Accelerating Gender Equality in
Irish Higher Education Institutions

GENDER ACTION PLAN 2018-2020

REPORT OF THE GENDER EQUALITY TASKFORCE

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FOREWORD

A few women in leadership roles within our higher education institutions (HEIs) is not success – just because these few women have found a door through, doesn't mean there still isn't a wall there[1].

I believe that our HEIs can become beacons of equality, diversity and inclusion and that Ireland will become recognised as an excellent place to study and work. Ireland's size and its track record in effecting change on key policy initiatives means that we can make this vision a reality. But right now, we have a lot of work to do to get there.

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions (2016) was an important first step in highlighting the gender inequality that existed at senior academic levels in our HEIs and suggested radical changes to tackle it. However, since the publication of the HEA Expert Group report progress has remained exceptionally slow.

Data trends in the universities over the period 2013-2017, show that there has been a consistently low rate of change year on year, only 1-2% each year at professor level, from a starting position of 18% female professors in 2013 to just 24% in 2017. The HEA Higher Education Institutional Staff by Gender report (2018) highlights that in 2017 only 24% of professor posts were filled by women as compared to 51% female lecturers, the entry level for academic posts in the university sector. While the number of female professors is just one metric, it is a key metric used internationally to compare countries, and it clearly highlights the extent of the problem in academia.

International experience shows us that the path towards gender equality is neither linear nor guaranteed, and the rate of improvement at senior levels in HEIs internationally is extremely slow. Countries who have made considerable efforts to improve their gender equality still show significant under representation of women at professor level (e.g. in 2016, France, 24%; Germany, 23%; Switzerland, 21%. And in 2017: Norway, 29%).

I established the Gender Equality Taskforce to identify significant measures, drawing on the work of the HEA Expert Group, that could accelerate progress in achieving gender equality in Irish HEIs.

New data analysis conducted by the Gender Equality Taskforce on the estimated rate of change for the future suggests that the adoption of a flexible cascade model approach alone (as recommended by the HEA Expert Group) could take more than 20 years to achieve gender balance at professor level (i.e. minimum 40% female professors). If the vision that '*by 2026 Ireland will be a world leading country for gender equality in higher education*' is to be realised, we need to look at the problem of gender diversity in academia in a new way, transformational positive action measures need to be implemented.

1 Prof. Fiona Jenkins, Australian National University, 10th European Union Gender Equality Conference, Dublin, Ireland, August 2018.

Mary Mitchell O'Connor,
MINISTER FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

This Action Plan outlines a comprehensive strategic approach to help embed the recommendations of the HEA Expert Group, to bring about sustainable organisational change and to empower a culture of gender equality in the HEIs for all staff, academic and professional, management and support staff at all levels.

The establishment of a *Centre of Excellence for Gender Equality* will be a key enabler of this and in particular will ensure sustainable change by providing centralised support for the institutions, sharing of good practice, and funding for innovative organisational and cultural change initiatives nationally.

HEIs will set ambitious targets for the proportion of academic and professional, management and support staff of each gender to be in senior positions in 1, 3 and 5 years time, and these will be agreed with the HEA and monitored annually through the Strategic Dialogue process. Each HEI will be held accountable for achieving their targets and performance will be incentivised through additional funding or funding consequences as appropriate, to ensure progress is constant and considerable.

Attainment of Athena SWAN certification is an important part of this Action Plan. Engaging with the Athena SWAN process has been transformative for HEIs, according to stakeholder feedback to the Gender Equality Taskforce. I am pleased to see that all seven universities have now achieved institutional bronze awards, and that the institutes of technology are also starting the process of applying. I am however, conscious of the amount of work involved in this process and it will be a key aim of mine to ensure that Irish HEIs have the necessary support to engage fully with Athena SWAN and be ambitious so that they can work towards obtaining a silver, and eventually a gold, level award.

Accelerating gender equality in HEI's is a key element in achieving the Department of Education and Skills vision and ambition to create the best education and training service in Europe by 2026. [2]

A culture of gender equality benefits everyone, men and women, and will ensure Irish HEIs can perform to their full potential: delivering innovative teaching and learning at third level; attracting and retaining talented staff; and maximising creativity and diversity of thought in research. I believe that gender inequality exists as a result of systemic and cultural barriers which have solidified over time.

We must work together to tear down these barriers.

2 https://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/Press-Releases/2016-Press-Releases/PR2016-09-15.html (accessed February 16th, 2018). Reiterated in the Action Plan for Education (2017), p. 6.

VISION

By 2026 Ireland will be a world-leading country for Gender Equality in Higher Education

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY BY THE CHAIR

Higher education has undoubtedly played a pivotal role in Ireland's success, and by investing in gender equality it will be possible for higher education institutions (HEIs) to perform to their full potential and to better meet the challenges of the future. However, systematic barriers in HEI organisation and culture mean that talent alone is not always enough to guarantee success.[3] [4]

The *Report of the Expert Group: HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions*, 2016 (hereinafter referred to as the Expert Group report) chaired by Maire Geoghegan-Quinn, was an important first step in tackling gender inequality in our higher education system. It highlighted the extent of the significant under-representation of women at the highest levels, of both academic and professional, management and support staff, and the many structural and cultural mechanisms which create and maintain gender inequality. However, since the recommendations were published only marginal improvements (1-2%) annually have been reported in addressing the under-representation of women at senior levels and in the governance and management of institutions.

The Gender Equality Taskforce, established in November 2017 by the Minister for Higher Education, Mary Mitchell O'Connor, T.D., has developed an Action Plan to accelerate the rate of progress towards gender equality in Irish HEIs and ensure that progress is constant and sustainable.

New qualitative data, gathered as part of the development of this Action Plan, has highlighted that the Expert Group's recommendations have been a catalyst for change in higher education. The Gender Equality Taskforce was very encouraged to see that the HEIs in Ireland have positively embraced the excellent recommendations of the Expert Group report. It was clear from the stakeholder consultation and the progress reported in the self-audit review of recruitment and promotion initiatives, that there is a deepening understanding of appropriate actions to accelerate gender balance in HEIs and a commitment to collaborate on developing and sharing best practices. This is evidenced by the qualitative progress reports submitted to this Gender Equality Taskforce by the universities and the institutes of technology (IoTs), and a range of initiatives, projects and leadership interventions across the sector, such as the appointments of Vice Presidents/Directors for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). All seven universities have now achieved Athena SWAN Institutional Bronze status. This qualitative narrative is as important as the quantitative reporting in measuring progress.

3 HEA (2016), *Report of the Expert Group: HEA National Review on Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions*.

4 I. Bohnet (2016) *What works: gender equality by design* (Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press); H. Morrissey (2018) *A good time to be a girl: don't lean in, change the system* (London: Williams Collins); K. White and P. O'Connor (eds) (2017) *Gendered success in higher education: global perspectives* (London: Palgrave Macmillan).

Marie O'Connor
CHAIR OF THE GENDER EQUALITY TASKFORCE

However, notwithstanding these positive steps in the right direction, it is clear from the work of the Gender Equality Taskforce that progress is too slow (e.g. there were still only 24% women professors in 2017 compared to 21% in 2016; 30% of the highest paid (>€106,000) core-funded, professional, management and support staff in the universities were women and only 18% in the IoTs, compared to 29% and 17% in 2016 respectively; there has never been a women president in the university sector and only 2 out of 14 Presidents in the IoT sector are women). Progress is also uneven across the sector with the HEIs all at varying stages in their journey to achieve gender equality and for each the trajectory will be unique. Organisational and cultural barriers in the HEIs still exist and will need to be addressed if gender equality is to be achieved in HEIs.

It is imperative that HEIs fully recognise the extent of gender inequality in their organisation, and that the Presidents and senior management take ownership and show leadership in addressing the issue by examining their own context and culture and reviewing in detail their own disaggregated data on gender across all parts and levels of the institution.

To accelerate gender balance, the Gender Equality Taskforce recommends that each HEI should set its own ambitious multi-year targets for the proportion of people of each gender which it aims to have at the senior levels in the HEIs over the next one, three and five-year period. These targets should be included in the HEI's gender action plan submitted annually to the HEA and be agreed as part of the Strategic Dialogue process. Progress on the goals, actions and targets in the HEI's gender action plan to address gender inequality should be reported annually to the HEA and linked to funding mechanisms with incentives and consequences where appropriate. If the recommended HEI led approach does not achieve significant change within an appropriate timescale, the HEA and the Minister can adopt a more directive approach.

There are gaps in the data available that need to be addressed particularly in relation to: professional, management and support staff; research staff; staff on contracts. Simple refinement of quarterly returns to the HEA (and analysis process of same) would help immediately to collect better disaggregated data and allow more comprehensive benchmarking at a sector level. Furthermore, the development of a new staff database by the HEA would further improve the quality of the data.

The Gender Equality Taskforce recommends that a *Centre of Excellence for Gender Equality* be set up within the HEA to ensure a sustainable acceleration towards gender equality is achieved by HEIs and it will advise the Minister and her Department of Education and Skills (DES) on progress, new developments and measures which may be required in future for Ireland. The Centre will be pivotal in enabling sharing of good practice, joint initiatives and co-operation between HEIs, and in developing a better understanding of the impact of the interventions taken and in determining the areas of future focus.

The Athena SWAN process has evolved, becoming more demanding in its requirements, since the HEA Expert Group's report was published. Attainment of Athena SWAN certification is an important part of the vision for the future but taking into account the more recent experience of HEIs in the UK to attain Silver and Gold status the Gender Equality Taskforce recommends that the HEA should have responsibility for determining the optimal timing and requirements in relation to Athena SWAN certification and whether a HEI is deemed eligible or ineligible for research funding based on their award status.

Recruitment, selection and promotion procedures and practices were a key focus for the Gender Equality Taskforce. Although there was some evidence of good practice already in place in some HEIs, this was variable across the sector. The Gender Equality Taskforce recommends that all HEIs should ensure that there are concrete actions in their institutional gender action plans, elaborated where appropriate at discipline and business unit level to bring their existing policies in line with good practice. The establishment of the *Centre of Excellence for Gender Equality* will play a key role in enabling this for the future.

The HEA Expert Group recommended the HEIs adopt a flexible cascade model, whereby the proportion of men and women to be recruited or promoted to a certain level is based on the proportion of each at the career level directly below. While there are some exceptions (e.g. senior lecturers in the university sector and senior lecturer 2 in the IoT sector), HEIs are broadly adhering to this model for academic staff. However, none of the HEIs have significantly exceeded the flexible cascade model threshold. Analysis shows that achieving gender balance at senior level in the university sector could take 20 years if the flexible cascade model approach alone is implemented. The introduction of a later retirement age could also slow down staff turnover. The Gender Equality Taskforce therefore recommends HEIs should ensure the flexible cascade model is used as a minimum, not as a maximum, and set ambitious short, medium and long-term targets (1, 3 and 5 years), over and above the flexible cascade model, for both promotion and recruitment of academic staff, and senior grades of professional, management and support staff.

International case studies show that the rate of change in higher education across Europe has been extremely slow. There are case studies throughout the European Union of positive action interventions which have led to accelerated or transformative change in higher education. Accordingly, the Gender Equality Taskforce recommends that, the HEIs appropriately consider further positive action measures that could be utilised in an Irish higher education context, where they would be a proportionate and effective means to achieve rapid and sustainable change.

In addition, the Gender Equality Taskforce re-enforces and reiterates the recommendations of the HEA Expert Group and has enhanced the recommendations based on further research and stakeholder consultation.

By investing in Gender Equality, Irish institutions will maximise their pursuit of excellence and successfully attract and keep the most talented students and staff, from all over the world. It will also provide Ireland with the opportunity to be recognised as unique in its inclusivity and excellence.

I would like to sincerely thank each member of the Gender Equality Taskforce, who gave so generously of their time and the HEA/DES secretariat who have been immensely supportive.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR ACTIONS RECOMMENDED BY THE GENDER EQUALITY TASKFORCE

HEIs SHOWING LEADERSHIP – INSTITUTIONAL GENDER ACTION PLANS

Action(s) recommended by the Gender Equality Taskforce:	
▶ **To accelerate gender balance, all HEIs shall set ambitious short, medium and long-term targets (1, 3 and 5 years) for the proportion of people of each gender which it aims to have at senior levels of academic and professional, management and support staff across the institution.**	
▶ **All HEIs shall set ambitious short, medium and long-term goals and actions at institutional level in order to progress gender equality.**	
▶ **All HEIs shall submit their institutional gender action plan to the HEA and provide annual progress updates.**	
▶ **It is envisaged that the institutional gender action plan will be implemented through discipline/ business unit gender action plans.**	
Relevant HEA Expert Group Objective	➔ To ensure a roadmap for attainment of gender equality is developed in each institution.

INCENTIVISED PROGRESS THROUGH FUNDING MECHANISMS

Action(s) recommended by the Gender Equality Taskforce:	
▶ **HEA block grant funding shall be linked to an institution's performance in addressing gender inequality through the Strategic Dialogue process and System Performance Framework.**	
▶ **A new 'Gender Equality Enhancement Funding Call' should be set up to support innovative organisational and cultural change initiatives nationally.**	
New Gender Equality Taskforce Objective	➔ To drive performance there shall be rewards for progress through funding incentives and consequences for lack of engagement or effort.

DRIVING SUSTAINABLE CHANGE IN THE FORM OF A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Action(s) recommended by the Gender Equality Taskforce:	
▶ **A new Centre of Excellence for Gender Equality, with a dedicated resource, shall be established by the Department under the auspice of the HEA. The Centre shall:** ● **ensure sustainable acceleration towards gender equality in HEIs;** ● **foster HEI collaboration and disseminate good practice;** ● **provide centralised support for HEIs;** ● **report regularly to the Minister in relation to performance of the system.**	
New Gender Equality Taskforce Objective	➔ To ensure sustainable acceleration towards gender equality in the institutions.

ATHENA SWAN CHARTER IN IRELAND

Action(s) recommended by the Gender Equality Taskforce	
▶ **HEIs shall apply for an Institutional Bronze award by 2019.**	
▶ **HEIs should retain their Bronze award until such time as they obtain a Silver award.**	
▶ **IoTs working towards TU status will be required to show evidence to the HEA, annually through their institutional gender action plans, that they are working together to build gender equality into their merger process.**	
▶ **Once a TU has been established, it shall be required to achieve a TU bronze award within three years.**	
▶ **The HEA will have responsibility for determining the optimal timing and requirements in relation to Athena SWAN certification, and whether a HEI is deemed eligible or ineligible for research funding based on their award status.**	
Relevant Expert Group Objective	➔ To support and recognise the embedding of gender equality across all aspects of the work of HEIs.

GENDER-PROOFING RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES

Action(s) recommended by the Gender Equality Taskforce	
▶	**All HEIs shall ensure that there are concrete actions in their institutional gender action plans, elaborated where appropriate at discipline and business unit level, to bring their existing policies in line with good practice.**
▶	**The Centre of Excellence for Gender Equality will support the sharing of good practice by HEIs across the sector.**
▶	**A report on the recruitment, selection and promotion procedures and practices must be submitted to the EDI sub-committee of the governing authority at least once annually, and should include statistical analysis of applications, recruitment and progression for all academic and professional, management and support staff.**
Relevant HEA Expert Group Objective	➔ To gender-proof recruitment, selection and promotion procedures and practices.

POSITIVE ACTION INTERVENTIONS

For all staff (academic and professional, management and support staff):

Action(s) recommended by the Gender Equality Taskforce	
▶	**All HEIs shall strive for gender balance in the final pool of candidates for all competitions.**
▶	**Each HEI is required to implement the flexible cascade model as a minimum (not a maximum) for both promotion and recruitment of academic staff and senior grades of professional, management and support staff.**
▶	**Each HEI is required to set ambitious short, medium and long-term targets (1, 3 and 5 years), over and above the flexible cascade model for both promotion and recruitment of academic staff and senior grades of professional, management and support staff.**
▶	**To enable HEIs to better monitor their progress and monitor patterns, data disaggregated by gender, contract type and broad discipline area or business unit should be collected on the number of applications, recruitments and promotions for all academic grades. This data should be submitted to the HEA annually for analysis at the sectoral and national level. Similar data should also be included for senior professional, management and support staff.**
▶	**New and additional gender-specific posts, at appropriate levels, as well as other positive action measures, should be considered where they would be a proportionate and effective means to achieve rapid and sustainable change.**
▶	**All HEIs shall ensure that there are concrete actions in their institutional gender action plan to address stereotyping of 'female' and 'male' roles.**
Relevant HEA Expert Group Objective	➔ To drive change through the use of positive action interventions for academic staff.
Relevant HEA Expert Group Objective	➔ To drive change at professor level through the use of positive action interventions.
Relevant HEA Expert Group Objective	➔ To drive change through the use of positive action interventions for professional, management and support staff, and to combat stereotyping of 'female' and 'male' roles and horizontal segregation among professional, management and support staff.

CONTEXT FOR THE WORK OF THE GENDER EQUALITY TASKFORCE

Expert Group Report (2016)

The *Report of the Expert Group: HEA National Review on Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions* (herein referred to as HEA Expert Group Report), published in 2016[5] was an important first milestone in developing a strategic approach to tackling gender inequality in Irish higher education. Not only did it highlight clearly for the first time the extent of the significant under-representation of women at the highest levels, of both academic and professional, management and support staff (*HEA Higher Education Institutional Staff Profiles by Gender, 2016, hereon referred to as the HEA Staff Profiles*[6]), but it set out deliberately ambitious and radical recommendations, with academic excellence at their heart. The recommendations were not only for the higher education institutions (HEIs), but also for other key stakeholder groups in higher education including the Higher Education Authority (HEA), Department of Education and Skills (DES) and the research funding agencies.

Progress since 2016

Compared to 2016, the level of public discourse around equality issues such as the gender pay gap has increased significantly and there is now a heightened awareness, driven by both men and women, of the need for both equal opportunities and equal results for both men and women[7]. The third publication of the *HEA Staff Profiles* in July 2018,[8] highlighted that numerical progress towards gender equality had been marginal (1-2%) each year since the inaugural report was published. This report presented gender-disaggregated data for 2017 on the leadership, governance, management and staffing of the universities, affiliated colleges and the IoTs. There was still a significant lack of women on key decision-making bodies in the institutions and at senior levels of both academic and professional, management and support staff.

5 HEA (2016) *Report of the Expert Group: HEA National Review on Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions*.

6 HEA (2016) *Higher Education Institutional Staff Profiles by Gender*.

7 C. Taylor (2018) Legislation to reduce gender pay gap set for this year. *The Irish Times*, 6 April 2018. See also https://press.pwc.com/News-releases/steady-progress-in-boosting-female-economic-empowerment--but-gender-pay-gap-still-a-major-issue/s/b77e04a0-f01c-4b62-b64f-f12032c6c409

8 HEA (2018) *Higher Education Institutional Staff Profiles by Gender*.

Gender Equality Taskforce approach

The Gender Equality Taskforce formally began their work in November 2017 following the development of their Terms of Reference (see appendix H)

The approach taken by the Gender Equality Taskforce involved the following stages:

- Review of recruitment and promotion policies and practices in HEIs, conducted by Equality Challenge Unit (ECU);
- Consultation with stakeholders involving face-to-face meetings with the Gender Equality Taskforce, a stakeholder consultation event; and analysis of the outcomes of the consultation process;
- Data analysis of academic staff recruitment and promotion by gender; and identification of gaps in data collection, particularly in regards professional, management and support staff data;
- Progress reports from HEIs on the HEA Expert Group Report recommendations and analysis of progress made at sectoral level;
- Literature review of national and international practice including challenges and emerging solutions since 2016;
- Development of three-year gender action plan.

Each of these stages is described below.

Review of recruitment and promotion policies and practices

An assessment of recruitment and promotion good practice was undertaken using a self-audit toolkit created by the Equality Challenge Unit[9] (ECU). The ECU took initiatives that were included in at least one-third of the thirty-one successful Silver and Gold UK Athena SWAN applications to establish a good practice benchmark for Irish institutions. The self-audit tool contained a list of ten initiatives (five recruitment and five promotion initiatives), as well as nine aspirational initiatives that were seen as innovative and useful to index for future evaluations. The self-audit tool asked HEIs to use a traffic light system to assess their own institution against each initiative: green (initiative is fully rolled-out across the institution); orange (initiative is rolled-out in some departments, or in the process of being rolled-out in the institution); and red (initiative is not rolled-out anywhere in the institution). Twenty-three HEIs across Ireland completed the self-audit (see appendix B for the full report).

9 Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) https://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/ is the UK higher education sector agency for equality and diversity. ECU has managed the Athena SWAN Charter since it was launched in 2005.

Consultation with stakeholders

The Gender Equality Taskforce recognised that it was imperative to engage and consult with the HEIs and other key stakeholders (see appendix E for a full list) to jointly identify areas that required specific focus in the gender action plan. The Gender Equality Taskforce met with key stakeholders through face to face meetings and a stakeholder consultation event in January 2018 to get feedback and identify challenges or barriers to change, in particular in relation to recruitment and progression in academia. The Gender Equality Taskforce commends the high level of participation by the sector and the engagement and commitment of all stakeholders was noteworthy.

Data collection and analysis

Detailed analysis was completed on the available data, but the Gender Equality Taskforce has identified areas where data collection needs to be expanded and enhanced; particularly in relation to professional, management and support staff. Improved data analysis at a national level with detailed annual returns should be a key focus.

Before developing the gender action plan, the Gender Equality Taskforce set out to estimate the rate of change in senior academic staff positions in Irish HEIs under the current academic structures. Due to data limitations, this analysis focused on the seven universities, and fourteen IoTs. The number of applications for senior academic posts by gender, as well as the numbers being recruited or promoted into these posts were analysed over the period 2007-2017.

The HEIs returned staff statistics to the IUA (for the universities) and the DES (for the institutes of technology and colleges) and a summary of the data by sector was submitted to the HEA for consideration.

With a view to making data-driven decisions, several scenarios were examined using the average number of posts available in any given year at professor/senior lecturer level (c. 50 posts in the universities; and c. 50 posts in the IoTs respectively) to estimate when gender balance (minimum 40% of each gender) might be achieved over the next two decades based on the historical rate of change observed for the past decade.

The results are presented in appendix C for the universities and IoTs.

Data areas for future development

There was limited data available on professional, management and support staff for this review. This is an area that needs to be developed. Simple refinement of quarterly returns to the HEA (and analysis process of same) would help immediately to collect better disaggregated data and allow more comprehensive benchmarking at a sector level. It is proposed that the data currently collected by the HEA on applications and promotions for academic staff, would in the future be expanded to include professional, management and support staff. There was also limited data available on research staff and staff on contracts. Furthermore, the development of a new staff database by the HEA would further improve the quality of the data and should be progressed as a matter of priority.

Intersectionality

While this report focuses on gender, the Gender Equality Taskforce recognises the imperative to promote equality in higher education across the nine grounds on which discrimination is unlawful in Ireland – gender, civil status, family status, age, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation and membership of the Traveller community. Changes that bring about inclusion for one group will have far-reaching benefits for society.

Progress reports

HEIs were asked to provide a progress update on their implementation of each of the Expert Group report recommendations. The summary of these qualitative progress reports were shared with the IUA and THEA. Each sector had the opportunity to comment on their collective data and the picture emerging, thereby setting a foundation for a culture of benchmarking and sharing of good practice across the sectors. A summary of progress under each recommendation was submitted to the HEA at a sectoral level (see appendix A for the progress reports).

Literature review

A literature review of national and international initiatives emerging since 2016 was conducted to identify developments and good practice since the publication of the Expert Group Report. This looked at emerging solutions in relation to addressing gender inequality in both higher education and business settings. Two measures to address gender inequality in higher education which emerged from this review of recent scholarship and activities were 'positive action measures' and 'mentoring/sponsorship'. A further discussion of each of these is included in appendix D.

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

International experience has demonstrated that the path towards gender equality is neither linear or guaranteed [10], and in other countries the rate of change in higher education has also been extremely slow.

