Athena SWAN: Silver department application – Oxford Department of Pharmacology

Contents

Athena SWAN Silver Department Awards

In addition to the future planning required for Bronze department recognition, Silver department awards recognise that the department has taken action in response to previously identified challenges and can demonstrate the impact of the actions implemented.

Note: Not all institutions use the term 'department'. There are many equivalent academic groupings with different names, sizes and compositions. The definition of a 'department' can be found in the Athena SWAN awards handbook.

Completing the form

DO NOT ATTEMPT TO COMPLETE THIS APPLICATION FORM WITHOUT READING THE ATHENA SWAN AWARDS HANDBOOK.

This form should be used for applications for Bronze and Silver department awards.

You should complete each section of the application applicable to the award level you are applying for.

Additional areas for Silver applications are highlighted throughout the form.

If you need to insert a landscape page in your application, please copy and paste the template page at the end of the document, as per the instructions on that page. Please do not insert any section breaks as to do so will disrupt the page numbers.

Word Count

The overall word limit for applications are shown in the following table.

There are no specific word limits for the individual sections and you may distribute words over each of the sections as appropriate. At the end of every section, please state how many words you have used in that section.

We have provided the following recommendations as a guide.

Department application	Actual word count	Silver
Word limit	**12,488**	**12,000**
Recommended word count		
1. Letter of endorsement	523	500
2. Description of the department	326	500
3. Self-assessment process	876	1,000
4. Picture of the department	1,779	2,000
5. Supporting and advancing women's careers	7,701	6,500
6. Case studies	800	1,000
7. Further information (additional words due to COVID)	483	500

Name of institution	University of Oxford
Department	Department of Pharmacology
Focus of department	**STEMM**
Date of application	March 2022
Award Level	**Silver**
Institution Athena SWAN award	**Date: April 2017 Level: Bronze**
Contact for application Must be based in the department	Academic Lead: Dr Liliana Minichiello Administrator: Carolyn Thackrah
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Telephone	01865 271850
Departmental website	www.pharm.ox.ac.uk

Glossary

Ac/Res .... Academic and research staff
AS .... Athena Swan
AP .... Associate Professor
AWERB .... Animal Welfare Ethical Review Body

BAME .... Black and Minority Ethnic

DGS .... Director of Graduate Studies
DORA .... Declaration on Research Assessment
DPhil .... Doctor of Philosophy

ECRs .... Early Career Researchers
EDI .... Equality and Diversity Initiatives

FPE .... Full Person Equivalent
FTC .... Fixed Term Contract

HRM .... Human Resources Manager

KIT .... 'Keeping-in-touch' days

MSc .... Master Student course
MSD .... Medical Science Division

PDR .... Personal Development Review
PDRA .... Postdoctoral Research Assistant
PI .... Principal Investigator
PGT .... Postgraduate taught student
POD .... People and Organisational Development (team)
PRS .... Postgraduate research student
PSS .... Professional and Support Staff
PT .... Part-time

RA .... Research Assistant
REF .... Research Excellence Framework
RoD .... Recognition of Distinction
RSIV .... Senior research staff who are recognised international experts providing intellectual leadership in a specialist area and establishing the strategic direction of a major research programme.

SAT .... Self-Assessment Process
SMP .... Statutory Maternity Pay
SPL .... Shared parental leave
SPLIT .... Shared parental leave 'in-touch' days

URL .... University Research Lecturer

WG .... Working Group
WT .... Wellcome Trust

1   Letter of endorsement from the Head of Department

Recommended word count: Silver: 500 words

An accompanying letter of endorsement from the head of department should be included. If the head of department is soon to be succeeded, or has recently taken up the post, applicants should include an additional short statement from the incoming head.

Note: Please insert the endorsement letter **immediately after** this cover page.

523 words

DEPARTMENT OF PHARMACOLOGY

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Professor Fran Platt FRS FMedSci
Head of Department

March 2022

Athena Swan Assessment Panel

Advance HE

I am delighted to give my unqualified and wholehearted support for our Silver application.

I have been involved with AS since 2013 and was Academic Lead from 2015 until 2020 when I was appointed Head of Department. I am actively involved in all SAT meetings and in developing our application and actions. Our Academic Lead, Dr Minichiello, has my full support and she has access to our Management Committee to ensure these activities have the priority they deserve.

I believe the AS Principles are vital to helping us drive improvements for our staff and students. I have personal experience juggling the pressures of family life and my career. I am, therefore, totally committed to helping my colleagues, giving them the very best chance of fulfilling their potential, whatever their personal circumstances.

Both as AS Lead and HoD, I have worked tirelessly to improve opportunities for female staff and improve transparency and communication within the Department:

- As a small department, we have focussed actions on individuals, which has made a significant impact - as demonstrated by the case studies we have included.
- I have invited staff and student representatives to our Departmental meetings and held Town Hall meetings and drop-in clinics.
- Our latest survey showed the positive impact of these initiatives:
  - Staff who feel integrated into the Department increased from 55%-89%F and 73%-85%M
  - Staff who feel decision-making is clear and transparent have increased from 29%-68%F and 62%-77%M
  - Staff able to voice their issues within Pharmacology have increased from 56%-82%F and 67%-79%M
- Through working groups and the launch of AS News, and information on our website and newsletter, 97% of female and male staff feel we are committed to equality and diversity. Our survey response rate increased from 56% to 88% (2018-2021).

Our action plan for the next five years is focused on four key issues:

- Inclusive recruitment – focused on equitable offer rates for students and an increase in female applicants for research posts
- Career development – grade reviews, access to training and mentoring, and the introduction of career development reviews
- Support for staff and students – management training for supervisors, support for grant applications, and for family leave and flexible working.
- Visibility of women and culture:
  - we will look at research staff workload and will increase recognition for female staff.
  - work with our artist in residence will highlight female staff achievements and make a real impact on our culture and environment.

We are never complacent, and I realise that challenges will lie ahead. We will broaden our equality agenda to create a true level playing field for the whole Department, now and in the future.

I can confirm the information in this application (including qualitative and quantitative data) is an honest, accurate and true representation of the department.

Yours faithfully

Professor Fran Platt
Head of Department

2 Description of the department

Recommended word count: Silver: 500 words

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

We are a small pre-clinical Department within MSD at Oxford (Figure 1) and have been at the top of the QS World University Rankings for Pharmacy and Pharmacology since 2019. We contribute to undergraduate teaching of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, run a master's course with an intake of around 25-30 students per year, and admit around 12 DPhil students per annum.

Figure 1: Structure of the University of Oxford and how the Department of Pharmacology fits in it.
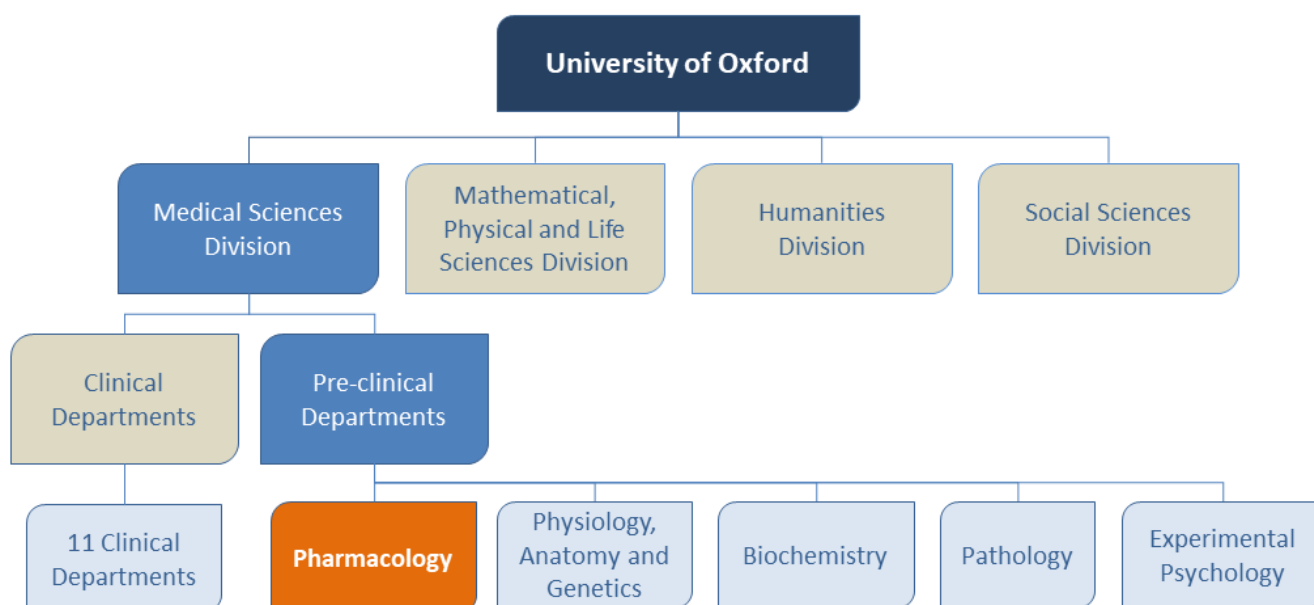
Our research covers a range of interests, from calcium signalling and neuroscience to drug discovery and medicinal chemistry. We aim to further the understanding of how chemicals modify living systems to develop therapeutic agents.

We are based on one site in the University's Science Area. Our academic community is highly collaborative and shares specialised equipment, such as microscopes and animal procedure rooms. Our professional staff provide a range of services including engineering and electronics workshops, finance and grant management, facilities, catering, HR and general administrative support.

We started our AS journey in 2013, and during this process, we have been led by Professors Antony Galione (to 2015), Nigel Emptage (2015-2020) and Fran Platt (since June 2020), with support from our Management Committee (MC) (Academic: 3F/3M, PSS: 1F/2M). Fran is one of only three female HoD in MSD (out of 16).

Figure 2: Research themes and group structure in Pharmacology
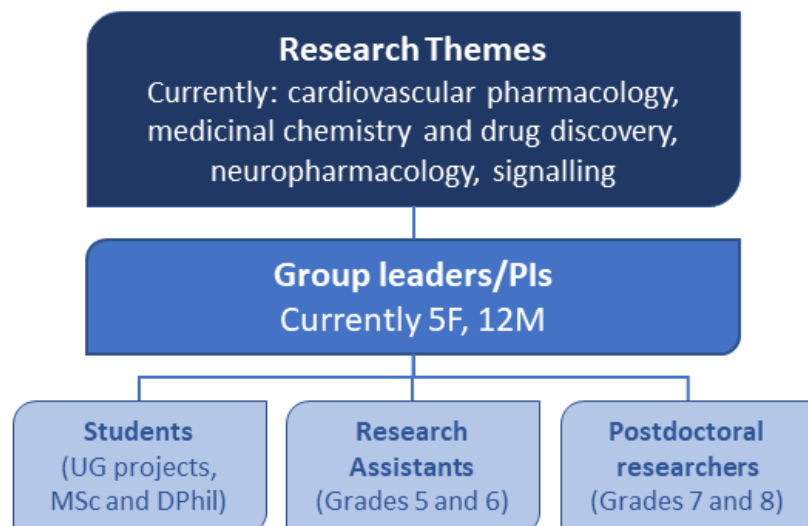
A current headcount picture was calculated in December 2021 (Table 1 and Figure 3).

Table 1: Headcount of all members of the Department (FPE)

	Department of Pharmacology (December 2021)			
	Female	Male	*Total*	*% female*
	No (FPE)	*No (FPE)*		
Academic and research staff	24	29	53	45%
Professional and Support Staff	9	9	18	50%
Students (MSc and DPhil students)	48	33	81	59%
Total	81	71	152	53%

Figure 3: Headcount by category of all members of the Department (at 31 December 2021)
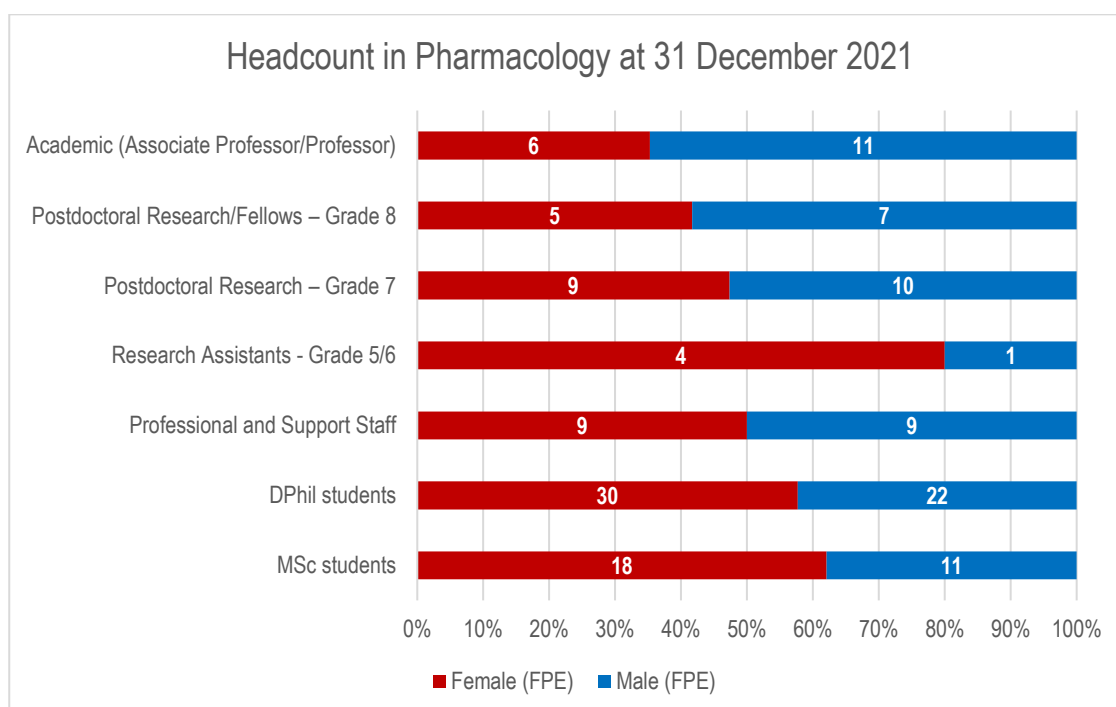
Out of our 53 ac/res staff (45%F, 55%M), there are 17 academic staff (35%F, 65%M) and 5 fellows (20%F/80%M) who manage their research group. These PIs are involved in teaching and research apart from one responsible for teaching only. Since 2020, our HoD has been female, one of only three in MSD.

Most of our research staff (Grade 8: 100%F/86%M and at Grade 7: 100%F/100%M staff) are funded on external research grants.

We are a small department and have a friendly and inclusive culture and in our 2021 surveys, 88% of staff (97%F/81%M) and 94% of students (96%F/91%M) would recommend Pharmacology as a place to work or study; 95% of staff (97%F/94%M) and 97% of students (100%F/91%M) highlight their good and supportive relationship with colleagues, and 88% of staff (90%F/84%M) and 89% of students (96%F/91%M) feel able to be themselves in the Department.

326 words

3 The self-assessment process

Recommended word count: Bronze: Silver: 1000 words

Describe the self-assessment process. This should include:
(i)   a description of the self-assessment team;
(ii)   an account of the self-assessment process;
(iii)   plans for the future of the self-assessment team.

(i)   A description of the self-assessment team

Our SAT comprises 19 members (Table 2 - redacted). The gender balance (13F/6M) is consistent with Department staff and students (SAT 68%F, Department 54%F) – there are five academics (4F/1M), six ECRs (3F/3M), five postdocs (3F/2M), one student (F) and two PSS (2F).

(ii)   An account of the self-assessment process

<div style="background:navy;color:white;padding:1em">

ACHIEVEMENTS

- 95%F/96%M ac/res staff and 100% PSS feel we are committed to promoting EDI (2021 survey – NB new data)
- 5 WGs established following feedback from previous Silver application
- Communications plan developed in 2021 to improve survey response rates:
    - Staff response rate increased to 88% (91%F/80%M) in 2021 (from 56% in 2018 and 51% in 2016) compared to University 58% response rate
    - First DPhil student survey (2021) had 81% (92%F/61%M) response rate.

</div>

SAT membership

SAT was established in 2013 (Figure 4). Membership is reviewed annually, and new members are found via the newsletter or by invitation by the HoD/AS Academic Lead. Advisors from the University attend meetings and assist with our AS process (Table 3).

We achieved Bronze in 2014, renewed in 2016 following an application for Silver. In response to the feedback on our application, we concentrated on linking actions to impacts through the collection of information via SAT, analysis of data and other feedback.

Figure 4: Timeline of Athena SWAN in the Department of Pharmacology
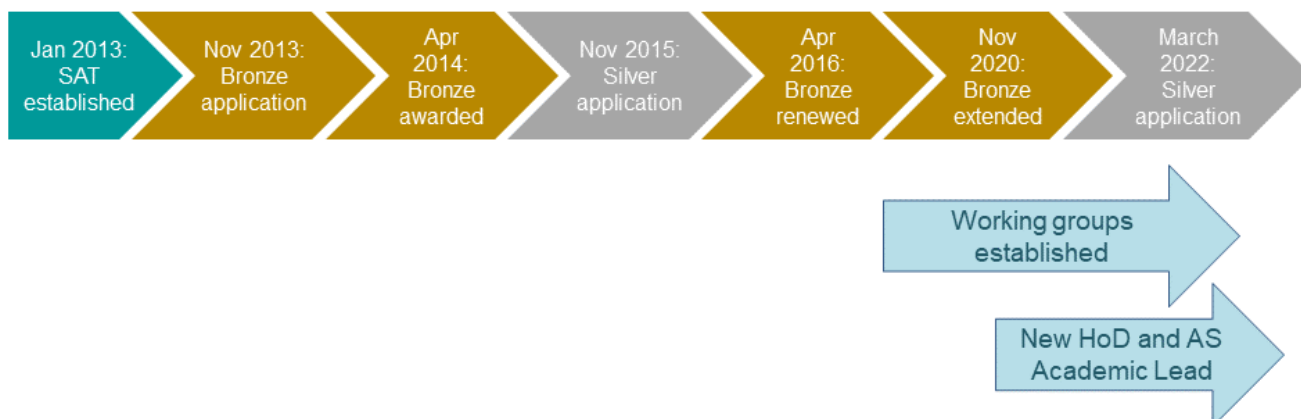
In 2015, Fran Platt was appointed as AS Academic Lead. Following Fran's appointment as HoD in 2020 (MSD HoD: 3F/13M), Dr Liliana Minichiello was appointed AS lead.

To assist with the preparation of this application, we have:
- Created a writing group that includes the Academic and Administrative Leads and our HoD
- Analysed data reports at SAT to identify issues and trends
- Assessed the impacts of our actions to include within the application and frame the content of our action plan
- Shared drafts of the application with WG leads and SAT to include their thoughts
- Involved critical friends in MSD and the University's EDU to seek frank and honest feedback
- Consulted the wider Department on the final draft before submission.

Working groups (WGs)

Feedback on our 2015 application recommended the creation of WGs – an analysis of our action plan identified four priority work areas (Figure 5). Priorities of each member were identified, based on situation and experiences, and each was assigned to a WG. A data monitoring group was also created.

Figure 5: Athena Swan working groups (WGs)
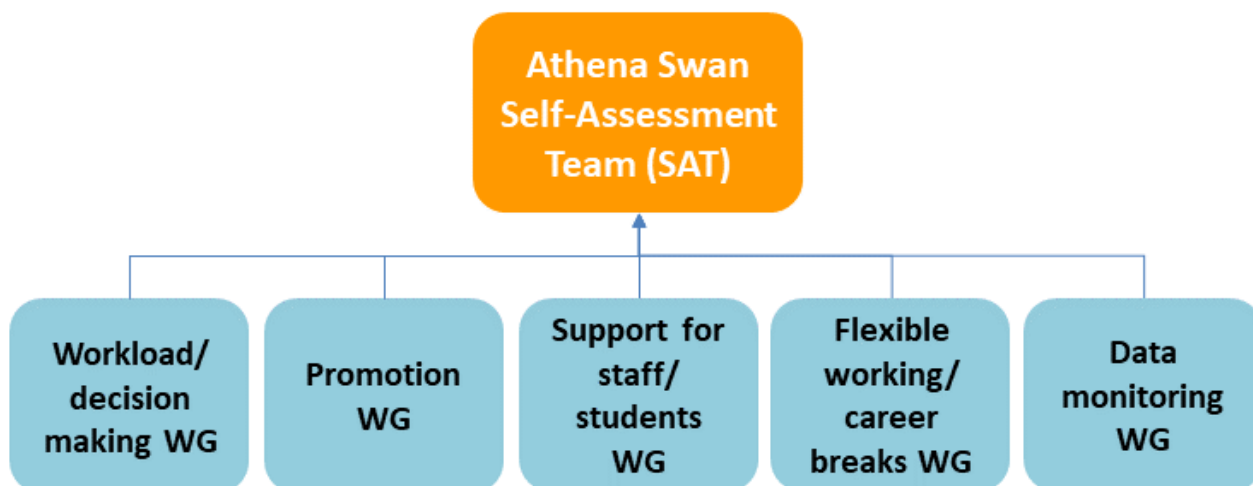
Each WG reports termly to the Academic Lead, convenes meetings to consider actions within their area and engages the Department, outside of SAT, to increase the reach of AS activities. WGs have considered issues raised by our self-assessment process and identified actions for SAT - WG leads will take responsibility for actions in their area.

