

Please note: This application form is for applicants applying in any round up to and including September 2026. If you are applying after September 2026, please use v2.

Athena Swan Silver application form for departments (v1)

Applicant information

When completing your application, please refer to the [applicant information pack](#), which includes full information on criteria, underpinning expectations and question-by-question guidance.

Name of institution	University of Bath
Name of department	Department of Life Sciences
Date of current application	Silver
Level of previous award	Silver awards were made to Pharmacy & Pharmacology (2017) and to Biology & Biochemistry (2020). Departments merged in 2022 when we were granted a combined Silver Award
Date of previous award	2021/22
Contact name	EDI Co-leads
Contact email	
Section	Words used
An overview of the department and its approach to gender equality	3114 (<i>incl restructuring 750</i>)
An evaluation of the department's progress and success	1674
An assessment of the department's gender equality context	4442 (<i>incl Covid-19 500</i>)
Future action plan*	
Appendix 1: Consultation data*	
Appendix 2: Data tables*	
Appendix 3: Glossary*	
Overall word count (Please see information on word limits overleaf)	9230/ 9250

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

Word limits

The standard overall word limit is 8,000 words. If any of the additional word allowances below apply to you, please confirm in the relevant box, and these can be added to the overall limit.

All additional words used must be detailed in the word count table on page 1 in the relevant sections they have been applied to.

Additional word allowances	Agreement
Covid-19 pandemic (500 words): Available to applications submitted in any award round <u>up to and including July 2026</u> . These words can be used to discuss practical impacts on the self-assessment process, on action plan implementation, or to address gender equality impacts of Covid-19 more broadly.	I confirm this application has used these additional words Yes
Faculty application (1000 words): these words should be used to analyse and reflect on any departmental or discipline-specific differences. Applicants are encouraged to disaggregate their data by sub-unit wherever possible to support this analysis.	I confirm the applying unit is made up of component sub-units, for example departments N/A
Clinical and non-clinical staff (500 words): these words can be used to analyse and reflect on any differences between the two staff groups. Applicants are encouraged to disaggregate their data for clinical and non-clinical staff to support this analysis.	I confirm the applying unit comprises both clinical and non-clinical staff N/A
Organisational restructure (750 words): these words can be used to reflect on the impact of the restructure to the applicant's gender equality work or application (eg. arising from changes to their staff or student demographic profile, policies, or context).	I confirm an organisational restructure has taken place since our last application or in the last three years for first time applicants Yes
Exceptional Circumstances: If additional words have been approved by AHE due to exceptional circumstances please paste the approval email in below this table	Have additional words been allocated to this application as a result of exceptional circumstances? No

Table of Contents

Applicant information.....	1
Section 1: An overview of the department and its approach to gender equality	4
1. Letter of endorsement from the head of the department	4
2. Description of the department	6
3. Governance and recognition of equality, diversity and inclusion work.....	9
4. Development, evaluation and effectiveness of policies	11
5. Athena Swan self-assessment process.....	12
Section 2: An evaluation of the department's progress and success	15
1. Evaluating progress against the previous action plan	15
2. Evaluating success against department's key priorities	33
Section 3: An assessment of the department's gender equality context	37
3.1 Culture, inclusion and belonging.....	37
3.1.1 Covid-19 Impact.	37
3.1.2 Assessing belonging, gender equality and work-life balance	38
3.1.3 Bullying and harassment.....	41
3.1.4 Workload and wellbeing.....	42
3.1.5 PGR experience.....	44
3.1.6 Student profile.....	45
3.1.7 Student awards.....	47
3.1.8 Staff profile.....	47
3.1.9 Supporting staff career progression.....	48
3.2 Key priorities for future action	50
Section 4: Future action plan	55
Appendix 1: Consultation data	80
Appendix 2: Data tables	80
Appendix 3: Glossary	81

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

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

- *Structures and processes are in place to underpin and recognise gender equality work*

Recommended word count: 2500 words

1. Letter of endorsement from the head of the department

Please insert (with appropriate letterhead) a signed letter of endorsement from the head of the department.



Dr Amanda MacKenzie

Head of Life Sciences

Email. a.mackenzie@bath.ac.uk

Department of Life Sciences

Bath BA2 7AY United Kingdom

Dear Athena Swan Assessment Panel,

I am writing, as Head of Department, to offer my unequivocal support for our department's application for an Athena Swan Silver Award. I do so not simply in a formal capacity, but as a personal commitment to advancing gender equality across every aspect of our academic, research, teaching and professional activities.

Since taking up the role as Head of Department in March 2025, I have actively engaged with the EDI Committee, contributing to discussions where possible, providing feedback on drafts, and supporting the Athena SWAN self-assessment process. **TEXT REDACTED**. These experiences inform my leadership. I have prioritised fostering an inclusive, flexible and supportive departmental culture, including revising our line management structure to strengthen staff support.

The newly merged Department of Life Sciences has a sustained commitment to the Athena Swan Charter, and we have embraced this framework not as a compliance exercise, but as a catalyst for reflection, accountability and action. Despite the challenges of the new Department, including its size, split site location, split campus location, I am proud of the progress we have made. I am confident that the evidence presented in this application demonstrates the depth and impact of our work.

As HoD, I take personal responsibility for ensuring that gender equality is embedded in our governance, decision-making and resource allocation. As HoD I have committed resources to inclusive social activities, supporting Plymouth-based staff to attend away days in Bath, and holding focus groups with PGR to understand their concerns and experiences. I chair our Executive Committee and sit on all major appointment and promotions panels. In each of these settings, I actively champion fair, transparent and inclusive processes. We have strengthened our recruitment procedures by requiring diverse selection

panels and anonymised shortlisting. We have updated our promotion processes to be more transparent, with feedback clearly tied to criteria that value contributions to teaching, leadership, citizenship and research. I have worked with the promotions committee to demystify the process and offering feedback to unsuccessful applicants, ensuring that potential is nurtured rather than lost.

The merger of our department in 2022 came as we emerged from the Covid-19 pandemic. Its impacts are still being felt, with culture survey respondents noting reduced cohesion, fewer informal interactions and restructuring contributing to unfamiliarity with colleagues. Nevertheless, we have made significant progress with our 2022 Action Plan.

Successes have been the proportion of professors that are women in the Department (30% in 2024/2025 vs 12% in 2020/2021) and our support for promotion of women in teaching-focussed roles to Senior Lecturer grades. We have enhanced support for parents going on leave particularly offering advice that includes cover for duties, research continuity during leave, preparation for return-to-work, and health and wellbeing during leave.

Our data-driven approach has been central to our progress. We have reviewed gender-disaggregated data across recruitment, promotions, workload allocation, grant capture, teaching evaluations and committee membership. We have already set up a workload working group to address emerging workload pressures affecting wellbeing, and we are introducing an annual review to ensure fairer workload distribution. We have strengthened our response to bullying and harassment by providing clearer reporting pathways through a departmental briefing, bespoke head of division training to be extended to other line managers and by assigning pastoral supervisors for all PGR.

Achieving a Silver Award would recognise not only the initiatives we have implemented, the successes we have achieved but also the ambitious action plan to ensure that our department continues to foster a working and learning environment where all staff and students can thrive, irrespective of their gender. As Head of Department, I remain fully committed to sustaining and accelerating this work, holding myself and my leadership team accountable for delivering meaningful, measurable change.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Mackenzie', followed by a period.

Dr Amanda Mackenzie

2. Description of the department

Please provide an introduction to the department.

In August 2022, the Department of Life Sciences (DLS) was created by merging the 'Biology & Biochemistry (B&B)' and the 'Pharmacy & Pharmacology (P&P)' departments. DLS delivers excellence in education and is a top 10 location for studying biosciences in the last 3 years (Times Good University Guide, Guardian University Guide). Bath MPharmacy students are the highest performing of all graduates in the General Pharmaceutical Council Registration Assessment 2016-2024. In the most recent research assessment exercise (REF2021), 83% of B&B and 99% of P&P activity was ranked as 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent'.

Table 1.1: Overview of staff and students in the Department of Life Sciences, 2024/25

Staff/Student Group	Female	Male	% Female
Academic Staff			
Research and Teaching			
Teaching			
Research			
All Academic staff			
PTO Staff			
MSA			
T&E			
All PTO Staff			
Students			
Undergraduates			
Taught postgraduates			
Research postgraduates			

In 2024/25, there were 169 (50%F) academic staff including research-only, teaching-only, and 'research and teaching' academics (Table1.1). Additionally, there were 6 (83%F) professional, technical and operational staff (PTO) based within DLS, line-managed at Faculty level, although more PTO staff are operationally members of DLS (Table3.6). In 2024/25, DLS has 1734 UG (66%F), 717 PGT (70%F) and 135 PGR (59%F) students, majority female aligning to biosciences sector data (Table3.3). DLS has 10 UG courses, at BSc and Masters (enhanced first degree) level, across biological/biomedical sciences, and the professional MPharmacy programme (TableA2.2). Approximately 75% of PGT are enrolled on professional pharmacy programmes offering CPD for qualified pharmacists. As such, there are a higher proportion of part-time and mature students.

PGRs (135, 59%F) work on diverse projects from conservation biology to drug delivery and are supported by their peers through a DLS PGR Society (LifeSciSoc), PGR Director of Studies (PGRDoS) and the University Doctoral College.

Our Department is one of five in the Faculty of Science and the second largest in the University. Faculty Research Centres include the Milner Centre for Evolution, based within DLS, and DLS staff/students co-direct and contribute to Centres of Mathematical Biology, Excellence in Science Education, and Excellence in Water-Based Early-Warning Systems for Health Protection. At Bath, DLS is located across 5 buildings, each of which has staff/PGR offices, shared spaces for social events/seminars and some include teaching/research spaces (Figure 1.1).

Bath received funding from NHS England in 2022 to establish an additional school of pharmacy in the South-West, with the University of Plymouth. There are currently 70 Plymouth-based students on the accredited Bath MPharmacy degree (26 started 2024/25) who will graduate from Bath. MPharmacy degrees with a Preparatory year are offered in Plymouth, from 2025/26. There is a purpose-built Pharmacy Practice teaching space and bespoke office provision for staff in Plymouth.

Currently, 16 DLS academic and PTO staff are based in Plymouth, with more planned. Plymouth-based staff access DLS online resources, and are invited to seminars, all-staff meetings and events just like Bath-based staff. Attendance is offered in a hybrid approach, with facilities at Plymouth specifically designed to enable conferencing and facilitate integration of staff across DLS. Travel expenses are provided for attending Department Away Days (2/yr) and MPharmacy curriculum planning/review events in Bath (4/yr). Reciprocal visits from Bath-based staff have supported delivery of the MPharmacy programme in Plymouth.

Our current HoD, since March 2025, following staff consultation (92% agreed) instigated a new organizational structure (Figure 1.2). Six divisions, incorporating a School of Pharmacy (SoP) were created. Divisional Heads (DivHead, 67%F) were appointed in Summer 2025 by open recruitment with staff/PGR input/feedback. DivHeads have responsibility for line management, strategic and operational input, and building research culture. This structure aims to improve lines of communication and effectiveness of line management (e.g. staff development).

The SoP is managed by the Director of Pharmacy (DoP) in Bath (M) and the Head of Pharmacy at Plymouth (F) who report to the HoD. The SoP includes staff delivering the MPharmacy at Plymouth, the PGT pharmacy programmes and the practice-based learning team. The Director of Taught Postgraduate Programmes (M) and the Director of Practice-Based Learning (F) have line management responsibilities and report to the DoP. Additionally, there are Directors of Studies (DoS, 2F, 1M) and a Teaching Practitioner Lead (tbc) who support the delivery of the MPharmacy programme. Apart from line-management, all members of the SoP are core members of the Life Sciences Education Division, and benefit from its activities.

The merger of B&B and P&P followed staff consultation and an external review process in 2021. Town hall meetings and strategic workshops with staff across the founder departments shaped a shared vision for DLS. Expressions of interest were invited for key leadership roles. An interim HoD, supported by two deputy HoDs from each of the founder departments, led a newly merged DLS Executive Committee (DLSEC). Activities were designed to foster shared identity and community from the outset including social/away day events.

While DLS was created from two departments with similar staff and student profiles, each had a unique workplace culture and separate historic identities. The size of DLS, localization across buildings and campuses has been a challenge to integration and development of a new DLS identity. This is reflected in culture survey data (CS2025). Only 58% of all respondents agreed/strongly agreed “I feel like I belong in my department” (64% of women; 57% of men), a slight improvement since CS2023, where 53% agreed/strongly agreed. Work to foster a sense of belonging for all staff and students in DLS is a key priority moving forwards (**2026AP KP1**).

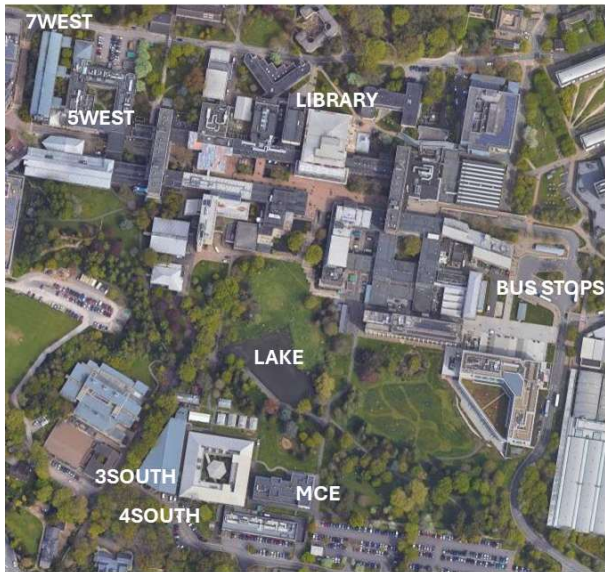


Figure 1.1: Campus map showing the different locations for the Department of Life Sciences at Bath (Constructed from Google maps 'satellite view').

Staff and PGRs are located across buildings 5West and 7West (former 'Pharmacy and Pharmacology') and across 3South, 4South (former 'Biology and Biochemistry') and the Milner Centre for Evolution (MCE). Additional staff are located at the University of Plymouth.

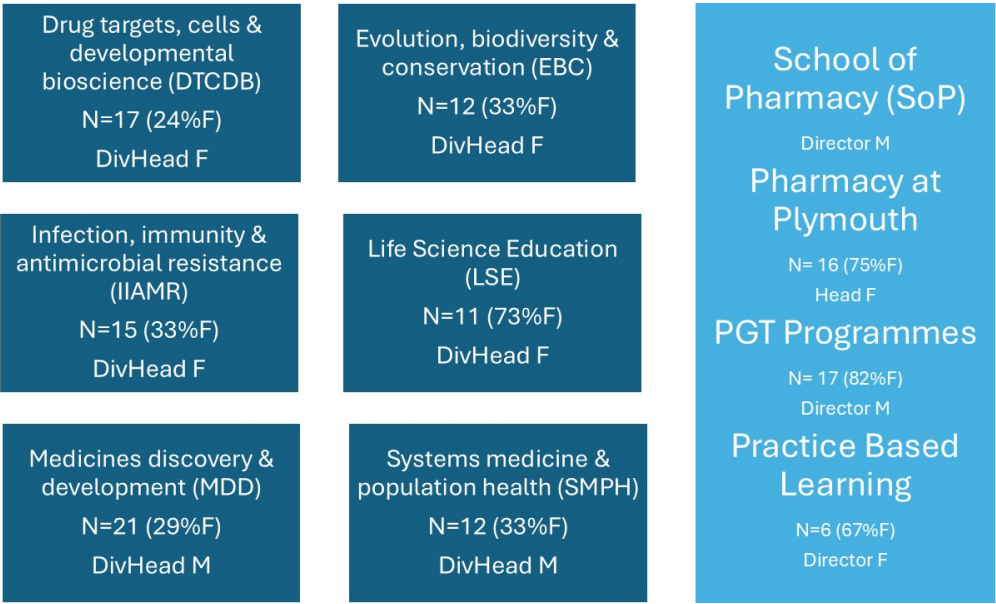


Figure 1.2: Organizational structure of the Department of Life Sciences.

N indicates the number of academic staff (not including PDRAs/RAs/research fellows) in each grouping, by gender, and line managers by gender.

3. Governance and recognition of equality, diversity and inclusion work

Please provide a description of your equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) structures, staff and department-level resources.

DLSEC sets the strategic direction of the Department and feeds into Faculty-level discussions. DLSEC meets monthly and membership is determined by role/function (Table 1.2). A subset of DLSEC, the Core Operational Group (COG), meets fortnightly to consider day-to-day operational and resourcing issues. Specific committees address EDI, research, teaching, and health and safety issues. Short-term working groups, grant review, and the Department promotion panels support specific areas (Figure 1.3).

DLS EDI committee (DLSEDIC) and EDI Leads are recruited through an open call for expressions of interest. The DLSEDIC Lead/Co-Lead sits on DLSEC, where EDI is a standing agenda item, ensuring EDI is discussed and embedded in Departmental activities. EDI is a standing item at monthly all-staff meetings enabling dissemination of actions, issues to be raised, discussions, surveys and communication of events e.g. Race Equality Week, Campus Pride.

Alongside reporting to DLSEC, DLSEDIC is integrated into faculty- and university-level structures (Figure 1.4). In 2024, the University strengthened support for EDI at Faculty-level creating Associate Deans for Community, Culture & Inclusion (ADCCI). The ADCCI (F, former DLSEDIC lead) leads bimonthly Faculty-level meetings with the EDIC leads for all science departments. These meetings allow sharing of experiences and tips, coordination of actions and provides a route to Faculty executive committee. Additionally, the ADCCI and DLSEDIC Lead/Co-Lead attend the University EDI Network (EDIN), a cross-campus forum for EDI issues. EDIN reports to University EDI Committee (UEDIC) which can bring issues to senior management via the University Executive Board (UEB).

DLSEDIC performed the function of the Departmental Self-Assessment Team (SAT) for Athena Swan (AS). DLSEDIC Lead/Co-Lead and Faculty ADCCI sit on the University's AS Network which feeds into the institutional SAT that meets thrice per year. The University SAT reports to institutional EDIC, UEB and Council annually. DLSEDIC meets at least 6 times a year and met monthly during the preparation of this application. The committee includes people from all career stages and job families in DLS, including the HoD (Table 1.2) and is responsible for the development of EDI initiatives, reviewing data annually and monitoring of action plans.

