

## Athena Swan Silver application form for departments

### Applicant information

Name of institution	Imperial College London
Name of department	Brain Sciences
Date of current application	31 March 2025 (Original submission due 29 November 2024. Confirmation of extension of award for exceptional circumstances is shown overleaf.)
Level of previous award	Silver
Date of previous award	27 November 2020
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Section	Words used
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An evaluation of the department's progress and success	2,296 / 2,000
An assessment of the department's gender equality context	2,900 / 3,500
Future action plan*	
Appendix 1: Culture survey data*	
Appendix 2: Data tables*	
Appendix 3: Glossary*	
<b>Overall word count</b>	<b>9,153 / 9,250</b>

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

**Overall word limit: 8000 words (plus 500 clinical and non-clinical, and 750 Faculty reorganisation; confirmation email overleaf).**

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

### **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.

Dani Glazzard  
Head of Athena SWAN  
Advance HE  
First Floor, Napier House  
24 High Holborn  
London WC1V 6AZ

## Re: Department Athena Swan Silver Award Application

Dear Dani,

I write as the former Head of the Department (HoD) of Brain Science (DoBS) to which I was appointed when the department was created in 2019 until April 2024. I can confirm that the information presented is an accurate representation of our department during my leadership. I have since taken up the position as Director at the Rosalind Franklin Institute but remain at Imperial as a member of DoBS.

When the department was created, I appointed a gender-balanced leadership team which included Dr Jo Jackson as the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) Chair and Athena Swan Lead. To support Dr Jackson's career development while EDIC Chair, we funded a PhD student for her group. The EDIC was given a £50K annual budget to support their work in the department. We ensured that the uptake of university EDI training was mandatory. This led to an increase from 19% of staff completing the EDI training to 84%. We also supported the creation of an EDI Co-ordinator position which has now been continued as a permanent post.

From the start, the department supported flexible working and provided academic support and flexible hours for those with caring responsibilities. This was particularly important to staff and students during the pandemic. Recognising the lack of women in academic positions, when these positions were available, I personally reached out to my network to encourage women to apply. This action resulted in the appointment of [REDACTED] female lecturers (from [REDACTED] posts).

During my time as HoD we launched the department Reward and Recognition Scheme, set up to recognise activities which are not commended through other channels. We launched the LGBTQ+ Allies group established to promote LGBTQ+ visibility in the department with a budget of £3K per year, and the early career researcher (ECR) group to provide support at a critical point in their career.

However, we also recognise that there is more that we need to do. For example, we aimed to appoint more women to academic positions and, whilst we had some success, we did not reach the number we had hoped.

Nonetheless, I am immensely proud of the work our EDIC has carried out to date to support the implementation of the Athena Swan action plan to foster an inclusive workplace culture for everyone. I am delighted to still be a member of the department and to see innovative developments that the department is planning to even better realise Athena Swan objectives and ensure that DoBS has an open, positive and supportive culture.

Yours sincerely,



**Paul Matthews OBE, MD, DPhil, FRCP, FMedSci**  
**Head, Department of Brain Sciences, August 2019 to April 2024**  
**Edmond and Lily Safra Chair in Translational Neuroscience and Therapeutics**  
**Director, The Rosalind Franklin Institute**  
**Group Leader, UK Dementia Research Institute Centre at Imperial**

Dani Glazzard  
Head of Athena SWAN  
Advance HE  
First Floor, Napier House  
24 High Holborn  
London WC1V 6AZ

## **Ref – Department Athena Swan Silver Award Application**

I am writing as current Interim HoD of DoBS to which I was appointed in April 2024. I am also HoD for the Department of Immunology & Inflammation (Doll).

It is with great pleasure that I endorse our Athena Swan Silver Award application, and I can confirm that the information presented is an accurate representation of the department during my leadership.

Since taking this role in April 2024 my focus has been to support the department's strategy in delivering education and research in an inclusive and equitable environment, where everyone can thrive. Being a lead contributor to this application, on the one hand allows me to oversee and implement actions and initiatives aligned with the department's strong commitment to improving the staff and student gender balance as well as enabling them to grow both professionally and personally, in harmony with their personal life. On the other hand, it allows me to drive new approaches based on my experience. As a female clinical academic, I understand the career challenges female colleagues may face and am committed to help them by cultivating a positive department culture where these challenges are recognised and addressed. I strongly believe that addressing inequalities with all underrepresented groups (including gender inequalities) benefits us all, and I am committed to support female academics by creating an environment where theirs and all voices are heard, and everyone's potential is realised.

Leading two departments has allowed me to learn from experience and integrate best practices from each, fostering impactful changes. For example, I have;

- + taken the Executive Board structure from Doll and broadened the remit for DoBS to now include ECR representation; following direct requests from ECRs at this meeting I established a £10Kpa travel fund to support attendance at conferences, with extra funds for those with caring responsibilities;
- + increased staff department meetings to monthly on different time and day of the week and introduced a Q&A approach;

- + introduced the DoBS policy of compulsory stipend payments for UROP students in Doll and presented this to Faculty as a proposal for implementation across the Faculty of Medicine (FoM);
- + created a research committee with a strong remit to support ERC (European Research Council) applications and provided my personal career guidance to many applicants, especially females.

I recognise that not everything in the DoBS has been positive, and have been humbled hearing the experiences of some staff and students. I have put several strategies in place to address these challenges. First, I personally presented the results from the 2023 culture survey. Second, we have added a new category of award to our successful Reward and Recognition scheme to recognise individuals who exemplify university values through their behaviour. Last, I have held an open-door policy since joining the department, discussing issues arising with a wide range of individuals and listening to their voices.

It is clear there is still room for improvement to ensure that a better gender balance among the academic staff is achieved and the department is an equitable, supportive and pleasant place to work and study for everyone. As we look to the next five years, our key priorities will be:

1. increase proportion of male students at PGT;
2. increase proportion of female academic staff at senior levels;
3. improve gender balance of and support for PTO staff;
4. improve support for research staff, particularly postdocs and fellows; and
5. improve inclusive culture.

In this context, the work of our EDIC is crucial in supporting our aims and I will continue to be an active member until a new HoD is appointed and during any transition period. I look forward to the innovative developments the department will make in the coming years to address some of the current challenges, and strongly believe we have a real opportunity for meaningful and tangible positive changes to advance gender equality and continue to facilitate an inclusive environment where everyone can flourish.

Best wishes,



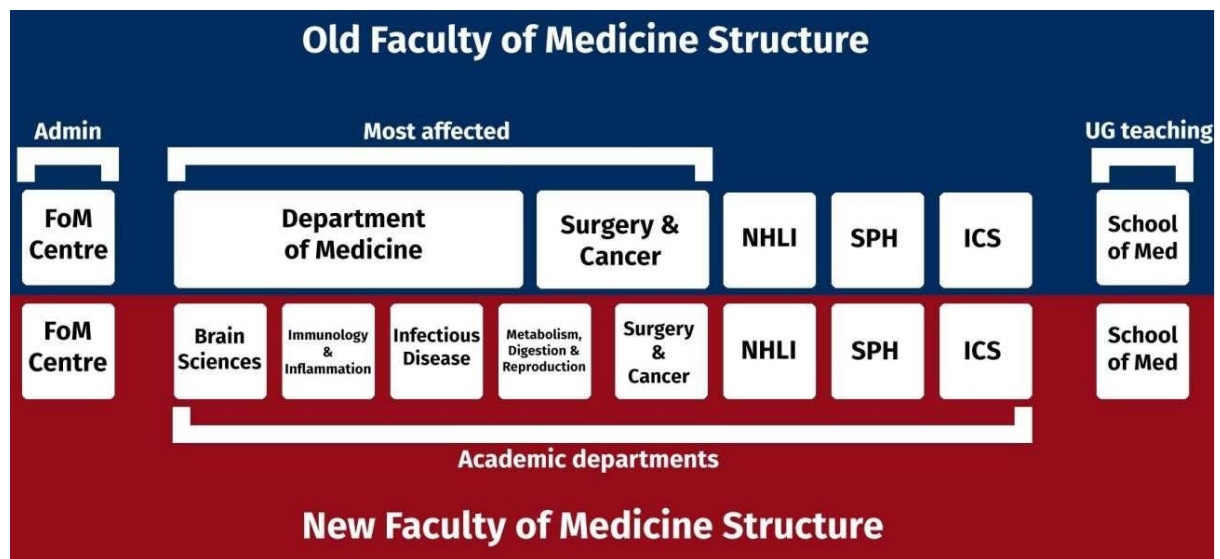
**Marina Botto MD FMedSci**  
**Interim Head, Department of Brain Sciences**  
**Director of Bioservices**  
**Professor of Rheumatology & Honorary Consultant**

## 1.2 Description of the department

### Background – changes and developments

DoBS was created in August 2019 following a FoM reorganisation that created a new faculty structure (*Figure 1*). It is one of eight departments in the FoM and has become internationally recognised for a unique portfolio of translational research in neuroscience, neurology and psychiatry.

*Figure 1: overview of the old and new Faculty of Medicine structure*



### Current context

DoBS consists of three divisions in which there are four embedded centres (*Figure 2*). The department also runs the Clinical Imaging Facility (CIF); all are overseen by the HoD (*Figure 3*) and Department Manager (DM) (*Figure 5*). In addition to our Heads of Division, we have core functional leads who chair key department committees (*Figure 4*).

Both staff and students in the department are geographically spread over three sites (*Figure 6*): Hammersmith Hospital Campus, White City Campus, and Charing Cross Hospital Campus; this can potentially pose challenges when organising events and facilitating a sense of belonging throughout the department. However, the use of hybrid meetings since the Covid pandemic in 2020 has increased our ability to meet and communicate virtually, benefitting cross-site department communication. For example, PTO staff (n=67 as of October 2024) meet virtually once per month as a whole group, led by the Department Manager.

Figure 2: DoBS structure – divisions and centres

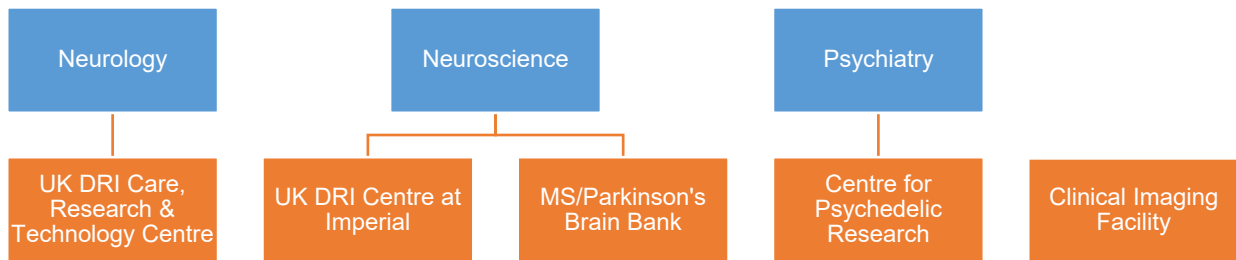


Figure 3: DoBS structure - academic leads

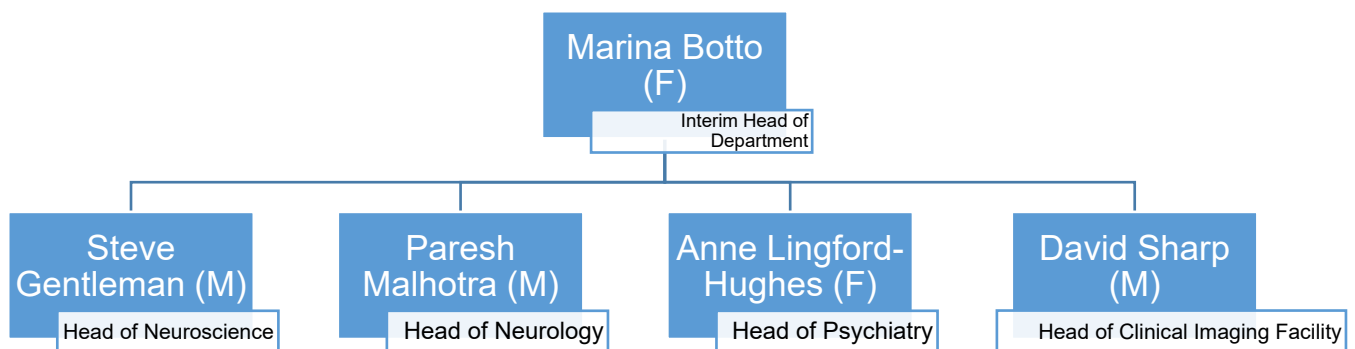


Figure 4: DoBS structure - Functional committee chairs

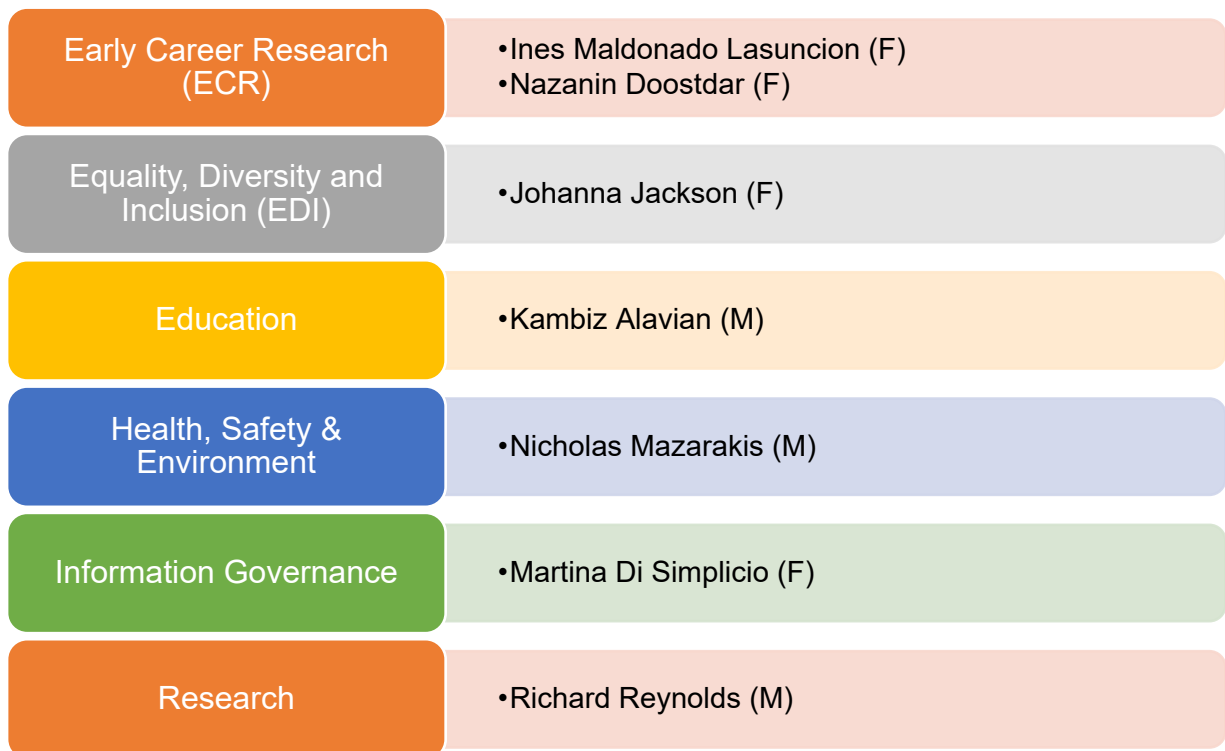


Figure 5: DoBS structure – PTO

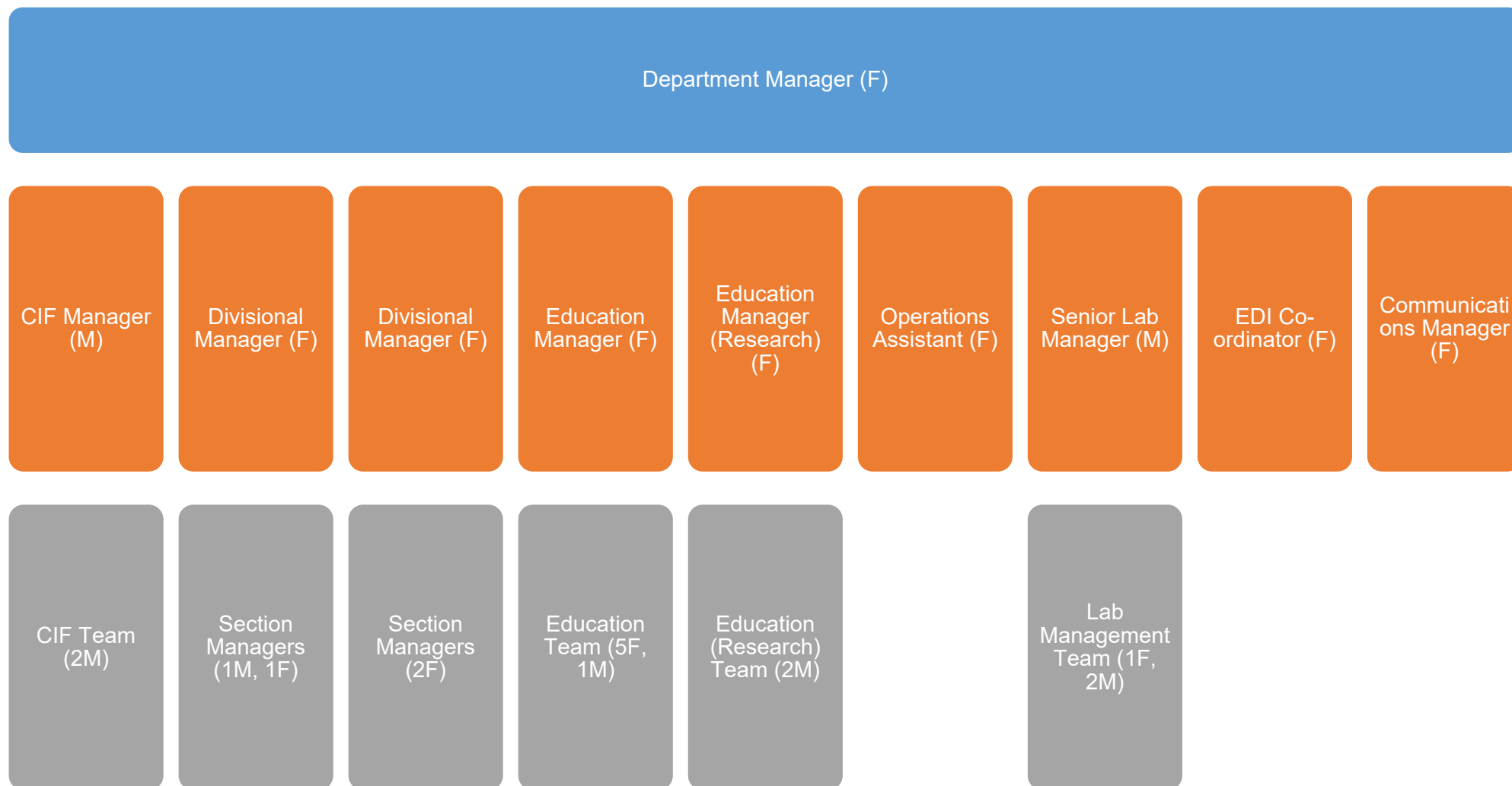


Figure 6: map showing the campuses on which staff from DoBS are based



As of 1 November 2023, the department had 213 staff members across all job families, which has increased marginally since 2020 (56%F, *Table 1*). The most significant change is with technical staff, where F have increased and M have decreased due to resignation (n=4) or end of contract (n=4) (*Table 75*); we note the small numbers in this job family (*Table 63*). Please note that, due to the size of the department and the FoM reorganisation (*Figure 1*) several PTO roles are split across other departments. As staff can only have one 'home' department, PTO data may appear inconsistent within the application.

The department provides education courses in neuroscience through an intercalated BSc in Neuroscience and Mental Health, and Masters courses in Translational Neuroscience (MSc) and Experimental Neuroscience (MRes), as well as hosting clinical and non-clinical research students (*Table 2*). All courses for 2023/24 are overwhelmingly populated by females.

