

SECTION 3:

An evaluation of the institution's progress and success

In Section 3, applicants should evidence how they meet criteria 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: 6,000

1. Evaluating progress against the previous action plan

Insert (on the landscape page to follow) the most recent iteration of the action plan associated with the previous institution award. The action plan should be 'RAG' rated (rated 'red,' 'amber' or 'green') depending on progress.

1.a Previous action plan

Table 75. Summary of 2019 Bronze Action Plan RAG-rating

Rating	% and number of BAP actions by rating
Silver	21% (10)
Green	30% (14)
Amber	47% (22)
Red	2% (1)
Total Completed (Silver + Green)	51% (24)
Total BAP Actions (2019):	47

Green = Achieved	Silver = Completed & Impactful	Amber = In Progress	Red = Not Started
---------------------	-----------------------------------	------------------------	----------------------

Table 76. BAP 2019 with RAG Rating.

No.	Description of Action	Rationale	Success criteria and Outcomes	Progress Update/Key Outcomes - Success Measures/Impact	SAT RAG Assessment
3.1	Audit University Athena SWAN Steering Group membership & initiate rotation. Increase the representation of male and Black and minority ethnic (BAME) staff.	Gender and ethnicity representation on the main University steering group needs to be improved.	(1) Minimum 45% M representation on University ASSG by end 2020 (noting space for non-binary representation). (2) Targets for BAME representation at School, College and University Steering Groups identified in collaboration with Race Equality Forum.	ASSG gender balance (41%M) maintained, aligning with overall staff gender balance (42%M). ASSG includes 1 non-binary / transgender member. 3 ASSG members are in minority ethnic groups (an increase from 1 member in 2019). New EDI governance arrangements (SAP Action 1.2.4) will maintain and embed improvements.	GREEN
4.1.1	Establish a Race Equality Forum led by Black and minority ethnic (BAME) staff, for BAME staff and students.	Staff/student surveys and University Equality Committee consultation demonstrate a systematic focus is needed on race/ethnicity in the organisation, led by and for BAME staff.	Race Equality Forum recommendations approved by UMT; operational plan agreed for 2020-23.	Race Equality Forum (2019) evolved into Race Equality Network (REN)(2023). ULT EDIB sub-committee Race Equality Working Group established October 2024. REN, the UCC EDI Unit and the Race Equality WG of the ULT EDIB Sub-Committee will implement the actions set out in the HEA Race Equality Implementation Plan (SAP Action 2.2.22).	SILVER
4.1.2	Research staff pathways into and out of different RSO roles.	Anecdotal evidence that F PDRs more likely to move to RSO roles, removing them from academic/research career pathways. RSO roles are new, their gendered impact needs clarification.	(1) Report on RSO career transitions developed and presented to University Athena SWAN Steering Group. (2) UMT considers whether action needed to address RSO career progression.	2023 cohort study indicates (a) sustained female overrepresentation in RSO roles (70%+F, 2018-23), (b) sustained reliance on RSO contracts (ranging 175-195 per annum, 2018-23); and (c) predominant use of fixed-term contracts for RSO roles (e.g. 77% of F RSO & 85% of M RSO on fixed-term contracts, in 2023). SAP Action 2.2.1 will continue this study to explore gendered patterns in entry/exit pathways to/from RSO grades, relative to academic/researcher career pipeline.	AMBER
4.1.3	Use CoreHR to centrally manage data on local hourly occasional contract use, to enable annual equality monitoring.	Hourly occasional staff data is not currently centrally monitored. Staff focus groups indicate need for oversight to avoid the excessive and inappropriate use of hourly occasional staff contracts.	Central monitoring of data on hourly paid staff, with annual reporting to Heads and managers.	Hourly Occasional Pay Group (HOPG) led by CPCO convened July 2024 (Project Alpha Workstream 2), to design and implement a centralised, automated process to monitor hourly paid employment. A preliminary survey of current policy, processes and systems concluded 9/24. Its findings, which include proposals for central data monitoring, will inform HOPG terms of reference: SAP Action 2.2.2 .	AMBER
4.1.4	Develop ethical employment guidelines regarding the use of hourly occasional contracts.	Cush Report (2016) and UCC staff focus groups indicate need to reduce use of fixed and short-term contracts for teaching and core activities. Ethical employment guidelines will guide managers on use and management of hourly paid employment.	(1) Ethical employment guidelines published on HR and EDI Unit webpages. (2) Manager/PI briefing sessions provided by HR Training and Development. (3) Hourly occasional staff report greater satisfaction with working conditions in further focus groups.	Draft ethical employment guidelines were developed and presented to ULT. An Hourly Occasional Pay Group (HOPG) led by CPCO convened July 2024 (Project Alpha Workstream 2), to design and implement a centralised, automated process to monitor hourly paid employment. A preliminary survey of current policy, processes and systems concluded 9/24. Its findings, which explicitly reference this Action (and a similar HEA recommendation to HEIs, arising from the 2nd Review of Gender Equality in Irish HEIs) will inform HOPG terms of reference: SAP Action 2.2.3 .	AMBER

