

Athena Swan Ireland Renewal Application: Institutions

Applicant information

Name of institution	Mary Immaculate College
Date of current application	3 January 2024
Level of previous award	Bronze
Date of previous award	2020
Contact name	Edel Foster
Contact email	Edel.foster@mic.ul.ie
Contact telephone	087 9959308

Section	Words used
Section 1: An overview of the institution and its Athena Swan work	3,463/2,500
Section 2: An evaluation of the institution's progress, opportunities and issues	8,907/4,500
Section 3: Action plan	N/A
Overall word count	12,370/7,000*
Additional Word Count Granted 4/10/2023	5,000
Additional Word Count Granted 14/11/2023	1,000
Revised Total Word Count	12,370/13,000

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

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Email no. 1 from Advance HE regarding word count extension, 4/10/23

Hi Edel

We have found that Bronze institutional renewal applications are in need of updating in terms of the word allowance. We are extending the word count for the application in line with what we gave to RCSI and Maynooth for their renewals – which is to 12000 words in total.

Best wishes

Sarah

Sarah Fink

Head of Athena Swan Ireland

Pronouns: She/her

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 **AdvanceHE**



Email no. 2 from Advance HE confirming word count extension, 14/10/23

Dear Edel

This email is to officially confirm an offer an additional 1000 words for the MIC bronze renewal application. We ask that you include this email in your application as evidence of the additional word count offer.

Best wishes

Athena Swan Ireland Team

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

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
AEG	Additional equality grounds
AS	Athena Swan
BA	Bachelor of Arts
CAO	Central Applications Office
CPD	Continuing professional development
DEIS	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools
EDI	Equality, diversity and inclusion
EDII	Equality, diversity, inclusion and interculturalism
ESVH	Ending Sexual Violence & Harassment
ET	Executive Team
F	Female
FTE	Full-time equivalent
G	Gender
GA	Governing Authority
GCAP	Graduate Certificate in Academic Practice
GPG	Gender Pay Gap
HEA	Higher Education Authority
HEIs	Higher education institutions
HR	Human Resources
IFUT	Irish Federation of University Teachers
IoG	Instrument of Government
LEAD	Learning Enhancement and Academic Development Centre
LINC	Leadership for Inclusion in the Early Years
M	Male
MA	Master of Arts
MIC	Mary Immaculate College
MISU	Mary Immaculate Students' Union
n	Number of respondents
NSR	National Student & Researcher
PATH	Programme for Access to Higher Education
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PL	Principal Lecturer
PMS	Professional, managerial and support (staff)
PTHP	Part-time hourly-paid
Q	Quarter

QMS	Quality management system
RGS	Research & Graduate School
SAT	Self-Assessment Team
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIG	Strategic Implementation Group
SL	Senior Lecturer
SMART	Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound
SVH	Sexual Violence & Harassment
SWY	Shorter Working Year
T	Total
TUS	University of the Shannon
UDL	Universal Design for Learning
UL	University of Limerick
VP	Vice President
WAM	Workload allocation model

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Section 1: An introduction to the institution's Athena Swan work

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

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

Recommended word count: 2,500 words

1. Letter of endorsement from the head of the institution

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

- + the link between the Athena Swan Ireland principles and the institutional strategy;
- + leadership of the head of institution in advancing equality, including any involvement in the self-assessment or specific actions;
- + evidence of how the institution's equality work is led and supported by the institution's senior management;
- + key priorities, achievements and challenges relating to gender equality as discerned from the self-assessment;
- + where relevant, key priorities, achievements and challenges relating to additional equality grounds, as discerned from the self-assessment;
- + priority actions to address the issues and opportunities identified.

Confirm the following:

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

Sarah Fink
Head of Athena Swan Ireland
3 Shelbourne Buildings
Crampton Avenue
Shelbourne Road
Ballsbridge
Dublin 4
Ireland D04 C2Y6

18 December 2023

Dear Ms Fink,

On behalf of Mary Immaculate College (MIC), I am delighted to submit the College's renewal application for our Athena Swan (AS) Bronze Award. I am deeply committed to the AS principles and to progressing and embedding gender equality at the College in management, academic and professional service functions.

MIC is a unique institution in the Irish higher education landscape. Founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1898, it is an autonomous, third-level College of Education and the Liberal Arts. Originally established for the education of primary school teachers, MIC is now one of the largest centres for teacher education in Ireland. In addition, we offer a suite of programmes in the liberal arts. Our student enrolments increased from 2,735 in 2009 to more than 5,000 in 2023, and we have expanded the number of undergraduate programmes from four to fifteen in the same period.

Since 2022, MIC has been engaged in a comprehensive dialogue with University of Limerick with a view to forming a new relationship based on closer structural alignment. If successful, the dialogue will have a significant bearing within the context of institutional governance with concomitant significance for the College's EDII strategy. It is anticipated that this will be very positive in terms of advancing the College's EDII and AS strategies.

Our application represents a critical self-reflection of the culture and progress at MIC and is the result of an extensive self-assessment process. This work was coordinated by our EDII Implementation Committee, which took on the role of the MIC Self-Assessment Team and was facilitated by the EDII Office. I acknowledge and thank those members for their diligence and exceptional teamwork. The AS process is a testament to the commitment and collegiality of a whole-institutional approach that engaged the entire staff and student community.

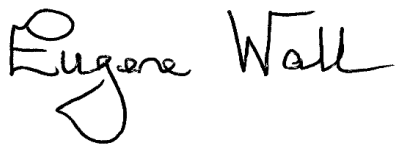
Our 2019–2023 Strategic Plan was ambitious, and despite the pandemic and post-pandemic periods, our commitment to AS and the actions set in 2019 was realised. Some of our achievements during the timeframe include the creation of a central MIC EDII Office; the appointment of the Director of EDII and a further three full-time employees; and the

development of the MIC EDII Strategic Plan, which aligns with the AS Action Plan 2019–2023 and Charter. Our 2023–2027 Action Plan highlights further areas where we will extend our work and commit to implementing change over the next four years.

My goal is to ensure that MIC is a diverse, welcoming and inclusive college for all and where equity of opportunity is embedded in all of our practices. We are ambitious and excited about our activities, and we look forward to submitting a Silver Award application in 2023/24.

The Action Plan has my full support and the support of the trustees, Governing Authority and Executive Team. I confirm that resources will be allocated to ensure the plan is effectively implemented.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eugene Wall". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "E".

Professor Eugene Wall
President

2. Description of the institution

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

- + *the mission of the institution, including its teaching and research focus;*

As an autonomous third-level College of Education and the Liberal Arts, Mary Immaculate College (MIC) is a unique institution within the Irish higher education sector. MIC was founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1898 and has significantly expanded since it enrolled 75 female students in 1901 for the purpose of professionally preparing female teachers for the primary school system. With a student population of almost 5,000 (81% female), MIC is now a multi-campus institution in Limerick city (Figure 1) and Thurles, County Tipperary (Figure 2).



Figure 1: MIC Limerick



Figure 2: MIC Thurles

MIC provides undergraduate programmes in primary and post-primary education, liberal arts and early childhood care and education as well as a range of postgraduate programmes up to PhD level. The College also offers access programmes, including the Pre-University Programme for Mature Learners, Certificate in General Learning and Personal Development for those with intellectual disabilities and Certificate in English Language for Academic Purposes for new communities seeking international protection (Figure 3).



Figure 3: English Language for Academic Purposes Summer Programme for new communities in Ireland, summer 2023 cohort

Programmes are accredited through a Memorandum of Understanding with University of Limerick (UL). Table 1 provides a list of current programmes.

Table 1: MIC programmes

LINC programme	
LINC (Leadership for Inclusion in the Early Years) NFQ Level 6 Special Purpose Award	
Lifelong learning programmes	
Certificate in General Learning and Personal Development NFQ Level 4	Teacher Education Access Programme
MIC English Language Programme	Pre-University Programme for Mature Learners
Undergraduate programmes	
Bachelor of Arts (BA)	BA in English Language and Literature
BA in Drama and English	BA in Contemporary and Applied Theatre Studies (the final course intake was in 2022/23)
Bachelor of Science in Psychology	Bachelor of Education in Education and Psychology
Bachelor of Education (Primary Teaching)	Bachelor of Education – International (Primary Teaching)
BA in Early Childhood Care and Education	BA in Education, Gaeilge and Religious Studies
BA in Education, Business Studies and Religious Studies	BA in Education, Mathematics and Gaeilge
BA in Education, Business Studies and Accounting	BA in Education, Mathematics and Business Studies
BA in Education, Home Economics and Business Studies	

Postgraduate programmes	
Postgraduate Studies in Arts by Thesis and Research	Postgraduate Studies in Education by Thesis and Research
Christian Leadership in Education (Graduate Certificate/Master of Arts (MA))	Academic Practice (Graduate Certificate)
Climate, Justice and Sustainability (MA)	Autism Studies (Graduate Certificate/Diploma/MA)
Environment, Society and Culture (MA/MSc)	Middle Leadership & Mentoring (Graduate Certificate/Graduate Diploma/MEd)
MA in Gaeilge	Inclusive Special Education (Graduate Diploma/MEd)
MA in History	Adult and Further Education (Graduate Diploma/MEd)
MA in Local History	Information and Communication Technologies in Primary Education (Graduate Diploma/MEd)
MA in Modern English Literature	Professional MEd in Education – Primary Teaching
MA in Media Studies	MEd in Education
MA in Applied Linguistics	Digital Leadership in Education (Graduate Certificate/Graduate Diploma/MEd)
MA in Education and the Arts	MEd in Education for Human Rights and Equality
MA in STEM Education	MEd in Education for Sustainability and Global Citizenship
MA in Music Education	MEd in Leadership of Wellbeing in Education
MEd in Religious Education	MEd in Educational Leadership and Management
MEd in Literacy Education	An Teastas Iarchéime I dTeagasc Ábharbhunaithe san Iarbhunscolaíocht Lán-Ghaeilge agus Ghaeltachta
Mentoring and Leadership in Schools (Graduate Diploma) International	Oideachas Lán Gaeilge agus Gaeltachta (MEd) (in the final year)
Research postgraduate programmes	
MA/PhD in Arts by Research	MA/PhD in Education by Research
Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology	Structured PhD in Education
Structured PhD in Literacy Education	Structured PhD in Literacy Education
Structured PhD in Applied Linguistics	Structured PhD in Contemporary Irish Studies

MIC launched a new Master of Education in Education for Human Rights and Equality in 2023 to address the challenges to human rights and equality arising from globalisation, increasing societal diversity and cultural changes. Some of our postgraduate programmes were developed in response to challenges outlined in the national strategy for sustainable development and UNESCO's Education for Sustainable Development 2030.

The MIC mission aligns with Athena Swan (AS) as we respect cultural diversity, strive to promote equity in society and foster an environment where all have freedom and opportunity to achieve their full potential. The MIC community strives for excellence in teaching, learning and research. MIC promotes a sense of identity enriched by an awareness of its Catholic tradition, the cultures, languages and traditions of Ireland, and its special commitment to the Irish language.

+ *the total number of staff by gender and category of post;*

The number of MIC staff is 427 (2023); 50% are academic staff. Overall, 72% are female, which is broadly in line with our student profile; 65% of academic and 78% of professional, managerial and support (PMS) staff are female (Figure 4). PMS staff provide support for a faculty (Arts or Education) or college-wide unit (e.g. HR, Finance). Technical support staff numbers are low (two) and are included in the PMS staff category. Male staff are under-represented; this is particularly evident in PMS services, where only 22% of staff are men.

The data in Figure 4 does not include part-time hourly-paid staff and school placement tutors. Headcount rises to 650 (68%F) when this category of staff is included (Table 2). The area of precarity is discussed in more detail in section 2.2.b as it is a key priority for our 2023 action plan. The total number of hourly-paid staff is highly relative to the staff headcount; gender balance is proportionate to the overall profile and will be discussed later in section 2.2.b as a priority theme. The hours and terms of employment of hourly-paid staff vary considerably.

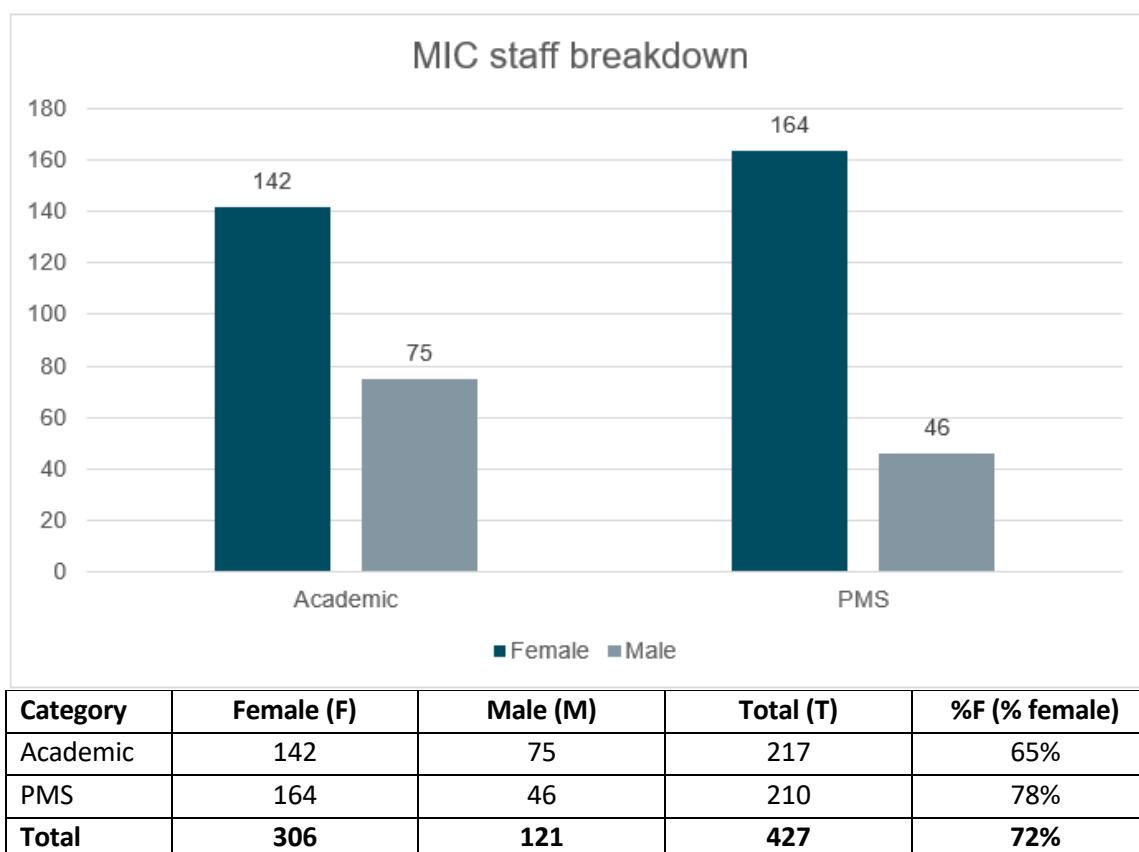


Figure 4: MIC staff breakdown 2023

Table 2: MIC staff and contract type breakdown at Quarter 1 (Q1) 2023

	F	M	T	%F
All staff				
Permanent	236	98	334	71%
Permanent P/T (including CID)	21	7	28	75%
Temporary/Contract/Fixed-Term/Specified Purpose	50	15	65	77%
Total	307	120	427	72%
Other				
Hourly-paid	66	41	107	62%
Hourly-paid (CID)	14	9	23	61%
If and when required (Placement Tutors)	55	38	93	59%
Total other	135	88	223	61%
Overall combined	442	208	650	68%

- + *the total number of staff by ethnicity and category of post as well as data on additional equality grounds collected by the institution;*

Similar to other higher education institutions (HEIs), MIC asks staff to voluntarily disclose their ethnicity on its Employee Self Service portal. To date, 158 staff (37% disclosure rate) have completed this. We also ask staff for their ethnicity in the AS staff surveys. Table 3 gives data from 2019 and 2023.

Table 3: AS staff survey 2023: ethnicity of respondents

Ethnicity	2019	2023
White Irish	97%	91%
White – any other white background	3%	7%

While ethnicity data is not currently available across Irish HEIs, 2022 Central Statistics Office data indicates 77% are ‘white Irish’ and 10% are from ‘any other white background’. This benchmarking indicates that MIC has a higher proportion of white Irish staff than nationally based on voluntary disclosure. This falls to 67% for Limerick city and suburbs¹ and to 79% for Thurles. We will continue monitoring the ethnic diversity of staff (**New Action² GE³ 1.1, New Action GE 1.2**).

For our AS renewal, we asked questions in the staff surveys relating to the additional equality grounds (Table 4).

¹ Central Statistics Office ‘town of usual residence’ category

² Actions on the 2023–2027 action plan are labelled ‘New Action’ throughout; ‘Action’ is used to denote actions from the current plan (2019–2023).

³ Gender Equality

Table 4: 2023 staff survey responses relating to additional equality grounds

Equality ground	Category	Gender
Age	18-24	1%F / 2%M
	25-34	11%F / 7%M
	35-44	26%F / 33%M
	45-54	37%F / 36%M
	55-64	23%F / 20%M
	65+	3%F / 3%M
Marital status	Civil Partnership	2%F / 0%M
	Cohabiting	10%F / 10%M
	Divorced	4%F / 2%M
	Married	60%F / 74%M
	Separated	3%F / 2%M
	Single	17%F / 11%M
	Widowed/Surviving Civil Partner	1%F / 0%M
Ethnicity	White Irish	92%F / 85%M
	White – any other white background	7%F / 10%M
	Another ethic group not listed	1%F / 3%M
Disability		7%F / 5%M
Caring responsibilities		54%F / 41%M
Sexual orientation	LGBTQIA+	9%F / 10%M
	Heterosexual/straight	86%F / 85%M



ACTIONS

New Action GE 1.1: Form a data collection working group.

New Action GE 1.2: Develop an efficient and accessible equality data-capturing strategy.

+ the total number of student enrolments by gender and programme type;

In 2023, MIC has 4,208 undergraduate students (80%F) and 784 postgraduate students (78%F) (Figure 5).

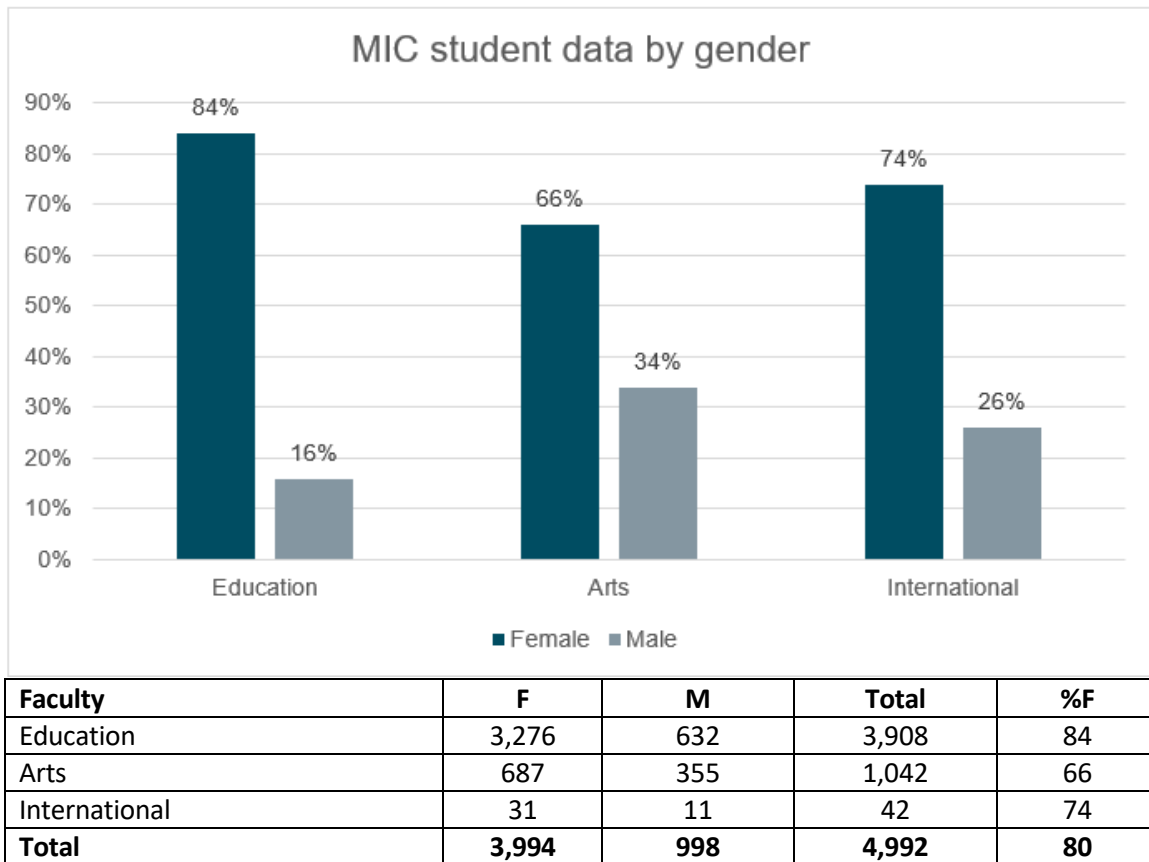


Figure 5: MIC student data by gender, 2022/23

For the past three years, intake numbers have increased, mainly due to the expansion of the curriculum. The high percentage of female students is typical of colleges of education⁴ and reflects the predominance of female primary school teachers in Ireland (87%) and across European countries⁵ (85%). In recent years, MIC has taken proactive steps to address recruitment into teaching programmes. The College continues to take actions to attract more males onto programmes, such as making efforts to increase male staff numbers, making male role models more visible and conducting targeted outreach activities in schools.

The Lifelong Learning programmes (listed in Table 1) offer additional pathways to help learners experience and progress to third-level education.

⁴ A 2006 report entitled *Males into Primary Teaching*, commissioned by the Minister for Education and Science, noted that the number of males entering the teaching profession had declined since the 1970s and projected a continuing reduction in males entering the profession unless dramatic action was taken. The report's recommendations, which included a national campaign led by the Teaching Council, were only partially implemented.

⁵ Eurostat, European Commission, 2016

Representing 58 different nationalities, 8% of our student population are non-Irish. Of this, 20% of postgraduate research students are non-Irish⁶. Five percent of the MIC student population (238) were registered with the Access and Disability Service in 2022/23, which compares to 6.6% of the national higher education student population in 2020/21⁷. Students with a disability, specific learning difficulties or significant ongoing conditions can register for a range of post-entry supports (Figure 6). There are quiet zones, sensory rooms, assistive technology rooms and access to an education support worker.

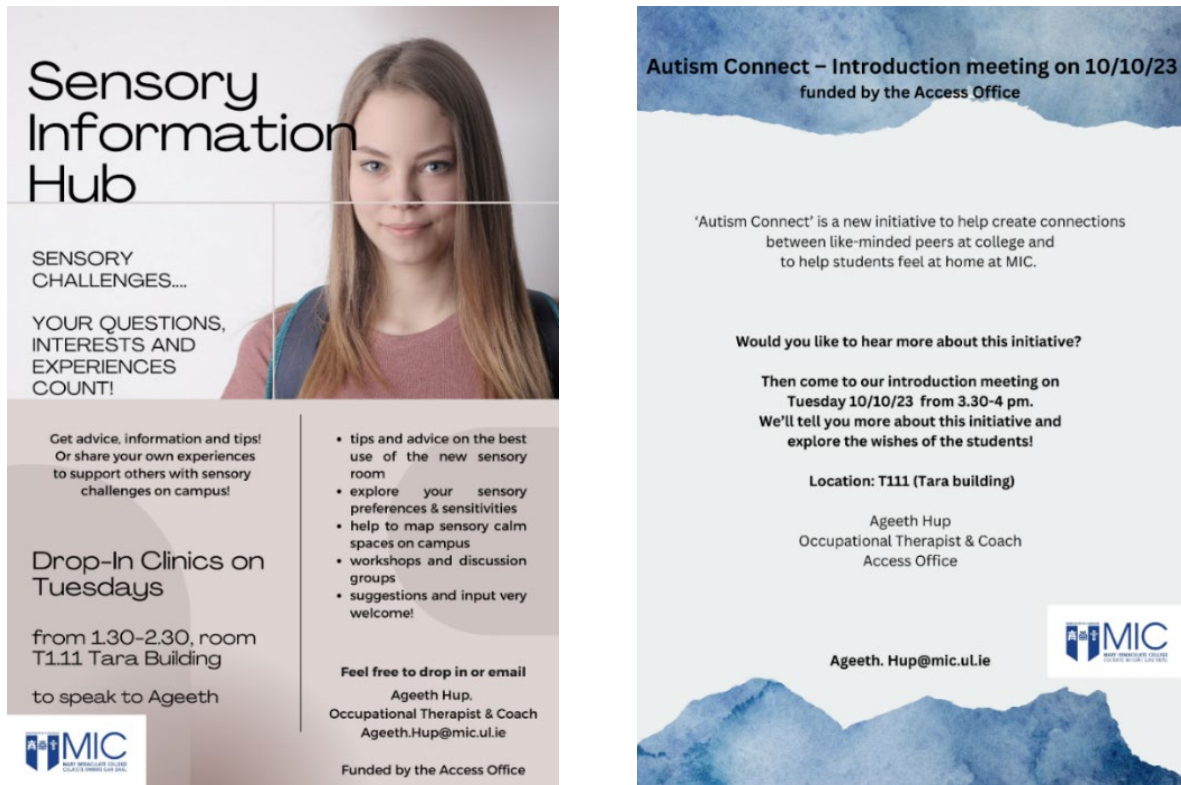


Figure 6: MIC access supports for students

Prompted by an increase in the number of students eligible for support, the Access and Disability Service was significantly reorganised in recent years. An overview of the HEA-funded Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH) strands and associated MIC projects is provided below. Progress has been made as a result of PATH funding in terms of recruitment and retention of students from underrepresented groups.

⁶ Of this percentage, 7% are EU and 13% are non-EU.

⁷ Sourced from AHEAD

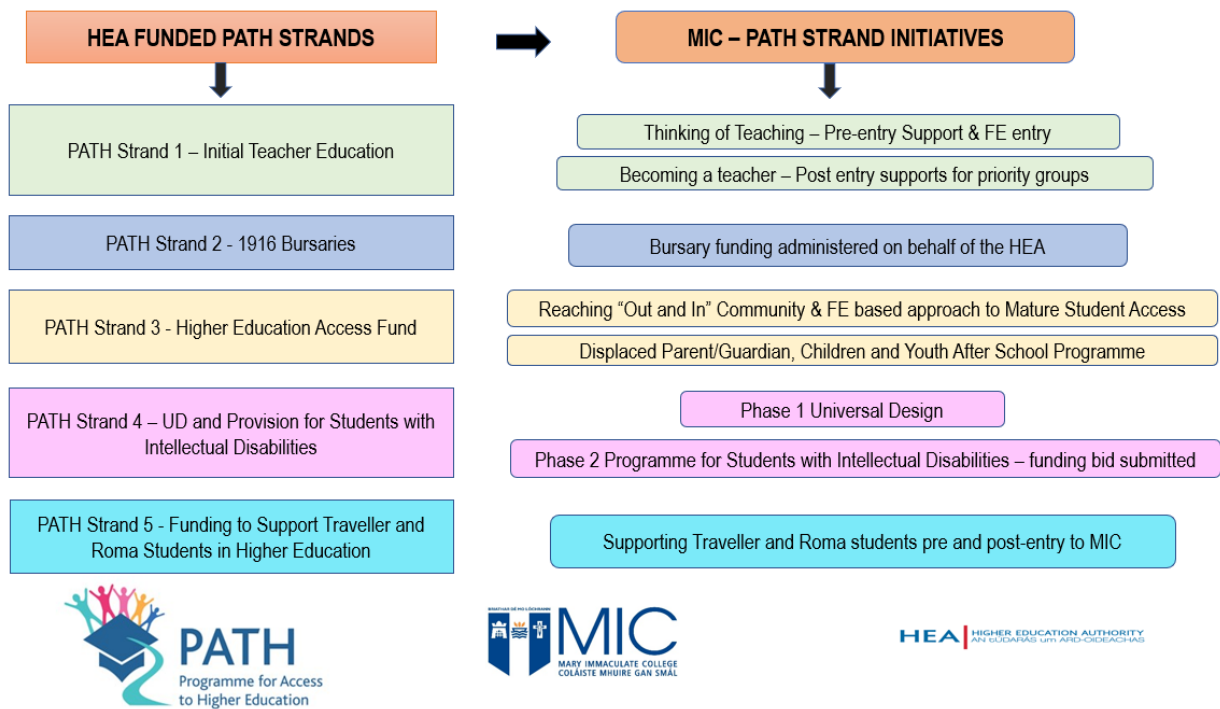


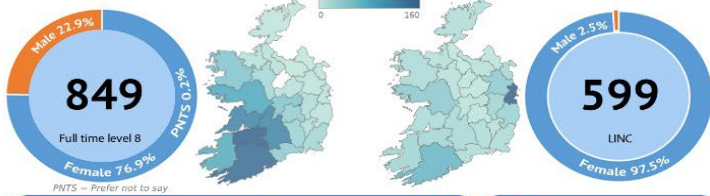
Figure 7: HEA-funded PATH strands and associated MIC projects

MIC records and monitors student data on ethnicity, entry routes and commuting distance from campus (Figure 8).

Mary Immaculate College Key Facts and Figures 2022/23

UNDERGRADUATE NEW ENTRANTS

849



STUDENT COMMUTE: ALL ROADS LEAD TO MIC

Data for MIC students with primary residence: Parental home



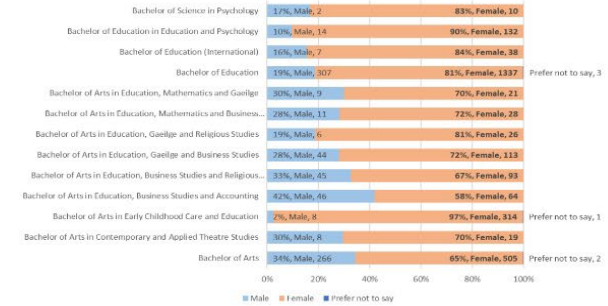
Average drive time to MIC
50 Min

Average drive distance to MIC
64.5 Km

Average CO₂ emission
0.016 t CO₂
One way drive in a small car

UNDERGRADUATE ENROLMENT

Percentage and Number of Students enrolled in each Full-Time Undergraduate Programme

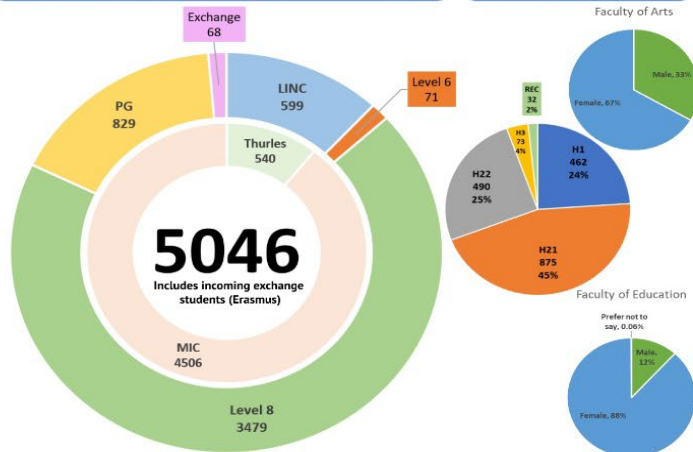


TOTAL STUDENTS ENROLLED

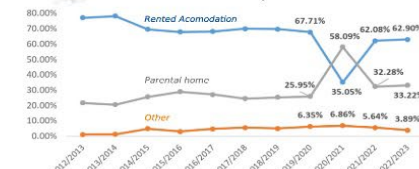
5046

GRADUATES

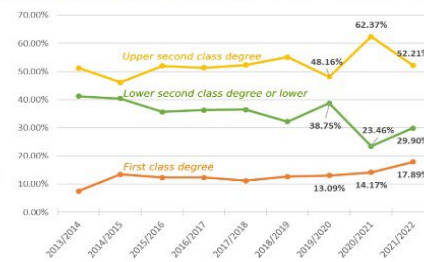
1932



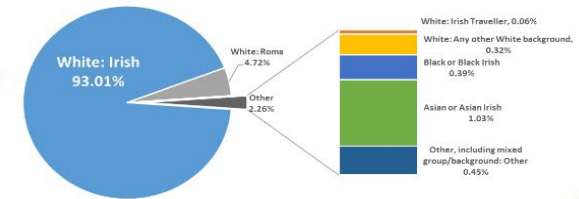
HEA Primary residence of new entrants



GRADUATES BY FINAL GRADE - Full time level 8 students



MIC ETHNICITY BREAKDOWN



CORE STAFF NUMBERS



ENTRY ROUTES - New entrants

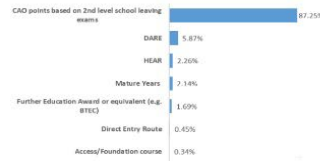


Figure 8: MIC key facts and figures, 2022/23, based on HEA staff profile returns

With accommodation issues and the rising cost of living, we are extremely mindful of the impact these wider societal issues have on our students.

- + *any changes to the institution's context since the previous award (e.g. national or international strategy, structural changes, significant expansions).*

MIC received its first Bronze institutional AS award in March 2020. The appointment of the inaugural Director of Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Interculturalism (EDII)⁸ in January 2022 was an important step in realising our institutional commitment. The Faculty of Arts received a Bronze department award in June 2022, and the Faculty of Education is working towards submitting for Bronze in 2024.

Our 2023 AS action plan aligns with recommendations from the 2nd HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions, 2022. Although Covid-19 and a period of self-reflection had a significant impact on our 2019 action plan, we feel very positive about progress made despite major societal challenges.

- + *any changes to the institution's context since the previous award (e.g. national or international strategy, structural changes, significant expansions).*

MIC is a linked provider (as defined in the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012) of UL. As such, MIC is subject to review and external quality assurance by UL or, if requested, by Quality and Qualifications Ireland. MIC submits an Annual Institutional Quality Assurance Report to UL. Both EDII and AS are areas on which we report progress and impact. Every seven years, UL conducts an institutional review of MIC to evaluate the College's quality assurance procedures. The last review was undertaken in 2016 and the next one will be conducted in spring 2024.

Since 2022, MIC has engaged in dialogue with UL with a view to forming a new relationship based on closer structural alignment. With input from the HEA in the context of system governance, the discussions led to heads of agreement being adopted by the respective governing authorities and MIC trustees in November 2023. Following another phase of negotiation, which will include input from internal and external stakeholders, final agreement is scheduled for June 2024. If agreed, the new arrangement will have a significant bearing on MIC's institutional governance and, accordingly, EDII strategy. This will obviously have an influence on MIC's AS programme and national alignment. It is anticipated that the new relationship will be very positive in terms of advancing MIC's EDII and AS strategies, some details of which are described below.

Although the talks are at an advanced stage, the details of the dialogue remain highly confidential at the time of reporting and, for this reason, it is not possible to provide further

⁸ Interculturalism was added to EDI at MIC as a key and unique aspect that aligns with the College's social justice ethos, intersectionality, University of Sanctuary and race equality work, which are all pivotal to inclusion.

information. However, we look forward to reporting on the outcomes in future submissions under the AS process.

