

**Application details**

Name of institution	University of Aberdeen
Name of department	Rowett Institute
Date of current application	13 May 2021
Level of previous award	Bronze
Date of previous award	November 2016

**Contact details for application**

Name	Dr Karen Scott
Email	k.scott@abdn.ac.uk
Telephone	07788741563

Question	Words used
Letter of endorsement from the Head of Department	<b>500</b> (outgoing) / <b>200</b> (incoming)
Description of the department	<b>512</b>
The self-assessment process	<b>1221</b>
Previous action plan*	
Progress report	<b>2195</b>
Current self-assessment and future priorities	<b>1533</b>
Future action plan*	
<b>Overall word count</b>	<b>5961</b> (includes 290 COVID related text) <b>6161</b> (with 2 <sup>nd</sup> endorsement letter)

\*The previous and future action plans should contain no commentary contributing to the overall word limit

**Overall word limit: 6000 words**

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# 1. Section 1 – Introduction to the department and the self-assessment process

In Section 1, applicants should evidence how they meet Criterion 1:

- + an organisational structure is in place to carry the action plan forward and continue the self-assessment process.

## 1.1 Letter of endorsement from the head of department

**Recommended word count: 500 words**



The Rowett Institute  
University of Aberdeen  
Foresterhill  
Aberdeen  
AB25 2ZD

Ruth Gilligan,  
Assistant Director for Equality Charters  
Advance HE  
7th Floor, Queens House  
55/56 Lincoln's Inn Fields  
London WC2A 3LJ

5 May 2021

Dear Ms Gilligan,

I am writing as the out-going Director of the Rowett Institute and I wish to express my strong support for our application for renewal of our Athena SWAN Bronze Award. The Rowett Institute has undergone considerable change over my time as Director, including change from independent status and legal entity to being part of the University in 2008, as well as a complete change of building and location in 2016. This has meant considerable adjustment in the working environment as well as the processes and systems that underpin the organisation for both staff and students. During this time of change over the past 4-5 years, the Athena Swan scheme has been an invaluable help to the Institute. It has shone a light on many of the things that we do well and raised our awareness of where we could do better to address the needs and interests of our staff and students, especially in relation to equality, diversity and issues of fairness.

Over the past 5 years, I have ensured that AS is actively promoted by ensuring that it is a standing item on the Institute Executive Agenda, where we can discuss AS-related issues, including monitoring the action points on the AS action plan. I am also a member and regular attendee of the Institute EDT

## Athena SWAN Departmental Renewal Application

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committee, which provides another forum to discuss AS-related issues, but perhaps more importantly I have had regular contact with our AS leaders (Dr Karen Scott and Dr Perry Barrett) to discuss AS issues. One of the results of these discussions has been the instigation of regular updates from me through the Institute newsletter to help improve the communication and sense of community.

Over the last 5 years I am particularly proud of the fact that there has been a sea-change in female leadership at the more senior levels in the Institute. This includes:

1. The appointment of two Deputies Directors, one woman and one man, who provide the highest-level leadership within the Institute.
2. Below this level, the Institute is organised into 4 themes, headed by Theme leads; 3 of whom are women and one whose is a man.
3. Finally over the past 5 years the institute there has been an increase from 20% to 62% in female Professors.

These changes provide clear evidence to our younger staff that there are no barriers to the attainment for women in the Institute.

At the same time, we have sought to address the interests of the lower grade and more junior staff and the students, through improved signposting and understanding of promotion and HR policies, as well as encouraging mutual support that comes from greater collegiality.

While I am sure that the new Director, Professor Jules Griffin, will strive for continued improvement in the future, when he takes over in July this year, I am proud of our journey, over the past 5 years.

I can confirm that the information presented in this application (including qualitative and quantitative data) is an honest and accurate representation

Yours faithfully,



Professor Peter J. Morgan FRSE  
Director of Rowett Institute  
Email:p.morgan@abdn.ac.uk  
Tel +44(0)1224 438642



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University of Aberdeen  
Foresterhill  
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AB25 2ZD

Ruth Gilligan,  
Assistant Director for Equality Charters  
Advance HE  
7th Floor, Queens House  
55/56 Lincoln's Inn Fields  
London WC2A 3LJ

6th May 2021

Dear Ms Gilligan,

I am writing as the incoming Director of the Rowett Institute and wish to express my complete support for our application for renewal of our Athena SWAN Bronze Award. As the incoming Director I have read the renewal application in detail and it has provided an excellent resource of how the Institute has championed equality and diversity across the staff and students. I was particularly impressed by the high proportion of female professors at the Institute and their prominent roles in leadership, especially when compared with institutions I have spent my previous academic career at. I have discussed with Professor Peter Morgan, the current Director, and Drs Karen Scott and Perry Barrett, the Athena SWAN leaders, the plans for future development and in particular the SMART Action plan which I fully endorse.

I will continue the commitment of my predecessor to equality and diversity at the Institute and can confirm that Athena SWAN values will continue to be promoted as a standing item on the Institute Executive Agenda. I will also take an active role in the Institute EDT committee. I look forward to working closely with Drs Scott and Barrett to discuss and champion AS issues in the future.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Julian Griffin'.

Professor Julian L. Griffin FRSC  
Incoming Director of Rowett Institute  
e-mail: [julian.griffin@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:julian.griffin@abdn.ac.uk)

### **Abbreviations**

AR – Annual Review

AP – (current) Action Plan

AS – Athena Swan

CAS - Career Advisory Service

ECR - Early Career Researcher

E&D - Equality and Diversity

EDT - Equality and Diversity Team

EDIC – (University) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

HESA – Higher Education Statistics Agency

HoS – Head of School

HR – Human Resources

IMS - Institute of Medical Sciences

IEC - Institute Executive committee

KE – Knowledge Exchange

KIT - Keep In Touch

M – Man

PAP – Previous Action Plan

PGR – Post-graduate Research

PGT - Post-graduate Taught

PI - Principal Investigator

PNTA – Prefer not to answer

RA - Research Assistant

RF -Research Fellow

RESAS – (Scottish Government’s) Rural and Environment Science and Analytical Services Division

RI - Rowett Institute

SMMSN - School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition

SMT – (University) Senior Management Team

STEMM – Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths and Medicine

T&R - Teaching & Research

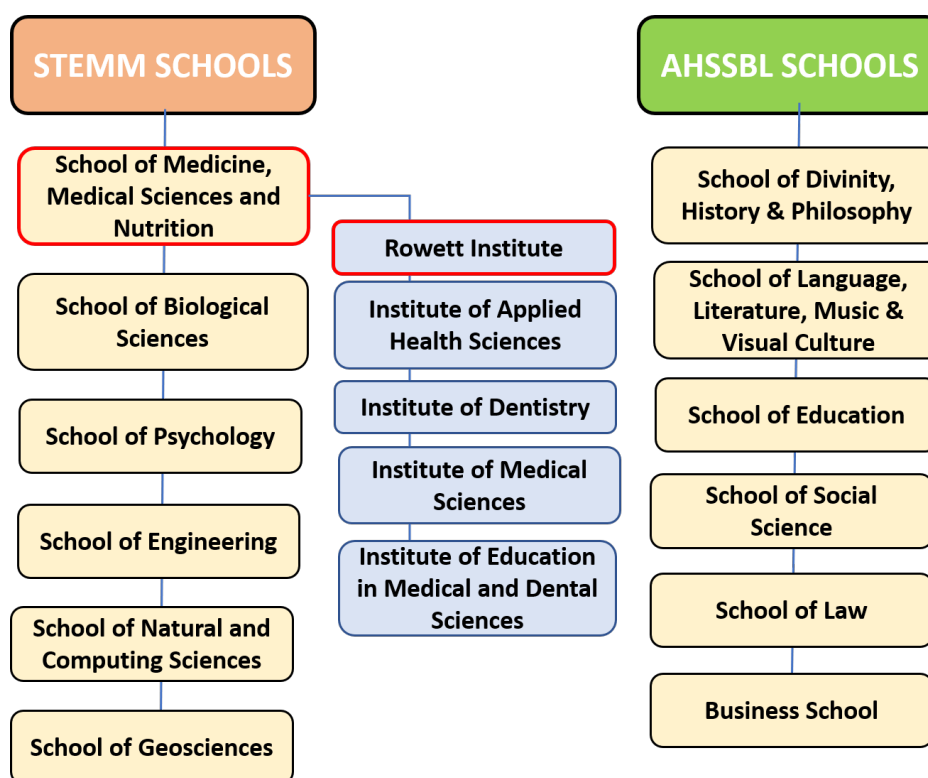
W - Woman

## 1.2 Description of the department

**Recommended word count: 500 words**

### A hundred years of history

Founded in 1913 by Sir John Boyd-Orr, the Rowett Institute (RI) was an independent institute largely funded by the Scottish Government. In 2008 RI merged with the University of Aberdeen, integrating into the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition (SMMSN) (Figure 1).



**Figure 1. Organogram of the University of Aberdeen Schools and institute structure**

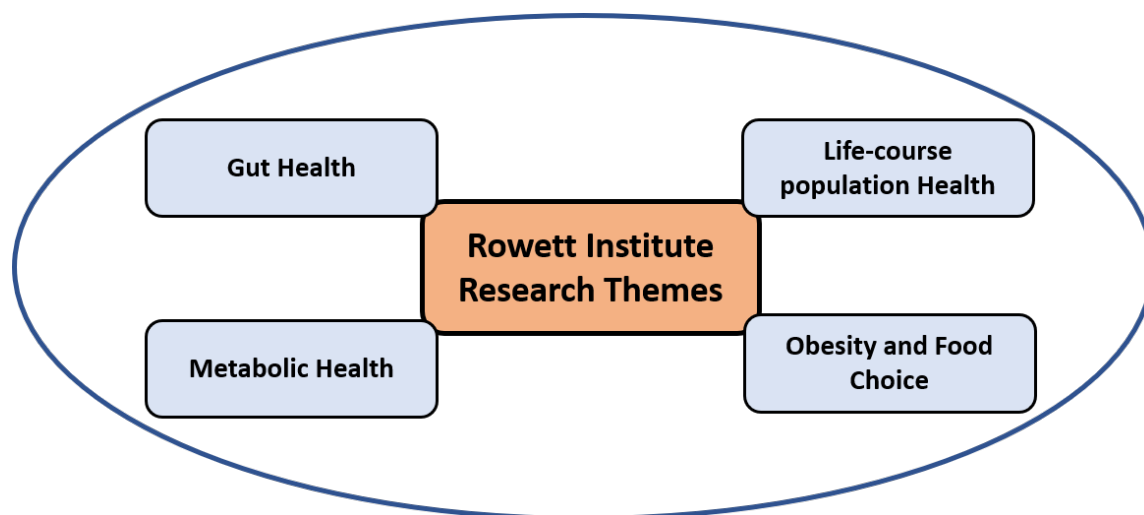
### Our home

In 2016 the institute moved from its original site, a large array of old buildings of an agricultural institute on the outskirts of Aberdeen, to a single purpose-built building adjacent to other SMMSN institutes and Aberdeen Royal Infirmary. SMMSN is based at Foresterhill Campus, four miles from the main Campus in Old Aberdeen where all other University Schools are located (free shuttle between the two sites). Staff and students socialise (pre-Covid) in the Rowett lounge, IMS or Suttie Centre Cafes.

### Our Research

From its inception, work carried out at RI has contributed to the contemporary field of Nutrition Science. The work of Boyd-Orr and others played a major role in establishing the link between diet and health and RI remains one of the pre-eminent institutes in this

field. RI research encompasses contemporary techniques in molecular biology through to human studies utilising a state-of-the-art human nutrition suite. RI has four themes, reflecting the breadth of nutrition research (Figure 2). Most staff are engaged on research commissioned by the Scottish Government’s Rural and Environment Science and Analytical Services Division (RESAS). In 2006 the funding structure from RESAS changed from direct support to 5-year rolling programmes of commissioned research, with the current programme ending March 2022.



**Figure 2. Rowett Institute Research Themes**

### Our staff and students

There are currently 113 staff employed at RI (Table 1). Most staff are employed on open ended contracts with > 50% being in post for more than 10 years. Over the past 5 years the number of female Professors increased from 2 (20%) to 5 (62%), through internal promotions. 24% of staff (19W and 8M) work part-time.

We currently have 23 postgraduate research (PGR) students (18W:5M), overseen by a postgraduate co-ordinator (M).