No.	Description of Action	Rationale	Success criteria and Outcomes	Progress Update/Key Outcomes - Success Measures/Impact	SAT RAG Assessment
4.1.6	Conduct annual pay reviews in respect of gender.	Pay reviews are ad hoc and not incorporated in UCC's audit/management reporting cycle.	Annual pay reviews incorporated in University's annual audit/management reporting cycle by 2023.	UCC publishes an annual gender pay gap report in line with the Gender Pay Gap Information Act 2021. Coinciding with the implementation of 2019 BAP, the mean and median gender pay gaps for all staff declined between 2022 Mean and median GPG has narrowed from 16.06% to 14.52% (mean, 2022 v. 2024) and from 17.37% to 11.56% (median, 2022 v. 2023) reflecting successful AS BAP interventions to improve female representation at higher grades in all roles. SAP implementation will further narrow GPG.	GREEN
5.1.1	(1) Revise equality of opportunity statement in recruitment material to include a specific commitment to equality principles (2) Develop guidance for writing equality-focused post advertisements.	Women remain underrepresented (36% of academics) at application stage. UCC equality surveys suggest 2% of staff are of African or Asian descent, compared to 10% of students.	(1) Strengthened statements of commitment to EDI principles incorporated into President's welcome and applicant information packs. (2) Target of 40% female applications for academic posts by 2023.	All HR post advertisements and candidate information packs (including the President's welcome and post descriptions) now include: (i) enhanced statements of commitment to equality principles; (ii) explicit welcome for applications from members of underrepresented cohorts; (iii) reference to UCC's flexible working and family-friendly policies; and (iv) a focused description of the university's equality work. Data measure: Target of 40% female applications for academic posts by 2023 reached: 39%F applicants across all academic competitions, 2018-2023; n=2874 .	SILVER
5.1.2	Reduce the size of academic selection committees. Ensure committees are composed of min. 40% of the underrepresented gender.	Self-assessment identified recruitment committee overload for a small number of senior female colleagues.	Appointment regulations revised to reduce committee sizes and incorporate gender representation targets.	UCC statutory appointment regulations are under review (2024) with a priority aim of reducing selection committee size. (SAP Actions 2.2.5).	AMBER
5.1.3	Create a promotion pathway to full Professor.	19% of full Professors are women (compared to 43%F at Prof (2)). A promotion pathway to full Prof. will improve gender balance at the most senior academic level.	Minimum 40% F applications in first call for promotion to full Prof.	Regulations for a new promotion pathway to full Professor are drafted and tabled for ULT approval (Nov 2024). A budgetary projection for the scheme is set. Subject to final approval by AC and GA, a launch in early in 2025 is planned: SAP Action 2.2.9.	AMBER
5.1.4	Submit applications for professorial appointments under HEA Senior Academic Leadership Initiative (SALI).	19% of full Professors are women. Vacancies and new posts are rare. Externally funded SALI Professorships offer an opportunity to improve gender balance, especially in disciplines where women are underrepresented.	Submit applications in every SALI call.	Three new SALI Professors were recruited; two further posts approved subject to HEA SALI funding. SAP Action 2.2.6 commits to match all SALI appointments with internal full Prof. appointments.	SILVER

No.	Description of Action	Rationale	Success criteria and Outcomes	Progress Update/Key Outcomes - Success Measures/Impact	SAT RAG Assessment
5.1.5	Implement e-Recruitment for all Research Posts, incorporating nationally agreed ethnicity categories in e-recruitment processes.	Researcher recruitment application is not centrally coordinated or monitored. E-recruitment will support annual equality monitoring of researcher recruitment, including by staff ethnicity (not currently monitored for any staff category).	(1) Establishment of e-recruitment for researchers with annual monitoring of recruitment statistics by gender and subsequently, ethnicity. (2) Ethnicity categories implemented in equality monitoring recruitment screen with over 50% of applicants voluntarily disclosing their ethnicity annually.	E-recruitment for researchers fully implemented, enabling institution-wide monitoring of researcher recruitment for the first time. SAP Action 1.2.10 will build capacity to incorporate ethnicity category in equality monitoring (including in recruitment). Progress to date: (a) Parameters for data collection agreed between HR and EDI Unit; (b) EDI Unit preparing Data Protection Impact Assessment for Q1 2025 submission.	GREEN
5.1.6	Pilot project in SEFS requiring PIs to complete LEAD equality training as a condition for institutional approval of grant applications involving researcher recruitment.	Junior researcher grades (through PDR) are recruited by PIs locally. There is a need to sensitise PIs to unequal gender patterns in research career progression seen in our data.	50% of new SEFS funding proposals in 2021 are submitted by PIs who have completed equality training; 70% of SEFS PIs completed training by 2022.	EDI in HE programme replaced LEAD training. To date, 43 SEFS-based staff (56%M) completed EDI in HE programme. During the reporting period, female researchers' recruitment success rate exceeded male at all grades but SRF (SRF F success rate 15%, M 16%). As of 9/24 UCC had 52 SPDR (30F) and 181 PDR (98F) (excl. Tyndall); of these, 10F SPDR and 27F PDR were in SEFS. Mandatory EDI training is planned (SAP Actions 2.2.7, 2.2.11).	AMBER
5.1.8	Revise UCC Staff Orientation Toolkit to include additional detail on UCC staff entitlements, protections and networks.	Staff surveys and focus groups indicate staff awareness of entitlements, protections and networks can be improved.	(1) Staff Orientation Toolkit revised and circulated as part of all new Staff Orientation sessions and placed on HR website. (2) Future staff surveys and focus groups indicate increased awareness of equality policies, entitlements and networks.	(1) Revamped Staff Onboarding programme includes bespoke researcher induction, new IT and Professional Skills onboarding programmes, updated Manager checklists, in-person President's Staff Orientations (2 per semester, with EDI Unit-led briefing). Orientation for new Heads of School/Unit, Mentoring Briefings (2 per semester), and President's Orientation Cafe (1 per semester). Details on policies/guidelines on family-friendly leave, Duty of Respect and Right to Dignity, Code of Practice for the Employment of People with Disabilities, Gender Identity & Expression, and Staff Networks are provided. (2) Data measures: 2024 EDI Staff survey data shows increased awareness of equality policies, entitlements and networks (e.g. awareness of Right to Disconnect increased from 48% (2022) to 63% (2024); increases also noted in awareness of policies for sick leave, career break, compassionate leave, Flexible Working Hours policy. Increased awareness of staff networks (e.g. LGBTQ Network: 2022=872 vs. 2024=938; Mna@UCC: 2022=669 vs. 2024=805; Race Equality Network: 2022=492 vs. 2024=657).	SILVER