3. Governance and recognition of equality, diversity and inclusion work

Provide a description of the institution's equality, diversity and inclusion structures and institution and department/professional unit-level resources, including staff resources. This should include information on:

- + *the formal processes in place to resource, distribute, recognise and reward equality, diversity and inclusion work;*

Significant improvements have been made on governance and recognition of EDII work. The EDII Office was established in 2022. The EDII team comprises the EDII Director, Manager and Clerical Officer along with MIC's Sexual Violence & Harassment (SVH) Prevention Manager. The team is assisted by five EDII Champions (two PMS staff and three academics). The EDII Lead in the Faculty of Arts chairs the faculty-level EDII Steering Committee.

The EDII Office reports to the Equality Committee. The EDII Implementation Committee is a sub-committee of the Equality Committee and aims to oversee the strategic development and mainstreaming of EDII at MIC (Figure 9).

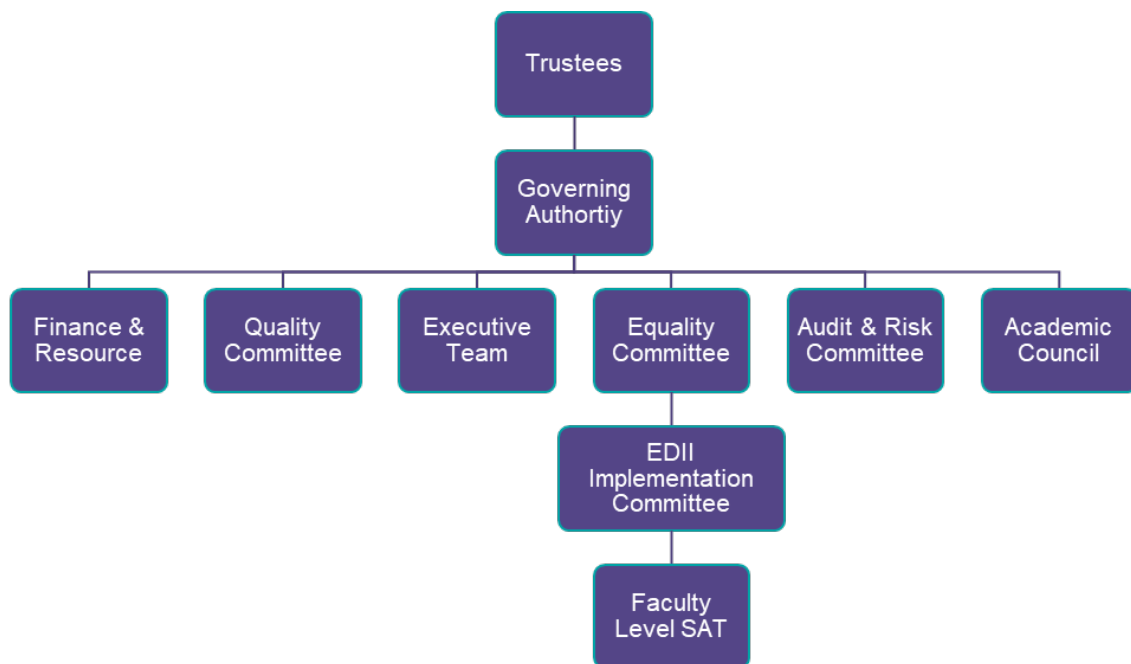


Figure 9: EDII reporting in MIC

The Director of EDII is a member of the MIC Executive Team (ET). EDII is a standing agenda item at ET meetings. Figures 10 and 11 show MIC's organisational, governance and operational structures.

MIC Executive & Senior Management Structure

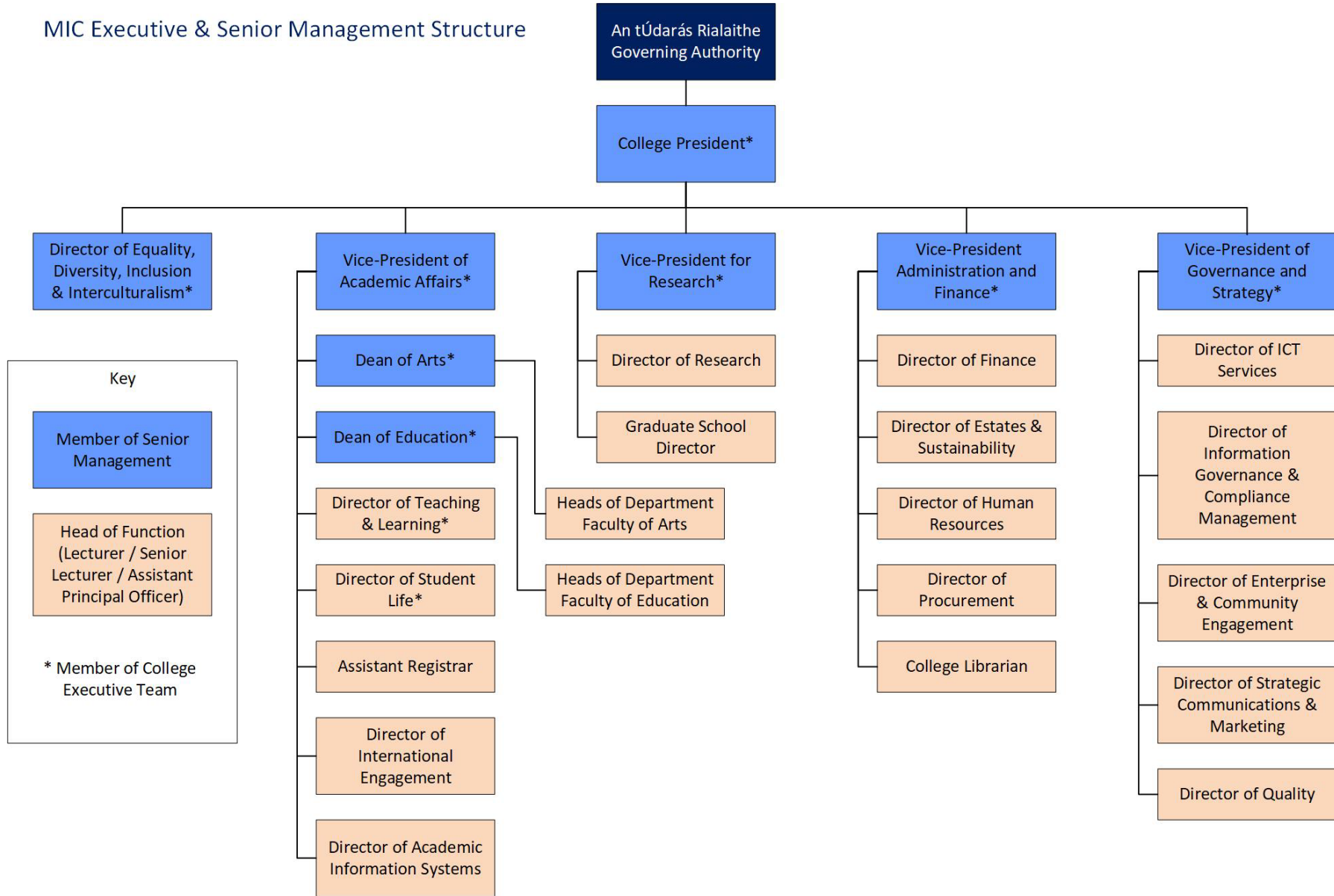


Figure 10: MIC organisational chart

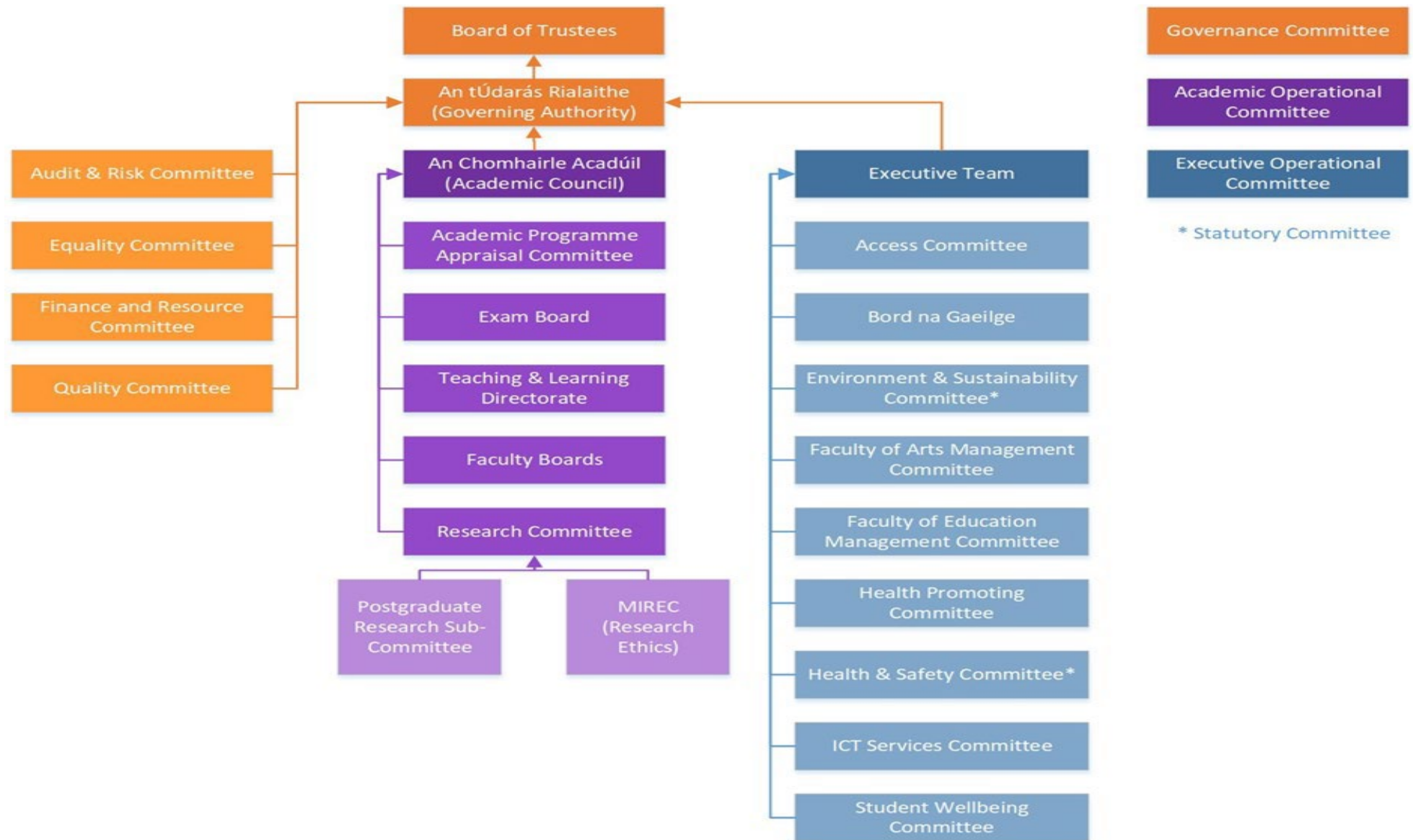


Figure 11: MIC governance and operational committee structure

In 2022, the EDII Office launched the first EDII Project Awards, which aims to catalyse and embed EDII through new annual collaborative activities. Providing funding of up to €5,000 per project, the awards foster collaboration and partnerships between staff (PMS and academic), students and community organisations.



Figure 12: Some EDII projects 2022, clockwise from top left: Peer mentoring; EDNIP World Café; FemFest public lecture with Sara Ahmed; conference raising awareness of plight of Afghan women and girls; Arts for All Day

- + any changes in governance, recognition or resourcing of EDI work since the previous award (e.g. changes in key management/committee structures or reporting lines that support EDI work; staffing changes), with reflection, where relevant, on how the changes have impacted on the institution's EDI work;

AS and EDII have grown and become more visible at MIC since 2020 as evidenced through branding, logo, a central recurrent budget, project awards, annual participation in the Aurora Leadership Development Programme for Women and other professional development opportunities. Over 70 staff undertook the EDI Online programme in 2022/23, and more than 30 women have availed of the Aurora programme (funded by the EDII budget). With an investment of €507,826 since 2019/20, these dedicated resources and mainstreaming of EDII are having a very positive impact in MIC.

From a wider societal perspective, MIC and the EDII Office have felt the consequences of larger challenges, such as the war in Ukraine, which affected our work and strategy. We worked to embed a college-wide response that led to the development of the NSR (National Student & Researcher) Helpdesk, the MIC Ukrainian Response and Displaced Citizens Hub, and the MIC Teaching for Inclusion Seminar Series. The EDII Office launched two postgraduate Sanctuary Scholarships in 2023 and is accepting applications for four undergraduate scholarships for 2024/25.

“Athena Swan and establishment of the EDII office in MIC has been very positive, as has the appointment of the Director of EDII.” (Female academic)

- + *resource provision for the action plan and associated activities to ensure effective implementation;*

Fulfilling the role of the AS SAT, the EDII Implementation Committee will oversee and monitor progress of the 2023–2027 action plan. The EDII Office will provide ongoing support and dedicated resources and will engage with ET and the other relevant committees.

With support from the EDII Office, the EDII Implementation Committee will seek to work collaboratively with key stakeholders across MIC to implement the action plan and map to the plan current work relating to sustainability, UN development goals and EDII themes.

- + *the support for equality activity in the institution's sub-units (e.g. academic departments and professional units), including steps taken by the institution to identify, support and resource sub-units to apply for Athena Swan awards;*

The five EDII Champions are appointed voluntarily based on an expression of interest and represent the Faculty of Arts (one), Faculty of Education (one), Thurles campus (one) and PMS units (two). The Champions are members of the EDII Implementation Committee.

One main function of the newly appointed Faculty of Arts EDII Lead is to support the enactment of that faculty's AS actions as well as progress with wider EDII issues. A similar role will be established in the Faculty of Education to work on the AS SAT and application development. The roles align with key recommendation number 2 of the aforementioned

2022 HEA review of gender equality in Irish HEIs. The post holders receive remission from their teaching to give them protected time to lead on EDII. The annual EDII Project Awards encourage proposals that underpin the AS action plan and allow us to develop a whole-institutional approach to embedding and enacting actions.

- + *any departmental/professional unit Athena Swan awards achieved to date.*

In June 2022, the Faculty of Arts was awarded its first Bronze department-level AS award, and the Faculty of Education will commence its application process in 2024. The EDII Office supports SATs in preparing and submitting an award application, including emphasising the importance of SMART action plans and arranging for 'critical friend' feedback.

4. The self-assessment process

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

- + a description of the self-assessment team (SAT), including comment on the roles and responsibilities of individuals and how these were assigned. The gender of SAT members, their professional/student role in the institution and their specific role in the SAT should be noted in a table;
- + an overview of the approach taken to evidence-gathering and analysis. Details of consultation response rates, disaggregated by gender, should be provided;
- + information on plans for evaluating progress, including action plan implementation, over the coming four-year period. This should make reference to how often the SAT will meet and how SAT succession and turnover will be planned and managed;
- + information on how the findings and activity of the SAT are, and will continue to be, communicated to senior management and the wider institution.

The self-assessment process involved extensive consultation with staff and students through:

- AS survey (November 2022)
- Five staff and student focus groups (April and May 2023)
- Formal meetings, informal conversations and a review period (May and June 2023)

We believe the AS process is vital to the development of a co-created, co-designed, college-wide strategic dialogue. The process included an evaluation of policies, processes, practices and culture. MIC's EDII Manager provided overall guidance on the application process and arranged for presentations by successful applicants and Athena Swan Ireland. The process comprised the following eight stages.

Stage 1: Formation of the SAT

The formation of the SAT in August 2022 was underpinned by the principles shown below.

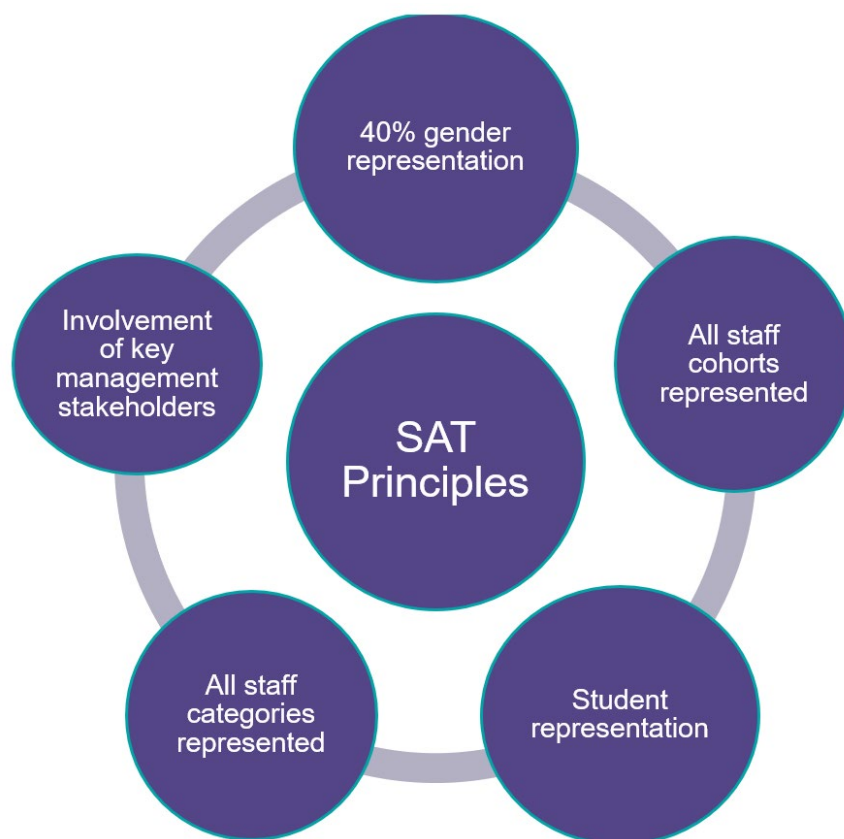


Figure 13: MIC SAT principles

Many SAT members brought their insight and expertise from their membership of the Institutional SAT 2018/19. Members' involvement indicates strong commitment to AS principles and objectives. Members were regularly acknowledged for their work by the Director of EDII and the President. The 12-member SAT (58%F) (Table 5) was divided into groups to support the different stages of the self-assessment process. Each group agreed on a lead member, who coordinated the communication among the group and wider SAT.

Stage 2: Development and pilot of survey

The SAT developed the AS staff survey for MIC staff and benchmarked it against the 2019 survey. The survey was piloted by the working groups before being distributed.

Stage 3: Data collection and analysis

An invitation link to the survey was emailed to all staff, including full-time, part-time and part-time hourly-paid (PTHP) staff. Reminder emails were sent and a poster campaign was developed to encourage colleagues to complete the survey. There was a 41% overall response rate: 76%F, 24%M, broken down further in Table 6. The gender profile of respondents reflects the overall staff profile.

Table 5: Membership of the MIC Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team

Name and position	Role in MIC	G	Role on SAT/EDII Committees
Prof. Lorraine McIlrath (Chair)	Director of EDII	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey pilot group • Action plan review group • Peer review group • Executive Team member • Equality Committee member
Prof. Gary O'Brien	VP Governance and Strategy	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action plan review group • Executive Team member • 2019 SAT member
Prof. William Leahy	Dean of the Faculty of Arts	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey pilot group 1 • Action plan review group • Executive Team member • Chair of Faculty of Arts SAT
Prof. Emer Ring	Dean of the Faculty of Education	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action plan review group • Data Collection & Analysis group (including survey development) • Executive Team member
Mr Frank White	Director of HR	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey pilot group • Action plan review group • Executive Team member • Equality Committee member • 2019 SAT member
Dr Joan O'Sullivan	Lecturer, Faculty of Arts	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey pilot group • Action plan review group • Peer review group • Faculty of Arts EDII Champion • Vice-Chair, Faculty of Arts SAT
Ms Ciara Ní Shúilleabháin	Director of Strategic Communications & Marketing	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action plan review group • Peer review group • Data Collection & Analysis group (including survey development) • 2019 SAT member • PMSS EDII Champion
Mr Martin Waters	Project Portfolio Manager	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action plan review group • Data Collection & Analysis group (including survey development) • PMSS EDII Champion
Dr Ailbhe Kenny	Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Education	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action plan review group • Data Collection & Analysis group • Faculty of Education EDII Champion
Dr Catherine Stapleton	Lecturer, Faculty of Education	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action plan review group • Peer review group • Data Collection & Analysis group (including survey development) • MIC Thurles EDII Champion
Ms Aoife Gleeson / Mr Cillian Brennan	Students' Union (MISU) President	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student perspective throughout • Equality Committee member
Ms Edel Foster	EDII Manager	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall facilitator • 2019 SAT member

Table 6: Profile of staff survey respondents, 2023

Contract detail	Overall %	%F	%M
Permanent	80%	81%	74%
Fixed-Term/Specified Purpose	11%	8%	20%
Full-Time	89%	88%	90%

Stage 4: Qualitative focus groups and analysis

Following analysis of the survey data by the SAT, semi-structured focus group interviews with staff (19; 89%F) and students (9; 56%F) were undertaken to investigate emerging areas from the survey. The emerging themes helped the SAT to identify gender and additional equality grounds priorities for the 2023–2027 action plan (see sections 2.2.b and 2.2.c).

Stage 5: Presentation of data and development of actions

The EDII Office conducted ongoing one-to-one meetings with units to review survey data, monitor progress with actions and plan future actions. Presentations were delivered on progress to various MIC boards and committees, including the boards of both faculties, and regular updates were given to ET and the Equality Committee.

Stage 6: Further development of actions and narrative report

In August and September 2023, the EDII Office arranged for a series of mini-workshops on the development of the 2023–2027 action plan to be conducted with key stakeholders from across MIC (Figure 14). With the aim of creating buy-in for the four-year plan, the workshops provided stakeholders with an opportunity to co-design SMART actions relating to their designated area.



Figure 14: MIC action plan development workshop stakeholders

Stage 7: Staff consultation and ET approval

Staff consultation sessions were held to discuss and gather staff feedback. The submission was sent to active MIC trade unions – Fórsa and IFUT (Irish Federation of University Teachers) – for their consideration and feedback. Once all feedback was collated and incorporated, as relevant, into the application, a critical friend was engaged to provide valuable insight. The amended version was then sent to all staff. Throughout November, ET members reviewed and approved the submission, as did the President with the Director of EDII.

Stage 8: Future implementation and review

The EDII Implementation Committee will meet quarterly in the first instance to review progress on the action plan, reflect on areas of key activity, and provide advice and flag concerns to the ET. The committee will also participate in regular communications (**New actions GE 5.1 and GE 5.2**) to update staff and students about MIC's work to advance gender and additional equality grounds priorities. Periodic open invitations will be sent to all staff members when there are vacancies. The action plan will be RAG rated annually to continually monitor progress and identify barriers to achieving the success measures and impact. We will continue to ensure that AS and other areas of EDII are high on the agenda of each faculty and MIC as a whole.

The EDII Implementation Committee will be responsible for MIC's next AS application.

We developed evidence-based actions to support the new action plan. We anticipate that the plan will lead to improvements for staff and students in gathering and analysing gender equality and EDII data. We include PMS staff as well as academic staff and students in our data collection methods. We have already developed student data dashboards and are exploring the integration of 'Core' (HR management system) into our employee system, which will enable us to develop staff data dashboards.



ACTIONS

New Action GE 5.1: Enhance staff and student awareness of Athena Swan and EDII matters and conduct regular consultation.

New Action GE 5.2: Host an annual Athena Swan Day.

Section 1 countable words: 3,463

Section 2: An evaluation of the institution's progress, opportunities and issues

In Section 2, applicants should evidence how they meet criteria B and D:

- + Evidence-based recognition of the issues and opportunities facing the applicant
- + Demonstration of progress against the applicant's previously identified priorities

Recommended word count: 4,500 words

1. Evaluating progress against the previous action plan

1.a Previous action plan

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

1.a Previous action plan

MIC Athena SWAN Action Plan Dec 2019 – Dec 2023

Priority 1 – Actions commenced within 12 months Priority 2 – Actions commenced within 24 months Priority 3 – Actions commenced within 48 months

Recommendations from the Report of the Expert Group (2016) 'HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions' are noted in the action plan as *HEA, 2016*, along with the associated reference number.

Objective	Action (2019-2023)	Rationale (2019-2023)	Timeframe	Persons responsible	Success criteria (2019-2023)	RAG	P
SECTION 3: THE SELF ASSESSMENT PROCESS							
1. Establish dedicated EDI structures to ensure that the gender equality agenda is supported and implemented in MIC	Action 3.1 Conduct biennial staff workplace survey to monitor gender and EDI issues. Target under-represented departments/offices/areas in future staff surveys.	The overall response rate for the workplace survey was 54%; 74%F/24%M. 43.2% of academic staff and 75% of professional services staff responded. Certain areas were underrepresented e.g. maintenance staff.	Staff survey conducted in March 2021 and March 2023 Focus group held with underrepresented groups – April 2021 and April 2023	Head of EDI	10% overall increase in response rate in 2021 and again in 2023. An increase of 5% per survey in the response rate for underrepresented staff categories.		2
	Action 3.2 Create permanent EDI structures including the appointment of a Head of EDI as a senior post and an Athena SWAN Manager to progress Athena SWAN initiatives. HEA, 2016:1.5	To drive the EDI agenda in MIC, support the implementation of the four-year action plan, support faculties to apply for departmental awards and the institutions application for a Silver award. To advise senior management on EDI issues.	Head of EDI appointed –June 2020 Manager appointed – Dec. 2020 (Current Manager and Director remain in place until appointments made)	President, Director HR, Director EDII	Greater awareness of the Athena SWAN process, increasing from 58%M/45%F to 70% of both genders. Greater confidence in staff that senior management understand the need to promote gender equality, increasing from 56%M/55%F to 75% of both genders.		1
	Action 3.3 Form the Gender Equality Steering Group. HEA, 2016: 1.9	To continue the work of the Self-Assessment Team. To support and assist in the implementation and monitoring of the four-year action plan. To support future AS applications. To	Gender Equality Steering Group established – Jan. 2020	President, ET, AS Team	Membership is diverse and gender-balanced and reviewed annually to ensure staff and students are represented. Role as members is accounted for in the workload model. AS refresher workshop with existing and new members		1

		support the mainstreaming of gender equality across the HEI.			delivered; 100% attendance. The four-year action plan implemented and monitored. Two departmental awards submitted by the end of 2023.		
	Action 3.4 Provide a dedicated EDI budget with specific funding for Athena SWAN action plans.	To ensure that the four-year action plan is resourced and implemented.	Jan. 2020 – Dec. 2023 EDI budget line approved annually	VP Admin. & Finance, ET	Each action costed and budgeted for annually.		1
	Action 3.5 Nominate AS Champions in each faculty/area.	To embed and provide support for AS and other gender equality activities at faculty level and throughout different areas of the college including professional services offices.	AS Champions identified in each faculty and in professional services – June 2020	AS Project Manager, Deans	Role as AS Champions is accounted for in the workload model. 100% of AS Champions undertake AS training. AS Champion Network developed which reports to the Gender Equality Steering Group and has links with departmental SAT groups. AS Champions attend AS National Practitioners meetings.		1
SECTION 4: A PICTURE OF THE INSTITUTION							
4.1: ACADEMIC & RESEARCH STAFF							
2. Address gender under-representation of academic and research staff (of both females and males)	Action 4.1 Improve the percentage of female academic staff above Lecturer level. (Linked to action 4.2 and 5.1.12)	62% of staff at Lecturer /Assistant Lecturer are female. This drops to 53% at SL and only 17% at PL. 15% of all female academic staff are at SL and 1% of female all academic staff are at PL compared to 22% of all male academic staff at SL and 7% at PL.	Merit-based promotional round taken place – Sept. 2021	VP Academic Affairs, President, Director HR	The proportion of applications from female staff matches the proportion of female staff at the grade immediately below (cascade model). The proportion of female staff promoted matches proportion of female staff at the grade immediately below (cascade model).		2
	Action 4.2 Explore the feasibility of rotation of senior positions (e.g. Head of Department/	To allow for more opportunities to apply for senior positions on a rotating basis. To address the underrepresentation of	Consultation held with staff and relevant unions – June 2022 Rotation of post	VP Academic Affairs, President, Director HR	Mechanisms for progressing up into posts and then reverting to original role after 3-5 years in place.		3

	Director) when future vacancies arise.	female academics at SL and PL levels.	procedures in place – Dec. 2022				
	Action 4.3 Implement measures to attract male candidates to posts in the Faculty of Education.	Male staff account for 21% of academic staff within the Faculty of Education.	Jan. 2020; ongoing	Head of EDI, Director HR, Dean of Education	Monitoring of applications, shortlisting, offers and acceptances by gender and by faculty quarterly. Report submitted to the GESG and Equality Committee. Ultimately success will be an increase by 10% in the numbers of males applying for academic roles in the Faculty of Education.		1
Several interrelated actions underpin Action 4.3: In areas where there is gender underrepresentation, if no applicants are received from that particular gender, the post will be re-advertised (Action 5.1.1) Mentoring offered to postgraduate students (Action 4.5) Gender-proofing language used in job specifications and advertisements (Action 5.1.2) Action 4.3 will be boosted in the longer term by our actions to attract more males into the sector at undergraduate level (Action 5.6.25 – Action 5.6.27)							
3. Provide secure working conditions for female staff	Action 4.4 Investigate the rise in fixed-term and specific-purpose contracts among female employees to determine cause and address regularisation as necessary.	There is a preponderance of women in all part-time, temporary, contract, fixed-term, specified purpose and hourly paid contracts. Currently over 50% of all female academic staff fall within these categories – 40% of all female academic staff are on hourly paid contracts and a further 14% are on temporary/contract/ fixed-term/specified purpose.	June 2020 – June 2021	Director HR, Director of Finance, Deans	Review conducted and report published / available for GA, ET and the Equality Committee. Report focuses on data in relation to female staff and clear actions outlined to combine part-time hours into full-time posts.		1
	Action 4.5 Provide access to supports for research/teaching assistants, fellows, hourly paid and early career academics to progress to full time lecturing grades to include access to	The majority of academic staff working as research/teaching assistants, fellows, part time hourly paid and early career academics are female. 40% of all female academic staff are on hourly paid contracts. 88%	Jan. 2022 – Sept. 2022	VP Academic Affairs, President, Director HR	Monitor proportion of staff uptake of each of these supports. 25% increase by 2023 in academic staff reporting that the following is made available: Mentoring (38% overall, 36%F/ 44%M in 2019 survey). Information and advice for applying for grants		3

	mentoring, research support and professional development opportunities.	of teaching fellows are female and 66% of teaching/research assistants are female (2018).			(65% overall, 59%F/ 81%M in 2019 survey). Decrease of 15% by 2023 in academic staff reporting they receive no encouragement to avail of training/professional development opportunities (31% overall - 24%M/34%F in 2019 survey).		
	Action 4.6 Develop guidelines to support academic posts to be filled on a full or part-time basis, including consideration of job-sharing options.	To support the career development of part-time academic staff. There are limited opportunities for part-time or atypical working arrangements for academic staff, particularly in promotional roles. This may be a barrier for staff with caring responsibilities.	Options in place for job-sharing and pro-rata in job specifications – Sept. 2020	Director HR	Decrease of 20% by 2023 in perception that it takes longer to progress in MIC if you work part-time or flexibly (50% overall - 47%M/50.5%F in 2019 survey).		1
4. Understand reasons why staff leave the College	Action 4.7 Conduct independent exit interviews to ascertain reasons for leaving.	Currently, there are no formal exit interviews/surveys conducted for staff. Therefore, the reasons why staff leave are not being collected or analysed. To enable gender-disaggregated, data-driven decision-making.	Formalised exit interviews conducted taking place with staff who resign from their posts – Sept. 2021	Director HR, Gender Equality Steering Group	Monitoring of feedback from leaving staff to identify any issues, e.g. working environment, culture within the College and work/life balance, and make recommendations for improvements. Report submitted to GESG.		2
5. Determine whether a gender pay gap exists	Action 4.8 Commission an external audit body to undertake a gender pay gap analysis.	An equal pay audit has not taken place before in the College. The audit will identify any gender pay gaps that may be in place and the reasons will require further analysis to develop measures to	Report published – June 2021 (dependent on legislation being finalised)	Director of Finance, Director HR, Gender Equality Steering Group	Gender pay gap analysis completed and actions to address any issues identified.		2

		reduce or eliminate any gap.					
	Action 4.9 Publish gender pay gap information in line with The Gender Pay Gap Information Bill once the Irish Government finalises legislation on the Bill.	The Irish Government is in the process of developing legislation which will apply to MIC whereby the College will be required to publish accurate gender pay gap information.	Report published – June 2021 (dependent on legislation being finalised)	Director of Finance, Director HR, Gender Equality Steering Group	Gender pay gap analysis completed and actions to address any issues identified.		2
SECTION 5: SUPPORTING & ADVANCING CAREERS & CAREER DEVELOPMENT							
5.1: KEY CAREER TRANSITION POINTS: ACADEMIC STAFF							
6. Provide equality of opportunity for all genders during recruitment	Action 5.1.1 In areas where there is gender underrepresentation, if no applicants are received from that particular gender, the post will be re-advertised. (Seek for this action to be updated as applicable to seniors posts)	Applicant gender balance following shortlisting is currently monitored on an ongoing basis, with data reported to the Equality Committee. Males are under-represented at shortlisting stage in 2018 in academic posts.	Re-advertisement of posts if no applicants are received by underrepresented gender is particular areas – from Jan. 2020	Director HR, Deans	Increase in male academics applying for posts in the Faculty of Education.		1
	Action 5.1.2 Provide training to relevant HR staff and line managers on gender proofing the language used in job specifications and advertisements	To ensure that job specifications are written using gender responsive language. Recruitment data on job applications show underrepresentation of gender for certain positions.	Training held – June 2020	Director of HR, Chair of the Equality Committee	100% attendance at training sessions and attendees evaluate effectiveness of training. All adverts clearly display AS messaging.		1
	Action 5.1.3 At the final selection step, in the appointment process for new Presidents insofar as possible, the final pool of candidates will comprise an equal number of	To promote gender balance and culture in the leadership of HEIs. In the latest recruitment process for President, no females were shortlisted.	2023 (or next recruitment process for President)	Chair of Board of Trustees, Director HR	Gender balance in the shortlisting of candidates for the post of President. If it has not been possible to achieve gender balance at the final selection step, the interview panel will account to the Governing Authority for why this was not possible.		3

women and men. HEA, 2016: 1.1						
Action 5.1.4 Introduce compulsory selection and competency-based interview training for interview boards, including EDI and unconscious bias training. HEA, 2016: 1.16	To ensure that our selection and interview boards are following best practice in relation to EDI. In recognition that it may not be an achievable short-term objective to have all selection board members trained, it will be a short-term objective to ensure that at least the chair of the selection board has undergone such training.	Minimum of one training workshop held per semester Requirement that Chair has attended training – Dec. 2020 Requirement that all board members have attended training – Dec. 2021	Director HR, VP Admin. & Finance	100% attendance at training. All selection board chairs and members will have completed interview skills training to include EDI and unconscious bias. Compliance will be verified by report from Director HR to each meeting of the Equality Committee and to ET.		2
Action 5.1.5 Include the requirement that candidates must demonstrate evidence of leadership in equality and diversity in all job specifications for leadership positions e.g. Head of Department, Dean, Assistant Principal Officer. HEA, 2016: 1.4	To embed EDI into the culture of the College. To lead cultural and organisational change in the candidates area of responsibility. This requirement will be introduced on a phased basis; a desirable requirement in the first instance and then an essential requirement.	Dec. 2019 Evidence of leadership in EDI included as a desirable candidate requirement – Dec. 2019 Evidence of leadership in EDI included as an essential candidate requirement – Dec, 2020	Director HR, ET, Head of EDI	Leadership in EDI used as assessment criterion at shortlisting and interview stage. Communication via faculty boards and line managers of the requirement and the expressed intention that it will be an essential requirement. Greater confidence in staff that senior management understand the need to promote gender equality, increasing from 56%M/55%F to 75% of both genders. 100% of those appointed will have demonstrated evidence of leadership in equality and diversity.		1
Action 5.1.6 Require that all shortlisting and interview boards have a minimum	All selection and interview boards currently must have at least one male and one female member. However, greater balance	March 2020 40% minimum representation on shortlisting and	Director HR, ET	Compliance will be verified by report from Director HR to each meeting of the Equality Committee on selection board composition.		1

	of 40% of each gender. HEA, 2016: 1.6	is in line with best practice.	interview boards – March 2020				
	Action 5.1.7 Amend the Instrument of Government to remove the requirement that posts in Religion (including Theology and Catechetics), Philosophy and Philosophy of Education are subject to approval by the Trustees.	To ensure all appointments and posts follow the same recruitment process and policy and the potential for perceived bias is removed. To address a need for organisational change and embed EDI in the recruitment process.	Feb 2020 – Dec 2020	Chair of An t-Údarás Rialaithe (GA), President	Revision made to the Instrument of Government.		1
7. Ensure staff are confident that the recruitment processes are fair and transparent	Action 5.1.8 Hold information sessions to explain the selection and recruitment process and answers queries from staff.	Our staff survey revealed that a minority of staff perceived recruitment and selection processes to be fair and transparent, (36% a great deal and a lot – 39%M/34%F). Consult staff to establish what process changes are required, in line with MIC's policy development and review protocol.	Information sessions held – Dec. 2020	Head of EDI, Gender Equality Steering Group, ET	Recruitment and selection policy and procedure updated on the basis of the consultation process. Increase in staff perception that selection and recruitment processes are fair and transparent from 36% “a great deal/a lot” to 60% of staff by 2023.		1
8. Ensure all staff have timely access to induction	Action 5.1.9 Provide EDI and Unconscious Bias training to all new staff at induction.	To ensure that staff are made aware of the College's priorities in relation to EDI and appropriate practices are embedded in the College culture.	EDI and Unconscious Bias training included in induction –Aug 2020	Director HR, Head of EDI	Survey staff to monitor effectiveness of training after each course. Monitoring of attendance with a minimum of 75% of staff attending the training.		1
	Action 5.1.10 Provide a second formal induction in January of each year.	In order to ensure that staff who commence mid-year have the opportunity of availing of induction training (including EDI). Induction addresses many issues in relation to equality and it is important that staff are briefed on	Jan-21	HR Team	All staff have the opportunity to attend induction in a timely fashion. 75% of invited staff attend the training.		1