Integration of Athena SWAN within Department

SAT works with our networks for students and Research Staff; representatives sit on SAT and are involved in our WGs. Since 2020, research staff and student reps are invited to Departmental Meetings, at which AS is regularly discussed, and share information with their colleagues. This has improved people's experience of our decision-making processes and open communication (see Table 4).

SAT outcomes are taken to Management Committee which meets 2-3 times per term – AS is a standing agenda item and the AS Academic Lead is invited to MC meetings where the AS initiatives are discussed.

From summer 2020 we launched a strategy to increase awareness of AS impacts and actions, sharing information via termly meetings, our newsletter and website. We launched AS News in April 2021 to highlight actions, impacts, and case studies at least once per term. We were delighted to see the positive impact these activities had, in 2021, not only on participation rates but in staff satisfaction around communications, leadership and decision-making.

Table 4: Survey results around communications, leadership, and decision-making

| | 2021 survey | | | | | | 2018 survey (where data exists) | |
| | Total % | Compared to MSD | All staff | | Academic and research staff | | Academic and research staff | |
			F%	M%	F%	M%	F%	M%
The Department is committed to promoting equality and diversity	95%	+15%	97%	97%	96%	95%		
Decision making is clear and transparent	72%	+30%	71%	75%	68%	77%	29%	62%
I have the opportunity to contribute my views	78%	+25%	74%	78%	74%	85%	56%	67%
Senior leaders listen and communicate with staff	89%	+25%	90%	78%	95%	85%		
Communication in the Department is open and effective	80%	+21%	81%	87%	79%	85%		
Survey response rates	88%	+28%	86%	80%	73%	81%		

We conducted regular staff surveys since 2013. To boost our previous response rates of 51% (2016) and 56% (2018), on a par with the Divisional average, we emphasised the importance of every survey reply and opinion. We trailed the survey in staff, student and Departmental meetings and involved the Research Staff and Student Societies to raise awareness. The survey was launched with a personal e-mail from the HoD and weekly response rates were circulated as a reminder. Our response rate increased to 88%, the highest in the Division (60% response rate across MSD) and the second-highest in the University.

Noting the importance of students' voices (as the University survey was for staff only), we launched a survey in 2021 for DPhil students and achieved a response rate of 81% (92%F/61%M).

Table 5: Staff and student surveys

Survey	Details	Conducted	Response rate
Staff experience survey	Sent to all academic, research and PSS staff – covers induction, promotion, career development and Departmental culture	2013*	52%
		2016	51%
		2018	56%
		2021**	88% (91%F/80%M)
Student experience survey	Sent to all DPhil students – covered training, career development, work-life balance, support and training and Departmental culture	2021	81% (92%F/61%M)

*Included staff and DPhil students
** delayed due to COVID

(iii) Plans for the future of the self-assessment team

SAT will meet termly to review actions and assess their impact. We will expand the remit of the committee to act as a broader Equality and Diversity Team that can take forward our AS actions and consider them in the context of their intersectionality with other diversity areas (1.2.iii).

This committee will report annually to our Management Committee on key actions and activities (1.1.ii). An annual data report will be prepared for SAT to consider trends and feed this into our action plan (1.3.ii).

Membership of SAT will be reviewed annually to make sure all groups are represented. The remit, leadership, and membership of our WGs will be reviewed every 12 months to reflect the key themes identified by the committee (1.2.ii).

We will consider how to adapt to the new AS principles and process, so our assessment process and actions feed into our next Silver renewal (1.4.i-ii).

The impact of our actions and activities will be monitored via data reports, surveys, and feedback via mechanisms such as our HoD drop-in clinics and biannual 'Town Hall' meetings.

> **ACTIONS – PRIORITY 1:**
> - Expand the remit of the SAT to consider broader E&D issues and their intersectionality with AS actions and impacts (1.2.iii)
> - Review the remit, membership and leadership of SAT working groups annually (1.2.ii)
> - In light of the new AS Principles, Charter and Process, consider how SAT needs to evolve to meet the new requirements of the scheme and consider issues around intersectionality (1.4.i-ii)
> - A formal annual report presented to the MC by the Academic Lead for AS (1.1.ii)

876 words

4 A picture of the department

Recommended word count: Silver: 2000 words

4.1 Student data

If courses in the categories below do not exist, please enter n/a.
i)   Numbers of men and women on access or foundation courses - n/a.
ii)   Numbers of undergraduate students by gender - n/a.

iii)   Numbers of men and women on postgraduate taught degrees

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

Student numbers

Our PGT course has a target intake of 25-30 students. Our proportion of female students (2016/2020) is 57% - compared to a Russell Group average for Pharmacology, Toxicology and Pharmacy of 69%F (Table 6 and Figure 6).

Table 6: Number of PGT student by gender (2016-2020)

	Oxford MSc in Pharmacology						Russell Group data for (B2) Pharmacology, toxicology and pharmacy				
	Female		Male		Total		Female		Male		Total
	No	%	No	%			No	%	No	%	
2020/21	12	52	11	48	23						
2019/20	15	68	7	32	22		1530	68	715	32	2245
2018/19	15	56	12	44	27		1390	69	635	31	2025
2017/18	18	67	9	33	27		1310	69	575	31	1885
2016/17	4	29	10	71	14		1175	69	535	31	1710
Total	64	57	49	43	113						

Figure 6: PGT students (2016-2020)

Figure 6: PGT students (2016-2020)
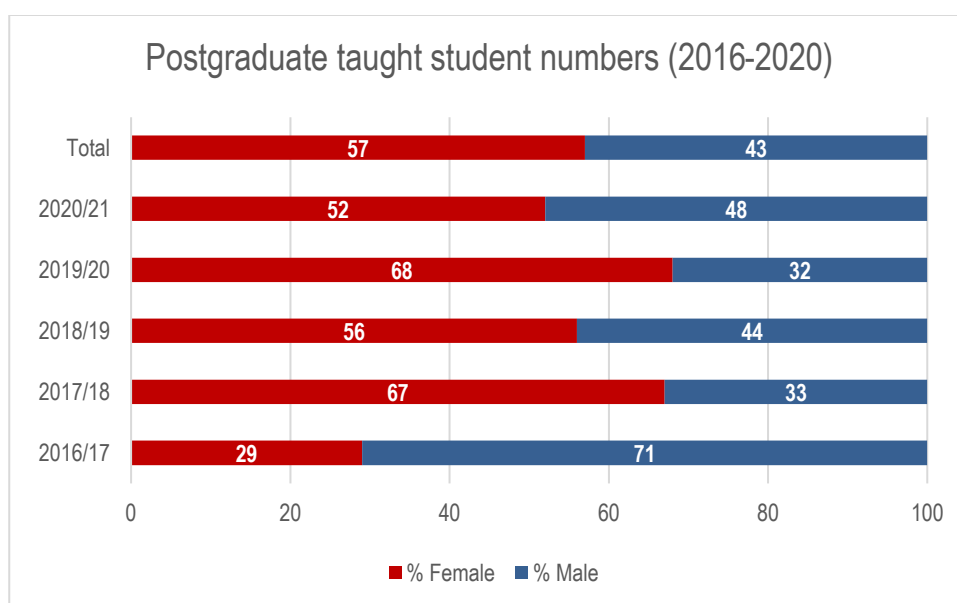
Admissions, offers made and offers accepted

Applicants come from a range of biological, chemical, and physical sciences. Applications from female students are higher than male students (62%F over five years), compared to female undergraduate students in Biological Sciences (64%) and Physical Sciences (43%F).

Applications are assessed by a gender-balanced panel who conduct student interviews after shortlisting. A scoring sheet, developed by the MSc Course Director in 2016, is used to assess candidates before offers are made. Once an offer is made, applicants must meet criteria including funding and visa conditions.

Table 7: PGT students: applications, offers and acceptances 2016-2020 intake

	Applications				Offers made				Offers accepted			
	F		M		F		M		F		M	
	No	%	No	%	No	Offer rate	No	Offer rate	No	Accept. rates	No	Accept. rates
2020/21	73	65%	40	35%	21	29%	17	43%	11	15%	11	28%
2019/20	65	70%	28	30%	21	32%	12	43%	15	23%	7	25%
2018/19	50	52%	47	48%	18	36%	17	36%	14	28%	13	28%
2017/18	42	64%	24	36%	22	52%	11	46%	18	43%	9	38%
2016/17	35	56%	27	44%	8	23%	11	41%	4	11%	8	30%
Total	266	62%	166	38%	90	34%	68	41%	62	23%	48	29%

Figure 7: PGT student intake 2016-2020

Conversion of applications to offer and accepted places
(PGT student intake 2016-2020)
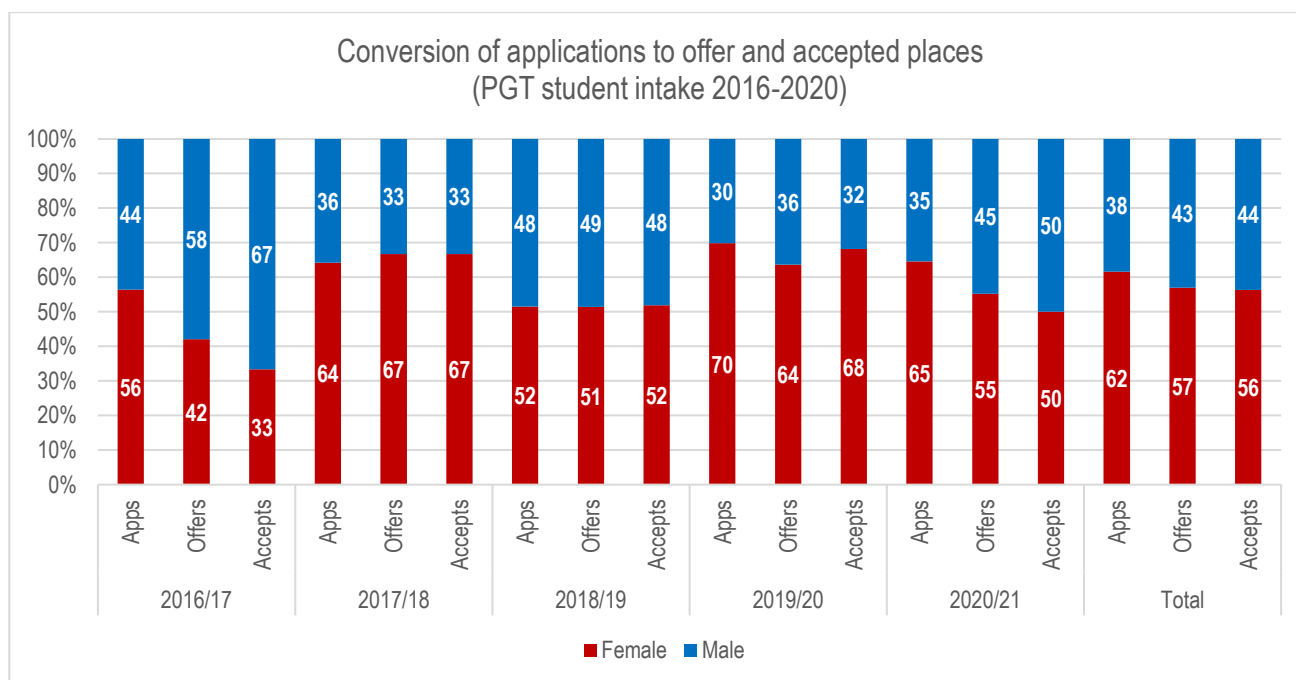
Over five years, male applicants have been more successful in obtaining an offer (34%F/41%M) and a higher proportion accept an offer (23%F/29%M).

The following actions will be introduced to eliminate the gender gaps:
- gender blind shortlisting – evidence from a Cancer in Cells programme, which uses blind shortlisting, report an increase in diversity (2.1.vi-viii)
- expanding shortlisting panel – a scoring system where applications are seen by more people will help to eliminate bias (2.1.ii).
- providing candidates with interview guidance – research shows female candidates perform better if they are clear about the selection process (2.1.iii).

In 2021, we looked at data on students from other underrepresented groups - 29% of applications from BME students receive an offer compared to 51% from white students, consistent across MSD courses. We will seek to raise scholarship funding, aimed at students from underrepresented groups (2.2.i).

ACTIONS – PRIORITY 2
- We will aim to run a pilot project, for 2023 admissions, to explore blind shortlisting (2.1.vi-viii)
- Shortlisting panel to be expanded from 2023 admissions (2.1.ii)
- Guidance about interviews to be issued to shortlisted candidates (2.1.iii)
- Funding sought for MSc scholarship place(s) (2.2.i)

Results

Students receive a pass (50-64%), merit (65-69%) (introduced 2018/19), or distinction (70%+). Less than 4% of students in the last five years did not achieve a pass grade.

Since 2015/16, 48% of female and 39% of male students were awarded a distinction (Table 8). Over the last two years, 56% of female and 63% of male students received a distinction.

Table 8: Results for PGT students (2015-2019)

	Pass		Merit*		Distinction	
	Female	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**
2019/20			4 (31%)	1 (17%)	9 (69%)	5 (83%)
2018/19	2 (14%)		6 (43%)	6 (46%)	6 (43%)	7 (54%)
2017/18	10 (56%)	7 (78%)			8 (44%)	2 (22%)
2016/17		6 (75%)			2 (100%)	2 (25%)
2015/16	8 (73%)	8 (80%)			3 (27%)	2 (20%)
Total	30 (52%)	28 (61%)			28 (48%)	18 (39%)

* introduced in 2018/19 academic year

Figure 8: PGT students: % grades by gender 2015-2020
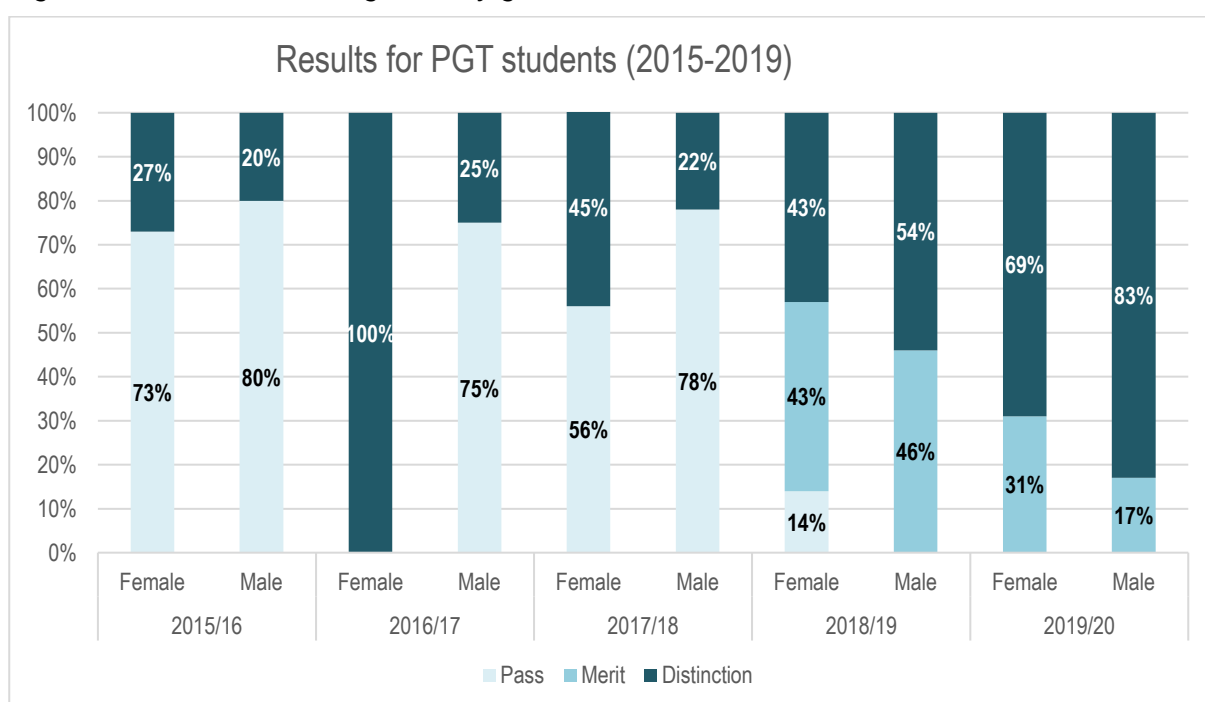
iv) Numbers of men and women on postgraduate research degrees.

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

Student numbers

Since 2016, we accepted 47 PGR students (57%F). Total student numbers over this period are 54%F (Table 9 and Figure 9), compared to national figures for PGR students in Biological Sciences and Subjects Allied to Medicine - both 62%F - and PGR students in Pharmacology, Toxicology and Pharmacy, in Russell Group - 58%F.

Table 9: Number of PGR students per year – total numbers plus annual intake 2015-2020

	Total student numbers					Annual intake*				
	Female		Male		Total	Female		Male		Total
	No	%	No	%	(no)	No	%	No	%	(no)
2020/21	31	66	16	34	47	6	100	0	0	6
2019/20	25	60	17	40	42	4	40	6	60	10
2018/19	23	49	24	51	47	8	67	4	33	12
2017/18	23	53	29	47	52	4	50	4	50	8
2016/17	23	57	20	43	43	5	45	6	55	11
Total	125	54	106	46		27	57	20	43	**47**

* DPhil in Pharmacology programme

*Figure 9: Postgraduate research student numbers 2016-2020*
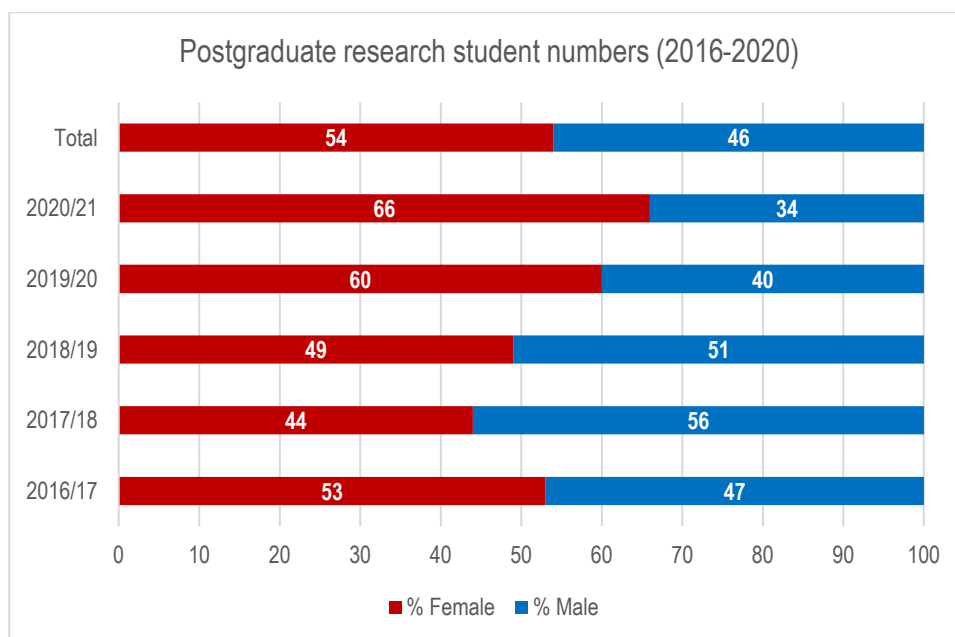
Applications, offers made and offers accepted

Since 2016, we received 126 applications from 63F/63M students with offers made to 43F (34%) and 37M students (29%), female applicants 9% more likely to receive an offer than male applicants. We will focus actions on the MSc course but will review their success and consider if they are applicable for PGR recruitment.

60%F students who received an offer took up their place compared to 65%M students (Figure 10). Informal feedback suggests students are quick to take the first offer they receive and that this affects more female students. We will survey students to determine the reasons they don't take up offers and can then determine the most effective actions (2.3.i).