Members of DLSEDIC serve 3-year terms, with possible extension for a further term. Membership is refreshed through open calls (by e-mail to all staff and announcements in staff meetings) and targeted recruitment to ensure representation and balance. For example, a male member of the technical staff was recruited following concerns expressed in CS2023 about lack of representation; a Plymouth-based member was recruited to ensure communication of EDI issues across sites. UG views are obtained in consultation with the Staff Student Liaison Committee (SSLC), a member of SSLC sits on DLSEDIC.

DLSEDIC activities are recognized in individual workloads. Academic staff are assigned 25 hours annually in the Workload Allocation Management System (WAMS), increasing to 50 hours during SAT periods. EDI Lead/Co-Lead share 300 hours annually in recognition of their participation in Department-, Faculty- and University-level committees, as well as EDI

monitoring and reporting. PTO staff contribute within their allocated work hours and contribution is recorded at annual appraisals. PGRs and PDRAs/Research Fellows do not have WAMS and contribute on a voluntary basis. Leadership of EDI is recognised in the institution's career progression criteria.

Table 1.2: Composition of Department of Life Sciences Executive Committee (DLSEC) and Core Operational Group (COG).

Department Executive Committee (DLSEC)		Core Operational Group (COG)	
Role title	Role holder (2025-26)	Role title	Role holder (2025-26)
Head of Department (Chair)	Female	Head of Department (Chair)	Female
Division Heads	4 Female 2 Male	Division Heads	4 Female 2 Male
Director of Pharmacy (DoP)	Male	Director of Pharmacy (DoP)	Male
Director of Teaching	Female	Director of Teaching	Female
Director of Research	Male		
Head of Pharmacy (Plymouth)	Female		
EDI Lead/ Co-Lead	Female		
Technical Manager	1 Female 1 Male		
Operations Manager	1 Female	Operations Manager	1 Female
Total	15 (67% F)	Total	10 (70% F)

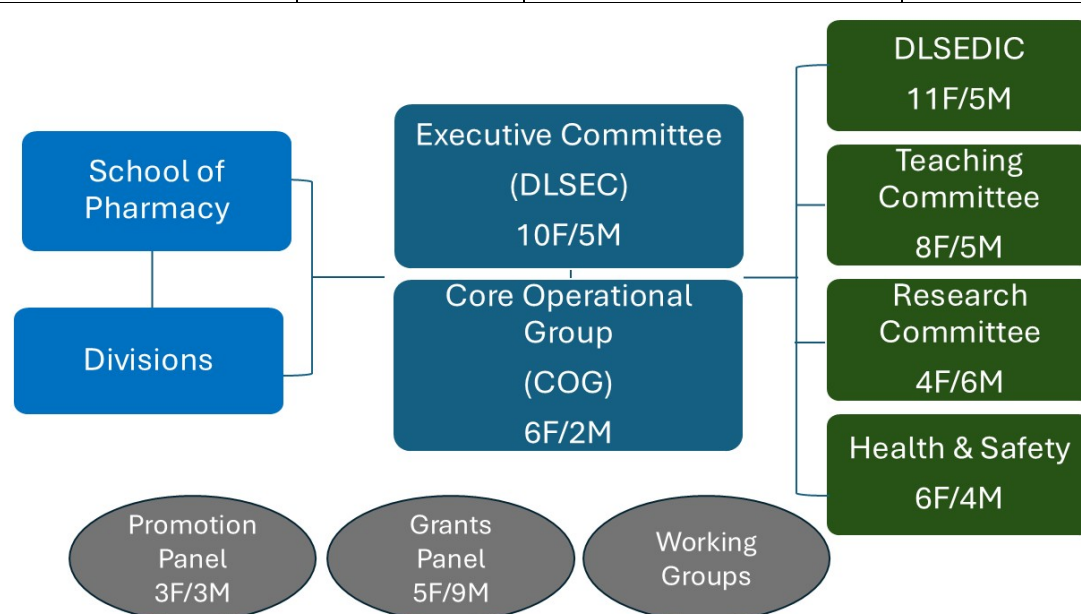


Figure 1.3: Structure of Department of Life Sciences key management committees.

Gender representation on each committee is shown. Staff at Plymouth are represented on all relevant DLS committees.

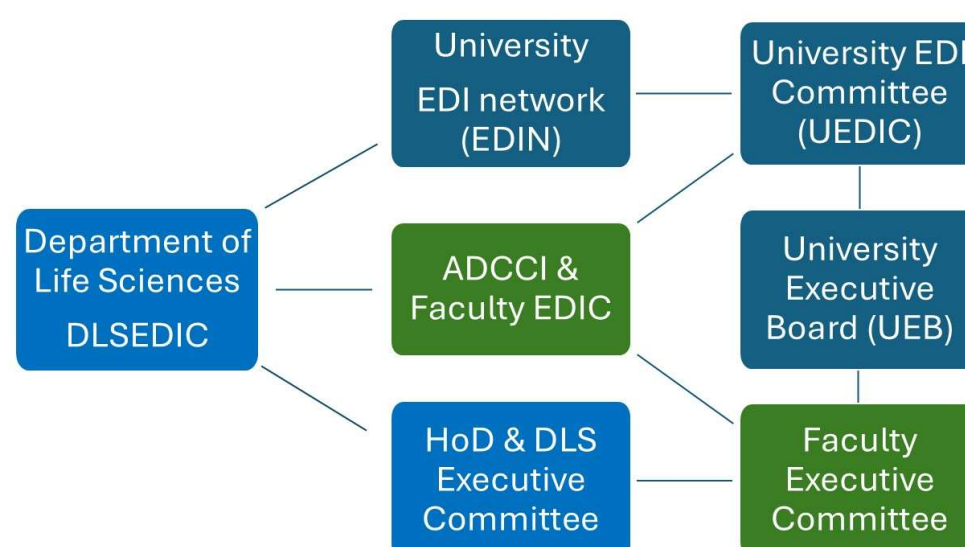


Figure 1.4: Faculty- and University-level structures supporting EDI.

4. Development, evaluation and effectiveness of policies

Please provide the processes in place for developing, evaluating and revising departmental policies (where relevant), and for evaluating the implementation of institutional policies.

Most EDI policies are institutional, available on internal webpages and inform mandatory training. Changes to University-level policies, news or events are communicated to EDI leads/DLSEDIC and cascaded to DLS via emails and all-staff meetings. Awareness of relevant policies, e.g. family leave, flexible working is promoted via departmental display screens, on DLS Hub (MSTeams shared site) and at all-staff meetings. Feedback from staff is encouraged, and we can shape EDI policy via the Faculty-level EDIC and University EDIN. Furthermore, members of DLSEDIC engage with working groups addressing campus-wide topics e.g. the Race Equality Taskforce, Inclusive Education Working Group.

DLSEC has responsibility for evaluating all policies in respect of inclusion/equity, including local EDI initiatives. The DLSEDIC Lead/Co-Lead's role at DLSEC includes evaluating departmental policies to ensure that EDI principles are embedded across activities, support an inclusive culture and consider equality impact assessment for new actions. EDI-related policies can be proposed and approved by DLSEC. For example, after a 2025 Department Away Day, staff suggestions led to an action to organize a talk from the University's Dignity & Respect Liaison Officer. This raised awareness and helped embed the University's framework for promoting positive behaviours and highlighted the online 'Support and Report' disclosure tool.

Consultation with staff happens at Department all-staff meetings (9 per year, EDI standing agenda item, hybrid attendance) and focused discussions are organized through away days and focus groups. For example, at a 2025 Department Away Day, staff discussed what the new Division structure could mean for culture and community. In this way staff or students can identify issues/policy areas that are considered at Department level.

Effectiveness of policies and their impact are evaluated via pulse surveys and biennial culture surveys. Anonymised results are analysed and discussed by DLSEDIC and DLSEC, shared with the Department and appropriate policies and actions are developed in response.

5. Athena Swan self-assessment process

Please provide an overview of who was involved in the preparation of this application, how it was prepared, and what plans are in place to support the department's future gender equality work.

Transition to Department of Life Sciences

DLS was formed in Summer 2022. Departmental silver awards were held by B&B (2020) and P&P (2017). Extensions to renewal were granted because of the Covid-19 pandemic and then overtaken by the merger. A continuation of silver award status was granted for DLS. The founder Department DSAT Chairs met to discuss aspirations and review achievements. In review, some actions were obsolete, some overtaken by the merger and some no longer viewed as priorities.

A new DLSEDIC Lead was appointed following an open call (former P&P DSAT Chair (F)), and a new DLSEDIC was formed. Targeted recruitment was used, for example, to facilitate continuity the DSAT Chair from B&B (M) joined DLSEDIC. In 2022/23, common key priority areas were identified, working groups within DLSEDIC evaluated them and a single unified action plan (2022AP) was agreed by DLSEC. Feedback on previous applications was factored into 2022AP. The DLSEDIC Lead took up the role of ADCCI in 2024 and a new DLSEDIC Lead was recruited to begin the SAT process for this application Autumn 2024 and a Co-Lead in Autumn 2025 (Table 1.3).

Self-Assessment Team: Department of Life Sciences EDIC

DLSEDIC has met monthly, alternating with hybrid/on campus and online-only meetings to enable full participation. HoD, or nominated DivHead, attends all meetings. While the majority of DLSEDIC have academic roles, including early career researchers, PTO and PGR are also represented. UG input is sought via SSLC. DLSEDIC membership is representative in terms of ethnicity, age and career stage, caring responsibilities and gender. Given that recruitment is largely by open call, women are above the overall representation in DLS (69% DLSEDIC, 50% DLS). We make use of all-staff meetings, Away Days and HoD newsletters to raise awareness of AS activities, discuss actions and share successes/challenges.

RAG evaluation of 2022AP was completed by Sept 2025. To evaluate the impact of our 2022AP, we used HESA data and culture surveys. Anonymised survey data were shared department-wide, discussed in all-staff meetings and the new action plan (2026AP) developed collaboratively. This application was shared with all staff and PGR for feedback in Feb 2026 and signed off by DLSEC in March 2026.

Consultation and Data sources:

Culture Surveys: Appendix 1 contains the results of the culture survey in Spring 2025 (CS2025) with comparator data from Autumn 2023 (CS2023) to assess progress. All staff and

PGR were invited to complete the survey, containing all core questions and a selection of questions from the full survey. PGR were not asked questions which do not apply e.g. workload allocation, promotion.

We reserved time in all-staff Department meetings to complete CS2025, offered a prize for a randomly selected participant, and used a smaller question set to reduce completion time. These steps increased the proportion of all staff/PGRs participating to 55% in CS2025 (36% CS2023) (Table 1.4, 1.5).

Quantitative data: See Appendix 2

Postgraduate research experience survey (PRES) and PGR focus group: The doctoral college runs and analyzes the national UK PRES survey every two years. 2025 was the first year that data were available for the merged DLS (Table 3.2). While not disaggregated by gender, it provides a snapshot of PGR experience. CS2025 revealed several concerns particularly among female PGR. DLS paid for external facilitators to run hybrid focus groups with PGR in Sept 2025. 41 students (93% female) participated. Anonymized data, qualitative themes and quotes informed 2026AP.

Away Days: In January/September 2025, academic staff away days included table-based discussions to consider how the Department could create a welcoming and inclusive environment. Some actions came directly from these events, which were reviewed/approved by DLSEC.

Research Culture Event: CS2025 revealed a need for cross-departmental events that included all staff and PGR. DLSEDIC supported PGR/PGRDoS to organize an away day. The event, attended by 75 people, including PGR, PDRAs, academic and PTO staff, featured a pizza lunch and pottery making. Evaluation identified the value of such activities for building DLS workplace culture.

Parental leave survey: Staff members that had parental leave were asked to complete a “return to work questionnaire”. Participants’ (2M, 6F) views informed our evaluation and 2026AP.

Implementing 2026AP

In Summer 2026, DLSEDIC members who have served 3 years or more will be invited to extend their term or step down. An open call will be made for new members. A new DLSEDIC Lead will be recruited, working with the existing DLSEDIC Lead/Co-Lead for 6 months to ensure effective handover.

Going forwards, DLSEDIC will revert to bimonthly hybrid meetings. Small working groups within DLSEDIC will be established to take ownership of each priority area, alongside the individual post holders responsible for delivery, and ensure monitoring, evaluation and updating of 2026AP.

Table 1.3: Membership of the Department of Life Sciences Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (DLSEDIC) in alphabetical order

Name	Gender	Role	2026AP area of focus
		Professor/ DLSEDIC Co-Lead, DivHead	Application
		Lecturer (Plymouth)	Inclusive culture - KP1
		Professor	Inclusive culture - KP1
		PGR student	PGR experience - KP3
		Senior Lecturer	Inclusive culture – KP1
		Operations Manager	Department data, Workload – KP2
		Reader/ DLSEDIC Lead	Application
		Senior Lecturer	PGT/ UG experience – KP4
		Senior Lecturer/HoD	Application
		Reader/ PGR Director of studies	PGR experience, Workload – KP3, KP2
		Professor / DRSL	PDRA experience – KP1, KP5
		Lecturer / DLSEDIC deputy lead/ Senior Academic Advisor, SSLC member	UG/PGT experience – KP4
		Professor/ Staff Parental Leave Officer (SPLO)	Inclusive culture, flexible working -KP5
		PGR student/ PGR Parental Leave Officer (PG-PLO)	PGR experience – KP3
		Research Fellow	PDRA experience – KP1/KP5
		Technical support liaison	PTO experience, career progression – KP5

¹DSAT leads for B&B prior to Department merger. ² First DLS HoD (2022-23, interim appointment).

Table 1.4: Summary of culture survey respondent characteristics by gender in 2023 and 2025.

Year	Respondents by gender (% by gender)				Response Rate
	Total	Female	Male	*PNTS/ Other	
2023	99 (100%)	56 (56%)	40 (41%)	3 (3%)	36%
2025	151 (100%)	86 (57%)	62 (41%)	3 (2%)	55%

*PNTS = prefer not to say, response rate determined as % of all staff and PGRs (2025=274. 2023 = 278). % of all respondents by gender is shown.

Table 1.5: Summary of culture survey respondent characteristics by job role in 2023 and 2025.

Year	Respondents by gender (% who are female)				PTO*	PGR
	Total	Teaching & Research	Teaching-only	Research-only		
2023	99	37 (43%)	13 (62%)	11 (45%)	12 (67%)	23 (83%)
2025	151	53 (31%)	22 (71%)	10 (60%)	22 (70%)	43 (77%)

PTO* = professional, technical and operational staff includes those with administrative functions, technical services support and operational staff, with a day-to-day role in the Department that are line-managed at a Faculty level. % of respondents in each category that are female is shown

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

In Section 2, applicants should evidence how they meet Criteria D and E:

- *Progress against the applicant's previously identified priorities has been demonstrated*
- *Success in addressing gender inequality has been evidenced*

Recommended word count: 2000 words

1. Evaluating progress against the previous action plan

Please provide a critical evaluation of your most recent action plan and any other actions you have initiated since your award.

Overview of progress: Our Silver action plan (2022AP) has been implemented successfully with significant progress across all areas. Overall RAG rating shows 35 (81%) actions are green, 7 (16%) amber and 1 (2%) red. The red-rated action was to develop a code of conduct in the Department but was lost in transition with turnover in senior leadership roles. This is a priority in the new action plan (**2026AP KP1**).

Noteworthy achievements are (Section 2.2 for more detail):

- **Improved recruitment of women academic staff (2022AP Aim1).** The proportion of women academic staff in DLS has increased from 46 % (2020/21) to 50% (2024/25) following positive actions to address recruitment.
- **Increased support for, and promotion of, women academic staff (2022AP Aim2).** The proportion of women applying for promotion, including to professorial grades, has increased (TableA2.39). In 2020/22 there were 14 applications (29%F), and 25 applications (60%F) in 2022/24. Success rates are gender balanced in 2022/24, with 93% of women and 90% of men achieving promotion (2020/22: women 100%, men 70%). The proportion of women professors in DLS is 30% in 2025 (12% in 2020 across both founder Departments).
- **Improved career progression for teaching-focused staff (2022AP Aim5).** Promotion of clear routes for progression of teaching-focused staff, effective SDPR and mentoring has led to the promotion of 5 women teaching-focused staff, including one to professor.
- **Improved support for parents going on leave (2022AP Aim3)** Enhanced support for parents through all stages of parental leave and returning-to-work means that 94% of staff taking parental leave have returned to the Department (16 staff since 2021).

Some proposed actions were less successful:

- Support for PDRA staff has encountered several hurdles (**2022AP Aim4**). PDRA staff include staff with variable lengths of FTC (<6 months-3 years), different role titles (even at the same grade) and high-turnover. Maintaining email lists and effective communication is a challenge, particularly in the expanded DLS. Promoting and uptake of mentoring opportunities, skills development training and careers advice has been uneven. Further support for PDRA careers is addressed in **2026AP KP5**.
- Support for PTO staff career progression (**2022AP Aim6**). While progress has been made with re-defining and regrading of technical services staff roles, development opportunities are limited but could support progression through applications for higher grade roles. Faculty level line-management creates a potential route for facilitating shadowing/secondment across Departments/Faculties and will be developed in line with University actions under the Technician Commitment in **2026AP KP5**.

Some actions were completed but did not lead to the desired outcome. For example, increased support for mental health by raising awareness of resources and support (**2022AP Aim7**) did not lead to an improvement in CS2025 outcomes for staff feeling that their mental health and/or wellbeing is supported in the Department. Support for mental health/wellbeing is included in **2026AP KP1**.

General learnings

The past 3 years have been a turbulent yet transformative period for our newly formed Department. The merging of two distinct departmental cultures and structures, a significant expansion in size, working across buildings and campuses, and changes in leadership have all posed considerable challenges. Progress on gender equality has been made because of a collective effort of three HoDs, three DLSEDIC leads/co-leads, and an exceptional DLSEDIC.

Monitoring and evaluation of the 2022AP has highlighted that the scope and range of activities, with leadership/responsibility for delivery residing largely with DLSEDIC, means inevitably a loss of focus. For 2026AP, we have reduced the number of key priority areas and distributed responsibility for delivery to key persons who will be asked to report to DLSEDIC annually.

Point-by-point evaluation of 2022AP in **Table 2.1**.