		EDI policies and practice from commencement of their post.					
9. Provide promotional opportunities for staff	Action 5.1.11 Develop and publish academic promotions process, which includes SL and PL promotions criteria, takes into account the full range of work-related activities and includes consideration of periods of leave.	To ensure transparency around criteria for promotions. To ensure that applicants who have availed of leave for caring purposes are not disadvantaged.	Consult with staff on draft promotion policy – commenced Promotion policy is made available on the staff portal – Mar, 2020	Director HR, ET	An increase in academic staff who understand the process/criteria from 41%F, 32%M to 60% of both genders by 2021 and 70% in 2023.		1
	Action 5.1.12 Advertise the current vacant SL/PL posts as merit-based appointments and introduce new promotional posts at SL and PL levels.	There has been no merit-based promotions since 2007. The introduction of new SL and PL posts is stated as a key enabling action as part of the Strategic Plan 2023. To improve prospects of future promotion. Only 22% of females and 28% of males believe that there is an attractive career path for them in MIC.	Promotional round advertised and PL/SL posts filled – Sept 2020	Director HR, ET	Feedback provided to candidates who are not successful. An increase in staff feeling that there is an attractive career path in MIC from 22%F/28%M to 60% of both genders by 2023.		1
5.3: CAREER DEVELOPMENT: ACADEMIC STAFF							
10. Provide training to support staff for career development	Action 5.3.1 Provide interviewee skills workshops on an annual basis (open to all staff).	To support staff, including those in underrepresented groups, to apply for positions. The most recent interviewee training was held in 2017 and only open to professional services staff.	Jan. 2020	Director HR, HR, Head of EDI	Uptake of the training monitored by grade and gender. Training promoted particularly to under-represented groups. Any differences between male and female staff perceptions identified and addressed. Effectiveness evaluated following each workshop. 85% of staff attended training by 2023.		1

	Action 5.3.2 Provide EDI training to staff on an annual basis (mandatory for line-managers).	To support the objective of embedding EDI in the culture of the College.	Annual EDI training delivered to all staff	Director HR, HR, Head of EDI	Uptake of the training monitored by grade and gender. Training promoted particularly to under-represented groups. Any differences between male and female staff perceptions identified and addressed. Effectiveness evaluated following each workshop. 85% of staff attended training by 2023.	1
	Action 5.3.3 Develop a system for recording training data including details of courses offered, number/gender of attendees and speakers.	To allow for monitoring of training data and to gather trends in terms of attendance and under-representation of staff categories at training and gender balance of speakers.	Database developed and implemented – Aug. 2021	Director ICT, Equality Committee	Trends monitor for gender and grade. Report provided to Equality Committee for consideration and remedial actions identified where required.	2
	Action 5.3.4 Provide professional development opportunities in the areas of management/ leadership skills training, information and advice on applying for grants, career advice and supervisory skills training (student supervision).	To ensure staff training needs are being met (female academic staff in particular expressed a desire for this CPD - 71% to 77% F in these areas).	Sept. 2020; ongoing Training provided annually for: leadership skills, applying for grants career advice supervisory skills (student supervision)	Director of HR, Director T&L, VP Research	20% decrease by 2023 in academic staff reporting they receive no encouragement to avail of training/professional development opportunities (31% overall - 24%M; 34%F in 2019 survey). Participation and effectiveness monitored on an ongoing basis.	1
11. Introduce a development review process	Action 5.3.5 Develop and implement an appraisal/development review process.	To support staff in their career development. Survey responses indicate that 70% of female academic staff and 53% of male academic would value appraisal/development reviews a great deal and a lot.	Guidance available for all staff on the staff portal – June 2022 Training delivered to HoDs and line managers – Aug. 2022 Development review process is rolled out – Sept. 2022	VP Academic Admin., Director HR, Deans, HoDs	Participation and effectiveness monitored on an ongoing basis. Staff asked to consider how they address EDI issues in the reviews. Increase in staff having opportunities for appraisal/development from 30%F/42%M to 60% of both genders in 2023. Increase in staff who report discussing	3

					career development with their line managers from 33%F/25%M to 60%F/52%M by 2023.		
	Action 5.3.6 Provide training to Heads of Departments and line-managers to support them in conducting appraisal/development reviews.	To provide support for staff responsible for conducting development reviews.	Guidance available for all staff on the staff portal – June 2022 Training delivered to HoDs and line managers – Aug. 2022 Development review process is rolled out – Sept. 2022	VP Academic Admin., Director HR, Deans, HoDs	Participation and effectiveness monitored on an ongoing basis. Staff asked to consider how they address EDI issues in the reviews. Increase in staff having opportunities for appraisal/development from 30%F/42%M to 60% of both genders in 2023. Increase in staff who report discussing career development with their line managers from 33%F/25%M to 60%F/52%M by 2023.		3
12. Enhance career development supports for postdoctoral researchers and staff on fixed-term contracts	Action 5.3.7 Amend the eligibility for criteria for the Research Support Scheme to include postdoctoral researchers and staff on fixed-term contracts.	To allow postdoctoral researchers, and those on fixed- term contracts access to similar career and research supports that permanent staff have. Female academic staff predominate in these staff categories. Currently all schemes are only open to permanent academic staff and some have a minimum length of service in MIC as a requirement.	June 2020 – Sept 2020; ongoing	VP Research	Postdoctoral researchers and staff on fixed term contracts are eligible to apply for research supports.		1
13. Introduce mentoring for staff	Action 5.3.8 Launch a mentoring programme to include training for mentees and mentors.	To provide support for staff in relation to career development. 74% of female and 49% of male academic staff surveyed indicated that they would greatly value mentoring to	Mentoring scheme developed and introduced – Sept. 2022 Training provided for mentees and mentors – Sept. 2022	VP Academic Affairs, Director HR, HoDs	Monitoring of the uptake of the scheme and impact by surveying participants. 25% of staff to be mentored by 2023.		3

		be made available to them.					
	Action 5.3.9 Support female staff to undertake the Aurora Leadership Development Programme for Women.	To develop the leadership skills and networks of female staff. Currently there is no leadership programme available for MIC female staff.	Minimum 2 academic staff per annum undertaking the programme – from Sept. 2020	Director HR, Head of EDI	Impact of the leadership programme on the career progression of the attendees monitored.		1
SECTION 5.5: FLEXIBLE WORKING & MANAGING CAREER BREAKS							
14. Improve the information and supports available to staff planning to avail of maternity and adoption leave	Action 5.5.1 Reconfigure the organisation of policies within the MIC staff portal.	To make all policies easier to access by all staff. Feedback from focus groups and the workplace survey indicates that the current layout of the policy section of the staff portal needs to be updated for ease of access. It is important for all staff to have access to HR policies, particularly those relating the EDI.	All carer-related policies are available under a single area of the HR section of the staff portal – June 2020 Information of the revised HR section of the staff portal communicated to all staff – July 2020	Director ICT, Director HR, Director of Executive Operations	Increase in staff awareness of policies, monitored through the annual workplace survey from 43% to 60% 'quite' and 'very aware' by 2023.		1
	Action 5.5.2 Develop an Adoption Leave policy.	To outline the supports available for staff who want to avail of this leave. There is currently no Adoption Leave policy.	Draft policy made available for staff consultation – April 2020 Policy finalised – Dec. 2020	Director HR, Equality Committee	Policies approved and disseminated via the staff portal. Supporting documentation made available to line-managers.		1
	Action 5.5.3 Develop a policy to support staff receiving IVF treatment.	To support staff undergoing IVF and provide guidance and information to their managers. There is also no policy in place for staff receiving IVF treatment or formal supports in place.	Draft policy made available for staff consultation – April 2020 Policy finalised – Dec. 2020	Director HR, Equality Committee	Policies approved and disseminated via the staff portal. Supporting documentation made available to line-managers.		1
	Action 5.5.4 Develop a policy to support staff who experience pregnancy loss (miscarriage and	Pregnancy loss from 26 weeks is covered by the maternity leave policy, however there is a need to support staff who		Director HR, Equality Committee	Policies approved and disseminated via the staff portal. Supporting documentation made available to line-managers.		1

	stillbirths under 26 weeks).	experience miscarriage and stillbirths under 26 weeks.					
	Action 5.5.5 Develop a handbook which offers guidance and checklists for line-managers to support staff before, during and after maternity/adoptive leave.	To provide support for staff before during and after leave, and to support line-managers to prepare effectively. To ensure that line-managers are clear about expectations from staff while on leave. Similarly, staff are clear about what is/is not expected during leave. Survey responses indicate a high proportion of staff who feel very little or no support before (35%), during (48%) and after maternity/adoption leave (50%).	§ Handbook is developed and available on the staff portal, including reference to: specific requirements for academic or professional service staff supports for staff returning to work (linked to Action 5.5.9) – Aug. 2021	Director HR, HoDs, Line-Managers	· HoDs and line-managers are briefed on the handbook. Included in manager training and at induction: 70% attendance 2021 75% attendance 2022 80% attendance 2023.		2
15. Enhance the supports provided when staff are taking maternity and adoption leave	Action 5.5.6 Provide staff taking maternity/adoption leave and other caring leave with the option of receiving information on promotional posts and new vacancies, while on leave.	To ensure staff are aware of promotion opportunities in the College during periods of maternity leave and other carers leave.	Jan. 2020	Director HR	Staff are offered the option of keeping up to date with information on promotional posts and new vacancies.		1
	Action 5.5.7 Introduce full replacement of academic staff taking maternity leave.	To ensure that the staff member and their colleagues are not disadvantaged by the redistribution of workload during maternity leave.	Full replacement cover made available for academic staff taking maternity leave – March 2020	VP Admin. & Finance, Director HR ET, HoDs	Allowance for handover to take place between cover staff and returning staff. Impact evaluated via staff survey.		1
	Action 5.5.8 Instruct all line-managers to liaise with HR at the earliest opportunity in	There have been occasions when both academic and professional services staff	Jan. 2020	Director HR	Increase in full-time cover for maternity and adoption leave.		1

	order to allow sufficient planning for cover to be in place.	have not been replaced – this disadvantages the staff member and also places an additional burden on colleagues.					
16. Cultivate a supportive environment for staff returning from maternity and adoption leave	Action 5.5.9 Develop a “returning to work” guide for staff returning from maternity/adoption leave. This should include information on facilities on-campus for breastfeeding/expressing milk.	To ensure all staff are aware of the supports available when returning to work.	Guide developed and available on the portal - Jan. 2021 Included in line- manager training – Jan. 2021 Awareness of the supports monitored in the staff survey – Dec. 2021	Director HR, VP Admin. & Finance	Meetings held with returning staff and their HoD/line-manager on return to work. Increase in the proportion of staff who felt they were supported ‘a great deal/a lot’ on return to work from 32% to 60% by 2023.		1
	Action 5.5.10 Identify and assign a suitable breastfeeding/expressing room for staff and students in MIC Thurles.	To provide suitable facilities for mothers who are breast-feeding.	Apr-20	Senior Campus Administrator	Breastfeeding/expressing room available in MIC Thurles campus.		1
	Action 5.5.11 Introduce a research grant for returning academic carers.	To support staff in re-establishing their research careers on return from extended leave (20 weeks or more) for reasons connected to caring.	Information on the new procedures are communicated to all staff and available on the staff portal – Aug. 2021	VP Research, Deans	Research grant available for academics returning from leave connected to caring. Uptake of the grant is monitored.		2
17. Enhance the information and supports provided for staff taking paternity and parental leave	Action 5.5.12 Provide cover for lecturing hours for academic staff taking paternity leave.	To support staff who are taking paternity leave. To ensure teaching hours are covered.	Aug. 2020	ET, Director HR	Funding is provided to ensure that cover for teaching hours is available. Increase in staff uptake of paternity leave.		1
	Action 5.5.13 Communicate guidelines to line-managers about the process for applying for paternity leave.	To ensure line managers and HoDs are up to date with the process for staff applying for paternity leave.	HoDs and line-managers are briefed on the process – Jan. 2021 Spotlight on HR policies included in quarterly Athena SWAN e-zine – commenced	Director HR, Head of EDI	Increased staff awareness of policies, monitored through the annual workplace survey from 43% (2019) to 60% ‘quite/very aware’ by 2023.		1

	Action 5.5.14 Increase the awareness of paternity, adoption and parental leave supports available to all staff through an awareness raising campaign and spotlight on HR policies. (Linked to Action 5.6.6)	To ensure all staff are aware of the supports that are available to them. To provide information to staff of their entitlement to different leave options and their rights and responsibilities before, during and after the leave.	HoDs and line-managers are briefed on the process – Jan. 2021 Spotlight on HR policies included in quarterly Athena SWAN e-zine – commenced	Director HR, Head of EDI	Publicise case studies of staff who have availed of parental leave and have also progressed in their careers.		1
18. Provide flexible working opportunities for staff	Action 5.5.15 Develop and implement a flexible working policy.	To enhance the work/life balance of staff and to support staff with different caring responsibilities. Introduction of flexible working was ranked as 3rd priority change staff would like to see in MIC. 78% of staff indicated that they would value a flexible working policy “a great deal/a lot” (57% males, 85% females).	Flexible working policy implemented – Sept. 2021 All staff are made aware of the policy through information sessions and policy disseminated via the staff portal –Sept. 2021	Director HR, HoDs, Line Managers	Briefing sessions are delivered to HoDs and line-managers and guidance developed to support the implementation of the policy. The number of staff seeking flexible working arrangements following the introduction of the policy is monitored and trends identified for staff categories, male/female staff uptake and any differences between offices and/or departments.		2
	Action 5.5.16 Amend the Shorter Working Year policy to include temporary staff.	To provide both permanent and temporary staff equal access to supports.	Changes communicated to all staff and updated policy available on the portal – Dec. 2020	Director HR, VP Gov.& Strategy	Amendments made to the policy to give equal access to supports for permanent and temporary staff. In cases where the Shorter Working Year is not granted, departments should consider, in advance of refusing any application, whether an application for a different period of leave or a different time of the year would be acceptable.		1
19. Ensure staff are supported when changing working arrangements	Action 5.5.17 Offer support to staff transitioning from part-time to full-time work. (linked to action 5.3.8 on	To support staff moving from part-time to full-time work. There is a predominance of female	Jan. 2021; ongoing	Director HR, HoDs, Line-Managers	HoDs and line-managers are briefed on how they can support a staff member transitioning from part-time to full-time work. Support is		2

	introduction of a mentoring scheme).	staff working on a part-time basis.			available for staff transitioning from full-time to part-time work also.		
20. Support staff seeking childcare in close proximity to their workplace	Action 5.5.18 Review previous childcare provision feasibility study in the current climate.	To support staff and students with childcare responsibilities. To assist with work-life balance of staff and remove barriers for parents in the workforce. 69% of staff indicated that they would value childcare facilities on campus 'a great deal/a lot' (69%F, 68%M).	Jan. 2021 – Jan. 2022	VP Admin. & Finance, Head of EDI	The feasibility study is reopened and reviewed. A report is prepared for ET and the Equality Committee. Staff and students are surveyed in relation to childcare provision as part of the new review.		2
	Action 5.5.19 Seek childcare places for MIC staff in facilities near to MIC Limerick and Thurles.	To support staff with childcare responsibilities.	Sept. 2020 – Dec. 2020	Head of EDI	Contact is made with childcare providers in the locality to hold places annually that are offered in the first instance to MIC staff.		1
21. Provide a supportive environment for staff with caring responsibilities	Action 5.5.20 Draft a Carer's Leave Policy, to include information on availing of Carer's Leave.	To support staff with caring responsibilities. To ensure staff are aware of the supports available to them as carers.	Commenced – Sept. 2021	UR, ET, Director HR, Equality Committee	Carers Leave Policy developed and available on the portal.		2
	Action 5.5.21 Launch a Parents and Carer's Network group to create awareness and support staff.	To provide peer support in the workplace environment for staff who have caring responsibilities.	Parent and Carers Network group launched Dec. 2021	Director of EDI	Group convened at least 4 times per annum. Links created with the existing Student Parent Support Service. Impact reviewed biennially as part of staff survey.		2
SECTION 5.6: ORGANISATION & CULTURE							
22. Embed gender equality and inclusivity in the culture of MIC	Action 5.6.1 Amend the terms of reference of the Equality Committee to prioritise attention to issues of diversity and inclusion and broaden the Equality Policy to include EDI.	To monitor practices and policies within the institution around equality, diversity and inclusion.	Terms of Reference of the Equality Committee amended – June 2020	GA, ET, Equality Committee	Increased perception that senior management have demonstrated clear leadership in promoting gender equality from 44%M/39%F to 70% of both genders by 2023.		1

<p>Action 5.6.2 Include EDI as a standing item on the agenda of faculty board meetings and key influential committees.</p>	<p>To allow for gender equality issues and wider EDI issues to be identified and discussed at faculty level. To embed EDI in the culture of MIC and to monitor the progress of the implementation of the Athena SWAN action plan.</p>	<p>EDI included as an agenda item on all faculty board meetings and key influential committees – Jan. 2021</p>	<p>VP Academic Affairs, VP Admin. & Finance</p>	<p>Faculty boards and key influential committees report on progress in relation to EDI initiatives and this action plan. Recommendations to advance EDI made to ET, GA and the Equality Committee.</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Action 5.6.3 Incorporate the gender dimension in the institutional quality assurance reporting, quality reviews and surveys. HEA, 2016: 1.12</p>	<p>The Quality Office facilitates continuous quality improvement across all the College's academic and professional service units. At the moment, gender data is not incorporated. To embed the gender dimension in quality review processes including aspects relating to teaching and learning.</p>	<p>Gender equality incorporated into the terms of reference of quality reviews – Dec. 2021</p>	<p>Director of Quality, Head of EDI</p>	<p>Quality reviews identify actions to promote gender equality within academic departments and professional service areas. Additional questions with a gender dimension are included on module satisfaction surveys and surveys for students.</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Action 5.6.4 Continue to implement the Athena SWAN and broader EDI communication strategy to reach staff.</p>	<p>To increase the awareness of the Athena SWAN Charter and process amongst staff. Awareness of the Athena SWAN Charter was 53%M/48%F ('very aware' and 'quite aware') in 2019. Awareness of the processes around Athena SWAN in MIC was 58%M/45%F ('very aware' and 'quite aware') in 2019.</p>	<p>Produce a quarterly e-zine to update all staff on the progress and work of the AS team – ongoing Continue with Equality Talk series – ongoing Athena SWAN noticeboard visible and kept up to date – ongoing</p>	<p>AS Project Manager, Gender Equality Steering Group</p>	<p>Awareness of the AS Charter and process within MIC increased by 20% by March 2021 with additional incremental increases to 90% by 2023. Gender and staff function data disaggregated to note change in each. Increase Twitter followers from 368 by 100 annually. Focus groups with professional services staff to find out how best we can communicate. Disseminate an annual AS report to governance committees, senior management and the staff body.</p>	<p>1</p>

23. Nurture a respectful working environment for all staff	Action 5.6.5 Develop a policy to support the implementation of the framework for consent in HEIs Safe, Respectful, Supportive and Positive: Ending Sexual Harassment in Irish Higher Education Institutions.	To support MIC's commitment to implementing the framework for consent in HEIs, launched in 2019.	Jan. 2021 – Sept. 2021	Head of EDI, Director HR, Equality Committee	Bullying Harassment and Sexual Harassment policy developed and disseminated via staff portal. Training evaluated and reviewed annually for effectiveness.	2
	Action 5.6.6 Hold quarterly "drop-in" information sessions where staff can direct informal queries to HR.	To increase the awareness of HR policies amongst staff.	Jan. 2020; ongoing Four HR 'drop-in' clinics held per year in Limerick and Thurles	Director HR	Review report submitted to Equality Committee annually. Increase in staff awareness of policies from 43% to 60% 'quite' and 'very aware' by 2023.	1
	Action 5.6.7 Provide mandatory training on key HR policies for all staff that have line-management responsibilities.	To ensure line-managers are aware of staff entitlements and are supported to effectively implement HR policies.	Jan. 2020 – Jan. 2021 Two workshops held annually	Director HR, VP Admin. & Finance	90% of line-managers attended training by Year 3. All training data to be recorded and monitored in relation to attendees, speakers and feedback on each session.	1
	Action 5.6.8 Provide 'dignity and respect at work' training to all staff and students.	30% of survey respondents (27% female and 37% male) indicated that they have experienced or witnessed sexist language and/or inappropriate behaviour. However only 57% of respondents (59% male and 57% female) would feel comfortable reporting any instances where they have felt they have been, or witnessed others being treated unfavourably. To help staff recognise what constitutes harassment, to inform line-managers	Dignity & Respect training offered annually – Sept 2020 Poster campaign rolled out across both campuses – Sept 2020 Spotlight on 'dignity at work' included in AS quarterly e-zine	Head of EDI, Director HR, Director of Student Life, MISU Equality Officer	80% attendance at dignity and respect training for all new staff members. 100% of staff reached by 2023. Increase in the response rate on the number of staff who would report an incident of bullying and harassment, from 57% (59%M/57%F) to 75% 2021 and 85% 2023. Training evaluated & reviewed annually for effectiveness.	1

		about their responsibilities to address issues, and direct staff to reporting options and supporting resources.					
	Action 5.6.9 Launch a 'dignity at work' awareness raising campaign.		Dignity & Respect training offered annually – Sept 2020 Poster campaign rolled out across both campuses – Sept 2020 Spotlight on 'dignity at work' included in AS quarterly e-zine	Head of EDI, Director HR	80% attendance at dignity and respect training for all new staff members. 100% of staff reached by 2023. Increase in the response rate on the number of staff who would report an incident of bullying and harassment, from 57% (59%M/57%F) to 75% 2021 and 85% 2023. Training evaluated & reviewed annually for effectiveness.		1
24. Lead cultural and organisational change	Action 5.6.10 The Board of Trustees, in their right to appoint the Chair of An t-Udarás Rialaithe (Governing Authority), to implement gender balance through chair rotation or the appointment of a female co-chair.	To ensure gender equality in the chairing of governance committees and demonstrate leadership in embedding EDI within the culture of MIC.	2023 (the expiry of the term of office of the current GA, or at the next occasion of a vacancy in the chair: whichever is sooner)	Board of Trustees	Item tabled in meeting of Board of Trustees and recorded in minutes. Either chair rotation or female co-chair of Governing Authority in place. Increased perception that senior management have demonstrated clear leadership in promoting gender equality from 44%M/39%F to 70% of both genders by 2023.		3
	Action 5.6.11 Revise the current practice for communicating the processes surrounding key structural changes with staff.	To ensure open and transparent communication with staff regarding the rationale and process for restructuring of governance and management committees.	Mar-20	President, Director of Executive Operations	Enhanced practice in place for sharing rationale and outcomes related to major restructuring of governance and management committees.		1
25. Guarantee minimum 40% gender representation	Action 5.6.12 Require that the membership of influential institutional committees	Not all of our influential institutional committees, which report to An t-Udarás Rialaithe	Jan. 2020 – June 2023	VP Gov. & Strategy, Director of	40% gender representation achieved on all of influential institutional committees. Committees with less than		2

on influential committees	consist of at least 40% of female and 40% of male members over a 3-year period.	(Governing Authority), are gender balanced.		Executive Operations	40% representation of either gender proactively address the gender imbalance, either through election or co-option.		
	Action 5.6.13 Incorporate term of office limits within all committee terms of reference, including length of tenure for the Chairperson.	To ensure that rotation of membership and the chair role occurs.	Jan. 2020 – June 2020	VP Gov. & Strategy, Director of Executive Operations	Committee terms of reference include specific guidelines for terms of office for members and chairperson.		1
	Action 5.6.14 Develop procedures for appointing chairs of key influential committees to ensure that at least 40% of chairs will be of each gender any given year. HEA 2016: 1.7	To address the under-representation of female chairs of influential institutional committees.	Jan. 2020 – Dec. 2020	VP Gov. & Strategy, Director of Executive Operations	At least 40% of the chairs of influential committees (concerned with resource-allocation, appointments and promotions) across the College are of each gender in any given year. It is expected that over a three-year period the ratio would be 50:50 female and male chairs.		1
	Action 5.6.15 Monitor committee membership annually and check for any potential overload.	To ensure that committee posts are not creating a disproportionate and gendered workload.	April 2020; ongoing	Equality Committee	Report on membership and chair roles provided to Governing Authority annually, to include recommendations for action. Committee participation in recognised in the workload allocation model (Action 5.6.19).		1
26. Consider gender equality in the development and review of policies and procedures	Action 5.6.16 Develop an Equality Impact Assessment (modelled on the Irish Human Rights and Equality Committee guidance) to be used when developing and reviewing all policies.	To ensure that all policies consider the equality dimension.	Dec. 2021	VP Gov. & Strategy	Equality Impact Assessment model used to review existing and new policies.		2
27. Introduce a workload allocation model	Action 5.6.17 Conduct a review of workload models in other	To ensure that best practice from other HEIs in considered when	Commenced – June 2020	VP Academic Affairs, Director of HR	Meetings regarding implementation issues and effectiveness held with other		1

	HEIs to inform the design of the MIC model.	designing the workload model.			HEIs. Draft model circulated to staff and unions for consultation.		
	Action 5.6.18 Provide staff training regarding applying the model alongside training for line-managers to ensure equality in allocation and monitoring of workloads.	To provide line-managers with guidance on equitable allocation of workloads.	Sept. – Dec. 2020	VP Academic Affairs, Director of HR	100% participation of line-managers in workload allocation training.		1
	Action 5.6.19 Introduce the workload model and monitor for gender bias.	To provide fair workloads for academic staff in MIC. To monitor allocation of workloads for any gender bias. 51% of female academics compared to 72% of male academic agree/strongly agree that work is allocated in a transparent manner in 2019.	Jan. 2021; ongoing	VP Academic Affairs, Director of HR	Increase in the proportion of staff who agree/strongly agree that work is allocated in a fair and transparent manner to 80% of both genders by 2023. Model reviewed with modifications implemented where appropriate and communicated to staff.		2
28. Accommodate staff with caring responsibilities when scheduling meeting	Action 5.6.20 Review the procedure for when timetabling is devised and notice given to staff.	To ensure there are no negative impacts on staff in particular those with caring responsibilities. Staff survey comments indicate that timetabling at departmental level is not consistent.	Aug. 2020	Assistant Registrar, Deans, HoDs	Recommendations for improvement sent to Deans/HoDs. Timetabling process allows for sufficient time for staff to make caring arrangements.		1
	Action 5.6.21 Develop and implement guidelines on core meeting times. (linked to Action 5.5.15 on flexible working).	To enable staff to meet their responsibilities outside of work while fulfilling their employment obligations. 73% of staff (75%F/67%M) indicated they would value (a great deal and a lot) core meeting times being made available.	Jan. 2020- Jan. 2021	GA, ET, Director HR	Policy in place stating that college and faculty meetings, seminars and workshops are to be held within core working hours. Meetings conducted via Skype to avoid staff needing to commute between Thurles and Limerick where possible. Impact monitored via the Annual Self-Evaluation		1

					Surveys of all committees issued by the Quality Office.		
29. Demonstrate organisational commitment to gender equality by supporting EDI events and promoting (female and male) role models	Action 5.6.22 Develop guidelines for holding inclusive and equitable events, to include guidelines for communications/publicity materials, speaker selection and programme development.	To support and embed EDI into the culture of MIC. To promote diversity of attendance and inclusivity of participation at college events.	Oct. 2020	Head of EDI, Director of Strategic Comms. & Marketing	Guidelines for best practice in developing inclusive conferences and events developed and available on the portal. Publicity materials including website content and images promote role models of all genders.		1
	Action 5.6.23 Provide institutional support for events such as FemFest, International Women's Day (March annually) and International Men's Day (Nov. annually).	To increase visibility of role models for staff and students. To promote the staff and student community in MIC, and the increased diversity of research activities and programmes of study.	Dec. 2019 – Dec. 2023 International Women's Day and International Men's day celebrated annually	ET, Head of EDI, Director of Strategic Comms. & Marketing	Annual events to recognise and celebrate the achievements of women and men across a range of disciplines. Attendance and gender balance of speakers monitored.		1
	Action 5.6.24 Profile female and male alumni through artwork, exhibitions and the naming of buildings and spaces.	To ensure visibility of role models to both staff and students throughout the campus.	Jan. 2023	Head of EDI, Director of Strategic Comms. & Marketing	Exhibitions on distinguished graduates with due regard to gender equality. New buildings/spaces named after prominent female graduates.		3
30. Tackle the gender imbalance in the student population	Action 5.6.25 Promote Faculty of Education programmes to male students through activities such as TY taster courses and guest speakers from relevant courses in MIC.	Currently the male enrolment rate in Faculty of Education programmes is only 15%.	10 schools conducting TY taster courses and 11 guest speaker visits to schools – May 2021	Director of Community Engagement	Male students enrolling in Faculty of Education programmes above 20% of cohort by 2023.		2
	Action 5.6.26 Develop a social media campaign to promote our Education and Liberal Arts programmes to male secondary school students	Males make up 19% of the student population across all programmes. This media campaign will be aimed at increasing male enrolment rates.	Sept. 2021 – May 2023	Director of Strategic Comms. & Marketing	50,000 impressions for each video in social media campaign. 30% increase by 2023 in CAO applications for MIC programmes from male students (in 2018 27% of CAO		2

					applications were from male students).		
	Action 5.6.27 Conduct research, in partnership with local DEIS schools in Limerick City, on male students' perceptions of primary teaching and early childhood care as a career.	In order to inform future outreach and student recruitment activities.	Sept. 2019 – Dec. 2020	PATH Programme Manager, Director of Student Life	Report developed and recommendations considered by the Equality and the Access Committee.		1
31. Monitor outreach activities for EDI	Action 5.6.28 Implement a formal monitoring system of outreach activities including attendance, speakers and staff engagement.	To record participation and uptake of outreach activities by school type and gender and to record staff engagement in outreach by grade and gender.	Online record system developed and operating – Aug. 2020	Director ICT, Director of Enterprise & Community Engagement	Annual report published on annual outreach activities, to include data on staff engagement by gender and grade, and participant uptake by school type and gender.		1
32. Submit departmental Athena Swan applications	Action 5.6.29 Provide a briefing session for Faculty Management Committees on the Athena SWAN department application process (Faculty level) and invite the Athena SWAN Ireland manager to contribute.	To progress towards a future application for a Silver Institutional award, our faculties will need to begin working on the Athena SWAN Bronze Departmental award. Given the staff numbers in MIC and the fact that students are assigned to a faculty and not a department, it is planned that faculties will apply as a whole for the AS department awards.	Nov. 2019 – March 2020	Head of EDI, AS Manager	Briefing session held for Faculty of Education Management Committee and Faculty of Arts Management Committee.		1
	Action 5.6.30 Establish faculty self-assessment teams.	To review current practice from a gender equality perspective and prepare for the submission of a Bronze Departmental Award. Ownership of and engagement with the	Faculty of Arts –April 2020 Faculty of Education – April 2021	Head of EDI, Deans	Faculty self-assessment teams established. Minimum of six meetings of each faculty held annually.		1

		process within each faculty is required.					
	Action 5.6.31 Submit Bronze Departmental Award applications from the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Arts	To embed the Athena SWAN Charter and principles at faculty level.	Nov. 2020 and Nov. 2021	Deans, AS Manager	Two Bronze Departmental (faculty) award applications submitted for assessment.		1
SECTION 6: SUPPORTING TRANS PEOPLE							
33. Provide a supportive environment for LGBTQ+ staff and students	Action 6.1 Develop a Gender Identity and Expression Policy.	To support transgender staff and students in MIC.	April 2019 – June 2020	Equality Committee	Gender and Identity policy developed and available on the portal.		1
	Action 6.2 Provide transgender awareness training to staff and students, including training on the Gender Identity and Expression policy.	To raise awareness of transgender issues and support staff and students. The majority of staff (59%; 46%F/67%M) 'neither agree nor disagree' in response to the statement that the College provides a supportive environment for transgender people.	May 2019; Ongoing	Director HR, Head of EDI, MISU	Trans Awareness workshops provided bi-annually. Guidance given to students during orientation and programme information sessions. Increase in staff that strongly agree/agree that MIC provides a supportive environment for transgender persons from 29% - 18%M/33%F (2019) to 60% of both genders by 2023.		1
	Action 6.3 Fund an external mentor to drive the reestablishment of the student LGBTQ+ society.	To provide support for LGBTQ+ students in MIC.	Dec. 2019 – Dec. 2020	Head of EDI, MISU President, MISU General Manager	An external mentor in place, to develop a medium to long term plan of support initiatives, campaigns, information seminars, workshops to support LGBTQ+ students.		1
	Action 6.4 Review changing facilities in Tailteann (Sports Complex) and MIC Thurles to accommodate transgender students and staff. Include gender-neutral facilities in the design of all new buildings.	To ensure all staff and students have access to safe and appropriate bathroom and changing facilities.	Aug. 2020 – July 2021	Building Maintenance Manager, VP Admin. & Finance	Gender-neutral changing facilities identified in both Limerick and Thurles. The design of any new building to have gender-neutral facilities (toilets and changing facilities).		1