Staff category	Number
Academic staff	Research Only - 37 (18W:19M)
	Teaching and Research – 6 (0W:6M)
	Teaching and Scholarship - 0
Scientific Support staff	60 (46W:14M)
Professional/administrative staff	10 (6W:4M)
<b>Overall</b>	62% (70)W:38% (43)M

**Table 1. – staff numbers (headcount) and distribution**



**Teaching**

Most teaching for RI staff is to an on-campus postgraduate taught (PGT) MSc Human Nutrition degree. The institute became administratively responsible for this accredited MSc course in academic year starting Oct 2020. Several modular online MSc nutrition courses have also been developed and taught by RI staff. Staff also contribute to undergraduate teaching within SMMSN.

**Institute management**

Management of the institute is overseen by an Institute Executive committee (IEC, Table 2).

<b>Institute Executive Committee (IEC)</b>	
<b>Role</b>	
Director	M
Deputy Director (Research)	M
Deputy Director (Teaching)	W
Finance Manager	W
RESAS Co-ordinator	M
Technical Resources Manager	M
Knowledge Exchange manager	W
Theme Leads	3W:1M
<b>Overall</b>	55% (6) W:45% (5)M

**Table 2. Composition of the Institute Executive Committee over the past 5 years**

A new director (M) will take up office in July 2021.

Each theme leader line-manages Principal Investigators (PI), who in turn line-manage research teams composed of post-doctoral fellows, research technicians and PhD students. The deputy director (research) line-manages the theme leads, the analytical facility and administrative support team.

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Theme lead</b>	<b>Principal investigators (including Theme lead)</b>
Gut Health	W	8 (6W:2M)
Metabolic Health	M	11 (4W:7M)
Obesity and Food choice	W	9 (2W:7M)
Life Course and Population Health	W	9 (3W:6M)

**Table 3. Institute research themes and their composition**

IEC meets monthly and Athena Swan (AS) is a standing agenda item. Information from IEC meetings, including relevant AS information, is disseminated to staff via theme leads at monthly theme meetings.

In addition to IEC, the institute has three other committees (Table 4).

<b>Committee</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Chair</b>
Health and Safety	3	5	M
Human studies	2	1	W
Equality & Diversity Team (EDT)	11	8	1W:1M

**Table 4. Composition of Rowett Institute committees as of April 2021.**

RI staff are also members of other University committees which operate at a school or University level who are selected by advertisement and/or staff ballot.

**(Word Count 512)**

### 1.3 The self-assessment process

**Recommended word count: 1500 words**

**(i) A description of the self-assessment team**

The Equality and Diversity Team (EDT) constitutes the Institute self-assessment team and supports AS and all equality and diversity activities. The EDT formed in January 2016, was integral in preparing our first Bronze application and the associated action plan (hereafter called Previous Action Plan – PAP). Staff and student membership turnover have occurred following formation of the original EDT, mostly through people leaving for new positions, retirements, or PGR students completing their studies. The EDT has 2 co-leads (1W, 1 M), who volunteered and were appointed by the director, taking over in late 2018 from the founding co-leads. Overall EDT membership numbers remain constant with the current membership composed of 11 (58%)W, 8 (42%)M reflecting gender balance of RI (Tables 1 and 5), including the institute director as an active participant. As the on-campus MSc course only runs for one year, and we do not run undergraduate courses, our student representatives are limited to PhD students.

Members of EDT, encompassing all grades and contract types are volunteers drawn from full and part-time staff and PhD students (Table 5), recruited via Institute-wide email invitations and additional advertising directly to PGR students.

The EDT also includes a Human Resources (HR) Partner who provides guidance on HR-related issues and the University AS Coordinator who provides data, guidance on process and ensures links between the Rowett and other EDTs across the University. EDT membership is recognised in the institute’s workload model (PAP5). The co-leads receive a 160hr credit (approximately 10% of annual workload) and each ordinary member 40hr credit.

Contribution to the advancement of equality is also recognised positively in the University promotion process.

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Name	Position	Responsibility in committee
Dr Karen Scott (W)	Senior Research Fellow Grade xx, Full-time	Co-lead, Staff survey review lead, Social and culture group
Dr Perry Barrett (M)	Senior Research Fellow Grade xx, Part-time	Co-lead, Staff resource page group lead, data analysis
Dr Silvia Gratz (W)	Senior Research Fellow, Grade xx, Full-time	Deputy co-lead, Career development group
Prof Peter Morgan (M)	Institute Director	
Dr Richard Anderson (M)	Support staff, Grade xx, Full-time	Staff survey review, data analysis
Russell Betney (M)	Professional admin support, Grade xx, Part-time	Media co-ordinator, Staff resource page group, Staff survey review
Maria-Grazia Cascio (W)	University Athena Swan co-ordinator, Grade xx, Full-time	Provides guidance on process, data and feedback on drafts
<b>Dr Antonio Gonzalez (June 2020) (M)</b>	Lecturer, Grade xx, Full-time	Career development lead, ECR resource page group
<b>Karen Hislop (Jan 2019) (W)</b>	Support staff, Grade xx, Part-time	Staff resource page group
Jeannette Ingram (W)	Personal assistant to director, Grade xx, Full time	Staff resource page group, administrative support
Prof Alexandra Johnstone (W)	Personal Chair, Grade xx, Full-time	Mentoring advisor, Career development group
Dr Alasdair Leeson-Payne (M)	Support staff, Grade xx, Full-time	Social committee lead, ECR resource page group lead
Fiona MacAskill (W)	Human Resources	HR advisor
<b>QianQian (Amy) Ni (June 2020) (W)</b>	PhD student	ECR resource page group, Career development group
Lynn Pirie (W)	Support staff, xx, Full-time	Staff survey review
Dr Justin Rochford (M)	Reader, xx, Full-time	Past co-lead, Staff resource page group
Dr Alexander Ross (M)	Research Fellow, Grade xx, Full-time	Staff survey review
Karen Taylor (W)	Research assistant, Grade xx, Part-time	Family support advisor, Staff resource page group
Olivia Watt (W)	PhD student	

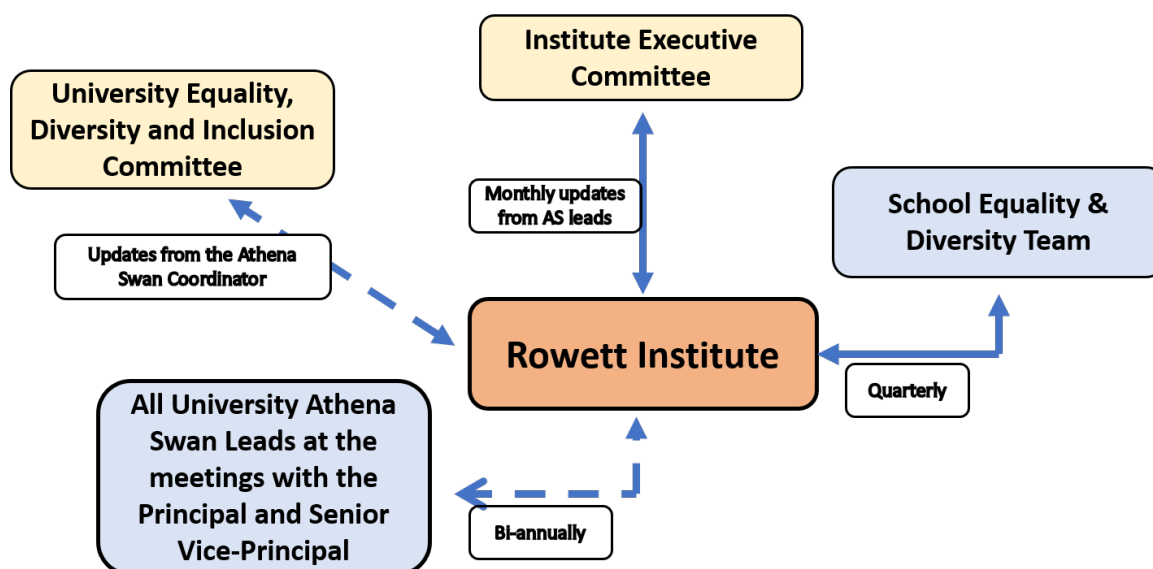
**Table 5.- Current membership of the Rowett EDT. Recent members are highlighted in bold. Gender in Table is self-identified. Grades redacted**

### (ii) An account of the self-assessment process

The EDT meet approximately quarterly as detailed in our annual business cycle (PAP4). EDT meetings are used for monitoring PAP progress, analysing the latest quantitative and qualitative data, and devising new or improved activities for future actions. We also implement and improve the annual review process and disseminate information from School and University-wide EDT meetings. Additionally, a core group comprising the current co-conveners, previous conveners, admin support, deputy leads, HR and university AS representative meet as required on a monthly basis, while the co-leads meet weekly. Minutes of full EDT meetings are circulated to members and presentations from these meetings are made available to all staff via email, theme meetings and on our developing resource centre on our website (PAP38).

EDT co-leads provide reports to the monthly IEC meetings with regular updates as well as an annual summary of the staff survey results with recommendations.

Co-leads of the five Institutes of the SMMSN, HR Partner, the AS coordinator and the School Business Manager meet three times/year with the Head of School (HoS) to report progress, discuss challenges and agree priorities. Progress of each School is reported regularly by the two University AS Officers to the University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) chaired by the Senior Vice-Principal and Institutional AS Champion (Figure 3).



**Figure 3. – Reporting pathways from Rowett EDT to Institute, school and University committees or forums. Solid arrows indicate direct reporting, dashed arrows indicate indirect reporting through Athena Swan coordinator.**

Co-leads from all the University EDTs meet biannually with members of the University Senior Management Team (SMT) including Principal and Senior Vice-Principal to discuss challenges and share good practice.

A draft of the future action plan (AP) was reviewed by the IEC and EDT members before asking all RI staff for comment. A direct link to the action plan, uploaded on our online information resource centre, was advertised in our fortnightly newsletter. The finalised future action plan was signed off by the IEC.

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### Data collection

Data on staff numbers, grades, contracts, promotion rates, maternity and paternity leave rates are received annually from HR via the University AS co-ordinator.

We formally gather the views of our staff and students through annual surveys (Table 6).

<b>Staff Survey</b>				
Survey Year	Overall response	% Female response	% Male response	% Prefer not to answer
2016	74% (105)	78% (67)	68% (38)	Data not available
2017	71% (80)	Data not collected		
2018	65% (81)	Data not collected		
2019	79% (88)	73% (49)	72% (26)	12% (13)
2020	74.5% (81)	62% (41)	71% (29)	10% (11)
<b>Postgraduate Student Survey</b>				
Survey Year	Overall response	% Female response	% Male response	% Prefer not to answer
2019	93% (25)	80% (16)	70% (8)	4% (1)
2020	59% (20)	48% (11)	54% (7)	6% (2)

**Table 6. Statistics for staff and student response rates - note gender disaggregated data not available for 2017/18.**

Our 2020 surveys contained specific sections on the impact of COVID which were subsequently incorporated into a template provided to other university EDTs. We also introduced a checklist in the Annual Review (AR) process (PAP8,14,17) enabling us to determine if key issues of promotion and staff development were covered during the annual review (2020 data - 94% completion rate). The lower student response rate in 2020 (93% to 59%) is probably a combination of COVID-19 affecting student engagement and because 25% (6 students) were finalizing their PhD theses for submission.

### Dissemination

In 2019 and 2020, ~80% or more of survey respondents said they were aware of AS in the institute and 94% of its purpose (Table 7).

Survey	Aware of AS in Institute		Aware of AS purpose	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
2019	86% (42)	85% (22)	94% (46)	100% (26)
2020	81% (33)	76% (22)	100% (41)	90% (26)

**Table 7: Awareness and purpose of Athena Swan in the Institute**

This increase from 82% in 2017 to 94% is an impact from actions initiated from our previous action plan (e.g. PAP1,4,11,14). Athena Swan is a standing item in all theme meetings and slides of EDT meetings are available in our information resources centre.

## Athena SWAN Departmental Renewal Application

In 2019 we introduced an “Athena Swan news” section in the institute’s fortnightly newsletter, now a permanent and prominent feature. Here we include information on institute, school and university Equality and Diversity (E&D) activities and career development opportunities for both staff and students. 2020 staff survey data indicate that the AS newsletter has been widely appreciated with 86% agreeing that the newsletter promotes the values of Athena Swan in the institute, producing 11 comments such as “*The newsletter update is useful for communicating Athena Swan news*”, “*Communication through a newsletter format is good*” and “*Communicated well through newsletter*”.

### (iii) Plans for the future of the Self-Assessment Team

The current cycle of quarterly EDT meetings will continue. The first succession of co-lead officers took place in late 2018 with the new officers lacking previous experience of working within the EDT, causing a lag phase while new appointees became familiar with processes. Therefore, we recognise that the succession process should be established earlier, with deputies appointed soon after the succession of new co-leads, forming part of the core management group to provide mentoring and maintain continuity (**AP1**).

