

# School of Nursing and Midwifery, UCC Bronze Renewal - Action Plan 2024

## Action plan

Action No.	Objective	Rationale	Planned Actions	Timeframe (start/end date)	Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
1	<p>Establish school level EDI Committee under which AS SAT will be positioned.</p> <p>The EDI committee will oversee the collating and monitoring of reliable local EDI data for future AS applications</p>	<p>Low response rate to EDI related surveys indicates a need to embed EDI and AS within the SONM</p> <p>EDI committee will enable progress on the work of this action plan to create a more equitable, inclusive, and diverse SONM.</p> <p>The establishment of an EDI committee is key in providing strategic institution-wide direction and ensuring that AS actions (and staff commitment to this</p>	<p>1.1 Agree terms of reference.</p> <p>1.2 Appoint Chair of EDI committee and establish diverse membership who have all completed the Digital Badge in EDI for HE</p> <p>1.3 Undertake a promotional campaign within the School to encourage engagement with EDI</p>	<p>Jan 2025 – Feb 2025</p> <p>Mar 2025- April 2025</p> <p>Jan 2025- April 2026</p>	<p>AS SAT Chair in collaboration with School Executive and CoMH EDI Steering Group</p>	<p>An EDI Committee structure will be established within which AS will be situated.</p> <p>All members of the EDI committee will complete the EDI for HE Digital Badge</p> <p>There will be an increase in the number of SONM staff completing the UCC EDI Staff Values and Culture Survey 2026</p>

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	Formalise the establishment an EDIB Student Forum	<p>direction) are consistent with the School's overall EDI objectives.</p> <p>Positioning the AS SAT under this committee aligns gender equality efforts with broader EDI goals fostering a more inclusive environment.</p> <p>Over 10 students responded to an invitation to contribute to EDI matters within the School</p>	<p>activities in the school and a high level of completion of relevant surveys.</p> <p>1.4 Agree terms of reference for EDIB Student Forum that are inclusive of a mechanism to ensure continuity of student engagement (nominees to sit on EDI Committee)</p>	Feb 2025 – June 2028	Chair of the SoNM EDI committee in collaboration with Chair of Student Experience Committee	<p>There will be an increase in positive perceptions of EDI of issues in future staff surveys</p> <p>Evidence that EDIB student forum is contributing to SoNM EDI committee as recorded in minutes.</p>
2	Enable SAT members, particularly Co-Chairs, to commit time to future AS	Teaching and administrative workloads as experienced by current SAT Co-Chairs are barriers	2.1 Teaching and assessment workload reduction for Co-Chairs	In advance of 2028 renewal/	HoS	Teaching and assessment workload reduction for Co-Chairs is provided in advance of submission.

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	renewals and applications	to completion of AS applications	2.2 Allocate a 0.2 FTE SEA to support AS and EDI activities in the School	Silver application Jan 2026- Jan 2027	HoS	Co-Chairs are able to meet the review and submission deadlines in a timely manner  SEA 0.2 allocated to AS/EDI
3	To achieve more balanced gender representation on all School committees (including the EDI committee and AS SAT) that is reflective of the gender balance within the disciplines of nursing and midwifery and of school staff	Self-assessment indicates that %M membership of School committees ranges from 7% to 44%  SAT membership is currently 36%M  Gender balance across committees needs to be more evenly distributed	3.1 All committee annual reports submitted to School meetings will include gender breakdown of membership, including non-binary.  3.2 HoS will consider gender balance when allocating workload regarding membership of committees	Jan 2024 – April 2026       Aug 2025- June 2028	Chairs of Committees      HoS	Committee reports will be seen to include gender breakdown  Committee membership will more closely align to the gender balance of School staff.  A report on gender balance across school committees will be submitted to the School EDI committee annually after workload allocation

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4	To ensure clear communication on progress between committee Chairs and the SAT	Progress review and self-assessment revealed reporting gaps between school committees and the SAT	<p>4.1 Agreed grouped actions will form the agenda of scheduled SAT meetings</p> <p>4.2 Committee Chairs will be invited to attend the meeting for the relevant grouped actions</p>	<p>Jan 2025 – Jan 2028</p> <p>Jan 2025-May 2028</p>	<p>AS SAT</p> <p>Admin support to SAT and Committee Chairs</p>	<p>Actions in new AP are progressed within the specified timeframe</p> <p>Record of &gt;80% attendance of committee Chairs at the relevant meetings on SAT SharePoint</p>
5	To review SAT membership annually between the SAT Chair and the HoS to ensure a broad representation of all staff grades inclusive of	SAT membership needs to be representative of all staff grades and categories of staff. Up to Feb 2024 there were no professorial grade staff on the SAT (As of May 2024 SL n=3, Prof n=1)	5.1 Review SAT membership and liaise with HoS to allocate SAT membership across staff grades	Oct 2024 and ongoing on annual review of all School committees	Head of School and SAT Chair	Membership of the SAT will be proportionally representative of all grades in the school.