Table 1: Staffing numbers by gender and job family in DoBS in 2020 and 2023

Membership Job Family	2020			2023		
	F	M	%F	F	M	%F
Professional and Operational Services			73%			73%
Technical Staff			39%			80%
Learning & Teaching			50%			50%
Academic – non-clinical			15%			12%
Clinical Academic			19%			12%
Research – non-clinical			60%			66%
Clinical Research			33%			47%
TOTAL	102	105	49%	120	93	56%
	207			213		

Table 2: 2023/24 student snapshot

	2023/24				
	F	M	NB	Total	%F
iBSc Neuroscience and Mental Health				37	70%
MSc Translational Neuroscience				53	96%
Mres Experimental Neuroscience				16	75%
Research students				101	67%
Total	157	49	1	207	76%

### 1.3. Governance and recognition of equality, diversity and inclusion work

#### Governance

Leadership and organisation of the department is illustrated in *Figure 7*. The strategic vision for and core-decision making of the department is shaped at Senior Executive Board (SEB), which comprises the HoD, Heads of Division, DM and the Head of the CIF (3F, 4M). 6/7 members of the SEB are on the EDIC, including the Head of Neurology and DM who are EDIC Deputy Chairs, ensuring Athena Swan principles are central to the department strategy. Key strategic deliberations are then shared with Executive Board, chaired by the HoD. Executive Board membership consists of SEB members, committee chairs, core PTO staff and representation from PhD, postdoctoral and early career researchers (ECRs); it is purposefully broad to enable fair representation and transparency in department decision-making.

*Figure 7: overview of governance structure of DoBS*



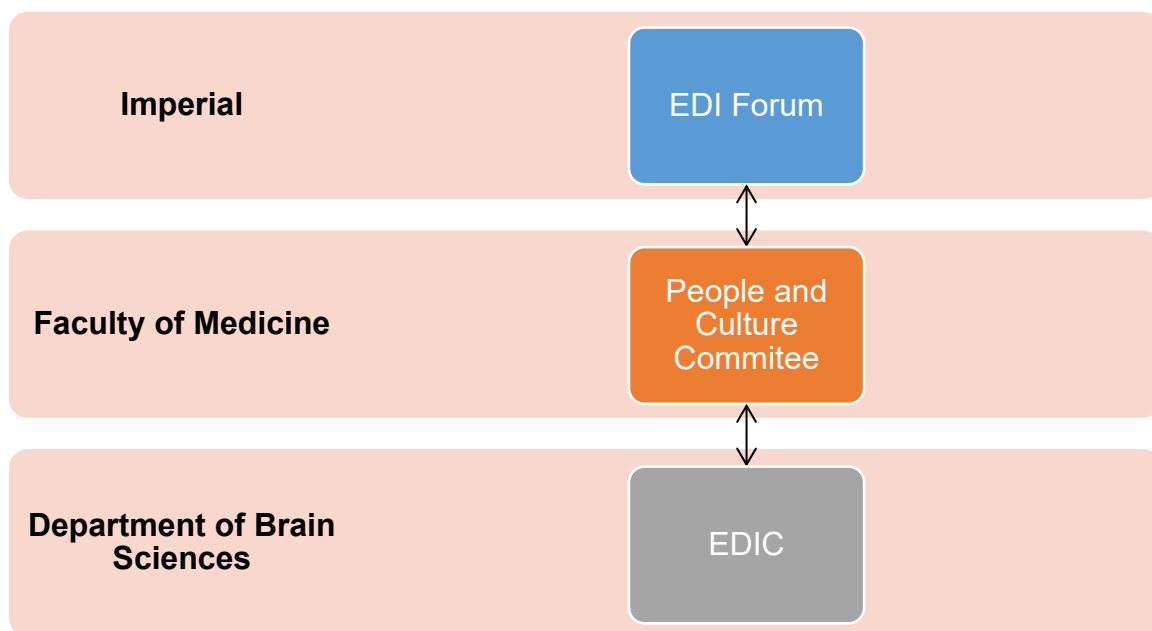
Effective and sustainable positive change to gender equality and EDI requires appropriate resourcing. In recognition of the importance of, and our commitment to, providing meaningful support for our EDI work, we created and recruited an EDI Co-ordinator role (F) in 2024, which we share with another department within FoM, allowing best practice sharing. The DM of each department share line management responsibility, ensuring clear senior escalation for any EDI issues. This role has been instrumental in our ability to identify, implement and evaluate relevant activities. It comes with an annual budget of £50K, and includes dedicated administrative support.

EDI activities and responsibilities are also formally embedded into other roles in the department, normalising and recognising its importance within department culture. For example, our Communications Manager leads on representation of gender and EDI characteristics for our department website, and a key priority of the Brain Tissue Bank strategy is to receive tissue donation from people with more diverse backgrounds.

The EDIC forms an integral part of the management structure, reporting to Executive Board where EDI is a standing agenda item. The EDIC, through the EDIC Chair and EDI Co-ordinator, report into the FoM People & Culture Committee (PCC) and university-level EDI Forum, ensuring information and good practice efficacy (*Figure 8*). Within the university, the EDIC Chair and DM are part of larger Athena Swan working groups encompassing FoM and university members, whilst the EDI Co-ordinator sits on a university-level working group with other EDI practitioners; all of which further facilitates the flow of good practice and information.

An example of EDI being embedded within the department’s structure and linked to the FoM is the current recruitment for a permanent HoD. This is being overseen by the Dean of the FoM (F) and interim HoD. The EDIC Chair, along with all three Heads of Division (all members of EDIC) are on the panel for the recruitment process. The focus is on appointing a HoD who will further promote a positive and improved culture.

*Figure 8: DoBS EDI governance structure within the university*



Membership of all department committees (*Table 3*) is voluntary and often linked to their position, e.g. functional lead. Members are nominated by their line managers or Heads of Division due to their specific expertise. The ECR and Information Governance committees have become formal committees since our previous application. Whilst the ECR and Research committees are not gender balanced, they are broadly reflective of their communities / eligible pools: 75%F and 15%F respectively. We will formalise the need for committees to consider gender in their membership, ensuring committees are reflective of the communities they serve (**2024 Action 5.7.f**).

Table 3: DoBS committee membership by gender, 2020 and 2024

	2020				2024		
	F	M	NB*	%F	F	M	%F
ECR	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A			83%
EDIC				63%			53%
Education				71%			56%
Executive Board				50%			61%
Health & Safety				40%			35%
Information Governance				N/A			25%
Research				70%			27%

\*NB = non-binary

### Recognition

Details of leadership roles, committee membership and contributions to department culture are held by the DM, reviewed on an annual basis and shared with relevant line managers ahead of the Annual Review Conversation (ARC) season and university-level recognition schemes. EDI activities are encouraged and integrated into all job families' ARC forms; they are included in applications for promotion and progression.

Staff are eligible for nomination to receive College Awards, Department Recognition Awards, and Achievement Awards under the university's annual Pay Review exercise (Table 4). According to the scheme the nominations are done by the HoD / DM, line manager or by any member of the department, including students.

Table 4: Pay review data on successful nominations to the College Annual Pay Review exercise by gender

	2023-24			2022-23			2021-22			2020-21		
	F	M	%F	F	M	%F	F	M	%F	F	M	%F
PTO			80%			100%			50%			100%
Research			100%			67%			100%			100%
Academic			0%			0%			0%			0%

Whilst the department does not currently have a formal Workload Allocation Model (WAM) in place for academic staff, we have adopted and applied the workload principles set out by the university. As of 2025, the Heads of Division, Education Manager, Research Manager, Division Managers and DM are meeting to review each individual workload in the department and amend accordingly to ensure fairness (2024 Action 5.7.e). We continue to join and contribute to the university-

level conversations around the development of a WAM, ensuring that administration and/or education-related tasks do not fall disproportionately onto any one group.

**2024 Actions referred to in this section:**

<b>5.7.e</b>	Heads of Division and DM to highlight EDIC membership opportunities as part of workload discussions (particularly M PTO staff)
<b>5.7.f</b>	ToR for all committees will highlight gender balance as a key objective for membership; to be contextualised against overall gender balance of the eligible pool.

#### 1.4. Development, evaluation and effectiveness of policies

Most policies are formulated at university level and then implemented by faculties and/or departments. EDIC members sit on the FoM PCC and the university's EDI Forum (*Figure 8*), contributing to the development of faculty and university policies and strategy. All new or updated regulations or procedures are circulated by email to staff and students, discussed at academic and PTO meetings and included in minutes. The university website (externally accessible) links to full policies.

Where policies are developed locally it is generally in response to an identified need, or repeated feedback / anecdotal evidence. At that point subject matter experts draft a framework to be reviewed by relevant stakeholders, shared with the department via email and made available through the department SharePoint. We also have a 'spotlight' feature in the newsletter on policies, for example, on family leave. The efficacy of department policies is evaluated over time against data relevant to the individual policy (i.e. qualitative data in the form of feedback from those impacted, quantitative data to explore changes to volume of events against policy, etc.). Policy content is reviewed annually by the owner and key stakeholders. For example, our new policy stipulates payment for UROP (Undergraduate Research Opportunities Programme) students but some Principal Investigators (PIs) have not budgeted for this in their grants. In response to stakeholder feedback the department will cover the costs for a transitional period, giving PIs time to incorporate this into future budgets. (see 3.1).

Undertaking the Athena Swan process highlighted that department policies do not go through the EDIC for impact assessment and review; we will now do this (**2024 action 5.4.e**). A key reason for creating an EDI Co-ordinator role was to augment our development, evaluation and implementation of policies, and ensure that EDI is embedded within everything that we do. We acknowledge that our policies are not documented all in one place, and that there are certain processes and ways of working that have become business as usual (BAU) but they are not formally written down, such as:

- + including an EDI-related question in all department interviews at all levels and within all job families;
- + scheduling of events to suit most attendees, using online tools such as Doodle polls, and avoiding religious events, busy clinical days, school holidays, etc.
- + making all group meetings hybrid and recording them with transcription so that those who are unable to attend can still access our discussions and updates;
- + including the EDIC Chair in Pay Review Panel, Academic Promotions Panel, Research Job Level Review Panel, etc.; and
- + holding summer and winter parties on different days each year and always beginning within working hours to maximise the opportunity for those with caring responsibilities or other considerations to attend.

We recognise the risk associated with not having all our policies fully documented and in one place, in relation to adherence and potential knowledge loss should certain colleagues leave their roles, and we will rectify this **(2024 action 5.4.f)**.

**2024 Actions referred to in this section:**

<b>5.4.e</b>	Ensure new department policies are reviewed by the EDI Co-ordinator in conjunction with the EDIC and impact assessed annually
<b>5.4.f</b>	Document and make available on SharePoint department policies, including those that we already do as part of business as usual (BAU)

## 1.5. Athena Swan self-assessment process

### Consultation and Engagement

We are grateful to our staff for sharing their views and experiences. The department circulates a culture survey to all staff biennially through a combination of targeted emails, the department newsletter, and reminders from the DM. This happened in 2021 for the first time as a new department and again in 2023 (*Table 5*).

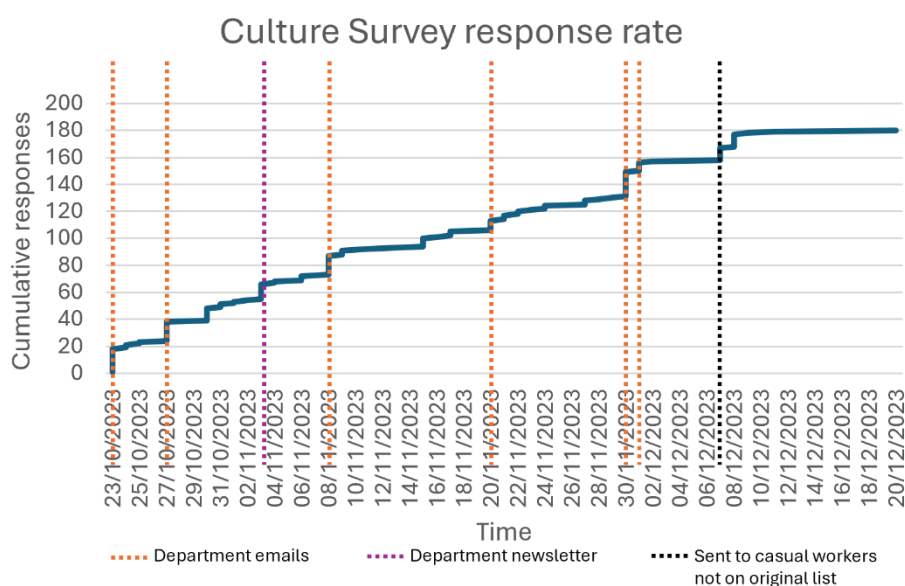
*Table 5: response rates for 2021 and 2023 department culture surveys*

	2023	2021
<b>Response rate</b>	119 / 213 = 56%	49 / 207 = 24%
<b>F%</b>	66 / 120 = 55%	26 / 113 = 23%
<b>M%</b>	42 / 93 = 45%	18 / 102 = 18%
<b>Total responses</b>	119	49
<b>Female</b>	66 / 55%	26 / 53%
<b>Male</b>	42 / 35%	18 / 38%
<b>PNS</b>	11 / 9%	5 / 10%

We note a slight gender disparity in response rates, with females consistently responding at higher rates than males; the proportions of those responding increased similarly by gender between 2021 and 2023. In addition, the new EDI Co-ordinator holds 1-2-1 meetings with staff to identify priorities, needs and challenges which have informed this self-assessment process. Staff were identified based on their role (e.g. HoD, Heads of Division, etc.) and an open call was made via department meetings and the newsletter. She has held 13 meetings (7F, 6M); these will continue.

We are pleased that our 2023 department survey had an increased response rate from 2021, with nearly 2.5 times more people choosing to respond (*Table 5*). The 2021 survey results may have been influenced by the department's recent formation and the ongoing pandemic, as many people were still working from home and may not have felt strongly connected to the department. For the 2023 survey, we established a communications plan early on which was devised and implemented jointly by the EDIC, Comms Team, Department Operations and Division Heads. We made the messaging more casual in tone and emphasised the survey's anonymity and how responses would feed into improving the department culture. We also incentivised people to engage by committing to plant a tree at the National Trust for each response received, and developed a graphic to show how the 'forest' was growing with each communication (*Figure 9*). The EDIC Chair, DM, HoD and Division Heads actively encouraged people to respond, and invited conversations with their teams around why it was important and how it would benefit individuals.

Figure 9: response rate and number of trees planted<sup>1</sup>



We will continue to host department surveys every two years (2025, 2027 and 2029) introducing other methods of continuous feedback (**2024 Actions 5.10.a-d**).

### Membership

Meeting monthly, the EDIC has 19 members (10F, 9M), compared to 32 (20F, 11M) in 2020. The reduction was a conscious decision to ensure active participation and create a more focused, committed group. We have a mix of members: some have been involved from the beginning and others joined more recently; we will formalise membership terms (**2024 Action 5.7.d**). Current membership (*Table 6, Table 7*) reflects a broad range of lived experiences, perspectives and EDI interests, as well as diverse sex and gender identities, caring responsibilities and intersectional characteristics that we feel is key to its success.

Recruitment onto EDIC is by a call for Expressions of Interest (Eoi) via email, announcements at academic and PTO meetings, and the newsletter. *Ex officio* membership includes key administrative roles (e.g. Communications Manager), many of whom are female. A drop-in ‘taster’ session is held and open to all staff and students to understand the workings of the committee. The EDI Co-ordinator has recently spoken at PGT student induction events, and from September 2025 we will ask each PGT course to provide an EDIC rep which will be a formally recognised position (**2024 Actions 5.7.a-b**). The PGR voice feeds into EDIC via the ECR committee providing a consistent and sustainable avenue for engagement.

The Self-Assessment Team (SAT), known as the ‘Core AS Working Group’ (4F, 3M), is comprised a sub-group of the EDIC (highlighted in green, *Table 7*). The EDIC Chair advertised an open call within the group to convene the SAT. This application

<sup>1</sup> Responses in *Figure 9* include all responses, even those that were not completed.

was prepared by the SAT, meeting weekly since 2024, actively supported by the HoD who contributed to the narrative, reviewed several drafts and was fundamental to the development of the action plan. The wider EDIC collaboratively developed the action plan, contributed to data collection and analysis, and were responsible for information sharing with the wider department. Drafts of this application were reviewed by Imperial’s Athena Swan Co-ordinator and an external ‘critical friend’.

To ensure alignment, consistency and spread of good practice following the FoM restructure, the EDIC Chairs (from the four new departments) meet regularly. Certain tasks (e.g. development of department culture surveys) were developed collaboratively, which allow comparative data within the FoM, and the identification of department-specific issues.

*Table 6: DoBS EDIC membership in August 2024 by gender and job family*

	M	F
<b>Academic – non-clinical</b>		
<b>Academic - clinical</b>		
<b>Research – non-clinical</b>		
<b>Research – clinical</b>		
<b>Learning &amp; teaching</b>		
<b>Professional and Operational services</b>		
<b>Technical staff</b>		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9 / 47%</b>	<b>10 / 53%</b>

### Reward and Recognition

Leadership of and membership on the EDIC and SAT are recognised through annual review conversations (ARC), the department’s Reward and Recognition scheme, achievement and equity pay reviews and promotion processes, reflecting the significant resource required to implement and manage the action plan, analyse data, and prepare Athena Swan applications. To support her role as EDIC Chair, the department funded a PhD student between 2020-2024. Since January 2024, the department supports the Chair’s time by buying out 0.3 FTE of her research fellowship salary. In recognition of the time and administrative commitments required, Champion roles will now receive a dedicated Administrator in the department to support their Champion activities **(2024 Action 5.7.c)**.

Table 7: DoBS EDIC membership in August 2024 – highlighted members of the Core AS Working Group (SAT)

[TABLE REDACTED]

### Activities

A range of new initiatives have been undertaken in the department since our Silver award in 2020.

Table 8: key EDI initiatives since 2020 submission and gender details

Year	Initiative	Outcome
2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Launch of department Reward and Recognitions awards scheme</li> <li>+ Quarterly Q&amp;A sessions with department management team during COVID</li> <li>+ Launch of DoBS handbook</li> <li>+ ImperialSAID (Scientists Advocating for Inclusivity and Diversity) seminar series <a href="https://www.imperial.ac.uk/brain-sciences/news-and-events/imperial-said/">https://www.imperial.ac.uk/brain-sciences/news-and-events/imperial-said/</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ 232 nominations between 2020-24</li> <li>+ Attendance not recorded</li> <li>+ February 2020</li> <li>+ the largest collaborative seminar series to focus on raising awareness of biases in STEM and to redefine workplace culture within the university. Views unknown.</li> </ul>
2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ EDI seed fund awarded: Sciversity - a TikTok initiative to reach pupils from all backgrounds especially those from lower socio-economic areas and highlight science role models with whom they can identify</li> <li>+ Launch of LGBTQ+ Allies Network</li> <li>+ <i>Guest lecture: 'Neurodiversity in Higher Education' Prof Sara Rankin</i></li> <li>+ Launch of 'Confront Educational Inequality Mentoring' scheme with secondary schools in lower-income areas</li> <li>+ Athena event: Neural pathways - inspiring career paths in Brain Science</li> <li>+ The Hows and Whys of Writing Research Grants and Fellowship Applications – a series of short practical talks to help you</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ 11 videos recorded with &gt;3500 views from UK and abroad</li> <li>+ 19 members, £3K annual budget</li> <li>+ Attendance not recorded.</li> <li>+ Engaged with 130 students over four years, approx. 1F:1M</li> <li>+ Attendance unknown.</li> <li>+ Designed to help you better prepare for grant and fellowship</li> </ul>

	<p>better prepare for grant and fellowship applications</p> <p><a href="https://www.imperial.ac.uk/brain-sciences/news-and-events/writing-seminars/">https://www.imperial.ac.uk/brain-sciences/news-and-events/writing-seminars/</a></p>	<p>applications. Each recorded; first session had 51 attendees and 109 later views.</p>
2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Support of British Neuroscience Association’s Scholars programme initiated</li> <li>+ PRDP quality review and launch of revised PRDP forms</li> <li>+ Website gender bias analysis</li> <li>+ <i>Athena event: Celebrating Imperial Women in Neuroscience</i></li> <li>+ Review of gender-coded wording on promotion criteria</li> <li>+ LGBTQ+ Brains Blog created (see 3.1 for more details)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Financial assistance of £1K per year</li> <li>+ <b>2020 Action 4.2.2</b></li> <li>+ 54%F/46%M across whole site (</li> <li>+ </li> <li>+ </li> <li>+ <i>Figure 13).</i></li> <li>+ 87 people attended, 85%F, 15%M</li> <li>+ Promotion criteria analysed for clinical and non-clinical academics and senior research and teaching staff. All but research criteria had weakly feminine-coded language.</li> <li>+ 6 interviews, 1 special edition</li> </ul>
2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Guest lecture: “High-throughput ‘Omics to Advance Equity in Alzheimer’s Disease” – Prof Renã A. S. Robinson (Vanderbilt university)</li> <li>+ Guest lecture: Sex and gender differences in Alzheimer’s – an update from the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Attendance: 41F, 30M, 5PNS, 1 other (25 in person, 52 online)</li> <li>+ 121 (77%F, 23%M) registrations.</li> </ul>

	Women's Brain Project. Dr. Maria Teresa Ferretti from the Women's Brain Project. + Grant Writing Workshop	+ A cohort of 15 participants wrote mock grants which were reviewed by 5 panel members.
2024	+ Analysis of gender and ethnicity bias in academic publications analysis in department  + Pronoun Drive  + Website gender analysis	+ M publish more but no effect of ethnicity on publication rate  + men and non-minoritised (i.e. White) groups were cited more  + no compounded intersectionality effect (see section 3.1 for more details).  + 16% of summer party attendees completed pronoun survey (see 3.1)  + 53%F, 16%M, 31% abstract ( <i>Figure 14</i> )

### Future plans

Following submission the EDIC will meet monthly with meetings taking place on different days and times in hybrid format so that all members can attend. We recognise the challenges of busy working days and clinical commitments, and staff who are not able to physically or virtually join the meetings provide comments to agenda items and previous minutes by email; we accept this as active engagement. Administrative support will continue to be provided. The action plan is a standing item on the EDIC agenda and maintained via a live shared document. The EDI Co-ordinator and FoM Head of Data are developing a live data dashboard to track data specific to the action plan.

