

# Athena Swan Ireland: Silver application form for departments

## Applicant information

Name of institution	University College Cork
Name of department	School of Food and Nutritional Sciences
Date of current application	November 2024
Level of previous award	Bronze
Date of previous award	April 2019
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Section	Words used
Section 1: An introduction to the department's Athena SWAN work	3,096
Section 2: An assessment of the department's gender equality context and, where relevant, wider equality context	8,057
Section 3: An evaluation of the department's progress and success	2,039
Section 4: Action plan	N/A
Additional word count	1200*
Overall word count	13,192**

\*Additional word count granted by Athena SWAN Ireland on 15/02/24 (confirmation email attached below); 1,000 extra words to discuss School restructuring and 200 extra words for letter of endorsement from HoS.

\*\*For information on text included in the word count, please see our [WORD ALLOCATION GUIDANCE](#). **Do not remove application headings or question text from your application document. Doing so may invalidate your application.**

## Additional Word Count Confirmation Email

**From:** Athena SWAN Ireland <athenaSWANireland@advance-he.ie>

**Sent:** Thursday, February 15, 2024, 4:31 PM

**To:** Sarah Murtagh <SMurtagh@ucc.ie>; Athena SWAN Ireland <athenaSWANireland@advance-he.ie>

**Subject:** RE: Additional Word Count Request - School of Food Science and Nutrition

**[EXTERNAL]** This email was sent from outside of UCC.

Dear Sarah

This email is to confirm a word-count extension for the School of Food Science and Nutritional Sciences, UCC. We can provide an extra 1000 words to discuss the restructure within the school and an additional 200 words for the letter from the new head of School. Upon submission, please enclose this email within the application as confirmation of the additional word-count.

Best Regards

*Irene Byrne*

*National Advisor Athena SWAN Ireland*

*At Advance HE we work flexibly to support colleagues have a healthy work/life balance. I'm emailing you now as it works for me. I respect your working arrangements may be different so please respond when convenient for you.*

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## List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AP	Action Plan
AS	Athena SWAN
ASSG	Athena SWAN Steering Group
BAP	Bronze Action Plan
BFNS	BSc Nutritional Sciences
BFS	BSc Food Science
CAO	Central Applications Office
CID	Contract of Indefinite Duration
COE	Dairy Science Centre of Excellence
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CTO	Chief Technical Officer
DEIS	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools
DPR	Deputy President and Registrar
EU	European Union
F	Female
FITU	Food Industry Training Unit
FNS	School of Food and Nutritional Sciences
FS	Food Science
FTE	Full-time Equivalent
HoS	Head of School
HEA	Higher Education Authority
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency (UK)
HR	Human Resources
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LA/B	Lecturer Above the Bar
LB/B	Lecturer Below the Bar
M	Male
MSc FS	Masters in Food Science
MSc HND	Masters in Human Nutrition and Dietetics
MTU	Munster Technological University
NS	Nutritional Science
OEEC	Outreach and External Engagement Committee (FNS)
PDR	Post Doctoral Researcher
PDRS	Performance and Development Review System
PG	Postgraduate
PI	Principal Investigator
Prof	Professor
Prof (2)	Professor Scale 2
RA	Research Assistant
RF	Research Fellow

RSO	Research Support Officer
SALI	Strategic Academic Leadership Initiative
SAP	Silver Action Plan
SAT	Self-Assessment Team
SEFS	College of Science, Engineering and Food Science
SFI	Science Foundation Ireland
SL	Senior Lecturer
SPDR	Senior Postdoctoral Researcher
SM	School Manager
SMT	School Management Team
SRSO	Senior Research Support Officer
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
STO	Senior Technical Officer
TO	Technical Officer
TY	Transition Year (4th Year in Secondary School)
UCC	University College Cork
UG	Undergraduate
WG	Working Group (in SAT)
WIDE	Wellbeing, Inclusion, Diversity and Equality Committee

## Repeated National and International Societies & State Agencies

CoVE	Centre of Vocational Excellence (Erasmus)
ICOS	Irish Co-operative Organisation Society
IFST	Institute of Food Science and Technology
Skillnet Ireland	National Agency dedicated to the promotion and facilitation of workforce learning in Ireland
Taste 4 Success	One of 70 business learning networks of Skillnet Ireland; Taste 4 Success supports businesses in the food, seafood and drink industry by identifying and driving training to upskill and reskill employees



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## Section 1: An introduction to the department's Athena SWAN work

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

- + Structures and processes underpin and recognise gender equality work and, where relevant, wider equality work

Recommended word count: 2000 words

### 1.1. Letter of endorsement from the head of the department

Insert (with appropriate letterhead) a signed letter of endorsement from the head of the department. The letter should comment on:

- + the link between the Athena SWAN Ireland principles and the department's strategy;
- + leadership of the head of department in advancing equality, including any involvement in the self-assessment or specific actions;
- + evidence of how the department's equality work is led and supported by the department's senior management;
- + the key gender equality priorities during the validity of the previous award;
- + where relevant, the key priorities relating to additional equality grounds during the previous award;
- + key achievements (against identified priorities) since the previous department award;
- + key priorities for future action, including any remaining priorities from the previous action plan.

#### Confirm the following:

The information presented in the application (including qualitative and quantitative data) is an honest, accurate and true representation of the department. ☒

Dr Sarah Fink,  
Head Athena SWAN Ireland

10th January 2025

Dear Dr Fink,

It gives me great pleasure, as Head of the School of Food and Nutritional Sciences (FNS) at University College Cork, to support and wholeheartedly endorse the School's application for an Athena SWAN Silver Award. Implementing our Athena SWAN Action Plan, following our Bronze Award in 2019, has been crucial in transforming our School's culture, better supporting our staff and students, and advancing our missions in teaching and research excellence. Our Silver Award application clearly outlines our ambitions to build on this progress and enhance our national and international standing in Food Science and Nutrition, producing graduates and conducting impactful research that addresses 21st-century food sector and societal challenges, including the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. We believe this is best achieved through a harmonious School culture that celebrates the contributions of a diverse and balanced community, from undergraduates to senior academics.

The School's steadfast commitment to Athena SWAN is evidenced by our sustained progress throughout the years since our Bronze Award, including the COVID-19 pandemic. I believe that the changes in our culture and practices made us better able to withstand an abrupt change in work practices, enabled smooth continuity of our educational and research missions under very different circumstances, and then eased the transition back to a way of working that is familiar, yet changed in ways that allow greater flexibility in areas such as remote working and workload balancing that are very consistent with our Athena SWAN principles.

Since our last application, we have focused on integrating Food Science and Nutrition in our School, which were previously distinct. We now have joint staff appointments, projects, and modules, leading to a more integrated School and the introduction of a new sub-discipline and Masters programme in Human Nutrition and Dietetics. This integration is crucial for staff culture, education, and research, positioning us to better address future food challenges. Our last application also highlighted the need to improve communication, address gender imbalance on committees, and enhance gender balance among undergraduate students. We believe this application demonstrates our success in these areas.

The rigorous self-assessment process undertaken for this Silver Award application has provided evidence of our strengths, including a vibrant, highly talented staff and student cohort; a friendly and welcoming atmosphere; and a commitment to celebrating achievements of all staff and students. We have also documented how women and men are represented fairly and evenly across academic, professional support and leadership roles in the School, and have sought valuable feedback on where our next steps must take us, and the priorities we must strive to achieve in the coming years.

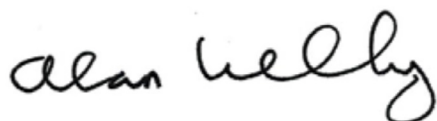
Areas of priority include a greater focus on career development for all staff (professional, managerial and support (PMS), Research and Academic), including fair and transparent models for workload allocation that are cognisant of career stage, individual circumstances (within and outside the University) and requirements for promotion (**SAPs 2.2.1-2.2.9; 2.3.1-2.3.7**).

Overall, in the coming years, we will embed and expand all initiatives to create a fair and respectful working environment and a more progressive culture. This includes the inclusion of Athena SWAN-focused sections in our quality-driven data collection processes, and the formalisation of performance reviews for all research staff. In addition, I will myself, as Head of School, sit on the WIDE committee, just as I have sat on the SAT since September 2023, being directly involved in data analysis and discussion of actions; such senior leadership commitment is critical in my view to the success in our future EDI actions.

Finally, I wish to thank Dr Therese Uniacke-Lowe, who made an enormous contribution by leading the School's Athena SWAN submission and the SAT team from its inception, Leah Neville, our School Manager, and all the members of our SAT. I would also like to acknowledge Professor Mairead Kiely, who was Head of School for most of the period in question, and from whom I took over as Head in September 2023.

I believe that the information presented in this application (including qualitative and quantitative data) is an honest, accurate and true representation of our School, and hope it meets the standards for Award at a Silver level. We look forward to your feedback in due course.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "alan kelly". The signature is written in a cursive, lowercase style.

**Professor Alan Kelly**

Head, School of Food and Nutritional Sciences  
University College Cork

## 1.2 Governance recognition of equality, diversity and inclusion work

### 1. Provide a description of the department's structures to advance equality. This should include:

#### 1.2 (i) information on where the department is in the Athena SWAN process;

The School of Food and Nutritional Sciences (FNS) received the Athena SWAN Bronze Award in 2019. FNS is proud of our achievements, having implemented 33 of the original 44 Bronze actions and made significant progress on 10 others, with one outstanding (Section 3.1). Preparing this submission, we recognized our path has not been straightforward. The COVID-19 pandemic required adjustments to our Action Plan, adding new initiatives and expanding our EDI agenda. These adaptations were essential for fostering an inclusive culture where all staff and students can thrive. Figure 1.2.1 provides a timeline of our assessment process and context for our current status, referenced throughout this application. The colour code highlights our main challenges (blue), major reviews of the BAP (red), and milestones achieved (green).

Due to retirements and the UCC Futures Initiative [Section 2.1a(i)], FNS underwent significant staffing changes. Over 50% of current staff have been here less than five years, affecting FNS committees, academic programme directors, research centres, teaching allocations, and processes. This evolving landscape impacted the timing of the Silver Application process.

Our response to the pandemic and staff changes strengthened the FNS EDI agenda. Staff and student wellbeing became a priority, leading to the formation of the Wellbeing, Inclusion, Equality, Diversity (WIDE) committee in January 2023 (**BAP 6.2**). The WIDE committee meets every two months during the academic year and is responsible for embedding EDI in FNS and submitting our AS Silver application, which has been a focus since February 2023. WIDE committee members also form the core of our SAT, as leads or co-leads of WGs. Consultation with HR wellness experts, UCC's EDI Unit, and FNS management helped establish our FNS wellbeing agenda (Figure 1.2.2). This agenda informs several Silver Action Plan (**SAP**) actions, displayed on the FNS website, outlining key priority areas for FNS impact:

- Expand and further embed EDI in FNS
- Educate and empower undergraduates (UGs) and postgraduates (PGs) on EDI using the framework of intersectionality
- Continue to improve academic and research staff career progression and wellbeing
- Progress structures for PMS staff career development and wellbeing
- Continue to provide a safe, respectful and supportive working and learning environment in FNS

Section 2.5 outlines the implementation of these priorities, while Section 4 presents a robust **SAP** to advance the FNS EDI agenda for 2024-2028.





## **FNS Staff and Student Wellbeing**

Fostering an environment where staff and students feel supported, valued, and thrive both personally and professionally

**Figure 1.2.1: Core Tenets of FNS Wellbeing Agenda.**

## FNS Athena SWAN Silver Application Journey

- Milestones
- AP iterations
- Challenges

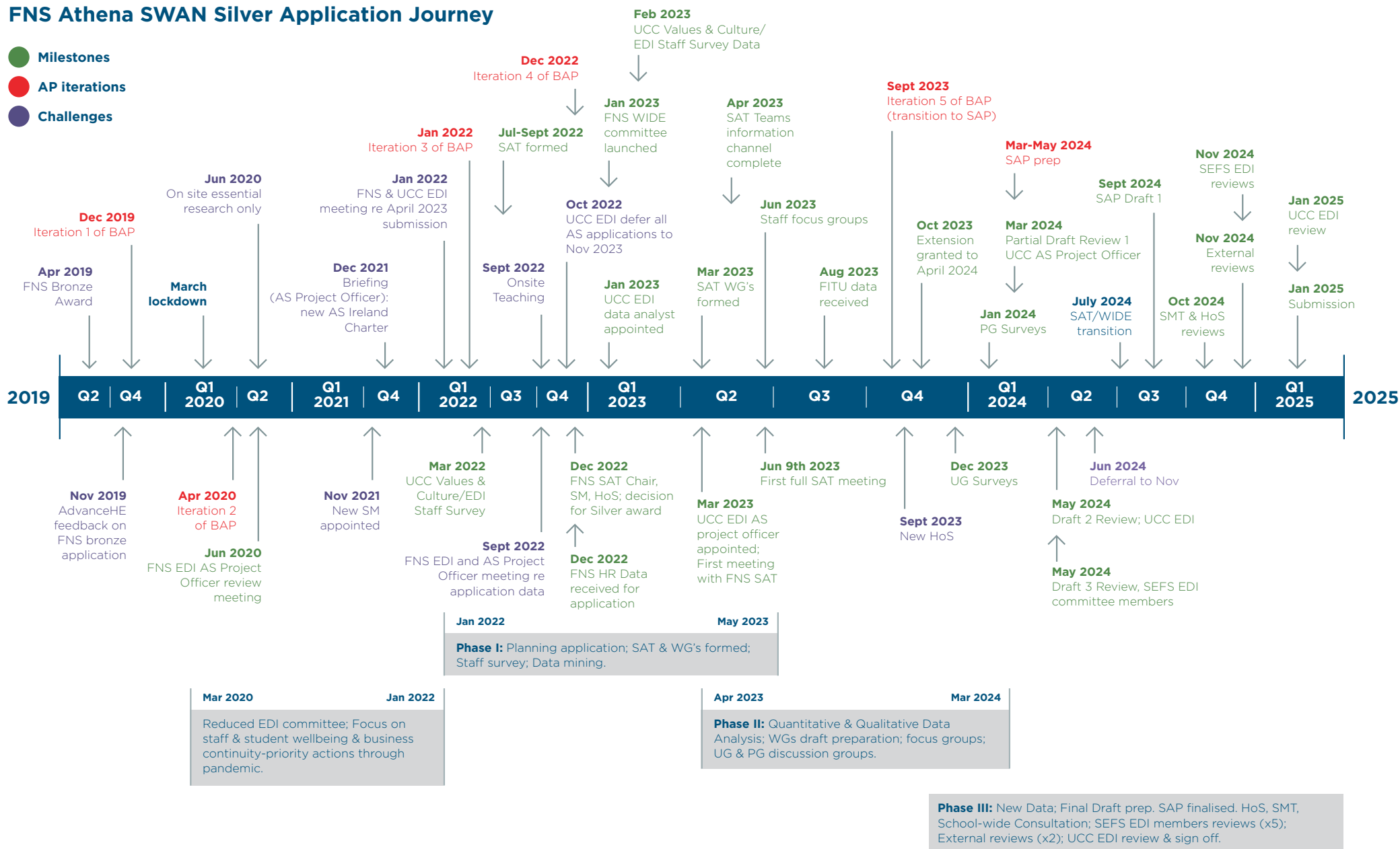


Figure 1.2.2: Timeline of the FNS Silver Application Journey (2019-2025).

1.2(ii) an organigram of the department’s key management and/or committee structures, with headcount by gender, that includes the formal reporting structures in place to carry out and support Athena SWAN activity and, if applicable, wider EDI work;

Figure 1.2.3 shows current FNS committees and reporting structures, reshaped after the new HoS appointment in September 2023. Enhanced reporting mechanisms improved communication between committees, with clear two-way reporting to the HoS and School Management Team (SMT). We assessed gender distribution and staff representation on all committees, inviting new members to promote balance.

The WIDE committee, the core driver of FNS’ AS agenda, reports directly to the HoS and supports all committees by providing guidance, resources, and oversight for implementation. Progress on AS actions and broader EDI work is reported monthly to SMT as a standing agenda item. Successes, challenges, and initiatives are shared with staff and students during the School Assembly three times a year.

The final BAP iteration (September 2023, Figure 1.2.1) included an action for open communication within FNS (**BAP 6.5**). Formal structures are in place to record and make FNS meeting minutes available promptly, ensuring all staff are informed about important events, actions, and deadlines, and that key updates reach everyone, including those absent, to support dual roles or caring responsibilities.

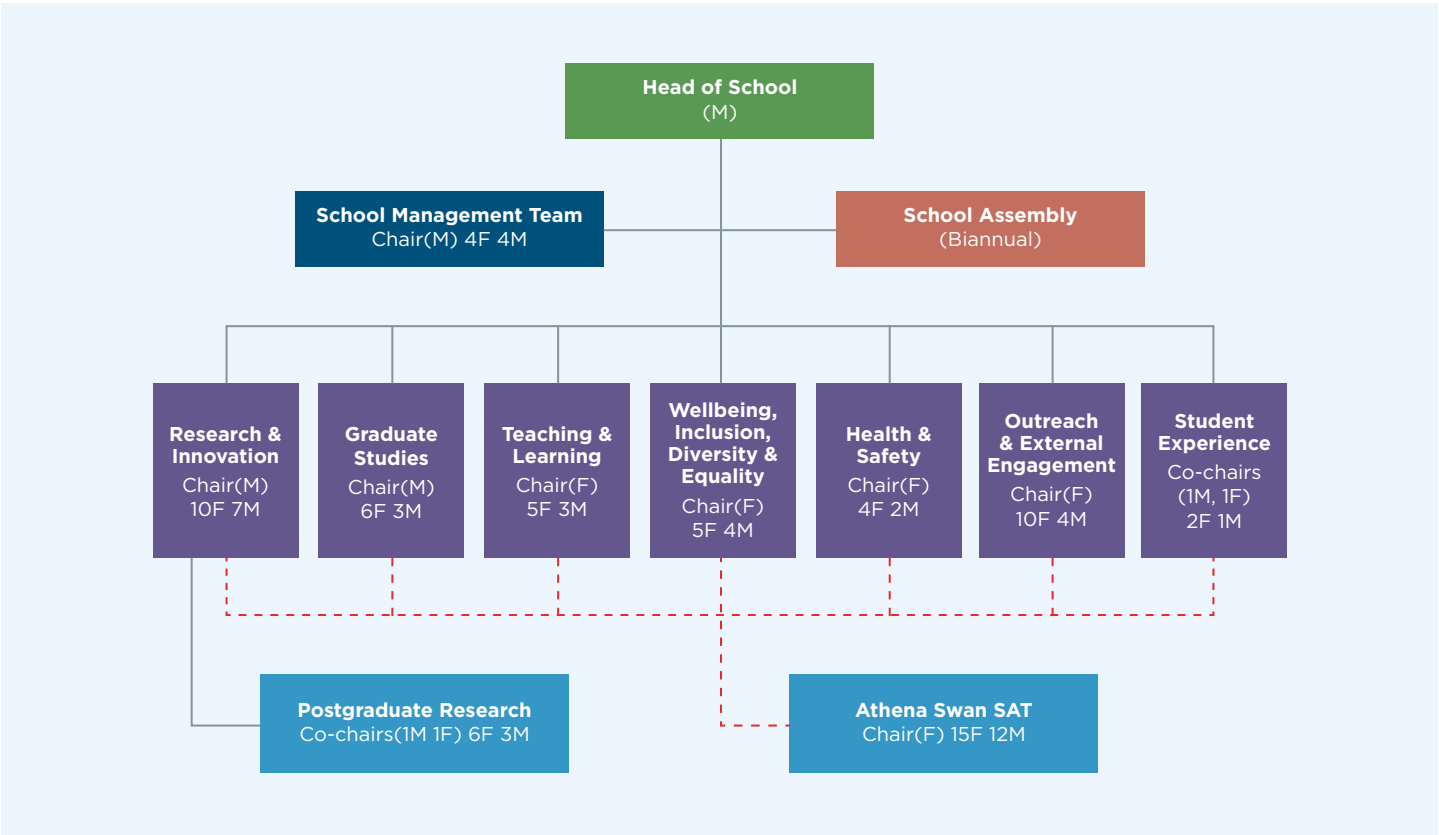


Figure 1.2.3: Organigram of key FNS management, committees, and reporting structures that support Athena SWAN and broader EDI initiatives. Committee headcounts are shown by gender, with Chair/Co-Chairs’ gender in brackets. Solid black lines indicate direct reporting channels, and red dashed lines show communication flow.

Notable points:

- Committee Chairs are gender-balanced [(6F, 6M), Table 1.2.1].
- Academic programme directors reflect staff gender balance [70%F, 30%M; Section 2.1 (ii)].
- The current HoS replaces a female HoS, and the Vice-Head is female.
- SMT and WIDE committees are gender-balanced (4F, 4M; 5F, 4M).
- SMT and WIDE include representatives for junior academic staff [Section 2.1 (ii)].

**TABLE 1.2.1:** GENDER DIVERSITY OF FNS COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND STAFF WITH ROLES OF SIGNIFICANT RESPONSIBILITY

		Gender Ratio
<b>Head of School (HoS)*</b>	Professor Alan Kelly (M)	
<b>Vice- Head of School</b>	Dr Majella O'Keeffe (F)	
<b>Programme Directors</b>	BSc Food Science (F) BSc Nutritional Sciences (F) BSc Food Science & Technology (International) (M) MSc Human Nutrition & Dietetics (F) MSc Food Science (M) PGDip Dairy Technology & Innovation (F)	67:33 F:M
<b>Committee Chairs</b>	School Management Team (M) Teaching & Learning (F) Outreach & Engagement (F) Graduate Studies (M) Wellbeing, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (F) Health & Safety (F) Research & Innovation (M) Student Experience (1M 1F) Postgraduate Research (1M 1F) Athena Swan SAT (F)	50:50 F:M
<b>School Manager</b>	(F)	
<b>Chief Technical Officer</b>	(M)	
<b>Safety Officer</b>	(F)	

\*HoS, 2019-2023, was female

**1.2 (iii) information on the relationship of department structures with institutional Athena SWAN structures and, if applicable, EDI structures, including mechanisms for sharing the findings of self assessment as well as good practice;**

UCC Management and central EDI/AS committees have comprehensive oversight of FNS EDI activities and progress through the reporting structure outlined in Figure 1.2.4:

- The EDI unit, alongside the Deputy President and Registrar (DPR), and Director of People and Culture, sets strategic objectives, develops policies, and delivers KPIs.
- UCC's Equality Committee, reporting to the President, serves as the steering group for the EDI unit, overseeing its activities and policy direction.
- The UCC Athena SWAN Steering Group (UCC ASSG) oversees the UCC Action Plan, supported by four College-level steering groups, including the College of Science, Engineering and Food Science (SEFS), which oversees School-level applications.

- The FNS WIDE Chair reports to the SEFS EDI committee (where they are Deputy Chair) and to UCC ASSG.
- The FNS WIDE Chair is a member of UCC ASSG WG2, preparing for the Institutional Silver Award in November 2024, a member of UCC's People, Culture, Equality, Inclusion & Belonging Subcommittee and the UCC Future of Work WG.

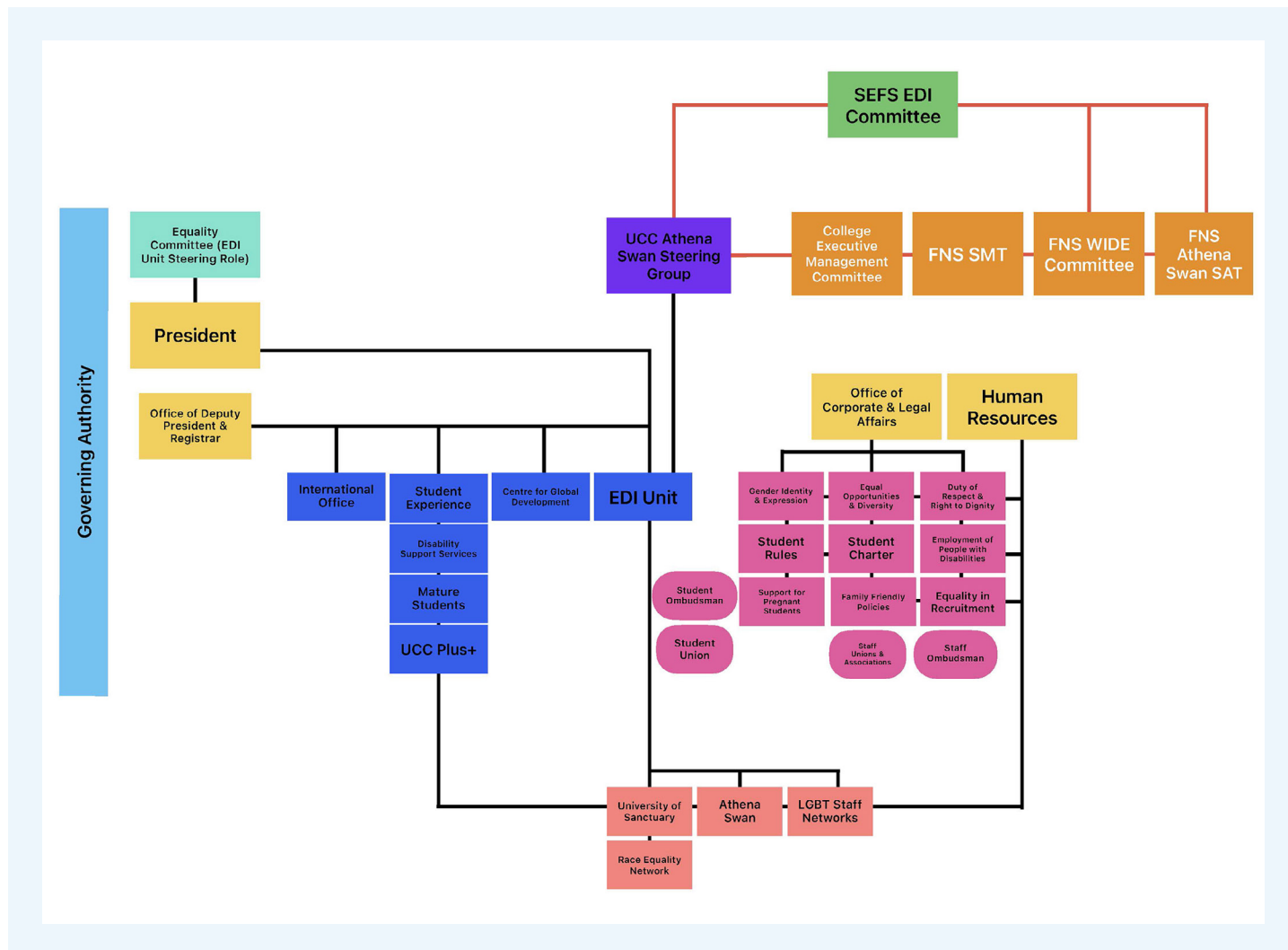


Figure 1.2.4: FNS relationship with UCC Management, Athena SWAN and EDI structures.



## **1.2 (iv) information on support provided by the institution for the application;**

UCC's EDI unit provided invaluable support throughout this application process and notable challenges through a range of resources, best practices, and guidance, including:

- Navigating the New AS Ireland Charter
- Supporting the decision to apply for a Silver Award – including application deferrals
- Reviewing and giving feedback on our application drafts.

The interim UCC AS project officer met fortnightly with the SAT Chair and Deputy Chair, guided WGs, attended the 1st full SAT meeting in June 2023, and organised externally-facilitated focus groups.

The EDI unit data analyst provided FNA with staff and HRIS survey data, as well as HEA and HESA benchmarking data, presented in comprehensive, guided, spreadsheets with application-ready template tables and graphs.

The SEFS EDI committee organised internal peer reviewers and provided constructed feedback on the application to the FNS Chair.

## **1.2 (v) information on formal processes in place to resource, distribute, recognise and reward Athena SWAN and, where applicable, EDI work, referencing institution-level policies where appropriate;**

- Staff contributions to AS and EDI work are supported and acknowledged at FNS meetings and are a standing agenda item at SMT. Time spent is considered in workload distribution by HoS and Line Managers.
- FNS' website and social media promote EDI activities, with updates presented at School Assembly.
- The large SAT formed for this application (Section 1.3.1) distributed AS activities among a wide range of staff and students, including new academic and technical staff.
- The SAT Chair was promoted in 2021 through a competitive, competency-based process, with leadership in FNS AS and broader EDI work central to the application.

Increased involvement of UG and PG students in EDI work is highlighted among our priority action areas [Section 2.5a(i)]. **SAP 2.4.8** aims to engage, train and acknowledge students' EDI work through an annual EDI award (Section 2.4b).

## **1.2 (vi) Information on resource provision for the action plan and associated activities to ensure effective implementation;**

FNS has remained committed to implementing its AS Action Plan as a priority, through measures including:

- Monthly reports to SMT identify where proactive resourcing is required
- Financial support deployed where needed
- SAP costed and reviewed by SMT to ensure viability
- Actions assigned to relevant staff/committees to ensure effective implementation
- Support of the SEFS EDI committee to seek assistance or report issues, allowing for a College-wide, collaborative approach.

**1.2 (vii) any other relevant structure and organisation information, such as the department's relationship with community partners;**

FNS is committed to building impactful partnerships with community organizations, charities, and government agencies. Through these collaborations, we aim to enhance our educational and research efforts, broaden our EDI agenda, support community well-being, and create a positive lasting impact. Significant current partnerships are summarized in Figure 1.2.5.



1. FNS manage, coordinate & implement the scientific element of these awards
2. NS staff co-authored cookbook for women, written by 5 female dietitians
3. NS staff were among 17 female co-authors of cookbook for sick children - collaboration between HSE and INDi
4. Co-authored cancer patients' cookbook with INDi, ISALT, Breakthrough Cancer & Oesophageal Cancer Fund
5. Head of School is on the board of this society
6. Partnership with FNS includes FITU/UCC Rejuvenate programme
7. These sites serve as partners for placements, workshops, research, and collaborative engagements, including talks, conferences, and information sessions

**Figure 1.2.5: Montage of many of the significant community partners that FNS staff support and collaborate with. Abbreviations: Irish Co-operative Organisation Society (ICOS); Irish Association of Speech and Language Therapists (IASLT).**

**1.2 (viii) confirmation that staff and students are recorded as the gender with which they identify in this submission.**

Aligned with UCC’s Gender Identity and Expression Policy, all gender data in this application is reported as the gender with which individuals identify. However, low numbers of individuals identified as non-binary. Therefore, to maintain anonymity of survey respondents, binary data is used throughout.

**1.3 The self-assessment process**

a. Provide information on the preparation and delivery of this application by the department. This should include:

**1.3a (i) a description of the self-assessment team, including comment on the roles and responsibilities of individuals, and how these were assigned. The gender of SAT members, their professional/student role in the institution, and their specific role in the SAT should be noted in a table;**

FNS aimed to embed wellbeing and EDI in all aspects of its life, viewing self-assessment as a collaborative process with broad participation from staff and students, achieving success despite challenges. After receiving our Bronze Award, the SAT (11F, 7M) became the School Athena SWAN Committee (SASC), which expanded in June 2020 to the FNS EDI committee. From 2020-2022, the COVID-19 pandemic limited FNS committee activities and restricted AS actions. During this time, our focus was on ensuring the continuity of online teaching, essential research, and staff wellbeing, managed by a FNS Operations Working Group (HoS, SM, managerial CTO, Health and Safety Officer, EDI Chair, and representatives from all staff categories) that met weekly. The EDI team, including the HoS, SM, EDI Chair, and at least 3 committee members, met monthly to identify actionable items. This team established online groups for staff and students to connect, share experiences, and offer support, prioritizing frequent communication about changes, resources, and available assistance. EDI issues affected by the pandemic were addressed, resulting in adjustments to our policies and practices.

The FNS AS Silver application was shaped by a large SAT (#27; 15F, 12M, Table 1.3.1) representing the entire FNS community’s academic, technical, administrative, research, and student members. FNS EDI committee members (WIDE committee, January 2023) formed the core of the SAT as WG leads or co-leads. The SAT was briefed on the application process from July to September 2022. Deferring the April 2023 submission allowed time for the formation of WGs (March 2023, Figure 1.3.1) and the establishment of a comprehensive Microsoft Teams channel (April 2023) with application requirements, information, data, and navigation guides. The first hybrid SAT meeting occurred in June 2023, with monthly meetings thereafter. Members were assigned to WGs in consultation with the UCC AS project officer and allocated application sections based on their roles, expertise, and interests. A core AP review and management team monitored BAP and SAP actions.



Figure 1.3.1: FNS self-assessment working groups.

**TABLE 1.3.1: OVERVIEW OF FNS SAT MEMBERS AND THEIR ROLE ON SAT. (INC., MEMBERSHIP OF RELEVANT FNS/UCC COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS)**

Name and Position in FNS	Identifying Gender	Position on SAT/Working Groups	Primary Application Contribution	Photo
<b>Dr Therese Uniacke-Lowe</b> Chief Technical Officer FNS OEEC; UCC TO's Section; SEFS College Council; SEFS EDI (Deputy Chair); UCC Future of Work WG; UCC ASSG WG2	Female	SAT (Chair) WGs 1 and 5 AS Actions Review & Planning Team	Section 1.2a (i) Section 1.3 (a) & (b) Section 2.5a (i) & (ii) Section 2.5b (i) & (ii) Section 3.1b (i) & (ii)	
<b>Leah Neville</b> School Manager FNS SMT; FNS OEEC; FNS Teaching & Learning; SEFS External Engagement; SEFS College Council	Female	SAT (Deputy Chair) WG's 1 and 5 (Co-Lead) AS Actions Review & Planning Team	Section 1.2a (ii) Section 2.1 (f)-(h) Section 2.2g Section 2.5a (i) & (ii) Section 3.1 (iii) Section 3.2a (i) to (iv) Section 3.2b (i) to (iii)	
<b>Prof Alan Kelly</b> Head of School Vice-Head SEFS; FNS SMT; FNS Research & Innovation; Teaching & Learning; SEFS Executive Management & College Council; UCC Academic Council	Male	WG 5 (Co-Lead) AS Actions Review & Planning Team	Section 1.2a (iii) to (vi) Section 2.2g Section 2.5a (i) & (ii) Section 3.1b (iii) Section 3.2a (i) to (iv) Section 3.2b (i) to (iii)	
<b>Anne Cahalane</b> Senior Executive Assistant FNS Teaching & Learning; FNS Graduate Studies; FNS Health & Safety; SEFS Academic Programs & Curriculum Development; SEFS College Council	Female	WG 1	Section 2.1b (i) to (iii) Section 2.1c (i) to (iii) Section 2.1d (i) to (iii)	
<b>Dr Maurice O'Sullivan</b> Senior Lecturer (Food Science) FNS Teaching & Learning; UCC Social Research Ethics; UCC China WG; UCC Assoc. of SE Asian Nations; SEFS College Council	Male	WG 1	Section 2.1a (i) to (iv)	
<b>Dr Amy-Jane Troy</b> Manager - FITU FNS School Management Team; FITU Business Advisory Board	Female	WG 1	Section 1.2a (vii) Section 2.1a (iv) Section 2.1e FITU data and contextual information	
<b>Dr Áine Hennessy</b> Lecturer (Nutritional Sciences) FNS OEEC (Chair); SEFS External Engagement; SEFS College Council	Female	WG 2 (Lead)	Section 2.2b	
<b>Dr Tom O'Callaghan</b> Senior Lecturer (Food Science) FNS Research & Innovation; FNS Graduate Studies; UCC Agri Science Board of Studies; SEFS College Council	Male	WG 2 (Co-Lead)	Section 2.2d	
<b>Prof Mairead Kiely*</b> Professor (Human Nutrition) SEFS College Council; UCC Strategy, Research & Innovation; UCC Healthy Campus (Chair: Healthy Eating & Physical Activity Subgroup)	Female	WG 2 & WG 5 AS Actions Review & Planning Team	Section 3.1b (ii)	



<b>Dr Alice Lucey</b> Lecturer (Nutritional Sciences) FNS Health & Safety; FNS Research & Innovation; FNS Student Experience; FNS Teaching & Learning; UCC Mitigation; UCC Patient-focused Research Quality	Female	WG 2 & WG 4	Section 2.2e (i) to (iii) Section 2.4a (iii)	
<b>Prof Seamus O'Mahony</b> Professor (Food Science) FNS SMT; FNS Research & Innovation; FNS Teaching & Learning; FITU Advisory Board; UCC Academic Board for Food Marketing & Entrepreneurship	Male	WG 2	Section 2.2f (i) & (ii)	
<b>Dr Aylin Sahin</b> Lecturer (Sustainable Food Systems) FNS Research & Innovation; SEFS College Council	Female	WG 2	Section 2.2e (i) to (iii)	
<b>Dr Eileen Ryan</b> Lecturer (Nutritional Sciences) SEFS College Council	Female	WG 2	Section 2.2f (i)	
<b>Raghunath Pariyan</b> Postdoctoral Researcher	Male	WG 2	Section 2.2f (i) to (ii)	
<b>Dr Karen Galvin</b> Senior Technical Officer FNS Health & Safety (Chair)	Female	WG 3 (Lead) WG 5	Section 2.3b	
<b>David Waldron</b> Chief Technical Officer (Managerial) FNS OEEC; FNS Research & Innovation; FNS Space & Infrastructure WG; UCC Laboratory Chemical Steering Group; UCC Technical Network WG	Male	WG 3 (Co-Lead) AS Actions Review & Planning Team	Section 2.2g Section 2.3c Section 2.3d (iii) Section 2.5a (i) & (ii)	
<b>Dr Yvonne O'Callaghan</b> Technical Officer	Female	WG 3	Section 2.3d (i) & (ii)	
<b>Dr Michael O'Grady</b> Senior Technical Officer	Male	WG 3	Section 2.3e	
<b>Dr Jillian Brown</b> Technical Officer	Female	WG 4 (Lead) AS Actions Review & Planning Team	Section 2.4c (iii); 2.5a (i) & (ii) Student semi-structured round table discussions Collation of staff focus groups & student survey reports	

<b>Dr Malco Cruz Romero</b> Technical Officer	Male	WG 4 (Co-Lead)	Section 2.4c (i), (ii) & (iii)	
<b>Dr Laura Nyhan</b> Postdoctoral Researcher	Female	WG 4	Section 2.4c (v)	
<b>Dr Shane Crowley</b> Lecturer (Food Science) FNS Teaching & Learning; FNS Student Experience; SEFS College Council	Male	WG 4	Section 2.4a (iii) Section 2.4b	
<b>Nicholas Malterre</b> PhD Student FS Co-Chair of FNS Postgraduate Research Committee	Male	WG 4	Section 2.4c (i)	
<b>Aidan O'Sullivan</b> PhD Student NS Co-Chair of FNS Postgraduate Research Committee	Male	WG 4	Section 2.4c (ii)	
<b>Sean Morrissey</b> UG student, 4th year FS	Male	WG 4	Section 2.4c (ii)	
<b>Mestawet Taye Asfaw</b> Senior Postdoctoral Researcher (Marie Curie Fellow)	Female	WG 4	Section 2.4c (iv) & (v)	
<b>Ciara Tobin</b> Executive Assistant	Female	WG 1 & WG 5	Section 2.1e Section 2.4 a (i & ii) Co-creator AS posters and banners, application organograms, tables, figures & schematics Website and social media communications	

\*On research sabbatical leave January, 2024 to June, 2024

**1.3a (ii) information on how the chair was appointed and on what supports or resources the institution and/or department has given the chair to lead the self-assessment process;**

The original Bronze Award SAT Chair led the FNS EDI committee starting June 2020, with the new SM as Deputy Chair from January 2022. Continuity of AS leadership provided stability for FNS' EDI agenda during the pandemic [Section 3.1b (ii)] and staffing changes [Section 2.1 (ii)].

The UCC EDI unit, SEFS EDI committee, and UCC ASSG supported the self-assessment process. A part-time AS administrative assistant was employed from January to April 2023.

The SAT Chair had 20% of duties relieved during the self-assessment and was fully seconded to the application during the final write-up. The application was reviewed by SEFS EDI committee (#5), external reviewers from Reading University and UCD, and the SAT and SMT. Key findings and actions were presented to staff, and their feedback was incorporated. The application also benefited from additional resources from an external graphic designer and UCC Academy consultancy.

**1.3a (iii) comment on whether the self-assessment team is representative of the department, including if there is adequate representation of senior staff.**

The SAT represents the diversity of FNS staff and students in terms of gender, ethnicity, age, experience and seniority (Table 1.3.1), notably:

- Gender distribution: 56%F, 44%M (**BAP 3.1.1**).
- Academic, technical and administrative staff representation, including 7 (3F, 4M) members of senior FNS PMS and academic staff.
- Presence of two PDRs (1F, 1M) , one SPDR (F) and three students (2 PGs, 1 UG).
- Representation of all FNS committees. Several members hold positions on relevant UCC/SEFS/FNS committees or working groups.
- Nine SAT members having been on the 2019 Bronze AS award FNS SAT.

b. Outline the process of self-assessment undertaken in preparation for this application. This section should include:

**1.3b (i) an overview of the approach taken to evidence-gathering and analysis. Details of consultation response rates, disaggregated by gender, should be provided;**

An approach blending qualitative and quantitative data was used, with data sources for evidence gathering and analysis detailed in Table 1.3.2.

**TABLE 1.3.2: QUALITATIVE & QUANTITATIVE DATA SOURCES USED FOR EVIDENCE-GATHERING AND ANALYSIS**

Data Source	Date	Data Type	#Participants	#F	#M
UCC Datahub*	Apr, 2022	Quantitative: staff & student headcounts	n/a	n/a	n/a
EDI Unit/Data Warehouse; FNS Local Recorded Data	Jan, 2023	Quantitative: Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research	n/a	n/a	n/a
UCC Values & Culture/EDI Survey	Mar, 2022	Quantitative & Qualitative	33	23	10
Staff Focus Groups (x2)**	Jun, 2023	Qualitative	Group 1: #6 Group 2: #7	3F 4F	3M 3M
UG Semi-Structured Roundtable Discussions	Dec, 2023	Qualitative	7	5	2
PG Semi-Structured Roundtable Discussions	Feb, 2023	Qualitative	14	8	6
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	Jun, 2023	Quantitative Benchmarking Data	n/a	n/a	n/a
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), UK	Jun, 2023	Quantitative Benchmarking Data	n/a	n/a	n/a
Human Resources Information System (HRIS)	Dec, 2022	Quantitative: recruitment & promotions; uptake of courses; PDRS	n/a	n/a	n/a
1st Years (FS) Student Survey	Nov, 2023	Quantitative & Qualitative	31	n/a	n/a
TY Week Student Survey	Apr, 2023	Quantitative & Qualitative	26	16 (62%)	10 (38%)

\*UCC Data Analytics and Business Intelligence. \*\*Facilitated and managed by Andrea Adams Consultancy; report not disaggregated by gender to protect the anonymity of participants

The phases of self-assessment are shown in Figure 1.2.1. Most data were collected and evaluated during Phase II, while Phase III focused on draft application preparation and review.

The Chair and Deputy Chair accessed relevant data from institutional systems (e.g., UCC Datahub, UCC Apply, DMIS, and HRIS). We integrated multiple data sources to enhance functionality and develop insights for this application. Where possible, we enriched core datasets from the EDI unit by merging up-to-date, locally held data, adding context for deeper analysis of the evolving FNS landscape over the last 5 years. A SEA reconciled all student headcount data with local data. The EDI data analyst provided all HR data from HRIS, including additional 2023-2024 data to cover a rapidly evolving employee profile.

The biennial UCC Values & Culture/EDI 2022 survey was a key data source, featuring 101 questions graded on Likert scales, grouped into 18 themes, and including 8 open text questions.

In summary:

- UCC staff completion rate was 44% (#1497; 65%F, 33%M), with low response rates from research and technical staff.
- 33 FNS staff participated (56%; 23F, 10M). Overall numbers of participants are noted in tables by most of the items.
- Disaggregated by staff category survey participants (data compared to March 2022 Data Hub figures; Table 1.3.3) were 80% academic staff (#16, 8F, 8M), 50% of PMS staff (#12, 10F, 2M); and 33% of Research staff (#5, 5F, 0M).

FNS will work to build staff, particularly research staff, engagement with the survey, and work with the UCC EDI unit to promote and implement a biannual UCC-wide EDI student survey, which has to date had very low response rates (7% in 2021 & <1% in 2024) (**SAP 1.3.1**).

**TABLE 1.3.3:** NUMBER AND CATEGORY OF FNS STAFF PARTICIPANTS IN UCC VALUES AND CULTURE/ EDI SURVEY, MARCH 2022

Staff Category	UCC DataHub March 2022 FNS Headcount	#F	#M	#FNS Participants	#F	#M	% Response Rate	%F	%M
Academic	20	11	9	16	8	8	80	73	89
PMS	24	18	6	12	10	2	50	56	33
Research	15	9	6	5	5	0	33	56	0
Total	59	38	21	33	23	10	56	61	48

Survey data was reviewed by HoS, SAT Chair and Deputy Chair, and analysis by the SAT in March 2023 identified two key areas warranting in-depth analysis:

- ‘Culture and Belonging’
- ‘Post-Covid Working Environment’

Two 1-hour staff focus groups, organised by the UCC AS project officer, and facilitated by Andrea Adams Consultancy, were held in June 2023. Semi-structured round table discussions were held with groups of invited UGs (December 2023) and PGs (January 2024). Questions (#16), prepared by SAT members, focused on key themes, including:

- FNS working environment
- Organisation of events
- EDI awareness
- Reporting issues
- Impact of initiatives such as FNS Research Day and Seminar series.

Issues raised by UGs and PGs were collated (Figure 1.3.2) and informed this application.

### The FNS PG and UG Voice

Selection of standout comments & suggestions



**Figure 1.3.2:** Collation of standout comments and suggestions from UG and PG invited discussions.

### *Data limitations*

- Lower response rate from males; data inferences might not fully reflect subgroups.
- Self-selection bias: Respondents may have stronger opinions than non-respondents.
- Opinions captured at a specific point in time (end of pandemic, before staff return to onsite teaching); results may not reflect long-term trends or changes in staff sentiment.
- Benchmarking headcount data (staff and students) identified using HEA and HESA databases; these sources do not provide discipline-specific staff headcount statistics or disaggregated figures by staff grade. HEA student enrolment and gender balance data are only available under broad categories; some data sourced from category 0510 (Biological and Related Sciences).
- Benchmarking against similar programs in Ireland or the UK is challenging. In Ireland, only the University of Limerick's Dept. of Biological Sciences offers a BSc in Food Science and Health, but not separate degrees in FS and NS. UCD's School of Agriculture and Food Science offers degrees in both Food Science and Human Nutrition. UCD data, disaggregated by program, was limited to 2021-2022 and used for student data benchmarking. In the UK, the Universities of Leeds and Nottingham offer degrees in FS and NS, but their programs differ in focus and duration. The School of Chemistry, Food and Pharmacy at the University of Reading, which offers degrees in both Food Science and Nutritional Sciences, was the best comparator and provided 2023-2024 student and staff data.

### *Data presentation*

Most data in this application are tabulated or presented in figures using both %F and %M, ensuring a balanced representation of gender dynamics within FNS.

### **1.3b (ii) information on plans for evaluating progress, including action plan implementation, over the coming four-year period. This should make reference to how often the SAT will meet, and how SAT succession and turnover will be planned and managed;**

From January 2025 to January 2029, the WIDE committee will meet every two months to monitor and implement all SAP Actions and broader EDI work. A Gantt chart of SAP actions will be prepared and made available on the FNS website, highlighting timeframes (short, medium, long) and identifying action owners. An action management system, coordinated by the SM, will track progress of actions (**SAP 1.3.3**).

The WIDE committee will be co-chaired by the FNS HoS and SAT Chair, with the SM as Deputy Chair. Members serve for 2 years, with the option to serve another 2 years to stagger departures. Post-application, the WIDE committee will formalize a plan to manage SAT succession and turnover of committee members (**SAP 1.3.2**).



**1.3b (iii) information on how the findings and activity of the self-assessment team are, and will continue to be, communicated to senior management and the wider institution.**

FNS reporting structures (Figure 1.2.3) will ensure SAT activities and findings are communicated to senior management and the FNS community. Final AP and WIDE committee progress reports will be posted on the FNS website, with updates communicated regularly, including at School Assemblies. Progress reports will also be provided to SEFS EDI and UCC ASSG committees.

Progress and Impact of BAP Actions (2019-2024)		
BAP Action	Aim & Rationale	Progress & Impact
3.1.1	Achieve a gender balance of 50:50 on FNS WIDE committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WIDE is 56%F, 44% M and the SAT is 54%F, 46%M</li> </ul>
3.1.3	Report progress of AS AP to SMT monthly & to FNS staff biannually.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FNS governance and committees restructured in September 2023; WIDE committee, reports directly to HoS, and is standing item on SMT, Outreach &amp; External Engagement and Teaching &amp; Learning committees agendas</li> <li>AS AP updates are presented at School Assemblies, website and social media channels</li> </ul>
5.6.5	Review & improve gender balance across all FNS committees and committee Chairs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Success in balancing gender across all FNS core committees</li> <li>SMT and all committee Chairs are gender balanced (50%F, 50%M)</li> <li>SAT is 54%F, 46%M</li> <li>Committee membership is collated and managed by SM</li> </ul>
6.2	Formation of Wellbeing, Inclusion, Diversity and Equality committee (WIDE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FNS has significantly broadened its EDI agenda with the formation of the WIDE committee.</li> <li>FNS recognises that EDI has a fundamental role in supporting wellness of all staff and students; improving wellness improves job satisfaction and productivity</li> <li>FNS EDI and wellbeing strategies synchronised and fundamentally connected, including an intersectionality framework.</li> </ul>

Silver Action Plan (2024-2028)	
SAP 1.3.1	Build staff engagement, especially research staff, with biannual UCC EDI Survey and work with UCC/EDI Unit to promote and implement a UCC-wide student EDI survey attempts at which, to date, have had exceptionally low response rate.
SAP 1.3.2	Create reporting templates to track progress of AS actions; design and implement with action owners responsible to complete prior to WIDE committee meetings, as requested.
SAP 1.3.3	Unprecedented staff changes in FNS; for continuity of AS/EDI activities involvement of new team members is crucial; WIDE committee will formalise the management of WIDE/SAT succession and turnover.

**Section 2: An assessment of the department’s gender equality context and, where relevant, wider equality context**

In Section 2, applicants should evidence how they meet Criterion B:

- + Evidence-based recognition of the issues and opportunities facing the applicant

Recommended word count: 8,000 words

**2.1 Overview of the department and its context**

- a. Provide a brief introduction to the department, including any relevant contextual information. This section should include information on:

**2.1a (i) teaching and research focus, including discipline coverage and any areas of specialism;**

Originally the Faculty of Dairy Science (established 1926), FNS is the home of food science disciplines in UCC, renowned for research and research-led teaching in Nutritional Sciences (NS) and Food Science and Technology (FS) (Figure 2.1.1). The School is based in the College of Science, Engineering and Food Science (SEFS) (Figure 2.1.2.), of which HoS (Prof. Alan Kelly) is Vice-Head.