Gender inequality in higher education continues to exist in countries which generally finish top of the overall gender equality index, such as Norway and Sweden[11]. Research highlights how systems for recruitment and promotion are far from gender neutral and not fully open to competition.[12] Women's career progression is affected by exclusionary practices, by workload allocation, an unwelcoming climate and unconscious bias.[13]

Country case study: Norway

Norway is regarded as a world leader in gender equality but has a persistent issue with gender imbalance at senior positions in academia and research.[14] Compared with other countries, Norway has a relatively large number of full professors (both men and women) but the proportion of women in higher positions is still comparatively low. In 2017, 29% of full professors and 47.5% of associate professors were women. The share of female professors has only increased about 1% every year in the last ten years.[15] This is despite strong gender equality policies in general, but in particular, policies targeted towards academia. Not to mention the relatively generous parental leave and widespread availability of childcare in Norway. The Norwegian Research Council has cited loss of talent and biased recruitment as both a democratic challenge and an obstacle to achieving the ambitious objectives of Norwegian research.[16]

Country case study: Switzerland

Since 2000, the federal government have been pursuing a programme called Equal Opportunity at Swiss Universities[17] whose main aims included ensuring that 25% of all full and associate professors and 40% of all assistant professors are women by 2012. This goal has still not been reached and the highest annual increase rate ever observed was 1.8% (in 2006, in comparison to 2005[18]). In 2016, 21.3% of full professors and 31.5% of assistant professors were women[19]. If the rate of promoting women to professorial positions remains at its current slow pace, the percentage of women professors in the year 2020 will be between 22% and 24%[20]

10 See Possible Reason 1, HEA (2016) *Report of the Expert Group: HEA National Review on Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions* p. 14

11 See http://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2015/countries-comparison

12 H. Peterson and B. Jordansson (2017) Gender equality as a core academic value: undoing gender in a 'non-traditional' Swedish university in K. White and P. O'Connor (eds.) (2017) *Gendered success in higher education: global perspectives*.

13 Ibid. p. 27

14 See https://www.forskningsradet.no/en/Funding/BALANSE/1253985316903/p1254006410319?visAktive=false

15 See http://kifinfo.no/en/content/statistics

16 The Research Council of Norway: Programme for gender balance in senior positions and research management - BALANSE publication. Available at: https://www.forskningsradet.no/en/Funding/BALANSE/1253985316903

17 See https://www.swissuniversities.ch/en/topics/promotion-of-young-talent/equal-opportunities/suc-programme-p-4/

18 Interim report following the completion of the first half of the programme. Available at: https://www.swissuniversities.ch/en/topics/promotion-of-young-talent/equal-opportunities/suc-programme-p-4/

19 P. Dubach et al. (2017) *Frauen and Maenner an Scheizer Hochschulen: Indikatoren zur Chancengleichheit in Studium und wissenschaftlicher Laufbahn*.

20 Swiss Universities (2013) *Evaluation of the third phase of the Swiss Federal Equal Opportunity at Universities Programme* (2008-2011/2012)

Figure 1: Trends in the number of women at professor level in France, Germany, Switzerland and Ireland.

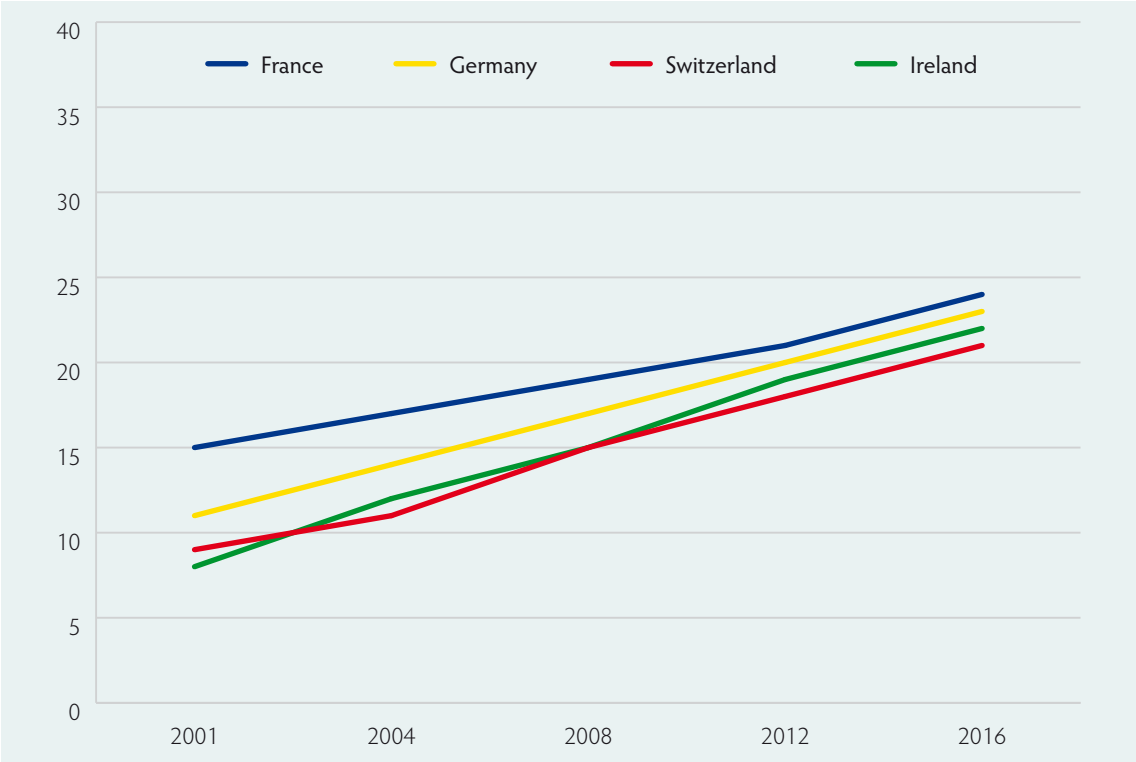

Figure 1 shows that Ireland started from a lower baseline level of (8%)[21] female professors in 2001, relative to France (15%)[22], Germany (11%)[23], and Switzerland (9%)[24], but improved slowly to reach (22%) by 2016, similar to France (24%)[25], Germany (23%)[26], and Switzerland (21%)[27].

However, this figure also shows that gender balance (a minimum 40% of either gender) is still a long way off at senior levels in higher education systems across Europe, and progress is unacceptably slow (which will only be made slower by the introduction of a later retirement age[28], and will remain so, unless positive action is taken (see appendix D).

21 P. O' Connor Understanding success: a case study of gendered change in the professoriate. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 2014 Vol. 36, No. 2. 212-224

22 See https://publication.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/eesr/9/EESR9_ES_04-les_personnels_enseignants_de_l_enseignement_superieur_public_sous_tutelle_du_menesr.php

23 See https://www.ssoar.info/ssoar/bitstream/handle/document/54112/ssoar-2017-lother_et_al-Evaluation_des_Professorinnenprogramms_des_Bundes.pdf?sequence=1 pg. 60

24 See https://www.swissuniversities.ch/fileadmin/swissuniversities/Dokumente/Forschung/Chancengleichheit/Modul1_Diagramme_Umfrage_Professuren_2014_2015.pdf

25 See https://publication.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/eesr/9/EESR9_ES_04-les_personnels_enseignants_de_l_enseignement_superieur_public_sous_tutelle_du_menesr.php

26 See https://www.destatis.de/EN/FactsFigures/SocietyState/EducationResearchCulture/InstitutionsHigherEducation/Tables/FrauenanteileAkademischeLaufbahn.html

27 See https://www.swissuniversities.ch/fileadmin/swissuniversities/Dokumente/Forschung/Chancengleichheit/Modul1_Diagramme_Umfrage_Professuren_2014_2015.pdf

28 The Pension Authority, State Pension Age. Available at: http://www.pensionsauthority.ie/en/LifeCycle/State_pensions/State_pension_age/; Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (December 2017), Circular 21/2017, 'A Temporary Circular to allow for certain Civil Servants to be retained beyond their Compulsory Retirement Age of 65 years until they reach the age of eligibility for the Contributory State Pension', p.2.

GENDER EQUALITY TASKFORCE ACTION PLAN FOR 2018-2020

This Taskforce Gender Action Plan is divided into eight themes:

THEME

HEIs showing leadership – Institutional Gender Action Plans

Incentivised Progress through Funding Mechanisms

Driving Sustainable change in the form of a Centre of Excellence for Gender Equality

Athena SWAN Charter in Ireland

Recruitment and Promotion Procedures and Practices*

Leadership

Governance and Management

Embedding Gender Equality in Organisational Culture

* *This theme was a particular focus of the Gender Equality Taskforce which was asked specifically to oversee a review of the systems of recruitment and promotion policies and practices in higher education institutions.*

The eight themes are based on the original HEA Expert Group Report themes and have been extended to include new 'Incentivised Progress through Funding Mechanism' and 'Support in the Form of a Centre of Excellence' themes.

All the HEA Expert Group recommendations were endorsed by the Gender Equality Taskforce. Where further insights, challenges and opportunities have emerged, the Gender Equality Taskforce has, where necessary, updated or extended the HEA Expert Group recommendations. The original numbering of the HEA Expert Group recommendations is referenced where appropriate.

HEIs SHOWING LEADERSHIP – INSTITUTIONAL GENDER ACTION PLANS

Action(s) recommended by the Gender Equality Taskforce:

- **To accelerate gender balance, all HEIs shall set ambitious short, medium and long-term targets (1, 3 and 5 years) for the proportion of people of each gender which it aims to have at senior levels of academic and professional, management and support staff across the institution.**
- **All HEIs shall set ambitious short, medium and long-term goals and actions at institutional level in order to progress gender equality.**
- **All HEIs shall submit their institutional gender action plan to the HEA and provide annual progress updates.**
- **It is envisaged that the institutional gender action plan will be implemented through discipline/ business unit gender action plans.**

Gender Equality Taskforce Comments:

It is imperative that HEIs fully recognise the extent of gender inequality in their organisation, take ownership and show leadership in addressing the issue by examining their own context and culture, and reviewing in detail their own disaggregated data on gender across all parts and levels of the institution.

To accelerate gender balance with a reasonable timescale, the Gender Equality Taskforce recommends that each HEI should set its own ambitious multi-year targets for the proportion of people of each gender which it aims to have at the senior levels in the HEIs over the next one, three and five-year period. These targets should be included in the institutional gender action plan submitted annually to HEA and be agreed as part of the Strategic Dialogue process. Progress on the goals, actions and targets in the institutional gender action plan to address gender inequality should be reported annually to the HEA and linked to funding mechanisms with incentives and consequences where appropriate. If the recommended HEI led approach does not achieve significant change within an appropriate timescale, the HEA and the Minister can adopt a more directive approach.

The institutional gender action plan should take account of the HEA Expert Group recommendations and Gender Equality Taskforce actions and, where appropriate, the requirements of Athena SWAN. To ensure the gender action plan is responsive to emerging good practice, the opportunity to suggest an alternative approach to reaching targets (e.g. if it is more appropriate to their particular HEI), would also be facilitated.

It is envisaged that the institutional gender action plan will be implemented and supported through discipline and business unit gender action plans.

Relevant HEA Expert Group Report:

NO.	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATION
1.21	To ensure a roadmap for attainment of gender equality is developed in each institution.	Each HEI will develop and implement a gender action plan (including goals, actions and targets), which will be integrated into the institution's strategic plan and into the HEI's compacts with the HEA.

INCENTIVISED PROGRESS THROUGH FUNDING MECHANISMS

Action(s) recommended by the Gender Equality Taskforce:

- **HEA block grant funding shall be linked to an institution's performance in addressing gender inequality through the Strategic Dialogue process and System Performance Framework.**
- **A new 'Gender Equality Enhancement Funding Call' should be set up to support innovative organisational and cultural change initiatives nationally.**

Gender Equality Taskforce Comments:

A key element of steering the strategic development of the Irish higher education and research system is the HEA's management of the *Higher Education System Performance Framework 2018-2020*. The purpose of the Framework is to hold the system accountable for performance and delivery on national priorities and to monitor performance of the system as a whole. A performance compact outlining HEI priorities and targets for specific areas is discussed and agreed with the HEA. Performance is then linked to funding through a Strategic Dialogue process consisting of annual progress updates to the HEA after which a judgement is made as to whether HEI performance has been sufficient. Funding incentives or consequences can then be applied to the HEI as appropriate. In the Performance Framework 2018-2020, gender equality has been included as a high-level objective providing the opportunity to incentivise progress through the funding mechanisms.

To facilitate gender equality initiatives to be implemented nationally the Gender Equality Taskforce also recommends that an annual *'Gender Equality Enhancement Funding Call'* be established. The initial funding provided by the government over the 3 years of the gender action plan may be leveraged through matched funding and/or time from the HEIs. The VPs/Directors for EDI group could provide stakeholder consultation to the *Centre of Excellence for Gender Equality* on themes by discipline each year. This initiative is intended to encourage cross-sectoral collaboration as a means to achieve national transformation.

New Gender Equality Taskforce Objective:

To drive performance there shall be rewards for progress through funding incentives and consequences for lack of engagement or effort.

DRIVING SUSTAINABLE CHANGE IN THE FORM OF A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Action(s) recommended by the Gender Equality Taskforce:

- **A new Centre of Excellence for Gender Equality, with a dedicated resource, should be established by the Department under the auspice of the HEA. The Centre will:**
  - **ensure sustainable acceleration towards gender equality in HEIs;**
  - **foster HEI collaboration and disseminate good practice;**
  - **provide centralised support for HEIs;**
  - **report regularly to the Minister in relation to performance of the system.**

Gender Equality Taskforce Comments:

The Gender Equality Taskforce recommends that a Centre of Excellence for Gender Equality be set up within the HEA to ensure a sustainable acceleration towards gender equality is achieved by HEIs and it will advise the Minister and her department on progress, new developments and measures which may be required in future for Ireland.

Detailed data obtained by the Centre from HEIs would be key to enabling data driven decisions to be made so that actual, rather than perceived barriers to gender diversity can be addressed. The Centre should be pivotal in enabling sharing of good practice, joint initiatives and co-operation between HEIs, and in developing a better understanding of the impact of interventions taken and determining the areas of future focus. Providing a centralised support for HEIs will help to embed an institutional gender equality culture.

The Centre will work closely with the HEIs (e.g. with the VPs/Directors for EDI) to achieve efficiencies across the system through the coordination of activities, such as the centralised identification of experts and delivery of training.

The Centre would use the new 'Gender Equality Enhancement Funding Call' mentioned above to encourage innovative approaches to addressing gender inequality across the institutions.

New Gender Equality Taskforce Objective:

To ensure sustainable acceleration towards gender equality in the institutions.

ATHENA SWAN CHARTER IN IRELAND

Action(s) recommended by the Gender Equality Taskforce:

- **HEIs shall apply for an institutional Bronze award by 2019.**
- **HEIs should retain their Bronze award until such time as they obtain a Silver award.**
- **IoTs working towards TU status will be required to show evidence to the HEA, annually through their institutional gender action plans, that they are working together to build gender equality into their merger process.**
- **Once a TU has been established, it shall be required to achieve a TU bronze award within three years.**
- **The HEA will have responsibility for determining the optimal timing and requirements in relation to Athena SWAN certification, and whether a HEI is deemed eligible or ineligible for research funding based on their award status.**

Gender Equality Taskforce Comments:

Currently all seven universities hold a Bronze institutional Athena SWAN award and several of the IoTs and colleges are in the process of applying.

Since the HEA Expert Group recommendation was published, the remit of the Athena SWAN Charter has expanded to be more inclusive of all staff working in institutions. The original application to Bronze level focused only on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) staff, whereas now all departments in an HEI will be included, and whereas previously only academic staff were included in the critical analysis, now professional, management and support staff are also included. It now takes into account the experiences of trans staff and students and requires intersectional analysis with consideration of ethnicity.

This has implications for the overall level of work needed to put together an Athena SWAN award application. To be eligible to apply for a Silver institutional award, the majority of departments must hold a Bronze award, and at least one department must hold a Silver award. On average it was recommended that HEIs take a year to do their critical analysis and write their application for an Athena SWAN Bronze award. *In the 12 years since the Charter was established in the UK, just 14% of award-holding universities have reached Silver* (13 hold a Silver and 83 hold a Bronze). Many focus on a Bronze institutional renewal before attempting a Silver (15 institutions have not yet reached Silver but have renewed their Bronze between 2-4 times).

The Gender Equality Taskforce notes that engagement with the Athena SWAN process has been transformative for HEIs and encourages them to continue to work towards obtaining a Silver, and eventually a Gold, level award. The Gender Equality Taskforce is cognisant of maintaining the momentum that has built up around the Athena SWAN certification, although recognises that the original timelines may now not be achievable. Given that the change in process and requirements outlined above has increased the amount of work involved in a successful application, it may be necessary to provide some flexibility for obtaining awards (e.g. obtain a Bronze by 2019; obtain a Silver eight years after first achieving an institutional Bronze).

Each HEI will have its own timing in relation to Athena SWAN and there may be multiple organisations (including research funding agencies) that could potentially need to understand whether an HEI, or departments within HEIs, have made significant progress in relation to addressing gender inequality or not. Therefore, the Gender Equality Taskforce recommends that the HEA should have responsibility for determining the optimal timing and requirements in relation to Athena SWAN certification, and whether a HEI is deemed eligible or ineligible for research funding based on their award status.

Relevant HEA Expert Group Report:		
NO.	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATION
1.22	To support and recognise the embedding of gender equality across all aspects of the work of HEIs.	HEIs will apply for and achieve an Athena SWAN institutional award within three years. TUs will apply for and achieve an Athena SWAN institutional award within three years of being formally established.

RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES

Irish higher education's best asset is its people. Effective talent management strategies are required to attract, develop, and retain the best talent, regardless of gender. Current recruitment and promotion practices can lead to women's achievements being ignored or undervalued.[29] This represents a considerable under-utilisation of talent for the institutions and must be addressed.

GENDER-PROOFING RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES

Action(s) recommended by the Gender Equality Taskforce:

- **All HEIs shall ensure that there are concrete actions in their institutional gender action plans, elaborated where appropriate at discipline and business unit level, to bring their existing policies in line with good practice.**
- **The Centre of Excellence for Gender Equality will support the sharing of good practice by HEIs across the sector.**
- **A report on the recruitment, selection and promotion procedures and practices must be submitted to the EDI sub-committee of the governing authority at least once annually, and should include statistical analysis of applications, recruitment and progression for all academic and professional, management and support staff.**

Gender Equality Taskforce Comments:

Review of recruitment and promotion policies and practice by ECU (see appendix B for full report)

An assessment of recruitment and promotion good practice undertaken using a self-audit toolkit created by the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) benchmarked Irish HEIs against initiatives that were included in at least one-third of thirty-one successful Silver and Gold UK Athena SWAN applications to establish a good practice benchmark for Irish institutions. The main findings apply to both academic and professional, management and support staff in the HEIs and include:

- The pace of change reported by the Irish HEIs is worthy of praise. Across all 23 institutions approximately half of the initiatives were either being rolled-out in some departments/faculties in the institution, or in the process of being rolled-out in the institution, but not yet finished for both recruitment (51.3%) and promotion initiatives (45.2%).
- The prevalence of good practice fully rolled out in the HEIs was greater for recruitment initiatives (35.7%) than for promotion initiatives (29.6%), which may reflect the recent history of a lack of promotion opportunities in the Irish HE sector.
- Institutions with larger total numbers of staff were more likely to have examples of good recruitment and promotion practices in place. There was no consistent pattern of institutions without sufficient recruitment and promotion initiatives rolled out across the institutions when analysed according to different proportions of female executive staff.

The comparison with Gold and Silver level institutions and departments represents a significant stretch target for the 23 Irish institutions that undertook the self-audit, but the results indicated that examples of good practice in recruitment and promotion at this level do exist in Ireland, but also that there is significant room for improvement. The tool used to audit the Irish HE sector was designed to take a snapshot of the sector as it currently is, as well as provide a baseline from which improvement over time could be ascertained. Noting of course that the analysis was not based on all best practice initiatives possible, but rather just on good practice observed in successful Gold and Silver Athena SWAN applications.

29 HEA (2016) *Report of the Expert Group: HEA National Review on Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions* pp14-17, 71

Gender Equality Taskforce Comments: *(continued)*

Taking into account the different contexts of the Irish and UK HE sectors, the pace of change and commitment to rolling out further initiatives reported by Irish HEIs in the self-audit process is noteworthy and demonstrates the level of engagement by the HEIs to address recruitment and promotion challenges in higher education.

Review of recruitment and promotion policies and practice in Irish Higher Education

Reflecting on the ECU findings above, the Gender Equality Taskforce expanded on the key areas for focus identified by the HEA Expert Group Report[30] in relation to recruitment and promotion policies and practice, to now include[31]:

- Advertising commitment to equality in recruitment process[32] and inclusion of a statement that the search committee are particularly interested in the under-represented gender to apply;
- A robust search process will help to ensure that there are enough fully qualified people of both genders included in the selection pool;
- Discussion of career development at performance development reviews[33];
- Compulsory equality and diversity training (including unconscious bias training) for new staff members[34]

Relevant HEA Expert Group Report:

NO.	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATION
1.16	To gender-proof recruitment, selection and promotion procedures and practices.	The recruitment, selection, and promotion procedures currently used, will be reviewed to ensure that they are gender-sensitive.

30 HEA (2016) *Report of the Expert Group: HEA National Review on Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions*
31 This is not an exhaustive list.
32 Good practice recruitment initiative from the ECU self-audit tool. See Appendix B
33 Ibid
34 Ibid

POSITIVE ACTION INTERVENTIONS

For all staff (academic and professional, management and support staff):

Action(s) recommended by the Gender Equality Taskforce:

- **All HEIs shall strive for gender balance in the final pool of candidates for all competitions.**
- **Each HEI is required to implement the flexible cascade model as a minimum (not a maximum), for both promotion and recruitment of academic staff and senior grades of professional, management and support staff.**
- **Each HEI is required to set ambitious short, medium and long-term targets (1, 3 and 5 years), over and above the flexible cascade model for both promotion and recruitment of academic staff and senior grades of profession, management and support staff.**
- **To enable HEIs to better monitor their progress and monitor patterns, data disaggregated by gender, contract type and broad discipline area or business unit should be collected on the number of applications, recruitments and promotions for all academic grades. This data should be submitted to the HEA annually for analysis at the sectoral and national level. Similar data should also be included for senior professional, management and support staff.**
- **New and additional gender-specific posts, at appropriate levels, as well as other positive action measures, should be considered where they would be a proportionate and effective means to achieve rapid and sustainable change.**
- **All HEIs shall ensure that there are concrete actions in their institutional gender action plan to address stereotyping of 'female' and 'male' roles.**

Gender Equality Taskforce Comments:

The Gender Equality Taskforce analysed application and appointment data for both the universities and the IoTs over the period 2007-2017, and it appears that the pattern of recruitment and promotion, with a few exceptions (e.g. senior lecturers in the university sector and senior lecturer 2 in the IoT sector), is largely in line with a flexible cascade model approach, i.e. the numbers being appointed at the level above reflect the percentage of women at the level below. Women and men had similar success rates in the university sector during 2013-2017, while in the IoT sector women had higher success rates than men.

However, analysis of the estimated rate of change for the future suggests that the adoption of a flexible cascade model approach alone, could take more than 20 years to achieve gender balance at professor level (i.e. minimum 40% female professors). Although the IoT sector currently has a higher percentage of women at senior levels relative to the university sector, it would still take ten years to achieve gender balance at senior lecturer 1 level and seven years at senior lecturer 3 level if the flexible cascade model approach alone was adopted (see appendix C).

Therefore, the Gender Equality Taskforce recommends that the flexible cascade model should be implemented as a minimum (not a maximum) and HEIs will be required to set ambitious short, medium and long-term targets (1, 3, 5 years), over and above the flexible cascade model, for both promotion and recruitment of academic staff and senior grades of professional, management and support staff.

It is clear from the limited progress to date in Ireland, and the experience internationally in academia[35], that the HEA Expert Group target of having a minimum 40% women and 40% men to be full professors, at the appropriate pay scale by 2024 will not be achieved without positive action (see appendix D for a more detailed discussion of positive action interventions), being taken by each HEI, as appropriate to its particular circumstances.

