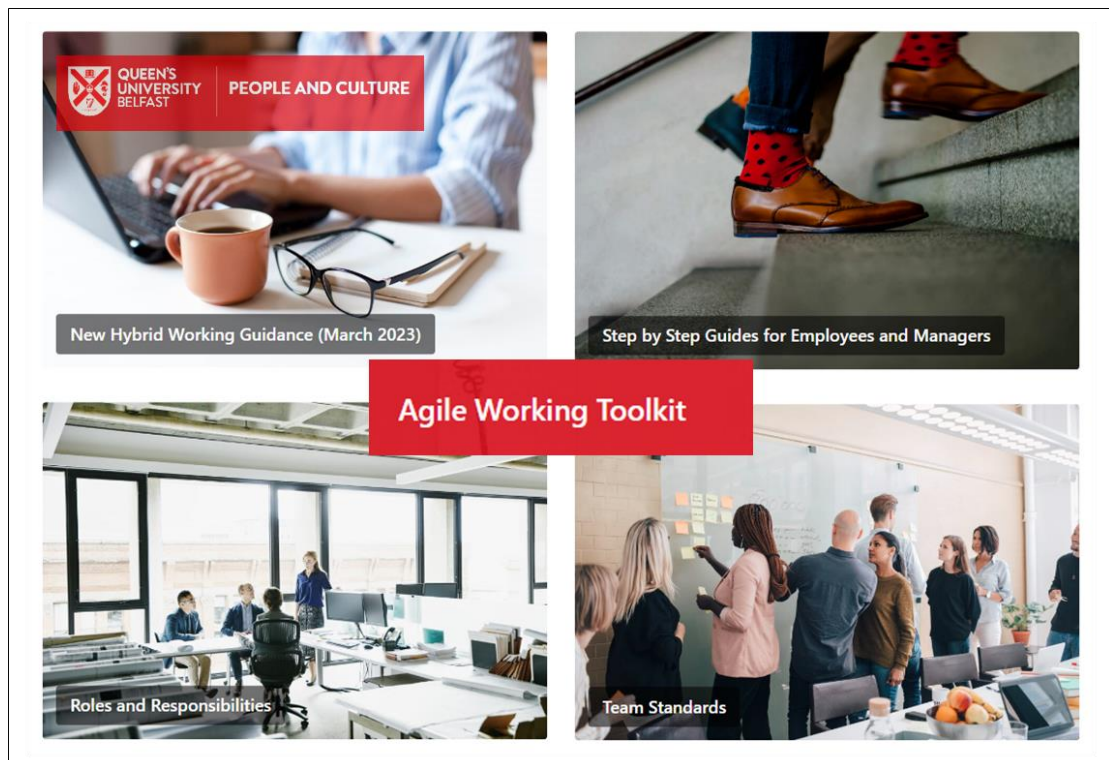



Figure 51. Guidance on Agile Working including information on Hybrid Working at Queen's

Innovative policy development was demonstrated during laboratory re-entry during Covid-19. Swan Champions, QGI and DIU called out risk of inequality as only 50% of researchers could be accommodated at any time due to social-distancing (Figure 52).

Prioritisation was reframed through EDI lenses, not seniority or level/source of funding. Individual circumstances informed allocation of laboratory-slots including wellbeing and protected characteristics.



Staging of Re-Entry Process

Stage 1 (A and B will run concurrently)
A – ESTATES/SAFETY SERVICES, OPERATIONAL RECOVERY TEAM & LOCAL RECOVERY TEAM LEAD: Signage / taping of access points, core facilities and labs – guidance on volumes per shared lab/room and directions of flow and room access needs – provision of online training for physical distancing.
B – LOCL RECOVERY TEAM: For each laboratory area PIs managing staff who use it should work together with their teams (technicians, senior contract researchers) to generate a framework for research activity under physical distancing, considering all key principles with staff/student safety at the core. Typically, Local Recovery teams would encompass PI/Pis, senior technician, senior contract researcher.

Stage 2
LINE MANAGER (or DESIGNEE) & DOMAIN ATHENA SWAN CHAMPION: Approval or otherwise of plans for each area/group of labs. Within the approval process input from the ATHENA SWAN Champion will be sought to ensure plans are balanced with respect to EDI with a primary consideration being any researchers not accommodated by planned return schedules.

Stage 3
RESEARCHERS & ASSOCIATED TECHNICAL STAFF: constant monitoring of safety/research delivery in line with agreed protocols.

Stage 4
SCHOOL SAFETY TEAMS: Regular checks to ensure safety expectations are optimal and being adhered to.

Appendix 1: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

- i. In developing a plan for return to work on campus, careful consideration must be given to an individual's personal circumstances (this includes but is not limited to their gender identity, age, race/ethnicity, disability or pre-existing conditions, pregnancy status, dependant or other caring responsibilities including home schooling etc); other factors may also be material i.e. whether they are in a partnership, relationship or married to a key worker, which may impact upon any childcare / schooling arrangements at home.
- ii. For staff with disabilities and/or long term conditions, it will be important to agree upon any reasonable adjustments (e.g. work patterns, hours of work, ability to travel, place of work, equipment required etc) which may be required to allow them to work safely and effectively on campus. This may involve revisiting any reasonable adjustments already in place for the individual to ensure they are still appropriate.

Protected Characteristics (including race/ethnicity, age, pregnancy, disability and dependant status, LGBT+ etc)

Figure 52. Queen’s guidance to Covid-19 Operational Recovery Teams on return to laboratories with Swan and EDI focus.

‘Engendering Solutions’ opened the CP-REF (Covid Pandemic-Research Enabling Fund) underpinned by the Department for Economy NI. It supported academics’ research who had been particularly impacted by lockdowns (e.g. caring roles, homeschooling). £437K was allocated to 43 applicants (34F, 9M) and 5 groups.

It also recommended a Covid-19 impact section in Academic Progression application forms, and ‘Covid-19’ memory in subsequent years to recognise medium-term impact on academic productivity.

Our sector-leading Menopause policy was developed in collaboration with medical professionals specialising in women’s health, women, trans staff, LGBTQ+ networks and HRBPs. This was reported on BBC News NI, BBC Radio, local and national media (Figure 53).

We are now reference resource for other organisations with regular requests for our innovative templates, toolkits and expertise. Queen’s staff were invited to share menopause policy at University College Dublin’s menopause conference; Diversity Mark NI and TLT, LLP menopause event; Business in the Community, and NI businesses. Our academic GPs deliver lectures and training to multiple NI organisations.



Figure 53. Launch of the new Menopause Policy was widely reported in the media. Photograph shows Clinical Academic GPs Dr Johnston (second from right) and Dr Reid (right) who deliver menopause awareness sessions in Queen's.

3.2 Supporting others to improve

Since 2000, Queen’s strategy is to work with external organisations to (1) support their GE work, (2) build networks to share learning, and (3) be better together, ‘moving the dial’. Our reach is on the island of Ireland, the UK and worldwide (Figure 54). Through events, workshops, conferences, or forging key partnerships, our sector-leading work aims to collectively advance GE (UN Sustainable Development Goal #5).

3.2.1 We Support the Swan Charter and GE in Higher Education

We support Swan nationally and internationally. Two female Professors are **Swan Panel Chairs** and several Champions are/were **panellists**. Swan Champions serve as Critical Friends for many Departmental/Institutional Swan applications across Ireland-UK.

