**University of Edinburgh Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2024**

The University of Edinburgh espouses a culture that promotes dignity, respect and inclusion and has a zero-tolerance approach to any form of discrimination.

Gender equality is key to ensuring that opportunity and access to opportunities is not different depending on your sex or gender. The Equalities Act 2010 requires employers to eliminate discrimination on the basis of sex, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment, together with the gendered dimensions of other categories: age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion and belief and sexual orientation.

This action plan is embedded within the overarching strategy of the University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committee which works to mainstream all aspects of equality and takes a holistic and intersectional approach to ensuring equal opportunity and access to opportunity irrespective of protected characteristics and intersections with socio-economic status. This action plan supplements actions from EDIC that ensure appropriate recognition and reward of all EDI-related work, as well as incorporation of EDI leadership within the governance structures. The objectives in this gender equality action plan take into account the specific needs and responsibilities of women, non-binary and gender diverse people as well as gendered dimensions of other categories, listed above.

This action plan supplements and extends the Institutional Athena SWAN action plan, 2018-2022.

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| **University of Edinburgh Gender Equality Subcommittee: Action Plan 2021-2024** | | | | |
| **Actions** | **How?** | **Responsibility** | **Timescale** | **Success measure** |
| **Objective A: Mainstream gender equality awareness and initiatives across the University to promote an inclusive culture** | | | | |
| 1. Cement gender equality in UoE/ College priorities and in governance arrangements | Maintain prominence of gender equality initiatives and commitment to intersectionality at UoE through maintained awareness and continued commitment to the Athena SWAN Charter or a Sector-wide equivalent:  - Identify key/priority objectives of the UoE Athena SWAN silver Action Plan 2018-2023 and oversee delivery  - Compile and submit an application, if appropriate, to renew the UoE Athena SWAN silver award (or equivalent), including development of an Action Plan for 2023-2028 | Lead, GE sub-committee of EDIC | April 2023 | Objectives accomplished or reasons for deviating from 2018-2023 plan identified and justified.  Application, if appropriate, for renewal of silver award is successful |
| Develop exemplars of excellence for leadership in gender and intersectional equality and other roles which may disproportionately fall to women, for promotions/regrading criteria, partnering with appropriate networks/projects eg genderED, RaceED, the Evidence Base project, and including research projects investigating gender disparity in REF2021. Establish how this will be monitored. | Colleges  Schools  HR | By end 2023 | Completed |
| Use evidence to monitor progress in Colleges/Schools and PS groups towards gender equality, impact of initiatives, and to inform future actions: Colleges and PSS groups to review data relating to gender in annual EDMARC data as well as gender/ gender identity of those responsible for leadership roles in EDI-related activities. Report on any gendered findings from Survey data.  A working group of up to 5 members of the EDIC gender sub-committee with others co-opted if appropriate, to scrutinise annual reports and data (including EDMARC data) from Colleges/PS groups (with 5 year trends) and provide feedback, assess progress and identify areas of priority for future Institution-wide actions. | EDMARC, Schools, Colleges and PSS groups, Gender Equality sub-committee and a subgroup of Gender Equality Committee | On an annual basis, from 2022 | Annual reports submitted, scrutinised and feedback provided, from 2022. Actions taken to address gender inequalities identified. |
| University KPIs to routinely include data on gender/sex, and intersectional dimensions where data allow. Monitor and publish gender/sex diversity in key University decision-making committees. | Strategic Planning | From 2022 | Gender becomes a routine part of committee decision making |
| Ensure that questions relevant to gender equality and intersectionality are included in periodic University surveys. | University Lead, EDI | From 2022 | Data from survey useful in informing decision making down to at least School level |
| Court to consider evaluation of its approach to gender equality, including recruitment and induction processes, mentoring of new members and developing literacy in gender equality. | Court Services | From 2022 | Court members have a good understanding and are appropriately briefed on gender equality |