*Figure 10: PGR students: applications, offers and acceptances 2016-2020 intake*
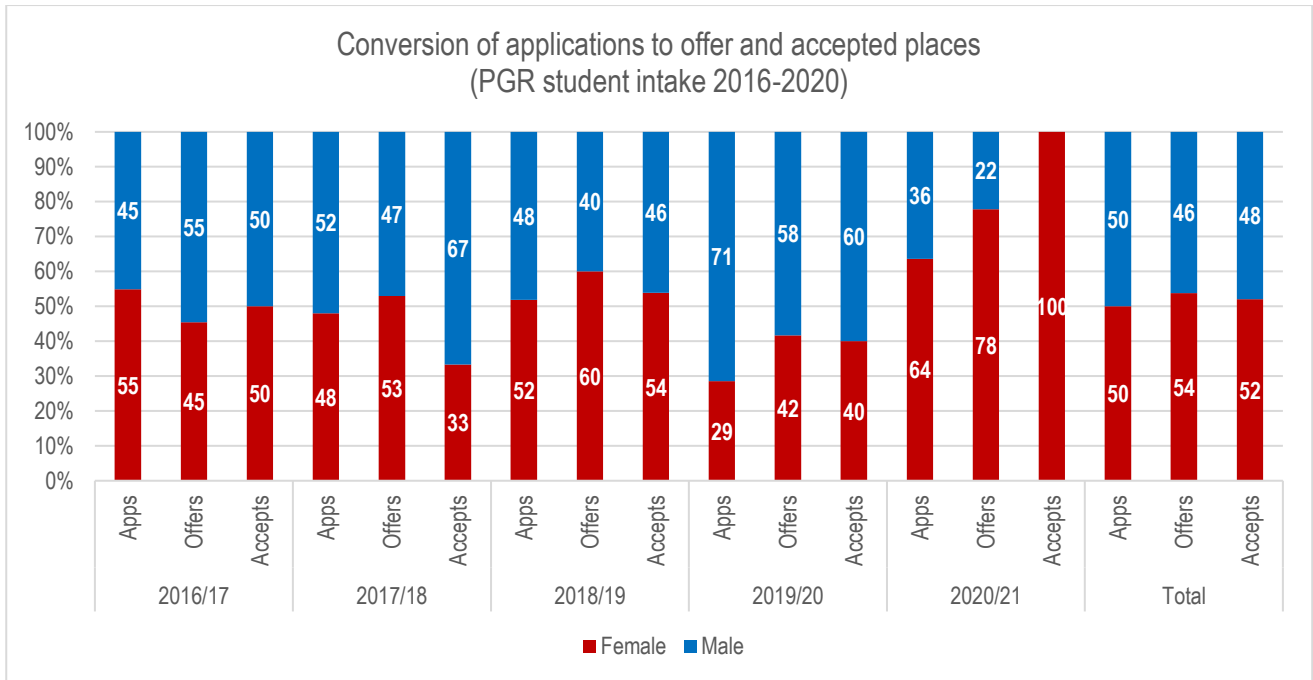
ACTION – PRIORITY 2

All shortlisted students to be surveyed from 2022 admissions cycle to find out the main reasons why students do not take up places offered on the DPhil programme (2.3.i)

Completion rates

Completion rates within four years, for student intake 2012/13 to 2016/17, are similar for female (75%) and male (74%) students. This compares to rates of 72%F and 73%M across MSD.

Figure 11: completion rates for male and female PGR students
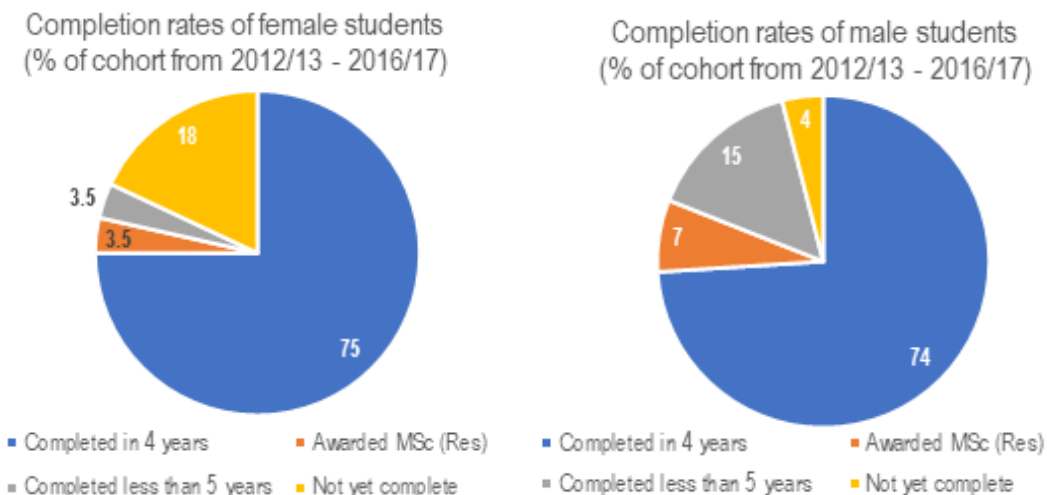
More male students (15%) complete within five years compared to female students (3.5%) and five female students, compared to 1 male student, from the 2016/17 intake have not yet completed - due to the COVID lockdown.

v) *Progression pipeline between undergraduate and postgraduate student levels*

The closest comparators for our MSc/DPhil programmes are courses in Biological Sciences, Physical Sciences and Subjects Allied to Medicine, in all of which there is a decrease in the proportion of female students progressing from UG and PGT into PhD programmes. While we do not have an undergraduate cohort, the proportion of female students across our MSc and DPhil programmes is constant and does not show this dip.

Figure 12: Student pipeline from UG to PGR (%F)
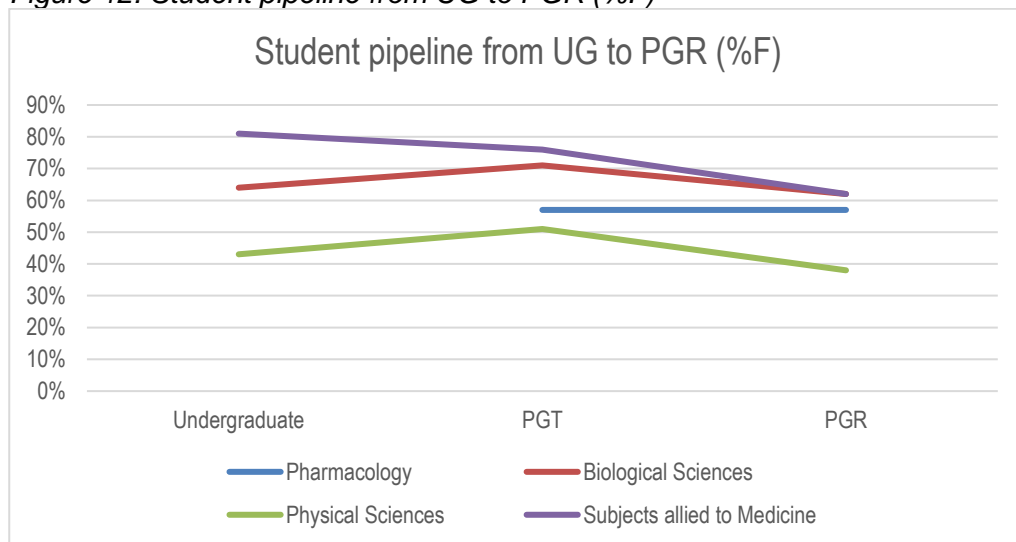
4.2 Academic and research staff data

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

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

NB All data in this section is based on an annual census date of 1 December and all numbers relate to FPE.

Career pipeline

Grade progression can be via regrading, fellowships or attaining title via the University's annual Recognition of Distinction exercise (Figure 13). *[See 'Promotion' in Section 5.1.3, page 36]*

Professor/AP staff have teaching and research contracts. Fellows/ECRs have research-only contracts but teach and supervise students as part of their development. Researchers at Grade 8 and below receive support to develop teaching experience.

Figure 13: Academic progression within Pharmacology
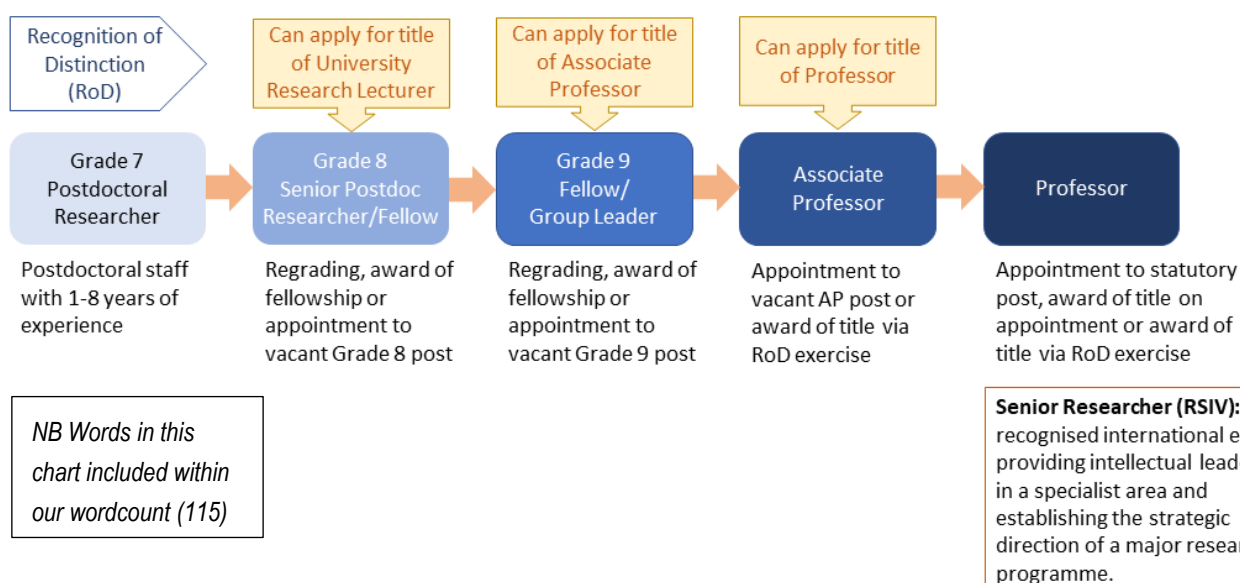
Gender balance and career progression

> **ACHIEVEMENTS**
> - Seven Grade 8 appointments (43%F) including four internal promotions – following investment in fellowships, inclusive recruitment and grade reviews for staff on new grants.
> - Five successful regrading applications following grade reviews for all staff

Within our small senior academic staff, F% fluctuated from 38% to 33% and back to 36% due to retirements (Table 10) - higher than MSD (28%F) and University (26%F) averages.

Since 2016, one female has been awarded the title of Professor and one the AP title.

We will introduce the new University principles for AP recruitment, using inclusive language and diversity statements in job adverts and setting up a search committee for each vacancy. We will include details about the selection process in adverts, offer familiarisation visits for candidates, and include selection criteria that meet the objectives of DORA.

Table 10: Staff by gender, year and grade

		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Professor/RSIV	Female	4	5	4	4	4
	Male	8	8	8	8	7
	%F	33%	38%	33%	33%	36%
Associate Professor	Female	1	-	-	1	1
	Male	4	4	4	4	5
	%F	20%	0%	0%	20%	20%
Fellows – Grade 9	Female		1	1		1
	Male					
	%F		100%	100%		100%
Fellows/ECRs/ Senior Researchers – Grade 8	Female	3	2	4	6	5
	Male	7	7	6	9	7
	%F	30%	22%	40%	40%	42%
Research – Grade 7	Female	19	20	18	12	9
	Male	15	14	21	11	10
	%F	55%	58%	46%	50%	47%
Research support - Grades 5/6	Female	5	2	4	3	4
	Male	7	3	1	1	1
	%F	42%	40%	80%	75%	80%

Our 2015/2016 action plan identified female candidates applying for Grade 8 posts, and support for fellowship applications, as major priorities. When a senior post became vacant in 2019, due to retirement, our Management Committee decided to invest in three Career Development Fellowships at Grade 8 rather than appoint a replacement. This funding has driven an increase in research activity and invests in the development of top-quality ECRs.

Vacancies were promoted internally via our newsletter and messages to research staff and PIs. Applications were 56%F (24% for Grade 8 posts in 2015/16) and we received 10 internal applicants (36%F applicants were internal). Three appointments were made in open competition (33%F).

Career development support was offered to unsuccessful internal applicants (Section 5.3, pages 39-45) and two (F) have now secured fellowships while 6 (5F/1M) still work in research at Oxford.

Analysis following our 2015 application found women in the department less likely to request regrading even when they met the threshold. We developed a pilot, in 2020, to review the grade of existing staff named on grant applications – two researchers (50%F) were subsequently appointed to Grade 8 posts. A grade review will be built into the grant application process.

AS actions also built routine grade reviews into PDR with an annual report provided to all PIs, which has contributed to the regrading of three Grade 7 posts (2F, 1M) and two Grade 8 posts (2F).

Via internal and external appointments and regradings, we have increased both the number of female researchers at Grade 8 (from 3 to 5) and the proportion of female staff at this level (from 30% to 42%) and have increased staff at Grade 9 (2F), one of whom was awarded the AP title (Figure 14).

Figure 14: Career pipeline in Pharmacology 2017-2021
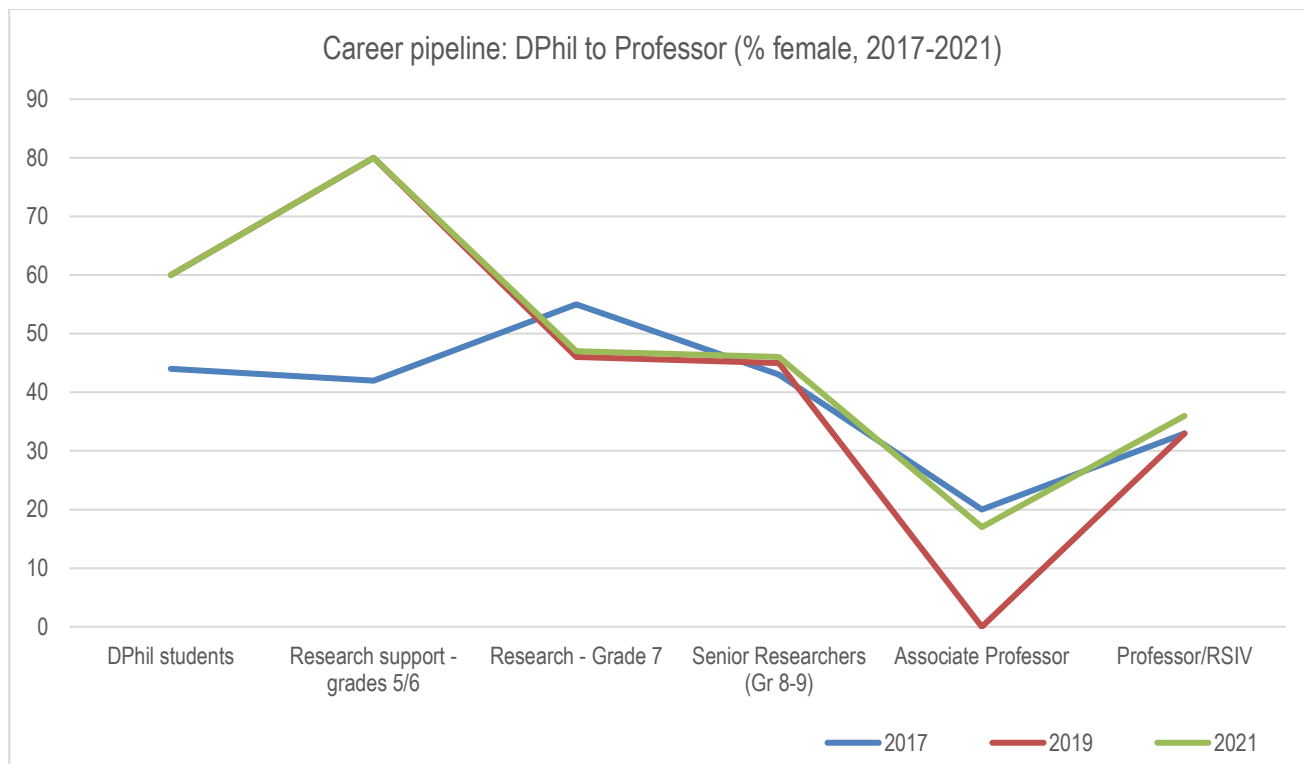
We have seen a reduction in Grade 7 researchers over the last two years (Table 9), partly due to success in promotions, but also affected by the COVID impact on new grant awards. We have been successful in obtaining 10 bridging grants (9F/1M) since 2019 – female staff more frequently ask for support for bridging in end-of-contract discussions.

Our grant success in 2020/21 has improved, so we foresee an increase in recruitment over the next 12-18 months to offset these staff losses. [see actions in recruitment – Section 5.1.i, page 33]

Comment on the transition of technical staff to academic roles

We have a small number of Research Assistant posts at Grade 5/6 (4F,1M), all grant-funded posts working on specific projects. Two (1F, 1M) have had their posts regraded since joining the Department. However, a transition into an academic career would involve additional study to move to a postdoctoral position.

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

Contract type

All Professorial/AP staff (94%) are on permanent contracts. MSD and University averages are 91% and 92% respectively.

Table 11: Contract type by grade and gender (2016-2020) (permanent/open-ended/fixed-term)

		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
		F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Professor/ RSIV	Per/OE	4	8	5	8	4	8	4	8	4	7
	FTC	1									
Associate Professor	Per/OE	1	4		4		4		4		5
	FTC							1		1	
Fellows (Grade 9)	Per/OE									1	
	FTC			1		1					
Research (Grade 8)	Per/OE	1	1	1	1	2		2			
	FTC	2	6	2	6	3	6	4	9	5	7
Research (Grade 7)	Per	1	3	1	3		4				
	FTC	18	12	19	11	18	17	12	11	9	10
Research (Grade 5/6)	Per/OE										
	FTC	5	7	2	3	4	1	3	1	4	1

For research staff, 95% are on fixed-term contracts (compared to 91% MSD and 90% University). Research funding makes it difficult to use permanent contracts for staff working on grant-funded projects or fellows on external grants. From 2022 we will review staff that have been on fixed-term contracts for more than 10 years to assess if they can be moved onto open-ended or permanent contracts (4.4.i).

We support staff on fixed-term contracts with probationary reviews, annual PDRs, continued professional development opportunities and training. As staff approach the end of their contract, more support is available:
- staff meet our HRM for advice and guidance
- can apply for any University vacancy as a priority candidate
- access to the University Career's Service.

Over the last five years, 6 research staff, all female, have been redeployed into posts within the University, 2 promotions to higher grade posts.