The budget will be reviewed annually to ensure it provides adequate support. We understand from the culture survey in 2023 that our communication flow within the department is not always consistent, and we will work with our Communications Manager to develop a dedicated Comms plan to ensure Athena Swan and EDI work is shared regularly (**2024 Action 5.4.g**).

### 2024 Actions referred to in this section:

<b>5.4.g</b>	Comms plan to ensure Athena Swan and EDI progress are updated regularly, e.g. through newsletter
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<b>5.7.a</b>	EDI Co-ordinator to speak at student Induction events to enhance visibility and highlight the work of the EDIC to encourage student representation.
<b>5.7.b</b>	PGT students to provide an EDIC rep for each course by the end of week 1 or 2 and be on the committee for the year. Reps get formal recognition for this.
<b>5.7.c</b>	EDIC champion roles to receive dedicated administrative support.
<b>5.10.a</b>	Introduce a 'virtual suggestion box' what will be managed and reviewed by the EDIC.
<b>5.10.b</b>	HoD to present on culture survey findings after each survey, including 'you said, we did' and actions for the future
<b>5.10.c</b>	Use a variety of ways to get feedback and measure success, including pulse surveys (success re pronouns in email signatures) Q&A sessions, focus groups, etc.
<b>5.10.d</b>	Run catered events, led by the HoD, to launch the 2025, 2027 and 2029 culture surveys. Incentivise engagement by planting a tree for each survey response received.

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

### 1. Evaluating progress against the previous action plan

*Table 9: summary RAG review of 2020 AS action plan*

2020 action plan section heading	Green	Amber	Red	Total no. of objectives
1. Staff consultation and Athena Swan embedding	3	0	0	3
2. Students	0	0	1	1
3. Career development and academic promotion	6	1	0	7
4. Appraisal	1	1	0	2
5. Recruitment	2	1	0	3
6. Communications	4	0	0	4
7. Health and wellbeing	3	0	0	3
8. Driving cultural change	4	2	0	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>23 (79%)</b>	<b>5 (17%)</b>	<b>1 (3%)</b>	<b>29</b>

#### Methodology of action implementation, evaluation of progress and iteration

The 2020 plan's actions were assigned to champions, divided into yearly buckets, and reviewed quarterly. Annually, EDIC Chairs evaluated (RAG-scored) and adjusted the plan based on completion or changing rationale. We will improve this by formally reporting to the Executive Board each year (**2024 action 5.7.g**).

79% of 2020 objectives met their success criteria, earning a green rating, largely due to the **structural embedding of EDI** across the department. Formed in 2019, we integrated ‘EDI voices’ into all leadership boards and committees from the start. In 2020, we launched a DoBS EDI training program (**2020 Obj. 8.1**) alongside a strong communications plan, later made mandatory in 2022 by the DM and HoD (**2020 Actions 8.1.1-4**). Staff must complete this training to serve on recruitment (**2020 Action 5.2.3**) and promotion (**2020 Action 3.7.2**) panels, with a required refresher every two years. Our EDI training complements Imperial Essentials, the university’s mandatory training suite, which includes an online EDI course. DoBS achieved a 96% completion rate for Imperial Essentials (as of January 31, 2025), compared to the university’s 53%, through consistent HoD and DM communications including the rationale for engagement, team meetings, away days, and accountability measures for Heads of Division and line managers. With staff from 43 nationalities, these courses provide a standard foundation of expectations, build community, foster mutual understanding, and reinforce our department values from the beginning.

## Barriers resulting in amber and/or red outcomes

However, 3% of objectives were not met and 17% only partially met, primarily due to a lack of resources, often staff time.

### 1. Inaccurate and unreliable data capture for appraisal process

We partially met **2020 Obj. 4.1**. While we met our 2021 success measure (*Table 10*) (>80% PRDP completion), no gender data was captured. We did not achieve 100% PDRP completion by 2023 and thereafter. The reasons for this are twofold:

1. In 2023, the process changed from PRDP to ARC, creating a transitional year with inconsistent appraisals and no formal reporting. As a result, self-reported data from the 2023 culture survey is provided.
2. The process for formally and centrally recording appraisals requires line managers to submit completed forms to a central database, and confirm appraisals through the university system. We know that few staff met both requirements due to lack of time or prioritising the ARC conversation itself, thus explaining the low ARC completions in 2024.

The 2021 and 2022 data is from the DM. We know 100% of academic and L&T staff receive annual appraisals because these are done by the Heads of Division and their administrators confirm this. We have actions to mitigate issues and improve local level recording (**2024 Actions 3.3.a-c, 4.1.a-c**).

*Table 10: PRDP / ARC recorded completions by year*

Year	PRDP / ARC recorded completions
2020	No data
2021	86%
2022	72%
2023	51%F, 61%M (2023 culture survey)
2024	25 recorded ARCs

### 2. Time for impact / evidence of success

Two success measures aimed to increase women in clinical academic roles to at least 20% (**2020 Obj. 3.3, 5.3**). This was achieved at Senior Clinical Lecturer level (20%F) in 2023 but not at Reader (0%) or Professor (13%F). To meet this success measure, we believe more time is required for staff to progress in their career. We fell short of enrolling an early-stage clinical academic in the Academic Women's Programme (**2020 Action 3.3.4**), despite department communications, demonstrating the need for a more targeted communication plan (**2024 Action 5.4.g**). Our EDIC Clinical Deputy Chair successfully advocated for gender-balanced NHS England recruitment panels on three occasions which changed the panel

make-up; this practice will continue. We also raised this issue with Imperial's Clinical Academic Training Office (CATO) (**2024 Action 2.1.f**).

### 3. Ownership of activities

The 2020 success measures relied on champions, overseen by the EDI Chair, to lead specific actions. Roles were advertised through department channels, attracting champions with particular interests for LGBTQ+ Allies, Race Equality, ECRs, Mentoring, and Disability. However, some roles (e.g., public engagement, student) remained unfilled, and others faced challenges — race equality saw delays in replacement, while mentoring experienced action delays and required a new champion.

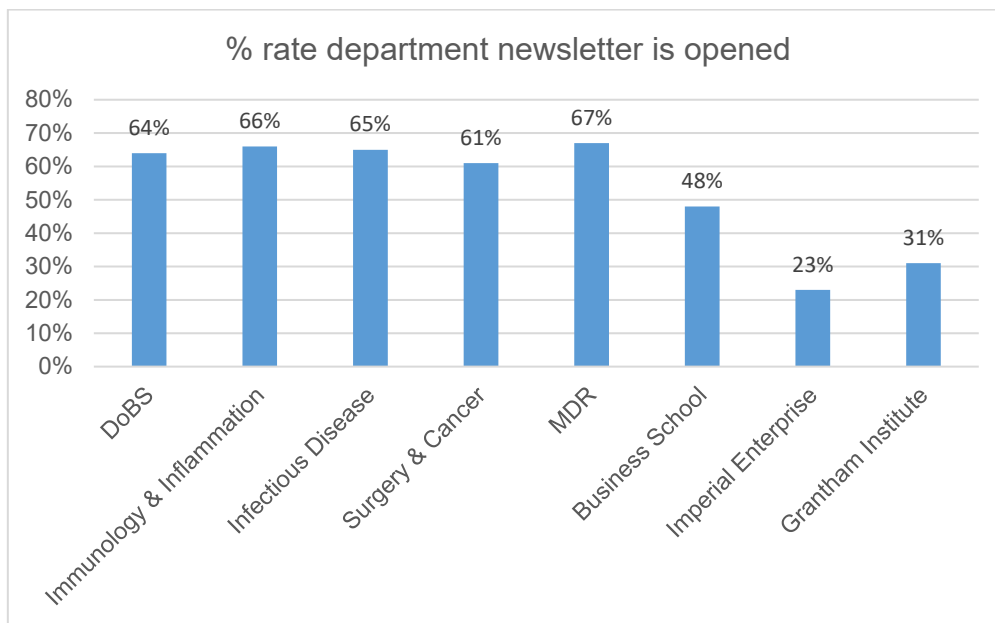
This led to one unmet success measure (**2020 Obj. 2.1**) and two partially met (**2020 Obj. 8.3, 8.5**). **Obj. 2.1** required student focus groups, but no Student Champion was appointed. **Obj. 8.3** was handled by the EDIC Chair due to a missing Outreach Champion but lacked close monitoring due to the Chair's workload. **Obj. 8.5** fell short after >2 years without a Race Equality Champion. Unfilled champion roles and poor performance were due to workload and perceived under-recognition. To address this, we will provide dedicated administrative support to EDI Champions and workload monitoring (**2024 Actions 5.7.c, 5.7.e**).

There were two broader reasons that resulted in difficulty in completing actions although the success measure was ultimately achieved. These included:

#### 1. Communication

Information dissemination was identified as a key barrier to completing all actions. The department communicated via email, newsletters, the department handbook, and verbally in meetings. Emails targeted specific groups, while the monthly newsletter provided broader updates. Most staff opened the newsletter (64%) – average for FoM and high within the university (*Figure 10*). In our 2023 survey, 73%F and 75%M agreed or strongly agreed that the newsletter was helpful. A February 2025 FoM survey ranked it the most useful electronic communication (83% rated it 1st or 2nd out of 7), the highest response.

Figure 10: %rate department newsletter is opened



Department meetings target specific groups (e.g. Management Board, PIs, PTO staff); reaching those who miss them remains a challenge. Meetings are recorded/minuted, but further dissemination is unclear. We are also mindful of information overload from multiple sources such as the department, FoM, university and external sources.

These factors likely contributed to incomplete actions, such as low uptake (n=5) for the Springboard Women's Development Programme (**2020 Action 3.2.1**) which, although signposted in the department handbook, needed personal recommendations from managers. Similarly, Postdoc and Fellows Development Centre (PFDC) courses (**2020 Action 3.2.4**) were promoted via the newsletter but needed a more targeted approach. To address communication gaps, we expanded the Executive Committee to include ECRs and research support staff and introduced Q&A sessions with senior managers during COVID-19 to increase their visibility and accessibility. These sessions will be reinstated alongside a more targeted communications strategy (see 2.2 and **2024 Actions 5.4.a, 5.4.c-d, 5.4.g**).

## 2. Replacement by university/faculty or other processes

*Table 11: example actions replaced by university, faculty or other processes*

<b>2020 Action Reference</b>	<b>Action wording</b>	<b>Replaced by</b>
<b>3.5.1</b>	Hold annual panel discussion with scientists returning from parental leave in association with The Daphne Jackson Trust	+ Panel held in 2020 + support developed from the university on returning to work, thus replacing department need
<b>5.1.1</b>	Audit job descriptions and adverts for all academic posts for gender specific language.	+ now recommended by Imperial using the <a href="#">TotalJobs tool</a>
<b>8.1.3</b>	EDI training event for whole department	+ EDI training now mandatory in the department.
<b>8.4.2</b>	Implement meeting etiquette good practice guide including points such as gender balance of chairs and ECRs to ask the first questions.	+ Some is BAU + guide to make meetings/seminars more accessible to a neurodiverse audience developed by EDIC + guide approved for university-wide roll-out

### **Conclusions**

Reflecting on our 2020 action plan, our experience of implementing actions and the assessment of success highlighted that we did not always have a strong gender focus to our success measures, thus making evaluation of gendered impact difficult. The success measures and actions not met have provided key learnings we have incorporated into the 2024 action plan:

- + Ensure gender lens/focus to success measures;
- + Evaluate support and time required to implement and achieve actions in terms of resources and individual's time commitment (workload);
- + Ensure adequate recognition for EDI activities
- + Improved transparency and dissemination of information

**2024 Actions referred to in this section:**

<b>2.1.f</b>	Ensure that academic recruitment panels are gender balanced. For Clinical Academic appointment we will keep pushing CATO/Deanery for this; continue to lead in this area. Heads of Division to highlight in Divisional meetings and make it an expectation.
<b>3.3.a and 4.1.a</b>	Invite member of POD/HR to host a Q&A session in the department, as part of a regular department catch-up meeting which is recorded for maximum engagement
<b>3.3.b and 4.1.b</b>	Ensure all staff are surveyed on their experiences of the ARC process at the 2025 and 2027 department survey
<b>3.3.c and 4.1.c</b>	Create department inbox specifically for completed ARC forms so all ARCs are recorded at department level and can be sent off to be centrally recorded
<b>5.4.a</b>	Restructure monthly newsletter to include logistical elements like staff changes, and spotlights on different research areas.
<b>5.4.c</b>	Quarterly Q&A department meetings led by senior management to share information and update - trialled during Covid
<b>5.4.d</b>	Ensure email distribution lists are up-to-date and that line managers are responsible for their teams being on the correct lists
<b>5.4.g</b>	Comms plan to ensure Athena Swan and EDI progress are updated regularly, e.g. through newsletter
<b>5.7.c</b>	EDIC champions to receive dedicated administrative support.
<b>5.7.e</b>	Heads of Division and DM to highlight EDIC membership opportunities as part of workload discussions (particularly M PTO staff)
<b>5.7.g</b>	EDIC formally reports to Executive Board annually on the progress of this action plan.

DoBS AP 2020	Obj . ref	Objective	Rationale	Actio n ref	Specific Actions	Original success measure(s)	Primary success measure met?
<b>1. Staff consultation and Athena embedding</b>	1.1	Ensure regular SAT membership rotation with good representation of staff groups, grades, campuses, students and gender balance	Generation of new ideas and enthusiasm	1.1	Diverse committee established and reviewed at the start of each academic year	Diverse committee	52% of current EDIC are women and there is a diverse range of ethnicities
	1.2	Investigate impact of COVID19 on health and wellbeing, career progression and impact of reorganisation.	COVID19 and re-organisation	1.2	Conduct survey and promote it via department communications, social media channels and using an Amazon voucher incentive.	Survey response of >33% and spanning all job families and levels	The 2023 survey received responses from 56% of the department (excluding honoraries), consisted of all job families but with a majority of women responding (53%)
	1.3	After action 2.1, conduct biennial culture survey	Implementation of the AS AP and new AS initiatives, and how they are perceived by DoBS	1.3	Conduct survey and promote via DoBS communications, social media channels and using an Amazon voucher incentive.		
<b>2. Students</b>	2.1	Investigate what would	Majority of PGT (73%) and PGR	2.1		Retention strategy	Focus groups were not held

		retain women PGR and PGT students in academia	(63%) students are women but this is not continued to higher academic levels		Hold focus groups with PGR and PGT students	developed to implement in the DoBS	
<b>3. Career development and academic development</b>	3.1	Increase the uptake of the university's mentoring scheme	49% of respondees to mentoring survey would like a mentor 63% would be willing to be a mentor We currently have 11 mentees in the department ECR challenges may be easier to overcome with guidance from more experienced members of the department.	3.1.1	Directly contact people who would like a mentor and match them with mentors	A yearly increase in those staff in a mentoring partnership to 10% in 2021, 20% in 2022 and 30% in 2023.	60%F, 67%M of respondees said they had 'someone outside their immediate team with whom they can talk to and go to advice (e.g. mentor)
				3.1.2	Directly approach people who are happy to be a mentor		
				3.1.3	Targeting different job family who have mentioned that they need mentoring		
				3.1.4	Regular communication about mentoring in the department newsletter		
				3.1.5	Adding mentoring in the PRDP so that it would be discussed, and manager highlights its importance		
				3.1.6	Add mentoring in the induction pack, and sign posting to mentorship programme		
				3.1.7	Reminder 3 months after appointment cross checking whether the mentorship has begun		
	3.2	Address the gender balance switch between research associate and research fellow	56% of Research Associates are women, compared to 33% of Research Fellows	3.2.1	Encourage all women to attend the Springboard Women's Development Programme	An increase in the number of women research fellows and above positions to >33% for	2024 data has 40% F at the research fellow level with a 5-year average of 44%
				3.2.3	Hold focus groups to investigate what women feel is stopping them progressing		
				3.2.3	Hold local training sessions on applying for fellowships		
				3.2.4	Signpost courses run by PDFC through department communication		

						research fellows.	
3.3	Address the gender imbalance at all clinical academic levels	Women are underrepresented at all clinical academic levels in DoBS (15% of total clinical academic staff)	3.3.1	Promotion panels to include women (minimum of 1 in 4)	An increase in the number of women in clinical academic positions to >20%	2024 data has 20% F at clinical senior lecturer level with a 5-year average of 22% however this target was not met when higher job levels were included (Clinical Reader and Clinical Professor; 13%)	
			3.3.2	Clinical academic women to be invited to speak at clinical academic meetings (>33% women)			
			3.3.3	All clinical academics to carry out EDI training (minimum 50% uptake)			
			3.3.4	Ensure that at least one early stage clinical academic in DoBS is enrolled at any one time on AWP			
			3.3.5	Ensure all early-stage clinical academic women have named mentor			
3.4	Investigate why academic women are not applying for promotion	Promotions data showed no women applied for academic promotion in the last round	3.4.1	Identify women within 1-3 years of promotion and signpost to coaching/mentoring	At least one woman applying for promotion	In the reporting period, two women applied and were successful at promotion. In the most recent 2024 round, two women have applied (outcome unknown)	
			3.4.2	Encourage coaching for academic women, particularly those within 1-3 years of promotion			
			3.4.3	Review the promotions criteria for gender-specific language			
3.5	Support return to work after parental or family leave	Parental leave can disproportionately affect women scientists	3.5.1	Hold annual panel discussion with scientists returning from parental leave in association with The Daphne Jackson Trust	>50% of eligible staff reporting that they felt supported after parental leave in biennial culture survey	74% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'You felt supported before and during the leave you took'	
			3.5.2	Pre and post maternity/adoption leave support sessions for all women especially academics and clinical academics			
			3.5.3	Encourage paternity/shared parental leave by highlighting university support			
3.6	Support PTO career development	The PTO career path is less linear than for academics and	3.6.1	Ensure mentoring and/or coaching for PTO staff going through the job level review	>50% of PTO staff reporting that they felt supported in	61% of PTO staff in the 2023 survey agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'My line	
			3.6.2	Encourage widening of skillset by signposting to university opportunities			

			so support is required	3.6.3	Provide opportunities for secondment, shadowing and networking events.	their career development in biennial culture survey	manager supports my career development'
				3.6.4	Develop reward and recognition scheme which values all types of activities		
	3.7	Remove bias in the promotion process	Biases of the promotion panel may be why women are underrepresented in the promotions process	3.7.1	Ensure gender balance promotion panels	At least one woman applying for promotion	See action 3.4
				3.7.2	100% of those involved in promotions to undertake EDI (including unconscious bias) training		
<b>4. Appraisal</b>	4.1	Increase uptake of PRDP	Appraisals have not always been completed by all staff. This year 74% of staff have completed PRDP	4.1.1	Implement a mandatory annual deadline for PRDP completion	Increase in PRDP uptake (80% in 2021, 100% by 2023)	86% PRDP uptake was achieved in 2021 however the scheme changed in 2023. Self reported ARC completion rate is 51%F, 61% in 2023
				4.1.2	Communication campaign around the importance of PRDP		
	4.2	Improve the quality of PRDPs to make sure they are effective and positive experience	Effective appraisals have not always been completed	4.2.1	Carry out the PRDP form sampling exercise (10% of returned PRDPs).	>50% staff reporting a positive PRDP in biennial culture survey	63% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their PRDP was helpful to them
				4.2.2	Produce DoBS PRDP guidelines based on the outcomes of the PRDP Quality control project		
<b>5. Recruitment</b>	5.1	Investigate the reasons for fewer women applying for academic positions	Recruitment data showed fewer women applying for Research Fellow positions	5.1.1	Audit job descriptions and adverts for all academic posts for gender specific language	Increase in number of women applying for Research Fellow	2019-2023 data has 44% F applying for research fellow positions
				5.1.2	Employ the 'search committee' (i.e. agency, existing network) approach to target women candidates for recruitment, especially at the more junior and clinical professor levels		

		especially research fellow positions	than men (30% W)	5.1.3	Advertise that IC supports flexible working where possible (with the aim to encourage women to apply for research fellow positions at IC)	positions to >40%	
	5.2	Remove bias in the shortlisting and interview process	Biases of the interview panel could be one reason why women are underrepresented in the applications process however our data suggests that comparable proportions of men and women are shortlisted	5.2.1	Implement at least one woman and one man in all recruitment panels with >3 panel members policy	Maintain comparable proportions of women being shortlisted and recruited	Across all academic and research recruitment during the reporting period, 53% of those shortlisted were women. Likewise, 53% of those appointed were women
5.2.2				Highlight at interview that Imperial supports flexible working where possible so even if unsuccessful they will be encouraged to apply again			
5.2.3				100% of those involved in recruitment to undertake EDI (incl. unconscious bias) training			
5.2.4				Increase the number of interview panel numbers from a BAME background and who have experienced parental leave			
	5.3	Increase clinical recruitment	Women are underrepresented at all clinical academic levels in DoBS	5.3.1	Clinical recruitment panel cannot meet without all members having EDI training	An increase in the number of women in clinical academic positions to >20%	2024 data has 20% F at clinical senior lecturer level with a 5-year average of 22% however this target was not met when higher job levels were included (Clinical Reader and Clinical Professor; 13%)
5.3.2				Internal recruitment and promotion panels to include women (at least 1 in 4)			
5.3.3				Insist on external panels (Deanery, academic clinical fellowships) to include at least 1 woman and those from a BAME background			
<b>6. Communications</b>	6.1	Ensure DoBS website includes diverse images and unbiased language	Ensuring that language and images are diverse reduces the chance of implicit bias in DoBS	6.1.1	Annual audit of DoBS website for diverse images and appropriate language	No bias in images or language	A 2022 audit showed no imbalance of gender representation on the DoBS website