| 2. Ensure that actions to ‘decolonise’ the curriculum include gender perspectives | Work with the Race Equality and Anti-Racism sub-committee of EDIC and with the Curriculum Transformation Programme to review curriculum development and toolkits to ensure that curricula are inclusive of sex/ gender. | IAD with College groups, Curriculum Transformation Programme | From 2022 | School audit findings and Student feedback (surveys, class reps) to reflect better consideration of gender equality |
| 3. Foster a culture of respect for gender equality and zero tolerance of harassment and discrimination | As part of induction and an introduction to the University, all staff and students to be given clear messages about joining a University with a clear zero-tolerance culture of discrimination, harassment and gender-based violence. Promote the ‘Do not be a bystander’ initiative. | Student experience, CAM | From 2021/22 academic year | Evaluation via feedback and other research to show positive change in attitude and also feelings of support and belonging |
| 4. Maintain prominence of gender equality initiatives across the University and their integration into the work of the gender equality sub-committee | One of the staff co-convenors of the GE sub-committee of EDIC will attend Athena SWAN network meetings to maintain flow of information between this committee and relevant School-level groups. The Athena SWAN network lead is a member of the GE sub-committee and reports on AS network activities. | Leads, GE sub-committee of EDIC; AS network lead | With immediate effect | Feedback from AS network is positive and members feel included (assessed annually) |
| Support School Athena SWAN (or equivalent) submissions through the Athena SWAN network and availability of resources (eg sharing of applications, feedback from AS panels, initiatives developed, advice on external sources of training and support such as coaching programmes), advice and internal review of applications. Schools/submitting units to share AS panel feedback as a way of identifying University-wide problems and supporting other Schools in their submissions. | AS network, HR | Some ongoing, formalise from 2022 | Feedback from AS network is positive and members feel supported in their role (assessed annually) |
| GenderED and other relevant partner groups to cascade news and event round-ups via the Gender Equality Committee and to disseminate more widely via the UoE and College comms teams. | CAM with genderED input | From 2022 | Assess via University survey (I am kept informed ...) |
| Working with LGBT+ sub-committee, consider UoE commitment to Charters that emphasise institutional commitment to trans, non-binary and gender diverse equality and inclusion. | The Convenors of this committee with University Lead, EDI | Ongoing | The University has a reasoned case for commitment to (or otherwise) of Charters |
| 5. Ensure that leadership reflects what we want to achieve in gender equality | Succession planning and balance for the EDIC Gender Equality sub-committee, exemplifying collaborative and gender-inclusive leadership: Appoint 2 staff co-convenors, normally of different sex or gender identity with one academic staff and one PSS, to serve overlapping terms to ensure future continuity of actions. Give consideration to diverse career stages. Appoint a student co-convenor to exemplify partnership and provide development opportunities. | Leads, GE sub-committee of EDIC; University lead for EDI | From 2021 | Leadership of GE is diverse and inclusive |
| Ensure that Court EDI updates include the work of the Gender Equality sub-committee of EDIC and its partners (eg. GenderED, Evidence Base). | University Lead, EDI; Leads of the GE sub-committee of EDIC | From 2022 | Court are informed on progress of priority actions from the GE sub-committee |
| Explore the reasons why women remain under-represented in leadership roles, including as Head of School (this has remained unchanged at around 1/3 women and 2/3 men for the last several years). Consider findings from the ‘Evidence Base’ project and if necessary, commission further research. Define the attributes and the skill set required for appointment to leadership roles and barriers to women and to members of minority groups. Implement actions to address barriers identified: eg Develop and pilot a mechanism to address gender imbalance in Heads of School roles such as trialling an “acting-up” scheme for future/potential Heads of School that is open to women and non-binary people, with clear monitoring and review of participants’ engagement. | Evidence Base;  IAD  [Likely to require further resource; consider research funding] | 2021-2024 | New actions and processes trialled or in place to increase diversity of HoS. A move towards gender parity.  Achievement of equality outcomes set, for example, in the UoE strategic plan and in KPIs (see A1, above) |
