

Section 3: Future action plan

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

- An action plan is in place to address identified key issues

2022-2027 Action Plan: School Priorities

ID	New/Carried over	Objective and Rationale	Action	Person(s) responsible	Timeframe	Success measure
<i>Priority 1: Culture</i>						
1.1	New	Increase a sense of belonging in the school From our analysis of perceptions of community in the department it was clear that female staff were less likely to feel a sense of belonging in the department.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Increase the amount of community activities – such as monthly coffee mornings and away days – stressing how everyone is welcome in the invitation (start Jan 2024). ii. Promote the importance of engagement and attendance at the upcoming School meetings and away days from all staff members (March 2024) iii. Develop and implement guidance for meeting chairs and line managers to make clear the need to actively encourage female participation and seek input. This guidance should also make clear that line managers should engage female staff in a conversation about how their views are import, valid and welcome (March-Nov 2024). 	Supporting female applications Working Group (WG) HoS Data analysis WG EDI leadership group	2024-2027 Start March 2024 Termly in school meetings	Increased participation in community events measured through the observation of community activities with gender balance Improved responses to questions pertaining to belonging and inclusion in the culture survey, increase satisfaction to 75% Evidence of guidance for meeting chairs relating to encouraging female participation
1.2	New	Increase staff and student awareness of SBE's approach to gender equality, equity and inclusion principles, and awareness of why positive action is needed The survey revealed that while over 90% of staff is aware that SBE holds AS award, 65% of staff is aware of the new EDI statement developed and agreed on in November 2022. Female staff are more likely to be aware of School EDI policies and understand why positive action should be taken. Though student data is too small, it reveals the trend of even lower awareness of either what AS principles are or the SBE EDI statement. This is a continuation of previous AP activity 5.6.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Include the induction pack that contains the principles of the AS charter and the EDI statement to be distributed to the students in September 2024 ii. Signpost the information to accompany the student Diversity Calendar published on the SBE Diversity and Inclusion webpage (Jan 2024) iii. Include the information in the induction pack for all the new staff members joining in 2024 iv. Signpost colleagues to the AS content on the webpages and ensure that all staff members are familiar with the EDI statement (school meeting in February 2024) 	EDI Lead Programme Directors Executive Administration Manager	Start in January 2024, update annually	Increased awareness of the staff of the school's EDI statement as the foundation for the school's policies and principles. Increase awareness from the current 65% to 80% in the next culture survey. Information prepared and updated, ready to be distributed to the new cohort of students (UG, PGT and PGR) joining in 2024-25 Higher rate of positive responses on the awareness of what positive action is and why is needed in the culture survey, especially among male members of staff.
1.3	New	Improve students and staff knowledge and confidence in reporting instances of bullying and harassment. We have found an increase in incidents of bullying and harassment experienced or witnessed by male staff. 67% of both female and male colleagues are aware of how to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Explore options for appropriate training on the topic of bullying and harassment – such as the anti-bullying (Active Bystander training) - to enhance clarity on expected behaviours and conduct, and to identify how individuals can raise concerns relating to bullying and harassment using existing University processes and 	Staff data and HR policies group EDI Student Partnership WG	2023 – 2027 Annual reviews for training updates	Identify appropriate training on the topic of bullying and harassment identified All staff members to undertake the training identified