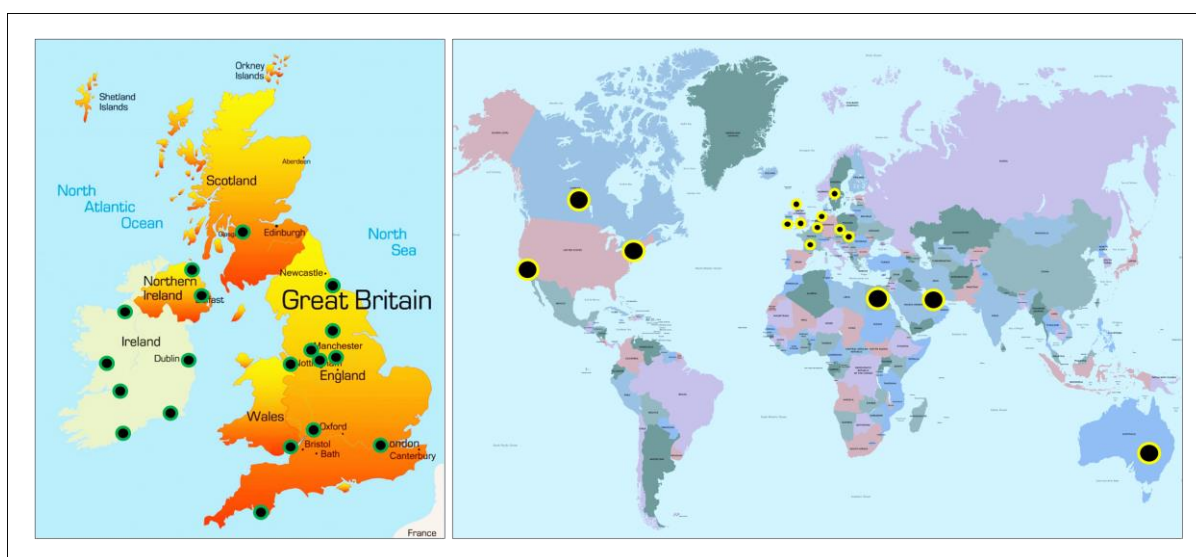


Figure 54. Global reach of Queen’s GE Programme highlighting influence in UK, Republic of Ireland and across the world.

Selected activity from 100s of instances (over 20 years) is given below. We are delighted to have supported many institutions, and their Departments, as they developed EDI structures that advanced GE, evidenced through Swan successes.

- Invited by **Trinity College Dublin** (2019) (Institutional Silver 2023) and **University of Galway** (2023), to share how we established an effective Swan Champions Network. Networks are now established in Trinity and Galway.
- **Royal College of Surgeons (Dublin)** invited us to meet with senior staff to share embedding of Swan (Bronze 2021, 2023).
- **Technology University Dublin** invited us to a Roundtable with Senior Academics to share challenges and impacts of our Swan programme (2019) (Institutional Bronze, 2022).

- Invited presentation on Queen’s 20-year successful GE/Swan programme to **Scottish Funding Council**, (Scottish FE/HE Swan and EDI leads (2020).
- Queen’s established a UK-Ireland **Nursing & Midwifery (N&M)** Swan Champions Network, 2019 with 23 Universities across 5 regions. The All-Ireland N&M Swan network, set up by Queen’s, is impactful on the island, supporting 4 N&M Departments to achieve Bronze. Its 3rd meeting was held in Belfast, September 2023.
- Advance HE invited Queen’s to contribute a Case Study for **Egyptian Universities**, sharing successful innovations from Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering to recruit more women into STEM (2022).
- **University of Zurich** visited Queen’s to learn about our Swan programme impacts. We hosted the Deputy Head of Office for GE and Diversity/Co-chair of LERU policy group (2022).
- We presented impacts of our 20-year GE/Swan programme to **Canada DIMENSIONS** organised by Swan Ireland (2021).

Chemistry and Chemical Engineering partnered with the **Royal Society of Chemistry** delivering an all-island Swan/GE conference (May 2023). (Figure 55, 56). Queen’s subsequently hosted the first meeting of the **All-Ireland Chemical Sciences Swan committee**.



Figure 55. All-island Athena/Swan GE Conference in Chemical Sciences representing ten institutions.

[Image redacted for publication]

Figure 56. All-island Athena/Swan GE Conference in Chemical Sciences [names redacted for publication].

3.2.2 We Inspire Future Female Leaders

We brought business leaders, politicians, academics and students together for a 'Women in Leadership - In conversation with Ambassador Jane Hartley' event at Queen's, chaired by QGI Director. This public event emphasised the importance of having Mentors, and Mentoring future leaders. The essential role of women leaders in delivering inclusive economic growth, including young female entrepreneurs, was examined (Figure 57).



Figure 57. Women in Leadership – In conversation with Ambassador Jane Hartley, US Ambassador to the UK (October 2023)

The realities of public service were interrogated in our ‘Reflections on Female Leadership’ event with First and Deputy First Ministers (NI Assembly) and the head of the NI Civil Service (May 2022). The event called out online bullying and harassment of female politicians/journalists and proposed solutions and support measures (Figure 58).



Figure 58. Live online event on Leadership and Public Service with the First and Deputy First Ministers, (NI Assembly) and Head of the NI Civil Service.

International perspectives on the societal benefits of women’s leadership were given by prominent women leaders at the Good Friday Agreement Conference (Figure 59).



Figure 59. In Conversation with... Professor Dame Louise Richardson, Secretary Hillary Clinton and Ambassador Melanne Verveer, on women’s leadership (2023).

Empowering young, talented women in working life and the professions is essential. Queen's sponsors the '**Women in Tech' Young Women's Network** by Women in Business and supports early-career staff to participate - a Queen's data analyst hosted the 2023 conference and was a panel speaker (Figure 60).

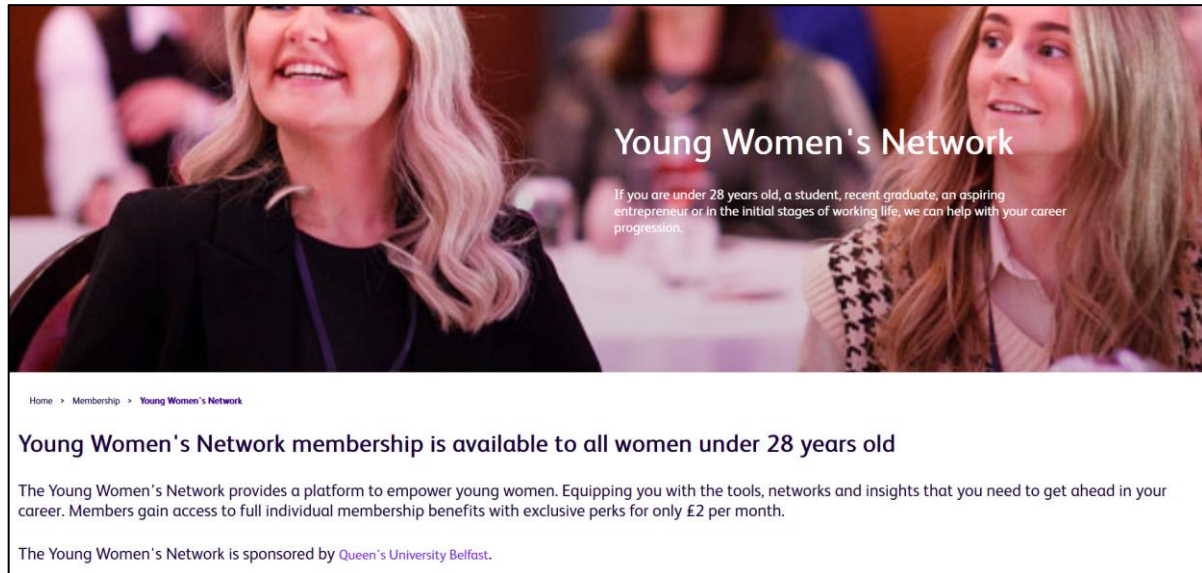


Figure 60. Queen's sponsors the Women in Business, Young Women's Network, supporting early-career women in NI to develop their leadership.

Queen's supports schools as they inspire schoolgirls' career planning. A female Professor is a Board Member of **SistersIN**, an exciting initiative, founded by a local School Principal to enable and empower schoolgirls to become future leaders (Figure 61).

Based on our 20 years of experience running successful Mentoring Programmes, QGI Academic Mentoring Champions delivered training to the 500 strong NI network of new Mentors (Oct 2023) (Action H1.1).

"On behalf of the entire SistersIN team, I want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to Dr Susan Clarke, Dr Clare Moran, and Professor Karen Morrison for their outstanding work in organising, facilitating, and providing invaluable guidance and insights during today's online mentoring training session."

We are providing Job Shadowing (Action H1.3) and holding a 'Female Future Leaders' event for 500 girls in 2024.

[Image cropped from original for publication]

Queen's hosts SistersIN event to enable and empower female pupils to become future leaders

20 January, 2023

Pupils from Assumption Grammar School, Glenlola Collegiate, St Cecilia's College, St Ronan's College, Strathearn School and Victoria College joined Queen's University for a "SistersIN" event this week.

Figure 61. Queen's hosted a SistersIN event with female school pupils, January 2023.