35 See pages 18 and 19 of this Action Plan for information on the International Experience

Gender Equality Taskforce Comments: *(continued)*

Ensuring that the proportion of women recruited to the professor grade increases by 2% per annum over and above the current rate could achieve 30% female professors within a decade and reach close to 40% within 15 years. In addition to this, the establishment of new and additional female specific positions in Ireland would be transformative and could result in 40% of professors being women within a decade in Ireland. (see appendix C)

It should also be noted that while gender balance and gender equality are similar, they are not essentially interchangeable. Achieving a gender-equal system where all staff members are developed and supported equally will take more than merely achieving an equal number of female and male academics at senior levels, though this is one of several important indicators. Gender-balanced data can be a reflection of a culture of gender equality within an organisation, but that culture can be achieved before complete gender-balance is achieved, if the right measures are put in place.

Therefore, to get a holistic picture, the number of professors should be used as one metric in a basket of gender equality metrics. Accordingly, the Gender Equality Taskforce encourages each HEI to consider innovative ways to achieve an ambitious acceleration of gender equality for academic and professional, management and support staff at all levels throughout its own institution.

For the purposes of reporting on 'professors' in line with European reporting requirements this metric is calculated using university staff data, as the IoT sector does not have a 'professoriate'.

In the IoT sector, it is the senior lecturer grades where women are under-represented. The Gender Equality Taskforce split the senior lecturer grade out into SL 1, SL 2, and SL3 to get a better picture of the estimated rate of change at this level.

It is noted that attention needs to be given to staff at all levels of the HEIs, and robust workforce planning is needed to realise this.

Relevant HEA Expert Group Report:

NO.	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATION
1.17	To drive change through the use of positive action interventions for academic staff.	Each HEI will introduce mandatory quotas for academic promotion, based on the flexible cascade model where the proportion of women and men to be promoted/recruited is based on the proportion of each gender at the grade immediately below.
1.18	To drive change at professor level through the use of positive action interventions	A minimum of 40% women and 40% men to be full professors, at the appropriate pay scale.
1.19 & 1.20	To drive change through the use of positive action interventions for professional, management and support staff, and to combat stereotyping of 'female' and 'male' roles and horizontal segregation among professional, management and support staff.	At the final selection step, in the appointment process for professional/support positions where the salary-scale reaches or exceeds €76,000, in so far as is possible, the final pool of candidates must comprise an equal number of women and men. If it has not been possible to achieve gender balance at the final selection step, the interview panel must account to the governing authority/or equivalent, for why this is not possible. Overtime, achieve greater gender-balance at all career levels (pay grades) within the institution.

LEADERSHIP

Action(s) recommended by the Gender Equality Taskforce:

- **In planning for a new president, the governing authority will ensure that measures to promote gender equality within the search and selection process (as well as documenting the gender balance in the applicant pool, and at each stage of the selection process), are undertaken. The governing authority will provide a report to the HEA.**
- **In the appointment process for all leadership positions (including Head of Department), a requirement of appointment will be demonstrable experience of leadership in advancing gender equality. This will be included as a specific criterion in role descriptions.**
- **All staff in a leadership position within the HEI shall be responsible for integrating gender equality in all processes and decisions made. HEIs should create a framework within the HEI to indicate how this would be implemented.**
- **The HEA shall work with IUA and THEA to develop a national programme to promote competency in advancing gender equality for managers and leaders.**
- **Each institution should appoint a Vice-President/Director for EDI. This may be a full-time or part-time role (if the institution can demonstrate, for its size and complexity, that the role offers sufficient leadership capacity in gender equality, diversity and inclusion), appropriately resourced to be effective in the role and shall be a member of the senior management team.**

Gender Equality Taskforce Comments:

The Gender Equality Taskforce acknowledges that the sector would benefit from an appropriate leadership and succession planning programme. This should be considered as part of the enhancement of gender initiatives at national level. Mentoring and sponsorship (see appendix D for a case study on this) at vice-president (VP) and other senior levels could be utilised to develop a diverse pipeline of potential candidates.

HEIs should create a framework within the HEI to indicate how all staff in a leadership position within the HEI will be responsible for integrating gender equality in all processes and decisions made. Priority areas could include: appointment, promotion, workload allocation, resource allocation, career development, return-to-work support and creating an environment supportive of family and care responsibilities and engaging men.

The Gender Equality Taskforce recognises the importance of supporting the professional development of managers and leaders, both in academia and professional, management and support staff areas, and recommends that the HEA work with IUA and THEA to develop a national programme to promote competency in advancing gender equality for managers and leaders.

It is critical that gender equality is driven from the President and senior management to ensure the success of gender equality plans and policies.

It was highlighted in the stakeholder consultation process that it is important that a VP/Director for EDI is appointed a member of the senior management team of the HEI.

Relevant HEA Expert Group Report:		
NO.	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATION
1.1	To foster gender-balance in the leadership of HEIs.	At the final selection step, in the appointment process for new presidents (or equivalent), in so far as is possible, the final pool of candidates must comprise an equal number of women and men. If it has not been possible to achieve gender balance at the final selection step, the interview panel must account to the Governing Authority/or equivalent, for why this is not possible.
1.2 & 1.3	To ensure HEI leaders foster a culture of gender equality in their HEI.	In the appointment process for a new president, a requirement of appointment will be demonstrable experience of leadership in advancing gender equality. In the appointment process for a new vice-president, a requirement of appointment will be demonstrable experience of leadership in advancing gender equality.
1.4	To lead cultural and organisational change in their area of responsibility.	The deans and heads of school/department, divisional directors and section/unit managers will be responsible for integrating gender equality in all processes and decisions made. Evidence of leadership in advancing gender equality will be taken into account in appointments to these management positions.
1.5	To achieve gender equality in each HEI.	Each HEI will, through a publicly advertised competitive process, appoint a vice-president/director for equality who will be a full academic member of the executive management team and who will report directly to the president.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

REPRESENTATION ON KEY DECISION-MAKING BODIES

Action(s) recommended by the Gender Equality Taskforce:

- **HEIs shall submit to the HEA, in their annual December returns, a gender breakdown of governing authority/body, academic council and executive management team members by gender.**

Gender Equality Taskforce Comments:

The progress reports submitted by the HEIs and the stakeholder consultation highlighted the need to further clarify the definition of *'key decision-making bodies'*. These could include for example the following:

- Governing Authority and committees
- Executive Senior Management team
- General Management team
- Relevant departmental teams
- Promotional boards

The Gender Equality Taskforce recommends that each institution, by the end of 2019, will have reviewed the structure of its academic council so that academic councils will comprise a minimum of 30% of the underrepresented gender by 2020 and a minimum of 40% women and 40% men by 2024, at the very latest. *Sub-committees of academic council* should be restructured in the course of 2018 to ensure they consist of at least 40% women and 40% men.

The Gender Equality Taskforce recommends that chief officers report annually to governing authority on diversity in their leadership team and proposed measures to promote further diversity.

The Gender Equality Taskforce reiterates that the standards for gender balance set out above are minimum standards, and that in many circumstances it is both preferable and practicable to have balanced groups comprising equal numbers of women and men.

Relevant HEA Expert Group Report:

NO.	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATION
1.6 & 1.7	To ensure gender balance on all key decision-making bodies.	Key decision-making bodies (concerned with resource-allocation, appointments and promotions) in HEIs should be comprised of at least 40% women and at least 40% men. At least 40% of the chairs of key decision-making bodies (concerned with resource-allocation, appointments and promotions) across the HEI will be of each gender in any given year. It is expected that over a three-year period the ratio would be 50:50 women and men chairs.

GOVERNING AUTHORITY GENDER EQUALITY SUB-COMMITTEE

Action(s) recommended by the Gender Equality Taskforce:

- **All HEIs to establish an EDI sub-committee of governing authority (or a joint committee of governing authority and academic council).**

Gender Equality Taskforce Comments:

The Gender Equality Taskforce recommends that the establishment of an EDI sub-committee of governing authority (or a joint committee of governing authority and academic council) be a mandatory requirement for all HEIs.

The chair of the sub-committee should be a member of the governing authority, and the VP/Director for EDI should be a member of the sub-committee. If there is a separate HR committee, HEIs should consider whether the VP/Director for EDI should be a member of that committee also.

As part of its work, the sub-committee should consider how best to communicate its activities/outcomes within the institution.

Relevant HEA Expert Group Report:

NO.	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATION
1.8	To provide strategic oversight of organisational processes and policies in relation to gender equality.	A gender equality sub-committee of the governing authority/body should be established. The minutes of the sub-committee will be published within the HEI.

EMBEDDING GENDER EQUALITY IN ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

ACADEMICALLY-LED GENDER EQUALITY FORUM

Action(s) recommended by the Gender Equality Taskforce:

- **The academically-led HEI gender equality forum shall be chaired by either the President (or equivalent) or the Vice-President/Director of EDI.**

Gender Equality Taskforce Comments:

The HEA Expert Group recommendation to establish an independent, academically-led gender equality forum has been implemented in 5 of the 7 universities and 7 of the 14 IoTs. It is often the institutional Athena SWAN self-assessment committee that fulfils this function. Senior members of staff across all areas of the institution need to lead by example if true cultural and organisational change is to take place.

Relevant HEA Expert Group Report:

NO.	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATION
1.9	To support the mainstreaming of gender equality across the HEIs.	Each HEI will establish an independent, academically-led gender equality forum, chaired by the vice-president for equality and comprising staff members drawn from across the HEI with sufficient influence and motivation to effect change.

FLEXIBLE AND AGILE WORKING

Action(s) recommended by the Gender Equality Taskforce:

- **Each HEI will re-examine its guidelines to consider a structure of flexible working models (inclusive of core hours, remote working and career breaks) and develop guidelines to underpin this.**
- **The HEA Centre of Excellence for Gender Equality will monitor progress on the development of guidelines and will disseminate good practice among HEIs.**

Gender Equality Taskforce Comments:

While there was a strong focus on family-leave in the HEA Expert Group Report, the stakeholder consultation highlighted that while it was appropriate for this to be given attention, the focus should not be so restricted.

Consideration should be given to wider opportunities to enhance the provision of support for all staff members, including those with caring responsibilities. For example, a strong consensus emerged from the stakeholder consultation process that there was an opportunity with modern technology to address work-life balance in HEIs. Flexibility in working environments was important to both men and women.

The *Centre of Excellence for Gender Equality* should be pivotal in enabling sharing of good practice, joint initiatives and co-operation between HEIs, and in developing a better understanding of the impact of interventions taken and determining the areas of future focus. Providing a centralised support for HEIs will help to embed an institutional gender equality culture.

Relevant HEA Expert Group Report:

NO.	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATION
1.10	To enhance the provision of support for staff members with caring responsibilities.	Each HEI will establish a cross-institutional working group to develop a funded structure of family-leave (inclusive of maternity, paternity, parental, adoptive, and carers' leave) and develop mandatory guidelines to underpin this.

DEVELOPING GENDER AWARENESS AMONG STAFF

Action(s) recommended by the Gender Equality Taskforce:

- **The institutional gender action plan shall include measures to actively develop gender awareness among all staff.**

Gender Equality Taskforce Comments:

HEIs need to ensure that the symbolic links between gender and discipline (e.g. masculinity and technology, femininity and education) are challenged.

While the gendering of subjects may begin at previous levels of education, HEIs have a central role to play in changing societal perceptions of gendered professions.

Institutions can reap the benefits of a gender-aware workforce by taking best practice from business as examples. Key areas for focus include:

- Establishing a HeforShe/MARC initiative, the goal of which is to engage men as agents for change, for the achievement of gender equality;
- The provision of face-to-face unconscious bias and gender equality awareness training measures for all staff complemented by a plan to continually review and update the training when appropriate;
- Each senior manager will be required to sponsor (see appendix D for more information on this) the career development of two of the under-represented gender;
- Managers will take responsibility for the active promotion of achievements by both women and men;
- The incorporation of evidence of advancing gender equality into staff members' performance reviews;
- The provision of a gender-aware leadership induction programme for staff moving into leadership positions, which should constitute a minimum 40% of both genders as participants.

Relevant HEA Expert Group Report:

NO.	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATION
1.11	To increase gender awareness among staff.	The HEIs will adopt measures aimed at actively developing gender awareness among all staff.

INTEGRATING THE GENDER DIMENSION INTO TEACHING & LEARNING, RESEARCH, AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

Action(s) recommended by the Gender Equality Taskforce:

- **The institutional gender action plan shall include actions to embed gender equality in Teaching & Learning, and Research, in particular how has the gender dimension been implemented into undergraduate and postgraduate curricula.**
- **Departmental reviews shall include an analysis of gender equality.**
- **HEIs will ensure that gender is examined as part of its quality assurance report.**

Gender Equality Taskforce Comments:

HEIs have a responsibility to ensure that all their graduates are gender-aware; in particular if they are responsible for educating teachers who greatly influence the society of the future. Therefore, face-to-face unconscious-bias training should be fully integrated into teacher education.

HEIs should ensure that the gender dimension is integrated into all research content and provide training and support for research staff on how to do this.

Departmental and institutional quality assurance reviews should acknowledge the importance of fully considering the gender dimension in the development of curricula, and teaching and learning practices, in the pursuit of quality.

Relevant HEA Expert Group Report:

NO.	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATION
1.12	To embed the gender dimension in teaching and learning and quality review processes.	The gender-dimension will be fully integrated into undergraduate and postgraduate curricula. Face to face, unconscious bias training will be fully integrated into initial teacher education. At department-level, self-assessment (departmental reviews) will include consideration of the gender dimension. HEIs will include consideration of the gender dimension in the institutional quality assurance report.
1.13	To embed the gender dimension in research content.	Ensure that the gender dimension is integrated into all research content and provide training and support for research staff on how to do this.

WORKLOAD ALLOCATION MODELS

Action(s) recommended by the Gender Equality Taskforce:

- **Workload allocations shall be discussed annually as part of staff performance and development reviews.**
- **These reviews should be used to discuss career development and promotion opportunities in the sector.**

Gender Equality Taskforce Comments:

The distribution of work can be gendered, with women (in both academic and professional, management and support roles) being tasked with more administrative, support and day-to-day tasks, while men may be allocated tasks deemed more valuable in terms of preparation for promotion.

Workload models in Ireland are normally implemented at departmental/business unit level and vary by discipline, so that there are challenges in implementing an annual process to monitor for gender bias. This is an area that was identified in the stakeholder consultation as needing further improvement as it is instrumental in achieving gender parity.

The Athena SWAN application specifically asks for institutional feedback on their 'workload model' and 'committee workload'.[36]

Relevant HEA Expert Group Report:

NO.	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATION
1.14	To ensure transparent distribution of work.	Ensure HEI workload allocation models are transparent, monitored for gender bias on an annual basis. Evidence of this will be taken into account in the performance development reviews of managers/supervisors responsible for setting staff workloads.

36 Athena SWAN Bronze/Silver Institution application form; expanded Process, section 5.6 'Organisation and Culture' vi and vii, https://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/athena-swan-ireland/

ENABLING DATA-DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING

Action(s) recommended by the Gender Equality Taskforce:

- **HR systems shall record gender disaggregated data and relevant data should be included in the institutional gender action plans.**
- **All data will be made available to decision-making bodies as necessary, subject to legal requirements.**
- **New developments in gender reporting should be incorporated into the data collection process.**
- **The development of a staff database should be progressed as a matter of priority by the HEA.**

Gender Equality Taskforce Comments:

Disaggregated data is key to enabling data driven decisions to be made so that actual, rather than perceived barriers to gender equality and diversity can be addressed by HEIs.

All key decision-making bodies need access to relevant gender-disaggregated data in order to effectively incorporate gender awareness into their decision-making and to measure progress. Therefore, all data gathered on personnel should be disaggregated by gender.

Currently there are gaps in the data available that need to be addressed particularly in relation to: professional, management and support staff; research staff; staff on contracts.

Simple refinement of quarterly returns to the HEA (and analysis process of same) would help immediately to collect better disaggregated data and allow more comprehensive benchmarking at a sector level.

Furthermore, the development of a new staff database by the HEA would further improve the quality of the data, and the visibility of the different types of staff.

Relevant HEA Expert Group Report:

NO.	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATION
1.15	To enable gender disaggregated data-driven decision-making.	A comprehensive gender-disaggregated data collection system will be in place in every HEI.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: MEASURING AND MONITORING PROGRESS

The Gender Equality Taskforce recommends a robust monitoring and accountability framework to measure progress including:

An annual review of HEI progress on gender equality, including:

- Submission to the HEA of institutional 'staff data returns' and 'governance and management structures' by gender;
- Submission of institutional gender action plans to the HEA including:
  - ambitious targets for the proportion of academic and professional, management and support staff of each gender to be in senior positions in the short, medium and long-term (1, 3 and 5 years);
  - specific short, medium and long-term (1, 3 and 5 years) targets for both recruitment and promotion in order to achieve this;
  - ambitious short, medium and long-term goals and actions both at institutional level, discipline and business unit levels to address gender inequality across the institution.
- Submission of institutional annual progress updates to the HEA on their institutional gender action plans, which would include updates on the HEA Expert Group recommendations and the Gender Equality Taskforce actions and, where appropriate, the requirements of Athena SWAN;
- Updates on the status of Irish HEIs application to and success in Athena SWAN.

Publication of review results, including:

- Annual publication by the HEA of institutional 'staff data returns', 'governance and management structures' by gender;
- Annual publication by the HEA of progress update reports on the HEA Expert Group recommendations and the Gender Equality Taskforce actions, at sector level;

The Strategic Dialogue process, including:

- The development of agreed targets and indicators of success for inclusion in the HEI compacts with the HEA;
- Funding incentives and consequences for the HEIs depending on gender equality performance, where appropriate.

Regular meetings of the national committee of HEI Vice-Presidents/Directors for EDI.

The Centre of Excellence for Gender Equality

- The HEA *Centre of Excellence for Gender Equality* will ensure sustainable acceleration of progress towards gender equality and will advise the Minister and her Department on progress, new developments and measures which may be required
- Detailed data obtained by the Centre from HEIs would be key to enabling data driven decisions to be made so that actual, rather than perceived barriers to gender diversity can be addressed.
- The Centre should be pivotal in enabling sharing of good practice, joint initiatives and co-operation between HEIs, and in developing a better understanding of the impact of interventions taken and determining the areas of future focus.

There will be a full review of progress at the end of this action plan including:

- Analysis of the annual reviews of HEI progress on gender equality, as outlined above;
- Analysis of the estimated rate of change for the future based on updated recruitment and promotion data from the HEIs;
- An updated literature review on national and international good practice since the publication of this action plan;
- National Online Gender Equality Survey repeated.

If the recommended HEI led approach does not achieve significant change within an appropriate timescale, the HEA and the Minister can adopt a more directive approach.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – SUMMARY OF PROGRESS REPORTS ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REPORT OF THE EXPERT GROUP: HEA NATIONAL REVIEW OF GENDER EQUALITY IN IRISH HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS, 2016[37]

SUMMARY OF UNIVERSITIES PROGRESS REPORTS

	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMELINE IN REPORT	
1.1	To foster gender balance in the leadership of HEIs.	At the final selection step, in the appointment process for new presidents (or equivalent), in so far as possible, the final pool of candidates will comprise an equal number of women and men. If it has not been possible to achieve gender balance at the final selection step, the interview panel will account to the governing authority or equivalent for why this was not possible.	From 2016 (including competitions already underway)	This recommendation has been accepted by all seven universities and will be implemented in all future appointment processes for president. One university will have to adapt the recommendation as the chief officer is elected. There have been three selections *completed* since the recommendation was published; in two cases the shortlisted candidates were 50% women and 50% men, in one case three men and one woman were shortlisted. The final appointee was male in all three cases.
1.2	To ensure HEI leaders foster a culture of gender equality in their HEI.	In the appointment process for a new president, a requirement of appointment will be demonstrable experience of leadership in advancing gender equality.	Effective immediately	This recommendation has been accepted by all universities and will be implemented in all future appointment processes. Only one search and selection process for President *commenced* since the recommendation was published; in this case one of the criteria against which candidates was assessed was their experience in advancing gender equality.
1.3		In the appointment process for a new vice-president, a requirement of appointment will be demonstrable experience of leadership in advancing gender equality.	Effective immediately	This recommendation has been accepted by all universities and is a criterion for appointment as vice-president. However, this criterion is not routinely included in the advertisement or role description. The universities are reviewing their documentation and processes for senior appointments with a view to ensuring the language is gender-neutral and to making this requirement explicit in the advertisement or further particulars for the role of vice-president.
1.4	To lead cultural and organisational change in their area of responsibility	The deans and heads of schools/ department, divisional directors and section/unit managers will be responsible for integrating gender equality in all processes and decisions made. Evidence of leadership in advancing gender equality will be taken into account in appointments to these management positions.	Effective immediately	This recommendation has been implemented by all universities.

37 HEA (2016) *Report of the Expert Group: HEA National Review on Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions*

	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMELINE IN REPORT	
1.5	To achieve gender equality in each HEI.	Each HEI will, through a publicly advertised competitive process, appoint a vice-president for equality who will be a full academic member of the executive management team and who will report directly to the president.	From 2017	This recommendation has been fully implemented in three universities; a third will advertise the role of vice-president for equality in the first half of 2018. The vice-president academic has responsibility for equality in one university. A special adviser to the president has been appointed in one university, and directors of equality in another two, but they are not members of the executive management.
1.6	To ensure gender balance of all key decision-making bodies.	Key decision-making bodies (concerned with resource allocation, appointments and promotions) in HEIs will consist of at least 40% women and 40% men.	From 2016	This recommendation is implemented or in progress in all seven universities. Promotion boards normally meet the criterion of being 40% women and 40% men. The majority of governance committees also meet this criterion. Appointment boards for senior positions normally meet this criterion though it is not practicable to achieve this in all circumstances; in these cases, and for more junior roles the appointment board normally meets the standard of being at least 30% women and 30% men. The seven universities are taking measures to move towards having executive teams that are 40% women and 40% men, and two have achieved this. It would be useful to clarify the exact scope of the recommendation and what is comprehended by the phrase *"key decision-making bodies (concerned with resource allocation, appointments and promotions)"*.
1.7		At least 40% of the chairs of key decision-making bodies (concerned with resource allocation, appointments and promotions) across the HEI will be of each gender in any given year. It is expected that over a three-year period the ratio would be 50:50 women and men chairs.	By 2018	This recommendation implemented or in the course of implementation in all seven universities and has been interpreted as referring to the major governance and management committees of the university. The promotions boards are normally chaired *ex-officio* by the president or vice-president academic, creating a difficulty in applying the recommendation to promotions boards if they are both men. It would be useful to clarify the exact scope of the recommendation and the what is comprehended by the phrase *"key decision-making bodies (concerned with resource allocation, appointments and promotions)"*.

	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMELINE IN REPORT	
1.8	To provide strategic oversight of organisational processes and policies in relation to gender equality.	A gender equality sub-committee of the governing authority/body should be established. The minutes of the sub-committee will be published within the HEI.	By 2017	This has been implemented in four universities. The situation in the remaining three is: ▶ in one, the governing authority university retains the competency for equality; ▶ in one the HR sub-committee of governing authority is responsible for equality; ▶ in one, there is a steering committee which is not a formal governance committee.
1.9	To support the mainstreaming of gender equality across the HEIs	Each HEI will establish an independent, academically-led gender equality forum, chaired by the vice-president for equality and comprising staff members drawn from across the HEI with sufficient influence and motivation to effect change.	By 2017	This has been implemented in five universities and is in train in the remaining two; in the most cases it is the institutional Athena SWAN self-assessment team which fulfils this function.
1.10	To enhance the provision of support for staff members with caring responsibilities.	Each HEI will establish a cross-institutional working group to develop a funded structure of family leave (inclusive of maternity, paternity, parental, adoptive, and carer's leave) and develop mandatory guidelines to underpin this.	By 2017	This has been implemented (four universities) or in progress (three universities) across the sector with specific actions taken to enhance family leave provision in all seven universities.
1.11	To increase gender awareness among staff.	The HEI will adopt measures aimed at actively developing gender awareness among all staff.	From 2016	This is in train across all seven universities.
1.12	To embed the gender dimension in teaching and learning and quality review processes.	The gender dimension will be fully integrated into undergraduate and postgraduate curricula. Face-to-face, unconscious bias training will be fully integrated into initial teacher training education. At departmental level, self-assessment (departmental reviews) will include consideration of the gender dimension. HEIs will include consideration of the gender dimension in the institutional quality assurance report.	Ongoing	The gender dimension is a key consideration in curricular design and scholarly work in all seven universities, and this continues to develop. Initial teacher education programmes include major components on gender and sexuality, diversity and inclusion, and the sources of bias and systemic inequality.