Please note: This application form is for applicants applying in any round up to and including September 2026. If you are applying after September 2026, please use v2.

Table 2.1: Amalgamated Action Plan for Department of Life Sciences – 2022AP

Aim 1: INCREASE THE NUMBER OF ACADEMIC WOMEN IN THE DEPARTMENT (RECRUITMENT OF ACADEMIC STAFF)				
Objective and Rationale	Specific actions proposed	RAG rating justification	Action Success	Analysis and New plans
1.1 Attract more women to apply for academic posts and to join our department	AP1.1a Ensure all academic staff carrying out recruitment, shortlisting and interviewing have appropriate training	73% of the staff has completed the diversity training; 70% on unconscious bias. All panel chairs have completed recruitment and selection training, but a few panel members participated on searches without being trained.	Our target was to meet the National Bioscience average, which is 53% female for biosciences. We increased the proportion of women in academic posts from 46% in 2020/21 to 50% in 2024/25.	Proposed actions have been successfully implemented (43% female applicants for jobs open between 2017/18-2019/20, and 48% from 2020/21 to 2023/24). But there are differences across contract function (Table A2.34). It appears that gains have been made in research-only and in teaching-only roles. For teaching and research staff, only 36% of applicants are female, but those women are successful with shortlists being 51%F and appointed 61%F. Actions will be taken forward (2026AP KP5.5) to continue to monitor and embed effective recruitment, including proactive search strategies for women for 'research and teaching' roles.
	AP1.1b Improve gender balance on interview panels	Between April 2022 to June 2024, 47% of the members of interview panels were women. Only 3 out of 122 panels did not have a woman, and these were panels with 2 or less members for temporary positions.		
	AP1.1c Include a larger proportion of the staff in the recruitment process	Since April 2022, 124 different staff have participated in the recruitment panels for the 120 jobs advertised. Calls for EoI to participate in searches have allowed greater inclusivity in panels.		
	AP1.1d Monitor gender balance in shortlisting to achieve gender balanced shortlists for academic staff posts	Application forms are anonymised where possible and merit-based shortlisting enacted against the person specification criteria. The number of single gendered shortlists has decreased from 22% across 2021 and 2022, to 12% in 2023 and 2024.		
	AP1.1e Ensure that all vacancies are advertised on STEM Networks	All jobs at the university are now listed on STEM diversity networks		

Aim 2: SUPPORT AND DEVELOP ACADEMIC STAFF CAREERS TOWARDS INCREASED PROMOTION OF ACADEMIC STAFF				
Objective and Rationale	Specific actions proposed	RAG rating justification	Action Success	Analysis and New plans
2.1 Increase effectiveness of the Staff Review process (SDPR) to assist with career progression	AP2.1a Revise SDPR forms with an additional “career conversation” proforma to be used to highlight readiness for promotion to HoD	SPDR forms and the whole review process have been revised at the faculty level in 2023/24. Staff can now choose to have a more formal SDPR or a “career conversation”. Staff can also choose to change their reviewer to insure a better match. Faculty EDI away day showed increased satisfaction with “career conversations” in 2023/24	We have aimed to >80% completion of SDPR. However, despite the re-design of SDPR forms, and the offer of a career conversation participation rates have decreased (75% in 2023 and 42% in 2025). Additionally, the average score for the question “How useful did you find your SDPR or career conversation?” was 2.96 on a scale of 1 (not very useful) to 5 (very useful).	We were able to implement many of these actions, and surveys indicate they were welcomed, but they might not be impacting career progression sufficiently. Research funding is a key element of promotion for Teaching-and-Research staff. Female staff remain less involved with the process. Actions addressing workload allocation (2026AP KP3), raising awareness of grant panel support for grant writing, effective support for promotion through the Department Promotion Panel and through line managers (2026AP KP5). Improvement of career progression via SDPR seems to be mixed and may be dependent on who the reviewer is. Although training is available for the reviewers, it is not compulsory or monitored by the University. SDPR is not performed by line-manager to enhance
	AP2.1b Refresh training for all staff carrying out SDPRs at least every 3 years.	A new module has been developed to provide training: “SDPR: Conducting an effective review is a module”. However, the uptake of this training remains low (data available indicate that 11 staff members participated between 2020 and 2023)		
	AP2.1c Encouraged all staff to participate in the review process	Multiple emails are sent by the Department Operations Manager to request people complete their reviews. Individual emails are also sent by the reviewer to the reviewee to encourage setting a time for the review meeting.		
2.2 Provision of support for submitting application for promotion	AP2.2a Publish promotion scheme on Wiki and Department notice boards	Promotion criteria are clearly listed in the university webpages, and in our departmental staff notebook on teams. Emails are regularly sent to staff reminding of promotions deadlines and encouraging all staff to put themselves forward.	We aimed to have 22% of our professors being female, and we reached 33% in 2025. There has also been an increased number of staff applying for promotion (12	

	AP2.2b Hold Departmental workshop for all academic staff to highlight career progression/ promotion pathways in the Education and Research	Instead of broad workshops we identified staff with experience with the promotion process to provide targeted 1:1 advice to applicants considering promotion. We also have created a departmental promotion panel that reviews all cases for promotion, provides written feedback grounded in the criteria, RAG rating of submission and a 1:1 feedback meeting to discuss next steps.	applicants between 2020 and 2022, to 24 applicants from 2022 to 2024), and a higher proportion of applicants were females (25% in 2020/22 to 62.5 % in 2022/24).	development aspects, but comments in CS2025 indicate “it feels like a nice chat with a colleague” rather than addressing any issues raised. The format of SDPRs is determined at Faculty level. Thus, we have limited scope to improve career advice through this pathway. Instead, we intend to strengthen the role of line managers in actioning support needed arising from SDPR (2026AP KP5). Several staff that have successfully been promoted recently, received 1 to 1 support from a “Promotion Champion” who was an experienced colleague (ex-HoD, male) and found this support invaluable. Additionally, a positive approach to feedback grounded in the criteria is now embedded in the Department Promotion Panel, new ways of working have been shared at Departmental all-staff meetings. However, there will be a new Academic Career Progression Framework introduced in 2026.27 and we need to ensure that staff, SDPR reviewers, DivHeads and line managers are familiar with the new framework and its operation (2026AP KP5).
2.3 - Support research activities of mid-career staff	AP2.3a Arrange grant writing retreats	Protected days for writing have been organized. However attendance by the target, mid-career female academics, has been low.	We aimed to increase grant applications from women by 20%. While there has been more support to write grants, the absolute number of grants submitted by female staff as PI has increased, but the proportion of grants submitted with a woman as the lead remains around lower than the proportion of ‘research and teaching’ academic staff that are women (34%).	
	AP2.3b Re-evaluate teaching load of affected staff	There is ongoing revision of teaching allocations, with the intention of rebalancing workload to provide protected time for staff writing particularly demanding grant applications. However, the continuous increase in student numbers, has limited the ability to effectively support all staff.		
	AP2.3c Provide grant pitch meetings for applications in a supportive environment, offering constructive feedback.	The grant panel was established in 2023 and has provided support and feedback to 16 proposals led by female academics, and 41 by male academics. Women thus make 28% of applications, despite being 34% of ‘research and teaching’ academic staff.		
	AP2.3d Pilot a departmental “mini sabbatical” for planning towards promotion, providing focussed time for research for mid-career females.	3 Female staff participated in this pilot ‘mini sabbatical’ programme in the P&P founder Department in 2019/20. All 3 of these women have now been promoted from Senior Lecturer, 1 to Reader and 2 to Professor. This was originally a P&P program and fell through when the departments merged. ADCCI is		

		considering how to implement this action at a Faculty level.		
2.4 – Support for the development of leadership skills:	AP2.4a Continued support for staff attendance of leadership training courses	In the last 3 years, 4 females have attended the Aurora leadership programme: 3 were teaching focused, and 1 in teaching and research. Two of these staff have been promoted in the last 3 years.	This action has supported women to achieve their goals and to develop their networks/leadership skills. While participants highly value their training, the number of staff able to take advantage of these opportunities are relatively small, due to limited spaces. The University is currently reviewing provision of leadership training for academic women.	

Aim 3: SUPPORT STAFF WITH PARENTAL LEAVE				
Objective and Rationale	Specific actions proposed	RAG rating and Justification	Action Success	Analysis and New plans
3.1- Minimise the ‘parent penalty’ experienced by staff taking parental leave by ensuring continuity of support before, during and after leave, protecting research momentum, and enabling a supported and sustainable return to work.	AP3.1a Appoint a SPLO (Staff Parental Leave Officer) to support staff through all stages of the parental leave	Prof. Taylor was appointed SPLO in 2022 to provide consistent, confidential support for academic staff before, during and after parental leave. Her aim is to mitigate the impact of leave on the parent and other colleagues. The SPLO meets individually with staff to discuss expectations, workload planning, preferred contact during leave, and return-to-work arrangements. This role has been particularly valued in helping staff navigate complex processes, advocate for appropriate adjustments, and facilitate clear communication between staff, students and managers. Feedback from returning parents highlights the importance of having a named, trusted individual who understands both university policy and the practical realities of academic careers. Several staff specifically identified SPLO support as central to feeling listened to, supported and able to step away from work during leave. In addition, she began to collect data on staff's leave experience in terms of organisation and return to work. This data was not gathered previously. She also guides conversations between parent and staff/students/manager to effectively communicate expectations and best practices.	We aimed for 90% return after parental leave. Since 2021, 16 staff members have taken parental leave, with 94% returning indicating strong retention. One person is no longer working with us because a PI relocated to another institution during the leave period. Qualitative feedback highlights that staff who felt supported, through flexible working, SPLO engagement, effective handover arrangements and clear line-manager communication, reported significantly more positive return-to-work experiences. Where challenges were identified, these were rarely related to the decision to take leave itself, but rather to structural issues such as access to childcare, clarity of HR processes, short timelines for maternity cover, and lack of workload	While the assignment of SPLO/PGR-PLO has been invaluable to members of our department, provision of support for parents continues beyond parental leave. Survey with parents that have undertaken parental leave highlight the need for clearer policies for the return-to-work phase (such as allocation of teaching). Key areas identified for improvement include: • clearer guidance and communication prior to return • transparent allocation of teaching and administrative duties • proportional protection from non-research activities following leave • improved access to childcare and better communication around nursery capacity • clearer HR guidance on entitlements, pension implications and shared parental leave

	AP3.1b Update induction material and staff Wiki pages	Induction materials and online guidance for new staff have been comprehensively revised and are now reviewed annually. Information relating to parental leave, flexible working, return-to-work support and available contacts is centrally hosted on the Life Sciences Teams resource, replacing the former staff Wiki. This has improved visibility of support mechanisms and reduced reliance on informal knowledge-sharing. However, staff feedback indicates that clearer, more proactive signposting (particularly prior to return) remains important, as several staff reported uncertainty about entitlements, benefits and expectations when preparing to come back to work.	protection immediately following return. The creation of this RS-PLO role highlighted a clear gap for PGR parents, who often have nuanced funding regulations and are not eligible for many financial support options open to staff. In response, a PGR-PLO (Postgraduate Parental Leave Officer) has been appointed to support PGRs with parental responsibilities.	In response, we will strengthen support for staff and PGR returning from parental leave through clearer departmental guidance, proactive workload planning, and continued advocacy at University level for improved parental leave policies, childcare provision and inclusive funding mechanisms (2026 AP KP5/ KP3).
	AP3.1c Petition university funded initiatives and Alumni Office to support staff returning from maternity and adoption leave	University Returning Parent Support Funds and a new maternity cover scheme have provided important opportunities to mitigate the career impact of parental leave. In one case, funding enabled the appointment of a lab manager during maternity leave, which the staff member described as fundamental in allowing her to step away from work and ensure her research progressed and her students were supported. Awareness and uptake of centrally funded schemes has varied, and staff experiences indicate that navigating available support can be complex. Feedback highlights the importance of clear communication, early planning and consistent guidance to ensure that such schemes are accessible and		

		effective for those taking and returning from parental leave. PGRs however, have very limited access funding to mitigate leave impact, which remains a challenge. One PGR returned from maternity leave and sought financial support for childcare during their writing up period. The terms of their funding source related to maternity leave left this individual without income and unable to access university support schemes that were reserved exclusively for staff.		
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Aim 4: SUPPORT POSTDOCTORAL CAREERS TO INSURE A HEALTHY PIPELINE OF WOMEN IN ACADEMIA				
Objective and Rationale	Specific actions proposed	RAG rating and Justification	Action Success	Analysis and New plans
4.1 -Increase the uptake of mentoring by PDRAs	AP4.1a Assign mentors as part of the PDRA induction process for all new PDRAs	Two senior staff have been named as mentor coordinators for PDRAs However, engagement with this opportunity has been low.	The department now has a Departmental Research Staff Lead (former HoD), which serves as a central point for organizing mentorship, induction and support. However, we must improve the visibility of this service, since PDRAs report they are not aware of this (2026AP KP5) .	There are significant challenges in monitoring this group of staff, as the nature of the external funding for these positions means high turnover, and the systems in place are not sufficiently agile to keep track of this group. As a result, email lists are usually incorrect, affecting communication and data collection. Participation of PDRAs in CS2025 was low. We will hold a focus group with PDRAs to identify targeted actions that will be most beneficial to supporting their inclusion in DLS and career progression – including mentoring, skills development, role of SDPR and visibility (2026AP KP5) .
	AP3.1b Provide SDPR or career conversation for all PDRA to support transition into permanent posts in the future	Career conversations were offered to PDRAs last year, but uptake was quite low. In addition, because they are not required centrally, records were not kept.		
4.2 - Support PDRA fellowship and grant applications to enable progression to future independent academic positions	AP4.2a Encourage PDRAs to be co-applicants on research grants	Since 2020 there are around 30 grants submitted a year that includes a researcher, which is equivalent to 25% of the grants submitted per year. 47% of the researchers included in grants were women, while 61% of the PDRAs in our department are female.	On average, 24% of the research grants submitted by our department since 2020 have a PDRA listed as a Co-Investigator, indicating healthy participation of our PDRAs in the research process. The impact of this participation on career progression for our PDRA remains untested, as data for PDRAs destination remains difficult to obtain.	
	AP4.2b Provision of fellowship pitching sessions for PDRAS as well as mock Interview panels	PDRAs are encouraged to apply to fellowships through emails, and mentorship. PDRAs that choose to apply for fellowships are matched to academic staff for support during writing and in preparing for interviews. Given the competitive nature of this process, since 2022, one person has been supported to achieve a fellowship and successfully recruited as a Lecturer.		

4.3.- Provision of training opportunities and experiences that enhance skills	AP4.3a Promote services provided by the Career's Service and training for personal development offered by the University.	Emails are regularly sent to encourage participation in different training opportunities provided by the university, however it has not been possible to assess actual uptake or the effectiveness of these opportunities	PDRAs have many opportunities to obtain training and showcase their work through their online presence, and through giving seminars and attending meetings. However, the uptake of training and the impact of our actions on the long-term success of our PDRAs has remained difficult to quantify	
	AP4.3b PDRAs have an external facing University of Bath web profile to raise visibility and support reputation building	The PDRAs now have a public webpage hosted by the university showcasing their publications and network. Unfortunately, due to digital security concerns, the content of these pages are not under the control of the PDRAs themselves, and may perhaps not be aligned with PDRA's future career goals.		
	AP4.3c Encourage ECRs to present at Departmental Research Seminar programme, and participate in the Departmental Research Away Days	Six of the weekly departmental seminars are reserved for PDRAS. In addition, PDRAs give talks in the annual research day, a yearly event when all staff, PDRAs and PGR come together to hear about the latest research in the department.		

Aim 5: SUPPORT AND DEVELOP THE CAREER OF TEACHING-FOCUSED STAFF				
Objective and Rationale	Specific actions proposed	RAG rating and Justification	Action Success	Analysis and New plans
5.1 - Improve the career opportunities for teaching – focused staff	AP5.1a Clarify career structure and promotions pathway for teaching-focused staff	Promotion criteria have been updated at the university level, and a clear pathway now exists for teaching focused staff to progress. In addition, specialized training was provided in the Department for SDPR reviewers of teaching-focused staff to clarify promotion routes and improve advice.	We had four teaching – focused staff successfully progressing through this pathway, including one that has become a professor.	Teaching-focused staff have seen many positive changes in the last 5 years, including clearer promotion pathways and more recognition in the department. This has translated into the highest levels of agreement within DLS in CS2025 for the statement “My contributions are valued in my department” (86%F, 83% M) for this staff group.
5.2: Support the training needs of teaching-focused staff	AP5.2a Assess and support training through SDPR/ probation meetings	All teaching focused staff are offered SDPR or career conversation, where training needs are discussed. For example, several teaching-focused staff were supported to receive training on TBL (team-based learning) to implement in our curricula, and received funding to attend a national conference on TBL.	100% of our teaching focused staff completed the Bath course and became an associated fellow of higher education (AFHEA).	However, teaching-focused men are less likely to agree that “I feel like I belong in my Department” than women (70%F, 33%M, CSFig1). Actions are in place to foster a sense of belonging for all staff (2026AP KP1)
5.3 - Improve the quality of mentoring for teaching-focused staff	AP5.3a Assign a mentor to teaching-focused staff as part of the Induction process	All new members of staff are matched to a “buddy” upon arrival that have similar specialty and/or are closely located in the same building to help settling in. Mentors are assigned via our mentor champions.	100% of our teaching focused have been offered a mentor.	

Aim 6: SUPPORT THE CAREER AND WELLBEING OF PROFESSIONAL, TECHNICAL and OPERATIONAL STAFF (PTO)				
Objective and Rationale	Specific actions	RAG rating and Justification	Action Success	Analysis and New plans
6.1 - Engage Professional, Technical and Operational Staff (PTO) with Athena Swan	AP6.1 Invite PTO staff to participate in Athena Swan events	We have appointed PTO staff to the DLSEDIC since 2021. There has also been good participation of PTO staff in the culture surveys (15 F and 7M). However, given that most staff in this group are line-managed at Faculty level, even though their role/function is within the Department, it is difficult to determine how effective the engagement is.	We aimed for 45% of PTO staff to indicate awareness about the Athena Swan Charter. In the CS2025, 69% of PTO staff respondents had heard of Athena Swan previously.	CS2025 results show that the proportion of PTO staff who agree or strongly agree with the statement, <i>"My contributions are valued in my department"</i> (53% F, 71% M) is lower compared to other staff groups. We plan to do more to celebrate the contributions and achievements of diverse staff groups, including PTO, across DLS (2026AP KP1). We will also take actions to support development opportunities for technical services staff in line with the University's actions under the Technician Commitment (2026KP5).
6.2 - Support the career progression of PTO staff	AP6.2 Identify career development opportunities for technical staff.	This action was delayed because of Covid-19 changes to ways of working. Plans had been in place to consider skills development opportunities by shadowing/secondment to different areas, but this has not been possible. Restructuring of the line management at a Faculty level has opened an opportunity to redefine/re-grade some technical positions, and consequently 17 staff position were upgraded in 2023. Nevertheless, this is not an embedded solution.	Despite the successful career progression brought about by regrading, there remains limited opportunities for advancement for technical staff. Opportunities for shadowing/secondment to other areas of the Faculty for skills development have not been taken up.	