	6.2	Improve visibility of role models	In the most recent seminar series, 31% of speakers were women There is little visibility of BAME, LGBTQ staff or those with disabilities at senior levels	6.2.1	Increase the number of women seminar speakers by targeting women in existing networks and using websites which highlight women in neuroscience	50% of seminar speakers are women	Across our four seminar series, the proportion of women speakers increased to 47% but did not reach 50%
				6.2.2	Roll out DoBS newsletter with emphasis on ECR successes and women role models		
				6.2.3	ImperialSAID seminar series		
				6.2.4	Establish Wikipedia pages for all female professors in collaboration with Jess Wade		
	6.3	Highlight opportunities available in university	Information about the university's service is held in several locations	6.3.1	Include in the department handbook and in regular communications. Highlight where to find staff support networks and resources, staff benefits, union information and career development opportunities	>50% staff report awareness of university services in culture survey	65% of respondees to the survey agreed or strongly agreed that they felt informed about key contacts in the university
	6.4	Maximise potential of all platforms to increase effective communication	Many staff rely on other forms of communication (i.e. social media)	6.4.1	Regular use of Twitter, Yammer etc groups as well as email	Regular use of twitter, email etc	The DoBS X (Twitter) account posts an average of 6 original tweets and 9 retweets per month with an average of 894 views per tweet.
<b>7. Health and wellbeing</b>	7.1	Promote and support flexible working and highlight mental health support	COVID19 has highlighted the importance of flexible working for those with caring responsibilities and for good mental health. In the 2019, only	7.1.1	Include details about flexible working and university mental health resources in the department handbook and in regular communications	Increased uptake of flexible working as reported in university survey	72% of staff work flexibly as reported in the 2023 culture survey
	7.2	Ensure the recognition of activities not		7.2.1	Develop reward and recognition scheme to recognise the following activities:	Reward and recognition scheme	65% of staff in the 2023 survey agreed or strongly agreed with the

		usually recognised through other channels	39% of respondees felt that their contributions to the university were recognised and valued. A pay review revealed one example of disparity. Women are more likely to occupy part time roles or fixed term contracts.		sustainability, innovation, technical/admin support, public engagement and teaching	resulting in >50% feeling that their contributions are valued in the 2021 staff survey	statement 'My contributions are valued in my department'
	7.3	Ensure pay parity at all levels		7.3.1	Conduct annual pay review and rectify immediately	No gender pay gap within DoBS at any level or in any job family	Reviewed annually and rectified on one occasion in the reporting period
	7.4	Examine the nature of part time and fixed contracts		7.4.1	Data analysis on contract types and those who hold those roles.	Provide textured data on contract types for next AS application	See Table 59, Table 60, Table 61, Table 62
<b>8. Drive culture change</b>	8.1	Implement EDI training programme for all staff	Current data suggests that 19% of staff have engaged with EDI training	8.1.1	EDI training essential requirements for all staff as communicated during induction and in staff handbook	An increase in EDI training to 75% of the department engaging with EDI training	Over the reporting period, 84% of staff have undertaken EDI training.
				8.1.2	Promote appropriate training for line managers and supervisors		
				8.1.3	EDI training event for whole department		
				8.1.4	Include EDI training requirements in PRDP		
	8.2	Increase outreach activities	To increase the number of women and BAME staff going through the academic pipeline, there needs to be a focus on targeting	8.2.1	Create an outreach subcommittee to develop engagement strategy and interface with central university and funder-specific initiatives (share resources, facilitate access to researchers, peer to peer involvement)	>33% of staff involved in outreach activities	In 2023 survey, 57% of respondees have been involved in outreach in the last 12 months
				8.2.2	Host an annual training workshop for researchers on public engagement activities		
				8.2.3	Representation at annual Imperial Festival – talks and hands-on activities		

			'grass roots' science	8.2.4	Develop a programme of Science Café Talks (i.e. Pint of Science brain-themed events, Virtual Pub Quiz, Invention Rooms)		
				8.2.5	Create a YouTube channel (or equivalent) to host all public-focused video content		
				8.2.6	Include outreach/ engagement pages on the website with FAQs		
8.3	Monitor gender balance in outreach activities	Many outreach activities take place however are sparsely recorded. Women can become disproportionately over-burdened with outreach activities	8.3.1	Develop better recording and recognition of outreach activities		A system to accurately report outreach data and shows no gender imbalance	A system was set up but under-utilised. From this limited data, more women reported their involvement in outreach however 2023 culture survey showed that women were not disproportionately overburdened by outreach activities (54% of those doing outreach)
			8.3.2	Maintain 50% representation of women in management committees			
8.4	Ensure gender parity in committee membership	Women are often underrepresented on management committees and overrepresented on operational committee	8.4.1	Maintain gender balance in operational committees		Gender balance (50% W) in all committees	Across all committees, women represented 45% of members however women were over-represented on the Executive Board (60%) and under-represented on operational committees such as H&S (35%).
			8.4.2	Implement meeting etiquette good practice guide including points such as gender balance of chairs and ECRs to ask the first questions.			
			8.4.3	Hold biannually Department Q&A sessions with the management team			
8.5	Give everyone a voice	The conversation may be dominated by	8.5.1	Increase awareness of academic racial inequalities through multiple channels including social media and newsletters		>50% staff feel listened to by senior	42% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed to being listened

			senior men of the department	8.5.2	Qualitative study of successful BAME academics and highlight their stories	management as reported in the culture survey	to by the department but, when 'neither agree or disagree' response was removed, this was 64%
				8.5.3	Develop and evaluate interventions for decreasing academic racial inequality		
8.6	Raise awareness of discrimination faced by those who identify as trans or non-binary	Many have little knowledge about trans rights Trans and non-binary staff may feel that they are not supported	8.6.1	Encourage the sharing of pronouns	>33% of staff share their preferred pronouns on email signatures	Pulse survey showed 42% share their pronouns (response rate 47% of department).	
			8.6.2	Signpost university resources including the Trans Staff Policy			
			8.6.3	Highlight scientists who identify as gender non-confirming in communications			

## 2.2 Evaluating success against department’s key priorities

**Priority 3: career development and academic development;** using mentoring to support the transition from postdoc to research fellow particularly for female staff (2020 Action 3.1.3)

### 3.1 Increase the uptake of the university's mentoring scheme

We ran a mentoring survey in 2020 (Table 12) to get a baseline measure of need and requested support; 55% of respondees stated they wanted a mentor, whilst 63% were willing to be mentors (Table 13).

Table 12: response rate for department mentoring survey 2020

	Total responses	Response rate of cohort
Woman		20%
Man		13%
NB		N/A
PNS		N/A
Total		19%
%W	55%	N/A

Table 13: “Would you like / do you need a mentor?” 2020 mentoring survey responses

[GRAPH REDACTED]

We improved communication to promote mentoring and the university system (2020 Actions 3.1.4, 3.1.6), aiming to raise staff participation from 5% (n=11) in 2019 to 30% (2020 Obj. 3.1). While university data (

Table 14) showed a growth trend in mentors and mentees (2019–2024), it did not fully capture department mentoring, as reflected in our culture survey.

*Table 14: number of mentors and mentees by year signing up to university's mentoring system in DoBS*

	Number of mentors			Number of mentees			
	F	M	Total	F	M	No data	Total
2019							
2020							
2021							
2022							
2023							
2024							
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>34</b>

We note the gender imbalanced data regarding mentees, the proportionately high numbers with 'no data' and the low total numbers registered on the university's mentoring system thus making meaningful conclusions in terms of gender balance difficult. To address the discrepancy between low formal mentoring registrations on the College system and anecdotal reports of informal mentoring, we examined alternative support sources, including department, external, and professional networks. This suggested broader mentoring participation than that formally recorded. We clarified the definition of 'mentor' and highlighted various mentoring forms.

Figure 11 and

Figure 12 show overall staff and Research Associate responses on mentoring from the 2021 and 2023 culture surveys. Research Associate participation rose from 13% (3F, 3M) in 2021 to 31% (10F, 5M, 1PNS) in 2023, indicating improved engagement and effectiveness of our communications strategy. Gender ratios remained broadly representative (2021: 56%F, 2023: 63%F). The 2023 survey showed we exceeded our 30% mentoring target, reaching 60%F/67%M having a mentor-like relationship (2020 Ref. 3.1), providing evidence of success of our 2020 mentoring actions (2020 Actions 3.1.1-3.1.7).

Figure 11: “Do you have a person outside your immediate team with whom you can talk (a mentor)?” 2021 survey responses by gender

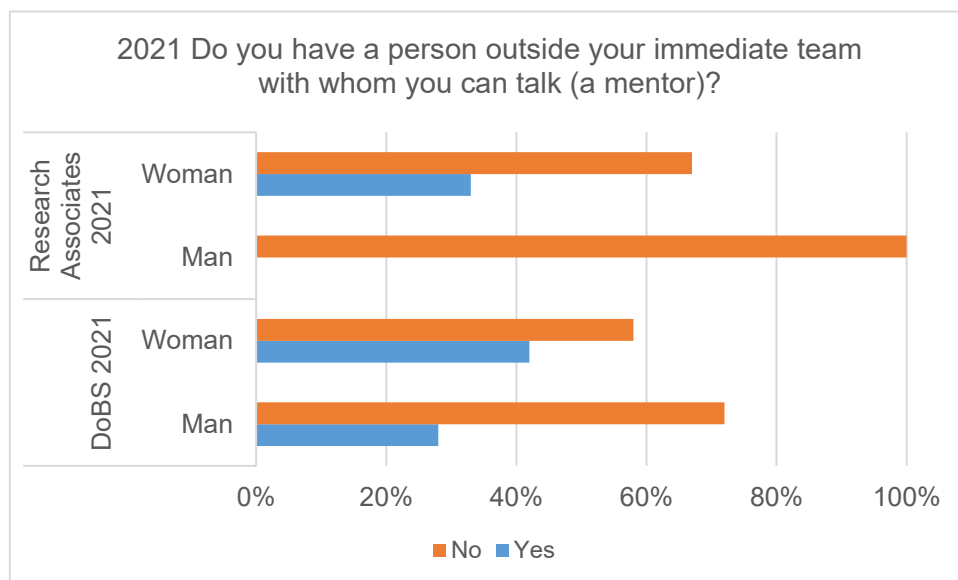
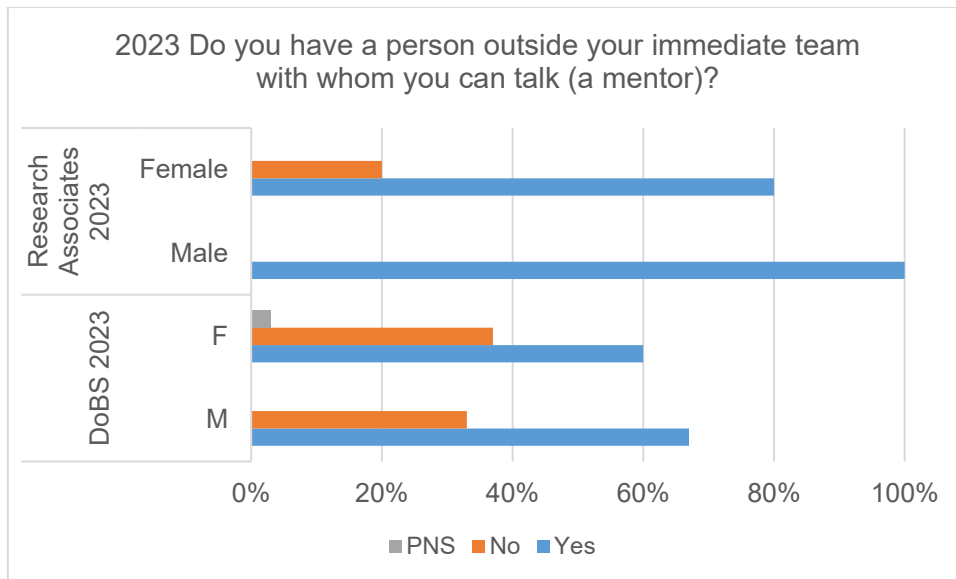


Figure 12 “Do you have a person outside your immediate team with whom you can talk (a mentor)?” 2023 survey responses by gender



The 2020 mentoring survey also revealed that the majority of those who wanted a mentor were at the Research Associate level and so we aimed to target this pinch-point of career progression i.e. the transition of Research Associate to Research Fellow **(2020 Action 3.1.3)**.

A new Mentoring Champion in early 2024 give us the opportunity to refine the remit and focus at this key career transition point. The new champion had previously launched a Women’s Fellowship Writing Circle in May 2023 at the UKDRI Centre for six senior Research Associates near or at the top of their pay scales who were catching up on research post-pandemic to secure fellowships. With increasing competition, fellowship applications were emphasized at every in-person events and by their PIs. The group meets three times a year alongside digital check-ins, setting clear actions and tracking progress through the EDIC Mentoring Champion. The first cohort resulted in:

- + 1F took up a new Fellowship position at Exeter;
- + [redacted] were awarded an Edmond J Safra Research Fellowship to establish an independent group within the department;
- + [redacted] received a Junior Faculty Award at AD/PD, received an Alzheimer’s Society Career Development Grant and a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship;
- + [redacted] has been shortlisted for a Fellowship; and
- + [redacted] have received their first independent pilot grant funding.

It is now clear that this focused approach for small numbers and specific shared objectives has contributed to its success. The Circle will extend to female senior postdocs across the department **(2024 Action 4.2.a)**.

**Priority 6: Communications;** ensure no gender bias in department communications and increase representation of minority groups

6.1 Ensure DoBS website includes diverse images and unbiased language

A 2022 website audit (**2020 Action 6.1.1**) reviewed 246 images, finding female staff featured in most images. Despite women making up 37% of academic staff, they appeared in 42% of academic/research images and 38% of high traffic pages, thus showing no proportional gender bias (

*Figure 13*). A 2024 audit (111 images) found similar results with women in 53% of images (*Figure 14*).

*Figure 13: website image audit 2022 gender representation*

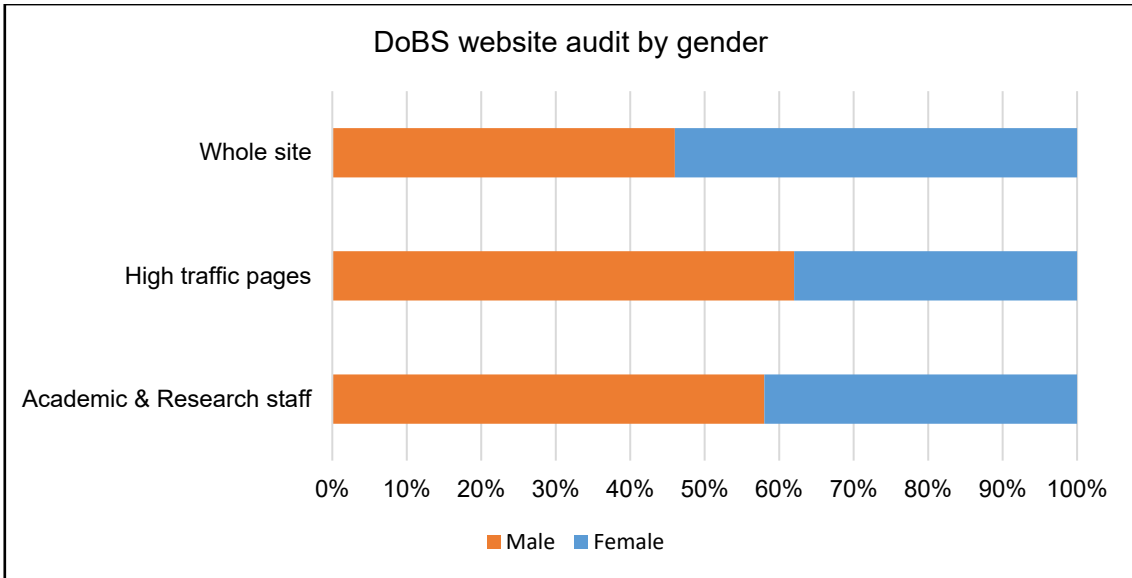
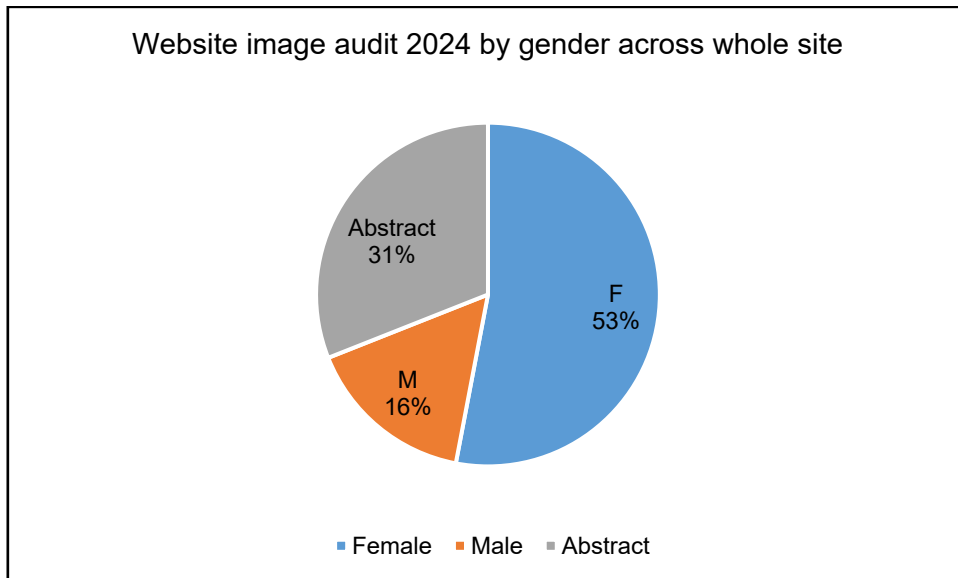


Figure 14: website image audit 2024 gender representation across the whole site



### 6.2 Improve visibility of role models

In the ‘Communications’ section, we nearly met our goal of 50% female seminar speakers (**2020 Obj. 6.2**), increasing from 31% to an average of 47%. One seminar series (60% women) skewed the data (*Table 15*) but, given low overall numbers and how a change or one or two speakers can make a difference, we considered this a success. Analysing invitations and acceptances to ensure we were not disproportionately inviting male speakers, found that 47% of speaker invites for one seminar series went to women (*Table 16*). To sustain speaker diversity, we identified databases that list [academic women](#) and [individuals from other underrepresented groups](#), and will actively leverage these resources to increase seminars from women and underrepresented groups (**2024 Action 2.2.d**).