	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMELINE IN REPORT	
1.13	To embed the gender dimension in research content.	Ensure that the gender dimension is integrated into all research content and provide training and support for research staff on how to do this.	Ongoing	The seven universities currently support a very wide range of research work in which gender is a central or important consideration. The seven institutions also offer specific supports to staff to further integrate the gender dimension in their work, and are seeking, within the resources available, to expand this support.
1.14	To ensure transparent distribution of work.	Ensure HEI workload allocation models are transparent and monitored for gender bias on an annual basis. Evidence of this will be taken into account in the performance development reviews of managers/supervisors responsible for setting staff workloads.	From 2016	Transparent workload models are in place in all seven universities, and each university is reviewing these to ensure that the principles that underpin their models and the manner in which they are implemented are not gender biased. Workload models are normally implemented at departmental/school level and vary by discipline, so that there are challenges in implementing an annual process to monitor for gender bias; nonetheless, each university is examining how workload allocation data can be analysed and aggregated to monitor for gender bias.
1.15	To enable gender disaggregated data-driven decision-making.	A comprehensive gender-disaggregated data collection system will be in place in every HEI.	From 2016	This recommendation has been accepted by all seven universities and is being implemented. Gender monitoring of promotion schemes is in place in all seven universities. Gender-disaggregated staff data is available at institutional level and collected by HEA; projects are under way in each university to analyse and report in a standard manner for different units and levels of the organisation. Gender monitoring of recruitment processes is in place or being implemented across the sector. Gender-disaggregated student data is available in detail in all universities and collected by the HEA.
1.16	To gender-proof recruitment, selection and promotion procedures and practices.	The recruitment, selection, and promotion procedures currently used, will be reviewed to ensure that they are gender-sensitive.	From 2016	The implementation of this recommendation is ongoing, with all seven universities undertaking or planning reviews of recruitment, selection and promotion, with a number of reviews completed in 2017.
1.17	To drive change through the use of positive action interventions for academic staff.	Each HEI will introduce mandatory quotas for academic promotion, based on the flexible cascade model where the proportion of women and men to be promoted/recruited is based on the proportion of each gender at the grade immediately below.	From 2016	Four universities have implemented quotas, cascade quotas or a cascade monitoring tool. One university is currently reviewing its promotion and progression schemes and is considering this recommendation in its review. The remaining two universities do not implement quotas, but have regard for gender equality objectives in monitoring the outcomes of promotions rounds.

	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMELINE IN REPORT	
1.18	To drive change at professor level through the use of positive action interventions.	A minimum of 40% women and 40% men to be full professors, at the appropriate pay scale.	Achieved by 2024	The seven universities are committed to the objective of 40% of full professors being women, and this is underpinned by a range of actions in the gender equality action plan of each university. However, there are concerns that from the current position, even with accelerated progress, it will be difficult to achieve this objective by 2024.
1.19	To drive change through the use of positive action interventions for professional, management and support staff.	At the final selection step in the appointment process for professional, management and support positions where the salary-scale reaches or exceeds €76,000, in so far as is possible, the final pool of candidates must comprise an equal number of women and men. If it has not been possible to achieve gender balance at the final selection step, the interview panel must account to the Governing Authority or equivalent for why this was not possible.	From 2016 (including competitions already underway)	The universities are working to ensure gender monitoring of shortlisting and selection processes for administrative and professional grades. There are concerns, however, about the scope and implementation of this recommendation. The only academic grade to which this recommendation applies is that of President, while for administrative and professional grades it applies to the top four grades and would inappropriately involve the Governing Authority in appointment processes at these grades. The gender issues at senior administrative and professional grades differ from those in academic grades, are equally complex, and will require a more comprehensive and sophisticated approach than comprehended by this recommendation.
1.20	Combat stereotyping of 'female' and 'male' roles and horizontal segregation among non-academic staff.	Overtime achieve greater gender-balance at all career levels (pay grades) within the institution.	From 2016	This recommendation is in implementation phase in all seven universities.
1.21	To ensure a roadmap for attainment of gender equality is developed in each institution.	Each HEI will develop and implement a gender action plan (including goals, actions and targets), which will be integrated into the institution's strategic plan and into the HEI's compacts with the HEA.	From 2016	A Gender Equality Action Plan is in place in all seven universities, usually as part of their Athena SWAN process, and is reflected in or will be reflected in the institutional strategic plan.
1.22	To support and recognise the embedding of gender equality across all aspects of the work of HEIs.	HEIs will apply for and achieve an Athena SWAN institutional award within three years. TUs will apply for and achieve an Athena Swan award within three years of being formally established.	From 2019	Five universities have achieved Athena SWAN Bronze awards, the remaining two have submitted second and third applications respectively.

SUMMARY OF INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY PROGRESS REPORTS

	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMELINE IN REPORT	SECTOR UPDATE
1.1	To foster gender balance in the leadership of HEIs.	At the final selection step, in the appointment process for new presidents (or equivalent), in so far as possible, the final pool of candidates will comprise an equal number of women and men. If it has not been possible to achieve gender balance at the final selection step, the interview panel will account to the governing authority or equivalent for why this was not possible.	From 2016 (including competitions already underway)	This recommendation has been accepted by all 14 Institutes of Technology and will be implemented in all future presidential appointment processes, subject to Governing Body approval. Presidential appointments are managed by individual Institute Governing Bodies, who will now be tasked with advising the relevant agents/Departments to ensure gender equality, in so far as possible, regarding the final pool of candidates. This practice has been rolled out in a number of competitions to date in the sector which have taken place since the publication of the HEA recommendations. However, the number of female candidates applying for presidential appointment was, in general, reported to be low, with two Institutions reporting that no female candidates applied. In one of these cases, the Institute has asked the recruitment consultants for their analysis of the reasons behind this imbalance.
1.2	To ensure HEI leaders foster a culture of gender equality in their HEI.	In the appointment process for a new president, a requirement of appointment will be demonstrable experience of leadership in advancing gender equality.	Effective immediately	The Institutes of Technology have accepted this recommendation, and demonstrable experience of leadership in advancing gender equality will be an essential requirement of appointment in future appointments at this level. To date, two Institutes have implemented this recommendation in presidential appointment processes that have taken place since the recommendation was published.
1.3		In the appointment process for a new vice-president, a requirement of appointment will be demonstrable experience of leadership in advancing gender equality.	Effective immediately	The Institutes of Technology have accepted this recommendation, and demonstrable experience of leadership in advancing gender equality will be an essential requirement of appointment in future appointments at vice-president/senior executive level. To date, five Institutes have implemented this recommendation in vice-presidential appointment processes that have taken place since the recommendation was published. The others are committed to such action in the future.

	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMELINE IN REPORT	SECTOR UPDATE
1.4	To lead cultural and organisational change in their area of responsibility	The deans and heads of schools/ department, divisional directors and section/unit managers will be responsible for integrating gender equality in all processes and decisions made. Evidence of leadership in advancing gender equality will be taken into account in appointments to these management positions.	Effective immediately	Institutes are committed to ensuring that deans and heads of schools/department, divisional directors and section/unit managers are to be responsible for integrating gender equality in all processes and decisions made, and most have already taken action to implement this recommendation. The current Athena SWAN process, along with specific gender equality training, and briefing and information sessions, have highlighted responsibilities in this regard. Some Institutes have included EDI as a standing agenda item at all executive/ management meetings, and others have included the recommendation as a specific action in their gender equality policies. National contracts of employment, which are centrally agreed with the Department of Education and Skills and Social Partners, have not yet been adjusted. The Institutes are committed to ensuring that evidence of leadership in advancing gender equality will be taken into account in appointments to these management positions, and many have actioned this in recent appointment processes.
1.5	To achieve gender equality in each HEI.	Each HEI will, through a publicly advertised competitive process, appoint a vice-president for equality who will be a full academic member of the executive management team and who will report directly to the president.	From 2017	The Institutes are broadly committed to this recommendation, and most have taken steps towards its implementation. However, given resource constraints and the relatively small scale of some of the Institutes, the mode of implementation has varied across the sector. The most common approach taken to date has been to combine the role of VP Equality with another senior role in the institution, so that the post holder has a dual portfolio. Half of the Institutes in the sector have taken this approach. Two Institutes have made appointments/are committed to creating a role dedicated solely to equality, at a senior level. Finally, two TU consortia are considering appointing a VP for Equality with responsibility across institutions.

	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMELINE IN REPORT	SECTOR UPDATE
1.6	To ensure gender balance of all key decision-making bodies.	Key decision-making bodies (concerned with resource allocation, appointments and promotions) in HEIs will consist of at least 40% women and 40% men.	From 2016	This recommendation is implemented or in progress in the Institutes of Technology. The exact nature of "key decision-making bodies" was not defined in the HEA recommendations and has therefore left it open to interpretation across the sector. Therefore, the comments below are based upon rather disparate responses and do not present the totality of data on all key decision-making bodies from the sector. Nonetheless, the following can be said. All Institutes are committed to monitoring and auditing gender balance of key decision-making bodies, and to making progress in this area. In terms of Governing Bodies, the majority reported that the 40% target has been achieved. Some of those who had yet been unable to achieve this balance pointed to difficulties achieving balance due to statutory requirements and the nominations process, but all were committed in principle to implementing the recommendation. In relation to Academic Council, the majority of Institutes who commented reported gender balance, with some ensuring that gender balance requirements were built into the relevant terms of reference/ constitutions of Council. Regarding Senior Executive Teams, a small number of Institutes reported that the 40% target had been met, with the majority making progress towards the achievement of the target. Finally, a small number of Institutes reported implementing actions to ensure that all interview panels would constitute at least 40% of each gender to ensure balance. Due to the composition of Governing Bodies in the various Institutes, this may be more difficult to implement for some.
1.7		At least 40% of the chairs of key decision-making bodies (concerned with resource allocation, appointments and promotions) across the HEI will be of each gender in any given year. It is expected that over a three-year period the ratio would be 50:50 women and men chairs.	By 2018	This recommendation is implemented or in progress in the Institutes of Technology. Actions include gender monitoring/auditing of chairs, amending terms of reference/constitutions of committees and organising appointments to ensure compliance with this requirement. Additionally, some Institutes are also taking steps to ensure that Interview Panel Chairs are gender balanced in any given year, and some have achieved this. However, due to the *ex-officio* nature of some of the Chairs, this recommendation may be difficult to meet in some Institutes, particularly if the President and the Chair of the Governing Body are the same gender. Again, the exact nature of "key decision-making bodies" was not defined in this recommendation and has therefore left it open to interpretation across the sector. Further clarification on this would be welcome.

	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMELINE IN REPORT	SECTOR UPDATE
1.8	To provide strategic oversight of organisational processes and policies in relation to gender equality.	A gender equality sub-committee of the governing authority/body should be established. The minutes of the sub-committee will be published within the HEI.	By 2017	This recommendation has been implemented or is in progress across the Institutes. Some Institutes already have gender equality sub committees of Governing Body in place, while others (the majority) have institutional/executive gender equality sub committees/steering committees in place. Five institutes are committed to putting a Governing Body subcommittee in place, and four have the matter under review/discussion.
1.9	To support the mainstreaming of gender equality across the HEIs	Each HEI will establish an independent, academically-led gender equality forum, chaired by the vice-president for equality and comprising staff members drawn from across the HEI with sufficient influence and motivation to effect change.	By 2017	This has been implemented in seven of the Institutes across the sector. Five Institutes are committed to establishing gender equality fora, and the two remaining Institutes have the matter under discussion/ review. In some cases, it is the Athena SWAN self-assessment team or the wider Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee that meets this requirement.
1.10	To enhance the provision of support for staff members with caring responsibilities.	Each HEI will establish a cross-institutional working group to develop a funded structure of family leave (inclusive of maternity, paternity, parental, adoptive, and carer's leave) and develop mandatory guidelines to underpin this.	By 2017	Institutes have nationally negotiated and agreed family leave policies in place. The majority of Institutes are currently reviewing such policies and exploring initiatives in this regard as part of the work pertaining to Athena SWAN/TU designation.
1.11	To increase gender awareness among staff.	The HEI will adopt measures aimed at actively developing gender awareness among all staff.	From 2016	Institutes are implementing this recommendation and have engaged in actions such as the establishment of committees/groups, policy review, staff briefings, information sessions, training and development activities, and other events to actively develop gender awareness among all staff.
1.12	To embed the gender dimension in teaching and learning and quality review processes.	The gender dimension will be fully integrated into undergraduate and postgraduate curricula. Face-to-face, unconscious bias training will be fully integrated into initial teacher training education. At departmental level, self-assessment (departmental reviews) will include consideration of the gender dimension. HEIs will include consideration of the gender dimension in the institutional quality assurance report.	Ongoing	The Institutes are committed to embedding the gender dimension in teaching, learning and quality review processes. Some have already implemented all the measures, whilst others have taken concrete steps towards full implementation. Initiatives include the provision of unconscious bias training and embedding gender equality in graduate attributes statements and curricula, (including tailored modules on teaching and learning programmes for staff). Some have also amended and updated relevant policies and procedures on the design, development and validation of new programmes to ensure the gender dimension is integrated into proposed new curricula. Finally, programmatic, departmental and institutional quality reviews will provide an opportunity for Institutes to review existing curricula with a view to implementing this recommendation.

	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMELINE IN REPORT	SECTOR UPDATE
1.13	To embed the gender dimension in research content.	Ensure that the gender dimension is integrated into all research content and provide training and support for research staff on how to do this.	Ongoing	The Institutes are committed to implementing this recommendation, in line with established policies and practices. The Institutes have begun implementing this recommendation in various ways, such as by including the gender dimension as part of the application process for the validation of research degree programmes, updating institutional research strategies, and providing training and guidance for staff. Others are at an earlier stage with regards to implementation but are committed in principle.
1.14	To ensure transparent distribution of work.	Ensure HEI workload allocation models are transparent and monitored for gender bias on an annual basis. Evidence of this will be taken into account in the performance development reviews of managers/supervisors responsible for setting staff workloads.	From 2016	The Institute of Technology sector generally adheres to the standard sectoral nationally agreed workload allocation model for academic and professional services staff, based on grades and contract hours as agreed nationally. These are implemented and monitored by relevant Heads of Faculty/School/ Department. Some of the Institutes are taking steps to monitor the workload allocation models for gender bias and implement best practice in this area.
1.15	To enable gender disaggregated data-driven decision-making.	A comprehensive gender-disaggregated data collection system will be in place in every HEI.	From 2016	The Institutes of Technology are committed to this recommendation. Some already have a comprehensive gender-disaggregated data collection system in place, and others are reviewing requirements and working towards the implementation of such a system. All Institutes currently provide gender disaggregated data to the HEA, and Institutes are also collecting and analysing disaggregated data for the purpose of Athena SWAN award submission.
1.16	To gender-proof recruitment, selection and promotion procedures and practices.	The recruitment, selection, and promotion procedures currently used, will be reviewed to ensure that they are gender-sensitive.	From 2016	The Institutes are currently implementing this recommendation, with various reviews of recruitment, selection and promotion ongoing.

	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMELINE IN REPORT	SECTOR UPDATE
1.17	To drive change through the use of positive action interventions for academic staff.	Each HEI will introduce mandatory quotas for academic promotion, based on the flexible cascade model where the proportion of women and men to be promoted/recruited is based on the proportion of each gender at the grade immediately below.	From 2016	Within the Institute of Technology sector, there are agreed national procedures for academic progression from Assistant Lecturer to Lecturer grade, based on years of service, agreed qualification levels, ability, experience, academic qualifications, scholarship and demonstrated performance. In practice, this ensures that the proportion of women and men progressing from Assistant Lecturer to Lecturer grade is based on the proportion of each gender at the grade immediately below. There is no similar system in place for all other academic promotions (SL I, II & III) which are competitive in nature. At present, six of the 14 Institutes have indicated that they are committed to the implementation of this recommendation, with a number of others keeping it under review, pending further data collection, analysis and discussion.
1.18	To drive change at professor level through the use of positive action interventions.	A minimum of 40% women and 40% men to be full professors, at the appropriate pay scale.	Achieved by 2024	As the Institute of Technology sector does not have a 'professoriate' as such, this recommendation has generated differing institutional interpretations and actions, and clarification around this anomaly would be welcome. Some Institutes considered that the recommendation does not apply to the sector. Two Institutes of Technology who currently award 'Honorary' or unpaid professorships have put in place a process to review criteria and process for appointments to ensure gender equality. Other Institutes in the sector considered that this recommendation might apply to SLI, SLII, SLIII and VP/Executive posts (or combinations thereof). Some of these Institutes indicated commitment to the overall goal of gender equality at senior levels, but some stopped short of committing to the 40% target. Others will implement measures with the aim of reaching gender balance at senior academic levels in their Institutions.
1.19	To drive change through the use of positive action interventions for professional, management and support staff.	At the final selection step in the appointment process for professional, management and support positions where the salary-scale reaches or exceeds €76,000, in so far as is possible, the final pool of candidates must comprise an equal number of women and men. If it has not been possible to achieve gender balance at the final selection step, the interview panel must account to the Governing Authority or equivalent for why this was not possible.	From 2016 (including competitions already underway)	Five of the Institutes have implemented this recommendation, and the majority of the remaining Institutes are committed in principle to its implementation, whilst also ensuring that the application of shortlisting criteria will continue to be done in a fair and consistent manner.

	OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMELINE IN REPORT	SECTOR UPDATE
1.20	Combat stereotyping of 'female' and 'male' roles and horizontal segregation among non-academic staff.	Overtime achieve greater gender-balance at all career levels (pay grades) within the institution.	From 2016	The Institutes are committed to the implementation of this recommendation, with most working towards enhancing gender balance through the organisation. While there is a realisation that this will take time to achieve and may be more difficult in some areas than other (particularly at certain administrative grades), Institutes are working towards achieving targets and implementing recommendations in line with best practice nationally and internationally.
1.21	To ensure a roadmap for attainment of gender equality is developed in each institution.	Each HEI will develop and implement a gender action plan (including goals, actions and targets), which will be integrated into the institution's strategic plan and into the HEI's compacts with the HEA.	From 2016	One Institute has a gender action plan in place, and other Institutes are committed to the implementation of same, usually as part of their Athena SWAN Bronze application and/or strategic planning process. Most have relevant processes underway.
1.22	To support and recognise the embedding of gender equality across all aspects of the work of HEIs.	HEIs will apply for and achieve an Athena SWAN institutional award within three years. TUs will apply for and achieve an Athena Swan award within three years of being formally established.	From 2019	Institutes of Technology are committed to achieving the Athena SWAN institutional award and are at various stages of the application process. One Institute submitted a second Bronze application, and five others intend submitting a Bronze application later this year. The remaining Institutes are at various stages of development, with all committed to the achievement of a Bronze award.

APPENDIX B – ECU REVIEW OF RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION PRACTICES

Review of recruitment and promotion policies and practices in Irish Higher Education

Executive Summary

Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) established a good practice benchmark using 31 successful Silver and Gold UK Athena SWAN applications. ECU took initiatives that were included in at least one-third of the successful applications and designed a self-audit tool for Irish higher education institutions (HEIs) to assess their recruitment and promotion policies and practices against this standard. The self-audit tool contained a list often initiatives (five recruitment and five promotion initiatives), as well as nine aspirational initiatives that were seen as innovative and useful to index for future evaluations. The self-audit tool asked HEIs to use a traffic light system to assess their own institution against each initiative: green (initiative is fully rolled-out across the institution); orange (initiative is rolled-out in some departments, or in the process of being rolled-out in the institution); and red (initiative is not rolled-out anywhere in the institution).

The Irish higher education (HE) sector differs from the UK HE sector as it has a shorter history of engagement with the Athena SWAN process and has faced external limitations on recruitment and promotion since 2009. ECU designed the tool to challenge Irish HEIs and present a 'picture of the sector' rather than report on the progress of individual HEIs.

Key findings from the research:

- Many of the self-audited Irish institutions had examples of good practice in place to some degree already, and at least two thirds had partly rolled out good practice recruitment initiatives.
- The prevalence of good practice fully rolled out in the institution was greater among recruitment initiatives (35.7%) than among promotion initiatives (29.6%), which may reflect the recent history of promotion policies and practices in the Irish HE sector.
- Across all 23 institutions approximately half of the initiatives were coded orange indicating that they were either rolled-out in some departments/faculties in the institution OR in the process of being rolled-out in the institution, but not yet finished for both recruitment (51.3%) and promotion initiatives (45.2%).
- Institutions with larger total numbers of staff were more likely to have examples of good recruitment and promotion practices in place. In contrast, there was no consistent pattern of red lights (initiative not rolled out anywhere in the institution) across institutions when analysed according to different proportions of female executive staff.
- The recruitment and promotion initiatives where there was the most progress were 'All new staff have a welcome event or meeting' and 'Feedback from Senior Management Team/Head of Department for staff who unsuccessfully applied for promotion'.
- The recruitment and promotion initiatives with the least progress were 'Assigning all new staff a 'buddy' as part of the induction process' and 'Workshops on promotion'.

The comparison with Gold and Silver level institutions represented a stretch target for the 23 Irish institutions that undertook the self-audit (92% of all Irish HEIs), but results indicated that examples of good practice in recruitment and promotion at this level do exist in Ireland, but also that there was room for improvement and the potential to use the tool to survey future progress in the sector.

Review of recruitment and promotion policies and practices in Irish Higher Education

9 February 2018

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Section 1 – Introduction and method

Project background

The Minister of State for Higher Education, Mary Mitchell O'Connor TD, set up and tasked the Gender Equality Taskforce with overseeing a review of recruitment and promotion policies and practices in higher education institutions (HEIs). The Gender Equality Taskforce reviewed national and international good practice and relevant literature, including the review on Gender Equality published by the Higher Education Authority (HEA) in 2016, as well as good practice arising from the Athena SWAN process. As part of this work, the HEA commissioned Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) to: review examples of good practice in recruitment and promotion initiatives in Athena SWAN applications; develop a tool for institutions to self-audit their progress; and present findings in a format that supports the Gender Equality Taskforce to develop a 'picture of the sector'.

Ireland's higher education sector in context

This review presents the prevalence of recruitment and promotion policies and practices across the Irish higher education (HE) sector and compares self-audited Irish HEIs with a sample of UK institution and department Silver and Gold Athena SWAN award holders. However, as the following table demonstrates, Irish and UK HEIs operate in different contexts:

2015/16 academic year:	Ireland[38]	UK[39]
Students	222,618	2,280,000
Academic staff	13,017	201,380
Professional/Supports staff	10,527	208,750
Student: academic staff ratio	17:1	11:1
Income	€2.3bn (£2.0bn)	€39.1bn (£34.7bn)
Athena SWAN launch year	2015	2005

The Irish HE sector has a shorter history of engagement with the Athena SWAN process. Furthermore, external limitations on recruitment and promotion, following the Irish public finances crisis, have shaped the recent history of policies and practices in HEIs. Since 2009, limitations on recruitment and promotion have been in place. By 2015, this had resulted in a reduction in staffing levels by circa 12.0%.[40] This history is likely to have impacted the roll-out of initiatives identified in the UK Athena SWAN applications, such as 'Discussion of career development at performance development reviews' and 'Workshops on promotion'. However, in light of the contextual differences between Ireland and the UK, ECU designed the self-audit tool to challenge HEIs for two main reasons: first, ECU encourages an aspirational approach to self-assessment and benchmarking because it makes it easier to identify progress. Second, the purpose of this research was not only to provide an overview of the recruitment and promotion processes currently in place among Irish institutions, but also to provide the sector with a baseline from which it can measure improvement in these areas over time. Using this tool, any future review of recruitment and promotion policies and practices in the sector should document change over time.