Aim 7: IMPROVE WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH OF STAFF AND PGR STUDENTS				
Objective and Rationale	Specific actions	RAG rating and Justification	Action Success	Analysis and new plans
7.1 - Greater support for PGR student wellbeing and mental health.	AP7.1a Work with Doctoral College to improve PGR student wellbeing and arrange for resilience and well-being workshops	With support from the Faculty EDI Lead, our department spearheaded the development of a new system—now adopted by the doctoral college—that provides PGRs access to an independent supervisory team, allowing confidential and unbiased guidance and support outside their home department. Additionally, Independent Advisors ran a workshop specifically for Life Sciences PGR in April 2024 ('Supervising your supervisor') that addressed challenges with supervision and provided individual support to those raising issues.	We aimed to improve PGR wellbeing by 20%. In 2021, PRES surveys showed 60% of PGRs agreed that "The support for my health and wellbeing meets my needs"; in 2023 & 2025 there was a sustained increase to 73 and 72%.	While perceptions of support for health and wellbeing are improving, CS2025 reveals that issues remain for PGRs in supervisory relationships, raising issues and feeling confident speaking up in the Department, particularly for women PGRs. While the 2025 PRES survey shows increasing respondents agreed that "If I am experiencing supervisory issues, I know who I can reach out to for support" (79% vs PRES2023 63%) we need to do more to support PGRs. We will address these issues by introducing pastoral supervisors, providing training in confident communication and mandating PGR supervisors attend training on "Enhancing Supervision" (2026AP KP3).
	AP7.2a Encourage staff to engage in Mental Health Awareness	The university organizes several activities to improve mental health, and emails regularly remind staff and students of these activities.	It is not possible to monitor uptake in these activities. Our surveys suggest that these actions have not changed perceptions of support for mental health in our Department. Only 34% of staff and 45% of PGR in CS2025 agreed/strongly agreed that "my mental health and/or wellbeing is supported in my department".	Actions are also planned to enhance support for mental health and/or wellbeing by appointing a Department Wellbeing Champion, building community and identity within DLS, and establishing a Departmental code of conduct that applies to all staff and PGRs (2026AP KP1).
	AP7.2b Encourage Wellbeing and Mental Health Awareness training for managers	Emails reminding all in the department to complete this training are sent annually.		
	AP7.2c Include information on Employee Assistance Program on Teams staff resources and Induction material	Information of where to find help with mental health and wellbeing is available on the Life Science Hub (MSTeams shared Departmental resource) and it is included in the induction material.		

Aim 8 -ADDRESS GENDER IMBALANCE IN UG RECRUITMENT AND CURRICULUM INCLUSIVITY				
Objective and Rationale	Specific actions	RAG rating and Justification	Action Success	Analysis and new plans
8.1 - Ensure gender balance in recruitment of UG students:	AP8.2a Review recruitment processes for UG students to ensure gender balance in e.g. in promotional materials, use of case studies, gender balance academic staff/role models on Open Days.	All marketing material has been revamped, and videos and images on prospectus are gender balanced, and include minorities. During open days, we ensure diverse representation of student ambassadors, and the main speakers for undergraduate courses are 3 males and 2 females.	Female proportion among undergraduate students has declined marginally from 68% in 2020/21 to 66% in 2024/25. While we will continue to produce recruitment material that encourage male students, we recognize our proportion is in line with the National averages.	Having revised our marketing material and embedded a consideration of gender representation across our UG recruitment activities, there is little we can do at a Department level to change the fact that at a National level biomedical sciences are majority female. HESA benchmarking data 2024/25 shows bioscience UG are 63%F and Pharmacy/Pharmacology 68%F (Table 3.3). Staff and PGRs continue to support outreach activities at local schools and consideration is given to having both men and women present.
	AP8.2b Encourage male students to apply for placements.	The number of male students engaging with placements has steadily increased and the proportion of male and females among the students going on placement this year have approached the proportion in our courses (65% Females: 35% males).		
8.2 – Improve curriculum inclusivity	AP8.3a Utilise curriculum transformation to produce an inclusive learning environment that supports the diverse learning needs for all our students	Academic staff engaged strongly with the opportunity of embedding EDI in the curriculum transformed activities for undergraduates in our department. Since 2020, initiatives such as recording of all lectures, alternative assessments for students, and increased diversity of types of assessment has made our courses more inclusive to a wide range of students. Additionally, colleagues have received funding from the University's Teaching Development Fund to develop resources for "how and what to teach about race and ethnicity in Pharmacy/Pharmacology programmes". Taught sessions encourage UGs to reflect on multiple	Our Pharmacy degree was the first to include EDI considerations into problem-based activities across the MPharm curriculum. The initiative received high praise from the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) during their accreditation visit in December 2022 and is now recognised as a model of good practice nationally.	Our activities on curriculum inclusivity have been among the first in the Faculty of Science, in part driven by the need for Pharmacy graduates to develop cultural competency in their professional skills training. A review of inclusive education practices and policies has recently been undertaken by an Inclusive Education Group at Faculty level, with several member of DLS contributing. Work is currently underway to strengthen and embed inclusive practices in both teaching

		facets of their own identity and apply this knowledge to how they communicate with patients or interpret scientific literature based on a single identity. Student feedback highlights the importance of these sessions for learning more about their peers and creating a more inclusive environment. These resources are now being shared across DLS UG programmes and across campus.	Staff driven initiatives also aim to increase the visibility of role models, consider identity widely and how this applies to interpreting scientific literature.	and assessment across DLS programmes. Funding has recently been provided from the University's Teaching Development Fund to examine "EDI in Clinical Teaching". The study will evaluate and enhance EDI representation in clinical teaching on the MPharmacy program. This will ensure that students, regardless of background, see themselves reflected in the curriculum which can improve engagement and academic success.
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Aim 9: SUSTAIN AN INCLUSIVE DEPARTMENT CULTURE				
Objective and Rationale	Specific actions	RAG rating and Justification	Action Success	Analysis and new plans
9.1 - Develop a respectable and inclusive environment	AP9.1 a Publish Professional Code of Conduct	The restructuring associated with the merger and formation of DLS has meant additional challenges in producing a concise document that captures all key scenarios.	CS2025 shows the proportion of respondents that agree or strongly agree with the statement <i>"I have experienced bullying or harassment in the last 12 months"</i> is for staff 21%/PGR 19%. This has reduced slightly for PGR since CS2023, but is at unacceptable levels.	Department culture remains a key priority for a Department that is 3 years old (2026AP KP1). Survey data supports an increased sense of belonging (Fig 3.1), this likely reflects the efforts made to ensure social events are inclusive and diverse - coffee meetings, away days, Christmas parties. <i>"I mostly work remotely so really looking forward to connecting with the wider department staff - thanks for organising!"</i> . DLS-EDIC will continue to lead these initiatives.
	AP9.1b Encourage all staff to complete unconscious bias courses	Diversity and unconscious bias training are now mandatory, and compliance is monitored regularly.		
9.2 - Improve staff perception of the work-load model (WLAM)	AP9.2a Remind staff of the University WAMS user guide and the option to agree or decline workload.	Annual email sent out with request to agree or disagree WAMS allocation, and the tariffs associated with different tasks.	Despite the increase in transparency around work allocation, staff remains unconvinced about the fairness of workload	

	AP9.2b Publish workload across the department	Non-anonymised workload published yearly and distributed by email to all academic staff in the workload shows contribution to teaching, research and management.	allocation in a gendered way (All staff 27%; 38%F and 18%M agree that “Workloads in my department are allocated fairly”).	However, CS2025 highlights bullying and harassment are significant issues and these will be addressed by co-creating a code of conduct for DLS and refreshing training on dignity and respect, allyship and bystander interventions (2026AP KP1)
9.3- Transparency in committee structure and improved communications	AP9.3 Recruit members for panels and committees through open recruitments	Committees and management jobs are advertised through email and expression of interests are invited (e.g. admission's tutor, DLSEDIC Lead, workload allocation group, director of studies).	Our committees and management structures are diverse (Fig 1.3). With high female representation across key managing roles (female HoD, 4F out of 6 DivHead, F Director of Teaching, DLSEDIC Lead). Diversity in grades and roles is also evident in committees (Fig 1.3)	Lack of transparency around workload and perceptions of fairness have not improved. Additionally, staff report low agreement with “My current workload is manageable”, and this is worse for men than women (CS2025 all staff 43%, 51%F, 39%M). Qualitative comments connect workload to wellbeing, so this is a key priority going forward (2026AP KP2)
9.4 - Ensure social events are inclusive and varied	AP 9.4 Establish inclusive and diverse social activities	Several regular social activities have been created, including weekly coffee mornings for academic staff, Friday's technical coffee, monthly happy hour. Gardening club and Walking club initiatives have started but waned with time pressures and the seasons. These activities are offered at different buildings, and at different times of the day and of the week with the aim of being as inclusive as possible for all staff and PGRs.	We believe there is a good and varied number of initiatives, and we will continue to support these initiatives. The cross department away day, which include PGRs, academic, and PTO staff was particularly well received.	

Please note: This application form is for applicants applying in any round up to and including September 2026. If you are applying after September 2026, please use v2.

2. Evaluating success against department's key priorities

Please describe the department's key achievements in gender equality.

2022AP Aim1 Improved recruitment of women academic staff

Goals:

- Increase application rates from women candidates.
- Review recruitment practices to ensure equity and inclusivity.
- Increase number and proportion of women in the Department to meet National average for discipline (HESA bioscience sector staff 53%F).

Actions:

- All adverts use agreed template including mentioning AS Silver Award, flexible working and disseminated through STEM networks (2022AP1.1e).
- Anonymised short-listing and monitoring of gender balance in shortlists (2022AP1.1b).
- Improved gender representation in interview panels (2022AP1.1e).

Impact:

- The overall proportion of females in our pool of applicants has increased to 48% (2020/21-2023/24) compared to 43% (2017/18-2019/20) (TableA2.34).
- For research-only roles, women are 55% of applicants, and shortlisted, interviewed and appointed in the same proportions.
- For 'research and teaching' roles, strong women candidates do apply (36% of applicants), and are more likely to be shortlisted (51% of candidates) and appointed (61% of appointed) across all grades (TableA2.35).
- All interview panels include a gender mix (20 panels in 2024/25 across all staff roles, panel size 2-6, on average proportion of females is 50%) and panellists undergo training, including on unconscious bias.
- ***The proportion of academic staff who are women has increased from 46% in 2020/21 to 50% in 2024/25 (Table A2.25).***

2022AP Aim2 Increased support for, and promotion of, women academic staff

Goals

- Eliminate gender imbalance in application rate for promotion.
- Increase number of women professors in the Department.

Actions

- Enhance effectiveness of SDPR/Career Conversations to support development (2022AP2.1).
- Encourage applications through targeted emails, inviting staff to put themselves forward and improving communication of academic promotion routes (2022AP2.2).
- Appoint Promotion Champion (ex-HoD, male) to support promotion case writing with enhanced feedback (2022AP2.2).
- Formation of Department Promotion Panel to include mix of genders and career pathways.
- Sustained longitudinal support for women's career progression, across both founder Departments, to enable progression to Professor.

Impact

- There has been an increase in the number of women academics applying for promotion, including to professorial grades. In 2020/22, there were 14 applications (29%F), and 25 applications (60%F) in 2022/24. Success rates are gender balanced in 2022/24, with 93% of women and 90% of men achieving promotion (2020/22: women 100%, men 70%) (TableA2.39).
- Qualitative comments highlight the value of the Promotion Champion in developing promotion cases.

“gave me the encouragement I needed to put forward my application for promotion... provided me with practical guidance on how I could best evidence my working practices to align to the promotions criteria”

- Departmental Promotion Panel (50%F, HoD is Chair) established in 2025 providing tailored feedback, grounded in the criteria. RAG-rating indicates whether application is ready or requires further time/work together with 1:1 feedback meeting to discuss next steps, supporting people to progress (TableA2.39). Process shared at Department all-staff meetings.
- SDPR uptake remains below target, and qualitative comments in CS2025 reveal limited satisfaction in supporting career development (**2026AP KP5**).
- ***The proportion of professors who are women has increased from 12% in 2020 (in both B&B and P&P) to 30% in 2024/25, surpassing the target of 22% and approaching the national benchmark of 31% (Advance HE statistical report 2024).***

2022AP Aim5 Improved career progression for teaching-focused staff

Goals

- Provide support for career progression for teaching-focused staff
- Increase the proportion of teaching-focused staff at Senior Lecturer level

Actions

- University level career progression framework was refreshed to make a clear pathway for teaching-focused staff. These routes have been publicised in the Department (2022AP5.1a).
- Department SDPR forms were reviewed to be more inclusive of diverse career pathways (2022AP5.2a).
- SDPR Reviewers/ line managers for teaching-focused staff held a workshop with former Academic Staff Committee members (University promotion body) to improve their understanding/interpretation of career progression criteria (2022AP5.1a).
- Some teaching-focused staff are teacher-practitioners, working part-time in DLS and part-time in clinical roles. Effective SDPR and 1:1 mentoring enabled staff to recognize their contributions and feel encouraged to apply for promotion (2022AP5.3a).

Impact

- Significant increase in satisfaction among the teaching-focused staff in culture surveys. In the CS2025 responses 81% of women and 83% of men teaching-focused respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “My line manager supports my career development”.

“the promotion champion encouraged me to see that there was a clear pathway for promotion with a teaching-focussed role.... my SPDR reviewer had great guidance on activities I could take on to ensure I met the criteria, which I may not have considered without his support”

- ***Since 2022/23, 6 teaching-focused women were promoted to Senior Lecturer and 1 to Professor. Some women in these roles had been at the University for >10years, held significant responsibilities (e.g. DoS), without ever considering promotion.***

2022AP Aim3 Improved support for parents going on leave

Goals.

- To improve the experience of staff and PGR taking parental leave
- To support staff and PGR effectively to return-to-work

Actions

- SPLO appointed to support staff before, during, and after parental leave, with the aim of enhancing retention, progression, and inclusion (2022AP3.1a). Provide individual meetings to advise on workload planning, expectations while on leave, cover for duties, support for research supervision, health and wellbeing during leave including staying in touch (KIT days), social events and preparation for return-to-work.
- PGR-PLO appointed to provide similar support for PGR with parental responsibilities.
- Induction materials revised/updated annually to include accurate information and available on DLS Teams resource (2022AP3.1b).
- Lobbied University to establish Returning Parents Support Funds to facilitate return to work

Impact

- 80% of staff and PGR in CS2025 agreed “My Department enables flexible working” compared with 69% staff in CS2023.
- Seven (5F) parental leave returners rated how happy they were with their parental leave experience as 7.6/10. Qualitative comments demonstrate the value of the SPLO role as somebody who understands the practical realities of academic careers, for people feeling listened to, supported and able to step away from work during leave.
- Our SPLO shared their experiences by contributing to Times Higher Education Campus magazine article on [how to build effective parental leave](#).
- PGR-PLO worked with GW4 (Bath, Bristol, Cardiff, Exeter) to gather data on PGR parents’ perspectives of support. Recommendations based on this data have been shared across institutions, with funding bodies and at the Houses of Parliament.

“her approach was thoughtful and supportive, allowing me to focus on my family ... her continued understanding and flexibility made the transition back to research smooth and very positive”
PGR parent comment on PGR-PLO support

- ***Enhanced support for parents through all stages of parental leave and returning-to-work means that 94% of staff taking parental leave have returned to the Department (16 staff since 2021) surpassing the 90% target.***

Section 3: An assessment of the department's gender equality context

In Section 3, applicants should evidence how they meet Criterion B:

- *Evidence-based recognition has been demonstrated of the key issues facing the applicant*

Recommended word count: 3500 words

3.1 Culture, inclusion and belonging

Please describe how the department ensures their culture and practices support inclusion and belonging.

3.1.1 Covid-19 Impact.

There have been lasting impacts, both positive and negative, of the unprecedented changes to HE brought about by the pandemic. In 2020, several colleagues took voluntary severance, workloads escalated for those who could work, many in research-focussed roles were unable to work and some PTO staff were furloughed.

Delivery of teaching moved to fully online, then hybrid (2020/21) and in 2021/22 reverted to majority on-campus. At the same time, the University engaged in a programme of 'curriculum transformation' for its UG and PGT programmes with roll out beginning in 2022/23 for first year units and 2025/26 being the final year. Teaching workloads have increased significantly as staff revise teaching materials annually because of Covid-19/curriculum transformation; including lecture content, materials to support learning via online learning platform (Moodle), assessments and feedback mechanisms. For research-active staff and students, although return to site happened in a limited capacity during 2020, many were impacted by social distancing measures until Jan 2022. PTO staff were furloughed in 2020, although some technical staff were required to remain on campus.

CS2023 highlighted that the impacts of Covid-19 were still being felt. 26% of respondents expressed concerns, particularly on career progression, with qualitative comments indicating disproportionate effects on vulnerable groups, early-career researchers and those with caring responsibility. Loss of support structures, continuing school and nursery closures and lack of wrap around childcare negatively impacted staff/PGR. Comments referenced exhaustion, from the pandemic itself, the pace and nature of change, and the return to in-person working. Many staff felt isolated, working from home, or seeing only a small number of their immediate research or teaching group. Multiple respondents in CS2023 noted a decline in departmental cohesion, fewer informal interactions and departmental restructuring contributed a lack of familiarity with new colleagues.