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	student representation					
6	To produce an accessible annual report on EDI progress for dissemination to school staff and to make same available on the AS webpage, offering updates to the wider University community as well as the public	Internal stakeholder feedback revealed that staff are unaware of AS Action progress.	<p>6.1 Annual AS Report to be written.</p> <p>6.2 Annual AS Report to be visible and accessible on dedicated AS webpage</p> <p>6.3 Action plan progress will be shared at key staff meetings on an annual basis e.g. School Away Day.</p> <p>6.4 Data on internet traffic to and interaction with AS webpage to be monitored and</p>	<p>June 2025- June 2028</p> <p>June 2025- June 2028</p>	<p>SAT Chair</p> <p>External Communications and relations Committee who oversee website.</p> <p>IT support and EA to the SAT</p>	Staff awareness measured through a pulse survey conducted every 2 years.

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			reported at SAT meetings			
7	To measure and evaluate the levels of awareness of pre-maternity leave supports that are available	EDI Survey data indicates that 35% of respondents were not aware of pre-maternity leave supports	<p>7.1 An annual feature on CoMH Newsletter highlighting available supports; an invitation to HR to speak to staff about supports available and a feature post on the School website</p> <p>7.2 Conduct a school staff survey to ask specifically about awareness of pre-maternity supports available</p>	March 2025- Mar 2026	SAT Chair in collaboration with the School EDI committee and the College of Medicine and Health EDI committee.	Survey data will demonstrate a 10% increase in awareness of pre-maternity leave supports
8	To improve monitoring of staff	Monitoring to date suggests those interested	8.1 Develop a school-based means of	Jan 2025- Apr 2027	Head of School and SM	An accurate record of staff who have completed

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	numbers and gender of those completing leadership training and widen opportunities for development of leadership skills	<p>in leadership training have the opportunity, though it indicated no male-identifying staff completed training courses in the reporting period.</p> <p>However, we have concerns about the completeness and accuracy of data reported and will improve monitoring in order to identify and address any issues.</p>	<p>maintaining records of completed leadership training courses by grade and by gender</p> <p>8.2 Periodically review records of completion of leadership training</p> <p>8.3 Identify leadership training opportunities for others who may be interested in leadership training but have not had the opportunity to do same.</p>	Apr 2025- and ongoing	Head of School and SM and SAT	<p>leadership training by grade and gender will be maintained by SM</p> <p>Head of School will undertake an annual review of this record noting grade and gender and report on this to AS SAT.</p> <p>A wider range of grades of staff will have undertaken leadership training</p>
9	To embed pedagogy related to equality, diversity and inclusion within	Self-assessment indicates a limited inclusion of equality, diversity and inclusion related content	9.1 As programmes are reviewed and updated, map programme content based on the nine	AY 2024/25 to 2028	Programme leads and Directors of Undergrad Education, of Postgrad Education,	Curriculum descriptors will include explicit reference to EDI and Equality legislation obligations in curriculum

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	our programmes, particularly as it relates to healthcare professionals' obligations	<p>has been in the curricula of our programmes</p> <p>Inclusion Health is a growing concern within health professional disciplines working with diverse patient populations</p>	<p>grounds for discrimination within the Equal Status Acts</p> <p>9.2 Encourage module and programme coordinators to include EDI/Equality legislation matters in their assessments</p> <p>9.3 Expose students to real-world clinical situations in diverse settings, situations, and populations</p> <p>9.4 Module evaluations will include question(s) on EDI pedagogy and curricular content</p>		and of Graduate/Research in collaboration with Director of Teaching and Learning	<p>content and in assessments</p> <p>Clinical placement opportunities and simulated patients reflect diverse patient populations and settings</p> <p>Data from module evaluations will indicate student feedback that reflects experience of EDI pedagogy and curricular content</p>



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10	To ensure school adherence to the university's Gender Identity and Expression policy (GIEP)	Self-assessment data reveals that the school is predominantly binary in the reporting of gender data.	10.1 The gathering or presenting of data on staff or student identity will adhere to the University's Gender Identity and Expression policy (GIEP)	Oct 2024 – ongoing to 2028	AS SAT Chair, EDI Committee Chair	Questions on gender will include further options in addition to 'male' and 'female', such as 'non-binary', 'self defined (state)' and 'prefer not to disclose'
11	Increase staff awareness of core meeting hours	EDI Values and Culture Survey March 2022 indicated that 52% of respondents (n=13) were unaware of the UCC core meeting hours policy i.e. key meetings should take place between the core hours of 10am and 4pm and 77% (n=18) reported that core meeting hours between 10am and 4pm	11.1 Engage in awareness raising exercises regarding core meeting hours policy (e.g. memo from HoS to all staff reminding committee chairs to schedule meetings core hours; we will include core meeting hours in Staff Information Booklet	Aug 2024-2028	Head of School to endorse and communicate to all School Committee Chairs  AS Chair and EDI Committee Chair	Staff will report higher levels of awareness of core meeting hours policy and survey data will indicate that 80% of staff are aware of core meeting hours