38 See http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/06/HEA-Key-Facts-and-Figures-201516.pdf

39 See http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/facts-and-stats/Pages/higher-education-data.aspx

40 ECU, *Athena SWAN Ireland: Panellist briefing* (November 2017), p. 10.

Methodology

ECU reviewed 31 successful UK Silver and Gold Athena SWAN applications from the most recent award round (April 2017). This sample of applications included two institutional (one Gold, one Silver) and 29 departmental applications (one Gold, 28 Silver). The policies and practices that most frequently demonstrated positive outcomes, in relation to recruitment and promotion, were extracted from the applications.[41] This process resulted in a list of ten initiatives (five recruitment and five promotion initiatives) with clear definitions and succinct examples of positive outcomes. While the frequencies of these 10 initiatives across the 31 applications varied considerably, they were present in at least one third of the applications (Table 1.1). In other words, an initiative had to have reported impact in at least one third of the applications to be considered frequent. This cut-off was selected in order to create a tool that captured the prevalence of established good practice initiatives across the sector as well as those that are newer (e.g. having a *formal* mentorship scheme) or related to a specific process (e.g. feedback from Senior Management for staff unsuccessful in applying for promotion).

ECU also reviewed 20 Bronze-level applications from Irish HEIs and departments to verify the appropriateness of extending the extracted list of initiatives to Ireland. All initiatives were present in at least one Irish application except one, 'Workshops on promotion'.

Table 1.1: Frequency of recruitment and promotion initiatives across UK and Irish Athena SWAN applications.

	UK Athena SWAN applications (k = 31)		Irish Athena SWAN applications (k = 20)	
Section A: recruitment initiatives	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
1. Advertising commitment to equality and flexible working policies	22	71.0	4	20.0
2. Compulsory equality and diversity training (including unconscious bias training) for interview panellists, new staff members and staff conducting performance development reviews	21	67.7	2	10.0
3. Mandatory gender balance on interview panels	16	51.6	4	20.0
4. All new staff have a welcome event or meeting	14	45.2	3	15.0
5. Assigning all new staff a 'buddy' as part of the induction process	13	41.9	2	10.0
Section B: promotion initiatives	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
1. Discussion of career development at performance development reviews	20	64.5	3	15.0
2. Availability of a mentorship scheme	8	25.8	1	5.0
3. Leadership training	15	48.4	5	25.0
4. Workshops on promotion	11	35.5	0	0.0
5. Feedback from Senior Management Team/Head of Department for staff who unsuccessfully applied for promotion	10	32.3	1	5.0

To supplement the list of the ten most frequent good practice initiatives, an additional list of nine 'aspirational' initiatives were also included. These showcase innovative initiatives that are examples of good practice in successful Silver and Gold Athena SWAN applications (Table 1.2).

41 This research builds-upon previous coding of Athena SWAN good practice undertaken by ECU. See https://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/athena-swan-good-practice-in-heis/

Table 1.2: Frequency of aspirational initiatives across UK and Irish Athena SWAN applications.

	UK Athena SWAN applications (k = 31)		Irish Athena SWAN applications (k = 20)	
Section C: aspirational initiatives	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
1. Actively identify and approach candidates to address any gender imbalance in the department, faculty or institution	2	6.5	0	0.0
2. Search committees must provide evidence to show they worked to recruit a diverse pool of candidates	1	3.2	0	0.0
3. All recruitment done through electronic system to ensure data on gender is captured for analysis	2	6.5	0	0.0
4. Shortlisters and panellists must follow fair and transparent criteria	4	12.9	0	0.0
5. Provision of a fund to support staff returning to work	8	25.8	0	0.0
6. Availability of a sponsorship scheme	0	0.0	0	0.0
7. Where a promotions process is in place, staff can self-nominate themselves for promotion	2	6.5	3	15.0
8. 360-degree reporting is available	4	12.9	0	0.0
9. Mock interviews (where appropriate) are available to staff that apply for promotion	1	3.2	0	0.0

The self-audit tool consisted of four sections:

- **Section A** asked institutions to audit against the five most frequent recruitment initiatives
- **Section B** asked institutions to audit against the five most frequent promotion initiatives
- **Section C** asked institutions to audit against nine 'aspirational' initiatives extracted from successful UK Silver and Gold Athena SWAN applications (April 2017 round)
- **Section D** provided an opportunity for institutions to indicate good practice initiatives from their own institution (optional)

Sections A-C also presented HEIs with space to provide a brief description of their engagement with each initiative. The self-audit tool asked institutions to use a traffic light system of green, orange or red to assess to what degree each initiative was present:

Green:	Initiative is rolled-out across the institution
Orange:	Initiative is rolled-out in some departments/faculties in the institution OR is in the process of being rolled-out in the institution, but not yet finished
Red:	Initiative is not rolled-out anywhere in the institution

The HEA requested that all 25 universities, colleges and Institutes of Technology (IoTs) complete the self-audit. All institutions, except two, complied. This report therefore presents responses from 23 institutions.

Results are presented anonymously, with each HEI assigned a different number, letter or Roman numeral for each table. The HEA has informed each HEI of their assigned numbers, letters and Roman numerals so they can use the tables to compare their progress with the sector but cannot compare themselves with other, specific institutions.

Report outline

Section 2 presents the frequency of initiatives across the samples of UK and Irish Athena SWAN application and self-audited Irish institutions (Table 2.1) and the overall summary results of the self-audit (Table 2.2). This is followed by two additional sets of tables that present results disaggregated by:

- **Staff size:** < 500 staff (Table 2.3), 500-999 staff (Table 2.4), > 1000 staff (Table 2.5)
- **Executive management:** < 20% female executive staff (Table 2.6), 21-30% female executive staff (Table 2.7), > 30% female executive staff (Table 2.8)

The inclusion of these additional tables provides contextual depth for the Gender Equality Taskforce to establish whether institutional activities relate to other factors. Section 2 concludes with an overview of the frequency of initiatives across the Athena SWAN applications and the self-audited Irish institutions.

Section 3 provides analysis of the most frequent initiatives rolled-out across entire institutions (Table 3.1), the most frequent initiatives rolled-out in some departments/faculties or in the process of being rolled-out (Table 3.2) and the least frequent initiatives rolled-out (Table 3.3). Alongside frequencies, this section also presents information shared in the free-text sections of the self-audit tool.

Using the results

The initiatives included in the self-audit tool were designed and implemented by institutions in response to a self-assessment of their own institutional or departmental gaps or areas for improvement. As such, while the list of initiatives come from successful Athena SWAN applications, it does not represent a list of actions that will necessarily result in an Athena SWAN award for institutions or departments who implement them.

Furthermore, the recruitment and promotion initiatives discussed in this report are not exhaustive. Some initiatives included in the self-audit tool may not apply to every HEI and depend on local contexts. Therefore, results present a starting point in the identification of good practice initiatives in HEIs and departments, rather than a final assessment.

Findings are presented visually (using the same traffic light system of green, orange and red) to convey a holistic 'picture of the sector'. As different methodologies were used across the four sections of the self-audit tool, it is not possible to attach numeric value to the traffic light system or use results to 'rank' individual HEIs.

Furthermore, the nature of gender inequalities in recruitment and promotion, and the variability of the contexts in which these exist, means that it is inappropriate to rate an institution based on the quantity of initiatives it has in place. Instead, as advocated in the Athena SWAN guidance, value is determined by how appropriate an initiative is to address gaps identified by a thorough and honest self-evaluation.[42]

42 See https://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/athena-swan-resources/

Section 2 – Overall analysis of the self-audit results

To avoid quantifying the initiatives within individual institutions, we purposively did not assign numeric values to the green, orange and red traffic lights. As such, the following results focus instead on the prevalence of different initiatives across the sample as a whole. Prevalence is calculated by dividing the total number of a given colour of light by how many times this light could have been present in the sample. For example, if there were three red lights across the five promotion initiatives for all 23 institutions, the prevalence would be 3/(5 x 23) = 2.6%.

Please note that institutions were not considered in isolation. As the aim of the self-audit tool was to establish an overview of the sector, and not to score individual institutions on initiatives that may be inappropriate for their context, we did not calculate total scores for individual institutions.

Overview of evidence-based recruitment and promotion initiatives

The selection of the recruitment and promotion initiatives in the self-audit tool was based on an analysis of 31 successful silver and gold Athena SWAN applications. Table 2.1 presents the overall frequencies of these initiatives in this sample compared with the 20 bronze Athena SWAN applications from Irish institutions (five successful) and the 23 institutions that completed the self-audit. However, the UK and Irish Athena SWAN applications that were coded included two UK and nine Irish institutional applications, and 29 UK and 11 Irish departmental applications. As such, the frequencies presented for the self-audited institutions are split into green and green/orange to demonstrate their prevalence across both levels.

The contrast between the green/orange lights among audited institutions and the successful UK Athena SWAN applications suggests that many of the Irish institutions have these examples of good practice in place, to some degree, already. Actually, at least two thirds of the audited institutions had rolled out the individual recruitment initiatives to at least some degree. For example, 100.0% of audited institutions reported at least an orange for having a welcome event or meeting for all new staff, with more than half of these saying this initiative was present across the entire institution. Likewise, for each of the promotion processes included in the auditing tool, at least half of participating institutions had this implemented already to some degree or were in the process of rolling this out across the institution. Notably, the least frequent initiative across all three samples was having workshops on promotion, suggesting that this initiative may be particularly difficult to implement.

By comparing the proportions of institutions with a green light and those with either an orange or green light, Table 2.1 also highlights the specific initiatives that institutions may require help rolling out across the entire institution, such as having compulsory equality and diversity training and assigning all new staff a 'buddy'.

Table 2.1: Frequency of recruitment and promotion initiatives across the samples of UK and Irish Athena SWAN applications and self-audited Irish institutions

	UK Athena SWAN applications (k = 31)		Irish Athena SWAN applications (k = 20)		Audited Irish institutions, green (k = 23)		Audited Irish institutions, green/orange (k = 23)	
Section A: recruitment initiatives	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
1. Advertising commitment to equality and flexible working policies	22	71.0	4	20.0	8	34.8	20	87.0
2. Compulsory equality and diversity training (including unconscious bias training) for interview panellists, new staff members and staff conducting performance development reviews	21	67.7	2	10.0	4	17.4	19	82.6
3. Mandatory gender balance on interview panels	16	51.6	4	20.0	12	52.2	21	91.3
4. All new staff have a welcome event or meeting	14	45.2	3	15.0	14	60.9	23	100.0
5. Assigning all new staff a 'buddy' as part of the induction process	13	41.9	2	10.0	3	13.0	17	73.9
Section B: promotion initiatives	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
1. Discussion of career development at performance development reviews	20	64.5	3	15.0	5	21.7	15	65.2
2. Availability of a mentorship scheme	8	25.8	1	5.0	4	17.4	18	78.3
3. Leadership training	15	48.4	5	25.0	6	26.1	20	87.0
4. Workshops on promotion	11	35.5	0	0.0	6	26.1	13	56.5
5 Feedback from Senior Management Team/Head of Department for staff who unsuccessfully applied for promotion	10	32.3	1	5.0	13	56.5	20	87.0

Table 2.2 provides a visual overview of the five recruitment and five promotion initiatives across the individual institutions that completed the self-audit. There were three instances of missing data among the promotion initiatives, and none among the recruitment initiatives; these instances are denoted with a black dot. The numeric labels for the individual institutions in the top row of Table 2.2 are provided so institutions can identify themselves while maintaining the anonymity of other institutions who completed the assessment. The numeric labels assigned in Table 2.2 correspond with those in the visual overview of the aspirational initiatives in Table 2.10. It is important to note that these labels are not ordered in any way.

The tool used to audit the Irish HE sector was designed to take an accurate snapshot of the sector as it currently is as well as provide a baseline from which improvement over time could be ascertained. As such, the assessment included initiatives that were present in a minimum of one third of the UK Athena SWAN applications. The results of this audit suggest that there is a similar frequency of such initiatives across the Irish sector: overall, there was a strong prevalence of green lights (across all 23 institutions) for both recruitment (35.7%) and promotion initiatives (29.6%). The slightly greater prevalence of green lights for recruitment initiatives may be a reflection of the historical limitations surrounding promotions discussed in the introduction.

However, in order for an assessment to index improvement over time, the measure needs to include items that are difficult to pass or fulfil. The individual variability and spread of orange and red lights across the 23 participating institutions indicate that there is room for improvement across the sector and that the self-audit tool designed for this project can be used to assess this in the future. Specifically, approximately half of the lights reported across all 23 institutions were orange for both recruitment (51.3%) and promotion initiatives (45.2%), echoing the results of the above comparison with the UK and Irish Athena SWAN applications. Finally, out of a possible 115 lights for recruitment initiatives (five initiatives, 23 institutions), only 15 of these were red (a prevalence rate of 13.0%). Although there were slightly more red lights reported for the promotion initiatives (25 out of a possible 115, a prevalence rate of 21.7%), none of these were completely absent in the audited institutions despite the unique historical context of the Irish HE sector.

Table 2.2: Summary of recruitment and promotion initiatives across individual institutions

Section A: recruitment initiatives	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
1. Advertising commitment to equality and flexible working policies	O	O	O	G	O	O	G	O	O	O	R	R	G	O	G	G	G	O	G	O	O	G	R
2. Compulsory equality and diversity training (including unconscious bias training) for interview panellists, new staff members and staff conducting performance development reviews	O	O	G	O	O	G	G	R	O	O	O	O	O	O	R	O	G	R	O	O	O	R	O
3. Mandatory gender balance on interview panels	G	O	G	O	G	G	G	G	R	O	R	G	G	O	G	O	O	G	O	G	O	O	G
4. All new staff have a welcome event or meeting	G	G	G	G	G	O	G	G	O	G	O	O	G	G	G	O	G	O	G	O	G	O	O
5. Assigning all new staff a 'buddy' as part of the induction process	O	O	O	O	G	R	G	O	R	O	R	O	O	O	O	R	G	O	R	O	R	O	O
Section B: promotion initiatives	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**14**	**15**	**16**	**17**	**18**	**19**	**20**	**21**	**22**	**23**
1. Discussion of career development at performance development reviews	O	R	O	O	G	R	G	O	O	R	R	R	O	O	G	R	G	O	B	O	G	R	O
2. Availability of a mentorship scheme	O	O	G	O	O	O	G	O	R	R	R	O	O	O	O	R	G	O	G	O	O	O	R
3. Leadership training	O	O	G	O	G	R	G	O	O	G	O	O	O	G	O	R	O	O	O	O	G	O	R
4. Workshops on promotion	O	O	G	R	O	O	G	R	B	O	R	R	R	G	O	R	G	R	G	O	G	R	B
5. Feedback from Senior Management Team/Head of Department for staff who unsuccessfully applied for promotion	G	O	G	G	O	G	G	O	B	O	R	O	G	G	G	G	G	R	O	O	G	G	G

Recruitment and promotion initiatives by size of institution

To explore whether the prevalence of recruitment or promotion initiatives that are not rolled-out in any way varied by institutional size, the 23 institutions that completed the self-audit assessment were split into three categories: smaller institutions (less than 500 members of staff; k = 10); medium-sized institutions (with 500 to 999 members of staff; k = 4); and larger institutions (more than 1,000 members of staff; k = 8). The total number of staff was not available for one institution; as such, this institution is not depicted in the following analyses. Visual representations of recruitment and promotion initiatives by size are presented in Tables 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5, respectively.

The number of institutions reporting that a recruitment initiative was not rolled-out in their institution decreased with the size of the institution. In other words, there were fewer red lights reported for recruitment initiatives in institutions with 500 to 999 members of staff, and even fewer still in institutions with more than 1,000 members of staff. Specifically, the prevalence of red lights among institutions with less than 500 members of staff was 20.0% compared with 15.0% among institutions with 500 to 999 members of staff and 2.5% among institutions with more than 1,000 members of staff. The largest decrease in the prevalence of red lights was between institutions with 500 to 999 members of staff and more than 1,000 members of staff, suggesting that both smaller and medium-sized institutions may require additional support implementing initiatives targeting gender equality in recruitment.

Although the number of red lights reported for promotion initiatives varied depending on the size category of the institution, the decreases did not follow the same pattern. The prevalence of red lights among institutions was highest for institutions with 500 to 999 members of staff (40.0%), followed by institutions with less than 500 members of staff (32.0%). However, at 2.5%, institutions with more than 1,000 members of staff still reported the smallest number of red lights for recruitment initiatives. Again, the most notable drop in the prevalence of red lights was between institutions with 500 to 999 and more than 1,000 members of staff, suggesting that even institutions with a relatively large number of staff may need support implementing initiatives to improve gender equality in promotion processes.

Table 2.3: Summary of recruitment and promotion initiatives across institutions with less than 500 members of staff

Section A: recruitment initiatives	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1. Advertising commitment to equality and flexible working policies	🟠	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟢	🔴	🟠	🔴
2. Compulsory equality and diversity training (including unconscious bias training) for interview panellists, new staff members and staff conducting performance development reviews	🟠	🔴	🟠	🟠	🔴	🟠	🔴	🟠	🔴	🟠
3. Mandatory gender balance on interview panels	🟠	🟢	🟢	🟠	🟢	🔴	🟠	🔴	🟢	🟢
4. All new staff have a welcome event or meeting	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠
5. Assigning all new staff a 'buddy' as part of the induction process	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠	🔴	🟠	🔴	🟠	🟠
Section B: promotion initiatives	**A**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**	**H**	**I**	**J**
1. Discussion of career development at performance development reviews	🔴	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠	🔴	🔴	🟠	🟠
2. Availability of a mentorship scheme	🔴	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠	🔴	🟠	🔴	🟠	🔴
3. Leadership training	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠	🔴
4. Workshops on promotion	🟠	🟠	🔴	🔴	🔴	⚫	🔴	🔴	🔴	⚫
5. Feedback from Senior Management Team/Head of Department for staff who unsuccessfully applied for promotion	🟠	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟠	⚫	🟢	🔴	🔴	🟢

Table 2.4: Summary of recruitment and promotion initiatives across institutions with 500 to 999 members of staff

Section A: recruitment initiatives	K	L	M	N
1. Advertising commitment to equality and flexible working policies	🟠	🟠	🟢	🔴
2. Compulsory equality and diversity training (including unconscious bias training) for interview panellists, new staff members and staff conducting performance development reviews	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟠
3. Mandatory gender balance on interview panels	🟢	🟢	🟠	🟢
4. All new staff have a welcome event or meeting	🟠	🟢	🟠	🟠
5. Assigning all new staff a 'buddy' as part of the induction process	🔴	🟠	🔴	🟠
Section B: promotion initiatives	**K**	**L**	**M**	**N**
1. Discussion of career development at performance development reviews	🔴	🟠	🔴	🔴
2. Availability of a mentorship scheme	🟠	🟠	🔴	🟠
3. Leadership training	🔴	🟠	🔴	🟠
4. Workshops on promotion	🟠	🟠	🔴	🔴
5. Feedback from Senior Management Team/Head of Department for staff who unsuccessfully applied for promotion	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟠

Table 2.5: Summary of recruitment and promotion initiatives across institutions with more than 1,000 members of staff

Section A: recruitment initiatives	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W
1. Advertising commitment to equality and flexible working policies	🟠	🟠	🟢	🟢	🟠	🟢	🟠	🟠
2. Compulsory equality and diversity training (including unconscious bias training) for interview panellists, new staff members and staff conducting performance development reviews	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟢	🟠	🟢	🟠	🟠
3. Mandatory gender balance on interview panels	🟢	🟢	🟠	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟢
4. All new staff have a welcome event or meeting	🟢	🟠	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢
5. Assigning all new staff a 'buddy' as part of the induction process	🟠	🟠	🔴	🟢	🟠	🟢	🟠	🟢
Section B: promotion initiatives	**P**	**Q**	**R**	**S**	**T**	**U**	**V**	**W**
1. Discussion of career development at performance development reviews	🟠	🟠	⚫	🟢	🟠	🟢	🔴	🟢
2. Availability of a mentorship scheme	🟢	🟠	🟢	🟢	🟠	🟢	🟠	🟠
3. Leadership training	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟢	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟢
4. Workshops on promotion	🟢	🟠	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟠	🟠
5. Feedback from Senior Management Team/Head of Department for staff who unsuccessfully applied for promotion	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟠	🟠

Recruitment and promotion initiatives by proportion of female staff in executive management roles

The prevalence of red lights across institutions was also examined across different proportions of female staff in executive management roles. Again, institutions were categorised into three groups: institutions with less than 20% female executive staff (k = 7); institutions with 21 to 30% executive female staff (k = 6); and institutions with more than 30% female executive staff (k = 9). One institution for which the proportion of female executive staff was not known was not included in the following analysis. The visual overviews of these three groups are presented in Tables 2.6, 2.7 and 2.8, respectively.

In contrast to the patterns identified across institutions of different sizes, there was not a consistent pattern of red lights across institutions with different proportions of female executive staff. For instance, the prevalence of red lights in recruitment initiatives was highest among institutions with 21 to 30% female executive staff (16.7%) compared with institutions with less than 20% female executive staff (11.4%) and institutions with more than 30% female executive staff (11.1%). The group of institutions with 21 to 30% female executive staff also had the highest prevalence of red lights for promotion initiatives (33.3%), compared with 22.9% in institutions with less than 20% female executive staff and 15.6% in institutions with more than 30% female executive staff. In other words, there were roughly similar numbers of red lights reported across all participating institutions, regardless of whether or not they currently had more or less than a third of their executive management roles occupied by female members of staff.

Table 2.6: Summary of recruitment and promotion initiatives across institutions with less than 20% female executive staff

Section A: recruitment initiatives	**i**	**ii**	**iii**	**iv**	**v**	**vi**	**vii**
1. Advertising commitment to equality and flexible working policies	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠	🔴
2. Compulsory equality and diversity training (including unconscious bias training) for interview panellists, new staff members and staff conducting performance development reviews	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠	🔴	🟠
3. Mandatory gender balance on interview panels	🟠	🟢	🟠	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢
4. All new staff have a welcome event or meeting	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟠
5. Assigning all new staff a 'buddy' as part of the induction process	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟢	🔴	🟠	🟠
Section B: promotion initiatives	**i**	**ii**	**iii**	**iv**	**v**	**vi**	**vii**
1. Discussion of career development at performance development reviews	🔴	🟠	🔴	🟢	🟠	🟠	🔴
2. Availability of a mentorship scheme	🔴	🟠	🟠	🟠	🔴	🟠	🟠
3. Leadership training	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟠
4. Workshops on promotion	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠	⚫	🔴	🔴
5. Feedback from Senior Management Team/Head of Department for staff who unsuccessfully applied for promotion	🟠	🟢	🟠	🟠	⚫	🔴	🟠

Table 2.7: Summary of recruitment and promotion initiatives across institutions with 21 to 30% female executive staff

Section A: recruitment initiatives	viii	ix	x	xi	xii	xiii
1. Advertising commitment to equality and flexible working policies	🟠	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴
2. Compulsory equality and diversity training (including unconscious bias training) for interview panellists, new staff members and staff conducting performance development reviews	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟠	🔴	🟠
3. Mandatory gender balance on interview panels	🟢	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟠	🔴
4. All new staff have a welcome event or meeting	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟠
5. Assigning all new staff a 'buddy' as part of the induction process	🟠	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟠	🔴
Section B: promotion initiatives	**viii**	**iix**	**ix**	**x**	**xi**	**xii**
1. Discussion of career development at performance development reviews	🟠	🟢	🟢	🔴	🔴	🔴
2. Availability of a mentorship scheme	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟠	🔴
3. Leadership training	🟢	🟢	🟠	🔴	🟠	🟠
4. Workshops on promotion	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🔴	🔴
5. Feedback from Senior Management Team/Head of Department for staff who unsuccessfully applied for promotion	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴

Table 2.8: Summary of recruitment and promotion initiatives across institutions with more than 30% female executive staff

Section A: recruitment initiatives	xiv	xv	xvi	xvii	xviii	xix	xx	xxi	xxii
1. Advertising commitment to equality and flexible working policies	🟠	🟠	🟢	🟠	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟠	🔴
2. Compulsory equality and diversity training (including unconscious bias training) for interview panellists, new staff members and staff conducting performance development reviews	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟠	🔴	🟠	🟠	🔴	🟠
3. Mandatory gender balance on interview panels	🟢	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟢	🟢	🟠	🟢	🟢
4. All new staff have a welcome event or meeting	🟠	🟠	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟠
5. Assigning all new staff a 'buddy' as part of the induction process	🔴	🟠	🔴	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠
Section B: promotion initiatives	**xiv**	**xv**	**xvi**	**xvii**	**xviii**	**xix**	**xx**	**xxi**	**xxii**
1. Discussion of career development at performance development reviews	🔴	🟠	⚫	🟠	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠
2. Availability of a mentorship scheme	🟠	🟠	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠	🔴
3. Leadership training	🔴	🟠	🟠	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟠	🟠	🔴
4. Workshops on promotion	🟠	🟠	🟢	🟢	🟠	🔴	🔴	🔴	⚫
5. Feedback from Senior Management Team/Head of Department for staff who unsuccessfully applied for promotion	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟠	🟢

Overview of aspirational initiatives

Table 2.9 presents the frequency of the aspirational initiatives across the sample of 31 successful Silver and Gold UK Athena SWAN applications, the 20 Bronze-level Athena SWAN applications from Irish institutions and departments, and the 22 institutions that completed the self-audit. Again, the frequencies for the self-audited institutions are presented for green and green/orange combined to reflect the differences in the three samples.