The return to on-campus activities post-Covid-19 coincided with the formation of DLS from the founder B&B and P&P Departments. This has impacted workplace culture in the new Department in terms of in-person events and social cohesion. The

challenges of working through Covid-19, and the inevitable uncertainties caused by merging Departments, has taken a toll on staff morale in terms of workloads, well-being and work-life balance. The beneficial new ways of working, such as hybrid/remote working, meetings and seminars, and flexible working have been retained, whilst rebuilding our program of social events, celebrations and away days.

During Covid-19, implementation of AS action plans was not a priority as the University mandated prioritizing student support and the delivery of teaching, so there has been a gap. The merger of the Departments, with turnover of multiple leadership roles, created discontinuities in action ownership and loss of ‘institutional memory’ around the rationale for some actions/activities. Nevertheless, efforts were refreshed with the formation of DLSEDIC in 2022/23 and we continue to make significant progress towards gender equality (Section 2). Challenges remain in building the identity of the new Department and fostering a sense of belonging that is inclusive for all staff and students.

3.1.2 Assessing belonging, gender equality and work-life balance

Our Department has a sustained commitment to gender equality, embedded in the leadership team, evidenced in CS2025 (Figure 3.1). Around two thirds of staff agree **the Department is family friendly, enables flexible working**, that meetings are timed to factor in caring responsibilities and is committed to achieving gender balance in leadership positions (Figure 3.2). In CS2025, 90% of staff (82%F: 96%M) and 66% of PGR (68%F;60%M) had heard about AS previously and participation rates increased to 55% (CS2023 36%).

DLSEDIC works to support community and inclusion across the Department through:

- EDI event celebrations and awareness emails
- Monthly socials, Away Days, Walking & Gardening groups

Quotes from these events (Figure 3.3):

“Great to meet people from the wider department - really valuable to start making connections as a fairly new staff member to Bath”

“What a brilliant event. More of this type of thing. I particularly felt it was great in getting academics and PhD students to meet. I certainly met PhD students I had not met before.”

Induction processes have been refreshed recently to help new staff members be supported and feel included in DLS. Alongside introductions to key members of staff, introduction to DLS Teams resources etc., new members of staff are matched to a “buddy” (typically somebody who is ~12 months in post) to help them become familiar with everyday tasks, and “mentors” (typically somebody more senior in the Department) who provide career and research advice.

There are weekly coffee meetings to facilitate social networking held in different buildings and different days to ensure all feel included. Plymouth-based staff have similar opportunities for informal networking, meeting once a month for coffee. There

is a monthly “happy hour” event for all staff and PGR to socialize together and foster discussion of common issues.

Flexible working is fully embraced by Departmental leadership, and many staff work flexibly and feel supported to do so, through formal (e.g. temporary teaching exemptions) and informal arrangements. We have improved support for staff/PGR taking parental leave and for return-to-work (Section 2.2).

Surveys show an **increased sense of belonging** in DLS (Figure 3.1) although work is needed to make further progress (CS2025 60% staff: 70%F /50%M vs CS2023 50% staff; CS2025 59% PGR: 59%F/60%M vs CS2023 60% agree). Most staff feel their contribution is valued in the Department (CS2025: 68%F/53%M agree), although male staff respond less positively to these statements, there is work to be done in recognizing and celebrating the achievements across all groups, genders and specifically PGR (CS2025: 39%F/50%M agree).

Comments in CS2025 suggest the new Department has yet to address some challenges formed by merging:

“The department is large and therefore sometimes feel disjointed and communications get lost. However, I believe there are now efforts to improve these”

“The merger has led to feeling disengaged from the dept”

Our September 2025 restructure into Divisions aims to enhance belonging through clearer communication, to build a sense of community, to support staff and PGR more effectively.



Figure 3.1: Headline culture survey 2025 (CS2025) and 2023 (CS2023) outcomes showing the proportion of staff and PGR responding “Agree/ Strongly Agree” to the statement shown.

* Core question. Data was not collected from PGR for all questions. See Appendix 1 for details.

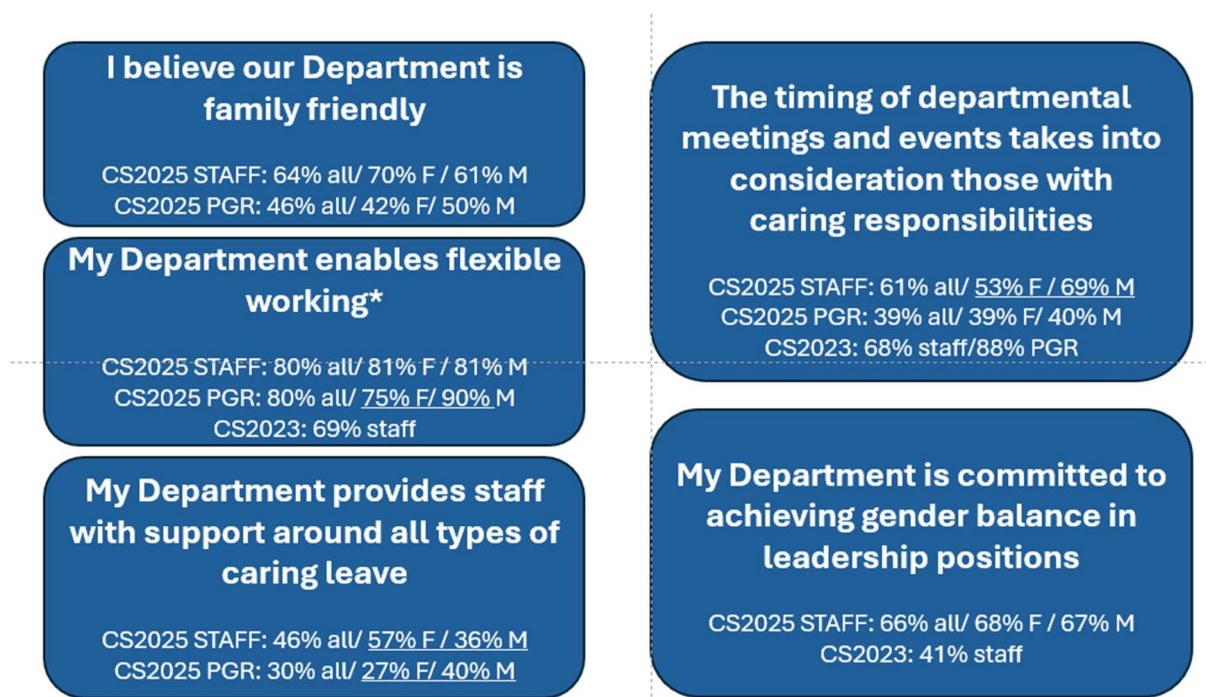


Figure 3.2: Headline culture survey 2025 (CS2025) and 2023 (CS2023) outcomes showing the proportion of all staff and PGR, by gender, responding “Agree/ Strongly Agree” to the statement shown.

* Core question. Gendered differences $\geq 10\%$ are underlined. Data was not collected from PGR for all questions. Only some questions were asked in CS2023. See Appendix 1 for details.

Figure 3.3: Exemplar activities fostering community for all staff/PGRs in Department of Life Sciences.

Clockwise from top left corner: All-staff/PGR social pottery making event; Departmental social with cake and coffee; LifeSciSoc ‘Alternative Research Day’/ ‘Happy Hour’ activity; Academic staff Away Day table discussions on improving DLS community.

PHOTOS REMOVED

3.1.3 Bullying and harassment

CS2025 outcomes highlight that **bullying and harassment are significant issues** in our Department. The University’s “Support and Report” tool enables staff and students to anonymously report any unwanted behaviour. It provides access to specialist staff to support and advise anyone who has experienced or witnessed inappropriate behaviour. Three quarters of staff and PGR agree they know how to report bullying and harassment (Figure 3.1).

One third, or less, of staff and PGR agree that Department management is active in tackling bullying and harassment or are satisfied with how issues are addressed (Figure 3.4). Interestingly, the majority response for both staff/PGR is ‘neutral’ indicating that most do not know how bullying and harassment issues are addressed. 20-25% of staff and PGR have experienced or witnessed bullying and/or harassment in the Department, with higher proportions of men than women.

Since CS2025 we have refreshed our approach to bullying and harassment, and work is ongoing (**2026AP KP 1**). 92% of staff have completed the University’s #NeverOK training module in October 2025. An external facilitator ran a focus group with PGR (Section 3.1.4). An open forum at an all-staff Department meeting, using mentimeter to invite anonymous suggestions, was used to explore concerns. This informed development of our 2026AP, including a Departmental code of conduct and bespoke training in bystander interventions/allyship (**2026AP KP1**).

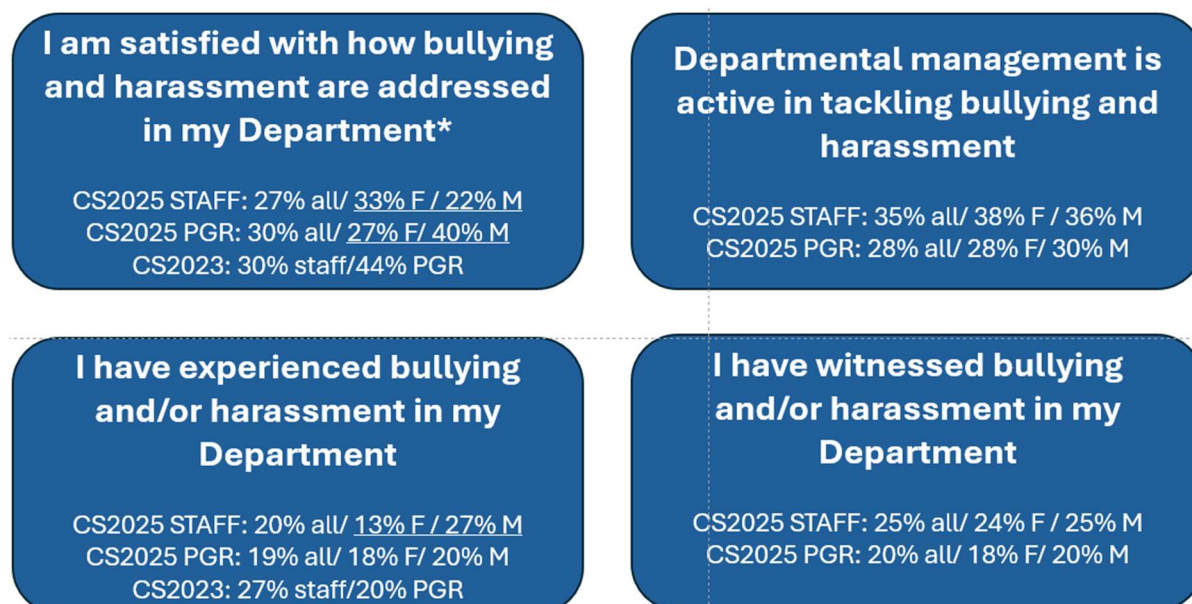


Figure 3.4: Headline culture survey 2025 (CS2025) and 2023 (CS2023) outcomes showing the proportion of all staff and PGRs, by gender, responding “Agree/ Strongly Agree” to the statement shown.

* Core question. Gendered differences $\geq 10\%$ are underlined. Only some questions were asked in CS2023. See Appendix 1 for details.

3.1.4 Workload and wellbeing

Culture surveys highlight the need for increased transparency and fairness in workload allocation (Figure 3.5). Smaller proportions of male staff agree that workload allocation is fair and overall satisfaction decreased since CS2023. Less than half of staff, and a smaller proportion of men than women, feel that their workload is manageable.

“Workload not transparent and not evenly distributed across the department. Having different tariffs for the same work across P&P and B&B bad for morale.”

“I have nearly always been significantly above the WAM and overworked. This has been raised in my SDPRs constantly. This has impeded my research career. Teaching/Admin is not valued. ... This has also impacted significantly on my work-life balance and family, as I have tried to keep a research career on track.”

WAMS data is gathered centrally to include research and teaching (e.g. doctoral supervisions, research grants/consultancy, timetabled contact hours). Management and administration activities are allocated using common University tariffs for e.g. DoS roles. Departments can adjust tariffs to suit context. The HoD is responsible for allocating workloads which should be a fair and reasonable reflection of staff's actual workload. Staff review and agree WAMS allocations annually. HoDs are required to explore cases where activities indicate a sustained workload above the notional allocation (1613h annually for 1FTE) by a margin of 10% or more. An analysis of WAMS data by academic staff role shows gender-specific differences in distribution of workload (Table 3.1). Overall, workloads appear to be reduced in 2024/25 compared to 2023/24 and female teaching and research staff remain marginally more overloaded than males. However, WAMS does not account for all activities staff undertake. In particular, “good citizenship tasks” which enable the University to function effectively, fall disproportionately on some staff, and are not included e.g. shortlisting/interviewing staff recruitment.

The HoD has established a Workload Working Group that will report to DLSEC to address gendered inequalities and develop tools in the Department to capture workload and make responsive adjustments (**2026AP KP 2**). DLSEC will identify routes to improve transparency and principles of fair workload allocation.

CS2025 qualitative comments made a clear link between workload and wellbeing. The university provides a comprehensive support service including mental health provision and counselling. Staff and students are encouraged to make use of these services. Survey outcomes show that staff and PGR know where to seek support for mental health/wellbeing at work. However, only one third of staff, and less than half of PGR feel their mental health and/or wellbeing are supported in the Department, and the proportions are worse for men than women (Figure 3.5). We will appoint a Departmental Wellbeing Champion to work across campus, with other Wellbeing Champions, to promote and support a healthy culture, raise awareness of health and wellbeing activities and with a focus on male mental health/wellbeing concerns (**2026AP KP 1**).



Figure 3.5: Headline culture survey 2025 (CS2025) and 2023 (CS2023) outcomes showing the proportion of all staff and PGRs, by gender, responding “Agree/ Strongly Agree” to the statement shown.

* Core question. Gendered differences $\geq 10\%$ are underlined. Data was not collected from PGRs for all questions. See Appendix 1 for details.

Table 3.1: WAMS data showing average hours allocated to staff in teaching-focused, or teaching & research roles, by gender in 2023/24 and 2024/25.

Average hours allocated to:	Teaching and Research Staff			
	2023/24		2024/25	
	Male (56)	Female (26)	Male (55)	Female (28)
Teaching	700	627	671	531
Research	720	824	763	812
Management	390	559	342	489
Total (h)	1810	2010	1776	1832
% 1613h	112%	125%	110%	114%
	Teaching-focused Staff			
	Male (7)	Female (24)	Male (15)	Female (35)
Teaching	1113	1200	900	1035
Research	-	-	-	-
Management	502	537	364	462
Total (h)	1615	1737	1264	1497
% 1613h	100%	108%	78%	93%

Notes: The number of females and males in each group is indicated in parenthesis; not all staff are included (probationary staff, parental leave, sick leave) where allocations were atypical. All allocations were standardized to 1 FTE to account for part-time staff. Categories highlighted in orange indicate gendered inequality in overall workload allocation, typically higher burden on female staff

3.1.5 PGR experience

PGR have a formal induction in DLS at the start of the academic year during 'Welcome Week' and, over the first month, campus-wide activities through the Doctoral College. Social events are organized to introduce PGR to academic staff, senior PGR and PDRAs. DLS PGR run "LifeSciSoc" which organizes social events/activities, including talent shows, barbecues and Halloween-themed parties.

"LifeSciSoc has been a lifeline—great for meeting people and feeling part of something."

CS2025 shows that PGR, particularly women, had the lowest levels of agreement with statements such as "My contributions are valued" (Staff: 59%; PGRs: 41% - 39%F: 50%M) and "I feel comfortable speaking up and expressing my opinions" (Staff: 61%; PGRs: 45% - 39%F: 70%M). There is only marginal improvement since CS2023 (Appendix 1). PRES responses in 2025 show a decline in satisfaction since 2023 with the experience of the research degree programme, induction and a sense of community and or belonging (Table 3.2).

DivHeads are working to specifically include PGR in the new Division structures/activities. PGR/PDRAs organize an annual DLS Research Day to showcase research of early career researchers and PGR give monthly research seminars. We have recently established a monthly coffee morning for all staff and PGR to enhance informal networking opportunities for PGR.

A key issue highlighted in externally facilitated focus groups was difficulty raising issues with supervisors due to a perception of power imbalance. Additionally, some PGR perceived that supervising UG project students was affecting their progress. Going forward, we will review induction processes to include a clear understanding of expectations and responsibilities on both sides of the PGR-supervisor relationship. We will assign pastoral supervisors, in addition to the independent advisor scheme that exists at the university level, to provide extra avenues for PGR to raise concerns. We will also work with the University's Doctoral College to organize bespoke training for female PGRs to enhance communication, influencing and negotiating skills to support PGR in managing potential disagreements with their supervisor **(2026AP KP 3)**.

Table 3.2: A subset of the postgraduate research experience survey (PRES) responses, for students in the Department of Life Sciences in 2023 and in 2025.

Census date is 30/4/25. Data are not available disaggregated by gender nor by raw counts. Percentages indicate agreement with each statement. Orange highlight shows a decrease, green shows an increase, of 5% or more since 2023.

DATA REMOVED

3.1.6 Student profile

- UG student numbers have been rising year-on-year to 1734 in 2024/25 (66%F), 1.45X increase from 2020/21 (TableA2.1).
- Proportion of women UG in 2024/25 is marginally lower (66%) than in 2020/21 (68%), perhaps reflecting 2022AP actions on UG recruitment (Aim 8). Almost no students identify outside of binary genders.
- There are <1% part-time students, both M/F.
- Across the 11 UG programmes, the proportion of women varies within sector averages for Bioscience (63%F) and for Pharmacy/Pharmacology (68%) (Table 3.3).
- Across Bachelors and Masters (Enhanced First Degree) options, the proportions of M/F are similar (TableA2.2).
- UG profile is more ethnically diverse in 2024/25 (69% white students, 75% 2020/21) with an increase in Mixed and Asian UGs (TableA2.5).
- For home domiciled UGs, Pharmacy has the highest proportion of ethnic minorities (49%/58% in Bath/Plymouth), with other programmes ranging from 33% (pharmacology) to 6% (biology) (TableA2.7).
- While an improving picture, our UG Pharmacy cohort is not yet representative of the profession. GPhC register diversity data tables (2025) show that 62% of pharmacists are from ethnic minorities with 40% identifying as Asian/Asian British and 8% as Black/Black British.
- Little evidence of gender X ethnicity intersectional inequality in UG profile.