We strengthened international partnerships with UMass Lowell (USA) through reciprocal visits and public recognition for Chancellor Professor Julie Chen's GE work with an honorary degree.

We are launching a new joint leadership programme in 2024; Phase 1 and Phase 2 will focus on early-career female academics and BAME colleagues respectively ([Action H3.5](#)).

We are co-leading establishment of a new global women's network of female academics from the Harvard Macy Institute's 'Leading Innovations in Healthcare Education Programme'.

Queen’s programmes supporting students/staff to develop business ideas and launch spinouts include bespoke programmes for female students (Figure 62). InQUBate, supporting student and graduate innovation with focus on female entrepreneurs, launched 2023 (Actions G5.1 – G5.2).

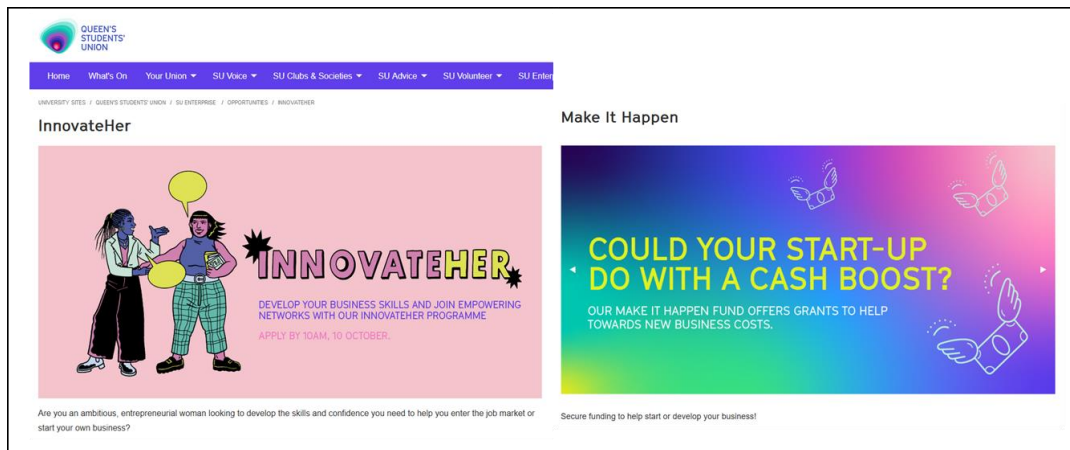


Figure 62. Support for (female) students’ business and entrepreneurship.

Events highlighting female entrepreneurs, at Belfast’s W5 Science Discovery Centre, and a Masterclass with Innovators from Queen’s and Ulster University were well-subscribed and positively evaluated (Figure 63).

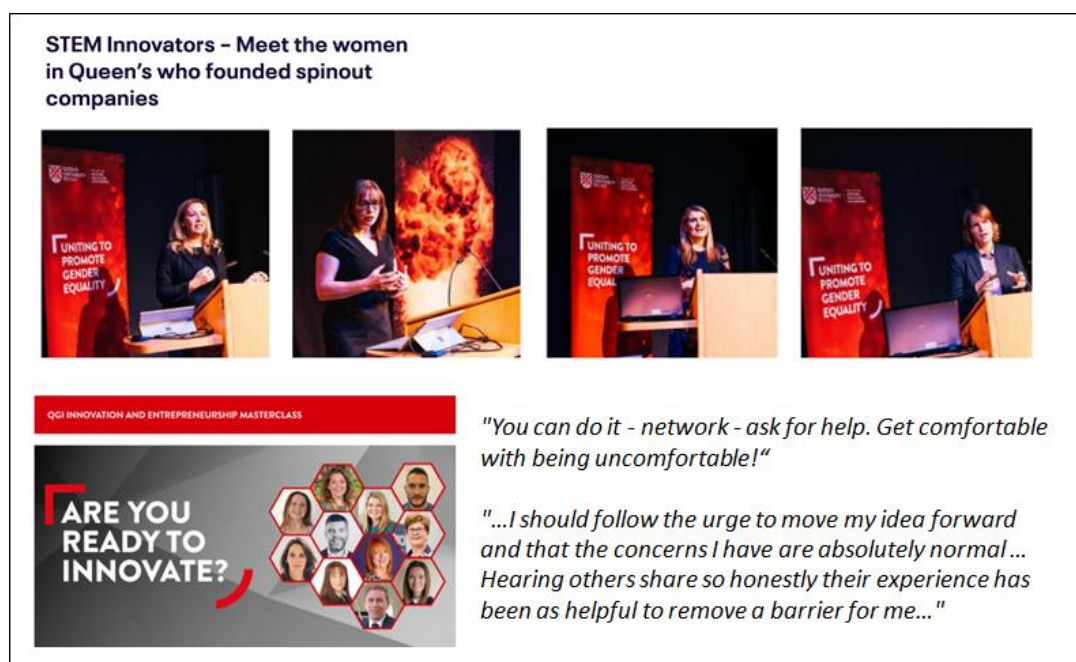


Figure 63. The ‘STEM Innovators’ showcase and ‘Are you Ready to Innovate?’ entrepreneurship masterclass highlighting female founders and innovators.

We created resources, based on our academic research, including guidance, toolkits and methodologies for GE and inclusion in HE. Outcomes from the EPSRC-funded ‘Inclusion

Matters' project at Queen's (Psychology) and the EU FP7 SAGE Consortium (co-led by Queen's) continue to be adopted by others (Figure 64).

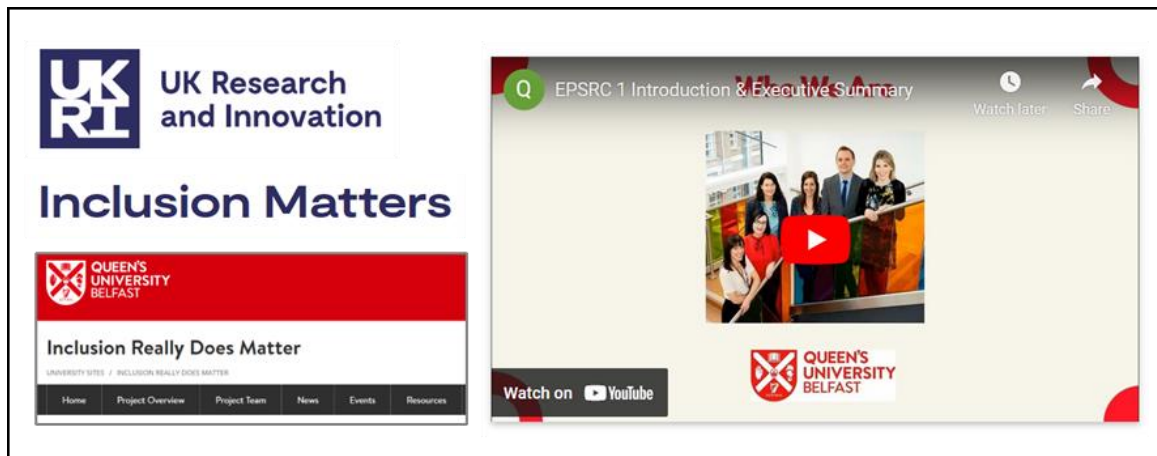


Figure 64. 'Inclusion Really Does Matter' EPSRC funded project (£524K) in Queen's; (right) video from the GE open-access Resources generated by the project.

3.2.3 We support the External Sector

We work with the NI external sector to progress GE (>20 years) through:

- Board/panel memberships.
- Speakers at public/private sector events.
- GE consultants/advisors e.g. Policing, NHS.
- Sponsor Women in Business NI Chair's Lunch 2023.
- Sponsor awards e.g. 'Advancing Diversity' Award, Women In Business NI 2023.

GE/EDI is increasingly a key priority for public organisations and businesses in NI.

As recognised GE experts, Queen's were on the Steering Group that established Diversity Mark NI, an awarding body of Diversity Mark accreditation. This accreditation recognises organisational commitment to diversity&inclusion and provides a framework to support organisational equality work. As a Founding Member, Queen's presented at the 5th anniversary event with business leaders, sharing how we identified and dismantled barriers to drive GE.

Since 2017, it has grown to 173 signatories with 19 NI companies awarded Silver. Queen's received a Diversity Mark Silver Award for gender, race and disability equality programmes, 2021 (Figure 65).