No.	Description of Action	Rationale	Success criteria and Outcomes	Progress Update/Key Outcomes - Success Measures/Impact	SAT RAG Assessment
5.1.9	Equality monitor the outcomes of the 2019 SL and Prof (2) promotion calls for Senior Lecturer and Professor (Scale 2) to evaluate impact of revised promotion schemes.	Target of 40% min. females promoted (set under new 2019 SL Promotion scheme) exceeded by 5%. As schemes are new, impact review is required to embed and sustain improvements.	SL and Prof (2) promotions continue to achieve target of 40%F promoted.	Data measures: Target of a minimum 40% F promoted exceeded in all 3 SL promotion calls since 2019: (i) 45%F appointees (n=18) in 2019-20 SL call; (ii) 46%F appointees (n=56) in 2022-2023 SL call; (iii) 65%F appointees (n=11) in 2023-4 SL call. Target of minimum 40% F promoted exceeded in 2019-2020 Prof (2) call (52%F appointees, n=11). Survey data indicates significantly improved perceptions of promotions processes, though more work is needed; e.g. 43%F respondents agree promotions criteria are transparent and fair (2024) (up from 19%F agreed, 2022) Following a review of the 2019/2020 SL and Prof (2) promotions rounds, new SL (2023) and Prof (2) (2024) promotions regulations introduced rolling calls for applications (annually (SL), biannually (Prof (2))). The revised regulations - (i) require equal gender balance where possible on promotions boards, and a minimum gender balance of 40% of the underrepresented gender (M/F); (ii) incorporate EDI training for promotions board members and EDI Champion Training for promotions board chairs; (iii) explicitly encourages applications from cohorts underrepresented at SL grade; (iv) provides enhanced guidance on statutory leave weighting formulae used in assessing candidates against promotions criteria; (v) allows for consideration of career disruption due to Covid-19 impacts.	SILVER
5.1.11	Offer staff seminars on high performance based on progression/promotion criteria, by role (academic, PMSS)	Ensure staff understand promotions criteria and new promotions processes	Maintain target of 50% female applications for academic promotional posts by 2023.	HR led a series of well-attended talks (some offered exclusively to women) coinciding with promotions calls to ensure applicants understood criteria, process following promotion scheme changes. Data measure: Target of 50%F applicants for academic progression/promotion (2018-2024) effectively met (48%F applicants, n=286).	SILVER
5.3.1	Establish Staff Development Virtual Hub to raise awareness of range of training and mentoring schemes available, and signal to managers the importance of making training and development opportunities available to staff.	UCC Staff Equality survey indicates 17%M and 21 %F respondents strongly disagree that communication on training is proactive and inclusive. HR 2018 Training Report indicates managers' flexibility regarding training and development opportunities requires attention.	(1) Increased staff awareness of training opportunities and eligibility registered in EDI surveys/focus groups. (2) Increased volume of staff attending training due to awareness and managers' flexibility.	Virtual training hub (www.ucc.ie/en/staff-training) provides a single point of access to training offered by all 13 staff training providers across UCC (including HR). Guidelines for staff and managers setting out UCC's commitment to continuing professional development for all staff launched and published on HR website (2023), including principles addressing relevance, frequency and equity. Data measure: EDI Staff Survey data shows improved staff experience of access to training to support career aspirations (63%F, 59%M academic respondents satisfied (2024) vs. 58%F, 54%M (2022)).	GREEN