| 6. Ensure an accessible and easy to find source of information relating to gender equality | Monitor and update gender equality sections of EDI webpages and annually review links. Include prominent signposting to sources of help and support.Links to include:   * Report and Support (gender based violence), including for victims of transphobic violence, which links to support and advice resources * Equally Safe toolkit * Trade union support for gender equality/EDI * Staff Pride Network, student PrideSoc * student Wellbeing * Information relating to parenthood (policies, guidance, maternity leave toolkit, information for managers) * Relevant HR policies; Dignity and Respect, Trans Equality Policy * Family friendly resources and policies (nursery/childcare provision, relevant HR policies); links to local (ie College/School) information, information for student parents and carers * IAD resources, including newly developed Research Staff Hub, resources to tackle microaggressions * Research and other resources e.g. research by genderED, Evidence Base; resources such as EqualBITE, the Inspiring Women web pages, and [Voices from the Early Days](https://www.gender.ed.ac.uk/early-days/) (a genderED oral history project on the women - and some men - who pioneered gender studies at Edinburgh) | HR, CAM | Underway | Greater use (clicks through) of webpages.  Student and staff surveys, feedback (from staff and student networks) and qualitative research to indicate an improvement in feelings of support. |
| **B. Promote a positive culture that is supportive and inclusive of all genders** | | | | |
| 1. Enhance the visibility of role models | Ensure we celebrate gender equality-related dates in the Equality Calendar. Work with staff and student networks, genderED, EUSA and UoE/College comms team support to include and promote relevant events. | UoE and College Comms teams | Ongoing | Events are seamlessly and timely promoted across UoE/College/School comms |
| Continue and build on ‘editathons’ for disciplines in which women and other minority gender groups (non-binary people, trans men) are under-represented with focus on an intersectional approach. | ISG | Ongoing | Maintain or increase number of participants at Editathons, indicating good engagement with EDI |
| 2. Ensure that actions to promote a positive research culture are “joined up” with gender equality initiatives | Include an annual report/presentation on Research Cultures to the Gender Equality Committee | UoE academic lead for Research Integrity and IAD lead for researcher development | From 2022 | Good practice is shared between RCWG and GE sub-committee, with actions "joined up" |
| Include appropriate representation from IAD on the Gender Equality sub-committee of EDIC (from researcher development). |
| Support line managers through provision and requirement for training. All Schools to provide new line managers with a check-list of mandatory and recommended training (eg. Mandatory: Managing Your [Research] Team and recommended: Draw-the-line; Difficult Conversations; Giving Positive Feedback and other relevant training and resources, including genderED's [Doing Gender Sensitive research](https://www.gender.ed.ac.uk/gender-sensitive-research/improving-research/) tools). | HR  Schools | From 2022 | All Managers have undertaken essential training to enable them to perform their roles. Training becomes part of the culture of professionalism and an expectation. |
| 3. Provide effective policies and processes that make clear that gender-based violence is unacceptable and that enable survivors to feel supported. | Review Gender-Based Violence and Harassment and Sexual Violence work to ensure this work is not stalled or down-graded and that it includes all forms of gender-based violence and harassment including against trans and non-binary people.   * Ensure the University provides adequate resources to implement its policies * Ensure timely roll out of report and support platform with effective resourcing of 'support' * Promote implementation of training and processes through effective communication and monitoring of training, support available and Report and Support platform (appropriate College and School committees, L&T staff, postgraduate contacts, EUSA and networks) * A trained disclosure manager identified to staff and students in each School * All personal tutors and supervisors of students to complete disclosure training * Active bystander training to be part of the EDI package of training for all staff and students * Evaluate training and processes for efficacy and impact. | Student Experience/ HR/ Schools/ CAM/ EUSA  Resource will need to be identified for any evaluation. | With immediate effect | Greater measure of support and awareness of GBV, consent, and being an active bystander, amongst the student and staff bodies (via evaluation, surveys, qualitative research), including student wellbeing teams. Evidence that training has shifted attitude to consent and GBV amongst staff and students  More usage of the Report and Support and Equally Safe webpages (clicks/visits to). |