	Action 6.5 Identify contact/support person for students and staff in relation to LGBTQ+ issues, and include in student handbooks and MISU information.	To raise awareness of supports for LGBTQ+ students.	A dedicated liaison person in place – Sept 2021	Director of Student Life, MISU President	Comprehensive information on the supports for LGBTQ+ staff and students shared during induction/orientation.		2
34. Monitor the impact of the Gender Identity and Expression policy	Action 6.6 Ensure the Gender Identity and Expression policy includes details of how the impact of the policy will be monitored.	To monitor and evaluate the impact of the Gender Identity and Expression policy.	Ongoing; June 2020	Equality Committee, Head of EDI	Equality Committee reviews a report from Head of EDI on the operation of the policy after 12 months.		1
	Action 6.7 Include questions relating to Gender Identity and Expression policy awareness in our staff survey.	To monitor awareness of the Gender Identity and Expression policy amongst staff.	Mar-21	Head of EDI	New question included in staff survey in relation to policy awareness.		2
35. Allow students identify their preferred gender where required on student records	Action 6.8 Update paper forms and online Student Record System (existing and new) with multiple gender fields.	To ensure that the Student Record System allows students to identify by their preferred identity.	Jan. 2020 – Dec. 2020	VP Academic Affairs, Director of Academic Info Systems	Existing Student Record System and forms updated to include multiple gender fields. New MIC system to have multiple gender fields from the outset.		1
36. Raise awareness of issues faced by members of the LGBTQ+ community	Action 6.9 Engage GOSHH, an organisation based in Limerick, to provide LGBTQ+ training for staff and students.	To assist in providing a safe environment for all students and staff in MIC.	Feb. 2020; ongoing	VP Academic Affairs, Director of Student Life, MISU President	GOSHH LGBTQ+ training delivered annually in Limerick and Thurles. Attendance and effectiveness monitored via anonymous survey evaluations.		1
	Action 6.10 Develop a plan of events and activities to continue to raise awareness of transgender persons including Trans Awareness Week.	To help raise the visibility of transgender and gender non-conforming people, and address the issues the community faces.	Oct. 2021; ongoing	Head of EDI, Director of Student Life	A range of events and activities organised across the college for both students, staff and the wider community. Annual Trans Awareness Week celebrated.		2

SECTION 7: FURTHER INFORMATION							
37. Provide an inclusive and supportive environment for staff and students	Action 7.1 Provide the Living Equality and Diversity (LEAD) online programme to new staff as part of their induction and to all existing staff.	The LEAD e-learning programme is currently being redeveloped by the Irish University Associated and the Athena SWAN Ireland Committee.	Dec. 2020; ongoing	Head of EDI, Director HR	LEAD e-learning programme available to all existing and new staff. 55% of staff competing programme in Year 1, raising by 20% annually. Effectiveness of the programme reviewed.		2
	Action 7.2 Develop guidelines for staff and line-managers on providing support for menopausal symptoms at work.	Feedback from focus groups identified the lack of support or understanding for staff experiencing menopause.	Jan. 2023 – June 2023	Head of EDI, Director HR	Guidelines developed and disseminated to line-managers and staff via the portal. Training held for all line-managers. 50% attendance in Year 1, rising by 20% annually.		3
	Action 7.3 Survey staff and students to ascertain the needs of minority and marginalised communities in MIC with consideration of intersectionality.	To identify needs of minority and marginalised groups in MIC.	Survey developed and disseminated to staff and student – March 2022 Focus groups held to gather additional information where necessary – June 2022	Head of EDI, Equality Committee	Report prepared for the Equality Committee identifying recommendations for changes in current practices, policies and infrastructure.		3

1.b Progress achieved through implementation of previous action plan

- b. Comment and reflect on the progress achieved through implementation of the institution's most recent action plan. This should include:
- + direct reference to the previous action plan, and, where appropriate, future action plan;
 - + qualitative and quantitative data to evidence the evaluation of progress;
 - + information on the methodology of action implementation, evaluation and iteration;
 - + comment on factors (internal or external to the institution) that acted as barriers or facilitators to the implementation of actions and meeting of success measures. Where relevant, make reference to actions from the previous action plan that have been rated as amber or red, and any actions that were removed over the course of the award. Where challenges to successful implementation are noted, outline the steps taken to respond to these, and how the action plan was adjusted;
 - + description of the main learnings and outcomes from the evaluation of the action plan and how learning can be applied to improve implementation, outcomes or impacts of the future action plan;
 - + information, where relevant, on how panel feedback on the previous institution application has been actioned over the course of the award.

Action plan implementation progress

The implementation of the 2019 action plan was led by dedicated units across the institution, including the EDII Office, EDII Director, EDII Implementation Committee and ET. The plan included 100 actions. Using the RAG rating, we made progress with 83 actions – 32 green (completed) and 51 amber (in progress). Seventeen actions are red rated (no progress).

Table 7: Summary RAG review of 2019 AS action plan

2019 action plan section	Green	Amber	Red	Total no. of actions
3. The Self-Assessment Process	4	1	0	5
4.1 Academic & Research Staff	0	8	1	9
5.1 Key Career Transition Points: Academic Staff	6	4	2	12
5.3 Career Development: Academic Staff	2	4	3	9
5.5 Flexible Working & Managing Career Breaks	8	7	6	21
5.6 Organisation & Culture	7	21	3	31
6. Supporting Trans People	4	4	2	10
7. Further Information	1	2	0	3
Total	32	51	17	100

The MIC community shares a sense of satisfaction in the achievements made, particularly in relation to actions that are now ‘business as usual’ **(5.1.6, 5.3.9, 5.5.6, 5.5.16, 5.6.21, 5.6.23)**.

The self-assessment process identified action plan barriers and enablers. In relation to barriers, vague actions or ones with unclear measures proved challenging to implement. Others were discontinued due to a lack of evidence that they were SMART or where they no longer aligned to the new AS charter. Covid-19 was another barrier to implementation. Our Bronze award was announced the same week institutions were closed in March 2020. The impact of the pandemic was significant in terms of delaying the formation of the EDII Implementation Committee, establishing the EDII Office and appointing the EDII Director. Having said that, significant progress was made throughout this award period, as will be reflected upon below.

We responded to panel feedback on the plan and focused on making actions ‘SMARTer’ for impact. The plan also seeks to align to wider institution priorities and strategic plans. We now have 57 overarching actions with detailed sub-actions to give clear direction for implementation.

Our summary of the progress made with the 2019 action plan is based on identified objectives from the plan.

Objective 1: Establish dedicated EDI structures to ensure that the gender equality agenda is supported and implemented in MIC (actions 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 3.1: Conduct biennial staff workplace survey to monitor gender and EDI issues. Target under-represented departments/offices/areas in future staff surveys.	Yellow
Action 3.2: Create permanent EDI structures including the appointment of a Head of EDI as a senior post and an Athena SWAN Manager to progress Athena SWAN initiatives.	Green
Action 3.3: Form the Gender Equality Steering Group.	Green
Action 3.4: Provide a dedicated EDI budget with specific funding for Athena SWAN action plans.	Green
Action 3.5: Nominate AS Champions in each faculty/area.	Green

Positive activities achieved since 2020 include:

- Appointment of the Director of EDII in 2022 **(Action 3.2)**
- Interculturalism aligns with MIC’s social justice ethos
- Development and approval of the EDII Strategic Plan
- Since 2019, MIC investment of €507,826 in EDII with a recurrent EDII budget established in 2022 **(Action 3.4)**
- Increased funding to enable female staff to undertake the Aurora programme (see under Objective 13) **(Action 5.3.9)**
- The annual Africa Day, a student-led initiative by our African students and staff

- Establishment of EDII Implementation Committee (**Action 3.3**) in 2022 with responsibility for overseeing the strategic development and mainstreaming of EDII at MIC and enacting MIC AS action plans (institutional and faculty)
- Drawn from staff (two PMS and three academic), five EDII Champion roles established (**Action 3.5**)

As highlighted in the 2019 panel feedback:

“considering the size of MIC, this level of investment in dedicated staff is a notable indicator of MIC’s commitment to advancing gender quality, and the plan to appoint a Head of EDI (p.6) will no doubt be a key driver of gender equality in the future” (Athena Swan Ireland Panel Commendation, 2019)

It is evident from the staff survey that most respondents are aware of AS.

Table 8: Survey responses in relation to Athena Swan

Item	N	Indicators
Charter awareness	248	91%F/90%M aware
Knowledge increasing since the achievement of MIC AS awards	251	79%F/85%M agree
Witnessing improvements since the AS awards were achieved	251	33%F/20%M agree

“MIC is on a journey and progress in my view has been good. It needs to maintain the drive and face down any opposition.” (Male academic)

However, there is scope to communicate better with staff (**New actions GE 5.1, GE 5.2 and GE 2.6**).

We consulted with staff on what they think their own responsibility is in terms of driving change. The highest proportion of responses (n=125) related to advocating for EDII and using opportunities to promote in their own area as well as leading by example.

“Representing for such change at Department and Faculty Board levels.” (Male academic)

“Ensuring I inform myself but also that I take action where I see harassment, discrimination, etc. That I ensure that I champion EDII and gender equality policies in my work.” (Female PMS)

We have been engaging with staff annually since the 2019 submission (**Action 3.1**), Figure 15.

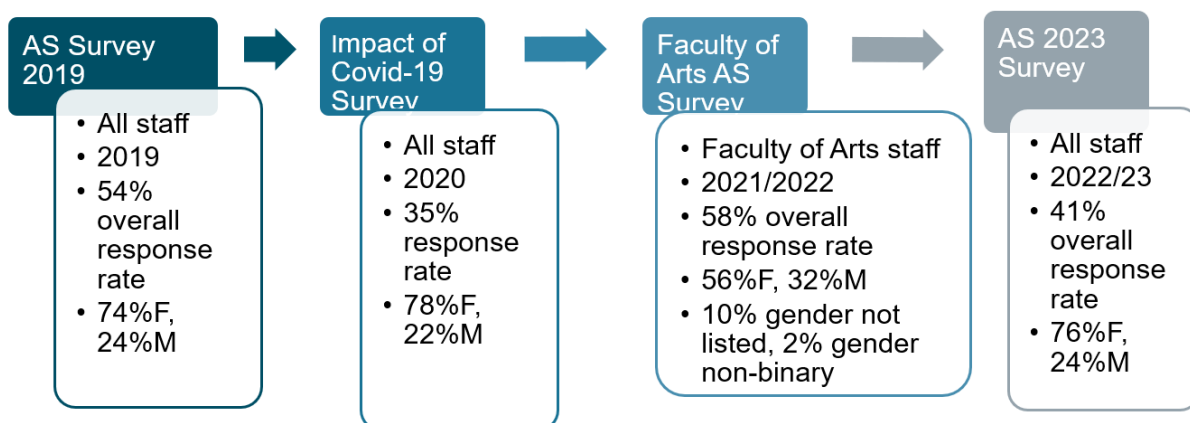


Figure 15: Athena Swan/EDII staff surveys

Participation rates have fluctuated, reasons for which include survey fatigue and the Covid-19 pandemic. While we conducted other forms of staff consultation, including focus groups and information roadshow sessions, surveys are important data monitoring tools for our action plan (**New actions GE 5.1 and GE 5.2**).

MIC proactively engages with HEIs across the sector on the HEA Gender Equality Enhancement Fund projects shown in Table 9.

Table 9: MIC engagement with Gender Equality Enhancement Fund projects

Year	Project	MIC role
2020	The development and implementation of a Gender Identity, Expression & Diversity Training programme for staff in Irish HEIs	Collaborator
2021	Embedding gender identity, expression and diversity training and best practice in Irish HEIs	Collaborator
	Integrating the gender dimension into teaching, learning and educational outreach in initial teacher education	Lead
2022	Edited academic publication entitled <i>Transforming Gender Equality and Inclusion within Higher Education in Ireland – Contemporary Perspectives</i>	Lead
	Engaging men in building gender equality – the development of a pilot programme in Irish HEIs	Collaborator
	Addressing the gender pay gap in Irish higher education	Collaborator
2023	Athena Swan Support and Bespoke Training for Smaller HEIs	Lead



ACTIONS

New Action GE 5.1: Enhance staff and student awareness of Athena Swan and EDII matters and conduct regular consultation.

New Action GE 5.2: Host an annual Athena Swan Day.

New Action GE 2.6: Improve engagement with precarious staff cohorts.

Objective 2: Address gender under-representation of academic and research staff (of both females and males) (actions 4.1, 4.2, 4.3; interrelated actions 5.6.25, 5.6.26, 5.6.27)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 4.1: Improve the percentage of female academic staff above Lecturer level.	
Action 4.2: Explore the feasibility of rotation of senior positions (e.g. Head of Department/Director) when future vacancies arise.	
Action 4.3: Implement measures to attract male candidates to posts in the Faculty of Education.	
Action 5.6.25: Promote Faculty of Education programmes to male students through activities such as TY taster courses and guest speakers from relevant courses in MIC.	
Action 5.6.26: Develop a social media campaign to promote our Education and Liberal Arts programmes to male secondary school students.	
Action 5.6.27: Conduct research, in partnership with local DEIS schools in Limerick City, on male students' perceptions of primary teaching and early childhood care as a career.	

Considerable progress has been made towards achieving gender balance among academics above lecturer level as a result of the introduction of merit-based promotions. For academic staff, there had been no merit-based promotions process since 2007, and discussions were ongoing with the union. The recent merit-based promotions had an impact on the gender profile, more notably at Principal Lecturer (PL) grades, which changed from 17%F in 2019 to 56%F in June 2023. Three of the current nine PL posts are held by females as a direct result of the merit-based promotions. The female percentage remained more consistent at 48% for SL (2019–2023) (**New Action GE 1.4**).

Having a higher proportion of females in lower-paid roles is an ongoing trend, especially in PMS services. This is highlighted in MIC's gender pay gap report 2022 (**New actions GE 3.12 and GE 3.10**).

Table 10: Academic staff, 2021–2023

Academic staff	2021			2022			2023		
	T	F	%F	T	F	%F	T	F	%F
President	1	0	0%	1	0	0%	1	0	0%
Vice President	2	1	50%	2	1	50%	2	1	50%
Principal Lecturer	5	1	20%	6	2	33%	9	5	56%
Senior Lecturer	31	14	45%	32	14	44%	33	16	48%
Lecturer	119	83	70%	123	87	71%	122	85	70%
Assistant Lecturer	19	11	58%	18	10	56%	21	13	62%
LINC Tutor	13	13	100%	7	7	100%	8	8	100%
Teaching Fellow	11	9	82%	10	8	80%	18	12	67%
Language Assistant	0	0	0%	0	0	0%	1	1	100%
Academic staff total	201	132	66%	199	129	65%	215	141	66%

Table 11: Research academic staff, 2021–2023

Research academic staff	2021			2022			2023		
	T	F	%F	T	F	%F	T	F	%F
Research staff									
Principal Lecturer	1	0	0%	1	0	0%	1	0	0%
Lecturer	2	1	50%	3	2	66%	2	1	50%
Postdoctoral Researcher	2	2	100%	4	3	75%	3	2	66%
Research Assistant	0	0	0%	1	0	0%	1	0	0%
Research staff total	5	3	60%	8	5	63%	7	3	43%

Table 12: Senior management and other academic staff, 2021–2023

Senior management and other ⁹	2021			2022			2023		
	T	F	%F	T	F	%F	T	F	%F
President	1	0	0%	1	0	0%	1	0	0%
Registrar/Bursar	1	1	100%	1	1	100%	1	1	100%
Principal Lecturer	1	0	0%	2	1	50%	2	1	50%
Senior Lecturer	5	4	80%	3	3	100%	3	3	100%
Lecturer				3	3	100%	3	3	100%
Assistant Lecturer				1	1	100%	1	1	100%
Teaching Fellow				1	1	100%	1	0	0%
Other total	8	5	63%	12	10	83%	12	9	75%

⁹ Staff who hold academic contracts that are not aligned to a specific faculty

Table 13: PMS staff, 2021–2023

PMS staff	2021			2022			2023		
	T	F	%F	T	F	%F	T	F	%F
Registrar/Bursar	1	0	0%	1	0	0%	1	0	0%
APO/AP3	13	9	69%	13	9	69%	16	12	75%
Building Manager	1	0	0%	1	0	0%	1	0	0%
Librarian	1	1	100%	1	1	100%	1	1	100%
Senior Librarian Assistant	3	3	100%	3	3	100%	3	3	100%
SEO	4	3	75%	6	5	83%	9	8	89%
Senior Technician	2	0	0%	2	0	0%	3	0	0%
HEO/AP2	44	36	82%	45	37	82%	45	37	82%
Assistant Librarian	4	3	75%	4	3	75%	4	3	75%
EO/AP1	57	46	81%	57	49	86%	61	50	82%
Library Assistant	15	14	93%	15	15	100%	14	14	100%
Clerical Officer	37	36	97%	32	31	97%	33	31	94%
Computer Lab Assistant	4	2	50%	3	1	33%	3	1	33%
General Operative	15	5	33%	15	4	27%	14	4	29%
Trades Person	1	0	0%	3	0	0%	3	0	0%
PMS total	204	158	77%	203	158	77%	210	163	77%

Key: APO = Assistant Principal Officer; AP = Assistant Principal; SEO = Senior Executive Officer; HEO = Higher Executive Officer; EO = Executive Officer

Benchmarking to national data

With the recent changes to our staff profile, MIC is now more in line with the national staff profile based on the staff categories published by the HEA.

Table 14: MIC staff data compared to HEA staff data profiles, 2021

Academic staff	MIC	Universities	Technological universities	Institutes of technology
Principal Lecturer	56%F	40%F	27%F	42%F
Senior Lecturer	48%F	42%F	60%F	44%F
Lecturer	52%F	52%F	45%F	50%F

Similar to the former institute of technology sector¹⁰, MIC staff have a different career structure to our university counterparts. For example, there has never been a rotation of academic management posts in MIC. The degree of success with implementing **Action 4.2** has been mixed. We will continue to explore opportunities for implementing this action in appropriate circumstances. This is also contingent on the ongoing MIC/UL dialogue.

Our target for **Action 4.3** was to increase the number of males applying for academic roles in the Faculty of Education by 10%. In 2019, there were 25%M applications to academic posts in

¹⁰ Now technological universities

the faculty and 0%M offers. In the period 2020–2022, there were 35%M academic applications and 18%M offers. However, while male academic staff accounted for 21% overall in the Faculty of Education in 2019, this reduced to 19% in 2023. While our recruitment target was met for this action, males continue to be under-represented, which it linked to wider national systemic issues, including the historic under-representation of males in the teaching profession (**New actions GE 3.15 and GE 3.16**).

Our students are part of the future recruitment pool for academic posts in the Faculty of Education. Associated actions on male student recruitment from the 2019 plan are discussed in more detail under Objective 30.

ACTIONS

New Action GE 1.4: Continue to monitor and report on gender representation at application, recruitment and promotion stages.

New Action GE 3.12: Formalise a strategy to develop mentoring.

New Action GE 3.10: Implement the national job evaluation scheme once it has been finalised and agreed by all stakeholders.

New Action GE 3.15: Identify barriers leading to male under-representation in the Faculty of Education.

New Action GE 3.16: Work with Strategic Communications & Marketing to roll out targeted recruitment campaigns to address male under-representation within the student cohort.

Objective 3: Provide secure working conditions for female staff (actions 4.4, 4.5, 4.6)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 4.4: Investigate the rise in fixed-term and specific-purpose contracts among female employees to determine cause and address regularisation as necessary.	Yellow
Action 4.5: Provide access to supports for research/teaching assistants, fellows, hourly paid and early career academics to progress to full-time lecturing grades to include access to mentoring, research support and professional development opportunities.	Red
Action 4.6: Develop guidelines to support academic posts to be filled on a full or part-time basis, including consideration of job-sharing options.	Yellow

While limited progress has been made on **actions 4.4 and 4.5**, precarity is a priority area for MIC (section 2.2.b). IFUT and MIC have established a Precarious Employment Working Group, and we expect that the group’s outcomes and recommendations will align with our AS goals (**New Action GE 2.1**). The SAT feels that an important step in this process is to define what is meant by the term precarity and what staff categories and contract types are included in this term (**Action 4.4; New Action GE 1.6**). The working group has agreed to develop a mechanism for the regularisation of long-term hourly-paid contract holders on a phased basis.

“Lack of value placed on part-time staff” (Female academic)

On reflection, **actions 4.5 and 5.3.7** (the latter being ‘Amend the eligibility for criteria for the Research Support Scheme to include postdoctoral researchers and staff on fixed-term contracts’) were too vague from the outset, and the financial and resource impact of changing the eligibility criteria for current research supports acted as a barrier to implementation. However, the AS self-assessment process and the HEA’s second gender equality review highlight that precarious employment makes staff more vulnerable to career disruption and stagnation.

“Not paid to research or go to academic events or conference, research happens despite not because of the part-time contract” (Focus group participant)

Acknowledging the barriers that have prevented progress to date with these actions and with ET support, we now wish to expand certain elements of the Academic Staff Research Support Policy to non-permanent staff. To avail of staff research supports (specified under Objective 10), academic staff must be on permanent contracts. While not all of the supports can be extended, such as when a staff member’s contract comes to an end before a conference takes place, more practical measures could be implemented.

“Open up more funding opportunities and additional clarity on supports available and how to apply for them to those on fixed-term or part-time contracts.”

(Female academic)

Any change to the current Academic Staff Research Policy requires approval from ET in the first instance, after which a feasibility study on MIC’s research supports for non-permanent staff may be conducted (**New Action GE 2.5**).

“As an hourly-paid staff member, I am not able to avail of any of these structures for development, support or research within my role.” (Female academic)

MIC financially supports staff and postgraduates to present research papers at conferences. Additional supports (e.g. to help with remote working) were provided to postgraduate research students during the Covid-19 pandemic.

It was unclear from the larger staff survey what respondents understood by the term ‘support’ and what barriers, if any, prevented them from availing of research supports. To address this, we conducted a further short pulse survey with academic staff eligible for research supports in June 2023. The findings indicate that workloads and time are the main perceived barriers to accessing research supports. This is in line with our wider staff consultation process, which indicates that workload is a thread that impacts staff outcomes in a range of themes captured in this application. This points to the need to prioritise workload management at an institutional level, as discussed in more detail under Objective 27 (**New**

Action GE 3.3). Staff consultation indicated different impacts on workloads, such as school placement within the Faculty of Education.

“Workload, workload, workload . . . this needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. We cannot fit research in when we are so overloaded with other work.”

(Female academic)



ACTIONS

New Action 1.6: Gather and monitor data on precarious staff categories.

New Action GE 2.1: Form the Precarious Employment Working Group with representatives from MIC and IFUT.

New Action GE 2.5: Explore the feasibility of extending elements of the Academic Staff Research Support Policy (2020) to non-permanent staff.

New Action GE 3.3: Identify the barriers that prevent academic staff from accessing teaching, learning and research supports.

Objective 4: Understand reasons why staff leave the College (Action 4.7)

Associated 2019 action	RAG
Action 4.7: Conduct independent exit interviews to ascertain reasons for leaving.	

Exit interviews are informally conducted by HR, and the main reasons for resigning are related to obtaining a permanent or promotional position elsewhere. We typically see higher rates of resignation for academic staff on fixed-term contracts that can be linked to a move to other roles when a contract is nearing completion. Voluntary staff turnover at MIC is relatively low (9% of overall staff).

Table 15: MIC staff resignation data, 2021–2023

	M	F	T	%F
Academic				
Permanent staff	3	0	3	
Specified Purpose/Fixed Term	2	11	13	
Research				
Total academic resignations	5	11	16	69%
PMS				
Permanent staff	5	10	15	
Specified Purpose/Fixed Term	1	6	7	
Total PMS resignations	6	16	22	73%
Total overall resignations	11	27	38	71%

While progress is being made with this issue, we will continue to monitor staff resignations **(New Action GE 3.14)**.

 **ACTIONS**

New Action GE 3.14: Continue to engage with staff leaving the institution.

Objective 5: Determine whether a gender pay gap exists (actions 4.8, 4.9)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 4.8: Commission an external audit body to undertake a gender pay gap analysis.	
Action 4.9: Publish gender pay gap information in line with The Gender Pay Gap Information Bill once the Irish Government finalises legislation on the Bill.	

As per the Gender Pay Gap (GPG) Information Bill, MIC undertakes an annual GPG review and publishes the report **(actions 4.8 and 4.9)**. In 2022, the average hourly rate of pay was 14.36% higher for all male than all female employees. The GPG is driven by the much larger number of female than male employees in lower-paid PMS grades and entry-level academic grades. The GPG is also affected by having more male than female employees at the highest grades, although this latter group represents quite a small number of employees.

PwC Ireland found that Irish organisations had an average GPG of 12.6% in December 2022. Data for 2023 shows that the MIC GPG has reduced since 2022 to 11.09%, which now brings us in line with the national average **(New Action GE 1.3)**.

 **ACTIONS**

New Action GE 1.3: Monitor gender pay gap trends.

Objective 6: Provide equality of opportunity for all genders during recruitment (actions 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.1.3, 5.1.4, 5.1.5, 5.1.6, 5.1.7)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 5.1.1: In areas where there is gender under-representation, if no applicants are received from that particular gender, the post will be re-advertised.	Yellow
Action 5.1.2: Provide training to relevant HR staff and line managers on gender proofing the language used in job specifications and advertisements.	Yellow
Action 5.1.3: At the final selection step, in the appointment process for new Presidents insofar as possible, the final pool of candidates will comprise an equal number of women and men.	Red
Action 5.1.4: Introduce compulsory selection and competency-based interview training for interview boards, including EDI and unconscious bias training.	Yellow
Action 5.1.5: Include the requirement that candidates must demonstrate evidence of leadership in equality and diversity in all job specifications for leadership positions e.g. Head of Department, Dean, Assistant Principal Officer.	Green
Action 5.1.6: Require that all shortlisting and interview boards have a minimum of 40% of each gender.	Green
Action 5.1.7: Amend the Instrument of Government to remove the requirement that posts in Religion (including Theology and Catechetics), Philosophy and Philosophy of Education are subject to approval by the Trustees.	Red

It has been difficult to implement **Action 5.1.1** for all new posts as it would have led to significant operational delays for posts that required immediate filling. We have, however, embedded this within the new promotions process, which focuses on senior and merit promotions where females are under-represented (**New Action GE 3.4**).

MIC uses standardised, periodically reviewed HR job specification templates that include gender-neutral terms. Processes between HR and line managers are collaborative, and HR oversees and ensures gender neutrality. In addition, the EDII and Quality offices have developed Guidelines for Gender Neutral Language in College Documentation, which includes HR documentation. The guide has been approved by ET and the Equality Committee and is a constituent document of the MIC quality management system (QMS) (**Action 5.1.2**).

The MIC President remained in position during the 2019 to 2023 review period, and **Action 5.1.3** will be enacted if a new president is to be appointed in the coming AS period (**New Action GE 5.8**).

Since 2020, HR has provided interviewer and unconscious bias training. Training for interview chairs commenced in June 2022; to date, 30 staff have been trained (50%F). MIC has committed to a 'licence to recruit' whereby interview panels, including chairs, must have undertaken such training to be included on the panel (**Action 5.1.4**). Since 2020, job specifications cite evidence of leadership in equality and diversity as being desirable. From March 2023, this changed to being an essential requirement for senior leadership positions at PL level and above (**Action 5.1.5**). Vice presidents and deans have discretion to include this

criterion as essential for appointments at SL where they consider it to be appropriate and subject to a consistent application of any such criterion. All interview and shortlisting boards have at least 40% of each gender (**Action 5.1.6**).

In response to **Action 5.1.7**, the MIC trustees commenced a review of the Scheme of Incorporation (from which the Instrument of Government (IoG) derives), and the issues referred to under this action are matters for consideration within the ambit of that review. That review process has been paused pending the MIC/UL dialogue process previously referred to, the outcome of which will have a direct bearing on the configuration and content of the IoG. While the outcome will be influenced by the requirements of closer structural alignment between the two institutions, all imperatives associated with MIC’s EDII strategy (inclusive of AS activities) will fully govern the content of the IoG (**New Action GE 5.9**).

Our recruitment data (Table 16) indicates that more applications are received from and offers made to male academics for senior academic posts, particularly at SL level. The reverse is seen for posts from Lecturer grade and below. This is also highlighted in our GPG report 2022.

Table 16: Academic recruitment data 2020–2022

Academic grade	Applications				Shortlisted				Acceptances				Posts
	M	F	T	%F	M	F	T	%F	M	F	T	%F	
Principal Lecturer	11	9	20	45%	4	4	8	50%	1	1	2	50%	2
Senior Lecturer	23	10	33	30%	14	8	22	36%	6	2	8	25%	8
Assistant Lecturer	130	205	335	61%	45	90	135	66%	5	36	41*	88%	39
Teaching Fellow	60	66	126	52%	22	37	59	63%	7	19	26	73%	26
Research Assistant	3	3	6	50%	2	1	3	33%	1	0	1	0%	1
Postdoc	9	15	24	63%	3	6	9	66%	2	2	4	50%	4
LINC Tutor	0	21	21	100%	0	10	10	100%	0	3	3	100%	3
Total	236	329	565	58%	90	156	246	63%	22	63	85*	74%	83
Acting SL	2	3	5	60%	2	3	5	60%	1	2	3	66%	3

* In two instances, two acceptances were for the same post (after the first offer had been rejected).

For PMS staff, we see more female applications and offers for posts across all grades except for more technical/maintenance grades such as AP1, AP2, General Operatives and Trades Persons (Table 17). It is not unique to MIC that the PMS cohort is predominately female. We look forward to the PMS AS process to help address this specific gender imbalance (**New actions GE 1.4 and GE 5.3**).

Table 17: PMS staff recruitment data 2020–2022

PMS grade	Applications				Shortlisted				Acceptances				Posts
	M	F	T	%F	M	F	T	%F	M	F	T	%F	
AP2	35	28	63	44%	11	12	23	52%	6	6	12	50%	12
AP1	14	2	16	13%	7	2	9	22%	4	0	4	0%	4
APO	16	25	41	61%	6	12	18	67%	2	6	8	75%	8
SEO	4	11	15	73%	3	6	9	67%	0	3	3	100%	3
HEO	44	92	136	68%	12	54	66	82%	2	19	21	90%	24
SLA	1	14	15	93%	0	8	8	100%	0	1	1	100%	1
EO	82	235	317	74%	23	95	118	81%	6	23	29	79%	6
LA	42	71	113	63%	30	57	87	66%	1	4	5	80%	4
CO	31	152	183	83%	11	108	119	91%	4	25	29	86%	
GO	22	0	22	0%	9	0	9	0%	2	0	2	0%	2
TP	4	0	4	0%	4	0	4	0%	2	0	2	0%	2
Total PMS	295	630	925	68%	116	354	470	75%	38	95	133	71%	
Acting posts													
HEO	2	6	8	75%	2	5	7	71%	1	3	4	75%	4
EO	0	7	7	100%	0	6	6	100%	0	4	4	100%	4

Key for new terms: SLA =Senior Library Assistant; LA = Library Assistant; CO = Clerical Officer; GO = General Operative; TP = Trades Person

For academic and PMS staff, we do not see many applications for acting-up posts, which tend to be internal-only competitions. Academic acting-up posts arise in a department or faculty on a fixed-term basis, typically short-term and at Head of Department or Dean level (e.g. research leave cover). The posts are advertised internally by seeking expressions of interest from Assistant Lecturer and above. Staff are paid at the higher grade for the duration of the post and return to their original grade once completed (**New Action GE 3.5**).

“I have absolutely no interest in seeking promotion which would increase the amount of administrative or managerial work I would have to undertake. My interests are on teaching, research and community service.”

(Academic, gender not listed)

We report on recruitment data to the Equality Committee as a standing item. This will now be included in annual EDII reporting (**New Action GE 1.4**).



ACTIONS

New Action GE 3.4: In areas where there is gender under-representation in senior and merit posts, if no applications are received from the under-represented gender, the post will be re-advertised.

New Action GE 5.8: In the final step of selecting a president, insofar as is possible, ensure that the final pool of candidates includes an equal number of women and men.

New Action GE 5.9: When appointing a chair of An tÚdarás Rialaithe (Governing Authority), the Board of Trustees will ensure gender balance by rotating the chair or appointing a female co-chair.

New Action GE 1.4: Continue to monitor and report on gender representation at application, recruitment and promotion stage.

New Action GE 5.3: Work towards submitting Athena Swan applications for the institution (Silver), Faculty of Education (Bronze) and professional units (Bronze).

New Action GE 3.5: Collaborate with other HEIs on identifying barriers faced by women applying for senior academic and management posts (including internal acting-up posts) across institutions and develop actions based on research.

Objective 7: Ensure staff are confident that the recruitment processes are fair and transparent (Action 5.1.8)

Associated 2019 action	RAG
Action 5.1.8: Hold information sessions to explain the selection and recruitment process and answers queries from staff.	

HR held information sessions for managers in 2023 (**Action 5.1.8**). HR created a space for FAQs on the web portal and a hub for all HR-related documentation and policies, thereby implementing **New Action GE 5.7** prior to submission and contributing to **New actions GE 5.1, GE 5.2 and GE 2.2**.



ACTIONS

New Action GE 5.7: Establish a dedicated staff hub on the staff portal.

New Action GE 5.1: Enhance staff and student awareness of Athena Swan and EDII matters and conduct regular consultation.

New Action GE 5.2: Host an annual Athena Swan Day.

New Action GE 2.2: Provide information and training to line managers on practices for hiring PTHP staff.

Objective 8: Ensure all staff have timely access to induction (Action 5.1.9, 5.1.10)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 5.1.9: Provide EDI and Unconscious Bias training to all new staff at induction.	
Action 5.1.10: Provide a second formal induction in January of each year.	