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		were not being adhered to in the School	and on School sharepoint)			
12	To improve staff and student understanding of what is a reasonable timeframe for staff to send and respond to communications	Data from EDI Values and Culture survey reported, 72% of respondents (n=18; 15F; 7M) reported that they currently send emails outside of standing working hours and that 96% (n=22; 21F and 1M ) receive emails outside of core working hours. When asked about the expectation to respond to emails outside of core hours 52% (10F; 3M) of respondents reported that this has not changed or has increased 36% (9F) since 2021.	12.1 Include clear details in undergraduate student handbook regarding email etiquette and response timeframe expectations.  12.2 Offer information sessions for staff on the Code of Practice on the Right to Disconnect from the Workplace	Immediate start – ongoing in yearly issue of Student Handbook	Directors of UG and PG Education	Details on communication will be clear in student handbook.  Student survey data will report greater awareness of reasonable timeframe etiquette  Staff survey data will report fewer instances of students having expectations of immediate responses  Staff survey data will report increased staff awareness of the Code of Practice on the Right to Disconnect from the Workplace



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				Jan 2025- Jan 2028		
14	Foster a culture within the School that values work-life balance for all staff	<p>Quotes from staff completing the EDI Staff survey indicate excessive working hours and a poor work-life balance</p> <p>PMSS Focus group data revealed a preference for a continuance of the current</p>	<p>14.1 School Leadership will model and promote work-life balance</p> <p>14.2 Offer support, training and education on</p>	2025-2028	Head of School and SM in collaboration with HR and Training & Development	<p>Staff will report in next survey that discussing work-life balance has become normalised within the school</p> <p>Staff survey will report better work-life balance</p>

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		flexible/hybrid working arrangements	<p>achieving better work-life balance</p> <p>14.3 Offer time-management training</p> <p>14.4 Invite HR to brief staff on flexible working options and help staff understand who is eligible and under what conditions.</p> <p>14.5 Foster a supportive culture by providing training and support for staff (e.g. using technology effectively)</p> <p>14.6 Keeping all staff informed about flexible working</p>			<p>Staff survey will include questions on taking time off and setting boundaries</p> <p>The use of 'Quiet Time' will be refined and evaluated</p>

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			<p>policies, changes and updates.</p> <p>13.5 Conduct a staff survey to assess satisfaction with flexible work arrangements.</p>			
15	Increase visibility of supports available for students with caring responsibilities	Data reveals minimal uptake of supports such as flexible clinical placement opportunities	<p>15.1 Develop and maintain dedicated webpage on SoNM website highlighting supports available</p> <p>15.2 Include section in Student Handbook on supports available for students with caring responsibilities</p>	<p>Jan 2025 – June 2028</p> <p>Sept 2024 - and ongoing issues of handbook</p>	<p>Directors of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Education in collaboration with Chair of External Communications and Relations committee</p> <p>Senior Programmes Administrator</p>	<p>Dedicated webpage available on SoNM website highlighting key supports available</p> <p>Dedicated section referring to supports for students with caring responsibilities is included in Student Handbook</p>

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16	Explore the support needs of students with caring responsibilities	UG and PG Programme evaluations did not explore support needs during the previous AP reporting period	<p>16.1 Include question in future programme evaluations exploring the support needs of students with caring responsibilities</p> <p>16.2 Programme Leads collate responses to the question and submit to AS SAT for review and action as needed</p>	<p>May 2025-May 2028</p> <p>Jan 2028-June 2028</p>	Programme Leads	<p>Specific questions on how the school can support students with caring responsibilities was implemented in 2023 in programme evaluations.</p> <p>This will continue to be reviewed and actioned in next AS application and will be actioned where needed</p>
17	Enhance the diversity of students undertaking our undergraduate and postgraduate courses, with a	UCC Data Hub (established in 2020) reveals that in the reporting years 2020-22, out of 2660 registered students, 2626 students were domestic in their	<p>17.1 Gather accurate data on the diversity of our student body including all 9 protected grounds</p> <p>17.2 Continue efforts to recruit male</p>	<p>2025-2028</p> <p>2024-2028</p>	EDI Committee in conjunction with the Directors of Undergraduate and Postgraduate education and Student Records	<p>Accurate, accessible data will accurately reflect the diversity of our student body.</p> <p>Numbers of male students entering undergraduate</p>