Table 3.3: Benchmarking student data from HESA for 'biosciences' and 'pharmacy, pharmacology or toxicology' in 2024/25.

Sector	Gender	Student		
		UG	PGT	PGR
Bioscience	Female	31035	4730	4980
	Male	18040	2420	3225
	Other	380	40	55
	% Female	63%	66%	60%
Pharmacy, Pharmacology, Toxicology	Female	16735	7160	740
	Male	7685	2840	490
	Other	35	20	5
	% Female	68%	71%	60%

We reviewed gender ratios at the application stage; our application pool is majority female and stable (Table 3.4). Across courses, there are variations in line with sector averages. Pharmacy has a higher proportion of women in the profession (63%F, GPhC diversity data tables, 2025), and in the UG cohort than our bioscience programmes.

- PGT numbers have decreased year-on-year to 717 (70%F, 54% ethnic minorities) in 2024/25, 0.81X decrease from 2020/21 (Table A2.11).
- The majority of PGT study advanced clinical pharmacy programmes and are majority female, reflecting the profession.
- PGR numbers have decreased year-on-year to 135 (59%F) in 2024/25, 0.78X decrease from 2020/21 (52%F) (Table A2.20). This likely reflects the impact of Covid-19 and funding availability.
- The proportion of women PGR is increasing and aligns to sector average (HESA Bioscience PGR 2024/25 59%F).
- 5-16% PGR study part-time, M≥F most years.
- PGR profile is marginally more ethnically diverse in 2024/25 (38% ethnic minorities; 34% 2020/21) with similar proportions of M/F across ethnicities.

Table 3.4 Proportion of applicants to Department of Life Sciences UG courses who are female in 2023/24 and 2024/25.

Course	2023/24	2024/25
Biochemistry	59%	59%
Biology	60%	60%
Biomedical Sciences	68%	68%
Pharmacology	58%	58%
Pharmacy (Bath)	71%	71%
Pharmacy (Plymouth)	72%	72%

3.1.7 Student awards

- There is a significant gendered awarding gap at UG level. 45% of women and 26% of men achieve first class degrees, evident across programmes (TableA2.8).
- There are programme specific differences in PGT awarding gender gaps. The proportion of women PGT achieving 'distinction' is higher than men in 2024/25, particularly in some clinical pharmacy programmes (TableA2.19).
- There is no evidence of a gender gap at entry to UG programmes. Investigating "near miss" entrants (dropped one grade level at entry) reveals that women, not men, are typically the majority (Table 3.5).
- Addressing this is a key priority for future action (**2026AP KP4**) and will include an investigation of intersectional inequalities in awarding gaps by ethnicity.
- Rates of PGR completion and thesis submission fluctuate (TableA2.24). From 2013/14 to 2020/21, overall average submission rates within 4 years are 63%F and 67%M, reaching almost 100% submitted after 4 years. Around 10% of students starting a PhD leave at different stages, for a variety of reasons including health, transfer to another institution, failing confirmation/lack of progress. Twice as many women as men left during the review period, with more women citing "personal reasons".

Table 3. 5: Proportion of entrants to Department of Life Science courses that are female among 'near miss' entrants in 2023/24 and 2024/25.

Course	2023/24	2024/25
Biochemistry	29%	100%
Biology	90%	63%
Biomedical Sciences	73%	71%
Pharmacology	64%	50%
Pharmacy (Bath)	67%	75%
Pharmacy (Plymouth)	N/A	100%

3.1.8 Staff profile

- Overall, 50% of academic staff are women. Women are better represented among teaching-only (70%F) and research-only (62%F), than 'research and teaching' staff (34%F) (Table A2.25).
- 2022AP (Aim1) actions on recruitment have increased the proportion of women academic staff to 50% since 2020/21 (46%) across job contracts.
- The number of research-only staff has fallen in DLS since 2021 (Figure A2.25). This likely reflects impact of Covid-19 and research grant funding.

- There is an increased proportion of women that are research-only staff at Grades 6/7 equivalent to RAs/PDRAs (Table A2.29). Multiple factors influence this in a high turnover staff group, largely tied to external research funding.
- 92% of women and 87% of men research-only staff are on FTCs.
- Increasing since 2020/21, at all grades and contract functions, women (44%) are more likely to work part-time than men (15%) (Tables A2.30 and A2.31), reflecting a variety of factors including teacher-practitioner roles, caring responsibilities and a positive culture in DLS towards supporting flexible working.
- Across contract function and grades, little evidence that gender is a factor in open-ended or FTC status (Table A2.32).

Overall, women are more successful in the recruitment process. They are more likely to be shortlisted and successful at interview (Table A2.34). For teaching-only roles, shortlisting rates are similar, but women are more likely to be appointed than men.

Women are better represented among applicants for teaching-only than 'research and teaching' roles. For 'research and teaching' posts, women that do apply are strong candidates and are more likely to be shortlisted, interviewed and appointed than men. Analysis of recruitment panels by gender shows the proportion of women on interview panels is in line with representation in DLS.

2022AP actions aimed to ensure gender-balanced recruitment. We will continue to monitor recruitment processes, take action to encourage women to apply for 'research and teaching' posts and embed unconscious bias training (**2026AP KP6**).

3.1.9 Supporting staff career progression

- AP2022 (Aim2), and longitudinal actions to support academic staff promotion, have increased the proportion of professors who are women to 30% in 2024/25 (12%F 2020/21).
- Among all academic staff, women are better represented at lower grades (Figure A2.26) reflecting women's higher representation among teaching-only and research only staff. Women's representation is similar across all grades among research & teaching staff (Figure A2.27).
- AP2022 actions to support promotion have increased the proportion of teaching-only staff at Grade 9 to 60% in 2024/25 (50%F 2020/21) (Table A2.28). Similar proportions of women and men teaching-only staff are on FTCs (~25%).
- There has been a significant increase in the proportion of females in leadership positions including 2/3 HoDs since formation of DLS, and currently 4/6 DivHeads (Figure 1.2).

Promotion application rates are low but success rates are high. Applications from women have increased (2020-22 4F, 2022-2024 15F) and success rates are high for both men and women, reflecting actions in 2022AP. We will continue to support career progression for academic staff (**2026AP KP5**).

- There are 41 technical services staff (49%F) working in DLS, with 63% having 100% of their function in DLS (Table 3.6).
- Direct promotions for PTO staff are not possible within the University framework.
- Since DLS formation, a proactive leadership approach to career progression has supported technical staff through regrading processes. As part of a Faculty-wide exercise, 17 staff have been upgraded since 2022.
- The University is a signatory to the Technician Commitment, and our actions align to this, supporting technical services staff career development through funding CPD training and introducing shadowing/secondments across Faculty to support skills development (**2026AP KP5**).

Table 3.6: Snapshot of technical services staff working in the Department of Life Sciences in 2024/25

Grade	100% DLS	Mixed function (40% DLS)
Grade 3		
Grade 4		
Grade 5		
Grade 6		
Grade 7		
Grade 8		
Grade 9		
Total		
Number of female staff		
Number of full-time staff		
Number of staff on fixed-term contracts		

Note: Most technical services staff are line-managed at Faculty level.

3.2 Key priorities for future action

Please describe the department's key priorities for future action.

KP 1. Foster a sense of belonging in DLS for all staff and PGR
<i>Evidence</i>
• CS2025 shows 20-25% of staff and PGR have experienced or witnessed bullying and/or harassment in the Department, with highest numbers for male staff (13%F, 33%M). • Satisfaction with how bullying and harassment is addressed within the department was low (27% staff, 30% PGR (Figure 3.4)). • CS2025 shows only marginal increase on sense of belonging in DLS. • PRES highlights concern about a sense of community and belonging for PGR (Table 3.2). • Only one third of staff feel that their mental health and/or wellbeing are supported in the Department, and proportions are worse for men than women (Figure 3.5).
<i>Analysis and identification of issue</i>
• DLS is one of the largest departments at Bath, split across multiple sites and two campuses. Turnover in senior leadership roles has delayed implementation of actions to address these issues. • Levels of bullying and harassment are not acceptable. • CS2025 qualitative comments support a sense of disengagement and a fragmented Department. • CS2025 qualitative comments show mental health and/or wellbeing are linked to uncertainty in wider HE sector, workloads and sense of belonging.
<i>Proposed solutions</i>
• A Departmental code of conduct will be co-created with staff and PGR to make agreed expectations of behaviour explicit (2026AP1.1). • Training will be enhanced to support allyship, bystander interventions and professional boundaries (2026AP1.1). • Working within and across Division structures, DivHeads will engage proactively with all staff and PGR to support research culture, informal networking and socializing (2026AP1.3). • A Wellbeing Champion will lead on promoting and supporting a healthy culture, signposting to events and promoting relevant Staff/PGR networks that support diverse groups e.g. Staff Men's Network (2026AP 1.4).

KP 2. Eliminate gendered inequalities in workload for academic staff
<i>Evidence</i>
• Only 27% CS2025 (43% CS2023) respondents agreed with the statement “workloads are allocated fairly”, more women (38%F) than men (18%M) agreed (Figure 3.5). • Only 43% CS2025 (34% CS2023) respondents agreed that “my workload is manageable”. • WAMS data analysis shows women are more overloaded than men (Table 3.1).
<i>Analysis and identification of issue</i>
• Averages only reflect broad patterns; within each role and gender there is a broad range of workload. • Across the Department, there are 51 academic staff (45%F) with workloads 110-239% of total hours available accounted by WAMS. • “Good citizenship tasks” not accounted for in WAMS. • Differential tariffs exist for similar tasks in the DLS founder departments. • Lack of awareness of tariffs and processes for review of workload allocation have not been systematically, transparently addressed by line managers.
<i>Proposed solutions</i>
• Newly established DLS Workload Working Group to identify and publish consistent tariffs across DLS, including for “good citizenship tasks” (interview panels, invigilation) (2026AP2.1). • Provide summaries of workload distribution across DLS to inform review and allocation of workload, via 1:1 discussion with line managers on an annual basis, and responsive adjustments to workloads to be made (2026AP2.2).

KP 3. Improve the experience of PGR
<i>Evidence</i>
• PRES 2025 survey shows decreased satisfaction with the experience of the research programme and induction processes (Table 3.2). • CS2025 shows low agreement among PGR that “My contributions are valued” (41%) and “I feel comfortable speaking up and expressing my opinions” (45%) and lower for women PGR than men. • PGR parents experience additional barriers related to unclear parental leave processes, funding extensions, and return-to-study expectations.
<i>Analysis and identification of issue</i>
• CS2025 comments indicated that PGR find it difficult to address issues with supervisors due to a perception of power imbalance. • Focus group with PGR raised uncertainty about expectations of workload, research progress and supervisory relationships. • Focus group highlighted a common perception that “there is no point reporting issues, since nothing happens” • Focus group feedback and GW4 project findings indicate the need for coordinated support pathways for PGR taking parental leave.
<i>Proposed solutions</i>
• Pastoral supervisors will be appointed, to provide a point of contact to discuss issues in a friendly and supportive way (2026AP3.1). • Induction processes will be reviewed to clarify expectations about supervisory relationships at the outset of the PhD process (2026AP3.2). • PGR supervisors will be required to undergo and refresh doctoral supervision training to support PGR and better manage supervisory relationships (2026AP3.3). • Establish coordinated support for PGR parental leave at Faculty-level (2026AP3.4).

KP 4. Reduce the gender gap in UG and PGT awards.
<i>Evidence</i>
• 45% of women and 26% of men achieve first class degrees, evident across UG programmes (TableA2.8). • The proportion of women PGT achieving 'distinction' is higher than men in 2024/25, and worse since 2020/21. • There are programme specific differences in PGT awarding gender gaps, although there are low numbers for specific awards which makes analysis difficult. • We do not have degree classification data for all programmes by ethnicity to enable intersectional analysis.
<i>Analysis and identification of issue</i>
• Analysis of entrants' grades indicate no significant differences in academic standing between males and females that can explain the gendered awarding gap (Table 3.5) • Participation of male students in the industrial placement program has increased (2022AP). • University-wide curriculum transformation process (2022-2026) has reduced high-stakes exam weighting and increased coursework in all UG programmes. • Women may do better in coursework assessments. Research suggests that women in HE are more conscientious, show stronger engagement and feel the positive impact of increased female representation in life sciences. • For clinical pharmacy PGT courses, students are part-time distance learners; the employment benefit comes from passing, not achieving a higher grade, so motivation may differ between genders.
<i>Proposed solutions</i>
• Undertake focus groups with male UG/PGT students, representatives of ethnic minorities, to understand any challenges that may impact final award (2026AP 4.1) • Investigate UG and PGT performance across programmes by gender for different assessment types to ensure that outcomes are not skewed by assessment types that produce gendered outcomes (2026AP 4.1). • Work with the University to obtain data on degree outcomes by ethnicity and put data-driven actions in place to address any intersectional inequalities in awards (2026AP 4.2).

KP 5. Support career progression for all staff roles.
<i>Evidence</i>
• CS2025 shows that only 60% of staff agree that their line manager supports their career development; men are less likely to agree than women. • Actions to support academic staff promotion have increased applications for promotion at Professor level and for teaching-only staff. • Support for PDRA career progression has stalled in the merged DLS. • Support for PTO staff to support skills development and further career progression is needed. • SPLO has significantly enhanced support for staff on parental leave. • SDPR uptake has not increased to target levels and only ~40% of staff find it useful.
<i>Analysis and identification of issue</i>
• New Department Promotion Panel has enhanced ways of working, including feedback and support for promotion case writing but this is yet to be embedded in DLS. • The University will introduce a new academic career progression framework in 2026/27. We must ensure that staff, promotion panel reviewers, SDPR reviewers and line managers are aware of the new criteria and their operation. • Returning to work from parental leave remains a challenge for academic careers. Line managers need guidance to effectively support return-to-work planning, reintegration plans, protected time to re-establish research. <i>“There was an expectation to be fully up to speed on day 1. With no reintroduction”</i> • PDRAs are a diverse, high-turnover group of staff that have lost identity and cohesion in the DLS structure. CS2025 data show that research-only staff show least agreement with belonging in the Department, that line managers support their career development, do not take up SDPR opportunities. • PTO staff career progression opportunities provided by the Faculty restructure have not been realised.
<i>Proposed solutions</i>
• Workshops and training for all academic staff in the new academic career progression framework (2026AP 5.1) • Devise and implement guidance for line managers to support staff return-to-work from parental leave to maintain career progression (2026AP 5.2) • Undertake focus group with PDRAs/research-only staff to identify barriers to integration in DLS and support needed for career progression. Develop actions to support PDRAs career progression and skills development (2026AP 5.3). • Promote cross-Faculty shadowing/secondment/CPD opportunities to support career development for technical services staff (2026AP 5.4). • Introduce post-SDPR annual meeting with line-manager to action changes/support needed (2026AP 5.6).

Section 4: Future action plan

In Section 4, applicants should evidence how they meet Criterion C:

- *An action plan is in place to address identified key issues*

KP 1 – Foster a sense of belonging in DLS for all staff and PGR					
Objective	Rationale	Action	Timeframe	Responsibility	Success criteria
1.1 Establish expectations of behaviour for all through a Departmental code of conduct.	CS2025 shows 20-25% of staff and PGR have experienced or witnessed bullying and/or harassment in the Department, with higher numbers for men than for women. One third or less of staff and PGR agree that “Departmental management is active in tackling bullying and harassment” or “I am satisfied with how bullying and harassment are addressed in my Department”. The majority of CS2025 respondents answered ‘neutral’ suggesting that people do not know how these issues are addressed. A focus group with PGR showed that past events continue to affect perceptions in DLS, and lack of transparency in outcomes maintains the belief that “nothing changes”. Clarification of expected standards of behaviour will facilitate and reinforce a whole-Department approach to anti-bullying that is cohesive, collective and collaborative.	i) Bespoke training for all staff and PGR in the University’s ‘dignity and respect’ policies, including outcomes of the “Support & Report” process to clarify how bullying and harassment are addressed in the Department.	April 2026 to Apr 2027.	DOM	90% of staff and PGR attend training with gender representation in line with gender balance in DLS.
		ii) Co-creation with all staff and PGR of a Departmental code of conduct (e.g. at Away Day) that promotes respect, inclusivity and understanding among staff/PGR. A key goal will be to encourage participation and collaboration across all DLS activities/committees to ensure all voices are heard and to facilitate inclusivity.	April 2026 to Sep 2026	HoD	Code of conduct in place
		iii) Promotion of the Departmental code of conduct at every all-staff meeting in 2026/27 and then annually. Included in PGR and staff induction.	Oct 2026 to Sep 2027	HoD	Code of conduct is used and referred to at 100% of DLS activities/committees.
		vi) Bespoke training for all staff and PGR in bystander/allyship.	Oct 2026 to Sep 2027	DOM	90% of staff and PGR attend bystander/allyship training with gender representation in

	Coupled with training about how systems are in place to address bullying and harassment, raising awareness of professional boundaries guidance and providing bystander/allyship training will support a consistent expectation of behaviour. We will need to monitor the uptake and effectiveness of allyship/bystander training and identify further training needs.				line with gender balance in DLS.
		v) Promote “Professional boundaries” guidance to all staff and PGR.	Oct 2026 to Sep 2027	DLSEDIC Lead	Professional boundaries guidance is promoted at 100% of DLS activities/committees.
		vi) Promote “Support and Report” online platform to all staff and students at DLS events and also through posters around the department.	Oct 2026 to Sep 2027	DOM	“Support and Report” online platform is promoted in the Department.
		v) Assess the effect of steps taken to establish expectations of behaviour using the culture surveys	Jan 2027 to Apr 2029	DLSEDIC Lead	CS2027 and CS2029 show at least 70% of staff /PGRs agree “I am satisfied with how bullying and harassment are addressed in my Department” irrespective of gender. CS2027 and CS2029 show at least 70% of staff/PGRs agree “Departmental management is active in tackling bullying and harassment” irrespective of gender. CS2027 and CS2029 show less than 5% of staff/PGRs have experienced or

					witnessed bullying and harassment in the previous 12 months.
1.2 Review and monitor effectiveness of the Departmental code of conduct	Managing workplace bullying and harassment requires a proactive shift across all staff and student groups in DLS. Having established a code of conduct we will need to monitor its effectiveness through the use of pulse surveys. We also need to ensure that people remain aware of “Support and Report” confidential online reporting platform and how to access tailored support. There is no single solution to bullying/harassment that will suit all situations. We will need to ensure that line managers are visibly supporting an inclusive culture, demonstrating that bullying and harassment will not be tolerated, and that behavioural expectations are met.	i) Monitor the use of the Departmental Code of Conduct across all DLS activities and committees through a pulse survey which is run initially in October 2026 and then annually thereafter.	Oct 2026 to Apr 2029	HoD	Annual pulse surveys in place that consistently show that, irrespective of gender, at least 70% of staff and PGR are aware of the Departmental Code of Conduct, at least 70% of staff and PGRs agree that “bullying and harassment are not tolerated in my Department” and “Departmental management is active in tackling bullying and harassment”.
		ii) Review participation data and evaluation data from bespoke training annually to identify strengths/weaknesses and perceived effectiveness, as well as further training needs. Consider further actions to support training needs/refresher training provision	Oct 2026 to Apr 2029	DOM/ DLSEDIC Lead	Annual reviews of participation and evaluation data from bespoke training in place and, where necessary, action developed to address issues.
		iii) Establish running an annual focus group with line managers to identify any issues or trends that require targeted interventions and	Apr 2027 to Apr 2029	DLSEDIC Lead	Annual focus groups for line managers in place and any issues identified reported to DLSEC for action.