Table 15: %F internal and external seminar speakers

Seminar series	%F speakers
Clinical Lecture Series (CX) (2023 - 2024)	46% (6/13)
Neurogenomics (2020 - 2024)	42% (25/60)
Neuroscience (2023 - Q1 2025)	43% (12/28)
UKDRI department (2023 - 2024)	60% (9/15)
<b>Average %F</b>	<b>47%</b>

Table 16: invitations and acceptances for Friday Clinical Lecture series by gender

		Female	Male	%F
2023	Invitations sent	8	6	57%
	Acceptances / lectures given	4	6	40%
2024 (to July)	Invitations sent	6	10	38%
	Acceptances / lectures given	2	1	67%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Invitations sent</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>47%</b>
	<b>Acceptances / lectures given</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>46%</b>

To address visibility in our department, we planned Wikipedia pages for women professors (**2020 Action 6.2.4**), but they declined due to reluctance around having an online presence. Instead, we focused on raising the profiles of women ECRs and junior group leaders through local communications. In 2024, we featured ECRs in Brain Sciences for International Women’s Day alongside an X campaign (*Figure 15*). Our ‘staff profile’ series (*Figure 16*) regularly highlights emerging researchers, with 14 of 18 newsletters since 2022 spotlighting women or ECRs as top stories. We also prioritise their features in the newsletter review process.

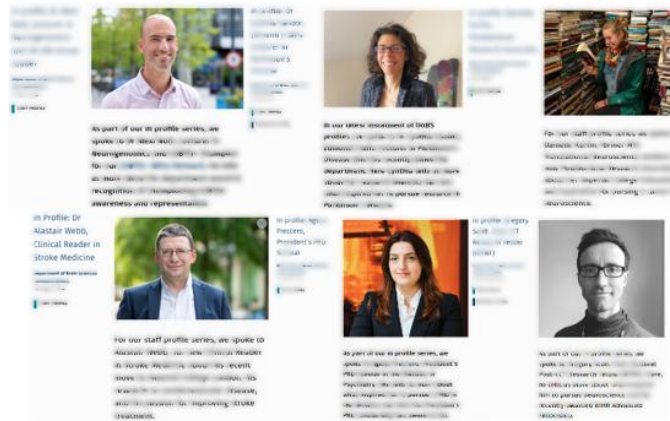
Figure 15: IWD 2024 piece highlighting female ECRs in DoBS

**Celebrating Early Career Women in Brain Sciences**

by Meesha Patel  
08 March 2024



Figure 16: selection of staff profiles from department website



To improve the visibility of LGBTQ+ role models we:

appointed an LGBTQ+ Champion and launched the 'LGBTQ+ and Allies' network in January 2021 with a £3K annual budget to enhance LGBTQ+ visibility and connect with LGBTQ+ STEM groups, including Imperial600 (staff network and IQ (student society)). They host events (*Table 17*) and run the LGBTQ+ Brains Blog, highlighting queer scientists (*Figure 17*). Their efforts were recognized in department reward and recognition awards for increasing the visibility of LGBTQ+ role models (*Figure 18*).

- + ran a pronoun drive at numerous whole department events (**2020 Action 8.6.1**) to raise awareness and encourage pronoun sharing; people were encouraged to choose and wear badges that best represented their gender identities. A survey showed strong agreement (4.45/5) that recognizing and using pronouns fosters an inclusive workplace.
- + ran a pulse survey in January 2025 and measured pronoun inclusion in email signatures and gathered views around pronoun sharing (*Table 18*). With 42% including pronouns, we met our success measure (**2020 Obj. 8.6**). However, free text comments (n=57) showed most felt it wasn't necessary or relevant. More work is required in this space.

Additionally, the EDIC Chair identified that the Imperial online profiles platform (used by all staff) lacked space for pronouns. This was raised with the Head of Digital Communications and will be rectified in the platform's upgrade in 2025.

*Table 17: a selection of events organised by the LGBTQ+ Allies network*

Year	Event	Attendance
2023	STEM Symposium	52
	Brain Sciences Symposium	89
	Lunch Social	17
	Summer Social	27
2024	Lunch Social	18

	Evening Social	17
	Psychedelic Symposium	74

Figure 17: DoBS Brains Blog on the department website, with a selection of profiles from staff and students

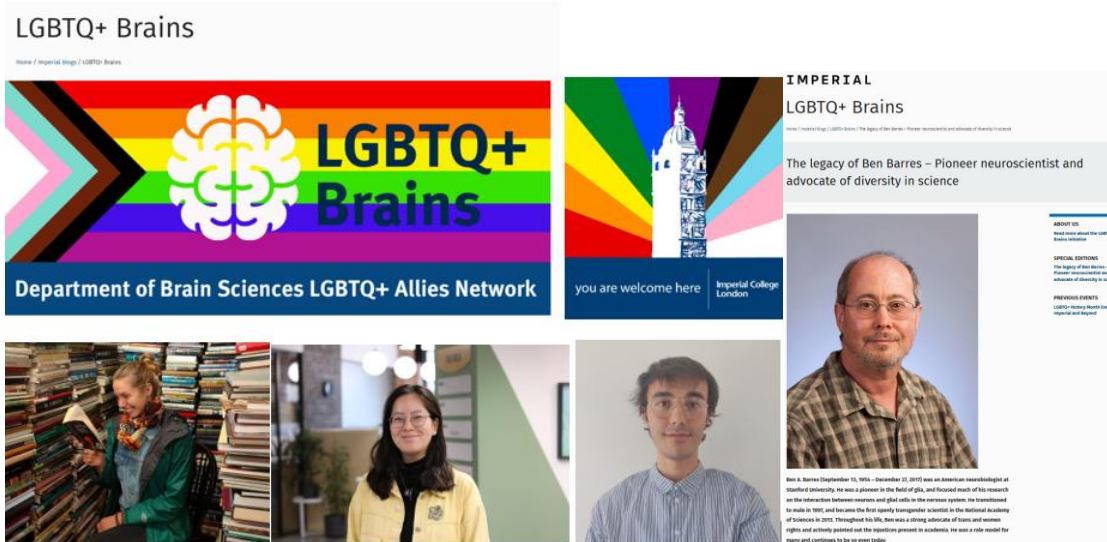


Figure 18: feedback from a recipient of the department award for ‘staff initiative to improve the department’s work’

*“It was such a joy to receive the award. Knowing that our efforts to create role models and foster diversity and inclusion for LGBTQ scientists in our department were recognized filled me with immense gratitude. This recognition reaffirmed the importance of embracing equity and intersectionality in science, and inspired me to continue advocating for a more welcoming and inclusive academic community.”*

Table 18: pronouns in email signature pulse survey results

Do you share your pronouns in your email signature?	
Yes	44 = 42%
No	62 = 58%
Response rate	106 / 227 = 47%

Figure 19: feedback from members of and attendees at LGBTQ+ and Allies’ network events

**P** *“I also would like to state how nice of an initiative it is and how I’m sure it is appreciated by many.”*  
PGT student

*“Thank you again for all of your work advocating for the LGBTQ+ community”*  
Postdoc

7.2: ensure the recognition of activities not usually recognised through other channels

To recognize contributions beyond research and grants, we launched a department reward scheme (2020 Obj. 7.2, Actions 3.6.4, 7.2.1) covering areas like sustainability, mentoring, public engagement, teaching, and technical and administrative support. Winners receive a trophy and £100 voucher. Over four years (2020 awards given in 2021 etc), 245 nominations led to 40 awards for 58 individuals (some were team awards) (Table 19). Gender balance among nominees and winners has improved (

Figure 21), suggesting that men are taking on and/or being recognised for activities outside of academic / research work. Awards are presented by the HoD at the Summer Party, with positive feedback (Figure 20). We plan to expand recognition further (2024 Action 5.2.a).

Table 19: nominations to the DoBS Reward and Recognition scheme by gender

	Nominations				Awarded			
	F	M	Total	%F	F	M	Total	%F
2020			41	83%			18	78%
2021			38	79%			11	91%
2022			98	50%			16	63%
2023			68	56%			13	54%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>71%</b>

Figure 20: a selection of feedback from Reward and Recognition award recipients

*“This has been such a massive confidence booster for me.”*

Male

*“Receiving an award made me feel valued and appreciated for the hard work I put in. My last award was for our sustainability team that I put together...and I was really pleased they were recognised especially as they’d given up their time and volunteered to be part of this team.”*

Male

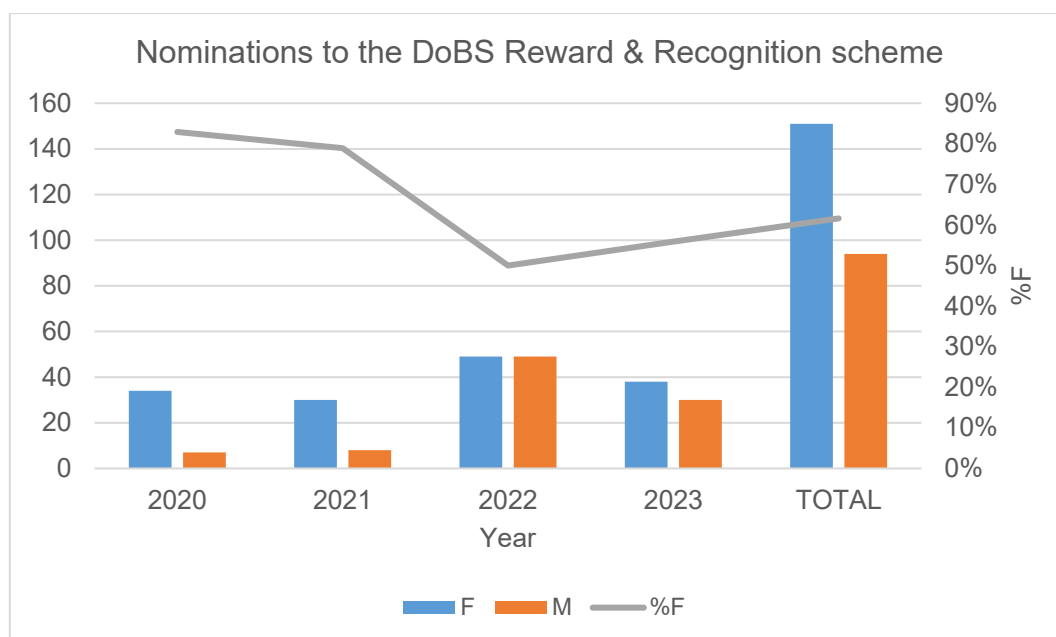
*“I have relentlessly strived to bring mental health as a topic of conversation across the department...It is a big honour to have received this award and see my efforts being recognised, so I am very hopeful for the future of the Department’s culture.”*

Female

*“I am honoured and truly humbled...”*

Female

Figure 21: nominations to the DoBS Reward and Recognition awards by gender



Our department survey in 2023 shows 58%F, 71%M (Table 29, Figure 36) feel their contributions are valued. Although we met and exceeded our target of >50% (2020 Ref. 7.2), we note that female respondents still feel less valued than male colleagues.

### 7.3: Ensure pay parity at all levels

An annual pay review exercise is conducted by the department (2020 Ref. 7.3, Action 7.3.1) and chaired by the HoD, and focuses on all non-clinical staff including PTO staff. The panel includes the department manager, Heads of Division, HR partner and the EDI Lead. This aims to rectify any pay discrepancies particularly those arising in under-represented groups. This panel has rectified gender pay discrepancies amongst senior academics (including one case of a woman academic at Reader level being paid less than her male counterparts) and there are currently no outstanding pay disparities.

### **2024 Actions referred to in this section:**

<b>2.2.d</b>	Utilise databases that specifically list academic women to increase F speakers to maintain and promote visibility of senior women in the sector.
<b>4.2.a</b>	Expand the Women's Writing Fellowship Circle to include all senior female postdocs in the department
<b>5.2.a</b>	Create additional department recognition awards: 1. staff member who best exemplifies College Values through their behaviour. 2. Most supportive PI

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

### 1. Culture, inclusion and belonging

#### Bullying and harassment

A key learning for us from the 2023 department survey is the responses to questions on bullying and harassment (*Table 35, Table 36, Table 37, Table 38, Figure 42, Figure 43, Figure 44*). We note the gender discrepancy around satisfaction of how bullying and harassment are dealt with in the department (19%F, 48%M, *Table 35 and Figure 42*), as well as the high proportions of those who chose ‘neither agree nor disagree’ to questions around bullying and harassment and the disproportionately high proportions of respondents who chose not to disclose their gender but disclosed negative experiences. We whole-heartedly acknowledge these and are grateful to respondents for sharing their personal experiences, which we recognise as being unacceptable. Whilst we have been aware of some issues over the past few years, this has been a wake-up call for us in terms of the extent of the behaviour, and how wide-spread it is. For example, 67%F, 52%M personally experienced or witnessed aggressive, condescending or intimidating communication to some extent over the 12 months prior to the survey (*Table 20*). This is significantly higher than the 2021 response which identified 35% of women and 28% of men experiencing or witnessing this behaviour to some extent. For those who chose not to share their gender, this negative response was even higher with 100% in 2021 and 92% in 2023.

*Table 20: 2023 and 2021 culture survey responses for those experiencing or witnessing aggressive, condescending or intimidating communication in the past 12 months*

	2023 Female	2021 Woman	2023 Male	2021 Man	2023 Prefer not to say	2021 Prefer not to answer
<b>Not at all</b>	33%	65%	48%	72%	8%	0%
<b>Not particularly</b>	28%	15%	29%	22%	8%	0%
<b>Somewhat</b>	18%	4%	15%	0%	25%	60%
<b>Definitely</b>	21%	15%	8%	6%	58%	40%

We acknowledge the different experiences by gender, with females and those choosing not to disclose their gender being more likely to personally experience or witness unacceptable behaviour, and be less satisfied with how issues are dealt with. This is not the department we want to be. It seems there is still a culture of not reporting incidents, and where they are reported these are perceived to be dealt with inconsistently, and with unsatisfactory outcomes. We need to work on increasing trust in and understanding of the processes available to us to resolve issues when they arise (**2024 Actions 5.2.b, 5.3.a-d**).

Figure 22: example responses around reasons for lack of disclosure from 2023 culture survey

*“It’s difficult to address and report behaviour like this given the more general academic landscape, where career progression requires references, and people are generally very dependent on superiors for support, e.g. funding. This creates an environment in which you cannot really report this behaviour if it’s coming from higher up, especially concerning supervisors and line managers.”*

F, PhD student

*“Being of the opinion that nothing would be done, harassment and bullying episodes have not been reported...”*

PNS, Operational staff

We are already responding to these concerns. Over the past couple of years Heads of Division have been responsible for discussing behaviours with individuals and their teams, which we think has increased an awareness in the department and thus increased disclosures in the survey. Additionally, the introduction of Active Bystander training as part of the DoBS mandatory EDI courses in 2022 has given people the confidence to speak up and out about inappropriate and unacceptable behaviours (Table 82 and 2.1).

The Imperial Values (Figure 23) established in October 2021 provides a structure for us to discuss behaviours within the department, and we have plans to use this more effectively through the Behaviour Framework to identify and encourage positive behaviours. We currently have two Values Champions (1F, 1M) who provide a conduit between the university and department.

Figure 23: Imperial values



### Intersectional inequalities

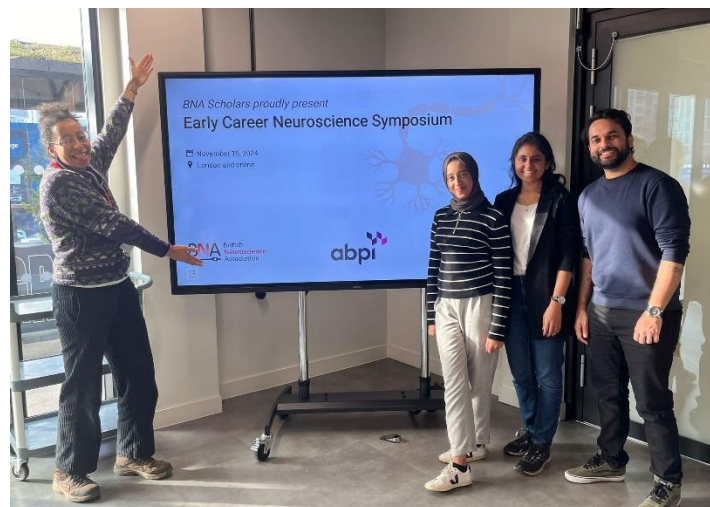
We are conscious that the academic sector has an underrepresentation of Black females in senior positions<sup>2</sup>. Imperial as a whole is particularly underrepresented by female students and staff of Black heritage: we have only one Black female Professor (and two Black male Professors) in the university, and none in our department; the university was awarded a Bronze Race Equality Charter (REC)

<sup>2</sup> [WHEN 100 Black Women Professors Now](#)

award in 2021. To increase the support for females of Black heritage in our department we have:

- + partnered with the British Neuroscience Association (BNA) to support the development of their Scholars programme, which supports students and ECRs from underrepresented ethnic groups to thrive in neuroscience. As well as sponsorship of £3K (£1K per year since 2022) we funded (£2.5K) and hosted their inaugural Early Career Symposium in November 2024 (*Figure 24*);
- + supported [redacted] to complete the IMPACT Development Programme, a talent development programme for staff who identify as being from a minority ethnic group; and
- + appointed a new Race Champion to the EDIC whose remit is to increase awareness of academic racial inequalities and support intersectional data collection (**2024 Actions 5.11.a-b**); this will help us focus on the structural inequalities facing our students and staff from minoritised racial groups. Administrative support has been identified to support this role.

*Figure 24: photos from the BNA Scholars inaugural Early Career Symposium from November 2024*

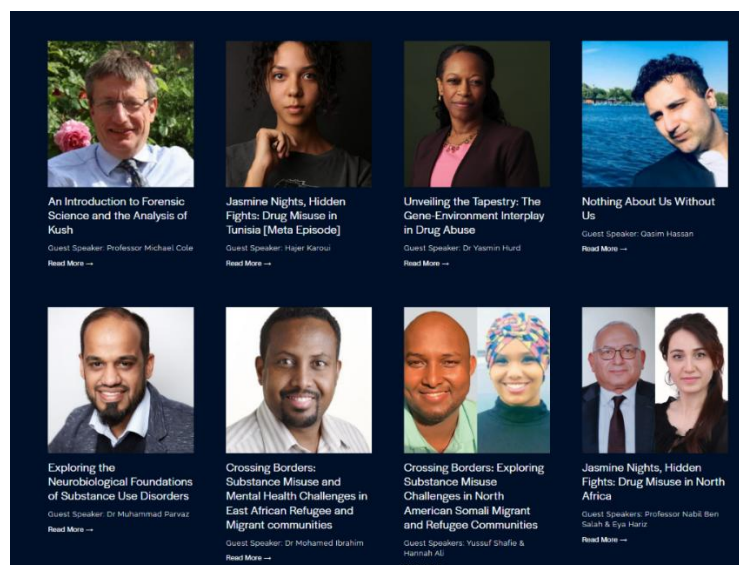




In 2024 the EDIC Chair supervised a female PGT student to look at Brain Sciences data on gender and ethnicity publication bias<sup>3</sup>. Whilst the research found no compounded effect of gender and ethnicity on publication rates, it did identify that males publish 20% more than females whatever their ethnicity.