| Work with the student wellbeing team to promote initiatives that support actions against GBV:   * Add the annual white ribbon day to the equality calendar and promote the campaign to staff and students) * Annual **#NoExcuse** campaign, as part of the equality calendar, to encourage all to take collective responsibility for ending GBV and harassment on campus and elsewhere * Enact relevant policies and sign the Emily Test Charter (GBV). | Student Experience/ EUSA/ CAM |  |
| Pre-arrival or during-matriculation training in 'consent matters' to be introduced for all undergraduate and postgraduate taught students, with signposting to Report and Support, Equally Safe toolkit etc, ensuring all students are aware of how to access relevant support and information. Review after trial period with view to it becoming mandatory. | Student Experience |  |
| Schools to work with EUSA to introduce face-to-face workshops on 'consent' and being an active bystander for undergraduate students, eg. utilising EUSA 'train the trainer' bystander training. | Schools with EUSA |  |
| Explore options/development of guidance (for managers, L&T staff) to support student sex workers, as part of the Equally Safe strategy. | EUSA, Student Wellbeing/Sexual violence and harassment liaison manager |  |
| Develop a resource to counter sexism, to be similar to the microaggression resources already developed by IAD. | IAD |  |
| 4. Work with the LGBT+ sub-committee of EDIC to provide a supportive and enabling environment for trans/non-binary staff and students | With LGBT+ sub-committee, review trans/non-binary gender inclusion policies in consultation with relevant staff and student bodies. | Subgroups of GE and LGBT+ sub-committees, HR,  Staff and student networks | 2022 | Positive feedback from relevant staff and student networks |
| Review toilet provision across the University estate, with a view to ensuring gender-neutral toilets are available in all buildings, with clear signage to their location. 'Period products for all' to be available in all gender-neutral toilets (as a minimum for period product provision). | Estates | From 2022 | Gender neutral toilets are universally available |
| Review changing room provisions within the University sports and exercise facilities, with a view to ensuring gender-neutral changing rooms are available in all sports and exercise facilities in addition to single-sex spaces, with clear signage to their location. | Estates | From 2022 | Gender neutral changing rooms/facilities are available and used in all sports and exercise facilities |
| Review whether there is a need to modify student data capturing systems to include questions that capture gender identity in a manner that allows impact on trans/non-binary students to be assessed anonymously, in a similar way to that already in place for staff. | Student Administration | 2022 | Identify whether there is a possibility to obtain more granular data to inform future GE actions |
| Provide resources, training and guidance for managers and L&T staff in trans and non-binary awareness. Ensure a consistent approach across the University in providing clarity on support for international staff and students, with examples of scenarios that might arise, eg. ‘supporting a trans student on a visa’, ‘employing a non-binary person in your lab’. | HR/IAD/Staff Pride Network | From 2022 | Trans/non-binary staff and student feedback indicates greater feelings of belonging and support (eg via University wide surveys including Principal's survey) |
| Communicate to staff and students where they can find facilities and support for trans/non-binary people. | CAM/ HR/ Estates/ staff and student networks/ College and School EDIC | From 2022 |
| 6. Increase awareness amongst staff of endometriosis, menopause, pregnancy and other conditions that only affect certain individuals; provide resources for managers to support staff and students reporting their condition, including links from EDI webpages (see A[8] above) | Review existing UoE policies/guidance on Absence and Sickness, Wellbeing, Diversity and Inclusion for content covering menopause, endometriosis, pregnancy and maternity/parenthood and other conditions associated with reproduction and ensure they are linked from the EDI webpages. | HR | From 2022 | Greater year on year use of webpages devoted to topics associated with reproduction (visits/clicks) |
| Provide guidance for line managers in how to support staff going through menopause or with conditions such as endometriosis. Incorporate awareness-raising information on pregnancy and maternity/parenthood, menopause and endometriosis into training initiatives such as "managing your research team' for line managers. | HR/Schools  IAD |  |