		report any issues to DLSEC for action.			
1.3 Build community and identity within DLS.	Surveys show an increased sense of belonging in DLS although work is needed to make further progress (CS2025 60% staff: 70%F /50%M vs CS2023 52% staff; CS2025 59% PGR: 59%F/60%M vs CS2023 60% PGR agree). While the majority of staff feel their contribution is valued in the Department (CS2025: 68%F/53%M agree), recognizing that male staff respond less positively to these statements, there is work to be done in recognizing and celebrating the achievements across all staff groups, genders and specifically PGR (CS2025: 39%F/50%M agree).	i) Refurbish social space in DLS to create space for informal social gatherings as well as small room meeting space.	Jun 2026 to Jan2027.	Social space group lead	Social space refurbished.
		ii) Establish 'Research Culture' events that explicitly include PDRAs & PGR e.g. speed networking	Apr 2026 to Apr 2029	DivHeads	At least two "research culture" events held in each Division every year. Attendance data shows that PDRAs and PGRs are included.
		iii) Department commits budget & resource to organize social events that accommodate diverse needs and explicitly include all staff (including PTO, PDRAs) and PGR.	Jun 2026 to Jun 2029	DLSEDIC Lead	Annual budget in place for inclusive social events. At least two events held each year. Attendance data shows that events are inclusive.
	CS2025 comments also show that people feel the Department is large and fragmented and are disengaged since the merger. The restructure of DLS to include 6 Divisions and a School of Pharmacy in Sept 2025 aims to enhance belonging by building community and identity within DLS. Community building requires facilities within which to hold regular	iv) Ensure Plymouth-based staff are included in Department events. Arrange some events where everybody joins online so that all staff can participate on an equal footing. Consider Away Days for Bath and Plymouth based pharmacy staff where all staff have to travel, not just Plymouth-based staff.	Jun 2026 to Jun 2029	Director of Pharmacy, Head of Pharmacy (Plymouth)	At least two opportunities organized each year for face-to-face contact between Bath-based and Plymouth-based pharmacy staff. In CS2027 and CS2029 at least 70% of Plymouth-based staff agree that they are included in departmental events.

	meetings, and these are not available at all sites. A group of early-career researchers and new lecturers have successfully applied for 'Research Culture' funds, now matched by the Department, to refurbish a large run-down space in the Department for meetings, social activities, coffee breaks.	v) Celebrate diverse achievements (including education initiatives, community engagement, research grants, publications, presentations, successful mentoring,) internally via monthly newsletter and externally via social media as appropriate (e.g. LinkedIn).	Apr 2026 to Apr 2029	DOM	Monthly newsletter and social media includes announcements of achievements.
		vii) Hold at least two "Human Library" events ("Books" are volunteers while "readers" are anyone curious to learn) each year for members of staff and PGRs to share narratives of their personal journey to Bath including workplace role, cultural backgrounds and diverse life experiences.	Jan 2028 to Jun 2029	DLSEDIC Lead	At least two "Human Library" events held each year. At least 75% of participant agree that the events are informative and valuable.
		viii) Explore the long-term effect of the steps taken to build community and identity within DLS using culture surveys.	Jan 2027 to Apr 2029	DLSEDIC Lead	CS2027 and CS2029 show 80% of staff /PGR agree "I feel like I belong in my Department," and "My contributions are valued in my Department" irrespective of gender.
		i) Appoint a Departmental Wellbeing Champion to promote and support a healthy culture. The Champion's term of office should be for three years, with the opportunity for renewal once.	Jun 2026 to Oct 2026	HoD	Departmental Wellbeing Champion appointed.

1.4 Improve support for mental health and wellbeing	Only one third of staff, and less than half of PGR feel their mental health and/or wellbeing are supported in the Department, and the proportions are worse for men than women (Fig 3.5). The University has a network of Wellbeing Champions across campus that are active in promoting messages, activities and events relevant to mental health and wellbeing. Champions can signpost to support mechanisms within the University and can promote and influence healthy policies and culture. We do not have one in DLS. A few activities that encourage staff to 'take a break' at lunchtimes or for coffee breaks have stalled. Anecdotally, people have welcomed these activities – particularly walking or gardening clubs that enable people to connect with the natural environment during their working day and ensuing wellbeing benefits.	ii) Promote the activities of staff networks which are available to all staff to provide a range of activities and support including the Staff Men's network, Carers' Support network, Neurodiversity Network, Mosaic (for ethnic minorities), aFLAME Disability Network (staff & PGR) and Kaleidoscope (LGBTQ+ staff & PGR).	Oct 2026 to Oct 2028	Wellbeing Champion	Activities of staff networks are actively promoted to all staff and PGRs.
		iii) Refresh the 'coffee buddy' programme begun in 2025. People from the founder Departments in DLS are invited to join the scheme and are paired with somebody from the other founder Department. This scheme encourages work breaks away from the desk, an opportunity for informal chats and community building.	Oct 2026 to Oct 2028	Wellbeing Champion	'Coffee buddy' programme refreshed. At least 40 active pairs in place.
		iv) Refresh informal DLS groups for lunchtime walking, gardening, sustainability clubs and encourage people to 'take a break' to join these activities.	Oct 2026 to Oct 2028	Wellbeing Champion	Feedback collected shows that at least half DLS staff are involved in at least one informal group.

		v) Explore the long-term effect of the steps taken to mental health and wellbeing within DLS using culture surveys.	Jan 2027 to Apr 2029	DLSEDIC Lead	CS2027 and CS2029 show 70% of staff/PGR agree “My mental health and/or wellbeing are supported in my Department” irrespective of gender.
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KP 2 – Eliminate gendered inequalities in workload for academic staff

Objective	Rationale	Action	Timeframe	Responsibility	Success criteria
2.1 DLS Workload Working Group to review and standardize workload tariffs across the department.	Different workload tariffs existed in the DLS founder Departments (B&B, P&P). CS2025 comments show that this lack of alignment has led to perceived inequities and misunderstandings in how work is valued and hours allocated. We need to publish a unified tariff system, to ensure transparency, consistency, and fairness across all roles. Comments in CS2025 indicate that “good citizenship tasks” that make a significant contribution to the operation of the Department are not captured by WAMS and are perceived to fall disproportionately on women. We need to improve transparency and fairness in how these tasks are shared.	i) Workload Working Group to review workload tariffs, in consultation with staff, and publish standardized tariffs for activities across the Department. Workload working group chair to report to DLSEC.	Jan 2026 to Jun 2026	Workload Working Group lead / DOM	Tariffs reviewed and workload working group chair reported to DLSEC on conclusions.
		ii) Revised tariffs discussed and approved by DLSEC and implemented in time for new academic year.	Jun 2026 to Oct 2026		Revised tariffs approved and in place.
		iii) Annual review of tariffs in place each Summer.	Jun 2027 to Jul 2029		Annual review of tariffs in place.
		iv) Create a Departmental “good citizenship tasks” database and tariffs, shared with all staff, to track number of hours spent. Use the database to identify the total number of hours spent on “good citizenship tasks” (e.g. open days, outreach events,	Oct 2026 to Apr 2027		Good citizenship tasks database set up and in use.

		interview panels) to identify an expectation for all staff in DLS to complete each year.			
		v) Assess the distribution of workloads to assess whether there are any significant differences between the workloads of members of staff and ensure that adjustments are made to ensure workloads are fair.	Oct 2027 to Oct 2029		WAMS allocations show no difference in workload by gender in 2028/29 and in 2029/30.
2.2 Improve the review and allocation of workload	Only 27% CS2025 respondents agreed with the statement “workloads are allocated fairly”, more women (38%F) than men (18%M) agreed. Improving since CS2023, 43% of staff feel their current workload is manageable, more women than men. Analysis of average workloads shows that women are more overloaded than men (Table 3.5). Mechanisms for workload adjustment are not clear. CS2025 comments show that SDPR/annual appraisal is not an effective mechanism to redress any imbalances in workload. Need to increase transparency and enable conversations about workload with line managers.	i) Graphical summaries of workload across the Department to be published on DLS Hub annually.	Jun 2026 to Jun 2028	Workload Working Group lead / DOM	Summaries of workload published annually.
		ii) HoD/DivHeads/ line managers to establish mechanisms for adjusting workload considering Departmental averages.	Jun 2026 to Jun 2028	HoD	Mechanism in place for adjusting individual workloads based on departmental averages.
		iii) Establish annual 1:1 meetings with appropriate line manager to review workload specifically and adjust as needed, considering personal circumstances (such as caring responsibilities).	Jun 2027 to Jun 2029	DivHeads/Line managers	Annual 1:1 meetings in place to review workloads and adjust as needed.
		iv) Consider mechanisms for how to move to a prospective workload allocation model, rather than the current retrospective reporting to help more timely management of	Jan 2028 to Jan 2029	Workload Working Group lead	Prospective workload allocation model explorer and put in place.

	Current system is not sufficiently responsive as workloads are published for past year and not forward looking to assist in planning.	workload and planning across the Department at the start of the academic year.			
2.3 Assess staff opinions of the fairness and transparency of workload distributions in DLS.	In the context of the changes made in Actions 2.1 and 2.2, it is necessary to assess the long-term impact and assess whether staff feel that workload allocations are fair and transparent.	Assess the staff opinions of the fairness of workload distributions in DLS.	Jan 2027 to Apr 2029	DLSEDIC Lead	CS2029 shows 70% of staff agree “Workloads in my Department are allocated fairly” irrespective of gender. CS2029 shows 70% of staff agree “My current workload is manageable” irrespective of gender.

KP3 – Improve the experience of PGR

Objective	Rationale	Action	Timeframe	Responsibility	Success criteria
3.1 Improve pastoral and structural support for PGR	Culture survey indicated that only 39% of women PGR (vs 70% men PGR) feel comfortable speaking up and expressing their opinions.	i) Provide bespoke training for female PGRs to enhance confidence in communication, influencing and negotiating skills.	Oct 2026 to Dec 2026	PGR DoS	Training sessions held; all female PGRs invited. Feedback shows that at least 75% of attendees found the training was useful.
	Provision of a separate advisor ('pastoral supervisor') to support non-academic development including wellbeing. Pastoral supervisor to bring groups of PGRs together across year groups to support	ii) Appointment of pastoral supervisors to all PGR. All pastoral supervisors to be trained so that they are clear of their roles.	Apr 2026 to Dec 2026	PGR DoS	Pastoral supervisors appointed and trained. All PGR students allocated a pastoral supervisor

	integration and peer-to-peer networking of PGR.	iii) Establish meetings between PGR and pastoral supervisor (4 times/ year).	Jun 2026 to Jan 2027.	PGR DoS	All PGRs meeting their pastoral supervisor at least 4 time a year.
		iv) Focus group to explore with PGR integration into Departmental life in terms of research-culture and social activities (e.g. LifeSciSoc). Findings used to make any appropriate changes	Jun 2026 to Sep 2026	DLSEDIC Lead	Focus group held with at least 10 PGR representative of gender balance in DLS. Report produced and actions proposed to address any issues identified.
		v) Effects of changes to pastoral and structural support for PGR measured using the cultural survey.	Jan 2027 to Apr 2029	DLSEDIC Lead	CS2029 shows 80% of PGR “feel comfortable speaking up and expressing my opinion” irrespective of gender. CS2029 shows 80% of PGRs agree that “I feel like I belong in my Department” irrespective of gender
3.2 Improve induction processes for PGR	PRES shows decreased satisfaction with the experience of the research degree programme, with induction processes and with a sense of community or belonging in 2025 versus 2023 (Table 3.6). KP 1 aims to address issues of community and belonging for PGRs alongside staff.	i) Review PGR induction, in consultation with PGRs and supervisors. Co-create a “PGR Welcome Pack” to make explicit responsibilities of PGRs and expectations of the supervisory relationship by welcome week 2026/27.	Jun 2026 to Oct 2026	PGR DoS	PGR induction reviewed and a new welcome pack created.
	PGR focus group revealed heterogeneity and misconceptions in	ii) Highlight new “PGR Welcome Pack” at all staff	Oct 2026 to Apr 2027	PGR DoS	Welcome Pack highlighted at all staff Department meetings

expectations of their PhD programme of study, as well as experiences with supervision. Clarification of expectations about supervisory relationships at the outset of the PhD process, and responsibilities for PGRs, to improve relationships and empower students to know when they need to seek support and where to find support. We will look to improve induction processes.	Department meetings & upload to DLS Hub.			and uploaded to DLS Hub.
	iii) Evaluate effectiveness of PGR induction into Department (Oct 2026) and follow up pulse survey 6 months later (April 2027). Annually thereafter.	Oct 2026 to Apr 2028.	PGR DoS	Effectiveness of PGR induction evaluated annually using pulse surveys.
	iv) An “Agreement of Expectations” statement to be completed between PGR and supervisors at the outset of the PhD and reviewed annually (frequency of supervisory meetings, attendance requirements, time commitment, training needs etc.).	Jan 2027 to Jun 2029	PGR DoS	“Agreement of Expectations” system in place. Statement agreed at beginning of PhD and reviewed annually.
	v) Instigate a PGR peer-mentor system so that new PGR are supported in the transition to PGR study and integrated into the Department. Develop guidance for mentors and mentees so that both parties are clear about expectations.	Oct 2027 to Jun 2029	PGR DoS	Peer-mentor system and guidance developed. All new PGR are offered a peer mentor.
	vi) Raise awareness of opportunities for PGR to present their research in the Department and to organize annual Research Day.	Oct 2026 to Jun 2029	PGR DoS	Opportunities for PGRs to present their research well publicised including at departmental Annual Research Day.

		vii) Supervisors/DivHeads to ensure PGRs are included in new Divisional structure e.g. Divisional research activities and events.	Oct 2026 to Oct 2028	DivHeads	Checks show that PGRs are routinely included in Divisional activities.
		viii) PGRs views of the induction processes and support in place assessed using the PRES survey (biennial 2027 and 2029).	Jan 2027 to Dec 2029	PGR DoS	PRES survey 2029 shows 80% of PGRs agree “I received an appropriate induction to my research degree programme” PRES survey 2029 shows 90% of PGRs agree “I am aware of my supervisors’ responsibilities towards me as a research degree student”

3.3 Improve support for PGR supervision	PGR focus group revealed some dissatisfaction with supervisory relationships and feeling unable to raise issues with their supervisors. Doctoral supervision training for PGR supervisors will be refreshed. This training is distinct from the pastoral training for doctoral supervision. This training is intended to provide a space where supervisors can identify ways that they can better support PGRs, understand their responsibilities in nurturing PGRs, supporting PGR development and clear expectations about the supervisory-PGR relationship.	(i) All staff currently supervising or expecting to supervise PGR to attend mandatory doctoral supervision training to support PGR experience. Training runs multiple times each year to include new staff. Staff will be required to refresh training every four years.	Apr 2026-Sept 2027	PGR DoS	All PGR supervisors taking on new PGR students will have completed doctoral supervision training by end of 2026/27. Refresher sessions in place every four years for staff who are supervising PGR.
3.4 Improve support for PGRs returning from parental leave	Building on work under AP2022, we want to ensure equitable support for PGR returning from parental leave and those with caring responsibilities. To gain greater insight into the challenges facing PGR with parental responsibilities, the PGR-PLO completed a successful GW4 Connect grant application in collaboration with three University of Bristol PGRs. The grant was used to collect data on the perspectives of PGR parents from the Universities of Bath, Bristol, Cardiff and Exeter and,	i) Develop a Faculty-level Postgraduate Parental Leave Officer (PGR-PLO) role , working with the Doctoral College, to coordinate support for PGR parents/carers, provide consistent guidance on leave and return-to-study processes, and embed recommendations emerging from the GW4 project.	Jun 2026 to Dec 2026	Faculty ADCCI	PGR-PLO role developed.
		ii) Pilot the implementation of the Faculty-level PGR-PLO role	Jan 2027 to Dec 2027		Individual appointed to PGR-PLO role

	through consultation with each institution's Doctoral Colleges, analysed to develop a report containing a list of recommendations to enhance support for this student group. Findings have been shared within institutions, with funding bodies, and taken to a GW4 event held at the Houses of Parliament to campaign for change. Actions will be developed based on learning from the SPLO/PGR-PLO roles and outcomes from the GW4 PGR parental leave project.	iii) Review the Faculty-level PGR-PLO role and make any changes necessary to role descriptor	Jan 2028 to Dec 2028		Operation of PGR-PLO role reviewed, and appropriate changes made to the role descriptor.
		iv) Work with the Doctoral College to standardise guidance on leave, funding extensions and return-to-study support for PGR parental leave across departments and enable supportive conversations with PGR-PLO.	Jan 2027 to Dec 2027	PGR-PLO	Guidance on leave for PGRs standardised across Faculty.
		v) Assess the effects of improved support for PGRs returning from parental leave.	Jun 2028 first focus group		Focus groups held every two years with PGR who have experience of parental leave to collect feedback and identify any issues that need addressing.