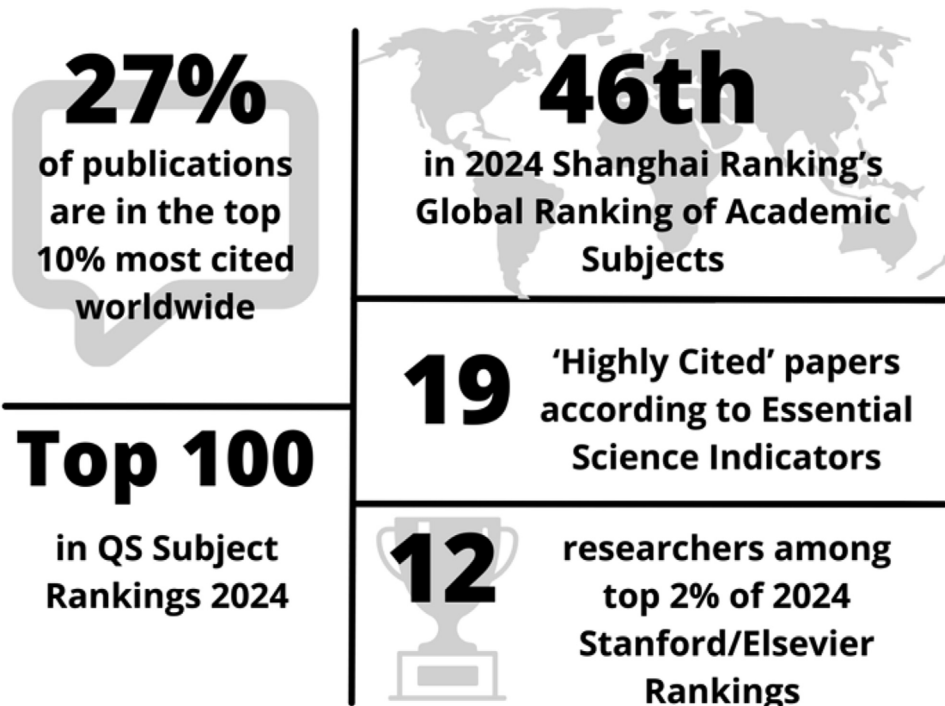
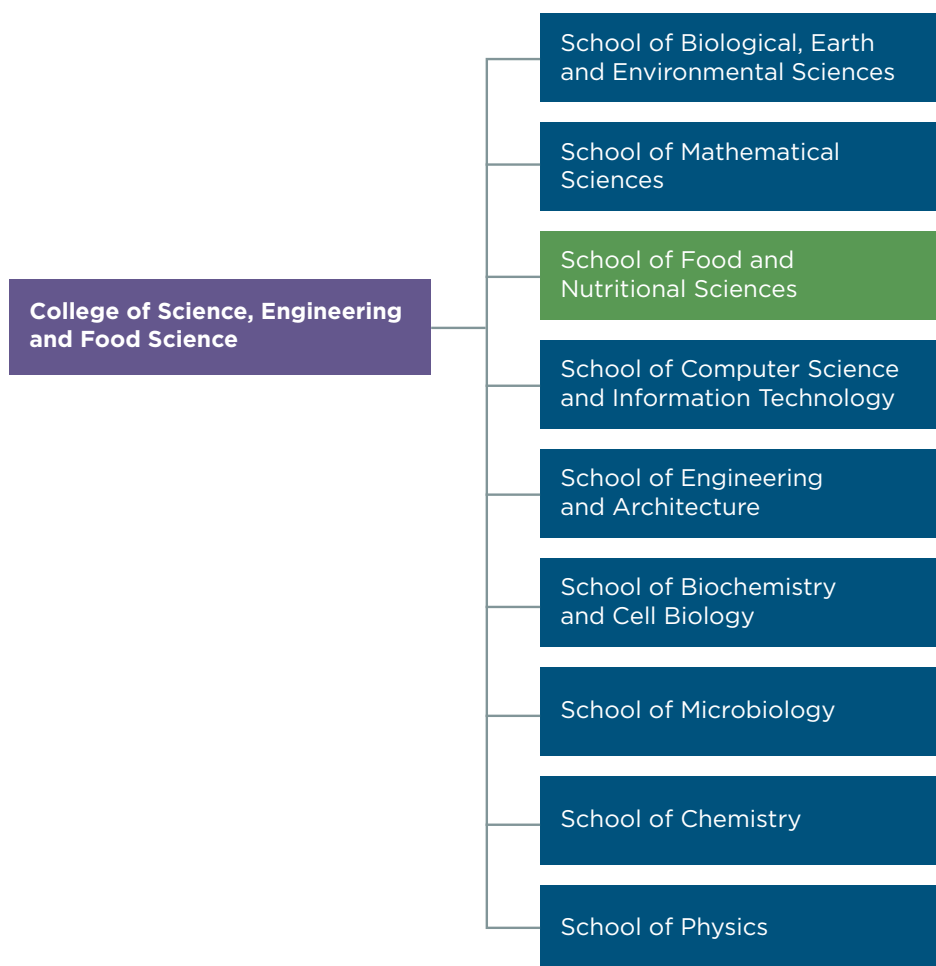


Figure 2.1.1: Recent research accolades for FNS (November, 2024)





**Figure 2.1.2: Academic units within the College of Science, Engineering and Food Science, UCC**

### Teaching

Table 2.1.1 (a) lists UG and PG programmes available at FNS. Through the Food Industry Training Unit (FITU), FNS offers a new part-time workplace-based Masters, part of a stackable qualification in Dairy Technology and Innovation.

**TABLE 2.1.1 (a): UNDERGRADUATE AND POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES OFFERED BY FNS**

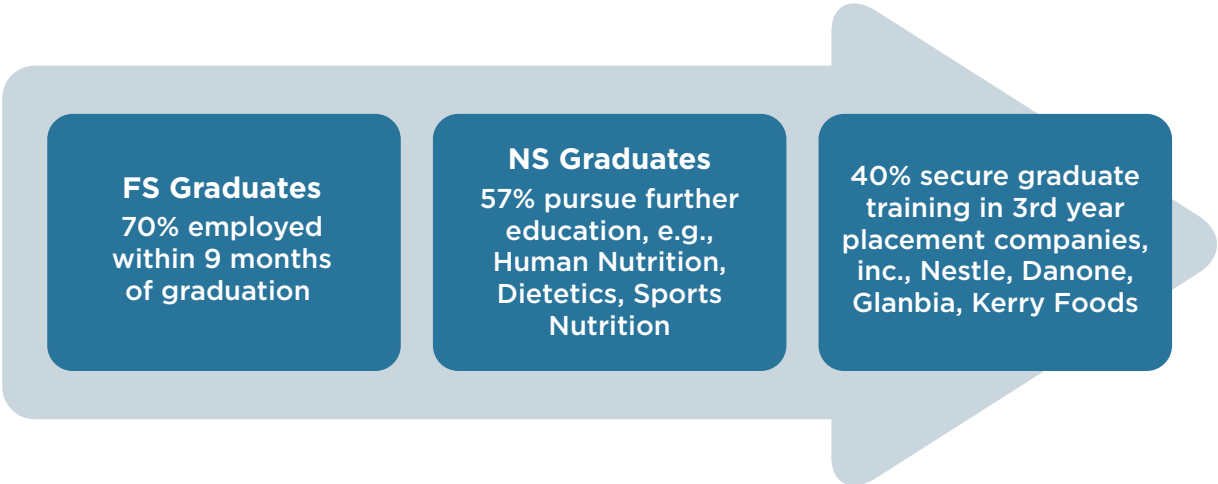
Programme Name	Programme Type
<b>BSc Food Science and Technology (Hons)</b>	Undergraduate Taught
<b>BSc Food Science and Technology (Ord)</b>	Undergraduate Taught
<b>BSc Nutritional Sciences</b>	Undergraduate Taught
<b>BSc Food Science</b>	Undergraduate Taught
<b>Diploma in Food Studies</b>	Undergraduate Taught
<b>MSc Food Science Taught</b>	Postgraduate Taught
<b>Postgraduate Certificate in Dairy Technology and Innovation</b>	Postgraduate Taught
<b>Postgraduate Diploma in Dairy Technology and Innovation</b>	Postgraduate Taught
<b>Postgraduate Diploma in Nutritional Sciences*</b>	Postgraduate Taught
<b>MSc in Human Nutrition and Dietetics**</b>	Postgraduate Taught
<b>MSc Food Science Research</b>	Postgraduate Research
<b>Masters in Dairy Technology &amp; Innovation***</b>	Postgraduate Research
<b>PhD</b>	Postgraduate Research

\*Programme discontinued from 2023-2024

\*\*New programme introduced 2020-2021

\*\*\*New programme introduced 2023-2024 (stackable – Postgraduate Certificate in Dairy Technology and Innovation; Postgraduate Diploma in Dairy Technology and Innovation; Masters in Dairy Technology and Innovation)

Both UG degrees are 4-year programmes with a 5-month industry placement in 3rd year, providing valuable experience in food companies. Our employment outcomes are among the best at UCC (Figure 2.1.3.):



**Figure 2.1.3: FNS graduate outcomes. Source: UCC Graduate Outcome Survey, 2022**

In 2018, the BSc Food Science and Technology (International) was introduced in collaboration with Beijing Technology and Business University (BTBU). BTBU students spend 1, 2 or 3 years at BTBU and complete their studies in UCC (Table 2.1.1b).

**TABLE 2.1.1 (b): FNS INTERNATIONAL DEGREE PROGRAMMES**

International student programmes	UCC Award	BTBU Award
2+2 (BTBU*)	BSc Hons in Food Science and Technology (Level 8)	BSc Hons
1+2+1 (BTBU)	BSc Ord in Food Science and Technology (Level 7)	BSc Hons
3+1 (BTBU and other international institutions)	Diploma in Food Studies (Level 7)	BSc Hons

\*Beijing Technology and Business University

FNS has 455 international students (355 UG, 100 PG), reflecting high demand for our graduate programs. Our research and teaching cover meat, cereal and beverage science, packaging, food analysis, ingredient development, formulation, and food structure. FNS excels in nutrition and dietetics, with expertise in cancer nutrition, vitamin D, iron research, and infant nutrition.

*Specialist training and education*

FITU supports industry lifelong learning, reaching participants from 40+ countries via online courses and webinars (Foodline UCC, Section 2.1e). From 2019-2024, it trained 650 participants in accredited programmes and 2,500+ on short courses, collaborating with agencies such as Taste 4 Success Skillnet and the Department of Agriculture, which funds bursaries for the Diploma in Specialty and Artisanal Food Enterprises (Table 2.1.2).

**TABLE 2.1.2:** ADDITIONAL POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES OFFERED BY FITU

Programme Name	Programme Duration & Delivery
Diploma in Food Manufacturing Management	1 year, part-time, blended (online, workplace & classroom)
Diploma in Food Science & Technology	2 year, part-time, blended (online & classroom)
Diploma in Corporate Direction (Food Business)	1 year, part-time, blended (online workshops & classroom)
Diploma in Leadership for the Agri-Food Sector*	1 year, part-time, blended (online workshops & classroom)
Diploma in Speciality Food Production**	1 year, part-time, blended (online & classroom)

\*Discontinued in 2022 and replaced with a series of short blended courses  
\*\*Replaced by Diploma in Speciality and Artisan Food Enterprises for September, 2024

FITU and Taste4Success Skillnet were finalists in the Learning and Development Institute’s Excellence in Learning Awards for the new stackable program option in Dairy Science & Technology (section 2.1e).

*Research*

FNS leads locally and globally in food innovation, earning international recognition for research excellence and producing graduates skilled in cutting-edge research. In 2022, UCC launched UCC Futures – a transformational interdisciplinary research strategy responding to global challenges – of which our HoS is Co-Director. FNS is a core UCC Futures unit, collaborating with other research centres (e.g. APC Microbiome) to address global food, nutrition, and health challenges. In 2023-2024, FNS recruited six academics (3F, 3M) through UCC Futures, specialising in sustainability, economic growth, and social equality.

FNS is a major partner in the *Dairy Processing Technology Centre* (DPTC) and *Meat Technology Ireland* (MTI). Our researchers collaborate with food companies nationally and globally, shaping policies on nutrition and diet.

**2.1a (ii) the total number of staff by gender and category of post;**

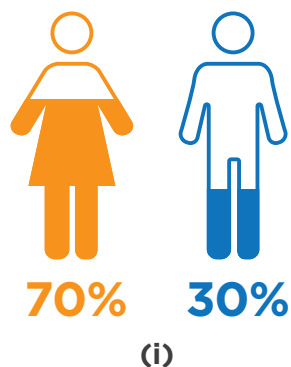
FNS employs 60 staff – 70%F, 30%M (42F, 18M) – in academic, technical and professional roles (Table 2.1.3).

**TABLE 2.1.3:** TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF BY GENDER AND CATEGORY OF POST (JULY, 2024)

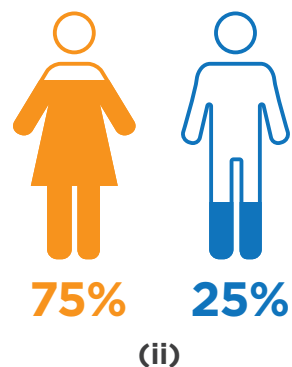
Staff Category	Female	Male	%F	%M	Total
Academic	14	9	62	38	23
Research	11	4	71	29	15
Professional, Managerial, Support Staff	17	5	77	23	22
Total	42	18	70	30	60

Staff gender balance aligns with benchmark (5-percentage point deviation) (Figure 2.1.4).

**FNS All Staff by Gender  
(2023-2024)**



**SCFP All Staff by Gender  
(2023-2024)**



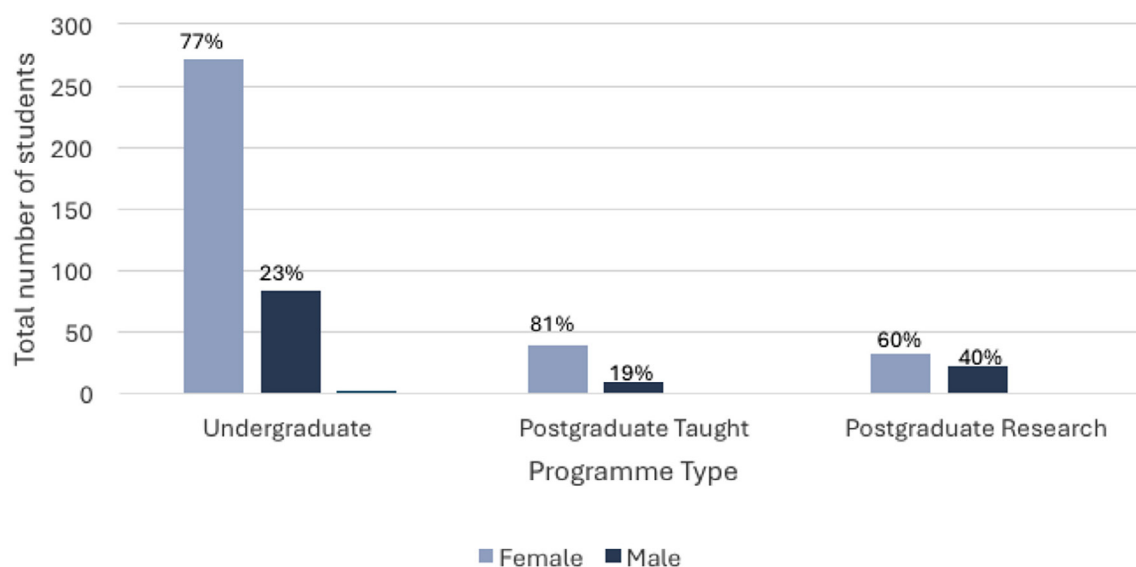
**Figure 2.1.4: Benchmarking -gender balance (all staff: academic, research, PMS) - School of Chemistry, Food and Pharmacy (SCFP) at the University of Reading (2023-2024)**

**2.1a (iii) the total number of students by programme type and gender;**

**TABLE 2.1.4: TOTAL NUMBERS OF STUDENTS BY DEGREE PROGRAMME AND GENDER**

	2019-2020				2020-2021				2021-2022				2022-2023				2023-2024			
Programme Type	M	%M	F	%F	M	%M	F	%F	M	%M	F	%F	M	%M	F	%F	M	%M	F	%F
Undergraduate	80	23	262	77	97	27	266	73	82	22	283	78	79	22	282	78	83	23	272	77
Postgraduate Taught	4	31	9	69	8	27	22	73	9	23	30	77	8	20	33	80	9	19	38	81
Postgraduate Research	15	27	40	73	27	41	39	59	30	39	47	61	23	37	40	63	21	40	32	60
<b>Total %</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>75</b>

UG and PGT students are mostly female (UG: 272F, 83M; PGT: 38F, 9M), while PGR gender split is more balanced (32F, 21M) (Figure 2.1.5).



**Figure 2.1.5: Proportion of students by programme type and gender (2023-2024)**

Figure 2.1.6 compares 2024 UG, PG data with 2019 AS Bronze self-assessment data, with trends observed in Figure 2.1.7.

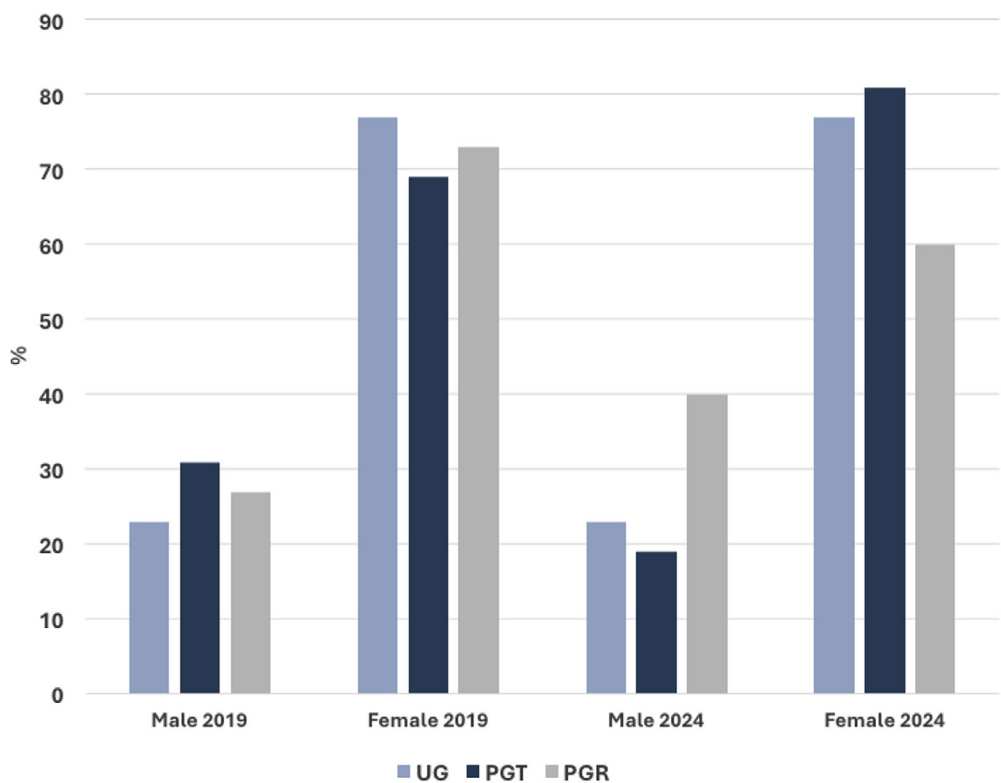


Figure 2.1.6: Comparative data for percentage of students by programme type and gender (2019 and 2024)

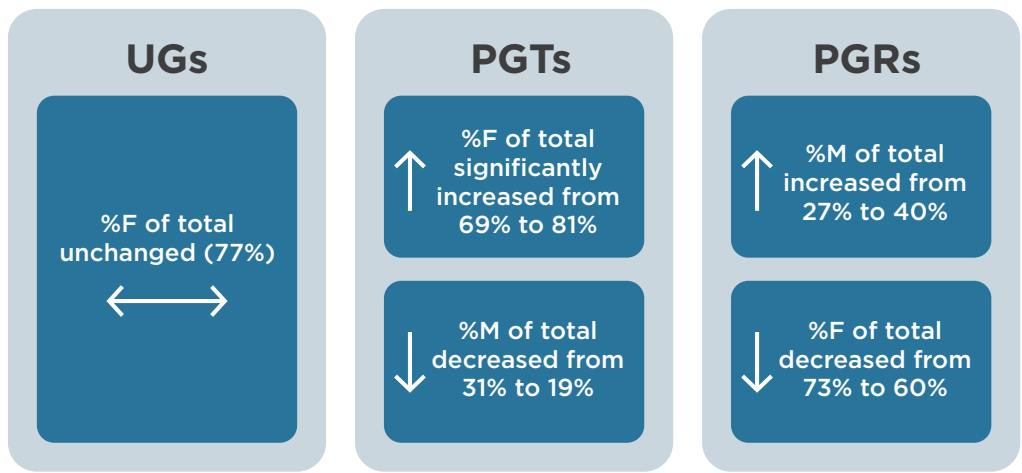
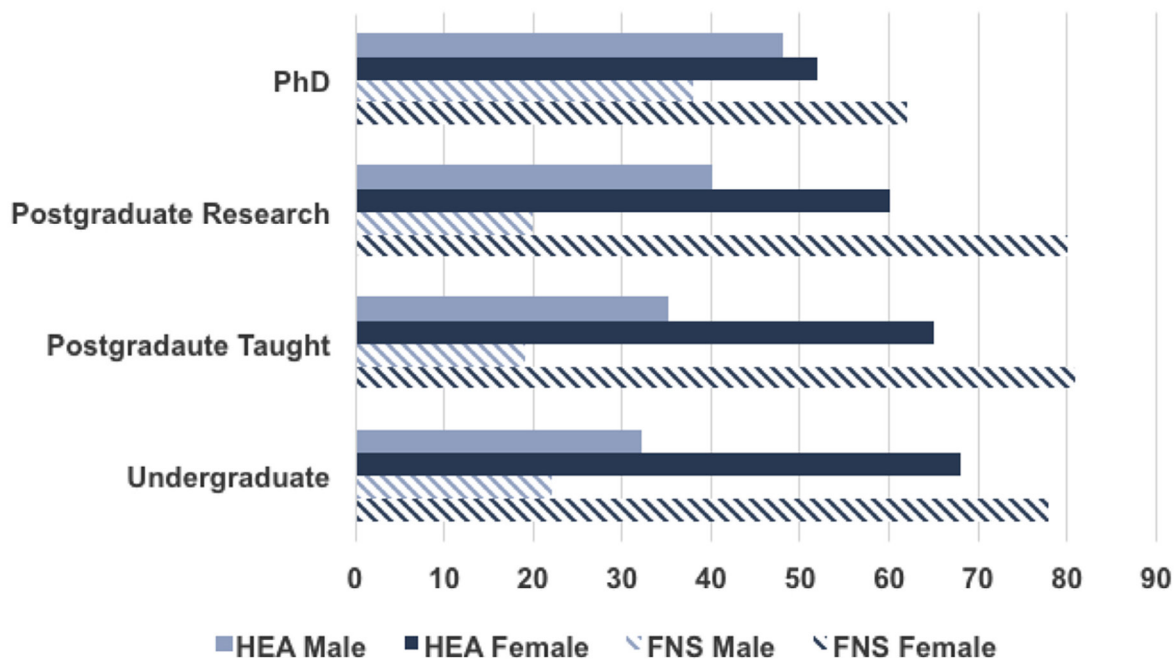


Figure 2.1.7: Comparative trends in UG and PG gender distributions for 2019 and 2023/24

FNS %F students exceeds national benchmark (Figure 2.1.8). Benchmarking against disaggregated PGR data (MSc vs PhD) shows:

- 20%M FNS MSc students v. 40% benchmark;
- 38%M FNS PhDs v. 48% nationally.



**Figure 2.1.8: Benchmarked FNS student enrolment data (%) against HEA data (2022-2023) \* Data for Biological and Related Sciences Not Further Defined (0510); Irish non-technical universities selected.**

FITU programme data (Table 2.1.5) reveals positive trends:

- Female students on the Dip. Food Manufacturing Management increased (from 17% to 47%).
- Improved gender balance of the Dip. Speciality Food Production (from 86%F, 14%M to 53%M, 47%F).
- A well-balanced gender split at PG Cert level (46%M, 54%F).

**TABLE 2.1.5: TOTAL NUMBERS OF STUDENTS BY FITU PROGRAMME\* AND GENDER**

	2019-2020				2020-2021				2021-2022				2022-2023				2023-2024			
Programme Type	M	%M	F	%F	M	%M	F	%F	M	%M	F	%F	M	%M	F	%F	M	%M	F	%F
PG Certificate in Dairy Technology & Innovation	11	52	10	48	11	69	5	31	6	43	8	57	4	36	7	64	6	46	7	54
PG Diploma in Dairy Technology & Innovation	n/a		n/a		n/a		n/a		n/a		n/a		1	50	1	50	1	20	4	80
Masters in Dairy Technology & Innovation**	n/a		n/a		n/a		n/a		n/a		n/a		n/a		n/a		1	100	0	0
Diploma in Food Manufacturing Management	19	83	4	17	13	65	7	35	13	65	7	35	13	76	4	24	9	53	8	47
Diploma in Food Science & Technology	16	48	17	52	20	53	18	47	20	66	10	33	14	58	10	42	15	48	16	52
Diploma in Speciality Food Production	2	14	12	86	5	38	8	62	0	0	14	100	5	45	6	55	9	53	8	47
Diploma in Leadership for the Agri-Food Sector***	n/a		n/a		7	50	7	50	7	78	2	22	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>58</b>

\*On-line and face-to-face teaching for fulltime employed.

\*\*New programme (2023-2024) (stackable – Postgraduate Certificate in Dairy Technology and Innovation; Postgraduate Diploma in Dairy Technology and Innovation; Masters in Dairy Technology and Innovation). Workplace based.

\*\*\*Programme discontinued (2022).

### 2.1a (iv) information on location/s;

Located on UCC's main campus, FNS' advanced teaching and research facilities include the Processing Hall, Packaging Lab, Clinical Assessment Room, and Culinary Innovation Zone (Figure 2.1.9 a-c). Upgraded state-of-the-art laboratories highlight FNS's commitment to research-led teaching.



(a)



(b)



(c)

**Figure 2.1.9: Specialised spaces in FNS (a) packaging hall; (b) clinical assessment room; (c) culinary innovation and teaching zone**

Significant investments have created adaptable spaces to meet evolving educational and research needs, ensuring sustainability. A Space Management Committee (currently a WG) will oversee optimal space use (SAP 2.1.1).

### b. Analyse three years of data on undergraduate students by:

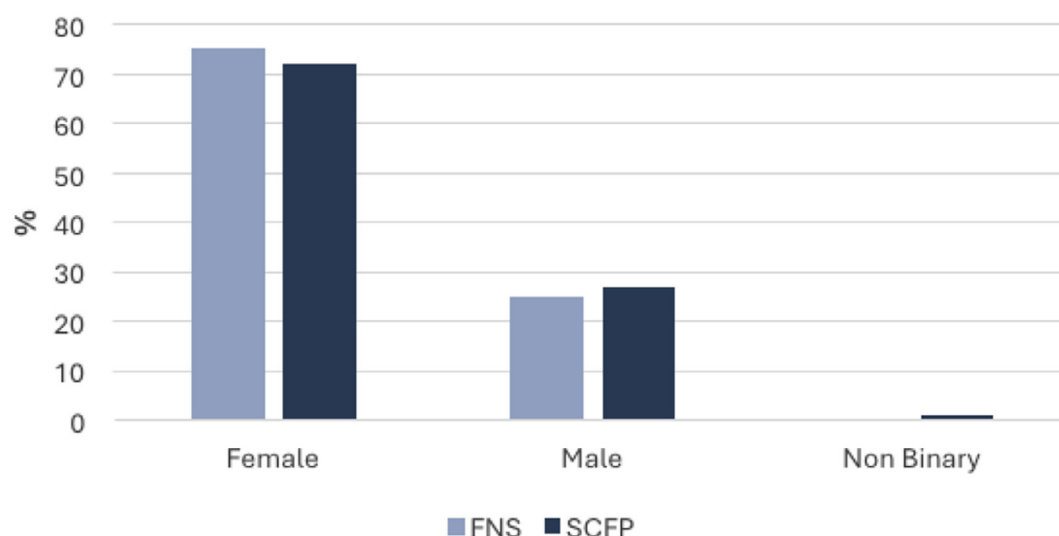
#### 2.1b (i) gender and degree programme, with reference to discipline-specific benchmark data;

UG data shows females predominate (Table 2.1.6) with little change since 2019. BSc NS is over 80%F; UG FS programmes are around 68%F.

**TABLE 2.1.6: GENDER BREAKDOWN BY UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMME (2019-2024)**

Year	Staff Category	Female	Male	%F	%M	Total
2019-2020	BSc Food Science	100	50	67	33	150
	BSc Nutritional Sciences	137	28	83	17	165
	BSc (Hons) Food Science and Technology	19	11	63	37	30
	BSc (Ord) Food Science and Technology	5	1	83	17	6
	Diploma in Food Studies	1	0	100	0	1
		<b>262</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>352</b>
2020-2021	BSc Food Science	99	46	68	32	145
	BSc Nutritional Sciences	139	33	81	19	172
	BSc (Hons) Food Science and Technology	25	15	63	38	40
	BSc (Ord) Food Science and Technology	2	3	40	60	5
	Diploma in Food Studies	1	0	100	0	1
		<b>267</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>364</b>
2021-2022	BSc Food Science	107	39	73	27	146
	BSc Nutritional Sciences	144	25	85	15	169
	BSc (Hons) Food Science and Technology	28	15	65	35	43
	BSc (Ord) Food Science and Technology	4	3	57	43	7
	Diploma in Food Studies	0	0	0	0	0
		<b>283</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>365</b>
2022-2023	BSc Food Science	107	46	70	30	153
	BSc Nutritional Sciences	146	21	87	13	167
	BSc (Hons) Food Science and Technology	24	7	77	23	31
	BSc (Ord) Food Science and Technology	4	2	67	33	6
	Diploma in Food Studies	1	0	100	0	1
		<b>282</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>358</b>
2023-2024	BSc Food Science	100	47	68	32	147
	BSc Nutritional Sciences	146	21	87	13	167
	BSc (Hons) Food Science and Technology	23	14	62	38	37
	BSc (Ord) Food Science and Technology	2	0	100	0	2
	Diploma in Food Studies	1	1	50	50	2
		<b>272</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>355</b>

FNS gender balance aligns with benchmark (SCFP at Reading, Figure 2.1.10). Compared to UCD School of Agriculture and Food Science (SAFS) for the period 2021-2022; SAFS had 77%F, 23%M (#140F, #43M) in its FS programme and 88%F, 12%M (#144F, #25M) in its Human Nutrition programme. FNS has similar data over this period, with 73%F, 27%M (#107F, #39M) in FS and 85%F, 15%M (#144F, #25M) in NS.

**Figure 2.1.10: Comparative gender breakdown of UG students (2023-2024) for FNS vs SCFP**



FNS outreach efforts (Section 2.1e) significantly improved UG gender balance, particularly through targeted activities such as school visits. From 2018-2024 (Table 2.1.7), male FS enrolment increased from 20% to 42% (2023). NS male enrolment increased threefold, from 5% (2021-2022) to 14% (2023).

**TABLE 2.1.7:** GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF ENROLMENT DATA FOR 1ST YEAR STUDENTS IN FS AND NS PROGRAMMES (2018/2019 TO 2023/2024)

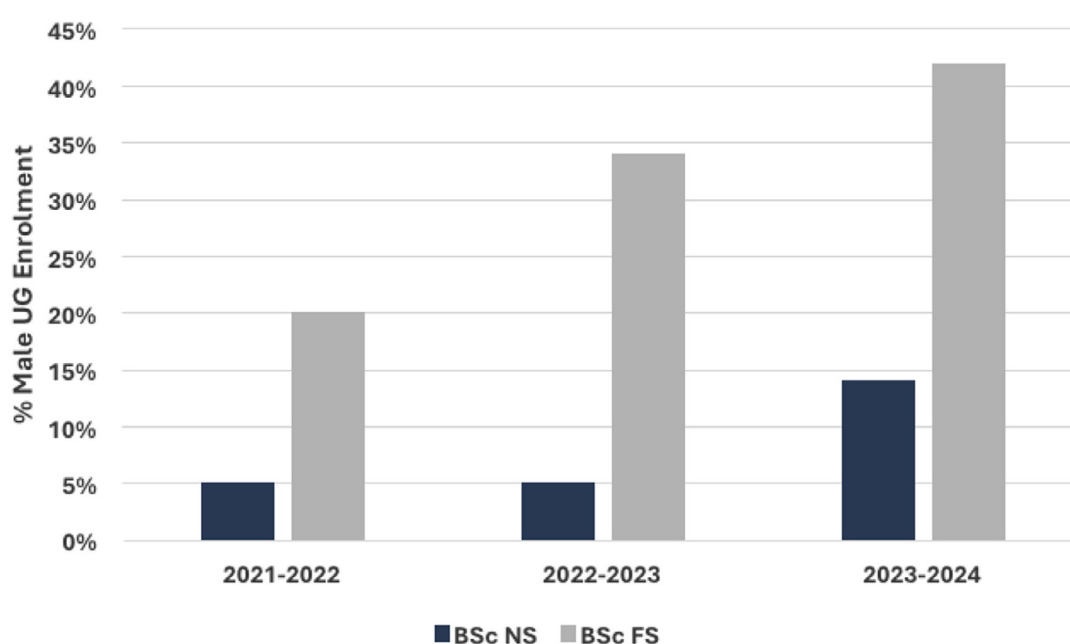
	2018-2019			2019-2020			2020-2021			2021-2022			2022-2023			2023-2024		
Programme	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
BSc (Hons) Food Science and Technology*	4 31%	9 69%	13	7 44%	9 54%	16	8 32%	17 68%	25	7 37%	12 63%	19	3 20%	12 80%	15	10 48%	11 52%	21
BSc (Ord) Food Science and Technology**	n/a	4 100%	4	1 50%	1 50%	2	2 67%	1 33%	3	1 25%	3 75%	4	1 33%	2 67%	3	n/a	n/a	0
BSc Nutritional Sciences	6 15%	33 85%	39	6 13%	39 87%	45	11 24%	35 76%	46	2 5%	41 95%	43	2 5%	38 95%	40	6 14%	37 86%	43
BSc Food Science	9 27%	24 73%	33	17 37%	29 63%	46	9 22%	31 78%	40	8 20%	33 80%	41	16 34%	31 66%	47	18 42%	25 58%	43
Diploma in Food Studies***	0	1 100%	1	0	1 100%	1	0	1 100%	1	0	0	n/a	0	1 100%	1	1 50%	1 50%	2

\*International students enter as 3rd year students.

\*\*International students enter as 2nd year students.

\*\*\*International students complete 1 year in FNS.

**BAP 4.1.1** aimed to increase male FS intake to 50% and NS to 25%. COVID-19 curtailed outreach, leading to revised targets (BAP Iteration 3, Figure 1.2.1). Since 2022, outreach intensified, focusing on secondary schools and achieving 42%M FS enrolment, nearing the 50% target (Figure 2.1.11). New modules in sustainable food systems highlight connections between food, sustainability, and innovation, broadening programme appeal and attracting a diverse student body.



**Figure 2.1.11:** Enrolment of 1st year male UGs (%) over 3-year reporting period

Discussions with UGs revealed the need for earlier School engagement, and we expanded our outreach to include TY students, with a new annual ‘TY Week’ programme (Section 2.1e). Providing clearer information about degree programmes and career opportunities remains a priority through outreach, promotional materials and on FNS website and social media (**SAP 2.1.2**).

BAP 4.1.1 aimed to increase CAO 1st preferences (particularly FS) and, while successful in 2024, this remains a challenge. FNS monitors CAO points and first-year UG CAO choices through annual surveys. 2023/24 survey data from 31 FNS respondents (gender unrecorded) shows:

- 32% (10) had FS as first preference
- 48% (15) as second
- 13% (4) as third
- 6% (2) as fourth

Following a CAO FS points drop (2022), FNS’s 2023 outreach achieved a 50% rise in 2024 first-year FS student first preferences (20 respondents), leading to the highest CAO points increase in SEFS (Table 2.1.8). Efforts will continue to boost first preferences, enhance FNS awareness via student involvement, online content, and community engagement, and attract underrepresented groups to degree programmes (**SAP 2.1.3**).

**TABLE 2.1.8:** CAO 1ST ROUND ENTRY POINTS FOR FS AND NS DEGREE PROGRAMMES (2021-2024)

Degree Programme	2021	2022	2023	2024
BSc Food Science	463	452	407	440
BSc Nutritional Sciences	555	532	511	531

**2.1b (ii) gender and degree attainment;**

- Low male numbers, except in BSc (Hons) Food Science, make it challenging to draw inferences about gender disparity in grade attainment (Table 2.1.9.)
- In BSc FS, females consistently outperform males, attaining more 1H1 degrees, while more males attain 2H1 or 2H2 degrees (Table 2.1.10.)

**TABLE 2.1.9: UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMMES ATTAINMENT BY GENDER AND REPORTING YEARS**

		2021				2022				2023			
	Degree Class	#F	#M	%F	%M	#F	#M	%F	%M	#F	#M	%F	%M
<b>BSc (Hons) Food Science and Technology</b>	1H1	1	0	12.5	0	1	1	6	12.5	1	0	8.3	0
	2H1	4	5	50	71	11	3	69	37.5	7	4	58.3	80
	2H2	3	2	37.5	29	4	4	25	50	4	1	33.3	20
	3H	0	0	n/a	0	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a
	<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>BSc (Ord) Food Science and Technology</b>	3H	0	0	n/a	n/a	1	2	100	100	0	0	n/a	n/a
	PASS	1	1	50	50	0	0	n/a	n/a	2	1	67	33
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>BSc Nutritional Sciences</b>	1H1	17	3	61	33	15	3	45	75	15	0	45	0
	2H1	10	5	36	56	18	1	55	25	18	4	55	100
	2H2	1	1	3	11	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a
	<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>BSc Food Science</b>	1H1	6	1	29	8.3	5	1	26	11	3	1	11	7
	2H1	11	7	52	58.3	14	8	74	89	20	11	74	79
	2H2	4	4	19	33.3	0	0	n/a	n/a	4	2	15	14
	<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Diploma in Food Studies</b>	1H1	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a
	2H1	0	1	0	100	0	0	n/a	n/a	1	0	100	0
	2H2	1	0	100	0	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>

Note: The BSc (Ord) Food Science and Technology is a level 7 degree with years 2 and 3 of the 4-year programme spent in UCC; grades cited in Table 2.1.9 are therefore from the end of the 2 years spent in FNS.

**TABLE 2.1.10: GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF UG OVERALL DEGREE CLASS FROM 2021 TO 2023**

		2021				2022				2023			
Degree Class		#F	#M	%F	%M	#F	#M	%F	%M	#F	#M	%F	%M
1H1		24	4	41	16	21	5	30.4	22	19	1	25	4
2H1		25	18	42	72	43	12	62.3	52	46	19	61	79
2H2		9	2	15	8	4	4	5.8	17	8	3	11	13
3H		0	0	n/a	n/a	1	2	1.4	9	0	0	n/a	n/a
PASS		1	1	2	4	0	0	n/a	n/a	2	1	3	4
<b>Total</b>		<b>59</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>24</b>

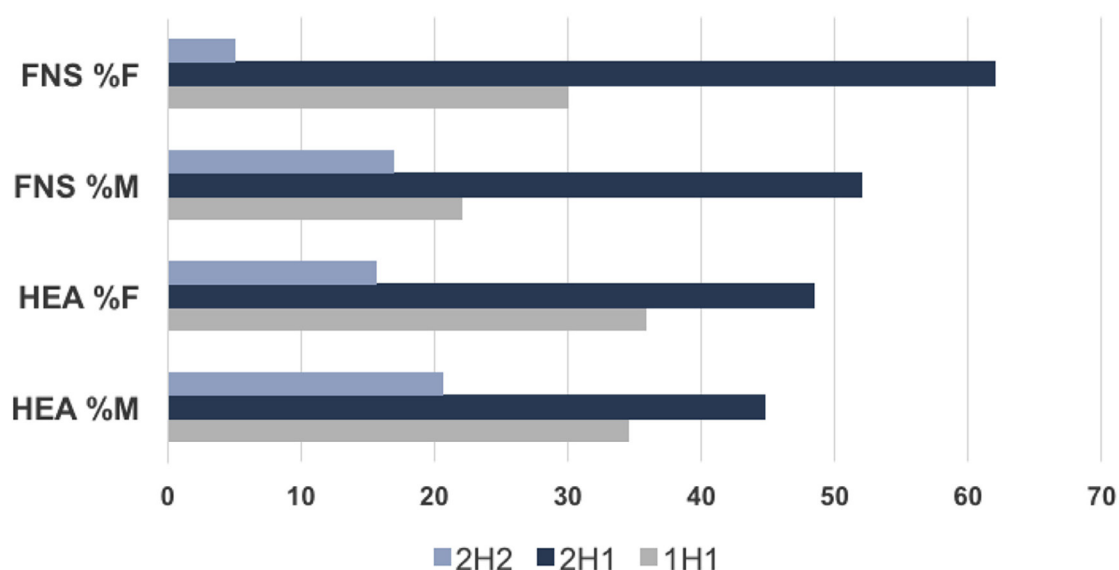
**BAP 4.1.2** addressed male underperformance. Annual gender monitoring now informs targeted supports for struggling students, including:

- Assigned academic advisors for guidance on coursework/ strategies.
- Additional tutorials on key topics.
- Encouragement to use UCC's Peer Support programme and Skills Centre.

In December 2023, feedback from 4th-year UGs (5F, 3M) showed no perceived gender performance gap, but both groups requested more continuous assessment and better exam preparation guidance.

2022 HEA benchmark data (Figure 2.1.12) reveals notable differences:

- 60% F in FNS attain 2H1, compared to <50% nationally
- %F in FNS with 1H1 is slightly below (30%) benchmark (35%)
- <10%F in FNS attain 2H2 vs >20%F nationally
- 52%M in FNS attain 2H1, above 44% benchmark (note: the percentage difference only represents 2 students)
- 17%M in FNS attain 2H2, just below 21%M nationally
- 22%M in FNS attain 1H1, equal to 22%M benchmark



**Figure 2.1.12: Gender Distribution of FNS UG Honours Degree Attainment (2022) benchmarked against HEA data (ISCED broad field of study *Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics*; detailed field of study: *Biological and Related Sciences Not further Defined or Elsewhere Classified (0510)*)**

### 2.1b (iii) gender and foundation courses.

FNS does not offer foundation courses.

### c. Analyse three years of data on postgraduate taught students by:

#### 2.1c (i) gender and degree programme, with reference to discipline-specific benchmark data;

FNS offers two Level 9 PGT programmes:

- MSc Food Science [MSc FS (1 year full-time or 2 years part-time course)]
- MSc Human Nutrition and Dietetics [MSc HND2 (2 year full-time course)].

Table 2.1.11 shows FNS PGT student gender distribution from 2019/20 to 2023/24. Female enrolment has increased significantly, from 65% in 2019 to 76% in 2022, partly due to the MSc HND programme, which enrolls 90% females.

PGT applications, managed through UCCApply, show high demand, particularly for MSc FS (Table 2.1.12), though many applicants don't meet eligibility criteria. Data for FS and NS programmes is recorded for internal reporting.

EU applicants dropped from 18% in 2021 to 6% in 2024. The MSc in FS now has almost exclusively non-EU applicants, with 87% of 2024-2025 applicants from India, compared to 53% in 2021, with others from Africa, South America, China, USA and Canada.

**TABLE 2.1.11: TOTAL NUMBERS AND GENDER BREAKDOWN OF FNS POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT PROGRAMMES**

Year		Female	Male	%F	%M	Total
2019-2020	MSc (Food Science)	7	3	70	30	10
	Postgraduate Diploma in Nutritional Sciences	2	1	67	33	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>13</b>
2020-2021	MSc (Food Science)	2	5	14	36	14
	Postgraduate Diploma in Nutritional Sciences	5	2	71	29	7
	MSc (Human Nutrition and Dietetics)	11	1	92	8	12
	<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>30</b>
2021-2022	MSc (Food Science)	6	6	50	50	12
	Postgraduate Diploma in Nutritional Sciences	3	0	100	0	3
	MSc (Human Nutrition and Dietetics)	21	3	88	12	24
	<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>39</b>
2022-2023	MSc (Food Science)	7	3	80	20	10
	Postgraduate Diploma in Nutritional Sciences*	3	2	60	40	5
	MSc (Human Nutrition and Dietetics)	23	3	88	12	26
	<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>41</b>
2023-2024	MSc (Food Science)	11	6	65	35	17
	MSc (Human Nutrition and Dietetics)	27	3	90	10	30
	<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>132</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>170</b>

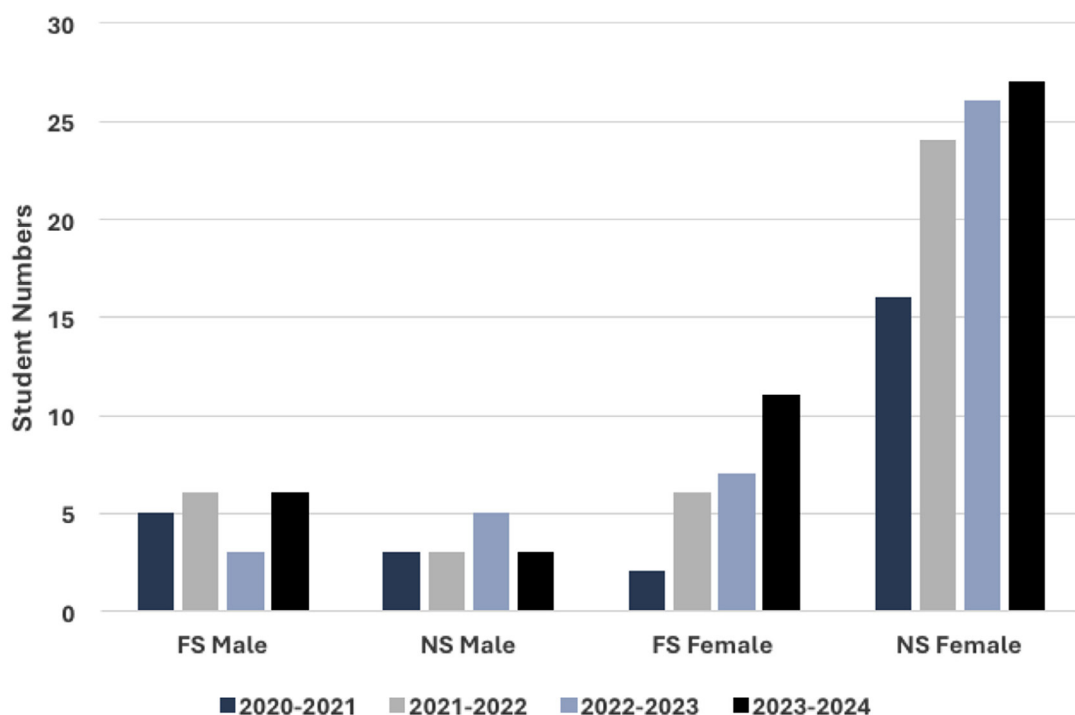
\*Programme discontinued for 2023-2024.

**Table 2.1.12:** APPLICATIONS AND ACCEPTANCES FOR THE TAUGHT MSc FOOD SCIENCE (FS) AND PG DIP NUTRITIONAL SCIENCES (NS) OVER THE LAST 3 ACADEMIC YEARS

	Total Number of Applications			Total Number of Offers			Net Number of Acceptances		
Year	EU*	Non-EU**	Total	EU*	Non-EU**	Total	EU*	Non-EU**	Total
<b>MSc FS</b>									
2021/22	18 (11F, 7M)	62 (37F, 25M)	<b>80</b> <b>(48F, 32M)</b>	5 (3F, 2M)	21 (12F, 9M)	<b>26</b> <b>(15F, 11M)</b>	2 (2F, 0M)	10 (4F, 6M)	<b>12</b> <b>(6F, 6M)</b>
2022/23	5 (3F, 2M)	70 (38F, 32M)	<b>75</b> <b>(41F, 34M)</b>	2 (2F, 0M)	24 (14F, 10M)	<b>26</b> <b>(16F, 10M)</b>	0	10 (7F, 2M)	<b>10</b> <b>(7F, 2M)</b>
2023/24	3 (3F, 0M)	90 (52F, 38M)	<b>93</b> <b>(55F, 38M)</b>	1 (1F, 0M)	31 (17F, 14M)	<b>32</b> <b>(18F, 14M)</b>	0	17 (11F, 6M)	<b>17</b> <b>(11F, 6M)</b>
2024/25	6 (3F, 3M)	120 (63F, 57M)	<b>126</b> <b>(66F, 60M)</b>	2 (2F, 0M)	18 (9F, 9M)	<b>20</b> <b>(11F, 9M)</b>	0	12 (6F, 6M)	<b>12</b> <b>(6F, 6M)</b>
<b>PG Dip NS***</b>									
2021/22	18 (15F, 3M)	8 (6F, 2M)	<b>26</b> <b>(21F, 5M)</b>	15 (13F, 2M)	3 (2F, 1M)	<b>18</b> <b>(15F, 3M)</b>	3 (3F, 0M)	0	<b>3</b> <b>(3F, 0M)</b>
2022/23	17 (14F, 3M)	7 (6F, 1M)	<b>24</b> <b>(20F, 4M)</b>	15 (13F, 2M)	4 (3F, 1M)	<b>19</b> <b>(16F, 3M)</b>	5 (3F, 2M)	0	<b>5</b> <b>(3F, 2M)</b>
<b>MSc HN &amp; Dietetics</b>									
2021/22	90 (76F, 14M)	0	<b>90</b> <b>(76F, 14M)</b>	14 (13F, 1M)	0	<b>14</b> <b>(13F, 1M)</b>	12 (11F, 1M)	0	<b>12</b> <b>(11F, 1M)</b>
2022/23	87 (77F, 10M)	1 (1F, 0M)	<b>88</b> <b>(78F, 10M)</b>	20 (18F, 2M)	0	<b>20</b> <b>(18F, 2M)</b>	14 (13F, 1M)	0	<b>14</b> <b>(13F, 1M)</b>
2023/24	92 (85F, 7M)	10 (10F, 0M)	<b>102</b> <b>(95F, 7M)</b>	18 (16F, 2M)	0	<b>18</b> <b>(16F, 2M)</b>	16 (14F, 2M)	0	<b>16</b> <b>(14F, 2M)</b>
2024/25	86 (78F, 8M)	10 (9F, 1M)	<b>96</b> <b>(87F, 9M)</b>	23 (20F, 3M)	0	<b>23</b> <b>(20F, 3M)</b>	16 (13F, 3M)	0	<b>16</b> <b>(13F, 3M)</b>

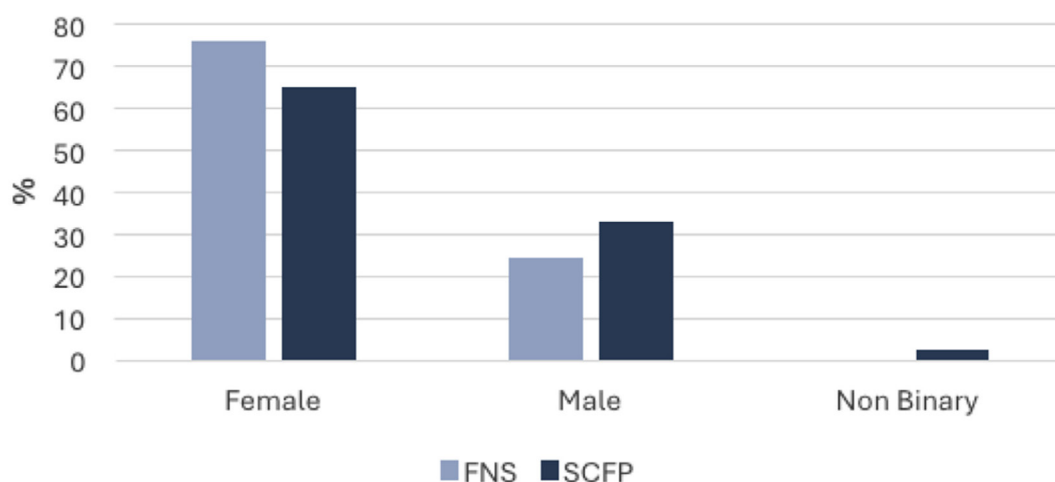
\*European Union. \*\*Non European Union. \*\*\*Programme discontinued 2023/24.

The gender distribution of PGTs in FS and NS (Figure 2.1.13) shows significantly more females in NS since the MSc HND was introduced. Male enrolment in the MSc HND has gradually increased, from 1M in 2022 to 3M in 2024. FNS is working to diversify NS gender representation through outreach campaigns, website and social media promotion, raising health and fitness awareness, adding sports nutrition modules, and highlighting the growing demand for nutrition professionals.



**Figure 2.1.13: Distribution of students across PGT programmes in Food Science and Nutritional Sciences (Nutritional Sciences includes PG Diploma up to 2022-2023)**

When benchmarked against SCFP (Figure 2.1.14, 2023-2024), FNS is comparable in gender breakdown for PGTs, though with a higher proportion of female students at 78% compared to SCFP (65%).



**Figure 2.1.14: Comparative gender balance of PGT students in FNS and SCFP (sample year 2023-2024)**

Notably, FITU professional-level accredited programmes (short and long-term) have a near equal breakdown of 49%F, 51%M (Table 2.1.13).

**TABLE 2.1.13: GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF ALL STUDENTS ATTENDING INDUSTRY-RELATED TRAINING AT FITU (2022-2023 DATA)**

Students	Short Courses	Accredited Programmes	# Total	Gender Balance (%)
# F	221	33	254	49
# M	199	61	260	51
# Total	420	94	514	

Overall gender balance for accredited diplomas (2022-2023, Table 2.1.14) is 35%F, 65%M. Two programmes, the Diplomas in Corporate Direction and Food Manufacturing and Management, are male-dominated. The former (96%M) targets Co-operative Board members, all farmers, with national efforts to improve female representation. FITU collaborates with ICOS to boost female board participation, with 3 women enrolled in 2023-2024, up from none in 2022-2023. The latter, traditionally aimed at meat processing, saw a drop in male participation from 82% in 2021-2022 to 71% in 2022-2023 as FITU broadened the programme to include diverse sectors.

**TABLE 2.1.14:** GENDER BREAKDOWN OF STUDENTS ON FITU ACCREDITED DIPLOMA PROGRAMMES (2022-2023)

Programme	#M	%M	#F	%F
Diploma in Food Science & Technology	13	54	11	46
Postgraduate Certificate in Dairy Science & Technology	5	38	8	62
Diploma in Corporate Direction	24	96	1	4
Diploma in Speciality Food Production	4	44	5	56
Diploma in Food Manufacturing and Management	12	71	5	29
Diploma in Leadership for the Agri-Food Sector	3	50	3	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>35</b>

### 2.1c (ii) gender and degree attainment.

The majority of PGTs in MSc FS and MSc HND achieved a 2H1 or higher over the 3-year period (Table 2.1.15), with no gender-based bias in grades. The higher scores among females reflect their greater representation in these cohorts, not grading differences. Notably, the 2 male MSc HND students both achieved 1H1 grades in 2023.