Examples of Recognition:

- QGI Director 'Highly Commended' in Women in Business 'Outstanding Leadership&Management' awards (2023).
- ISAT member, former Swan Champion finalist in Women in Tech Awards 'Male Advocate of the Year' (2023).

- DIU shortlisted in Business in the Community Responsible Business Awards (2023) for 'Diversity&Inclusion' and 'Staff Wellbeing'.



Figure 65. Queen's awarded Silver Diversity Mark (NI) Accreditation (December 2021)

We brought together academic and external sectors (Deloitte, NHS, NI Civil Service, BT) for the **Future of Work** conference (Jan 2022) to explore hybrid/remote working modalities and how this would advance/impact GE (Figure 66). We shared our innovative Agile Working pilot with delegates, now embedded at Queen's.

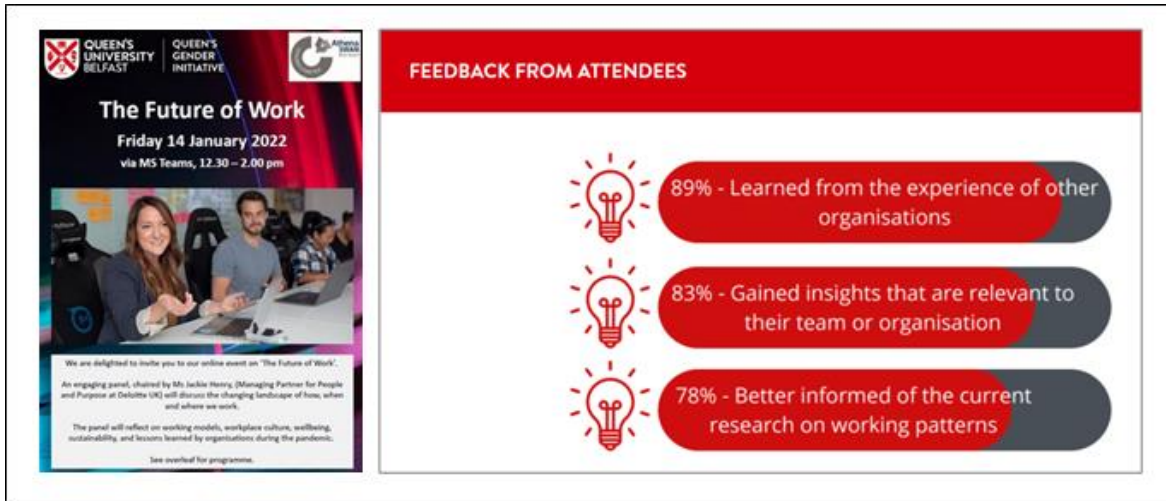


Figure 66. The 'Future of Work' Conference in Queen's, exploring innovative post-pandemic working patterns

Section 4: An Assessment of the University's GE context

4.1 Culture, inclusion and belonging

4.1.1 Sensing and shaping our culture

Queen's culture is inclusive (75% agree) where staff have a strong sense of belonging (73%, similar F/M, QES 2023, Q7a, Q2a, Appendix 1). In the 2023 Staff Survey, 70% agree Queen's is a great place to work. In QES, staff agreed (73% overall) they are treated equally by colleagues irrespective of their sex/ethnicity (Q3, Appendix 1).

We noted higher disagreement by women, and BAME colleagues. Many BAME women did not have the same sense of belonging (61% agreed) and had lower agreement about an inclusive culture (50%). A focus group with BAME women explored issues and informed actions, Section 4.2, Priority B.

“Being a female early-career researcher and educator with an Asian background, I had to navigate and adapt to differences in both social and academic cultures perhaps to a greater extent than my counterparts. However, the anxious feeling soon subsided as I was very fortunate to work in a University which strongly promotes GE and creates an environment with plenty of opportunities to nurture early-career researchers...”

Our culture has been shaped by EDI programmes. Staff agree that GE (76% overall) and Race/Ethnicity equality (72% overall) are embedded (Q5c, Q5b, Appendix 1). Again, BAME women had lower agreement.

EDI/GE is a standing item on committee agendas. It is not a 'nothing to report' item, or only addressed in statutory reporting. It is actively practiced across Education, Research and Societal Impact.

Increasingly, people call out inadequate representation, emphasise inclusivity and connect with EDI leads for advice/guidance.

Staff expect engagement will bring about change. Staff Surveys (2016, 2019) and the 'Engendering Solutions' Survey have built trust. Staff provide honest feedback about life at work. Importantly, Queen's communicates Survey findings and the recommendations.

Post-survey changes impacted GE:

- Staff Forum (Figure 67).
- People First Strategy, Core Values, Staff Charter.
- PDR replacing Appraisal.
- New Academic Progression process.
- STAR Recognition Scheme for exceptional performance (5,055 awards, 5 years, 63%F).
- New WAM guidance (including tariff hours for Swan Champions (Section 1.3.4)).
- Agile and hybrid working.



Figure 67. The Staff Forum brings together representatives from every School and Directorate and provides voice to staff and collaborative working to bring about positive change.

The 2019 Staff Survey and QES raised the issue of a minority of colleagues exhibiting poor behaviours. Staff confirmed they **know what to do** if they witness/experience such behaviours (77% agreed, [Q12b, Appendix 1](#)) with gendered difference in relation to feeling **able to challenge** (55%F, 70%M, [Q12c, Appendix 1](#)). We have policies for Grievance, B&H, disciplinary and capability; however, processes take too long, policies are not joined up and there is limited use of mediation/informal resolution.

Embedding the Staff Charter to encourage better behaviours, and reviewing policy/practices (grievance, bullying/harassment etc) so that issues are promptly addressed, are in [Priority B Actions](#).

Bullying/harassment training runs 3 times annually. Anti-harassment advisors provide confidential information/support - staff are helped to decide on next steps.

ABT sessions help staff recognise, call out and decide on the best way to react in real time, and steps to take afterwards. Staff valued the learning/toolkit around 5Ds of active bystander intervention; this was provided in bookmark format ([Figure 68, Section 3.1.5 and 4.1.3; Action A5.1](#)).

“The 5Ds toolkit will be very useful moving forward.” ABT session participant



Figure 68: The 5Ds of active bystander intervention provided as a bookmark with sources of support on the other side.

Queen’s culture is shaped by engagement and is responsive to changing circumstances. After the Covid-19 pandemic, attitudes to work and wellbeing significantly shifted. Rather than considering staff as employees, we regard them as people with life within and outside work. ‘Work-life-balance’ is now understood as ‘healthy whole-life balance’.

For the first time, guidance was issued to prevent an always-on culture/burnout – this remains in place. Colleagues are now aware of others’ home responsibilities and the benefits of flexible working approaches. People bring their whole selves to work - professional expertise, health, life-stage, caring roles, wellbeing.

4.1.2 Supporting colleagues, minimising gendered impacts

Our portfolio of family/wellbeing policies and practices minimise gendered impacts on development/progression. For more than a decade, Queen’s Maternity Fund finances maternity cover so business continues during leave, without adding to the workload of colleagues. For

academics, maternity cover can help research activity continue to a degree while on leave.

To mitigate the 'maternity penalty' on academic CVs where productivity is unavoidably impacted, Queen's offers a teaching-free semester for maternity-returners to build research traction. This is widely-welcomed and diminishes stress.

Enhanced maternity leave, enhanced paternity leave, adoptive leave, dependants leave, shared parental leave and agile/flexible/part-time working practices support colleagues during specific circumstances. Opportunity to avail of coaching following return from maternity leave or from long-term absence builds confidence at an uncertain time.

" I thought you might be interested to see how the benefits of all the good initiatives ... like flexible working, help families like ours who have children with additional needs."
(correspondence to QGI from a member of staff)

Queen's is a supportive employer that delivers when people need it. Our HRBPs and line managers meet with colleagues to understand what support is needed, whether through Occupational Health, Disability adjustments or Wellbeing provision. Similar supports are in place for students through Advisors, Tutors, Disability officers, Wellbeing Services and Chaplaincies.

"But one of the things that I actually found was, I wanted to get some external advice, or actually get some kind of counselling, ... my employer really stepped in and was absolutely phenomenal ...there were long waiting lists elsewhere, ... the university put this in for me literally at 24 hours' notice and that was actually quite transformational for me."