Overall, the results of this section of the audit tool are positive, as the proportions of audited institutions that reported having these aspirational initiatives in at least some departments or faculties are considerably larger than the proportions of UK or Irish Athena SWAN applications reporting these initiatives.

Table 2.9: Frequency of aspirational initiatives across the samples of UK and Irish Athena SWAN applications and self-audited Irish institutions

	UK Athena SWAN applications (k = 31)		Irish Athena SWAN applications (k = 20)		Audited Irish institutions, green (k = 22)		Audited Irish institutions, green/orange (k = 22)	
Section C: aspirational initiatives	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
1. Actively identify and approach candidates to address any gender imbalance in the department, faculty or institution	2	6.5	0	0.0	1	4.3	5	21.7
2. Search committees must provide evidence to show they worked to recruit a diverse pool of candidates	1	3.2	0	0.0	2	8.7	10	43.5
3. All recruitment done through electronic system to ensure data on gender is captured for analysis	2	6.5	0	0.0	8	34.8	18	78.3
4. Shortlisters and panellists must follow fair and transparent criteria	4	12.9	0	0.0	13	56.5	20	87.0
5. Provision of a fund to support staff returning to work	8	25.8	0	0.0	3	13.0	8	34.8
6. Availability of a sponsorship scheme	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	13.0	6	26.1
7. Where a promotions process is in place, staff can self-nominate themselves for promotion	2	6.5	3	15.0	19	82.6	21	91.3
8. 360-degree reporting is available	4	12.9	0	0.0	3	13.0	7	30.4
9. Mock interviews (where appropriate) are available to staff that apply for promotion	1	3.2	0	0.0	6	26.1	8	34.8

Table 2.10 provides a visual overview of the aspirational initiatives across the individual institutions that completed the self-audit assessment. The numeric labels for the individual institutions in the top row of Table 2.10 correspond with those presented in Table 2.2, in order to allow participating institutions to identify their own results without compromising the anonymity of other institutions.

Overall, there was a similar prevalence of green lights across the aspirational initiatives (28.0%) as there were for the recruitment (35.7%) and promotion initiatives (29.6%). However, this appears to be driven by the frequency of two initiatives in particular, 'Shortlisters and panellists must follow fair and transparent criteria' and 'Where a promotions process is in place, staff can self-nominate themselves for promotion'. At 43.5%, the prevalence of red lights was considerably higher for the aspirational initiatives than for the recruitment and promotion initiatives (13.0% and 21.7%, respectively). However, this section of the audit tool was designed to be forward-thinking, and as such was made to be particularly difficult for institutions to satisfy.

Table 2.10: Summary of aspirational initiatives across individual institutions

Section C: aspirational initiatives	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
1. Actively identify and approach candidates to address any gender imbalance in the department, faculty or institution	🔴	🔴	🟠	🔴	🔴	🔴	🟢	🔴	🟠	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🟠	🟠	⚫	🔴	🔴
2. Search committees must provide evidence to show they worked to recruit a diverse pool of candidates	🟠	🔴	🟠	🟢	🔴	🔴	🟢	🟠	🟠	🔴	🔴	🔴	🟠	🔴	🔴	🔴	🟠	🔴	⚫	🟠	⚫	🟠	🔴
3. All recruitment done through electronic system to ensure data on gender is captured for analysis	🟢	⚫	🟠	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟢	🟠	🔴	🔴	🟠	🟠	🟢	🟠	🟢	🟠	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟠	⚫	🟢	🟠
4. Shortlisters and panellists must follow fair and transparent criteria	🟢	🟠	🟢	🟢	🟠	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟠	🔴	🟠	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟠	🟠	🟢	🟠	⚫	🟢	🟢
5. Provision of a fund to support staff returning to work	🔴	🔴	🟠	🔴	🔴	🟠	🟢	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🟠	🟢	🔴	🔴	🟢	🔴	🟠	🟠	⚫	🔴	🔴
6. Availability of a sponsorship scheme	🔴	🔴	🟢	🔴	⚫	🔴	🟢	🟠	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🟠	🔴	🔴	🔴	🟢	🔴	⚫	🔴	⚫	🟠	🔴
7. Where a promotions process is in place, staff can self-nominate themselves for promotion	🟢	🟠	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	⚫	🟢	🟢	🟠	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢
8. 360-degree reporting is available	🔴	⚫	🔴	🔴	🟠	🔴	🟢	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🟢	🟠	🔴	🟢	🔴	🔴	🔴	🟠	🔴	🟠
9. Mock interviews (where appropriate) are available to staff that apply for promotion	🔴	🟠	🟢	🔴	🟢	🔴	🟢	🔴	⚫	⚫	🔴	🔴	🔴	🟢	🟢	🔴	🟢	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🟠

Section 3 – Analysis of initiatives in the self-audit tool

This section presents data on:

- The most frequent initiatives rolled-out across entire institutions (green lights)
- The most frequent initiatives rolled-out in some departments/faculties OR in the process of being rolled-out (orange lights)
- The least frequent initiatives rolled-out (red lights)

Alongside frequencies, this section also includes information shared in the open-ended sections of the audit tool. Tables use the labels R1-R5 and P1-P5 in place of the full name of recruitment and promotion initiatives, as detailed in Section 2.

Table 3.1: Initiatives with green lights

Initiative	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5
Total	8	4	12	14	3	5	4	6	6	13
Rank	*3*	*4*	*2*	*1*	*5*	*4*	*5*	*=2*	*=2*	*1*

The recruitment initiatives with the most green lights were 'All new staff have a welcome event or meeting' (14), 'Mandatory gender balance on interview panels' (12) and 'Advertising commitment to equality and flexible working policies' (8). Institutions shared the following comments on the recruitment initiative with the most green lights (R4):

> The session provides all new staff with the opportunity to meet and develop networks with both new and existing staff. Feedback is always very positive. The format is constantly reviewed and updated to ensure new staff are getting the most up to date information and support.
>
> All new staff have a welcome event with HR (usually each term) which introduces the institution, highlights key information (including the LGBT Staff Network and engagement with Athena SWAN) and brings staff on a historical tour of the campus.

The promotion initiatives with the most green lights were 'Feedback from Senior Management Team/Head of Department for staff who unsuccessfully applied for promotion' (13), 'Workshops on promotion' (6) and 'Leadership training' (6). Institutions shared the following comments on the promotion initiative with the most green lights (P5):

> Unsuccessful internal candidates are provided with feedback from the hiring manager which includes feedback on their performance at interview, their application/CV and suggested actions that could assist in overcoming any areas requiring development.
>
> The Registrar and Deputy President writes to unsuccessful candidates, copying the Head of School, to provide feedback. The Head of the relevant School then meets with the unsuccessful candidates to inform the putting in place of an agreed future development plan between the applicant and the Head of School and access to a mentoring facility is offered to candidates.

Table 3.2: Initiatives with orange lights

Initiative	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5
Total	12	15	9	9	14	10	14	14	7	7
Rank	*3*	*1*	*=4*	*=4*	*2*	*3*	*=1*	*=1*	*=4*	*=4*

The recruitment initiatives with the most orange lights were 'Compulsory equality and diversity training (including unconscious bias training) for interview panellists, new staff members and staff conducting performance development reviews' (15), 'Assigning all new staff a 'buddy' as part of the induction process' (14) and 'Advertising commitment to equality and flexible working policies' (12). Institutions shared the following comments on the recruitment initiative with the most orange lights (R2):

> All interview panellists and those involved in academic promotion decision making committees are required to attend interview and unconscious bias training. The training comprises an online module which is completed in advance of attending a classroom workshop.
>
> All new employees are invited to attend Induction training. This training includes a mandatory session on the Dignity at Work Policy outlining the employee's rights under the policy and their obligations to work with dignity and respect in the workplace. This training includes information on bullying and harassment on all the nine grounds including gender, however, unconscious bias is not included in the content of this training.

The promotion initiatives with the most orange lights were 'Leadership training' (14), 'Availability of a mentorship scheme' (14) and 'Discussion of career development at performance development reviews' (10). Institutions shared the following comments on the promotion initiatives with the most orange lights (P2 and P3):

> Mentoring has been rolled out on a number of occasions down the years however what we have experienced is that without a clear 'hook' the mentoring relationships did not develop sufficiently to gain any real benefit. What we have learned is that mentoring is most powerful when linked to specific programmes or initiatives and therefore there is a clear purpose for the mentoring and from there the relationship can grow and develop.
>
> The institution runs a highly-subscribed mentoring programme for academic as well as professional (i.e. professional, management and support) staff; participants are paired with a mentor from outside their normal reporting lines who can support them with matters of career development etc, and they also take part in a series of four training days throughout the year which develop a wide range of skills.
>
> Leadership training is given to all management at present. The Institute has also engaged with the Leadership Foundation and in 2017 used the leadership for non-managers training on a trial basis.
>
> Leadership training is offered in the form of three formal training programmes: Leadership Development Programme (LDP) – senior management training; Managing Through People (MTP) – middle management training; Aurora – women-only leadership development programme. Candidates for the LDP and MTP are nominated by their manager/head of department and candidates for the Aurora programme self-nominate and a selection committee is responsible for deciding on the successful applicants.

Table 3.3: Initiatives with red lights

Initiative	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5
Total	3	4	2	0	6	7	5	3	8	2
Rank	*3*	*2*	*4*	*5*	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*1*	*5*

The recruitment initiatives with the most red lights were 'Assigning all new staff a 'buddy' as part of the induction process' (6) and 'Compulsory equality and diversity training (including unconscious bias training) for interview panellists, new staff members and staff conducting performance development reviews' (4). Institutions shared the following comments on challenges they had encountered rolling-out a buddy system (R5):

> We are a relatively small Institute, which prides itself in having a personal approach to welcoming and supporting new staff. All new staff are supported in their roles informally through various initiatives – collegiality is encouraged throughout the institute, existing staff working within functional areas are encouraged to assist new staff with familiarising themselves with the campus and help induct/mentor/train them in their new role.
>
> A buddy system for new employees was piloted in 2016. As the majority of new staff commence in employment in August which is also peak holiday period, successful implementation was challenging.

The promotion initiatives with the most red lights were 'Workshops on promotion' (8) and 'Discussion of career development at performance development reviews' (7). Institutions shared the following comments on challenges they had encountered in relation to promotion workshops (P4):

> The Institute does not offer any such promotion workshops at present, however through our progressive Professional Development Committee, all staff are afforded the opportunity to apply to attend workshops, upskilling and address particular training and development needs. This is open to staff right across the Institute at all levels and in all roles.
>
> Promotion opportunities are very limited in a small institution with a very flat and lean structure.

Section 4 – Conclusion

Following ECU's review of good practice in recruitment and promotion initiatives in Athena SWAN applications and the development of a tool for institutions to self-audit their progress against these initiatives, findings are presented in this report in a format that helps convey a 'picture of the sector'.

The tool asked institutions to self-audit against the five most frequent recruitment initiatives, the five most frequent promotion initiatives and an additional nine 'aspirational' initiatives. By using Silver and Gold UK Athena SWAN award holders as a benchmark, the self-audit tool was designed to challenge Irish HEIs.

Compared with UK Athena SWAN applications, many of the self-audited Irish institutions had examples of good practice in place, to some degree or in some departments/faculties, already. The high frequency of 'orange' lights highlights the need for further work but also, on a positive note, demonstrates the engagement of institutions to address recruitment and promotion challenges in the sector.

Taking into account the different contexts of the Irish and UK HE sectors, the pace of change reported by Irish HEIs in the self-audit process is worthy of praise. Although many HEIs have not yet rolled-out initiatives across their entire institution, comments shared in the free-text sections of the tool noted intentions to undertake further work. Across all initiatives, excluding the promotion initiative 'Discussion of career development at performance development reviews', at least 20.0% of institutions that self-audited as 'orange' or 'red' noted their intention to further roll-out initiatives in the near future. Of particular note, 45.5% of orange/red HEIs intend to roll-out 'Mandatory gender balance on interview panels' and 44.4% of orange/red HEIs intend to roll-out 'All new staff have a welcome event or meeting'.

Across the 23 institutions that participated in the audit, the prevalence of green lights (when an initiative was rolled-out across an institution) was greater among recruitment initiatives (prevalence of 35.7%) than among promotion initiatives (prevalence of 29.6%). This finding might reflect the recent history of promotion policies and practices in the HE sector. However, even in institutions where opportunities for promotion are limited, ECU recognises the value of career development as it supports staff to enhance their skills and promotes wellbeing.

When results were analysed by staff size, the number of institutions that reported that an initiative was not rolled-out decreased with the size of the institution. This was the case for both recruitment and promotion initiatives. In other words, larger institutions were more likely to have these examples of good practice in place within their institution, at least to some degree. In contrast, there was no consistent pattern of red lights across institutions when analysed according to different proportions of female executive staff. This finding suggests that institutions with a relatively high proportion of female executive staff are not more likely to have a greater number of gender equality initiatives in place. However, and perhaps more likely, it could also be the case that it is too early in the process to establish a link between these two factors.

As with recruitment and promotion initiatives, the overall proportion of audited institutions that reported having aspirational initiatives in at least some departments or faculties was considerably larger than the proportions of UK or Irish Athena SWAN applications that reported these initiatives. Nonetheless, institutions reported aspirational initiatives less frequently than recruitment and promotion initiatives (the prevalence of red lights for aspirational initiatives was 43.5% compared to 13.0% for recruitment and 21.7% for promotion initiatives).

Finally, the recruitment and promotion initiatives with the most green lights were 'All new staff have a welcome event or meeting' and 'Feedback from Senior Management Team/Head of Department for staff who unsuccessfully applied for promotion'. In contrast, the recruitment and promotion initiatives with the most red lights were 'Assigning all new staff a 'buddy' as part of the induction process' and 'Workshops on promotion'.

APPENDIX C – TRENDS IN PROMOTION AND RECRUITMENT

UNIVERSITIES

A critical issue for the Gender Equality Taskforce was to understand the patterns of promotion and recruitment to professor grades, and how these patterns might need to chance in order to accelerate progress towards gender balance at these grades.

Total staff numbers

The current structure of core-funded academic staff in the university sector is outlined in Table 1, showing women to be significantly underrepresented at the most senior grades (only 21% of professors and 29% of associate professors are women)[43].

Table 1: The numbers and proportion of women and men at the four major academic grades in the university sector. The data are three-year average full-time equivalents for the period 2015-2017, for core-funded academic staff only.

	FTE Female	% Female	FTE Male	% Male	Total
Professor	116	23%	400	77%	516
Associate Professor	113	32%	244	68%	357
Senior Lecturer	351	38%	575	62%	926
Lecturer	1,291	51%	1255	49%	2,546

Promotion

The Gender Equality Taskforce reviewed patterns of promotion across the university sector over the period 2007-2017. Table 2 shows the overall pattern of academic promotions. There were 104 promotions to professor, approximately 10 per annum; 30% of the applicants were women, and 28% of those promoted were women. The data for promotion to associate professor show there were 321 promotions, with 32% of the applicants and 31% of those promoted being women; for promotion to senior lecturer there were 644 promotions and women accounted for 41% of the applicants and 42% of those promoted.

Table 2: The number of applicants for promotion and the number promoted by gender for the university sector for the period 2007-2017 inclusive.

Grade	Female	Male	% Female
Professor			
Applicants	61	145	30%
Promoted	29	75	28%

43 While different universities use different titles for the various academic grades, for the purposes of this report we use the professor/associate professor/senior lecturer/lecturer terminology. Source data: http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2018/01/Higher-Education-Institutional-Staff-Profiles-by-Gender-2018.pdf

Grade	Female	Male	% Female
Associate Professor			
Applicants	232	483	32%
Promoted	101	220	31%
Senior Lecturer			
Applicants	652	933	41%
Promoted	278	386	42%

The Gender Equality Taskforce also examined whether or not patterns of promotion had changed over time. Table 3 compares patterns of promotion in the first half of the period (2007-12) with the second half (2013-17). These data show an increase both in the numbers of women applying and the numbers of women promoted, though it is of concern that the rate of change at the most senior grade of professor is slower than at other grades.

Table 3: The number of applicants for promotion and the number promoted by gender in the university sector, comparing the first half of the study period (2007-12) with the second half (2013-17).

	2007-12			2013-17		
Grade	Female	Male	% Female	Female	Male	% Female
Professor						
Applicants	24	68	26%	37	77	32%
Promoted	12	33	27%	17	42	29%
Associate Professor						
Applicants	89	218	29%	143	265	35%
Promoted	36	97	27%	65	123	35%
Senior Lecturer						
Applicants	237	418	36%	415	515	45%
Promoted	89	149	37%	189	237	44%

Table 4 compares success rates in promotional competitions, by grade and gender, for the university sector in the period 2007-2017 and shows similar success rates for men and women.

Table 4: The success rates for men and women in promotions in the university sector over the decade 2007-17 and comparing the first half of the study period with the second.

Success rates in promotion	2007-17		2007-12		2013-17	
Grade	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Professor	48%	52%	50%	49%	46%	55%
Associate Professor	44%	46%	40%	44%	45%	46%
Senior Lecturer	43%	41%	38%	36%	46%	46%

Flexible cascade model analysis

A key recommendation of the HEA Expert Group report was the introduction of a mandatory cascade model for promotions in higher education, that is, the proportion of women and men that should be promoted is based on the proportion of each gender at the grade immediately below. Table 5 compares the proportion of women promoted in the university sector for the period 2013-2017 with the flexible cascade model quota (the proportion of women in the grade below). **The data show that the pattern of promotion in general (with the exception of promotion to senior lecturer) is in line with a flexible cascade model approach**.

Table 5: A comparison of actual promotion patterns with flexible cascade quota targets, comparing the proportion of women amongst those promoted in the period 2013-17 with the flexible cascade model approach, the proportion of women in the grade below.

	Cascade quota target[44]	Percentage female promotees (2013-17)
Professor	29%	29%
Associate Professor	36%	35%
Senior Lecturer	51%	44%

44 The percentages are the three-year average full-time equivalents for the period 2014-2016, for core-funded academic staff only. See Table 1 of this appendix

Recruitment

The Gender Equality Taskforce also examined recruitment to professor grades. Table 6 shows that from 2007 to 2017 inclusive there were 407 appointments (approximately 40 per annum) made at professor level by advertisement and selection, 109 (27%) of whom were women. The proportion of women appointees improved from 24% in the period 2007-12 to 30% in the period 2013-17. Recruitment to associate professor grades is less common, with only 125 appointments (11 per annum) of whom 40 (32%) were women.

Table 6: Number of women and men recruited to professor posts through advertisement and selection, for the period 2007-17 and comparing the first half of that period (2007-12) with the second (2013-17).

Recruitment to Professor Grade								
2007-17			2007-12			2013-17		
Female	Male	% Female	Female	Male	% Female	Female	Male	% Female
109	298	27%	52	162	24%	57	136	30%

Future estimates of rate of change

The Gender Equality Taskforce also examined the likely rate of change towards gender parity at Professor grade from the 2014-2016 average level of 21% female professors. The Gender Equality Taskforce observed that the rate of change would be expected to be slow. There are approximately 500 Professors in the university system, but only about 50 appointments to Professor grade per annum (40 recruitments and 10 promotions) so that it takes almost a decade for any change in recruitment or promotions processes to have its full effect on the composition of the professoriate.

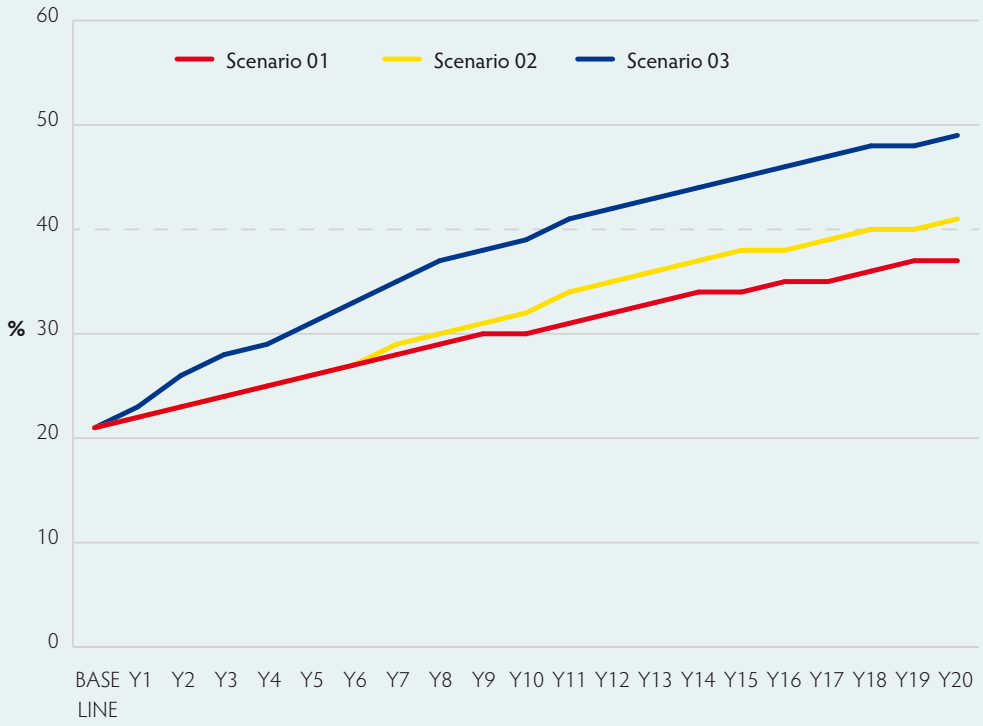
It should be noted that the rate of recruitment to and therefore the rate of change within the professor grade depends on the rate of retirement from that grade, so that proposals to extend retirement age beyond 65 years are likely to have a negative effect on progress to gender equality.

The Gender Equality Taskforce examined the likely rate of change in the gender profile of the professoriate under a range of different scenarios, assuming there would continue to be 40 recruitments and 10 promotions per annum. Three illustrative scenarios are presented in Figure 1:

- A flexible cascade model applies to promotion and recruitment;
- A flexible cascade model applies to promotion, and the proportion of women recruited increases 2% per annum;
- A flexible cascade model applies to promotion, the proportion of women recruited increases 2% per annum and 10 new women-only posts are created each year.

The analysis suggests that the adoption of a flexible cascade model alone could take more than 20 years to achieve 40% female professors. Ensuring that the proportion of women recruited to the professor grade increases by 2% per annum over and above the current rate, could achieve 30% female professors in a decade, and reach close to 40% in 15 years. However, the establishment of new and additional women-only positions would be transformative, and with the introduction of 10 such posts per annum (100 in total) in addition to a cascade model and 2% over and above the cascade model in recruitment, could result in 40% of professors being women within a decade.