**AP1:** Formally establish deputy co-leads soon after the biennial succession of new co-leads

The COVID pandemic delayed the establishment of EDT subgroups to take responsibility for new initiatives such as newsletter and staff/student resource page management but these are now established. Further expansion of subgroup activities will occur as more initiatives are developed. Subgroup meetings will take place as required to meet their objectives and they will update the core EDT group at monthly intervals (**AP2**).

**AP2:** EDT to receive, updates and reports from working subgroups

To date, the highly successful annual STEMM lecture (PAP16) has relied on suggestions and invitations from the co-leads but we will appoint EDT STEMM lecture co-ordinators to oversee the continued development of this important activity (**AP10**) and expand this to incorporate race and ethnic diversity (**AP24**).

**AP10:** Appoint a staff and a student STEMM lecture co-ordinator

**AP24:** Record racial and ethnic diversity of seminar speakers

The future action plan will be implemented utilising focussed subgroups of EDT to oversee specific issues This will involve continued gender disaggregation of survey data, assessing impact of our actions, recording attendance at E&D events and engaging with HR, course co-ordinators, career advisory service (CAS) and student admissions (**AP2-4**).

**AP3:** Establish a record of attendance and feedback at EDT organised events

**AP4:** Assess the impact of our actions by introducing a new section 'Impact of actions' in our annual surveys.

The annual surveys (with the specific 'Impact of actions' section (**AP4**) will continue to form a significant part of the evaluation process going forward, together with data received from HR, subgroups and input from seminar co-ordinator, knowledge exchange (KE) co-ordinator, course co-ordinator and postgraduate student advisor. The new actions will be evaluated using information from these sources by the core EDT group.

Although EDT co-leads of the five institutes within SMMSN meet regularly, each institute EDT is independent, and each institute holds a Bronze award. Discussion is underway to bring all five groups closer together with the view to making a combined application for a School AS award in the future.

**(Word count 1221** includes 70 words COVID related text)

## 2. Section 2 – Evaluation of progress against the previous action plan

In section 2, applicants should evidence how they meet Criteria 2 and 3:

- + progress has been made on the previous action plan
- + learning has been demonstrated from the evaluation of progress.

### 2.1 Previous Action plan

#### RI Action plan (in order of appearance in the Athena SWAN application)

Action Plan Priorities are given in the item column as either: (H) – High, (M) – Medium or (L) – Low. Many actions started immediately following award, but are ongoing actions that recur annually. The RAG status of each PAP is given in column 2.

Item	Planned Action/objective	Rationale	Detailed Actions	Timeframe		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome	Ref
				Start	End			
1 (H)	Update and run staff and student annual surveys to provide continually improved, ongoing self-assessment data.  G	Staff and student surveys posed new questions which should be included in future. We also need to assess the successful implementation of actions proposed.	Run surveys each May (staff) and November (students). Process will include a review of the previous surveys to include specific questions to measure the success of action points. Surveys and review process to be included in EDT annual planning cycle and led by EDT survey co-ordinator (EDT-SC) (see Action Point 3)	Jan 2017	Dec 2017 Annual	SAT/EDT co- leads and designated EDT survey co-ordinator EDT-SC.	Annual surveys established and included in EDT planning cycle. At least 75% response rate in each survey. Responses to survey questions compared against Action Points.	3(ii)



<b>2 (H)</b>  <b>G</b>	Biennial review of EDT membership and leadership to ensure full representation of all groups and both genders within RI. Phased inclusion of professional and support staff to prepare for future Athena SWAN Silver award application.	Need to refresh the EDT membership, ensure gender balance, bringing new ideas and offering the opportunity for new leaders of the process.	i) Establish a biennial review of EDT membership and co-leads rotation in April and November, so arrival of new members staggered to allow a smooth transition.	Apr 2018	Nov 2018. <b>Biennial</b>	EDT co-leads, EDT, RI Director	Appointment of 1F and 1M co-convenor.	<b>3(iii)</b>
			ii) Include in EDT planning cycle	Jan 2017	Jan 2018 <b>Annually</b>	EDT co-leads	Appears in planning cycle. Revised and published annually on Rowett Webpage.	
			iii) Inclusion of professional & support staff in EDT	Apr 2017	Nov 2018	EDT co-leads	Recruitment of 4 or more support staff with ~50% F:M	
			iv) Review success of EDT membership review process		Nov 2020	EDT co-leads, EDT, RI Director	Review carried out. Evidence of a smooth review process with good presentation of RI staff	

Item	Planned Action/objective	Rationale	Detailed Actions	Timeframe		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome	Ref
				Start	End			
3 (H)	Actively monitor all Action Plan Points, review survey data and other consultations and develop further strategies. G	Need to accurately assess action plan success and develop new actions	Assign a member of the EDT to act as survey co-ordinator with specific responsibility for overseeing surveys (EDT-SC).		By end Jan 2017 - <b>Annually</b>	EDT co-leads with EDT	Survey co-ordinator assigned. Action plan updated on a quarterly basis. Survey summary published annually on webpage and highlights in newsletter. Survey data discussed with EDT and new actions developed	3(iii)
4 (M)	Create cycle of business and diarise action plan. Formal annual review to determine success of actions and update actions. Publish annual report. G	Allows timeline of actions to be followed and monitored	i) Establish a diary of actions and a business cycle for the EDT which is to be updated regularly and published cycle of business.		By April 2017 <b>Annually</b>	EDT and EDT co-leads	Business cycle and annual report published annually on the Rowett AS webpage. Revisions made to survey and action plan based on annual survey data.	3(iii)
			ii) Establish annual review of actions, publish annual report		By Jan 2018 <b>Annually</b>			
5 (H)	Ensure that the workload model takes into account time spent as part of the EDT. G	Need to acknowledge contribution to ensure continued participation of staff on EDT	Include EDT work in workload model.	Apr 2017	By Sep 2017	UoA senior management, RI Directorate, EDT co-leads	Allocation of a proportionate number of hours reflecting time and effort to EDT for leads and EDT members. Rowett workload model published annually on Rowett AS webpage.	3(iii)
6 (H)	Establish an RI specific data base to monitor staff and student numbers and data related to gender balance issues. G	Identifying up to date RI specific data for the application was difficult	i) assign an individual to act as Equality and Diversity Team (EDT) Data Manager.		By Feb 2017	RI Director	EDT Data Manager appointed.	3(iii)
			ii) Establish database through liaison with key staff eg Technical Resources Manager, QA manager, HR assistant	Mar 2017	Oct 2017	EDT Data Manager	Update staff list at 3 monthly interval and student list at 6 monthly interval.	

Item	Planned Action/objective	Rationale	Detailed Actions	Timeframe		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome	Ref
				Start	End			
7 (M)	PhD student data collected and continually updated to ensure: i) Extensions and submissions are correctly attributed. ii) Source and nationality of PhD students is known. iii) Future careers of PhD students is recorded <b>A</b>	Develop database relating to career pipeline for PhD students.	i) Create data base of current and recent students extensions and submissions	Mar 2017	Accurate records by Sept 2017	EDT Data Manager, Graduate School, RI Post graduate Research Co-ordinator	Accurate RI student data available for analysis whenever required.	4.1 (iv)
			ii) Collect information from current students regarding their previous education and place of study.					
			iii) Collect information from PhDs as they leave and follow up for 5 years.					
8 (H)	Monitor length of time staff spend at a given grade and encourage to apply for promotions. <b>G</b>	Allows us to determine if individuals stall in career progression	Collect accurate data and hold for annual analysis. Staff spending more than 2 years at the top of current grade will be highlighted to IEC. IEC will then contact line manager to discuss.	Apr 2017	Accurate records by Oct 2017 then maintained	EDT Data Manager, HR Partner responsible for data collection/storage. Line managers responsible for encouraging promotion applications.	>75% of survey respondents indicating promotion was discussed.	4.2 (i)
9 (M)	Set up process to systematically assess all aspects of recruitment. <b>G</b>	Views of RI recruitment based only on discussion of SAT with recent appointees. Better information needed	Survey all individuals who joined the RI in the last 12 months and then all new recruits at induction	Apr 2017	Process functioning by Sep 2017	EDT with EDT Data Manager	Better data from which to assess quality of recruitment process in the RI and make specific, informed improvements.	5.1 (i)

Item	Planned Action/objective	Rationale	Detailed Actions	Timeframe		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome	Ref
				Start	End			
<b>10 (M)</b>	Job advertisements to be reviewed using principles recommended by unconscious bias experts. <b>G</b>	Potential for implicit bias in job adverts which we should eliminate	Staff advertising posts will be required to understand how to avoid unconscious bias (see AP 11 below). Advertisements will be reviewed by HR co-ordinator.	May 2017	Procedure adopted by Oct 2017	EDT Co-Lead (LW) EDT	System in place to review job advertisements, applying principles to avoid bias.	<b>5.1 (i)</b>
<b>11 (H)</b>	RI-staff on interview panels attend an unconscious bias seminar at least every 2 years. <b>G</b>	To eliminate any unconscious bias in interview panels	A specific seminar on unconscious bias will be scheduled annually in the RI. Attendance will be recorded and only staff attending within the last 2 years will be permitted on interview panels.	Procedure adopted by Sept 2017	All staff on interview panels will have attended seminar by Sept 2018 <b>Annually revised</b>	RI external seminar series organiser, EDT Co-Lead (LW).	All staff who are potentially engaged in interviewing for posts to have attended unconscious bias lecture every 2yrs – monitored by register.	<b>5.1 (i)</b>
<b>12 (H)</b>	Composition of all recruitment committees will be recorded and this data reviewed by the EDT. <b>G</b>	Need to ensure fair representation of all groups on selection committees	Composition of all recruitment panels will be fed to EDT Data Manager to be held in the RI EDT data base	Mar 2017	Accurate records by Sept 2017 <b>Annual</b>	EDT Data Manager, HR partner, EDT	consistently gender balance recruitment panels	<b>5.1 (i)</b>
<b>13 (M)</b>	Put in place a process to monitor feedback from inductions to identify potential for improvements. <b>G</b>	We need to assess if the RI induction process could be improved	Feedback data collected by the EDT Data Manager and then assessed annually by the EDT	Apr 2017	Process in place by Oct 2017 EDT first report to EDT Jan 2018	EDT Data Manager, liaising with QA and Technical Services manager	Feedback form introduced and returned within 1 week of induction being completed. > 95% rating good or excellent.	<b>5.1 (ii)</b>

<p><b>14 (H)</b></p>	<p>System to determine that promotion is discussed during annual review by recording this in feedback.</p> <p><b>G</b></p>	<p>Staff perception that promotion system is opaque and low application rate suggests that understanding could be improved.</p>	<p>Specific question to determine whether promotion was discussed will be added to the feedback forms on staff reviews</p>	<p>Apr 2017</p>	<p>In time for 2017 annual review</p>	<p>EDT with EDT Data Manager and HR partner</p>	<p>Better information to staff regarding the promotion. More applications for promotion if appropriate. Monitored by staff survey and Annual Review checklist. &gt;80% indicating discussion during annual review.</p>	<p><b>5.1 (iii)</b></p>
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Item	Planned Action/objective	Rationale	Detailed Actions	Timeframe		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome	Ref
				Start	End			
15 (H)	Ensure all staff attend promotion information sessions and provide direct feedback on their usefulness. <b>A</b>	Promotions exercise is perceived as unclear or unfair	Theme leaders and line managers will contact staff directly prior to promotion information session to strongly encourage to attend	Jun 2017	In time for promotions round at end of 2017	EDT, EDT Data Manager, HR partner	Complete, specific information seminar provided and feedback being collected via staff survey and Annual Review checklist. Target <10% indicating further information	5.1 (iii)
16 (H)	Improve career development advice for female staff by mentoring and inspirational female STEM speakers. <b>G</b>	We need to improve visibility of senior female role models and provide advice and support specific to women in science	In conjunction with IMS run an annual seminar dedicated to career advice with invited STEM speakers for female staff will be made a recurrent fixture in the RI seminar series	Apr 2017	First talk before Dec 2017	EDT with EDT Data Manager	Evidence for impact via annual survey of staff and students. >1 indicating seminar promoted thoughts on career development	5.3 (i)
17 (H)	Add checklist to documentation for reviewers to use at annual reviews (see Section 7). <b>G</b>	Need to ensure all relevant topics are covered in each annual review meeting	Generate a checklist to include with documentation for RI annual reviews to ensure all key review topics have been discussed	Mar 2017	Apr 2017	EDT Co-Lead (JR) and EDT	Evidence that staff are better advised on key topics the annual review should cover. Measured in surveys. Target of <10% disagreeing that the checklist was effective	5.3 (ii)
18 (M)	Collate feedback from staff after annual review. <b>G</b>	To acquire better information with which to assess reviewee's experience and improve the review process where possible	i) Put in place protocol for reviewers to ensure full collection of feedback forms from staff after each annual review	Apr 2017	May 2017	HR partner, line managers and IEC (ensuring reviewers collect feedback) assessment of effect). Data collation by the EDT Data Manager.	Improved review process measured by response to questions on review process in annual surveys.	5.3 (ii)
			ii) Discussion group to be held following 2017 round of reviews	Jul 2017	Aug 2017			

