# OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY

## Athena Swan Gender Equality Action Plan 2022 –2027

### Revised and agreed 6 June 2023 (ASSG)[[1]](#footnote-1)

**The Athena Swan Gender Equality Action Plan builds on the initial Gender Equality Plan developed under the GEARING-Roles EU Horizon 2020 Project. This now forms the institutional Gender Equality Plan (GEP) to address all the** [**European Commission mandatory requirements and recommended thematic content**](https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/strategy/strategy-2020-2024/democracy-and-rights/gender-equality-research-and-innovation_en#:~:text=Gender%20equality%20in%20the%20European%20Research%20Area%20(ERA),-Gender%20equality%20and&text=The%20Commission%2C%20through%20FP7%20and,of%20over%20%E2%82%AC72%20million.)**, along with the requirements of the** [**Athena Swan Charter**](https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan-charter)**.**

**The GEP contributes to the University EDI Strategy and is overseen by the University Athena Swan Steering Group reporting to the Vice-Chancellor’s Group via the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Group.**

### Dimensions:

Dimension 1: Inclusive leadership and governance

Dimension 2: Inclusive recruitment, reward and career progression

Dimension 3: Inclusive culture and working environment

Dimension 4: Inclusive innovation, entrepreneurship, teaching and research

### Priorities underpinning the Athena Swan Gender Equality Action Plan

1. Develop an integrated and holistic approach to EDI, to support implementation and evaluation of AS action plans with focus on intersectional impact (Action Plan Dimension 1).
2. Develop capacity to deliver evidence and research-led gender equality initiatives and to improve sharing and embedding of good practice across faculties (Action Plan Dimension 1).
3. a) Further develop diverse academic career pathways for parity across research, teaching, practitioner and knowledge exchange tracks; with focus on developing indicators and support for key transition points.

b) Improve career progression and development pathways for Professional Services and Technical support roles (Action Plan Dimension 2).

1. Promoting and evaluating gender equality in the implementation of hybrid and agile working to enhance flexibility and work-life balance (Action Plan Dimension 3).
2. Development of gender inclusive approaches to increasing innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurship and integration of the gender dimension into research, teaching and curriculum (Action Plan Dimension 4)

### KEY to Action Plan

Shaded boxes relate to the timescales for specific actions - where more than one measurable action relates, they are identified by (1), (2) etc. Annual measurable outcomes are denoted by (\*)