ACTION – PRIORITY 4

All research staff on fixed-term contracts with more than 10 years' service to be reviewed by end of 2022 to assess if they can be moved onto an open-ended contract (4.4.i)

Figure 15: Trends in the proportion of contract types (permanent/open-ended/fixed-term by gender and grade (2017-2021)

Contract type by gender: Academic - Prof/AP (2017-2021)

Contract type by gender: research staff - grades 5-9 (2016-2021)
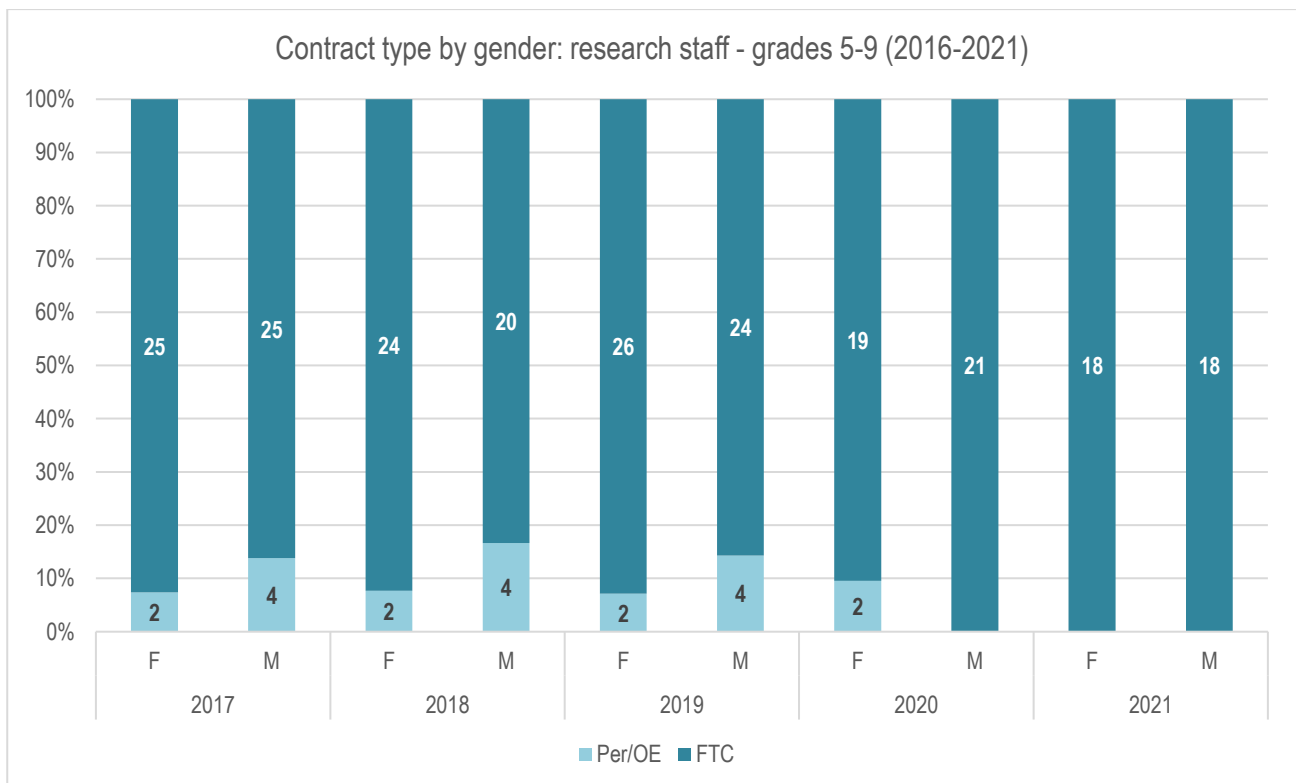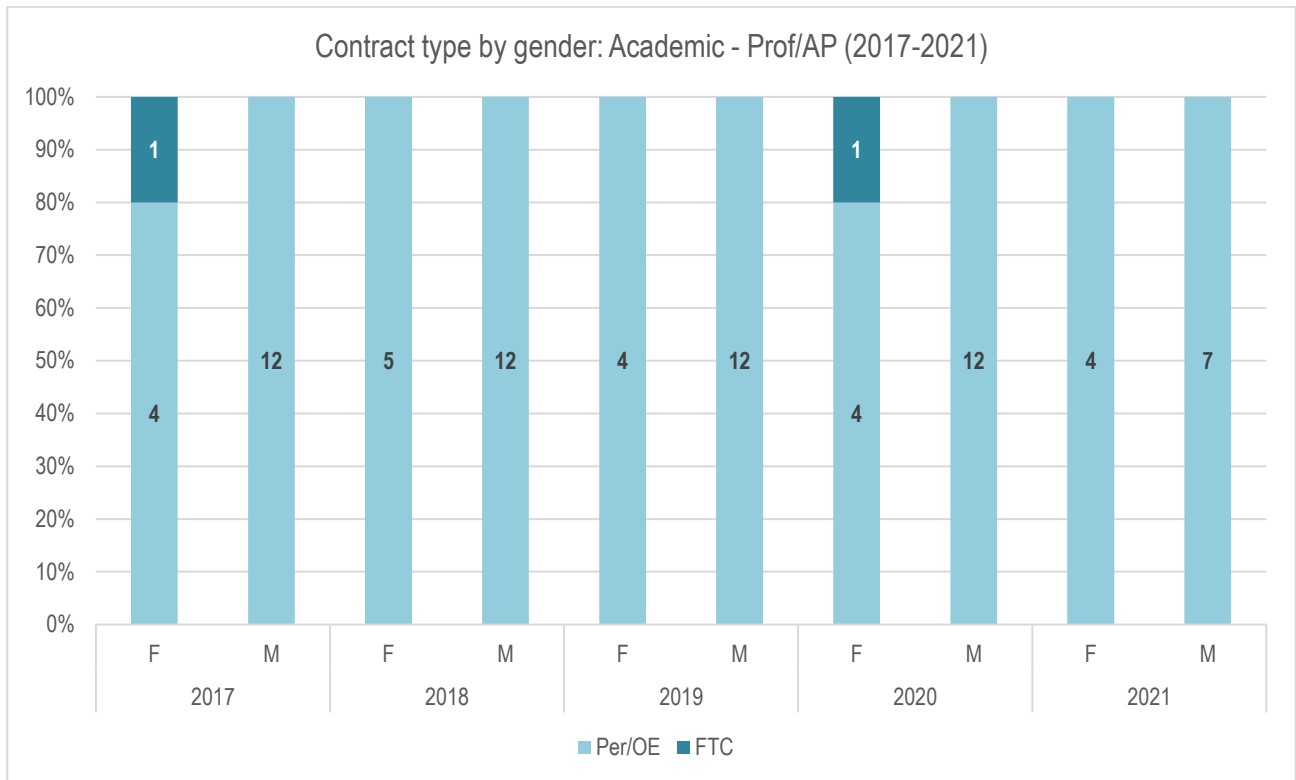
iii) Academic leavers by grade and gender and full/part-time status

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

Leaver data

In the last five years, out of 49 leavers (Table 12), two academic staff retired (1F, 1M). The budget for the female academic post was used to fund three new Grade 8 fellowships (33%F) while the male academic has not been replaced.

The proportion of leavers at Grade 7 is consistent across male and female staff; however, male leavers at Grades 8/9 (where there are more male staff in post) and Grades 5/6 (where numbers are small) outnumber female staff.

Table 12: Leavers in the academic and research staff groups (2017-2021)

		Numbers (FPE)		% by gender		Leavers as % of staff in post	
		F	M	F	M	F	M
Academic	Staff in post (2017-2021)	24	59	29%	71%	4%	2%
	Leavers	1	1	50%	50%		
Fellow/Senior Researchers (8-9)	Staff in post (2017-2021)	23	36	39%	61%	0%	11%
	Leavers	0	4	0%	100%		
Researchers (7)	Staff in post (2017-2021)	78	71	52%	48%	21%	23%
	Leavers	16	16	50%	50%		
Researchers (5-6)	Staff in post (2017-2021)	18	13	58%	42%	22%	46%
	Leavers	4	6	40%	60%		

Table 13: Reasons for leaving – research staff 2017-2021

	Female		Male	
	No	% of total leavers	No	% of total leavers
Retirement	2	10%	2	7%
Move to a new post	5	24%	7	26%
Further study	1	4.5%	3	11%
Resignation – personal	1	4.5%	1	3%
Redundancy/end of fixed-term contract	12	57%	14	51%
Total	21		27	

A higher proportion of female staff left at the end of their FTC. Our career development actions [Section 5.3, page 42] aim to provide the skills to help staff move into new posts. We have been successful over the last three years with 10 applications (9F/1M) for bridging funding with 3 staff (2F/1M) appointed on new grants, one female appointed to a higher-grade post in Oxford and 3F staff currently supported to prepare fellowship applications.

Collection of data

Information is collected for all leavers and recorded on our personnel system so we can report on the reasons that staff leave and on their destinations in terms of location and sector.

1,794 words

5 Supporting and advancing women's careers

Recommended word count: Silver: 6500 words

5.1 Key career transition points: academic staff

i) Recruitment

Break down data by gender and grade for applications to academic posts including shortlisted candidates, offer and acceptance rates. Comment on how the department's recruitment processes ensure that women (and men where there is an underrepresentation in numbers) are encouraged to apply.

> **ACHIEVEMENTS:**
> - Female applicants are 46% (35% in 2015/16) – we posted case studies on our website and EDI information on all job descriptions
> - For Grade 8 posts, an issue in our previous application, the proportion of female applicants has improved from 24% to 56% between 2017-2021.

Application data

Table 14: Recruitment data by gender and grade (2017-2021)

	*	Grade 6				Grade 7				Grade 8			
		A	S	OM	OA	A	S	OM	OA	A	S	OM	OA
2021	F					22	7	2	2				
	M					21	6	3	3				
	%F					51	54	40	40				
2020	F					25	4	2	2				
	M					27	6	3	3				
	%F					48	40	40	40				
2019	F	34	3	1	1	25	3	2	2	22	4	1	1
	M	17	1	0	0	36	6	4	4	17	4	2	2
	%F	67	75	100	100	41	33	33	33	56	50	33	33
2018	F					24	4	2	2				
	M					60	5	3	3				
	%F					29	44	40	40				
2017	F	47	5	0	0	17	4	2	2				
	M	38	7	4	4	34	7	4	3				
	%F	55	42	0	0	33	36	33	40				
Total (2017-2021)	F	81	8	1	1	113	22	10	10	22	4	1	1
	M	55	8	4	4	178	30	17	16	17	4	2	2
	%F	60	50	20	20	38	42	37	38	56	50	33	33

* No of (A)pplicants, (S)hortlisted candidates, (O)ffers (M)ade and (O)ffers (A)ccepted

Since 2017 we advertised 34 posts, 82% at Grade 7; the proportion of female applicants was 60% at Grade 6, 38% at Grade 7 and 56% at Grade 8.

Five appointments were made at Grade 6 (20%F); during this period (due to M staff leavers) female staff increased from 42% to 80%. We have put in inclusive recruitment actions and will consider the impact of these actions on future recruitment at this level (2.4.i-iv).

At Grade 7, 38% of applicants and appointments were female. One post in 2018, in Medicinal Chemistry, received 9 female applicants out of 49 (18%F) which reflects the experience of the Department of Chemistry. Actions we will be adopting reflect those being trialled in Chemistry (2.4.i-iv).

Female staff at Grade 7 have decreased from 55% to 47% since 2017; this is in the context of a 45% reduction in staff and the impact of staff being regraded/promoted. We will focus on:
- using inclusive language in job adverts
- stronger diversity and positive action statements
- clear guidance on the selection process in our adverts
- using clear selection criteria that meet the objectives of DORA.

We have made three appointments at Grade 8 (33%F); female applicants were 56% with 33% of appointments. We will amend our selection processes for senior posts including a pilot to explore gender split shortlisting, a search committee for each vacancy and familiarisation visits for shortlisted candidates (2.4.v-vii).

Recruitment process

Our AS status is highlighted on all adverts which include details of family-friendly policies, our commitment to equality, and work-life balance. Opportunities are advertised on the University website, jobs.ac.uk and our newsletter. Academic staff share vacancies with collaborators to help identify suitable candidates from underrepresented groups.

All panels are gender-balanced and, over the last five years, there were 38F/40M panel members (49%F). Our HRM organises interviews, records panel members and supports candidates.

All panel chairs undertake Recruitment and Selection training (including modules on equality, inclusivity, and implicit bias). We will extend this training to all supervisors by the end of 2022 with refresher training every three years.

> **ACTIONS – PRIORITY 2**
> - Job adverts to feature inclusive language and images and a diversity and positive action statement (2.4.i-iii)
> - Clear guidance on selection included on job adverts along with clear and fair selection criteria (2.4.iv)
> - Pilot the use of gender split shortlisting for all vacancies (2.4.vii)
> - For more senior roles, use networks to promote vacancies, set up a search committee for each vacancy and offer familiarisation visits for shortlisted candidates (5.i-vi).

ii) Induction

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

ACHIEVEMENTS:
- Pairing scheme launched in 2020 – four pairs established for new starters.
- 100% of female ac/res staff felt their induction was useful (2021) compared to 57% in the 2018 survey.

Figure 17: Department of Pharmacology formal induction process
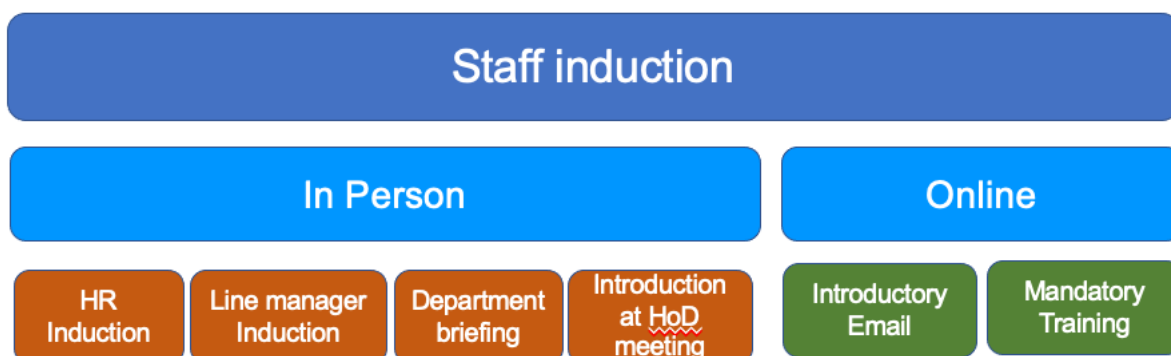
Our 2021 survey showed that only 60%F/67%M ac/res staff were offered an induction so we will formalise the induction process via welcome e-mails and an online induction programme, to be signed off by supervisors and the HRM (4.1.i-ii).

In 2018, 57%F staff reported their induction was useful compared to 100%M staff. Following feedback from new staff, we set up a 'buddy' scheme, led by the Research Staff Society, where new research staff are paired with an existing member of staff - four pairs have been set up (4.1.iii). Our 2021 staff survey showed that 100% of female research staff felt their induction was positive, although the figure for male staff has reduced to 75%, this may be skewed by more male staff being appointed during the lockdown.

"it was good to get to know a new member of the department working in a similar field"

"I would definitely recommend the scheme."

"I felt I could ask questions on where things are and how things work in the department"

Research Staff pairing scheme (anonymous feedback)

The University holds a termly induction session for new research staff and an annual session for academic staff to meet and form networks, advertised via the handbook and HR induction.

New supervisors, via comments in the 2021 survey, suggested the introduction of a training programme. Our staff's satisfaction with their manager relationship (65%, 69%F/63%M) is 7% higher than the University average; however, the survey highlighted that line managers are less confident in some areas of managing staff than in 2018:
- Applying HR policies: 71%F/60%M (2018: 100%F/83%M)
- Conducting reviews: 71%F/75%M (2018: 100%F/83%M)
- Managing staff and giving feedback: 86%F/80%M (2018: 100%F/M)

We will conduct focus groups to identify content and will work with experts in the University, the POD team and the Researcher Hub, to enable supervisors to support their staff's career development. We will include equality and diversity training and modules to support disabled and neurodiverse staff (and students) (4.6.i-viii).

ACTIONS – PRIORITY 4
- Online induction programme to be launched in 2022, aim to increase satisfaction with induction above 90% by 2023 survey and proportion of staff who report having an induction above 85% with no gender imbalance (4.1.i-ii).
- Review pairing scheme for new research staff and expand to all new starters (4.1.iii)
- Management training programme for supervisors to be developed for 2022/23 (4.6.i-viii)

---

iii) Promotion

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

Oxford does not have an automatic promotions process, staff gain seniority, academic recognition and uplifts in pay via the award of academic titles, appointment into a new post or regrading (Figure 11: Section 4.2, page 22).

Opportunities for advancement are a focus of PDR reviews offered to all research staff and annual HoD reviews for academic staff.

The combination of the following actions has created two female staff with the title of Professor and one with the title of Associate Professor, a new Grade 9 female postholder plus an increase in Grade 8 female staff from 3 to 5 (30% to 42%F).

Recognition of Distinction

ACHIEVEMENTS:
- From the 2015/16 action plan, all academic staff are reviewed annually against the criteria for the RoD exercises:
  - Two female academics awarded the title of Professor since 2014
  - One female and one male awarded AP title (2020 and 2021); one female and two males were awarded the title of URL
- All applications submitted for titles since 2014 have been successful (compared to an MSD success rate of 62%)

To redress the fact that female staff are less likely to put themselves forward for promotion (no applications for professors were made by female staff in 2015), we introduced annual reviews for all academics against the criteria for the URL, AP or Professorial titles, carried out by the HRM and HoD. Anyone who meets the criteria is invited by the HoD to apply. In this way, we identified two female staff who submitted a successful application for the title of Professor and two additional applications (1F/1M) are pending in 2022.

Applications are reviewed by other academic staff and the HRM, and applicants can view previous successful applications. Our HoD guides each and creates a personalised letter of support.

Applications for recognition are discussed with academic staff during annual reviews and, if there are gaps in their experience, this is built into their objectives to make sure they are on track to make an application in future.

Case studies: Female Fellow

Following a successful regrading in 2018, our Fellow was identified as a candidate for the AP title and was supported to make a successful application. "The Department has always encouraged me to seek recognition for my achievements and I have always felt very supported in my ambitions. Gaining the title of Associate Professor will be a huge advantage as I work to move my career onto the next level."

Regrading

ACHIEVEMENTS:
- Eight (38%F) ac/res staff regraded since 2016 – grade reviews now built into PDR and costing on new grants.
- All grading applications submitted have been successful.

Staff are considered for regrading during PDR, introduced for staff as part of our Bronze Action Plan. Supervisors share PDR outcomes with the HRM to pick up on any actions. Staff can also discuss their grade with the HoD during the weekly Drop-In Clinic or directly with the HRM.

All applicants work with the HRM and input is available from the HoD to ensure that applications are as strong as possible.

Of eight successful applications, six were prompted by supervisors or mentors (83%F), one male researcher approached our HRM directly and one male researcher was regraded on completion of his DPhil.

As this evidence supports the perception that female staff are less likely to put themselves forward for regrading, we have developed actions to identify suitable candidates:
- Regrading covered during PDR - three candidates identified (33%F) since 2016 – we are exploring a new PDR system and will embed regrading into all reviews (3.2.i).
- Our HoD identified one female candidate who had taken on additional responsibilities and was successfully regraded to a Grade 9.
- A pilot programme in 2021 provided the PI with a summary of salaries, grades and length of service for all their staff which identified a female researcher at Grade 7 who was successfully regraded. This information will now be provided to all PIs in advance of annual PDRs (3.2.iii).

Case study: Female academic

A 1:1 meeting with our HoD highlighted the additional duties that one of our academic staff had taken on. "I have really enjoyed the opportunity to take on work in new areas and develop my role and was very grateful for the support in regrading my post. I feel that my new role gives me greater visibility and authority and I am pleased to be able to lead on such a vital area of work."

ACTIONS – PRIORITY 3
- A discussion on regrading to be a mandatory part of our PDR process. We will build in training for supervisors as part of the PDR process to help them identify suitable candidates (3.2.i)
- Staff data is provided to all PIs annually to help identify candidates for regrading (3.2.iii)

New posts within the Department

> **ACHIEVEMENTS:**
> - Five internal appointments to new Grade 8 posts (40%F) since 2016

Staff can move into a new post at a higher grade through recruitment or via a named post on a new grant.

We have recruited four Grade 8 posts since 2015 (50%F). Three candidates were appointed to the CDF posts - all have been assigned a mentor to work on grant applications to secure an external fellowship grant.

Three Grade 7 researchers (30%) were promoted into Grade 8 posts following the award of new grants. We have put in place an action to review the grade of all existing staff named on grant applications so that grants are costed at an appropriate level (3.2.ii).

> **ACTIONS – PRIORITY 3**
> - A grade review will be built into the process of costing existing staff on new grant applications (3.2.ii)
> - Also note actions on inclusive recruitment for new posts in Priority 2 (2.4 and 2.5)

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

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

All eligible staff were submitted for REF2020 (9F/18M), including 11 ECRs (5F/6M) - eligibility is based on evidence of independence plus an appointment of at least 0.2FTE at the census date.

Table 15: Staff submitted for REF (2014-2020) by gender

	REF 2014			REF 2020		
	Eligible staff	Submitted staff	%	Eligible staff	Submitted staff	%
Female	5	4	80	9	9	100
Male	22	17	77	18	18	100
Total	27	21	95	27	27	100

In 2014, 27 academic staff were eligible (5F/22M); however, one female and five male staff were not submitted.

For 2020, we assessed all members of staff carefully to determine if they were sufficiently independent for inclusion. In this way, we were able to maximise our eligible staff and include more ECRs.

1,685 words

5.2 Key career transition points: professional and support staff

i) Induction

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

PSS induction starts with the Administrator and HRM taking staff through essential paperwork, talking through the Handbook and introducing them to members of the team.

A team member works 1:1 with each new starter to develop key skills and training with the Administrator and HRM remain available for support.

All staff are reviewed in their probationary period to make sure everything is going well and if any additional support is needed. They then receive an annual PDR to monitor their development.

In both 2018 and 2021 surveys, 100% of PSS staff stated that their induction was useful.

> **ACTIONS – PRIORITY 4**
> - PSS staff will also benefit from the online induction system to be introduced in 2022 (4.1.i-ii)

ii) Promotion

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

> **ACHIEVEMENTS:**
> - Three staff (60%F) regraded since 2016 – identified via PDR
> - Four staff (4F) moved to higher grade posts in the University.

Since 2016, three regrading applications were submitted for PSS (60%F) – all successful. All staff were full-time although one female has since taken maternity leave and returned to work part-time.

Staff can ask to be regraded at any time via their line manager, or during their PDR, or will be invited to apply following a review of duties carried out by the HRM and Administrator.

Applications are drafted by the individual working with the HRM and with input from the Administrator.