Item	Planned Action/objective	Rationale	Detailed Actions	Timeframe		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome	Ref
				Start	End			
19 (H)	Appointment of RI mentoring co-ordinator. <b>A</b>	Need to improve awareness of options for mentors and mentees in mentoring programme	Assign individual to promote mentoring and advise line managers who will discuss mentoring in annual reviews.	Mar 2017	In place in time to report to Oct 2017 EDT	RI Director and IEC, and EDT Co-Lead (JR)	Significantly higher mentoring rates, better awareness of mentoring opportunities (by 2018 survey)	5.3 (iii)
20 (L)	Put in place measures to ensure that students are aware of KE activities. <b>A</b>	Need to improve awareness of possible KE activities to students	Supervisors to highlight KE activities their students could contribute to. Opportunities will also be highlighted at student inductions. We will also add a specific KE page to the media wall.	Mar 2017	Before arrival of new 2017 Oct intake of PhD students	EDT Data Manager, EDT and RI Post Graduate Research Co-ordinator	Increased involvement of students in KE activities and knowledge of them recorded in student survey (2017 and onwards)	5.3 (iv)
21 (M)	Develop a structured 'Grant Academy' system for assisting staff following unsuccessful grant applications. <b>R</b>	Need to improve support and subsequent outcomes for future grant applications	Consult with RI Deputy Director responsible for research and successful senior staff to identify any areas of weakness. Consult academic staff by focus group on preferred support. Define process.	Apr 2017	Process in place by Dec 2017 ready for staff to use by Jan 2018	RI Deputy Director (research), IEC and EDT	Evidence that staff feel better advised how to successfully compete for research funding Measured in surveys (2018 on) and direct feedback after events	5.3 (v)
22 (M)	Organize a focus group with ECRs and later career stage staff to explore their satisfaction with support currently available for grant writing. <b>R</b>	Need to offer better support for those applying for competitive external support	Advertise (e-mail and media wall) and then hold focus group. Define any improvements that should be made. EDT and RI Deputy Director (research) to determine Changes	Mar 2017	Completion for EDT Oct 2017	EDT and RI Deputy Director (research)	Survey and feedback evidence that staff feel better supported and confident in grant writing. Monitor grant success of individuals via the staff survey.	5.3 (v)

Item	Planned Action/objective	Rationale	Detailed Actions	Timeframe		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome	Ref
				Start	End			
23 (M)	A Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) will be put in place to define how cover will be put in place for maternity leave. <b>G</b>	At present work that cannot be done by staff on maternity leave is reallocated to other staff informally.	An SOP will be prepared to cover how work is reallocated when staff are on parental leave	Feb 2017	In place by May 2017	RESAS Theme 3 Coordinator at RI	Relevant SOP in place and in use	5.5 (i)
24 (H)	Appointment of RI Parental Leave Advisor (RI-PLA) to advise prospective parents of rights and helpful resources. RI-PLA will liaise with HR advisor to ensure accurate advice given. <b>G</b>	Need to improve access information relating to maternity/parental leave, childcare etc	A current SAT/EDT member has been identified to take up role of RI-PLA. All staff will be made aware of the RI-PLA via their annual review, induction information, e-mail and the media wall	Apr 2017	Report progress to Jul 2017 EDT	RI Director, IEC and EDT co-leads	Improved experience of finding information and receiving advice relating to parental leave and associated issues.	5.5 (i)
25 (M)	Take part in a UoA wide survey of parents to determine the effect of parental leave on career progression. <b>R</b>	The numbers of parents in the RI who had taken maternity/parental leave was too low to draw conclusions from the survey data.	Press for a UoA wide survey of parents that would take place in 2017. This may take the form of a unified question set in staff surveys across multiple departments and collated by the EDT Data Manager.	Feb 2017	Unified question in staff survey May 2017 if possible but co-ordination required may delay this	EDT Co-Leads , HR partner, RI-PLA in consultation with EDT Leads from other departments and the UoA Gender Equality Steering Group	More reliable data regarding the impact of maternity and parental leave on career development to inform future actions	5.5 (iii)
26 (M)	Ensure recognition for staff covering those taking maternity/parental leave <b>G</b>	Staff covering for those on leave do not always feel their contribution is appropriately acknowledged	A system to more formally recognise the contributions of staff covering parental leave This will be specifically noted in annual review by line managers	Feb 2017	In place for 2017 annual reviews Assessment/ review by EDT-FWG at Jan 2018 EDT meeting	EDT, RI Director	Contributions made officially recorded in annual reviews. A new question will be used in the survey to measure response.	5.5 (v)



Item	Planned Action/objective	Rationale	Detailed Actions	Timeframe		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome	Ref
				Start	End			
27 (M)	Put out targeted messages from the RI Director to line managers and staff to promote a positive attitude to flexible working. <b>G</b>	Survey suggested some staff feel flexible working is not encouraged. This should be improved.	Director will contact all line managers to ensure that all staff receive appropriate, supportive advice during annual reviews. Media wall and e-mail will be used to better inform staff about flexible working	Mar 2017	Line managers contacted before 2017 annual reviews. Staff informed by media wall and e-mail by Jun 2017	RI Director, EDT	Improved responses in staff survey regarding perceptions of flexible working	5.5 (vi)
28 (M)	Ensure the option of changing hours after maternity leave or a career break is flagged up to staff before or during period of leave. <b>G</b>	To improve information available to those taking maternity leave or career breaks in a timely way	Line managers and RI-PLA will make sure staff are aware of options before leave is taken. This will be monitored by RI-PLA and reported to the EDT. Success measured via specific question in the 2018 surveys.	Jun 2017	In place by Oct 2017	HR partner, RI-PLA, EDT	Improved knowledge and greater staff satisfaction with provision of information relating to return to work. Increased satisfaction in staff surveys	5.5 (vii)
29 (M)	Obtain specific feedback from individuals who have taken career breaks to determine how to improve support <b>G</b>	Staff survey suggested up to 40% of staff might not feel fully supported during or after a career break. However, the reasons for this were not clear	Staff who have taken a career break will be contacted by the EDT-flexible working group to determine any improvements that could be made. EDT may suggest new questions to include in staff surveys and follow up with future actions.	Feb 2017	EDT-flexible working group to report to EDT meeting Jul 2017	EDT-flexible working group	Improved understanding of problems with support during or after career breaks by interviewing staff to identify specific problems.	5.5 (vii)
30 (M)	Review our communications network by obtaining the views of all staff <b>G</b>	Changing structure of RI has led to changes in staff communications structure. It is important to determine if this is working well	E-mails and networking opportunities eg 'café culture' events will be used along with the staff surveys to determine staff views and seek suggestions for any improvements. New questions to appear in 2017 and 2018 survey	Mar 2017	KE co-ordinator to report progress/ findings to EDT Jul 2017	KE co-ordinator, EDT, EDT-SC (where new questions added to survey)	Clearer information as to whether communication to and from staff and management is working well and how it may be improved. Improvements measured by positive survey responses	5.6 (i)

Item	Planned Action/objective	Rationale	Detailed Actions	Timeframe		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome	Ref
				Start	End			
31 (H)	Monitor gender balance on RI committees to maintain accurate and up-to-date information for assessment <b>G</b>	Need to ensure that we systematically analyse gender balance on all committees to prevent bias	Data about committee gender balance to be collected by the EDT Data Manager. Committees to be formed by application and selected to provide gender balance	Mar 2017	Report progress to Jul 2017 EDT Committee selection process formulated by Mar 2018	EDT Data Manager. IEC and Directorate define committees when application and selection is possible and mechanisms	More consistent gender balance on committees and accurate data to assess this	5.6 (iii)
32 (M)	Ensure that participation on external committees is recognised in annual review and workload model. <b>G</b>	Some RI staff felt that these contributions were not recognised appropriately	External committee membership will be monitored and noted during the annual review process	Feb 2017	In place for 2017 annual reviews	HR partner, EDT Co-Leads, IEC, EDT- SC (gathering subsequent survey information)	Better staff satisfaction that their contributions outside the UoA are recognised where appropriate. Monitored by staff survey	5.6 (iv)
33 (H)	Add specific question(s) to the annual survey in 2018 to evaluate views of the new workload model. <b>G</b>	Workload model is new so important to have feedback from staff	Questions relating to how well the workload model is understood or performs will be included in the 2018 survey	Jan 2018	In place for 2018 staff survey	EDT, EDT-SC	Appropriate questions appear in the 2018 staff survey. Information gathered regarding staff views of workload model	5.6 (v)
34 (M)	Add specific question(s) to the annual survey in 2018 to determine if timing of meetings can be improved. <b>G</b>	Staff survey suggested some staff found it difficult/impossible to attend some meetings but it was not clear why	Add new questions to 2017 staff survey to determine the reasons for this	Jan 2017	In place for 2017 survey	EDT, EDT-SC	Appropriate questions appear in the 2017 staff survey. Information gathered regarding why staff may be unable to attend all meetings	5.6 (vi)

Item	Planned Action/objective	Rationale	Detailed Actions	Timeframe		Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome	Ref
				Start	End			
35 (M)	To ensure gender and ethnicity balance in material on all RI intra and internet web-sites. <b>G</b>	Need to ensure that the image projected by all online literature is inclusive for all ethnicities and both genders	RI KE Co-ordinator will monitor and report to EDT. They will ensure no bias in RI literature or online images and visible role models for all groups where possible	Feb 2017	Report progress to Apr and Jul 2017 EDT	RI KE Co-ordinator, EDT	Improved image of the RI as an inclusive workplace and more visible, positive role models for staff and students.	5.6 (vii)
36 (H)	Ensure that public/stakeholder engagement work is recognised in the new workload model. <b>G</b>	Some RI staff felt that these contributions were not recognised appropriately	Public/stakeholder engagement work will be monitored and noted during the annual review process and included in data gathering from staff regarding workload/commitments	Feb 2017	In place for 2017 annual reviews then ongoing	HR partner, EDT Co-Leads, IEC, RI Science Officer and EDT data manager	Better staff satisfaction that contributions to public/stakeholder engagement work are recognised. Monitored by staff survey	5.6 (viii)
37 (L)	Set up system for the collection of audience information and evaluation from public engagement events. <b>R</b>	We do not have a means to systematically assess the composition of audiences or how they perceive/value the public engagements activities of RI staff and students.	All staff will be asked to use the feedback forms at their public engagement activities and return these to RI Science Officer who will liaise with EDT data manager for analysis	Apr 2017	Oct 2017	RI Science Officer and EDT data manager	Systematic collection of evaluations of RI staff public engagement activities. Better appreciation of the impact of RI engagement work	5.6 (viii)

Item	Planned Action/objective	Rationale	Detailed Actions	Timeframe Start	End	Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome	Ref
38 (M)  A	Build a resource of useful information for staff and Early Career Researchers (ECRs) on our AS webpage.	To provide easy access to relevant information for staff and ECRs. Information publicly available to demonstrate to potential applicants Institute commitment to equality and diversity	Build webpage resource section with useful information including links to information and videos on unconscious bias, working from home	Apr20	Apr21	EDT co- leads and designated EDT Webpage administrator	Usefulness assessed in annual staff and student surveys. >50% of those viewing providing positive feedback. Use recruitment survey to assess access and impact among newly recruited staff.	Extn
39 (M)  A	Development of online inductions to support face-face induction process.	The amount of information at the initial induction can be overwhelming, and staff may not assimilate everything. An online resource to made available to review induction information, after completion of the face-face process. Also provides support for the induction process during CoVID-19 social distancing measures.	Each presenter within the induction process to record their information on a powerpoint or similar presentation. Presentations to be available via Rowett Intranet AS webpage, with access route illustrated after induction meeting.	Jul 20	Dec 20	QA manager	All Induction presentations complete and available via the Webpage. Success monitored on induction feedback form. > 50% of respondents to find this approach useful.	Extn

<p><b>40 (H)</b></p>	<p>Ensure all staff receive communications and information during Covid-19 enforced blended working. Ensure meeting scheduling considers staff locations.</p> <p><b>G</b></p>	<p>With not all staff present in the same place more effort required to ensure information flow reaches everyone at all grades and locations</p>	<p>Enable participation at alternate theme meetings</p> <p>Email from senior management to increase awareness of newsletter as primary communication channel</p> <p>Time meetings with staff members appropriately to accommodate staff who may be in the Rowett and those still at home</p>	<p>March 2020</p>	<p>Aug 2021</p>	<p>EDT co-leads, EDT-Web</p>	<p>Effectiveness of communications measured in annual survey. &gt;75% satisfaction with communications</p>	<p><b>Extn</b></p>
<p>Extn signifies actions added following the one year extension we were granted to our Bronze award validity (from 4 to 5 years, as recommended by the Independent Athena Swan Review)</p>								

## 2.2 Progress Report

### **Recommended word count: 2000 words**

Since establishment of the EDT and our successful Bronze application in 2016, appreciation of the Institute's commitment to E&D has become embedded as evidenced by responses in our annual staff and student surveys, culminating in the 2020 survey when 94% of staff recognised the AS aspirations (Table 7) an increase from 82% in 2017 survey.