Since 2020, AS and EDII form part of the induction programme for new staff (**Action 5.1.9**), which occurs biannually in September and January (**Action 5.1.10**). A HR staff handbook currently in development will be distributed to all new staff at induction and hosted on the HR hub for staff to access (**New actions GE 5.5 and GE 5.6**).

ACTIONS

New Action GE 5.5: Offer an enhanced suite of training opportunities on gender equality and EDII to staff.

New Action GE 5.6: Support the engagement of males in EDII work.

Objective 9: Provide promotional opportunities for staff (actions 5.1.11, 5.1.12)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 5.1.11: Develop and publish academic promotions process, which includes SL and PL promotions criteria, takes into account the full range of work-related activities and includes consideration of periods of leave.	
Action 5.1.12: Advertise the current vacant SL/PL posts as merit-based appointments and introduce new promotional posts at SL and PL levels.	

Significant progress has been made in providing promotional opportunities to academic staff. The promotions process for vacant merit-based SL posts commenced in January 2022 and for PL posts in September 2022 (**Action 5.1.12**), Table 18. The positive impact on the proportion of women at PL grade and significant improvement in the gender balance since 2019 is directly attributable to the merit-based promotions process. The application and appointment rates by gender are proportionate to the eligible pool of applicants at grades below.

Table 18: Promotion data for merit-based posts

Merit posts	Applications	Appointed	Grade directly below
Principal Lecturer	16 total – 69%F	4 Total (75%F)	Senior lecturer (43%F)
Senior Lecturer	25 total (72%F)	4 Total (75%F)	Lecturer & Assistant Lecturer (69%F)

A proposal has been submitted to IFUT for two additional promotions rounds over the next three years. A revised academic promotions policy was approved in December 2023, after which the next SL promotions round was advertised for three SL posts in each of the Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Education.

According to the staff survey, 33%F/23%M (n=109) of academic staff reported having no understanding of the promotions process. The survey was conducted at a time when the promotions process was just beginning so we will continue to monitor the issue with staff. It is not surprising that a high proportion of fixed-term/PTHP staff (42%F/14%M; n=25) reported having no understanding of the process. Although these staff are currently not eligible for

promotion, it would support their career development to be more aware of the process **(New Action GE 3.1)**.

The merit promotions application form includes a specific section where applicants can include details of personal circumstances they wish to be taken into consideration. A range of personal circumstances that have affected, interrupted or delayed the career path, performance or output of a staff member during their academic career can be considered, including, but not limited to, protective leave (e.g. maternity, adoptive, parental, paternity or carers' leave); long-term caring responsibilities; illness; disability; and inability to travel abroad or undertake field work. The circumstances may be ongoing or of a fixed duration; the candidate can indicate the time period involved **(New Action GE 3.2)**.

The Academic Promotions Board comprises nine members – four internal, four external and an independent chair. Positive feedback was verbally received from the external members of the merit promotions panel on the process **(New Action GE 1.4)**.

Similar promotional opportunities do not exist for PMS staff, who are predominately female. Often, securing a post at a higher grade, which can be seen as an opportunity to expand skills and knowledge, may mean leaving one's area or unit. PMS staff can apply to the HR-managed internal and external recruitment competitions, and interviewee training has been offered annually to staff.

A national project involving the trade union Fórsa, MIC, institutes of technology and technological universities was developed to evaluate the grading of PMS posts, and implementation arrangements are being finalised. This formal job evaluation scheme will ensure that jobs of equal value are at the same grade and will promote pay equality **(New Action GE 3.10)**.



ACTIONS

New Action GE 3.1: Communicate updates and progress on upcoming promotion rounds to all staff.

New Action GE 3.2: Clearly link EDII activity with the promotion criteria and process.

New Action GE 1.4: Continue to monitor and report on gender representation at application, recruitment and promotion stages.

New Action GE 3.10: Implement the national job evaluation scheme once it has been finalised and agreed by all stakeholders.

Objective 10: Provide training to support staff for career development (actions 5.3.1, 5.3.2, 5.3.3, 5.3.4)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 5.3.1: Provide interviewee skills workshops on an annual basis (open to all staff).	Green
Action 5.3.2: Provide EDI training to staff on an annual basis (mandatory for line-managers).	Yellow
Action 5.3.3: Develop a system for recording training data including details of courses offered, number/gender of attendees and speakers.	Yellow
Action 5.3.4: Provide professional development (PD) opportunities in the areas of management/leadership skills training, information and advice on applying for grants, career advice and supervisory skills training (student supervision).	Yellow

The number of continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities available to staff since the 2019 action plan review period has grown. Academic staff training is supported and provided by HR, Learning Enhancement and Academic Development Centre (LEAD), Research & Graduate School (RGS), EDII Office and individual faculties and departments. Training data is recorded locally by each unit that organises the training, such as HR or RGS. EDII, Bystander and Gender Identity and Expression training has been offered to all staff, samples of which are listed in Table 19.

Teaching and learning opportunities

Bursaries are available for MIC staff to take the Graduate Certificate in Academic Practice (GCAP), which is an accredited CPD pathway for those who teach in HEIs, including PMS staff who teach and support student learning. Since 2022, 22 staff members (91%F) have taken the programme.

LEAD is working towards embedding Advance HE Fellowships in the GCAP programme. In 2023, Dr Gwen Moore¹¹ (former Director of Teaching and Learning) achieved the distinguished and internationally recognised status of Principal Fellowship¹².

MIC staff engage with the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Digital Badge through the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. To date, 110 MIC staff have participated on the programme¹³.

¹¹ Dr Moore is the first Principal Fellow to be accredited by Advance HE at MIC and is one of only 12 Principal Fellows in the Republic of Ireland.

¹² Principal Fellowships are awarded to academics who demonstrate a sustained record of successful, strategic leadership in their disciplines and/or in academic practice to enhance student learning.

¹³ The gender or faculty of the participants is not recorded.

Table 19: Training attendance by gender, 2023

Training	Total	%F	%M
Staff Orientation	36	78%	22%
Manual Handling	31	74%	26%
Chairperson Interview Equality and Unconscious Bias	23	48%	52%
Fire Safety Training	31	65%	35%
Agresso Training	17	71%	29%
Equality Diversity and Inclusion E-Learning	95	74%	26%
Interview Board Member Training	32	84%	16%
Interview Skills for Staff	15	80%	20%
Leave Legislation Policies and Procedures	15	80%	20%
Conference Communications & Marketing	6	66%	33%
Six-week Staff Wellness Programme	10	100%	0%
Dignity at Work – Support Contract Person Training	7	71%	29%
Google Analytics Training	5	60%	40%
Conducting Return to Work Interviews	28	79%	21%
ShoutOut Gender Identity and Expression Training	100	n/a	n/a
ShoutOut Gender Identity and Expression Train the Trainer	4	75%	25%
Bystander Online Programme	27	70%	30%
Irish Research Council Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship 2024 Briefing Session	25	60%	36%
Orientation for postgraduate research students 2023/24	32	59%	41%
Writing Successful Funding Applications	18	67%	33%
Disseminating Your Research	12	100%	0%
Project Managing Your Research	16	69%	31%
Data Management Planning	13	77%	23%
Thesis Submission and the Examination Process	32	75%	25%
Being an Ethical Researcher: Ethical Considerations in Research and MIREC Training	16	75%	25%
Research with Children: Moving beyond Tokenism to Active Participation of Children in Research	27	89%	11%
Getting Published in Peer-Reviewed Journals: An Introduction	15	67%	33%
Surviving the Viva	14	79%	21%
Publishing in Peer-Reviewed Journals: An Editor's Perspective	17	53%	47%

Launched in April 2023, MIC's UDL Community of Practice provides a teaching and learning space for staff and postgraduate students to share ideas on inclusive practices, generate research in the area of UDL and create resources to assist with teaching and learning.



Figure 16: MIC's UDL Community of Practice Launch, April 2023

As part of the department quality review of the LEAD centre in 2022, staff were asked about the barriers to engaging with LEAD training and events (Figures 17, 18 and 19). While gender was not recorded, we see a similar trend emerging from this review to our AS staff consultation. Time to engage with such training is the main barrier and links to our action to implement a workload allocation model (WAM) (**New actions GE 3.3, GE 3.9, GE 3.11, GE 2.3 and GE 2.4**).

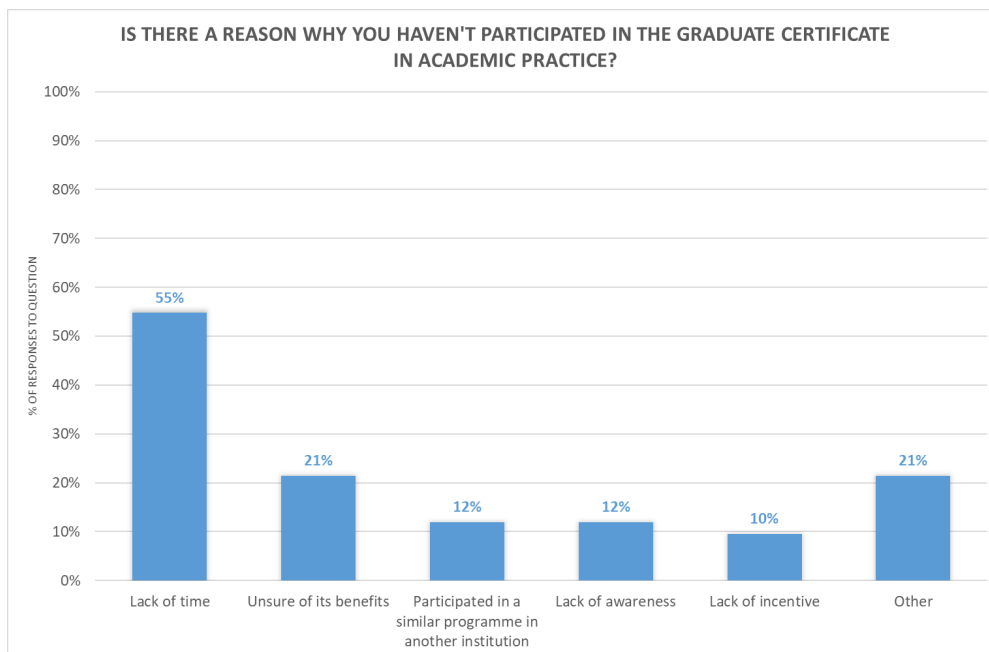


Figure 17: Barriers to participating in the Graduate Certificate in Academic Practice, 2022

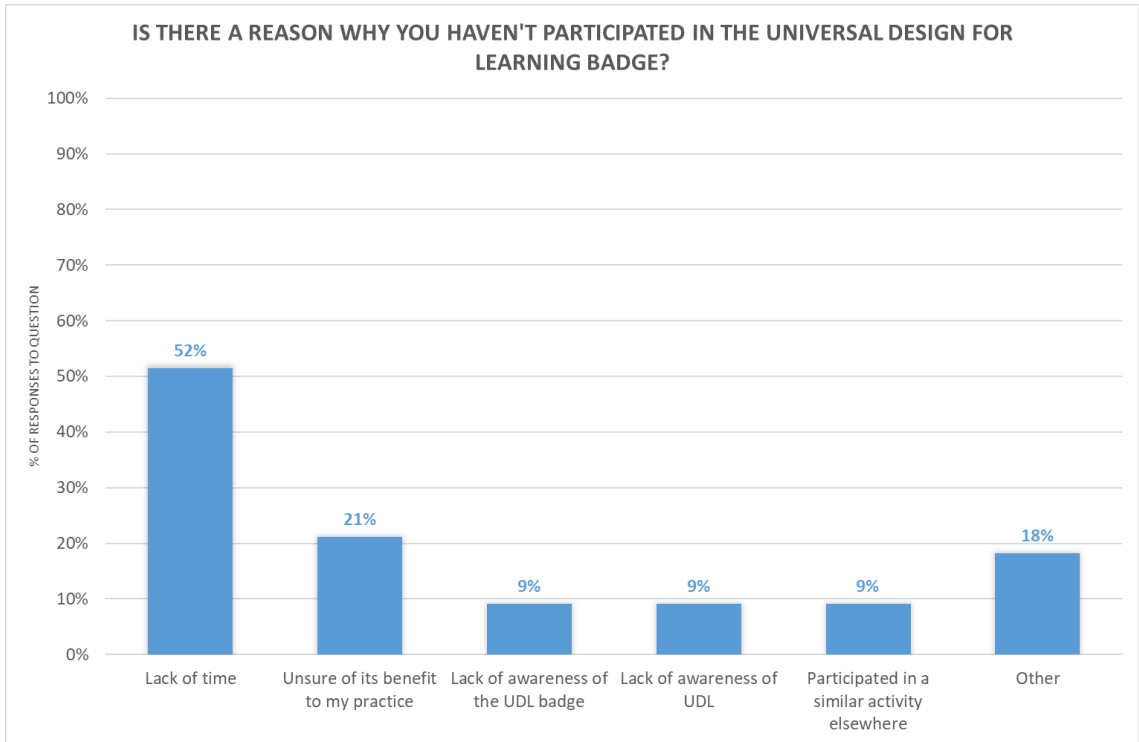


Figure 18: Barriers to participating in the UDL Badge, 2022

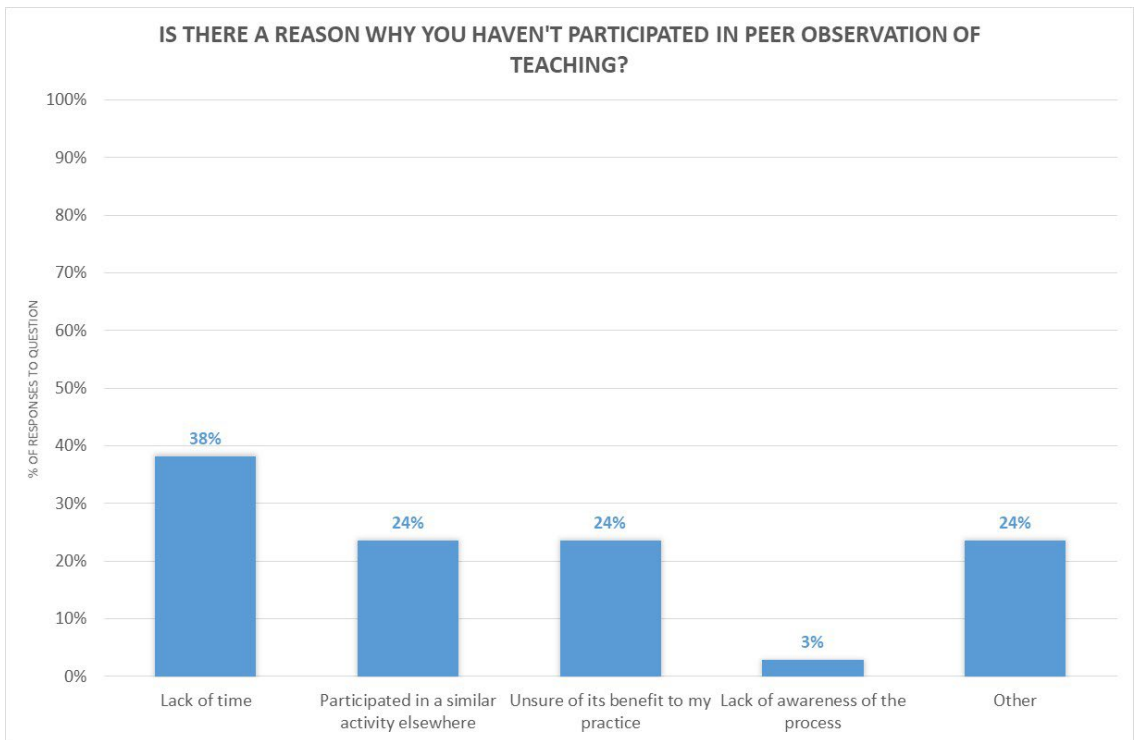


Figure 19: Barriers to participating in Peer Observation Teaching, 2022

Research training and opportunities

The current Academic Staff Research Support Policy caters for the provision of opportunities in management/leadership skills training, information and advice on applying for grants and internal funding schemes (Table 20).

Table 20: Research support schemes for MIC staff

No.	Support scheme
1.	Sabbatical leave for research
2.	Professional leave of absence for research
3.	Doctoral Fees Reimbursement scheme
4.	Staff exchanges for research/Transfer of Knowledge
5.	Staff Conference Fund Scheme
6.	Research Seed Funding Scheme
7.	Research Networking Scheme
8.	Supporting External Research Funding: Applications and Awards
9.	Mary Immaculate Research Repository and Digital Archive
10.	Mary Immaculate Research Ethics Committee
11.	Research institutes and centres
12.	Institutional Staff Online Research Survey
13.	Personal research plans/departmental research plans
14.	Research Integrity Training

In addition, training is provided in research skills, research methods, *viva voce* chairing and other roles, postgraduate supervision skills, postgraduate progression procedures and other relevant areas through the annual RGS Research Skills Programme. The accessibility and frequency of these supports have significantly improved; for example, internal research funding opportunities are provided more often, and weekly and monthly bulletins¹⁴ on research opportunities and news are published (Figures 20 and 21). Engagement with all research supports is monitored regularly. The RGS offers a wide variety of research-specific information on its intranet (Figure 20), such as research resources, developments and funding opportunities. These opportunities are monitored as part of RGS's commitment to high-quality services.

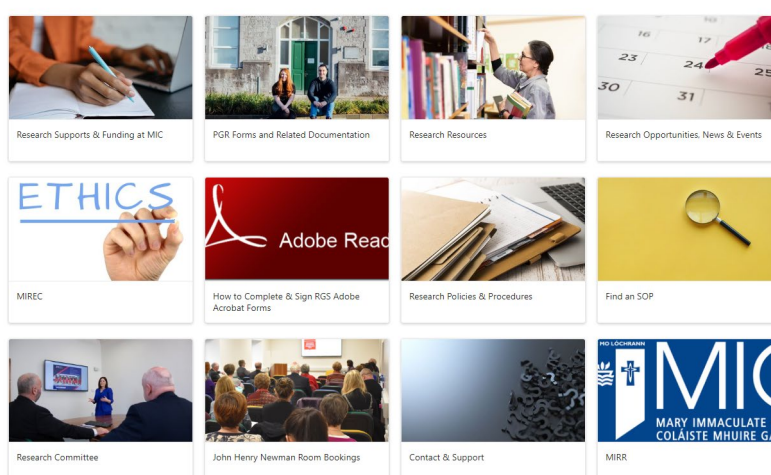


Figure 20: Screenshot of RGS intranet

¹⁴ These bulletins contain research opportunities due to expire in the next three weeks and upcoming research events being held at MIC.

Research Opportunities



MIC Seed Funding Scheme

Deadline: 01 October 2023

[Click here →](#)



St. Catherine's Community Services - Strategic Plan

Deadline: 02 October 2023

[Click here →](#)



HRB Secondary Data Analysis Projects (SDAP 2023)

Deadline: 04 October 2023

[Click here →](#)



SFI Public Service Fellowship

Deadline: 05 October 2023

[Click here →](#)



Call for Proposals - Pedagogy, Culture & Society

Deadline: 10 October 2023

[Click here →](#)



US-Ireland Research and Development Partnership Programme

Deadline: 11th October 2023

[Click here →](#)



Youth Work Ireland

Deadline: 11 October 2023

[Click here →](#)



IRC Postgraduate Scholarship Programme

Deadline: 12 October 2023

[Click here →](#)



IRC Postdoctoral Fellowship Programme

Deadline: 12 October 2023

[Click here →](#)



Archaeological Archives Research Grant

Deadline: 12 October 2023

[Click here →](#)



Ireland-Scotland Bilateral Network Grants

Deadline: 26 October 2023

[Click here →](#)



Fulbright - EPA Awards

Deadline: 27 October 2023

[Click here →](#)



2024-25 Fulbright Irish Awards

Deadline: 27 October 2023

[Click here →](#)



Charlemont Grants Scheme

Deadline: 27 October 2023

[Click here →](#)



Emerging Investigator Awards

Deadline: 09 November 2023

[Click here →](#)



BiodivNBS Call for Proposals

Deadline: 10 November 2023

[Click here →](#)



Aquatic Ecosystems Services Call

Deadline: 13 November 2023

[Click here →](#)

To view all upcoming Research Events on the RGS Intranet click here --->

MIC Research Events

RGS Research Skills Seminar Series AY23/24, Semester 1: Project Managing Your Thesis

ALC In-Person Writing Sessions - Every Tuesday!

ALC Workshop - Using Quotations

ALC Workshop - Critical Thinking, Reading & Writing

RGS Research Skills Seminar Series AY23/24, Semester 1: Thesis Examination

Limerick History Research Seminar: Oliver Cromwell's Mad Proconsul

RGS Research Skills Seminar Series AY23/24, Semester 1: MIREC and Research Ethics

Britain and Ireland Network of Researchers in Catholic Education Conference

Research Conference on Moral Failure and Moral Development

ALC Workshop - Synthesizing Sources

061 20 4318

@rgso@mic.ulie

RGS Intranet




Figure 21: RGS weekly and monthly sample news bulletins on research opportunities and news

“I have been fortunate to be in a permanent academic role where I can avail of many of the research supports offered in MIC.” (Female academic)

“Support to me means financial support for fees and conferences, support with research funding applications and research projects, support with research-related activity, e.g., training. I have found the RGS staff to be very supportive as well in terms of moral support, advice, practical support, etc.” (Female academic)

ACTIONS

New Action GE 3.3: Identify the barriers that prevent academic staff from accessing teaching, learning and research supports.

New Action GE 3.9: Encourage PMS staff to avail of training opportunities.

New Action GE 3.11: Conduct a training needs analysis for all staff.

New Action GE 2.3: Provide on the staff portal key College information and contacts for part-time staff.

New Action GE 2.4: Raise awareness of supports that non-permanent staff can avail of.

Objective 11: Introduce a development review process (actions 5.3.5, 5.3.6)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 5.3.5: Develop and implement an appraisal/development review process.	
Action 5.3.6: Provide training to Heads of Departments and line-managers to support them in conducting appraisal/development reviews.	

There has been no progress on developing a formal appraisal/development review system (**Action 5.3.5**). As this links closely to workloads, the lack of a WAM affected progress. While the WAM focuses on academic staff, implementing an appraisal review process will be for all staff (**New Action GE 3.13**). Based on staff consultation, informal appraisal reviews take place *ad hoc* and are dependent on line managers.

Table 21: Survey responses relating to appraisal reviews

Survey question	Academic		PMS	
	%F	%M	%F	%M
Feels that their line manager engages and supports their career aspirations	58%	63%	56%	63%
Discusses career progression with line manager either once or more than once a year	43%	46%	42%	55%

This is an issue that is linked to the priority area of staff development and career pathways (section 2.2.b).

“There is no performance review process, no structured opportunity to discuss the workload, career goals, etc.” (Female PMS)

In November 2023, training on managing performance and probation were delivered to line managers at a more general level in the absence of a formal model (**Action 5.6.3**). Supervisory management training is scheduled for January 2024.

ACTIONS

New Action GE 3.13: Develop and implement an appraisal/development review process.

Objective 12: Enhance career development supports for postdoctoral researchers and staff on fixed-term contracts (Action 5.3.7)

Associated 2019 action	RAG
Action 5.3.7: Amend the eligibility for criteria for the Research Support Scheme to include postdoctoral researchers and staff on fixed-term contracts.	

Similar to action 4.5 discussed earlier, we wish to extend aspects of our Academic Staff Research Support Policy to non-permanent staff (**New Action GE 2.5**). This will be explored by ET and recommendations implemented in line with senior management guidance. One of our priority theme for 2023 – precarity – is also linked to this issue (section 2.2.b).

ACTIONS

New Action GE 2.5: Explore the feasibility of extending elements of the Academic Staff Research Support Policy (2020) to non-permanent staff.

Objective 13: Introduce mentoring for staff (actions 5.3.8, 5.3.9)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 5.3.8: Launch a mentoring programme to include training for mentees and mentors.	
Action 5.3.9: Support female staff to undertake the Aurora Leadership Development Programme for Women.	

Action 5.3.8 has not been implemented as the expected timeline was impacted by Covid-19. However, staff do report access to mentoring. The Director of Research offers informal mentoring to academic staff regardless of contract type. Similarly, informal mentoring and support is offered to staff from LEAD, ICT Services, Library, Academic Learning Centre and academic departments.

The EDII Office continues to support female staff to undertake the Aurora programme, on which the number of participants and female mentors has more than doubled since 2020 (Table 22). Participants show a preference for female mentors.

Table 22: MIC Aurora participants and mentors

Year	Aurora participants	MIC Aurora mentors (F)	MIC Aurora mentors (M)
2020–2021	6	6	0
2020–2022	12	10	2
2023–2024	13	13	0

More PMS staff survey respondents reported having access to mentoring to support career aspirations (43%F/51%M; n=109) than did academic staff (38%F/22%M; n=106). The biggest gender differences are seen between academic staff reporting no access (42%F/29%M; n=109) and non-permanent staff reporting no access (21%F/0%M; n=38) (**New Action GE 3.12**). This is an issue that is linked to our Staff Development/Career Pathways priority area, section 2.2.b.

“Definitely worth the investment. I am at MIC well over a decade and it is the first opportunity I have had to do a leadership course.” (MIC Aurora participant)

ACTIONS

New Action GE 3.12: Formalise a strategy to develop mentoring.

Objective 14: Improve the information and supports available to staff planning to avail of maternity and adoption leave (actions 5.5.1, 5.5.2, 5.5.3, 5.5.4, 5.5.5)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 5.5.1: Reconfigure the organisation of policies within the MIC staff portal.	Green
Action 5.5.2: Develop an Adoption Leave policy.	Green
Action 5.5.3: Develop a policy to support staff receiving IVF treatment.	Yellow
Action 5.5.4: Develop a policy to support staff who experience pregnancy loss (miscarriage and stillbirths under 26 weeks).	Yellow
Action 5.5.5: Develop a handbook which offers guidance and checklists for line-managers to support staff before, during and after maternity/adoptive leave.	Red

Action 5.1.1 was completed, and greater policy awareness is evident from staff consultation. **Action 5.5.2** was also completed while **Action 5.5.4** is included in the 2023 action plan (**New Action GE 4.2**).

While limited progress was made on **Action 5.5.5**, an informal support network has been established and the development of guidance for line managers will continue as part of the 2023 action plan (**New Action GE 4.1**).

Over the period 2020–2022, 16 staff availed of maternity leave (10 academic and 6 PMS staff), after which all returned to their posts.



ACTIONS

New Action GE 4.1: Document and disseminate to staff and students the supports that are available to those with caring responsibilities.

New Action GE 4.2: Offer specific pregnancy- and fertility-related supports to staff.

Objective 15: Enhance the supports provided when staff are taking maternity and adoption leave (actions 5.5.6, 5.5.7, 5.5.8)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 5.5.6: Provide staff taking maternity/adoption leave and other caring leave with the option of receiving information on promotional posts and new vacancies, while on leave.	Green
Action 5.5.7: Introduce full replacement of academic staff taking maternity leave.	Yellow
Action 5.5.8: Instruct all line-managers to liaise with HR at the earliest opportunity in order to allow sufficient planning for cover to be in place.	Green

Action 5.5.6 has been implemented. Academic staff taking maternity leave are replaced by a full-time Teaching Fellow for the duration of their maternity leave and for any additional leave (**Action 5.5.7**). **Action 5.5.8** has been embedded, and the oversight of the process has noticeably improved.

Objective 16: Cultivate a supportive environment for staff returning from maternity and adoption leave (actions 5.5.9, 5.5.10, 5.5.11)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 5.5.9: Develop a “returning to work” guide for staff returning from maternity/adoption leave. This should include information on facilities on-campus for breastfeeding/expressing milk.	Red
Action 5.5.10: Identify and assign a suitable breastfeeding/expressing room for staff and students in MIC Thurles.	Green
Action 5.5.11: Introduce a research grant for returning academic carers	Red

Limited progress has been made on **Action 5.5.9**, which is now **New Action GE 4.1** on the 2023 plan. Renamed the Parent & Child Room, the Mother & Baby Room on the Limerick campus has been upgraded to be more comfortable, and the Thurles campus now has a Parent & Child Room (**Action 5.5.10**). Limerick City & County Council is restarting its ‘We’re Breastfeeding Friendly’ campaign¹⁵, which MIC has committed to supporting on campus. MIC has installed four baby changing units throughout the Limerick campus buildings. A soft play area¹⁶ is being developed as part of the new library.

¹⁵ This initiative is to welcome and support breastfeeding mothers and families onto public spaces on campus.

¹⁶ This can be used, particularly at weekends, by student parents who may wish to study while their children play or read books.

The EDII Office is collaborating with the RGS on obtaining ET approval to implement **Action 5.5.11** for returning academics in recognition of the impact of caring responsibilities on academic research activity (**New Action 4.2**).

 **ACTIONS**

New Action GE 4.1: Document and disseminate to staff and students the supports that are available to those with caring responsibilities.

New Action GE 4.3: Introduce a research grant for returning academic carers.

Objective 17: Enhance the information and supports provided for staff taking paternity and parental leave (actions 5.5.12, 5.5.13, 5.5.14)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 5.5.12: Provide cover for lecturing hours for academic staff taking paternity leave.	
Action 5.5.13: Communicate guidelines to line-managers about the process for applying for paternity leave.	
Action 5.5.14: Increase the awareness of paternity, adoption and parental leave supports available to all staff through an awareness raising campaign and spotlight on HR policies (linked to Action 5.6.6).	

Policies and procedures on paternity leave have been adopted by ET, and substitution arrangements are available for paternity leave. However, given the nature of this leave, there is usually insufficient notice to source and attain replacement staff for such short periods (**Action 5.5.12**). In the period 2020–2022, three staff (one PMS and two academic) availed of paternity leave.

In the period 2020–2022, 22 female staff availed of parents and parental leave (18 PMS and 4 academic staff). This is fewer than during the previous review period, when 38 staff availed of parental leave (parents leave was not available then). While we cannot assertively link the two areas, it may be considered that the new patterns of blended working impact staff availing of this type of leave. In addition, other wider societal issues (e.g. cost of living, housing crisis) need to be monitored. To support future actions (**New Action GE 4.4**), we aim to consult with men to better understand barriers that prevent them from taking family leave.

 **ACTIONS**

New Action GE 4.4: Monitor the impact of flexible working policies on staff.

Objective 18: Provide flexible working opportunities for staff (actions 5.5.15, 5.5.16)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 5.5.15: Develop and implement a flexible working policy.	Green
Action 5.5.16: Amend the Shorter Working Year (SWY) policy to include temporary staff.	Green

Flexible working was a priority in the 2019 action plan, and progress has been made due to the pandemic and new flexible ways of working. The MIC Blended Working Policy (2023) makes provision for remote and/or hybrid working as a long-term benefit to PMS staff to replace the emergency arrangements that were put in place as a consequence of the pandemic (Action 5.5.15). The Shorter Working Year (SWY) Policy was amended in 2020 to include temporary staff (**Action 5.5.16**). For the period 2020–2022, 20 female staff availed of SWY leave (19 PMS staff and 1 academic). This is fewer than availed of it in the previous review period (57). This needs to be monitored further as the evidence pointing to greater work/life balance since the pandemic is anecdotal (**New Action GE 4.4**).

Although the Blended Working Policy is applicable to PMS staff only, in 2023, approximately three-quarters of staff reported working in a blended manner (75%F/77%M, n=110, academic respondents; 78%F/67%M, n=113, PMS respondents).

ACTIONS

New Action GE 4.4: Monitor the impact of flexible working policies on staff.

Objective 19: Ensure staff are supported when changing working arrangements (Action 5.5.17)

Associated 2019 action	RAG
Action 5.5.17: Offer support to staff transitioning from part-time to full-time work (linked to action 5.3.8 on introduction of a mentoring scheme).	Red

While limited numbers of staff transitioned from part-time to full-time work during the current and previous AS review periods, **Action 5.5.17** will remain valid to some extent in the context of mentoring and training (**New Action GE 3.12**).

ACTIONS

New Action GE 3.12: Formalise a strategy to develop mentoring.

Objective 20: Support staff seeking childcare in close proximity to their workplace (actions 5.5.18, 5.5.19)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 5.5.18: Review previous childcare provision feasibility study in the current climate.	
Action 5.5.19: Seek childcare places for MIC staff in facilities near to MIC Limerick and Thurles.	

MIC recognises the challenges posed by access to childcare, and while providing an on-campus facility is the ultimate goal (**Action 5.5.18**), this must be considered in the context of competing capital funding priorities and limited available space. Due to very limited childcare facilities available near campus and a cost-of-living crisis nationally, it would be unreasonable to expect childcare providers to reserve such a highly sought-after service (**Action 5.5.19**). We acknowledge that getting childcare close to campus is a real issue for many staff. Therefore, as a more immediate support measure, MIC will make a list of childcare providers available to staff and students (**New Action GE 4.1**).

 **ACTIONS**

New Action GE 4.1: Document and disseminate to staff and students the supports that are available to those with caring responsibilities.

Objective 21: Provide a supportive environment for staff with caring responsibilities (actions 5.5.20, 5.5.21)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 5.5.20: Draft a Carer’s Policy, to include information on availing of Carer’s Leave.	
Action 5.5.21: Launch a Parents and Carer’s Network group to create awareness and support staff.	

Policies and procedures on paternity leave and carers leave (**Action 5.5.20**) have been approved and implemented. With the aim of fostering a culture of peer-to-peer support, an informal support group enables parents and carers to share their experiences and knowledge. In operation since September 2023, it is anticipated that the support group will be formally launched during the 2023–2027 AS period.

Objective 22: Embed gender equality and inclusivity in the culture of MIC (actions 5.6.1, 5.6.2, 5.6.3, 5.6.4)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 5.6.1: Amend the terms of reference of the Equality Committee to prioritise attention to issues of diversity and inclusion and broaden the Equality Policy to include EDI.	Green
Action 5.6.2: Include EDI as a standing item on the agenda of faculty board meetings and key influential committees.	Yellow
Action 5.6.3: Incorporate the gender dimension in the institutional quality assurance reporting, quality reviews and surveys (HEA, 2016: 1.12).	Green
Action 5.6.4: Continue to implement the Athena SWAN and broader EDI communication strategy to reach staff.	Yellow

In relation to **actions 5.6.1, 5.6.2 and 5.6.3:**

- Revised terms of reference of the Equality Committee were approved by the trustees (2020).
- EDII is a standing agenda item at ET, Governing Authority, Academic Council and Arts Faculty Board meetings and will be for the Education Faculty Board once the AS SAT is developed and EDII Lead appointed.
- The Quality Office continues to consider gender and EDII.
- EDII is included in the 2023/24 Institutional Quality Review.
- Guidance on the appropriate use of gendered language in MIC documentation has been included in the QMS.
- The policy development protocol is currently under review and will incorporate gendered language.
- Department quality reviews align with EDII. For example, the Department of History is undertaking an exercise to decolonise their curriculum, which aligns to both faculty and institutional AS actions.
- The gender dimension on programme and module creation/modification forms will be broadened to wider EDII consideration at module creation and development stage.