Professor, living with blood cancer tells his story (from YouTube video).

Staff feedback led to new policies on Menopause, and Fertility Treatment Leave ([Sections 1.4.3 and 3.1.6](#)). These recognise that at particular times, colleagues need different support measures. As 55% of staff are women, these policies and a forthcoming policy for pregnancy loss may help a significant proportion of staff. These policies are fully inclusive of trans and non-binary people. ([Action B9.1, B9.2](#)).

Queen's brought these sensitive and 'taboo' issues into conversations. Students have been inspired to lead innovative projects e.g. Feminatch, a student-led startup ([Figure 69](#)).



Figure 69. Kate Muir (Author and Menopause Expert) with Feminatech Co-Founders (both MEng students) at the Annual Clare Macmahon lecture, 2023.

Queen’s new Carers’ Network ‘CONNECT’ supports staff who care for dependants. CONNECT brings people together as a peer-support group giving time/space to rest and reflect (Figure 70).

While men and women serve as Carers, more women have this responsibility. Introduction of the Carers’ Passport was transformative; however, feedback and limited uptake suggests our new Agile working practices provides the flexibility that Carers need.



Figure 70. Queen’s Carers’ Network ‘CONNECT’ supports staff who care for others.

Some students serve as Carers. Student Officers reviewed the Staff Carers' Passport and are bringing forward a Student Carers' Passport. This will assist conversations around the challenges of learning/training while also having caring responsibilities. Importantly, it will frame discussion of appropriate support measures, understanding and adjustments ([Action G10.1](#)).

4.1.3 Inclusivity of culture, practices and policies for staff/students of all gender identities

As understanding of gender identities increases, culture is evolving to be welcoming and inclusive of everyone. We recognise that while data suggests low numbers of non-binary, trans and gender-nonconforming staff/students, many may have not yet chosen to disclose.

To ensure inclusion, P&C worked with PRISM, following feedback, to ensure University systems are inclusive of non-binary identities relating to employee gender through three options including 'Prefer to Self-Describe' with a free-text box.

Staff/students choose to share preferred pronouns in email signatures, correspondence, conversation etc. This is regarded as a supportive statement for non-binary/trans people.

LGBTQ+, Transgender Awareness, and non-binary training sessions (3 each annually) are delivered with local LGBTQ+-organisations (135 attendees). 100% attendees would recommend to colleagues - 100% agreed they now felt more prepared to support trans people at work.

“Excellent training to help understand terms and how it impacts on the person.”

These sessions increased understanding of inequalities, barriers to accessing support/services, clarity on appropriate language, and how Queen's can support trans/non-binary people ([Figure 71](#)). A new web-resource (2021) with guidance/FAQ supports the Trans Inclusion Policy with practical support and processes for staff/students at any stage in their transition journey.



Figure 71. PRISM LGBTQ+ network at Queen's and extract from guidance 'Supporting non-binary staff and students').

An LGBTQ+ Allies network was established (Figure 72) with Allies receiving training from Stonewall to identify practical ways to exhibit inclusivity, creating a safe and supportive environment for LGBTQ+ staff/students.

Following consultation during planning of the Student Centre (2022), the building has gender-neutral, single-sex, and accessible toilets.

Celebrating Diversity calendar (2022) included key dates related to trans visibility and inclusion, including International Transgender Day of Visibility and IDAHO: International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia.

LGBT+ Allies

The University Is Keen To Develop An Informal Network Of LGBT+ Allies At The University

What is an Ally? An Ally is a (typically) straight and/or cis person who supports members of the LGBT community. In a workplace, good allies recognise that LGBT people can perform better if they can be themselves, and that everyone benefits from inclusion, and so allies use their role within an organisation to create a culture where this can happen.

- Trans Equality Policy
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Sources of Support
- Asking about Sex / Gender Identity
- Checklist - Asking about Sex/ Gender Identity

Figure 72. Information and resources from P&C for supporting trans staff and students.

4.2 Key priorities for future action

Our comprehensive data analysis of GE context (in addition to [Section 4.1](#)) included interrogation of the intersection of sex and race/ethnicity ([Appendix 2](#)).

The self-assessment crystallised eight Priorities.

Priority A. Values and Behaviours

As discussed in [Section 4.1.1](#), we need to continue to demonstrate positive behaviours and better address poor behaviours. Core values¹⁵, were developed to shape culture and reflect positive behaviours - staff reflect on how they exhibit these during PDR. The Staff Charter (2023) promotes their practical application.

In QES, 29% (28%F, 34%M) agreed Queen's responds effectively to reports of inappropriate behaviours ([Q12d](#), [Appendix 1](#)). This was accentuated for BAME women - 39% agreeing. Around 40% 'don't know' indicative of not encountering these situations. A Focus Group with BAME women indicated perceived lack of consequences for poor behaviours. Staff listening groups during Strategy 2030 development, and the SFAL also called for better approaches to promptly address issues.

Actions emphasise Mediation and more efficient, joined up institutional processes ([Actions A1.1 - A1.4](#)). Full implementation of the Staff Charter includes training in expected behaviours ([Actions A4.4 - A4.3 and A5.1](#)) and how to challenge inappropriate behaviours ([Actions A2.1, A3.1](#)).

Priority B. Culture and Belonging

Staff report strong senses of belonging (QES, 73%); however, this was lower for BAME women (61%) ([Q2a](#), [Appendix 1](#)). Similarly, staff agree Queen's culture is inclusive (73% overall, 50%F BAME) and celebrates diversity of staff/students (overall 77%, 61%F BAME) ([Q7a](#), [Q7b](#), [Appendix 1](#)). The priority is to further improve culture and foster belonging among under-represented groups.

We learned during Covid-19 that bringing people together is essential for belonging. Recent Carers' Network events and PS Networking events were appreciated. Staff welcome further events.

Several actions particularly focus on women, BAME staff, trans/non-binary staff/students, and those with disabilities ([Actions B1.1-1.4, B5.1, B5.2](#)). Better communication of cultural diversity and enhanced inclusivity in communications/events is ongoing ([Action B6.1-B6.3, B7.1](#)). Enhanced collaborative space to support international staff integration is now within Estates' priorities for renovation or new builds ([Action B4.1](#)).

¹⁵ Excellence, Connectivity, Ambition, Respect and Integrity

Priority C. Representation of senior female academics at leadership level

Significant longitudinal progress has been achieved. Our aim is gender balance across academic grades, in turn balancing HoS, Deans and FEBs.

Lecturer has longitudinal gender balance. Senior Lecturer improved +11% since 2014 to 46%. Reader was strengthened in 2019 with a new salary grade to differentiate from Senior Lecturer - currently 33%F (see below). Professor has longitudinal success since 2000 (11%F) to 31% (2022), with the Silver AP 27% target exceeded (Figures 2.2a, 2.3a, 2.3b, Appendix 2).

Intersectionally, BAME Academics increased from 8% (6%F, 9%M) to 11% (9%F, 13%M) over the last 5 years (Figure 2.1, Appendix 2).

We undertook detailed analysis of the two Academic roles to understand **gendered aspects** and sharpen the focus for transformative actions.

Academics (44%F) are Teaching & Research (T&R) or Education (Ed) with the latter apparently a more attractive pathway for women

(Figure 73).

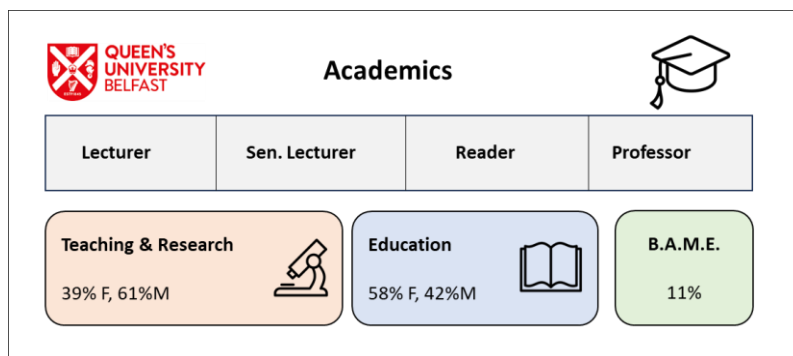


Figure 73. Academic roles and key demographics.

Academic (Ed) has grown from 252 (58%F) to 360 (58%F) over the last five years (Figure 2.5a, Appendix 2). It was consolidated with a new Reader (Ed) grade (2019).