No.	Description of Action	Rationale	Success criteria and Outcomes	Progress Update/Key Outcomes - Success Measures/Impact	SAT RAG Assessment
5.3.2	Develop EDI communications plan for middle managers (Heads of Unit, Pls and School Managers) to promote and support engagement with institutional EDI initiatives (particularly w/r/t Family Friendly policies and Duty of Respect & Right to Dignity policy).	Staff consultation indicates the need to encourage Heads of Unit, Pls and School Managers to prioritise time and space for staff career development; remain up to date on changes in equality-related policy and culture, and become more informed and vocal advocates on equality issues.	(1) Increased awareness reported in 2018 and 2020 staff equality surveys of equality-related policies. (2) Survey feedback evidencing improved perceptions/experience of visibility of different role models, good equality practices, training and development opportunities/entitlements.	EDI Director provides monthly updates to middle-managers via university-wide PI Forum. Info on EDI initiatives and policy launches is circulated to all staff in monthly EDI Unit newsletters. Data measures: 2024 EDI Staff survey data shows increased awareness of equality policies, entitlements and networks (e.g. awareness of Right to Disconnect increased from 48% (2022) to 63% (2024); increases also noted in awareness of policies for sick leave, career break, compassionate leave, Flexible Working Hours policy. Increased awareness of staff networks (e.g. LGBTQ Network: 2022=872 vs. 2024=938; Mna@UCC: 2022=669 vs. 2024=805; Race Equality Network: 2022=492 vs. 2024=657). To embed progress made, EDI will be a crosscutting theme in UCC's new internal communications strategy: SAP Action 2.4.19 .	GREEN
5.3.3	Establish an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Digital Badge (free micro-credential).	UCC's EDI Unit led the IUA's revision of the LEAD e-learning programme. The new programme (available 2020) will underpin an individualised EDI Digital Badge available to all staff.	EDI Digital Badge microcredential established with annual increases in numbers of staff in all roles earning the badge.	Proposal for EDI Digital Badge microcredential approved (2024); launch planned for Q4 2025. EDI in HE training module (replacing LEAD) launched 2020 (272 staff and 36 student completions). 241 staff participated in Bystander Intervention training; 103 staff completed consent training (2024 EDI staff survey); SAP 2.2.11 will support increased staff engagement in EDI Training.	AMBER
5.3.4	Encourage engagement with internal coaching and mentoring programmes available to all staff through targeted awareness raising initiatives.	Data shows recent decline in participation in institutional mentoring programmes from a 4-year high of 35F to 8 in 2018. One reason identified in focus groups is the visibility of mentoring courses and access to information about them.	Restored engagement with institutional mentoring programmes to 4-year average of 20 females per year.	Data measure: Target achieved of 4-year average of min. 20 women annually engaged in HR-led mentoring programmes. This is the result of the formalized programming of mentoring briefings for all staff (twice termly) and the promotion of mentoring opportunities through videos, email, UCC WorkVivo and UCC Staff Support Tree.	GREEN
5.3.5	Run UCC's Epigeum Professional Skills for Research Leaders course specifically for female Postdoctoral and Senior Postdoctoral Researchers.	Fewer women than men progress to SPDR roles. Women PDRs are more likely to move to Research Support Officer (admin) roles or out of HE. Focus groups indicate the effectiveness of this 6-week, researcher-specific development programme, until now exclusively for Senior Research Fellows. We will offer the programme specifically to women PDRs, SPDRs, to support their research careers and opportunities for advancement.	100% uptake of training places. Participants report positive impacts of training on career planning and professional development. Raise proportion of female Senior Postdoctoral researchers from 33% to 40%, and proportion of female Senior Research Fellows.	Target of 40%F SPDR, RF, SRF met and exceeded. UCC's 6-month Professional Skills for Research Leaders programme offered exclusively to F SPDR, RF in 2021, 2022. 43 women participants, including 15% of all UCC's female PDRs (2021) and 18% of all UCC's female PDRs (2022). Improvements to recruitment practices (BAP Actions 5.1.1, 5.1.5) also impacted recruitment to senior research posts. Data Measures: Increase % Female Staff at Senior Post Doctoral Grade 2018 = 31% (n=1) 2023 = 53% (n=20) Data Measures: Increase % Female Staff at Senior Research Fellow Grade 2018 = 25% (n=2) 2023 = 50% (n=7) Data Measures: Increase % Female Staff at Research Fellow Grade 2018 = 48% (n=23) 2023 = 56% (n=27).	SILVER

No.	Description of Action	Rationale	Success criteria and Outcomes	Progress Update/Key Outcomes - Success Measures /Impact	SAT RAG Assessment
5.3.6	Establish a pilot online PMS Staff Knowledge and Skill Sharing Panel, whereby experienced staff members 'buddy' with junior colleagues to share knowledge regarding specific tasks and skill sets.	Focus groups with PMS Staff (majority women) revealed need for more proactive line manager support for professional development. This pilot Panel will also allow staff from academic units to collaborate with staff in central administrative units and vice versa, enhancing potential for career mobility.	(1) Directory established online, minimum 50% of staff have been approached to share their expertise after first year (2) Scheme review is positive, leading to roll-out at a wider University level.	Pilot rolled out (2020-2022) and UCC StaffConnect intranet site launched (2021) with senior sponsorship and line manager support. Project scope broadened to create directory of "peer contacts" by area of expertise, (regardless of role or seniority). Pilot outputs included a StaffConnect introductory workshop (May 2021), a formal launch event (Nov. 2021), a series of well-attended complementary workshops and a social gathering (2022), and a StaffConnect Social Event news item. 34 staff registered for StaffConnect ; though pandemic impacts limited more extensive engagement. StaffConnect site is comprehensive and remains live. Pilot learnings indicated the need for a more structured skill-sharing format. Subsequently, UCC's Continuous Improvement Action Network launched in Jan. 2024 - a network of over 200 members building a peer to peer community of practice in service innovation and improvement.	GREEN
5.3.7	Develop action learning sets (peer learning networks) specifically for Executive and Senior Executive Assistants.	Expand successful standalone pilot conducted with School Managers to include PMS Staff at EA, SEA grades. PMS Staff focus groups - in identified the lack of opportunity to share practice and demonstrate competencies as a barrier to their career progression/promotion.	(1) Minimum of 20 EA and SEA staff from across the University take part in an action learning set each year of the action plan. (2) Check-ins with HR Staff Training and Development and future EDI Focus groups indicate a positive benefit in terms of new shared knowledge, and career development.	Action Learning sets ("ALS") are integrated into HR-led First Steps/Continuing into Management Digital Badges and Current Leaders Programmes , with average annual participation in action learning sets exceeding target of 20 people . In addition, HR-led career development sessions exclusively for EA/SEA staff include bespoke sessions on ALS, with high uptake, e.g. in 2020, 67 EAs/SEAs joined (52F, 15M).	GREEN
5.5.1	Introduce a policy and guidelines to support staff undergoing fertility treatment.	Build on positive staff consultation feedback on UCC's Family Friendly provision to expand institutional supports, based on benchmarking exercise on good practise in HEIs internationally.	New Fertility Treatment policy and guidelines published on HR website; dedicated HR briefings for managers and staff.	UCC Fertility Treatment Leave Policy launched (2024) , offering up to 5 paid fertility treatment leave days per cycle of treatment, flexible working hours and remote working. Manager and staff policy briefings are included in UCC staff induction and in dedicated, HR-led manager workshops (semesterly) on work-life balance policies. 8 staff have availed of Fertility Leave since policy launch.	GREEN
5.5.2	Training for line managers on their roles and responsibilities regarding family-related leave and flexible working.	Line manager focus group indicates the need for greater support managing leave/cover. Consultation with staff taking family leave shows some managers need support to develop a more proactive and inclusive approach to managing maternity leave.	Staff report increased satisfaction with management of maternity leave in Staff surveys (In 2018 66% of 187 survey respondents reported satisfaction, without reference to time period involved).	Since 2023, HR offers Policies Information Sessions for Managers , semesterly, including information on all Family-Friendly policies (Uptake: 138F, 37M). HR Orientation for New Heads and Managers (twice annually) includes briefings on family friendly policies. A Comprehensive Guide for Managers to Maternity & Paternity is published on HR website. Data measures: 2024 EDI Staff Survey data shows that, among 121F recent leave-takers, 66% had access to KIT arrangements while 29% had supports on return from leave. SAP Action [135] will build on progress with dedicated, in-depth training for line managers, via Managers' Insights Hub, on supporting staff before, during and returning from family-related.	SILVER