### **Methods used to evaluate the Rowett Institute's progress on actions**

Due to COVID, since March 2020 to the present time, many staff have been working primarily from home, only returning to work at the institute in laboratories when necessary. However, we have continued to be committed to our action plan and have monitored progress and measured success through analysis of quantitative data and feedback obtained in staff surveys, with actions extended or modified accordingly.

### **Panel feedback provided on the previous application**

Many features of our previous application were commended by the assessment panel, but there were also points for consideration. We are pleased to report that good progress has been made in respect of the issues raised, as follows:

- **Lack of clarity on the induction process by a significant number of new staff.**

We did not previously gather feedback on the induction process. Consequently in 2018 we introduced a compulsory feedback form (implemented by QA manager) after the induction process for all new staff and students (PAP13). Feedback is given as a rating and suggestions can be made for improvements. The ratings received, range from *good* to *excellent* with no-one rating the induction process as poor. Most comments were very positive (:- eg "*Thank you so much for this excellent induction pack. I think it was useful totally and I was well-orientated for this programme*").

One comment criticised the quality of information contained in the *in-house* induction manual. This led directly to our induction manual being updated and improved in 2020.

These improvements included the addition of new sections promoting E&D activities and mentoring. The information on E&D and mentoring is given by an EDT member who is the institute's mentor advisor. By actively promoting mentoring to new staff during the induction process, we hope to increase mentoring rates (currently 4 mentors – 3W,1M; 2 Mentees -0W, 2M) and enhance subsequent career progression.

- **The panel identified that not all staff were clear about the promotion process.**

As a result of this comment, in 2018 we organised a staff promotion seminar (run by HR) to clarify the promotion process (well attended, but attendance not recorded). Our recent survey data (2020) found that more than 80% staff (50% in 2016) understand the promotion process (88%W (36), 72%M (21)) and only 7% (10%W (3), 5%M (2)) say they require training (20% in 2016), some of whom may be new members of staff. To ensure staff remain informed, we will organise these sessions every two years and will record attendance and feedback by gender (**AP13**). This initiative has developed into a schoolwide process.

**AP13:** Clarity of the criteria to be achieved for staff who are at the top of their grade to qualify for contribution awards or further promotion

Going forward, we will schedule regular HR line-manager training sessions to maintain awareness of new developments (**AP12**) and ensure that all staff are aware of the support available by targeted communications prior to the launch of the annual promotion round. Additionally, to stimulate promotion applications we schedule bookable meetings with HR and role analysts, offering one-to-one advice and review of applications (**AP14**).

**AP12:** Organise line manager workshops every two years for new staff and as a refresher for experienced line managers

**AP14:** Arrange annually scheduled bookable meetings in confidence with HR for individuals considering a promotion application for bespoke guidance

- **Staff perception of Annual Review (AR) process was not gender disaggregated.** The staff surveys include a question aimed at exploring the perception of staff about the AR process. Unfortunately, due to an oversight when moving survey hosting platform, survey data could not be gender disaggregated in 2017 and 2018 surveys. We addressed this issue by obtaining a license for a different survey platform, which has allowed us to gender disaggregate the data for subsequent surveys. Since 2019, our survey data suggest there is little evidence of gender differences in perceptions of the annual review, with 90% of both men and women respondents indicating that each of career progression, promotion, staff development, mentoring and workload, were usefully discussed during their AR meeting. An exception was that more men (17%M (4) versus 10%W (4)) did not think staff development was usefully discussed. To address this issue, we will strengthen our AR checklist to make sure all these key aspects are discussed as a sub-action of **AP13**.
- **Research grant application success rates not disaggregated by gender.** We have now obtained this data which shows women are slightly more productive and successful (Table 8).

Grant applications		
	Women	Men
Submitted applications (256)	58%	42%
Success rate (121)	50%	45%

**Table 8. Averaged grant application submissions and success rate from 2015 -to date**

- **Lack of understanding of KIT days during maternity/paternity leave among staff.**

In 2019 we organised an information session on family leave polices, entitlements and support which was well attended (attendance not recorded) by institute and other SMMSN staff.

In 2019 the University produced a helpful Parents' guidebook explaining the types of leave, entitlements including Keep In Touch (KIT) days and support available for parents-to-be, those with new-born or adopted children. We have included a link to this guide on the section in our resource centre of our E&D webpage. A University Parents and Carers Network was established in 2018. Details and contacts appear in our resource centre on our webpage.

- **The culture of the institute was identified as an area for improvement.**

Staff surveys since 2018 show that some progress has been made in respect to improving the culture of the institute [Note, due to COVID, questions were removed in 2020 to facilitate the introduction of questions specific to the home-working environment] (Table 9). Although the number of survey terms describing the working environment receiving positive responses increased between 2018 and 2019, we recognise that this is still an area that requires further action (AP26).

**AP26:** Change the perception of the culture in RI and create a welcoming, inclusive and supportive environment.

Working environment	2018	2019	2019 data by gender	
	%	%	%M	%W
Inclusive	42 (33)	44 (39)	50 (13)	47 (23)
Supportive	64 (50)	57 (50)	58 (15)	63 (31)
Welcoming	40 (32)	45 (40)	58 (15)	45 (22)
Sociable	40 (32)	45 (40)	46 (12)	51 (25)
Happy	25 (20)	28 (25)	35 (9)	29 (14)
Cliquey	10 (8)	18 (16)	12 (3)	16 (8)

**Table 9. 2018 and 2019 Survey data indicating the proportion of respondents who strongly agree or agree that the working environment is [for terms indicated], with gender breakdown for 2019, the last available data.**

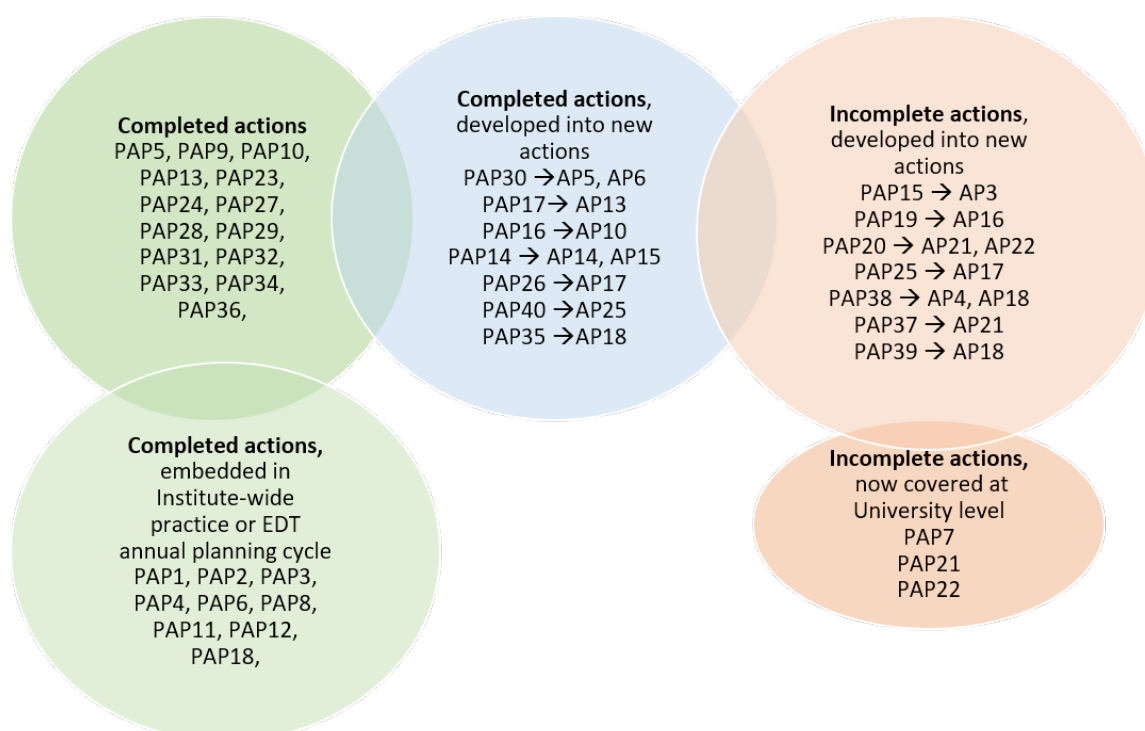


Survey opinions in 2018 (Table 9) may have been influenced by limited social gatherings during establishment of our new building, coinciding with the retirement of staff who were key members of the social committee. Re-introduced successful social gatherings (since 2018 but pre-COVID) include theme level Christmas lunches, intermittent group-level pot-luck suppers, Institute-wide Christmas parties, a SMMSN-wide annual staff barbeque, regular bake sales and leaving/retirement celebrations (many held during working hours). A running club and book club have also been established.

In the past year we have revamped the social committee and are establishing a range of events, (online and planning for in-person events), further addressing **AP26**. Some of these are in response to a short staff questionnaire we issued in 2020. The monthly online quiz we developed during the lockdown period, has proven very popular with 40-50 staff regularly taking part. This expanded to a SMMSN-wide Christmas quiz involving 120 people in 20 teams. Online coffee mornings established within groups have been successful in maintaining social contact whilst home working during the pandemic, and the Book Club bi-monthly 'meetings' have continued, albeit online.

### **Previous action plan**

Over the course of the last four years, we have fully achieved the majority 75% (30) of actions set out in our previous action plan (summarised in Figure 4). No major barriers were encountered in implementing the action plan and senior management have been fully supportive. The assessment panel on our previous application noted "that the action plan could be more SMART, particularly success measures"; this was in part because many of the success criteria and outcomes of the PAP actions were qualitative. We addressed this by adding specific targets or better-defined measures of success which could be quantified from responses to our annual staff survey. We also identified that several of the actions in the PAP with given end dates really require action annually. For example, questions included in staff and student surveys are continually reviewed and updated (as part of the EDT annual calendar) to ensure we can capture relevant information and feedback, crucial for evaluating the success of EDT actions.



**Figure 4 – Summary of completion status of actions of the previous action plan**

Successful actions in our previous action plan include: -

PAP17 – The addition of the discussion checklist to AR documentation successfully ensures discussion occurs on issues including promotion (PAP14), workload, career development and recognition of work to cover parental leave (PAP26). In the 2019 survey, only 4W and 4M (2020 survey carried out before AR) respondents stated that these aspects were not usefully discussed in their annual review. The annual STEMM speaker, introduced in 2018 (PAP16) has led both staff (14% (9)) and students (25%, (5)) to think about their own career development.

PAP27 – introduced to promote flexible working, via a discussion point on the annual review checklist. This led to the number of staff recognising that the Institute supports flexible working increasing from 65% (2018) to >81% (2020, 81% (33)W, 83% (24)M, 73% (8)PNTA). In the 2020 staff survey 61% of staff (61% (25)W:68% (19)M) indicated that they had a flexible working arrangement with their line manager.

PAP30 – the institute communications network, particularly communication from senior management, attracts some criticism every year. To improve this, we implemented a monthly contribution to our fortnightly newsletter from the institute director. The 2020 survey saw a significant improvement in staff responding ‘yes’ to the question “Are communications between staff and the management team effective?” from 22.9% (19) in 2018 to 42% (34) in 2020 (51% (21)W, 45% (13)M). However, two actions focus on further improvement (**AP5, 6**).

**AP5:** Improve timing of Institute theme meetings.

**AP6:** Improve the effectiveness of communications between management and staff

## Athena SWAN Departmental Renewal Application

Progress towards achieving actions in our previous action plan are summarised in Figure 4. Those that were partially implemented include: -

PAP7 – We have created and maintain a database of Rowett PhD students. Since the school already collects and administers the data for Rowett PhD students, additional sub-actions were subsequently viewed as duplication. It is also considered unrealistic to follow-up PhD students for 5 years beyond completion of study.