The Centre for Psychedelic Research is leading the department in terms of highlighting the voices and experiences of people, particularly women, from Black heritage, developing a framework for conducting culturally responsible research. They are also working on a project to make neuroimaging more accessible to people with coarse/textured/curly hair, generally those from minoritised ethnic groups, particularly women from Black heritage. Finally, they have created a podcast, [Craving Clarity](#), to highlight underrepresentation in addiction neuroscience and amplify historically marginalised perspectives in this field of research (Figure 25).

Figure 25: a selection of podcast episodes from Craving Clarity



<sup>3</sup> Alobaid, N. Exploring Publication Bias across the Department of Brain Sciences. 2024

## Supporting the maintenance of a healthy whole life balance

We are pleased that most respondents agree or strongly agree that the department enables flexible working (86%F, 89%M), and that there is a willingness to organise meetings taking account of timetables and caring responsibilities (81%F, 83%M); 26% of respondents stated a caring responsibility (equal for F & M). However, comments on the theme of ‘Work life balance and managing career breaks’ highlighted some less positive individual experiences, suggesting that whilst the department as a whole is enabling flexibility in terms of its structures and support available, this is not consistently being put into practice by individual managers and PIs (*Figure 26*).

*Figure 26: selection of comments from respondents of 2023 culture survey around flexible working*

*“Line manager is very supportive and has brought in strong ways/ideas on improving practice for work/life balance etc.”*  
F, Professional and Operational staff

*“There should be rules on meeting times within the department that people have to keep to avoid meetings at unreasonable hours where the PI is not considering people's preferences”*  
F, PhD student

Also highlighted were examples of negative behaviours and cultures exhibited by senior staff that are tolerated within the department (*Figure 27*):

*Figure 27: selection of comments from respondents of 2023 survey around work:life balance*

*“Most of the senior academicians are working way beyond their work hours. This percolates down, though unsaid, to junior ranks as well.”*  
M, Clinical research fellow

*“I believe that workers passion towards their projects are capitalised by supervisors”*  
F, Technical staff

We will address the above **(2024 Actions 5.8.a-c)**.

Mental health and wellbeing are always a concern in a highly competitive, academic environment. Respondents were generally positive that their mental health and wellbeing are supported in the department (52%F, 67%M); we recognise neither of those figures are high. Females were much less likely to respond favourably and we know there is much work to be done to improve this. Of concern is also how these responses spread across the department, with the Division of Neuroscience scoring noticeably lower in this area, with only 42% of respondents agreeing with this statement **(2024 Actions 5.9.a-b)**.

We are pleased that since 2019 only two individuals, both Research – non-clinical staff, have chosen not to return from maternity leave (*Table 76*), and these both

occurred during the pandemic. However, anecdotal evidence suggests at least three members of staff felt the need to apologise for their pregnancies when disclosing to their line managers. We note only one instance of shared parental leave (*Table 80*), six of paternity leave (*Table 79*), and no instances of leave for fertility treatment, all figures of which we believe to be low compared with those eligible. All of the above leads us to believe we need to do more to support, celebrate and normalise taking time to have and raise children (**2024 Actions 2.1.d, 5.5.a-c**).

Although staff are based on three campuses (*Figure 6*), we try to facilitate a sense of belonging and engagement from the whole department. Since 2022, we have organised and funded two whole department social events each year, in Summer and Winter (*Table 21*) (it was one ‘Christmas’ party previously; the DM changed this to make it more inclusive). These were initially hosted on campus (max. capacity 80), but increased demand (and a lack of a large enough space on campus) means these are now hosted externally. These will continue (**2024 Action 5.1.c**).

*Table 21: Attendance at DoBS whole department social events*

Event	Attendance	Department headcount	% of department
Summer 2023	184	213	86%
Winter 2023	155	213	73%
Summer 2024	192	223	86%
Winter 2024	195	223	87%

## Widening participation in medicine

### UROP students

In 2024 DoBS were the first department in the FoM to stipulate all UROP students must receive financial support (currently £400pw) to undertake these 6-12 week research experiences with a PI. The department has put aside funds (circa. £16K for 2025) to support PIs and group leaders with these costs for a transitional period if they were not budgeted for in grants. The department is looking at ways it can remove further barriers to participation for UROP students by, for example, introducing accommodation bursaries.

Data show an increased proportion of female UROP students over time (*Table 22*). Applications are processed centrally by the university Outreach Office, and we will work with them to ensure there is no gender bias within the application and selection process (**2024 Action 1.2.a**).

*Table 22: UROP students by gender*

Year	Female	Male	%F
2021			58%
2022			74%
2023			74%
2024			87%

Travel bursaries for Y12 work experience students

DoBS is hosting Y12 work experience students for the first time in 2025. We are the only department in the university to provide travel bursaries to all successful applicants as standard. We will track the gender of the participants (**2024 Action 1.3.a**).

Hallinan Fund

The Hallinan Fund is a Travel Scholarship for Division of Psychiatry, and used to help fund registration, travel & accommodation to attend conferences/research meetings (both national & international). Preference is given to junior researchers (e.g., PhD students, research assistants, post docs & ECRS) who have no other means of funding travel to academic meetings or conferences. All applications to the fund have been successful (*Table 23*).

*Table 23: Hallinan Fund Travel scholarship for Division of Psychiatry*

Year	Female	Male	Total Amount	Average amount	
				Female	Male
2021			£40	£40	N/A
2022			£11,353.20	£757	£649
2023			£1,242.39	£414	N/A
2024			£15,020.56	£955	£1,367
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>£27, 656.15</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>

Alzheimer’s research UK Network Grant

This covers small pilot grants, equipment and network opportunities (such as public events) and must be related to dementia. Between 7-10 people apply each year, and all eligible applicants have received some funding; the average is between £5K-£7K per year (*Table 24*).

Table 24: Alzheimer’s research UK Network Grant

Year	Female	Male	Total
2023			£8,404
2024			£24,980
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>£33,384</b>

Library

We are working closely with the Library on the Hammersmith Campus to introduce more EDI resources. Since our initial discussions in 2024 they have produced a specific ‘EDI’ display at the entrance (Figure 28). We are also developing a DoBS reading list of EDI books which will be provided to all students, and increasing the number and range of EDI books available both physically and online.

Figure 28: photograph of EDI book display at Hammersmith Campus Library



**2024 Actions referred to in this section:**

1.2.a	Work with the university Outreach team to audit their application and selection data by gender, as well as processes.
1.3.a	Provide travel bursaries to all successful applicants to the DoBS Y12 work experience as standard (approx.£75 per student for 10-15 students). Work with Research Manager and university Outreach team to promote this at application stage. Monitor the gender of successful applicants.
2.1.d	Spotlight a range of staff, i.e. with caring responsibilities, to showcase the diversity of work-life patterns, taking inspiration from the Royal Society's 'Parent Carer Scientist' campaign: <a href="https://royalsociety.org/about-us/who-we-are/diversity-inclusion/case-studies/parent-carer-scientist/">https://royalsociety.org/about-us/who-we-are/diversity-inclusion/case-studies/parent-carer-scientist/</a>

<b>5.1.c</b>	Continue to commit to funding and facilitating whole department inclusive social events twice per year
<b>5.2.b</b>	Invite College EDI Centre in to run a briefing session on bullying and harassment for the department
<b>5.3.a</b>	HoD to present findings from culture survey highlighting bullying, harassment and unacceptable behaviours and encouraging people to report
<b>5.3.b</b>	Work with the College through the FoM PCC to improve the current reporting mechanisms, particularly the 'report and support' tool.
<b>5.3.c</b>	Communicate processes for disclosing and what the next steps would be in terms of options for disclosure; highlight and focus on resolutions
<b>5.3.d</b>	Train up Harassment Advisers through the College EDI Centre so there are additional safe spaces within the department for people to disclose unacceptable behaviour. Partner up with other departments to share advisers to issues can be raised anonymously.
<b>5.5.a</b>	HoD to champion extending paternity leave with HR to be in line with or above those of local universities
<b>5.5.b</b>	Ensure new staff are signposted as part of their onboarding to the family leave offering.
<b>5.5.c</b>	Profile staff who have taken different types of family leave (particularly paternity and SPL) for the staff newsletter and staff blog to raise the profile and help people be aware of the benefits; we can also add this to the Sharepoint for new starter information.
<b>5.8.a</b>	Develop and deliver workshops on communication and boundary setting to initiate conversations and discuss expectations from both ECR and supervisor perspective.
<b>5.8.b</b>	Send out regular reminders about the use of official work channels, e.g. email, rather than WhatsApp, unless previously agreed
<b>5.8.c</b>	Review support for those returning from leave and use 'back to work' conversations from those returning from leave to understand how we can enhance our support
<b>5.9.a</b>	Signpost the free counselling already offered through the College in newsletter under new 'mental health and wellbeing ' heading. Continue to use EDI budget to provide additional / specialist sessions for staff if required.
<b>5.9.b</b>	We currently have 6 MHFA (5F, 1M) with 5F and 1M training in March 2025. Train up more mental health first aiders and advertise the support they offer
<b>5.11.a</b>	Use pulse survey in the department to see if people are happy to disclose their gender and racial identity along with clear rationale as to how and why this will be used - link to the university REC application in November 2026.
<b>5.11.b</b>	Work with Head of Data in FoM and Assistant Provost for EDI to collect intersectional data on staff

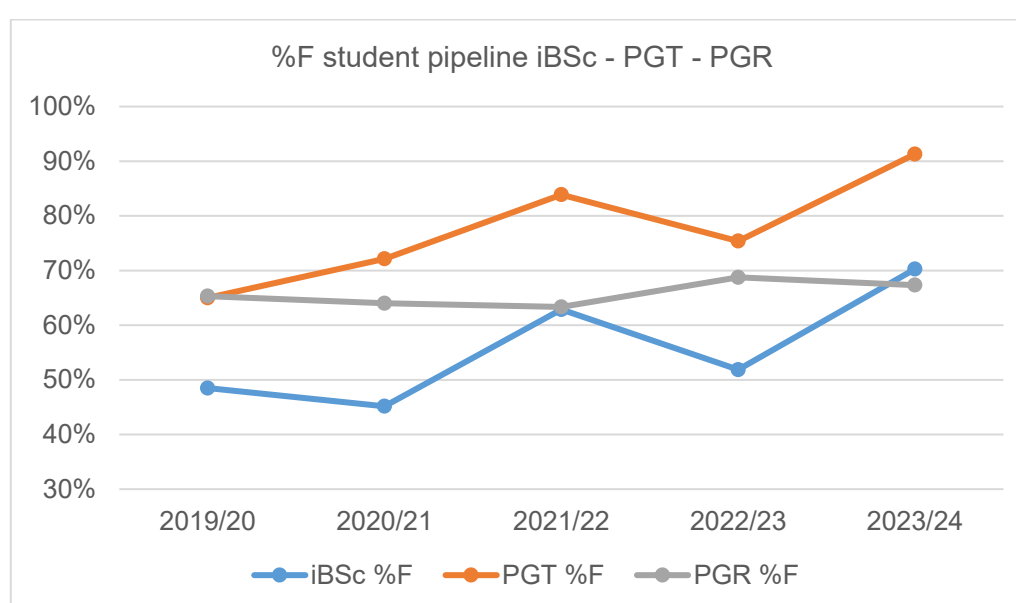
## 2. Key priorities for future action

Through our data analysis we have identified five overarching priorities to guide our actions and initiatives over the next five years. We are conscious of the numerous actions, particularly in priority 5, and are committed to tackling these issues with the necessary resources and senior support, recognising that such commitment is essential for effectively tackling complex cultural issues.

### Key priority 1: increase proportion of male students at PGT

We recognise that our student population is skewed towards increasing proportions of female students at all levels (*Figure 29*).

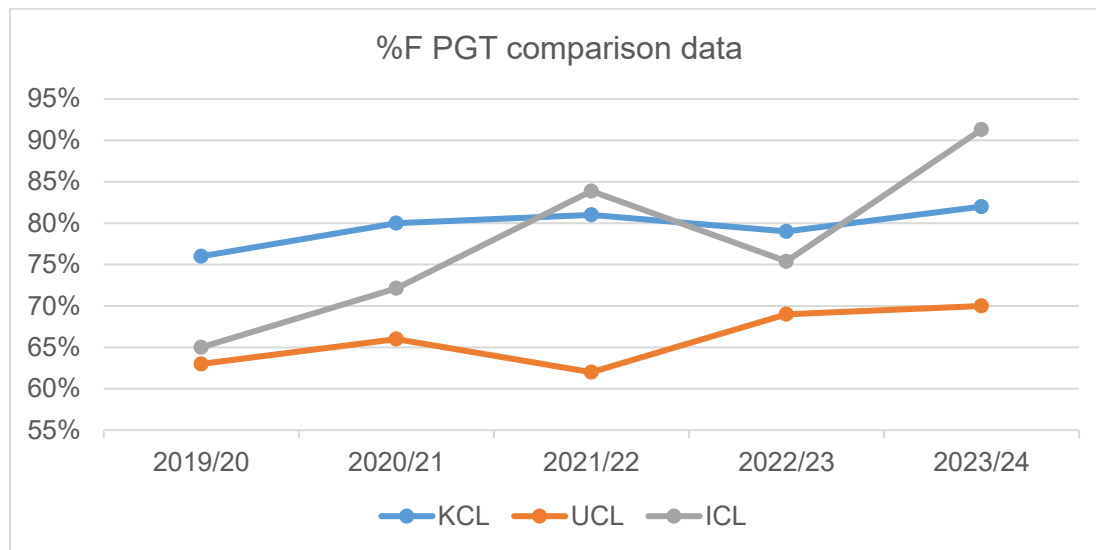
*Figure 29: DoBS %F student pipeline*



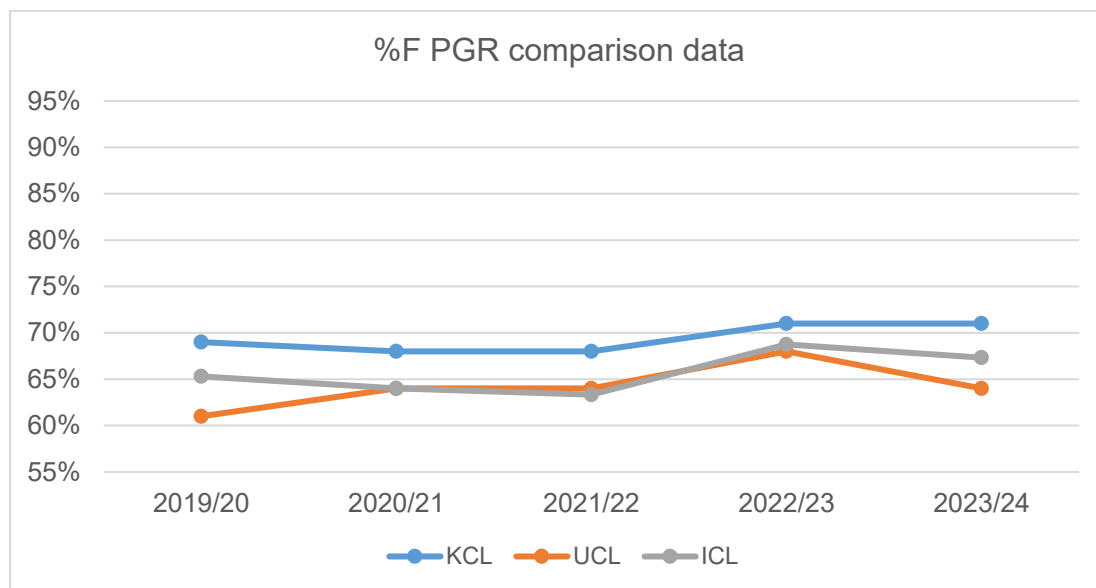
It is unclear why this trend towards a higher proportion of female students studying Brain Sciences is now occurring. To establish whether this was something unique to Imperial or happening across the sector we reached out to four other comparative departments at institutions around the UK asking for their high level data, and offering to share our data with them; only two departments responded: Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience at King's College London (KCL), and Queen Square Institute of Neurology at University College London (UCL). Data from these courses show a similar picture of an overrepresentation of female students (*Figure 30, Figure 31*) over the time period, with some fluctuations. For all courses at both PGT and PGR, in 2023/24 at least 2/3 of students were females. Whilst this shows a wider issue than Imperial, it is clear that our gender imbalance has increased over the past five years. This is especially stark at PGT (*Table 47, Table 49*) where our F% has increased from 65% to 91%, the biggest increase across our comparators (*Figure 30*). The recruitment process for this programme is administered and managed within the department but has never been audited for gender

balance; we will do this to check for points of bias (**2024 Action 1.1.b**). We have no influence or involvement in BSc student recruitment.

*Figure 30: %F PGT students from comparator departments*



*Figure 31: %F PGR students from comparator departments*



We have developed a strong relationship with the British Neuroscience Association (BNA) since our investment in the BNA Scholars programme. We contacted them to explore whether this trend was representative of the sector as a whole. They shared insights with us comparing HESA data with BNA membership, suggesting this is a trend happening across the sector. Whilst we recognise that this is not just an Imperial issue, identifying and raising this as part of the analysis and reflection for this application has provided an opportunity to highlight this and articulate it within the department. We are now working in partnership with the BNA to explore these trends further, collect and analyse more data and develop actions to support this (**2024 Action 1.1.a**).

## Actions relating to Key Priority 1

1.1.a	Work with the BNA to support and shape their data projects around gender balance in neuroscience at student level
1.1.b	Work with Education Team to gather gender data on applications and offers for our courses, including home and overseas students
1.2.a	Work with the university Outreach team to audit their application and selection data by gender, as well as processes.
1.3.a	Provide travel bursaries to all successful applicants to the DoBS Y12 work experience as standard (approx.£75 per student for 10-15 students). Work with Research Manager and university Outreach team to promote this at application stage. Monitor the gender of successful applicants.

## Key priority 2: increase proportion of female academic staff at senior levels

We have focussed on non-clinical academics in particular because of the system by which many clinical academics join the department; that is, through NIHR clinical lecturer and speciality training schemes that are beyond department influence.

### Recruitment

The number of female Academic non-clinical and Clinical Academic staff has reduced (*Table 55*) mainly due to retirement (*Table 75*). We have very few recruitment opportunities for these roles, with only seven between 2019 and 2023 (*Table 70*). We note that there were no applications from females for the Professor role during this time period.

Despite the limitations we have in terms of recruitment opportunities, we have actions in place to enhance our recruitment process in general and highlight support we can offer throughout the process, for example, by including an unconscious bias observer at interview stage, and providing opportunities for conversations around working patterns and contextually relevant information via the EDI Co-ordinator throughout the process (**2024 Action 2.1.a-f**).

### Promotion

Whilst our promotion success rates are high (100%F, 83%M, *Table 73*) our 2023 culture survey showed that 39%F, 62%M agreed or strongly agreed that the promotion process treats all staff equally; this was even lower for females at the university level: 28%F, 62%. This is a stark gender imbalance in terms of perception, and is inverted in terms of promotion performance. We need to improve this.

With so few females in academic positions in the department, we are conscious of not putting undue pressure on them to advance in order for us to appear successful. Thus we have focused on improving and increasing our support through the structures and resources that we have (**2024 Actions 2.2.a-d**).

## Actions relating to Key Priority 2

2.1.a	At shortlisting stage, highlight academic adviser through probation process (approx. 3 years).
2.1.b	At interview, application and interview stage give people the opportunity to contextualise or share any other relevant information about themselves; pilot for academic positions.
2.1.c	Have EDI Co-ordinator as a contact on the application form, and available for contact throughout the application process.
2.1.d	Spotlight a range of staff, i.e. with caring responsibilities, to showcase the diversity of work-life patterns, taking inspiration from the Royal Society's 'Parent Carer Scientist' campaign: <a href="https://royalsociety.org/about-us/who-we-are/diversity-inclusion/case-studies/parent-carer-scientist/">https://royalsociety.org/about-us/who-we-are/diversity-inclusion/case-studies/parent-carer-scientist/</a>
2.1.e	Introduce unconscious bias observers for academic positions for Lecturer and above.
2.1.f	Ensure that academic recruitment panels are gender balanced. For Clinical Academic appointment we will keep pushing CATO/Deanery for this; continue to lead in this area. Heads of Division to highlight in Divisional meetings and make it an expectation.
2.2.a	Enhance transparency around the pathways to the next step and the options available for ECRs through department Q&A events dispelling the myths around different routes of progression. Highlight opportunity and pathway to become an academic - this seems to have been overlooked in favour of alternative careers, e.g in industry, publishing, etc.
2.2.b	Ensure female representation in shortlisting process and interview panels for promotion (without overburdening them)
2.2.c	Facilitated workshops on experiences of promotions process
2.2.d	Utilise databases that specifically list academic women to increase F speakers to maintain and promote visibility of senior women in the sector.