KP 4 Reduce the gender gap in UG and PGT awards

Objective	Rationale	Action	Timeframe	Responsibility	Success criteria
4.1 Investigate and address causes of the gendered awarding gap in UG and PGT programmes	45% of women and 26% of men achieve first class degrees, evident across UG programmes (TableA2.8). The proportion of women PGT achieving 'distinction' is twice that of	i) Run focus groups with male UGs/PGTs, representative of ethnic minority groups, to explore barriers to engagement and attainment.	Oct 2026 to Feb 2027	DoP/ DoT	Focus groups run involving at least 20 different students.

	men in 2024/25, not the case in 2020/21, across all programmes. Programme specific differences in gendered outcomes for PGT.	ii) Discuss outcomes of focus at DLSEDIC, Teaching Committee and, if appropriate, SSLC, and recommendations for actions put forward.	Feb 2027 to Jun 2027		Outcomes from focus groups discussed and recommendations put forward.
		iii) Collect and analyse unit outcomes by gender for different assessment types in all units for UG and PGT programmes.	Oct 2026 to Jun 2027		Data collected and report presenting data produced.
		iv) Develop actions based on (i- iii) to address any issues identified and begin implementation	Jul 2027 to Jul 2028		Actions to address issues developed and implemented for academic year 2027/28.
		v) Review the unit data and assessment outcomes to assess whether actions have had an effect. Refine existing and develop new actions as appropriate	Jan 2028 to Jul 2029		Data reviewed and actions refined/new actions developed and implemented for academic year 2028/29.
		vi) Review and assess the classification gap to assess whether changes have affected the awarding gaps.	Jan 2028 to Jul 2030		The classification gap should be reduced to <10% difference between genders for UG and PGT in 2030.
4.2 Investigate intersectional inequalities for ethnicity X gender in	We do not have completion data for all programmes by ethnicity and by gender to explore intersectional inequalities in student awards.	i) Liaise with the University to obtain data by ethnicity for all our UG and PGT programmes.	Oct 2026 to Jun 2027	DLSEDIC Lead	Degree classification data broken down by ethnic groups obtained from university.

student awards for UG and PGT programmes.		ii) Investigate data and develop and implement data-driven actions to address any intersectional inequalities identified.	Jul 2027 to Jul 2029	DoP/ DoT	Data examined and actions in place to address any identified intersectional inequalities in student awards for UG/PGT for academic year 2027/28.
		iii) Establish an annual review of data followed by refinement of actions.	Jul 2028 to Jul 2030	DoP/ DoT	Data by ethnicity reviewed annually. Existing actions refined and new actions developed as part of each review.

KP 5- Support for career progression for all staff

Objective	Rationale	Action	Timeframe	Responsibility	Success criteria
5.1 Embed support for women academic staff to apply for promotion	While there aren't currently any gendered issues in career progression, research shows that bad practice adversely affects women more than men, while good practice benefits everybody.	i) Hold workshops for academic staff to highlight changes to the academic career progression framework ahead of first academic promotion round where new criteria will operate, Autumn 2026, and repeat in Spring 2027.	Act 2026 to Apr 2027	DLSEDIC Lead	80% of eligible staff attend workshops and at least 80% agree with pulse survey "I understand the new academic career progression framework" irrespective of gender

	Data show that the number of women applying for promotion in DLS has increased. The positive supportive approach to promotion needs to be embedded in new ways of working for the Department Promotion Panel, new Division structures and with new criteria for academic career progression being introduced in 2026/27 across the University.	ii) Ahead of SDPR round in Summer 2026, hold workshops for line managers, Department Promotion Panel (DPP) and SDPR reviewers to understand the interpretation and operation of the new academic career progression framework. Repeat workshops in Spring 2027	Apr 2026 to Apr 2027		100% of line-managers/SDPR reviewers/DPP members attend workshops and at least 80% agree with pulse survey “I understand how to support staff in their career ambitions within the new academic career progression framework” irrespective of gender
5.2 Strengthen guidance to support academic staff, including PDRAs/RAs, to resume their careers during return-to-work from parental or other types of extended leave.	Survey of staff returning from parental leave indicated an “expectation to be fully up to speed on day one”. Individuals returning from sick leave, fed back difficulties in returning to research due to poor communication while on leave. The appointment of the SPLO has supported staff, particularly researchers, in preparing for maternity leave. SPLO works with staff and line managers to identify support needs, discuss cover for research supervision, funding, KIT days and how to use these, and wellbeing. The SPLO conducts structured check-ins at return and at 3 months	i) Co-create with staff who have returned from leave, with HR, and with HoD/DivHeads/Line managers guidance for line managers to support academic staff before, during and after parental leave/extended leave and in particular focusing on the return to work. Also consider how to resource support such as protected research time. ii) Share newly developed guidance with staff at all-staff meetings. Develop and deliver briefing for line manager on the guidance and embedded in annual	Jun 2026 to Dec 2026 Jan 2027 to Jan 2029	SPLO SPLO	Revised guidance developed to support academic staff before, during and after parental leave/extended leave. Where required, resource identified from DLS budget to support returners. Guidance shared at all-staff meetings. Line manager briefing delivered. Leadership induction includes details of guidance.

	to provide support and follow-up where issues arise. However, workload adjustments (e.g. protected research time, reduced teaching) remain inconsistent and dependent on line manager discretion. There is no formal mechanism to systematically feed insights from returners into departmental practice.	leadership induction thereafter.			At least 80% of line managers report (pulse survey) they are confident in supporting academic staff during return-to-work from parental or other types of extended leave
	There is a University 'returning parents support fund' available for staff, although there is limited knowledge and experience of how these funds can be used	iii) Raise awareness of the Parents' Network at Bath as a resource for sharing and learning from each other's experience and informal networking with all staff who are parents. Via EDIN, EDIC and USAT, this network provides a forum for advocacy e.g. for access to childcare.	Oct 2026 to Oct 2027	SPLO	Steps taken to raise awareness of Parents' Network with all parents through staff meeting and through line managers.
	Survey data and qualitative comments also highlight the need for clearer more consistent guidance and support mechanisms around the return-to-work experience. This applies not just to parental leave, but other types of extended leave.	iv) Depending on numbers, run focus groups or face-to-face interviews each year with returners to collect feedback. Use the feedback to refine support and to assess satisfaction with support in place.	Oct 2027 to Oct 2029	SPLO	At least 80% of returners from extended leave report satisfaction with their return-to-work experiences. Feedback used to further refine support in place.
5.3 Identify actions to support career progression for PDRA/research-only staff	Due to the temporary role of some PDRA/research-only staff and high turnover for some, up-to-date staff lists and email lists are difficult to maintain. Communication is uneven	i) Undertake focus group with PDRAs/research-only staff to identify what opportunities are taken up, barriers to integration in DLS and what	Jun 2026 to Sep 2026	Department Research Staff Lead	Focus groups run with at least 15 researchers, with at least 5 men. Report written up highlighting issues for

	across DLS. Only 10 PDRA/research-only staff participated in CS2025.	support is needed for career progression.			actions and any solutions proposed by participants.
	PDRAs/research-only staff do not take up the opportunity of SDPR. PDRAs/research-only staff do not take up the opportunity for mentoring. This may be because SDPR/mentoring are perceived to be of limited value or this staff group is not aware that they have these opportunities	ii) Develop targeted actions to support PDRAs/research-only staff career progression and skills development. (E.g. networking sessions, leadership development, grant writing, innovation and impact)	Oct 2026 to Dec 2026		Actions developed and participation/ uptake monitored
		iii) Implement actions and monitor uptake where relevant. As appropriate revise and refine actions annually based on data collected.	Jan 2026 to Jan 2028		Actions implemented. Uptake of opportunities monitored. Actions reviewed and revised annually.
		iv) Use the culture survey to assess research staff views of support.	Jan 2027 to Dec 2029		CS2029 at least 80% of research-only staff agree 'My contribution is valued in my Department' irrespective of gender (vs CS2025 60%). CS2029 at least 80% of research-only staff agree 'My line manager supports my career development'

					irrespective of gender (vs CS2025 50%).
5.4 Promote and provide opportunities for technical services staff to enhance skills and experience	Technical services staff are line managed at a Faculty level. There are 26 staff (58%F) who work 100% in DLS and a further 15 staff (33%F) that are 'mixed-function' working 40% in DLS. Faculty line management provides an opportunity to support skills development working at a cross-Departmental level. For example, shadowing/internships, funding for CPD, regrading and potential for career progression.	(i) Promote awareness of Faculty funding for CPD training for technical staff (30% of staff across the Faculty have taken up this opportunity in the last 2 years).	Oct 2026 to Oct 2027	Faculty of Science Director of Technical Services	Awareness of funding for CPD training for technical staff promoted via staff meetings and through line managers.
		(ii) Skills audit to be carried out to map existing in-house practical skills and promote awareness of shadowing opportunities for staff to gain skills/ career development	Jan 2027 to Jan 2029		Skills audit complete. Data used to identify opportunities for shadowing; opportunities highlighted during SDPR discussions.
		(iii) Promote awareness of the process for going through HERA regrading within the Faculty	Oct 2026 to Oct 2027		Line managers ensure staff understand the HERA regrading process through SPDR discussions
		(iv) Technical staff opinions about support available to them assessed using the culture survey.	Jan 2027 to Dec 2020		CS2029 at least 80% of technical services staff agree 'My contribution is valued in my Department' irrespective of gender (vs CS2025 65% of PTO staff agree).

					CS2029 at least 80% technical services staff agree 'My line manager supports my career development' irrespective of gender (vs CS2025 65% of PTO staff agree).
5.5 Proactive action to increase strong women candidates in the pool of applicants for 'research and teaching' academic posts.	The overall proportion of academic staff who are women in DLS has increased from 46% in 2020/21 to 50% in 2024/25 (Section 2.2). The academic staff profile shows that for 'research and teaching' roles the proportion of women has increased to 34% in 2024/25 from 31% in 2020/21. For 'research and teaching' roles strong women candidates do apply but are only 36% of applicants. When women do apply they are more likely to be shortlisted and appointed across all grades. Advertisements already include statements positively encouraging women to apply and highlight silver Athena Swan award. We need to continue to take actions on recruitment. Specifically, to encourage strong women candidates to apply for 'research and teaching' jobs when they are available.	(i) Encourage all academic staff to engage in proactive identification of promising women researchers or academics, invite them to give Department seminars and maintain contact.	Oct 2026 to Oct 2029	HoD	Database of promising women researchers and academics created to be used for recruitment when posts available.
		(ii) Encourage all academic staff to support PDRAs to apply for fellowships in the Department.	Oct 2026 to Oct 2029		Support at least one PDRA annually to apply for an externally funded fellowship.
		(iii) When 'research and teaching' roles are advertised, encourage colleagues to identify strong women candidates and contact them to encourage them to apply.	Oct 2026 to Oct 2029		Review of applicant data in 2029 shows that women are 50% of applicants for 'research and teaching' academic posts.

5.6 Strengthen SDPR process to ensure it is effective for supporting career development	In CS2025, only 72% of all staff (66% of female, 78% of male respondents) had completed SDPR in the last 12 months. 50% or less of staff rated the usefulness of SDPR as 4 or 5 (on a scale of 1 (poor) to 5, (great)) Qualitative comments indicate that some staff had not been offered an SDPR, weren't sure about the procedure or did not have time. For research-only staff, comments indicated that this staff group were not aware that they could have SDPR in their position, it had not been suggested by their line manager or that the questions in the paperwork were not applicable. Feedback from staff also suggests that SDPR-identified support needs rarely result in visible action 'nothing ever changes'.	i) DLS will put in place a process to monitor the uptake and completion of SDPRs and remind both line managers and their reports about SDPRs, especially PIs and research-only staff.	Oct 2026 to Oct 2028	HoD	Dynamic monitoring process in place. At least 80% of all staff, irrespective of gender, have completed SDPR annually.
		ii) DLS to review and revise the SDPR form, making local changes to the university form so that the DLS process better suits DLS staff. Changes to be consider include: - Interim reviews to monitor progress and to ensure identified support has been implemented. - Ensure that all staff eligible for promotion have an SDPR during which progress against promotion criteria is considered, gaps identified, and steps discussed to address those gaps.	Oct 2026 to Apr 2027	HoD	SDPR process reviewed, and local changes made to the process/form. Changes implemented and all staff briefed about the changes.
		iii) DivHeads/ line managers to review SDPR forms and action "support needed" requests within 3 months of completion of annual SDPR cycle, or feedback to staff	Apr 2027 to June 2029	DivHeads	Process of reviewing SDPR forms and actioning support within 3 months in place.

		members reasons why request cannot be fulfilled and/or propose an alternative.			
		iv) Train SDPR reviewers – explicitly including those PIs who manage PDRAs/research staff.	Jan 2027 to June 2029	DOM	All SDPR reviewers undergo bespoke DLS training at least once every three years.
		v) Culture surveys used to assess staff attitudes towards the SDPR process and to assess whether changes have improved views.	Jan 2027 to June 2029	DLSEDIC Lead	At least 80% of staff, including at least 80% of research staff, in CS2027 and CS2029 respond positively to the question, “How useful did you find your SDPR or career conversation?” and agree with the statement, “My line manager supports my career development.”

KP 6 – Identify and correct gaps in equity and diversity

Objective	Rationale	Action	Timeframe	Responsibility	Success criteria
6.1 Investigate intersectional aspects relating to staff and student ethnicity	The department does not routinely receive data broken down by gender and ethnicity. DLSEDIC Lead will continue to work with the University to improve its data packages. This will allow more complete analysis of our EDI issues to occur regularly, leading to	i) Introduce an annual review of intersectional data relating to gender and ethnicity. Use the data to identify any specific issues for action, identity action to address those issues, and implement those actions.	Apr 2027 to Jun 2029	DLSEDIC Lead	Intersectional data reviewed annually, issues identified, and actions implement to address those issues.

	improved understanding of issues and the design of evidence-based updated actions. Some data sets became available in 2025/26 for the first time.				
	We have not collected data on ethnicity in our culture surveys, which prevented more detailed intersectional analysis. It is important to collect this data to be able to identify intersectional effects on e.g, wellbeing and sense of belonging among staff and PGR.	ii) Future culture surveys to collect data on ethnicity to better understand potential intersectional effects	Jan 2027 to Jun 2029	DLSEDIC Lead	Data on ethnicity collected in CS2027 and CS2029. Where numbers allow, analyses to be presented broken down by ethnic groups as well as gender.
6.2 Embed biennial review and monitoring of action plan (2026AP) and revise actions to address any issues highlighted.	We plan to identify good practice in DLS that can be shared across the Faculty of Science, and more widely across the University. Through the Faculty EDIC and University AS Network we will also collect examples of good practice that we can implement in DLS. The good practice may provide a solution to an already identified issue or may just provide a route to more equitable and inclusive practice in areas where specific issues have not been identified.	i) Conduct a biennial review of the 2026AP to assess progress, in line with timing of culture surveys, and identify good practice in DLS that can be shared.	Jan 2027 to Jan 2029	DLSEDIC Lead	Report produced following biennial review that highlights examples of good practice that is shared through Faculty EDIC and University AS Network.
		ii) At biennial review, revise 2026AP to address any issues raised by data/culture surveys and incorporate good practice from elsewhere	Jan 2027 to Jan 2029		Good practice used to inform future development of the action plan. Actions revised and implemented to address issues identified.

Appendix 1: Consultation data

Please present the results of any relevant consultation exercises used to inform the submission, including, if applicable, any data relating to the evaluation of culture (eg results of the culture survey questions or other consultation findings related to the culture survey themes).

CULTURE SURVEY DATA REMOVED

Appendix 2: Data tables

Please present the mandatory data tables, and if desired, any additional datasets.

Department data requirements

- 1 Students at foundation, UG, PGT and PGR level
- 2 Degree attainment and/or completion rates for students at foundation, UG, PGT and PGR level
- 3 Academic staff by grade and contract function
- 4 Academic staff by grade and contract type
- 5 Professional, technical and operational (PTO) staff by job family
- 6 PTO staff by contract type
- 7 Applications, shortlist and appointments made in recruitment to academic posts
- 8 Applications, shortlist and appointments made in recruitment to PTO posts
- 9 Applications and success rates for academic promotion
- 10 Applications and success rates for PTO progression

MANDATORY DATA REMOVED

Appendix 3: Glossary

Please provide a glossary of abbreviations and acronyms used in the application.

2022AP – 2022 Silver Action Plan (old)

2026AP – 2026 Silver Action Plan (new)

AP - Action plan ID for action

AS – Athena Swan

B&B - Department of Biology and Biochemistry, founder for Department of Life Sciences

CPD – continuing professional development

COG – Core Operational Group

CS2023 – Culture Survey for DLS run in 2023

CS2025 – Culture Survey for DLS run in 2025

DivHead - Head of Division

DLS - Department of Life Sciences

DLSEC – Department of Life Sciences Executive Committee

DLSEDIC - Department of Life Sciences Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee

DOM – Department Operations Manager

DoP – Director of Pharmacy

DoS – Director of Studies

DoT – Director of Teaching

DRSL: Departmental Research Staff Lead

DSAT – Department Self-Assessment Team

EDI – Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

EDIN – University Equality Diversity & Inclusion Network

F - Female

FHEA – Fellowship of Higher Education Academy

GPhC – General Pharmaceutical Council, independent regulator for pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and pharmacy premises in Great Britain

HoD - Head of Department

KP – Key Priority in 2026AP

LifeSciSoc – Life Sciences Society, Department of Life Sciences PGR Society

M - Male

#NeverOK - Anti-harassment initiative run jointly by the University and Students' Union

NSS - National Student Survey

P&P – Department of Pharmacy and Pharmacology, founder for Department of Life Sciences

PDRA - Postdoctoral Research Associate

PGR – postgraduate research (students)

PGRDoS – postgraduate research student Director of Studies

PGT - Postgraduate taught (students)

PRES- Postgraduate research experience survey

PTO - professional, technical and operational staff

RAG – red-amber-green rating of 2022AP

REF - Research Excellence Framework

SAT – Self-assessment team

SDPR - Staff Development and Performance Review (annual appraisal process)

SoP – School of Pharmacy

SPLO – Staff Parental Leave Officer

SSLC – Staff Student Liaison Committee

UEB – University Executive Board

UEDIC – University Equity Diversity & Inclusion Committee

USAT - University Self-Assessment Team

UG - Undergraduate (students)

WAMS - Workload Allocation Management System (for academic staff only)