Figure 2: The projected proportion of female professors under a number of different model scenarios, where it is assumed there will continue to be 10 promotions and 40 recruitments to professor grade per annum. The scenarios are (i) a flexible cascade model applies to promotion and recruitment where the cascade target starts at 30% (CASCADE); (ii) a flexible cascade model applies to promotion, and the proportion of women recruited increases 2% per annum (CASCADE + 2%); and (iii) a flexible cascade model applies to promotion, the proportion of women recruited increases 2% per annum and 10 new and additional women-only posts are created each year (CASCADE + 2% + WOMEN ONLY).



INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY

The Gender Equality Taskforce sought to understand the patterns of appointments to the Senior Lecturer (SL) grades in the IoTs, and how these patterns might need to change in order to accelerate progress towards gender balance.

Total staff numbers

Table 7 shows the current structure of the core-funded academic staff in the IoT sector, showing women to be underrepresented at the most senior grades (only 32% of SL's are women).

Table 7: The numbers and proportion of women and men at the three major academic grades in the IoT sector. The data are three-year average full-time equivalents for the period 2015-2017, for core-funded academic staff only.[45]

	FTE Female	% Female	FTE Male	% Male	Total
Senior Lecturers (1, 2 & 3)	152	34%	300	66%	452
Lecturer	1,378	45%	1,713	55%	3,091
Assistant Lecturer	469	49%	491	51%	960

Table 8 shows a further breakdown of SL staff into three further grades as of 31st December 2017, showing women to be underrepresented at SL 1 and SL 3 grades. The SL 2 grade has 40% women.

Table 8: Breakdown of the numbers and proportion of women and men at senior lecturer grades in the IoT sector as at 31st December 2017.

	FTE Female	% Female	FTE Male	% Male	Total
Senior Lecturer 3 (Head of School)	25	31%	55	69%	80
Senior Lecturer 2 (Head of Department/ Assistant Head of School)	85	40%	126	60%	211
Senior Lecturer 1 (Teaching)	61	33%	121	67%	182

This data shows that for all three senior grades in the institutes of technology, the percentages of females in these senior positions is far greater than the senior positions (Associate Professor and Professor levels) in the university sector. In the light of technological university developments, it is anticipated that there may be an increase in the proportion of academic posts at senior academic grades.

Appointments (Promotion and Recruitment)

The Gender Equality Taskforce reviewed patterns of appointments (made through both promotion and recruitment) to SL grades across the IoT sector over the period 2007-2017. Table 9 shows the overall pattern of academic appointments to the SL grades. There were 152 appointments to SL 1, approximately 15 per annum; 37% of the applicants were women; and 39% of those appointed were women. The data for promotion to SL 2 show that there were 252 appointments, with 35% of the applicants and 38% of those appointed being women. For appointment to SL 3 grade, there were 95 appointments and women accounted for 27% of the applicants and 35% of those appointed. The data indicate that the percentage of women being appointed was higher than the percentage of women applying during the period 2007-2017.

45 Source data: http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2018/01/Higher-Education-Institutional-Staff-Profiles-by-Gender-2018.pdf

Table 9: The number of applicants and the number appointed by gender for the IoT sector for the period 2007-2017 inclusive.

Grade	Female	Male	% Female
Senior Lecturer 3			
Applicants	242	643	27%
Appointed	33	62	35%
Senior Lecturer 2			
Applicants	557	1,057	35%
Appointed	97	155	38%
Senior Lecturer 1			
Applicants	462	801	37%
Appointed	60	92	39%

The Gender Equality Taskforce also examined whether or not patterns of appointments changed over time. Table 10 compares patterns of appointment in the first half of the period (2007-12) with the second half (2013-17). These data show an increase both in the numbers of women applying and the numbers of women being appointed in the second half of the decade compared to the first.

Table 10: The number of applicants and the number appointed by gender in the IoT sector, comparing the first half of the study period (2007-12) with the second half (2013-17).

	2007-12			2013-17		
Grade	Female	Male	% Female	Female	Male	% Female
Senior Lecturer 3						
Applicants	90	294	23%	152	349	30%
Appointed	13	33	28%	20	29	41%
Senior Lecturer 2						
Applicants	219	512	30%	338	545	38%
Appointed	39	73	35%	58	82	41%
Senior Lecturer 1						
Applicants	147	289	34%	315	512	38%
Appointed	18	24	43%	42	68	38%

There were similar success rates for men and women across the Senior Lecturer grades in the IoT sector for the period 2007-2017 as indicated in Table 11, and women had slightly better success rates.

Table 11: The success rates for men and women in senior lecturer competitions in the IoT sector over the decade 2007-17

Success rates in promotion	2007-17		2007-12		2013-17	
Grade	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Senior Lecturer 3	14%	10%	14%	11%	13%	8%
Senior Lecturer 2	17%	15%	18%	14%	17%	15%
Senior Lecturer 1	13%	11%	12%	8%	13%	13%

Flexible cascade model analysis

A key recommendation of the HEA Expert Group report was the introduction of a mandatory flexible cascade model for promotions in higher education, that is, the proportion of women and men to be promoted is based on the proportion of each gender at the grade immediately below. Table 12 compares the proportion of women appointed in the IoT sector for the period 2013-2017 with the flexible cascade model quota (the proportion of women in the grade below). The data show that the pattern of appointment falls below that expected of the flexible cascade model approach for SL1. For SL2 and SL3 the % of female appointees was above the cascade model target of 33%.

Table 12: A comparison of actual patterns of women appointed in the period 2013-17 with the flexible cascade model quotas (the proportion of women in the grade below).

	Cascade quota target[46]	Percentage female appointees (2013-2017)
Senior Lecturer 3	40%	41%
Senior Lecturer 2	33%	41%
Senior Lecturer 1	45%	38%

It should be noted that the rate of appointment to and therefore the rate of change within the Senior Lecturer grades depends on the rate of retirement from those grades. Proposals to extend retirement age beyond 65 years could have a negative effect on progress to gender equality.

46 The SL1 target is taken from the 2015-2017 average for Lecturer in Table 7; the SL2 and SL3 targets are taken from the SL1 and SL2 2017 data respectively in Table 8.

Future estimates of rate of change

The Gender Equality Taskforce modelled the likely rate of change in the gender profile of SL grades under two different scenarios, assuming there would continue to be 50 replacements each year. The 50 replacements are split proportionally between the three SL grades.

The two scenarios suggest that:

- With the adoption of a flexible cascade model approach alone for all future appointments, 40% female representation for SL 1 is achievable within ten years (Figure 3) and seven years for SL 3 (Figure 4);
- With an increase over and above the flexible cascade model by 2% per annum, 40% female representation at SL 1 is achievable within four years (Figure 3) and six years for SL 3 (Figure 4).
- In the case of SL 2, gender balance is already present. It is assumed that this will continue and so it is not included in the results here.

Figure 3: The projected proportion of female senior lecturers at level 1 under two different model scenarios. The scenarios are (i) a flexible cascade model applies to appointments (CASCADE); (ii) the proportion of women appointed increases by 2% per annum over and above the flexible cascade model (CASCADE + 2%).

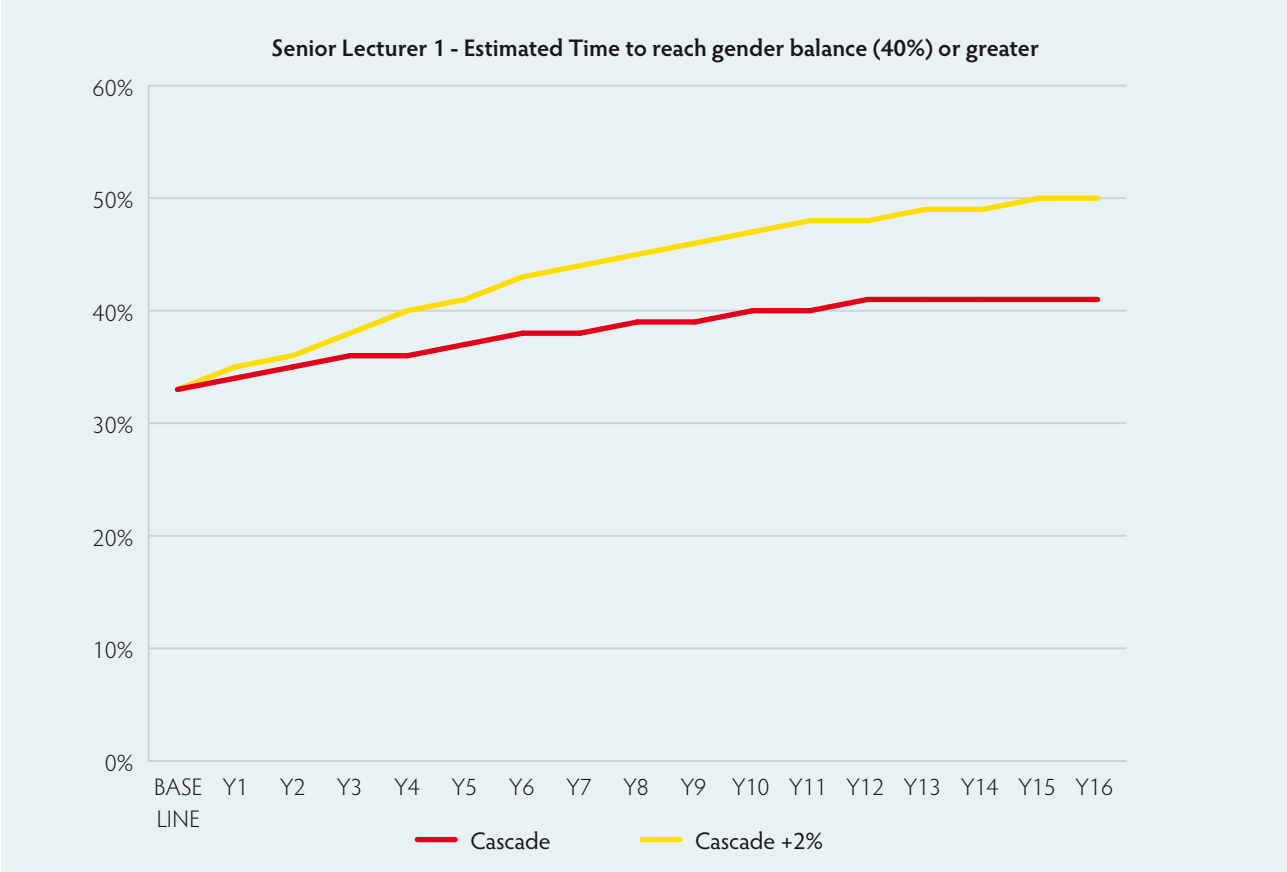
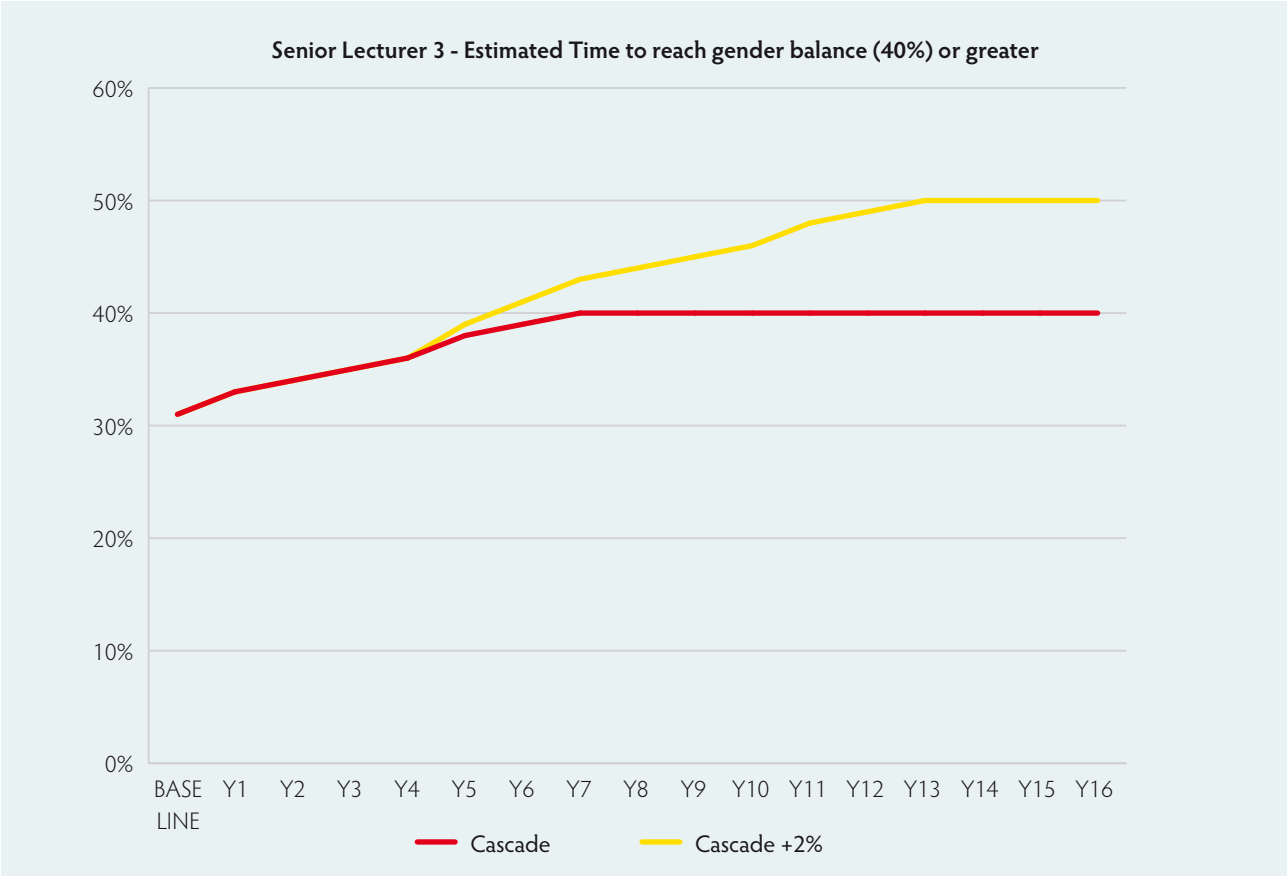


Figure 4: The projected proportion of female senior lecturers at level 3 under two different model scenarios. The scenarios are (i) a flexible cascade model applies to appointments (CASCADE); (ii) the proportion of women appointed increases by 2% per annum over and above the flexible cascade model (CASCADE + 2%).



APPENDIX D – POSITIVE ACTION CASE STUDIES

POSITIVE ACTION IN RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION PRACTICES

Sometimes, rather than relying on people to constantly make good decisions, you have to design the system so that success is not dependent on every decision being a good one.[47]

Positive Action as a legislative and policy tool

Discrimination is prohibited under equality legislation[48] on the grounds of gender. However, to further actual equality in practice, some practices in the form of positive actions are permitted. This is dealt with in Irish law by section 24(1) of the Employment Equality Act 1998 (as amended), which provides as follows.

24(1) This Act is without prejudice to any measures –

(a) maintained or adopted with a view to ensuring full equality in practice between men and women in their employments, and

(b) providing for specific advantages so as –

(i) to make it easier for an under-represented sex to pursue a vocational activity, or

(ii) to prevent or compensate for disadvantages in professional careers.

The European Union (EU) has acknowledged that when addressing the issue of gender discrimination, the role of governments in promoting positive action measures to combat discrimination is vital[49]. The Commission has adopted a working definition of positive actions as "consisting of proportionate measures undertaken with the purpose of achieving full and effective equality in practice for members of groups that are socially or economically disadvantaged, or otherwise face the consequences of past or present discrimination or disadvantage".[50] Regarding positive action on gender grounds, Article 157(4) TFEU states that:

"With a view to ensuring full equality in practice between men and women in working life, the principle of equal treatment shall not prevent any Member State from maintaining or adopting measures providing for specific advantage, in order to make it easier for the underrepresented sex to pursue a vocational activity or to prevent or compensate for disadvantages in professional careers."

47 J. Dubner (2016) What Are Gender Barriers Made Of? *Freakonomics Podcast*, July 20, 2016.

48 Employment Equality Act 1998

49 European Commission (2009) *International perspectives on positive action measures*

50 Ibid p. 6

The European Court of Justice, in Badeck[51] accepted that positive action was permissible in pursuit of substantive equality (and not merely equality of opportunity). Under Badeck[52] case that the German public service was entitled to give priority to women in promotions, access to training and recruitment in sectors of the public service where women were under-represented, when the female candidate was equally qualified to her male counterpart, under two conditions:

a) it does not automatically and unconditionally give such priority when men and women are equally qualified; and

b) the candidates are the subject of an objective assessment which takes account of their specific personal situations.

The Irish Civil Service have implemented a similar policy in senior appointments which allows for preference to be given to a female candidate in deciding between two equally qualified candidates where women are under-represented on the management board of the department in question.[53]

In Abrahamsson,[54] the CJEU refused to endorse a rule of Swedish law governing universities which provided that a candidate belonging to an under-represented sex and possessing sufficient qualifications could be chosen in preference to a candidate of the opposite sex who would otherwise have been chosen, subject to the condition that the difference in their respective qualifications was not so great as to make the appointment contrary to the requirement of objectivity. The latter was held to be so vague as to indicate that selection would be ultimately based on gender. In applying its decision, the court implied a requirement of proportionality in the permissive provision of the treat (now article 157(4) of TFEU).[55]

In EFTA Surveillance Authority v Kingdom of Norway,[56] the EFTA Court refused to sanction the allocation of 20 women-only post-doctoral research grants to the University of Oslo, finding that the scheme gave absolute and unconditional priority to female candidates. They reasoned that there was a requirement for flexibility and argued that the scheme, as it stood, could result in a woman unqualified for the post being appointed.

Arguably, there has been a move in European law towards substantive equality rather than procedural equality or equality of opportunity.[57] However, the case law shows there is an undoubted requirement of proportionality and any positive action measure must be sufficiently flexible (with saving provisions) so as not to be deemed discrimination.

51 *Badeck* Case C-158/97

52 Ibid

53 ESRI (2017) *A study of gender in senior civil service positions in Ireland*, p. 132.

54 Abrahamsson v. Fogelqvist Case C-407/98

55 See also *Lommers* C-476/99, 39

56 Judgement of the EFTA Court, 54

57 T. Tridimas (2006) The *general principles of EU law* 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press) p. 117

Types of Positive Action

Flexible cascade model

The HEA Expert Group recommended (1.17) 'each *HEI will introduce mandatory quotas for academic promotion, based on the flexible cascade model where the proportion of women and men to be promoted/recruited is based on the proportion of each gender at the grade immediately below*'.

The Gender Equality Taskforce analysed recruitment and promotion data for professors in universities and senior lecturers in institutes of technology to assess whether the flexible cascade model was being applied in the sector.

From the data, it is clear that the flexible cascade model approach is, in general, currently being implemented across HEIs (with the possible exception of promotion to senior lecturers in the university sector and senior lecturer 2 in the IoT sector). That is, the number of women appointed to a higher grade, on average, reflects the percentage of women at the grade below.

Quotas

Gender quotas are an emotive subject which often leads to immediate strong and negative reactions.[58] As a form of positive action, they have been implemented with varying degrees of success in both the public and private sectors including legislative quotas in various countries to improve female representation on company boards.[59] Additionally, various types of quotas have been implemented in the electoral processes of Ireland, Iceland, Germany, and Sweden[60].

It has been shown that quotas do effect change in situations where the number of posts to be renewed is sufficiently high. Political party quotas have yielded encouraging results where all posts are up for renewal at one time, thus allowing female representation to increase at a faster rate[61]. Furthermore, increasing the turnover rate on boards and the number of vacancies by imposing limitations to directors' terms in office has been viewed as something that may have a positive effect on the number of women on boards.[62]

Quotas may not have the desired effect within the academic system due to the tenure of academic posts and the relatively small number of posts available for renewal at any one time. Also, the negative opinion which accompanies quotas may counteract the desired effect of organisational and cultural change that is sought. For example, Corporate UK remains largely united against quotas. The Alexander Hamilton review has said that in making change we wish to do so by building consensus "as opposed polarising opinion and the problem being viewed as a compliance issue".[63]

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58 ESRI (2017) *A study of gender in senior civil service positions in Ireland*, p. 132. In January 2017, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform announced a series of measures to improve gender balance at senior levels of the civil service, including having a target of 50/50 gender balance in senior appointments. Preference is to be given to a female candidate only in deciding between two equally qualified candidates where women are under-represented on the management board of the department or office in question. According to the ERSI study, this measure drew spontaneous negative comment from those interviewed for their study: Men considered this discriminatory, while women felt they would prefer to be promoted on merit alone. In this context, the policy may have negative unintended consequences and analysis is needed to establish whether the gains from a very mild form of preferential treatment are enough to potential negative side-effects. T. Besley et al. (2017) Gender quotas and the crisis of the Mediocre Man in *London School of Economics Blog*

59 M. Teigan Gender quotas for corporate boards in norway: innovative gender equality policy in C. Fagan et al. (eds.), *Women on corporate boards and in top management: European trends and policy* (U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan)

60 Electoral (Amendment) (Political Funding) Act 2012. Political parties risk losing half of their central exchequer funding unless the minority sex among the candidates accounts for 30% of the entire national ticket. See also European Commission (2009) *International perspectives on positive action measures*; E. Bjarnegård (2015) *Gender, informal institutions and political recruitment: explaining male dominance in parliamentary representation*; (U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan) K. Brady (2017); Percentage of female Bundestag deputies hits a 19-year low in *In DW Made for Minds*, 29 September 2017.

61 The 2016 general election in Ireland was the first one where the gender quotas as per the Electoral (Amendment) (Political Funding) Act were applied. It saw a 40% increase in the number of female TDs selected. See also: F. Buckley (2016) The 2016 Irish election demonstrated how gender quotas can shift the balance on female representation in *EUROPP Blog: European politics and policy*.

62 L. Senden and M. Visser (2013) Balancing a tightrope: The EU directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of boards of listed companies in *European Gender Equality Law Review*, No. 1/2013

63 Virgin Money Plc and HM Treasury (2016) *Empowering Productivity: harnessing the talents of women in financial services voluntary charter*

Targets

In Northern Ireland, targets have been used rather than quotas[64].

Legislation[65] in Northern Ireland imposed a duty on all regulated employers, both public and private, to carry out regular reviews of the composition of their workforce to determine whether there is fair participation of both Catholic and Protestant communities, and to undertake remedial action where fair participation has not been agreed. The legislation also entitled an equality tribunal to select employers for investigation and to establish agreements to improve performance, both voluntary and legally binding.[66] Targets were found to have a positive effect across all levels in the organisation and a spill-over effect of cultural change at sector level in organisations not required to have agreements.

Finland, Sweden[67] and the UK have made progress with female representation on company boards using targets rather than quotas. Voluntary targets are in place in different sectors in the UK such as the voluntary Women in Finance Charter[68]. The Charter commits firms to promote women to senior ranks and to publish an annual update on progress on their targets.

When targets are applied, accountability and consistency are very important. The latest Lean In report (2017)[69], advocated strongly for gender targets in business and highlighted their need in recruitment and promotion policies:

Companies need to review their hiring and review processes to make sure there aren't gaps or inconsistencies. Additionally, they should track outcomes and set gender targets, so they have clear goals and can gauge their progress. It only follows that a more comprehensive approach will lead to better outcomes.[70]

Targets are regularly set across all areas of Irish HEIs and are part of corporate governance and the compacts that are proposed by the HEIs and agreed with the HEA as part of the Strategic Dialogue process.

Financial Incentives for the hiring of women

The German federal government, in cooperation with the states (Länder), implemented a Women Professor's Programme to incentivise the hiring of more women professors in higher education institutions.

To qualify for the programme HEIs had to submit Gender Equality Plans for approval by an external review board. HEIs which submitted Gender Plans, deemed excellent by the review board, could apply for 5 years' financing of up to three professor posts for women, after 5 years, the state/university takes over the funding of the post. Therefore, these posts are permanent positions.