Analysis shows a positive pipeline for female Academic (Ed):

- Lecturers (Ed): 71 recruited since 2011, maintaining 63%F.
- Senior Lecturers (Ed): +31, from 46% to 54%F since 2014; 33 progressed to Senior Lecturer (Ed) in last 5 years.
- Readers (Ed): +5 through Progression, now 43%F.
- Professors (Ed): +7, from 0-29%F since 2011 through Progression (5) and recruitment (2).

Progression data shows similar application rates by gender, men were slightly more likely to be successful. 46F and 44M Academics (Ed) have been promoted (Figure 8.1d, Appendix 2).

This group has requested further clarification of Academic Standards by grade as this pathway further embeds (Action C4.1).

We analysed academic grades to discover the contributions of progression and recruitment to improving balance.

- **Lecturers** are appointed through recruitment: over last five years, 180F Lecturers (56%F, 141M) were recruited through individual job advertisements¹⁶ and 77F (52%F, 77M) through campaigns (Figure 6.2a, 6.3b, Appendix 2). During this period, diversity improved with female BAME 8%-12% and male BAME 12%-25% (Figure 2.2b, Appendix 2).
- **Senior Lecturer** recruitment through individual advertising hired 16F (59%F, 11M); campaigns hired 13F (33%F, 27M) (Figure 6.2b, 6.3b, Appendix 2). 152F (48%) and 162M progressed to Senior Lecturer (Figure 8.4a, Appendix 2). This confirms individual job advertising and progression are bringing gender balance. We discovered disparity through campaign hiring for Senior Lecturers (and Professor, see below). Over the last five years, BAME cohort has grown, 3-9%F and 7%-9%M (Figure 2.2b, Appendix 2).
- **Reader** is the smallest cohort. It is an area of focus with the new salary scale and new Reader (Ed) role. Female Readers grew by 17; however, proportion decreased from 41%-33% (Figure 2.2a, Appendix 2). This resulted from growth in male Readers (3 recruited, 82 progression (62%)), vs. female Readers (0 recruited, 51 progression (38%)) (Figure 6.4b, 8.4b, Appendix 2).

New initiatives (Actions C1.1 and C2.1) will support women to be promoted to Reader ('Reaching Reader') and promoted from Reader to Professor ('Beyond Reader').

- **Professor** reached 31%F from 19F recruited (33%F) and 51F promoted (47%) over last 5 years (Section 2.1, Figure 6.2d, 6.3b, 8.4a, Appendix 2). Progression is the main enabler. Recruitment represents opportunity and challenge (disparity with campaign recruitment). Actions C5.2 – C5.5 drive a new target of 40%F Professors by 2028.

There are 2F BAME Professors and 4F BAME Readers (Figure 2.2b, Appendix 2). Queen's now has a pipeline of earlier-career female BAME academics (Lecturer/Senior Lecturer). While Progression applications are strong (28%), outcomes are concerning (47% vs 77% white F, based on <10 applications/year) (Figure 8.1c, Appendix 2). A similar trend is noted for male BAME academics. A new programme, 'Active Inclusion' will address this area of challenge (Action C3.1).

Review of Academic Progression

This has been most impactful (Figure 74). Progression is driving GE at senior academic grades. While some have concerns (QES, 2023), data shows high confidence (Section 2.2). In 2014, application rates were low (13%F, 16%M, total 87) and historically, women were less likely to apply. This is no longer the case. A 5-year review shows women are now as likely to apply as men (24%F, 23%M) with higher success rates (74%F, 68%M) (Figure 8.1a, Appendix 2). Achieving Fellowship of Higher Education Academy (HEA) (162F, 166M since 2018) or Senior Fellowship HEA (40F, 32M) supports Progression.

¹⁶ Queen's uses Individual Job advertising and Campaigns. In the latter mode, posts are advertised at multiple levels e.g. Lecturer/Senior Lecturer, Senior Lecturer/Reader) and candidates apply to the Campaign. Successful candidates' profiles are matched against the Academic Standards for appropriate grade.

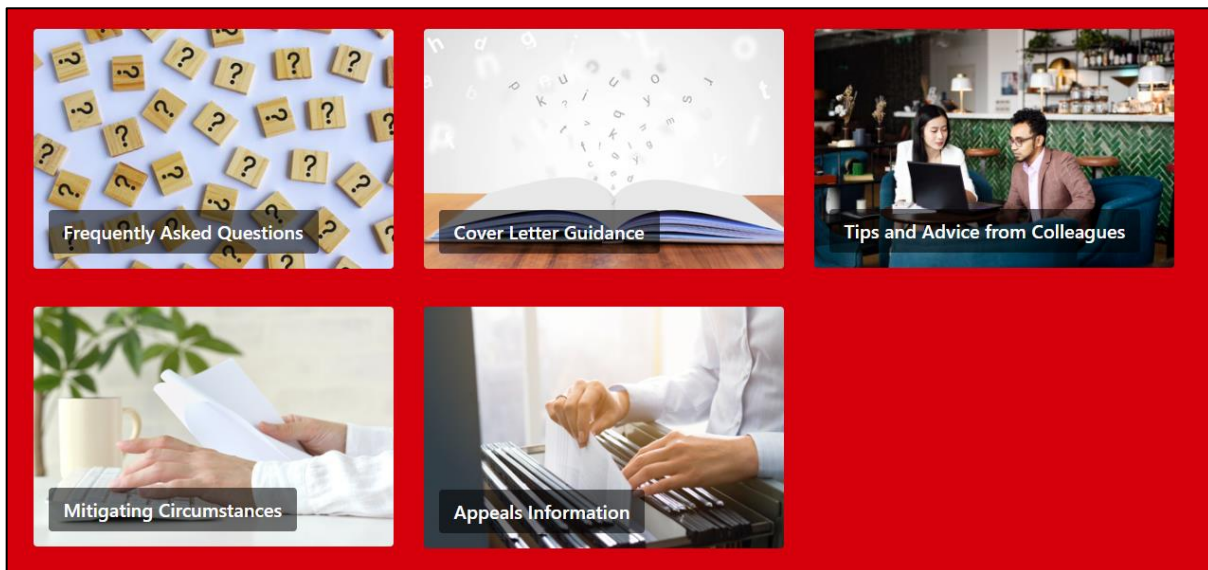


Figure 74. Resources and Guidance for Academic Progression.

Review of Academic Recruitment

We reviewed Individual job advertising and Campaigns (Figure 75).

Individual recruitment hired 399 academics (53%F) over last 5 years.

- Applications 35%F.
- Shortlisting rates: 24%F, 17%M.
- Success rates (offers/applications): 8%F, 4%M.

Men are more likely to apply; however, the process gives parity, with 52% offers to female applicants (Figure 6.1a, Appendix 2).

Intersectional analysis illuminated disparities:

- Applications 12%F vs 35%M BAME.
- Shortlist/success rates were lower for female and male BAME applicants vs. white applicants.
- 18% of appointments were BAME (6%F, 36 and 12%M, 66).

Disparities in shortlisting/success rates for BAME applicants are concerning. This analysis is feeding into P&C recruitment reviews, and is being interrogated in the REC programme.

Campaigns hired 199 academics (47%F) from 27%F applications indicating the process gives balance (Figure 6.3a, Appendix 2). However, detailed analysis shows gendered outcomes for Senior Lecturer and Professor. Specific actions have been created (Action C5.1 – C5.6). P&C are advising HoS/Faculty PVC on the gendered outcomes from campaign recruitment (Action C5.1 and C6.1).

Executive Search Providers were used for 24 posts since 2018. Nine women (38%, 5 Academics, 4 PS) and fifteen men were appointed (9 Academics, 6 PS).