The University runs two award schemes aimed at PSS staff: Awards for Excellence and Recognition Scheme. Awards are for staff who perform above the level expected for someone at their grade (where formal regrading is not appropriate).

Since 2016, 24 award nominations (42%F/58%M) were made by managers - all approved by the Management Committee.

Table 16: Awards and regrading applications for PSS staff (2016-2020)

		Numbers (FPE)		% by gender	
		F	**M**	**F**	**M**
PSS staff	Staff in post (2016-2020)	52	40	57%	43%
	Recognition awards	10	14	19%	35%
	Regrading applications	2	1	4%	3%

Between 2016-2020, a higher proportion of male PSS was nominated for awards. Following a review of this data, all staff are now assessed by the Administrator and two Deputy Administrators. Since 2019, 12 awards have been made (7F/5M) with three awards given to staff working part-time.

Table 17: Awards made to PSS staff by gender (2015-2020)

	Scheme	Female	Male
2021	Recognition Award*	3 (1 PT)	2
2019	Awards for Excellence	4 (1PT)	3 (1PT)
2018	Awards for Excellence	1	2
2017	Awards for Excellence	1	3
2015	Awards for Excellence	1	4

* note Awards for Excellence scheme suspended by the University due to COVID

Case study: Female PSS staff member

An appointment was made to a Grade 3 post in 2014. Following her PDR, a successful regrading application was made in 2016. This member of staff had two periods of maternity leave and now works part-time. She received a Recognition Award in 2021. "I really enjoy my job and am able to fit in my work around my family which is absolutely key for me. It is nice that my role has developed over time and I continue to develop my skills all the time and pick up new things whenever I can.

ACTIONS – PRIORITY 3
- If a new PDR system is introduced, this will also be extended to PSS staff and will consider opportunities for promotion (3.3.ii)

396 words

5.3 Career development: academic staff

i) Training

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

ACHIEVEMENTS:
Actions – adding training to PDR discussions, inks to training in our newsletter, internal career development events and creation of the Research Staff Society:
- Female staff comfortable discussing training needs with their supervisor has increased from 62% (80%M) in 2018 to 78% (77%M) in 2021
- 68%F and 77%M staff are clear about opportunities for training and development (42%F/71%M in 2018).
- 84%F/ 81%M staff have undertaken development activity in the last 12 months (2021 survey)

The University training in the following areas:
- Skills development, eg laboratory techniques
- Career/personal development, eg coaching, effective CVs
- Management/leadership, eg managing teams, skills for PIs
- Role training, eg information security, research grant administration
- EDI training, eg implicit bias, race equality at work

Figure 18: Trends in training take up - academic and research staff 2016-2021
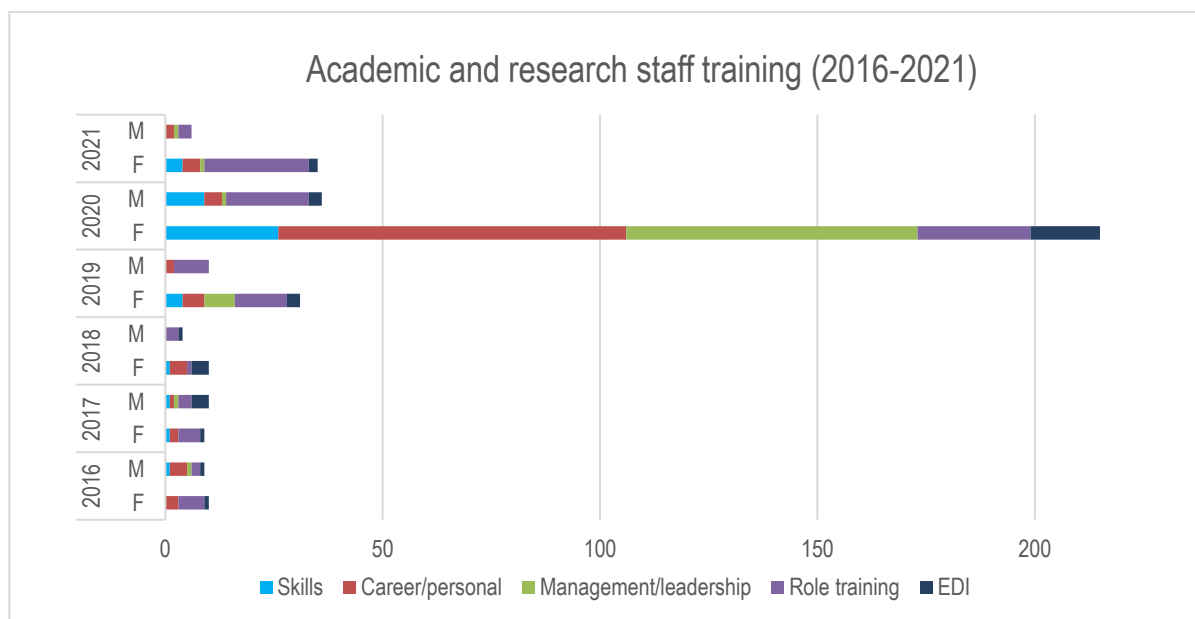
A University data system was introduced in 2019 so the increase from 2019/20 is in part due to an improvement in the data. Our actions aim to increase training from this base.

Course information is available via the University and MSD websites, and we flag up training opportunities via our newsletter. The HRM reviews all PDR forms and will send training recommendations to help to meet future objectives.

In our 2018 survey, 62%F staff reported that they did not feel comfortable discussing their training needs with their supervisor – compared to 80%M. As a result, training was added to our PDR process as a specific element for supervisors to discuss with staff. In 2021, these figures increased to 77%F and 78%M staff (3.3.ii).

Our 2018 survey found staff were not focused on development: 54%F compared to 93%M staff stated that they take time to focus on career development while only 42%F and 71%M were clear about development opportunities.

As a result, we updated our 2015/16 action plan to focus on in-house events providing easy access to development. We held a Career Development Workshop in 2020, attended by 8F staff (44% of staff at Grades 7 and 8) and 3M researchers (15%). Reacting to demand for guidance on grant applications, our HoD organised a seminar in 2021 on Fellowship and Grant Writing attended by 12F (60%) and 8M (28%) (3.5.i and 4.2.i-ii).

In our 2021 survey, 68%F/77%M staff stated that they were clear about opportunities for training and development. In the last 12 months, 84%F and 81%M ac/res staff have undertaken some development activity and 32%F and 35%M staff have spent at least 10 days on professional development (+10% over MSD average).

> **ACTIONS – PRIORITY 3**
> - Review data from PDR to match staff with training opportunities (3.3.ii)
> - Establish an annual career development workshop with input from Research Staff and Student Societies to inform agenda (3.5.i)
>
> **ACTIONS – PRIORITY 4**
> - Run up to three other internal development events to provide training as requested from postdocs and ECRs (4.2.i-iii)

ii)   Appraisal/development review

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

> **ACHIEVEMENTS:**
> - Annual reviews for all staff – extended to academic staff from 2021.
> - Proportion of ac/res staff who found PDR useful increased from 71%-80%F and 80%-86%M (from 2018-2021).

From our Bronze action plan, we introduced an annual PDR for all research staff. Training was organised to set out the aims and benefits of PDR.

AS actions have extended PDR to cover training (Section 5.3.i, page 39), work-life balance (Section 5.6.v, page 56), flexible working (Section 5.5.vi, page 51) and regrading (Section 5.1.iii, page 34).

PDR outcomes are shared with the HRM who reviews training needs or additional support for each individual.

To ensure female academics are considered equally for promotion and supported to submit grant applications, the HoD initiated annual reviews in 2021 for all academics, focusing on research strategy, collaborations, and opportunities for funding.

In 2018, only 50%F/33%M ac/res staff had a PDR in the last two years. These figures increased to 53% and 54% respectively by 2021 but remain lower than we would like – all supervisors are asked every year to organise a PDR with their staff. We will investigate the take up of PDR in 2020/21 to assess the impact of COVID.

The proportion of ac/res staff who found PDR useful has increased from 71%-80%F and 80%-86%M. We will explore the introduction of an online PDR system to drive uptake, collect data and make sure reviews are delivering real outcomes for individuals (3.3.ii).

In 2021, 63%F research staff, compared to 75%M staff, stated that they take time to reflect on, and plan for, their career development. We will introduce Career Development Reviews for research staff, incorporating best practices from University pilots (3.4.i-ix).

> **ACTIONS – PRIORITY 3**
> * Include a session on PDR at an annual Departmental meeting before reviews are planned to highlight the benefits and aims (3.3.i)
> * Investigate the introduction of a PDR system to drive and log take up (3.3.ii).
> * Introduce Career Development Reviews for all research staff (3.4.i-ix).

iii)   Support given to academic staff for career progression

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

> **ACHIEVEMENTS:**
> * Development of Research Staff Society – 44 members (18F/26M), 2-3 seminars per term.
> * Information shared via Teams and newsletter about jobs, training and funding – ac/res staff clear about development opportunities increased since 2018 to 68%F (from 42%) and 77%M (from 71%).
> * Career development workshop in 2020 attended by 44%F/15%M researchers. 5F/1M researchers who attended this event have now been promoted into new roles.
> * Five research staff (2F/3M) being mentored to develop fellowship applications.

One of the benefits of being small is that we can target support at an individual level and to small groups - this personalised help can make a big impact on each individual.

Networks

A previous action pledged to create a network for postdocs - our Research Staff Society was formed in 2020, and now has 44 members (18F/26M). RSS organises three seminars per term to allow researchers to present their science and meet and share information. RSS has worked remotely during COVID so will be supported financially and administratively to enable in-person social and networking events (4.5.i-ii).

> *"RSS events are really useful as they enable me to find out about people and research going on in other groups – they are helping to create a really positive network within the postdoc community."*
>
> **Senior female researcher**

Communication

We have Departmental, researcher and DPhil mailing lists and a Teams group to share information. The newsletter provides information about grant funding, training opportunities and seminars and celebrates personal and professional achievements. The proportion of ac/res staff clear about development opportunities has increased since 2018 to 68%F (from 42%) and 77%M (from 71%). To drive career development activity, we will introduce annual Career Development Reviews for all researchers (3.5.i-iii).

Research staff can access advice from the University Careers Service; information is provided via induction, PDR and at the end of contract. Within the last 12 months, two Grade 7 researchers (2F) have moved into Grade 8 posts in other University research departments following support from the Careers Service.

Our 'Support for Staff and Students WG' identified demand for information about careers, in particular an idea of routes into an academic career. From 2022 we ask seminar speakers to include a summary of their career at the start of their presentations for staff and students (3.5.ii).

In 2021, we introduced 'Town Hall' meetings with research staff and students to find out what support they need and hear suggested improvements. Approximately 10 staff and students attended these first meetings with a gender balance that was approximately 75% female. Meetings will be held biannually to gather feedback.

Mentoring

We introduced a weekly HoD drop-in clinic in 2021, in response to queries about grant and career development and to ensure the HoD remained accessible during the lockdown. Sessions have identified five researchers and fellows (2F/3M) who have been assigned a mentor to work on applications.

In addition to mentoring offered via the HoD drop-in clinic, we assigned mentors to our CDFs to guide collaborators, development of skills and research vision, for example, guidance to mitigate the impact of the lockdown and to get momentum back into their research.

In 2021, 42%F/27%M researchers have been mentored by someone other than their line manager and 88%F/100%M staff found mentoring useful. We will extend informal mentoring via a Departmental-wide scheme to offer a mentor to all research staff. This project will include focus groups and training for mentors and mentees to make sure the relationships are offering the support that people need (3.1.i-vi).

ACTIONS – PRIORITY 3
- Formalise mentoring scheme for research staff (3.1.i-vi)
- Careers information and support for researchers – including annual Career Development workshop, information from seminar speakers, information circulated via Teams and newsletter (3.5.i-iii)

ACTIONS – PRIORITY 4
- Support for Research Staff Society to enable them to host in-person workshops and networking and social events and explore options to link their seminars with the main Departmental seminar series (4.5.i-ii)

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iv) Support given to students for academic career progression

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

ACHIEVEMENTS:
- Pharmacology (student) Society active with 349 members across MSD – 71%/81%M students are members.
- Student reps are invited to Departmental meetings to provide feedback and take information about new initiatives back to the student body.
- The student survey in 2021 had an 81% response rate.

Since 2019, we have hosted an induction session and a social event so the new intake of students can meet existing DPhil students. Our 2021 student survey showed that 96%F and 73%M students found their induction useful.

Our 2021 survey highlighted that students feel their supervisor:
- Values their contribution 88% (92%F/82%M)
- Supports their career development 83% (83%F/82%M)
- Creates a positive work environment 86% (88%F/82%M)

The Department feels welcoming, and the HoD and support staff always seem approachable and friendly

My supervisor is incredibly supportive and encouraging

The lab has a friendly atmosphere and everyone is very happy to help with each other's work

The department consists of pioneers in different field of studies, and all of them are very down to earth and supportive.

Feedback from 2021 student survey

Developing a student network was part of our Silver action plan and our Pharmacology Society was launched in 2018. The Society holds annual voting for the election of officers, student reps attend Departmental Meetings and are members of SAT. In our 2021 student survey, 74% of respondents (71%F/81%M) were members of the Pharmacology Society.

The Society offers events and career workshops and organised online 'coffee mornings' during the lockdown. They started regular DPhil Student Presentations in 2021. 97% of survey respondents (100%F/91%M) stated that they feel supported by their colleagues.

Our 2021 survey indicated that 79%F students take time to reflect on their career development compared to 91%M students. Feedback from the survey suggested that training needs include publishing papers; presenting at conferences; interview skills; experimental techniques; grant applications; and outreach (4.2.i-iii).

The latest Departmental survey on destinations for our DPhil students found that 100% either progressed to additional study or moved into employment. Over the past five years, 11 (5F/6M) former DPhil students (out of 125F/106M) have been appointed to postdoctoral positions within the Department.

Our Teams channels offer a useful mechanism for the promotion of vacancies for postdoc and DPhil opportunities. We will build on this activity by encouraging students to set up notifications.

"I am proud to work in one of the best Universities in the world. We are the highest ranked University for my subject area and it is satisfying to feel that I have contributed to this in some way. I have also transitioned successfully from being a student here to being a colleague of some of the academics I respected most in my studies."

Feedback from 2021 survey

v) Support offered to those applying for research grant applications

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

ACHIEVEMENTS:
- ECRs invited to Research Away Day in 2019 and Fellowship and Grant Writing Workshop held 2020 – 2F/3M staff subsequently made successful grant applications
- 1:1 mentors identified for 6 staff (4F/2M) to provide grant application guidance.
- 8 ECRs have made successful internal grant applications since 2018

Figure 19: Support for staff to make successful grant applications
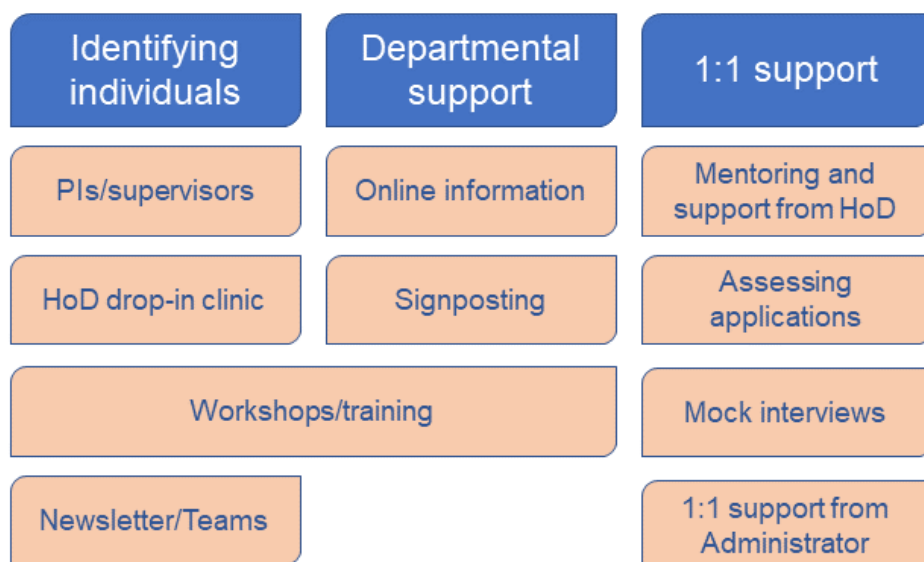
Table 18: Grant success rates 2016/2021 by gender

Success rates by year	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	ALL YEARS
F	27%	36%	20%	29%	11%	28%
M	43%	38%	17%	26%	9%	28%

Success rates by value	£0-£99k	£100k-£499k	£500k-£1M+
F	31%	30%	19%
M	31%	27%	21%

Since 2017/18 our female and male ac/res staff had the same success rates (28%) and we are only slightly less successful than the MSD average (31%F/30%M), as we don't participate in two major MSD funding schemes. Our female academics are just as successful as their male counterparts with high-value awards – not the case throughout MSD where success rates for female staff drop as award value increases.

We are developing actions to identify people who need guidance and information and to put in place 1:1 support for individuals as they prepare applications.

Following feedback to SAT, we invited researchers to our annual Research Away Day in 2019. Seven research staff (4F, 3M) attended, three (1F, 2M) made successful grant applications and two (1F/1M) have subsequently obtained a fellowship.

A Career Development event in 2020 attended by 9F/3M researchers featured a presentation from Research Services on applying for research grants. We will use feedback from this group, and via the Research Staff society, to set the agenda for future events (4.3.iii).

Regular grants items in the newsletter highlight sources of funding and grant successes. Over half of all sessions at the HoD drop-in clinics (2F, 2M) were about support for grant applications – as a result of these sessions, the HoD is providing 1:1 mentoring for these applicants. We will identify academic staff for each of our theme areas to support this mentoring and make sure staff making applications have access to support and guidance (4.3.i).

Feedback via 'Town Hall' meetings, surveys, and academics receiving enquires from research staff suggested a demand for more guidance on grant applications. A fellowship and grant writing workshop held in 2021 (attended by 12F/8M) highlighted support available to anyone planning to make an application.

Staff moving towards independence are encouraged to submit small grants as a first step. Since 2018, four members of research staff and one fellow (5F) have successfully applied for Returning Carer's Fund grants and two researchers and one fellow (3F) in 2021 made applications for bridging funding. Three of these staff are currently working on fellowship applications.

For individuals making applications, we offer 1:1 support, including mentorship, assessment of applications, mock interviews, personalised letters of support from the HoD and 1:1 assistance with costings. We will put in place actions to review CVs – including workshops, templates, and 1:1 review of the content and format of CVs (4.3.iv-v)

While we have anonymised application success data, it is difficult to identify individuals who are unsuccessful so will work to improve the data available. We will then provide support to unsuccessful applicants, such as increased mentorship, an assessment of funding opportunities and a review of past and future applications (4.3.vi).

> **ACTIONS – PRIORITY 4**
> - Key academic staff identified in each theme area to act as champions for staff making grant applications in their area (4.3.i)
> - Provide a 1:1 mentor for all staff member thinking of make a grant or fellowship application and give them feedback on the content and format of their CV (4.3.ii, iv-v)
> - Provide at least one workshop per annum, working with the Research Staff Society, to provide support and guidance for staff working on grant applications (4.3.iii)
> - Identify unsuccessful grant application candidates and provide them with guidance and mentorship to resubmit (4.3.vi)

2,167 words

5.4 Career development: professional and support staff

i)   Training

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

ACHIEVEMENTS:
- One PSS close to completing an apprenticeship – identified via PDR
- Training uptake increased from 4F/4M (2016) to 12F/12M (2021 - staff in post = 10F/8M) – driven by PDR and circulation of training opportunities directly to staff.

PSS have access to the range of courses within the themes set out for ac/res staff, eg skills development, career/personal development, management/leadership, role training, and EDI training. Role training is more significant and often contributes to career development for PSS.