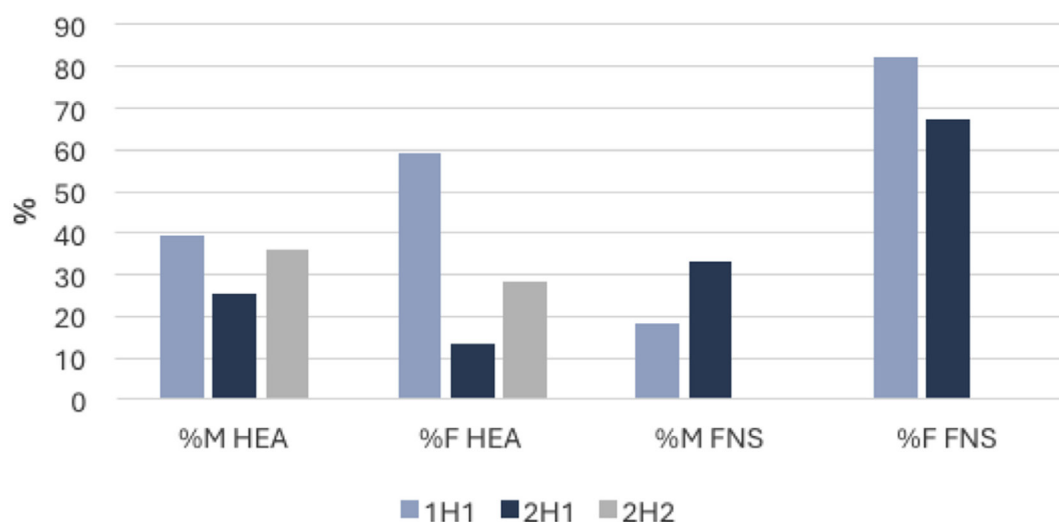
**TABLE 2.1.15:** POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT PROGRAMMES GRADE ATTAINMENT BY GENDER AND REPORTING YEARS

		2021				2022				2023			
Degree Programme	Grade	#F	#M	%F	%M	#F	#M	%F	%M	#F	#M	%F	%M
<b>Msc (Food Science)</b>	1H1	1	0	14	0	1	2	50	67	1	1	20	20
	2H1	6	3	86	100	1	1	50	33	3	4	60	80
	2H2	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a	1	0	20	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Msc (Human Nutrition and Dietetics)</b>	1H1	0	0	n/a	n/a	8	0	73	0	7	2	70	100
	2H1	0	0	n/a	n/a	3	1	27	100	3	0	30	0
	2H2	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Postgraduate Diploma in Nutritional Sciences*</b>	1H1	0	2	0	100	1	0	100	0	0	0	n/a	n/a
	2H1	5	0	100	0	0	2	0	100	2	0	67	0
	2H2	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a	1	2	33	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>17</b>

\*Graded as pass/fail.

The relatively low number of PGTs in FNS and dominance of females in the MSc HND programme make benchmarking grade attainment against HEA or other institutional data challenging. Benchmarking 2022 PGT data against HEA data (Figure 2.1.15) shows broadly similar trends, but females' grade attainment (1H1 and 2H1) is higher.





**Figure 2.1.15: FNS PGT degree level attainment benchmarked against HEA data for 2022 (HEA data from the ISCED broad field of study *Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics*)**

Most FITU programme students attained grade 2H1 or higher (Table 2.1.16). High percentages of male and female cohorts attain 1H1 qualifications in the Diploma and PG certificate courses.

**TABLE 2.1.16: PROGRAMME GRADE ATTAINMENT FOR FITU COURSES BY GENDER AND REPORTING YEARS**

Degree Programme	Grade	2021				2022				2023			
		#F	#M	%F	%M	#F	#M	%F	%M	#F	#M	%F	%M
Diploma in Food Science & Technology	1H1	5	5	62.5	71	4	8	80	67	1	4	33	100
	2H1	3	2	37.5	29	1	4	20	33	2	0	67	0
	2H2	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	0	0	0	n/a	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>57</b>
Diploma in Leadership for the Agri-Food Sector	1H1	6	2	86	29	5	1	26	11	3	1	13	8
	2H1	1	5	14	71	14	8	74	89	20	11	87	92
	2H2	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a
	<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>34</b>
Diploma in Speciality Food Production	1H1	7	1	100	33	0	0	n/a	n/a	3	1	75	25
	2H1	0	2	0	67	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	3	0	75
	2H2	0	0	n/a	n/a	1	0	100	0	1	0	25	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>
Postgraduate Certificate in Dairy Technology and Innovation	1H1	3	5	60	45	5	1	71	17	3	3	37.5	75
	2H1	2	6	40	55	2	5	29	83	4	1	50	25
	2H2	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	0	1	0	12.5	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>33</b>
Postgraduate Diploma in Dairy Technology and Innovation	1H1	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a	1	0	100	0
	2H1	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	1	0	100
	2H2	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>
Postgraduate Diploma in Food Science*	Pass	0	2	0	100	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>n/a</b>

\*Graded as pass/fail.

**d. Analyse three years of data on postgraduate research students by:**

**2.1d (i) gender and enrolment;**

Female students remain the majority at research level, but male numbers increased from 27% (2019) to 40% (2022) (Table 2.1.17). As more males enrol in 1st-year UG programmes, male PGR numbers are expected to rise.

In part-time MSc and PhD programmes (Table 2.1.18), there are 2 female MScs, and 2 female and 2 male PhDs. Though not immediately concerning due to low enrolment in these pathways, it warrants future monitoring to understand possible underlying factors, such as caregiving responsibilities, and to determine if additional supports for part-time PGRs are required (**SAP 2.1.4**)

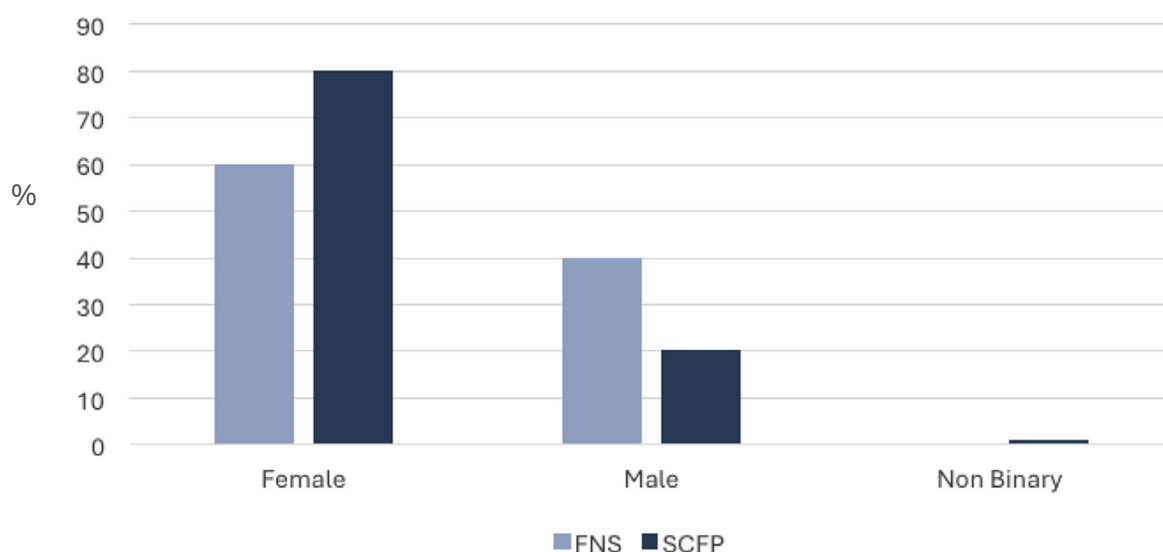
**TABLE 2.1.17:** TOTAL NUMBERS AND GENDER BREAKDOWN OF FNS POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH PROGRAMMES

Reporting Academic Year	Degree	Mode of Study	Female	Male	%F	%M	Total
2019-2020	MSc (Food Science and Technology)	Full-time	8	4	67	33	12
	PhD	Full-time	31	11	74	26	42
	PhD	Part-time	1	0	100	0	1
	<b>Total</b>		<b>40</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>55</b>
2020-2021	MSc (Food Science and Technology)	Full-time	3	2	60	40	5
	PhD	Full-time	36	24	60	40	60
	PhD	Part-time	1	0	100	0	1
	<b>Total</b>		<b>40</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>66</b>
2021-2022	MSc (Food Science and Technology)	Full-time	10	2	83	17	12
	MSc (Food Science and Technology)	Part-time	1	0	100	0	1
	PhD	Full-time	36	28	56	44	64
	<b>Total</b>		<b>47</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>77</b>
2022-2023	MSc (Food Science and Technology)	Full-time	3	1	80	20	4
	MSc (Food Science and Technology)	Part-time	1	0	100	0	1
	PhD	Full-time	36	21	63	37	57
	PhD	Part-time	0	1	0	100	1
	<b>Total</b>		<b>40</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>63</b>
2023-2024	MSc (Food Science and Technology)	Full-time	3	1	75	25	4
	PhD	Full-time	28	19	60	40	47
	PhD	Part-time	0	1	0	100	1
	<b>Total</b>		<b>31</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>198</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>313</b>

**TABLE 2.1.18:** GENDER BREAKDOWN OF FNS POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH PROGRAMMES BY MODE OF STUDY (2019-2023)

Type of Study	Female	Male	%F	%M	Total
Full-time	194	113	63	37	307
Part-time	4	2	67	33	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>313</b>

Benchmarking the gender distribution of PGR students with SCFP (Figure 2.1.16, 2023-2024), FNS shows greater balance (60%F, 40%M) compared to SCFP (80%F, 20%M).

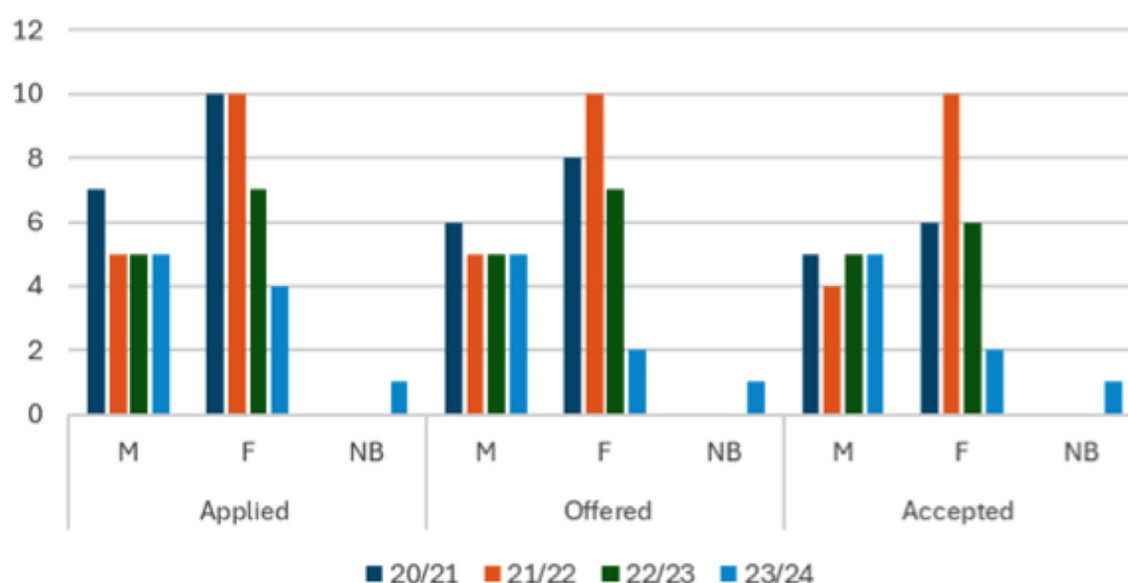


**Figure 2.1.16: Comparative gender breakdown of PGR students between FNS and SCFP (sample year, 2023-2024)**

**2.1d (ii) gender and application, offer and enrolment, with comment on how this data is collected and evaluated by the department and on any gender disparities in student funding;**

FNS collects application data through UCCApply, tracking PGR and PGT applications and generating reports (Figure 2.1.17). FNS also follows up on unsolicited PhD and researcher queries, to reach a wider pool of candidates for future opportunities.

Male PGR enrolment remained steady at ~39%, with high success rates in securing positions (Figure 2.1.17). Linked to **BAP actions 4.1.1, 4.1.3, and 4.1.4, BAP 4.2.2** aims to encourage male PGR applicants. With increased male UG enrolments and improved tracking, FNS expects male PGR numbers to rise, particularly among UCC and EU graduates.



**Figure 2.1.17: Three years of data for PGR students by gender, application numbers and enrolment after pre-screening of applications**

Most PhD scholarship positions are advertised by UCC HR. Due to high applicant numbers and the cost of using UCCApply, FNS pre-screens, shortlists, and interviews candidates before the formal application. **BAP 4.1.4**, adopted in 2022, tracks all research-funded PGR positions. The FNS SM records application data. Figure 2.1.18 shows recent FS PhD applications, with 95% of applicants non-EU, mainly from India and Africa. Selection committees are led by project PIs.

Research Recruitment Database (FNS Sample Applications 2023-2024)												
Position	Date	PI	Details	Funding Body/ Research Code	Total No Applicants	Applicants		Shortlisted		Selection Committee		Successful Candidate
						M	F	M	F	M	F	M/F
PhD Student	01/06/23	AK/SOM	FNS	EI*/DPTC**	301 (95% Non-EU)	202 (67%)	99 (33%)	4	1	2	0	M
PhD Student	01/05/24	TOC	Joint FNS/ Teagasc PhD	DAFM***	110 (95% Non-EU)	63 (57%)	47 (43%)	2	3	2	0	F
PhD Student	01/08/24	AL/MK	FNS	SFI****	132 (60% Non-EU)	44 (33%)	88 (67%)	3	7	0	2	F
PhD Student	02/07/24	TOC	FNS	DAFM	103 (98% Non-EU)	42 (41%)	61 (59%)	1	3	2	0	F
PhD Student	15/09/24	TOC	FNS Dairy Centre of Excellence (COE)/ Teagasc	SFI	125 (93% Non-EU)	59 (47%)	66 (53%)	1	2	1	1	F

**Figure 2.1.18: FNS researcher recruitment data from 2023-2024.**

\*Enterprise Ireland; \*\*Dairy Processing Technology Centre (multi-institutional dairy research and innovation);

\*\*\*Department of Agriculture Food and Marine; \*\*\*\*Science Foundation Ireland

PGR students are funded through national and European grant awards or collaborative research with industry partners with no gender disparities. In all cases, PGRs receive a standard stipend rate.

High employment rates of our graduates contribute to low application numbers for PGT and PGR positions [Section 2.1 a (i)], **BAP 4.1.5**, implemented in 2020, analyses all UCC graduate destination data for SEFS and FNS. Data is managed by FS and NS programme directors, and graduate destinations reported to SMT and other FNS committees.

#### 2.1d (iii) gender and completion rates.

FNS's strong support and supervision structures have led to high PGR completion rates, with over 90% of Research Masters and 80% of PhDs completed on time, in line with HEA STEM data (2022). Table 2.1.19 shows PGR completion rates by gender over 3 years. Male completion rates rose from 14% (2021) to 50% (2023); 2021 was anomalous with 90% of PhDs awarded to females. Males represented 29% and 35% of MSc and PhD students, respectively. **BAP 4.1.3**, implemented in 2019, tracks PGR students from enrolment to degree attainment, with data reviewed annually by FNS PG programme directors.

**TABLE 2.1.19:** POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH PROGRAMMES DEGREE ATTAINMENT BY GENDER AND REPORTING YEARS

Degree Programme	Grade	2021				2022				2023				TOTAL			
		#F	#M	%F	%M	#F	#M	%F	%M	#F	#M	%F	%M	#F	#M	%F	%M
<b>MSc (Food Science and Technology)</b>	Awarded	2	1	67	33	2	1	67	33	1	0	100	0	5	2	71	29
<b>PhD</b>	Awarded	10	1	90	10	8	6	57	43	4	5	44	56	22	12	65	35
<b>Total (PGRs)</b>		12	2	86	14	10	7	59	41	5	5	50	50				

**e. Comment and reflect on the relationship (if any) between the department's outreach, engagement, and support activities and issues or opportunities in the student pipeline. This should include comment on how the department recognises staff and student contributions to these activities and monitors the gender balance of those involved.**

FNS runs extensive outreach, public engagement, and support activities targeting primary and secondary school students, UGs, PGs, staff, researchers, and the public (Table 2.1.20). These initiatives are managed by the FNS Outreach and External Engagement Committee (OEEC), to ensure gender balance among contributors and that materials suit the target audience. FNS shares research through public lectures, webinars, and publications to engage and inform the community, while working to develop the student pipeline. All activities are recorded by the OEEC (**BAP 5.6.10**) and showcased on multimedia platforms, with efforts to balance gender among visiting speakers in collaboration with industry partners (**BAP 5.3.5**).

**TABLE 2.1.20:** FNS OUTREACH, PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT, SUPPORT ACTIVITIES, CONFERENCES AND SHOWCASING EVENTS (JANUARY 2023- APRIL 2024). NUMBERS AND GENDER BREAKDOWN OF ATTENDEES INCLUDED, WHERE AVAILABLE.

Event	Date	Target Audience	Volunteer #F	Volunteer #M	Volunteer Category	%F	%M	Total
Events for Primary & Secondary School Students								
TY Week (annual)*	Apr '24	TY School Students (#21; 13F, 8M)	2	2	Academic	50	50	4
			7	4	Technical	64	36	11
			1	0	Admin	100	0	1
			2	2	PG	50	50	4
Access UCC Plus Programme*	Apr '23	TY (DEIS) School Students	0	1	Technical	0	50	2
ESB Science Blast Festival	May '24	Primary School Children (#56; 28F, 28M)	1	0	Academic	100	0	1
			3	1	PG	75	25	4
UCC Schools Guidance Counsellors Conference	Oct '23	Guidance Counsellors from Secondary Schools (#130)	0	1	Academic	0	100	1
UCC UG Open Day	Nov '23	Secondary Schools, General Public	3	3	Academic	50	50	6
School Visits (inc., specific STEM career events & career option fairs)	Nov '23 to Feb '24	Secondary School visits (#5) > 300 students, 60%M, 40%F	2	1	Technical	67	33	3
			3	0	Admin	100	0	3
			3	2	PG	60	40	5
			3	2	Academic	60	40	5
Events for UGs								
UCC Postgrad Expo	Jan '23	UG Students, General Public	2	2	Academic	50	50	4
Nutrition Careers Fair, ATU, Galway	Oct '23	UG NS Students, General Public	1	0	Academic	100	0	1
			6	1	UG	86	14	7
Public Interest & Education Events								
BBC Radio 4. Sliced Bread: Milk alternatives (Podcast) collaboration with University of Reading	On-going	General Public	1	0	Academic	100	0	1
Massive Open Online Course (MOOC): Ageing Well: Nutrition and Exercise for Older Adults – collaboration with Future Learn @ University of Reading	On-going	Carers of Older People and Older People	1	0	Academic	100	0	1
The Conversation. Millions of older people don't get enough nutrients – how to spot it and what to do about it – collaboration University of Reading (UCC are co-funders of the Conversation)	Online	General Public	1	0	Academic	100	0	1
Cork on a Fork Festival	Aug '23	General Public	0	1	Academic	0	100	1

Artisan and Farmhouse Cheese Through History and Culture (FITU/FNS/Cáis)	Nov '23	Students (UG, PG); Staff; General Public	0	3	Academic	0	100	3
Glenville Flower & Garden Club	Feb '24	Dairy & Food Science at UCC talk (#65, 0M, 65F)	3	0	Admin	100	0	3
			0	1	Academic	0	100	1
Conferences (In UCC)								
Developing a Sustainable Future: CPD Conference (FITU/ICOS)	Dec '23	Agri & Dairy Industry Representatives (#98; 70M, 28F)	0	3	Academic	0	100	3
			5	0	Admin	100	0	5
			2	1	PG	67	33	3
Erasmus CoVE Dairy Academy Summer School (FNS)	Jun '23	European early career researchers (#38; 21M, 17F)	0	4	Academic	0	100	4
			1	0	Admin	100	0	1
Erasmus (CoVE) Dairy Academy Symposium (FNS, on-line)	Jun '23	School teachers, researchers, academics, industry partners (#495 registered)	0	2	Academic	0	100	2
			1	0	Admin	100	0	1
Erasmus CoVE Project (FNS)	Sept '23	European Dairy Professionals from 10 countries (#40; 20M, 20F)	0	2	Academic	0	100	2
			1	0	Admin	100	0	1
International Milk Genomics Consortium (IMGC) Hybrid Symposium (FNS/IMGC)	Sept '23	PG Students, researchers, academics, industry partners (#200; 88M, 112F)	4	4	Academic	50	50	8
			0	1	Technical	0	100	1
			3	0	Admin	100	0	3
			7	5	PG	58	42	12
Society of Dairy Technology (SDT) Autumn Conference: Digitisation in the Dairy Industry (FNS/SDT)	Nov '23	PG Students, researchers, academics, industry partners (#220; 149M, 71F)	2	3	Academic	40	60	5
			0	1	Technical	0	100	1
			3	0	Admin	100	0	3
			5	3	PG	63	37	8
Showcasing/Support Activities (FNS Facilities)								
FNS Industry Research Partnership Exploration	April '24	Industry representatives (#10; 8M, 2F)	0	1	Technical	0	100	1
Process & Chemical Eng. Biotech. Students	Feb '23	2nd and 3rd year students (#65; 45M, 20F)	0	1	Technical	0	100	1
UCC Admissions Office	Jul '23	In depth tour of facilities and research themes to support enquiries to admissions office re FNS programmes (#5; 1M, 4F)	0	1	Technical	0	100	1
MTU Culinary Innovations Students	Oct '23	Scale-up and food processing experience (#8; 5M, 3F)	0	1	Technical	0	100	1
MTU Home Economics Students	Nov '23	Scale-up and food processing experience (#16; 5M, 11F)	0	1	Technical	0	100	1
SDT Autumn Conference	Nov '23	Tour of facilities for conference attendees	0	1	Technical	0	100	1
UCC Open Day	Nov '23	Showcasing facilities and research for potential 1st year students	0	1	Technical	0	100	1
UCC-ICOS Dip in Corporate Direction Students	Jan '24	Tour of facilities and research themes for future company directors (#16; 5M, 11F)	0	1	Technical	0	100	1
Taste4Success Skillnet staff	Feb '24	Facilities Tour/Review (#3; 0M, 3F)	0	1	Technical	0	100	1



### Other Events (annual)

Blas na hÉireann (Annual Irish National Food Awards)**	Jun-Jul '23	> 3,000 Food Producers; 150 food & drink categories	4	4	Academic	50	50	8
			4	3	Technical	57	43	7
			3	0	Admin	100	0	3
			20	15	PG	57	43	35
Manufacturing Excellence Awards	Apr '24	Innovation, Sustainability & Collaboration Talk for industry representatives (#200)	0	1	FITU	0	100	1
Launch of the Tirlán Governance Academy (collaboration with UCC to support representation across Co-operative Board structures)	Oct '23	Agri sector/Co-operatives representatives; young farmers, especially females	1	1	FITU	50	50	2
National Ploughing Championships (FITU/Taset4Success Stand)	Sept '23	> 200,000 attendees; general public, industry representatives	1	1	FITU	50	50	2
				1	Academic	0	100	1
National Women's Enterprise Day: Empowering Business Together Event	Oct '23	Women in business (#100 F attendees)	1	0	FITU	100	0	1
Specialised Lifelong Learning Programme for Employees Working in the Dairy Sector (FITU/Taste4Success supporting flexible pathways for career progression in the dairy sector)	Oct '23	Dairy Industry (#151; 81M, 70F)	4	1	FITU	80	20	5
			0	1	Academic	0	100	1
Cork Summer Show	Jun '24	> 50,000 attendees	3	2	Academic	60	40	5
			1	2	Technical	33	66	3
			3	0	Admin	100	0	3
			3	3	PG	50	50	6

\* Sample year data provided; events also took place in 2024

\*\*FNS manage, coordinate and implement the scientific element of these awards

FNS’ annual TY Week (Figure 2.1.19 a, b) attracts applicants from across Ireland and promotes FS/NS programmes and related careers. Four to five places are reserved for DEIS schools, and over 70% of applicants have been female (Table 2.1.21). Feedback is gathered to improve the event each year (Figure 2.1.20). Outreach efforts (**SAP 2.1.2**) will continue to target more male applicants. On average, four PGs assist with TY Week, and FNS plans to increase PG participation (**SAP 2.1.5**).



**Figure 2.1.19: Transition year students (2024) making Dippin’ Dots ice cream snack (a) and in the Dairy Processing hall making butter (b)**



**Figure 2.1.20: Survey feedback comments from TY students (2024)**

**TABLE 2.1.21: FNS ANNUAL TY WEEK APPLICANTS AND PLACES OFFERED BY GENDER**

Year	#Applicants	#F	#M	#Other	Total F (%)	Total M (%)	Offered Places	#F	#M	Total F (%)	Total M (%)
2019	113	79	34	n/a	70	30	21	12	9	57	43
2022	50	42	8	n/a	84	16	23	18	5	78	22
2023	120	89	31	n/a	74	26	26	16	10	62	38
2024	84	61	24	1	73	29	21	13	8	62	38
Total	367	271	97	1	74	26	91	59	32	65	35

## FITU Rejuvenate Programme

In 2019 FITU, in partnership with Taste4Success Skillnet, developed Rejuvenate, an innovative programme encouraging professional women to return to careers (Figure 2.1.21 a, b, c and d). Rejuvenate received the IITD Best Diversity and Inclusion Award 2020. Revitalise, a second offering from FITU and Taste4Success Skillnet, supports mature professionals whose career is affected by job loss or job changes.



(a)



(b)

*"The course content was extremely appropriate to my needs and was delivered in an easy to digest manner. Meeting women in the same situation was invaluable in letting me know I wasn't alone and in giving me confidence"*

(c)



(d)

**Figure 2.1.21: FITU/Taste 4 Success Skillnet Rejuvenate programme (a); best diversity and inclusion award (IITD) 2020 (b); testimonial (2023) from participant; (c); class of 2023 (d)**

FITU and FNS Dairy Science Centre of Excellence were finalists in the Learning and Development Institute *Excellence in Learning Awards* in the category 'Best Talent and Strategy Development Initiative' (September 2023).

FNS recognises staff and student contributions to outreach activities through commendations on our website and social media channels and biennial updates at School Assembly. Outreach activities are included when assessing staff workload.

PG involvement in outreach activities increased since 2019 (e.g., Figure 2.1.22), however feedback indicates more participation is welcomed [Section 1.3(b): Figure 1.3.2]. **BAP 5.6.11** aims to improve gender balance which is already a key consideration when planning event staffing and engage more PGs in outreach, this



will continue as **SAP 2.1.5**. The new student-led PG Research Committee (**BAP 6.4**) communicates PG opportunities, and the OEEC's ToR were updated (April 2024) to include PG representatives.



**Figure 2.1.22: Dr Alice Lucey (FNS) with a group of PGs who participated at the National Careers Fair, ATU, Galway, 2023.**

FITU offers short courses for staff, PGs, and industry partners (Table 2.1.22), with PhD students lecturing on several accredited programmes. FNS plans to expand this initiative (**SAP 2.1.5**), with 3 PhD students (2M, 1F) already delivering material in 2023. Gender breakdown for FITU courses are shown in Table 2.1.23.

**TABLE 2.1.22: FITU SHORT COURSES (2023-2024) SUPPORTING THE FOOD AND AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY**

Food Safety & Quality Audits	Thermal Processing
Food Process Engineering Principles	Ice Cream Science & Technology
Introduction to the Manufacture & Science of Cheese	Introduction to the Manufacture & Science of Chocolate
Cheese Science & Technology	Concentration & Drying
Production Supervisory Training Programme	Cleaning in Place (CIP) for the Food & Drink Industry
Essential Plant Hygiene for the Food & Drink Industry	The Science of Confectionary Processing & Manufacture
Blas ns hEireann/UCC: Business Planning & Distribution	Blas ns hEireann/UCC: Marketing of Speciality/Artisan Foods – A Focus on Digital Marketing
Lean Yellow Belt	Lean Green Belt
The Science & Technology of Plant-Based Ingredients for Food Applications	Introduction to Food Chemistry
Foundation Skills in Management	Bespoke Training*
<b>Rejuvenate</b>	<b>Revitalise</b>

\*Specific training courses tailored for industry.

**TABLE 2.1.23: NUMBERS AND GENDER OF PARTICIPANTS ON FITU SHORT COURSES (2022-2023)**

Short Course	Date	Delivery	#Male	#Female	#Total
Cleaning in Place	Oct, 2022	Online Live	9 (47%)	10 (53%)	19
Concentration & Drying	Oct, 2022	Online Live and Recorded	5 (56%)	4 (44%)	9
Thermal Processing	Oct, 2022	Online	7 (30%)	16 (49%)	23
Production Supervisory	Nov, 2022	Online and Face-to-Face	15 (73%)	5 (25%)	20
Advanced Cleaning In Place	Nov, 2022	Online Live	8 (62%)	5 (38%)	13
Introduction to the Manufacture & Science of Cheese	Dec, 2022	Face-to-Face	12 (57%)	9 (43%)	21
Tirlan Dairy Science & Technology	Dec, 2022	Online Live and Recorded	10 (50%)	10 (50%)	20
Carbery Fund Cleaning in Place	Feb, 2023	Face-to-Face	8 (89%)	1 (11%)	9
Cheese Science & Technology	Feb, 2023	Face-to-Face	16 (62%)	10 (38%)	26
Carbery Area Cleaning	Feb, 2023	Face-to-Face	6 (100%)	0 (0%)	6
Carbery Fund & Advanced Cleaning In Place	Feb, 2023	Face-to-Face	8 (73%)	3 (27%)	11
Fund Cleaning In Place	Mar, 2023	Online Live	12 (71%)	5 (29%)	17
Food Process Engineering Principles	Mar, 2023	Face-to-Face and Recorded	9 (45%)	11 (55%)	20
Advanced CIP	Mar, 2023	Online Live	15 (60%)	10 (40%)	25
Concentration & Drying	Apr, 2023	Online Live and Recorded	11 (55%)	9 (45%)	20
Rejuvenate	Oct, 2022, Apr, 2023	Online	0	42 (100%)	42
Revitalise	Oct, 2022	Online	0	16 (100%)	16
<b>Total Short Courses 2022/2023</b>			<b>151 (48%)</b>	<b>166 (52%)</b>	<b>317</b>

In 2023 Foodline UCC, (see Section 2.1a(i)) delivered 173 webinars and 17 short courses to students from 39 countries. Several PG students have participated and FNS will continue to increase this participation (**SAP 2.1.5**). In 2023, 2 PhD students (1M, 1F) disseminated their research in live webinars, widely advertised to industry.

FNS is committed to expanding outreach and public engagement, ensuring all students can pursue higher education and reach their potential, building a strong, diverse student pipeline. 2024 outreach highlights are shown in Figure 2.1.23.





**Figure 2.1.23: Photo montage of selected FNS outreach and engagement activities in 2024.**

Top row (L to R), group of visiting secondary school students making sausages in the meat processing hall (L); MSc HND students at ESB Science Blast, University of Limerick, 2024 (R); Middle row (L to R), Mr George MacLeod, General Manager of Dairygold Health & Nutrition presenting the FNS, SFI funded, *Appetite for Knowledge* award to 1st place winning group captain Rachel Mullins, Presentation Secondary School, Mitchelstown with runner up team captain, Rian Leahy, Glanmire Community College (L); Dr Elaine McCarthy presenting a public lecture ‘*Fuelling Your Body*’ at Cork Summer Show (R). Bottom row (L to R), MTU BA (Hons) Home Economics and Business final year students who participated in a scale-up and food processing experience in FNS with David Waldron, CTO FNS, (L); Prof Alan Kelly, HoS, make ‘butter in a jar’ at the Cork Summer Show.

**f. Provide data for academic and research staff by gender and grade. Analyse and benchmark the career pipeline.**

*Academic*

Table 2.1.24 shows the gender and grade profile of core-funded academic staff in FNS. Since 2018 female representation has steadily increased, to 66% currently. However, there are no female Professors at full Professor level; all female Professors are at Grade 2 (see Section 2.2). Females are gender balanced at both SL and Professor Grade 2 level (Table 2.1.25)

**TABLE 2.1.24:** TOTAL NUMBER OF CORE-FUNDED ACADEMIC STAFF (FT & PT) BY GENDER AND GRADE (JULY, 2024)

Academic Staff Grade	Female	Male	%F	%M	Total
LB/B	5	0	100	0	5
LA/B	2	1	67	33	3
SL	4	4	50	50	8
Prof(2)	3	3	50	50	6
Prof	0	1	0	100	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>23</b>

**TABLE 2.1.25:** PERCENTAGE OF CORE-FUNDED ACADEMIC STAFF (FT & PT) BY GENDER AND GRADE (SEPTEMBER 2022 - SEPTEMBER 2024)

	Sept-20		Sept-21		Sept-22		Sept-23		Sept-24	
Academic Staff Grade	%F	%M	%F	%M	%F	%M	%F	%M	%F	%M
LB/B	75	25	67	33	60	40	73	27	100	0
LA/B	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	0	67	33
SL	50	50	50	50	67	33	75	25	50	50
Prof(2)	60	40	60	40	60	40	40	60	50	50
Prof	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100

HESA and HEA benchmarking data (Table 2.1.26) for academic staff in 2021-2022 shows:

- FNS had a gender distribution close to HESA, UK data - 59%F, 41%M vs 56%F, 44%M, respectively
- FNS has a higher percentage of female academic staff compared to UCC total at 59% vs 46%
- Comparing FNS and HEA data, the former has a higher percentage of female academic staff (59% vs 46%)

**TABLE 2.1.26:** ACADEMIC STAFF BY GENDER AS REPORTED BY HESA (HECOS SUBJECT CODE CAH06), UCC FNS, UCC (TOTAL ACADEMIC), AND HEA (TOTAL ACADEMIC) FOR 2021-2022

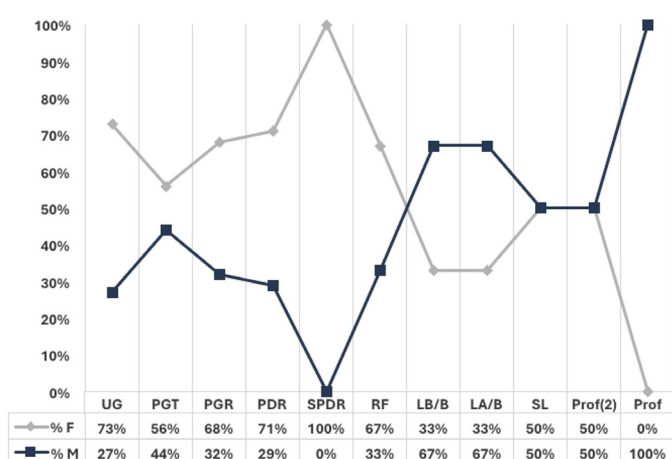
Benchmarking Year	Academic Staff	%F	%M
<b>2021-2022</b>	<b>HESA CAH06</b>	56	44
	<b>UCC FNS</b>	59	41
	<b>UCC Total</b>	46	54
	<b>HEA Total</b>	46	54

Comparing data from 2018/19 with 2023/24 for FNS' academic and research career pipeline (Table 2.1.27) shows:

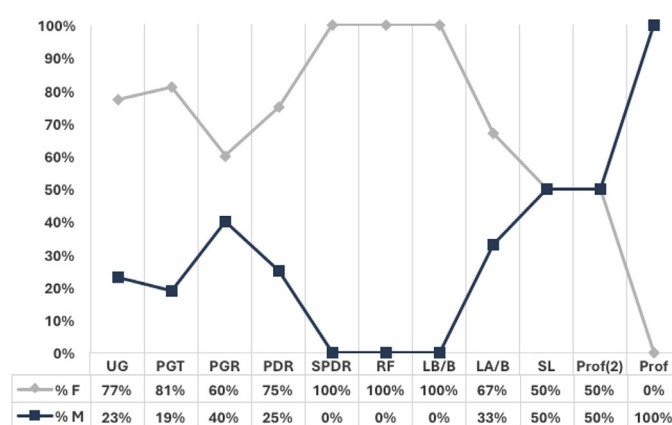
- UG gender distribution is mostly unchanged at 73%F, 27%M and 77%F, 23%M, respectively.
- %F PGTs significantly increased from 56% to 81%
- FNS %F remained largely unchanged, apart from LB/Bs, which increased from 33%F to 88%F. LA/Bs are currently 100%F (although in both cases numbers are low).
- %F eligible to apply for full Professor and Professor Scale 2 remains unchanged (50%F) (Figures 2.1.24 and 2.1.25).

**TABLE 2.1.27: COMPARATIVE DATA (2018/19 AND 2023/24) BY GENDER FOR FNS ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH CAREER PIPELINE**

	2018-2019				2023-2024			
	#F	#M	%F	%M	#F	#M	%F	%M
UG	248	90	73	27	272	83	77	23
PGT	5	4	56	44	38	9	81	19
PGR	53	31	68	32	31	21	60	40
PDR	10	4	71	29	3	1	75	25
SPDR	1	0	100	0	1	0	100	0
RF	2	1	67	33	1	0	100	0
LB/B	1	2	33	67	7	1	88	12
LA/B	1	2	33	67	2	0	100	0
SL	1	1	50	50	2	2	50	50
Prof(2)	3	3	50	50	3	3	50	50
Prof	0	2	0	100	0	1	0	100



**Figure 2.1.24: FNS academic career pipeline by gender (2018 – 2019 data)**

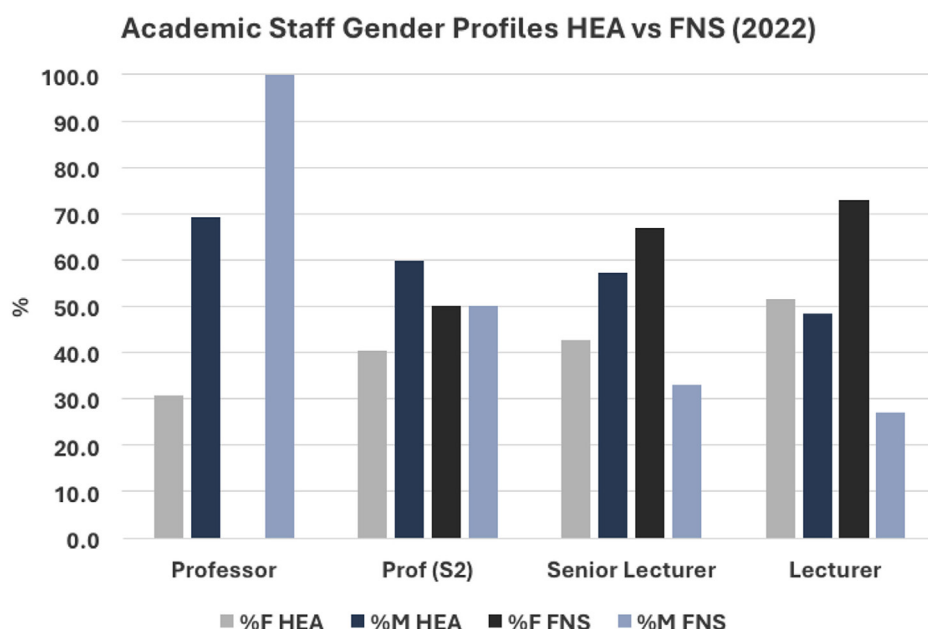


**Figure 2.1.25: FNS academic career pipeline by gender (2023-2024 data)**



Academic staff gender profile data is comparable with national data (HEA, 2022) at senior lecturer level but differs at other grades (Figure 2.1.26):

- No FNS female full professor (see Section 2.2), below the national average of 31%
- 50%F, 50%M at Prof (S2) grade compared to national data of 40.3%F, 59.7%M
- At lecturer level, FNS has 73%F compared to HEA's 51.6%F (Figure 2.1.26).



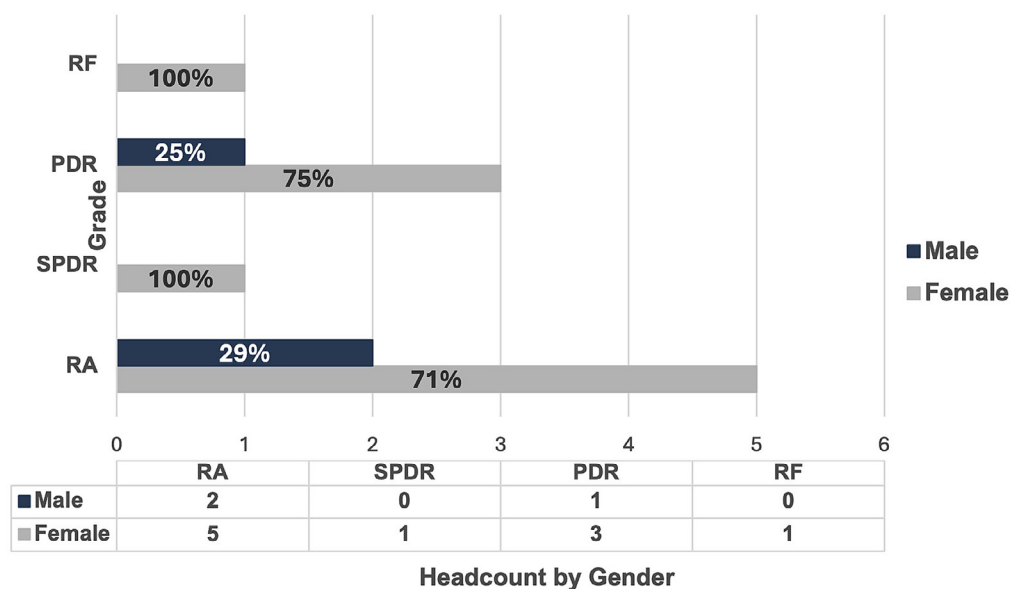
**Figure 2.1.26: FNS staff gender profiles benchmarked against Irish education institutional staff profiles by gender, 31st December 2021 (HEA, 2022). Data from HEA for STEM disciplines in non-technological universities.**

## Research

2023 data, divided into research/specialist academic and research support, is shown in Table 2.1.28. In both categories, female staff numbers are higher at #10F, #3M and #11F, #4M, respectively. Disaggregating by grade, RFs and SPDRs are 100%F, while PDRs and RAs are 75%F and 71%F, respectively (Figure 2.1.27).

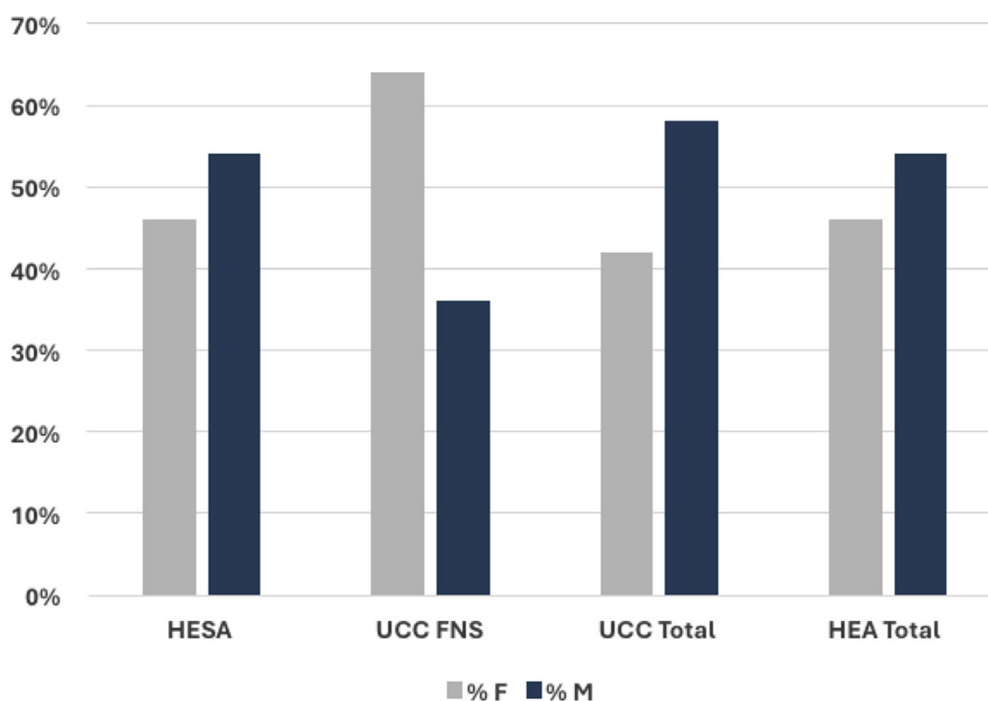
**TABLE 2.1.28: TOTAL NUMBER OF NON CORE-FUNDED RESEARCH STAFF (FT & PT) BY GENDER AND GRADE (DECEMBER 2023)**

Research Staff Grade	#F	#M	%F	%M	#Total
<b>Research/Specialist Academic</b>					
RA	5	2	71	29	7
SPDR	1	0	100	0	1
PDR	3	1	75	25	4
RF	1	0	100	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Research Support</b>					
RSO	1	0	100	0	1
SRSO	0	1	0	100	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>15</b>



**Figure 2.1.27: Gender distribution as percentage of non-core funded research and specialist academic staff (2023)**

Comparing FNS research staff by gender with HESA, HEA and UCC data, FNS has the highest proportion of female staff (Figure 2.1.28). Research staff gender distribution has remained relatively unchanged, ranging between 64%F and 73%F (2019-2023, Table 2.1.29).



**Figure 2.1.28: Research/Specialist Academic Staff by Gender as reported by HESA (HECoS Subject Code CAH06), UCC FNS, UCC (total academic), and HEA (total academic) for 2022-2023.**

**TABLE 2.1.29: PERCENTAGE OF NON CORE-FUNDED RESEARCH STAFF (FT & PT) BY GENDER AND GRADE (SEPTEMBER 2019 - DECEMBER 2023)**

	Sep-19		Sep-20		Sep-21		Sep-22		Dec-23	
Research Staff Grade	%F	%M	%F	%M	%F	%M	%F	%M	%F	%M
RA	50	50	50	50	100	0	56	44	71	29
PDR	78	22	75	25	50	50	71	29	75	25
SPDR	50	50	67	33	57	43	0	0	100	0
RF	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>35</b>
RSO	90	10	100	0	50	50	75	25	100	0
SRSO	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>29</b>

**g. Provide data for professional, managerial and support staff by gender and grade. Analyse representation, benchmarking where possible.**

Table 2.1.30 shows most recent gender balance for PMS staff in FNS with 79%F and 21%M. Disaggregating by category, administrative staff are 100%F while TOs are 58%F and 42%M.

**TABLE 2.1.30: TOTAL NUMBER OF PMS STAFF (FT & PT) BY GENDER AND GRADE (JUNE 2024)**

Category	Grade	Female	Male	%F	%M	Total
<b>Administrative</b>	EA	0	0	n/a	n/a	0
	SEA	2	0	100	0	2
	ADMIN V, ADMIN III, II	10	0	100	0	10
<b>Technical</b>	TO	2	2	50	50	4
	STO	4	1	80	20	5
	CTO	1	1	50	50	2
<b>Support Staff</b>	DO*	0	1	0	100	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>24</b>

\*Departmental Operative.

The gender distribution of core-funded PMS staff increased from 63%F to 79%F (2019-2024, Table 2.1.31). FNS %F figure is higher than both SEFS and UCC (Table 2.1.32).

**TABLE 2.1.31: GENDER DISTRIBUTION BY PERCENTAGE OF CORE-FUNDED PMS STAFF (2019 TO 2024)**

	Sep-19		Sep-20		Sep-21		Sep-22		Sept-23		Sept-24	
PMS Staff Grade	%F	%M	%F	%M	%F	%M	%F	%M	%F	%M	%F	%M
EA	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
SEA	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0
ADMIN V, ADMIN III, II	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0
TO	50	50	50	50	67	33	67	33	67	33	50	50
STO	55	45	63	37	67	33	67	33	80	20	80	20
CTO	0	100	0	100	0	100	50	50	50	50	50	50
DO	0	100	0	100	0	100	0%	100	0%	100	0	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>21</b>

**TABLE 2.1.32:** CORE-FUNDED FT&PT PMS STAFF IN FNS COMPARED TO SEFS COLLEGE TOTAL AND UCC TOTAL (DECEMBER 2022)

PMS Staff (December 2022)	Female	Male	%F	%M	Total
UCC Total	922	424	68	32	1346
SEFS	84	54	61	39	138
FNS	16	5	76	24	21

Comparing against HESA (no discipline-specific data), HEA and UCC, FNS has a significantly higher proportion of female PMS staff (Table 2.1.33).

**TABLE 2.1.33:** PMS STAFF BY GENDER AS REPORTED BY HESA (TOTAL PMS), UCC FNS, UCC (TOTAL PMS), AND HEA (TOTAL PMS) FOR 2022-2023

Benchmarking Year	PMS Staff	%F	%M
2022-2023	HESA Total*	63	37
	UCC FNS	76	24
	UCC Total	65	35
	HEA Total	64	36
	HEA PMS STEM	66	34
	HEA Research/Specialist PMS	64	36

\*HESA Higher Education Staff Statistics: UK 2022-2023. HEA Higher Education Institutions Staff Profiles by Sex and Gender report (2022) was used.

**h. Provide data on staff on fixed-term contracts, contracts of indefinite duration/permanent contracts, and hourly-paid contracts by gender and staff category. Outline instances where fixed-term and hourly-paid contract types are used. This should include comment on:**

**2.1h (i) whether or not numbers of fixed-term/hourly-paid contracts are representative of a typical year;**

The majority of FNS contracts are permanent or fixed-term. 21 staff members (17F, 4M) are on fixed-term contracts, typical for research staff, while most academic, technical, and professional staff have long-term positions. FNS is committed to not using Contracts of Indefinite Duration (CID) to ensure greater job security. Since 2022, FNS has no CIDs.

**TABLE 2.1.34:** CORE AND NON CORE-FUNDED (FT & PT) STAFF BY CATEGORY, GENDER AND CONTRACT TYPE (2023-2024)

Category	Contract Type	Female	Male	%F	%M	Total
Academic	Permanent	14	9	66	33	23
	Fixed-term	3	0	100	0	3
Research	Fixed-term	11	4	73	27	15
PMS	Permanent	15	4	79	21	19
	Fixed-term	3	0	100	0	3
TOTAL		45	15	75	25	60

## 2.1h (ii) the rationale for the use of short-term contracts;

Short-term contracts are typically issued to researchers on projects with specific end dates, aligning with the specific purpose of their research activities, and are deemed necessary to facilitate the temporary nature of research grants.

Since 2021, one academic was recruited on a 12-month fixed-term maternity contract, and two additional fixed-term academic contracts in NS were issued to cover roles later advertised as permanent. Three fixed-term PMS contracts were given to FITU staff in administrative roles, where funding for course administration and delivery was of fixed duration.

## 2.1h (iii) the extent to which hourly-paid staff contribute to the teaching of core modules and/or services.

Hourly contracts (2021-2023, Table 2.1.35) are mainly used for student assistance or demonstrator roles (around 5 per year) to support laboratory work and maintain staff-to-student ratios. FNS avoids using hourly paid staff for core teaching, although occasional visiting lecturers may be hired per UCC policy. In 2024, an hourly-paid administrative assistant was employed for the AS Silver application (Section 1.3 a(ii)). FITU also hires hourly-paid external specialized lecturers, with FNS PGs gaining teaching experience (#2 in 2023/2024).

**TABLE 2.1.35:** HOURLY PAID STAFF IN FNS BY GENDER (2021-2023)

Category	Female	Male	%F	%M	Total
2021	7	4	64	36	11
2022	5	4	56	44	9
2023	6	5	55	45	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>31</b>

Progress and Impact of BAP Actions (2019-2024)		
BAP Action	Aim & Rationale	Progress & Impact
<b>3.1.5</b>	Promote AS in FNS and at outreach and external engagement events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ AS principles are central to all FNS activities.</li><li>◆ 2022 Staff Survey: 60% F and 40% M respondents (#28) recognized AS principles in FNS culture; a significant increase from 2018 (33% F, 21% M).</li><li>◆ AS logo on all FNS promotional material; banners/posters used at events and outreach.</li><li>◆ FNS will continue promoting and expanding all EdI/AS activities through the WIDE committee.</li></ul>
<b>4.1.1</b>	Tailor outreach activities to improve gender balance in UG programmes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ BFS male enrolment grew from 20% (2021) to 34% (2022) and 42% (2023).</li><li>◆ BFNS male enrolment increased from 5% (2021 &amp; 2022) to 14% (2023).</li><li>◆ Male participation rate in BFS is now 42%, nearing the 50% target.</li></ul>

<b>4.1.2</b>	Identify factors affecting UG male student performance in FS.	<p>While females outperform males in FS, attaining more 1H1 grades, inferences from data about male performance are difficult due to low numbers; discrepancies could be attributed to male individual results disproportionately affecting overall percentages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ FNS programme directors review and document student performance annually, reporting to Teaching &amp; Learning Committee and SMT to identify supports needed.</li> <li>◆ UG feedback reported no apparent gender differences in perception of course load or exams.</li> </ul>
<b>4.1.3</b>	School to implement a live database of all enrolled research postgraduate students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ A live database, tracking from enrolment to completion of PG degrees, of all PGR students has been implemented since 2020 and is managed by a SEA.</li> <li>◆ Data are available immediately on request by SMT and other committees including the SAT.</li> <li>◆ FNS will continue to collate these data annually and reconcile with data from UCC.</li> </ul>
<b>4.1.4</b>	Track all research-funded PGR positions locally including applications, offers and acceptances by gender and discipline (FS or NS).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Since 2019, all PIs involved in PGR recruitment record all data regarding the PGR application process.</li> <li>◆ New reporting form to collate and centralise all PGR data, was introduced in 2024, managed by the SM.</li> <li>◆ Formal record keeping of all unsolicited enquiries for research posts has been introduced; potential applicants can be contacted directly in the event of a position arising in FNS.</li> </ul>
<b>4.1.5</b>	Request UCC Careers Services provides breakdown of FNS graduate destinations by gender.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ FNS programme directors analyse these data annually; reports to SMT and Outreach &amp; Public Engagement.</li> <li>◆ Gender balanced profiles of graduates, refreshed regularly, are showcased on FNS website.</li> <li>◆ Staff and graduate students are encouraged, and actively use, LinkedIn to maintain connection and track graduates' destinations.</li> </ul>
<b>4.2.2</b>	Devise strategies to encourage male applicants for research positions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Numbers of male PGR students are increasing year-on-year (e.g., from 27% of PhDs in 2019 to 37% in 2022).</li> <li>◆ Increased UG male students (up from 20% in 2021 to 42% in 2023) in FNS should ensure good gender balance in the academic career pipeline.</li> </ul>

Silver Action Plan (2024-2028)	
<b>SAP 2.1.1</b>	Create a Space Management Committee in FNS.
<b>SAP 2.1.2</b>	Expand the promotion of FS and NS programmes and highlight programme content and career opportunities.
<b>SAP 2.1.3</b>	Through Outreach & Public Engagement committee, devise and implement new strategies to continue efforts to improve 1st preference CAO applications, especially for FS.
<b>SAP 2.1.4</b>	Monitor the composition of students taking part time research programme options to identify any concerning trends.
<b>SAP 2.1.5</b>	Increase opportunities for PGs to be involved in outreach activities; in addition, increase opportunities to teach as part of PG training, e.g., FITU programmes, other lectures.