### Key priority 3: improve gender balance and support for PTO staff

Our numbers of Operational and Professional Services staff, both male and female, increased between 2019 and 2023, whilst Technical staff decreased by a quarter, with mainly loss of male staff (*Table 63*). These changes mean that our Technical staff are now imbalanced with 80%F in 2023, whilst the gender balance of Professional and Operational staff has remained relatively static. Where there is more than one individual at a particular level, Level 3a is most imbalanced towards females (*Table 66*).

In recruitment, for Technical staff, females are more likely to be shortlisted and appointed (*Table 71*). For Professional Services and Operational staff, whilst proportions are fairly balanced overall, when analysing by grade there are several discrepancies, for example at level 5 where females are more likely to be shortlisted and appointed (*Table 72*). We will audit the recruitment processes for gender bias (**2024 Action 3.2.a**).

We do not currently have a formal progression pathway for our PTO staff, which has long been a frustration. We already have some success in supporting staff to progress by applying for roles at higher grades within the department, outside the department, and

external to the university (*Table 74*); however, we can enhance the information we provide and the consistency with how it is communicated (**2024 Action 3.1.a-c**). Career development and active support has more prominence in the new ARC process, and we will continue to encourage engagement and respond to feedback (**2024 Actions 3.3.a-c**).

### **Actions relating to Key Priority 3**

<b>3.1.a</b>	Work with the university to provide formal opportunities and structured support for PTO staff to progress, whether that be in the department, College or elsewhere
<b>3.1.b</b>	Institute development days for PTO staff, similar to those for postdocs, where they can visit other departments, shadow roles, etc.
<b>3.1.c</b>	Include new section in the department newsletter which signposts staff to opportunities specific to PTO staff across the College.
<b>3.2.a</b>	Audit recruitment processes to explore and investigate any areas for potential bias
<b>3.3.a</b>	Invite member of POD/HR to host a Q&A session in the department, as part of a regular department catch-up meeting which is recorded for maximum engagement.
<b>3.3.b</b>	Ensure PTO staff are surveyed on their experiences of the ARC process at the 2025 and 2027 department survey
<b>3.3.c</b>	Create department inbox specifically for completed ARC forms so all ARCs are recorded at department level and can be sent off to be centrally recorded

### **Key priority 4: increase support for research staff, particularly Research Associates and Fellows**

Unreliable and inconsistent data reporting (see 2.1) have been a barrier for us in gaining an accurate picture of how many staff receive an appraisal, and the usefulness of the process. A key part of the ARC process concerns career development, crucial for ECRs to progress. This process was new in 2024 and such processes take time to fully implement and embed; however, it creates a protected space for ECRs to discuss their development with their line manager and engagement is encouraged. We will ensure staff are surveyed on their experiences and support data reporting so we have a more accurate picture of who is receiving these (**2024 Action 4.1.a-c**)

We note that females are more likely to be appointed after shortlisting for Research Associate and Research Fellow (*Table 70*), as well as being more likely to be appointed from the application stage for Research Associates. Whilst we consider our recruitment process fair and inclusive, these data have highlighted an area of focus for us to explore further (**2024 Actions 4.3.a-b**), along with expanding on our successful Women's Fellowship Writing Circle (**2024 Actions 4.2.a**). We recognise the transition from RF to lecturer is also key; although recruitment to these posts is within the control of the department, the availability of posts is determined by the FoM and university.

### **Actions relating to Key Priority 4**

<b>4.1.a</b>	Invite member of POD to host a Q&A session in the department, as part of a regular department catch-up meeting which is recorded for maximum engagement
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4.1.b	Ensure academic and research staff are surveyed on their experiences of the ARC process at the 2025 and 2027 department survey
4.1.c	Create department inbox specifically for completed ARC forms so all ARCs are recorded at department level and can be sent off to be centrally recorded
4.2.a	Expand the Women's Writing Fellowship Circle to include all senior female postdocs in the department
4.3.a	Audit recruitment processes for research pathway.
4.3.b	Pilot unconscious bias observers on recruitment panels for postdocs applying for Fellowships.

### Key priority 5: improve inclusive culture

The 2023 culture survey identified bullying and harassment as a key issue for the department to address (section 3.1). Not only must we lower the incidences of bullying and harassment occurring, we also must increase transparency and communication within the department to improve trust and empower individuals to disclose inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour (**2024 Actions 5.3.a-d**). It is also important to reward and celebrate positive behaviours (**2024 Actions 5.2.a-c**).

To achieve this, facilitating an environment where all staff and students are psychologically safe and can thrive is key, acknowledging department feedback that shows we need to work harder to enable consistent and effective access to meetings and information (**2024 Actions 5.1.a-c**) and support for mental health and wellbeing (**2024 Actions 5.9.a-b**) and work/life balance (**2024 Actions 5.8.a-c**). We will encourage individuals to feel able to contribute and make suggestions for improvements (**2024 Actions 5.10.a-d**) and be honest and timely about communicating our successes and challenges for the department (**2024 Actions 5.4.a-g**) and EDIC (**2024 Actions 5.7.a-g**). Data showing what we perceive as low numbers of eligible staff taking paternity and shared parental leave (SPL), as well as no instances of leave or fertility treatment is disappointing (1 instance of SPL, 6 of paternity since 2019, 0 instances of fertility leave) (*Table 78, Table 80*) and shows us we need to do more to promote these types of leave, including lobbying the university for an increase in paternity leave entitlement (**2024 Actions 5.5.a-c**); we also need to enable and support staff to take their annual leave (**2024 Actions 5.6.a-d**).

### Actions relating to Key Priority 5

5.1.a	Implement a 'core hours' policy for all regular department meetings to take place between 10-4pm to give staff maximum flexibility in their caring responsibilities. Ensure this is effectively communicated.
5.1.b	Provide guidance on how to organise inclusive social events on different days, times and focus, e.g. breakfast meetings, 'bring your culture to work' days, etc.
5.1.c	Continue to commit to funding and facilitating whole department inclusive social events twice per year

<b>5.2.a</b>	Create additional department recognition awards: 1. staff member who best exemplifies College Values through their behaviour. 2. Most supportive PI
<b>5.2.b</b>	Invite College EDI Centre in to run a briefing session on bullying and harassment for the department
<b>5.2.c</b>	Regular signposting of positive culture through department comms (e.g. newsletter) and seeking ways for members to feed into this. Opportunities to give ownership to small groups to effect change
<b>5.3.a</b>	HoD to present findings from culture survey highlighting bullying, harassment and unacceptable behaviours and encouraging people to report
<b>5.3.b</b>	Work with the College through the FoM PCC to improve the current reporting mechanisms, particularly the 'report and support' tool.
<b>5.3.c</b>	Communicate processes for disclosing and what the next steps would be in terms of options for disclosure; highlight and focus on resolutions
<b>5.3.d</b>	Train up Harassment Advisers through the College EDI Centre so there are additional safe spaces within the department for people to disclose unacceptable behaviour. Partner up with other departments to share advisers to issues can be raised anonymously.
<b>5.4.a</b>	Restructure monthly newsletter to include logistical elements like staff changes, and spotlights on different research areas.
<b>5.4.b</b>	Utilise the staff sharepoint site to provide up-to-date organisational charts (with photos)
<b>5.4.c</b>	Quarterly Q&A department meetings led by senior management to share information and update - trialled during Covid
<b>5.4.d</b>	Ensure email distribution lists are up-to-date and that line managers are responsible for their teams being on the correct lists
<b>5.4.e</b>	Ensure new department policies are reviewed by the EDI Co-ordinator in conjunction with the EDIC and impact assessed annually
<b>5.4.f</b>	Document and make available on Sharepoint department policies, including those that we already do as part of business as usual (BAU)
<b>5.4.g</b>	Comms plan to ensure Athena Swan and EDI progress are updated regularly, e.g. through newsletter
<b>5.5.a</b>	HoD to champion extending paternity leave with HR to be in line with or above those of local universities
<b>5.5.b</b>	Ensure new staff are signposted as part of their onboarding to the family leave offering.
<b>5.5.c</b>	Profile staff who have taken different types of family leave (particularly paternity and SPL) for the staff newsletter and staff blog to raise the profile and help people be aware of the benefits; we can also add this to the Sharepoint for new starter information.
<b>5.6.a</b>	Gather data to see whether there are gender differences in those not taking leave
<b>5.6.b</b>	Targeted approach to line managers and PIs to raise conversations around why their staff may not be taking their leave. This includes exploring if people are trying to take leave but it's not being approved.
<b>5.6.c</b>	Direct emails to individuals to highlight that they haven't used their leave and offer conversations to understand why not.

<b>5.6.d</b>	Head of Department to send out communication about the importance of leave and to provide various touch points (including EDI Co-ordinator) within the department if people do not feel able to take their leave.
<b>5.7.a</b>	EDI Co-ordinator to speak at student Induction events to enhance visibility and highlight the work of the EDIC to encourage student representation.
<b>5.7.b</b>	PGT students to provide an EDIC rep for each course by the end of week 1 or 2 and be on the committee for the year. Reps get formal recognition for this.
<b>5.7.c</b>	EDIC champion roles to receive dedicated administrative support.
<b>5.7.d</b>	Amend ToR to formalise length of membership for non ex-officio members to 3 years, with the ability to extend by one year.
<b>5.7.e</b>	Heads of Division and DM to highlight EDIC membership opportunities as part of workload discussions (particularly M PTO staff)
<b>5.7.f</b>	ToR for all committees will highlight gender balance as a key objective for membership; to be contextualised against overall gender balance of the eligible pool.
<b>5.7.g</b>	EDIC formally reports to Executive Board annually on the progress of this action plan.
<b>5.8.a</b>	Develop and deliver workshops on communication and boundary setting to initiate conversations and discuss expectations from both ECR and supervisor perspective.
<b>5.8.b</b>	Send out regular reminders about the use of official work channels, e.g. email, rather than WhatsApp, unless previously agreed
<b>5.8.c</b>	Review support for those returning from leave and use 'back to work' conversations from those returning from leave to understand how we can enhance our support
<b>5.9.a</b>	Signpost the free counselling already offered through the College in newsletter under new 'mental health and wellbeing ' heading. Continue to use EDI budget to provide additional / specialist sessions for staff if required.
<b>5.9.b</b>	We currently have 6 MHFA (5F, 1M) with 5F and 1M training in March 2025. Train up more mental health first aiders and advertise the support they offer
<b>5.10.a</b>	Introduce a 'virtual suggestion box' what will be managed and reviewed by the EDIC.
<b>5.10.b</b>	HoD to present on culture survey findings after each survey, including 'you said, we did' and actions for the future
<b>5.10.c</b>	Use a variety of ways to get feedback and measure success, including pulse surveys (success re pronouns in email signatures) Q&A sessions, focus groups, etc.
<b>5.10.d</b>	Run catered events, led by the HoD, to launch the 2025, 2027 and 2029 culture surveys. Incentivise engagement by planting a tree for each survey response received.
<b>5.11.a</b>	Use pulse survey in the department to see if people are happy to disclose their gender and racial identity along with clear rationale as to how and why this will be used - link to the university REC application in November 2026.
<b>5.11.b</b>	Work with Head of Data in FoM and Assistant Provost for EDI to collect intersectional data on staff

## Section 4: Future action plan

### 4.1 Action plan

Please provide an action plan covering the five-year award period.

	WHAT are we trying to change for the better?	WHY are we doing it?		WHAT is the specific action we will take to address the issue?	WHO will be responsible for the action being completed?	WHO will implement the action?	WHEN will the action be addressed?	HOW will we know that the action has been achieved?
	Objective	Rationale and data	Ref	Action	Accountability	Responsibility	Timeframe	Success criteria
<b>Key priority 1: increase proportion of male students at PGT</b>								
1.1	Improved gender balance for students at PGT	2023/24 data show: PGT: 2019/20: 65%F 2020/21: 72%F 2021/22: 84%F 2022/23: 75%F 2023/24: 91%F	1.1.a	Work with the BNA to support and shape their data projects around gender balance in neuroscience at student level	EDIC Chair	EDIC Chair and EDI Co-ordinator	Already started, ongoing  Review April / May annually	<b>Exploratory analysis of PG student data across the neuroscience field</b> available to determine 1) if DoBS is consistent with other universities, 2) if student data provides further evidence of leaky pipeline and 3) where and why the leaky pipeline happens as a sector
			1.1.b	Work with Education Team to gather gender data on applications and offers for our courses, including home and overseas students	Education Manager	Education Team, EDI Co-ordinator	Oct-25 to Oct-26	<b>Demographic data</b> (at least gender) <b>on all of our applicants</b> to identify when gender imbalance first becomes apparent. Analysis of potential bias points. <b>Centralised systems developed to record this data.</b>
1.2	Ensure no gender bias within the UROP application and selection processes.	Increase in %F UROP students over reporting period: 2021: 58%F 2022: 74%F 2023: 74%F 2024: 87%F	1.2.a	Work with the university Outreach team to audit their application and selection data by gender, as well as processes.	EDI Co-ordinator	Outreach champion	Oct-25 in preparation for Jan-26 application launch  Review annually	<b>Data available on gender of successful UROP students and those applying.</b> Gender of successful UROPs will be reflective of those applying to the scheme.

1.3	Ensure financial background is no barrier to work experience.	We know that Medicine is still overrepresented by people from higher socioeconomic positions, and that work experience is often based on family networks rather than by fair and just processes.	1.3.a	Provide travel bursaries to all successful applicants to the DoBS Y12 work experience as standard (approx.£75 per student for 10-15 students). Work with Research Manager and university Outreach team to promote this at application stage. Monitor the gender of successful applicants.	EDI Co-ordinator	Outreach Team	Oct-25 in preparation for Jan-26 application launch  Review annually	<b>Qualitative data showing increased representation in work experience placements.</b> Travel bursaries enable students to participate in work experience who would not otherwise have been able.
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**Key priority 2: increase proportion of female academic staff at senior levels**

2.1	Ensure support is proactively in place for female applicants if/when we have an opportunity to recruit and promote, particularly at senior levels.	<p>Recruitment For Lecturer applications (21 for 3 positions), M less likely to be shortlisted and appointed, but more successful from shortlist to appointment.</p> <p>Only 1 application for Professor (M) who was appointed.</p> <p>No F at SL, Reader, Clin Lecturer or Clin Reader          Professor - 14%F          Clin SL - 20%F          Clin Prof - 13%F          RF: 40%F          ARF - 50%F</p>	2.1.a	At shortlisting stage, highlight academic adviser through probation process (approx. 3 years).	Head of Divisions	Head of Divisions	Amend paperwork July 2025 in preparation.  Review after each recruitment.	<b>Increased F applications at Lecturer level to 50%</b>  Comparable proportions of M/F throughout application, shortlist and appointing process
			2.1.b	At interview, application and interview stage give people the opportunity to contextualise or share any other relevant information about themselves; pilot for academic positions.		EDI Co-ordinator as contact		
			2.1.c	Have EDI Co-ordinator as a contact on the application form, and available for contact throughout the application process.	Department manager	EDI co-ordinator		
			2.1.d	Spotlight a range of staff, i.e. with caring responsibilities, to showcase the diversity of work-life patterns, taking inspiration from the Royal Society's 'Parent Carer Scientist' campaign: <a href="https://royalsociety.org/about-us/who-we-are/diversity-inclusion/case-studies/parent-carer-scientist/">https://royalsociety.org/about-us/who-we-are/diversity-inclusion/case-studies/parent-carer-scientist/</a>	EDI Co-ordinator	Comms manager	Feb-26 to Feb-27	
			2.1.e	Introduce unconscious bias observers for academic positions for Lecturer and above.	Heads of Division	Heads of Division, EDI Co-ordinator	From March-25. Review after each recruitment.	
			2.1.f	Ensure that academic recruitment panels are gender balanced.	Academic & research: Department	Academic & research: Department	Already in place, review	

				For Clinical Academic appointment we will keep pushing CATO/Deanery for this; continue to lead in this area. Heads of Division to highlight in Divisional meetings and make it an expectation.	Manager Clinical: Heads of Division; Head of Department	Manager Clinical: heads of Division, Head of Department	annually every March	monitored.  <b>All external and Deanery recruitment that DoBS is involved in (staff sitting on panels) contain a range of genders.</b>
2.2	Retain and support female staff to become senior academics (if they want this)	Promotion 2023  100%F and 83%M are successful at promotion.  Culture survey 2023 found 39%F, 62%M agreed or strongly agreed the promotion process at department level treats all staff equally	2.2.a	Enhance transparency around the pathways to the next step and the options available for ECRs through department Q&A events dispelling the myths around different routes of progression. Highlight opportunity and pathway to become an academic - this seems to have been overlooked in favour of alternative careers, e.g in industry, publishing, etc.	Mentoring Champion	Mentoring Champion, ECR Rep	First event Jan 2026	<b>50% of ECRs attend department Q&amp;A events</b> , gender proportion to current make-up  Survey / pulse survey / feedback shows that <b>80% find Q&amp;A events helpful</b> , no gender differences.
			2.2.b	Ensure female representation in shortlisting process and interview panels for promotion (without overburdening them)	Head of Department, Heads of Division, PIs	Operations Assistants and Section Managers	May-25, review annually	<b>Collect gender data for recruitment panels</b> , showing that they are reflective of the pool of eligible panellists.
			2.2.c	Facilitated workshops on experiences of promotions process	EDIC Chair	HoD, EDI Co-ordinator, staff with recent experience of promotion	Held in Nov-26 in preparation for 2027 promotion round	<b>Perception of the promotions process</b> , as measured by 2027 survey, <b>increases to 65%</b> (no gender differences)
			2.2.d	Utilise databases that specifically list academic women to increase F speakers to maintain and promote visibility of senior women in the sector.	EDIC Chair	Seminar series organisers	Jan-2026, review annually	
<b>Key priority 3: improve gender balance of and support for PTO staff</b>								
3.1	Formalise progression pathways for PTO staff	Anecdotally, PTO staff tell us they are frustrated by a lack of progression options within the department and at the university.  2023 culture survey showed that only 25%M and 58%F PTO knew what	3.1.a	Work with the university to provide formal opportunities and structured support for PTO staff to progress, whether that be in the department, College or elsewhere	HoD	Department Manager, EDI Co-ordinator	Jun-26 to Jun-27	<b>25% of PTO staff have taken a progression day</b> (no gender differences)
			3.1.b	Institute development days for PTO staff, similar to those for postdocs, where they can visit other departments, shadow roles, etc.	Department Manager	Department Manager and EDI Co-ordinator	Feb-27 to Feb-28	<b>&gt;80%</b> (no gender differences) are <b>aware of career progression opportunities</b> in 2027 survey.

		opportunities were available to them in the university for their role.	3.1.c	Include new section in the department newsletter which signposts staff to opportunities specific to PTO staff across the university.	EDIC Chair	Comms Manager	Starting May-25 Monthly Review Apr-26	
3.2	Review recruitment processes for PTO staff	M technical staff less likely to be appointed if shortlisted (i.e. at interview stage).  Small numbers by level, but in general M P & O applicants less likely to be shortlisted at all levels except 3b.	3.2.a	Audit recruitment processes to explore and investigate any areas for potential bias	Department Manager	Department Manager and EDI Co-ordinator	May-26 to Jul-26  Review at each recruitment opportunity.	Identification of points for possible bias.  <b>Increase M PTO to 35% (P&amp;O) and 30% Technical</b>
3.3	All PTO staff to receive ARC (link to 4.1 below)	This is inconsistent across the department, with only 51%F and 61%M responding to CS2023 receiving their ARC in 22-23:  PTO = 43%	3.3.a	Invite member of POD/HR to host a Q&A session in the department, as part of a regular department catch-up meeting which is recorded for maximum engagement.	EDI Co-ordinator	EDI Co-ordinator, representative from POD/HR	June-26 ready for ARC round July-Sept 2026	<b>Increase in ARC uptake to 60%</b> (no gender differences)  ARC question in CS2025. <b>&gt;80% of respondents (F&amp;M) found the ARC useful</b>
			3.3.b	Ensure PTO staff are surveyed on their experiences of the ARC process at the 2025 and 2027 department survey	Department Manager	Department Manager and EDI Co-ordinator	Sept/Oct 2025 and Sept/Oct 2027	
			3.3.c	Create department inbox specifically for completed ARC forms so all ARCs are recorded at department level and can be sent off to be centrally recorded	Department Manager	EDI Co-ordinator, Department Administrators	June 2025, ready for ARC round July-Sept	
<b>Key priority 4: improve support for research staff, particularly postdocs and fellows</b>								
4.1	All eligible academic and research staff to receive ARC (link to 3.3 above)	This is inconsistent across the department, with 51%F, 61%M responding to CS2023 receiving their PRDP/ARC in 2023.	4.1.a	Invite member of POD to host a Q&A session in the department, as part of a regular department catch-up meeting which is recorded for maximum engagement	EDI Co-ordinator	EDI Co-ordinator, representative from POD/HR	June-26 ready for ARC round July-Sept 2026	<b>Increase in ARC uptake to 60%</b> (no gender differences)  ARC question in CS2025. <b>&gt;80% of respondents (F&amp;M) found the ARC useful</b>
			4.1.b	Ensure academic and research staff are surveyed on their experiences of the ARC process at the 2025 and 2027 department survey	Department Manager	Department Manager and EDI Co-ordinator	Sept/Oct 2025 and Sept/Oct 2027	