Figure 20: Trends in training take up – PSS staff 2017-2021
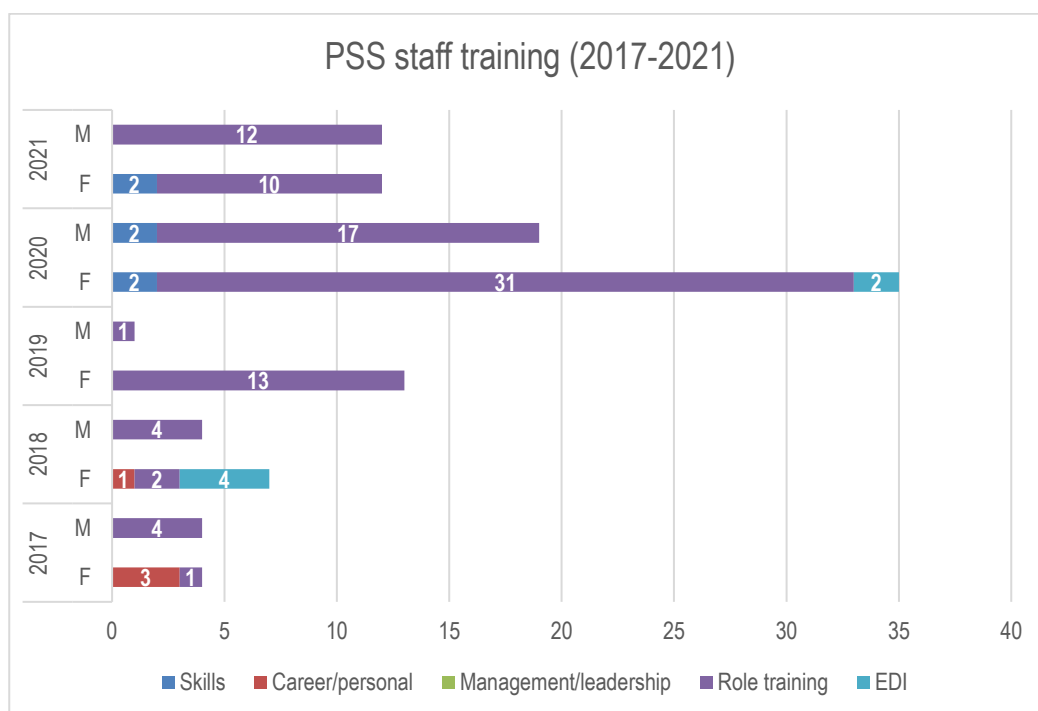
Networks across MSD and University provide information sharing and 'on-the-job' skills development.

Since 2019, we have explored opportunities for PSS to enrol on apprenticeships, enabling staff to spend one day per week on training. One PSS is undertaking an apprenticeship and is now close to finalising a qualification. Once this training is complete, we will aim to enrol further members of PSS on apprenticeships so we can continually upskill our team (3.6.iii)

PSS have consistently reported that they are clear about their development opportunities 83%F/50%M PSS in 2021 and 85%F/57%M in 2018.

Anecdotally, it has been difficult for staff to prioritise development over the last 18-24 months due to COVID, however male PSS who take time for career development activities has remained stable at 50% while the proportion of female staff has dropped from 83% to 67%. To increase the proportion of female staff who can make time for career development, we will introduce skills sharing sessions where staff can organise lunchtime sessions to pass on their knowledge and experience. This will act as a development opportunity for both the session organiser and participants (3.6.i).

ACTIONS – PRIORITY 3
- Identify PSS who can offer skills sharing sessions for colleagues and run six lunchtime sessions per annum (3.6.i)
- Consider PSS staff for apprenticeship opportunities to have one apprentice training at any time (3.6.iii)

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ii) Appraisal/development review

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

PDR has been running for PSS since 2013 and considers achievements, objectives, work-life balance, and skills development. 75% of female staff (2018 and 2021) found their PDR useful and the proportion of male staff who found their review helpful has increased from 83% to 100%.

The uptake of PDR among female staff improved from 53% to 67% from 2018-2021 but for male staff dropped from 83% to 17%. This is in part due to the impact of COVID – more of our male PSS is site-based and were either performing key roles or on furlough during the restrictions.

Demand for PDR among those who haven't had a review is 50%F staff and 60%M staff. We will drive uptake within our male PSS to make sure everyone gets the benefit of a regular review.

Following PDR, three PSS (2F, 1M) had their posts regraded, while several staff have been nominated for the University Awards Schemes (see Table 13 in Section 5.2 and case studies above and in the 'Promotion' section of 5.2).

iii) Support given to professional and support staff for career progression

Comment and reflect on support given to PSS staff to assist in their career progression

We have a small PSS and have frequent discussions about their work and development, in addition to more formal annual reviews. All staff are encouraged to undertake training needed for their jobs but also to develop new skills. Our Administrator and HRM regularly review people's duties to assess if a regrading is appropriate.

Our Administrator keeps a lookout for secondment opportunities that would benefit our PSS; for example, we identified a secondment opportunity in 2021 for one of our finance team to work with the University Finance Division (3.6.ii).

We recognise that we are unable to fulfil everyone's career aspirations due to the size of our team and encourage our staff to take up opportunities elsewhere in the University. Three members of our finance team have moved in the last four years to higher grade positions in other departments.

POD is developing a pilot mentoring scheme for PSS, and we will explore options for involvement; it would be difficult to introduce in-house mentoring but a University programme would enable our staff to form networks with staff across the University (3.6.iv).

ACTIONS – PRIORITY 3
- Explore secondment opportunities for PSS staff during annual PDR to expand skills (3.6.ii)
- Investigate options to get involved in University mentoring scheme for PSS (3.6.iv).

697 words

5.5 Flexible working and managing career breaks

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

> **ACHIEVEMENTS:**
> - Only one member of staff, out of seven, did not return from maternity leave from 2016-2021
> - All staff who returned from maternity leave either remain in post after 18 months or returned from leave within the last 18 months.

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

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

Our maternity pay scheme includes 26 weeks' full pay, 13 weeks' SMP and up to 13 weeks' unpaid leave. Once staff have notified their supervisor and HRM, the priority is to make sure that all safety processes are followed. Feedback from maternity returners requested information on pregnancy and family leave available in the early stages of planning (4.7.i)

The HRM shares guidance on maternity leave, including options for SPL, and a 1:1 meeting is held. Following feedback from a supervisor in 2021, a checklist will be developed to record all discussions before and on return from family leave (4.7.ii).

We also consider contract status for everyone taking maternity leave, making sure that, wherever possible, contracts can be extended beyond the end of the leave period (only one contract ended during the maternity period since 2013).

In 2021, we put a member of staff planning family leave into contact with others who have returned to work to help them decide on their maternity plan – we will ask female academics who have taken a career break to share their experiences (4.7.iii)

> *"It was really helpful to talk to someone who had returned to work – it was great to be able to chat with someone who had been through the same thing. I think it would also be useful to speak to someone more senior, at the PI level, which would be reassuring as they have made it through the other end!"*
>
> **Maternity leave returner 2022**

> **ACTIONS – PRIORITY 4**
> - Add information to our intranet on pregnancy and family leave so it is available to staff in the early stages of planning (4.7.i)
> - Develop checklist to document meetings and decisions that can be shared with staff, their supervisor and the HRM (4.7.ii)
> - Review pilot where staff have been put in contact with others who have returned to work following a career break and expand if there are identifiable benefits. The first maternity returner suggested it would have been useful to talk to an academic who has taken a career break so we will build this into the process. (4.7.iii)

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

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

For everyone taking family leave, we check if staff are happy to be contacted during their leave, staff remain on our mailing list so continue to receive the newsletter and messages about events and developments to keep up to date.

All staff are aware of their entitlement for KIT and SPLIT days and encouraged to use these towards the end of their leave to make the transition back to work easier.

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

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

Support is provided to staff returning from leave by supervisors and the HRM; all staff are offered options for a part-time or phased return to work. A review period is set for each part-time returner so they can make changes to their working pattern. Individuals can talk to other staff who have returned to work to find out how different arrangements have worked for them.

All staff who have a career break are encouraged to apply for a Returning Carer's Fund grant which provides support to get a research career back on track. Funding can provide salary support for support staff, purchasing items of equipment or travel to events.

Six staff have made RCF applications – all successful – with applications ranging in value from £3,400 to £9,800 which have contributed to two publications and two fellowship applications.

> **Case study: Female professor**
> *"For my first maternity leave the department was very supportive and I used KIT days to keep in touch with my work. For my second child, I shared leave with my husband and the department was great at facilitating the shared leave, including balancing my teaching and administrative responsibilities. It worked much better for the family and for me personally to balance my work and family life, and to help my transition back to work."*
>
> *"The department encouraged and supported me to apply for a successful RCF grant. A small grant at that pivotal moment had a huge impact on my career. I have since shared my application and discussed with other returning carers to support their own RCF applications."*

iv) Maternity return rate

Provide data and comment on the maternity return rate in the department. Data of staff whose contracts are not renewed while on maternity leave should be included in the section along with commentary. Provide data and comment on the proportion of staff remaining in post six, 12 and 18 months after return from maternity leave.

Since 2015, seven staff have taken maternity leave – 2 academic, 4 researchers and one PSS (two periods of maternity leave).

Only one member of the research staff did not return after her maternity leave (12.5%). We supported her to make a fellowship application before her maternity break, but this was unsuccessful.

Our maternity return rate over the last five years is 87.5%.

All staff who returned from maternity leave during this period were still in post after 18 months (or have returned from leave less than 18 months ago).

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

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

Three researchers have taken paternity leave over the last five years.

We have had good take up of SPL, with four staff since 2015 (out of 6 taking maternity leave) using SPL (3F, 1M). SPL is discussed with all staff planning their maternity leave during 1:1 consultation with the HRM.

We will pull together case studies of how staff have used SPL and create a leaflet for all staff on family leave options – to be shared with existing staff and given to new starters (4.7.v).

> **ACTIONS – PRIORITY 4**
> * Pull together case study examples of how staff have used SPL, paternity and parental leave into a leaflet for new starters and shared initially with all staff (4.7.v)

vi) Flexible working

Provide information on the flexible working arrangements available

We support a range of flexible working and information is shared during induction and in our Handbook.

Flexible working can range from working fewer days, term-time only working and working short days across a full week. We have never refused a flexible working request. Full-time staff can also organise their own time according to experimental needs and caring responsibilities.

In our 2021 survey, 92% of staff felt we are supportive of flexible working (96%F/100%M of ac/res staff). 100% of ac/res staff with caring responsibilities feel supported to work flexibly.

In our last data set before pandemic affected working patterns (Dec 2019), we had 16 staff (9F, 7M) who had formal flexible working arrangements in place.

Table 20: Uptake of flexible working (pre-pandemic) from Dec 2019 data

Staff group		Staff in post		Formal flexible working in place	
		No	**%**	**No**	**%**
Academic and fellows	F	8	36%	0	-
	M	14	64%	1	7%
Research staff	F	24	48%	4	17%
	M	26	52%	4	15%
PSS staff	F	11	58%	5*	45%
	M	8	42%	2	25%

* NB includes one maternity cover post in addition to the substantive postholder – both working flexibly

As we return to work following the pandemic, we will work with staff to consider how working arrangements may change now that home working has become more established. We will build this into policies and procedures and include within management training programme for supervisors (4.8.iii, 4.6.i-viii).

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ACTIONS – PRIORITY 4
- Consider good practice lessons about flexible working from the pandemic and ensure these are available to staff going forwards (4.8.i)
- Consider inclusion of flexible working wording for all new recruitment exercises (4.8.iv)
- Build a flexible working policy into Departmental procedures and include in management training programme to give supervisors the skills necessary to manage requests (4.8.iii and 4.6.i-viii)

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

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

We always support requests to work part-time on return from leave, either a phased return to work or as a permanent change. We work with individuals to consider salary support and model the impact of flexible working to extend contracts as necessary.

If staff return on a part-time basis, a review period enables working arrangements to be updated if required. Once a working pattern is established, this is reviewed annually during PDR.

The HRM also puts family leave returners in contact with staff who have returned to work on either a part-time or full-time basis to find out about the pros and cons.

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Case study: Female researcher
This postholder returned from maternity leave in May 2020, working three days per week for a trial period of six months and is now working on an application for a Fellowship.

"I wasn't sure until I returned from my maternity leave what the impact would be on my research but I wanted to make sure that I got the balance right between work and home. It was reassuring to have the initial trial period in place, with a review date set, so that I had the option to change the arrangements if they weren't working for me."

</div>

1,151 words

5.6 Organisation and culture

i) Culture

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

> **ACHIEVEMENTS:**
> - Decision-making committee 44%F (University target 35%).
> - Staff and students represented at Departmental meetings and HoD holds 'Town Hall' meetings and drop-in clinics:
>   - Ac-res staff who feel they have a voice on issues in the Department has increased from 56%-82%F and 67%-79%M since 2018.
>   - 68%F/77%M ac/res staff feel decision-making is clear and transparent (29%F/62%M in 2018).
>   - 87%F and 81%M staff feel communication is open and effective.

We are a small and friendly Department and inclusivity is vital to our success.

Question	Theme	Response favourability			Comparison
Communication in my department is open and effective	Leadership	83%	12%	5%	+24
Senior leaders make the effort to listen to and communicate with staff	Leadership	85%	12%	3%	+20
My department sets clear expectations of behaviour	Leadership	83%	14%	3%	+16
There has been a positive cultural change in my department over the last two years	Leadership	68%	32%		+32

Question	Theme	Response favourability			Comparison
There is a fair and transparent way of allocating work in my department	Decision-making	62%	29%	10%	+18
I have the opportunity to contribute my views before changes are made which affect me	Decision-making	75%	20%	5%	+20
Management and decision-making processes are clear and transparent in my department	Decision-making	72%	18%	9%	+29

Our 2021 survey shows leadership, and decision-making scores significantly outperform University averages (green 'comparison' scores). Decision-making rests with the Management Committee (44%F), chaired by our HoD, which exceeds the University's target to get 35% female representation on decision-making committees.

SAT reports directly to the Management Committee and our Academic Lead works closely with the HoD – AS is a standing agenda item. Our SAT WGs allow all members of the Department to get involved in issues relating to AS and to influence decision-making.

We share information via Departmental Meetings, held termly, which include all academics, research staff and student reps. Research and Student Societies share information from these meetings with their colleagues for discussion and feedback.

We hold regular Departmental seminars, open to all, and events are also run by the Research Staff and Student Societies, which offer an opportunity to make connections and create networks within our communities.

Information is shared via our newsletter and in 2021 we launched Athena Swan News, which includes details of actions and their impacts.

We hold regular social events, and all members of the Department are invited via our mailing list and in the newsletter. We aim to extend these events to include families (5.4.i).

> *Recently, an increased effort has been made to hear and support all members of the Department by the HoD. This is wonderful.*
>
> *The department has really made me feel valued as a person, and their commitment to supporting my career and continued development has been amazing.*
>
> *This is such a welcoming, collaborative, hard-working and efficient department. I worked in many similar places in the past, however, this is the best one I have ever worked in.*
>
> *There is a community feel across the department, efforts are made to encourage interaction and socialising outside of work*
>
> *We applaud the positive steps that have been made to invite comments and raise issues with the managing committees, be it direct or via representatives. We feel that we have a 'voice' and that our opinions are valued.*
>
> **Anonymous feedback – 2021 survey**

2021 survey data shows:
- 89%F/85%M - feel integrated into the Department (2018: 55%F/73%M)
- 74%F/85%M - feel included in networking and social activities (2018: 55%F/87%M)
- 82%F/79%M - feel able to voice issues important to them within the Department (2018: 56%F/67%M)

ACTIONS – PRIOIRITY 5
- Extend biannual social events to families of staff and students (5.4.i)

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ii)   HR policies

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

ACHIEVEMENTS:
- Distribution of information about bullying and harassment, including support and guidance – posters in Reception and WCs and a footer in each newsletter – incidence of B&H has reduced from 21%F to 5%F since 2018 (7%M/8%M) and witnessed behaviour has reduced from 8%F to 5%F (7%M/8%M)

Responsibility for HR policies rests with the HRM in collaboration with supervisors. In 2018, 100% of female supervisors felt confident about administering HR policies compared to 83% of male supervisors; however, this dropped to 83%F and 53%M in 2021. We will build a training programme, to be developed with supervisors, that will include staff management and HR policies (4.6.i-viii).

Our 2018 survey showed that 21%F staff experienced bullying or harassment compared to 7%M staff. We put in place several actions:
- Information about harassment in WCs - we have two trained harassment advisors (1F, 1M).
- Posters encourage people to act as 'responsible bystanders' if they witness harassment.
- A footnote in each newsletter to state our zero-tolerance approach to B&H which signposts individuals to support and guidance.

Our 2021 survey showed that 5%F/8%M ac/res staff experienced bullying or harassment (21%F/7%M in 2018) and that the same proportion had witnessed any behaviour in the last 12 months (8%F/7%M in 2017/18). 94% of female and 92% of male staff are aware of the University's harassment policy and 94%F/81%M staff know how to contact a harassment advisor.

ACTIONS – PRIOIRITY 4
- Management training programme for supervisors to be developed for 2022/23 (4.6.i-viii)

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iii)   Representation of men and women on committees

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

Table 21: Committee membership by gender

	Academic		Research		PSS		Students		%F
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	
Management Committee*	3	3			1	2			44%
Departmental Meetings	7	17	2	1	1	1	1	1	36%
AS SAT	4	2	5	4	2			1	61%
Teaching Advisory Group	3	5			2				50%
MSc Teaching Committee	4	3			2				67%
Safety Committee			1	4	2	4			27%

* main decision-making committee

Our Management Committee includes six academics (3F) and three PSS (1F). Membership was established when Fran was appointed HoD in 2020 and will be reviewed annually. The proportion of female staff on this committee, currently 44%, exceeds the University target of 35%.

All academics attend Departmental meetings along with research, PSS and student reps. Research staff and student reps are nominated by the Research Staff and Pharmacology Societies from members of their committee.

We have two teaching committees; our Teaching Advisory Group (TAG) is 50%F and MSc Teaching Committee is 67%F.

Our Safety Committee, a mixture of research and PSS, is currently 27%F. The Committee features staff in key technical roles and, therefore, rotation of personnel on this committee is more difficult.

Only two academics, both females, serve on more than two committees – the HoD, who chairs the MC and sits on TAG and SAT, and our Teaching Oversight Manager who reports on teaching to

the MC, sits on TAG and chairs the MSc Teaching Committee. This ensures that women in the Department are not subject to the onerous workload by taking on excessive administrative duties

iv)   Participation on influential external committees

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

All academic staff have an annual review with our HoD to encourage activities and to contribute to each individual's career development.

Our HoD strongly supports involvement in external roles and currently serves as a committee member for the Gordon Research Conferences and as Chair of the Springboard Grant Panel for the Academy of Medical Sciences. Our AS Academic Lead also serves on the review panel for the Distinguished Professor Grant on behalf of the Swedish Research Council since 2017.

From 2022, we will establish a Nominations Committee to consider staff for external activities and appointments, prizes, and other awards (5.3.i-ii).

> **ACTIONS – PRIORITY 5**
> - Nominations Committee established to encourage academic and research staff to apply for external appointments and activities and to ensure they are recognised via external awards and prizes. New appointments, awards and prizes will be promoted in our newsletter and on our website. (5.3.i-ii)

v)   Workload model

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

We do not have a formal workload model, but this question is asked annually during PDR and any concerns about workload are monitored by the HRM. We have not yet had any staff raise issues with the workload during their annual review, but this has only been in place for two years.

62% of staff feel workload is allocated fairly and transparently (18% higher than the University average), however, in our research community at Grade 6 and 7, this figure falls to 22%F staff (78%M). The workload is an issue in this group, and we will need to work out how to address this in our action plan (5.1.i-vi). This compares to 80%F/78%M academic staff who feel workload is allocated fairly.

> **ACTIONS – PRIORITY 5**
> - Explore the issues around workload for female research staff so that appropriate actions can be developed (5.1.i-vi)

vi)   Timing of departmental meetings and social gatherings

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

All key meetings are held during core working hours (9.30am-4pm) and timings varied to suit different working patterns. Meetings are arranged with plenty of notice, so care arrangements can be put in place.

Seminars are organised at midday to suit those carrying out experiments. The Research Staff and Student Societies consult their members regularly about the timing of meetings, eg the Student Society meets monthly and sends forms online about the timing of the meetings

In 2021, 83%F/81%M ac/res staff felt we take the needs of those with caring responsibilities into account when scheduling meetings (57%F/60%M in 2018). Our online seminar series, held during COVID, has proved popular and we will continue in a hybrid format to keep them as accessible as possible. We have also recorded career development events to share with staff working part-time.

Social gatherings are held within core working hours to maximise attendance and, from 2021, we will be aiming to include families and carers to ensure everyone can attend.

vii) Visibility of role models

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

The achievement of members is celebrated via our newsletter and website, including new papers, awards, prizes, promotions, and personal successes.

We host regular seminars with speakers across our research themes. A previous action requested academic staff to nominate speakers from poorly represented areas, both in terms of gender, ethnicity, and career stage.

Since 2013, we have increased the %F speakers from 15% to 42% and female hosts for seminars from 23% to 33%. From 2021 we have asked academic staff to suggest one male and one female speaker at every opportunity so the programme can be balanced (5.2.i).