No.	Description of Action	Rationale	Success criteria and Outcomes	Progress Update/Key Outcomes - Success Measures/Impact	SAT RAG Assessment
5.5.3	Devolve coaching supports for maternity and adoptive leave to HR Managers at College and Central Unit levels.	Currently all staff coaching supports are offered by one staff members (SEFS HR Business Manager). These need to be devolved to College/central HR managers to ensure sustainability of coaching support model and provide easier access to such supports for staff.	Staff report increased satisfaction with management of maternity leave in staff surveys.	A new Maternity Coaching Service (launched 2020) is available to all staff and managers, delivered by 17 trained and accredited peer coaches, including individuals with personal experience of taking maternity leave in UCC. Transitions to/from leave are covered by all coaches. The Coaching Service won UCC's Frank McGrath Perpetual Award for Wellbeing & Welfare (2024). 6 HR Business Managers also provide local support and guidance to both managers and staff across the university. SAP Action 2.4.20 commits further support for staff taking maternity leave.	AMBER
5.5.4	Revise and update the University's Guidelines to Support Pregnant Students.	The new EDI Unit has provided a focal point for pregnant students to inform the University about the outdated nature of UCC's Pregnant Student Guidelines (last revised 2011).	New guidelines circulated to all relevant academic and student-facing departments with briefing sessions and brief visual guide.	Policy with EDI Policy Review group for review; anticipated launch of new guidelines: Q3 2025: SAP Action 2.4.33.	AMBER
5.5.5	Audit all Family Friendly policies from an LGBT+ perspective to ensure that same-sex parenting, non-binary and transgender experiences are recognised.	Staff consultation (including with LGBT+ Staff Network) identified the need to audit Family Friendly policies from an LGBT+ perspective, in light of the University's new (2018) GIEPG and proposed Equality Impact Assessment in University Policy Framework Document.	All existing Family Friendly Policies and Guidelines revised and new Policies and Guidelines written in line with GIEPG and Equality Impact Assessment in University Policy Framework Document.	EDI Policy Review Group (convened 2023) includes LGBT+ Staff Network representative ensuring LGBT+ perspective informs EDI policies (developed or planned) relating to foster care, surrogacy, IVF treatment, supporting pregnant students, gender identity & expression. The new ULT EDI Subcommittee LGBTQI+ Working Group will oversee the development of a dedicated LGBT+ Action Plan in line with EDI Framework commitment. SAP Action 2.4.15	AMBER
5.5.6	Assess the impact of the requirement for 26 weeks continuous service to be eligible for paid UCC maternity leave.	A review of practice in Irish HEIs shows the requirement for 26 weeks service for eligibility for paid maternity leave is not uniform. The potential negative impacts of this requirement on staff who are newly employed need to be assessed.	Recommendation to revise/retain minimum eligibility periods adopted by University.	There is no longer a service requirement for access to paid maternity leave in UCC. The requirement for 26 weeks continuous service for was removed by ULT decision (2021).	GREEN