PAP15 – Promotion information session was held, but attendance and feedback were not collected. Lack of data collection has previously been a weakness for the EDT and we aim to improve this (**AP3**).

PAP19 – In 2017 we appointed a mentor co-ordinator to increase engagement with the mentoring system, yet mentoring rates in the institute have not increased. Further action has been incorporated in our future action plan (**AP16**).

**AP16:** Promote the benefits of mentoring to increase the number of applications and success rate for promotion among all academic staff

PAP20 – Although PGR students take part in KE activities, we have not yet included a question in the student survey to monitor involvement. However, this will be addressed by two actions in the new action plan (**AP21,22**).

**AP21:** Promote and enable participation in KE to foster gender equality, racial and ethnic diversity in science

**AP22:** Lobby HoS & director for recognition for involvement in KE activities

PAP21 and PAP22 (Red) were not actioned because the School introduced an equivalent school-wide grant academy giving advice on writing and applying for grants. Grant applications are assessed at Institute level using assessors with appropriate expertise from the institute or the wider school as required. Constructive feedback is provided, and mentors appointed to develop grant applications to their full potential before submission.

PAP25 (Red) was reliant on the UoA undertaking a staff-wide survey to determine the effect of parental leave on career progression, which did not occur. Consequently, our annual staff survey invites comments relating to family and parental leave. This was intentionally broadened to accommodate RI staff demographic. As we have very few staff taking parental leave, going forward whenever such leave is taken, we will invite feedback on the process of taking leave and returning to work (**AP17**).

**AP17:** To seek feedback on the support for parental leave and returning to work

PAP37 (Red) Audience participation data was considered irrelevant to the issue of gender balance and equality within institute staff and students.

We have implemented new, successful initiatives resulting either from feedback from the annual staff survey or new actions incorporated in August 2020 (PAP38-40).

1. The introduction of AS news in the fortnightly Rowett newsletter. The information includes news of upcoming events, courses and activities. This has been further

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enhanced by the inclusion of a communication to all staff by the institute director. This has resulted in many positive comments about the newsletter from staff and most agree with the statement “highlights social activities and promotes staff development opportunities” (staff survey 2020, 74% (30)W, 87% (25)M ).

2. We have introduced a resource centre on our webpage with ‘Resources for Staff’ and ‘Resources for Early Career Researchers’. These sections are continually updated with new relevant information, and additions are highlighted in the Newsletter (PAP38). The impact of this action will be assessed in future (AP4). EDT subgroups are focussed on developing these online resources.
3. We developed an online induction process to support the face-to-face induction process. Presentations are gradually being recorded and added to our resource centre but is not yet complete (PAP39).
4. We have surveyed staff and students on the impact lockdown may have had on work and career progression with the inclusion of an additional section in the 2020 staff survey (PAP40, 100% of staff and student respondents, M&W completed these questions). This has identified additional caring responsibilities with an impact on work and increased workload (Table 10) with a predicted effect on work-related productivity.

Impact of COVID	M		W	
	Number	%	Number	%
Additional caring responsibility	19	66	14	65
Caring impacting work	13	52	6	23
Increased workload	14	48	22	54

**Table 10. 2020 Survey data showing the number of staff agreeing that COVID impacted on caring and workload**

Predicted impact	M		W	
	Number	%	Number	%
Publication output	16	67	9	35
Grant applications & success	9	38	7	27
Promotion prospects	9	38	12	46

**Table 11. 2020 Survey data indicating number of staff predicting a negative future impact of COVID on work-related productivity**

Some staff predict an impact on publication output, grant application success and promotion prospects. (Table 11). We will continue to assess the impact of COVID, with further actions developed as required (AP25).

**AP25:** Monitoring the effects of the COVID pandemic on staff performance and reporting outcomes to IEC for further action

The main learnings from evaluation of the action plan are that delivering the action plan is a continually evolving, dynamic process, and even once 'achieved', actions have to be monitored, adapted and developed to maintain momentum. The annual staff survey is critical in measuring achievements and it is important to provide sufficient 'free text' response boxes for staff to provide opinions about what is going well, going badly and additional things that could be considered. Many of our new actions have developed from such direct staff feedback.

(Word count 2195 including Covid related text 220)

### 3. Section 3 – Future priorities and action plan

In section 3, applicants should evidence how they meet Criteria 4 and 5:

- + key priorities have been appropriately identified, to direct future action
- + a specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) action plan has been provided, which addresses priorities.

#### 3.1 Current self-assessment and future priorities

**Recommended word count: 1500 words**

Based on data obtained from our annual survey, HR, student admissions and staff feedback, the key priority areas in the next five years and the associated action plan are detailed below.

##### **Student enrolment, progression and support**

Enrolment data from student admissions up to 2020 show that fewer men register for our on-campus nutrition courses (1-9M [6-34%] between 2017 to date). This is consistent with HESA data for UK postgraduate courses in nutrition (Table 12).

<b>HESA 2020 data for postgraduate study in Nutrition and dietetics</b>		
	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>
Full-time study	940 (78%)	270 (22%)
Part-time study	540 (86%)	95 (14%)

**Table 12. HESA 2020 data showing UK-wide enrolment for postgraduate study in Nutrition and dietetics**

Nutrition is important for both health and social wellbeing for everyone. As future researchers, advisors and communicators who develop from courses such as ours act as exemplars in the field of nutrition, it is important to have gender balance in nutrition education. This message will be enhanced with promotion of E&D issues in our taught courses (AP9).

**AP9:** Increase awareness among postgraduate students of equality and diversity challenges within the field of nutrition research.

PGR studentships are offered in open competition or may be self-funded. The current gender profile of all RI PGR students shows an under-representation of men (Table 13).

PGR student recruitment		
	Women	Men
All PGR including self-funded	18 (78%)	5 (22%)
Open competition	10 (77%)	3 (23%)

**Table 13. Gender profile of current cohort of postgraduate research students studying at RI**

Notably 2018 and 2020 cohorts are entirely female (eight and three respectively). To address postgraduate student (PGR and PGT) gender balance, we propose to attract more applications from men by ensuring marketing, communications and general outreach reflect gender and ethnic balance and lobby HoS to ensure RI and school selection panel members have undergone unconscious bias training (AP7). **Therefore, we identify increasing the proportion of male students in postgraduate study at RI as one of our priorities.**

**AP7:** Increase the proportion of male postgraduate students for both Rowett MSc nutrition courses, and PhD study

Only 25% of PGR students thought that they were well supported in making the transition from postgraduate study to the next career step (1W, 4M). Therefore, we will ensure further support is made available (AP8) and enhanced with E&D training (AP9).

**AP8:** Improve careers advice and support for postgraduate research students

### Key career transition points

#### Women on teaching and research contracts.

Table 14 summarises the university grading system in relation to career paths.

The demographic profile within RI has remained largely static with respect to Research Only contracts which make up the majority of academic contracts, with women comprising 52±3% of this staff cohort over the past five years. Gender distribution has been generally balanced (40-60%W) within grades with >1 employee, although Grade

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6 staff dropped from 55%W to 27%W in 2019/20 (Table 15), due to expiry of funding-limited and fixed-term contracts.

However, we have a substantial and growing gender imbalance among staff on Teaching and Research (T&R) contracts. Since 2015 the number of women in T&R roles decreased from 1 to 0, while the number of men increased from 4 to 6 (Table 16). Furthermore, the three recent Grade 7 Lecturer appointments, the only grade to which T&R staff have been appointed since 2015/16, are male. Therefore, a **key priority is recruitment of women to T&R positions** whenever externally advertised positions become available, unless we have achieved gender balance through internal redeployments (**AP20**). This will be aided by demonstrating our commitment to gender equality on our AS resource centre and striving to eliminate the potential for unconscious bias in selection processes (**AP18, 19**).

**AP18:** Review Rowett Institute resource centre on our AS webpage

**AP19:** Reduce unconscious bias in recruitment process.

**AP20:** Increase the number of female staff in Teaching and Research posts

<b>Career Path</b>		
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Research Only</b>	<b>Teaching &amp; Research (T&amp;R)</b>
5/6	Research Assistant (RA)	
6	Research Fellow (RF)	
7	Research Fellow	Lecturer
8	Senior Research Fellow (Snr RF)/Reader	Senior Lecturer/Reader
9	Professor	Professor

**Table 14. Aberdeen University career paths and grades**

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Role and grade	Academic Staff (Headcount) – Research Only														
	2015/16			2016/17			2017/18			2018/19			2019/20		
	W	M	%W	W	M	%W	W	M	%W	W	M	%W	W	M	%W
RA Grade 5	1	0	100	4	0	100	1	0	100	1	1	50	1	0	100
RA Grade 6	1	0	100	1	0	100	1	0	100	1	0	100	1	0	100
RF Grade 6	10	14	42	10	13	43	11	11	50	11	9	55	3	8	27
RF Grade 7	6	3	67	4	4	50	4	5	44	4	4	50	3	4	43
Snr RF Grade 8	9	4	69	7	4	64	5	4	56	4	4	50	5	4	56
Professor Grade 9	2	5	29	3	5	38	5	4	56	6	4	60	5	3	63
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>49</b>

**Table 15. Distribution of Research Only Staff by grade and gender 2015-2020. Data are a snapshot as 31<sup>st</sup> July of each year**

Role and grade	Academic staff (Headcount) - Teaching and Research Staff														
	2015/16			2016/17			2017/18			2018/19			2019/20		
	W	M	%W	W	M	%W	W	M	%W	F	M	%W	W	M	%W
Lecturer Grade 7	1	1	50	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	3	0
Senior Lecturer Grade 8	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Reader Grade 8	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	2	0
Professor Grade 9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>

**Table 16. Distribution of Teaching and Research (T&R) Staff by grade and gender 2015-2020. Data are a snapshot as 31<sup>st</sup> July of each year**



**Career development**

Several previous actions (PAP15-17) have collectively contributed to the success for the institute in the number of women promoted to Grade 9 during the last 5 years (3 successful applications, Table 17) with a current gender profile of 5W:3M at this grade.



**Table 17. Promotion applications and successes for grades applied for 2016-2020 (note – no data for 2019/20 as promotion round suspended due to COVID) – data redacted.**

Further analysis of the promotion data (Table 17) also emphasises the paucity in total promotion applications to grade 7 and 8 in the last 5 years (xxx), and the poor success rate (30%). A contributing factor to a low number of applications for promotion, particularly among staff on open-ended funding/activity limited contracts (generally grade 6) could be a belief that grant funded academic staff cannot be promoted. Poor mentoring rates among staff, and recent survey data which revealed 47% of staff were unaware of our mentor advisor, are additional factors that may contribute to low numbers of promotion applications. Further we do not know if lack of training opportunities presents a barrier for promotion. Therefore, **a priority through several actions is to try and increase promotion applications from all staff (AP11, AP14-16)**. We will hold an information session on mentoring to inform and encourage all academic staff, including those on time limited open-ended contracts, to use mentoring to their full advantage (AP16). Furthermore, mentoring will be promoted directly to new staff during the Induction process after starting at RI (AP16). Assistance with applications or experience required for promotion will be provide through AP14.

- AP11:** We will monitor and record uptake of training activities by gender
- AP15:** Increase the number of men applying for promotion
- AP16:** Promote the benefits of mentoring to increase the number of applications and success rate for promotion among all academic staff

More broadly, across all staff, proportionally fewer men apply for promotion. This is exemplified in promotion data within Grades 7-9 (Table 17) but occurs across all grades. In the past 5 years, there have been a total of xx promotion applications from women (xx) and xx from men (xx). The lower number of applications from men is coupled with a lower success rate (xx M, xx W). The staff survey data indicate lack of support (xx), lack of information (xx) and low confidence (xx), but this is no worse for men than women. To understand whether there are any perceived barriers among men to apply for promotion which are not covered in the current survey questions, a confidential open text survey will be conducted to gather information and inform further action as appropriate (AP15).

**As a priority** which will benefit all staff, we will put in place an advertised, dedicated sessions for bookable one-to-one appointments to encourage staff to talk to an HR representative in confidence about promotion prior to the start of each annual promotion round (AP14). It is envisaged staff could invite their line managers to these sessions (if wished), so promotion applications can be developed together, enabling identification of gaps in applications and actions to fill gaps in the requirements for promotion.

### **Flexible working and career breaks**

The Institute's supportive attitude to flexible working is a key strength, with 81% of staff agreeing that RI management supports flexible working, and 61% have flexible working arrangements (as previously discussed section 2.2).

Only xx female staff members have taken maternity leave in the last five years and no male staff were recorded as having taken paternity leave. xx of the women utilized KIT days to keep in touch with developments at work. From such low numbers of parental leave, we cannot determine if there is any issue with the perception of flexible working with respect to bringing up children. However, we have recently organised an information session on family leave policies and placed a recently produced University parents' guidebook with information on the types of family leave in our online resource centre. Going forward we will invite all staff taking maternity/paternity leave to give feedback on the support for parental leave and during return to work (AP17).