| Dimension 1: Inclusive leadership and governance | | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Objective with rationale** | **Responsibility** | **2022 - 2027** | | | | | **Action** | **Outcome measure/target** | **RAG Rating**  **Nov 2022** |
| **Yr1** | **Yr2** | **Yr3** | **Yr4** | **Yr5** |
| **1.1** **Provide effective and strong leadership for gender equality** at an institutional level so as to effectively deliver change including role modelling inclusive behaviours | ASSG Chair | 1 |  |  |  |  | (A) Review TOR and membership of AS Steering Group (SG) to improve focus and strengthen strategic leadership | ASSG revised TOR agreed and SG members understand their role in driving agenda (1) |  |
| ASSG Chair/EDI Advisor | 1 |  | 2 |  | 2 | (B) Improve frequency and connectedness of communication about gender inclusion and AS activities across the University including improved web pages with video and impact case stories using a consistent approach to gender neutral and inclusive language. | Communication plan in place and operating effectively (1); AS Culture Surveys/Staff Survey report increased awareness and positive impact of AS/gender work amongst all staff (2) |  |
| EDI Director | **\*** | \* | **\*** | **\*** | \* | (C) Annual monitoring and evaluation of institutional governance/committees for gender inclusion taking action to redress as necessary | Gender inclusion of governance/committees reflects that of the institutional staff base as monitored annually (\*) |  |
| EDI Director |  | 1 |  |  |  | (D) Work with new EDI resources to strengthen collaborative and connected working across EDI agenda, particularly to tackle intersectional issues effectively. | Clarity across EDI agenda of different roles and responsibilities particularly in relation to intersectional issues (1) |  |
| ASSG Chair/EDI Director |  |  | 1 | 1 |  | (E) Carry out a gap analysis and develop a plan to apply for an AS Silver Award at institutional level. | Successful application for institutional Silver award in 24/25 or 25/26 (1) |  |
| ASSG Chair/EDI Director | 1  2 | 3 | 4  5 |  |  | (F) Support Faculties/Directorates to achieve: TDE Bronze renewal (1); OBBS Bronze (2); HLS Silver renewal (3); HSS Silver (4); IT Services Bronze Award (5) | Successful faculty and directorate renewals/applications |  |
| **1.2 Maintain a clear and up-to-date understanding of current position** with regard to gender equality to inform development of actions, and monitor the impact of interventions | EDI Director and Data Analyst |  | 1 | **\*** | **\*** | \* | (A) Improve systematic data collection and analysis of datasets which align with national datasets and include intersectional analysis to become integrated in core business processes | Agreed dataset in place by 23/24 (1) which is reviewed annually (\*) by ASSG to inform ongoing or new actions |  |
| EDI Director |  | 1 |  |  |  | (B) Support and monitor the meaningful use of EIAs in AS change/development initiatives such as policy development and wellbeing across the university | EIAs being used to assess impact of all significant, institutional gender change/development initiatives from 23/24 (1) |  |
| Director CDPRP |  |  | 1 | **\*** | \* | (C) Build Gender Mainstreaming Tool from EU H2020 CASPER research project into AS self-assessment and measurement of progress at institutional and faculty levels | Gender mainstreaming Tool is employed in self-assessment activities at institutional and faculty level (1) including annual monitoring and evaluation of progress (\*) as reported by institutional and faculty AS members |  |
| Staff EDI Advisor | 1 |  | 2 |  |  | (D) Develop peer support/capacity building for faculty/directorate AS Leads to strengthen mechanisms for disseminating - learning from selected pilots to determine if this approach should be built into all future pilots | Selected faculty pilots include plans for mainstreaming across university (1); AS Culture Surveys report successful mainstreaming of initiatives (2) |  |
| Faculty AS Leads and EDI Data Analyst |  | 1 |  |  |  | (E) Develop a consistent and coordinated approach to delivery, analysis and communications relating to Faculty-level AS Culture Surveys | All faculties have agreed to a consistent approach to design, analysis and communication of AS Culture Surveys (1) |  |
| **1.3 Build capability to address gender inequality** across the university so all staff are able to identify and address gender inequality issues | EDI Research Network Chair & Staff EDI Advisor |  | 1 | \* | \* | \* | (A) Extend membership of EDI Research Network across academic and P&S staff and use network to share learning (internal and external) and build capability | Increase P&S staff and early career researcher membership of EDI network (1) and Increase in reported awareness of innovation and good practice in gender inclusive behaviours and practice across all staff measured by AS Culture Surveys (\*) |  |
| EDI Director/staff EDI advisor | 1 | \* | \* | \* | \* | (B) Improve information and communication of AS activities and impact on improved webpages using video and case studies for greater impact | Improved visibility of AS activities and impact on web pages (1); greater awareness of AS impact through AS culture surveys and all-staff surveys (\*) |  |