## 2.2 Embedding policy, practice and supports to advance academic and research careers

### a. Reflecting on recruitment practices in the department, answer the following:

Recruitment to academic and research posts in the department adheres to institutional policy on recruitment, which includes gender-balanced panels and training for assessors    Yes ☒    No ☐

If you answered 'no', please comment.

### b. Provide three years of data on application, shortlist, and appointment rates for recruitment by gender and grade. Where data suggests opportunity for improvement, comment and reflect. Include any other relevant information relating to recruitment processes and practice for academic and research posts in the department.

Academic staff increased significantly, from 16 (6F, 10M) (2018) to 23 (14F, 9M) (2024). The positions of five senior retiring academics were repurposed to align with UCC Futures (section 2.1a[i]), emphasizing interdisciplinary research and innovative recruitment. This enabled FNS to enhance junior staff career progression, address gender imbalances, foster diversity, and strategically manage NS staffing.

Funding reallocation allowed recruitment under two UCC Futures themes—Sustainability and Food, and Microbiome and Health—resulting in:

- 7 Lecturers (6F, 1M)
- 4 Senior Lecturers (2F, 2M)
- 1 Professor (1F).

50% of current staff were recruited within the past five years. Senior staff grades remain balanced (7F, 8M), reflecting strategic career-stage distribution.

The first female HoS was appointed during this period (2019-2023). Future HoS vacancies will be guided by the WIDE committee and HoS to ensure a broader, gender-balanced applicant pool (**SAP 2.2.1**). Since 2023, a rotating deputy HoS role (currently female) facilitates succession planning and leadership development.

The %F applications and appointments increased since 2019 [Table 2.2.1 (a),(b)], attributable to recruitment efforts in NS, a female-dominated field. FNS aims to attract male applicants through inclusive job advertisements and reframing roles in broader science contexts, e.g. sustainability, health systems. FNS' website highlights diverse career paths in nutrition, fostering broader representation.

**TABLE 2.2.1 (a): FNS ACADEMIC STAFF RECRUITMENT DATA BY YEAR, GENDER AND GRADE**

		Applications				Shortlisted				Appointed				Success Rate	
Reporting Academic Year	Recruitment Competitions by Grade	F	M	%F	%M	F	M	%F	%M	F	M	%F	%M	%F	%M
2018-2019	Head of School	1	0	100	0	1	0	100	0	1	0	100	n/a	100	n/a
2019-2020	Lecturer Below Bar in Sustainable Food Systems	10	10	50	50	3	1	75	25	1	0	100	0	10	0
	Lecturer Below Bar in Nutritional Sciences	11	3	79	21	4	1	80	20	1	0	100	0	9	0
	Lecturer Below Bar in Food Science	17	19	47	53	3	3	50	50	0	1	0	5	0	5
	Lecturer Below Bar in Human Nutrition & Dietetics	8	1	89	11	2	0	100	0	1	0	100	0	13	0
	Senior Lecturer in Human Nutrition & Dietetics	4	0	100	0	3	0	100	0	1	0	100	n/a	25	0
2020-2021	Lecturer Below Bar in Nutritional Sciences	10	7	59	41	5	1	83	17	1	0	100	0	10	0
	Lecturer Below Bar in Sustainable Food Systems	9	12	43	57	2	3	40	60	0*	0*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2022-2024**	Lecturer Below Bar	50	45	53	47	11	8	58	42	2	0	100	0	4	0
	Senior Lecturer	20	45	31	69	5	9	36	64	1	2	33	4	5	4
	Professor (Scale 2) in Dietetics	7	2	78	22	3	0	100	0	1	0	100	0	14	0
	Head of School (Professor scale)	0	1	0	100	0	1	0	100	0	1	0	100	1	100
TOTAL		147	145	50	50	42	27	61	29	10	4	71	29	7	3

\*position not filled.

\*\* reporting year expanded from 2022-2024 due to protracted recruitment to the LA/B and SL roles.

Note: no academic positions were recorded in 2021-2022.

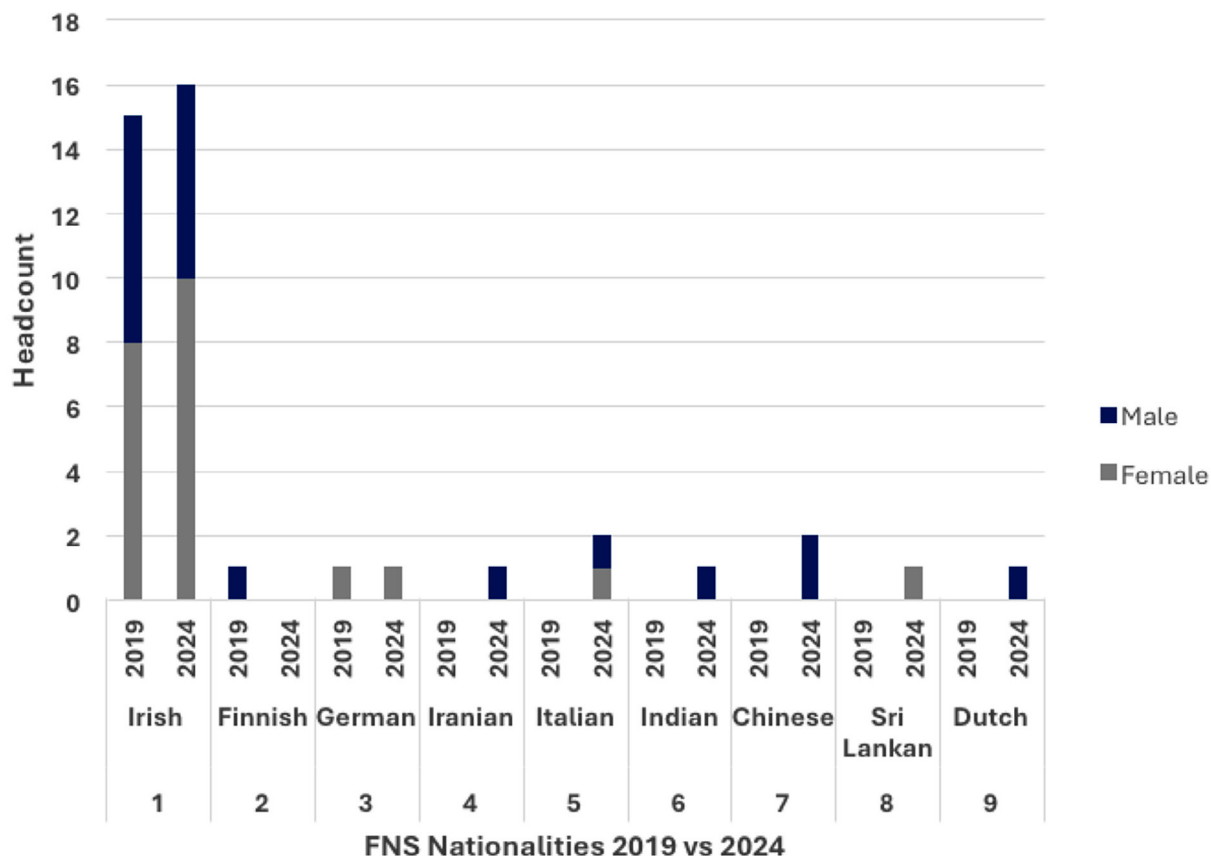
**TABLE 2.2.1 (b): ADDITIONAL RECRUITMENT DATA FOR 2024**

Appointed		
Lecturer Below Bar in Innovative Food Transformations	1F	
Lecturer Above Bar in Food Science		1M

\*Table 2.2.1 (b) is included to reflect 2024 appointments for which HR data was unavailable at time of reporting.

FNS successfully leveraged global networks and social media to expand academic recruitment reach. Currently, 9 nationalities are represented, up from 3 in 2019 (Figure 2.2.1).





**Figure 2.2.1: Comparative analysis of FNS academic staff by headcount, gender and nationality for 2019 and 2024. Note: headcount includes 2 FNS research professors, not funded by UCC/FNS.**

BAP 4.2.1 proposed FNS engage in UCC’s HEA-funded Senior Academic Leadership Initiative (SALI) to address the lack of female full Professors. While unsuccessful in application to date, FNS remains committed to addressing this disparity. UCC’s GEAP (2024) launches a promotion pathway to full professor, with up to five internally-recruited Professors by 2025, including two in SEFS, and commits to retaining/developing new SALI appointments. FNS will actively support eligible staff to apply, aiming to appoint 1F full Professor within two years (**SAP 2.2.2**).

### *Research careers*

During the reporting period, female applicants comprised 55% and secured 69% of available positions (Table 2.2.2). Women applicants had an overall 6% success rate, double the male rate (Table 2.2.2). Table 2.2.3 aggregates recruitment data by year. The grand total represents all job opportunities versus posts filled. Females were more successful overall, filling 37% of roles.

**TABLE 2.2.2: RESEARCH STAFF RECRUITMENT DATA BY YEAR, GRADE AND GENDER**

		Applications			Shortlisted			Appointed			Success Rate	
Reporting Academic Year	Recruitment Competitions by Grade	F	M	%F	F	M	%F	F	M	%F	%M	%F
2018-2019	Research Assistant	3	2	60	3	2	60	3	2	100	100	100
	PostDoctoral Researcher	5	1	83	5	1	83	5	1	100	100	100
	Senior PostDoctoral Researcher	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	100	n/a
	Senior Research Coordinator	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	100	n/a
2019-2020	Research Assistant	2	1	62	2	1	67	2	1	100	100	100
	Research Assistant (Dairy Processing Technology Centre)	2	2	50	2	2	50	0	1	0	50	0
	Research Assistant	2	1	67	2	1	67	1	0	100	0	50
	Research Assistant	3	4	43	3	4	43	0	1	0	25	0
	Research Assistant	65	43	60	65	43	60	1	0	100	0	2
	Research Support Officer (Research Dietitian)	3	0	100	3	0	100	1	0	100	n/a	33
	PostDoctoral Researcher	19	23	45	19	23	45	0*	0*	n/a	n/a	n/a
	PostDoctoral Researcher	18	27	40	18	27	40	0*	0*	n/a	n/a	n/a
	PostDoctoral Researcher / Senior PostDoctoral Researcher	7	13	35	7	13	35	1	0	100	0	14
	Senior PostDoctoral Researcher	3	7	30	3	7	30	1	0	100	0	33
2020-2021	Research Assistant	41	21	66	41	21	66	0	1	0	5	0
	Research Assistant (APC Microbiome Ireland)	25	14	64	25	14	64	0*	0*	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Research Assistant (National Dietary Survey Research Group)	29	12	71	29	12	71	1	0	100	0	3
	PostDoctoral Researcher	13	26	33	13	26	33	1	0	100	0	8
	PostDoctoral Researcher (APC Microbiome Ireland)	8	7	53	8	7	53	1	0	100	0	13
	PostDoctoral Researcher	3	8	27	3	8	27	0	1	0	13	0
	PostDoctoral Researcher	5	2	71	5	2	71	0*	0*	n/a	n/a	n/a
	PostDoctoral Researcher	9	5	64	9	5	64	1	0	100	0	11
	Senior PostDoctoral Researcher	6	2	75	6	2	75	1	0	100	0	17
2021-2022	Research Assistant (APC Microbiome Ireland)	21	7	75	21	7	75	0	1	0	14	0
	Research Assistant	7	3	70	7	3	70	1	0	100	0	14
	Research Assistant	10	4	71	10	4	71	1	0	100	0	10
	Research Assistant	12	6	67	12	6	67	0*	0*	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Research Assistant (APC Microbiome Ireland)	13	13	50	13	13	50	0	1	0	8	0
	Research Support Officer	2	2	50	2	2	50	0	1	0	50	0
	PostDoctoral Researcher	13	14	48	13	14	48	0*	0*	n/a	n/a	n/a
	PostDoctoral Researcher (Centre for Vitamin D and Nutrition Research)	3	8	27	3	8	27	0*	0*	n/a	n/a	n/a
	PostDoctoral Researcher (APC Microbiome Ireland)	12	8	60	12	8	60	0*	0*	n/a	n/a	n/a
	PostDoctoral Researcher (Centre for Vitamin D and Nutrition Research)	5	5	50	5	5	50	1	0	100	0	20
	PostDoctoral Researcher	5	5	50	5	5	50	0*	0*	n/a	n/a	n/a
	PostDoctoral Researcher (APC Microbiome Ireland)	10	4	71	10	4	71	1	0	100	0	10
	PostDoctoral Researcher	4	8	33	2	1	67	0	1	0	13	0
	PostDoctoral Researcher	1	5	17	1	5	17	0*	0*	n/a	n/a	n/a
	PostDoctoral Researcher	11	11	50	11	11	50	1	0	100	0	9
2022-2023	Research Assistant	98	76	56	94	76	55	3	1	75	1	3
	PostDoctoral Researcher	11	3	79	3	0	100	1	0	100	0	9
	PostDoctoral Researcher	47	48	49	46	48	49	3	0	100	0	6
	PostDoctoral Researcher	5	8	38	5	8	38	1	0	100	0	20
TOTAL		561	461	55	546	451	55	33	15	69	3	6

\*Position not filled; Note: success rate is ratio of appointments (M or F) to number of applicants by gender (n/a no applicants of a given gender or no appointments made)

**TABLE 2.2.3:** SUMMARY OF AVERAGE SUCCESS RATE (%) BY GENDER FOR RESEARCHER RECRUITMENT 2018/19 TO 2022/23

				Avg. Success Rate	
Reporting Academic Year	Recruitment Opportunities	Count*	Filled**	%M	%F
2018-2019	Research Assistant	5	5	100	100
	PostDoctoral Researcher	6	6	100	100
	Senior PostDoctoral Researcher	1	1	100	n/a
	Senior Research Coordinator	1	1	100	n/a
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
2019-2020	Research Assistant	7	7	3	42
	Research Support Officer	1	1	n/a	33
	PostDoctoral Researcher	3	1	0	14
	Senior PostDoctoral Researcher	1	1	0	33
	<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>31</b>
2020-2021	Research Assistant	3	2	2	2
	PostDoctoral Researcher	5	4	3	8
	Senior PostDoctoral Researcher	1	1	0	17
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>
2021-2022	Research Assistant	5	4	5	6
	Research Support Officer	1	1	50	0
	PostDoctoral Researcher	9	4	3	10
	<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>5</b>
2022-2023	Research Assistant	5	4	1	3
	PostDoctoral Researcher	4	4	0	100
	PostDoctoral Researcher	1	1	0	20
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>41</b>
	<b>Grand total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>37</b>

Note: success rate is averaged separately for F/M across competitions in a given year (n/a no applicants of a given gender or no appointments made).

\*Count is total number of job opportunities from 2018/19 to 2022/23.

\*\*Filled is total number of vacancies filled.

FNS upholds UCC's equality-focused recruitment policy and members undergo equality in recruitment training. FNS implemented this policy through BAP 5.1.1. From 2018-2023, female representation was 57% in committees, 45% of chairs, and 50% among external members (Table 2.2.4).

**TABLE 2.2.4:** SELECTION COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP ACROSS PANELS

			Total Board Members			Chairpersons			HR Representatives			Externs*		
Reporting Academic Year	Category of Post	Total Competitions	F	M	%F	F	M	%F	F	M	%F	F	M	%F
2018-2019	Academic	1	2	2	50	0	1	0	1	0	100	0	0	n/a
	Research**	0	0	0	n/a	0	0	n/a	0	0	n/a	0	0	n/a
2019-2020	Academic	5	10	5	67	3	2	60	6	0	100	1	2	33
	Research**	9	2	2	50	5	5	50	0	0	n/a	0	0	n/a
2020-2021	Academic	2	4	2	67	0	2	0	2	0	100	0	0	n/a
	Research**	9	4	9	31	7	2	78	0	0	n/a	0	0	n/a
2021-2022	Research**	15	6	9	40	7	8	47	0	0	n/a	0	0	n/a
2022-2023	Academic	7	23	12	66	5	5	50	5	0	100	1	0	100
	Research**	9	11	5	69	3	11	21	0	0	n/a	0	0	n/a
TOTAL		57	62	46	57	30	36	45	14	0	100	2	2	50

\* In some cases, no gender was known ('Unknown' status). Some academic and research competitions had no externs attending.

\*\* Not all recruitment opportunities have data reported on the selection panels.

For full data on the research competitions see 2.2 b) data query.

Note: Only one extern in the 2020-2021 year with an 'unknown' gender status.

### *Recruitment processes and practices*

Among 2022 Staff Survey academic respondents (6F, 1M), a majority (57%, 4F) agreed/strongly agreed they were satisfied with the recruitment process; the remainder (2F, 1M) neither agreed nor disagreed (no research staff response). FNS continues to work with HR partners to ensure recruitment processes are fair and transparent.

The AS logo and statement are displayed on all recruitment materials, with job descriptions gender-proofed. Equality in recruitment training (including unconscious bias) is mandatory for recruitment staff, with additional Chair training, and minimum 40% gender representation requirements for most competitions.

All academic vacancies are posted on UCC's website, circulated internally, and advertised nationally and internationally. FNS highlights our Bronze AS award in promoting roles via LinkedIn, X, search champions and academic networks.

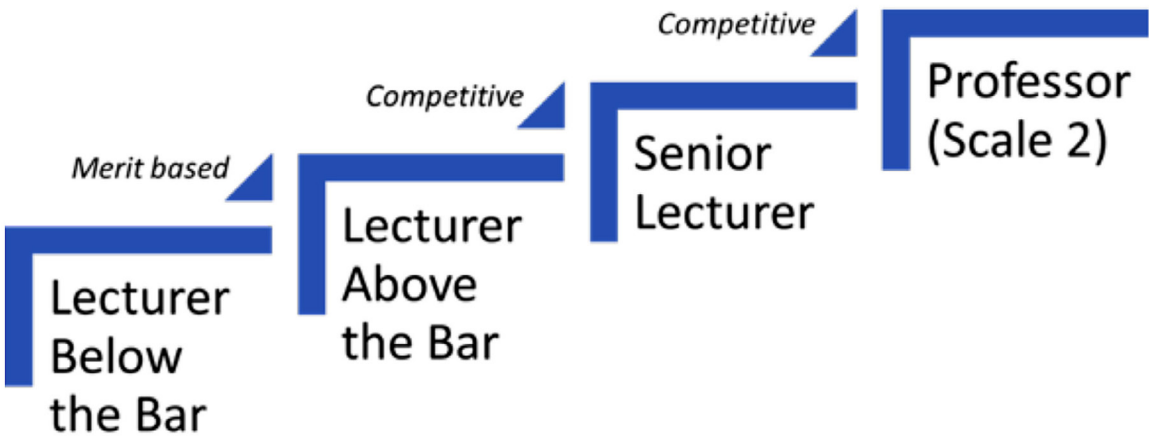
### **c. Reflecting on academic promotion in your institution, answer the following:**

Academic promotion processes, including eligibility criteria, are managed centrally by the institution

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

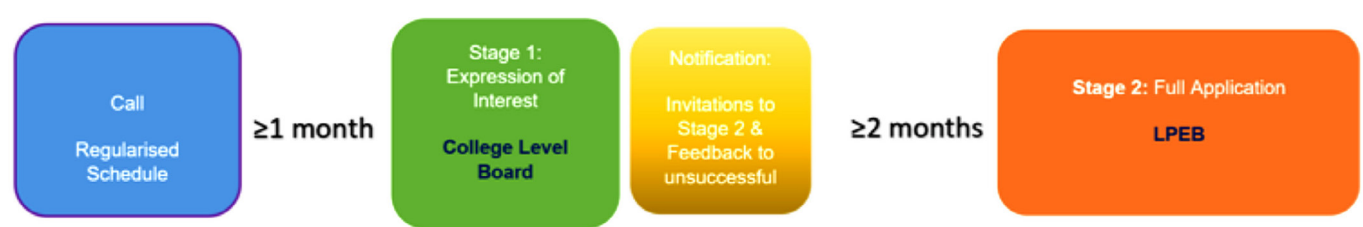
If you answered 'no', please comment on the department's role in academic promotions processes. If you answered 'not applicable', as prescribed promotion pathways are not in place in your institution, provide comment and reflection on alternative routes for academic career progression.

Figures 2.2.2, 2.2.3 summarize UCC’s academic promotion pathways and process.



**Figure 2.2.2: Promotion pathway for academic staff in UCC**

Promotions, excluding Professorships, are based on teaching, research, contribution to University and community, and leadership. Expressions of interest are reviewed by SEFS Level Boards, followed by full applications to University-level boards. Calls are twice annually (June, November).



**Figure 2.2.3: Steps in the promotion process for lecturers across the merit bar. Note: LPEB is Lecturer Progression and Establishment Board (Chair: Deputy President and Registrar)**

HoS communicates opportunities to eligible staff, ensuring transparency and clarity of criteria. For the 2024 SL call, detailed guidance was emailed to all eligible staff, including newer members. An open-door policy, and online booking system (launched 2023), facilitates academic staff one-to-one meetings with HoS to discuss career aspirations. These sessions help staff identify and implement steps to enhance promotion prospects. Unsuccessful applicants are encouraged to discuss feedback, to identify areas for upskilling for future calls, or to explore appealing to APAB.

BAP 5.1.3 initiated FNS’ mentoring scheme, supporting promotion applicants and professional development. Since launch (2021), 75% of participants (6F, 3M) surveyed reported satisfaction; 7 academic staff (4F, 3M) have served as mentors.

FNS mentoring complements UCC's Academic Mentoring Panel, supporting newly appointed academic staff. FNS recommends mentors for this panel, and new FNS academics receive guidance. Together, these initiatives reflect FNS's dedication to fostering professional growth and equitable advancement for academic staff.

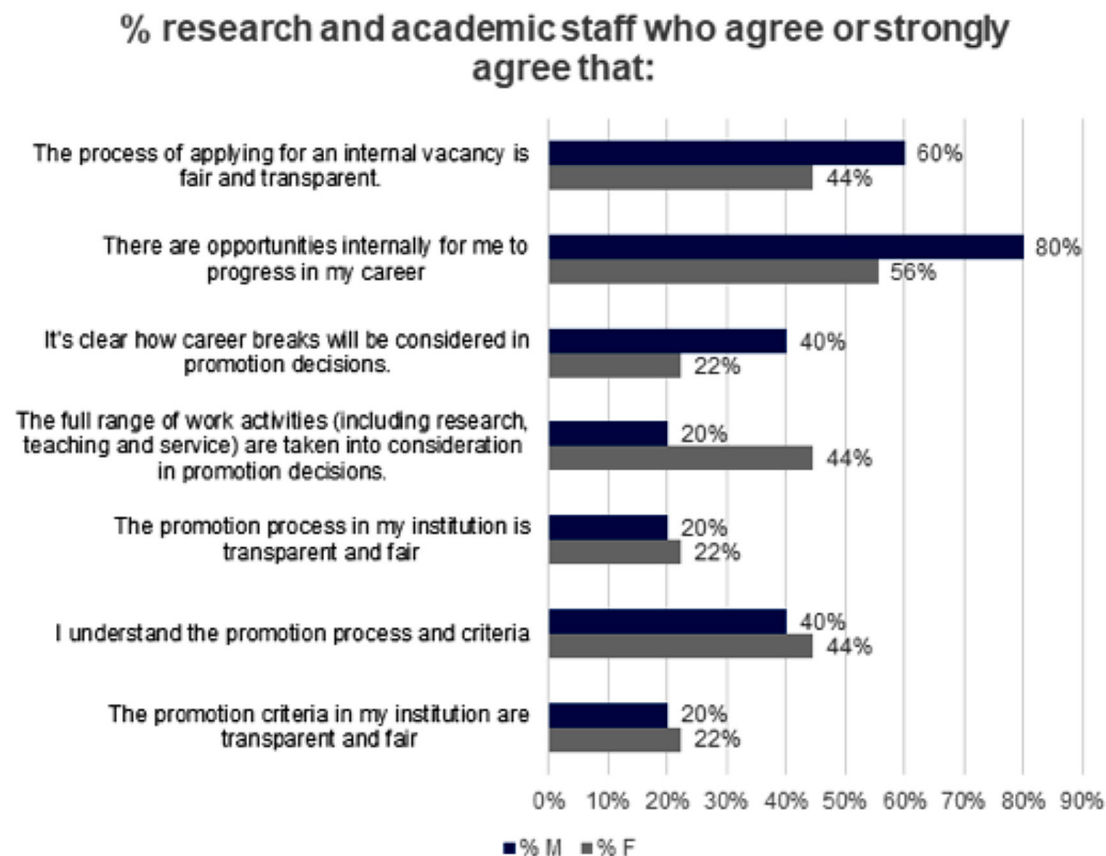
**d. Provide three years of data on application and success rates for promotion by gender and grade and present results from staff consultation by gender. Where data suggests opportunity for improvement, comment and reflect.**

Table 2.2.5 outlines FNS promotion application and success rates (2018-2023). Of nine eligible staff (5F, 4M), 78% (4F, 3M) were successful, aided by **BAP 5.1.3** (see above).

**TABLE 2.2.5:** APPLICATION AND SUCCESS RATES FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SCHOOL OF FOOD AND NUTRITIONAL SCIENCES

		Applications		Successful		Success Rate	
UCC Promotion Rounds (between September 2018-August 2023)	Promotion Calls	F	M	F	M	%F	%M
2018-2019	Promotion to Senior Lecturer	1	1	1	1	100	100
2019-2020	Promotion to Professor Scale 2	0	1	0	0	n/a	0
2021-2022	Progression Across Merit Bar	2	0	2	0	100	n/a
2022-2023	Promotion to Senior Lecturer	0	1	0	1	n/a	100
	Promotion to Professor Scale 2	1	1	1	1	100	100
	Progression Across Merit Bar	1	0	0	0	0	n/a
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>75</b>

2022 Staff Survey results reveal, while a majority of academic staff [80% of 14 respondents (9F, 5M)] are aware of internal career opportunities, confidence in promotion process fairness is low, with only 20%M, 22%F agreeing processes are fair and transparent (Figure 2.2.4). Concerns over the transparency of promotion criteria persist, especially among females, possibly due to perceived unclear University policies on considering career breaks. Males also expressed lower agreement regarding the comprehensive consideration of work activities in promotion decisions.



**Figure 2.2.4 Survey responses of research and academic staff to career development questions.**

To improve transparency and perceptions of fairness, **SAP 2.2.3** will clarify promotion criteria/processes including:

- Sharing promotion guidelines via email, Teams, WhatsApp updates.
- Hosting Q&A sessions with UCC promotions board members.
- Creating a digital calendar for key call deadlines.
- Developing a FNS website portal for promotion-related resources (**SAP 2.4.9**).

**e. Reflecting on opportunities for staff development reviews, answer the following:**

The institution operates a development review process, or equivalent, for academic and research staff

Yes ☒ No ☐

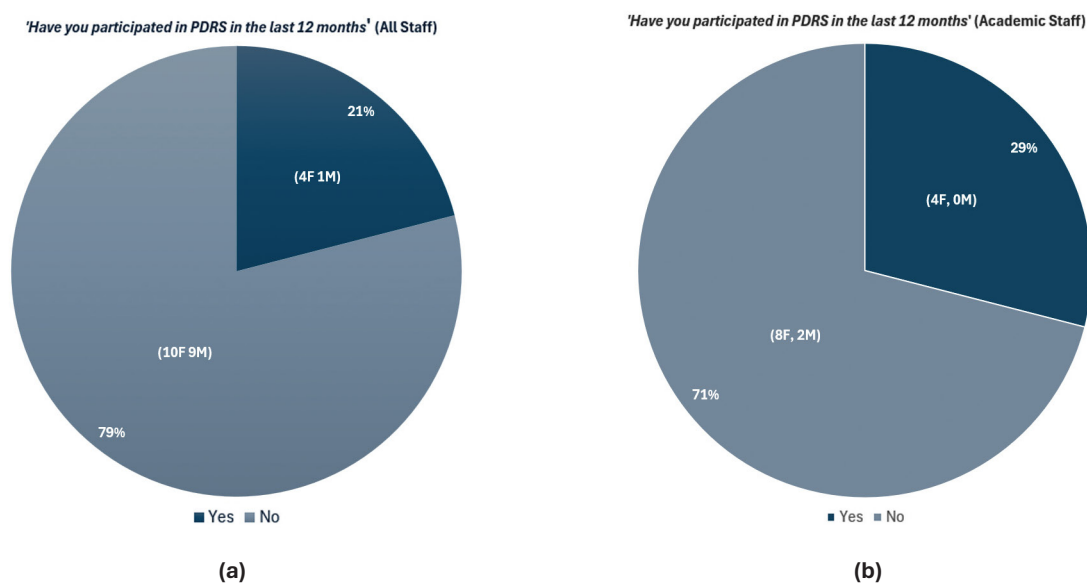
If you answered 'yes', comment and reflect on the implementation of this institution-level process in the department. This should include:

If you answered 'no', provide detail on department-level opportunities for staff to discuss professional development, including data on uptake by gender and results from staff consultation presented by gender.

## 2.2e (i) data on uptake by gender;

UCC's Performance and Development Review System (PDRS) aims to support staff development via mandatory, biennial, one-to-one line manager meetings., .. Feedback is provided, and future goals agreed,, including identifying training requirements. Staff can discuss long-term career aspirations, workload and work-life balance.

21% of 2022 Survey respondents (4F, 1M of 14F, 10M) reported participating in PDRS within the previous year (Figure 2.2.5a). 71% of academic staff had not participated (no research staff response) (Figure 2.2.5b).



**Figure 2.2.5: FNS 2022 Staff Survey responses regarding participation in PDRS; (a) all FNS staff (b) FNS academic staff**

Low uptake reflects broader University trends, influenced by:

- Introduction of *Simitive* e-performance platform (2021), disrupting data collection.
- Survey year falling outside the biennial PDRS cycle.
- Reliance on informal practices, e.g. mentoring, one-to-one meetings.

BAP 5.3.2 aimed to increase PDRS participation, achieving progress since 2019. FNS commits (**SAP 2.2.4**) to achieve 70%+ participation by 2026, aligning with University commitments.

## 2.2e (ii) results from staff consultation presented by gender;

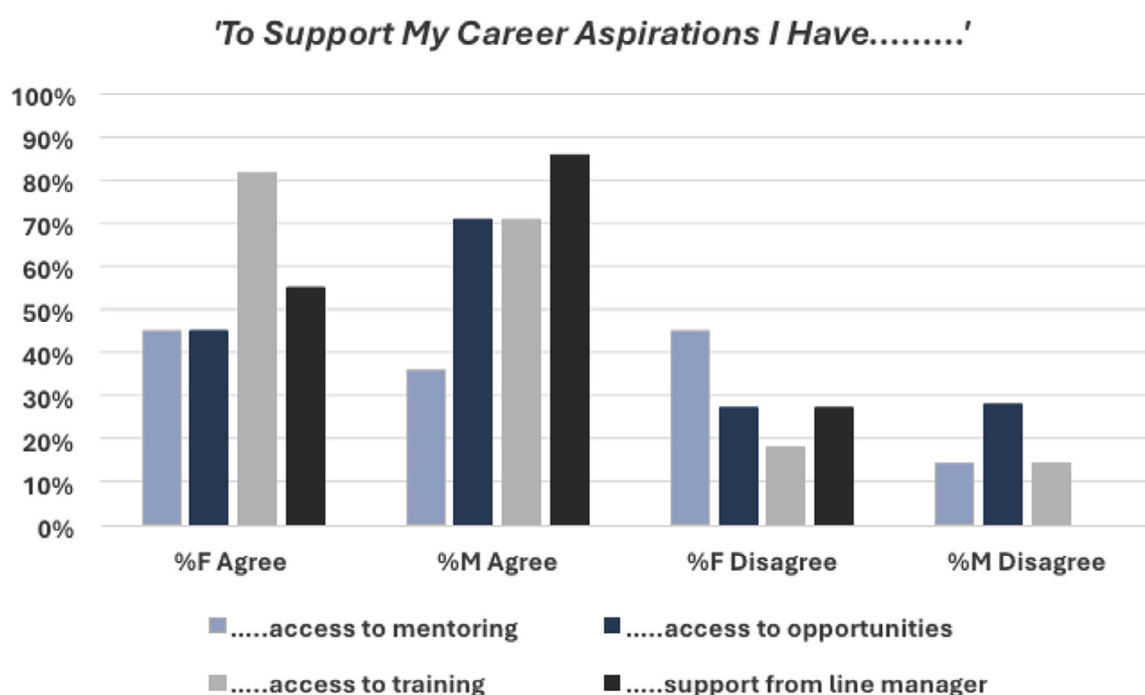
Among 2022 Survey respondents who used PDRS, all felt they benefited from participation.



**TABLE 2.2.6:** STAFF RESPONSES WHEN ASKED TO 'RATE YOUR LEVEL OF AGREEMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS REGARDING PDRS'

Question	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total
I used the PDRS to discuss work-life balance issues	0%	0	0%	0	40%	2	40%	2	20%	1	5
I used the PDRS to discuss my work objectives	40%	2	60%	3	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	5
I used the PDRS to discuss my workload	20%	1	60%	3	20%	1	0%	0	0%	0	5
I used the PDRS to discuss my career progression	60%	3	40%	2	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	5
I benefitted from my participation in the PDRS	40%	2	60%	3	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	5

Besides PDRS, FNS offers additional development opportunities (see section 2.2c). In the 2022 Staff Survey, of 18 respondents (11F, 7M), 55%F and 86%M felt supported by their Line Manager. Female respondents were happier with access to mentoring (45%), than males (36%), while males were considerably more satisfied with career aspiration opportunities (71% vs. 45%) (Figure 2.2.6). BAP 5.3.1 encouraged a balanced training profile, and FNS aims to ensure all staff engage in relevant programs (**SAP 2.2.5**). Most academic staff were satisfied with training access (82%F, 71%M).



**Figure 2.2.6:** Staff survey responses about supports for their career aspirations

Research staff feedback was limited (#3), therefore responses are not gender disaggregated (Table 2.2.7). All were satisfied with discussions on work-life balance and workloads. Most were satisfied with opportunities to discuss career progression and work objectives, while there was a mixed response to satisfaction with support for research funding and training/mentoring. **SAP 2.2.5** (linked to **BAP 5.3.1**) will promote training and mentoring for research staff. **BAP 5.3.3** ensures annual participation of research staff in performance development reviews, with data managed by PIs and the SM.

**TABLE 2.2.7:** RESEARCH STAFF RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONS ‘I AM SATISFIED WITH THE OPPORTUNITIES I HAVE...’

Question	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total
...to discuss work-life balance issues with my PI	0%	0	100%	3	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	3
...to discuss training and mentoring opportunities with my PI	33%	1	0%	0	33%	1	33%	1	0%	0	3
...to discuss my work objectives with my PI	33%	1	33%	1	0%	0	33%	1	0%	0	3
...to discuss my career progression with my PI	0%	0	67%	2	0%	0	33%	1	0%	0	3
...to discuss and review my workload with my PI	0%	0	100%	3	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	3
I am satisfied with the support I receive to apply for research funding	0%	0	33%	1	67%	2	0%	0	0%	0	3

## 2.2e (iii) information on any additional department-level opportunities for staff to discuss professional development.

Alongside successful mentoring initiatives (BAP 5.1.3), FNS’ professional development supports include:

*Individual Interaction:* Confidential one-on-one career development sessions with HoS. Uptake: 31 staff since 2023

*Committee Participation:* FNS ensures gender balance and a mix of seniority levels on committees. SMT reserves a position for junior staff to represent and advocate for early-career colleagues.

*Networking and support:* FNS organizes social/networking events, including Foodie Fridays and coffee

mornings. The monthly Research Seminar Series (**BAP 6.3**), includes presentations from new recruits and researchers. Early career staff have opportunities to chair. These inclusive events encourage dialogue, knowledge sharing, and mentorship. Feedback from postgraduate students reports 100% satisfaction.

*New Staff Induction:* Formal induction for new academic and PMS staff launched 2019, including a comprehensive staff Handbook (**BAP 5.1.2**). New staff are introduced via email and walkthroughs on day one. Line Managers guide new staff through an induction checklist. With many new hires recently, FNS will learn from their induction experience to identify areas for improvement (**SAP 2.2.6**)

**f. Comment and reflect on department engagement with institution-level supports for academic and research staff career progression as well as any department-level support available. This should include results from staff consultation presented by gender and may include, but is not limited to, support given to staff to:**

SEFS supports include:

- Information sessions clarifying promotion processes
- Annual externally-hosted workshops by Excello Coaching
- Tailored support, including personalized mentoring and workshops, for applicants for ‘Progression across the Merit Bar’ (2022).
- Promotion applicant workshop (2023) on effectively evidencing achievements, articulating accomplishments, and demonstrating impact.

UCC’s Post Doc Development Hub offers resources such as training in transferable skills, guidance on preparing Professional Development Plans and CV support.

Table 2.2.8 (a and b) shows female academic and research staff had high training participation rates (91% and 85%, respectively), with low male participation. Female researchers engaged with the PostDoc Development Hub at higher rates than males (Table 2.2.8b). #2F undertook Aurora leadership training in 2022. **SAP 2.2.5** will support higher Aurora participation

**BAP 5.3.4** proposed a dedicated researcher mentoring scheme within FNS. Despite low researcher survey response rates, feedback on career supports was very positive (Figure 2.2.7). Mentoring is also provided by UCC PostDoc Hub. SAP 2.2.7 will improve researcher engagement with career supports. FNS will also monitor training uptake and encourage all staff to participate in relevant courses (SAP 2.2.5).

*"I was fortunate to have a mentor who really prioritised my development as both a researcher and professional. They also made time for regular check-ins and offered honest, constructive feedback without being overly critical"*

**Female researcher**

**Figure 2.2.7: Survey comment from researcher regarding career supports in FNS**

**TABLE 2.2.8 (a): FNS ACADEMIC STAFF PARTICIPATION IN UCC TRAINING COURSES**

Reporting Academic Year	Course Category	Course	#F	#M	%F	%M	Total
2018-2019	Management & Leadership Development	Senior Leadership Development	2	0	100	0	2
	Career & Personal Development Skills	Orientation for Newly Appointed	2	0	100	0	2
		The Effective Employee	2	1	67	33	3
		Post Doc Development Hub	1	0	100	0	1
2019-2020	Career & Personal Development Skills	The Effective Employee	1	1	50	50	2
		Orientation Q & A for New Staff	1	0	100	0	1
2020-2021	Management & Leadership Development	IMI Leadership Courses	2	0	100	0	2
	EDI Skills	Athena SWAN Unconscious Bias	1	0	100	0	1
	Career & Personal Development Skills	Recruitment and Selection Committee	2	1	67	33	3
		Training for Research	5	0	100	0	5
		The Effective Employee	6	0	100	0	6
2021-2022	Management & Leadership Development	Aurora Leadership Development Programme	1	0	100	0	1
		Current Leaders Level 2	1	0	100	0	1
	Career & Personal Development Skills	Orientation Q & A for New Staff	1	0	100	0	1
		Training for Research	2	0	100	0	2
		The Effective Employee	2	0	100	0	2
Total			33	3	91	9	35

**TABLE 2.2.8 (b): FNS RESEARCH STAFF PARTICIPATION IN UCC TRAINING COURSES**

Reporting Academic Year	Course Category	Course	#F	#M	%F	%M	Total
2018-2019	Management & Leadership Development	Lean Yellow Belt Training	1	0	100	0	1
	Career & Personal Development Skills	Personal & Professional Effectiveness Courses	5	0	100	0	5
		Orientation for New Staff	1	0	100	0	1
		Post Doc Development Hub	13	2	87	13	15
2019-2020	Career & Personal Development Skills	Personal & Professional Effectiveness Courses	16	1	94	6	17
		Staff Wellbeing	1	2	33	67	3
		Post Doc Development Hub	4	2	67	33	6
2020-2021	Career & Personal Development Skills	Personal & Professional Effectiveness Courses	5	2	71	29	7
		Post Doc Development Hub	2	0	100	0	2
2021-2022	Management & Leadership Development	Aurora Leadership Development Programme	1	0	100	0	1
	Career & Personal Development Skills	Orientation Q & A for New Staff	1	0	100	0	1
		SPEAK Digital Badge	1	0	100	0	1
		The Effective Employee	5	1	83	17	6
Total			56	10	85	15	66

**2.2f (i) apply for research funding;**

FNS manages 29 national and international funded research projects, with a total budget of €8M (2024). Academic staff are encouraged to apply for external funding, supported at UCC, SEFS, and FNS levels. UCC's VP for Research and Innovation office offers guidance on funding opportunities, proposal preparation, and funder criteria, and hosts a monthly online PI forum for discussion, networking, and sharing best practices.

UCC's Research Support SharePoint site offers resources on funding opportunities, proposal templates, and grant-writing training. UCC Futures supports researchers in aligning projects with global challenges to enhance competitiveness for prestigious grants, e.g. European Research Council.

In 2023, FNS launched a monthly research seminar series for staff and PG students to highlight ongoing research and expand networking opportunities. **BAP 5.6.3** established an annual internal research conference, supported by 100% of respondents (8F, 6M) in PG discussions (Figure 2.2.8).



**Figure 2.2.8: Comments from PGs when asked about the annual FNS internal research conference**

Launched March 2024, FNS holds annual information sessions for staff (particularly new staff) on funding opportunities. FNS data shows no gender disparity in applications or success rates for securing funding. Notably, a new €10M Horizon Europe project, Zero\_HiddenHunger\_EU (2024-2027), is co-led by 1F, 1M academic staff..

## 2.2f (ii) develop excellence in teaching and learning.

New academic staff without a Teaching and Learning qualification must complete a part-time, one-year PG certificate through UCC's Centre for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning (CIRTL). This pathway ensures continuous professional growth and internationally recognised qualifications for staff. Core modules integrate EDI principles, such as universal design, neurodiversity, and accessibility.

Table 2.2.9 (a) and (b) shows that 54%F and 46%M academic staff (mostly new hires) participated in CIRTL, while 62%F research staff compared to 38%M engaged in the programme. Two senior lecturers (1F, 1M) completed CIRTL Master's degrees. **SAP 2.2.5** will record CIRTL training data annually, disaggregated by gender.

**TABLE 2.2.9 (a): CIRTL DATA BY GENDER AND YEAR FOR FNS ACADEMIC STAFF**

Reporting Academic Year	Programme	Job Category	#F	#M	%F	%M	Total
2018-2019	PG Certificate	Academic	1	0	100	0	1
	PG Diploma	Academic	1	0	100	0	1
	Masters	Academic	0	1	0	100	1
2020-2021	PG Certificate	Academic	1	1	50	50	2
2021-2022	PG Certificate	Academic	2	4	33	67	6
	PG Diploma	Academic	1	0	100	0	1
	Masters	Academic	1	0	100	0	1
Total			7	6	54	46	13

Note: No data reported for academic staff for 2019-2020.

**TABLE 2.2.9 (b):** CIRTl DATA BY GENDER AND YEAR FOR FNS RESEARCH STAFF

Reporting Academic Year	Programme	Job Category	#F	#M	%F	%M	Total
<b>2018-2019</b>	PG Certificate	Research	1	1	50	50	2
	Masters	Research	0	1	0	100	1
<b>2019-2020</b>	PG Certificate	Research	3	2	60	40	5
<b>2020-2021</b>	PG Certificate	Research	2	0	100	0	2
	PG Diploma	Research	1	1	50	50	2
<b>2021-2022</b>	PG Certificate	Research	1	0	100	0	1
<b>Total</b>			<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>13</b>

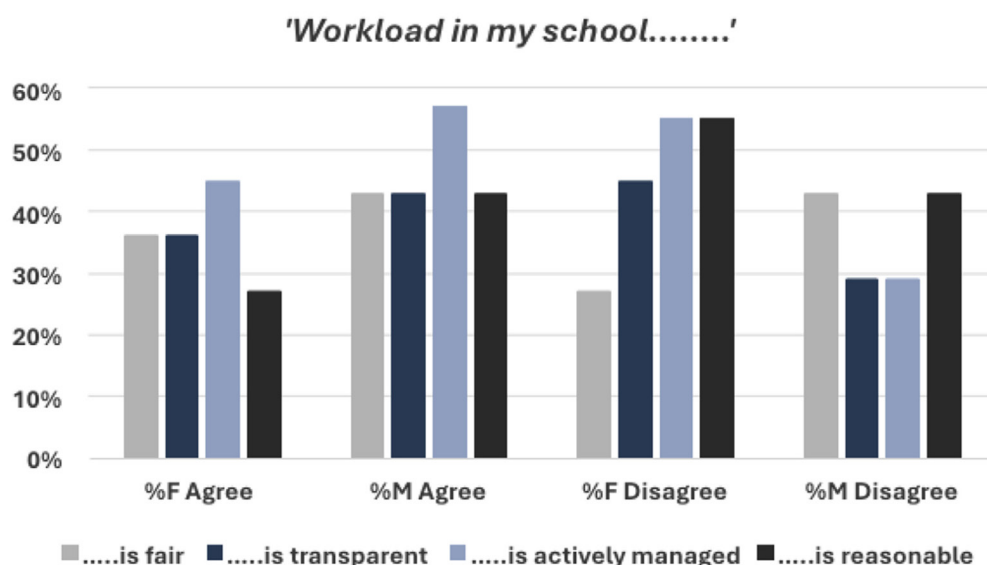
FNS has nominated 6F and 5M staff for UCC's annual Teaching Excellence Awards, with 4M and 3F awardees. **SAP 2.2.8** aims to increase award nominations.

**g. Comment and reflect on how workload is allocated and managed in the department (e.g. via a workload allocation model). This should include information on how the breadth of academic and research roles and responsibilities are captured in workload planning and allocation and results from staff consultation presented by gender.**

UCC introduced the Academic Workload Distribution Model (AWDM) in 2010. Implementation was suspended during Covid-19, and is currently under review.

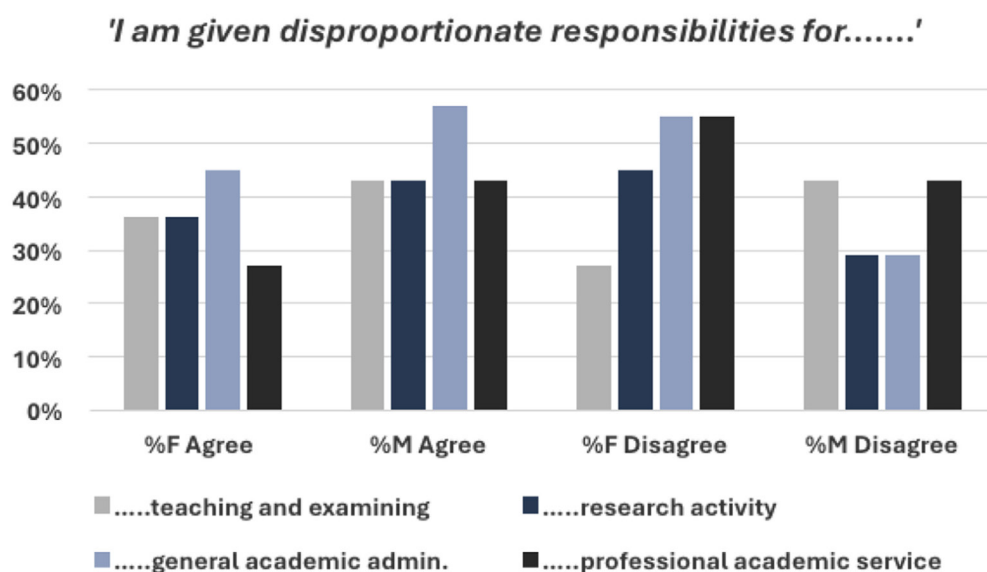
FNS developed a local AWDM, based on UCC's model. This provides transparency, especially for teaching. Within SEFS, workable AWDMs are discussed at College Management Team meetings which helps standardise some aspects of the AWDM and also inform Schools on ways to structure frameworks, while meeting specific School needs. FNS AWDM is under review to ensure it accurately reflects staff workloads, including research activities and atypical roles, and considers career stages of academic staff. In 2025, the HoS will work with a University Consultative Forum, led by DPR, to standardise workload models while meeting the needs of different academic disciplines (**SAP 2.2.9**).

Of 18 FNS staff survey respondents (11F, 7M) just 27% F (#3) agreed that their workload was reasonable, while 55%F (#6) felt their workload was unreasonable (Figure 2.2.9). By contrast, 43%M (#3) agreed and 43%M (#3) disagreed their workloads were reasonable. Only 39% (4F, 3M) agreed that workload allocation was fair and transparent, while 45%F (#5) and 57%M (#4) felt workload was actively managed.



**Figure 2.2.9: Staff responses regarding their workload in FNS**

Regarding workload categories and distribution (Figure 2.2.10), data shows concerns about imbalance; 27%F and 43%M reported disproportionate teaching responsibilities. Other issues included academic administration and academic services.



**Figure 2.2.10: Staff responses regarding proportioning of responsibilities with the AWDM**

Open-ended responses (not gender disaggregated) highlighted the need for improvements, including:

*'clarity on who supports workload distribution are needed'*

*'research workload is not allocated'*

*'AWDM not being rigorously used and discussed (although it should)'*

*'working hours are set but workloads are higher than the working hours can accommodate'*

*'estimating academic working hours per day is a poor guide to the reality of working academic life'*



FNS staff suggestions on future EDI priorities included:

*‘workload equality (huge disparities)’*

*‘fair distribution of workload’*

*‘I believe fairness in workload among academic staff should be discussed’*

Data shows 73%F (8 of 11) and 86%M (6 of 7) felt their workload increased since 2021, likely due to the pandemic. FNS will address this through **SAPs 2.2.4** and **2.2.9**.

FNS encourages academic staff to discuss workload through 1:1 meetings with the HoS. 64% F (7 of 11) and 43% M (3 of 7) agreed they could talk to their Line Manager if workloads were too heavy, with higher confidence among females that responsive action would be taken.

Progress and Impact of BAP Actions (2019-2024)		
BAP Action	Aim & Rationale	Progress & Impact
<b>5.1.3</b>	Introduce a mentoring scheme for academic staff applying for promotion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>75% academic staff report satisfaction with the mentoring system in place.</li> <li>For all promotion opportunities, senior staff are identified by HoS and support junior colleagues applying for promotion.</li> <li>80%F &amp; 75%M successful in promotion applications.</li> </ul>
<b>5.3.1</b>	Staff to avail of a balanced profile of training in professional and personal development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>82%F, 71%M surveyed very satisfied with training opportunities.</li> </ul>
<b>5.3.2</b>	Improved PDRS engagement to ensure that all staff have the opportunity to receive feedback from their Line Managers and the HoS to encourage staff feedback on the process and action any issues as necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of those who engaged with PDRS agreed they discussed work objectives.</li> <li>60% strongly agreed they discussed career progression and/or workloads.</li> <li>100% agreed that they benefited from participating in PDRS.</li> <li>Impact of these data will ensure more staff participate in future rounds of PDRS.</li> </ul>
<b>5.3.3</b>	All PI's to hold annual performance reviews with researchers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% uptake by FNS research staff.</li> <li>PIs record participation and suggested actions for follow-up meetings with researchers.</li> </ul>
<b>5.3.4</b>	When the researcher mentoring programme is rolled out to all research staff, the School will action that all newly appointed research staff will participate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FNS academic staff act as mentors for research staff, fostering an environment where researchers grow as scholars, scientists and professionals.</li> <li>Despite low researcher response rate to survey, feedback on mentorship is very positive.</li> </ul>
<b>5.6.3</b>	School to host an annual Internal Research Conference.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FNS Research Conference Day about to enter its fourth year.</li> <li>Showcases research of staff and PGs; facilitates connections and collaborations between existing staff and students in FS and NS.</li> <li>Significant impact on integration of FS and NS for staff and students.</li> <li>100% of staff focus group participants said it has been a significant benefit to FNS.</li> <li>Feedback from PGs overwhelmingly positive about this initiative with 100% agreement on its benefits towards an inclusive and engaging environment.</li> </ul>

<b>5.6.7</b>	Ensure that workload discussed whenever staff wish to and always during PDRS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ 67%F &amp; 43%M staff are comfortable discussing work-life balance which is a significant improvement on our 2018 survey results (23%F, 27%M).</li> <li>◆ 64%F &amp; 63%M would be happy to discuss workload with Line Managers.</li> <li>◆ 55%F and 86%M agreed that their Line Manager fully supported them.</li> <li>◆ FNS has implemented effective systems, inc., mentoring, whereby staff can discuss workload and work-life balance with Line Managers/HoS.</li> <li>◆ The HoS has an online booking system for one-to-one meetings; this system has had significant uptake.</li> </ul>
<b>6.3</b>	Introduction of monthly FNS Seminar Series.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ 3 speakers per session: an established lecturer, a new academic staff member, and a postgraduate researcher, balanced by gender and across FS and NS.</li> <li>◆ Feedback very positive; 100% of PGs saying it increases awareness of internal research, collaboration opportunities, and provides them with valuable presentation experience.</li> </ul>

Silver Action Plan (2024-2028)	
<b>SAP 2.2.1</b>	To date there have been only 2 candidates for HoS position; 1F in 2018 and 1M in 2023. WIDE committee will action to increase number of applicants and promote gender balance in candidates for HoS.
<b>SAP 2.2.2</b>	FNS will action to support eligible females applying for SALI professorships if a call takes place. As actioned in the UCC Gender Equality Action Plan 2024, FNS will identify eligible staff, especially females, in Q2 2025 when promotions to full professorships are advertised. Additionally, FNS will engage with SEFS and UCC to support plans on making full professorship positions a defined step of the academic promotion scheme.
<b>SAP 2.2.3</b>	FNS will action that guidelines on the academic promotion scheme are clearly communicated to FNS staff and facilitate equitable career advancement.
<b>SAP 2.2.4</b>	FNS will action, in line with the Government Sustaining Progress agreement and UCC policy on PDRS, to ensure all staff participate in PDRS.
<b>SAP 2.2.5</b>	FNS will action to ensure that uptake of training opportunities for all staff increases, especially among research staff, so that staff have a balanced profile of training for professional and personal development. Female academic and research staff will be encouraged to participate in the Aurora leadership programme. The SM will set up and maintain a database of staff training to ensure local records are up to date and data are available, upon request, by school committees.
<b>SAP 2.2.6</b>	FNS has a comprehensive staff induction process in place but has not, to date, surveyed new staff regarding its effectiveness. FNS will survey all new staff, 6 months post arrival, to determine on an on-going basis, if further enhancements to the induction process are necessary.
<b>SAP 2.2.7</b>	FNS will action (a) to ensure research staff participate in future surveys and (b) to ensure research staff are aware of, and engage with, all career support schemes.
<b>SAP 2.2.8</b>	Nominations of FNS staff for Excellence in Teaching awards have been low. FNS will action to increase the number of nominations of staff, to all categories of the awards scheme. In addition, FNS will increase the number of nominations to UCC's annual Staff Recognition awards.
<b>SAP 2.2.9</b>	FNS SMT is reassessing workload models which best suit the needs of FNS and also takes into consideration stage of career; the HoS will work with the University Consultative Forum on standardisation and implementation of an AWDM within FNS which takes into account the teaching, research, admin and other commitments of academic staff.