Figure 21: Seminar speakers and hosts by gender 2013-2020
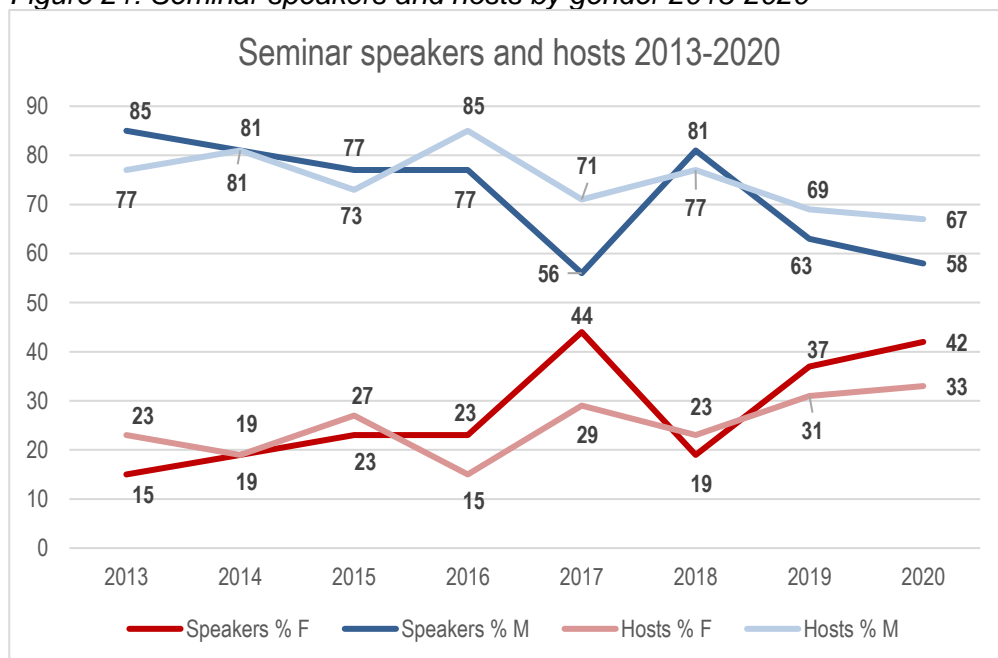
Three women – one academic, one fellow and one PSS – were included in the MSD's 100 Women in Science project in 2021 to celebrate 100 years since the admission of women to Oxford. We have included these case studies on our website and will build this into a wider range of case studies.

Our website images focus on images of our research, except for staff profiles where individuals choose their images. However, our portraiture is not representative of our diversity either in terms of gender or ethnicity. We are working with an artist-in-residence to update our reception area - to include case studies of Departmental pioneers, including two female scientists (5.2.ii-iv) – plus a 'cabinet of curiosities' to feature projects from our staff and students. We also have a exhibition throughout the Department of paintings created by our artist.

> **ACTIONS – PRIORITY 5**
> - All suggestions for seminar speakers to include both male and female speakers (5.2.i)
> - Case study boards in the entrance hall and up and down the stairwells – historic profiles to include at least two high-profile female pioneers (5.2.ii-iv)
> - Increase scope of case studies on the website
> - Add to diversity of art and portraits in Reception, working with artist-in-residence (5.2.ii)

viii) Outreach activities

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

Staff and students take part in outreach, including school visits, science festivals, patient groups, and charity fundraising. Our 2021 survey showed that 35%F/37%M staff are involved in outreach, including 55%F (25%M) taking part in festivals and 55%F (67%M) visiting local schools, which outperforms University averages.

In 2018 we set up a Public Engagement Committee (8F/4M), including ac/res staff and students. In 2020/21: one of our postdocs led a successful application to the Wellcome Trust for a public engagement award, and one of our DPhil students was appointed as an Ambassador to the Oxford Sparks' programme.

Outreach work is featured in our newsletter and website. We will build a discussion of outreach into CDR for research staff so that staff receive recognition via awards and, potentially, regrading opportunities.

1,605 words

6 Case Studies

Associate Professor (female)

I joined Pharmacology in 2015. I studied at Oxford for my PhD and then worked as a postdoc before being successful with my fellowship application.

Pharmacology is a very supportive and inclusive environment and feel that I have had input to academic discussion and development within the Department from the start.

On a personal level, I have had a great deal of support from several Heads of Department and from other academic colleagues to help with my career development. I was initially asked by the HoD in 2016 to apply for the title of University Research Lecturer and was pleased that my application was successful.

Following input from my mentors, I requested a regrade in 2018 which was backed by the Head of Department. Our HRM was really helpful, working with me to update my job description and put together a regrading application, from Grade 8 to Grade 9, that was successful in 2018.

During the annual exercise in 2020 to identify suitable candidates to apply for the title of Associate Professor, I was once again delighted to be invited to submit an application that was granted by the MSD. This will be a major help with my future career development and applications for senior fellowships and grants.

Throughout my time in the Department, both academic colleagues and the PSS team, have been helpful, enabling me to manage my fellowship and other grants to maximum effect.

I have been an active member of the Athena Swan SAT since I joined the Department and am now a joint lead for the working group for promotion and recognition. I also suggested the creation of a network for BAME staff and students in the Department and will take the lead to get this set up and established as soon as I can.

As I am now in the last year of my Fellowship, I am working on several applications for senior fellowships and have received mentorship, advice and guidance from both the Head of Department and other members of the Management Committee. I very much look forward to continuing my academic career in Pharmacology.

Researcher - female

I studied for my PhD in the Department and was then offered a postdoctoral position in 2013.

One of the biggest advantages here is that it is very easy to find the right people to talk to - everyone is accessible. When planning my maternity leave in 2019, our HRM was happy to sit down with me and my husband and explain the options. She helped with our forms and gave us invaluable advice that helped with my husband's employers. They initially didn't think our plan would be possible, but the details from Pharmacology helped us make the case to get what we wanted.

It was also very easy to organise my return to work – I originally planned to return full-time but decided during my leave that I wanted to try a part-time return to work. With the support of my supervisor, and following a simple call with our HRM, I was able to change my plans and trial a period of 60%FTE. It was reassuring to have this flexibility to work out the best balance for me as my daughter settled in at nursery.

On my return to work, I had a lot of support from academics to identify my next career steps. I was sent details of the University's Returning Carers' Fund and applied for funding for a part-time research assistant to help get my project work back on track. My supervisor and the MSD Athena Swan Co-ordinator reviewed my application and Fran provided a fantastic letter of support. My application was successful, and I have been able to really focus on my experiments; my research assistant sets up so I can focus my experimental time within nursery hours. I am producing good data for future papers and applications.

I am now working on applications for an independent fellowship. I will submit in 2022 and the Department has been very supportive, guaranteeing me access to space and facilities and supporting the application process as a whole. The workshop on Grant and Fellowship funding in 2021 was scheduled outside of my normal working hours, however, our HRM recorded it for me to watch at a later date. The advice was useful, but I think the most important thing was that senior academics presenting the workshop urged anyone working on an application to come to them for advice. I have been very grateful for this 'open door' approach, and both have provided me with really useful input.

7 Further information

Recommended word count: Silver: 500 words

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

Additional words: mitigating the impact of COVID

Students
The main issues students have faced have been accessing labs and concerns about funding:
- In 2021, we had 5 (4F/1M) DPhils who didn't complete their thesis within 5 years due to lockdown. Our DGS worked with supervisors to prioritise access during the restrictions and ensure extensions are in place. We have supported students to apply for funding extensions where available and have circulated information regularly about the University's hardship funding, so students can be supported financially.
- In 2020, we had two MSc students (1F, 1M) unable to complete their research project – both deferred their course and returned in 2021 to complete their studies.

Career development
- While uptake of PDR for ac/res staff increased from 50%F/33%M in 2018 to 53%F/54%M in 2021, reviews for 2020 and 2021 were affected by restrictions and workload. We will introduce a new PDR system to drive and measure uptake.
- COVID adversely affected the ability of PIs to source research funding, necessary for the extension of research staff contracts. We submitted 3F applications for bridging funding (all successful) which covered £70k of salary costs, matched by £120k from the Department.
- To mitigate the impact of restrictions on ac/res staff, we have supported 4F/2M staff to make applications to the University's COVID Rebuilding Research Momentum Fund (CRRMF) – 3F/2M were successful in providing £23k of funding. The funding call was promoted via Teams and our newsletter, and we had the highest proportion of applications across MSD, compared to the size of our research staff
- For PSS, COVID has decreased female staff undertaking development activity (83% in 2018 to 67% in 2021) – due to increased workload – so we will introduce lunchtime skills sessions to make training more accessible. Male staff taking part in PDR have reduced from 83% to 17%, due to the impact of on-site working in key roles and furlough. The new PDR system will drive uptake from 2023.

Organisation/culture
- Our Research Staff Society was formed in 2020 and has 44 members (18F/26M). We will provide financial and administrative support to RSS to increase in-person interaction and collaboration.
- As we move to business-as-usual, we will document good practice around flexible working and build this into our guidance and policies.
- We moved our seminars online during the lockdown and received positive feedback from people with caring responsibilities about remote events. We have invested in technology in our meeting rooms to enable hybrid meetings and will continue to present seminars in a hybrid format, so they remain accessible.

"The Department's flexible approach has become more important since the start of the pandemic. I have been grateful for Teams events held at convenient times of day. The acknowledgement that there is no expectation to work in on-site full time, and working from home is encouraged, has been great. I would like to see this continue along with things like hybrid seminars so those with caring commitments can still attend.

Male researcher and parent

8 Action plan

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

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

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

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

Athena SWAN Silver Department award application – Action Plan

Name of institution: University of Oxford

Date of application: March 2022

Department: Department of Pharmacology

Departmental website address: www.pharm.ox.ac.uk

Contact for application:

Academic lead: Dr Liliana Minichiello

Administrator: Carolyn Thackrah

E-mail: carolyn.thackrah@pharm.ox.ac.uk. Telephone: 01865 271850

Priority actions:

🟥 High – focus within 1-2 years

🟧 Medium – from 2-3 years (or dependent on other high priority actions)

🟩 Low – from 3 years (or after other key elements in place)

🟦 Ongoing actions

Objective	Evidence	Actions	Priority	Owner/ timescale	Success measure
Priority 1: Self-assessment process					
Key actions: • Expand the remit of SAT to include other broader equality issues, in addition to its gender focus, to consider issues around intersectionality • Review our SAT processes to fit with the new AS Principles and Process					
1 Regular review of actions and priorities *Page 18*	• Keeping the action plan updated is a vital part of the self-assessment process. • A review of progress against priority areas will help us to meet our objectives and maximise impact	i Termly meetings of SAT will include a review of the action plan and updates as required.	🟦	AS Academic Lead *Ongoing - termly*	Action plan updated three times per year. Priorities updated when required. Current and future actions reviewed to ensure they are on track and relevant.
		ii Annual report on SAT actions presented to Management Committee	🟦	AS Academic Lead *Ongoing - annually*	High-level support and investment for AS actions and activities. MC input makes it easier to implement AS actions.

Objective	Evidence	Actions	Priority	Owner/ timescale	Success measure
	• Highlighting actions and impacts increases support within the Department for AS	iii AS actions promoted within Department in newsletter and termly issues of AS News	🟦	Deputy Administrator (Personnel) *Ongoing - termly*	Keep survey response rates above 85% (88% in 2021). Keep proportion of staff who feel the Department takes equality and diversity seriously above 90% (currently 95%)
2 Ensure SAT is representative of our whole community *Page 18*	• Involvement of all constituent groups will maximise the impact of AS activities • Diversity within SAT and WGs will improve the impact of the action plan and greater representation means responsibility for delivery can be shared more evenly to avoid any undue burden.	i Annual review of SAT membership	🟦	AS Academic Lead *Ongoing - annually*	• Keep SAT membership above 15, ensure gender balance reflects that of the Department, and make sure that academic, research, PSS staff and students are always represented. • Membership to always include established academic staff, early career researchers, those with family responsibilities and staff working part-time.
		ii Annual review of WGs and their leads	🟦	AS Academic Lead *Ongoing - annually*	Five WGs maintained to represent the priorities for AS actions – priorities to be led by feedback via 'Town Hall' meetings and biennial surveys
		iii Expand the remit of the AS SAT to include other broader equality issues, in addition to its key gender equality focus, to consider if there are issues around intersectionality.	🟥	HoD *ToR agreed by end 2022. SAT membership updated Spring 2023*	Departmental committee to represent staff from minority ethnic groups, those with disabilities and staff and students from the LGBTQ+ community.

Objective	Evidence	Actions	Priority	Owner/ timescale	Success measure
3 Provide effective data for SAT *Page 18*	• Reviewing and monitoring key metrics is essential to the development of actions and priorities • Regular data reports enable SAT to identify key trends – while the new Charter means less data is required, we are aware that our data needs to be reviewed regularly to identify trends and feed into our ongoing learning process.	i Biennial staff and student surveys to collect key data	🟦	HoD *Ongoing – every two years*	Keep survey responses above 80% with no gender bias.
		ii Annual data report produced for SAT	🟦	AS Academic Lead *Ongoing - annually*	Action plans, WGs and priorities will be adjusted annually in response to changes in data.
		iii Work with the Divisional Athena Swan Co-ordinator and Athena Swan Working Group (ASWG) to continue to help improve and inform data collection across the University.	🟩	Deputy Administrator (Personnel) *Continual improvement over 4-5 years*	• Improve definition of staff in post reports to enable Departmental analysis of grade, contract type and status • Improve Departmental access to training, admissions and grant data. • Improved access and data quality will enable efficient identification of changes, trends and impact.
4 Review SAT processes against new AS Principles and Process *Page 18*	Advance HE launched a new application process and principles in July 2021 and these will be used for future applications	i Review new process and consider how SAT processes need to adapt	🟩	AS Academic Lead *By Spring 2026*	SAT structure and self-assessment process updated in advance of preparation of next application.
		ii SAT workshop to present new approach and discuss focus for future applications	🟩	AS Academic Lead *By Spring 2026*	

Objective	Evidence	Actions	Priority	Owner/ timescale	Success measure
Priority 2: Inclusive recruitment (students and staff)					
Key actions • Blind shortlisting pilot and updates to selection process to ensure F/M applicants for MSc/DPhil course have equal offer success rates. • Review job adverts (inclusive language, diversity and positive action statements, clear selection criteria that relate to DORA) to increase proportion of F applicants for research posts from 38% above 50% in line with staff in post.					
1 Develop fair and transparent admissions processes for MSc students *Pages 20-21*	41%M applicants compared to 34%F applicants receive an offer to study.	i All involved with selection of MSc students (shortlisting and interviews) to have undertaken implicit bias and selection training and ensure this is up to date	🟥	MSc Course Director *By October 2022*	Remove bias from the admissions process to ensure all students have an equal chance of success. Achieve gender parity in offer success rates between M and F applicants by 2025.
		ii Increase the number of trained reviewers for MSc applications so that all applications are reviewed by more people. All reviewers to use standard scoring system to ensure fair average for all applicants	🟧	MSc Course Director *For 2024 admissions – Nov/Dec 23*	Each application is assessed by five reviewers (currently assessment carried out by MSc Course Director) using standardised scoring system to produce a fairer average score. Achieve gender parity in offer success rates between M and F applicants by 2025.
	Research has shown that prior information about the interview process increases the success of female candidates. The Oxford Department of Biochemistry noted a similar issue of female candidates being less successful at interview and saw improvement once they instituted a series of actions around improving the transparency of the application process, including providing specific pre-reading to prepare for interview.	iii Provide guidance for applicants on the interview process to include the method of assessment, likely questions and the make-up of the panel. Provide a standard text for pre-reading so all applicants can prepare for their assessment.	🟧	MSc Course Director *For 2024 admissions – Nov/Dec 23*	• Guidance is provided for all candidates for all MSc interviews. • Data is collected on whether actions help candidates and have an impact on success rates. • Share results across MSD.
		iv Survey candidates following the assessment to ask if support was useful and assess against success rates	🟩	MSc Course Director *From 2024*	

Objective	Evidence	Actions	Priority	Owner/ timescale	Success measure
		v Report findings to MSD EDI Steering Group with a view to expanding these actions into other courses	🟩	MSc Course Director *From 2024*	
	A pilot programme for a new Cancer in Cells DPhil programme, established in 2020, introduced standardised, anonymised applications and references and the use of socio-economic data as part of the assessment process. The programme has seen an equal distribution of male/female applications which carried through to offer and acceptance rates. Feedback from the assessment panel is that the standardised format makes it easier to assess applications fairly.	vi Run a pilot to produce anonymised applications for shortlisting panel	🟧	MSc Course Director *For 2024 admissions – Nov/Dec 23*	Assess success rates over three years – aim for gender neutrality by 2025.
		vii Review pilot programme to assess method and results	🟩	MSc Course Director *Spring 2024*	Review of pilot highlights improvements is undertaken and updates to the process are ongoing to ensure no gender issues with success rates
		viii Embed updated process of blind shortlisting if results support this action	🟩	MSc Course Director *From Autumn 2024*	Average success rates move to gender parity within four years and are maintained. Increase proportion of students from disadvantaged backgrounds
2 Attract more students from under-represented and disadvantaged groups *Pages 20-21*	Only 29% of applications from BME students receive an offer on our PGT course (compared to 51% of applications from white students) – there is a similar differential on all other divisional courses.	i Raise funds for MSc scholarships – target these places at under-represented groups and disadvantaged students	🟧	HoD *For 2024 admissions*	Two fully-funded places available on MSc course by 2024. Increase offer rate for BME students to 40% by 2026.
		ii Develop a CV/application template to support those from disadvantaged/underrepresented backgrounds	🟩	MSc Course Director *From 2024*	

Objective	Evidence	Actions	Priority	Owner/ timescale	Success measure
3 Eliminate gender bias in take up of student offers and increase conversion to numbers accepted. *Pages 22-23*	Conversion of offers to acceptance on our PGT course has been 68%F/71%M over the last five years while 60%F/65%M PGR students have accepted an offer since 2016. Feedback from admissions on the Chemistry in Cells programme suggests that students often take the first offer they receive and that this is more likely to be the case for female students.	i Collect information from MSc and DPhil students about the reasons they do not take up offers. Update admissions information to make the process clearer and offer clarity on timescales.	🟩	MSc Course Director/DGS *From 2024*	• Feedback can be used to develop actions to increase the conversion of offers to acceptances. • Proportion of female and male students over the next five years who take up an offer are gender balanced. • Increase take up of offers above 75% for both PGT and PGR students by 2026, with no gender bias.
4 Increase proportion of females applying for and appointed to Grade 7 research posts *Pages 31-32*	In the last five years, only 38% of applicants for posts at Grade 7 were female. This compares to 52% female staff in post since 2017 at this grade – the lowest proportion of female staff at Grade 7 has been 46%.	i Review all job advert text to ensure language is inclusive. Make sure advert and job description text is checked via gender decoding software	🟥	Deputy Administrator (Personnel) *From Summer 2022*	All job adverts feature gender neutral language.
		ii Develop inclusion statement for job adverts and include the University's involvement with AS, the Race Equality Charter, Stonewall, etc as part of the text (currently only the logos included on the job description). Include a positive action statement where proportion of female applicants is below staff in post.	🟧	Deputy Administrator (Personnel) *By end 2022*	
		iii Develop a banner of inclusive images for inclusion in job description documents	🟧	Deputy Administrator (Personnel) *Spring 2023*	Increase proportion of female applicants at Grade 7 above 50% in line with the proportion of staff in post.