No.	Description of Action	Rationale	Success criteria and Outcomes	Progress Update/Key Outcomes - Success Measures/Impact	SAT RAG Assessment
5.5.7	Provide fully costed cover for maternity/adoptive leave for academic staff, using a centrally ringfenced budget and a minimum standard of cover (6 month min. contract at min. LB/B grade). Create fast-track centralised recruitment process for maternity leave cover.	Only 37% of staff survey respondents reported their roles were covered during maternity/adoptive leave. 36% of academic respondents reported working during leave. Staff consultation shows staff work more before/after leave to 'compensate' for their absence. Line managers report challenges in organising timely cover in a timely way.	(1) 100% cover guaranteed for academic maternity leave by Sept 2023 through ringfenced budget. (2) Recruitment track established to fast-track maternity cover across all staff categories.	HR approves all maternity leave replacement requests. Academic maternity backfill posts are filled at Lecturer B/B level at a minimum. To facilitate timely appointment of cover, HR prioritises recruitment to academic posts, and when necessary, makes out-of-competition appointments. The Head of School/Unit assesses the requirements of the department/unit over the period of leave in consultation with the staff member concerned. Options available to the Head include: • Re-evaluation of the workload and the timing of delivery • Part-time Hourly Occasional teaching support for academic staff • Reassignment or reallocation of key duties • Part or fulltime replacement at a different grade • Internal opportunity for skills development for staff SAP Action 2.4.20 will monitor the use of hourly paid cover for academic maternity leave with a view to reducing inappropriate or excessive reliance.	AMBER
5.5.8	Implement a Family Leave Planning Template to facilitate individualised pre- and post-leave workload review and to plan transition from and return to work.	20% of 2018 staff survey respondents reported dissatisfaction with how their maternity leave was managed.	Satisfaction rates regarding support with leave increase in 2018 and 2020 Staff Equality Surveys.	A Comprehensive Guide for Managers to Maternity & Paternity at UCC includes detailed information and guidelines and a checklist (planning leave and return) for managers of employees before, during and on return from leave, including information on KIT days, supporting workplace return, parking for pregnant employees, grant (up to 5k) for returning academics, breastfeeding, and information on supports for parents at work, including Maternity Connection, Maternity Coaching. Individualised support is available through UCC Maternity Coaching Service. SAP Action 2.4.20 offers new Managers' Insights Hub training sessions for managers, focussing specifically on supporting staff prior to, during and on return from maternity leave.	AMBER

No.	Description of Action	Rationale	Success criteria and Outcomes	Progress Update/Key Outcomes - Success Measures/Impact	SAT RAG Assessment
5.5.9	Conduct an Equality Space audit to assess (1) adequacy of current main campus facilities for breastfeeding/expressing/baby changing, (2) adequacy of spaces for daily prayer; (3) physical accessibility of facilities from a disability perspective.	(i) 88% of 2018 Staff survey respondents reported no special provision made on return from maternity/adoptive leave. (ii) The Race Equality Subgroup of UCC Equality Committee identified shortcomings with the suitability of facilities for prayer/religious observation. (iii) UCC Equality Committee identified the need to move beyond adherence to minimum legal standards in relation to physical building/facility accessibility.	Upgraded and expanded facilities completed by December 2023.	(i) All existing breastfeeding/ expressing/ baby changing facilities visited, university maps updated. (ii) Following a request by the Jewish, Islamic and Christian Union Societies, facilitated by UCC Chaplaincy, a new, centrally located Multi-Faith Prayer and Meditation space (available to all staff and students) is now available (2024). SAP Action 2.4.13 will deliver a full equality space audit of main campus buildings.	AMBER
5.5.10	Build on the Academic Returners' Grant Scheme by establishing a pilot Researcher Maternity/Adoptive Leave Returners' Grant in CACSSS and CoBL.	Lower maternity return rate for researchers. Focus groups indicate the greater vulnerability of research staff returning from leave.	1-year pilot in CACSSS, COBL offering grant of up to €3k to researchers returning from maternity leave. Impact assessment on completion and expansion of pilot if positive impact demonstrated.	Pilot delayed during/following pandemic. A commitment to fund the pilot is secured: SAP 2.4.20 .	AMBER
5.5.12	Develop a new Flexible Working Policy and guidelines to facilitate flexible work requests. Incorporate all existing schemes, following a review of the current Flexible Working Hours policy for Professional Support Staff and an equality audit of the Reduced Working Week and Unpaid Leave schemes.	Uptake of formal flexible working arrangements is low. Awareness of entitlements and transparency of practice regarding Reduced Working Week, Unpaid Leave and Flexible Working is required to ensure gender equality in University's largely informal academic and professional flexible work arrangements.	(1) New policy and Guidance available on HR website. (2) Policy and Guidance issued directly to all managers; (3) Annual policy briefing for all managers conducted.	Following the easing of Covid-19 restrictions, a pilot blended working policy launched in February 2022, governing remote working. This will be replaced (2025) by a new Work-Life Balance Policy on the Right to Request Flexible Working ("WLB Policy"). This implements new statutory rights for (i) certain parents/carers to request flexible working (Parental Leave Acts); and (ii) for all employees to request remote working (Work Life Balance Act). SAP Actions 2.4.9, 2.4.10 .	AMBER
5.5.13	Explore the feasibility of expanding reduced rate preschool childcare places for staff.	Only 15% of 2018 Staff survey respondents with young children availed of UCC crèche. Staff focus groups indicate significant unmet demand. Greater access would support more staff to return to work/maintain a full workload.	Feasibility of expanding reduced rate childcare places to staff revisited annually as part of review of Strategic Plan (attracting and retaining the best staff).	The feasibility of expanding reduced rate childcare places to staff is revisited annually, though no opportunities yet identified due to impacts of pandemic and financial constraints post-pandemic.	GREEN