## 2.3. Embedding policy, practice and supports to advance professional, managerial and support staff careers

### a. Reflecting on recruitment practices in the department, answer the following:

Recruitment to PMS posts in the department adheres to institutional policy on recruitment, which includes gender-balanced panels and training for assessors. Yes ☒ No ☐

If you answered 'no', please comment.

### b. Provide three years of data on application, shortlist, and appointment rates for recruitment by gender and grade. Where data suggests opportunity for improvement, comment and reflect. Include any other relevant information relating to recruitment processes and practice for professional, managerial and support staff in the department.

Gender disaggregated data for PMS staff recruitment from 2018-2023 is shown in Table 2.3.1. During this period, 12 PMS positions were advertised due to programme expansions, retirements, and promotions. Recruitment processes were managed centrally by UCC HR (Section 2.2b), with input from FNS on skills and job specifications.

Highlights from the data include:

- Overall, 14% of both male and female applicants were successful, indicating no gender disparity in securing PMS positions in FNS.
- Females made up 75% of applicants and had a 75% success rate, primarily due to higher female representation in administrative roles and Dietetics, e.g., practice tutor positions in the MSc HND programme.
- The gender balance of technical staff shifted from 46%F in 2019 to 64%F by 2023.

Improving gender balance in PMS roles remains challenging, as female applicants dominate in administrative and Dietetics roles. FNS has 4 STOs (4F, 1M) eligible for promotion to CTO, when the opportunity arises. FNS will continue to promote PMS positions through diverse networks and ensure inclusive job descriptions to encourage applications from underrepresented groups.

**TABLE 2.3.1: PMS RECRUITMENT BY ACADEMIC YEAR AND GENDER**

Reporting Academic year*	Position	Gender	Applications	Shortlisted	Appointed	Success rate %
<b>2018-2019</b>	Programme Manager (FITU)	Female	8	8	1	13
		Male	0	0	0	n/a
		% Female	100	100	100	
<b>2020-2021</b>	Practice Tutor (Human Nutrition & Dietetics) (x2)	Female	11	5	2	18
		Male	2	1	0	0
		% Female	85	83	100	
	Technical Officer (x3)	Female	19	5	2	11
		Male	7	2	1	14
		% Female	73	71	67	
	Chief Technical Officer	Female	1	1	0	0
		Male	2	2	1	50
		% Female	33	33	0	
	School Manager	Female	5	5	1	20
		Male	0	0	0	n/a
		% Female	100	100	100	
<b>2021-2022</b>	Manager (FITU)	Female	8	4	1	13
		Male	3	0	0	0
		% Female	73	100	100	
	Programme Manager (FITU)	Female	2	2	1	50
		Male	0	0	0	n/a
		% Female	100	100	100	
	Training & Learning Manager (FITU)	Female	6	3	1	17
		Male	1	0	0	0
		% Female	86	100	100	
<b>2022-2023</b>	Technical Officer	Female	6	3	0	0
		Male	7	1	1	14
		% Female	46	75	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>All positions</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>14</b>
		<b>Male</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>14</b>
		<b>% Female</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>75</b>	

Note: There were no recruitment competitions for PMS Staff for 2019-2020.

Note: Success rate is a ratio of appointments (either M or F) to a number of applications by gender.

N/A stands for no applicants of a given gender, or no appointments made (hence no success rate could be calculated by gender).

### c. Reflecting on progression in your institution, answer the following:

Career progression opportunities for PMS staff are centrally managed by the institution (e.g. internal vacancy competitions; regrading; promotions pathway). Yes ☒ No ☐

If you answered 'no', please comment on the department's role in career progression for professional, managerial and support staff.

At UCC, PMS staff have multiple avenues for promotion, addressed separately below. Eleven FNS PMS staff (8F, 3M) responded to career progression survey questions with 50%F (#4) and 33%M (#1) agreeing internal career advancement opportunities exist within UCC.

### *Administrative Staff Promotions*

Managed by UCC HR through the Administrative Promotions Scheme, candidates are assessed based on competencies for each grade. Staff are supported through clear policies and structured processes, including UCC workshops, mentoring, and coaching. The availability of promotions and their distribution across grades are determined by institutional needs. However, staff survey results indicated that just 13% of females and no males felt they had promotion opportunities under this scheme. Locally, FNS SM mentors administrative staff to review competencies before applying for promotions, ensuring alignment with expectations. SM guidance includes:

- Delegating leadership roles to showcase skills
- Encouraging participation in committees to highlight contributions
- Recommending training programs to build required skills

This approach has been successful, with all three administrative staff under Grade V promoted in the last three years. FNS plans to raise awareness of this scheme, support, and mentor staff to apply (**SAP 2.3.1**).

### *Technical Staff Promotions*

Previously, Technical Officers (TOs) entered at different points of the scale based on qualifications. As of 2023, all new TO appointments begin at point 1 due to public sector controls. To progress to Senior Technical Officer (STO), staff must meet specific criteria, including three years' service and leadership roles. FNS has two TOs eligible for promotion to STO in 2025. Opportunities beyond the STO grade are limited (Figure 2.3.1), with many spending a significant portion of their careers at this level. There were only 3 promotion calls to Chief Technical Officer (CTO) in the past 45 years. As of 2023, UCC has 129 TOs, with a gender balance at the STO grade (50:50), but only 13 CTOs (3F, 10M). FNS has more female STOs (80%) than the UCC average, leading to more women eligible for CTO promotion. One female STO was promoted to CTO in 2022, and FNS is currently the only UCC unit with both a male and female CTO.

Two TOs in FNS are part of UCC's Technical Section Committee, working to increase CTO promotion rounds to ensure 20% of TOs reach this grade (currently ~10%). FNS will continue to support this through **SAP 2.3.2**, ensuring robust mentoring systems when opportunities arise.



**Figure 2.3.1: PMS staff response to open-ended question regarding career progressions opportunities**

Administrative staff can advance by moving to internal vacancies in other areas of UCC, while TOs tend to remain in specific areas due to the nature of their roles.

**d. Reflecting on opportunities for staff development review, answer the following:**

The institution operates a development review process, or equivalent, for PMS staff. Yes ☒ No ☐

If you answered ‘no’, provide detail on department-level opportunities for staff to discuss professional development, where different to above (2.e), including data on uptake by gender and results from staff consultation presented by gender.

If you answered ‘yes’, comment and reflect on the implementation of this institution-level process in the department. This should include:

**2.3d (i) data on uptake by gender;**

The UCC PDRS scheme is discussed in Section 2.2e(i). In the most recent PDRS cycle (2021-2022), 32% of PMS staff participated (Table 2.3.2). Following the Bronze application (BAP 5.3.2), PDRS participation increased significantly. By expanding the scheme to include workload and caring responsibilities, FNS aims to involve more staff [see Section 2.2e(i) SAP 2.2.4].

**TABLE 2.3.2: PDRS REVIEWS COMPLETED BY PMS STAFF BY REVIEW CYCLE AND GENDER**

PDRS cycle*	Uptake			
	Female	Male	% Female	TOTAL
2018-2019	2	0	100	2
2021-2022	5	2	71	7

\*No reviews completed during 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 cycles.

### 2.3d (ii) results from staff consultation presented by gender;

As discussed in Section 2.2e(i), 25 FNS staff responded to the survey on the PDRS process (data not disaggregated to protect anonymity). All respondents agreed they discussed work objectives [Table 2.2.6; Section 2.2e(ii)] and all found PDRS beneficial, but none used it to discuss work-life balance. **BAP 5.6.7** aimed to ensure work-life balance is addressed in PDRS. Survey results showed 82% (6F, 3M) of PMS staff were open to discussing workload with their Line Managers outside of the PDRS process. This suggests staff are mainly using informal discussions to address workload, but work-life balance will be included in **SAP 2.2.4** as part of FNS's commitment to staff wellbeing.

### 2.3d (iii) information on any additional department-level opportunities for staff to discuss professional development, where different to above (2.e).

Opportunities for PMS staff to informally discuss career development and receive feedback exist outside the PDRS process. Line Managers operate an open-door policy and the majority (80%) of PMS staff somewhat/strongly agreed with the statement 'feedback from my Line Manager, when given, is constructive', indicating staff find these opportunities beneficial. PMS staff responses (8F, 3M) to survey questions about career development supports are shown in Figure 2.3.2, with key patterns emerging as follows:

- 63%F and 33%M agreed their Line Manager supported their career aspirations
- 63%F were satisfied with access to mentoring, compared to 0% of males
- 50%F were satisfied with career development opportunities, compared to 33%M
- Most PMS staff were very satisfied with access to training (75%F, 66%M).

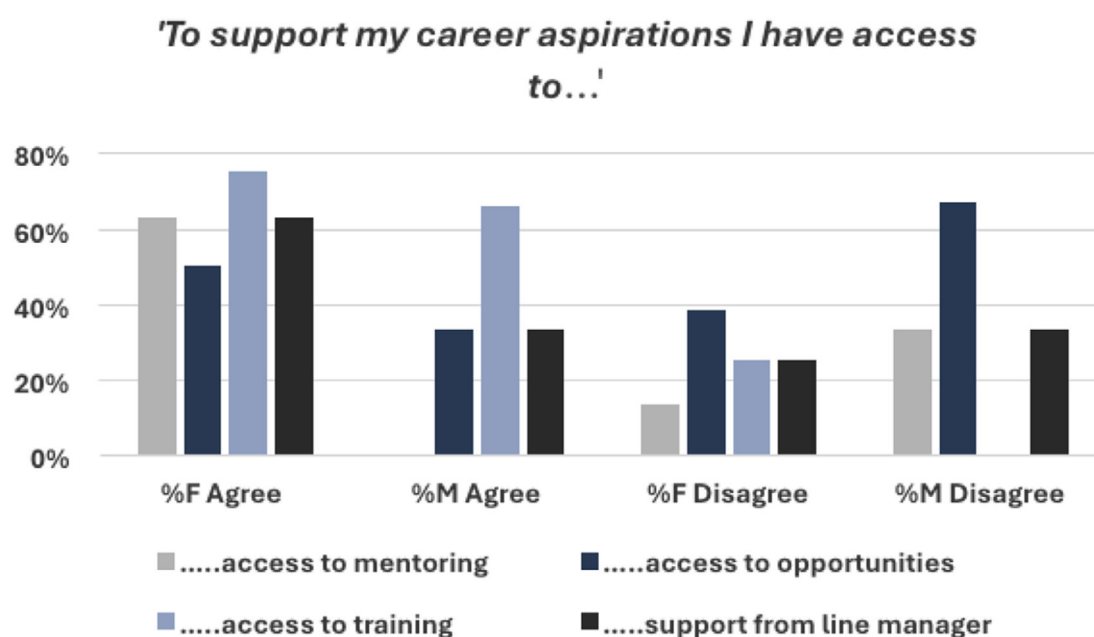


Figure 2.3.2: PMS staff responses to questions regarding career progression

**BAP 5.3.1** aimed to encourage a balanced approach to professional and personal development training. While generally successful, FNS will continue to support and encourage PMS staff to participate in relevant training programs (**SAP 2.3.3**). Additionally, staff can meet with the HoS to discuss work or career development [Section 2.2(d)].

**e. Comment and reflect on department engagement with institution-level supports for PMS staff career progression as well as any department-level support available, where different from above (2.f). This should include results from staff consultation presented by gender.**

FNS engages with several UCC-level supports for PMS staff progression:

- *UCC HR's Training and Development Unit (TDU)* offers online and in-person courses based on staff needs, advertised via email and on UCC's website, with specific courses for administrative and technical staff, such as those scheduled in June for technicians to avoid academic timetable conflicts.
- *The Staff Wellbeing and Development team* provides one-on-one guidance for PMS staff on career and professional development.
- *CIRTL* (see section 2.2f(ii)) offers accredited teaching development courses, including courses for PMS staff involved in teaching.
- *SEFS SMs*, who line-manage administrative staff, meet fortnightly to discuss staffing issues, including workloads and career progression. Promotion and training opportunities for are shared, and strategies for career planning in administrative roles are collectively developed.

Technical staff have access to several networking and training resources:

- UCC Technical Officers Forum allows technical staff to connect *via* Microsoft Teams.
- UCC's membership in HEATeD (Higher Education and Technician Educational Development, UK): 4F and 3M technical staff participated in HEATeD training courses.
- UCC is part of the All-Ireland Technical Staff Network, with two FNS TOs attending workshops and reporting on activities and opportunities. UCC's GEAP 2024 includes a commitment to secure steering committee membership for UCC technical staff by 2027.

Through **SAP 2.3.4**, 2 FNS TOs will be nominated to a UCC consultation group to support UCC GEAP (2024) Action 2.3.8 to progress sign-up to the Technical Commitment (UK) by 2028 (a network dedicated to visibility, recognition and career progression for all TOs in higher education).

#### *Training and Development Engagement*

- 78 UCC training and development courses were undertaken by PMS staff since 2019 (Table 2.3.3). High engagement, particularly in 2020-2021, was likely influenced by upswing in online courses during Covid-19.
- Most courses attended were in career and personal development (49 courses completed by, 98%F, 2%M), followed by management/leadership development (24 courses completed by, 96%F, 4%M). A comparatively small number of EDI skills courses were undertaken; (5 courses completed by 80%F, 20%M).

FNS aims to promote more balanced participation in EDI training as part of **SAP 2.4.9**.

Notable individual achievements include:



- One female staff member completed the CIRTl Masters in Teaching and Learning (2018-2019).
- Three STOs completed CIRTl Diplomas in Teaching and Learning between 2018 and 2020.
- Two STOs are currently undertaking Irish Management Institute (IMI) Level 2 leadership courses (2023-2024).
- One CTO completed IMI Levels 1 and 2 leadership courses, while another CTO (F) has been a member of the Institute for Leadership, UK since 2019.
- Two administrative staff undertook Aurora leadership training

**SAP 2.3.5** will recognize PMS staff contributions and achievements, improving visibility on FNS website and social media channels.

**TABLE 2.3.3:** UCC TRAINING COURSES UNDERTAKEN BY PMS STAFF IN FNS (2018-2022)

Reporting Academic Year	Course Category	Course	Female	Male	% Female
2018-2019	Management & Leadership Development	The Successful Team Leader	2	0	100
		Lean Yellow Belt	2	0	100
		First Steps Into Management	2	0	100
		Communicating with Impact - Managers/Team Leaders	1	0	100
	EDI Skills	Working Effectively Across Cultures	1	0	100
	Career & Personal Development Skills	The Effective Employee	3	0	100
		Introduction to Project Management	1	0	100
		Knowing Yourself & How You Work (MBTI*)	3	0	100
2019-2020	Management & Leadership Development	Aurora Leadership Development Programme	1	0	100
		The Successful Team Leader	3	0	100
		Communicating with Impact - Managers/Team Leaders	1	0	100
	EDI Skills	Improving Cross-Cultural Teamwork: In The Classroom	0	1	0
	Career & Personal Development Skills	Recruitment & Selection Training	1	0	100
		The Effective Employee	6	0	100
		Communication Skills	7	0	100
		Introduction to Project Management	1	0	100
2020-2021	Management & Leadership Development	Current Leaders Level 1	0	1	0
		The Successful Team Leader	7	0	100
		An Introduction to Change Management for Line Managers	1	0	100
		Technical Officers Only: Self-Leadership Workshop	1	0	100
	EDI Skills	Athena SWAN Unconscious Bias	2	0	100
		Trans Awareness: The Basics	1	0	100
	Career & Personal Development Skills	Mid-Career Financial Planning	1	0	100
		The Effective Employee	11	0	100
		Communication Skills	9	0	100
		Technical Officers Only: Managing Your Wellbeing & Resilience	1	0	100
2021-2022	Management & Leadership Development	Current Leaders Level 2	1	0	100
	EDI Skills	Athena SWAN Unconscious Bias	1	0	100
	Career & Personal Development Skills	Recruitment and Selection Committee	1	1	50
		Take 60mins: Constructive Feedback for the Hybrid Workplace	2	0	100
		Technical Officers Only: Knowing Yourself & Others (MBTI*)	1	0	100
TOTAL			75	3	96.2

\*Myers-Briggs Type Indicator

### *Further supports available*

While opportunities for TO career advancement are limited, FNS has worked to address this challenge. Many TOs hold advanced qualifications (Masters or PhD) and contribute to FNS research publications. FNS strives to ensure TOs continue to be acknowledged as co-authors on publications where their research contribution has been significant. FNS encourages TOs to broaden their skills by training on different equipment and working with research groups beyond their assigned areas. STOs are encouraged to prepare for promotion by managing FNS projects or completing training courses that support career advancement. **SAP 2.3.3** will focus on identifying training gaps for TOs and exploring upskilling opportunities. STOs and CTOs are well represented on FNS committees; however, part of **SAP 2.3.3** will include a broadening of TO grades on committees.

UCC HR operates a mentoring scheme for administrative staff applying for promotion. Similarly, on appointment, new TOs are assigned mentors, typically from another department. In FNS, a local mentoring system pairs TOs with a mentor identified by the managerial CTO. TOs are also encouraged to join committees at School, College, and University levels to ensure equal opportunities and broader involvement.

Launched in Summer 2022 (**BAP 6.1**), the FNS Staff Support Fund offers up to €2k per individual every two years for travel, conferences, sabbatical leave, and staff-led development initiatives. PMS staff were made aware of this fund and its application procedure during FNS staff meetings and via email from the SM. 10 TOs attended BOC Gas Training in 2023, funded by the Staff Support Fund, and one PMS staff member completed an external HACCP course using the fund (Figure 2.3.3). When applying, staff must outline how the fund will be used to benefit themselves and the School. FNS will continue promoting this fund to PMS staff as part of **SAP 2.3.6**.



**Figure 2.3.3: Testimonial from PMS staff member who availed of the staff support fund in 2023.**

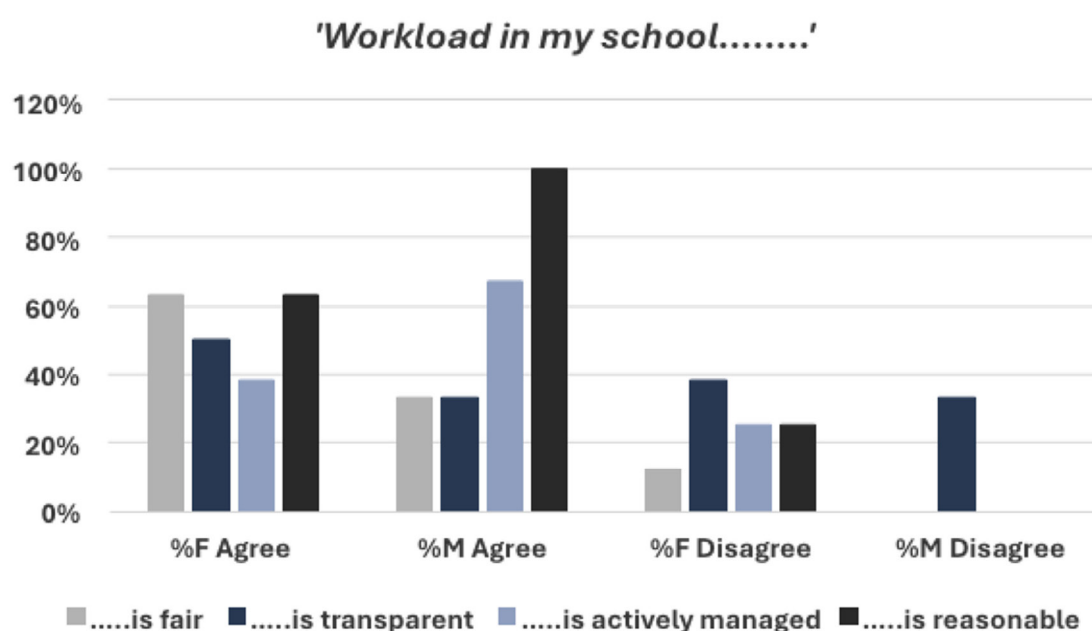
**f. Comment and reflect on how workload is distributed and managed. This should include information on how the breadth of professional, managerial and support roles and responsibilities are captured in workload planning and allocation and results from staff consultation presented by gender.**

In FNS, Line Managers oversee PMS staff workloads, balancing routine tasks, projects, and support roles to

meet FNS goals. The SM supervises administrative staff, and the 2021 establishment of the Managerial Chief Technical Officer role improved workload management for technical staff.

Survey responses from 11 PMS staff (8F, 3M) regarding workload showed:

- 63%F and 33%M agreed workload was fair
- 50%F and 33%M agreed it was transparent
- 38%F and 67%M agreed workload was actively managed
- 63%F and 100%M agreed their workload was reasonable.



**Figure 2.3.4: PMS staff responses regarding their workload in FNS**

Respondents (75%F, 100%M) felt they could approach their Line Manager, with males more confident (100%) about Line Manager action if issues arose. However, 25%F and 67%M reported disproportionate responsibilities outside their job description. Feedback also indicated that less than half felt their workload aligned with career goals, and there were concerns over workload management, particularly among female staff.

FNS will introduce clearer job duties and mechanisms to recognise additional responsibilities (**SAP 2.3.7**) to address these issues and ensure fairer workload distribution and alignment with career aspirations.

Progress and Impact of BAP Actions (2019-2024)		
BAP Action	Aim & Rationale	Progress & Impact
5.1.3	Introduction of mentoring scheme for all staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Mentoring in place for PMS staff when commencing their careers and when applying for promotion.</li> </ul>
5.3.1	Staff to avail of a balanced profile of training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Increasing numbers of PMS staff undertaking professional and personal development training.</li> <li>◆ 75%F, 66%M PMS satisfied with training opportunities.</li> </ul>
5.3.2	Improved PDRS engagement for all staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Engagement with PDRS scheme increased from 9% to 32% of PMS staff.</li> <li>◆ 100% participants reported it as a very positive experience.</li> <li>◆ Staff utilising Line Manager process to discuss workloads and career objectives without a need to escalate into the formal PDRS process.</li> </ul>
5.6.7	Ensure that workload as it relates to work-life balance is discussed whenever staff wish to and always during PDRS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ 82% PMS staff agreed they are happy to discuss workload with their Line Manager.</li> <li>◆ FNS has informal processes in place to support staff via Line Managers or HoS.</li> <li>◆ Online booking system for one-to-one meetings with HoS; high uptake by PMS staff.</li> </ul>

Silver Action Plan (2024-2028)	
SAP 2.3.1	Ensure all FNS administration staff are aware of the Administrative Promotions Scheme and actively support, mentor and encourage eligible staff to apply.
SAP 2.3.2	Continue to engage with UCC to ensure promotion rounds/opportunities to CTO grade for technical staff occur consistently and have a minimum number of female applicants per round.
SAP 2.3.3	Promote all PMS HR training courses and highlight relevance to the working environment and career progression. FNS will collate all PMS training opportunities into one document so that all staff have similar awareness/access to training. Female administrative staff will be actively encouraged to train in leadership through the Aurora programme. Identify any gaps in training for technical staff, explore opportunities for upskilling within FNS, and seek suitable courses or workshops. Spread representation of TOs on FNS committees across all grades.
SAP 2.3.4	Engage with UCC as they strive to sign up to the Technician Commitment (UK) in 2027; an important initiative aiming to ensure visibility, recognition, career development and sustainability for technicians working in higher education.
SAP 2.3.5	Improve school recognition of the contribution of PMS staff to school activities via greater visibility on the school website and celebrate their achievements more publicly.
SAP 2.3.6	FNS will action to ensure all PMS staff are aware of the FNS Staff Support fund and the diverse range of options where it may be used to support training and career progression.
SAP 2.3.7	FNS PMS Line Managers will institute a comprehensive outline of duties and responsibilities for PMS staff with mechanisms for recognising and rewarding duties undertaken outside their core responsibilities.

## 2.4. Evaluating culture, inclusion and belonging

a. Provide information on how the department ensures that culture and practices support inclusion and belonging. This should include, but is not limited to, information on how the department actively considers gender equality, and EDI more broadly, in:

### 2.4a (i) organisation of meeting and events;

FNS recognizes the vital role culture and practices play in fostering a supportive and productive workplace. Inclusive practices are embedded into daily actions to create a healthy and welcoming environment.

#### *Meetings*

UCC maintains a meeting policy, adhering to AS principles, whereby core meetings are scheduled between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm. Survey data (Figures 2.4.1 and 2.4.2) revealed:

- Of 29 (18F, 11M) respondents, 62% (11F, 7M) were aware of the policy
- Most respondents (79%F, 91%M) reported that they were not obliged to attend meetings outside the 9:00 am–5:00 pm standard working hours
- 61%F (11F) and 82%M (9M) stated that FNS meetings fell consistently within core hours.

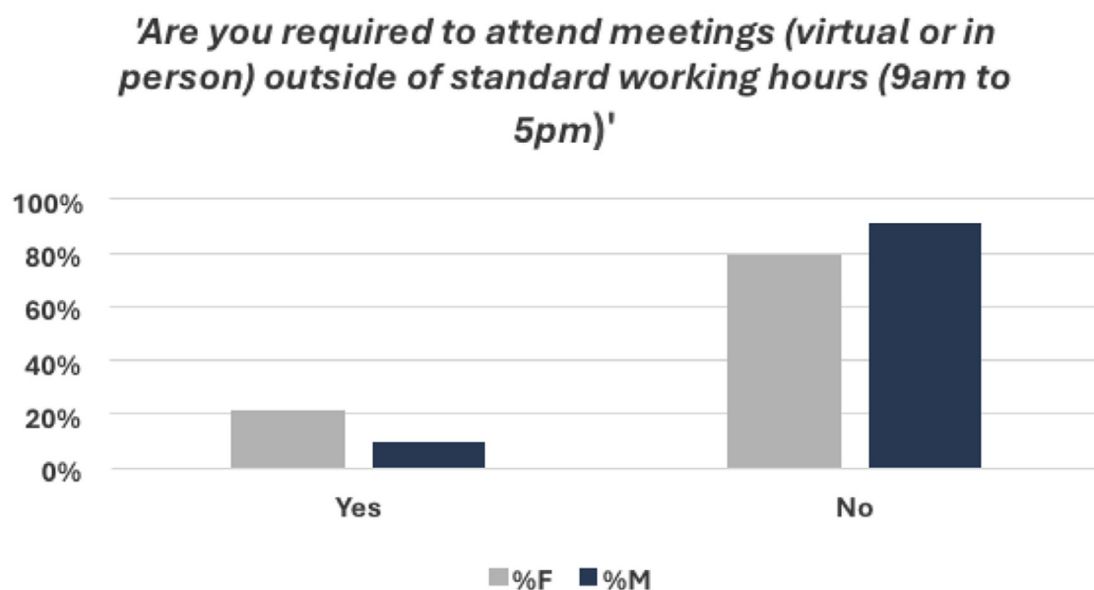
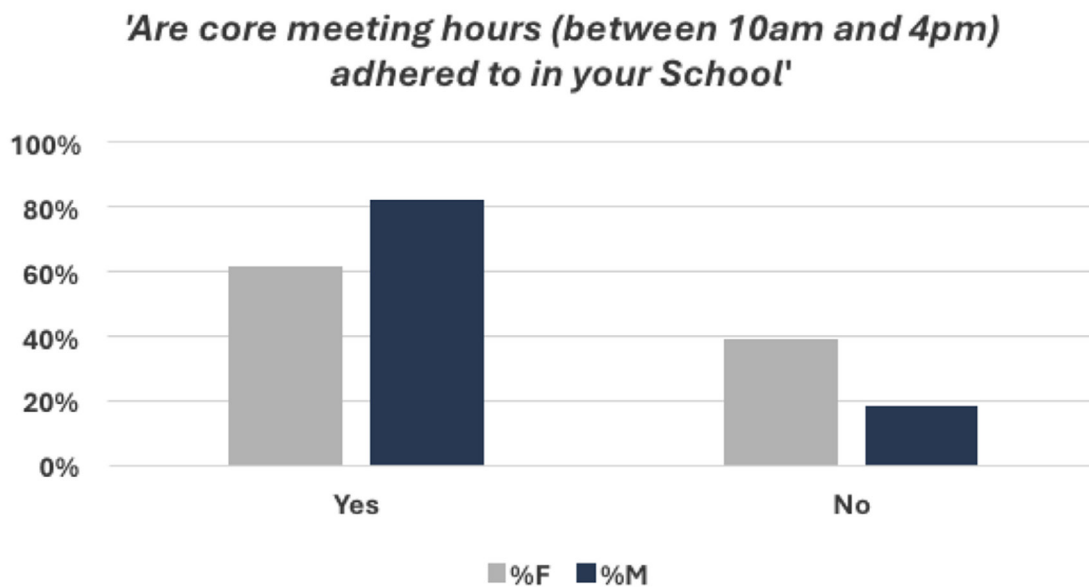


Figure 2.4.1: FNS responses regarding attendance at meetings outside of standard working hours.

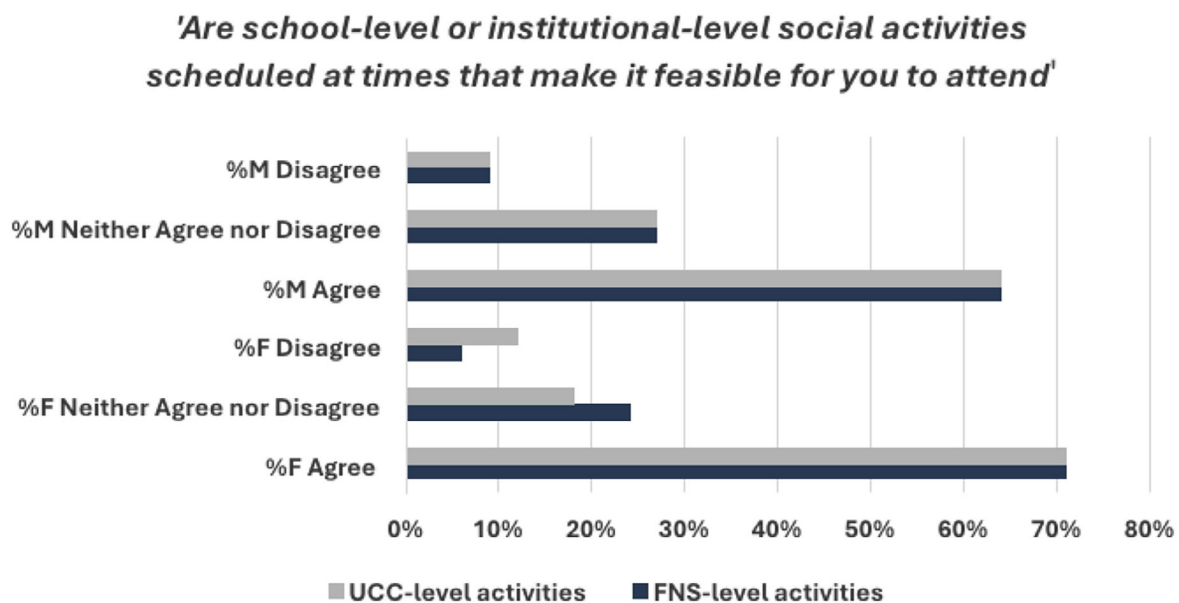


**Figure 2.4.2: Staff responses to the adherence to core meeting hours in FNS.**

Despite efforts to comply, some female staff noted that meetings occur outside core hours due to global time zones or program-related obligations. Under **SAP 2.4.1**, FNS will emphasize its policy on meeting times, which currently involves consensus scheduling via Doodle Polls, with options planned in advance to accommodate caring responsibilities.

#### *Social Events*

Regarding social activities, most respondents (70%F, 64%M) were satisfied with event scheduling in FNS and UCC, while 24%F and 27%M neither agreed nor disagreed about FNS-level activities (Figure 2.4.3).



**Figure 2.4.3: Staff responses when asked 'if social activities (virtual and in person) at UCC- or FNS-level are scheduled at times that make it feasible for them to attend'.**

Following the AS Bronze application, through initiatives such as **BAP 5.6.8** (2019) and, later, **BAP 6.8** (2023), more social interaction was introduced in FNS:

- The semester 1 School Assembly is followed by a Christmas party, scheduled for inclusivity.
- Initiatives such as *Foodie Fridays* (June 2024) and multicultural celebrations boost morale and enhance inclusivity.
- FNS seminars, held at lunchtimes or agreed times, are hybrid, recorded, and followed by receptions.

UG attendance at seminars and events remains low. In discussions with UGs (5F, 3M), students expressed a preference for career-oriented events, such as networking days, scheduled immediately after lectures to address logistical issues such as commutes and reliance on public transport. These insights highlight the need for purpose-driven, flexible events focused on networking (**SAP 2.4.2**).

Postgraduate feedback (8F, 6M) was generally positive regarding events such as the annual internal Research Day (Figure 2.4.4), although PGs, including FNS-based Teagasc students, requested more social events. The FNS PG-led Research Committee (**BAP 6.4**) has successfully organized events, including quiz nights and adventure days (June 2024).



**Figure 2.4.4: Comments from PGs when asked about events in FNS**

FNS also prioritizes event relevance with events like the '*Nutrition and Menopause*' seminar (October 2023) which attracted 73 attendees (66F, 7M), and demonstrated that FNS actively supports UCC's Menopause Support Policy (2024).



**Figure 2.4.5: FNS seminar ‘Nutrition and Menopause’, October 2023; hosted Dr Aisling Aherne (right) with Drs Samantha Cushen (left) and Alice Lucey from FNS.**

#### *Emails*

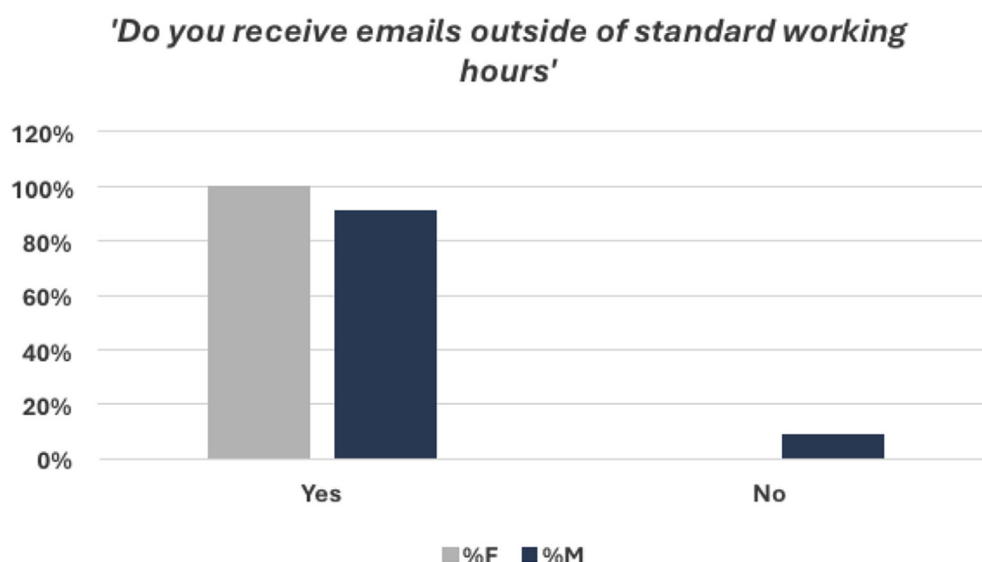
Survey data (29 respondents, 18F, 11M) revealed (Figures 2.4.6 and Figure 2.4.7):

- 73%F and 91%M send emails outside standard hours
- 100%F and 91%M receive emails outside standard hours
- Among those sending emails, 48% were academic staff, 6% PMS, 14% technical staff, and 10% research staff.



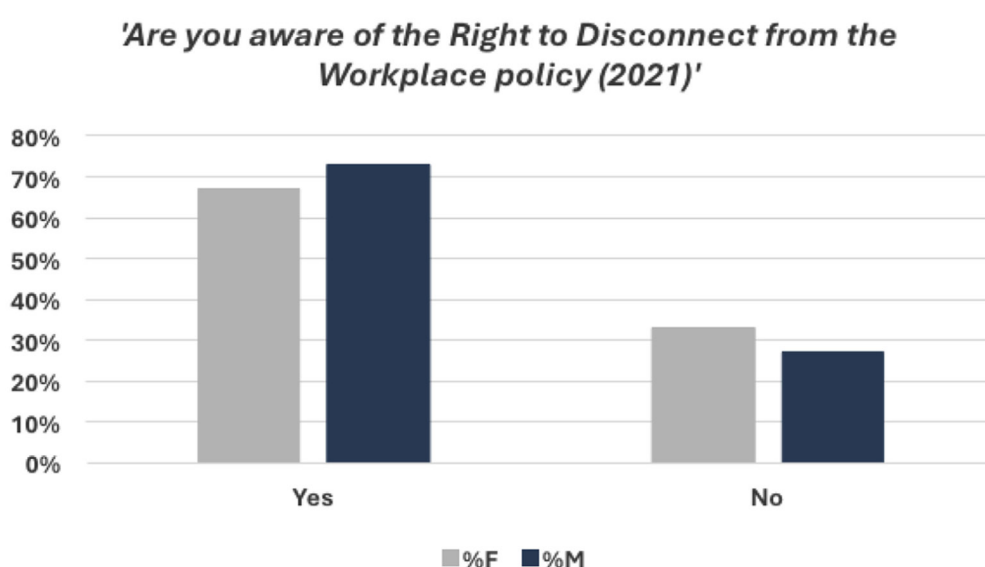
**Figure 2.4.6: Staff survey responses to question ‘do you currently send emails outside of standard working hours’**



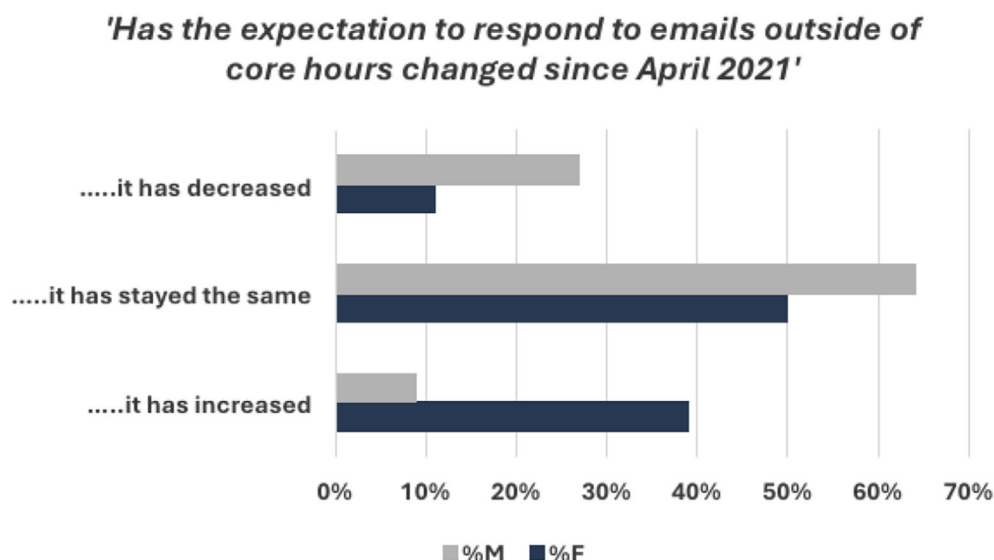


**Figure 2.4.7: Staff survey responses to question ‘do you receive emails outside of standard working hours’**

Figure 2.4.8 shows that 67%F and 73%M were aware of the policy Right to Disconnect policy (2021) but 50%F and 64%M felt expectations to respond to emails remained unchanged and 39%F believed it had increased (Figure 2.4.9). A focus group (3F, 3M) confirmed that all participants were aware of the Right to Disconnect Policy but had not read it. Most agreed checking emails outside hours was a personal choice and that such emails were typically not work-related.



**Figure 2.4.8: Staff survey responses to question ‘are you aware of the Right to Disconnect from the Workplace policy (2021)’**



**Figure 2.4.9: Staff survey responses to question ‘has the expectation to respond to emails outside of core hours changed since April 2021’**

**SAP 2.4.1** will ensure that all FNS staff adopt the UCC Management Team protocol (2022) and use features such as ‘send next day’ or ‘work in draft’ and include disclaimers in email signatures advising recipients not to respond outside core hours.

To foster a culture supporting the Right to Disconnect, **SAP 2.4.3** will promote awareness of the policy and include dedicated resources on the FNS staff wellbeing website.

#### **2.4a (ii) images and text used in department spaces and on the department’s website;**

FNS actively promotes gender equality, diversity, inclusion, and wellbeing through both physical and digital initiatives.

- Athena SWAN (AS) posters and banners are displayed in key areas, including main entrances and the main office (Figure 2.4.10a, b), and prominently featured at school events and open days (**BAP 3.1.5**).
- The AS Bronze award is displayed in the FNS meeting room, with its logo included in staff email signatures and research presentations.
- Photographs of celebratory events (e.g., course completions, workshops) are taken in the Glass Atrium with the AS banner displayed, showcasing FNS’s commitment to EDI and AS principles on UCC websites and externally (Figure 2.4.11a, b).



(a)



(b)

Figure 2.4.10: FNS Athena SWAN Poster (a) and Banner (b)



(a)

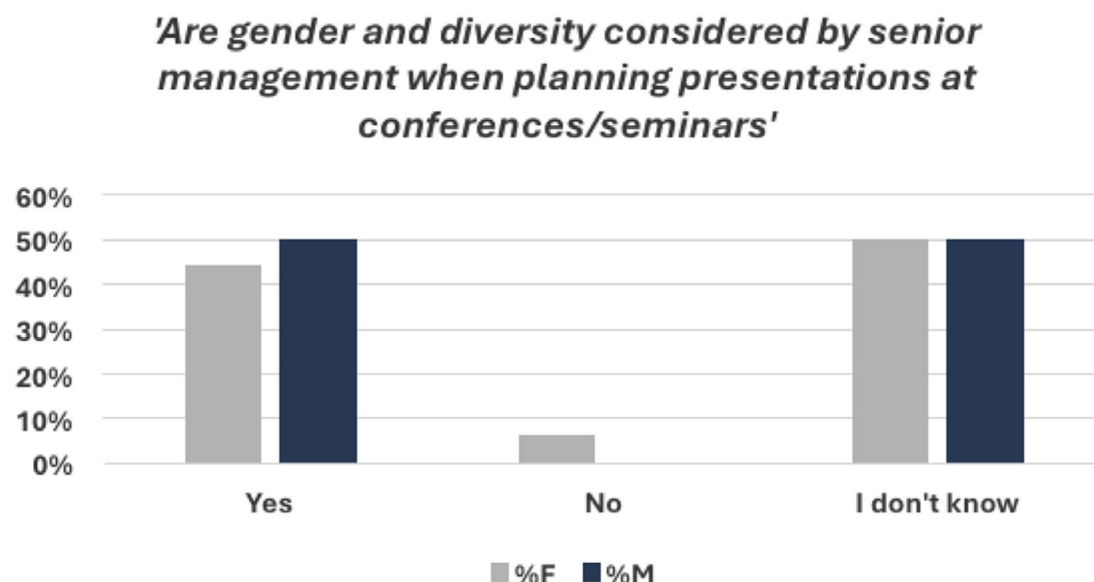


(b)

Figure 2.4.11 (a): Final year MTU BA (Hons) Culinary Entrepreneurship students attending a workshop in FNS (2024; inc., far left David Waldron, CTO, FNS); (b) Participants at FITU 4-day, digital badge, course 'Developing Future Agri Leaders' (2024)

Plans to increase FNS EDI branding (**BAP 6.9**) was delayed due to UCC rebranding and Project Alpha cost-cutting pushing this initiative to **SAP 2.4.4**.

**BAP 5.3.4** significantly improved gender diversity in FNS events. In 2018, only 22%F and 47%M believed gender balance was achieved and just 16%F and 40%M felt gender diversity was considered by management. By 2022, this rose to 44%F and 50%M (Figure 2.4.12), though further transparency is needed (**SAP 2.4.5**). A 2022 survey comment highlights the progress made (Figure 2.4.13)



**Figure 2.4.12: Survey responses to 'are gender and diversity considered by senior management when planning presentations at conferences/seminars'**



**Figure 2.4.13: Response to an open-ended question regarding consideration of gender and diversity in FNS when organising events.**

The FNS website reflects diversity, with 57%F and 43%M across 67 static images (November 2024) and moving frames feature 46%F and 54%M (13 images). Implementation of **BAP 5.6.1** highlights diverse staff and alumni via research profiles (Figure 2.4.14) as well as student testimonials showcase placements (Figure 2.4.15) and career outcomes (Figure 2.4.16).



## Staff Research Profiles

Learn of our School Research - led by our Academic staff

The section displays two staff research profiles. The first profile is for Dr. Gaurav Rajauria, featuring a portrait of a man in a light blue shirt. A quote from him reads: "My research interests aims to produce alternative proteins, food ingredients, bioactive, and biobased products, for improving resources efficiency, food security, and implementing circular bioeconomy". Below the quote is his name and affiliation: Dr. Gaurav Rajauria, SUSBioRef: Sustainable Bioprocess Technology and Biorefinery Research Group. The second profile is for Professor Mairead Kiely, featuring a portrait of a woman with short brown hair. A quote from her reads: "Our research is mainly in the fields of vitamin D and food fortification, maternal and child nutrition; currently investigating the evidence for healthy, sustainable diets throughout the life course." Below the quote is her name and qualifications: Professor Mairead Kiely BSc (Nutrition), PhD, RNutr (Public Health Nutrition). Both profiles include a "Find Out More" button with a right-pointing arrow or icon.

**Dr. Gaurav Rajauria, SUSBioRef: Sustainable Bioprocess Technology and Biorefinery Research Group**

**Professor Mairead Kiely BSc (Nutrition), PhD, RNutr (Public Health Nutrition);**

Figure 2.4.14: Examples from *FNS Staff Research Profiles*

## Work Placement Stories

The section features a work placement story from Jennifer Ramsbottom, a 4th Year Nutritional Science student. It includes a portrait of Jennifer and a quote: "I was involved in bringing the product 'Velo Tandem' from idea to shelf. This was of course a huge success for a small local producer - suffice to say my workplace mentor was thrilled!". Below the quote is her name and year: Jennifer Ramsbottom - 4th Year Nutritional Science student. At the bottom right, there are three small circular icons: one showing a person, one showing a person, and one showing a plant.

**Jennifer Ramsbottom - 4th Year Nutritional Science student**

Figure 2.4.15: FNS Website – Example from the FNS Website from Work Placement Stories link

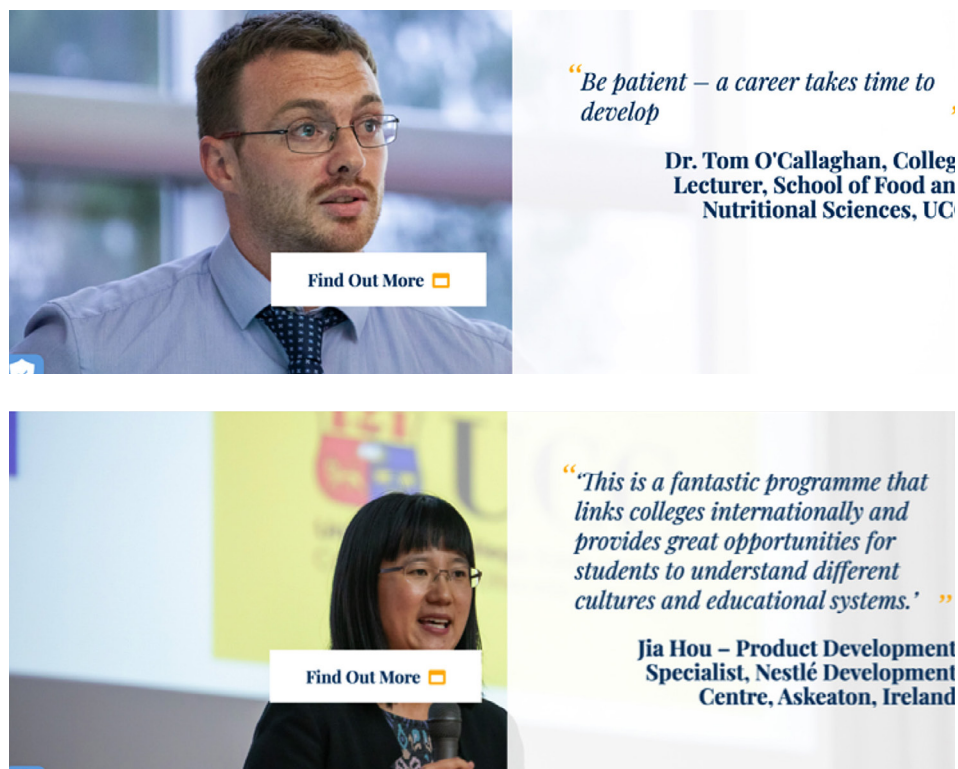


Figure 2.4.16: FNS Website – Examples from FNS Graduate Careers link.

YouTube videos, created with SEFS (2023), balance gender and diversity in promoting programmes (Figure 2.4.17).

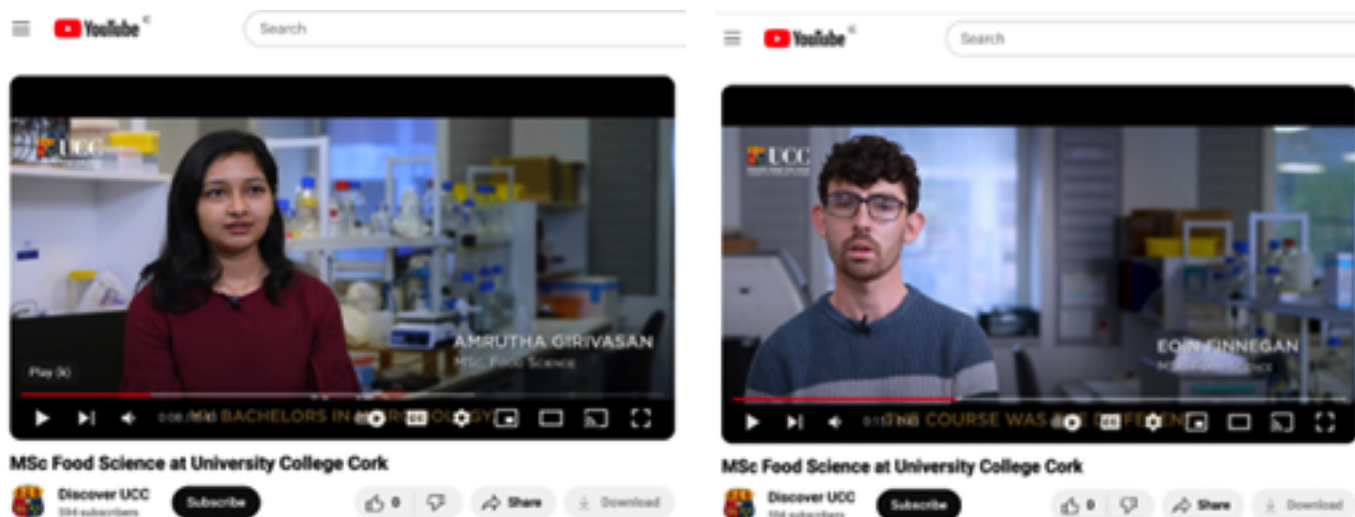


Figure 2.4.17: YouTube videos promoting FS postgraduate programmes

FNS dietetics students also hosted podcasts on UCC Radio in 2023, addressing men's health topics such as nutrition and cancer-related andropause (Figure 2.4.18).