Objective	Evidence	Actions	Priority	Owner/ timescale	Success measure
		iv Confirm selection process in adverts and include clear and fair selection criteria that meet the objectives of DORA	🟧	WG2 lead *Summer 2023*	
	Female candidates make up 38% of appointments at Grade 7. Both female and male applicants have a 9% success rate at Grade 7.	v Implicit bias training for all supervisors and all panel members	🟧	WG2 lead *By Summer 2023*	As we drive proportion of female applicants above 50%, maintain the success rate of females appointed to Grade 7 posts in line with male applicants.
		vi Develop support for shortlisted candidates including nominated individuals for further details of the post, the Department and living in Oxford. Send clear details to all candidates about the assessment and selection process to enable them to prepare.	🟩	WG2 lead *2024*	
		vii Pilot the use of gender split shortlisting where selection panels are asked to shortlisting female and male candidates separately before comparing to create the final shortlist.	🟩	WG2 lead *By 2025*	
5 Inclusive recruitment processes in place for future AP posts *Pages 31-32*	Our last AP recruitments attracted 2F out of 15 applicants (2012) and 2F out of 11 applicants (2013), although a female candidate was appointed in 2013. Currently only 17% of AP posts are female.	i Consider placement of adverts. Panel chair and selection panel members asked to identify useful networks relevant to the post to make sure it is widely distributed.	🟧	Head of Department *Summer 2023*	Increase female applicants for next AP post above 30%. Increase % female AP staff in post to 30% within 10 years.
		ii Strategy meeting organised by the panel chair to determine search strategy and selection and assessment process	🟧	Head of Department *End 2023/ Spring 2024*	

Objective	Evidence	Actions	Priority	Owner/ timescale	Success measure
		iii Search lead identified for each vacancy who will take ideas from the selection panel and other colleagues.	🟧	Head of Department *End 2023/ Spring 2024*	
		iv Identify and approach potential candidates and invite them to apply	🟧	Head of Department *End 2023/ Spring 2024*	
		v Offer familiarisation visits to candidates in advance of assessment process	🟧	Head of Department *End 2023/ Spring 2024*	
		vi Confirm selection process in adverts and include clear and fair selection criteria that meet the objectives of DORA	🟧	Head of Department *End 2023/ Spring 2024*	

Priority 3: Career Development

Key actions:
- Offer a mentor to all research staff by 2024 – expand number of research staff being mentored from 42%F/27%M above 50%
- Career Development Reviews offered to all research staff by 2025 with 60% uptake and satisfaction above 80%. Increase proportion of research staff who take time to reflect on career development from 63%F/75%M above 80%

Objective	Evidence	Actions	Priority	Owner/ timescale	Success measure
1 Provide mentors for research staff *Page 42*	• 42%F and 27%M of academic and research staff have been mentored by someone other than their line manager. In the absence of a formal scheme, our female staff have been successful in finding mentors but we need to make sure this options is available to all and reduce the gender gap.	i Identify established staff to act as mentors	🟥	Lead WG4 *January 2023*	Identify 15 mentors by January 2023
		ii Provide training for mentors	🟧	Lead WG4 *Spring 2023*	All mentors compete training by Summer 2023
		iii Identify research staff who wish to be mentored	🟧	Lead WG4 *Summer 2023*	• 50% of research staff sign up for mentorship scheme with appropriate gender balance
		iv Match mentors and mentees	🟧	Lead WG4 *Autumn 2023*	• All mentors and mentees clear about the aims of the scheme
		v Organise welcome session for all mentors/mentees to highlight objectives	🟧	Lead WG4 *Autumn 2023*	

Objective	Evidence	Actions	Priority	Owner/ timescale	Success measure
	• 100%M and 75% female research staff have found mentoring useful. By finding out what people want from mentoring and providing training and guidance we will aim to make mentoring more useful for female staff.	vi Seek feedback from mentees and mentors after 6 months	🟩	Lead WG4 *Summer 2024*	• Proportion of research staff receiving mentorship above 50% • Proportion of mentees who report that the scheme is useful is above 90%
2 All staff grades reviewed annually *Pages 35-36*	Build on case study examples within the application – five regrading applications identified via PDR (4F,1M), one prompted by data provided to PI in 2020 pilot (F) and two staff regraded on a new grant application (1F/1M). These trial review processes have identified six female members of staff who met the criteria for regrading but had not put themselves forward.	i Part of annual PDR reviews	🟥	Lead WG2 *From Summer 2022*	• All staff considered against the criteria for regrading on an annual basis. • 1-2 regrading applications to be submitted on an annual basis.
		ii Grades reviewed when new grant applications made	🟥	Lead WG2 *From Summer 2022*	
		iii Data provided to PIs on an annual basis	🟥	Lead WG2 *From Summer 2022*	
3 Strengthen uptake and impact of PDR *Pages 40-41*	• 53%M and 50%F research staff report having a PDR in 2021. • 89% M and 86% F research staff found their PDR useful. • 56%M and 57%F research staff who haven't had a PDR would like to have one. • Women 20% less likely to take time to reflect on career development, 10% less aware of training opportunities and 12% less supported to take on career development opportunities than their male counterparts – a formal PDR process with CD aspects will be central to improving this data.	i Session on PDR held annually during Departmental meeting to highlight the aims and benefits to supervisors	🟥	Lead WG4 *Autumn 2022*	• Increase proportion of research staff who have a PDR above 85% • Proportion of research staff who find their PDR useful is above 90% • Remove gender gap for academic staff who take time to reflect on career development, who are aware of development opportunities, and who feel supported to take on career development

Objective	Evidence	Actions	Priority	Owner/ timescale	Success measure
	Data on uptake of PDR is hard to collate which makes it difficult to drive participation	ii Investigate introduction of PDR management system	🟩	Lead WG4 *By end 2023*	
4 Introduce Career Development Reviews *Pages 40-41*	As a key part of the Researcher Development Concordat we are committed to introducing CDR for the benefit of our research staff. In our 2021 survey 63%F research staff, compared to 75%M staff, stated that they take time to reflect on, and plan for, their career development.	i Working group to consider how CDR will work, what issues should be covered, who conducts reviews and how CDR links with our PDR scheme	🟥	Lead WG4 *Spring 2023*	Report to SAT with key recommendations
		ii SAT report to Management Committee to gain senior support for implementation of CDR	🟧	Lead WG4 *Summer 2023*	• Clear aims set out for CDR along with a process that enables positive outcomes
		iii Appoint CDR champions to promote to staff	🟧	Lead WG4 *End 2023*	• Ensure that over 80% of research staff are aware of the introduction of CDRs and what they aim to achieve
		iv Develop templates to set out agenda for CDR meetings and record outcomes	🟧	Lead WG4 *End 2023*	
		v Run pilot with research staff volunteers – work with Research Staff Society on implementation	🟧	Lead WG4 *February 2024*	• CDR process tested and updated in line with feedback from pilot participants
		vi Seek feedback from participants in pilot to find out what worked well and what needs improving	🟧	Lead WG4 *April/May 2024*	• Ensure that over 80% of research staff who have a CDR find the process useful.
		vii Update CDR process and paperwork as required	🟩	Lead WG4 *End 2024*	
		viii Organise training events for reviewers and reviewees	🟩	Lead WG4 *Spring 2025*	• 60% of research staff take up the offer of a CDR with no gender gap
		ix Roll out CDR for all research staff and monitor uptake	🟩	Lead WG4 *Spring 2025*	• 80% of those having a CDR find it useful.
5 Provide useful careers information and support for researchers *Pages 41-42*	• Feedback from both staff and students suggests a demand for career development events and information.	i Annual career development workshop to be developed with input from Research Staff and Student Societies	🟥	Lead WG4 *Autumn 2022*	Major workshop held every 12 months 50% of research staff attend Review outcomes for each workshop and present data to the next meeting.

Objective	Evidence	Actions	Priority	Owner/ timescale	Success measure
	• 73% of staff report that they take time to think about their career development; however 61% of female staff said this compared to 81% male staff. • Career development workshop held in 2020 was attended by 9F and 3M research staff – 3F and 1M attendee subsequently moved to new positions within the University.	ii Seminar speakers to be asked to include a brief summary of their career to date to give research staff and students a clear idea of how they can progress and different paths to success.	🟥	Lead WG4 *Summer 2022*	Increase proportion of female research staff, thinking about their career development, to 80%
		iii Job and study opportunities posted on dedicated Teams channels for research staff and students	🟥	Lead WG4 *Summer 2022*	
6 Increase career development opportunities for PSS staff *Pages 46-48*	While 74%F and 72%M PSS staff are clear about the career development opportunities available to them, only 63% of female PSS staff take time to reflect on their career development compared to 75% of male staff.	i Identify PSS who can offer skills sharing sessions for colleagues and run six lunchtime sessions per annum.	🟥	Administrator *End 2022*	Increase proportion of female PSS staff who take time to consider their career development to 75%
		ii Explore secondment opportunities within the University for all PSS staff during their annual PDR	🟧	Administrator *Spring 2023*	
		iii Consider PSS staff for apprenticeship training opportunities with the aim of having one apprentice training at any one time.	🟧	Administrator *End 2023*	Keep one member of the PSS team on an apprenticeship
	• Only 11%F and 13%M PSS have been offered a mentor • 91%F compared to 100%M found mentoring useful.	iv Investigate PSS mentoring scheme being piloted by the University People and Organisational Development Team to see if our staff can take part.	🟩	Administrator *Spring 2024*	• Identify two PSS candidates who would like to participate in a mentoring scheme • Increase proportion of PSS staff who have been offered a mentor to 25% with no gender imbalance

Objective	Evidence	Actions	Priority	Owner/ timescale	Success measure
Priority 4: Support for staff and students					
Key actions: • Develop online induction and expand 'buddy' scheme to increase proportion of research staff offered an induction from 33%F/57%M above 80% with 90% of staff finding induction useful • Introduce training programme for PIs and new supervisors to increase the proportion of managers who feel confident about managing their staff to 80%					
1 Develop valued and effective induction *Pages 33-34*	• Only 75% of male academic and research staff found their induction useful. • Only 33% F and 57% M academic and research staff state that they were offered an induction when they started their current post. • In our 2018 survey, only 57% of female staff reported their induction was useful so we set up a buddy system for research staff in 2020 and have since set up four pairs	i Develop and launch online induction programme for all new starters	🟥	Lead WG4 *Autumn 2022*	• Increase proportion of both female and male academic and research staff who are offered an induction above 80% • Increase proportion of academic and research staff who found their induction useful above 90% with no gender imbalance
		ii Seek feedback from new starters six months after taking induction programme	🟧	Lead WG4 *Summer 2023*	
		iii Review pairing scheme for new research staff and expand to make sure all new starters are offered a buddy.	🟧	Lead WG4 *Summer 2023*	
2 Enable easy access to targeted training *Pages 39-40 and 42-44*	• Feedback from staff and student surveys identify priorities for training. • 32%M and 35%F research staff have spent at least 10 days per annum on professional development. • Only 61% of female academic and research staff take time to plan for their career development, compared to 81% male staff.	i Training opportunities to meet suggestions from staff and student surveys, including career planning, skills development, finding funding, support for fellowship application, and finding and getting the best out of a mentor. Consult Research Staff and Student Societies on titles for internal, termly training events	🟥	Lead WG4 *Spring 2023*	• Increase proportion of students who feel supported to think about their career development (now 75%F/73%M) above 90% in next survey • Increase proportion of female academic and research staff who plan for their career development to 80% • Increase proportion of research staff who spend 10 days per annum on professional development to 60%
		ii Source speakers for three training events per annum – presenters/ facilitators are 50% female	🟧	Lead WG4 *Autumn 2023*	
		iii Hold training event per term for research staff and/or students	🟧	Lead WG4 *Autumn 2023*	

Objective	Evidence	Actions	Priority	Owner/ timescale	Success measure
3 Support research staff and fellows to make grant applications *Pages 44-45*	• Research data over the last five years shows that our female staff are equally as successful as their male counterparts (28% success rates). 19% of female applicants for successful high value awards (£500k-£1m) compare to 21% male applicants – this balanced success measure is not seen in other areas of the MSD. • Feedback via both staff and student surveys asks for additional training to support grant applications. • Enquires to HoD during drop-in-clinic suggest the need for support in this area. • Evidence suggests that female researchers, in particular, often need support with the timing of fellowship applications and encouragement that they are ready to do so.	i Identify key academic staff to act as champions for grant application in their area	🟥	Lead WG4 *End 2022*	Two academics identified for each theme area by end of 2022.
		ii Provide 1:1 mentorship for staff identified via HoD Drop-in Clinic who are thinking of making a grant or fellowship application	🟥	Lead WG4 *End 2022*	Mentors provided to 3-4 staff per annum to help with grant applications
		iii Provide at least one workshop per annum to provide guidance around grant applications. Work with Research Staff Society on agenda for future workshops	🟧	Lead WG4 *Summer 2023*	Proportion of successful grant applications increased above 30% with no gender imbalance, keeping the success rates of female applicants for high value awards in line with success rates for male applicants.
		iv Potential applicants provided with a 1:1 meeting to review their CV and offered support to format and update.	🟧	Lead WG4 *Spring 2023*	
		v CV templates and guidance provided on the Pharmacology intranet	🟧	Lead WG4 *Summer 2023*	
		vi Identify unsuccessful grant application candidates and provide them with guidance and mentorship to resubmit.	🟩	Lead WG4 *Spring 2024*	Ensure that all identified unsuccessful applicants are able to resubmit an application within 12 months.
4 Increase contract protection for research staff *Page 28*	• 95% research staff are on fixed-term contracts compared to MSD and University averages of 91% and 90% respectively	i All research staff on fixed-term contracts with more than 10 years service to be reviewed by end of 2022 to assess if they can be moved onto an open-ended contract	🟥	Lead WG1	All staff who have been on FTC for more than 10 years are reviewed annually and when new grants are awarded to move onto open-ended contracts
5 Support for Research Staff Society *Pages 41-42*	• Our Research Staff Society, launched in 2020, has 44 members (28M/18F) but has operated mainly remotely due to COVID.	i Support provided, both administrative and financial, to enable a programme of in-person seminars, networking and social events to be developed	🟥	Lead WG1 *Autumn 2022*	• Over 95% of both male and female research staff members of the Research Staff Society by end 2023

Objective	Evidence	Actions	Priority	Owner/ timescale	Success measure
	• Society members wish to establish in-person meetings and events and focus more on networking and social activities	ii Get the Research Staff Society involved with Departmental Seminar programme to run joint events and drive recognition of the Society within the Department	🟧	Lead WG1 *Summer 2023*	• From MT 2022, two seminars per term run by the RSS with a gender balance of speakers. • 100% of research staff have an opportunity to present over the next five years.
6 Management training for new and junior PIs *Pages 33-34*	• Feedback via WGs and survey asks for more training and support • Survey responses suggest some supervisors are less confident about managing staff: - Advising on HR policies (53%M/83%F) - Conducting PDR (73%M/83%F) - Giving feedback (73%M/100%F) - Managing contracts (47%M/83%F)	i Conduct focus groups with managers to identify content	🟥	Lead WG1 *Spring 2023*	• Needs assessment carried out with target group to make sure programme is effective and adds value • Identify internal sources of training and fill any gaps with external providers where necessary
		ii Work with POD and the Researcher Hub to identify training pathways	🟧	Lead WG1 *End 2023*	
		iii Get an external provider to deliver training on elements that cannot be provided internally	🟧	Lead WG1 *End 2023*	
		iv Organise pilot programme	🟧	Lead WG1 *Spring 2024*	• Deliver training sessions for 4 new managers/fellows by end 2024 • Evaluation shows confidence in key staff management criteria increases above 80%
		v Do 360° reviews with all staff on pilot	🟧	Lead WG1 *End 2024*	
		vi Evaluation and rollout of programme	🟩	Lead WG1 *Spring 2025*	• All supervisors offered a place on the training programme over the next five years. • Proportion of supervisors who feel confident about managing their staff and their group above 80% with no gender issues in this data
		vii Review and update modules in response to feedback	🟩	Lead WG1 *Autumn 2025*	
		viii Create a manager support network	🟩	Lead WG1 *End 2025*	
7 Support for staff to take family leave *Pages 49-51*	Our maternity return rate is currently 87.5% and all staff who have returned from maternity leave remain in post at 18 months. 67% of staff taking maternity leave have used an element of SPL. Three	i Information on the intranet for staff in the early stages of pregnancy or planning to start a family. To include FAQs and guidance on how grants are managed around family leave	🟥	Lead WG3 *Summer 2022*	• Maternity return rate increased to 90% and maintained. • Proportion of line managers who are confident of applying HR policies such as family leave

Objective	Evidence	Actions	Priority	Owner/ timescale	Success measure
	members of staff have taken paternity leave. Feedback from WG3 suggests that staff taking family leave would be grateful for more information at all stages of the process to help their decision making.	ii A checklist and record of discussions to be developed to ensure all options are covered and staff and supervisors have a record of all decisions.	🟧	Lead WG3 *Spring 2023*	increased to 80% (currently 60%M/71%F) • Feedback from maternity leave returners states that their experiences were positive.
		iii Review pilot to put staff in touch with those who have previously taken leave – first feedback has suggested it would be useful to also put staff thinking about their leave with an academic who has had a career break.	🟧	Lead WG3 *Spring 2023*	• Every staff member planning their career break is put in contact with a peer and an academic 'buddy' to provide advice and guidance
		iv Build on feedback from pilot to drive the creation of a network for parents and carers to share good practice and provide support.	🟩	Lead WG3 *End 2023*	Staff who identify as carers report that they are supported.
		v Create a suite of case study examples of family leave options – including maternity, paternity, SPL and parental leave.	🟩	Lead WG3 *End 2023*	Ensure paternity and parental leave are recorded in line with maternity leave rates.
8 Embed flexible working opportunities for all staff *Pages 51-52*	92% of staff feel that the Department is supportive of flexible and home working. Feedback from SAT members suggests that good practice from the Coronavirus lockdown would be useful to implement permanently	i All SAT WGs to seek feedback on working practices from lockdown that made flexible working easier	🟥	All WG leads *End 2022*	Report to SAT within 12 months with key recommendations
		ii Ensure that staff who wish to work flexibly have access to the necessary equipment	🟧	Administrator *By Spring 2023 and ongoing*	• Increase proportion of staff who feel the Department supports flexible working above 95% • Develop case studies to include two examples from: male academic or research staff, staff working flexibly for non-childcare caring, or staff flexing to a accommodate time for training/study.
		iii SAT to develop a flexible working statement for the Department with case study examples	🟧	AS Academic Lead *Summer 2023*	

Objective	Evidence	Actions	Priority	Owner/ timescale	Success measure
		iv Consider for each new vacancy if they can be offered on a flexible working basis and include a relevant statement on the job description	🟩	Deputy Administrator (Personnel) *Spring 2024*	50% of all new posts advertised include the option of flexible working on the job description

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Key actions:
- Explore the reasons why female research do not feel workload is allocated fairly and transparently (22% compared to 78%M)
- Update images and information in Reception to increase the visibility of woman and include a diversity of case studies

Objective	Evidence	Actions	Priority	Owner/ timescale	Success measure
1 Reduce workload pressure for research staff *Page 56*	Only 22% of female research staff at Grades 6/7 feel that there is a fair and transparent way of allocating workload – compared to 78% of male staff at these grades. This compares to 80%F and 78%M academic staff (Professor/Associate Professor).	i Create focus groups for research staff to investigate workload pressure	🟥	Lead WG1 *End 2022*	Identify the main issues contributing to workload pressure
		ii Consult other comparable University Departments to consider if issues are widespread	🟧	Lead WG1 *Spring 2023*	• Explore joint actions across Departments to help mitigate issues identified • Effective actions identified and tested with research staff
		iii SAT to create an action plan to focus on priority issues identified.	🟧	Lead WG1 *Autumn 2023*	
		iv Consultation with research staff on potential actions identified by SAT	🟧	Lead WG1 *End 2023*	
		v Launch pilot actions to target priority issues	🟩	Lead WG1 *Spring 2024*	Female researcher who feel their workload is reasonable and allocated fairly and transparently increased to 80%
		vi Review actions after 12 months and consult research staff	🟩	Lead WG1 *Spring 2025*	
2 Increase visibility of female role models in the Department *Pages 57-58*	Currently our most visible role models in the Department are portraits in our Reception area of two high- profile former faculty members – both are white and male so do not reflect the diversity of our staff and students.	i Academics asked to nominate seminar speakers from each gender to make sure programme has good gender balance. All seminar speakers asked to include details of their career to provide inspiration to more junior members of staff and students	🟥	Lead WG1 *Summer 2022*	Keep proportion of female speakers between 45-55%

Objective	Evidence	Actions	Priority	Owner/ timescale	Success measure
		ii Work with our artist in residence will include profiles of historic figures in the Department – to be displayed in reception – that will include case studies of two high profile female pioneers	🟧	Lead WG1 *Spring 2023*	• Historic profiles include at least two female case studies • Case studies on website and displayed around the Department reflect our diversity including female staff, individuals from a BME background and other minority groups.
		iii Increase the range and diversity of case studies on the website. Post at least two new case studies per annum	🟧	Lead WG1 *Autumn 2023*	
		iv Case studies to be published on display board in reception and main staircase to promote the diversity of people within the Department	🟧	Lead WG1 *Summer 2023*	
3 Encourage academic and research staff to seek external recognition *Page 56*	• Data not currently collected on participation in external activities; however, comparison with similar departments in the University suggests we are not taking advantage of opportunities for our staff to gain recognition for their work. • Evidence suggests that women benefit in particular from 'sponsorship' to gain recognition for their achievements.	i Recognition Committee to be established – will meet biannually to consider staff suitable for external appointments, awards and prizes	🟥	HoD *Summer 2022*	• Two appointments or awards for academic and research staff per annum with at least one female success • Departmental staff aware of opportunities for recognition – collect data via annual PDR and include as an aim
		ii Promote new external appointments, awards and prizes via the Departmental newsletter and website	🟧	HoD *Spring 2023*	
4 Ensure all members of the Department included in events and meetings *Pages 53-54*	74% female academic and research staff (compared to 85%M) feel included in social activities	i Extend invitation to annual Summer Event to families of staff and students	🟥	HoD *Summer 2022*	Increase proportion of female academic and research staff who feel included in social events to 85%