		report such incidents, so we need to increase the awareness of procedures for reporting and addressing such instances and increase confidence in how those instances are dealt with.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. Details of expected behaviour and conduct of students and staff (making specific reference to findings of the Athena SWAN data and zero tolerance approach to bullying and harassment) to be included during the induction week and as part of new staff induction processes (Sep 2024) iii. Ensure that concerns are addressed and resolved in a timely manner (start Jan 2024) i. Monitor and investigate instances of bullying and harassment that is specific to male staff and students and explore barriers to reporting these (annually) 	<p>EDI Student Partnership WG</p> <p>EDI leadership group</p>		<p>All staff to have completed the training identified</p> <p>Increased rates on questions relating to having clarity on the school's anti-bullying and harassment policies.</p> <p>Reduced instances of staff and students experiencing any forms of discrimination, bullying and harassment</p> <p>Higher rates of satisfaction on how bullying and harassment is handled in the school</p> <p>Reduced time taken to investigate instances of bullying and harassment</p>
1.4	New	Voicing opinion Fewer female colleagues report being comfortable speaking and expressing opinions (67%F 79%M). We need to strengthen the inclusivity of the school environment and sense of belonging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Enhance the design and facilitation of meetings to encourage participation from all participants (Feb-May 2024) ii. Indicate the importance of a diverse set of opinions when requesting help and support in emails (School meetings) iii. Monitor participation in meetings and ensure equal exchange of opinions (Jan 2024-Jan 2025) iv. Prepare pulse surveys and/or focus groups with female colleagues to understand the perceptions of being uncomfortable voicing opinions (Feb 2024 - Feb 2025) 	<p>EDI leadership group</p> <p>HoDs, HoS</p>	<p>2024-2025</p> <p>Start in January 2024</p>	<p>Increased diversity of representations in meetings and participation in strategy activities</p> <p>Increased number of responses stating that they feel comfortable and expressing opinions</p>
Priority 2: Career development and support						
2.1	Rolled forward	Inclusiveness and fairness Female members of staff are less likely to feel they have been treated unfairly in work allocations and inclusion in decision making, although 58% believe that there is a fair representation on committees. This action is therefore carried over from the previous plan (5.6.6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Perceptions of staff fairness and inclusivity will be probed through ongoing data collection (staff surveys and focus groups) (biennially) ii. Assess the gender distribution in the work allocation by departments (Jan-May 2024) iii. Review female participation on committees to determine whether these tasks could be reduced or redistributed (start April 2024, biennially) 	<p>Data analysis WG, Staff data and HR policies group</p> <p>HoDs</p> <p>EDI leadership group</p>	<p>2023-2027</p> <p>Start in March 2024 and review in 2026</p>	<p>Improved fairness scores in staff cultural survey</p> <p>Identification of the admin roles and tasks undertaken by female colleagues not disproportionate to the gender ratios in both Architecture and CME</p> <p>Findings of the gender distribution of work allocation</p>
2.2	New	Work allocation Irrespective of gender, staff found that workloads were not evenly distributed amongst the department, as well as a greater representation of women in administrative roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Continued monitoring of staff perceptions around work allocation through senior management board, along with the staff cultural survey (Dec 2023) ii. Survey staff additional workload and impact of support to define WML adjustments (annually) iii. Rolling review of WLM to ensure new EDI work fully included and inequalities removed (annually) 	<p>SAT</p> <p>Research Division Leads</p> <p>HoS, HoDs, EDI Lead</p> <p>All staff</p>	<p>2023-2027</p> <p>Start in March 2024 and review in 2026</p>	<p>Level of satisfaction in staff survey about the support provided</p> <p>Updated Working lives document and checked against the EDI statement</p> <p>Increased participation of female staff in research activities</p> <p>Tested and adjusted Workload Model for fair capture of staff activities and contributions</p> <p>Guidance document for staff/PGR</p>