| 7. Increase visibility/discoverability of, and provide signposting to, gender-related resources to ‘enable’ and support staff and students | Promote [genderEd](https://www.gender.ed.ac.uk/) as a hub for UoE work on teaching, research and knowledge exchange on matters of gender. Promote the EqualBITE resource across the University and monitor uptake. | This committee, CAM, GenderED, IAD, | From 2021 | Greater internal use of genderEd website and EqualBITE (visits/clicks/downloads) |
| Include information on resources that promote and facilitate gender equality in Leadership/Management training for PIs and other staff; eg. resources developed by genderED to support [integration of gender equality into 'Global Challenges Research Fund' research](https://www.gender.ed.ac.uk/gender-sensitive-research/improving-research/). Work with IAD to disseminate. | IAD, genderED | From 2021, and incorporate into all new offerings | Greater satisfaction measured by relevant questions in Principal's survey. Better GE at senior positions and reflected in UoE staff and student data |
| **C. Provision and support for parents and carers of all genders** | | | | |
| 1. Enhance accessibility to affordable and flexible high-quality child-care for staff and students | Conduct a strategic review of child-care provision across the University estate, to include BioQuarter and Central campus as priorities. Consider creche facilities, after school and holiday care. Consider the EDI implications of any restrictions placed by UoE workplace nursery providers (eg whether preference is given to full time places over part time). | Corporate Services Group | 2022 | Staff and student parents feel better supported in child-care provision, measured by feedback (eg EDI committees) and surveys |
| Extend the salary-sacrifice scheme to include private nurseries, as is the case at other Universities. |
| Make the government-funded Childcare Fund application more streamlined and transparent. Introduce bursaries to help pay for childcare/creche facilities for student parents who are ineligible for the childcare fund (eg. PhD, non-UK, part-time students). | Student experience group | From 2022 | Student parent feedback that they feel better supported |
| 2. Increase uptake of shared parental leave and other family friendly policies | Work with HR and Athena SWAN network to increase awareness of family friendly policies that are less well known, including shared parental leave, parental leave, time off for dependents, adoption/surrogacy leave, through School/College/campus-based/on-line briefings and Q&A sessions. | HR, Athena SWAN network |  | Increased uptake of shared parental leave and leave arising from other family friendly policies above current levels within 3 years. |
| Provide separate one-stop guides to maternity/partner/parental leave for managers and supervisors of students: flow diagram for managers of staff to explain how maternity/partner/parental leave is managed and financed, including arrangements from different research funders (who cover, or do not cover, costs of maternity/partner/parental leave). Develop similar flow diagram for supervisors of postgraduate research students and Learning & Teaching staff. | College Research Support Offices (for research staff) with College HR (for PSS) | 2022 | Feedback (surveys, training courses eg Managing Your Research Team) to show staff are confident in managing maternity/parental/partner leave arrangements. |
| 3. Ensure that staff and students who take maternity/parental leave are supported in their return to work | Review and implement the recommendations of the thematic review on Support for Mature Students and Student Parents and Carers (2017-18). | Student experience group with GE sub-committee of EDIC | 2022 | Student and staff parent feedback that they feel better supported, including via Principal's and student surveys.  Year-on-year improvement in annual (and informal) feedback from AS network on provision and take up of shared parental leave and other provision for parents and carers |
| Develop a campus guide to relevant facilities, to include nursery and creche provision, facilities for breastfeeding and/or expressing/storing/heating breastmilk, baby-changing facilities, ‘parent-child’ spaces, toy areas. Use this to identify areas of poor provision and rectify. | Estates | 2022-23 |
| Apply for NHS Lothian accreditation as breast feeding friendly facilities for University catering facilities. | Estates | 2022-23 |
| For research staff and students, develop guidance for managers/supervisors on how to support staff and student parents and carers to attend conferences, networking and collaborative/travel opportunities. | IAD to incorporate into training. Schools to provide relevant local information | From 2021 |