We now seek to further embed and integrate EDII into our quality assurance practices (**New actions AEG¹⁷ 3.4, AEG 4.2 and GE 5.10**).

Figure 22 specifies aspects of MIC’s ongoing communication strategy (**Action 5.6.4**).

¹⁷ Additional Equality Grounds



Figure 22: Features of EDII communications with MIC staff, students and the wider community

During 2022/23, the EDII Office was involved in over 70 events, of which it hosted 48. The Strategic Communications & Marketing Office continues to promote EDII through social media, MIC website and engagement with print and radio media.

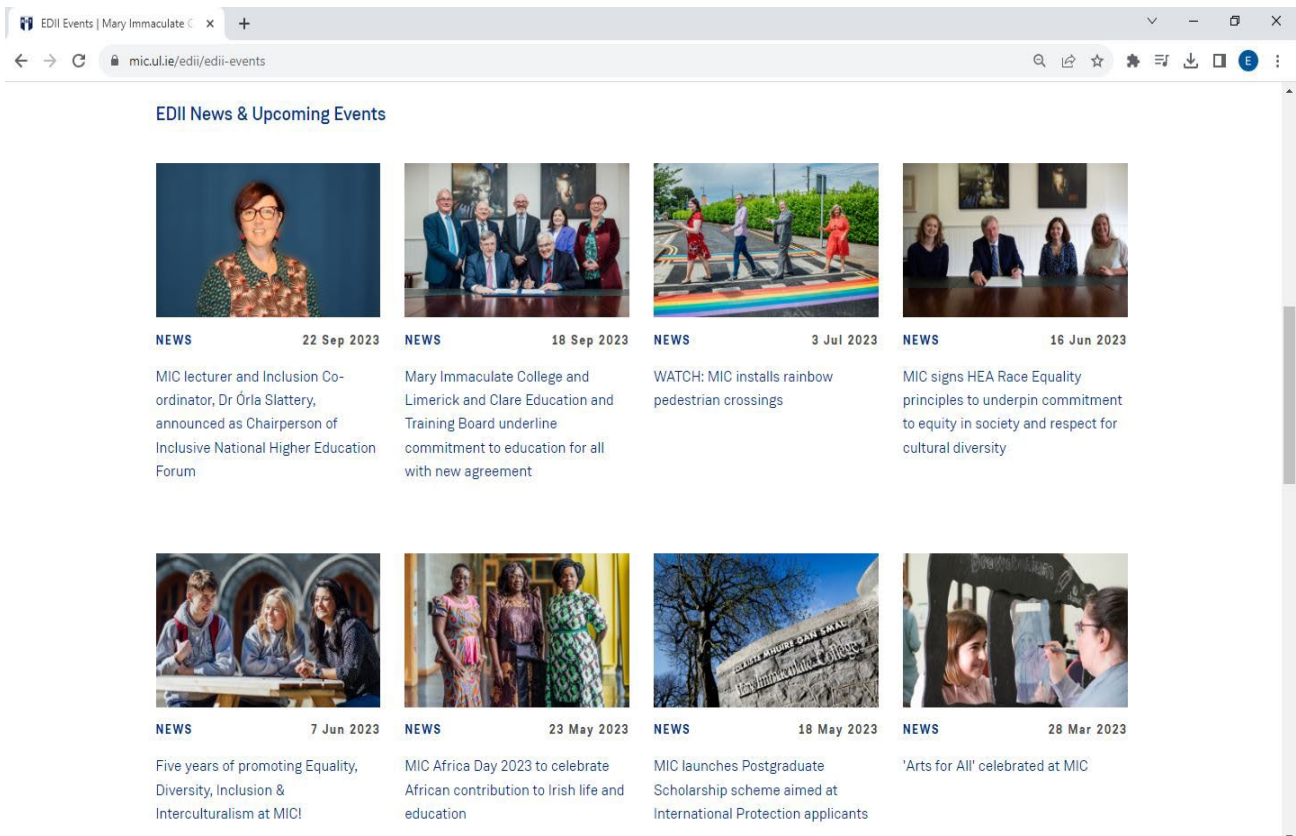


Figure 23: Screenshot of MIC EDII News section of MIC website



ACTIONS

New Action AEG 3.4: Mainstream the principles of Universal Design and EDII across MIC.

New Action AEG 4.2: Provide guidance to staff on how to consider EDII in their curricula, including sharing current good practice models.

New Action GE 5.10: Ensure EDII is integrated into committee and policy development processes.

Objective 23: Nurture a respectful working environment for all staff (actions 5.6.5, 5.6.6, 5.6.7, 5.6.8, 5.6.9)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 5.6.5: Develop a policy to support the implementation of the framework for consent in HEIs Safe, Respectful, Supportive and Positive: Ending Sexual Harassment in Irish HEIs.	Yellow
Action 5.6.6: Hold quarterly “drop-in” information sessions where staff can direct informal queries to HR.	Red
Action 5.6.7: Provide mandatory training on key HR policies for all staff that have line-management responsibilities.	Yellow
Action 5.6.8: Provide ‘dignity and respect’ training to all staff and students.	Yellow
Action 5.6.9: Launch a ‘dignity at work’ awareness raising campaign.	Yellow

MIC submits annual HEA reports on the progress-related implementation of the Framework for Promoting Consent and Preventing Sexual Violence (Consent Framework). Now known as the Ending Sexual Violence & Harassment (ESVH) Framework, the framework is a standing Equality Committee agenda item. Appointed in September 2023, the EDII SVH Prevention Manager is currently developing a strategy that engages staff and students in SVH prevention activities (**New actions GE 1.5, AEG 1.1 and AEG 1.2**). An implementation group involving key stakeholders is being developed to oversee the implementation of the ESVH Framework in MIC.

Polices will be reviewed and developed and procedures put in place around SVH. MIC’s Critical Incident Management Plan has been amended to take account of matters around SVH. Supporting a safe, respectful, supportive and positive environment in MIC is an additional equality ground priority (**AEG 1**) identified by the SAT. In addition, MIC plans to develop a domestic violence leave policy to support the statutory domestic violence leave introduced by the government in November 2023.

While the majority of survey respondents reported knowing how to report incidents of sexual harassment or sexual violence, PMS respondents (72%F/68%M; n=107) are more likely to know than academic respondents (46%F/58%M; n=108). However, students indicated in consultation that they require more support and information on reporting. Those entering the teaching profession would like to be skilled in the area to support primary and post-primary

children. We will work with the students' union to embed EDII (including consent training) into student orientation and ensure that student leaders are EDII aware (**New Action GE 5.4**).

Table 23: SVH workshops delivered to students, 2023

Cohort	Attendees	Date
Bachelor of Education 1st years Life Skills module	435	16.10.2023
Bachelor of Education and Psychology 1st years	34	06.11.2023
International students 3rd group cohort St. Johns	16	10.11.2023
Bachelor of Arts 1st years	280	20.11.2023
Total students	765	

The SVH Prevention Manager has delivered workshops to over 700 students since September 2023. We acknowledge the important of educating students on consent and SVH, particularly those who will be future educators (**New Action AEG 1.2**).

A peer mentoring programme with a focus on EDII and the SVH Framework was piloted in 2023 with MIC students.



Figure 24: Peer mentoring students, 2023

ACTIONS

New Action GE 1.5: Develop processes for reporting, collecting and recording statistics on sexual violence and harassment (SVH).

New Action AEG 1.1: Review, update and develop a five-year (2024–2029) strategy and policies to support the implementation of the ESVH Framework in Irish HEIs.

New Action AEG 1.2: Actively communicate to staff and students the procedure for reporting inappropriate behaviour and support them to report such behaviour.

New Action GE 5.4: Engage regularly with MISU on the promotion of EDII and gender equality on both the Limerick and Thurles campuses.

Objective 24: Lead cultural and organisational change (actions 5.6.10, 5.6.11)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 5.6.10: The Board of Trustees, in their right to appoint the Chair of An tÚdarás Rialaithe (Governing Authority), to implement gender balance through chair rotation or the appointment of a female co-chair.	
Action 5.6.11: Revise the current practice for communicating the processes surrounding key structural changes with staff.	

The Board of Trustees has delegated responsibility for negotiating draft heads of agreement as a precursor to a new relationship between MIC and UL based on the principle of closer structural alignment. In this, the Board of Trustees retains its full commitment to MIC's AS undertakings. This includes implementing **Action 5.6.10**, which will be delivered in the context of any new structural framework for MIC governance that emerges from the dialogue.

MIC enacted **Action 5.6.11** and has put in place new practices for communicating the processes surrounding key structural changes and other important institution-level information (section 2.2.b). Examples include:

- Online Town Halls and all-staff meetings during the pandemic
- In-person Town Hall event (June 2022) that focused on commencing the MIC/UL dialogue
- MIC President's ongoing communications on key structural changes, including progress on the MIC/UL dialogue

On foot of dialogue between MIC and the union representing academic staff (IFUT) and facilitated by the Workplace Relations Committee, MIC is part of a discursive forum that enables direct communication between senior management and representatives of IFUT on matters of mutual concern. MIC will continue to develop and enhance its communication practices as a matter of ongoing quality assurance and will create practical means of doing this in its future strategic planning (**New actions GE 5.11 and GE 5.12**). (The MIC strategic plan is due to be updated in 2024.)



ACTIONS

New Action GE 5.11: Form a PMS working group of the Strategic Implementation Group (SIG).

New Action GE 5.12: Enhance communication between staff and senior management.

Objective 25: Guarantee minimum 40% gender representation on influential committees (actions 5.6.12, 5.6.13, 5.6.14, 5.6.15)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 5.6.12: Require that the membership of influential institutional committees consist of at least 40% of female and 40% of male members over a 3-year period.	Green
Action 5.6.13: Incorporate term of office limits within all committee terms of reference, including length of tenure for the Chairperson.	Green
Action 5.6.14: Develop procedures for appointing chairs of key influential committees to ensure that at least 40% of chairs will be of each gender any given year (HEA 2016: 1.7).	Yellow
Action 5.6.15: Monitor committee membership annually and check for any potential overload.	Yellow

Action 5.6.12 was adopted in 2020 (Figure 25). We will ensure the composition of committees is reviewed and, where appropriate, reconfigured based on any relevant outcome of the closer structural alignment dialogue with UL.

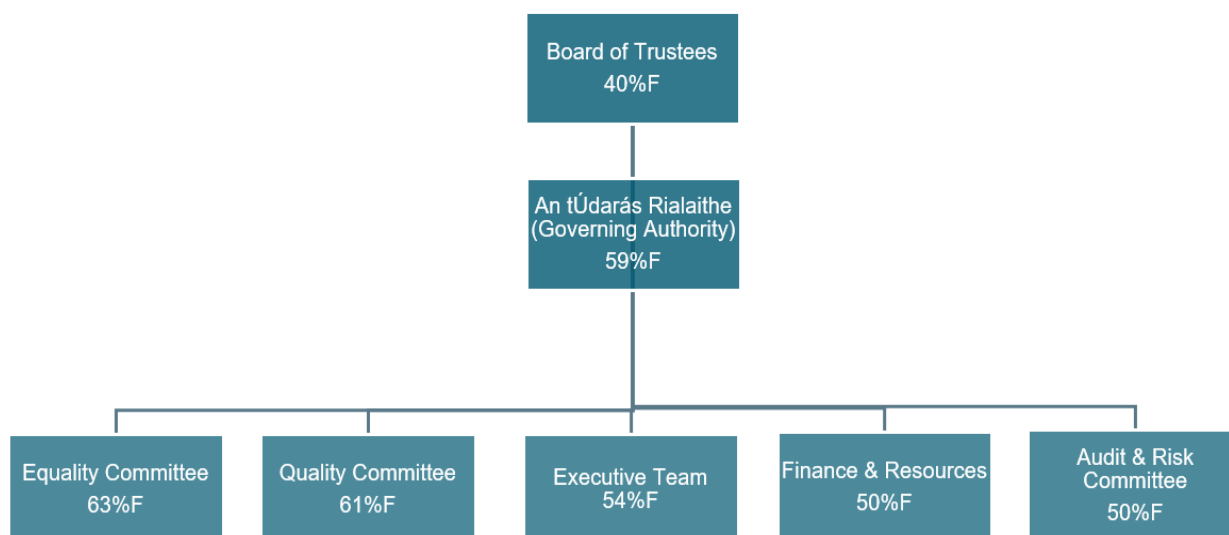


Figure 25: Gender representation on governance committees, 2023

Actions 5.6.13, 5.6.14, 5.6.15 are routinely carried out as part of the MIC annual review of committee effectiveness. In addition, the terms of reference and structure of all committees will be reviewed on foot of the outcome of the MIC/UL dialogue in 2024. The actions will be retained in **New actions GE 5.10 and GE 3.7**.

 **ACTIONS**

New Action GE 5.10: Ensure EDII is integrated into committee and policy development processes.

New Action GE 3.7: A. Include committee membership (internal and external) in the WAM.

B. Highlight committee membership as part of the promotions process.

Objective 26: Consider gender equality in the development and review of policies and procedures (Action 5.6.16)

Associated 2019 action	RAG
Action 5.6.16: Develop an Equality Impact Assessment (modelled on the Irish Human Rights and Equality Committee guidance) to be used when developing and reviewing all policies.	

The 2022 HEA Expert Group recommended that HEIs incorporate equality impact assessment as part of standard practice in institutional policy development and review processes. This is also in line with public sector duty requirements. The EDII Office is working with the Quality Office and Vice President Governance & Strategy to implement **Action 5.6.16** and actions related to quality assurance processes. Guidance on the use of gender-neutral language for MIC documentation has been approved and integrated into the protocol for policy development. This will be included in QMS guidelines, templates, training and related support provided by the Quality Office. The guidelines have been shared with all staff and available for review on the portal. In terms of committee systems and structures, we aim to develop and operationalise an easy-to-apply checklist for EDII best practice (**New Action GE 5.10**).

 **ACTIONS**

New Action GE 5.10: Ensure EDII is integrated into committee and policy development processes.

Objective 27: Introduce a workload allocation model (actions 5.6.17, 5.6.18, 5.6.19)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 5.6.17: Conduct a review of workload models in other HEIs to inform the design of the MIC model.	
Action 5.6.18: Provide staff training regarding applying the model alongside training for line-managers to ensure equality in allocation and monitoring of workloads.	
Action 5.6.19: Introduce the workload model and monitor for gender bias.	

The development of a centralised WAM is underway. **Action 5.6.17** is complete (Figure 26). **Actions 5.6.18 and 5.6.19** have been delayed due to Covid-19 (**New Action GE 3.6**).

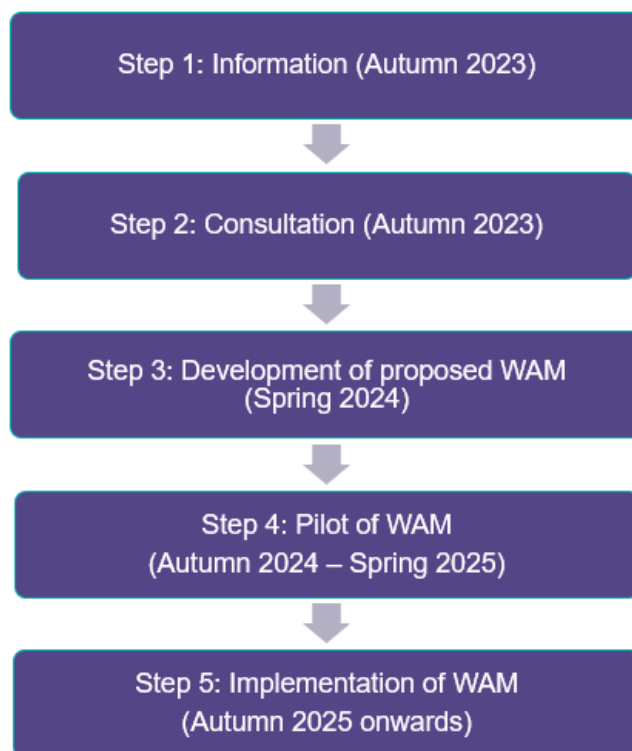


Figure 26: Anticipated timeline for the introduction of the MIC WAM

We know from staff consultation that workload impacts staff outcomes in a range of the themes captured in this application, which emphasises the need to prioritise workload management at an institutional level.

ACTIONS

New Action GE 3.6: Support the development of a workload allocation model (WAM).

Objective 28: Accommodate staff with caring responsibilities when scheduling meeting (actions 5.6.20, 5.6.21).

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 5.6.20: Review the procedure for when timetabling is devised and notice given to staff.	Yellow
Action 5.6.21: Develop and implement guidelines on core meeting times.	Green

As is the case for the sector as a whole, timetabling is a complex entity with moving parts that continually shift and change. Timetabling at MIC is dominated by the need to construct a workable solution that handles the complex task of managing school placements as well as delivering lectures and seminars. MIC’s timetables are released at the same time as UL’s as we align with its academic timelines. MIC sought to recruit a new scheduler but the post has not been filled at the time of writing (**New Action GE 3.8**). In addition, external factors, such as the teacher supply crisis, make timetabling challenging. Many MIC students work as substitute

teachers when they are not timetabled during the semester. At times, MIC has altered academic semesters to alleviate pressure from the lack of available substitute teachers.

Action 5.6.21 has been implemented since 2020 and continues to be monitored.



ACTIONS

New Action GE 3.8: Monitor changes to timetabling procedures for academic programmes.

Objective 29: Demonstrate organisational commitment to gender equality by supporting EDI events and promoting (female and male) role models (actions 5.6.22, 5.6.23, 5.6.24)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 5.6.22: Develop guidelines for holding inclusive and equitable events, to include guidelines for communications/publicity materials, speaker selection and programme development.	Yellow
Action 5.6.23: Provide institutional support for events such as FemFest, International Women’s Day (March annually) and International Men’s Day (Nov. annually).	Green
Action 5.6.24: Profile female and male alumni through artwork, exhibitions and the naming of buildings and spaces.	Yellow

Guidelines for holding inclusive and equitable events were published in 2023 (**Action 5.6.22**). In line with **Action 5.6.23**, institutional support is provided for many events (Figures 27, 28 and 29 and section 1.3).



Figure 27: International Women’s Day 2023: public lecture with Sara Ahmed



Figure 28: International Women's Day 2022, FemFest Festival



Figure 29: President Michael D. Higgins at launch of Imogen Stuart: In Her Hands exhibition, MIC

The Strategic Communications & Marketing team developed a range of activities to promote diversity among our student and staff cohorts, which links to priority theme **AEG 2, Student & Staff Diversity**. This includes embedding EDII themes in the monthly staff newsletter and hosting a quarterly 'in conversation with' series where staff can share their journeys and experiences through an EDII lens. The Strategic Communications & Marketing team is

launching an upcoming podcast series through which a range of EDII areas will be explored with staff and students. **Action 5.6.24** is ongoing and is dependent on certain future developments before it can be realised.

Objective 30: Tackle the gender imbalance in the student population (actions 5.6.25, 5.6.26, 5.6.27)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 5.6.25: Promote Faculty of Education programmes to male students through activities such as TY taster courses and guest speakers from relevant courses in MIC.	
Action 5.6.26: Develop a social media campaign to promote our Education and Liberal Arts programmes to male secondary school students.	
Action 5.6.27: Conduct research, in partnership with local DEIS schools in Limerick City, on male students' perceptions of primary teaching and early childhood care as a career.	

Male under-representation has been a recent focus of the EDII Office, Faculty of Education and Strategic Communications & Marketing Office (**New actions GE 3.15 and 3.16**). The EDII Office hosts events on male under-representation, including annual International Men's Day panel sessions since 2020.

INTERNATIONAL MEN'S DAY 2022

Male Underrepresentation

Join us for a panel discussion on male underrepresentation in certain professions such as early years childcare, primary teaching and professional services roles.

Our panel, chaired by Prof. Gary O'Brien, MIC VP Governance & Strategy includes:

- Des Carswell, Lecturer RPECS, MIC
- Eoin Martin, faculty support to RPECS and LSRE, MIC Education Office
- Shane O'Carroll, faculty support, MIC Education Office
- Neil Collins, primary school teacher and student counsellor, MIC
- Dr Suzanne O'Keefe, Maynooth University

Date: Monday 21st November
Time & Venue: 1pm, G10, Foundation Building, MIC Limerick.
All Welcome!

EDII Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Inclusion

MIC Athena SWAN

International Men's Day 2020

Join us to mark *International Men's Day* with a panel discussion to celebrate the many student, staff and graduate role models in MIC Limerick and Thurles.

- Stephen Dunne, graduate BA in Geography and Maths: Overcoming barriers
- Dr Patrick Cosgrove, Student Recruitment Officer, Strategic Communications & Marketing: Male Underrepresentation
- Dr Tayo Paul Adenusi, Assistant Lecturer in Education: Education in West Africa
- Aaron Sheil, John White & Alex O'Keefe: Experiences and perspectives of mature students at MIC

Date: Thursday 19th November
Venue: Online
Time: 11am

Open to all staff and students. All welcome!

Athena SWAN

Figure 30: Sample International Men's Day events in MIC

In 2018 in Ireland, 85% of primary teachers were female compared to 73% in the EU. MIC has engaged with efforts at national level to attract more males into teaching.

Comprising multifaceted campaigns, the Strategic Communications & Marketing team developed a targeted strategy to help address male under-representation in the student body (**actions 5.6.25 and 5.6.26**).

One such campaign to increase applications to BEd degrees was directed at males in post-primary schools. The TikTok campaign featured male Leaving Certificate students talking about how they had been inspired by their male teachers and why they were now considering teaching as a career choice.

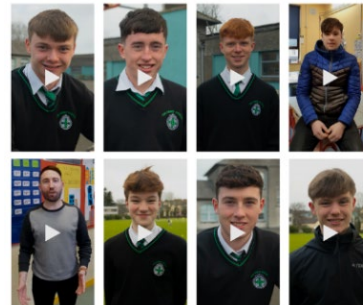


Figure 31: MIC TikTok campaign

Another campaign featured interviews with young male teachers and continues to run across all media platforms. The campaign garnered much national media attention and received many accolades from the Department of Education & Skills, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, the General Secretary at Education and Training Boards Ireland and political party spokespersons.



Figure 32: MIC male teacher campaign

In addition, social media campaigns profile the male student and include the male voice in Student Experience Days (recruitment events). The number of presentations to mixed and all-male schools on MIC's undergraduate programme offerings is up by 27% from 2019. DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) schools are visited by Strategic Communications & Marketing personnel to encourage the recruitment of students from more disadvantaged areas.

We continue to ensure that males are represented across all promotional material. Small increases in the number of male Central Applications Office (CAO) applications have been seen: 17%M in 2020, 18%M in 2021 and 20%M in 2022.



Figure 33: Undergraduate campaign 2022/23 (used for all overarching UG campaigns, including prospectus cover/Open Days/CAO)



Figure 34: Current postgraduate campaign image

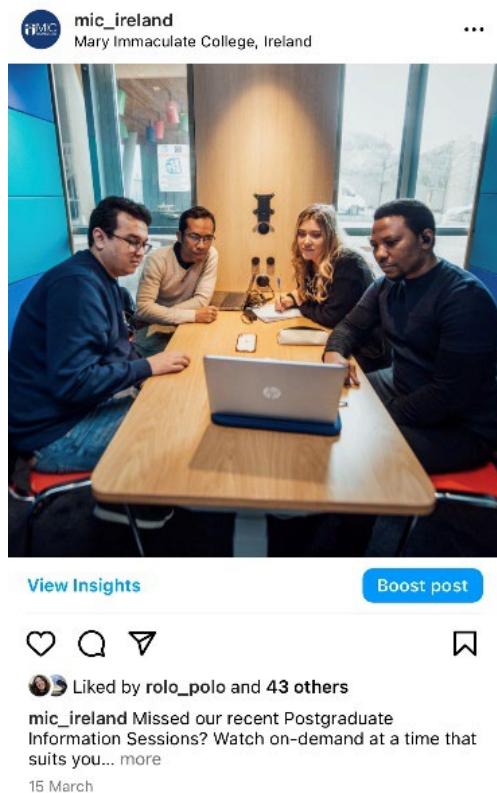


Figure 35: Sample of current postgraduate digital assets campaigns



ACTIONS

New Action GE 3.15: Identify barriers leading to male under-representation in the Faculty of Education.

New Action GE 3.16: Work with Strategic Communications & Marketing to roll out targeted recruitment campaigns to address male under-representation within the student cohort.

Objective 31: Monitor outreach activities for EDI (Action 5.6.28)

Associated 2019 action	RAG
Action 5.6.28: Implement a formal monitoring system of outreach activities including attendance, speakers and staff engagement.	

Outreach includes activities to improve access to or widen participation in higher education and, more broadly, research activities. The Office of Enterprise and Community Engagement is monitoring participation in all events on campus and outreach activities in terms of participation by gender in accordance with key performance indicators agreed with Athena Swan Ireland.



Figure 36: STEPS Engineering Week and ESB Science Blast



Figure 37: EMPOWER Programme



Figure 38: MIC CPD Summer Programme for primary and post-primary teachers

As illustrated in the three images to follow, students actively lead and collaborate on important and topical societal issues. However, focus groups indicated that students from different backgrounds (ethnicity, socio-economic backgrounds, those with caring responsibilities, mature students) would welcome participating in outreach events in which, to date, they have not participated or been represented (**New Action 5.4**).

Figure 39: Mary Immaculate Students' Union (MISU) charity run in memory of past student Ashling Murphy



Figure 40: Professor Gary O'Brien (VP Governance & Strategy), Róisín Burke (MISU President), Aoife Gleeson (MISU Vice-President) and Professor Lorraine McIlrath (Director EDI & Interculturalism) at the launch of the free period products initiative



Figure 41: MISU showcases Limerick as a student city



ACTIONS

New Action 5.4: Engage regularly with MISU on the promotion of EDII and gender equality on both the Limerick and Thurles campuses.

Objective 32: Submit departmental Athena Swan applications (actions 5.6.29, 5.6.30, 5.6.31)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 5.6.29: Provide a briefing session for Faculty Management Committees on the Athena SWAN department application process (Faculty level) and invite the Athena SWAN Ireland manager to contribute.	
Action 5.6.30: Establish faculty self-assessment teams.	
Action 5.6.31: Submit Bronze Departmental Award applications from the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Arts.	

Actions 5.6.29, 5.6.30 and 5.6.31 are complete for the Faculty of Arts and will commence in January 2024 for the Faculty of Education. The focus for the faculties and institution is to work towards achieving Silver awards. In addition, we will launch an AS process with our PMS staff cohort (**New Action GE 5.3**).



Figure 42: (Left to right): Dr Joan O'Sullivan, Vice-Chair of SAT; Professor Eugene Wall, President of MIC; Christine Ratzlaff, Vice President of the Mary Immaculate Students' Union; Professor William Leahy, Dean of Arts; Professor Lorraine McIlrath, Director of EDII; Dr Deirdre Flynn, SAT member; Edel Foster, EDII Manager

 **ACTIONS**

New Action GE 5.3: Work towards submitting Athena Swan applications for the institution (Silver), Faculty of Education (Bronze) and professional units (Bronze).

Objective 33: Provide a supportive environment for LGBTQ+ staff and students (actions 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 6.1: Develop a Gender Identity and Expression Policy.	Yellow
Action 6.2: Provide transgender awareness training to staff and students, including training on the Gender Identity and Expression policy.	Yellow
Action 6.3: Fund an external mentor to drive the reestablishment of the student LGBTQ+ society.	Green
Action 6.4: Review changing facilities in Tailteann (Sports Complex) and MIC Thurles to accommodate transgender students and staff. Include gender-neutral facilities in the design of all new buildings.	Red
Action 6.5: Identify contact/support person for students and staff in relation to LGBTQ+ issues, and include in student handbooks and MISU information.	Green

The Gender Identity and Expression Policy was approved in October 2023 and will be launched in early 2024. Developed with ShoutOut¹⁸, tailored workshops were delivered to senior management and HR personnel, and wider all-staff workshops were delivered across the partner institutions¹⁹ to more than 300 staff, of whom close to 100 were from MIC. In addition, partner HEIs and ShoutOut launched a National Gender Diversity Champions Network to share best practice and develop policy in this area. The project was shortlisted for the Advancement of LGBTQ+ Inclusion award in the National Diversity & Inclusion Awards 2023. As part of the Teaching for Inclusion Seminar Series, a workshop on gender identity and expression for the primary and post-primary education sector was attended by over 100 schools online and is now housed on the MIC website as a resource for the school community.

Other significant develops:

- The MISU student LGBTQ+ society was re-established as MIC Cloud in 2021.
- The MIC staff LGBTQI+ network was created in 2022 and formally launched by the MIC President and guest speakers in January 2023.
- Pride pedestrian crossings were installed on campus.
- Staff at MIC and TUS hosted a jointly sponsored EDII float at the Limerick Pride parade in July 2023.
- Since 2020, details for a contact/support person in relation to LGBTQ+ issues (**Action 6.5**) are given to students during orientation.
- The EDII Office works collaboratively with MISU on supports and events.
- Transgender and transitioning students are supported on school placement and *Gaeltacht* placement
- Students are supported in the process of changing their names.

¹⁸ A sector-leading charity working to create inclusive educational institutions

¹⁹ Gender Equality Enhancement Fund project with South East Technological University, University of the Shannon (TUS), Carlow College and University of Galway



Figure 43: Launch of MIC rainbow pedestrian crossings to visually highlight our inclusion of all people, including the LGBTQI communities, June 2023



Figure 44: Members of the staff network marched for the first time in the Limerick Pride parade in July 2023 along with members from the TUS and UL staff network

The Limerick campus has gender-neutral bathrooms. Discussions are ongoing around changing facilities in Tailteann (Sports Complex) and MIC Thurles. The new library on the Limerick campus will include gender-neutral spaces. Two further projects at tentative stages of development will include gender-neutral facilities and will be reviewed through the EDII lens.

Objective 34: Monitor the impact of the Gender Identity and Expression policy (actions 6.6, 6.7)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 6.6: Ensure the Gender Identity and Expression policy includes details of how the impact of the policy will be monitored.	Yellow
Action 6.7: Include questions relating to Gender Identity and Expression policy awareness in our staff survey.	Red

Actions 6.6 and 6.7 will be retained for the new action plan and as part of the policy development process. The EDII Office will establish a Gender Identity and Expression Policy Working Group to ensure that the policy works in practice, and amendments will be made in light of this monitoring activity (**New Action AEG 2.3**).

ACTIONS

New Action AEG 2.3: Implement, monitor and amend, as required, the Gender Identity and Expression policy.

Objective 35: Allow students identify their preferred gender where required on student records (Action 6.8)

Associated 2019 action	RAG
Action 6.8: Update paper forms and online Student Record System (existing and new) with multiple gender fields.	Green

Launched in 2020, the now fully operational student record system currently uses the following gender fields:

- Male
- Gender non-binary
- Female
- Prefer not to say

Objective 36: Raise awareness of issues faced by members of the LGBTQ+ community (actions 6.9, 6.10)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 6.9: Engage GOSHH, an organisation based in Limerick, to provide LGBTQ+ training for staff and students.	Yellow
Action 6.10: Develop a plan of events and activities to continue to raise awareness of transgender persons including Trans Awareness Week.	Green

Over the review period, we partnered with organisations including GOSHH, TENI and ShoutOut to deliver training sessions to staff and students. The students' union established an annual MISU Pride Week, which the staff network and EDII Office support by organising events and activities.



Figure 45: MISU Pride Week Walking Tour, 2023

Objective 37: Provide an inclusive and supportive environment for staff and students (actions 7.1, 7.2, 7.3)

Associated 2019 actions	RAG
Action 7.1: Provide the Living Equality and Diversity online programme to new staff as part of their induction and to all existing staff.	Green
Action 7.2: Develop guidelines for staff and line-managers on providing support for menopausal symptoms at work.	Yellow
Action 7.3: Survey staff and students to ascertain the needs of minority and marginalised communities in MIC with consideration of intersectionality.	Yellow

Focusing on new staff at orientation, the updated Living Equality and Diversity programme (EDI in higher education in Ireland) is available to all staff on Moodle since March 2022. To date, 95 staff (74%F) have completed the programme (**Action 7.1**).

Menopause guidelines for staff and students drafted by the EDII Office in collaboration with Catherine O’Keeffe (The Wellness Warrior) will be launched in January/February 2024. The associated awareness campaign will include an in-person education session for staff (**New Action GE 4.5**).

With a particular focus on intersectionality, we will continue to support minority and marginalised communities at MIC. For example, MIC is hosting placements through the IBEC Refugee Education and Placement Programme in early 2024. Along with our AEG priorities, the new AS Ireland Framework also supports this work (**New actions GE 1.1 and 1.2**).



ACTIONS

New Action GE 4.5: Finalise and launch the menopause at work guidelines and implement the associated awareness campaign.

New Action GE 1.1: Form a data collection working group.

New Action GE 1.2: Develop an efficient and accessible equality data capturing strategy.

Methodology and evaluation of action plan implementation



Figure 46: Implementation of action plan

Reviewed data included student intake, progression and completion data by gender, recruitment data by gender and staff profile by gender.

Implementation barriers and facilitators

One of the biggest barriers faced during implementation of the action plan in 2020 was the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. As we announced our AS Institutional Bronze award in March 2020, the country effectively came to a halt. This, in turn, led to a delay in starting the action plan and appointing an EDII Director. Other barriers and facilitators to implementation are given in the figure below.

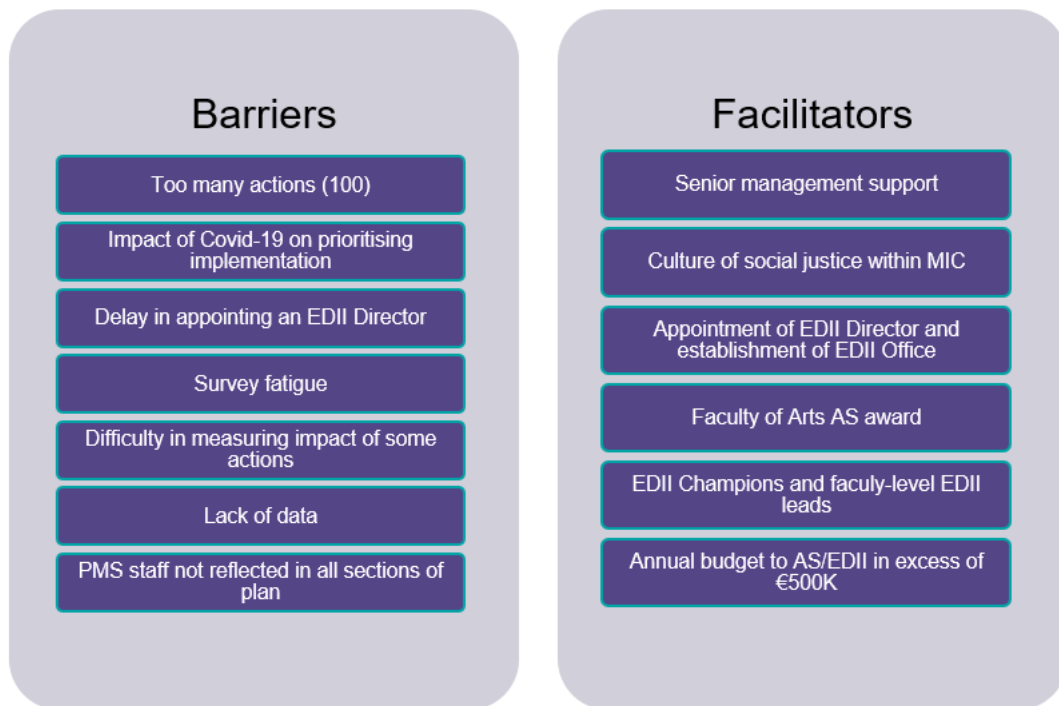


Figure 47: Action plan implementation barriers and facilitators

Main learnings

The following are the main lessons we learned from the 2019 plan, some of which fed into the design of the new plan and some of which should help us with the plan’s implementation:

- The 2019 action plan had too many actions (100); the 2023 plan has 57 actions, which should be more manageable.
- Regular communication and consultations on progress against the action plan is needed.
- Wider EDII data is needed.
- We need to further embed AS in current MIC structures.
- We need to be prepared to change actions if they are not having the desired outcome.