**Figure 2.4.18: NS dietetics students hosting the 3rd podcast of a 3-part series on topics related to men's health (2023)**

#### **2.4a (iii) student curricula, pedagogy, and assessment.**

The BSc FS is accredited by the Institute of Food Science & Technology (IFST), and the BSc NS by the Association for Nutrition (AfN), UK. These accreditations reflect the high disciplinary and academic standards of our UG programmes. FNS prioritizes the development of core competencies and professional growth, with curricula delivered by a gender-balanced team of lecturers and technicians. Many staff hold advanced qualifications in Teaching & Learning, ensuring pedagogical delivery reflects the latest research and supports a diverse student body (Section 2.2).

Staff integrate Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and neurodiversity principles into flexible teaching and assessment methods, fostering inclusivity. A student-centred, research-enhanced approach includes inquiry-based and peer-learning activities, e.g., Labster Simulation software, enabling self-directed virtual lab experiences, is a popular innovation. This initiative earned one staff member a UCC Staff Recognition Award in 2021 for advancing technology-enhanced learning across UCC.

To improve accessibility, a dedicated FNS programme handbook supports UG and PG students. FNS is committed to addressing gender and racial equality by revising curricula to connect studies with societal issues. Modules now map learning outcomes to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including Goal 5 on gender equality. Case studies highlighting gender equality feature prominently in global nutrition and sustainability modules.

In 2023, three academic staff joined UCC's ID+ Project, delivering a nutrition module tailored to students with intellectual disabilities using an easy-read format. FNS annually reviews programmes to ensure quality and accessibility, with the Student Experience Committee, which includes UG representative, providing a critical platform for student-staff engagement. This committee, which relays feedback to the Teaching & Learning



Committee, has driven changes such as increased continuous assessment, assignment variety, discussion time at the end of lectures, and flexible deadlines.

From September 2024, Canvas modules feature feedback surveys completed during the final lecture, assessing teaching methods and resource effectiveness. **SAP 2.4.6** introduces anonymous Microsoft Forms surveys at semester-end for further feedback on teaching and learning experiences. Programme teams will collate feedback from all platforms, implementing feasible actions to enhance the student experience.

**b. Comment and reflect on the department’s current understanding of, and capacity to identify and address, issues and opportunities relating to equality grounds in addition to gender, as well as capacity to identify and address intersectional inequalities for staff and students.**

FNS embraces a broad definition of equality, addressing discrimination against racial minorities, individuals with disabilities, and the LGBTQ+ community and is committed to EDI (see Section 2.4a(iii)). UCC confidentially collects staff and student data on race, nationality, disability, and age. Of 33 FNS participants (22F, 11M) in the 2022 survey, none identified as non-binary nor expressed a preference ‘not to say’; 9% (#3) reported having a disability, aligning with the national average (8-12%). To maintain anonymity, data is not disaggregated by gender or job category.

Comments from UGs and PGs (Figure 1.3.2) about their understanding of EDI and related issues included:

*“what is intersectionality?”*

*“what EDI training is available for students?”*

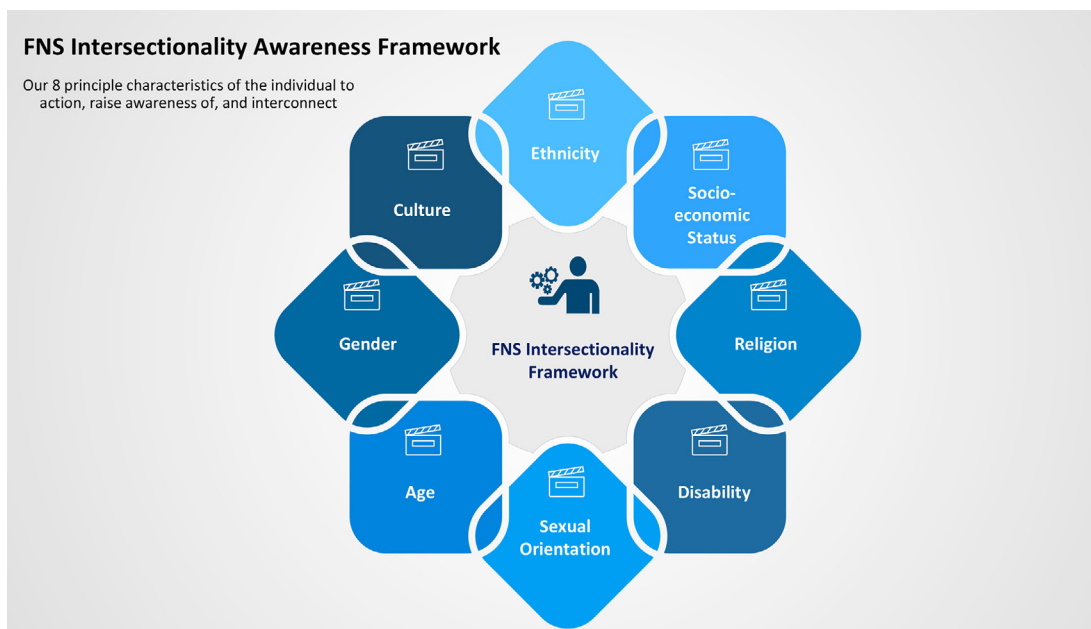
*“what are SpeakOut and Bystander Intervention?”*

*“I’m not sure what an inclusive school means”*

SAPs have been identified to expand EDI in FNS and are set out below.

**SAP 2.4.7** will address intersectionality and neurodiversity by:

1. At least one WIDE committee member to complete the CPD 12-week “Neurodiversity for the Workplace” certificate by 2026. Four staff members (3F, 1M) recently completed the HR “Introduction to Neurodiversity” course.
2. FNS has also developed guiding principles for intersectionality awareness, displayed on our website, as part of an intersectionality awareness framework (Figure 2.4.19).
3. An introductory session on intersectionality and neurodiversity for all staff will be arranged in 2025, facilitated by HR or EDI experts.



**Figure 2.4.19: The FNS Intersectionality Framework**

**SAP 2.4.8** is aimed at developing EDI awareness in students:

1. EDI training to increase student awareness of EDI issues. Survey and focus group feedback highlighted gaps in understanding terms such as intersectionality, inclusive school practices, and availability of training opportunities (e.g., Bystander Intervention).
2. Award recognition for EDI related activities at the annual student awards.
3. From 2025, all incoming students will receive a dedicated session on the FNS WIDE agenda during welcome week.

**SAP 2.4.9** arose from the staff survey and focus group session on ‘*Culture, Dignity and Respect*’ staff in FNS which raised potential challenges regarding students’ religious, cultural, or moral beliefs conflicting with course materials. The action will include:

1. Identifying potential conflicts which may impact on the student experience.
2. Working with UCC’s EDI unit and Student Services to balance academic requirements and respecting student beliefs.

**c. Provide information on the department’s culture as it relates to gender equality and, where relevant, EDI more broadly, by presenting consultation findings by gender and staff category on the following areas:**

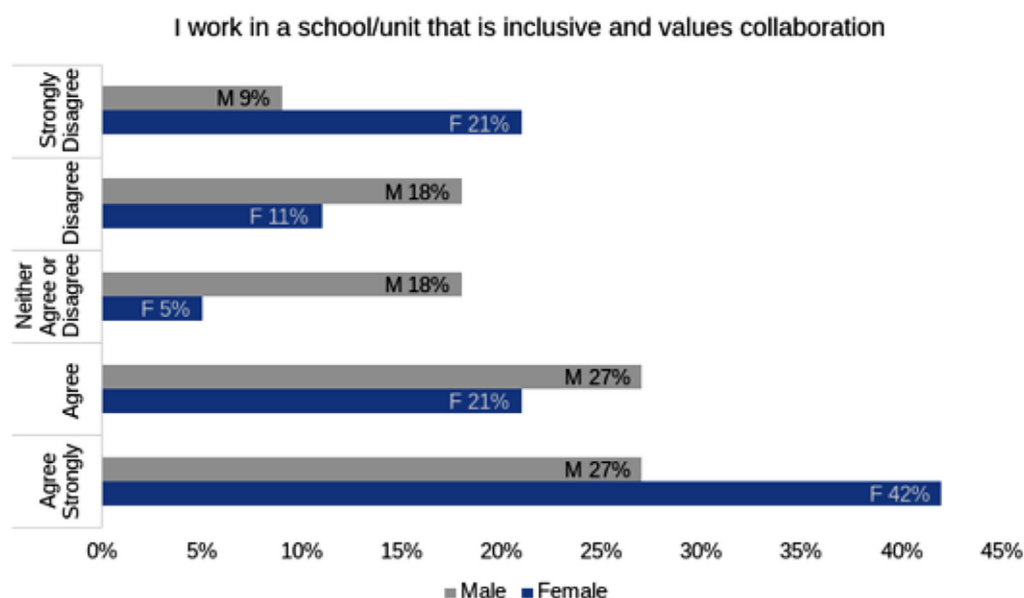
**2.4c (i) values and traditions of the department;**

FNS has a long tradition of supporting international students. Thirty years ago, the postgraduate cohort included up to 15 nationalities, 50% from non-EU countries. Today, FNS is widely described by students as “supportive,” “welcoming,” and “inclusive,” as shown in a Word Cloud (Fig. 2.4.20).



**Fig 2.4.20: Word Cloud of comments from UGs and PGs discussions.**

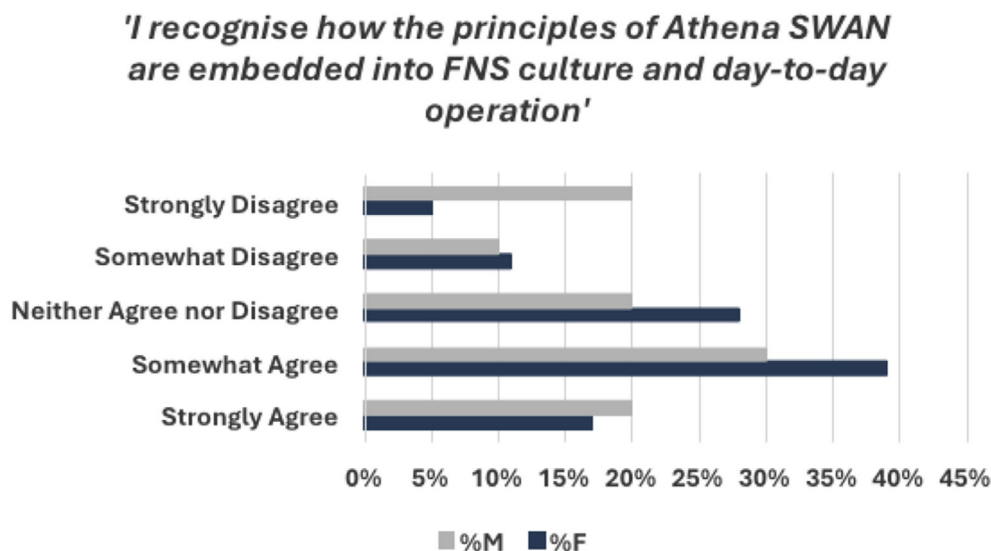
In the staff survey, 63%F (total #21) and 54%M (total #11) agreed that FNS fosters inclusivity and collaboration (Fig. 2.4.21) and this was echoed by findings from the two focus groups. The “*Culture, Dignity, and Respect*” group (4F, 3M attendees) found that inclusivity at FNS has improved over the past two years, supported by social activities and events such as the annual Research Day (**BAP 5.6.3**).



**Figure 2.4.21: Staff survey responses when asked if FNS was ‘inclusive and values collaboration’**

The monthly FNS Research Seminar series (**BAP 6.3**) further fosters inclusivity, offering researchers a platform to present their work and providing networking opportunities at post-seminar receptions.

Survey results show improved awareness of AS principles: 56%F and 50%M (total #28) agreed these principles are embedded in FNS, a significant increase from 20%F and 18%M in the 2019 AS application (Fig. 2.4.22).



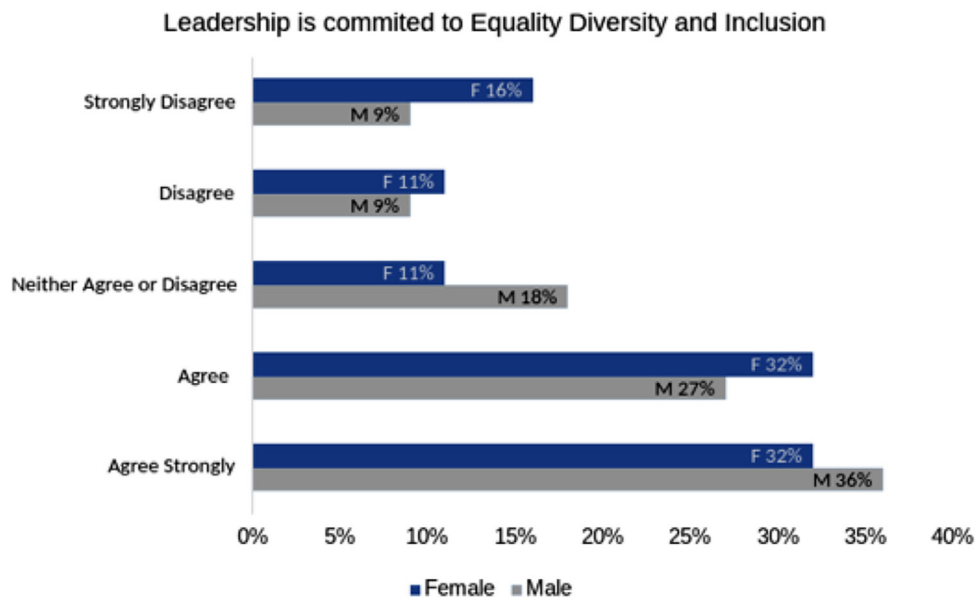
**Figure 2.4.22: Staff survey responses when asked if they recognised ‘how the principles of Athena SWAN are embedded into FNS culture and day-to-day operation.’**

**BAP 3.1.5** sought to increase awareness of the FNS AS action plan, charter principles and associated cultural shift in how FNS carries out its activities. As demonstrated above, FNS expresses its values and commitment to equality, inclusion and diversity and will continue to expand its EDI agenda through **BAP 6.9**, which will be implemented in 2025 as **SAP 2.4.4**, already referred to above.

**2.4c (ii) formal and informal structures and interactions that characterise the working and learning environment of the department, including leadership practices and behaviours;**

FNS leadership prioritises EDI values and staff and student well-being, as reflected in survey results on EDI values (Figure 2.4.23).

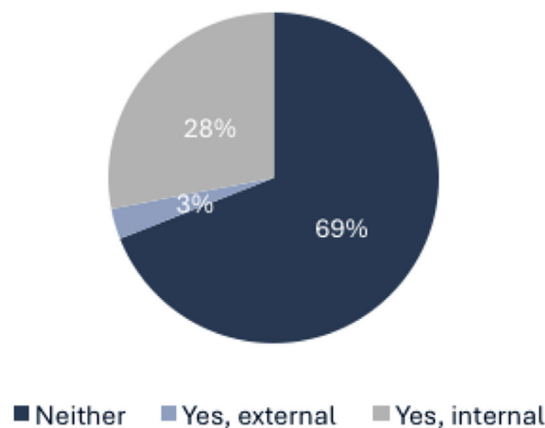
- Of 30 respondents (19F, 11M), 64%F and 63%M agreed or strongly agreed that FNS leadership is committed to EDI (Figure 2.4.23).
- By job category, 75% of academic, 50% admin, 67% technical, and 33% research staff agreed.
- Positively, 84%F and 54%M (# 28; 18F, 10M) felt colleagues are supportive and work well together.
- Regarding decision-making, 64%F and 72%M (# 28; 18F, 10M) agreed they are included in relevant discussions, and 69%F and 72%M felt their views are welcomed and respected. Responses were similar across all staff categories.



**Figure 2.4.23: Staff survey responses regarding leadership commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion**

All FNS staff involved in recruitment and SAT members have completed unconscious bias training. However, 2022 survey results [29 respondents (19F, 10M)] showed only 28% (6F, 2M) had taken internal EDI training (Figure 2.4.24). Interest in training remains high, with 66% seeking disability awareness, 38% autism awareness, and 41% anti-racism training.

***'Have you participated in any EDI training'***



**Figure 2.4.24: Staff survey responses asking if they had participated in EDI training**

FNS has since increased EDI training uptake, with more staff completing Bystander Intervention (8F, 3M) and online EDI modules (5F, 2M). **SAP 2.4.10** will enhance EDI training promotion, implement a tracking system, and highlight completions and learnings on the FNS website. Staff focus groups noted gaps in communication of UCC policies. In response, FNS will create a centralized, easily accessible folder of all UCC policies, including leave and dignity at work (**SAP 2.4.11**).

#### 2.4c (iii) negative practices and behaviours and how these are managed by the department;

FNS actively promotes a positive working environment, but survey data revealed areas for improvement:


- No staff reported experiencing or witnessing sexual harassment in the past 12 months
- 72%F (total #18) and 70%M (total #10) had not experienced discrimination or unfair treatment, but 22%F and 10%M reported experiencing it
- 78%F and 70%M had not experienced bullying or harassment
- 22%F and 30%M reported having experienced bullying or harassment in FNS

Focus group feedback highlighted low awareness of the Duty of Respect and Right to Dignity policy, with only one participant familiar with it. Survey data showed only 28%F and 20%M believed harassment complaints would be appropriately managed, while 33%F and 20%M strongly disagreed.

Individual comments in open-ended questions about negative behaviour in FNS (comments not included here) raised some alarm and FNS actioned immediately to address these issues and included **BAP 6.6** in an updated iteration of the BAP (note: results of the 2022 Survey were not received until Feb 2023) which included the following sub actions:

- Immediate Duty of Respect and Right to Dignity at Work training for line managers
- Guidance from HR for managing difficult behaviours
- Email from HoS to staff emphasising support for reporting issues and reinforced this at a School Assembly

Concerns about reporting sexual harassment were notable, with 44%F uncomfortable reporting it. **BAP 5.6.4** was introduced to address these issues, increasing confidence in reporting any issue to 55%F and 60%M (up from 23%F and 33%M in 2019). An open-ended survey question also showed there is a slowness to report anti-social behaviour in the workplace because staff are unsure where these reports are meant to be made (Figure 2.4.25). Focus group participants noted the lack of a platform in FNS to report discrimination, bullying, or negative behaviours. **BAP 6.6** addressed this by clarifying reporting methods and protocols, outlined by HoS via email and at the School Assembly.



*"I would feel comfortable reporting discrimination and/or unfair treatment that myself, colleague or student is experiencing but I am unsure where to report it"*  
(Female survey comment)

**Figure 2.4.25: Survey comment to open-ended survey question about willingness to report discrimination or unfair treatment**

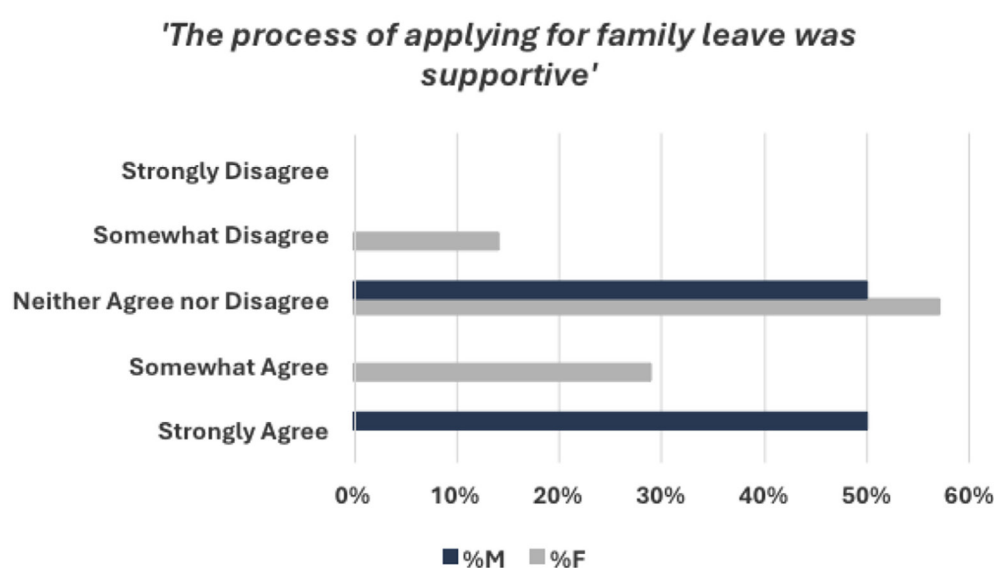
Students echoed similar concerns, showing limited awareness of reporting tools such as Speak Out and no familiarity with the Bystander Intervention program. **SAP 2.4.12** will address these gaps by raising awareness of reporting structures and developing student-focused protocols within FNS.

#### 2.4c (iv) flexible working opportunities in the department;

FNS communicates flexible working opportunities, including Hybrid Working, to all staff, with 7 staff members (6F, 1M) currently using flexible working arrangements. UCC's Flexible Working Hours Policy allows eligible staff to choose their start and finish times, subject to department needs, and is detailed in the staff handbook with implementation through local arrangements with line managers. While hybrid working may not suit all, under the UCC Pilot Blended Working Policy (2022), FNS allows staff in student-facing roles to use hybrid working during non-teaching periods. Survey results show that 56% of female and 80% of male staff believe flexible working does not negatively impact career progression, though 22% of females and 20% of males are unsure. FNS will ensure all staff are informed of flexible working policies, and requests will be supported when possible (**SAP 2.4.13**).

#### 2.4c (v) management of, and attitudes towards, family leave in the department.

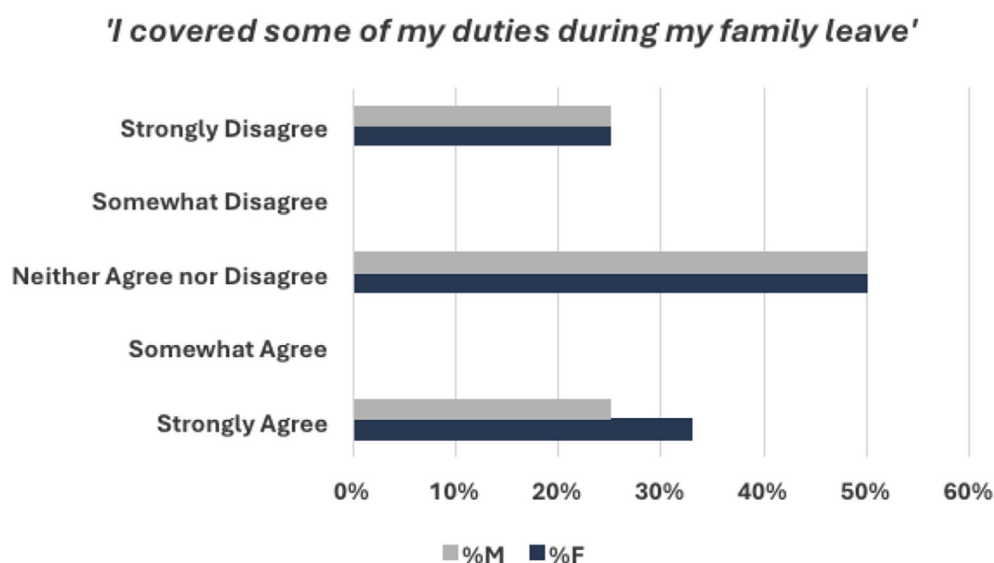
FNS fully supports all University policies regarding Family Leave entitlements, including maternity, adoptive, paternity, carer's leave, and the newly introduced fertility treatment and surrogacy leave policies, with details provided in the staff handbook and online (**BAP 5.5.3**). Survey results on the supportiveness of the family leave application process were mixed; 50%M respondents strongly agreed that the process was supportive, while only 29%F respondents somewhat agreed; 57%F and 50%M neither agreed nor disagreed (Figure 2.4.26).



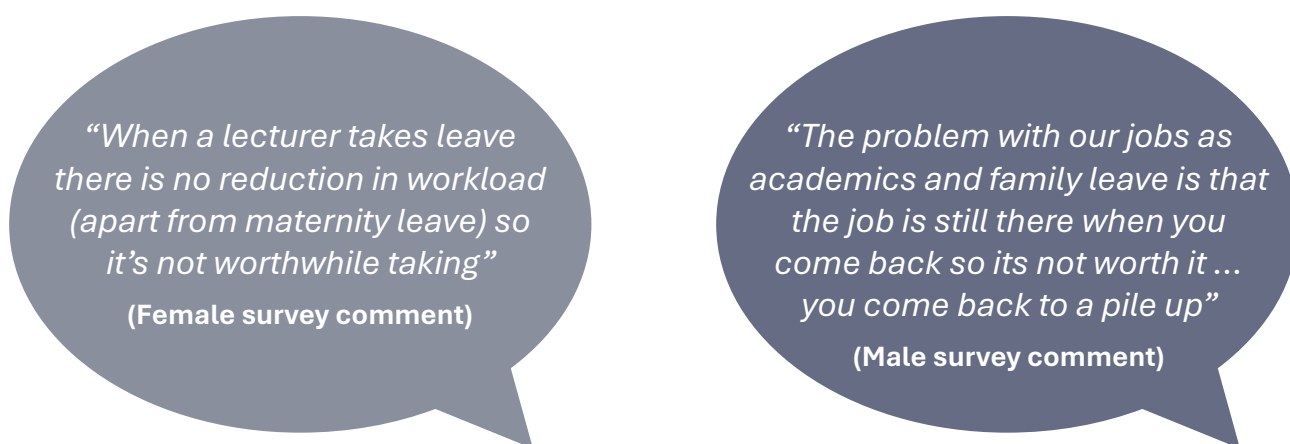
**Figure 2.4.26: Staff survey responses when asked 'if the process of applying for family leave was supportive'**



Despite FNS's efforts to support staff on leave, 33%F and 25%M agreed that they covered some of their responsibilities while on leave (Fig 2.4.27) and cited increased workload upon return as a deterrent, making leave less attractive (Figure 2.4.28).



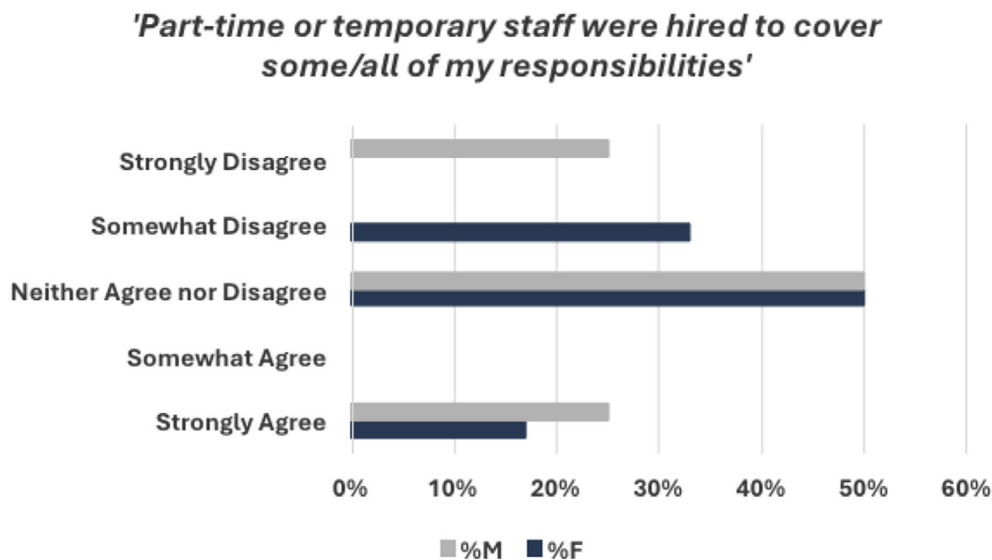
**Figure 2.4.27: Survey responses to question asking if they ‘covered some of my duties while on family leave’**



**Figure 2.4.28: Survey comments on open-ended question about family leave**

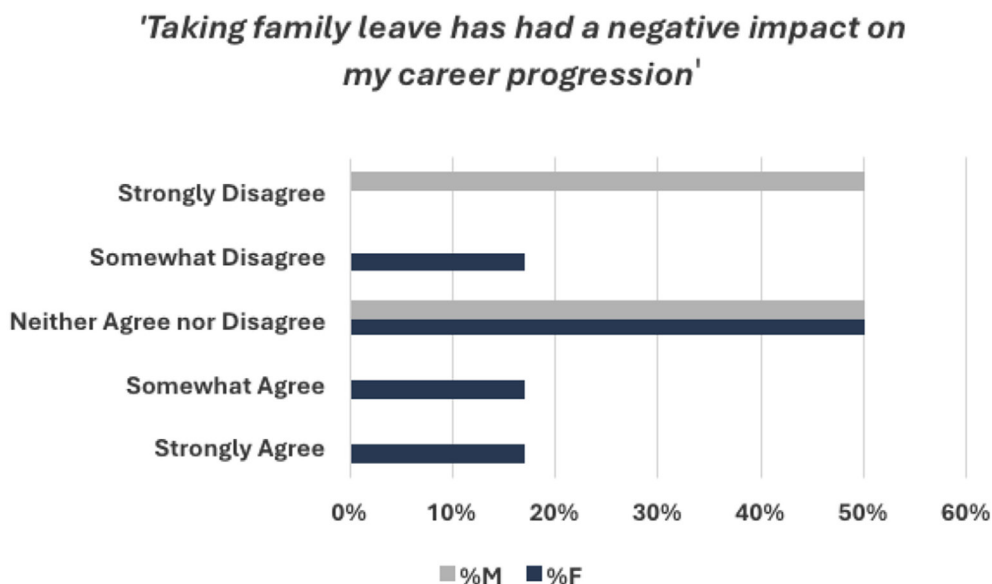
Only 17% of female and 25% of male respondents agreed that part-time or temporary staff were hired to cover their duties while on leave (Figure 2.4.29). **SAP 2.4.14** addresses this by:

- Reviewing leave cover. Full backfill is provided for maternity leave at UCC but cover for other leave is ad hoc and depends on funding.
- FNS will review family leave, particularly for academic staff, to ensure staff feel taking leave is worthwhile.



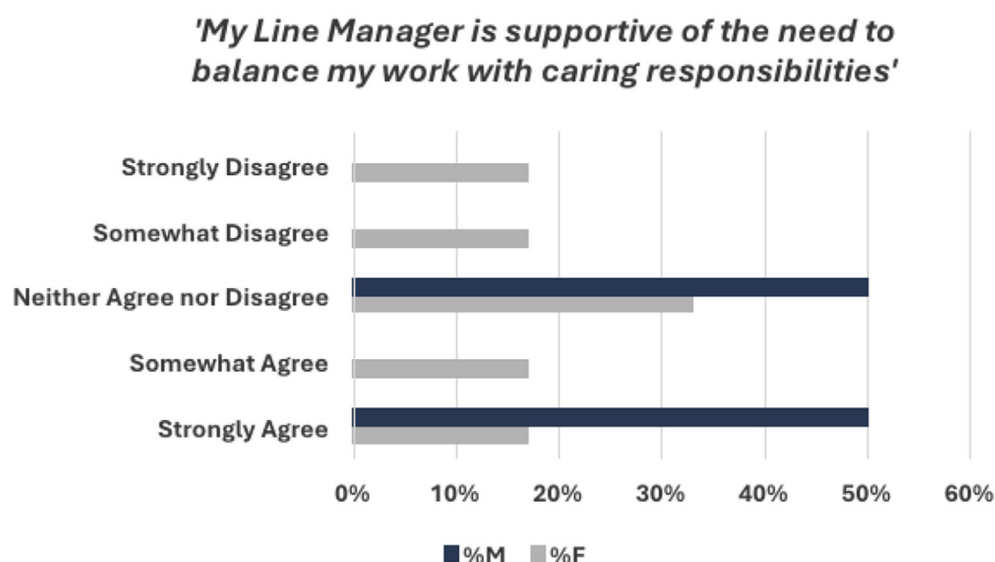
**Figure 2.4.29: Staff survey responses when asked if *'if part-time or temporary staff were hired to cover some/all of my responsibilities'***

Of note, only 34% of female respondents strongly agreed/somewhat agreed, that family leave negatively impacted their career progression, with no male respondents agreeing (0 of 4) ((Figure 2.4.30). This marks a significant improvement from 2018, when over 40%F and 25%M felt family leave had negatively impacted their careers. **BAP 5.5.3** was successful in progressing a cultural shift within FNS to ensure family leave was part of an academic career.



**Figure 2.4.30: Staff survey responses when asked if *'taking family leave has had a negative impact on my career progression'***

Regarding work-life balance, 33% of female respondents (#2 of 6) disagreed that their line manager was supportive of their need to balance work with caring responsibilities, while no male respondents disagreed (0 of 4) (Figure 2.4.31).



**Fig 2.4.31: Staff survey responses asking if their ‘Line Manager is supportive of the need to balance my work with caring responsibilities’**

The survey also showed that:

- Of 45 survey respondents (32F, 13M), 66%F and 85%M reported having ongoing caring responsibilities, with 38% of females and 15% of males having non-parental care duties (e.g., eldercare, caring for sick, or disabled care). This is notably higher than UCC’s 2024 staff survey, where 63% of staff reported having caring responsibilities, 19% of whom were non-parental carers.
- In response to an open-ended question, one respondent (gender protected) felt unsupported in their caring role (Figure 2.4.32).

*“As currently structured my job does not facilitate caring responsibilities (caring responsibilities are done in my own time)”*

**Figure 2.4.32: Comment from staff member to open-ended question regarding caring responsibilities**

**SAP 2.4.15** will aim to promote support for those with caring responsibilities by:

1. Continuing to support the UCC Staff Carers Network, the launch in October 2024 was attended by two SAT members. This network aims to provide a supportive space for staff with caring responsibilities and raise awareness of carers’ needs across the UCC community.
2. FNS is committed to ensuring that all staff with caring responsibilities are informed about UCC’s initiatives and policies. To achieve this, FNS will continue to communicate its support for staff with caring responsibilities, raise awareness of available support services, and highlight the network on the website, with follow-up emails and updates during School Assemblies.

3. Supporting staff with caring responsibilities is a key priority in the UCC Gender Equality Action Plan, 2024 and FNS will enact any initiatives that emerge from this action.

**2.4c (vi) Where data suggests opportunity for improvement, comment and reflect. This should include reflection on any gaps between institution-level policy and practice in the department, including if the institution's approach meets the requirements of department staff.**

Issues were identified regarding support for staff on family leave, particularly in covering work responsibilities and differing experiences between male and female staff. While UCC has policies in place, there is a gap in staff awareness and use of available supports. FNS will ensure staff are informed about leave options and promote central policies, networking groups, and activities (**SAPs 2.4.11 and 2.4.14**).

Progress and Impact of BAP Actions (2019-2024)		
BAP Action	Aim & Rationale	Progress & Impact
5.1.3	Promote AS in FNS and at outreach and public engagement events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant increase in staff agreement that FNS promotes EDI values and embeds AS principles into culture and day-to-day operations; 60%F and 40%M agreed in 2022 survey, compared to 33%F and 21%M in 2018. AS logo, banner and posters used at outreach and other events.</li> </ul>
5.6.1	Populate School web links with gender balanced academic and alumni information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FNS website and social media channels present gender balanced images, e.g., work placement stories, graduate experiences, staff profiles, degree programmes promotional videos on YouTube.</li> <li>100% of PG survey respondents said website and social media channels were gender balanced and reflected diversity of staff and students.</li> </ul>
5.6.3	School to host an annual internal research conference.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See Progress and Impact of BAP Actions (2019-2024), Section 2.2</li> </ul>
5.6.8, 6.3 and 6.8	<p>Create events that encourage greater social interaction between staff and students.</p> <p>Seminars by external or internal speakers at lunchtime.</p> <p>School Assembly and Christmas Social Event.</p> <p>FNS Annual Research Conference.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Events created that encourage greater social interaction between staff and students.</li> <li>Significant impact on integration of FS and NS staff and students.</li> <li>Biannual School Assembly followed by social event.</li> <li>In-house Christmas party starting at 3:00pm.</li> <li>'Foodie Fridays'.</li> <li>Seminars (internal or external speakers) held at lunchtimes (at staff request) followed by refreshments (see BAP impact, Section 2.2).</li> <li>All seminars are hybrid with streaming/recording technologies used also.</li> <li>Annual FNS Research Conference (see BAP impact, Section 2.2).</li> <li>70%F and 70%M survey very satisfied with scheduling of events.</li> <li>Staff focus group participants commented on the importance of FNS social events in contributing to a positive and inclusive working environment.</li> <li>100% PGs surveyed were very positive about the range of in-house social activities and commented on the importance of feeling more connected getting to know everyone in both FS and NS.</li> <li>Staff and students get a break from academic pressures, promoting mental health and wellbeing; reduces stress and enhances productivity and creativity.</li> </ul>

Silver Action Plan (2024-2028)	
<b>SAP 2.4.1</b>	Review core meeting times and investigate why there may be a gender disparity in survey responses. Ensure all staff include a note on email highlighting that recipients should not feel obliged to respond outside core working hours.
<b>SAP 2.4.2</b>	Ensure that UG student events are purpose driven, accessible events which consider scheduling and logistical issues.
<b>SAP 2.4.3</b>	Raise awareness of the UCC Right to Disconnect policy.
<b>SAP 2.4.4</b>	Continue to expand FNS EDI agenda and our commitment to AS principles; increase EDI branding and visibility in FNS.
<b>SAP 2.4.5</b>	Report gender diversity of seminars, conferences and speaking events to School on a yearly basis.
<b>SAP 2.4.6</b>	Annual survey to UG students for feedback on programmes, assessment and inclusion. Continue post module surveys.
<b>SAP 2.4.7</b>	Introduce guiding principles on intersectionality to FNS staff; including information workshop, facilitated by HR/EDI unit.
<b>SAP 2.4.8</b>	Educate and empower both UG and PG students using the framework of intersectionality; students will be actively encouraged to take EDI training such as Bystander Intervention. From 2025, FNS will include an award for EDI activities inc., uptake of training courses, at the annual student award ceremony. Introduce dedicated session on FNS EDI agenda for all incoming UG year groups.
<b>SAP 2.4.9</b>	Examine and address cultural, moral or religious issues which may impact on students' ability to complete FNS programmes.
<b>SAP 2.4.10</b>	Promote and record EDI training for all staff. Introductory session for all staff to raise awareness of neurodiversity and intersectionality.
<b>SAP 2.4.11</b>	Create central FNS platform with easy access to all UCC policies and protocols.
<b>SAP 2.4.12</b>	Develop student focused communication plan to clarify reporting processes for any issue within UCC and locally in FNS.
<b>SAP 2.4.13</b>	Promote flexible working options for FNS staff.
<b>SAP 2.4.14</b>	Promote family leave supports available to staff and develop internal processes for covering staff on leave.
<b>SAP 2.4.15</b>	Action to support FNS staff with caring responsibilities; Align FNS with UCC Gender Equality Action Plan 2024 action supporting carers.

## 2.5 Department priorities for future action

a. Identify the department's key issues relating to gender equality and establish key priorities for action over the next four years:

**2.5a (i) Select up to five key priority areas where the department will strive for impact. Selected priorities should be justifiable and based on the quantitative and qualitative evidence presented in Section 2.**

FNS is committed to ongoing evaluation and improvement in all its well-being and EDI practices. The 5 key Priority Areas (PAs) where FNS will strive for positive impact, identified during the course of this self-assessment process, are to:

- 1. Expand and embed EDI principles in FNS structures and activities.**
- 2. Educate and empower UGs and PGs on EDI including intersectionality, disability and compassion.**
- 3. Continue to advance academic and research staff career development and wellbeing.**
- 4. Build structures for PMS staff career development and wellbeing.**
- 5. Continue fostering a safe, respectful and supportive working and learning environment.**

**2.5a (ii) Specific action(s) to support progress in priority areas should be identified**

Table 2.5.1 presents an overview of the specific actions that will be undertaken in the PAs to embed and advance EDI principles and activities in FNS over the coming 4 years. Key objectives, aligned to drive progress in each PA, are highlighted.

**TABLE 2.5.1: LIST OF FNS PRIORITY AREAS ALIGNED TO SPECIFIC SAP ACTIONS (2024-2028)**

Priority Code	Priority	Objectives	Silver Action Plan References
<b>PA1</b>	Expand and embed EDI principles in FNS structures and activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Normalise all EDI activities in FNS beyond mandatory sessions. Encourage and improve staff uptake of EDI training.</li> <li>• Encourage, improve and record staff uptake of EDI training, especially among males.</li> <li>• Continue to integrate EDI principles into all FNS governance and activities such as outreach, marketing, presentations, research, teaching and curriculum design.</li> <li>• Increase awareness of intersectionality in FNS, including an understanding of how identities such as race, gender, class, disability and sexuality intersect and create unique experiences for staff and students which must be supported.</li> <li>• WIDE committee is central to FNS governance and will work with all committees to integrate EDI principles in their activities.</li> <li>• Support the integration of Universal Design into all T&amp;L resources.</li> </ul>	SAPs 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 2.2.5, 2.4.4, 2.4.5, 2.4.7, 2.4.10
<b>PA2</b>	Educate and empower UGs and PGs on EDI including intersectionality, disability and compassion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage students to take EDI training such as Bystander Intervention.</li> <li>• Advertise EDI supports such as 'Speak Out' to students.</li> <li>• Create annual EDI awards for FNS students.</li> <li>• Increase gender-targeted opportunities for PGs to become involved in outreach and external engagement activities.</li> <li>• Develop student-focussed communication plan to clarify reporting processes, both in UCC and FNS, for any issues.</li> <li>• Dedicated sessions on our EDI agenda for all incoming UG year groups.</li> </ul>	SAPs 2.1.5, 2.4.2, 2.4.6, 2.4.8
<b>PA3</b>	Continue to advance academic and research staff career development and wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide and promote supports for career development and wellbeing such as mentoring, coaching and training.</li> <li>• Increase awareness of leave entitlements.</li> <li>• Promote recognition of staff achievements including increasing nominations for UCC's Excellence in Teaching awards and Staff Recognition awards.</li> <li>• Finalise FNS AWDM.</li> <li>• Increase engagement with PDRS process and include discussion on work-life balance and workload.</li> <li>• Identify and support eligible females for UCC SALI professorship posts in 2025.</li> <li>• Ensure all academic staff are aware of the operating guidelines for promotions in UCC.</li> </ul>	SAPs 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3, 2.2.4, 2.2.6, 2.2.7, 2.2.8, 2.2.9
<b>PA4</b>	Build structures for PMS staff career development and wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase engagement of PMS staff with PDRS and include discussion on work-life balance and workload.</li> <li>• Highlight and support training opportunities, including leadership training, Aurora programme etc.</li> <li>• Promote recognition of PMS staff contributions to FNS.</li> <li>• Identify relevant specialised training for TOs.</li> <li>• Create comprehensive framework of duties and responsibilities for all PMS staff and mechanisms to recognise work carried out that is outside day-to-day activities.</li> </ul>	SAPs 2.2.4, 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.3.3, 2.3.4, 2.3.5, 2.3.6, 2.3.7
<b>PA5</b>	Continue fostering a safe, respectful and supportive working and learning environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strive to integrate dignity and respect into every aspect of FNS activities, ensuring they are foundational to all that we do.</li> <li>• Strengthen internal processes for addressing issues of unacceptable behaviour; ensure all staff and students are aware of mechanisms for reporting and addressing microaggressions, harassment or discrimination.</li> <li>• Communicate all leave and flexible working options.</li> <li>• Communicate core meeting hours policy to all staff.</li> <li>• Raise awareness of the UCC Right to Disconnect Policy.</li> <li>• Support staff with caring responsibilities.</li> <li>• Survey effectiveness of FNS staff induction process.</li> <li>• Continue to expand initiatives such as 'Foodie Fridays' to foster an inclusive culture by celebrating diverse traditions, cultures and awareness days.</li> <li>• Build staff and student engagement with UCC EDI surveys.</li> <li>• Develop UG student feedback surveys.</li> <li>• Address cultural, moral or religious issues that may impact FNS students' ability to complete programmes.</li> </ul>	SAPs 2.4.1, 2.4.3, 2.4.6, 2.4.9, 2.4.11, 2.4.12, 2.4.13, 2.4.14, 2.4.15



**b. Outline how the department's gender equality priorities align with the institution's Athena Swan action plan and, where relevant, broader EDI initiatives in the institution and/or department. This should include comment on:**

**2.5b (i) key institutional actions that have, or will, support the department's progress;**

UCC's Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP, 2024) was created in parallel with the FNS application for an institutional Silver application submission (December 2024). Table 2.5.2 lists key institutional GEAP actions, their link to relevant FNS SAP actions, and the expected impact of these activities on future FNS EDI activities.

**TABLE 2.5.2: KEY INSTITUTIONAL ACTIONS THAT WILL SUPPORT FNS SILVER ACTION PLAN**

UCC GEAP 2024-2028	FNS Action(s)	Status and Expected Impact for FNS
<b>Priority Area 1 - Expand and Embed EDI Activity in FNS</b>		
<b>1.2.6:</b> Establish a dedicated EDI Awards scheme for staff and students to include a dedicated theme for AS good practice	SAPs 2.4.8 & 2.4.10	<i>Planned for Q4, 2025. Universal Impact.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiatives to recognise and reward exemplary practices address the need for staff and student contributions to be valued.</li> <li>UCC's new EDI award scheme will complement the FNS local action.</li> <li>The EDI Awards scheme will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highlight and reward FNs staff &amp; student contributions to EDI.</li> <li>Foster a culture of recognition and inclusion.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Recognition of staff and students' work will increase as FNS will submit applications for this award annually.</li> </ul>
<b>1.2.7:</b> Appoint Vice Deans for EDI across the four colleges in the next two years, with responsibility for Athena Swan	SAP 2.4.4	<i>Timescale Planned Q4 2024 to Q4 2025.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action will support FNS in implementing its EDI agenda</li> <li>A SEFS-level EDI Vice Dean will serve to support and ensure implementation of EDI framework across all Schools, including FNS.</li> </ul>
<b>1.2.10:</b> Develop staff data systems to collect, monitor and report staff equality data such as gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation disability status, etc.	SAP 1.3.1 or any data gathering survey	<i>Planned for February 2025 &amp; on-going. Universal Impact.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved Data Gathering: Enhanced EDI metrics will strengthen reporting capabilities and allow FNS to monitor and adapt its SAP activity effectively.</li> <li>Provision of intersectional data to support FNS AS work.</li> <li>Availability of equality data will demonstrate FNS' commitment to diversity and inclusion.</li> <li>Allow FNS understand any disparities that could arise and highlight underrepresentation or systemic issues that might affect specific groups.</li> <li>Improved Data Hub with full self-service will enable FNS carry out its next self-assessment more efficiently.</li> <li>Availability of UG data for equality monitoring in FNS.</li> </ul>
<b>1.2.11:</b> Develop and roll out a self-declaration campaign for staff encouraging self-disclosure using the newly implemented Diversity Screen		
<b>1.2.13:</b> Extend features and reporting capabilities of the AS Gender Analytics part of the Data Hub service as a central data platform for schools		
<b>1.2.12:</b> Develop an EDI dashboard to improve transparency, trustworthiness and engagement with EDI data and topics, and raise awareness of the impact of EDI/AS work in UCC	SAP 2.4.4	<i>Planned implementation date TBC</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased EDI Visibility: Better alignment of UCC and FNS SAPs through improved EDI dashboard ensures greater visibility and support for EDI initiatives within FNS, along with improved literacy of equality data and EDI impact.</li> </ul>
<b>1.2.15:</b> Establish the EDI Gathering as an annual event each June to assess the impact of EDI/AS actions and identify any new topical EDI areas that need to be addressed	SAP 2.4.4	<i>Commenced in June 2024</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reinforced Implementation: University-level efforts to embed EDI values will support and amplify the effectiveness of FNS actions.</li> <li>Space created where FNS can be involved in, and learn from, discussions on systemic barriers, unconscious bias and ways to foster a more inclusive environment in FNS.</li> <li>Opportunity for sharing best practices and develop innovative solutions to EDI challenges within FNS.</li> </ul>

<b>2.2.11:</b> Make EDI training compulsory for all staff on an annual basis with renewal every 3 years (in line with health and safety training)	SAP 2.4.10	<i>Planned for Q1 2027</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FNS plans to expand its EDI training initiatives for all staff and students.</li> <li>Support from institutional action will help FNS build its EDI training programme as we continue to build a culture where diverse perspectives are celebrated.</li> </ul>
<b>Priority Area 2 - Educate and Empower Students on EDI</b>		
<b>2.4.26:</b> Review student data collection model and internal data sharing framework	Partially aligned to BAP 4.1.1	<i>Timescale Planned for Q1 2026 to Q1 2028</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FNS access to data currently used for HEA reporting only</li> <li>Opportunity to evaluate Access and EDI indicators from students' records system.</li> <li>Improved data sharing between UCC and FNS.</li> </ul>
<b>2.4.27:</b> Increase engagement with student EDI survey to understand student needs and perception of EDI	SAP 1.3.1	<i>Timescale Planned for Q1 2026 to Q1 2028</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased Engagement: Collaboration with EDI to promote the Student Survey will boost FNS students' participation, ensuring student voices shape future initiatives.</li> </ul>
<b>2.4.33:</b> Update pregnant student policy and guidelines	SAP 2.4.8	<i>Timescale Planned for Q2 to Q3 2025</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on Welfare: Institutional policies that prioritise student welfare aligns with FNS' ethos, to foster a more inclusive and supportive environment for its students.</li> </ul>
<b>Priority Area 3 - Academic and Research staff Career Development</b>		
<b>1.2.16:</b> Review Values & Culture EDI Survey question set for researchers and run dedicated researcher EDI survey/round table discussions for researchers to identify key needs	SAPs 1.3.1 & 2.2.7	<i>Values &amp; Culture EDI Survey, 2026</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FNS will have better engagement from research staff with the survey and be able to identify and address any key issues raised.</li> </ul>
<b>2.1.6:</b> Review HoS Appointment policy in College of SEFS	SAP 2.2.1	<i>Timescale Planned for Q4 2029</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic Career Development: UCC's GEAP includes pathways for promotion and career growth to support staff ambitions. FNS actions will support staff in applying for these opportunities.</li> </ul>
<b>2.2.6:</b> Submit applications for forthcoming HEA Senior Academic Leadership (SALI) calls. Create UCC Core funded matched SALI appointments with up to 5 internally recruited Prof posts in 5 areas and ensure sufficient support are in place to retain/develop new SALI appointments	SAP 2.2.2	
<b>2.2.9:</b> Launch a promotion pathway to full Prof	SAPs 2.2.2 & 2.2.3	
<b>2.2.15:</b> New PDRS process to include discussion of work-life balance, workload, EDI contribution.	SAPS 2.2.4 & 2.2.9	<i>Timescale Planned for Q1 2025-Q1 2026.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive impact for all FNS staff.</li> <li>Addresses need for better engagement with PDRS from FNS staff and discussions of workload and work-life balance to support FNS SAP actions.</li> </ul>
<b>2.3.9:</b> Incorporate workload management into PDRS training for Heads/line managers and into institutional leadership/management training programmes for line managers/Heads	SAPs 2.2.4, 2.2.9 & 2.3.7	
<b>2.4.20:</b> Continue and advance maternity leave supports	BAP 5.5.1 & SAP 2.4.14	<i>Timescale Planned for Q1-Q2 2027</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing and advancing maternity leave supports will strengthen FNS commitment to removing barriers that women, particularly academics, face when balancing family responsibilities and career advancement.</li> </ul>
<b>Priority Area 4 - PMSS Career Development</b>		
<b>2.2.15:</b> New PDRS process to include discussion of work-life balance, workload, EDI contribution	Bap 5.6.7 and SAPs 2.2.4, 2.2.9 & 2.3.7	<i>Planned for Q1 2025 to Q1 2026</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work-Life Balance and Wellbeing: PDRS and Work Life Balance policies will prioritise discussions on workload, work-life balance and EDI contributions, promoting FNS staff wellbeing and supporting equitable workload distribution.</li> <li>FNS will participate in any discussions around new policy, bringing a strong voice that reflects its SAP ambitions.</li> </ul>
<b>2.4.9:</b> Develop and launch a new Work Life Balance policy for staff		

<b>2.3.1:</b> Encourage underrepresented applicants to apply for PMSS roles, particularly men at Admin Grades 3-5 and women at Admin Grades 9+ and at senior technical grades	Partially aligned to SAP 2.3.1	<i>Planned Timescale 2026 to 2029</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Career Development and Diversity: Actions such as encouraging underrepresented groups to apply for admin roles and progressing the Technicians Commitment will improve access to career advancement, address diversity gaps, and enhance professional growth opportunities for FNS PMS staff.</li></ul>
<b>2.3.8:</b> Progress adoption of Technicians Commitment. Facilitate technical staff representation in new All-Ireland Technical Staff network	SAP 2.3.4	
Priority Area 5 - Working and Learning Environment		
<b>2.2.19:</b> Appoint Staff Disability Officer	SAPs 2.4.4 & 2.4.10	<i>Carers Network commenced in 2024 with further initiatives in Q3 2025. Staff Disability Support Officer to be appointed Q4 2025.</i>
<b>2.2.22:</b> Develop and implement framework for carers	SAP 2.4.15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support for staff with caring responsibilities is a high priority action in the FNS SAP. UCC action will enable effective implementation of SAP 2.4.15.</li><li>• Inclusivity and Diversity: Institutional actions that promote an inclusive environment across age, race, and ability strengthens FNS' SAP and EDI agenda.</li><li>• Improved Support Systems: Ensures targeted support for staff with disabilities or neurodiverse needs which FNS will actively promote.</li></ul>
<b>2.2.21:</b> Develop Disability and Neurodiversity Action Plan in partnership with Disability and Neurodiversity Staff Network.	SAPs 2.4.4 & 2.4.10	
<b>2.2.23:</b> Achieve Age-Friendly University Accreditation through the development/implementation of the Age-Friendly Action Plan	SAPs 2.4.4 & 2.4.10	
<b>2.2.24:</b> Develop and Implement Race Equality Action Plan	SAPs 2.4.4, 2.4.9 & 2.4.10	
<b>2.4.1:</b> Establish a Dignity & Respect Support Hub to support anonymous reporting, disclosures and formal complaints from staff and students	BAP 6.6 & SAP 2.4.12	<i>Timescale Planned for Q3 2025 to Q4 2028: Universal impact</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Action will strengthen FNS' commitment to the Right to Dignity and Respect for all staff and students.</li><li>• Support FNS efforts to establish clear reporting and complaints procedures for staff and students.</li></ul>
<b>2.4.2:</b> Establish clear data collection and monitoring processes for formal and informal complaints, anonymous reports and disclosures	BAP 6.6 & SAP 2.4.12	
<b>2.4.4:</b> Provide Dignity and Respect training and education to all staff. Provide training to managers on how to manage and support complaints, disclosures related to bullying, harassment, discrimination, sexual harassment and unfair treatment.	BAP 6.6	<i>Timescale planned from Q1 2025 to Q4 2029</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dignity and Respect: Provides support and education on handling bullying, harassment, and discrimination in FNS.</li><li>• FNS will promote and encourage staff to use new resources and trainings and apply these in day-to-day work to strengthen BAP 6.6.</li><li>• Awareness and Reporting: Enhances awareness of reporting mechanisms, ensuring staff feel safe and supported. FNS will advertise these mechanisms to support and strengthen BAP 6.6.</li></ul>
<b>2.4.5:</b> Develop communications plan to increase awareness of report and support mechanisms for bullying, harassment, discrimination, sexual harassment, unfair treatments in UCC.	BAP 6.6	
<b>2.4.6:</b> Raise awareness of new Domestic Violence Policy with managers and staff	SAP 2.4.11	<i>Policy launched in 2024</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Awareness of this policy and others strengthen FNS' commitment to staff wellbeing.</li></ul>
<b>2.4.11:</b> Assess the extent of application of university practice of setting core meeting hours from 10:00am to 4:00pm (with hybrid options encouraged). Encourage scheduling that prioritizes needs of parents/ carers and staff wellbeing.	SAP 2.4.1	<i>Planned for Q1 2025</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• FNS has updated its original BAP action on core meeting hours for staff.</li><li>• Institutional action will strengthen FNS local action and improve staff responses, especially females, to adherence to this policy.</li></ul>
<b>2.4.21:</b> Establish Parents Network	SAP 2.4.15	<i>Parents Network planned for Q2 2026</i>
<b>2.2.22:</b> Develop and implement framework for carers		<i>Carers Network and care-related policies commenced in 2024</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support for parents and staff with non-parental caring duties is a high priority action for FNS.</li><li>• The impact of institutional networks will assist FNS in ensuring all staff, regardless of personal circumstances, have equal opportunities to thrive and progress in their roles while fostering a culture of empathy in FNS.</li></ul>

## **2.5b (ii) any gaps in institutional supports for achieving progress and impact in the department.**

*Financial Constraints:* 2024 has been a difficult year for UCC following a financial crisis and the impact of subsequent cost-cutting measures. Improving FNS branding and visibility of EDI (BAP 6.9) was halted due to financial constraints but is anticipated to progress in Q1-Q2, 2025 (SAP 2.4.4). While the institution will continue to be impacted in the near future, with financing of projects, hiring of staff and general day-to-day expenditure remaining closely monitored, this is not anticipated to impede AS progress, as UCC has committed to safeguarding the wellbeing of staff and students during this time. This is evident, for example, through continued maternity leave backfill and expansion of training and development programmes. Long-term, further impacts are possible, if financial limitations lead to prioritising key projects and delaying others. The UCC GEAP (2024) sets out the key areas of focus for UCC, and FNS SAP is optimistic for success where actions are in alignment.