			4.1.c	Create department inbox specifically for completed ARC forms so all ARCs are recorded at department level and can be sent off to be centrally recorded	Department Manager	EDI Co-ordinator, Department Administrators	June 2025, ready for ARC round July-Sept	
4.2	Expand support for postdoc to Research Fellow transition	Pilot of Women's Fellowship Writing Circle (2020 Action Plan) had positive results for participants, with 4/6 achieving a Fellowship shortly afterwards.	4.2.a	Expand the Women's Writing Fellowship Circle to include all senior female postdocs in the department	Mentoring Champion	Mentoring Champion, ECR Rep	To begin Oct-25, review annually	<p><b>50% of participants in writing circle who apply for external Fellowships to be successful</b></p> <p><b>75% of participants in writing circle who apply for internal Fellowships to be successful</b></p>
4.3	Ensure fair and equitable recruitment processes for those on the Research pathway. (See also 2.1. and 2.2 above)	Drop-off for F is post-doc to Fellow.	4.3.a	Audit recruitment processes for research pathway.	EDIC Chair	EDI Co-ordinator	Nov-26	<p><b>No evidence of bias throughout the application process</b> as demonstrated in shortlisting and and appointing data (no gender differences at each stage).</p>
		<p>F more likely to be shortlisted at Res. Associate, and RF roles, and appointed from application stage to Res Associate.</p> <p>Staff recruitment data show increased likelihood of F being offered after shortlisting at Research Associate level (41%F to 19%M) and Research Fellow (50%F to 25%M) as well as Research Associates increased chance of being offered from application (6%F to 2%M).</p> <p>Clinical-research and clinical lecturer roles are recruited through the Trust and we have no influence over this process.</p>	4.3.b	Pilot unconscious bias observers on recruitment panels for postdocs applying for Fellowships.	EDIC Chair	DRI Centre Head, Group leaders, EDI Co-ordinator	From Jun-25 when recruitment opportunities occur	
<b>Key priority 5: improve inclusive culture</b>								

5.1	Facilitate a more inclusive environment for all staff and students to thrive	<p>CS2023 data show 26% respondents (equal F &amp; M) have a caring responsibility.</p> <p><i>"Meeting should be restricted to core working hours and kept to time in order not to disadvantage people with caring responsibilities or any other commitments."</i></p> <p>People want more opportunities to interact in a informal environment: <i>"In person social events hugely important for facilitating belonging - need adequate lead time and bear in mind that not everyone is full time at the college so vary the day"</i></p>	5.1.a	Implement a 'core hours' policy for all regular department meetings to take place between 10-4pm to give staff maximum flexibility in their caring responsibilities. Ensure this is effectively communicated.	EDIC Chair	DM, EDI Co-ordinator, Comms Manager, PIs	Idea shared by HoD at department meeting in Jan-25  Formally effective by May-25	<b>100% staff</b> agree or strongly agree that <b>department meetings only take place between 10-4pm</b> in 2027 culture survey.
			5.1.b	Provide guidance on how to organise inclusive social events on different days, times and focus, e.g. breakfast meetings, 'bring your culture to work' days, etc.	EDI Co-ordinator	EDI Co-ordinator	Guidance published / shared Sept-25	<b>&gt;80% staff</b> (no gender difference) agree or strongly agree that there are a variety of <b>social events</b> held in the department that <b>are inclusive and accessible</b> .  <b>&gt;2 events hosted by the department per year</b> .
			5.1.c	Continue to commit to funding and facilitating whole department inclusive social events twice per year	Department Manager	HoD, Heads of Division	Summer: Jun-25  Winter: Dec-25  To review after each event	
5.2	Improve positive behaviours and communication within the department	<p>CS2023 data show:</p> <p>77%F, 52%M personally experienced or witnessed aggressive, condescending or intimidating communication over the 12 months prior to the survey</p>	5.2.a	Create additional department recognition awards:  1. staff member who best exemplifies College Values through their behaviour. 2. Most supportive PI	Department Manager	EDIC Chair, DM	Confirm and launch in Mar-26  Included in Summer 2026 awards	<b>2027 culture survey shows &lt;50%F and 30%M experienced or witnessed aggressive, condescending or intimidating communication</b> over the 12 months prior to the survey. <b>2029 culture survey shows comparable levels of these behaviours in M and F and at &lt;25%</b> for both.
			5.2.b	Invite College EDI Centre in to run a briefing session on bullying and harassment for the department	EDI Co-ordinator	EDI Co-ordinator	May-June 2025	
			5.2.c	Regular signposting of positive culture through department comms (e.g. newsletter) and seeking ways for members to feed into this. Opportunities to give ownership to small groups to effect change	Comms Manager	Comms Manager	From Jun-25  Reviewed annually	

5.3	Where incidents of bullying and harassment occur, these are handled effectively	CS2023 data show 13%F and 6%M had experienced bullying and/or harassment over the 12 months prior to the survey  AND  18%F and 48%M agree or strongly agree that bullying and harassment are addressed in a satisfactory way	5.3.a	HoD to present findings from culture survey highlighting bullying, harassment and unacceptable behaviours and encouraging people to report	HoD	HoD, Department Manager, EDIC Chair & EDI Co-ordinator	Jan-26 and Jan-28	<b>&gt;70% staff</b> (no gender differences) <b>are satisfied how bullying and harassment are dealt with</b> in the department.
			5.3.b	Work with the College through the FoM PCC to improve the current reporting mechanisms, particularly the 'report and support' tool.	EDI Co-ordinator	EDI Co-ordinator	Add to PCC agenda in April 2025	
			5.3.c	Communicate processes for disclosing and what the next steps would be in terms of options for disclosure; highlight and focus on resolutions	Head of Department	Head of Department	Jun-25	
			5.3.d	Train up Harassment Advisers through the College EDI Centre so there are additional safe spaces within the department for people to disclose unacceptable behaviour. Partner up with other departments to share advisers to issues can be raised anonymously.	EDI Co-ordinator	EDI Co-ordinator working with College EDI Centre and Comms Manager	EDI Co-ordinator to train as Harassment Adviser in 2025 (based on availability), then at least one individual from the department per year.  Review and evaluate partnerships annually.	<b>4 members of the department to be trained as harassment advisers</b> , at least 1M.
5.4	Improving transparency and flow of comms to improve trust	Culture survey 2023:  21%F agreed and 37%M agreed or strongly agreed that 'the department is transparent in its management and decision making'.  Text responses highlight:	5.4.a	Restructure monthly newsletter to include logistical elements like staff changes, and spotlights on different research areas.	Comms Manager	Comms Manager	May-25  To be ready for Sep-25	<b>&gt;80% staff</b> (no gender differences) <b>agree or strongly agree</b> that they know <b>who is in their department</b> and/or know how and <b>where to find the information</b> in 2027 culture survey.  <b>Policies and processes published on department SharePoint</b> , highlighted by HoD at department meetings (minuted).  EDIC minutes show policies are discussed.
			5.4.b	Utilise the staff SharePoint site to provide up-to-date organisational charts (with photos)	Comms Manager	EDI Co-ordinator, Department Administrators	Jun-25  To review annually.	
			5.4.c	Quarterly Q&A department meetings led by senior management to share information and update - trialled during Covid	Department Manager	HoD and DM	From Jan-26	

		<p><i>"staff changes/issues are not communicated"</i>  <i>"I only hear things through the grape vine about new Section Managers, etc. It would be good to be kept informed of key contacts"</i>  <i>"Opaque &amp; hidden..."</i></p>	5.4.d	Ensure email distribution lists are up-to-date and that line managers are responsible for their teams being on the correct lists	Department Manager	Comms Manager, Line Managers, Administrators	Jan-26  Review at monthly PTO meetings	<p>In <b>2029 culture survey, 50%F, 60%M say they believe the department is transparent</b> about policies and processes.</p>
	5.4.e		Ensure new department policies are reviewed by the EDI Co-ordinator in conjunction with the EDIC and impact assessed annually	Department Manager	EDIC Chair, EDI Co-ordinator	Sep-25 and then at each EDIC meeting  Annual review from July-26		
	5.4.f		Document and make available on SharePoint department policies, including those that we already do as part of business as usual (BAU)	Department Manager	EDI Co-ordinator	From Jun-26, reviewed annually		
	5.4.g		Comms plan to ensure Athena Swan and EDI progress are updated regularly, e.g. through newsletter	Comms Manager	Comms Manager, EDIC Chair, EDI Co-ordinator	May-25  To be ready for Sep-25		
5.5	<p>Ensure all staff are aware of the paternity, shared parental and fertility treatment leave entitlements and take it if they choose to. Taking time to raise children to be normalised and celebrated (link to 2.1.d above)</p>	<p>1 instance of SPL, 6 of paternity and 0 of fertility treatment leave since 2019 which we think is low in terms of those eligible.</p> <p>Imperial offers 2 weeks paternity leave at full pay.</p> <p>Oxford: 12 weeks Cambridge: 12 weeks Kings: 6 weeks UCL: 20 days</p> <p>Conversations with senior leaders highlighted instances where women were apologising before disclosing their pregnancies.</p>	5.5.a	HoD to champion extending paternity leave with HR to be in line with or above those of local universities	EDIC Chair	HoD	HoD has already raised this at FoM.  Review Mar-26	<p>HoD raised issue at FoM (minuted).</p> <p><b>Paternity leave entitlement increased</b> as a result of this.</p> <p><b>Clearer</b> and more regular <b>signposting</b> to existing policies on <b>paternity and shared parental leave</b>.</p> <p>Archive of profiles. Qualitative feedback from staff who have taken paternity and SPL.</p> <p>All eligible staff take their enhanced paternity leave.</p>
			5.5.b	Ensure new staff are signposted as part of their onboarding to the family leave offering.	Department Manager	All Heads of Division and Line Managers	To include in department onboarding process from May-25.  Annual review.	
			5.5.c	Profile staff who have taken different types of family leave (particularly paternity and SPL) for the staff newsletter and staff blog to raise the profile and help people be aware of the benefits; we can also add this to the SharePoint for new starter information.	EDIC Chair	Comms Manager	To be included in newsletter from Nov-26	

5.6	Enable and support staff to take and log their annual leave	<p>Our systems show that staff are either taking leave but not logging it, or not taking sufficient annual leave throughout the year</p> <p>Of the CS2023 respondents, only 52% (no gender differences) stated they had taken all their allocated annual leave over the past 2 years, with only 33% of staff from Neuroscience agreeing with this</p>	5.6.a	Gather data to see whether there are gender differences in those not taking leave	EDI Co-ordinator	Department Administrator	Oct-25. Review Mar-26 and every 6 months	<b>Process</b> established to <b>gather and analyse</b> quantitative and qualitative <b>annual leave data</b> .
			5.6.b	Targeted approach to line managers and PIs to raise conversations around why their staff may not be taking their leave. This includes exploring if people are trying to take leave but it's not being approved.	HoD	HoD and Heads of Division	Jan-26 to Dec-26	<b>Question in 2027 survey:</b> have you taken all your allocated leave over the past 2 years? (if not, why not?)  <b>100% indicate they have taken their leave.</b>
			5.6.c	Direct emails to individuals to highlight that they haven't used their leave and offer conversations to understand why not.	Department Manager	Department Manager, Section managers and Pis	Jan-26 and Jul-26, then every 6 months	Email records, <b>increase in uptake/recording of leave</b> .
			5.6.d	Head of Department to send out communication about the importance of leave and to provide various touch points (including EDI Co-ordinator) within the department if people do not feel able to take their leave.	EDI Co-ordinator	HoD, DM		Email / newsletter / meeting minutes as records of the communications.  <b>&gt;80% of staff are taking and logging their allocated leave.</b>
5.7	Enable responsibility for EDIC actions to be shared and owned more widely throughout the department	<p>2020 action plan relied on Champions for some actions; some roles were difficult to fill due to workload and perceived under-recognition and led to actions not being completed.</p> <p>We are conscious that responsibility for action implementation is owned by a small number of individuals within the department, and in order to be successful we need to bring more people along. There is a balance to be sought</p>	5.7.a	EDI Co-ordinator to speak at student Induction events to enhance visibility and highlight the work of the EDIC to encourage student representation.	EDIC Chair	EDI Co-ordinator	From Sept-25 and then annually.	<b>Rep from each PGT course on EDIC</b>
			5.7.b	PGT students to provide an EDIC rep for each course by the end of week 1 or 2 and be on the committee for the year. Reps get formal recognition for this.	EDI Co-ordinator	Course organisers		
			5.7.c	EDIC champion roles to receive dedicated administrative support.	DM	Department Administrative Assistants	From July-26	Interviews with Champions show that <b>administrative support is not a barrier to them fulfilling their roles.</b>
			5.7.d	Amend ToR to formalise length of membership for non ex-officio members to 3 years, with the ability to extend by one year.	Department Manager	DM, EDI Co-ordinator, Education Manager	Jun-25, reviewed annually along with membership	<b>1M PTO staff to join the EDIC</b>  <b>EDIC gender</b> representation continues to be <b>reflective of the department</b>

		<p>around representation and responsibility where small numbers are concerned.</p> <p>Whilst we have engagement from academic staff, M PTO staff are lacking.</p> <p>Eligibility for committees is often based on role or seniority. We want to ensure membership is reflective of the eligible pool, ensuring specific groups are not overburdened with membership. For example, even though Research only has 27%F membership, the eligible pool is 15%F.</p>	5.7.e	Heads of Division and DM to highlight EDIC membership opportunities as part of workload discussions (particularly M PTO staff)	EDIC Chair	Heads of Divisions, DM	From May-25 to May-26	
			5.7.f	ToR for all committees will highlight gender balance as a key objective for membership; to be contextualised against overall gender balance of the eligible pool.	EDIC Chair	EDI Co-ordinator	Wording amended Apr-25  To be approved by Executive Board May-25 (or next available meeting).	
			5.7.g	EDIC formally reports to Executive Board annually on the progress of this action plan.	EDIC Chair	EDIC Chair and EDI Co-ordinator	March-26 and reviewed annually	
5.8	Work/life balance	<p>Culture survey data identified issues for individuals trying to take control of their work/life balance and not always succeeding due to culture, expectations and lack of support. 53%F, 71%M agreed there was a positive attitude towards work-life</p>	5.8.a	Develop and deliver workshops on communication and boundary setting to initiate conversations and discuss expectations from both ECR and supervisor perspective.	Head of Department	Head of Department (delivering); EDIC Chair & EDI Co-ordinator (development)	Feb-26 to May-26	<p><b>80% of department to attend/watch workshop</b> (no gender differences), and increased satisfaction in 2025 and 2027 culture surveys where fewer examples of these behaviours are identified.</p> <p><b>80% staff</b> (no gender differences) agree there is a <b>positive attitude towards work-life balance</b> in 2027 survey.</p> <p>Culture survey results show <b>&gt;90% of</b></p>
			5.8.b	Send out regular reminders about the use of official work channels, e.g. email, rather than WhatsApp, unless previously agreed	Comms Manager	Comms Manager	From Oct-25 and then annually.	

		<p>balance. Comments included:</p> <p><i>"There was little support returning from leave, the expectation of resuming full activities immediately felt overwhelming."</i></p> <p><i>"Out of our hour work emails, emails/whatsapp messages during annual leave (directed emails not just cc's), and emails during weekends are so common..."</i></p> <p><i>"There has been push-back relating to setting boundaries around work"</i></p> <p><i>"Most of the senior academicians are working way beyond their work hours. This percolates down, though unsaid, to junior ranks as well."</i></p>	5.8.c	<p>Review support for those returning from leave and use 'back to work' conversations from those returning from leave to understand how we can enhance our support</p>	Department Manager	Heads of Division, EDI Co-ordinator	May-27 to May-28	<p><b>staff</b> (no gender differences) <b>feel supported returning from leave</b>. We know this is more likely to affect F due to maternity leave (longer time away, etc.).</p>
5.9	Improved support for mental health and wellbeing	<p>CS2023 identified 52%F, 67%M think their mental health and / or wellbeing are supported in the department, 42% in Division of Neuroscience.</p>	5.9.a	<p>Signpost the free counselling already offered through the College in newsletter under new 'mental health and wellbeing ' heading. Continue to use EDI budget to provide additional / specialist sessions for staff if required.</p>	EDI Co-ordinator	EDI Co-ordinator and Comms manager	Highlight in newsletter from May-25	<p>65%F and 75%M think their mental health is supported in 2027 survey; 60% in Division of Neuroscience. <b>&gt;80%</b> (no gender differences) <b>in 2029 survey</b>.</p>
			5.9.b	<p>We currently have 6 MHFA (5F, 1M) with 5F and 1M training in March 2025. Train up more mental health first aiders and advertise the support they offer</p>	EDI Co-ordinator	Senior Lab and Safety Officer, EDI Co-ordinator and Comms Manager	<p>Already started, ongoing</p> <p>Review Aug / Sept annually</p>	<p>Department has <b>&gt;15 MHFA</b>, with at least 3 of those being M and 1 being in the Division of Neuroscience</p>

5.10	Encourage staff and students (particularly M) to continue to share their thoughts and develop ideas to improve department culture continuously	<p>We increased the culture survey response rate from 24% to 56% between 2021 and 2023. However, M still respond at a lower rate (45%M in 2023 compared to 55%F). HoD presented survey results to whole department with 64 attendees (13 in person, 51online); this was recorded and transcribed. Anecdotal positive responses.</p> <p>Current avenues for feedback are only through formal surveys. We want to provide more opportunities for staff and students to share ideas at any time.</p>	5.10.a	Introduce a 'virtual suggestion box' what will be managed and reviewed by the EDIC.	EDIC Chair	EDI Co-ordinator	Available from August 2025. Highlighted to students in induction from Sept-25.	<p>Attendance at <b>survey launch events &gt;60% of staff</b> and PhD students.</p> <p><b>Response rate for surveys increases to &gt;65%</b> (65%F, 55%M)</p>
			5.10.b	HoD to present on culture survey findings after each survey, including 'you said, we did' and actions for the future	HoD	DM, EDI Co-ordinator, EDIC Chair	Jan-26 and Jan-28	
			5.10.c	Use a variety of ways to get feedback and measure success, including pulse surveys (success re pronouns in email signatures) Q&A sessions, focus groups, etc.	EDI Co-ordinator	DM, Comms Manager	From May-25	
			5.10.d	Run catered events, led by the HoD, to launch the 2025, 2027 and 2029 culture surveys. Incentivise engagement by planting a tree for each survey response received.	EDIC Chair	HoD, EDI Co-ordinator, DM	Sept/Oct 2025, 2027 and 2029	
5.11	Collect intersectional data	<p>We know that Imperial as a whole is not representative of, for example, Black home students. There are three Black Professors (1F, 2M) at Imperial; none in our department. We are told that race data reporting is low amongst staff and students. This needs to increase to provide meaningful data.</p>	5.11.a	Use pulse survey in the department to see if people are happy to disclose their gender and racial identity along with clear rationale as to how and why this will be used - link to the university REC application in November 2026.	Race Champion	EDI Co-ordinator	Jun-26 to Jun-27	<p><b>Baseline race data available on &gt; 1/3 of department</b> to inform future actions</p>
			5.11.b	Work with Head of Data in FoM and Assistant Provost for EDI to collect intersectional data on staff	Race Champion	EDI Co-ordinator, Assistant Provost for EDI, Head of Data FoM		