2. Identifying issues and priorities for future action

2.a Reflection on self-assessment

- a. Reflecting on the self-assessment undertaken to support this application, consider the following:

The self-assessment has addressed the areas covered by the charter framework for institutions, including analysis of necessary data sets and evaluation of policies, processes, practices and culture.	Yes	No
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered 'no', please comment.

2.b Key issues and priorities relating to gender equality

- b. Based on the self-assessment undertaken, comment and reflect on the institution's key issues relating to gender equality and explain key priorities for action over the next four years. This should include:
- + consideration of how the institution's issues have changed since the previous award, drawing on qualitative and quantitative data sets to evidence statements. Where appropriate, reference past and future action plans;
 - + comment on any need to further support Athena Swan activity in sub-units (e.g. academic departments and professional units);
 - + selection of up to five priority areas where the institution will strive for impact. Selected priorities should be justifiable and make reference to quantitative and qualitative evidence. Specific action(s) to support progress in priority areas should be identified;
 - + reference to previously identified key priorities. If applicable, applicants may carry previously identified key priorities into the upcoming award period; where previously identified priorities are adjusted or edited for incorporation in the coming award period, the rationale for these changes should be presented.

The 2019 AS application identified the following priority areas for the 2019–2023 action plan lifecycle:

1. Appoint academic merit-based promotional posts.
2. Develop and implement a flexible working policy.
3. Introduce a workload model.
4. Appoint a Head of EDI.
5. Deliver EDI, unconscious bias and interview training for those involved in recruitment and selection panels.

Based on our self-assessment process in 2022/2023, which included an analysis of qualitative and quantitative data, we identified five key gender equality priorities for action over the next four years. As outlined in section 2.1.b, much progress has been made on the 2019 key priorities, some of which have been retained in the 2023 plan (staff development, workloads and flexible working). These priorities focus on areas of critical importance to MIC and align with the recommendations of the second HEA review of gender equality in Irish HEIs, the Horizon Europe Requirements and internal institutional priorities. The 2023 action plan includes additional equality grounds, priorities for which are outlined in section 2.2.c below.

The justification and underpinning evidence for selecting these priorities and associated actions is included in section 2.1.b above and in the 2023 action plan below. We outlined key changes to the institution's issues throughout section 2 when evaluating our progress. Precarity is a key theme that emerged from the self-assessment process. It is also a key focus of the Faculty of Arts AS action plan and aligns with the main themes from the 2022 HEA second gender equality review. In the context of Irish HEI staff profiles, MIC's profile is unique in some respects. We have a high proportion of female staff and, for many of our academic disciplines, the recruitment pool is predominately female. Given our gender profile, we have an opportunity to be leaders in supporting the career development of female staff.

As the 2019 action plan focused significantly on academic staff, a priority for the SAT this time around was to include PMS staff. While we attempted to implement actions for all staff in the previous plan, the framework at the time was limiting in this respect. The new AS Ireland framework and interim application²⁰ ensures that we can include PMS staff at all stages of the process.

GE 1: Data Collection, Analysis, Monitoring and Reporting

To date, approximately 39% of staff have declared their ethnicity on the Employee Self Service staff portal. We do not have mechanisms for collecting equality grounds data other than age, gender, marital status and ethnicity. EDII data relating to students is not currently captured systematically. We need to collect intersectionality data so that we can monitor equality trends other than those relating to gender.

We acknowledge that data is an essential element of impactful AS and EDII work. We need to collect more intersectional data on staff and students, particularly relating to ethnicity. Better streamlining of our institutional data reporting mechanisms is key to advancing our equality agenda and to enabling evidence-based EDI policy and practice.

This priority theme supports the HEA Report 2022, the HEA Race Equality Implementation Plan in the Higher Education Sector 2022–2024 and our national statutory reporting requirements and obligations in relation to EDII.

²⁰ Under which of Faculty of Arts achieved its AS Bronze award

Table 24: Gender Equality Priority 1: Data Collection, Analysis, Monitoring and Reporting

No.	Action
GE 1.1	Form a data collection working group.
GE 1.2	Develop an efficient and accessible equality data capturing strategy.
GE 1.3	Monitor gender pay gap trends.
GE 1.4	Continue to monitor and report on gender representation at application, recruitment and promotion stages.
GE 1.5	Develop processes for reporting, collecting and recording statistics on sexual violence and harassment (SVH).
GE 1.6	Gather and monitor data on precarious staff categories.

GE 2: Precarity

Precarity emerged as a theme from our staff consultation at both faculty (2022) and institutional (2023) levels. Concern is growing nationally in relation to the number of staff in HEIs on precarious contracts. Precarious contracts are a significant and overlooked gender equality issue in the Irish HE sector²¹. To address the rise in precarious employment, it is necessary to identify the drivers within MIC. We need to better understand the profile of part-time staff before we can provide bespoke supports to this diverse group.

The percentage of hourly-paid female staff is close to that of females in permanent posts (Table 2). This can be linked to the recruitment pool being predominately female, particularly in education, and this is reflected in the profile of PTHP staff in the Faculty of Education. This percentage may not necessarily reflect female career disadvantage but rather the under-representation of males in the recruitment pool.

The HEA's HEI Staff Profiles by Gender (Table 25) includes data on core-funded staff only and therefore may not reflect the nature or number of staff on hourly-paid contracts. It is difficult to ascertain PTHP data across the sector.

²¹ HEA Expert Group in the 2nd HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions, 2022

Table 25: HEA benchmarking data, 2019–2021

	MIC	All colleges	All universities	All institutes of technology
	%F	%F	%F	%F
2019				
Full-time permanent	55%	62%	43%	45%
Full-time temp/contract	69%	71%	52%	45%
Part-time permanent				
Part-time temp/contract				
Hourly-paid	N/A	58%	50%	36%
2020				
Full-time permanent	60%	65%	43%	46%
Full-time temp/contract	53%	71%	55%	47%
Part-time permanent	65%	65%	59%	65%
Part-time temp/contract	100%	76%	74%	58%
Hourly-paid	69%	46%	50%	43%
2021				
Full-time permanent	70%	69%	50%	49%
Full-time temp/contract	71%	71%	60%	56%
Part-time permanent	83%	72%	79%	75%
Part-time temp/contract	39%	48%	45%	66%
Hourly-paid	66%	69%	53%	66%

The full-time equivalent (FTE) for the headcount of hourly-paid staff must be considered. MIC FTE is 20 contact (lecture) hours/week. The results of a review we conducted on hourly-paid contracts in 2020–2022 are given in Table 26. The table shows PTHP headcount and FTE by gender to reflect the number of FTE contracts that the headcount equates to. By showing a total for the year, this table differs to Table 25, which captures a specific point in time.

Table 26: Part-time hourly-paid hours, staff headcount and FTE, 2020–2022

PTHP	Total hours	Total staff	%F	FTE
2020				
F	9294.25	106		19.2
M	2965.5	48		6.2
Total	12,259.75	154	69%	25.4
2021				
F	10309.75	127		21.5
M	4579.25	64		9.5
Total	14,889	191	66%	31
2022				
F	6900	80		14.4
M	5240	50		10.9
Total	12,140	130	62%	25.3

Participants of the focus group that was undertaken with part-time staff for this AS process welcomed the chance to partake in the group, for which their attendance was paid. While some participants described feeling like a “ghost” or “invisible” within MIC, all (professional

and academic staff) feel a sense of belonging due to the College’s warm, collegial culture. They view their part-time work in MIC as a career stepping-stone but describe it as a double-edged sword. One participant was “*afraid to stick my head up as well though in case it gets swung off*”.

We look forward to working and supporting the new IFUT/MIC Precarious Employment Working Group on areas to improve the working environment for part-time staff. While many issues affect precarity at national government level, we acknowledge we can implement actions to resolve some of these issues at local level.

Table 27: Gender Equality Priority 2: Precarity

No.	Action
GE 2.1	Form the Precarious Employment Working Group with representatives from MIC and IFUT.
GE 2.2	Provide information and training to line managers on practices for hiring PTHP staff.
GE 2.3	Provide on the staff portal key College information and contacts for part-time staff.
GE 2.4	Raise awareness of supports that non-permanent staff can avail of.
GE 2.5	Explore the feasibility of extending elements of the Academic Staff Research Support Policy (2020) to non-permanent staff.
GE 2.6	Improve engagement with precarious staff cohorts.

GE 3: Staff Development/Career Pathways

Over a third of female respondents (n=229) to the staff survey did not see an attractive career path in MIC. The gender difference on this question was quite marked among non-permanent staff: 31%F/7%M; n=44. This links to our precarity priority theme.

For academic staff, the introduction and development of merit-based promotions offers career progression opportunities that were not in place during the previous review period.

Table 28: Survey responses in relation to seeing an attractive career path in MIC

Category	Yes		No		Unsure	
	%F	%M	%F	%M	%F	%M
Academic	22%	31%	37%	38%	41%	31%
PMS	29%	44%	33%	28%	38%	28%
Permanent	25%	29%	37%	45%	38%	26%
Non-permanent	28%	53%	31%	7%	41%	40%

PL and SL posts (not merit-based promotion) have low female application (35%F) and appointment rates (30%F) (2020–2022; 10 posts). These posts would typically be for Acting Head of Department/Director and open to staff within those areas. We intend to identify barriers faced by women applying for senior academic and management posts (including internal acting-up posts) across institutions and specify actions based on what we find.

More PMS staff report having access to training to support career aspirations (59%F/65%M; n=111) than do academic staff (39%F/50%M; n=105). More permanent staff agree to this (54%F/58%M; n=179) than do non-permanent staff (34%F/46%M; n=38). In contrast, the majority of applications to undertake CPD are approved. We need to further investigate if there are barriers to accessing training, particularly for female academic staff. As part of our future staff consultations, we will need to clearly define what we mean by the terms 'training' and 'access to training'.

We recognise that providing more targeted supports to PMS staff and having a better understanding of the needs of part-time staff are priorities. In the absence of a traditional promotions pathway for PMS staff, we recognise the importance of career development opportunities for this cohort as a key enabler of progressing to more senior roles in MIC.

More female than male respondents (60%F/45%M; n=239) felt their unit would benefit from a WAM while 26%F/33%M were neutral on this question. As outlined in the previous section, creating a fair and transparent academic workload model remains a priority in the 2023 action plan.

Table 29: Gender Equality Priority 3: Staff Development/Career Pathways

No.	Actions
Promotions	
GE 3.1	Communicate updates and progress on upcoming promotion rounds to all staff.
GE 3.2	Clearly link EDII activity with the promotion criteria and process.
Academic Staff Career Support and Development	
GE 3.3	Identify the barriers that prevent academic staff from accessing teaching, learning and research supports.
GE 3.4	In areas where there is gender under-representation in senior and merit posts, if no applications are received from the under-represented gender, the post will be re-advertised.
GE 3.5	Collaborate with other HEIs on identifying barriers faced by women applying for senior academic and management posts (including internal acting-up posts) across institutions and develop actions based on research.
Workloads	
GE 3.6	Support the development of a workload allocation model (WAM).
GE 3.7	A. Include committee membership (internal and external) in the WAM. B. Highlight committee membership as part of the promotions process.
GE 3.8	Monitor changes to timetabling procedures for academic programmes.
PMS Career Support and Development	
GE 3.9	Encourage PMS staff to avail of training opportunities.
GE 3.10	Implement the national job evaluation scheme once it has been finalised and agreed by all stakeholders.
Supports for All Staff	
GE 3.11	Conduct a training needs analysis for all staff.
GE 3.12	Formalise a strategy to develop mentoring.
GE 3.13	Develop and implement an appraisal/development review process.
GE 3.14	Continue to engage with staff leaving the institution.
GE 3.15	Identify barriers leading to male under-representation in the Faculty of Education.
GE 3.16	Work with Strategic Communications & Marketing to roll out targeted recruitment campaigns to address male under-representation within the student cohort.

GE 4: Flexible Working and Support for Leave

Staff consultation indicated that support for flexible working and leave are top priorities for PMS and academic staff.

We need to monitor the impact of the 2023 Blended Working Policy, especially on PMS staff. We also need to consider the longer-term impact of Covid-19, particularly on academic and research careers. We need to raise awareness of the leave options available to staff, particularly male staff, and ascertain what barriers might prevent staff from accessing the options.

Given the staff profile of MIC and the impact of areas such as menopause and infertility on staff, we wish for MIC to become leaders in promoting a culture of empathy and support for staff.

Table 30: Gender Equality Priority 4: Flexible Working and Support for Leave

No.	Action
GE 4.1	Document and disseminate to staff and students the supports that are available to those with caring responsibilities.
GE 4.2	Offer specific pregnancy- and fertility-related supports to staff.
GE 4.3	Introduce a research grant for returning academic carers.
GE 4.4	Monitor the impact of flexible working policies on staff.
GE 4.5	Finalise and launch the menopause at work guidelines and implement the associated awareness campaign.

GE 5: Leadership and Staff Engagement

We have engaged with staff (all contract types) annually since the first AS submission. Our staff survey indicates that engagement on strategic planning is a priority area for both PMS and academic staff, ranking as a top priority for female academic staff. Staff consultation also indicates a desire for better communication to and from senior management.

Including academic and PMS staff, MIC's Strategic Implementation Group (SIG) oversees the HEA Compact Report process and has a wide understanding of the College's units and activities. To support the wider staff community to understand the parameters and decisions made at senior level, members of SIG will be asked to share SIG updates with their staff teams.

"Better communication (strategy, channels, feedback, etc.) with staff as pressing priority." (Male academic)

We also recognise that PMS staff (78%F) have no forum such as Academic Council or faculty boards through which information can be shared. A SIG working group will be formed to further support institutional knowledge-sharing among PMS staff.

"We are still seen very much as "clerical" staff instead of student affairs professionals with valid and valuable skills, knowledge and insight that the college could benefit from if they gave us a way to do so." Female PMS

Table 31: Gender Equality Priority 5: Leadership and Staff Engagement

No.	Actions
Athena Swan Timelines	
GE 5.1	Enhance staff and student awareness of Athena Swan and EDII matters and conduct regular consultation.
GE 5.2	Host an annual Athena Swan Day.
GE 5.3	Work towards submitting Athena Swan applications for the institution (Silver), Faculty of Education (Bronze) and professional units (Bronze).
Staff and Student Engagement on AS and EDII	
GE 5.4	Engage regularly with MISU on the promotion of EDII and gender equality on both the Limerick and Thurles campuses.
GE 5.5	Offer an enhanced suite of training opportunities on gender equality and EDII to staff.
GE 5.6	Support the engagement of males in EDII work.
GE 5.7	Establish a dedicated staff hub on the staff portal.
Governance	
GE 5.8	At the final selection step, in the appointment process for new Presidents insofar as possible, the final pool of candidates will comprise an equal number of women and men.
GE 5.9	When appointing a chair of An tÚdarás Rialaithe (Governing Authority), the Board of Trustees will ensure gender balance by rotating the chair or appointing a female co-chair.
GE 5.10	Ensure EDII is integrated into committee and policy development processes.
Staff Communication	
GE 5.11	Form a PMS working group of the Strategic Implementation Group (SIG).
GE 5.12	Enhance communication between staff and senior management.

2.c Key issues and priorities relating to additional equality grounds

- c. Comment and reflect on the institution's key issues relating to additional equality grounds and explain key priorities for action over the next four years. This should include:
- + selection of up to five priority areas where the institution will strive to make progress. Selected priorities should be justifiable and make reference to qualitative and quantitative evidence. Where evidence is not yet available, priorities should be aligned with established good practice to progress equality and support the institution to build capacity in evidence-based equality interventions;
 - + identification of specific action(s) to support progress in priority areas.

MIC hugely welcomes the addition of other equality grounds to the AS framework. We frequently hear during consultation about the need to focus '*beyond gender equality*'. The fact that intersectionality is a key theme of the HEA's second gender equality review underlines the importance of considering additional equality grounds in all aspects of the

College's EDII work. Much of this work, including the EDII strategy, aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 5 (SDG 5), and these additional equality priorities enable us to align with SDGs 4, 16 and 17.

The timing of MIC's forthcoming institutional quality review and new strategic plan (both due in 2024) provides an ideal opportunity for us to embed our GE and AEG priorities into the College's goals for the coming years. Being cognisant of wider HEA and sector movements, such as the Mental Health Framework, Healthy Campus Framework, ESVH Framework, Race Equality Implementation Plan and Universal Design, enables us to take a holistic view of our priorities over the coming period.

We are working collaboratively with MIC colleagues who lead in these areas to map and align our priorities and actions, thereby avoiding duplication. We wish to further promote MIC as a place of welcome and cultural diversity for staff and students from all backgrounds. This aligns well with the Government of Ireland's Teaching Transforms promotion campaign, which highlights the importance of diversity in the classroom.

MIC has been supporting vulnerable communities that face barriers to accessing higher education for many years. The MIC University of Sanctuary Scholarship Programme is another step towards fulfilling this commitment and will offer financial support to those within international protection systems as they do not qualify for free fees if they have lived in Ireland for less than three years. We recognise the importance of evidence-based actions and responses to emerging issues and realise that data gathering is therefore essential.

The aim of our Universal Design approach is to ensure that every member of our community can fully participate in and benefit from the employment and educational experience we offer, regardless of background, abilities or circumstances. We are committed to providing a supportive and inclusive atmosphere that fosters academic excellence, personal growth and success for every individual associated with MIC. We also wish to further facilitate MIC's special commitment to the Irish language as part of our EDII strategy.

Table 32: Additional equality grounds (AEG) priority actions, 2023–2027

AEG priority	No.	Action
AEG 1: Safe, Respectful, Supportive and Positive Environment	AEG 1.1	Review, update and develop a five-year (2024–2029) strategy and policies to support the implementation of the ESVH Framework in Irish HEIs.
	AEG 1.2	Actively communicate to staff and students the procedure for reporting inappropriate behaviour and support them to report such behaviour.
AEG 2: Student and Staff Diversity	AEG 2.1	Advance race equality at MIC by the implementing the HEA’s Race Equality Anti-Racism Principles for Irish Higher Education Institutions.
	AEG 2.2	Work with Strategic Communications & Marketing to continue to roll out targeted recruitment campaigns to diversify our student cohort.
	AEG 2.3	Implement, monitor and amend, as required, the Gender Identity and Expression policy.
	AEG 2.4	Facilitate the College’s special commitment to the Irish language as part of the EDII strategy.
AEG 3: Disability and Neurodivergent Supports	AEG 3.1	Roll out CPD sessions on Universal Design to all staff.
	AEG 3.2	Implement a Universal Design-informed approach to achieving the Autism-Friendly HEI award.
	AEG 3.3	Conduct an audit of the campus for disability access.
	AEG 3.4	Mainstream the principles of Universal Design and EDII across MIC.
AEG 4: Embedding EDII in Quality Assurance and the Curriculum	AEG 4.1	Conduct a pilot EDII review of the reading lists on the MIC curriculum.
	AEG 4.2	Provide guidance to staff on how to consider EDII in their curricula, including sharing current good practice models.

Section 2 countable words: 8,907

Section 3: Action plan

In Section 3, applicants should evidence how they meet Criterion C:

- + Action plan to address identified issues

Present the action plan in the form of a table (on the landscape page to follow).

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

The plan should be published on the institution's website to enable staff, students and the wider community to understand the institution's equality objectives and how these will be achieved.


Confirm the following:

The action plan will be published on the institution's website.

1. Action plan

While many actions are interlinked, they are presented only once in the plan for ease of reading.

Action plan legend

Alignment	 Reference in action plan (after action plan number, 2 nd column)
HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions, 2016	HEA, 2016
HEA Gender Action Plan 2018–2020	HEA, 2018
Consent Framework, 2019	HEA, 2019
Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans, 2021	Horizon Europe, 2021
HEA Race Equality Anti-Racism Principles for Irish Higher Education Institutions, 2022	HEA Race Equality, 2022
2 nd HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions, 2022	HEA, 2022

Priority rating	Meaning
Priority 1 (P1)	Actions commenced within 12 months
Priority 2 (P2)	Actions commenced within 24 months
Priority 3 (P3)	Actions commenced within 48 months

New acronyms

Term	Meaning
AFB	Arts Faculty Board
DARE	Disability Access Route to Education
ESS	Employee Self-Service System
FMC	Faculty Management Committee
GEEF	Gender Equality Enhancement Fund
HEAR	Higher Education Access Route
HoD	Head of Department
L&D	Learning & Development
MIRIS	MIC's Research Information System
PEWG	Precarious Employment Working Group
PGRs	Postgraduate researchers
VPAA	Vice President Academic Affairs
VPAF	Vice President Administration and Finance
VPGS	Vice President Governance and Strategy
SVHP	Sexual Violence & Harassment Prevention

Priority	New AP Number	Action	Rationale	Specific Actions and Implementation	Responsibility	Timeline	Success Criteria/Outcome Measures
Gender Equality Priority Area 1: Data Collection, Analysis, Monitoring and Reporting							
P1	GE 1.1 (HEA, 2022)	Form a data collection working group.	To date, approx. 39% of staff have declared their ethnicity on the ESS database for staff. We do not have any other mechanism to collect other equality grounds data except age, gender, marital status and ethnicity. EDI data relating to students is not currently captured systematically. We need to consider intersectionality throughout our work, and this data will allow us to monitor MIC data trends. To support the HEA Report 2022 and the HEA Race Implementation Plan. To enable evidence-based EDI policy and practice and to fulfil our statutory reporting requirements and obligations nationally in relation to EDII.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop terms of reference for the working group. • Develop a consolidated approach to collecting staff data with representation from EDII, HR, ICT, Student Services, Finance and Quality. 	ICT with support from EDII, Finance, HR, Quality	Q1 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A streamlined data-collection and reporting process is in place on student and staff data to ensure annual data requirements are met, e.g. in public sector duty reporting, gender pay reporting and for public reporting on Athena Swan action plan progress. • Key statistics and audit presented to ET, Academic Council, GA, EQ and EDII Annual Report published fulfilling public sector duty reporting requirements. • Statistics on staff gender and ethnicity reported to HEA annually. • Annual target of a 5% increase in staff declaring ethnicity data; disclosure rate rising to 60% by 2027.
P1	GE 1.2 (HEA, 2022)	Develop an efficient and accessible equality data-capturing strategy.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the ESS system to allow for staff to declare additional equality grounds data. • Launch an awareness campaign to encourage staff to self declare on the expanded ESS system. 		Q2 2024 Q3 2024	
P2	GE 1.3	Monitor gender pay gap trends.	The first MIC gender pay gap was published in 2022. The average hourly rate of pay for all male employees for the reporting period was 14.36% higher than that for all female employees. This was 28.43% for the median rate of pay. The gender pay gap is driven by the much larger number of female than male employees in lower paid professional services grades and entry-level academic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collate data annually for gender pay gap as of 30th June and publish by 30th December. • Support the Undergraduate Gender Equality Enhancement Fund (GEEF) project. • Develop evidence-based actions to address. 	Director HR, Director EDII	Q4 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual reporting internally on MIC's gender pay gap. • Recommendations from the GEEF Project and modelling tool are implemented. • The MIC gender pay gap is reduced to the national average of lower (12% of lower). This is also linked to wider issues and career pipeline of staff.

Priority	New AP Number	Action	Rationale	Specific Actions and Implementation	Responsibility	Timeline	Success Criteria/Outcome Measures
			<p>grades.</p> <p>The gender pay gap is also impacted by the greater number of male than female employees at the highest grades, though this latter group represents quite a small number of employees.</p> <p>To inform planning on actions to address same, MIC is a partner on the HEA's GEEF project, 'Addressing the Gender Pay Gap in Irish Higher Education', with University of Galway as the lead.</p> <p>This project will create a modelling tool for the higher education sector, from which MIC will benefit for future gender pay gap reporting.</p>				
P1	GE 1.4	Continue to monitor and report on gender representation at application, recruitment and promotion stages.	<p>To identify gendered trends across the institution. 70% of staff at the Lecturer grade are female, directly below the SL grade. During the review period, 30% of applications to such SL posts were female. 25% of acceptances for these SL posts were female.</p> <p>As this is the first time merit-based promotions have been available for academic staff since 2007, we need to analyse the data of the different stages to identify any gendered trends. Particularly we need to analyse</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually analyse applications, shortlisting and appointments data by faculty/PMS and gender (and by intersectionality, where possible). • Address any gendered trends through further targeted supports and review existing supports. 	Equality Committee with support from HR and EDII	Q4 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis and reporting of gender breakdown and recruitment at faculty/PMS staff level. • Report submitted to AFB/FMC/ET annually. • Data reported to Equality Committee and shared in annual EDII reporting

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			and benchmark with the current trend of low female rates applying for and being appointed to senior posts. For PMS staff, we see more female applications and offers for posts across all grades except more technical/maintenance grades such as AP1, AP2, General Operatives and Trades Persons.				
P2	GE 1.5 (HEA, 2019; Horizon Europe, 2021)	Develop processes for reporting, collecting and recording statistics on sexual violence and harassment (SVH).	To support the implementation of the ESVH Framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Join the Speak Out Network and report on anonymous data from the tool collated quarterly. Develop policies to support the consent framework, including appropriate reporting procedures. 	SVHP Manager, Student Counselling	Q1 2024 Q3 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff and students report awareness of the Speak Out Tool. Staff and students report understanding how to use the tool if required. Statistics on SVH reported to Equality Committee and GA. MIC's Critical Incident Plan refers to SVH specifically and supports provided. Better understanding of SVH at MIC.
P1	GE 1.6 (HEA, 2022)	Gather and monitor data on precarious staff categories.	To develop a clear understanding of staff category defined as precarious so that we have a true reflection of staff in these categories through data gathering and analyses. While the %of female staff on PTHP contracts has reduced from 69% in 2020 to 62% in 2022, it is essential to have reliable data. Any informal recruitment practices for hourly-paid staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather and analyse local data on hourly-paid staff headcount and contracts collected centrally on an annual basis and monitored at faculty/service level. 	Quality Office with support from HR and Finance	Q3 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better understanding of precarity in MIC and ways to reduce it. Report submitted to AFB/FMC/ET annually. Detailed data on extent of reliance on PTHP staff by faculty. <p>This action and success measures are linked to Action GE 2.1.</p>

Priority	New AP Number	Action	Rationale	Specific Actions and Implementation	Responsibility	Timeline	Success Criteria/Outcome Measures
			are EDII- and gender-proofed. To support the work of the recently established Precarious Employment Working Group.				
Gender Equality Priority Area 2: Precarity							
P1	GE 2.1 (HEA, 2022)	Form the Precarious Employment Working Group with representatives from MIC and IFUT.	Part-time staff focus group participants (all female) described feeling different, as a 'ghost' or 'invisible' within the College. To enhance the working environment for staff on precarious contracts. To develop a consolidated approach to precarity between IFUT and MIC based on data and definitions of precarity. 130 staff (62% female) were on PTHP contracts in 2022.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop terms of reference and schedule of meetings for the working group. • Clarify what the contracted lecture hours includes for PTHP staff. • Develop a mechanism for regularising long-term hourly-paid contract holders on a phased basis. • Review mechanisms for developing a career path from Teaching Fellow to Assistant Professor. 	PEWGW, VPAF, HR	Q4 2023 Q1 2024 Q3 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduction in the number of staff on precarious contracts (benchmarked from the working group findings). • Detailed data on extent of reliance on PTHP staff by faculty. • MIC has an understanding where issues originate and targeted solutions are developed accordingly. This action and success measures are linked to Action GE 1.6.
P2	GE 2.2 (HEA, 2022)	Provide information and training to line managers on practices for hiring PTHP staff.	Consultation indicates that different practices are in play across the College in relation to supporting PTHP staff. To deepen a sense of inclusion for PTHP staff and support open communication. To support MIC's EDII goals. To ensure we are being inclusive of all staff joining MIC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop guidelines for HoDs and line managers to support PT staff • Ensure staff are made aware that payment is available for attendance at departmental meetings and CPD • PTHP staff included on welcome email lists. 	HoDs/line managers, VPAF, HR	Q3 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All hourly-paid staff paid for attendance at induction. • Hourly-paid staff are aware of existing and potential opportunities and career supports. • Biennial focus group are held with staff on precarious contracts to reflect on supports and awareness of same.
P2	GE 2.3 (HEA, 2022)	Provide on the staff portal key College information and contacts for part-time staff.	Respondents from the focus groups (all female) gave insights on their experiences of feeling 'invisible' and not included on mailing lists. To enhance inclusive,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up a dedicated staff online information hub to host a practical guide for part-time and hourly-paid staff to include key MIC information on ICT, finance, ID cards, 	L&D with support from ICT and line managers	Q3 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2027, at least 70% of non-permanent and part-time male and female staff report feeling included and professionally valued in MIC. • By 2027, at least 65% of PTHP

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			welcoming environment for staff on all contract types.	parking and wider onboarding information.			male and female staff report being informed on key MIC information.
P1	GE 2.4	Raise awareness of supports that non-permanent staff can avail of.	To provide PTHP staff with access to key contacts and data on all supports in MIC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure PTHP staff are aware of available hotdesking office space and of park and ride options that are free for staff use. • Make sure PTHP staff are aware that they can be paid for attendance at induction and training events. 		Q3 2024	
P2	GE 2.5	Explore the feasibility of extending elements of the Academic Staff Research Support Policy (2020) to non-permanent staff.	<p>To allow postdoctoral researchers and those on fixed-term contracts access to similar career and research supports that permanent staff have. Female academic staff predominate in these staff categories.</p> <p>Currently all schemes are open to permanent academic staff only.</p> <p>Part-time staff focus group (all female) participants indicated that they felt at a disadvantage in terms of affording attendance at conferences, postdoctoral studies and access to wider research supports.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With ET support, extend elements of the Academic Staff Research Support Policy (2020) to non-permanent staff and postdoctoral researchers. • Communicate new amendments of the policy to all staff. • Raise awareness of existing supports, such as mentoring offered by Director of Research, to all staff and the MIC Postgraduate Conference Fund for postgraduate researchers (PGRs). 	VP Research with support from EDII Office and ET	Q2 2024 Q1 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in number of staff on PTHP contracts reporting support for research development (80%F, 60%M). • Elements of the Research Support Scheme available to postdoctoral researchers and non-permanent staff. • By 2027, at least 70% of non-permanent and part-time male and female staff report feeling included and professionally valued in MIC.
P1	GE 2.6	Improve engagement with precarious staff cohorts.	To encourage PTHP to engage with AS and EDII matters. PTHP staff were specifically targeted and paid for participation during the 2022 staff consultation; however, during further consultation, we	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct regular focus groups with PTHP and fixed-term staff. • Make PTHP staff clearly aware that they will be paid for attendance at such groups. • Include hourly-paid and 	EDII Implementation Committee, EDII Office	Ongoing Q1 and Q3 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and student gender trends are monitored and analysed against the 2021 survey data. • An increase in staff participation with focus groups: by 2025, a 10% overall increase

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			<p>identified that while participants described a desire to be included in AS activities, they indicated they do not have the capacity to attend activities due to the nature of their contracts.</p> <p>2%F/8%M survey respondents were PTHP staff.</p> <p>9%F/8%M survey respondents were fixed-term/specified-purpose contract staff.</p> <p>To create a better understanding and deeper awareness among part-time staff of AS and its purpose.</p>	short-term contracted staff on local inductions and welcome email lists.			<p>in response rate and again in 2027.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increase is seen in staff reporting a sense of engagement with the MIC community and EDII/AS.

Gender Equality Priority Area 3: Staff Development/Career Pathways

Promotions

P1	GE 3.1	Communicate updates and progress on upcoming promotion rounds to all staff.	<p>33%F/23%M of academic staff report not understanding the promotion process and criteria, as do 42%F/14%M of fixed-term and PTHP academic respondents.</p> <p>However, while staff in these categories are not eligible for promotion, it would support their career development to have a greater awareness of the process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update staff on promotion rounds and timelines. 	VPAA	Q3 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The promotion process is itemised at Faculty Board meetings to communicate and prepare staff for updates. The number of academic staff indicating they understand the promotion process and criteria increases to 70% F/M.
P2	GE 3.2 (HEA, 2022)	Clearly link EDII activity with the promotion criteria and process.	<p>To ensure EDII activity and work in recognised and acknowledged in the promotions process. This is also a recommendation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure EDII activity is referenced to college/community criteria within promotions policy and procedures. 	VPAA	Q1 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The promotions application form includes reference to EDII activity within the college/community criteria. This is communicated to all staff.