No.	Description of Action	Rationale	Success criteria and Outcomes	Progress Update/Key Outcomes - Success Measures/Impact	SAT RAG Assessment
5.5.14	Establish a Carers' Support Network.	The Flexible Working and Leave WG identified the need for greater peer support, information sharing and mentoring for staff with caring (including parenting) responsibilities.	Carers' Network established and develops a University profile raising awareness of supports available and needed, through its own activities (meetings, speakers) and representation on UCC Equality Committee.	Carers' Network launched (2024) by UCC President; dedicated budget and EDI Unit support allocated. Carers' Network representative to join ULT EDI Committee. Network launch builds on UCC Carers' Week (2023) and 2024 annual President's Athena SWAN Symposium (theme: Caring, in context of referendum on Constitution Article 41).	SILVER
5.6.1	Designate Equality and Access Links across all Schools/units, and University Management Team Equality Champions for each of the Equal Status Grounds.	Staff consultation supports the designation of local equality liaisons to support (1) sharing of good practice (2) raising awareness of Athena SWAN charter (3) highlighting local issues with Heads/management and (4) to act as a support referral point for staff and students.	All Schools and professional domains have a designated Equality and Access Link by 2022, with 6-monthly meetings and succession plan for spreading the role and related training to other staff (4-year maximum role).	As part of new EDI/AS governance overhaul (2024), Associate Vice-Deans for EDI will be appointed in each College (2 in place already) (SAP Action 1.2.7). 1 dedicated College AS Support Officer is in place (2024); 3 more to be appointed (SAP Action 1.2.8).	AMBER
5.6.2	Review UCC's Duty of Respect and Right to Dignity (DRRD) Policy . Develop user-friendly policy guidelines. Nominate first responders and Dignity at Work advisors.	Survey data indicates 14% of female staff respondents and 12% of female student respondents experienced sexual harassment. 27% of female staff and 17% of male staff reported experiencing identity-based bullying, with gender, age, contract status and race/ethnicity the most commonly claimed bases of bullying.	(1) Clearer communication of high expectations regarding local and institutional responses to sexual harassment and identity-based bullying. (2) Reduction in the incidence of sexual harassment and identity-based bullying reported in staff surveys.	New Dignity at Work policy launched (2020) . HR offers regular policy briefings to managers and staff. UCC Staff Support Tree signposts supports. Speak Out Anonymous Reporting Tool launched (2021). Among 2024 Staff Survey respondents, 2% of F (n=12) and 2% of M (n=7) reported experiencing workplace sexual violence or harassment in the prior 12 months. 20% of F respondents (n=156) and 14% of M (n=59) reported experiencing bullying/harassment in the prior 12 months. Among 2024 Student Survey respondents, 14% of F (n=26) and 5% of M (n=5) reported experiencing sexual violence or harassment while at UCC. 17% of F student respondents (n=34) and 20% of M (n=22) reported experiencing discrimination/unfair treatment. SAP Actions 2.4.1-5 plan an ambitious suite of actions to create a zero-tolerance culture towards bullying and harassment in UCC.	AMBER
5.6.3	Implement anonymous Report & Support tool to monitor prevalence of sexual and identity-based bullying in UCC .	Staff/student consultation indicate low reporting rates among those reporting experiences of bullying/harassment, suggesting low confidence in systems/supports. HEA 'Consent Framework' (2019) promotes reporting tools to monitor prevalence, encourage disclosure.	Report and Support tool provides University with a map of prevalence of harassment and bullying, creating evidence base for targeted initiatives and decision-making.	Speak Out reporting tool launched 2021 , providing a platform for students and staff to voluntarily and anonymously report incidents of bullying, harassment, discrimination, assault, sexual harassment/violence etc. The dedicated Speak Out campaign launched 2022 and is re-issued quarterly . Staff survey data shows increased awareness of how to report bullying and harassment 47%F:53%M (2022) to 56%F:56%M (2024) SAP Actions 2.4.1 – 2.4.5 will build on this progress.	GREEN