			iv. Share best practice for presentation of career breaks/periods of leave on grant/job applications (annually)			
2.3	New	Flexible working Female staff are more negative about the support for flexible meetings. female staff hold more negative views about the format of meetings supporting flexible working (58%F, 77%M). This is a reversal from the previous round of survey responses where male colleagues perceived less supported in flexible working. This signals the need to further understand the change in perceptions and whether this is the question of equity, rather than equality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Undertake focus groups with specific staff groups to better understand the qualitative comments and data provided from the staff survey. Focus groups to particularly focus on better understanding of the support needed for career development by early- and mid-career female researchers) (Oct 2024 – May 2025) ii. Monitor the levels of support for flexible working offered to staff members (biennially) iii. Review the data to understand whether gender differences are also linked to job grades and roles (Jan-Feb 2024) 	<p>EDI leadership group</p> <p>Staff Data & HR Policies Group</p>	2023-2027	<p>Increased satisfaction rates and positive perceptions on the support for flexible working</p> <p>Analysis of focus groups including emerging themes relating to access to flexible working and how this varies with gender</p>
2.4	New	Encourage female colleagues to apply for promotion Female staff are less likely to be clear on pay structure and less likely to feel they have been encouraged to apply for promotion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Once the personal titles process resumes (currently suspended): information to be circulated around all staff signposting the information (expected Aug 2024, annually) ii. Guidance for line managers to be prepared and circulated ahead of PDRs to emphasise the importance of positive action in this space (annually). 	<p>EDI leadership group</p> <p>EDI leadership group</p>	2023 – 2027	<p>Increased number of applications for personal titles</p> <p>Increase the rate of positive perceptions on clarity on the promotion process</p>
2.5	New	Receive useful feedback during PDR All female staff should be engaged in the PDR about what the University's promotion process is and why the School is taking positive action to encourage female staff to familiarise themselves.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Increase career support for staff through the PDR process (annually) ii. Use the PDR process for more focused feedback on promotion processes and progress (annually) iii. Run a series of interviews with researchers to identify what additional support is needed to allow them to delegate work that is non promotive (June 2024 – May 2025) 	<p>HoS</p> <p>HoDs</p>	2023 – 2027	<p>Improved satisfaction with PDR process from staff cultural survey</p> <p>Increased satisfaction rates on the useful feedback received during PDR</p>
2.6	Rolled forward	Support female staff members apply for research grants In 2021, 21% female staff had positive perceptions about the support, compared to 83% male. Yet, in 2023, there was a significant drop among male colleagues (38%), which seems to be a school-wide problem, rather than gender based. However, to understand perception of the change, we are now including this area for monitoring the trends and understand the data in more detail based on job positions, grade, and other characteristics. This activity has been forwarded from the previous plan (5.3.2).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Create a research proposal peer review group for members of staff, with senior members of staff (particularly those who have been PIs) serving as reviewers/mentors (Jan 2024) ii. Review the data to see potential differences in perceptions based on job roles and grades (ongoing, complete by April 2024) iii. Understand the support needed for (female) staff members applying to be PIs and submitting to REF (annually) iv. Hold further information sessions regarding REF submissions (ongoing, annually) 	<p>EDI leadership group,</p> <p>Research Division Lead,</p> <p>HoDs</p>	2023 – 2025 Review and revise as needed	<p>Increased number of early and mid-career researchers applying for research funding</p> <p>Increase the rate of satisfaction with perceived support for writing research grants</p> <p>Monitored trends on grant applications by gender, departments, staff grades and roles</p>

2.7	New	<p>Mentorship Retain highly qualified and diverse staff (academic and support) within the School. Fewer female colleagues perceive to have received useful opportunities to be mentored or received useful feedback from their mentor (33%F, 50%M). Staff have indicated the need for mentoring support and mentoring opportunities in the recent staff survey so we want to extend staff mentoring activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Establish mentoring and networking forum to strengthen the positive culture of knowledge exchange practices (annually) ii. Evaluate the assigned mentorship within 6-12 months as part of the induction program for any adjustments (ongoing, review annually) iii. Engage with PDRA's on career plans and monitor progress and outcomes (annually) iv. Inform and encourage staff to take training opportunities for mentoring. All staff members who have been promoted to AP to complete the Successful Mentoring training and Professors to complete the Personal Titles Mentor training (annually) v. Extend good practices of building academic and professional networks, such as one led by Dr. Kimberly Steed German with the Thames Valley Built Environment Hub, that are open and collectively shared vi. Encourage more mentors within School with recognition in PDR (annually) 	<p>EDI leadership group Staff data and HR policies group Research Division Lead and PI leads</p>	<p>2023-2027 Review annually</p>	<p>Increase satisfaction with the induction information and clarity of policies. Satisfaction with the mentoring arrangements. Increased uptake of training and research activity by female members of staff Increased satisfaction of staff survey respondents to the networking opportunities question Data monitoring process in place to understand PDRA outcomes</p>
2.8	New	<p>Support wellbeing and a healthy work-life balance for all staff through flexible working, manageable workload and support through career breaks Through discussions it was clear that some staff were unaware of how to receive support on creating a healthy work-life balance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Record experience of relevant staff and update processes on career breaks (annually) ii. Survey staff on flexible working and support needed (biennially) iii. Implement working policy to enable all staff to work flexibly post-pandemic restrictions (started in October 2022, review annually) 	<p>EDI leadership group Data analysis WG EDI leadership group</p>	<p>2023-2027</p>	<p>Increase rate of respondents' satisfaction with the sense of wellbeing and support Increased hybrid-enabled meeting spaces in the department Increased responses indicating awareness of flexible working in the survey on flexible working and support</p>
Priority 3: Student representation and experience						
3.1	Rolled forward	<p>Improved student understanding and appreciation for the role of diversity in the construction sector Women in construction practice remain in low proportion, attributed to the image of the sector as inherently male-dominated. Increase the student awareness of the career opportunities for women in construction. Explore ways to encourage females to consider construction and engineering as a field of study and work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Establish a Women in Construction Project. Propose the creation of an internal Young Women in the Built Environment platform, building on the strong SBE participation of our female students in the national Women in Construction Awards. (March 2024 – March 2026, review progress in 2025) ii. Monitor applications, enrolment and student data at UG, PGT and PGR levels to understand gender balance support the growth of the Architecture & Architectural Engineering PGT and PGR (which is still relatively new compared to CME) programmes (annually) iii. Attainment gap monitoring and intersectionality (check that those from marginalized groups, such as BAME students, students from socioeconomically deprived areas are not disadvantaged) (annually) 	<p>EDI Student Partnership WG Data analysis WG Supporting female applications WG EDI Student Partnership WG</p>	<p>2023-2026 Start in March 2024, review progress in March 2025, complete by 2026</p>	<p>Women in Construction Project established, internal Young Women in the Built Environment platform Steady or increasing levels of female student applications to programmes Continued monitoring and intervention on attainment gap issues</p>