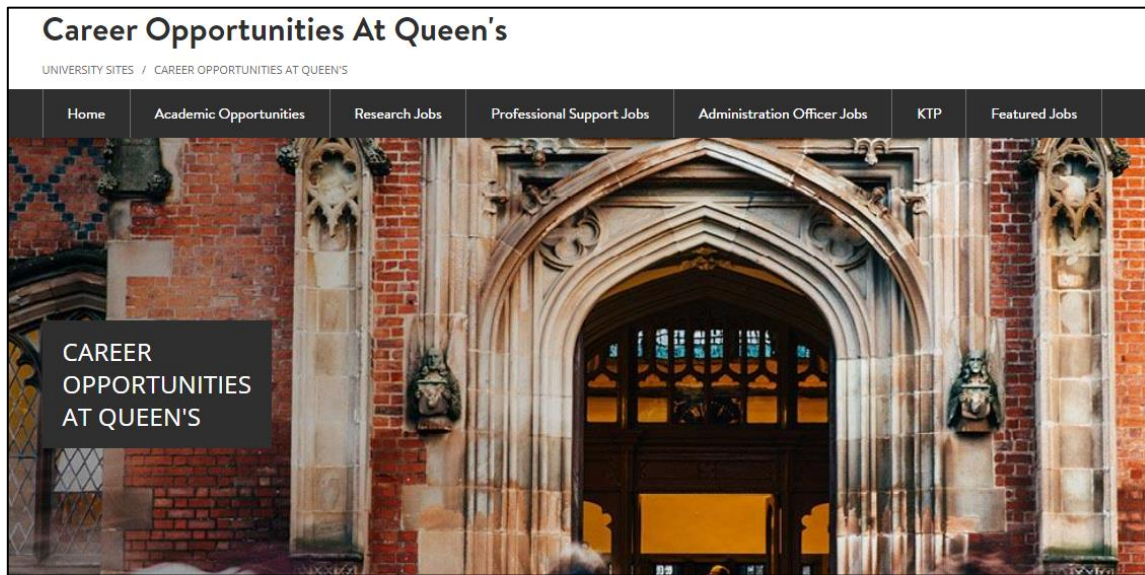


Figure 75. Recruitment resource for potential applicants

No concerns by gender/ethnicity were identified for permanent or fixed-term contracts. Most academics work full-time – there are part-time academics at all grades, including some senior leadership positions. Part-time working is accounted for in Academic Progression, WAM and PDR.

We conclude that recruitment and progression are critical to achieve gender balance at Reader or Professor. BAME women are under-represented and have less favourable outcomes in both processes. Decisive actions including 'Reaching Reader', 'Beyond Reader', 'Active Inclusion' and a BAME academic progression workshop will drive improvements. Other actions will attract more female applicants for Reader/Professor and enable senior academic women to take on leadership roles ([Actions C1.1, C2.1, C3.1](#)).

Researchers have sustained gender balance (49%F) ([Figure 2.6a, Appendix 2](#)). Researchers typically have fixed-term contracts, reflecting salary from external grants. Permanent researchers were approx. 20 staff, predominantly male and represented a range of roles. Female BAME researchers increased 11%-18% (total BAME increased +4% to 22%) ([Figure 2.6b, Appendix 2](#)).

There are no gender concerns with recruitment. Individual job advertisements hired 849 researchers (47%F appointments) ([Figure 6.5a, Appendix 2](#)). Campaign recruitment accounted for a minority of researcher appointments.

The highest proportion of applications were from male BAME applicants. Success rates for BAME had no gender difference (both 3%) but were lower than white applicants (10%F, 9%M) ([Figure 6.8a, Appendix 2](#)). These differences by ethnicity, not gender, are being interrogated in the REC programme.

The Postdoctoral Development Centre (PDC) runs bespoke training and development programmes for researchers. Whole-life-balance has particular challenges for female researchers around maternity leave who requested better information as the available information was difficult to find and did not directly address contracts underpinned by external grant funding. The QGI/Swan team, PDC Manager and P&C together developed new web-content that was prominent, addressed nuances of researcher contracts including new guidance, FAQs and case studies (Figure 76).

"We received feedback from postdoctoral researchers that they struggled to navigate the maternity leave policy, especially understanding how maternity leave would impact the length of their externally-funded fixed-term contracts."

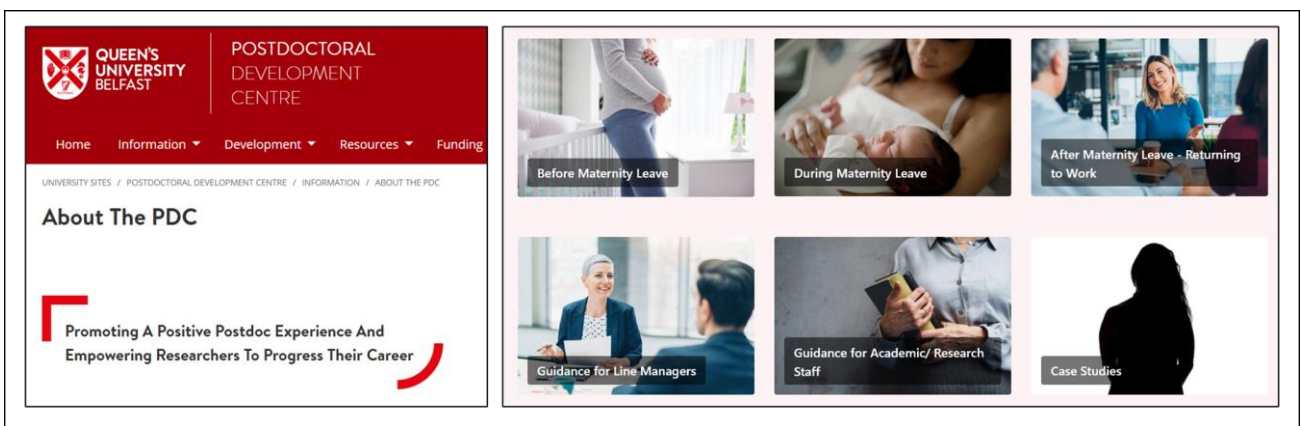


Figure 76. Postdoctoral Development Centre and new P&C resource for maternity leave

Priority D. Supporting Career Development for Professional Services and Researchers

PS represent 54% of staff, overall 62%F, sustained >5 years (Figure 4.1a-c, Appendix 2). Here, we interrogated data by Grade, job family to assess representation by sex/ethnicity.

- Grades 3-8 have higher %F. Grades 9, 10¹⁷ and 10+ are 53%, 40% and 57%F respectively.
- PS are 3% BAME, aligning with NI population.
- Increasingly diverse from 30F, 18M in 2017-18 and 43F, 27M in 2021-22.
- Female BAME have higher representation across Grades 1-4 whereas male BAME higher represented across Grades 5-8. Low numbers preclude further analysis (Figure 4.2d, Appendix 2).

Job family analysis shows gender imbalance in technicians at Grade 7 (20%F) also Grades 4-6, indicative of pipeline issues (Figure 4.3h, Appendix 2). Discussion with technicians generated Actions D4.1-D4.3.

There were no trends in permanent or fixed-term contracts by gender, across job families and grade.

Review of Recruitment

Shortlisting/success rates had no gender trend. We note overall 54%F applicants and 61%F appointments so the process may favour women (Figure 4.1a, Appendix 2). An ongoing P&C review of recruitment will implement enhanced processes and systems (Action D6.1).

Most PS applicants are white, reflecting NI population. Of concern, shortlisting rates for BAME applicants (19%F, 21%M) are lower than for white applicants (33%F, 30%M). Appointments were 5% BAME (2%F, 44; 3%M, 45) (Figure 7.1b, Appendix 2). This illuminates the need to attract a more diverse pool of applicants to PS posts and actions are within the REC programme.

Progression

There is no formal PS Progression process. Progression is achieved through applying for higher grade positions, or infrequently, regrading of current post:

- Of PS staff in 2021-22 employed in the preceding 5 years, 35%F and 24%M had at least one grade increase (Figure 9.1, Appendix 2).
- Intersectional analysis showed grade increases for BAME staff (<10).

PS staff welcome a progression process (QES feedback and discussions); however, given the diversity of job families and roles, this remains a challenge. In QES, 66% agreed there are opportunities to develop professionally, and they were encouraged to avail of them (Q8a, Q8b Appendix 1). PDR was considered to have limited value (34%F, 35%M) (Q8c, Appendix 1).

The PDC developed a new PDR form/guidance tailored for researchers. This launches in 2024 PDR following a 2023 pilot (Action D5.3). Three new Daphne Jackson Fellowships for post-career

¹⁷ N=20

break returners will be funded ([Action D5.1](#)). Under-representation of women in the STEM strand of Vice Chancellor's/Illuminate Fellowships (21%F applications, 0F, 2M appointments) will be tackled in [Action D5.2](#). This programme has had 32%F applications and 41F% appointments over the last 4 years - STEM is now a priority.