| Dimension 2: Inclusive recruitment, reward and career progression | | | | | | | | |  |
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| **Objectives and rationale** | **Responsibility** | **2022 - 2027** | | | | | **Actions** | **Outcome measure/target** | **RAG rating Nov 2022** |
| **Yr1** | **Yr2** | **Yr3** | **Yr4** | **Yr5** |
| **2.1 Address under-representation of BAME/part-time women and reduction in the gender pay gap** through inclusive recruitment and better support for progression in the early stages of career pathways including women in professional services and technical roles | Chair Promotions Panel; Chair ASSG | 1 | \* | \* | 2 | \* | (A) Develop improved interventions and support to redress the inequality in promotion of BAME women in conjunction with the Race Equality Action Plan. | Interventions and support programme in place (1); improved career progression of BAME women at all career stages with concomitant reduction in gap with white women (2) as evaluated by promotion statistics (\*) |  |
| Chair Promotions Panel; Chair ASSG |  | 1 | \* | \* | \* | (B) Develop improved interventions and support to redress the inequality in promotion of part-time versus full time academics in the early stages of the career pathway (L to SL, SL to Reader/PL) and increase visibility of part-time senior staff as role models | Improved career progression for part-time academic staff in the earlier stages of the career pathway (1), reducing gender inequalities as evaluated by annual review of promotion statistics (\*) |  |
| Heads of Professional Services in faculties/  Chair Technician Commitment SG/Director IT Services |  |  | 1  2  3 |  |  | (C) Support delivery of the Technician Commitment and Tech Talent Charter action plans relating to inclusive recruitment and gender equity and diversity in workforce development; evaluate impact from a gender perspective; support IT Services to apply for AS Bronze Award (ref 1.1F) | Improved recruitment, career progression and pathways for women in technical roles (1); increase the % of women developing careers in IT services (2); IT services obtain a bronze AS award (3) |  |
| Chief People Officer | 1 | 2 |  |  |  | (D) Review the findings of the faculty pilots - HSS Inclusive recruitment checklist; TDE gender inclusion during induction for new staff) and support the mainstreaming of successful interventions | Roll out of HSS Inclusive recruitment checklist to all faculties (1) resulting in increased diversity of appointments; Roll out of TDE initiative to promote gender inclusion and AS during induction to all faculties (2) resulting in increased awareness of gender equality in new staff measured by AS Culture Surveys |  |
| Director of Researcher Development |  |  | 1  2 |  |  | (E) Evaluate and support the delivery of the actions relating to the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers in relation to support for their career development both within academia and in moving to other fields and increase use of open-ended contracts | Increase in the number of women research assistants moving to research fellowships; and increase in RFs to academic posts (1) and increase in % on open ended contracts (2) |  |
| Reward and Progression Partner, People Directorate | 1 |  |  |  |  | (F) Develop and evaluate impact of guidance for recruiting managers on good practice in starting salaries which recognises intersectional and contextual factors relating to gender (Pay Gap Report action) | Guidance in place (1) and impact on recruitment and reduction in Gender Pay Gap cf Pay Gap Report |  |
| **2.2 Introduce effective and inclusive leadership development programmes** which address identified career blockages and support workforce planning | Chair ASSG, Chair RESG, EDI data analyst | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | (A) Undertake annual analyses of leadership career pipelines to identify target areas for interventions with focus on the intersection of gender and ethnicity | Robust evidence that interventions are having a positive impact or are reviewed to improve impact |  |
| Staff EDI Advisor and Director Organisational Development and Effectiveness |  |  | 1 |  |  | (B) Evaluate interventions (e.g. Aurora programme and mentoring schemes) to understand impact and identify gaps/blockages and benefits | Mentoring and leadership schemes correlate with an increase in women’s promotion success, retention or wellbeing (1) |  |
| **2.3 Develop effective and inclusive career development pathways for academic staff** which target areas of under-representation, address gender pay gaps and support workforce planning | University Senior Leadership Team; Chair ASSG |  | 1 | \* | \* | \* | (A) Introduce clearly defined and flexible career pathways for academics on teaching & scholarship, KE and practitioner & scholarship tracks to the same extent as has been developed for those on a research track | Requirements for promotion of individuals on teaching and scholarship, KE and practitioner tracks are clearly articulated in promotion guidelines on web pages (1) and promotion panel statistics show increase in gender balanced promotions across different career pathways (\*) |  |
| Reward and Progression Partner, People Directorate |  | 1 |  |  |  | (B) Revise and communicate Promotions Criteria and Guidance (academic staff) to reflect new career pathways and key transition points |