*Public Sector Limitations:* Career development for all staff is an FNS priority area, however this is limited by nature of the University and public sector. Staff are subject to categorisation (i.e. academic, technical and professional) as well as grading levels that are overseen at government level. While this may limit options available to staff who wish to develop in conventional manners, FNS will support and advise where possible.

*Data Collection:* Collecting data for this application was challenging on occasions given the wide range of sources to be drawn from, and dependency on other units for timely provision of data. UCC GEAP (2024) specifically highlights actions aimed (detailed in Table 2.5.2 above) at improving EDI data collection and access. Streamlined data would be highly beneficial to FNS' SAP implementation, and would address gaps that have been experienced to date.

## **Section 3: An evaluation of the department's progress and success**

In Section 3, applicants should evidence how they meet Criterion D and E:

- + Demonstration of progress against the applicant's previously identified priorities
- + Evidence of success addressing gender inequality and, where relevant, wider inequalities

Recommended word count: 2,000

### **3.1. Evaluating progress against the previous action plan**

**a. Insert the most recent iteration of the action plan associated with the previous department's award. The action plan should be 'RAG' rated (rated 'red,' 'amber' or 'green') depending on progress.**

**TABLE 3.1.1: ITERATION 5 OF FNS BRONZE ACTION PLAN ASSOCIATED WITH BRONZE AWARD (2019)**

AP No.	Action	Rationale	Responsibility	Start Date	End Date	Success Measures	Status	Key Outputs and Milestones	Progress & Impact
3.1.1	SASC membership to achieve a gender balance of 50:50 within two years.	Currently, the SAT (SASC) post-AS application submission) is 61% F and 39% M. The self-assessment process has identified the need to address the imbalance of males at UG and PG stages and females at some academic grades. To develop strategies to address these issues the School want to ensure equal representation of males and females from all staff and student categories to implement this AS Action Plan.	SASC Chair in consultation with HoS	Apr-19	Jan-23	SASC Membership with 50:50 gender balance across staff categories.		As places become available on the SASC, the Chair will make every effort to ensure gender balance across staff/student categories, in consultation with the HOS to balance workload distribution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The original School Athena SWAN Committee (SASC; 54%F, 46%M) was rebranded as the EDI Committee in March 2020 to reflect its broader EDI agenda. Then, in January 2023, to strengthen its inclusion agenda, the EDI committee (55%F, 45%M) became the WIDE committee.</li> <li>WIDE committee members (#9; 5F, 4M) represent the diversity of FNS staff in terms of gender, age, seniority and staff category and includes PG and UG representatives (students reviewed and co-opted annually, as required).</li> <li>The current SAT (formed February 2023) is 54%F, 46%M.</li> </ul>
3.1.2	All School staff to participate in LEAD and unconscious bias training courses within two years	The School wants to embed and promote core values of equality and inclusion among the School community.	School Manager/ SASC to monitor	01-Sep	Sep-22	Annual report to SASC of staff uptake of training indicates minimum [80%] uptake within two years In future staff surveys, increase in positive responses to questions on perceptions of how FNS promotes values of equality, diversity and inclusion		Liaise initially with HR to conduct an FNS school-specific unconscious bias training course. Flag online LEAD training to all staff via email. Staff to report back once training has been completed. Ensure all new staff take up courses as they become available.	All staff and EDI committee members participated in unconscious bias training (via EDI resources, Canvas modules or HR workshops) and many undertook EDI-related training between Sept 2019 and 2022. Data is only available for uptake of EDI courses with HR and not recorded for Canvas or EDI unit courses. FNS records uptake of courses annually (SAT Chair). In addition, FNS has undergone a dramatic shift in personnel in the last 4 years. Multiple long term staff members retired and have been replaced, leading to 50% of current staff having been hired in the last five years. While staff have been given support in their new roles, a concerted effort continues to be made to ensure that all EDI training opportunities are availed of. This action is transferred to the SAP as Action 2.4.10 and includes a new mechanism for recording, locally, all uptake of EDI-related courses by FNS staff and students.
3.1.3	Report progress of AS Action Plan to SMT monthly and to School Assembly biannually; produce an annual report of achievements for SMT and SEFS ASSG, summarised for the School website. Report progress of AS AP to wider School community at Staff meetings and the biannual School assembly.	To promote the SASC and its activities in implementing the AS AP as a permanent operational committee. To build AS principles into all School activities and decision-making. To update all staff on progress and achievements and to collect feedback from staff. To ensure AS actions are being completed and to identify and resolve any roadblocks to closing out actions.	SASC Chair, School Manager and HoS	Sept. 2019 (SMT Report)	On-going with monthly report from WIDE Chair to SMT	Periodic reporting proceeding on schedule. Timely implementation of AS AP. Early identification and intervention by HoS and SMT level, if issues arise.		Monthly updates to SMT. Bi-annual reports to School Staff. Public updates through the School communication channels; the School newsletter, website, and School (@fnsucc) and HoS twitter feeds.	Following a restructure of our governance and committees in September 2023, the WIDE committee now reports directly into the School Management Team monthly. Previously, the EDI Chair directly reported to the HoS on Athena Swan matters and updates were given at School Assemblies, website & social media channels. THE WIDE committee is now positioned central to FNS governance and its progress, along with our AS action plan are standing items at all SMT monthly meetings. Periodic reports have proceeded on schedule. Bi-annual reports, summarising progress of actions are presented to staff at School Assembly and updates provided regularly through our website and other social media channels.

3.1.4	The School will incorporate core AS-quantitative and qualitative components into ongoing quality-driven staff data collection	Online, ethically approved, anonymous survey data supplemented by focus groups among students and early career researchers and academics will deliver ongoing quantitative and contextual data to the SASC and the HoS to evaluate whether the actions implemented are delivering anticipated outcomes for staff and students. Opportunities to identify new or unanticipated consequences or issues that require a systematic approach to ongoing data gathering and secular analysis of trends.	SASC with support from UCC AS office  WG Leads  School Manager	Apr-20	Every 18 months	Completed surveys. Regular monitoring and feedback from staff and students. Evidence-based decision making. School can analyse any trends and implement actions to address any issues. Ongoing updates of AS AP. Incorporation of AS actions and achievements within the School quality review(s).		Complete a draft survey for circulation to allow staff to provide comments.	Since being documented, this action has been subsumed into the new biennial UCC Values & Culture/ EDI survey for all staff and students; FNS will actively encourage staff participation in UCC Values & Culture surveys as they arise.
3.1.5	Promote AS at School outreach and public engagement events	Increase awareness of School AS action plan and the Charter Principles	Outreach and Public Engagement Committee Chair  SASC Chair will monitor	Nov-18	Ongoing	Increased awareness of the principals of Athena SWAN and associated culture shift, measured by responses to staff survey.  School publicly expressing its values and commitment to equality, diversity and opportunities for all.		At School public engagement and outreach events, display the Athena SWAN logo. Provide a short, succinct piece of information about Athena SWAN to staff members to be used at outreach events. Place School AS banners at stands for promotional activities and conferences. Promote our AS activity through the School communication channels; the School newsletter, website and School (@fnsucc) and HoS (@Kelly_Alan) twitter feeds.	In the 2018 staff survey just 33%F and 21%M respondents agreed that ' <i>FNS promoted EDI values and recognised how AS principles were embedded in School culture and day to day operation</i> '. The 2022 survey showed an impressive increase in awareness of FNS EDI values and AS, with 60%F and 40%M agreeing with the statement. AS principles are at the core of all activities in the School and promotion is extensive through all communication channels. The AS logo is on all FNS promotional material & banners/posters are used at events & outreach. FNS continues to promote its equality, diversity and inclusion agenda and AS activities.
4.1.1	Tailor outreach activities to improve gender balance in our UG programmes.	Men are underrepresented among FNS UG students (~30%), particularly in NS. Outreach work has not systematically focussed on underrepresented cohorts.  FNS acknowledges perceptions of disciplines like NS as feminised, supported by research, impact students' choice. To a certain extent NS is changing with focus on areas such as Performance Nutrition which could be highlighted at outreach events.	School manager; Teaching & Learning committee; Academic staff	Nov-19	Nov-24	25% males in BSc Nutritional Sciences. 50% males in BSc Food Sciences.		A more balanced gender profile across both UG programmes over time. Systematic targeting of male schools for outreach to include data collection from those in senior cycle to identify reasons for not selecting Food or Nutritional Sciences in their Central Applications Office (CAO) preferences. Strategies to address these reasons and attract male school-leavers.  Gender balance among those providing outreach, especially male role models in NS. Improved visibility of male role models on social media.	Analysis of 1st year intake from 2018-2019 to 2023-2024 shows an impressive increase in the number of male student 1st year enrolments in BFS from the 2021, 2022 and 2023 with intakes at 20%, 34% and 42%, respectively. There has also been a notable increase of male students into BFNS going from 5% in 2021 and 2022, to 14% in 2023. BAP 4.1.1 originally aimed to increase male student intake into BFS and BFNS to 50% in 2 years and 25% in 4 years, respectively. Outreach activities were curtailed due to the pandemic and so this action was reviewed in Jan 2021, with the targets adjusted for the 2023-2024 UG intake for BFS. Since 2022, FNS outreach activity has increased, resulting in a 42% male participation rate, approaching the 50% target.



4.1.2	The FNS staff-student committee will identify factors affecting student performance in FS and develop and provide improved supports.	In FS, > 52% of male students are attaining a 2H2 or lower grade, well below that of female students even taking low numbers of males into account.	Chair of staff-student committee and FNS programme directors	Sept 2019 Feb 2020 Sept 2020	Dec 2019 April 2020 Review and assess Sept. 2021	A reduced performance gap between male and female students.  At least 80% of students satisfied with supports available in FNS at next survey.		Collate and analyse final grade data across all years to identify when UG performance, especially that of males, begins to decline.  Plan student consultation (survey, focus groups) to understand grade disparities.  Develop supports to help struggling students.  Implementation of supports.	FNS programme directors, reporting to FNS Teaching and Learning Committee and SMT, monitored grade attainment and confirm no evidence of male underperformance; data, for example, from 2021 to 2023 showed that lower male enrolment means individual performances of male students can disproportionately affect overall percentages.  In a round table discussion in December 2023, UGs (5F, 3M) were asked about course load and grade attainment; there was no gender disparity in the responses and both male and female students requested more continuous assessment and more guidance on exam preparation; students did not feel there was a performance gap between male and female students.  FNS programme directors review and document student performance annually to maintain oversight and identify supports required. Apart from support services provided by UCC, FNS has well-structured support services for students who may be struggling, e.g., students are assigned an academic advisor within their programme who can provide guidance on coursework and study strategies; additional tutorials are given on key topics; UGs are strongly encouraged to avail of the Peer Support programme and to engage with UCC's Skills Centre
4.1.3	School to implement a live database of all enrolled research postgraduate students from enrolment through progression and completion of their MSc by Research or PhD degrees.	Students are currently enrolled centrally without distinguishing by discipline.  Data by gender not consistently available.  FNS needs a database which will be maintained and provide SASC with annual reports by gender/discipline.	School EA and Pls	Jan 2019 Jan 2020		Database of PG students by discipline and gender to enable reporting of enrolment and progression.		Up to date local data to report research students by discipline and gender.  1st report to SASC.	From 2019, all PG Research data was collated by a SEA in FNS and data available immediately on request by SMT and other committees inc., the SAT. FNS will continue to collate these data and compare/reconcile with similar data from UCC.
4.1.4	Track all research-funded PGR positions locally including applications, offers and acceptances by gender and discipline (FS or NS)	PGR positions traditionally handled locally by Pls; no formal records are kept.  SEFS ASSG in conjunction with HR has created template for tracking all researcher recruitment and annual reports will be submitted to SEFS	School Manager	Jun-19	Early 2024	School will be able to produce snapshots at any time or over a period of time of the profile of UG students applying for PGR positions in FNS.  SEFS have complete database of research funded PGR positions.		School Manager to inform all Pls of new policy and forward researcher tracking template to be filled out.  Data on the proportions of males and females who apply to, and are successful in, being appointed to a funded research PGR programme.  First report of researcher tracked data.	From 2019, all Pls involved in PGR recruitment recorded all data regarding the application process. A new reporting form, to collate and centralise all PGR data, was introduced in 2024, managed by the School Manager. This action, updated in March 2024, includes record keeping of all unsolicited enquiries for research posts so that potential applicants can be contacted directly in the event of a position arising in FNS.
4.1.5	Request that UCC Careers Services provides breakdown of FNS graduate destinations by gender.	Currently UCC Careers Services provides this data to the HEA annually and therefore should be able to do so for individual units.  Information on graduate destination by gender is important in terms of monitoring success of both genders, determining possible gender preferences for certain jobs.	School Manager and HoS	Jan-20	Ongoing annually	Data on graduate first destinations by gender available, reported annually to SASC.		Data on 1st destinations disaggregated by gender.	The UCC Careers Service provides this information on request and publishes it on their website; FNS programme directors analyse these data annually and report to SMT and Outreach & External Engagement Committee. Staff and graduate students are encouraged, and actively use, LinkedIn to maintain connection and track graduate destinations.



4.2.1	FNS to participate in UCC's internal call for proposals - SALI Initiative	Despite better than average balance overall within the School at lecturer, SL and Prof Level 2, the School has only 2 full Profs who are both male.  The School has engaged with the SALI initiative as an opportunity to address this imbalance.	HoS and SMT	Mar-19	Mar-22	All opportunities pursued for a female Chair post for FNS under SALI initiative.	Application Submitted.  Participate in any further opportunities to propose female Chair post for FNS during 3-year SALI cycle.	While FNS engaged with the 2020 SALI initiative, it was unsuccessful. Since 2021, there have been no further SALI calls for promotion. This specific action is not included in the SAP. However, FNS recognises that the lack of full Professor posts by appointment or promotion from Professor (Scale 2) to Professor has been a longstanding issue at University- level. The recent UCC Gender Equality Action Plan (2024) includes an action to launch a full professorship promotion pathway in Q2 2025, with minimum targets for female applicants. FNS will actively engage with this process and identify and encourage eligible staff, especially females to apply.
4.2.2	Devise strategies to encourage male applicants for research positions.  Track applications to research positions through the entire process.	Data has shown a consistently lower proportion of males in research positions (29-36%) across FNS, particularly in FS.  While this is challenging and reflects the high rate of private sector employment on graduation, the School wishes to address it over time.	Research Committee Graduate Studies Committee	Mar-20	Mar-22	More balanced graduate staff profile.	Focus groups among those in the final year of their MSc/ PhD and research staff to build institutional knowledge around the criteria needed to attract male applicants to research positions.	Linked to Action 4.1.1. above, which has been implemented, the trend for a higher proportion of female students continues at research level but numbers of male students are increasing significantly year-on-year (e.g., from 27% of PhD's in 2019 to 37% in 2022). In addition, increased numbers of UG male students in FNS (up from 20% in 2021 to 42% in 2023), along with targeted outreach measures are expected to continue the observed trend towards a more balanced gender breakdown in the academic career pipeline.
4.2.3	Implement SEFS 'exit survey' to record why staff are leaving and their destinations.	Currently there is no formal recording of why staff, especially PDRs and senior research staff are leaving and where they are ultimately going.	School Manager	Jun-19	Ongoing annually	Formal record of leavers with reasons for leaving and destinations.	Exit survey template to be distributed to all staff with responsibilities for management of other staff inc., PDRs and senior researchers.  Record all exit surveys and produce annual report for SEFS and internally for SMT and RGSC.	The School has implemented this policy as an option for staff members. It is held informally and is done only on the agreement of the departing person. Exit survey data is anonymously included and reported to SEFS and SMT annually. These data have improved our understanding of staff experiences in FNS and in some cases have highlighted areas for improvement in management, work culture and institutional processes.
5.1.1	All staff, particularly those involved in recruiting, mentoring and coaching research staff, must be trained in appropriate equality, diversity and inclusion courses.	To reinforce that FNS actively welcomes people from a variety of backgrounds and reflects this attitude in its workplace culture.  Mandatory gender equality training aligns with UCC Institutional AP Action 4.1-12 which seeks, for example, to ensure promotions in UCC are free of bias.	HoS and School Manager	Oct-19	Dec-21	The School echoes the University ethos of treating everyone equally and none are discriminated against.  Elimination of unconscious bias. Staff perception regarding gender bias improved as measured by Athena SWAN staff survey.  Training uptake monitored by School Manager/HoS with annual report to SASC (commencing April 2021).	School Manager to survey all FNS PIs to track whether/ when they participated in recruitment/equality training.  HoS to encourage all PIs to avail of training within 12 months.  Refresher training every 3 years, monitored by School Manager, HoS	All PIs now participate in recruitment/equality training, and this is recorded by FNS. However, this action overlaps with action 3.1.2 and continues into SAP 2.4.9, with improved reporting around EDI training for all staff. Since completing our Bronze Application in 2019, the School has undergone a dramatic shift in personnel. Multiple long term staff members retired and have now been replaced, leading to 50% of current staff having been hired in the last five years. Some staff have completed the EDI training provided by the University but tracking this has not been done. In addition, UCC has committed through its AS action plan, that all line managers take mandatory EDI training by the end of 2024. This commitment is now being implemented by SEFS and FNS will ensure all staff are compliant.
5.1.2	School will develop a comprehensive staff induction handbook for FNS staff, including a specific section for PDRs and research staff.	To improve on-boarding and induction of staff to the School of FNS.  Staff survey revealed that only 56% of new starts were satisfied with induction/orientation process.	School Manager	Jan-20	Jul-21	Handbook published online and circulated to all new staff. Improvement in staff satisfaction rate regarding the FNS induction processes in next staff survey.	Completed comprehensive guide to the structure and workings of the School and UCC, including details of HR policies and contact points; UCC code of conduct and supports for all staff including parents and carers.	This Handbook was developed in 2021 and is regularly updated. This is given to all new staff members, in addition to which a comprehensive on-line portal has been created.

<b>5.1.3</b>	School will introduce a mentoring scheme for male and female staff applying for promotion.	Of 17 academic staff respondents in the staff survey, only #1F and #3M agreed that "the promotions process in UCC is fair and transparent".  For the current open call for promotion to SL, FNS has put a mentoring scheme in place to identify staff eligible for promotion and to assist both male and female staff applying for the current promotion round.	HoS; Senior academic cohort; SASC	Sep-19	Dec-21	Increase in School staff reporting a positive experience of supports provided to help meet promotion criteria, measured by Athena SWAN survey.  School staff applying for promotion will be helped.	Review and assess staff experience of mentoring offered during current promotion round.  Incorporate feedback and embed promotions mentoring for future promotions calls.	FNS introduced a mentoring scheme for all staff applying for promotion and to discuss professional development. FNS staff applying for promotion are offered assistance by colleagues who act as mentors and are encouraged to engage with specialist sessions provided by experts in academic leadership at a SEFS level. Since its introduction in December 2021, feedback from the 2022 staff survey on the FNS mentoring was very positive with 75% (6F, 3M) academic staff reporting satisfaction with the mentoring system in place. For all promotion opportunities since, senior staff are identified and support junior colleagues applying for promotion.
<b>5.3.1</b>	Encourage all staff to avail of a balanced profile of training in professional and personal development provided by UCC.	Uptake of courses offered by HR by male staff members is exceptionally low.  Need to identify training required by males and females perhaps through the PDRS/PDP processes as there may be gender-specific requirements currently not being met.  Help to identify suitable training opportunities for males and females according to their role.  HR must be made aware of the very low uptake of personal development courses by males so that they might investigate and possibly develop courses tailored for, and targeting, male staff.	SASC, HoS, HR	Jan-20	Jan-21	Balanced uptake of HR personal and career development courses by staff and by gender.	Raise the issue of poor uptake of courses by male staff with HR.  New/broader range of training courses available targeting male staff members  Balanced uptake of appropriate training opportunities.	There has been a significant increase in the professional and personal training undertaken by staff. In the staff survey, 82%F and 71%M academic staff agreed that they have training to support their career aspirations; 75%F and 66%M of PMS staff agreed. This action will continue into our SAP going forward as the School wishes to grow this further and ensure all staff are aware of, and take up, personal and career development courses, all of which FNS will record. SAP 2.2.5 and SAP 2.3.3 include emphasis on ensuring academic and PMS staff, respectively, are aware of, and avail of, relevant training opportunities for career progression.
<b>5.3.2</b>	Improved PDRS engagement to ensure that all staff have the opportunity to receive feedback from their line managers and the HoS to encourage staff feedback on the process and action any issues as necessary.	Overall low satisfaction with the PDRS process to date.  Further bi-lateral engagement required to improve satisfaction and clarity around its purpose, particularly regarding the process of developing and implementing a PDP.	HoS; Line Managers	Apr-20	Dec-22	Higher satisfaction among staff; better uptake and satisfaction with professional development opportunities.	HoS or line managers to contact staff after next round of PDRS and invite them to meet to discuss the process and any resulting feedback.	Reflection on this action and consultation with EDI colleagues provided insight into the low engagement with PDRS generally in UCC. In the 2022 staff survey only 29% of FNS academic staff indicated they had participated in the PDRS process; 32% of PMS staff had availed of the system. Available data in UCC was incomplete at time of survey as the e-performance platform Simitive was only in place since 2021 and the PDRS system is biennial. The staff survey coincided with a year with no PDRS. Most academic staff in FNS use informal processes, e.g., one-to-one meetings with HoS, as alternative opportunities to discuss career development. This action is updated and carried over to as SAP 2.2.4 to ensure engagement and recording of PDRS for all staff.
<b>5.3.3</b>	All PIs to hold annual performance reviews with researchers and to encourage and support research staff to develop Professional and Personal Development Plans.	The formal PDRS process in UCC is not available to research staff.  Feedback from PDRs indicated dissatisfaction with current situation of no formal system for performance reviews.	All PI's	Apr-19	Dec 2019 and ongoing	100% of research staff will have met with their PI and prepared a PDP by Jan 2020.  Improved feedback from researchers in AS staff survey regarding career development, opportunities and training plus improved uptake of training.	PI's to be contacted and informed of new system for performance reviews for PDRs and preparation of PDPs.  Within a given year, every researcher will have a performance review and develop a PDP.	This is a requirement for all research staff and the School implements this (100% uptake). PI's record participation and suggested actions for follow-up meetings with researchers.

5.3.4	When the re-researcher mentoring programme is rolled out to all research staff, the School will action that all newly appointed research staff will participate.	FNS staff did not have the opportunity to take part in the pilot programme for researcher mentoring.	FNS Research & Innovation and Postgraduate Committees/UCC HR.		Ongoing	A more self-aware, focussed researcher cohort indicated by higher satisfaction ratings and higher success rates in funding awards, career progression and development.		Assignment of PDRs to appropriate mentors for at least 12 months, within the first year of programme initiation.	Since this action was proposed, UCC has a comprehensive Post Doc Hub in place which offers professional development, e-learning and a mentoring scheme for all research staff. In addition, SEFS has several support systems in place for researchers (discussed in Section 2.2f). The response rate of research staff to the 2022 survey was very low (5F) and it is difficult to gauge overall engagement with the PostDoc Hub, but FNS will action to improve all researcher engagement with career supports (SAP 2.2.7).
5.3.5	The School will liaise with industry partners to ensure there is improved gender balance among visiting speakers from the private sector.	Over-representation of male speakers both at industry visits to the School and student visits to sites.  In 2018, invites were sent with a 50:50 gender balance but uptake was still primarily male.	Programme directors; Module coordinators; Workshop coordinators.	Sep-19	Ongoing with an annual review	At least 30% of speakers are female at all seminars and workshops.		Planning the next open day event (Sept 2019) will include discussion of our requirement for gender balance among speakers when soliciting representatives from the private sector to speak or present awards.	Since 2019, FNS has put significant effort into ensuring there is gender balance among speakers at all seminars and workshops; the importance of this action is communicated regularly to all staff by the WIDE Chair and SM and records are maintained locally.
5.5.1	The HoS will work with HR to ensure adequate backfill support for all staff taking maternity leave	42% of staff (5F, 1M) reported having to cover some of their own work during periods of maternity leave and family leave.  Females returning from maternity leave reported facing a huge workload on return.	HoS	Apr-19	Ongoing	Backfill for staff member taking period of maternity or family leave.  Less stressed staff returning to work following ML with regular workload.		Once pregnancy is confirmed, HoS/Line Manager work with HR Business Manager to organise backfill.  Backfill is organised.	This policy has been implemented and support has been provided to 3F to date. The policy on this matter is also included in the FNS Staff Handbook.
5.5.2	A formal system for 'keeping in touch' (KIT) days will be established.	Additional comments from survey revealed that some female staff members were "isolated" and "excluded" from initiatives that emerged while they were on ML.  As per UCC Maternity Leave policy, "Keep in Touch" days should be organised by the HoS or Line Manager.	HoS/Line Manager	Apr-19	Ongoing	Keeping in touch days become an important part of staff ML.  Positive feedback from AS staff survey indicating less isolation while on leave and manageable workload on return.  Increased participation from working mothers in initiatives that arise when they're on ML.		Policy of 'keep in touch' days communicated to HoS/Line Managers.  Organise keeping in touch days with person availing of maternity leave.  Include question on staff survey to understand how School could improve "keeping in touch" days support.	This action has been implemented and HoS and line managers maintain contact with those involved in collaboration with the staff members and their needs.  Updated in 2021, this action also ensures FNS maintains contact with staff, should they wish to do so, during all types of family leave. Of 11 respondents to the staff survey in relation to 'keeping-in-touch' while on family leave, 45% (3F, 2M) agreed that 'arrangements were available for me to keep in touch during my family leave to the extent I wished to do so'. No respondent disagreed.
5.5.3	The School will action to ensure support for staff with caring responsibilities is communicated and fully endorsed by the HoS, line managers and PIs.	Awareness and uptakes of some leave options available are low.  Some staff members are not clear about how taking periods of leave are handled during promotion process.	HoS, School Manager & CTO (managerial)	Apr-19	Bi-annual update	Measure the success of HR session by surveying staff to ascertain usefulness of the session and make recommendations.  Increased awareness and clarity about how flexible working, family leave and career breaks are accessed.		HR workshop with staff.  Inclusion of policies in Staff Handbook.	This has largely been implemented and HR have conducted a workshop with staff and the UCC carers policy has been included in the Staff Handbook. 66%F and 85%M in FNS reported having caring responsibilities in the 2022 staff survey; of these, 38%F and 15%M said their caring was non-parental. Supporting carers is a priority area of the UCC Gender Equality Action Plan (2024). FNS will prioritise supporting staff with caring responsibilities and this action is included as SAP 2.4.14, which will ensure that staff are aware of the supports available for carers from FNS and UCC.
5.6.1	Populate School web links with gender balanced academic and alumni information.	Ongoing activity but not purposefully monitored to date.  Only 30% F and 40%M survey respondents agreed that the School considers gender equality in promotional material.	School Senior Executive Assistant (SEA)	Sep-18	Ongoing	Gender balanced role models visible.		Balanced projection of images and stories on public facing web and social media.	FNS has put considerable effort, since 2018, into ensuring that its website and communication channels present gender balanced images. Staff were not directly asked about promotional material in the staff survey, however, PG feedback from semi-structured discussions showed that 100% (8F, 6M) agreed that the FNS website and social media images and material were gender balanced and reflective of the diversity of staff and students.

5.6.2	Based on 'suggestions' box feedback and staff responses to timing of social events, the School will expand its range of activities and ensure timings facilitate staff attendance gatherings.	School is to build on its current social events for staff and students (based on feedback suggestions received) and ensure every effort is made to facilitate broad attendance as only 50% of staff surveyed were happy with the timing of social gatherings.  School wants to create more opportunities to showcase its facilities and research to the general public.	School Manager and Admin Staff	Oct-19	Review Feb 2020 and agree next event. Note: halted by pandemic but reviewed in 2021.	At least two new social activities organised for staff and students over the next academic year (2019-2020).  Attendance by a large number of staff and students.  Improved satisfaction rating for timing of social events and range of activities at next survey.		Subgroup from OPEC will compile list of ideas from staff and students to broaden range of social activities and include suggestions of dates and timings. Poll staff and students on preferences to get majority consent on activities. Doodle poll timing of event. First new social events will take place in the School.	Since the pandemic, FNS has put considerable effort into its social activities for staff and students and introduced several new social events at times that suit staff, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First onsite Christmas Party (2022) which began at 3pm.</li><li>• Foodie Fridays (1:00pm) where staff bring in baking and share lunch together.</li><li>• Regular research seminars (1:00pm) with refreshments served afterwards to facilitate discussions.</li></ul> 70% of staff in 2022 survey agreed that social events were held at times that suited them to attend.
5.6.3	School to host an annual Internal Conference, featuring FNS research from academic, research, technical and graduate staff and students.	Based on strong feedback from staff survey (open ended question) and PDR focus group a need has been identified to showcase research activities from right across the School annually.  An annual conference will create internal dialogue to facilitate collaboration between staff in different fields and enable crosstalk among researchers at all levels of the academic continuum.	Research & Innovation Committee and HoS	Sep-19	Annually in Sept	High levels of satisfaction at next survey among research staff regarding being able to show case their research and hear and see what others are doing right across FNS.  More opportunities for collaborative research and potential for new research grants in cross disciplinary fields.		A date has been pencilled in for Sept 2nd, 2019 just prior to the academic year start.  RSGC to confirm date and contact all staff and researchers.	The Research Day is about to enter its fourth year and has proved to be a huge success with staff and students and one of the most impactful actions from our BAP. Staff of all levels, including researchers and PhD students, are invited to display posters or give short talks on their work. It has showcased the work of new staff members and facilitated connections and collaborations between existing staff in FS and NS. Feedback from PGs (8F, 6M) was overwhelmingly positive about this initiative with 100% agreement on its benefits towards and inclusive and engaging environment.
5.6.4	School to address, as a priority, the issue of staff reluctance to report unfair treatment; liaise with HR to investigate possibility of FNS contact person to mediate.	Only 44% of female staff indicated that they would report unfair treatment in the workplace. Several staff members (both male and female) indicated that all staff should be educated in existing policies and procedures regarding unfair treatment, harassment and bullying.	HoS with oversight by School Manager	Jan-20	Jan 2021 and ongoing	Increase to 80% or higher, the percentage of female staff who would report unfair treatment.		It is anticipated that the person selected will receive appropriate training and have supports available to carry out the role with absolute confidentiality and be able to identify specific responsibilities wrt complainant, HoS and HR.	The 2022 survey showed an increase in the number of staff who would report unfair treatment (55%F, 60%M) compared to the 2018 survey (23%F, 33%M) but the School recognises that more work is required in this area to reach targets.  BAP 6.6 was included in an updated iteration of this BAP in September 2023 and immediately implemented. It includes a sub action on reporting structures within FNS which addresses issues of clarity around methods to report negative behaviours in FNS.
5.6.5	Gender balance across all School committees and committee Chairs to be reviewed and improved.	There is a tendency towards female dominance at committee level.  The School will action to actively solicit male members for committees to spread membership and effort across both genders.  Programme directors are gender balanced for core degree programmes but male dominated for others.	HoS	Apr-19	Annual Review	Annual review report		Balanced representation at core and working group committee levels.	The School has achieved considerable success in balancing gender across its core committees. Currently, SMT and all committee Chairs are balanced 50:50 F/M. The SAT is 54%F, 46%M. Programme directors and committee members broadly reflect the overall gender balance of the School. Committee membership is collated and managed annually by School Manager.
5.6.6	Encourage and support staff to participate in external committees.	Opportunities are not always disseminated to all staff members; these may be valuable for junior faculty in particular.	HoS/SMT	Sep-19	Annual Review	Annual review report		Increased representation of academic, technical and administrative staff on external working groups and committees.	This has been strongly encouraged and promoted by HoS and SMT. Staff are surveyed annually; most recent data (Mar 2024) showed we have 23 individual staff members sitting on various UCC committees and external committees. Combined with Action 5.6.5, data are collated annually by School Manager.

5.6.7	Ensure that workload as it relates to work-life balance is discussed whenever staff wish to and always during PDRS.	Many staff reporting being uncomfortable discussing workload in the context of work-life balance.  Staff, #21, (89%F, 90%M) who had undergone PDRS welcomed the opportunity to discuss workloads but very few (33%F, 50%M) agreed that their work-life balance was raised and discussed.	HoS, School Manager, CTO Line Manager, PI's	Sep-19	Biennial review in line with PDRS cycle	Significant increase in the numbers of staff reporting that they would be comfortable discussing their work-life balance with line managers via the PDRS or other mechanisms.		Staff make a very clear distinction between being able to discuss workload and issues around work-life balance which framed this action.  HoS and Line Managers to specifically ask staff at PDR if they wished to discuss work-life balance. HoS and line managers discuss workload and work-life balance through other means besides PDRS.	The 2022 survey showed that 64%F & 43%M staff are comfortable discussing work-life balance with their line manager which is a significant improvement on our 2018 survey results when only 23%F, 27%M reported that they would be comfortable. Outside of the PDRS process discussed above (5.3.2), the School has implemented systems whereby staff can discuss workload and work-life balance with line managers/HoS. Line managers (SM and CTO managerial) communicated this to staff in 2023 and many have availed of the opportunity. The HoS has an online booking system for one-to-one meetings for staff to discuss any issues, including work/life balance and career goals. Since Sept 2023 this system has had significant uptake (Section 2.2d).
5.6.8	Every effort will be made to hold seminars by external speakers at lunch-time.	Staff with caring responsibilities have difficulty attending evening lecturers.	All staff	Jan-20	Ongoing	Attendance and survey data		Increased attendance by staff with caring responsibilities.	All seminars are scheduled for times within the Athena Swan working hours policy; however, where possible, seminars are also hybrid. Streaming/recording technology is available for those who are unable to attend in person.
5.6.9	School to invest in media training for staff.	Outreach and external engagement on many levels need multiple and diverse inputs; training required.  Three female staff members underwent media training courses in September 2019 and gave very positive feedback on their experience. All staff, especially males, should be encouraged to participate in such courses to improve their skills in presenting research via national media. The School recognises that central funding is limited for such training.	School Manager, Outreach Team	Sep-19	Ongoing annually	Secular changes in the Outreach and engagement profile of the School linked to 5.6.1.  Diversity in external engagement profile.		The School will allocate a budget annually out of which a number of places (#3-4) will be paid for.  First participants funded by FNS take part in media training.	Media training was provided for all staff by the College of Science, Engineering and Food Science in 2023. While uptake was relatively low (2F, 1M), despite considerable promotion by the School, the School has communicated to all staff that media training will be paid for by the School, outside of the Staff Support Fund discussed in action 6.3 below.
5.6.10	Outreach committee to put a process in place for documenting outreach and public engagement activities in line with SEFS AS/HR initiative.	Documentation of outreach work has been on an ad hoc basis to date, despite an active outreach and engagement profile.	Chair of Outreach & Public Engagement Committee and School Manager	Jun-19	2023	Annual report of outreach and public engagement activities, disaggregated by grade and gender of staff responsible and contributors.		The School representative on the SEFS Outreach Committee will document, in line with recent template from SEFS, all outreach activities within the School and report annually.  Accessible profile of School outreach and public activities.	All outreach activities in the School are documented and the gender balance of staff and students involved recorded and, where possible, the numbers and gender of attendees. The School Outreach and Public Engagement committee updated its ToR in 2023 to ensure outreach is collated centrally and presented at School Assemblies.
5.6.11	Promote the importance of gender balance for outreach presenters (and for organisers to consider the gender profile of audiences) and encourage participation by PGs in outreach activities.	Outreach activities need to be designed with the audience and the objective in mind including gender profile of contributors and recipients.  Similarly, only 18% of female respondents and 20% of male respondents agreed that we consider the gender profile of our audiences for outreach events and a very large proportion of respondents, 52%F, 46%M expressed no opinion.  No PG in FNS has taken the 5 credit PG6014 module 'Outreach and communication' which would benefit them in terms of personal development and ensure the School has a broader pool to draw from for outreach activities.	School Manager; Outreach team.  PG programme manager to promote PG6014	Oct-19	Annual Review	Data contributing to the annual report above.  Tailored outreach plans.  PGs involved in outreach activities and gaining credit for same.		Science week workshop in Nov 2019 will have considered gender balance among presenters.  Enrolment of between #2 and #4 PGs in PG6014	This action overlaps somewhat with actions 4.1.1 and 5.6.1 above. Outreach activities are closely monitored by the School and carefully designed with the audience in mind to ensure, wherever possible, a balance between contributors' gender and category and the audience and that material presented is appropriate for the target group. While involvement of PGs has increased in our outreach activities since 2019, feedback from our 2024 PG semi-structured discussions indicates that they would like to be involved more in outreach and other community activities. This action is updated and continued in SAP 2.1.5, which includes a broader range of sub-actions to engage PGs with outreach & public engagement events.

6.1	Staff Support Fund	Enable staff research initiatives and professional development. All staff, including academic, technical, research, and professional support are eligible to apply for funding. Supporting research, innovation, or development initiatives of benefit to the School. Funding for training and/or professional development.	Approved by SM, HoS, and Managerial CTO through online application process.	Jun-22	Ongoing	Encouraging staff to participate in professional training and development outside of the university. Improve the quality of the teaching and researching staff.		Increase in staff being supported and encouraged to participate in research, innovation, or development initiatives of benefit to the School.	Introduced in June 2022, this action initiative has been utilised by academic, technical and research staff. The School has committed 30,000 euro annually to this initiative. Individual applications can be made for up to 2,000 euro. This has been taken up by eight staff members (5F, 3M) for a variety of conferences, training programmes and research trips.
6.2	Rebranding and updating ToR of EDI committee to form Wellbeing, Inclusion, Diversity and Equality committee (WIDE)	The COVID-19 pandemic caused a sudden shift in work patterns and significant stress and highlighted the lack of prioritization of staff wellbeing in the School's inclusion agenda. Recognizing the need for a more nurturing and respectful work environment, the School decided to focus more closely on staff wellbeing to ensure both staff and students can thrive in their teaching and learning.	WIDE Committee Chair/HoS	Jan-23	Ongoing	Staff wellbeing becomes the foundation of a supportive and functioning work environment. Support the ability of staff to balance research and teaching obligations while maintaining a strong work-life balance.		Introduction of WIDE committee at School Assembly in Dec 2022 and formal launch in Jan 2023.	The School has significantly broadened its EDI agenda and the formation of the WIDE committee and its launch in January 2023 ensures we recognise that EDI has a fundamental role in supporting wellness of all staff and students; improving wellness, in turn, improves job satisfaction and productivity. We have synchronised our EDI and wellbeing strategies as they are fundamentally connected and included an intersectionality framework approach.
6.3	School Seminar Series	Provide an opportunity for staff and students alike to share an insight into their current research activities. To allow for a reflection on the vastness of the research outputs within the School of Food and Nutritional Sciences. Research to be presented equally by faculty members and students as well as those who specialise in Nutritional Sciences and Food Sciences.		Sep-23	Ongoing	Greater awareness and appreciation for the research being conducted by staff as well as students. Improved connection between NS and FS.		Increase attendance and participation of staff and students who will discuss their research in a large setting. Allow students to get constructive feedback from peers as well as teaching staff which will improve the quality of their work. Awareness of research themes and topics in NS and FS for all staff and students.	The School Research Seminar Series, introduced in 2023/24, features three speakers per session: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an established lecturer</li> <li>• a new academic staff member, and</li> <li>• a postgraduate researcher</li> </ul> balanced by gender and across the disciplines of Nutritional Science and Food Science. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with 100% of postgraduate participants (8F, 6M) finding it very beneficial for increasing awareness of internal research, collaboration opportunities, and providing valuable presentation experience.
6.4	Formation of a Postgraduate Research Committee	Formation of a postgraduate committee that is led by postgraduate students from the School of Food and Nutritional Sciences. To allow postgraduate students to assess and reflect on the issues, or possible areas of improvement concerning their research deadlines and their individual studies and other aspects of School life. Reporting directly to the Research & Innovation committee, allowing mainstream communication lines between staff and postgraduate students.	PG Committee Chair(s) Research & Innovation Committee	June, 2023	Ongoing	Increase in representation of postgraduate students at relevant meetings. Organised cohort that can be referred to and addressed for the input of postgraduate students. Increase in networking opportunities for postgraduate students.		Clear communication between staff of the School of Food and Nutritional Sciences and postgraduate students. Greater understanding and capacity to evaluate the work conditions and learning environment for postgraduate students.	This committee was created in 2023 by PhD and MSc students. The committee have developed a handbook for PG students and a communication plan. The School has supported them by providing a dedicated email address, information and meeting facilities. The committee provides numerous benefits for PGs inc., fostering leadership, collaboration and a sense of agency with their academic environment. With direct communication within the reporting structures of FNs, PGs have a platform to contribute to decisions affecting their academic and social experiences; the committee has organised several very successful social events since its inception. FNS staff have also noted the impact of this committee, e.g., involving PGs in outreach activities.
6.5	Open Communication Action	To address the need for a formal structure to record and note the minutes of all meetings within the School of Food and Nutritional Science. These minutes become available to all staff members to ensure that no staff member is left uninformed about important events or deadlines within the School. To ensure that staff who fulfil dual roles in the School as well as staff with caring responsibilities are not unfairly penalised by their inability to attend all meetings.	HoS, School Manager, Committee Chairs	Sept, 2023	Ongoing	Ensure that all staff members remain informed about important changes or upcoming events within the School of Food and Nutritional Sciences. Prevents any staff member from being unfairly excluded from events or meetings that take place outside of their availability.		Staff members are kept to up to date with all relevant information pertaining to the School of Food and Nutritional Sciences. Allows for staff members with obligations outside of working hours as well as staff with teaching responsibilities to stay clued in about the school.	Under the new committee structures, all meetings are now minuted. Once approved, the minutes are accessible to all relevant staff for their attention. Minutes are also stored in a central, SharePoint site.



6.6	Promotion of Code of Conduct and a Zero Tolerance Approach to Negative Behaviours	<p>The 2022 Staff Survey revealed a lack of confidence in the School's ability to effectively address bullying and harassment, with only 35% of respondents (8F, 6M) believing the School would handle these issues appropriately. Managing this issue is a priority action for the new HoS</p> <p>While most staff (72%F, 70%M) had not experienced discrimination or unfair treatment in FNS, 22%F said they did. Also, 22%F and 30%M reported having been bullied or harassed in FNS.</p>	HoS and SMT	Sep-23	Ongoing	Outline the importance of being mindful of staff's treatment of their colleagues and the need to safeguard an environment of respect and dignity for all staff. Instil confidence that all issues will be dealt with by senior management.		<p>A reminder email emphasized the importance of the UCC Duty of Respect and Right to Dignity at Work Policy, stressing a zero-tolerance approach to anti-social behaviour to ensure equal treatment and respect for all staff. Address and confirm the school's zero-tolerance approach towards poor behaviour and mannerism towards colleagues. Support staff in their ability to feel comfortable in the workplace.</p>	<p>The relevant policies have been circulated to all staff by the HoS who also stressed the School's stance on the issue. Due to the confidential nature of this matter, we cannot discuss any incidences; however, these matters are being dealt with proactively and showing significant improvement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Line managers underwent Duty of Respect and Right to Dignity at Work training.</li> <li>HoS and line managers consulted and took guidance from HR on best practice to manage difficult behaviours.</li> <li>HoS communicated the policy to all staff via email and emphasised management support for staff wishing to report any issues. The policy was reinforced at the following School Assembly as was the message that FNS would no longer tolerate negative behaviours in the workplace.</li> </ul> <p>Steps were taken to implement HR guidelines in resulting complaints and official processes were followed. Reporting systems have been implemented and communicated to all staff.</p>
6.7	Self-Evaluation	The School wanted a means of gathering honest and relevant feedback from staff members about the current standards of teaching and working environment within the School of Food and Nutritional Sciences.	HoS and SMT	Sept, 2023	Ongoing	The Head of School (HoS) initiated an anonymous staff survey to gather honest feedback on the achievements and potential improvements for the School of Food and Nutritional Sciences. The anonymity encourages staff to be more open and critical without fearing repercussions.		<p>Chance to address any areas of improvement within the School. Encourage an environment of honesty within the School in which staff can evaluate their workplace without fear of repercussions.</p>	In September 2023, the HoS issued a popular anonymous survey asking staff what the school does well and what could be improved. The feedback was used to address issues and inform future actions. The outcomes and actions were communicated to staff at the School Assembly, and this process will be repeated annually. communicated to staff at the subsequent School Assembly.
6.8	School Assembly and Christmas Social Event.	The School of Food and Nutritional Sciences comprises of two academic disciplines Food Sciences and Nutritional Sciences, different academic disciplines with limited professional opportunities for interaction. Creation of events to promote greater social interaction between staff who do not have the chance to converse daily. Ensures that all staff have the opportunity to discuss the running of the school and raise any issues.	CTO (managerial) and volunteers	Dec, 2023	Ongoing	Promoting a more inclusive environment that allows for staff, who may not cross paths due to the size of the school itself, an opportunity to socialise.		<p>A more interactive working environment allows for greater social inclusivity and diversity amongst staff. Reduce feelings of alienation and isolation among staff, which will improve staff wellbeing and job satisfaction.</p>	The School held its first annual in-house Christmas party in December 2023. The event included games, spot prizes and raffles and was attended by nearly 80 people from all areas of the School. The Christmas party is preceded by the annual School Assembly, the latter now agreed at SMT to be held twice per year (from Dec 2023). Feedback from staff and students has been very positive with 100% PG's surveyed agreeing that it was a great, informal, in-house event and the timing suited everyone. PG's have become active members of the organising team for the event.
6.9	EDI Branding & Visibility	To celebrate the opening of the UCC Rainbow Walkway in 2021 and increase awareness of the EDI agenda and wider efforts of creating an inclusive community in UCC and FNS by creating a space in the Glass Atrium of the Food Science building which showcases the powerful message of the Progress Pride Flag (2021).	WIDE Chair, CTO (managerial), UCC Media & Communications, UCC Buildings & Estates	Proposed first in Dec 2021	Ongoing	To raise awareness of the meaning of the colours of the Progress Pride Flag and how they represent the different facets of the UCC community, highlighting intersectionality and broaden the understanding of EDI issues among all FNS staff and students.		<p>FNS engaged with Buildings &amp; Estates and an external graphic design company to wrap the existing seating (9 chairs) in the colours of the Progress Pride Flag with a QR code on each chair explaining the meaning of the different colours. To hold an event to launch with initiative, once complete, with members of the LGBT and Staff Network, Student LGBTQ+, EDI Unit and FNS staff and students.</p>	The action was halted twice due to rebranding of the UCC colours by Media & Communications and, more recently, due to the cost-cutting measures in place under UCC's Project Alpha. FNS is committed to financing this, and the action is transferred directly to the SAP.



**b. Comment and reflect on the department's most recent action plan. This should include information on:**

**3.1b (i) the methodology of action implementation, evaluation and iteration;**

During the 2019-2024 review period, 98% of our 44 BAPs were implemented—75% fully and 23% in progress and updated in SAP. Three BAP actions (4.1.5, 5.3.4, and 5.5.1) were superseded by institutional actions. FNS' path to success is summarized in Figure 1.2.2 (see page 16) outlining key milestones (in green) and highlighting FNS's commitment to EDI initiatives and AS actions despite challenges (in blue).

*Implementation:*

Following the successful Bronze Award Application in 2019, implementation began in December of that year. Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic significantly disrupted activities, necessitating a reassessment of priorities and a temporary scaling back of efforts, with focus on delivery of teaching and core research. However, progress on staff and student wellbeing continued to be prioritised throughout this period via weekly virtual meetings between the EDI Chair, HoS, SM and Health and Safety committee chair. Throughout the pandemic, the EDI committee, comprising the EDI Chair, HoS, SM and a minimum of three EDI committee members, met virtually twice per Semester. Three of these meetings – between December 2019 and January 2022 (discussed below and Figure 3.1.1) – were dedicated to reviewing all BAP actions and updating the AP. Actions were considered at each meeting and measures of success defined. BAP actions were managed by the EDI Chair and SM, with oversight by HoS, throughout the pandemic and actions that could be implemented were identified, inc., staff handbook created (**BAP 5.1.2**), PG databases created (**BAPs 4.1.3** and **4.1.4**), EDI training was promoted and encouraged (**BAP 3.1.2**), the website was redesigned with a gender diversity focus (**BAP 5.6.1**) and online career development training was promoted (**BAP 5.3.1**). Further delay in implementation of some actions (e.g., **BAP 4.2.3**) was in part linked to the departure of the SM in February 2021 – a key player as designated holder of several actions. The new SM commenced work in Nov 2021.

Starting July 2022, staff returned to campus, normal staffing resumed, and the EDI committee resumed regular activities. The current SAT, formed between July and September 2022, conducted a RAG rating of the BAP in December 2022 and developed plans to address outstanding actions, leading to accelerated implementation under HoS and WIDE oversight from January 2023. By Iteration 5 of the BAP in September 2023, 98% of the actions were implemented fully or partially.

Steps taken for successful implementation of the BAP actions included:

- Assigning responsibility for actions to designated holders, with oversight by the FNS WIDE committee. Where staff changes occurred, actions were reassigned as needed.
- Providing updates at every WIDE meeting and giving feedback as needed. The Committee reported progress to SMT.
- The WIDE Committee includes representation from several key senior staff members, inc., the HoS, which ensured robust reporting lines from WIDE to all relevant committees, enhancing the implementation and oversight of the BAP.
- WIDE Chair serves as Vice Chair of the SEFS EDI committee and is a member of the UCC Athena Swan Working Group.
- SM serves as Deputy Chair of WIDE and sits on the SMT, allowing direct reporting from the WIDE committee to the management team.