A new 'Research-only' career pathway is under discussion and may present future opportunities during the Gold AP.

Actions will enhance PDR ([Action D1.1 – D1.3](#)), provide new development opportunities ([Actions D 2.5, D3.1 – D3.6](#)) including job shadowing ([Action D2.1, D2.4](#)), new Academies and Communities of Learning ([D2.2, D2.3](#)), actions for Technicians ([Actions D4.1 – D4.3](#)), and improved feedback from internal recruitment process to unsuccessful candidates (requested during Swan event discussion [Action D6.1](#)).

Priority E. Data and resourcing for Swan Champions and EDI leads

School Reviews (2023) confirmed Champions value training and resources. Champions suggested improvements to Power BI dashboards to better enable collation of Mandatory Data for School applications.

Introduction of new platforms e.g. 'Simitive' to capture work allocation (WAM) equipped with EDI variables will assist analysis by gender/ethnicity.

Actions will increase institutional collection of EDI variables ([Action E4.2 – E4.3](#)) enabling diversity monitoring across HR analytics and make accessible to Champions/EDI leads. The Swan Champion/EDI lead support programme ([Actions E1.1 – E1.4](#)) will be extended, including Phase 2 of the Swan/Diversity Power BI dashboard ([Actions E2.1 – E2.2](#)). Creation of a data analysts' group will accelerate learning and progress new methodologies ([Action E3.1](#)).

Priority F. New Athena Swan in PTO Directorates

We are extending the Swan programme into Directorates, following University restructuring in 2023 and aligning with Advance HE PTO Directorates pilot. Foundational work, including an International Women's Day event for Directorates (March 2023) and participation by Directorates' Swan Representatives at the June 2023 Swan Champions Network confirms strong staff buy-in.

The new leadership structure, with four new Vice-Presidents, creates optimal context for a PTO AS Programme.

This will be actioned in the first 2 years of the Gold AP ([Actions F1.1 – F1.5](#)).

Priority G. Students and Gender Equality

We value engagement with students and will enhance at ISAT ([Action G9.1](#)). Students' Union officers, and students in Focus Groups are positive about GE and EDI at Queen's ([Figure 77](#)).



Figure 77. First prizes for UG, PGT and PGR entries to the Swan Student Poster Competition (2022) 'Who is your inspirational woman?'

- UG (58%F) and PGT (60%F) populations increased - gender representation was sustained ([Figure 1.1a, Appendix 2](#)).
- PGR was stable and maintained gender balance ([Figure 1.2a, Appendix 2](#)).
- Ethnicity diversity increased, exceeding NI population.
- 12%F, 14%M UG are BAME ([Figure 1.1c, Appendix 2](#)).
- 27%F, 31%M PGT are BAME ([Figure 1.2c, Appendix 2](#)).
- 29%F, 30%M PGR are BAME ([Figure 1.3c, Appendix 2](#)).
- data unavailable by Trans status; non-binary numbers too low to report.

UG, PGT and PGR across 15 Schools shows EPS is predominantly male whereas AHSS and MHLS are predominantly female ([Figure 1.1d, 1.2d, 1.3d, Appendix 2](#)). In focus groups, students were aware of gender representation in classes, and across teaching staff. Our disciplines align with the HE sector; [Actions G6.1 – G6.3](#) will address under-representation, extending School Swan APs.

We delivered 23 bespoke in-person welcome events for international students ([Figure 78](#)) reaching over 2,500 international students in 2023. We also held 12 events during the year to support identity/belonging within Queen's and Belfast ([Figure 79](#)).

International Undergraduates

HOME / NEW STUDENTS / UNDERGRADUATE / INTERNATIONAL UNDERGRADUATES

Money Matters

Your Application - What Next



When you get here

My Queen's - Your first semester

Get your university life off to a great start by viewing My Queen's - everything you need to know when coming to Queen's and throughout your first semester.

In addition to helping you navigate your way through the University in your initial few weeks, we'll help you get registered, provide details on your learning environment, all of our excellent support services, and ways to get the most of your student experience.

[My Queen's](#)

Figure 78. Extract from information resources for new international students

Development of new inclusive social spaces for students who prefer settings without alcohol is particularly welcomed by women. They consider a university-run evening café to be a safe space (Action G8.1).



Figure 79. International student Nistha's story on Queen's social media.

EDI, Bias Awareness and ABT sessions within curriculum and through initiatives led by Swan/REC/EDI champions (Figure 80) are well-received. The optional student EDI module ‘Think Difference, Act Differently’ was refreshed - engagement is gaining traction and will be mandated (424 completions (80%F, 20%M)). Sustained focus is essential to enhance belonging as our student populations become increasingly diverse.

[Quotation redacted for publication]

Female BAME student panel speaker at Race Equality in HE conference.

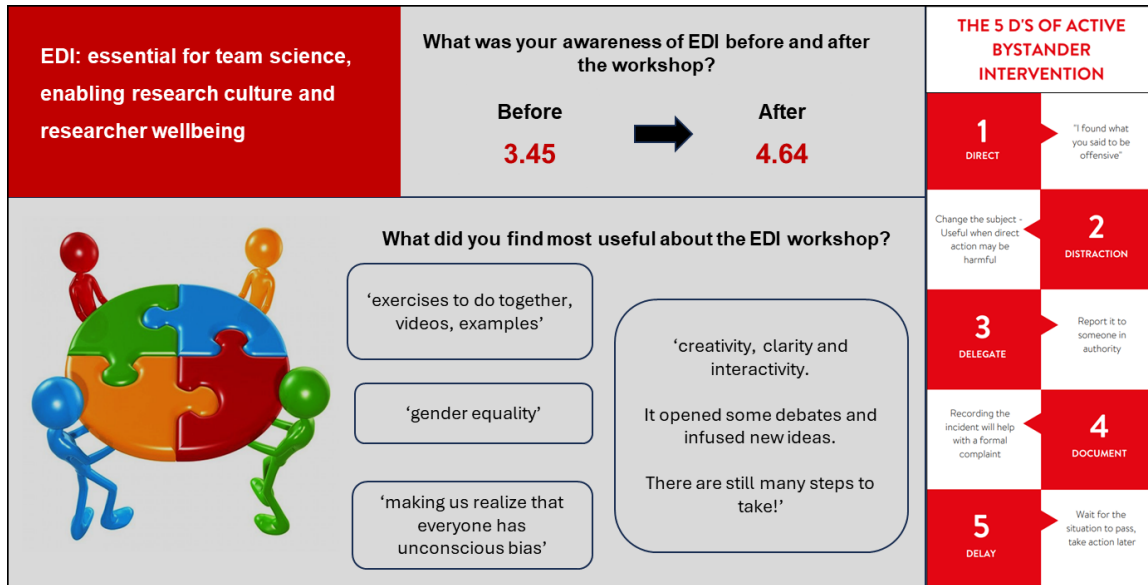


Figure 80. Student evaluation of an EDI workshop. The Active Bystander Toolkit is shown on the right.

A priority area for students is consent, and they work closely with Student Support Services. Consent training for students, and training for staff around recognising signs of abuse/coercive control will be delivered (Action G1.1, G3.1), including co-creation of ABT/Consent training (Action G2.1-G2.4), and collaboration with other HE/FE organisations to support students at risk (Action G4.1-G4.2).

Priority H. GE beyond Queen’s: partnership and leadership

Queen’s partners with others to improve their GE/EDI practices. This aligns with Strategy 2030 and our responsibility to NI as an anchor institution. We will continue to extend our influence into HE and other sectors (Actions H2.1).



Figure 81. Queen's female students at a Women in Business training event for future leaders.

Transition of QGI to the next phase, Queen's Global Institute for Women's Leadership, will deliver the 'Accessing Queen's' programme for schoolgirls from disadvantaged areas, and open a student internship programme. We will mentor and develop our students (Figure 81) and schoolgirls (Actions H1.1 – H 1.3) through e.g. the SistersIN initiative and donating staff time to work with local groups (Actions H2.1).

The Queen's Global Institute for Women's Leadership will deliver our new International Women's Leadership Programme with USA partners e.g. UMass-Lowell, to drive inclusive leadership in academia (Actions H3.1 – H3.5).

Section 5. Athena Swan Gold Action Plan (2023-2028)