The professorships were not advertised as women only posts but instead were subject to the normal recruitment procedures in the HEIs to which men and women could apply. For each woman employed as a professor for the first time, the university could apply to the federal government for funding for the salary of the professor for up to 5 years.

As of November 2017, 525 female professor appointments had been funded. Under the rules of the programme, a proportion of the overhead cost saved due to the funding of the professorship must be spent on gender equality activities as specified in the Gender Action plan.

Description of programme in German: https://www.bmbf.de/de/das-professorinnenprogramm-236.html

64 With the exception of quotas for recruitment in the PSNI

65 Fair Employment (Northern Ireland) Act 1989 and the Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998

66 C. McCrudden et al (2009) Affirmative action without quotas in Northern Ireland, *The Equal Rights Review*, Vol. 4, 7-14

67 See http://ec.europa.eu/research/swafs/index.cfm?pg=policy&lib=gender

68 See https://30percentclub.org/assets/uploads/UK/Research/20160331_-_Voluntary_charter_on_women_in_financial_services1.pdf

69 McKinsey and Co and LeanIn.Org. (2017) *Women in the Workplace*

70 Ibid, p. 26.

Gender specific competitions

Internationally in higher education there have been some examples of opportunities directed at one gender only.

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) of Australia developed an initiative in 2017 to fund more research by female scientists. A launch statement by the NHMRC noted that: '[e]very year the funded rates for Project Grants are higher for men than women. This initiative will reduce this gap by funding an additional 34 women lead investigators in 2017'.[71] The initiative contributes to the Workplace Gender Equity Agency's goal of achieving broadly equal outcomes for women and men in the workplace.[72]

In Europe, some HEIs have introduced gender-specific competitions (bursaries and research funding) as an attempt to adjust gender imbalance in their institutions. Examples include:

- In 2017, Coventry University introduced a new bursary aimed at encouraging men into the field, to address the growing gender imbalance on nursing and healthcare courses[73].
- The Dutch Rosalind Franklin Fellowships (Groningen) have run since 2003, which grant female researchers placements of up to six years[74] and following this, candidates are invited to apply for tenure track positions.
- The PRIMA programme in Switzerland awards grants to female researchers to lead their own research project at a Swiss HEI[75]In Ireland, efforts to support women with competitive, gender-specific funding have been instigated by industry, namely Enterprise Ireland[76] and most recently, The Irish Film Board[77].

Gender specific positions

The University of Melbourne advertised for female only positions at lecturer, senior lecturer and associate professor level in their School of mathematics and Statistics to counteract the lack of female representation in the field.[78]

In December 2017, The Max Plank Institute (Berlin) launched the Lise Meitner excellence program, a women-only program of tenure-track positions.[79]

The Technical University of Delft also offers women-only fellowships at the assistant, associate and full professor level. The fellowships also come with generous research funding.[80]

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71 NHMRC 06 December 2017 'Funding Australia's top female health and medical researchers'. https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/media/releases/2017/funding-australias-top-female-health-and-medical-researchers

72 NHMRC, Ibid.

73 The university has introduced a fund of £30,000 to help 10 men in subjects where they are under-represented. The award, spread across each year of the degree, is believed to be the first created specifically for men taking nursing and healthcare courses in UK higher education. The funding was won by Coventry following a bid proposal to the National Express Foundation. Further information is available here: http://www.wmcu.ac.uk/411-2/

74 The programme is co-funded by the European Union and primarily directed at women who have a PhD and aim for a career towards full professorship at a European top research university. They are invited to apply for tenure track positions. More information available here: https://www.rug.nl/about-us/work-with-us/rff/rosalind-franklin/

75 See http://www.snf.ch/en/funding/careers/prima/Pages/default.aspx#

76 The Competitive Start Fund is a competition, specifically for Female Entrepreneurs or female-led start-ups, active in the Manufacturing & Internationally Traded Services sectors. More information available at: https://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/funding-supports/company/hpsu-funding/competitive-start-fund-for-female-entrepreneurs.html

77 Irish Film Board, the aim of POV scheme is to enable distinct Irish female voices with a passion to tell stories on the big screen through the development and production of feature films. https://www.irishfilmboard.ie/news/Successful_Short_Shorts_Teams_Announced/1722/P4

78 Only 9% of Mathematics professors in Australia are women. M. Davey (2016) University of Melbourne mathematics school advertises women-only positions. *The Guardian* 19 May 2016.

79 The organisation "has made considerable efforts in the past years to promote equal opportunities and to increase the proportion of women in leading scientific positions," a spokesperson notes. At the beginning of 2006, the organisation had 5.7 percent female directors and 21.6 percent female group leaders. Now, 14.1 percent of directors are women as are 34.6 percent of group leaders, in part because of past equality initiatives. See https://www.mpg.de/11767653/lise-meitner-programme

80 Fellows are offered the chance to establish their own research programme of international repute, including generous start-up funding. The 5-year fellowships are awarded at the Assistant, Associate or Full Professor Level. See http://scholarship-positions.com/delft-technology-research-fellowships-female-researchers-netherlands/2017/10/16/

The example of the female-only fellowships in TU Delft is instructive. The case was the subject of a discrimination claim to the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights[81]. The male claimant argued that the failure to consider him as a candidate for the fellowship breached his right to equality under European law. The Institute, applying the case law of the CJEU, in particular the Kalanke, Marschall, Badeck and Abrahamsson[82] cases, found that the fellowships were an acceptable positive action measure to improve gender equality in practice as envisioned by Article 157(4) TFEU. In complying with the proportionality requirement and to prove that the measure was justified the university had to demonstrate that:

1. There was a serious problem at hand. TU Delft showed that female representation in academic posts in the Netherlands in general and TU Delft in particular were extremely low. Research was carried out in the university as to the extent of the problem and the reasons for it
2. Other 'softer' measures had been implemented to try and rectify the situation. There had been 25 measures previously, which had worked to varying degrees, but progress was too slow.
3. The intended measure did work in practice. It improved female representation by 4 years compared to the normal curve they were following.
4. The measure is not disruptive. A calculation was made of the ratio of additional female-only posts created by the scheme to all posts created in the same year worldwide. The number was statistically insignificant[83]

The feedback from this programme was extremely positive. The high calibre of the candidates impressed the Deans in the University so much that they funded three additional posts themselves, over and above the original ten posts, in order to secure the excellent candidates.

Conclusion

Proportionality is a key consideration in relation to effective positive action measures that enable substantive equality. There are case studies throughout the European Union which show that positive action interventions have led to accelerated or transformative change in higher education. There are a variety of types of positive actions measures including: a flexible cascade model approach to recruitment; quotas; targets; financial incentives for hiring women; gender specific competitions; as well as gender specific positions.

In Ireland, where there is a significant under-representation of women at senior levels of the HEIs, the use of positive action initiatives could be transformative. Accordingly, the Gender Equality Taskforce recommends that further positive action measures that could be utilised in an Irish higher education context, where they would be a proportionate and effective means to achieve rapid and sustainable change, should be seriously considered.

81 2011/2012

82 *Kalanke.* Case C-450/93; *Marschall.* C-409/95; *Badeck* Case C-158/97; *Abrahamsson v. Fogelqvist* Case C-407/98

83 See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MgByLzRWZTg&feature=youtu.be

Mentoring and Sponsorship

Mentoring programmes are frequently recommended[84] as part of a comprehensive gender equality policy and have been shown to greatly improve the participation and retention of underrepresented genders in academia[85]. Mentoring schemes were identified as a top priority in a public consultation survey carried out by the HEA Expert Group (2016)[86]. Many Irish HEIs have signed up to the AURORA[87] mentorship programme and feedback has been generally very positive[88] e.g. feedback at the stakeholder consultation event which took place on December 14th, 2017 and January 22nd, 2018.

While mentorship is certainly useful, according to Ibarra, the "connection to actually getting promoted and actually getting developmental assignments, has been kind of diluted.[89] Analysis shows that women are less likely to have mentors who advocate for and promote them, and this is the type of support that ultimately opens doors and creates opportunities.[90] This type of advocacy is known as sponsorship and is deemed more powerful.[91]

Sponsors make sure their mentees get visibility and are considered for future opportunities. They negotiate on their behalf for interesting job assignments, promotions, and pay increases.[92] It is far more powerful to have other people advocate for you rather than advocating for yourself, especially as a woman.[93]

A good example of sponsorship combined with mentoring is the WoW[90] programme targeted women in the middle management stage of the pipeline in businesses. The programme was competitive and lasted one year. Each participant was assigned a Mentor from another company plus an internal sponsor from their own company. Sponsors must be in senior roles within the mentees company and be there to support and advocate for them. WoW sets up a voluntary contract between each party, clearly outlining minimum requirements of contact hours and what each party hoped to achieve from the mentorship/sponsorship. There was also support programme and training for mentees.

WoW was the stimulus for a third of mentees to change roles: 'several of our mentees have since been promoted, twelve of the 27 mentees changed roles in the course of the year and eight of them directly attributed this to the WoW programme'[95]. They argue that the dynamic of having an external mentor and an internal sponsor is very powerful.[96]

Sponsorship and mentoring can be effective, especially when they are cross-institutional/cross-organisational.[97] However, in combination, they could be more effective, especially when formalised and training is provided for both mentors and sponsors and their mentees. Sponsors may be more useful for people at senior levels, whereas mentoring is critical from early to mid-career.[98]

84 H. Morrissey, (2018), pp122-123; L.N. Nishii, (2017). 'A multi-level process model for understanding diversity practice fig. 2, in *CAHRS ResearchLink* No. 5, p. 3

85 V. Meschitti and H. L. Smith (2017), "Does mentoring make a difference for women academics? evidence from the literature and a guide for future research," 166-199, p. 182. Bohnet, (2016), p. 85

86 HEA (2016) *Report of the Expert Group: HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions* p. 121

87 Set up in 2013, AURORA addresses inequality in higher education by using a combination of: development days (four, at approximately monthly intervals); an action learning set and self-directed learning that complements the key themes and supports participants' own development needs and in-house mentoring.

88 AURORA Programme (2017).

89 See https://hbr.org/2010/08/women-are-over-mentored-but-un

90 H. Ibarra, N.M. Carter, and C. Silva, (2010) Why men still get more promotions than women, in *Harvard Business Review* September 2010 .

91 I. Bohnet (2016) p. 87

92 Ibid, p. 87

93 V. Brescoll (2011), Who takes the floor and why: gender, power and volubility in organizations. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 56, no. 4, pp. 622-641. Study 3 shows that powerful women are in fact correct in assuming that they will incur backlash as a result of talking more than others — an effect that is observed among both male and female perceivers. Implications for the literatures on volubility, power, and previous studies of backlash are discussed.

94 WoW (2017) *Woman up: an action plan for female leadership*

95 WoW (2017) *Woman up: an action plan for female leadership* p. 30.

96 Ibid p. 24

97 Ibid., p. 123.

98 H. Morrissey (2018), p. 122.

APPENDIX E – STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED

Higher Education Institutions

- Athlone Institute of Technology
- Cork Institute of Technology
- Dublin City University
- Dublin Institute of Technology
- Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology
- Dundalk Institute of Technology
- Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology
- Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown
- Institute of Technology, Carlow
- Institute of Technology, Sligo
- Institute of Technology, Tallaght
- Institute of Technology, Tralee
- Letterkenny Institute of Technology
- Limerick Institute of Technology
- Mary Immaculate College, Limerick
- Maynooth University
- National College of Art and Design
- National University of Ireland, Galway
- Queen's University Belfast
- Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland
- St Angela's College, Sligo
- Trinity College Dublin
- University College Cork
- University College Dublin
- University of Limerick
- University Ulster
- Waterford Institute of Technology

Government Departments

- Department of Education and Skills
- Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation
- Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform

Funding Agencies

- Enterprise Ireland
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Health Research Board
- Irish Research Council
- Marine Institute
- Science Foundation Ireland
- Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
- Teagasc

Unions

- Irish Federation of University Teachers
- Fórsa (formerly IMPACT)
- Services Industrial Professional and Technical Union
- Teachers Union of Ireland
- Union Students in Ireland
- UNITE

European groups

- Irish representatives on the European Research Area Committee (ERAC) Standing Working Group on Gender in Research and Innovation (SWG GRI)
- Irish representative on Science Europe Working Group on Gender and Diversity

Other Stakeholders

- Equality Challenge Unit
- Irish Universities Association
- Irish Athena SWAN National Committee
- Independent gender equality consultants
- National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education
- National Women's Council of Ireland
- Royal Irish Academy
- Technological Higher Education Association
- The 30% Club
- Women in Technology and Science

QUESTIONS USED FOR STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION EVENT

Theme 1

Gender-specific targets/ initiatives

The *HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions: Report of the Expert Group (HEA Expert Group Report)* contains a specific recommendation **1.17**, based on the flexible cascade model –

Objective: To drive change through the use of positive action interventions for academic staff.

Recommendation: Each HEI will introduce mandatory quotas for academic promotion, based on the flexible cascade model where the proportion of women and men to be promoted/recruited is based on the proportion of each gender at the grade immediately below.

- Q. **What is your perspective on the use of the flexible cascade model in Irish HEIs?**
- Q. **Do you think there are ways to strengthen recommendation 1.17?**

The *HEA Expert Group Report* recommendation **1.18** states –

Objective: To drive change at professor level through the use of positive action interventions.

Recommendation: A minimum of 40% women and 40% men to be full professors, at the appropriate pay scale. Achieved by 2024.

- Q. **How can the sector make the following recommendation a reality? Should we be taking specific actions, over and above those already recommended, to accelerate the achievement of gender equality at senior level? Should phased targets be adopted?**

Theme 2

Mentoring, sponsorship and promotion

Mentoring refers to the provision of advice, feedback and coaching, whereas Sponsorship refers to someone in a position of authority using their influence intentionally to help others to advance.

The *HEA Expert Group Report* recommendation **1.11** states –

Objective: To increase gender awareness among staff.

Recommendation: The HEI will adopt measures aimed at actively developing gender awareness among all staff. In particular, key areas mentioned for focus include: each senior manager will be required to sponsor the career development of two of the under-represented gender.

- Q. **What is your experience of formal/informal mentoring and sponsorship in Irish HEIs for academic, professional and supports staff?**
- Q. **How might a more active mentorship programme and sponsorship programme be implemented across the sector?**

The *HEA Expert Group Report* recommendation **1.14** states –

Objective: To ensure transparent distribution of work.

Recommendation: Ensure HEI workload allocation models are transparent and monitored for gender bias on an annual basis. Evidence of this will be taken into account in the performance development reviews of managers/ supervisors responsible for setting staff workloads.

- Q. **What is your view of performance and professional development reviews in the HEIs that specifically assess for example: work allocation, training needs including regular unconscious bias, promotion opportunities, promotion criteria and career development plans?**
- Q. **Do you think there are ways to strengthen recommendation 1.14?**

Theme 3

Recruitment

The *HEA Expert Group Report* recommendations **1.1** and **1.19** include 'at the final selection step, in the appointment process […], in so far as possible, the final pool of candidates will comprise an equal number of women and men'.

Q. How can the sector consistently achieve gender-balanced candidate pools?

Q. What is your view on having a search process continue until a gender balanced candidate pool has been reached?

Q. What is your view on HEIs having a Talent Management strategy, with structured succession planning in place to identify a pool of people in the sector and abroad who would be considered eligible to apply for jobs when they arise?

Some European countries have introduced gender-specific competitions as an attempt to adjust gender imbalance in their Institutions. Examples include:

A: In August 2017, Coventry University introduced a new bursary aimed at encouraging men into the field, to address the growing gender imbalance on nursing and healthcare courses.

B: In December 2017, The Max Plank Institute (Berlin) launched the Lise Meitner excellence program, a women-only program of tenure-track positions.

C: The Technical University of Delft also offers women-only fellowships at the assistant, associate or full professor level.

D: The Dutch Rosalind Franklin Fellowships (Groningen) have run since 2003, which grant female researchers placements of up to six years

Q. What is your view of the role of such initiatives in the Irish context?

Theme 4

Athena SWAN

The *HEA Expert Group Report* recommendation **3.8** states –

Objective: To support HEIs to mainstream gender equality, improving the environment within which research is undertaken.

Recommendation: Within three years research-funding agencies will require HEIs to have attained an Athena SWAN Bronze Institutional award to be eligible for funding (by 2019). Within seven years research-funding agencies will require HEIs to have attained an Athena SWAN Silver institutional award to be eligible for funding (by 2021).

Since this recommendation was published, the remit of the Athena SWAN Charter has expanded to be more inclusive of all staff working in institutions. It now takes into account the experiences of trans staff and students and requires intersectional analysis with consideration of ethnicity. The original application to Bronze level focused only on STEM staff, whereas soon all departments in the HEI will be included, and previously only academic staff were included in the critical analysis, whereas now professional and supports staff are also included. This has implications for the overall level of work needed to put together an Athena SWAN award. To be eligible to apply for a Silver institutional award, the majority of departments must hold a Bronze award, and at least one department must hold a Silver award. On average it was recommended that HEIs take a year to do their critical analysis and write their application for an Athena SWAN Bronze award. In the 12 years since the Charter was established in the UK, just 14% of award-holding universities have reached Silver (13 hold a Silver and 83 hold a Bronze), as many focus on a Bronze Institutional renewal before attempting a Silver (15 institutions have not yet reached Silver but have renewed their Bronze between 2-4 times).

Q. What is your experience/opinion of the process and timeline for higher education institutions and departments/faculties to achieve Athena Swan Bronze and Silver awards?

The *HEA Expert Group Report* recommendation **1.19** states –

Objective: To drive change through the use of positive action interventions for professional and supports staff.

Recommendation: At the final selection step in the appointment process for professional and supports positions where the salary-scale reaches or exceeds €76,000, in so far as is possible, the final pool of candidates must comprise an equal number of women and men. If it has not been possible to achieve gender balance at the final selection step, the interview panel must account to the Governing Authority or equivalent for why this was not possible.

The *HEA Expert Group Report* recommendation **1.20** states –

Objective: Combat stereotyping of 'female' and 'male' roles and horizontal segregation among professional and supports staff.

Recommendation: Overtime, achieve greater gender-balance at all career levels (pay grades) within the institution.

Q. What has been your experience in relation to professional and supports staff, are there specific initiatives that need to be considered for them over and above those already recommended, to accelerate the achievement of gender equality?

Theme 5

Caring responsibilities and returning to work policies

The *HEA Expert Group Report* recommendation **1.10** states –

Objective: To enhance the provision of support for staff members with caring responsibilities.

Recommendation: Each HEI will establish a cross-institutional working group to develop a funded structure of family leave (inclusive of maternity, paternity, parental, adoptive, and carer's leave) and develop mandatory guidelines to underpin this.

- **Q. Do you consider the family leave policies and provisions in your HEI sufficient or how could they be improved?**
- **Q. What is your experience/opinion on targeted initiatives for people returning to work?**

Flexible/agile working was raised as a key issue at the recent high-level symposium on "Rising to the challenge – addressing Ireland's gender pay gap" held by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation and the Department of Justice and Equality.

- **Q. What is your experience/opinion on your HEIs approach to supporting flexible/agile working arrangements, and how can this be improved?**

Theme 6

Equality and Diversity Training

The *HEA Expert Group Report* includes unconscious bias training for staff in recommendations:

1.11 '…the provision of face-to-face unconscious bias and gender equality awareness training measures for all staff.'

1.12 Face-to-face, unconscious bias training will be fully integrated into initial teacher training education.

1.16 '…compulsory face-to-face training in gender-aware interview techniques should be provided for members of appointment committees, with membership of an appointment or promotion board conditional upon having completed the face-to-face unconscious-bias training.'

- **Q. What is your view of mandatory unconscious bias training for all Higher Education employees?**
- **Q. How can this be mainstreamed and regularly maintained? Should consideration of this be included when performance development reviews are conducted with staff?**
- **Q. What is your experience engaging men in the gender equality agenda? What more can be done to improve this?**

APPENDIX F – ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DES	Department of Education and Skills
ECU	Equality Challenge Unit
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
ERA	European Research Area
EU	European Union
FTE	Full-time equivalent
HE	Higher Education
HEA	Higher Education Authority
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HR	Human Resources
IoT	Institute of Technology
IUA	Irish Universities Association
MARC	Men Advocating Real Change
SL	Senior Lecturer
STEM	Science, technology, engineering and mathematics
TD	Teachta Dála
THEA	Technological Higher Education Association
TU	Technological University
USI	Union of Students in Ireland
VP	Vice President

APPENDIX G – REFERENCES

LEGISLATION AND CASE LAW

All Acts of the Oireachtas are available online at: http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/

Electoral (Amendment) (Political Funding) Act 2012

Employment Equality Act 1998

All EU Laws are available online at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/collection/eu-law.html

Article 157 (4) TFEU (ex Article 141.4 EC)

All laws of Northern Ireland are avalable online at : http://www.legislation.gov.uk/browse/ni

Fair Employment (Northern Ireland) Act 1989

Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998

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APPENDIX H – TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Gender Equality Taskforce Terms of Reference were to:

- Oversee a review of the systems of recruitment and promotion policies and practices in higher education institutions;
- Review national and international practice and relevant literature including the Review on Gender Equality published by the HEA in 2016 and good practices arising from the Athena Swan process and lessons learnt from unsuccessful applications;
- Consult with relevant stakeholders;
- Prepare a prioritised, costed, three-year action plan.

APPENDIX I – MEMBERSHIP OF THE GENDER EQUALITY TASKFORCE

Ms. Marie O' Connor, Chair

Marie O'Connor was the first female partner at PwC Ireland, a position she held for over 30 years before retiring in September 2017. She led the development of PwC's Irish asset and wealth management practice from inception for 12 years and PwC's financial services practice for four years. She was a central figure in establishing the IFSC (International Financial Services Centre) in Dublin

Marie was Chair and a founding member of the 30% Club in Ireland, a group of chairs and CEO's committed to accelerating gender balance in their organisations. She has served on a number of State Boards, including Dublin Airport and IDA Ireland.

Dr Patricia Mulcahy

Patricia Mulcahy is the President of Institute of Technology Carlow. She was first appointed to the post in January 2012 and is in her second 5 year term. She is a graduate of NUI Galway where she completed her undergraduate studies in Biochemistry in 1986 and her PhD in Biocatalyst Technologies in 1989.

Following postdoctoral research positions with BioResearch Ireland in NUI Galway and Dublin City University, she has held lecturing, research, Head of Department and Vice President roles at Institute of Technology Carlow. She is currently the IBEC South East Regional President and Chairperson of the South East Regional Skills Forum.

Professor Philip Nolan

Philip Nolan is the President of the University of Maynooth, a position he has held since August 2011.

He received his BSc (Hons) degree in Physiology in 1988 and the primary medical degrees of MB BCh BAO in 1991 from University College Dublin (UCD). He practiced medicine for a short time but was drawn to an academic career. He earned a PhD for his research on the control of breathing and the cardiovascular system during sleep. He joined the staff of UCD in 1996 where he received awards for research and teaching. He was appointed Registrar and Deputy President of UCD in 2004 and led a radical reform of the undergraduate curriculum.

He chairs the Irish Universities Association's Task Group on Reform of University Selection and Entry.

Ms Sheila Nunan

Sheila Nunan is the General Secretary of the INTO. She has been a member of the Executive of the INTO since 1995 and was INTO President in 2005/2006. In 2006, Sheila was elected INTO Deputy General Secretary/General Treasurer and served in that role until her election as General Secretary in 2009.

Sheila is the current president of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions having been elected at the Biennial Delegate Conference in Belfast in July2017. Prior to that in her role as Vice-Chairperson of the Public Services of Congress, Sheila was centrally involved in all public sector pay negotiations in recent years.

Mr Ryan Shanks

Ryan Shanks is Head of Strategy Practice at Accenture Ireland, delivering technology-enabled strategy and transformation initiatives that position Accenture's clients to take advantage of the latest business opportunities.

Ryan has over 17 years experience of successfully delivering large-scale, complex change and transformation programmes across multiple industry sectors including consumer goods, retail, resources, technology and the public sector. He has particular expertise in areas of operating model-design, human resources, and talent and change management.

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