3.2	Rolled forward	<p>Encourage application of female students at all levels (UG/PGT/PGR) The proportion of female students at all levels has been around 30%, reflecting the wider industry barriers to recruiting females into construction and engineering. This area aims to maintain good practices and explore further any potential barriers within school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Continue to ensure female presence during Open Days and Visit Days (UG and PGT) (ongoing) ii. Keep School web pages up to date with promotional material for its diversity and inclusivity (annually in June) iii. Invite female alumni and industry representatives to speak at career events (annually) iv. Encourage colleagues to Invite female guest speakers into UG and PGT classes (ongoing) 	<p>Programme Directors (UG, PGT, PGR) EDI Lead Supporting Female Applications WG</p>	2023-2027	<p>Positive view of gender-balanced, diverse visual identity, feeling welcomed in arrival High response rate on satisfaction of gender-balanced, perception of the programmes in student survey New EDI website includes blog posts with stories of current female students. Invited alumnae to contribute their story. Perception of visible female role models at annual SBE PhD conference and RUAS public lecture series.</p>
3.3	Rolled forward	<p>Improve the overall gender balance in the student cohorts Understand the effects of the context-related and School-related initiatives for increasing the overall enrollment and gender balance in student applications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Review annual UG, PGT and PGR enrollment data against set targets (annually) ii. Review progression of students by gender (annually) iii. Work with professional institutes to progress gender equality (annually) iv. Increase support for PGR students with careers, e.g. workshops on careers in Academia for PhDs and PDs (annually) 	<p>Programme Directors (UG, PGT, PGR) EDI Lead Supporting Female Applications WG</p>	2023-2027 Annually, in March, June, October and November	<p>Increased enrolment; majority of student respondents report that the School is a friendly place to work High and balanced progression rates by gender Increased satisfaction on the visibility of female role models in professional practice. Satisfaction and positive perception of the levels of support among PhDs and PDs.</p>
3.4	New	<p>Review and monitor the student data to understand further gender differences with respect to intersectionality. Student data reveals a widening gap in attainment in CME in the proportion of minority ethnic students from disadvantaged backgrounds achieving 2:1 or first. We will continue to monitor the intersectionality characteristics of our students and the effects on attainment and progression.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Review the data to identify differences in the performance between female home students from ABMO and white backgrounds (annually) ii. Review progression rates by gender (Sep 2024) iii. Appoint SBE EDI student partners for increasing the student voice and partnering in creating solutions (annually in November) iv. Continue the co-creation of SBE School Diversity Calendar with students, to mark days of significance, whether personal, cultural or national (updated biennially, September) 	<p>EDI Lead Awarding Gap and Intersectionality WG</p>	2022-2027 Annually in March Focus groups biennially, next in February 2025	<p>Increased enrolment: majority of student respondents report that the School is a friendly place to work High and balanced progression rates by gender and intersectionality characteristics Students from minority backgrounds reporting more satisfaction with the received support Reduced attainment gap, working with the University's Awarding Gap Steering Group</p>
Priority 4: Governance, evidence-based approach to EDI						
4.1	New	<p>Administer regular culture surveys and monitor participation The participation rates have been decreasing over the years and are remaining around 50% for staff and less than 20% for students. The school surveys are critical for the department's self-assessment process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Run culture survey every other year to assess the change and impact of actions, but also minimise survey fatigue and increase participation (start November 2023, run biennially) ii. Administer school-wide student survey annually to increase the response rates iii. Monitor survey participation rates and collect gender disaggregated participation data iv. Offer incentives to encourage participation in surveys, especially for students (annually) v. Analyse survey results and share summary with department, including how SBE responds to the comments and issues raised in the surveys 	<p>EDI Lead SAT</p>	2023-2027 Biennial staff survey (2023, 2025, 2027): October-November Annual student survey (2025): January-March.	<p>Survey response rate to increase from 50% to 65% with gender balance in respondents by 2025 survey At least 5 student respondents in each of the gender-represented demographics, in each cohort (UG, PGT and PGR)</p>