No.	Description of Action	Rationale	Success criteria and Outcomes	Progress Update/Key Outcomes - Success Measures/Impact	SAT RAG Assessment
5.6.5	Revise AC, AB, UMT, UMTS and Finance Committee terms of reference to require minimum 40% min. representation of the underrepresented gender.	Positive change in gender representation in these committees needs to be embedded by writing 40% minimum male and female representation requirement into their terms of reference.	AB, AC, UMTS, UMT and Finance Committee terms of reference redrafted to include minimum 40% male and female representation by September 2023.	All targets met/exceeded: - Academic Council is now 39% F (2024)(increase from 31%F (2018)). - Academic Board is now 54%F (2024) (increase from 37%F (2018)). - Reformed University Leadership Team (formerly University Management Team (Strategy and Operational)) is 40%F (2024) (increase from 32%F (UMT, 2018)). - Reformed GA Finance Oversight Planning & Resource Allocation Committee is now 57%F (2024) (increase from 13%F (GB Finance Ctte, 2018)). - ULT gender balance currently 40%F SAP Action 2.1.4 will amend AB TOR to guarantee a minimum 40% gender balance.	AMBER
5.6.6	Publish guidance on Inclusive Committee and Meeting Conduct.	Staff consultation suggests room to improve culture/practices regarding the conduct, timing, workload and representativeness of committees (including, e.g. inclusive chairing practices, core meeting hours, avoiding committee overload).	Increases in proportion of staff surveyed in 2020 and 2022 who agree that committees are chaired and managed in an inclusive manner.	Toolkits for Inclusive Committee and Meeting Conduct (BAP 5.6.6) were published in 2022 to highlight best practices in committee formation, meeting times, inclusive chairing practices, etc Data measures: Among 2024 EDI Survey respondents, 41%F and 54%M respondents agree gender and diversity are considered by senior management when forming committees (increased from F=41%/M=54% (2022)). SAP Actions 2.1.7, 2.4.11 will build on this progress.	GREEN
5.6.7	Insert Equality Impact Assessment heading into University Policy Framework Document to formalise ongoing review and analysis of how new/ revised policies impact on various staff student groups by equality ground (age, race, gender, religion, etc.)	Staff equality survey and focus groups indicate the need to embed a systematic focus on different equality grounds when developing and reviewing policy so that there are no gaps in University approaches to any issue from an equality perspective.	Equality Impact Assessment included in all new policies developed and reviewed from Jan 2021 onward.	The University Policy Framework Document is not consistently applied in practice, and therefore plans to integrate equality impact assessments did not progress.	RED
5.6.8	Expand PDRS and researcher Professional Development Plan templates & guidelines to explicitly address workload, work/life balance.	PDRS and PDP schemes do not promote discussion of workload or work/life balance. 60% of Staff Equality Survey respondents reported feeling facilitated to achieve a reasonable work/life balance, with workload allocated transparently.	80% of staff Survey respondents report satisfaction with work/life balance	PDRS was suspended during the pandemic. A review of the system is planned and will integrate the discussion of workload management and work-life balance. SAP Action 2.2.15 Data measures: Survey data shows improved staff satisfaction with work life balance (62% satisfied (2024) vs. 54% (2022)); more staff also report they would feel comfortable discussing work life balance with their line manager (63% (2024 vs. 60% (2022)).	AMBER

No.	Description of Action	Rationale	Success criteria and Outcomes	Progress Update/Key Outcomes - Success Measures/Impact	SAT RAG Assessment
5.6.9	Devise Inclusive Event Guidelines for planning UCC conferences, keynotes, workshops, seminars etc.	28% of female staff survey respondents disagreed that conferences feature diverse speakers. Inclusive Event Guidelines will promote mainstreaming equality in planning events, including w/r/t speaker panels, student and ECR supports, format, catering, accessibility.	(1) Inclusive Event Guidelines published on UCC website. (2) Staff Equality Survey shows increase in proportions of respondents agreeing that inclusion informs planning of UCC conferences.	An Inclusive Events Toolkit (BAP 5.6.9) was launched in 2023 Survey data shows improved perceptions of consideration of diversity in planning conferences/seminars (10%F disagreed that diversity is considered (2024), compared to 28%F (2018)).	GREEN
5.6.11	Establish dedicated resource in each College to support School SAT Chairs working on AS applications (in line with upscaling for Silver institutional application).	5 Schools hold Bronze awards (Nov 19). Consultation with UCC SAT Chairs identified the need to incentivise more Schools to apply for AS by offering institutional support.	Target of 14 Schools (incl. Tyndall) with Athena SWAN Bronze Award and 1 School with a Silver Award by October 2023.	Target exceeded with 17 UCC Schools holding bronze AS awards . 2 Schools plan 2025 Silver applications. A €3,000 grant for first-time applicants launched 2021; this is now offered to all applicants (€2,000). As part of new EDI/AS governance overhaul (2024), Associate Vice-Deans for EDI will be appointed in each College: SAP Action 1.2.7. 1 dedicated College AS Support Officer is in place (2024); 3 more to be appointed: SAP Action 1.2.8 .	AMBER
5.6.12	Develop an Athena SWAN/Equality Data Infrastructure as part of UCC's Enterprise Data Strategy Project. Establish permanent Equality Data Analyst role.	School SATs need earlier data delivery to facilitate self-assessment. This action supports the automation of equality data capture and monitoring, and the expansion of equality data monitoring to include a range of equality grounds, across a wider range of institutional activities/processes.	(1) Accelerated, direct SAT access to high quality Athena SWAN data. (2) UCC EDI Action Plan informed by annual equality monitoring of staff/student data, with reporting to UMT, from 2021.	Target achieved. Permanent Equality Data Analyst appointed (2022). Since 2022, the AS Gender Analytics dashboard (via UCC Data Hub) available to all SATs (with instant access to live data on staff/student headcount by gender, staff category, and degree). EDI Data Analyst now has access to MicroStrategy AS reporting, allowing for accelerated production of high-quality data reports tailored for specific AS requirements. EDI Data Analyst has full access to 90% of live data needed for AS/EDI reporting. SAP Action 1.2.10 will build on this progress.	SILVER
6.1	Create a Standard Operating Procedure for change of staff records under the Gender Identity and Expression Policy.	A Standard Operating Procedure exists for student change of records. Current, informal arrangement for staff change of records needs to be standardised.	Consultation with transgender and non-binary staff members confirms they feel included and supported by GIEP policy and processes.	SOP for changing staff records commenced but delayed due to departure of key staff in TENI/UCC. SAP Action 2.4.7 will continue this work.	AMBER
6.2	Review UCC's Gender Identity and Expression Policy and Guidelines.	In light of the sensitivity of this policy and the changing cultural context around it, a review is planned for 4 years post-launch to evaluate its effectiveness and update as needed.	Agreed policy amendments are incorporated as necessary in 2023 revision of Policy and Guidelines and approved by relevant University bodies.	Review underway. Lessons learned will be integrated into a new resource for colleagues transitioning and their colleagues/ managers: SAP Action 2.4.8.	AMBER