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			from the HEA's 2nd National Gender Review.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an increase by 2027 to 70%F/M of academic staff indicating they understand the promotions process and criteria.
Academic Staff Career Support and Development							
P2	GE 3.3	Identify the barriers that prevent academic staff from accessing teaching, learning and research supports.	To increase the percentage of female academic staff being aware of opportunities to access career supports (36%F in 2023) and in research to support career progression (38%F in 2023).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate a list of all professional development opportunities and host it on the central staff hub. • Develop recommendations based on the Research Supports survey 2023 and the Teaching & Learning quality review. • Submit a report based on survey findings to ET for its consideration of appropriate changes. 	RGS and Director Teaching & Learning	Q3 2024 Q1 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 70% of both genders indicate they understand how to access research and career progression supports. • Recommendations are developed based on Research Supports survey 2023 and the Teaching & Learning quality review.
P2	GE 3.4	In areas where there is gender under-representation in senior and merit posts, if no applications are received from the under-represented gender, the post will be re-advertised.	This original action was applicable to all posts but not implemented. It has proven difficult to implement for all posts. For 2022, SL promotions saw 25 applications in total – 18F/7M; 72%F. SL was re-advertised due to low applications from males.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In this instance, if no applications are received from underrepresented gender for senior and merit posts, re-advertise these posts. • Engage with male staff, particularly in the Faculty of Education, to ascertain what barriers, if any, prevent them from applying for merit promotion posts. 	VPAA, HR	Ongoing Q1 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The analysis of the gender breakdown and recruitment at faculty level is monitored and reported on annually. • An increase in applications from females to merit promotions, proportionate to staff profile.
P3	GE 3.5	Collaborate with other HEIs on identifying barriers faced by women applying for senior academic and	While we acknowledge that this is a multifaceted issue, we want to investigate what steps we can take locally. Recruitment data shows us that at SL, 36% of shortlisted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with the AS Network/GEEF Fund, develop and circulate a survey aimed at identifying the barriers faced by females in applying for management roles. 	EDII Implementation Committee, EDII Office	Depends on HEA GEEF funding rounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey and focus groups are conducted with network/member HEIs. • Barriers are identified and appropriate actions developed (linked to actions on

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		management posts (including internal acting-up posts) across institutions and develop actions based on research.	<p>applicants (n=8) are female and 25% (n=2) have been appointed (refers to 8 posts). For acting-up SL posts, 60% of applicants are female (n=3) and 66% (n=2) have been appointed (refers to 3 posts). Currently, 70% of staff at L and 62% of staff at AL are female. We need to investigate why more women are not applying for senior roles and benchmark it against national research. This will ensure we are addressing the barriers at all stages: advertisement, application, shortlisting, appointment and supports. Overall, more female staff at more junior levels is not translating into representation of senior female staff. It is noted that there has been limited promotional opportunities up until now.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse trends that emerge from Gender Pay Gap reporting. Investigate the perceived barriers and develop evidence-based actions to address them. 			<p>promotion).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A collective response is developed on successful attainment of HEA GEEF funding. A detailed report is presented to faculty boards, Academic Council and Executive Team.
Workloads							
P1	GE 3.6 (Horizon Europe, 2021)	Support the development of a workload allocation model (WAM).	<p>MIC currently lacks an effective, institutional mechanism that ensures equity, sustainability, transparency and fairness in academic workloads across the institution, corresponding to best practice in the higher education sector. To ensure that workload allocation is linked to promotion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot the model in the Faculties of Arts and Education and in MIC Thurles and implement the resulting feedback. Provide staff training on how to apply the WAM alongside training for line managers. Review and update the 	VPAA	Q1 2024 Q3 2024 Q3 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The academic faculty is consulted on the development of the WAM tool. A workloads model is developed and mainstreamed as part of the career development trajectory in MIC. 80% attendance at WAM training. Future staff surveys will

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			criteria in a transparent manner. Data submitted onto MIRIS (MIC's Research Information System) will inform core processes such as workload modelling.	WAM periodically in consultation with staff.			record a satisfaction rate of 60% with the WAM.
P2	GE 3.7	A. Include committee membership (internal and external) in the WAM. B. Highlight committee membership as part of the promotions process.	Currently there is no formal recognition of committee membership in the absence of a workload model although it can be considered to be included in the 'Service and Contribution' section of the current promotions policy. To ensure that committee posts are not creating a disproportionate and gendered workload.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the incoming institutional WAM takes account of committee service. • Engage MIRIS as a tool to support process. • Conduct a review of the weighting of committee membership within the new promotions process. 	VPAA	Q2 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee participation in recognised in the WAM. • The relationship between promotions and committee membership is analysed.
P3	GE 3.8	Monitor changes to timetabling procedures for academic programmes.	To ensure there are no negative impacts on staff, in particular those with caring responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint an MIC Scheduler. • Monitor practices in Limerick and Thurles. • Consult with staff on the potential implications of breastfeeding on timetabling. 	Assistant Registrar, VPAA	Q3 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next staff survey includes questions on any timetable changes to monitor impact. • Based on staff consultation, recommendations for improvement are sent to Deans/HoDs. • By 2027, staff reporting on satisfaction with timetabling process is up to 75%.
PMS Career Support and Development							
P2	GE 3.9	Encourage PMS staff to avail of training opportunities.	78% of PMS staff are female. More male than female staff respondents report having access to training to support career aspirations: 59%F/65%M of PMS staff; 39%F/50%M of academic staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share case studies from staff who have availed of professional development support from the College. • Continue to support the growing number of female staff undertaking Aurora. 	HR L&D, line mangers	Q1 2025 Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPD opportunities are provided on the basis of the needs identified through the training needs analysis (linked to Action GE 3.11). • 10+ staff annually being supported in the Aurora

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			<p>Consultation indicates PMS staff feel that while training opportunities are available, they may not be specific to their area or may not feel confident that they will get support to undertake the programme. We are encouraged to see PMS staff engaging with Aurora and hope to have a strong PMS representation on our Aurora Alumni network.</p>				programme and reporting positive impacts.
P1	GE 3.10	Implement the national job evaluation scheme once it has been finalised and agreed by all stakeholders.	<p>Such a mechanism is needed as many roles have evolved since first occupied by the incumbent post holders. A national project is being developed to evaluate grading of PMS posts in conjunction with Fórsa MIC, institutes of technology and technical universities. A formal job evaluation scheme will ensure that jobs of equal value are at the same grade and will promote pay equality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the implementation of the national job evaluation scheme once finalised. 	Director HR, Fórsa	Depends on timeline for finalising scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The job evaluation scheme is in place with posts regraded in cases where that is the outcome of the process. Participation levels and the effectiveness of the scheme are monitored and analysed on an ongoing basis. There is an increase in the percentage of staff reporting career progression satisfaction.
Supports for All Staff							
P1	GE 3.11 (HEA, 2022)	Conduct a training needs analysis for all staff.	<p>To identify specific areas of training opportunities for staff. 59%F/65%M PMS staff and 39%F/50%M academic staff report having access to training opportunities. More permanent (54%F/58%M) than non-permanent (34F/46%M) staff agree they</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite staff to participate in the training needs analysis. Invite PTHP staff to attend interview preparation training. Where possible, make hybrid options available to facilitate the attendance of Thurles staff. 	HR L&D	Q4 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A training needs analysis is conducted with staff on a regular basis and specific training needs identified. CPD opportunities are provided on the basis of the needs identified. The training needs analysis is linked to the new appraisal

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			<p>have access to training. In contrast, most applications to undertake training and/or education are approved. We need to further investigate if there are barriers that prevent staff, particularly female academic staff, from accessing training.</p>				<p>process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2027, there is an increase to 75% of all genders reporting having access to training opportunities.
P2	GE 3.12 (HEA, 2022)	Formalise a strategy to develop mentoring.	<p>More PMS staff (43%F/51%M) report having access to mentoring than academic staff (38%F/22%M). The biggest gender differences are seen when reporting having no access: academic staff 42%F/29%M and non-permanent staff 21%F/0%M.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design a strategy to provide a mentoring framework to support staff with career progression. Include in the strategy all associated actions around promotion, training, appraisal and Aurora. Consult with staff on what type and degree of mentoring would be appropriate. 	EDII Implementation Committee, HR	Q1 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mentoring is available for staff. Training is offered to both mentors and mentees. The mentoring programme is evaluated annually. By 2027, there is an increase to 70% of all genders reporting access to mentoring.
P2	GE 3.13	Develop and implement an appraisal/development review process.	<p>There was no progress made with this action during the 2019-2023 period. 58%F/63%M academic and 56%F/63%M PMS respondents feel their line manager engages and supports their career aspirations. 43%F/46%M of academic and 42%F/55%M of PMS staff discuss career progression with their line manager at least once per year. We see the academic promotions process as the first step in formalising a performance culture and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide training to HoDs and line managers to support them in conducting appraisal/development reviews. 	EDII Implementation Committee, HR, Director EDII	Q3 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are asked to consider how they address EDI issues in the reviews. By 2027, at least 70% of female and male PMS staff report having opportunities to discuss career progression with their line manager. The participation and effectiveness of the reviews are monitored and analysed on an ongoing basis.

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			recognise that promotions, workloads and appraisals are interlinked.				
P3	GE 3.14	Continue to engage with staff leaving the institution.	To identify any gendered trends among resignees. To monitor the feedback from leaving staff to identify any issues, e.g. working environment, culture within the College and work/life balance, and make recommendations for improvements. It would also be useful to establish if staff are moving to other roles in the higher education sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record resignees' reasons for resigning. Address any emerging trends. 	HR	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations are made based on trends identified.
P2	GE 3.15	Identify barriers leading to male under-representation in the Faculty of Education.	Male under-representation continues to be evident in Faculty of Education posts, which can be linked to wider sector male under-representation in teaching and early childcare professions. This has an impact on the recruitment pool available for such posts in MIC. There has been an increase in applications from males from 25% in 2019 to 35% over the period 2020-2022 and in offers made to males from 0% in 2019 to 18% over the period 2020-2022.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make male under-representation a priority theme in the 2024 Faculty of Education Athena Swan Bronze award application. Re-establish the male under-representation working group within the AS Practitioner Network. Submit to the GEEF fund an application that explores male under-representation in caring professions such as teaching and early childcare. 	EDII Office, Dean of Education	Q2 2025 Q1 2025 GEEF Funding Round, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Male under-representation is a priority theme of the Faculty of Education Athena Swan SAT. National and local discourses and activities to diversify the student body teacher education/childcare are supported and engaged with. Recruitment and CAO applications data is monitored annually to inform our practice.
P3	GE 3.16	Work with Strategic Communications & Marketing to roll out	We have seen only small increases at CAO application stage from male students to our	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with male students regarding what attracted them to MIC. 	Strategic Comms & Marketing	Ongoing and annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MIC's public image is gender balanced. CAO application data is

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		targeted recruitment campaigns to address male under-representation within the student cohort.	BEd programmes: 17% in 2020, 18% in 2021 and 20% in 2022.				monitored in terms of gender. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2027, the percentage of male CAO applications to the BEd programmes has risen to 25%.
Gender Equality Priority Area 4: Flexible Working and Support for Leave							
P2	GE 4.1 (HEA, 2022; Horizon Europe 2021)	Document and disseminate to staff and students the supports that are available to those with caring responsibilities.	To provide peer support in the workplace environment for staff who have caring responsibilities (which 54%F/41%M respondents indicated they have). To support the Parents & Carers Network established in 2023. To raise awareness of available facilities as staff consultation indicated that returning parents were unaware of supports like breastfeeding rooms on campus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a handbook that offers guidance and checklists for line managers to support staff before, during and after maternity/adoptive leave. • Compile and share with staff and students a list of childcare providers within 5km of both Limerick and Thurles. • Conduct further pulse surveys with staff and students in relation to all types of caring leave responsibilities. 	EDII Office with support from HR	Q1 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an increase in the numbers of staff and students with caring responsibilities feeling supported in MIC. • There is more awareness of family-friendly supports on campus. • There is a deeper understanding of the experiences of staff in relation to caring leave. • By 2027, staff (academic and PMS) awareness and understanding of caring leave policies grows by 20%, particularly among those with caring responsibilities. • Any evidence-based recommendations stemming from specific staff consultation related to caring leave are implemented.
P2	GE 4.2	Offer specific pregnancy- and fertility-related supports to staff.	Our staff profile is predominately female and we wish to support those taking maternity leave. Similarly with leave related to caring responsibilities, we wish to ensure line managers are guided on how to facilitate a more consistent approach to supporting staff before, during and after family leave. To comply with Horizon Europe requirements. To identify specific supports for staff availing of caring leave.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of the revised 'We're Breastfeeding Friendly' campaign with Limerick City and County Council. • Raise awareness of updated breastfeeding and baby-changing facilities on campus. • Launch guidelines to support staff receiving IVF treatment. • Launch guidelines to support staff who experience pregnancy loss (miscarriage and stillbirths under 26 weeks). 		Ongoing Q3 2025	

Priority	New AP Number	Action	Rationale	Specific Actions and Implementation	Responsibility	Timeline	Success Criteria/Outcome Measures
			There was a lack of clarity in the data gathered in 2023 and a further study is required here.				
P2	GE 4.3 (Horizon Europe, 2021)	Introduce a research grant for returning academic carers.	To support staff in re-establishing their research careers on returning from extended leave (20 weeks or more) for reasons connected to caring. This was an action in the 2019-2023 action plan with minimal implementation to date. Staff consultation indicated female academic staff would benefit from time to re-engage with teaching.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a review of similar grants in comparable HEIs for returning academic carers. • Subject to ET support, roll out a scheme for returning academic carers. • Identify gaps in policies and develop clear guidance for undergraduate and postgraduate students who are pregnant or adopting and map the supports available to them. 	VP Research with support from EDII Office, ET	Q3 2025 Q1 2026 Q3 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIC has a positive environment for staff and students with families. • Survey responses continue to show a reduction in the proportion of overall staff who disagree that supports were put in place to facilitate their re-engagement when they returned to work from family-related leave (<30% by 2027).
P2	GE 4.4 (Horizon Europe, 2021)	Monitor the impact of flexible working policies on staff.	To ensure staff feel supported by the flexible working options now available in MIC, including the Blending Working Policy, Job Sharing and Part-Time Working, and Shorter Working Year. To monitor the impact of working patterns post-pandemic as most staff are currently working hybrid (75%F/77%M academic and 78%F/67%M PMS respondents). Based on staff consultation, PMS staff are more likely than academic staff to experience more positive impacts from flexible working.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct consultation with staff on the impact of flexible working patterns on work/life balance. • Monitor any negative impacts emerging as a legacy from the pandemic and develop actions to address. 	EDII Office, EDII Implementation Committee	Q1 2025 Q1 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff awareness of (and satisfaction with) flexible working policy is added to EDII surveys to establish baseline data that can be tracked annually for possible intervention. • By 2025, at least 50% of staff report being satisfied with flexible working arrangements. A new target is then reviewed for 2027.
P1	GE 4.5	Finalise and launch the menopause at work guidelines and	To support staff experiencing symptoms of menopause. While symptoms vary, some can	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile guidelines for staff and line managers on providing support for 	EDII Office, EDII Implementation	Q4 2023 Q1 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIC menopause guidelines have been approved and implemented.

Priority	New AP Number	Action	Rationale	Specific Actions and Implementation	Responsibility	Timeline	Success Criteria/Outcome Measures
		implement the associated awareness campaign.	experience symptoms that impact on their wellbeing. To assist with creating an open and supportive workplace where managers and staff can discuss any issues associated with the menopause if they so wish and to ensure necessary and reasonable supports are offered in an emphatic way. In 2022, 36% of female staff were aged 45 to 55 years with a further 27% in the 35–44-year-old age group. In addition, 22% of female staff are in the 55-64 age category and may continue to experience symptoms. Thus 85% (35-64 age category) of all female staff at MIC could potentially be experiencing perimenopause, menopause or post menopause.	menopausal symptoms at work. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop training and education programmes on the menopause at work along with resources for staff and students on the menopause to be housed in the MIC library, on the EDII website and on the staff hub. • Add to the EDII survey questions to monitor staff awareness of the menopause guidelines. 	Committee with support from Buildings & Estates and HR		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses to EDII survey questions on staff awareness of the menopause guidelines show improvement year on year. • Peer-to-peer experts are identified in MIC as champions to normalise menopause at work.

Gender Equality Priority Area 5: Leadership and Staff Engagement

Athena Swan Timelines

P1	GE 5.1 (HEA, 2022)	Enhance staff and student awareness of Athena Swan and EDII matters and conduct regular consultation.	Awareness of the AS charter has improved from 48%F/53%M in 2019 to 90%F/91%M in 2022 and we want this trend to continue. However, there is less knowledge of the impact of AS in the College: 33%F/20%M respondents indicated witnessing improvements since the AS awards were achieved while 43%F/63%M were unsure. More male staff are unsure of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult regularly with staff and students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct regular focus groups and surveys on gender and EDII issues. - Include specific questions on intersectionality in consultations. • Communicate with all staff and students on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EDII-related policies and initiatives 	EDII Implementation Committee	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025 and 2027 survey results show a greater awareness among staff and students of the impact of AS and EDII work. • EDII surveys attract a response rate of at least 70%. • Consultation findings are incorporated into the EDII Implementation Committee planning cycle and EDII strategic plan. • 2025 and 2027 survey results
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Priority	New AP Number	Action	Rationale	Specific Actions and Implementation	Responsibility	Timeline	Success Criteria/Outcome Measures
			improvements linked to our 'engaging men in equality work' project. There is also a need to embed EDII (including consent training) into student orientation and ensure that student leaders are EDII aware.	- Public sector duty responsibilities • Encourage all staff to add an AS signature and logo to their own email signatures and public presentations and emphasise this in any future funding applications. • Include EDII messaging on job adverts and new job descriptions.			show greater staff and student participation levels in focus groups and a 10% overall increase in the response rate. • PTHP staff are communicating on the payment process for attendance at such consultation events.
P3	GE 5.2	Host an annual Athena Swan Day.		• Celebrate with all staff and students on EDII and AS progress. • Host an Annual AS day to acknowledge the work of SATs and the wider MIC community.		Q2 annually	
P3	GE 5.3 (HEA, 2018; HEA, 2022)	Work towards submitting Athena Swan applications for the institution (Silver), Faculty of Education (Bronze) and professional units (Bronze).	To continue to embed AS and EDII in MIC. To adhere to Athena Swan application timelines. To further demonstrate MIC's commitment to equality and to the Athena Swan charter and principles.	• Establish self-assessment teams for the Faculty of Education and professional units. • Submit a Bronze Departmental Award application from the Faculty of Education. • Submit a Bronze Professional Unit Award application. • Develop a five-year EDII plan for 2024-2029 that aligns with the AS action plan and other EDII priorities.	Director EDII, faculty EDII leads	Q1 2024 Q1 2026	• A Silver institutional AS application is submitted in adherence with HEA timelines. • In April 2025, a Bronze Faculty of Education AS application is submitted. • By 2027, a professional units AS application is submitted.
Staff and Student Engagement on AS and EDII							
P2	GE 5.4 (HEA, 2022)	Engage regularly with MISU on the promotion of EDII and gender equality	Student consultation indicated a difference in the student experience on the Thurles campus with many events being	• Host two collaborative events per semester with the EDII Office and MISU on EDII activities on the Limerick and	EDII Office, MISU	Ongoing Q1 2025	• Continued positive reporting is seen from students on efforts to promote gender equality in MIC.

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		on both the Limerick and Thurles campuses.	based in Limerick. In the 2023/24 academic year, MISU sabbatical officers have a presence on both campuses each week. We need to build on strong links being developed with MISU Limerick and Thurles reps and the EDII Office.	Thurles campuses. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the University of Sanctuary movement and Consent Framework are led in partnership with students and MISU. • Monitor students' awareness and understanding of AS principles. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student surveys indicate a high level of understanding and awareness of AS principles. • MISU and EDII Office operate as partners on EDII-related change and transformation.
P2	GE 5.5 (HEA, 2022)	Offer an enhanced suite of training opportunities on gender equality and EDII to staff.	To build and capitalise on the high level of awareness of the AS Charter among respondents (91%F/90%M), and 79%F/85%M respondents indicated a growing awareness since the College achieved AS awards. Through consultation, it is evident there is an appetite for further training opportunities in wider EDII areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure EDII training places a focus on inclusive gender equality, gender-based violence, race equality, intersectionality, disability and all equality grounds. • Incorporate survey findings on staff and student awareness of the impact of AS and EDII work into the EDII Implementation Committee planning cycle and strategic plan. 	HR L&D with support from the EDII Office	Q4 2024 Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase of 10% in staff and student awareness of the impact of AS and EDII work by 2025 and by another 10% by 2027. • Surveys attract a response rate of at least 70%.
P1	GE 5.6 (HEA, 2022)	Support the engagement of males in EDII work.	While the staff profile at MIC is predominately female (72%F), fewer males engage in consultation. One-third of all male staff completed the staff survey and a small number (11%) attended our focus groups. Targeted engagement with men is increasingly recognised in society as critical to advancing gender equality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify ways to overcome the barriers that prevent males from engaging in EDII work. • Through the GEEF project, support the development of a tailored training programme for HEIs, including a toolkit and supporting materials. • Evaluate the GEEF project training to ascertain the experience of participating males. 	EDII Implementation Committee	Q4 2023 Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys show greater awareness of the importance of male engagement in EDII work and of the gendered barriers their female colleagues face in the sector.

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect data on engagement with the training. 			
P1	GE 5.7 (HEA, 2016)	Establish a dedicated staff hub on the staff portal.	<p>Staff responses on awareness of various MIC policies were mixed; 45% (47%F/42%M) of 2023 staff survey respondents were 'quite' or 'very aware' of the paternity policy, which is slightly up on 2019 (40%). Awareness of the equality, dignity and respect at work and research sabbatical policies were low.</p> <p>While we acknowledge that all staff may not need to be aware of all policies at all times, these specific policies have a big impact on equality issues in MIC and we would like them to be readily and clearly accessible to staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up a specific section of the staff portal as a staff hub to host leave and other EDII-related policies and procedures, training information, HR-related documentation, a staff handbook and FAQs. Ensure new staff have access to the staff hub and draw their attention to the staff handbook in particular. 	HR L&D with support from the EDII Office	Q2 2024 Q1 & Q3 annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff awareness of EDII-related policies increases by 20% in 2025 and by another 20% in 2027. Staff awareness of available training opportunities increases by 20% in 2025 and by another 20% in 2027.
Governance							
P3	GE 5.8 (HEA, 2016, 2022)	In the final step of selecting a president, insofar as is possible, ensure that the final pool of candidates includes an equal number of women and men.	To promote gender balance and culture in the leadership of HEIs. To support the HEA's 2016 Taskforce recommendations and 2022 gender equality review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where possible, ensure the final pool of candidates comprises an equal number of women and men. 	Chair of Board of Trustees, President	Depends on appointment process taking place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The final pool of candidates for the position of President comprises an equal or as close to an equal number of women and men as possible.
P2	GE 5.9 (Horizon Europe, 2021)	When appointing a chair of An tÚdarás Rialaithe (Governing Authority), the Board of Trustees will ensure gender	By default, the chair of the Governing Authority is the Bishop of Limerick (male). This action is being carried forward from the 2019-2023 to the 2023-2027 action plan as	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out this action in the context of any new structural framework for MIC governance that emerges from the dialogue. Ensure this issue is placed on 	Board of Trustees	Q1 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The chairing of the Governing Authority is perfectly gender balanced.

Priority	New AP Number	Action	Rationale	Specific Actions and Implementation	Responsibility	Timeline	Success Criteria/Outcome Measures
		balance by rotating the chair or appointing a female co-chair.	the review was paused to take cognisance of wider MIC/UL negotiation considerations. This action continues to align with ensuring gender equality in the chairing of governance committees and demonstrates leadership in embedding EDII within the culture of MIC.	the agenda of MIC/UL negotiation meetings and Board of Trustees meetings.			
P2	GE 5.10	Ensure EDII is integrated into committee and policy development processes.	To be cognisant of wider intersectional and EDII commitments. To date, committee membership has focused on gender and we now aim to widen this approach. To support public sector duty requirements whereby institutional policy development and review processes should include an equality impact assessment tool. To facilitate the mainstreaming of EDII throughout MIC as policy developers take responsibility for ensuring their policies are promoting EDII.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devise an equality impact assessment tool (modelled on Irish Human Rights and Equality Committee guidance) for use when developing and reviewing all policies. • Monitor committee representation annually. 	VPGS, Director Information Governance & Compliance Management	Q3 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDII is embedded in committee and policy development processes.
Staff Communication							
P2	GE 5.11	Form a PMS working group of the Strategic Implementation Group (SIG).	To support information sharing and institutional knowledge among staff, particularly PMS who do not have a mechanism equivalent to that for academic staff. 78% of our PMS staff are female. To support staff consultation on strategic planning via the SIG.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put in place a PMS working group from the SIG. • Set up mechanisms to ensure that information flows efficiently between the SIG and the PMS working group. • Consult with staff and share knowledge across the College 	SIG, VPGS	Q4 2024 Q1 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff report being more aware of institutional-level information and engaging more in strategic planning.

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			The staff survey shows that engagement with strategic planning is a top priority for PMS female staff. To support the HEA Performance Compact Process, which is overseen by the SIG. To improve communication between staff and management.	on areas such as Universal Design and EDII.			
P2	GE 5.12	Enhance communication between staff and senior management.	To support additional opportunities for more open communication between senior management and staff, for which staff consultation indicated a desire. "Better communication (strategy, channels, feedback etc.) with staff as a pressing priority," (male academic).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities to engage with staff on the MIC/UL dialogue. • Consult with staff and students on the next MIC strategic plan (2024), which aims to be fully inclusive of all stakeholders. • Use Town Halls as a mechanism to consult with staff and students. 	SIG, VPGS	Q4 2024 Q1 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff report being more aware of institutional-level information and engaging more in strategic planning.
Additional Equality Ground Priority Area 1: Safe, Respectful, Supportive and Positive Environment							
P1	AEG 1.1 (HEA, 2019; Horizon Europe, 2021)	Review, update and develop a five-year (2024-2029) strategy and policies to support the implementation of the ESVH Framework in HEIs.	To support MIC's commitment to implementing the 2019 ESVH Framework in HEIs. Student focus group participants acknowledge that consent and harassment are nationwide issues but they feel more could be done to train and teach students and prepare them for sexual consent. Some cited having witnessed situations where they felt consent would not be possible due to consumption of alcohol. Others cited not knowing how	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devise new practices, processes, policies, procedures and training opportunities relating to the ESVH Framework for all MIC stakeholders. • Review and broaden the membership of the MIC Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment Working Group to facilitate coordinating the implementation of the ESVH Framework. • Develop a Domestic Violence Leave Policy to support the 	SVHP Manager	Q1 2024 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2027, 90% of staff report knowing how to report SVH-related incidents. • By 2027, the proportion of staff and students who feel confident reporting such incidents increases.

Priority	New AP Number	Action	Rationale	Specific Actions and Implementation	Responsibility	Timeline	Success Criteria/Outcome Measures
			to report sexual violence, bullying or harassment and felt they would be uncomfortable making official complaints.	Civil Service Circular 16/2023.			
P1	AEG 1.2 (HEA, 2019; Horizon Europe, 2021)	Actively communicate to staff and students the procedure for reporting inappropriate behaviour and support them to report such behaviour.	PMS respondents (72%F/68%M) are more likely than academic respondents (46%F/58%M) to be aware of how to report incidents of sexual harassment or sexual violence. All student focus group participants indicated knowing little about reporting bullying or harassment and would feel uncomfortable doing so.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use online, in-person and physical advertising to raise awareness of the formal mechanism to be used by students, staff and visitors to report incidents of SVH. • Provide direct student-facing activities including workshops/classes that promote an understanding of consent; student understanding and skills for speaking up and calling out unacceptable behaviour. • Promote the concept of dignity and respect and bystander to staff and students. 	SVHP Manager	Q1 2024 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More students report being aware of SVH reporting procedures. • The number of staff who report being aware of SVH reporting procedures increases by 20% by 2025. • Staff attendance at SVH training increases by 10% annually.
Additional Equality Ground Priority Area 2: Student and Staff Diversity							
P2	AEG 2.1 (HEA Race Equality, 2022)	Advance race equality at MIC by implementing the HEA's Race Equality Anti-Racism Principles for Irish Higher Education Institutions.	To eliminate racism and enact the Race Equality principles. To support staff and students from ethnic minority backgrounds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devise and implement an MIC Race Equality Action Plan and monitor impact via staff/student consultations. • Submit the University of Sanctuary Accreditation Application. • Support six migrant students annually through the University of Sanctuary scholarship programme. • Provide anti-racism training on Moodle to all staff and 	EDII Office with the University of Sanctuary Working Group	Q1 2024; ongoing and Q1 2025 for the Traveller Education working group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once a baseline has been established, staff and student EDII surveys show rising satisfaction levels with aspects of race equality over time. • Attendance at anti-racism training increases by 10% annually.

Priority	New AP Number	Action	Rationale	Specific Actions and Implementation	Responsibility	Timeline	Success Criteria/Outcome Measures
				students. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Traveller Education working group. 			
P1	AEG 2.2	Work with Strategic Communications & Marketing to continue to roll out targeted recruitment campaigns to diversify our student cohort.	MIC has students from 58 different nationalities and 4,660 students with an Irish nationality. 8% of our student population are non-Irish. 238 students (5% of the MIC student population) were registered with MIC's Access and Disability Service in 2022/23. This is lower than the 6.6% of the national student population registered with disability support services in 2020/21 in Irish HEIs, according to AHEAD.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement specific HEAR/DARE campaigns. As part of the College Awareness Week planned for November 2024, profile different pathways into MIC, such as HEAR, DARE, Pre-University Programme for Mature Learners and Certificate in General Learning and Personal Development. Monitor the intake of students from different pathways. Roll out a Strategic Communications & Marketing podcast series featuring a range of AS priority themes and profiling students from diverse backgrounds. Use MIRIS to showcase staff research profiles to support the recruitment of postgraduate researchers. 	Strategic Comms & Marketing; Access and Participation Office	Ongoing and annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admissions data from the Access and Participation Office shows growth in the number of students entering MIC through alternative pathways. MIC's public image reflects the diversity of our community. Metrics show high levels of engagement with the Strategic Communications & Marketing podcast series.
P1	AEG 2.3	Implement, monitor and amend, as required, the Gender Identity and Expression policy.	To support and promote the rights of gender-diverse students and staff. To support our EDII Strategy and create a 'whole person' approach to supporting staff and students. To enact national Irish legislation, which protects and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch the Gender Identity and Expression policy. Provide ongoing training to staff and students on the policy's supporting procedures and implementation. Establish a working group to ensure that the policy works in practice, and amend the policy 	EDII Office with support from EDII Implementation Committee and Building & Estates	Q1 2024 Q3 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All campus buildings have at least one gender-neutral toilet by 2027 and as standard for new capital projects. Changing facilities in Tailteann (Sports Complex) and MIC Thurles can accommodate transgender students and staff. 50% of EDII survey

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			supports the gender-diverse community. With Pride now celebrated annually, progress has been made with supporting members of the LGBT+ community. However, student consultation indicates that more could be done to support transitioning and LGBT+ students.	in light of the group's monitoring activity.			respondents by 2025 and 60% by 2027 agree that transgender and gender-diverse staff and students are supported and included in MIC policies and procedures.
P2	AEG 2.4	Facilitate the College's special commitment to the Irish language as part of the EDII strategy.	To fulfil our obligations under the new Irish Language Act, 2021. The Irish language is now an officially recognised EU language. The current MIC Irish Language Policy is no longer fit for purpose as it is short in content and in the medium of English. To promote a culture of inclusion, it is necessary to develop a more robust policy using a community practice approach that includes the Irish language as a mainstream ethos and practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rewrite, approve (ET) and enact the MIC Irish Language Policy. • Submit an Irish Language Compliance report to Irish Language Commissioner. • Add to the EDII student and staff surveys a question about the extent to which those with Irish as a first or second language feel supported at MIC. 	Bord na Gaeilge, Meitheal Irish Language Review Committee	Q3 2024 annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Irish Language Compliance report is returned to Irish Language Commissioner • 20% of all advertising is placed through the medium of Irish and 5% of budget is spent in the Irish language media sphere. • Future EDII surveys show that most students and staff whose first or second language is Irish feel supported at MIC in that context.
Additional Equality Ground Priority Area 3: Disability and Neurodivergent Supports							
P1	AEG 3.1	Roll out CPD sessions on Universal Design to all staff.	To educate and empower staff on developing accessibility statements and creating accessible content for all MIC stakeholders. To embed the principles of Universal Design for Learning in MIC communications. To support the UN Convention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll out training on Universal Design to all staff. • Add online Universal Design training to the training opportunities section of the staff hub and at induction for new staff. • Monitor staff and student 	Path 4 UDL Project Lead with support from HR	Q4 2023 Q1 & Q3 annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design training is completed by 80% of staff by 2027. • EDII surveys show staff and student awareness of Universal Design increasing by 10% per annum.

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			on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.	awareness of Universal Design for through EDII surveys.			
P3	AEG 3.2	Implement a Universal Design-informed approach to achieving the Autism-Friendly HEI award.	To support and promote the rights of students and staff with autism and other neurological differences. To support the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put in place a strategic implementation group to explore the possibility of becoming an autism-friendly campus. Consult with staff and students who have autism and other neurological differences. Apply for designation as an Autism-Friendly University. 	EDII Office with Path 4 UDL Project Lead and Inclusion Coordinator, VPAF	Q1 2025 Q1 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MIC achieves the Autism-Friendly HEI Award. EDII surveys show staff and student awareness of Universal Design increasing by 10% per annum. EDII surveys show satisfaction levels with the impact of Universal Design increasing by 10% per annum.
P3	AEG 3.3	Conduct an audit of the campus for disability access.	To support and promote the rights of students and staff with disabilities. 7% of staff survey respondents indicated they have a disability. Nationally and in the Limerick/Thurles region, 22% of the population indicated they have a disability. To support the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on the audit, make required changes to the physical environment. 	VPAF, Buildings & Estates	Q1 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The annual physical infrastructure summer works are driven in part by EDII.
P2	AEG 3.4 (HEA, 2022)	Mainstream the principles of Universal Design and EDII across MIC.	To embed the principles of Universal Design and EDII in MIC documentation. To track and monitor for alignment with Universal Design and EDII the documentation being produced across the College. To ensure public sector duty requirements are enshrined in MIC's daily activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a pilot audit of documentation being produced across the College. Make plans to mainstream the pilot audit. Ensure that all quality assurance processes align with Universal Design and EDII as part of ongoing reviews and training. 	Director of Quality with support from Path 4 UDL Project Lead and Inclusion Coordinator	Q3 2025 Q1 2026 Q3 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universal Design and EDII are incorporated into departmental quality review submissions. EDII surveys show staff and student awareness of Universal Design increasing by 10% per annum. EDII surveys show satisfaction levels with the impact of Universal Design increasing by 10% per annum.

Priority	New AP Number	Action	Rationale	Specific Actions and Implementation	Responsibility	Timeline	Success Criteria/Outcome Measures
Additional Equality Ground Priority Area 4: Embedding EDII in Quality Assurance and the Curriculum							
P2	AEG 4.1 (HEA, 2022; Horizon Europe, 2021)	Conduct a pilot EDII review of the reading lists on the MIC curriculum.	To review the undergraduate and postgraduate curricula from the perspective of gender balance and EDII, which has not been undertaken to date. To support the new AS Framework and HEA Taskforce Recommendation 1.12. Student consultation indicates an appetite for broadening the parameters of AS and EDII to more accurately reflect their lived experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the extent to which the undergraduate and postgraduate curricula are gender balanced and whether changes could be made in light of MIC's EDII Strategy. Pilot a review of reading lists in relation to gender balance, intersectionality and diverse global scholars and make recommendations for change. 	Director Teaching & Learning, Dean of Arts, Dean of Education, VPAA	Q3 2025 Q1 2026 Q3 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A review of reading lists during the next AS cycle shows parity in relation to gender, intersectional and diverse global scholars. Student awareness and perceptions of EDII in the curriculum are monitored via EDII surveys.
P2	AEG 4.2	Provide guidance to staff on how to consider EDII in their curricula, including sharing current good practice models.	Student focus group participants place more emphasis on the need for additional EDII in the curriculum and report on some anti-EDII sentiments in certain areas, such as support for the LGBT+ community, disability awareness and consent training for their future employment as teachers. Participants cited that the lived experience should be more apparent in the classroom, especially in terms of disability education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the MIC EDII project awards to encourage applications on curriculum development. Ensure AS faculty action plans include actions on developing inclusive curricula. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future EDII surveys show that most students and staff are aware of EDII in their curricula.