| Dimension 3: Inclusive culture and working environment | | | | | | | | |  |
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| **Objectives and rationale** | **Responsibility** | **2022 - 2027** | | | | | **Actions** | **Outcome measure/target** | **RAG rating Nov 2022** |
| **Yr1** | **Yr2** | **Yr3** | **Yr4** | **Yr5** |
| **3.1 Foster belonging and psychological safety** in relation to gender based violence and harassment | Chief People Officer & Director CDPRP | 1 |  |  |  |  | (A) Understand the current position re gender-based violence across the institution through participation in the UniSAFE project and implement recommended actions | Implement actions from UniSAFE (1); Harassment and bullying policy revised (2) and report/support channels and communications strengthened resulting in increase in reporting and improved effective resolution of complaints (3); institutional zero tolerance stance resulting in reduced instances of gender-based violence (4) |  |
| Chief People Officer | 2 | 3 | 4 |  |  | (B) Revise Harassment and Bullying Policy and related resources and improve report and support channels and communications. Review and promote the ‘It’s Not Brookes, It’s Not OK’ campaign and consider extension to include staff to staff reporting. |
| **3.2 Support wellbeing, mental health and work life balance** particularly for groups most at risk of experiencing inequality | Chief People Officer | 1 |  | \* |  | \* | (A) Deliver a campaign to raise awareness of existing policies and processes to promote work-life balance, mental health and well being | Campaign delivered (1) and surveys show more staff are aware of opportunities for different ways of working/reduced hours (\*) |  |
| Chair HLS AS-SAT and EDI Staff Advisor |  | 1 | \* |  | \* | (B) Support a pilot project (in HLS) to explore the impact of caring, particularly for women, in relation to their work; understand interventions that work to support them; monitor and evaluate the project and promulgate learning | Pilot expanded cross university (1) and surveys show increased awareness of impact of caring, and interventions which are effective in supporting staff (\*) |  |
| Chair HLS AS-SAT and EDI Staff Advisor | 1 | 2 |  |  |  | (C) Support a pilot project (in HLS) to raise awareness of women and menopause; share the learning and develop action plan to mainstream effective interventions | Roll out a university-wide awareness and intervention campaign (1) resulting in Increased awareness of the impact of menopause on working life that is reflected in revised management policies/practice (2) |  |
| EDI Director and Employment Relations & Policy team leader | 1 |  | \* |  | \* | (D) Map out existing interventions to support returners from family leave, review against best practice and develop a consistent offer across the institution | Better, more consistent support to returners (1) as evidenced by staff surveys and EDI analysis of promotion statistics (\*) |  |
| Director of Estates and Campus Services with EDI Director |  | 1 | \* |  | \* | (E) Undertake EIA on planned Agile & Hybrid Working pilots in order to understand equality implications of hybrid and agile working pilot before roll out more widely. Ensure particular attention to part-time staff, those with caring responsibilities, and staff with disabilities and health conditions. | Hybrid and Agile working pilots address any equality issues raised through EIAs (1) before further roll out; positive impact of Hybrid and Agile working initiatives on health and wellbeing at work as monitored by staff surveys (\*). |  |
| **3.3 Ensure appropriate nursery provision for the One Campus Vision** to ensure high quality childcare provision for staff and students | Chief People Officer and Director of Estates & Campus Services |  |  | 1 |  |  | As part of One Campus planning, review nursery provision to ensure adequate, high quality on-campus provision for staff and students. | Appropriate, high quality nursery provision for main Oxford campus has been established (1) |  |