### **Organisation and culture**

Staff responses in the 2020 survey show there is no gender difference in perception of access to laboratory space, career development opportunities and administrative support (>80% positive responses, both M&W). For promotion, 72% indicate no gender difference (76%W (31), 72%M (21)). Responses from 2018 and 2019 surveys show that culture within the institute is still a concern (these questions were removed in 2020 to enable inclusion of COVID-specific questions while staff worked remotely from home). Although some aspects improved in 2019, staff still perceived the institute as unsupportive and cliquy (Table 9).

Concerns about how RESAS manage our Research programme and ongoing uncertainty about future funding of the programme may contribute to a low score for happiness, but perception of support, inclusivity and cliquiness is more dependent on communication and social interactions within RI. While there have been social activities

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organised such as establishment of a running club, book club and an annual Christmas party, only the Christmas party attracts widespread participation. Therefore, **we identify an improvement in culture within RI as a priority for action**. This we feel not only involves organising social events, but proper celebration of work-related successes and achievements, such as PhD and grant successes. This will involve increasing the role of the new social committee in organising a range of events, including events to celebrate success and achievement (**AP26**). These latter events will appeal to all staff in the institute which we think will also foster more communication among staff and alleviate the perception of cliquiness. We have also introduced a regular section “Celebrating success” in our fortnightly newsletter.

Organisational and cultural efforts to achieve gender and ethnicity balance include unconscious bias training (mandatory for PIs) and increasing the visibility of women in science through seminars (**AP19, 23, 24**) by women, encouraging and recognising the value of KE activities to promote equality in science (**AP22**) and ensuring gender balance of women in images used on our webpage, which currently feature women extensively, including different ethnicities. To date, there has been wide variation in the annual number of women presenting seminars to the institute. We therefore have a new action aimed at achieving more consistent gender balance in seminar speakers (**AP23**).

These seminars include an annual STEMM seminar (PAP16) by a female speaker who includes a discussion of her career path/problems encountered for women in science. This important feature in the seminar calendar will be supported by appointment of EDT staff and student STEMM seminar co-ordinators (**AP10**). However, with 70% of staff at grade 9 being women, we hope this will be its own advertisement, inspirational for ECR's and encouragement for women seeking posts at RI to apply.

**AP10:** Appoint a staff and a student STEMM lecture co-ordinator

**AP23:** We will aim for gender balance of seminar speakers.

**(Word count 1533)**

### 3.2 Future Action plan

Please provide (in table format) an action plan covering the four-year award period.

**RI SMART Action plan for application 2021 (Specific, Measurable, Agreed/Attainable, Realistic, Time-bound)**

**Action Plan Priorities (in the item column) are either: (H) – High, (M) – Medium or (L) – Low.**

Item	Planned Action/Objective	Rationale	Detailed Action	Timeframe Start/End	Person Responsible	Success Criteria
<b>The self-assessment process</b>						
<b>1 (M)</b>	Formally establish deputy co-leads soon after the biennial succession of new co-leads	Appointment of deputy co-leads soon after the succession of new EDT co-leads, will provide the opportunity for mentoring for future lead roles and maintain continuity. Successors will be part of the core EDT meetings	Nomination of deputy co-leads in consultation with EDT and director	Oct21 Biennial occurrence	EDT and director	First Succession planning established by Jan 22 Deputy co-leads appointed within 3 months of co-lead succession
<b>2 (M)</b>	EDT to receive updates and reports from working subgroups	Working subgroups have been recently established within the EDT to evaluate relevant survey data, feed in views and recommendations to the EDT and identify new issues relevant to the remit of the EDT for discussion.	EDT to invite subgroups to update the core EDT group on a monthly basis and receive reports at quarterly EDT meetings from each subgroup.	Feb22 - Feb25	EDT co-leads	Established reporting of updates and recommendations from all EDT-working subgroups at the quarterly meetings by Feb 22.  Recommendations and any identified actions will be

						recorded in minutes of EDT and actions included in the agenda for discussion at the subsequent IEC meeting.
<b>3 (M)</b>	Establish a record of attendance and feedback at EDT organised events	We have previously organised events such as promotion and family policy information sessions, but we have not recorded attendance by gender or feedback in these events.	Assign responsibility to an EDT member for taking an attendance record at EDT organised institute information sessions.	From Jan22 at each event	EDT Admin support	Person assigned responsibility for attendance/feedback records. Statistical information (disaggregated by gender) on EDT organised events presented annually at EDT meeting.
<b>4 (M)</b>	Assess the impact of our actions by introducing a new section 'Impact of actions' in our annual survey.	In our previous annual surveys, we have never specifically assessed the impact of our previous actions. We believe that a new section 'Impact of actions' in our future annual surveys, updated annually, will help us measure the impact and effectiveness of our previous actions	(i) Introduce a new section in our annual survey and revise it on an annual basis.  (ii) Analyse results of the new impact section to determine whether new and existing actions are working and gauge whether improvements have been effective or if additional new actions are required.	Nov21 with annual revision  Jan22 annually	EDT Survey group lead	(i) Impact section added to 2021 survey.  (ii) Survey data (with response rate of at least 70%) indicate that at least 75% of respondents indicate that the actions introduced by the EDT have had an impact. Actions that are not seen as successful, suggestions added

	Analysis of survey data disaggregated by gender	It is important to be able to disaggregate survey data in respect of gender to identify gender-specific issues When the annual staff survey moved to a survey Monkey platform (several years ago) consideration of the need to be able to disaggregate data in respect of gender was not taken into account.	(iii) Analysis of survey data by to identify gender specific trends in our responses which require action.	Jan22 Annually		to open text boxes, or any gender specific issues, are further reviewed.  iii) This will enable us to identify if new actions have different impacts on female or male colleagues and similarly in respect of our postgraduate research students.
<b>Communication</b>						
<b>5 (M)</b>	Improve timing of Institute theme meetings.	The past 2 staff surveys (2019 & 20) indicates the timing of staff meetings are only convenient for ~50% of staff (similar for both genders) to attend their respective theme meetings including online meetings during the pandemic. Consequently, staff may be missing information on	Dates, times and teams meeting links (while home working continues) for all four theme meetings to be circulated to all staff by inclusion in our fortnightly newsletter.	Jul23 Embedded	Admin support & newsletter manager	An increase in the number staff from 50% to 70%, who can attend at least one monthly theme meeting. Data collected from 2023 surveys.

		<p>developments and opportunities to feedback concerns to senior management.</p> <p>RI themes hold meetings on different days at different times of the day allowing the possibility to attend an alternative convenient theme meeting.</p>				
<b>6 (H)</b>	<p>Improve the effectiveness of communications between management and staff.</p>	<p>In the most recent survey (Nov 20), only 42% of staff (51% (21)W, 45% (13)M, 0% (0)PNTA) were fully satisfied with general communication in the institute and 47% were partially satisfied (39% (16)W, 55% (16)M, 55% (6)PNTA).</p>	<p>(i) Publicise and add link to IEC meeting minutes in our fortnightly newsletter.</p> <p>(ii) Appoint a communications officer to update noticeboards situated in communal areas beside printers and photocopiers with general institute information. This will include the newsletter which is not always read on day of publication.</p> <p>(iii) Use the annual survey to assess if the inclusion of a regular communication from</p>	<p>From Oct21</p> <p>Jan22</p> <p>Nov 22/Jan 23 (on an annual basis)</p>	<p>EDT co-leads Media co-ordinator</p> <p>EDT co-leads</p> <p>EDT Survey group lead</p>	<p>(i) Regular links to IEC meeting minutes in newsletter by Dec21</p> <p>(ii) Communications officer appointed to increase communication within the institute during first quarterly EDT in 2022.</p> <p>(iii) An increase in the percentage of staff from 42% to 65% fully satisfied</p>

			the director improves management/staff communication			with communication as measured by staff surveys from 2022 onwards.
<b>2. PG students – Gender balance and training</b>						
<b>7 (H)</b>	Increase the proportion of male postgraduate students applying for Rowett MSc nutrition courses, and PhD study	Over the last 3yrs, data from postgraduate admissions office show on average only 29% of registrations for MSc nutrition courses are men. This is consistent with HESA data showing significantly more females enrol on nutrition degree courses. The current gender profile of PhD students is 5M:18W with 2 yearly cohorts (2018 &20) with no male PhD students. To increase both male PGT and PGR students, we need to increase the number of applications from men. Increased applications from males for open competition PGR study will increase the	(i) Update images and promotional videos on our Rowett course details webpage to include more male role models.  (ii) Work with student admissions team to change promotional literature sent to prospective students to include more male role models  (iii) lobby HoS to ensure student selectors have received unconscious bias training prior to selecting candidates for open competition studentships.	Apr22/Oct23	Course coordinators, University administration office, Website administrator and EDT co-leads	(i) Update of images and promotional videos on website, by Jun22.  (ii) Male role models appear in promotional literature, by Jun22  (iii) 100% of student selectors to receive unconscious bias training, prior to selecting candidates for open competition studentships. By Dec22.  Overall: An increase in male participants on MSc nutrition



		likelihood for further interview and selection.				courses from 29% to 40%. By Oct23. Increase male PhD student applications for open competition PhD studentships with the aim of increasing male PhD students from 23% to 40%. By Oct23
<b>8 (M)</b>	Improve careers advice and support for postgraduate research students	72% (91% (10)W; 57% (3)M) of respondents in the postgrad survey indicated they did not have a careers advisor. We consider that all students should be more aware of careers support and alternative careers	We will communicate with the careers advisory service (CAS) to what support can be given and arrange a presentation for students from CAS, so CAS can set out the support they can give.	Oct21/Jul22	EDT Student reps CAS	An increase in students with careers advisors from CAS from 28% to 50% by Jul22 as measured in 2022 student survey.
<b>9 (L)</b>	Increase awareness among postgraduate students of equality and diversity challenges within the field of nutrition research.	Some of postgraduate students will inevitably take a career in an academic institution, but whatever career students follow, it is important that they are aware of the importance of equality and diversity in the workplace.	(i) Negotiate access for PGR and PGT students to the university's E&D e-training modules  (ii) To make E&D training for PGR and institute administered PGT students mandatory.	Jan23/Dec24	Course co-ordinators, PGR advisor & Director of Teaching	(i) Access to E&D training modules in place by Jun23.  (ii) 100% of new intakes of RI PGR and PGT students will complete E&D training. Monitored by PGR advisor and course co-

						ordinators. By Dec 24.
<b>10 (L)</b>	Appoint a staff and a student STEM lecture co-ordinator	Our STEM lectures whereby an invited female researcher gives research seminar and information on career path, have been well received. Suggestions and invitations have relied on a co-lead to organise this event.	Appoint a staff and a student STEM lecture co-ordinator from within EDT.	Jan 22-Apr 22	EDT co-leads	A staff and student STEM lecture co-ordinator appointed. By Apr 22
<b>3. Career development, training and promotion</b>						
<b>3i. Training, promotion and contribution awards</b>						
<b>11 (M)</b>	We will monitor and record uptake of training activities by gender	Training is important for career development and to enhance promotion prospects. There is no institute collation of training requested and granted, whether it has been effective or if there is any gender bias in the number of applications or those approved.	We will devise a mechanism to record uptake and approvals of training requests and analyse for gender ratio.	Jan23 embedded	EDT Career development group lead	Establish a mechanism for recording training requests and approvals by Jun23. Annual statistics (disaggregated by gender) to be published in the EDT annual report and submitted to the IEC. By Dec23
<b>12 (M)</b>	Organise line manager workshops every two years for new staff and as a refresher for	New staff require line manager training, and since line manager duties change over time all staff need refresher sessions. Furthermore, an	Set up biennial workshops with the university staff development presentation	Jul22. On a biennial basis	Career development lead. University Staff development team, EDT	Attendance record. All line managers to attend one training session at least once every 4 years, by Jul 23