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	particular attention to the nine Protected grounds, and the School's obligations under the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty	origin (i.e. originating from Ireland). Gender data? No additional data relating to protected grounds are reported.	identifying students onto our programmes  17.3 Access and evaluate central university data relating to completion and retention rates among underrepresented students  17.4 Undertake Focus groups with diverse and underrepresented students	2025-2028          2026-2028	and Examinations office   EDI Committee, AS committee in conjunction with the EDI Unit	programmes will increase in the reporting period  Accurate accessible data will illustrate completion and retention rates of students  The lived experiences of underrepresented students will be captured through focus groups undertaken during the reporting period
18	Foster a greater sense of inclusion, familiarity, and belonging among all Professional, Managerial and	PMSS Focus Group reported that some PMSS feel isolated as there are fewer staff in their areas.	18.1 Ensure photographs of all staff members on their Microsoft Outlook profile.	Jan 2025 - June 2028	SM and other relevant line managers in collaboration with	The majority of staff will have included a photograph on their Microsoft Outlook profile



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	Support Staff (PMSS) groups.	<p>The rapid growth of the school has resulted in staff not having met or become familiar with some of their own colleagues</p> <p>There is a perceived need to build familiarity within the school, especially for new staff members</p>	18.2 Host informal bi-monthly staff coffee or lunch, in the staff common room, outside of annual scheduled social events	Dec 2024-June 2028	the School Social Committee	<p>Staff survey data will indicate evidence of familiarity with their colleagues</p> <p>PMSS completing staff survey will report a greater sense of inclusion and connection with the School and with colleagues</p>
	Identify gender trends and issues experienced relating to PTH staff	Data on PTH gender trends and issues experienced have not been monitored during the reporting period	18.3 PTH staff gender trends and issues have been monitored since 2023	Sept 2024-Feb 2028		<p>Gender trends identified through analyses of collected data and actioned accordingly.</p> <p>PTH completing staff survey will report issues being experienced in relation to EDI</p>

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19	PMSS will have greater opportunities for collaborative events and training	<p>PMSS focus group data indicates PMSS not accessing equal opportunities for training</p> <p>PMSS reported few opportunities to collaborate with other PMSS, academic, and research staff.</p> <p>PMSS focus group was considered a unique and valuable opportunity worthy of regular scheduling</p>	<p>19.1 An agreed plan at the beginning of each AY that PMSS can avail of training opportunities and cover to be provided by colleagues.</p> <p>19.2 Group in-house training to be held. PMSS will be facilitated to meet as a group for inhouse training on a 6 monthly basis to discuss Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), workloads, supports and training needs as appropriate to their area of work</p> <p>19.3 A regular calendar of</p>	<p>August 2025 – June 2028</p> <p>Jan 2025 – June 2028</p>	<p>SM and other relevant line managers in collaboration with Human Resources (HR)/Training and Development</p> <p>SM and other relevant line managers in collaboration with HR/Training and Development</p> <p>PMSS together with SM and other relevant line managers in</p>	<p>PMSS, through staff survey, will report greater opportunities for collaboration and training</p> <p>In-house training is implemented every 6 months and will be attended by a majority of PMSS where needed</p> <p>Feedback from PMSS, through staff survey, after training will indicate satisfaction with training and that training needs have been met</p> <p>PMSS report greater opportunities for collaboration with colleagues across the</p>

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			scheduled collaborative events for PMSS		collaboration with School Social Committee	School, through staff survey
20	PMSS will be supported in their professional development and will have access to opportunities for professional growth and development, resulting in greater levels of retention	Staff retention data demonstrates significant turnover of PMSS and suggests that levels of PMSS retention are of concern	20.1 A mentoring and buddying scheme will be established within the School across all PMSS grades.  20.2 In-house SOPs to support Executive Assistants' work will be established	April 2026-April 2027  Feb 2025-Feb 2028	SM and other relevant line managers, in collaboration with HR	PMSS will report having access to greater opportunities for professional development  The rate of PMSS retention will be increased
21	Explore the experiences of research staff since the introduction of explicit supports over the last 4	All research staff are now included in the School email communications  Self-assessment data indicates involvement of	21.1 To evaluate these changed practices, a focus group with research staff will be carried out	Sept 2027 – April 2028	Chair of the SoNM Research Committee	Focus group analysis will provide insight into impact of supports provided to research staff

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	years: Ref: old AP 5.3(iii)	<p>research staff in training opportunities</p> <p>PIs undertake to ensure that a Training &amp; Development plan is put in place to support the personal development of research staff</p>				