| Dimension 4: Inclusive innovation, entrepreneurship, teaching and research | | | | | | | | |  |
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| **Objectives and rationale** | **Responsibility** | **2022 - 2027** | | | | | **Actions** | **Outcome measure/target** | **RAG rating Nov 2022** |
| **Yr1** | **Yr2** | **Yr3** | **Yr4** | **Yr5** |
| **4.1 Becoming an institution that supports and nurtures gender inclusive innovation and entrepreneurship** to increase women’s participation in the commercialisation of research to include inventorship, licencing, consultancy, spin-out and start-up creation | Director Research Innovation and Enterprise/ EDI Director | 1 | 2 | 3 |  |  | (A) Adopt the Framework for Higher Education Institutions for Gender Inclusive Academic Entrepreneurship (developed as part of the EPSRC Inclusion Matters project) and its checklists to undertake a self-assessment and gain a better understanding how to strengthen gender inclusive approaches to innovation and entrepreneurship | (1) Self-assessment completed and a better understanding has been gained by all relevant stakeholders of how to promote gender inclusive innovation and entrepreneurship. (2) Specific areas where action is needed have been identified. (3) Increased % women taking part in innovation and entrepreneurship |  |
| ASSG Chair/EDI Director | 1 |  | 2 |  |  | (B) Develop clear and transparent criteria to define and reward activities relating to innovation and entrepreneurship. These are reflected in promotion criteria and consistently communicated across the institution (see also 2.3) | Clear and transparent promotion criteria for innovation and entrepreneurship (1) and this is evidenced by the increased number of women involved in these activities (2). |  |
| **4.2 Building capacity** and a deeper understanding of how to achieve gender inclusive innovation and entrepreneurship | Director Research, Innovation and Enterprise/IP Manager/ Associate Director Enterprise | 1 | 2 |  |  |  | (A) Information is communicated/ disseminated to raise awareness about innovation and entrepreneurship via talks, workshops, web-pages etc. The choice of images and case studies is gender inclusive. | A communication plan (1) is in place supported by a series of activities (e.g. talks/workshops). More women academics, including ECRs take part in opportunities to commercialise their research through patenting, licensing, ICURe, spinout creation etc (2) |  |
| Associate Director Enterprise/IP Manager/EDI Director |  | 1 | \* | \* | \* | (B) Participation in commercialisation of research (e.g. patenting, licensing, ICURe) and entrepreneurship is monitored by gender, age, ethnicity and other protected characteristics (as practicable), different career stages, to identify trends and future needs. Monitoring also includes spin-outs and start-ups in the new University Enterprise Centre. | Agreed monitoring process in place by 23/24 (1)to include the new University Enterprise Centre, which is reviewed annually (\*) by ASSG. |  |
| **4.3 Supporting bridging of research** to business from a gender perspective to ensure that women have equal opportunities to participate in the ecosystem that drives innovation | Bridge Programme Academic Lead |  | 1 |  |  | 2 | (A) Build on the Bridge pilot programme to ensure that training/development initiatives are gender-sensitive and avoid images, language and case studies that reproduce gender stereotypes and reinforce masculine notions of entrepreneurship. Give greater visibility to women founders as role models and provide insights into different career paths (see also 2.3). | The Bridge Programme promotes gender inclusive innovation and entrepreneurship, and is established as part of the University training and development offer to academic staff (1). Increased number of women and ECRs taking part in this programme (2). |  |
| Bridge Programme Academic Lead/ Associate Director Enterprise | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | (B) Extend the speed-mentoring pilot initiative, run as part of the EPSRC Inclusion Matters project, to facilitate knowledge sharing between women who founded spin-out/start-up companies and women researchers interested in commercialising their research. | Speed mentoring events are run on a yearly basis (\*) and a pool of women mentors with experience of founding spin-outs and start-ups has been established. |  |
| Associate Director Enterprise |  | \* |  |  |  | (C) Foster a more diverse network of business leaders and investors to facilitate bridging of research and business. Ensure inclusive networking practices, accessibility and gender balance representation. | An effective, accessible and diverse network of business leaders, founders and investors has been established \*) to support gender inclusive entrepreneurship and alternative career paths. |  |
| **4.4 Introduce PhD-level placements in industry** to broaden skills and experiences of research students to further diverse career opportunities | PVC Research & Global Partnerships |  | 1 | \* |  | \* | Introduce funded PhD-level placements (3 months) in industry, businesses and third sector to enhance skills and experiences beyond the PhD to further diverse career opportunities beyond academia; evaluate via biennial PRES survey of research students | Scheme in place by 23/24 (1) and evaluation through PRES (\*) indicates increase in women student satisfaction with broader skill and career development opportunities |  |
| **4.5 Develop a plan for gender inclusive research** as a prerequisite for EU funding proposals | Chair EDI research network/CDPRPDirector |  | 1 | 2 |  |  | Raise awareness and increase knowledge around gender inclusive research practices. Analysis of gender and intersectional awareness within existing research projects. Extend existing award schemes to include and celebrate gender-sensitive research | Development (1) and dissemination (2) of an inclusive research plan that supports EU requirements for funding bids. |  |
| **4.6 Raise awareness and increase knowledge around inclusive curriculum development** | Director Oxford Centre for Academic Enhancement and Development and CDPRP | 1 | 2 |  | 3 |  | Develop Handbook on teaching and learning strategies for gender inclusive curriculum. Incorporation in wider inclusive curriculum and IDEAS Framework for programme development. Ongoing support for analysis of gender inclusivity and intersectional diversity in curriculum content. | Handbook developed and disseminated (1)  IDEAS Framework implementation (2) and review (3) |  |

1. Athena Swan Steering Group (ASSG) 6 June 2023 chaired by Professor Linda King [↑](#footnote-ref-1)