### Evaluation:

Progress against the 44 BAP actions was determined using the RAG rating method (Figure 3.1.1). An overview of the most recent iteration of the BAP and associated RAG ratings is presented in Table 3.1a above, with a topline summary as follows:

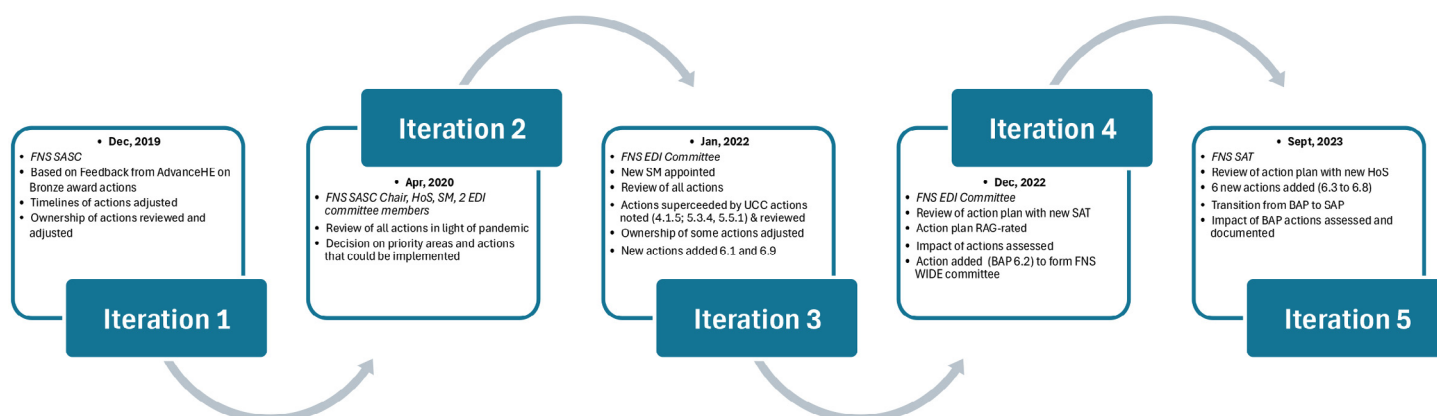
- Completed actions rated green (#33) – 75%
- Actions in progress rated orange (#10) – 23%
- One action not completed rated red (#1) – 2%



**Figure 3.1.1: Schematic of the progress of FNS BAP actions rated using the RAG rating method**

### Iterations:

Figure 3.1.2 tracks the main iterations of the action plan from 2019 to 2024 and details the changes involved in each one and the committee involved.



**Figure 3.1.2: Iterations of BAP from 2019 to 2024**

Key points to note are:

- **Iteration 1** in Dec 2019 was created based on feedback received from AdvanceHE on our Bronze award application.
- **Iteration 2** took place in April 2020 and identified actions which should be prioritised during the pandemic, specifically areas focused on staff and student wellbeing.
- An updated version of the BAP, **Iteration 3**, was produced in January 2022 to reflect the impact of the pandemic and staffing. New actions were added (**BAPs 6.1** and **6.9**).
- Upon formation of the current SAT in July 2022, the BAP was RAG-rated to evaluate the current status of actions, with **Iteration 4** released in December 2022. A new action, **BAP 6.2** was added.
- The final iteration of the BAP, **Iteration 5** dates from September 2023. New actions were added (**BAPs 6.2** to **6.8**) and the transition to the SAP began. Priority areas for the FNS EDI agenda were identified.

**3.1b (ii) factors (internal or external to the department) that acted as barriers or facilitators to the implementation of actions and meeting of success measures. Where relevant, make reference to actions from the previous action plan that have been rated as amber or red, and any actions that were removed over the course of the award. Where challenges to successful implementation are noted, outline the steps taken to respond to these, and how the action plan was adjusted;**

A number of external and internal factors within the operating environment of the FNS BAP affected implementation over the period 2019-2024. Both barriers and facilitators to implementation are summarised below:

#### *Barriers to Implementation*

##### *1. Delayed Survey Data:*

The UCC/EDI Staff Survey in 2022 was crucial for FNS' application. However, staffing shortages delayed data delivery until February 2023 impacting the application timeline (Fig 1.2.1). FNS adapted by focusing on locally held data, the issue has since been resolved, and the EDI Unit is now fully resourced.

##### *2. Pandemic Disruptions:*

The Covid-19 pandemic created significant barriers to the original BAP's success. The shift to remote work and online teaching necessitated revisions to the AP, altering timelines and priorities. Although UCC returned to full in-person teaching in September 2022, it took time for normal routines to resume. FNS responded by maintaining a core EDI team, including the HoS, which met regularly to keep the EDI and AS agenda on track. Actions involving outreach activities (**BAPs 3.1.5** and **4.1.1**) and events with external speakers (**BAP 5.3.5**) were particularly affected.

##### *3. Low Survey Participation:*

Participation in the 2022 and 2024 UCC student surveys was very low, limiting qualitative and quantitative data for this submission and hindering the assessment of student issues. Similarly, the response rate from researchers to the UCC EDI Values and Culture Survey 2022 was low, as was the overall response rate from

male staff. FNS addressed UG and PG participation by holding semi-structured roundtable discussions with these cohorts and strongly encouraged researchers to attend externally facilitated focus groups.

#### *4. Staffing Challenges:*

Several staff transitions, including the SM with significant BAP responsibility, left critical roles unfilled for extended periods, delaying BAP implementation. The SM role was vacant for nearly 10 months, posing a significant challenge. Management of EDI training for staff involved in recruitment (**BAP 5.1.1**) and unconscious bias training for all staff (**BAP 3.1.2**) halted during this time. The HoS and EDI Chair regularly emailed staff to encourage training participation, but these actions were carried forward to the SAP (**SAP 2.4.10**). Exit interviews with departing FNS staff also ceased (**BAP 4.2.3**). Notably, 50% of FNS staff (academic, technical, and admin) began in the last 5 years, impacting continuity. Early involvement in FNS committees (including SMT and SAT) has helped new staff integrate and engage in FNS governance and EDI activities.

#### *5. Institutional Implementation of New AS Charter:*

Athena Swan's new Ireland Charter was launched, with a briefing session for FNS in December 2021. Adapting to the new Charter and the lack of previous application examples slowed progress, as FNS and UCC needed more time to familiarize ourselves with the revised format. Iteration 3 of our BAP in January 2022 considered the new Charter principles and guidelines.

#### *6. Application Delay:*

In October 2022, UCC took the decision to delay all UCC Athena Swan applications to November 2023 due to the impact of Covid and EDI staffing challenges, further slowing the momentum of the FNS submission.

### *Facilitators to Implementation*

#### *1. Strong Institutional Commitment:*

FNS is committed to EDI, supported at the institutional level. The SAT Chair's experience as deputy Chair of the SEFS EDI committee and participation in institutional working groups provided valuable insights and cross-departmental support for the submission. The UCC GEAP (2024) demonstrates UCC's commitment to EDI principles and outlines actions to support FNS's EDI journey. From 2019-2024, several FNS BAPs were replaced by institutional actions, including staff EDI surveys (**BAP 3.1.4**), maternity leave backfill for academic staff (**BAP 5.5.1**), the establishment of the PostDoc Hub (**BAP 5.3.4**), mandatory performance reviews for researchers by PIs (**BAP 5.3.3**), and availability of graduate destination data (**BAP 4.1.5**).

#### *2. Leadership Support:*

The HoS has supported the application and participated in the process, ensuring alignment with institutional goals and providing necessary resources for implementation. He began his term in September 2023 with enthusiasm and implemented new structures supporting EDI and demonstrating commitment to AS. A key action introduced shortly after his tenure began was **BAP 6.7**, an annual self-evaluation survey seeking honest feedback from staff on their experiences in FNS.

#### *3. Adaptability of the BAP:*

The BAP was flexible in adapting to challenges, with multiple iterations expanding and adjusting actions in

response to barriers such as Covid-19. The addition of new actions, such as the zero tolerance to negative behaviour (**BAP 6.6**), increased social gatherings (**BAP 6.8**), open communication (**BAP 6.5**) and self-evaluation (**BAP 6.7**), reflected the evolving needs of the department and ensured progress despite external challenges.

#### 4. *WIDE Committee:*

FNS has a gender-balanced WIDE committee with members from all areas of the School. This committee, including the HoS, represents diverse staff experiences and is dedicated to promoting EDI principles and supporting the wellbeing of all staff and students.

These barriers and facilitators shaped the implementation of actions and progress towards success measures. Adjustments to the AP, particularly in response to staffing and pandemic disruptions, enabled FNS to stay on course and enhance its EDI activities.

### **3.1b (iii) learning and outcomes from the evaluation of the action plan and how learning can be applied to improve implementation, outcomes, or impacts of the future action plan.**

Several lessons learned provide useful guidance for improving future planning and execution:

#### 1. *Cohesion:*

The BAP analysis revealed overlapping actions, such as **4.1.1** with **5.6.11** and **3.1.2** with **5.1.1**, indicating the need to streamline and align actions with SAP priorities for a more cohesive plan that avoids redundancy.

#### 2. *Responsibility:*

Better management of action documentation and success measures would have aided in the early identification of staff or students to fill roles on the EDI committee and SAT, particularly those with action responsibilities. Clear documentation of actions, progress, and responsibilities, along with broader accountability, will strengthen implementation by fostering teamwork and resilience.

#### 3. *Agility:*

The importance of agility at FNS stood out as a key takeaway, particularly following the pandemic, and showed how plans need to stay flexible and adapt to changes as they arise. With external factors often in play, it's clear we need to adopt personalised and adaptable approaches to handle those dependencies.

#### 4. *Strategic planning:*

Setting SMART goals is crucial for tracking progress and ensuring the AP stays on course. Consistent tracking of data and defining and monitoring measures of success for actions will be key to success of our SAP.

#### 5. *EDI activities and Athena SWAN:*

EDI must be embedded in School culture and not the sole responsibility of the EDI Chair and WIDE committee. Measures of success of actions must be included in the agendas of all FNS committees and communicated to all staff and students.

## 3.2. Evaluating success against key priorities

a. Provide information on the department's key achievements in gender equality. This should include:

- evidence of how the department has achieved the desired outcome/s and impact/s in relation to at least two previously identified key priorities;
- qualitative and quantitative data to evidence statements;
- reflection on the main facilitators or factors that supported success;
- identification of whether there are any aspects that could be translated to other areas to support success against the department's key priorities.


A longlist of achievements following implementation of the BAP is discussed in greater detail in Section 2. Here, we will showcase results from three key priority areas (Table 3.2.1) and set out details of each area, how it succeeded, data showing its success, factors that supported its success and the learnings gained:

**TABLE 3.2.1: KEY PRIORITY AREAS WHERE FNS HAS ACHIEVED SUCCESS**

Key Priority 1 – Increase 1st Year Male Undergraduates	
<b>Related BAPs:</b>	
<b>4.1.1</b>	Tailor outreach activities to improve gender balance in our Undergraduate programmes
<b>5.6.1</b>	Populate School web links with gender balanced academic and alumni information
<b>Data Evidence</b>	<p>BSc FS 1 2019/2020 – 20% Male  BSc NS 1 2019/2020 – 5% Male  BSc FS 1 2023/2024 – 42% Male  BSc NS 1 2023/2024 – 14% Male</p> <p>Website information is gender balanced; 67 images (outside staff profile photographs) are 57%F and 43%M while moving frames are 46%F and 54%M.</p>
<b>Outputs and Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The gender balance of FNS programmes has significantly improved, contributing to greater diversity in the classroom.</li> <li>- The increase in male students aligns with overall growth in enrolment and reflects our programmes' broader appeal and success in reaching underrepresented groups.</li> <li>- FNS will continue to challenge stereotypes about food and nutritional sciences being predominantly female-oriented fields, making our programmes more attractive to future male applicants and underrepresented groups.</li> <li>- It has been noted that gender diversity in teams in labs and on projects has fostered improved collaboration, creativity, and problem-solving due to varied perspectives.</li> <li>- FNS is quickly gaining a reputation as inclusive and progressive, which has already begun to attract more diverse applicants for roles in the school and should improve funding opportunities.</li> <li>- The career pipeline in FNS will become more balanced in time.</li> <li>- Since 2022, FNS outreach activity has significantly increased in all areas, particularly targeting secondary school students.</li> </ul>
<b>Facilitators to success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff engagement allowed FNS' presence at many recruitment events, offering potential students a direct route to talk to us.</li> <li>- A targeted approach to increase 1st year numbers and focusing on secondary school events, including expansion of the TY Week of activities.</li> <li>- Showcasing the excellence of FNS' work and the opportunities available to our graduates.</li> <li>- Directly addressing the needs and interests of potential students by relating programmes to global issues.</li> <li>- Demonstrating relevance of programmes with focus on global food systems and sustainability.</li> <li>- Highlighting diversity and experience of staff and students on FNS website.</li> </ul>
<b>Transferable Learnings</b>	<p>FNS can benefit from a bolder, more forward approach to advertising achievements and accolades, and in promoting our research.</p> <p>Continuing to showcase the relevance of FNS to the public will engage and foster interest in the discipline.</p>

Key Priority 2 – Increased equality, diversity and transparency on committees																	
<b>Related BAPs:</b>																	
<b>3.1.1</b>	SASC membership to achieve a gender balance of 50:50 within 2 years																
<b>5.6.5</b>	Gender balance across all School committees, and committee Chairs to be reviewed and improved.																
<b>6.2</b>	Rebranding and updating ToR of EDI committee to form WIDE																
<b>6.4</b>	Formation of a Postgraduate Research Committee																
<b>6.5</b>	Open Communication Action																
<b>Data Evidence</b>	<p><b>Gender breakdown of direct EDI- related Committees</b></p> <table> <tr> <th>Committee</th><th>Gender Distribution</th></tr> <tr> <td>WIDE (SAT)</td><td>56%F, 44%M</td></tr> <tr> <td>SMT</td><td>56%F, 44%M</td></tr> </table> <p><b>Special Purpose Committee Members</b></p> <table> <tr> <th>Committee</th><th>Membership Type</th></tr> <tr> <td>WIDE (SAT)</td><td>2 PG, 1 UG, 3 Postdoc, 2 new academic staff</td></tr> <tr> <td>SMT</td><td>1 Junior Academic, 1 CTO and 1 Admin</td></tr> <tr> <td>OEEC</td><td>1 PGR, 1UG, 1 PG</td></tr> <tr> <td>PG Research Committee</td><td>2 Postdoc, 2 PGR, 1 CTO</td></tr> </table>	Committee	Gender Distribution	WIDE (SAT)	56%F, 44%M	SMT	56%F, 44%M	Committee	Membership Type	WIDE (SAT)	2 PG, 1 UG, 3 Postdoc, 2 new academic staff	SMT	1 Junior Academic, 1 CTO and 1 Admin	OEEC	1 PGR, 1UG, 1 PG	PG Research Committee	2 Postdoc, 2 PGR, 1 CTO
Committee	Gender Distribution																
WIDE (SAT)	56%F, 44%M																
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OEEC	1 PGR, 1UG, 1 PG																
PG Research Committee	2 Postdoc, 2 PGR, 1 CTO																
<b>Outputs and Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All committees are gender balanced, with representatives from relevant stakeholder groups.</li> <li>- Creation of the Postgraduate Research Committee by PGR students has given PGs a strong voice within FNS and improved social engagement for PGs in FS and NS.</li> <li>- Circulation of minutes of all meetings to all staff (edited for confidentiality if necessary) has increased transparency and trust by showing what committees are doing.</li> <li>- All groups within FNS represented and given opportunity to voice concerns; Showing that all groups in FNS are valuable and contribute to the success of the School.</li> <li>- Increased engagement among staff and students.</li> </ul>																
<b>Facilitators to success</b>	- Commitment and engagement by Senior management including HoS and SMT in advancing progress.																
<b>Transferable Learnings</b>	<p>Engaging the whole School increases activity and productivity, as staff are more likely to participate when they are involved in process.</p> <p>Obtaining feedback from all levels of staff and students improves actions taken by the School and helps steer FNS in a direction that is beneficial to all.</p>																
Key Priority 3 - The integration of Food Science staff and Nutritional Science staff																	
<b>Related BAPs:</b>																	
<b>5.6.2</b>	Based on suggestion box feedback and staff responses to time of social events, the School will expand its range of activities and ensure timings facilitate staff attendance at gatherings																
<b>5.6.3</b>	School to host an annual Internal Research Conference, featuring FNS research from academic, research, technical and graduate staff and students																
<b>6.3</b>	School Seminar Series																
<b>6.6</b>	Promotion of Code of Conduct																
<b>6.8</b>	School Assembly and Christmas Social Event																
<b>Data Evidence</b>	<p>Athena Swan Focus Group Report – Culture, Dignity and Respect held in June 2023 found:</p> <p><i>'Improvements had been made (to the culture) in the last 3 or 4 years and the social activities started up more of a connection between different categories of the School'.</i></p> <p><i>'There had been attempts to organise social activities and people did turn up, but it was more of an obligation and could go back to when they were 3 or 4 different departments, many Heads of School had tried to integrate the departments, but it was hard to pull them together. More recent activities had been well attended'</i></p>																



<b>Outputs and Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monthly School Seminar Series showcases wide variety of research projects and promotes interaction between FS and NS research groups. Very positive feedback recorded in focus groups and discussions with staff, PGs and UGs.</li> <li>- Annual Research Conference integrates both FS and NS research and has led to more collaborative research within FNS, especially in areas such as sustainability and food for health.</li> <li>- Impact for the future is crucial as we increase our level of cross discipline research activities.</li> <li>- Increased number of, and high attendance at, social events, e.g., Foodie Fridays, Christmas Party has had very positive feedback.</li> <li>- Introduction of processes to address breaches of Code of Conduct and a zero tolerance approach to negative behaviours benefits all staff and students and shows our commitment to the wellbeing of staff and students.</li> </ul>	
<b>Facilitators to success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commitment by HoS to improving staff integration.</li> <li>- Strong management team, including new SM and managerial CTO appointed in 2021, are responsive and addressed staff issues as they arose.</li> <li>- Involvement by staff at all levels in organising events and activities .</li> </ul>	
<b>Transferable Learnings</b>	<p>Support of leadership is vital for the success of any endeavour as there needs to be someone senior to champion initiatives.</p> <p>Engaging staff through a vibrant and active School culture (e.g., organising a Christmas party) promotes inclusion, conversation and ultimately leads to stronger collaborations and research innovation.</p>	

**b. Where relevant, provide information on any key achievements on equality grounds in addition to gender. This should include:**

- qualitative and quantitative data to evidence statements;
- reflection on the main facilitators or factors that supported success;
- identification of whether there are any aspects that could be translated to other areas to support success against the department's key priorities.

Below is an example of FNS's success in diversifying our staff and increasing the numbers of international staff members in the School. Table 3.2.2 compares the makeup of FNS in 2019 and 2024, the factors which facilitated these changes, and the transferable learnings for FNS.

TABLE 3.2.2: FNS ACHIEVEMENTS ON EQUALITY GROUNDS IN ADDITION TO GENDER

Key Achievement – Diversification of FNS Staff Profile																																																																																							
Overview	While FNS’s research retains a global reach and our student body is large and international, the staff profile is predominately Irish. Recent changes to our staff (see section 2.2), gave FNS the opportunity to advertise roles internationally and diversify our staff by nationality, race and experience.																																																																																						
Data Evidence	<div><table><caption>FNS Nationalities 2019 vs 2024</caption><thead><tr><th>Nationality</th><th>Year</th><th>Male</th><th>Female</th><th>Total</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td rowspan="2">Irish</td><td>2019</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>15</td></tr><tr><td>2024</td><td>6</td><td>10</td><td>16</td></tr><tr><td rowspan="2">Finnish</td><td>2019</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>2024</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td rowspan="2">German</td><td>2019</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>2024</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td rowspan="2">Iranian</td><td>2019</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>2024</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td rowspan="2">Italian</td><td>2019</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>2024</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td rowspan="2">Indian</td><td>2019</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>2024</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td rowspan="2">Chinese</td><td>2019</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>2024</td><td>2</td><td>0</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td rowspan="2">Sri Lanka</td><td>2019</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>2024</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td rowspan="2">Dutch</td><td>2019</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>2024</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>1</td></tr></tbody></table></div> <p>Figure 2.2.1: Comparative analysis of FNS academic staff by headcount, gender and nationality for 2019 and 2024.</p> <p>Note: headcount includes 2 research professors, not funded by UCC/FNS.</p>	Nationality	Year	Male	Female	Total	Irish	2019	7	8	15	2024	6	10	16	Finnish	2019	1	0	1	2024	0	0	0	German	2019	0	1	1	2024	0	1	1	Iranian	2019	0	0	0	2024	1	0	1	Italian	2019	0	0	0	2024	1	1	2	Indian	2019	0	0	0	2024	1	0	1	Chinese	2019	0	0	0	2024	2	0	2	Sri Lanka	2019	0	1	1	2024	0	0	0	Dutch	2019	0	0	0	2024	1	0	1
Nationality	Year	Male	Female	Total																																																																																			
Irish	2019	7	8	15																																																																																			
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	2024	1	0	1																																																																																			
Facilitators to success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Large number of retirements occurring together</li><li>- Creation of UCC Futures Initiative</li><li>- Job opportunities were advertised on international websites and staff promoted them through their research networks</li><li>- Reputation of FNS as conducting world leading research</li></ul>																																																																																						
Transferable Learnings	Staff were comfortable promoting FNS job opportunities through their own networks and contacts, as they were confident in the high calibre reputation of the School.																																																																																						

## Section 4: Action Plan

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

+ Action Plan to address identified issues

### 1. Action Plan

Present the action plan in the form of a table (landscape page format).

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

The SAP has been informed by our self-assessment process with input from consultation with SMT, HoS, FNS staff and students, internal reviewers, external reviewers and UCC EDI unit.

Actions have been assigned as high, medium or low priority and FNS aims to implement all actions by 2028. Priority areas for 2024-2028 are coded in the SAP as follows:

- PA1 Expand and embed EDI principles in FNS structures and activities.
- PA2 Educate and empower UGs and PGs on EDI including intersectionality, disability and compassion.
- PA3 Continue to advance academic and research staff career development and wellbeing.
- PA4 Build structures for PMS staff career development and wellbeing.
- PA5 Continue fostering a safe, respectful and supportive working and learning environment.

Responsibility for each action will be assigned to a priority area lead from the WIDE committee, with full support from relevant senior staff or committees in FNS.

**TABLE 4.1: FNS SILVER ACTION PLAN (2024-2028)**

Priority Area	Action Plan No	Priority Level	Action	Rationale	Responsibility	Timeline	Success Measure	Current Status
PA1	SAP 1.3.1	Low	Build staff engagement, particularly research staff, with biannual UCC EDI survey. Work with UCC EDI Unit to promote a UCC-wide student EDI survey which has had low response rates in the past.	Staff Survey response rate for FNS in 2022 was 56% (70%F, 30%M) with low participation from research (33%) and PMS staff (50%); no male researchers responded and only 2 male PMS staff took part. The UCC Student EDI Survey 2022 and 2024) response rate was <1% in 2022 and <7% in 2024 therefore not useable. While academic staff engagement with the 2022 survey was excellent at 80%, FNS wants greater survey engagement from all staff categories to gain insight on what actions are working and what areas are of most concern and will allow FNS to be more proactive in addressing EDI issues. The lack of comprehensive student data is not conducive to full insight into the student experience and creating actions, if necessary.	PA1 Lead and Chair of WIDE Committee; HoS to communicate to staff	Q1 Jan 2026 Q1 Jan 2028	UCC EDI Staff Survey response rate: 70% of FNS staff in 2026; 80% of FNS staff in 2028.  UCC EDI Student Survey response rate: 15% of FNS students in 2026. 20% of FNS students in 2028	2 actions included in UCC's GEAP (2024). GEAP 1.2.16 to have dedicated researcher EDI survey with targets of 20% response rate for 2026 and 40% by 2028. GEAP 2.4.27 to promote student EDI survey with target of >5% response rate by 2028
PA1	SAP 1.3.2	High	WIDE Committee will formalise WIDE/ SAT management succession following FNS' significant staff turnover.	Lack of continuity in the management of the WIDE Committee would jeopardise implementation of the SAP and promotion of EDI values in FNS. Succession planning is critical in preventing this and allowing for a smooth transition.	PA1 Lead, HoS and Chair of WIDE Committee	Jan 2025 - Dec 2025	A ratified policy setting out process for appointing new WIDE management will be instituted. Continuity in WIDE committee leadership, no period without Chair in place.	New terms of reference in draft mode
PA1	SAP 1.3.3	High	Create reporting templates to track progress of AS actions, design and implementation. Action owners will have responsibility to complete progress reports prior to WIDE committee meetings as requested. Actions progress will be available for SMT and any relevant committees.	A defined implementation plan will ensure accountability, measure progress, allow data driven decision making, ensure continuous improvement, permit aligning of resources and can build a case for future supports.	PA1 Lead, SM and Chair of WIDE Committee	Mar 2025 - Dec 2028	Reporting templates developed. Implementation plan will in place. When SAP is reviewed for next AS application, all actions (100%) will have been addressed, amended, removed or updated.	Templates in preparation for March 2025 roll out
PA5	SAP 2.1.1	Med	Creation of a Space Management Committee in FNS	A space committee in FNS is essential for managing and optimising the use of physical resources in supporting teaching, research, and administrative activities.	PA5 Lead and HoS/SMT	Jun 2025 - Dec 2026	Space Committee to be fully functional by September 2025 with ToR defined.	Initial planning has begun through SMT and Chair has been identified. Remit and composition of the committee is being discussed.

<b>PA1</b>	SAP 2.1.2	Low	Expand the promotion of FS and NS programmes and highlight programme content and career opportunities	Based on feedback from students (4th year UG students and TY week participants), there was a lack of awareness of the purpose and content of the degree programmes. Promoting greater awareness of FNS programmes showcases the content of the programmes and opportunities on offer. Devising additional initiatives to promote programme content and career opportunities will lead to a more diverse student body.	PA1 Lead and Chair of Outreach and External Engagement Committee	Ongoing	UG (incoming 2025 UG survey) and Secondary school students (e.g., TY Week survey, 2026) will demonstrate a greater understanding of our degree programmes when next surveyed. >50% of UGs surveyed by 2028 will show understanding of FNS degree programmes and career opportunities. 80% of students surveyed by 2028 agree that FNS outreach material fosters greater interest in FNS programmes and 90% agree that outreach activities are gender balanced and inclusive.  Documented evidence of FNS booth at 20% more career and promotional events. Updated promotional materials, e.g. brochures, pull up stands, social media.	This action began under BAP 4.1.1 and continues as SAP 2.1.2.
<b>PA1</b>	SAP 2.1.3	Med	Through Outreach & Public Engagement committee, devise and implement new strategies to continue efforts to improve 1st preference CAO applications, especially for FS.	Currently FNS has a CAO first preference rate of 50%; we need to increase the demand for the programmes, especially FS, and the CAO points required for entry to improve competitiveness, attract high performing students and ensure FS is a first choice for students and not a fallback option. Greater demand for FNS programmes will allow expansion of programmes, hiring of more staff, improvements to facilities and enhance research or employment opportunities for alumni	PA1 Lead and BSc FS and BSc NS programme directors with representative from OEEC	Ongoing	Increased student points and preferences results in a more diverse student body. FNS CAO 1st Preferences for incoming FS UGs in 2024 increased by 50%, this will increase to 70% by 2027. FS 1st round points to be consistently over 450 by 2028. NS 1st round points to be consistently over 540 by 2028	More school visits have taken place and are planned. Increased presence of FNS stand at Outreach events in 2024 and planned for 2025
<b>PA1</b>	SAP 2.1.4	Low	Monitor the composition of students taking part-time research programme options to identify any concerning trends.	Currently, there are 6 students (4F, 2M) undertaking PGR programmes part-time. This will be monitored as part time options are frequently utilised by those with external responsibilities such as caring obligations, financial difficulties or family commitments. Support may be available for these students or accommodations may be needed to assist them in completing their research.	PA1 Lead and Chair of Research Committee	Mar 2025 - Mar 2026	Survey results available by 2026 of those taking part time PGR options and a better understanding of the reasons behind their decision. Supports identified and circulated to all staff and PG student to ensure all PGR students have opportunities to complete their studies.	Pending initiation
<b>PA2</b>	SAP 2.1.5	Low	Encourage and promote opportunities for PGs to be involved in outreach activities. Additionally, increase opportunities to teach as part of their training, e.g., FITU programmes, demonstration work etc.	PG students, when surveyed, asked for more opportunities to be involved in outreach and teaching. Engaging PG students in outreach and teaching has benefits for the PG students, potential new students and FNS staff. PG students can obtain experience in teaching and also promote their own research. Potential students can interact with those who have been through the academic pipeline and staff are given assistance where shortfalls may exist.	PA2 Lead and Chairs of OEEC, Research Committee and Postgraduate Research Committee	Ongoing	Target of 30% of outreach activities involving PG students by 2028. Increase number of PGs with teaching experience from 3 (2023/24) to 6 by 2028 and PGs involved in FITU webinars from 2 (2023/24) to at least 4 by 2028.	Action commended in 2023
<b>PA3</b>	SAP 2.2.1	Med	Low applications for HoS position; 1F in 2018 and 1M in 2023. WIDE committee will support higher applicants, considering gender.	Traditionally the HoS role has gone to a Professor however, Senior Lecturers are also eligible to apply. Highlighting this will result in a wider field of candidates and bring greater diversity. In addition, highlighting the eligibility criteria for the role of HoS will increase awareness on how the successful applicant for the position is selected.	PA3 Lead, HoS and WIDE Committee	Sept 2027	Eligibility criteria to be highlighted to staff by FNS when post is advertised. 3 Expression of Interest for HoS when next available in Sept 2028. >70% staff agree in 2026 UCC EDI survey that selection to HoS and senior roles in FNS is fair and transparent	FNS action will be supported by UCC GEAP 2.1.6 (2024) to review HoS appointment policy across all 4 Colleges, inc., SEFS, with view to increasing number of female applicants to 40% by 2029

<b>PA3</b>	SAP 2.2.2	Med	FNS will action to support eligible females applying for HEA SALI professorships when a call takes place. As actioned in the UCC Gender Equality Action Plan 2024, FNS will identify eligible staff, especially females, in Q2 2025, when UCC launches SALI-matched promotions to full professorships. Additionally FNS will engage with SEFS and UCC to support plans on making full professorship positions a defined step of the academic promotion scheme.	FNS has no female at full Professor grade. Promotion of equality in academic leadership positions is a priority for FNS, UCC and universities generally (currently 30% of Professors are female). Lack of available positions in recent years has hampered female promotion prospects. As this level has additional responsibilities and rewards it is vital that the gender imbalance be addressed by increasing female appointments.	PA3 Lead, SMT and HoS	2025-2028	1 female Full Professor by 2028	Currently, UCC GEAP (2024) action 2.2.6 is committing to 5 SALI-matched UCC-funded female Professorships to be advertised from 2025 with a commitment to ensuring Professorship grades are retained and new SALI appointments developed
<b>PA3</b>	SAP 2.2.3	Low	FNS will action that guidelines on the Academic Promotion Scheme are clearly communicated to FNS staff to facilitate equitable career advancement.	Only 20%M and 22%F of Survey respondents agreed that the Academic Promotions process was fair. While FNS cannot change this process, continued support for those applying and more information sessions on the process can be provided.	PA3 Lead, SMT with communication to staff by HoS	June 2025 - Sept 2028	Staff satisfaction level with fairness of promotion process to increase from 20%M and 22%F to 50% F, 50%M by 2028.  5 Academic staff to have achieved promotion by 2028.  2 Information sessions to be provided by FNS annually.  Mentoring provided to all staff applying.	Pending initiation
<b>PA3/ PA4</b>	SAP 2.2.4	Med	FNS will action, in line with the Government Sustaining Progress agreement and UCC policy on PDRS, to ensure all staff participate in PDRS.	Uptake of PDRS in FNS remains low with only 21% of respondents to the staff survey indicating they had participated in the process. The PDRS process supports staff development and provides an opportunity for any issues to be raised and addressed, including workload and worklife balance	PA5 Lead, HoS, SM and Managerial CTO	Jan 2025 - Sept 2028	70% of academic, PMS and research staff completing a PDRS by September 2026 with % completions to be maintained at that level or increased by 2028	FNS action will be supported by UCC GEAP 2.2.15 (2024) to revise PDRS policy (Q1 2025-Q1 2026) and include discussion on workload and worklife balance and EDI contributions. Aim is for 50% staff participation by 2028 and 65% staff satisfaction re workload discussion by 2028 EDI survey
<b>PA1</b>	SAP 2.2.5	Med	FNS will action to increase the uptake of training courses by academic and research staff, especially by male staff so that all staff have a balanced profile of training in professional and personal development. Female academic and research staff will be encouraged to participate in the Aurora leadership programme. The SM will set up and maintain a database of staff training to ensure local records are up to date and data are available, upon request, by school committees.	Over the reporting years 2018-2022, for which data were available, female academic staff registered the highest participation rates in available training courses at 91%. Male academic staff engagement is very low. While most academic staff (82%F, 71%M) were satisfied with access to training, uptake remains is low.	PA3 Lead, HoS and SM	Feb 2025 - ongoing	Tracking system in place.  Annual review of training programme completion rates. Male participation (both academic and research) to increase to at least 20% by 2028. Essential training courses inc., health and safety to have 90% completion rate by 2028.  At least 2 female participants in Aurora programme annually from 2025. Staff are emailed twice per year to remind them to engage with training programmes. SM forwards all training opportunities to relevant staff categories.	Tracking database draft created for review by SMT in Jan 2025

PA3	SAP 2.2.6	Low	FNS has a comprehensive staff induction process in place but has not, to date, surveyed new staff regarding its effectiveness. FNS will survey all new staff, 6 months post arrival on their induction experience, to inform improvements	A strong induction process helps new staff integrate with colleagues, supports them in getting established in their new roles and increases their productivity. This is especially true for new staff coming from outside of UCC and Ireland	SM	Mar 2025 & on going	Survey issued to all new staff 6 months after starting.  Positive feedback scores on key aspects of the induction process, such as clarity, support, and relevance.  Updated Induction process including implementation of any suggested improvements by 2028	Pending initiation
PA3	SAP 2.2.7	Med	FNS will action to support research staff, in particular male researchers, with all career support schemes and uptake of training will be documented.	The survey response rate from research staff regarding engagement with all career support schemes, including the UCC PostDoc Development Hub, was low. During the reporting period (2018/19 to 2021/22) 91% of researchers engaging with researcher career support training schemes were female. Female researchers have engaged with the PostDoc Development Hub at a significantly higher rate compared to males (83%F). Partially linked to Action 1.3.1 above and separate to Action 2.2.5, given its importance, FNS will action to ensure research staff engage with the UCC Researcher EDI survey (2026) as feedback from researchers on uptake of all career support schemes and training opportunities is essential to monitor effectiveness and engagement. In addition this action will ensure researchers in FNS are aware of, and participate in, all career support schemes.	PA3 Lead and Research Committee Chair	Q2 2025 to Q4 2028	40% engagement of FNS research staff in the UCC Research Staff Survey in 2026 with at least 20% of male researchers responding. >50% of both female and male researchers engaging with 2028 Research Staff Survey. 30% of male researchers engaging with PostDoc Hub and career support training schemes by 2028. Data collated annually by Research Committee Chair and made available to SMT, HoS and other committees, on request	Pending initiation
PA3	SAP 2.2.8	Low	Nominations of FNS staff for Excellence in Teaching awards have been low for many years. FNS will action to increase the number of nominations of staff, to all categories of the awards scheme. In addition, FNS will increase the number of nominations to UCC's annual Staff Recognition awards.	FNS staff are dedicated to supporting students and research and this deserves to be recognised. Nominations for these awards should be an integral part of FNS' activities to reward staff and promote their excellent work	PA5 Lead, HoS, SM and Managerial CTO	Annually from 2024	A minimum of one nomination from FNS for both Excellence in Teaching and Staff Recognition awards from 2025.  Record of FNS nominees to be kept.  Any successful applications to be promoted on FNS social media.	Application for Staff Recognition award submitted in 2024 but not successful. Submissions will continue.
PA3	SAP 2.2.9	High	FNS SMT is reassessing its academic workload model to ensure it meets the needs of FNS and also takes into consideration stage of career; the HoS will work with the University Consultative Forum on standardisation and implementation of an AWDM within FNS which takes into account the teaching, research, admin and other commitments of academic staff	Only 27% of FNS academic staff agreed that their workload was reasonable while just 39% felt allocation of workload was fair and transparent. Reassessing workload models ensures FNS meets the diverse needs of staff at different career stages, especially given the significant number of new academic staff in FNS. Collaboration with UCC on an AWDM will allow FNS needs to be heard and will bring recognition to the variety of duties carried out by academic staff. EDI work must be fully recognised and accounted for in AWDM	HoS	May 2024 - Sept 2026	Developed AWDM approved by SMT AWDM completed by all academic staff within 12 months of implementation.  Implementation of AWDM with workload distributed appropriately according to career stage. 50% of academic staff agree that their workload is reasonable in 2026 UCC EDI survey. 60% of academic staff believe allocation of workload in FNS is fair and transparent. EDI work included in workload model	HoS currently working on a new AWDM system, plans have been brought to SMT for feedback and are currently being discussed.



PA4	SAP 2.3.1	Med	Ensure all FNS administration staff are aware of the UCC Administrative Promotions Scheme. Actively support, mentor and encourage eligible staff to apply.	Only 13% of FNS admin staff surveyed were aware of their opportunities for promotion under the UCC Administrative Promotions Scheme. The scheme allows FNS to retain high quality staff while also recognising their work.	PA4 Lead and SM	Jun 2025 and ongoing	100% of FNS admin staff aware of the UCC Administrative Promotions Scheme, eligibility requirements and their opportunities for promotion at 2026 UCC EDI survey. Applications to the Promotions Scheme from all eligible admin staff (100%) by 2028.	UCC Administrative Promotions Scheme under review from Nov 2024. Interim Scheme being developed through consultation and progressing through formal approval channels. Scheduled for Q2 2025 release.
PA4	SAP 2.3.2	Med	Continue to engage with UCC to ensure promotion rounds/ opportunities to CTO grade for technical staff occur consistently and have a minimum number of female applicants per round	Of 129 TOs in UCC, only 13 are at CTO grade with promotion calls having occurred only 3 times in 45 years. UCC has only 3 female CTO's (1 in FNS). Engaging with UCC to ensure consistent promotion rounds to CTO grade provides regular career advancement opportunities for technical staff while promoting equity. Setting a minimum number of female applicants per round helps address gender imbalances, fostering inclusivity and diverse leadership.	PA4 Lead, Managerial CTO and HoS	Mar 2025 - Dec 2028	At least one female STO promoted to CTO by 2028 subject to UCC introducing TO promotions. Commitment from UCC to hold promotion calls to CTO grade every 2 years.	Action dependent on negotiations between TO representatives in UCC and HR
PA4	SAP 2.3.3	Low	Promote all PMS HR training courses and highlight relevance to the working environment and career progression. Collate all PMS training opportunities into one document so that all staff have equal awareness/access to training. Female PMS staff will be actively encouraged to train in leadership through the Aurora programme. Identify any gaps in training for technical staff, explore opportunities for upskilling within FNS, and seek suitable courses or workshops. Spread representation of TOs on FNS committees and across all grades.	Continued professional development for PMS staff is a priority action for FNS and is of benefit to the School and to each staff member. UCC offers a wide range of training courses and FNS is happy to support additional courses when necessary.	PA4 Lead, SM and Managerial CTO	Ongoing	Centrally collated database of all PMS staff training from Jan 2025. Essential training courses (e.g., health and safety) to have 90% completion rate by 2027.  Number of training courses undertaken by PMS staff to increase 20% by 2028. Minimum of 1 female PMS staff member per year to participate in Aurora training from 2025.  TO representation on all committees with members spread across all career stages by 2026. 30% Increase in male PMS staff uptake of training courses by 2028. Increase in satisfaction about career development opportunities to 70%F, 50%M by 2026 and 80%F, 60%M by 2028.	Action commenced in June 2024
PA4	SAP 2.3.4	Low	Engage with UCC as they strive to sign up to the Technician Commitment (UK) in 2027	The Technician Commitment (UK) is an important initiative aiming to ensure visibility, recognition, career development and sustainability for technicians working in higher education	PA4 Lead and Managerial CTO	2027-2028	2 FNS TOs part of UCC consultation group to progress signing Technical Commitment. UCC Sign Technical Commitment by 2028 Opportunities to engage with this network available for all FNS TOs by 2029	Included in UCC GEAP (2024) as action 2.3.8. Process to begin in 2025.
PA4	SAP 2.3.5	Med	Improve school recognition of the contribution of PMS staff to school activities via greater visibility on the school website and celebrate their achievements more publicly.	Recognising the work of all staff fosters a sense of value and inclusion, boosting morale and encouraging continued engagement and excellence.	PA4 Lead, SM and Managerial CTO	Sept 2025 - Sept 2028	30% of website news items to include PMS staff. 50% increase in PMS staff satisfaction that their contribution to FNS activities is valued and recognised by 2026 UCC EDI survey and a 70% increase by 2028.	Pending initiation

<b>PA4</b>	SAP 2.3.6	Med	FNS will action to ensure all PMS staff are aware of the FNS Staff Support fund and the diverse range of options where it may be used to support training and career progression	The FNS Staff Support Fund was created to encourage professional development for all staff members, not just academic. To date, just one TO has availed of the fund for an individual training course.	PA4 Lead and SM	Ongoing	Staff Support Fund to be advertised twice yearly.  30% of applications for Staff Support Fund to come from PMS staff by 2026. Documented evidence of the value of this fund and the benefits staff have gained from it for career progression.	Staff emailed re Support Fund in Oct 2024
<b>PA4</b>	SAP 2.3.7	Med	FNS PMS line managers will institute a comprehensive outline of duties and responsibilities for PMS staff with mechanisms for recognising and rewarding duties undertaken outside their core responsibilities	In the 2022 EDI survey, 25%F and 67%M PMS staff felt that they were given disproportionate responsibility outside their job description. Instituting a process of managing and recognising their contribution to FNS is necessary to increase PMS staff wellbeing and satisfaction. FNS has no workload model for PMS staff equivalent to the AWDM	PA4 Lead, HoS, SM and Managerial CTO	Sept 2025 - Sept 2028	Responsibility holders of this action to adapt AWDM and implement a PMS staff workload model by 2028. >80% PMS staff satisfied that they are not given disproportionate responsibilities outside their job description by 2028 UCC EDI Survey. >80% PMS staff agree their workload is reasonable and actively managed by 2028 UCC EDI Survey.	Pending initiation
<b>PA5</b>	SAP 2.4.1	Low	Review core meeting times and investigate why there may be a gender disparity in survey responses.	While UCC does have a meeting time policy, which FNS adheres to, 39% F surveyed said that they attend meetings scheduled outside of those hours vs 18% M. This needs to be investigated to identify any issues which can be addressed.	PA5 Lead, SM and SMT	May 2025 - Dec 2028	FNS, through consultation, has greater understanding as to why staff hold meetings outside core hours. %F attending meetings outside core times will be reduced to 20% or less by 2026 UCC EDI Survey and to 10% or less by 2028 survey	Pending initiation
<b>PA2</b>	SAP 2.4.2	Low	Ensure that UG student events are purpose driven, accessible events which consider scheduling and logistical issues	Attendance at FNS events is very low from UGs. When asked, 100% expressed dissatisfaction with the timing of events and the lack of relevance to their studies or career aspirations. Holding events at suitable times for UG students will increase attendance and engagement. This will provide students with career opportunities, information sessions and research engagement	PA2 Lead and Student Experience Committee Chair	Sept 2025 - Sept 2028	Student Experience Committee to have developed at least 2 UG-targeted events by Q1 2026. One event to take place Q1 2026  40% attendance by UGs at first event. Timings of >2 FNS events (e.g., external speaker seminars/lectures) to be set in consultation with Student Experience Committee to allow attendance of UGs. UG attendance at FNS events to increase by 10% in 2026 and >20% by 2028	Pending initiation
<b>PA5</b>	SAP 2.4.3	Low	Raise awareness of the UCC Right to Disconnect policy	A very high proportion of staff send and receive emails outside of core working hours. Since introduction of the Right to Disconnect Policy in April 2021, 39%F surveyed felt that the expectation to respond to emails had increased. Raising awareness of the policy in FNS is important to support staff wellbeing	PA5 Lead and HoS and SMT	May 2025 - Sept 2026	HoS communicates policy at School Assembly.  Percentage of females feeling they are expected to respond to emails out of hours to reduce to 10% by 2026 UCC EDI Survey with >80% of staff aware of the policy.	Pending initiation
<b>PA1</b>	SAP 2.4.4	Low	Continue to expand FNS EDI agenda and our commitment to AS principles; increase EDI branding and visibility in FNS	This action continues on from BAP 6.9 which was paused due to financial constraints. Implementation will bring greater awareness of EDI in FNS.	PA5 Lead, WIDE committee and SMT	Ongoing	90% staff and >50% of students aware of FNS commitment to EDI and AS principles by 2026 UCC EDI survey.>80% students aware by 2028 survey. FNS AS/EDI link on website front and foremost and accessible. Improved EDI branding in main entrance to FNS	Action commenced; EDI branding awaiting resources
<b>PA1</b>	SAP 2.4.5	Low	Report gender diversity of seminars, conferences and speaking events to School on a yearly basis.	44%F and 50%M agreed that diversity of speakers was considered at FNS events. Transparent reporting of these figures will bring awareness to the area and promote equality.	PA5 Lead and SM	Annually from Jan 2025	Database of all seminars, conferences and talks showing gender breakdown of presenters by Q4 2025 and ongoing thereafter.  A minimum 40% female representation at all FNS events. >70% staff agree that diversity of speakers considered at FNS events by 2026 UCC EDI Survey and >80% by 2028 survey	Data gathering began in Sept, 2024

<b>PA2/PA5</b>	SAP 2.4.6	High	Annual survey of UG students for feedback on programmes, assessment and inclusion. Continue post module surveys which commenced in Sept 2024.	UG feedback on all FNS programmes is crucial on an on-going basis especially given the high number of new academic staff members within the School. UGs need an opportunity to influence the programmes and teaching methods. UGs (100%) surveyed in 2024 asked for more continuous assessment throughout FNS modules.	PA2 Lead, BSc FS and BSc NS programme directors	Sept 2024 - ongoing	All academic staff assign time in lectures to encourage completion of a survey at the end of all FNS modules. Annual end of year survey on overall course content with feedback on student experiences.  Response rate of 60% to annual UG survey by 2026. >70% UGs satisfied with teaching and learning experience in FNS by 2028 annual survey.	Annual survey was sent out in Nov 2024 and will continue. End of modules survey commenced in Sept 2024
<b>PA1</b>	SAP 2.4.7	Med	Introduce guiding principles on neurodiversity and intersectionality to FNS staff; including information workshops, facilitated by HR/EDI unit.	Staff survey in 2022 requested more education in, and awareness of, the concept of neurodiversity and the intersectionality framework as a means of creating a more inclusive environment in FNS. Increased EDI training will foster awareness among FNS staff, promoting a more inclusive and equitable environment. Specific EDI training and expert guidance will help staff understand student learning styles and address overlapping identities and systemic inequalities	PA5 Lead and WIDE committee	Mar 2025 - Dec 2028	>80% of staff aware of intersectionality guiding principles on FNS website by 2026  70% of staff will have undergone intersectionality training by 2028. First workshops for FNS staff in Q3 2025. One WIDE committee member champions neurodiversity in FNS having completed 12 week CPD course by end of 2026. One FNS staff member to get a UCC EDI award by end of 2028	Pending initiation
<b>PA2</b>	SAP 2.4.8	Med	Educate and empower both UG and PG students using the framework of intersectionality; students will be actively encouraged to take EDI training such as Bystander Intervention. From 2025, FNS will include an award for EDI activities inc., uptake of training courses, at the annual student award ceremony. FNS will nominate staff and students for new annual UCC EDI awards (2025)	Empowering students with EDI training fosters a culture of inclusivity and respect. Recognising EDI efforts with an annual award from 2025 further motivates student engagement and highlights the value of equity initiatives	PA2 Lead and WIDE committee	Sept 2025 - Jun 2027	Plan for promoting EDI training to students in place by Q3 2025 20% of FNS students to have completed EDI training by Jun 2028. First FNS student EDI award in 2026. One FNS student to receive UCC EDI award by 2028.	Action will be supported by UCC GEAP (2024) 1.2.6 to host annual staff and student EDI awards from Q4 2025.
<b>PA5</b>	SAP 2.4.9	Low	Examine and address cultural, moral or religious issues which may impact on students' ability to complete FNS programmes.	Arising from comments by staff at the externally facilitated focus group, these issues have not been considered previously in FNS. Given the increasing diversity of FNS students and the nature of FNS practical work, awareness of students cultural beliefs and taking practical steps to address them will ensure that all students can fully participate in FNS programmes without any barriers. This promotes a supportive and inclusive learning environment	PA5 Lead, WIDE committee and programme directors	Jan 2026 - Jan 2027	FNS policy created, in conjunction with EDI unit and Students Union, to address issues of students with moral, cultural or religious issues to FNS programme content.  Working group set up by Q4 2025 to consider potential issues and solutions. 100% staff aware of FNS policy by 2026 UCC EDI survey.	Pending initiation
<b>PA1</b>	SAP 2.4.10	Med	Promote and record EDI training for all staff. Introductory session for all staff to raise awareness of neurodiversity and intersectionality.	2022 survey results showed only 28% of FNS staff had taken EDI training courses, such as unconscious bias training. Promoting and recording EDI training for all staff ensures accountability and progression of the FNS EDI agenda.	PA5 Lead, SM and Chair of WIDE	May 2025 - May 2027	40% of staff have undergone at least one EDI training course by 2026, excluding attending neurodiversity and intersectionality workshops	Pending initiation

PA5	SAP 2.4.11	Med	Create central FNS platform with easy access to all UCC policies and protocols	Focus group participants highlighted that FNS staff were uncertain where to find UCC policies such as leave entitlements and only one participant had seen the Right to Dignity and Respect Policy but had not read it. A central FNS platform will provide easy access for staff to UCC policies which enhances transparency and increases staff knowledge of their entitlements	PA5 Lead, SM and Chair of WIDE	May 2025 - Sept 2026	Sharepoint site created for FNS staff by 2026. >70% of staff aware of how to access policy documents at 2028 UCC EDI survey. 100% of staff aware of the UCC Right to Dignity and Respect policy.	Preliminary work already begun in Jun 2024. Currently under review.
PA5	SAP 2.4.12	High	Student-focused communication plan to raise awareness of UCC reporting structures and develop reporting protocols within FNS for local complaints	When asked, students displayed a lack of awareness of reporting tools in UCC or in FNS. Promoting these tools and developing local protocols will provide students with resources to ensure their safety and wellbeing.	PA5 Lead, PA2 Lead and WIDE committee	Sept 2025 - Sept 2028	Creation of plan to promote awareness of reporting protocols by Sept 2025. Policy implemented for reporting any issues in FNS by Q1 2026. Protocols communicated annually to all students from Sept 2026  60% of FNS students to indicate awareness of reporting structures in next UCC EDI Student Survey	Pending initiation
PA5	SAP 2.4.13	Low	Promote flexible working options for FNS staff	In the 2022 survey 35%F and 36%M felt that FNS supported flexible working. Promoting this option will enhance work-life balance, boost morale, and support productivity by accommodating diverse needs and responsibilities.	PA5 Lead, HoS, SM and Managerial CTO	Jun 2025 - Dec 2028	Flexible working discussed at all PDRS meetings.  >60% of staff indicate that FNS supports flexible working in 2026 UCC EDI Staff. 10% more staff avail of flexible working option by 2028	Pending initiation
PA5	SAP 2.4.14	High	Promote family leave supports available to staff and develop internal processes for covering staff on leave.	Only 29%F somewhat agreed that FNS was supportive of family leave. 33%F and 25%M reported they covered some of their duties while on leave. Promoting family leave supports and developing coverage processes ensures staff feel supported in balancing work and family commitments, fostering a positive and inclusive workplace culture	PA5 Lead, HoS, SM and Managerial CTO	May 2025-May 2026	FNS policy on covering staff on leave. Family Leave entitlements to be highlighted on new SharePoint page. >60%F agree that FNS is supportive of family leave at 2026 UCC EDI survey and <20% staff report covering duties while on leave	Pending initiation
PA5	SAP 2.4.15	Med	Introduce action to support FNS staff with caring responsibilities which aligns FNS with UCC Gender Equality Action Plan 2024 action supporting carers.	66%F and 85%M of FNS staff surveyed have caring responsibilities with 38%F and 15%M reporting the caring as non-parental. 33%F reported lack of support from line manager in balancing workload with caring responsibilities. Expanding supports to include caring obligations ensures that staff with caregiving roles are better supported, enhancing work-life balance and equity.	PA5 Lead, HoS, SM and Managerial CTO	Jan 2026 - ongoing	All staff with caring responsibilities aware of the UCC Carers Network and care-related policies by 2026 UCC EDI Survey. Increase to 60%F who feel line manager is supportive of need to balance work with caring responsibilities in 2026 UCC EDI Survey.	Practical supports for parents and carers is a priority area of UCC GEAP (2024). UCC Carers Network promoted to FNS staff. UCC GEAP 2.2.22 will support FNS with commitment to 3 additional supports for carers by Q3 2025.