			Consult professional services on how to improve engagement and participation (e.g. Marketing, Communications and Engagement and HR) (March-August 2024)			
4.2	New	<p>Streamline data collection and conduct more fine-level analysis of staff data. Disaggregate by departments for clearer view of issues.</p> <p>The monitoring of our progress in previous years has suffered from inefficient processes, staff turnover and unclear responsibilities. This activity calls for revising approaches to SAT and data collection and analysis to support a sustained self-evaluation process and progress monitoring.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Disaggregate data by departments to identify specific issues and tailor actions appropriately (Jan 2024 – Jan 2025) ii. Review the SAT working groups structure and ensure access to relevant data (annually) iii. Review the recruitment and leavers data collection processes and revise where possible to enable easier monitoring (August 2024 – Sep 2025) iv. Create new online version of leavers’ survey to allow for anonymous responses (June 2024) <p>Review training data annually and monitor effectiveness of the system (annually)</p>	<p>EDI Lead and HR</p> <p>EDI Lead</p> <p>Executive Administration Manager</p>	2024-2027	Self-assessment conducted and highlights reported to SAT and SMB annually (every September/October)
4.3	New	<p>Improve the SBE EDI Governance and build resilience in the self-assessment process during SAT turnover and role transitions</p> <p>EDI work and knowledge are distributed and hence, in need of clearer processes and coordination of undertaken work. Our progress monitoring has been inefficient due to fewer staff members collecting, analysing and leading the EDI work, which has proven unsustainable, especially when transitioning in new roles. Increased workloads post-pandemic call for clearer recognition of EDI work in staff contributions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Review the structure and processes to manage EDI leadership succession and SAT turnover to ensure knowledge management and continued self-assessment (annually) ii. Review SAT working groups to focus on priority areas and access to data (annually) iii. Update SAT Terms of Reference (annually) iv. Identify training opportunities to support SAT members (annually) v. Establish routine monitoring of EDI engagement activities through a short form on Teams, with all staff asked to update records (annually) <p>Create an annual EDI-specific lump-sum award to acknowledge and incentivize staff members to engage with EDI activities (establish the process March 2023-March 2024, then annually)</p>	<p>EDI Lead</p> <p>SAT Working Groups</p>	<p>2023-2027</p> <p>Start in September, annually review membership</p> <p>Termly engagement monitoring</p>	<p>Increased engagement and input from SAT members recognized in PDR, personal development and staff satisfaction</p> <p>Staff volunteering information on EDI-related activities in the SAT notebook</p> <p>SAT members feeling valued for their contributions to the EDI agenda; consideration for appointing additional admin support for data collection and analysis</p> <p>Increased survey response rate reporting satisfaction on valued contributions in the department/school, aim 70%</p>
4.4	New	<p>Enhance SAT representation by engaging more male members of staff in championing EDI areas within their influence</p> <p>SAT membership has more female members, which does not represent the gender balance across the school. The representation from Architecture has been reduced due to key members of staff leaving in the last year, including the Head of Department.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Review SAT membership and engagement to ensure representation across departments, roles, grade and diverse communities (annually) ii. Ensure representation of gender corresponding to the school-wide and departmental gender profile (annually) iii. Engage more senior male colleagues to champion EDI areas within their influence (annually) iv. Consider options to incentivise staff to participate in activities such as the SAT (Jan 2024 – Jan 2025) 	<p>HoDs, HoS</p> <p>EDI Lead</p> <p>SAT Working Groups</p>	2023-2027	<p>More senior male staff members joining the SAT and leading areas of activities</p> <p>SAT membership has proportional representation from both departments</p>