| 4. Support undergraduate and PGT students who are parents or carers | Schools to provide a mechanism to facilitate liaison with student parents and carers, eg when there are particular difficulties that are ongoing (eg as happened with home schooling in 2020/2021). | Schools | 2022 | Student surveys and feedback to demonstrate greater satisfaction with support for mature students and those who are parents/ carers, enabling them to focus on their studies  Reduced numbers of student parents/ carers who drop out or complete late. |
| Ensure there is robust data collection on student parent/carer numbers (similar to data on mature students; EDMARC). Use to inform service improvement and to create a mailing list of student parents who can be emailed relevant correspondence relating to the student parent community. | Student systems, student experience | 2022 |
| Create a central University and/or EUSA webpage for student parents with clear signposting to information and resources. | Student experience with EUSA/student parent group | 2022 |
| Publicise Fair Assessment/ Help not hinder principles for student parents and carers; submission extensions for student parents/carers to be either automatic or opt-in/ opt-out, withdrawing the requirement for them to request extensions repeatedly. | Colleges, Schools | 2022 |
| Consider how to support placements for student parents/carers, eg. limiting the amount of travel time to less than the current position of 90 minutes each way by giving student parents and carers priority choice of placement before the general cohort. | Schools | 2022 |
| Develop a workshop for student parents and carers to help with managing multiple demands/adjusting to study. | IAD | From 2022 |
| **D.** **Career development and support of all categories of staff** | | | | |
| 1. Increase gender parity amongst staff in leadership positions and/or in senior grades | Address the gender pay gap: Use research from Evidence Base and Gender.ED, from research projects to investigate gender bias in REF2021 and commission further research as necessary to identify reasons for the persistence of the gender pay gap, including amongst PSS. Use this to inform future actions for this action plan. | Modelled on Evidence Base, led by IAD in consultation with Gender.ED, Athena SWAN network and GE sub-committee. | Dependent on funding resource | A significant reduction in the gender pay gap within 3 years of actions being put into place |
| Develop and promote the Edinburgh Leader programme (previously the Senior Leadership programme) and the newly developed Women of Colour programme; evaluate the impact on career progression. Use Positive action (eg dedicated provision) to encourage under-represented groups to participate in leadership training. | HR, IAD | Ongoing | Within 4 years, an increase in the proportion of Heads of School who are women with at least one a woman of colour. College and University Executive teams to be at least 40:60 split (ideally 50:50), between genders. |
| Each College/PS Group to support and finance at least 1 candidate per 2 years for the AdvanceHE Senior Women’s Leadership Development Programme. | Colleges, PS groups | From 2022 |
| 2. Monitor and mitigate against unequal impact of COVID-19 upon career development of staff, dependent upon gender being mindful that impact may not be fully apparent for many years | Add a section to Annual Review forms to capture information about impact of COVID-19 on staff, to inform line management and develop actions. Develop and promote guidance for managers in supporting staff who have been particularly negatively impacted. Provide information to staff on how the impact of COVID-19 has been mitigated through actions developed using stories to build trust and to build case studies with IAD and/or HR for wider circulation). | Colleges, Schools | 2022-2023 | Maintained and improved (where warranted) gender equality (based on EDMARC and College/School data) over the period of this action plan and beyond. Greater gender parity at higher grades for all job types. |
| Run an event around the genderED “[Care, Careers in Higher Education and Covid” project.](https://www.gender.ed.ac.uk/he-covid/) Aim to stimulate further research based on the existing sector-wide evidence base and the “Care, Careers in Higher Education and Covid” project to gain insight into effects of Covid-19 on different categories of staff (research, teaching, professional support). Examine UoE data to identify institution-wide actions to mitigate against long-term adverse impact upon gender equality. | genderED, IAD, GE sub-committee of EDIC  Research project will require funding | In 2022 |
| Work with organisations including AdvanceHE (eg guest speakers, exchange of information) to ensure we are implementing sector best practice in this area and to act as a critical friend to ensure that schemes designed to promote equality are proportionate and targeted for maximum leverage. | GE sub-committee of EDIC | From 2022 |