	experienced line managers	explanation of requirements and responsibilities will achieve better understanding of the importance the role of the line manager.			admin support.	
<b>13 (H)</b>	Clarity of the criteria to be achieved for staff who are at the top of their grade to qualify for contribution awards or further promotion	HR data show very few staff were put forward for contribution awards over the last 5 years and the annual survey routinely indicates only 50% of staff put forward for promotion were encouraged by their line manager. This may be due to a lack of awareness by staff for the criteria for contribution awards or promotion as 19% of staff (12% (5)W, 28% (8)M) indicate in the 2020 annual survey that they may not have a good understanding of the promotion process.	<p>i) Run promotion seminars every 2 years, detailing the process (and updating any changes), focussing on the roles of staff and line managers, highlighting the necessary criteria for both promotion and contribution awards.</p> <p>ii) The annual review checklist will be modified to promote discussion on career progression and staff development and will also include a new item on discussion of contribution awards.</p>	<p>Jul22 Biennially</p> <p>Nov22</p>	<p>EDT Career development lead &amp; HR advisor</p> <p>EDT co-leads</p>	<p>i) Assessed via annual staff survey with a target for 90% of staff indicating they are aware of the criteria for contribution award and promotion. By Nov 22</p> <p>ii) Greater than 95% of respondents (current baseline 80%) indicate career progression discussed during annual review, monitored by collation of checklists from 2022 annual review.</p> <p><b>Overall</b> - A target 1-2% of staff put forward annually for</p>

						a contribution award. By Jan 23. Promotion applications encouraged by line managers increased from 50% to 75% as measured in staff surveys from 2023.
<b>14 (H)</b>	Arrange annually scheduled bookable meetings in confidence with HR for individuals considering a promotion application for bespoke guidance	i): On average there have been 6 applications per year (all grades) over the last 5 years with a success rate – 50% M vs 68% W.	i): Arrange 1:1 meetings with HR prior to launch of promotion process to guide and give feedback to potential applicants.	From 2021/22 Promotion exercise	EDT Career development lead	i) An Increase in the success rate for promotions for men from 50% to 80% and women from 68% to 80%. By Aug23
<b>15 (H)</b>	Increase the number of men applying for promotion	i) on a proportional basis over the past 5 years, applications for promotion from men have been significantly lower (1 in 2.6 F vs 1 in 4.5 M)  ii) In the past 5 years only 3M have applied for promotion to Grade 7 or above, none were successful.	i) Invite all male staff members to give their views via confidential and anonymous questionnaire on perceived barriers to applying for promotion and how they overcame them  ii) IEC to identify potential candidates of men at Grade 6 and	Nov22/Jun23  Nov22	EDT Career development lead  Directorin consultation with IEC	i) An understanding of barriers which result in a lower percentage of male staff applying for promotion leading to formulation of an action point. By Jun 23  ii) An increase in the number of men applying for the

			encourage candidates to develop applications through a mentorship programme.			mentoring programme and subsequent promotion. By Dec24
<b>16 (H)</b>	Promote the benefits of mentoring to increase the number of applications and success rate for promotion among all academic staff	<p>Over the past 5 years academic staff there has been only 7 applications from women 7 (3 unsuccessful and 4 successful [3 at grade 9]) and 3 from men (none successful) for promotion to grades 7 to 9. Staff at lower grades on open ended time limited contracts maybe unaware that promotion is equally open to them.</p> <p>Although the 2020 staff survey reveals 93% of staff are aware of the university mentoring scheme (93%W, 90%M the uptake is very low (only 2 mentees). The staff survey revealed 47% of staff were unaware of our RI mentor advisor. Promoting mentoring</p>	<p>(i) conduct a survey of post-doctoral staff on open-ended funding limited contracts to find out the awareness of promotion prospects.</p> <p>(ii) Hold an information session for all academic staff on the benefits of mentoring with particular emphasis on encouraging staff on open ended time limited contracts to attend.</p> <p>(iii) Reinforce the benefits and opportunities for mentoring and promote RI's mentor advisor in our newsletter at 3 months intervals.</p> <p>(iv) Promote mentoring schemes during the induction process to new staff members by</p>	<p>Apr 22/Jun22</p> <p>Oct 22</p> <p>Apr22</p> <p>Oct 21 Embedded</p>	<p>EDT Career development lead.</p> <p>EDT mentor co-ordinator</p> <p>EDT mentor co-ordinator</p> <p>EDT admin support</p>	<p>(i) 75% of postdoctoral staff responding to specific survey issued by Jun22</p> <p>(ii) Mentoring information session organised in Oct22.</p> <p>(iii) Regular inclusion of mentoring benefits in newsletter. Ongoing from Apr22.</p> <p>(iv) Induction checklist returns to show 100% of new academic staff having met mentor co-ordinator.</p>

		as new staff join the institute may be more successful to increase mentor uptake.	including meeting with AS mentor co-ordinator.			<b>Overall:</b> An increase in the number of successful applications from academic staff at grade 6-8 from an average of 0.6 per year to 1 per year. From 2023 promotion round.
<b>17 (L)</b>	To seek feedback on the support for parental leave and returning to work	We need to assess whether there is any deficiency in the support prior to taking maternity/paternity leave and for returning to work. Due in part to the demographic of the institute, the number of staff in the past 5 years having new-born children has been very low and is likely to continue to be low in the short to medium term. Therefore, survey questions or focus groups are not applicable to capture feedback on the experience of taking maternity/paternity	Contact individuals who have taken maternity/paternity leave and invite them to give feedback in response to a questionnaire or individual meetings as preferred. Any issues identified will be raised with senior management.	Jan 22 Embedded	EDT Family leave advisor	An invitation issued to 100% staff taking maternity or paternity to give feedback. Any issues identified will be raised with senior management and specific actions devised. Ongoing from Jan22.

		leave and the support for returning to work.				
<b>3ii Recruitment</b>						
<b>18 (M)</b>	Review Rowett Institute resource centre on our AS webpage	Our AS webpage can be a reference point which demonstrates our commitment and actions in respect of equality and diversity to people seeking a position or studentship at the RI.	Ensure content is continually updated with relevant information including family leave policies, flexible working and the most up to date workload model. Maintain awareness of importance of inclusivity and gender and ethnicity balance in text and visual material	Bi-monthly review after initial overhaul in Nov 21.	EDT Staff and ECR resource group leads, media co-ordinator	90% of newly recruited staff, visiting the resource centre and indicating it was useful in a post-recruitment survey. 75% of respondents indicate this has been a useful development in the impact section of the annual staff and student surveys, from 2022.
<b>19 (H)</b>	Reduce unconscious bias in recruitment process.	Unconscious bias is difficult to overcome, requiring frequent reinforcement. This will help to reduce unconscious bias in interview panels and ensure equality for all in recruitment process	A specific seminar on unconscious bias will be run biennially in the RI.  All interview chairs will check with Admin support to confirm interview panellist has either attended an unconscious bias seminar within the last 2 years or has viewed training videos on EDT resources page within the last year.	Nov 21	EDT Admin support, HR partner, Interview panel chair	Staff attendance at unconscious bias seminar will be recorded and feedback requested.  Data from admin support to show all staff on interview panels will have received unconscious bias information. By Oct22 and data reviewed annually by EDT co-leads.

			We will ask HR to confirm with interview chairs unconscious bias training has been received.			
<b>20 (M)</b>	Increase the number of women on Teaching and Research contracts	We currently have no women employed on T&R contracts at any grade. In 2018 there was a significant number of applications for lecturer grade 7 position from women, but none made the shortlist.	<p>i) As posts become available, the director will seek nominations for suitably qualified internal or external female candidates to approach and encourage them to apply.</p> <p>ii) Ensure equal representation of genders on job application shortlists, or gain prior approval from Director for skewed short-lists</p> <p>Use the recently published (Women into Science &amp; Engineering (WISE) guide to ensure job advert text is worded to avoid gender bias</p> <p>We will offer to cover childcare costs for onsite interviews or</p>	Jan 22/Dec 25	Director, HR	Our target is one or more female staff recruited to a T&R position by Dec 25 (currently 0)



			offer virtual interviews via zoom or Microsoft teams.			
<b>3iii Enabling outreach opportunities</b>						
<b>21 (M)</b>	Promote and enable participation in KE to foster gender equality, racial and ethnic diversity in science.	KE plays a significant role in promoting gender equality, ethnic and racial diversity in science. For staff, involvement in KE activities may promote inclusivity and for students this is part of the training process.	Disseminate opportunities for involvement in KE activities through a co-ordinated approach via the KE officer. Record KE activities by the KE officer to monitor gender, ethnic and racial balance and student participation.	Oct22/Sept23	KE co-ordinator	Establishment of base line data of staff and student involvement in KE activity together with gender, ethnicity and racial distribution of participants. By Sept23. Further actions developed based on data received.
<b>22 (M)</b>	Lobby HoS & director for recognition for involvement in KE activities	KE is vitally important for RI in demonstrating the impact of our research to funders, particularly RESAS. KE activity often occurs out with normal working hours including weekends. Currently staff and students are not recognised for the additional time and effort in KE activities	Lobby HoS for 1) recognition for academic staff in workload model and recorded in each staff member's workload model statistics which are available at AR. 2) Support staff to record KE activities in training record (annually updated) and recognition for support	Oct22 embedded	EDT co-leads, KE coordinator, Director.	Recognition for PI's for KE activities. in workload model recorded in each staff member's workload model statistics. By Sept 23 Support staff to record KE in training record and recognised via a contribution award

			staff via contribution award or time off in lieu. 3) Student involvement recorded in database and recognition of student involvement with a prize for commitment to KE activities.			or time off in lieu. By Sept 23 Students KE recorded in database. Establish an annual student prize award for commitment to KE activities. By Sept 23
<b>4. Improving visibility of female role models</b>						
<b>23 (L)</b>	We will aim for gender balance of seminar speakers.	As speakers are role models for junior staff and students the aim is to achieve more consistent gender balance. Over the past 5yrs we have had a wide annual variation in numbers of M and F speakers as gender balance has not been consciously considered.	Seminar co-ordinator will record speaker gender. This will be reviewed by biannually with a reminder to staff to staff inviting speakers of the importance of achieving a gender balance.	Jan 22 Embedded	Seminar co-ordinators and STEMM lecture co-ordinators	Establish a consistent distribution in gender of invited speakers by 2024
<b>24 (L)</b>	Record racial and ethnic diversity of seminar speakers	We have no data on the racial and ethnic diversity of speakers. A good representation of a diverse background of speakers will serve as role models for junior staff of non-white background.	Record speaker race-ethnic background. Review biannually and encourage staff to invite speakers of diverse backgrounds	Jan 22 Embedded	Seminar co-ordinators and STEMM lecture co-ordinators	Seminar co-ordinator to build database of speakers including gender and ethnicity, reported annually to EDT. Further action based on data received.
<b>5. Mitigation of the impact of the disruption caused by COVID</b>						

<p><b>25 (H)</b></p>	<p>Monitoring the effects of the COVID pandemic on staff performance and reporting outcomes to IEC for further action</p>	<p>The most recent staff survey (Nov 20) indicates some staff consider that lockdown will have an impact on publication output (more acute in men compared to women - 16M:9F) or on promotion prospects, particularly women (46%F v 38%M). The survey data has been conveyed to senior management for discussion. It is important that where possible support is offered to abate the potential negative impact of the COVID pandemic on career progression.</p>	<p>(i) Add section to the annual review checklist "Impact of lockdown on research output and career progression" for 3 years to ensure this issue is part of discussion during AR.  (ii) Add questions to staff and student surveys to assess (1) if support has been discussed and (2) monitor the longevity of the impact of COVID.</p>	<p>Nov 21/Jan24</p>	<p>Survey group lead &amp; EDT co-leads</p>	<p>(i) 75% of staff survey respondents indicate support has been discussed during AR. starting with the 2021 survey  (ii) Reported impact of disruption due to COVID on publication output reduced from 25 to &lt;5 staff and perceived impact on career progression reduced to &lt;10% for both men and women. Between 2021-23 surveys.</p>
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**6. Culture**

<p><b>26 (H)</b></p>	<p>Change the perception of the culture in RI and create a welcoming, inclusive and supportive environment</p>	<p>Although the culture of the Institute has improved in the years following the move to the new building, the most recent survey data showed only ~50% of staff thought the institute either</p>	<p>Develop the remit of the social committee and introduce more social events in consultation with staff suggestions. Establish events into an annual social calendar, starting with events suitable for</p>	<p>Jan 22-Sept 22 Reviewed annually</p>	<p>Social group lead</p>	<p>An increase in staff perceiving the institute to be welcoming from 50% to 70% and a reduction in perception of cliqueness from 18% to 5%. Assessed in</p>
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		welcoming (45% (22)W, 58% (15)M, 23% (3)PNTA), inclusive (47% 23)W, 50% (13)M, 23% (3)PTNA) or sociable (51% (25)W, 46% (12)M, 23% (3)PNTA) with 18% reporting cliquiness (16% (8)W, 12% (3)M, 39% (5)PNTA). Clearly there is significant room for improvement in the culture within RI.	'remote' participation as required when still necessary.			staff and student surveys by Oct 2023
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## Contact us

### General enquiries

+44 (0) 3300 416201

[enquiries@advance-he.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@advance-he.ac.uk)

[www.advance-he.ac.uk](http://www.advance-he.ac.uk)

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