

**Champion Action Plan**  
**School of Physics and Astronomy, University of Nottingham**

Objective or Principle	Rationale and Action already taken	Further Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Success Measure
JP1 1.1 Governance	Staff in the school have long been working to improve EDI, however this has relied on the commitment and support of the individuals in senior School roles. Part of embedding this work in the School, and ensuring it continues, is to make it part of the job description for all Senior roles.	EDI responsibilities to be included in updated job descriptions for senior roles.	OM	September 2023	Updated job descriptions written and agreed with role holders.
JP1 1.2 Data Collection	Tools developed by the University have made data collection and monitoring much smoother in many areas. However, prize nominations are decided within the school, and we do not keep sufficiently good records to analyse the data.  The incomplete data that we have shows a high proportion of female staff being nominated for external prizes (e.g. 30% F nominations for IoP prizes), but complete records are needed to monitor fairness.	Record staff and students nominated for prizes and monitor gender balance.	HoS, HoO, SA	Annually at the end of each academic year	Percentage of female staff and students nominated reflects the demographics of each group.
JP1 1.3 Resources	The scope of activities and responsibilities of the Director of EDI has expanded since 2017, and the amount of time allocated to the role in the workload model has not been adjusted.	Monitor and record the workload of the Director of EDI.  Update allocation in Workload Model in discussion with the Faculty of Science and wider University.	EDI, DHoS	September 2023	New workload allocation agreed for Director of EDI.

JP2 2.1 Recruitment	In 2022 we began a pilot recruitment project, aimed at showcasing the welcoming and supportive environment of the school.	Evaluate success and workload involved in the project at the end of first year.	EDI, OM, SA	January 2024	Report on outcome of pilot project shared with EDI committee.
	This gives shortlisted interviewees the chance to talk to members of the school from underrepresented groups, outside of the interview process.	Depending on outcome of pilot decide whether to make this standard practise and whether to extend to UG and PGR recruitment. If not, decide if modifications or alternative approaches should be trialled.	EDI Committee	January 2024	Report discussed at EDI committee. Agreed recommendations on whether to continue, modify or end the pilot project.  Recommendation on whether lessons learned can be applied to UG and PGR recruitment.
JP3 3.1 PGWiP	In March 2020 we successfully ran the first national Post-graduate Women in Physics (PGWiP) conference.  We received much positive feedback on the event, and the opportunities for learning and networking it provided. We believe a second event would provide similar benefits to a new cohort of PhD students.	Run second national PGWiP conference.  To support our PGR recruitment (Actions 3.2), the conference will also be open to our final year undergraduates.	EDI	March 2025	National conference has taken place, with attendees from a range of institutions in the UK.  Majority of attendees say they enjoyed the day and found it valuable.

JP3 3.2 Recruitment PGR students	<p>Our percentage of female PGR students is slightly lower than the national average for physics, but our percentage of female undergraduates is higher. To increase our percentage of female PGRs, we will encourage our undergraduates to consider studying for a PhD with us.</p> <p>We will adapt the approach we have taken to diversifying our undergraduate recruitment, in particular the role our ambassadors play in speaking to the supportive and inclusive culture of the School, and the experiences people with different backgrounds have while studying here.</p> <p>Recruitment of PGR students is run at the level of Research Groups, so it is important to share best practice within the School, while recognizing that different groups are recruiting students with different types of skills.</p>	<p>Annual event for UG students to learn about PhD opportunities.</p> <p>We will ensure that prospective applicants have the possibility to discuss with a range of current PhD students, similarly to the role our ambassadors play in UG recruitment.</p>	PGAT, DHoS	Annually	<p>Events have taken place.</p> <p>Percentage of female PGR students at least 30%</p>
		<p>Run workshop for staff to share best practise and experiences of PGR recruitment. This will include sharing best practise from UG recruitment, and our recruitment pilot (Action 2.1).</p> <p>Monitor the resulting actions taken by each group, and the demographics of the new PGR cohort annually.</p>	PGR, PGAT	Summer 2026	<p>Workshop has taken place.</p> <p>Percentage of female PGR students at least 30%</p>
JP3 3.3 PGT students	<p>The number of PGT students in the school is small but growing, and the demographics of this population are notably different to other parts of the school. In particular, there is currently a smaller proportion of women. We want to ensure we support these students while also growing the percentage of female students studying PGT courses in the school.</p>	<p>Make sure female PGT students are put into groups with at least one other woman so as not to feel isolated (as we already do for our UG students).</p>	MLiS	Ongoing - from start of academic year 2023/24	Female PGT students paired during group work.
		<p>Ensure visibility of the female staff delivering this course and students taking it in school and university advertising.</p>	MLiS	Summer 2025	Updated imagery on University and School webpages.

3.3 PGT students (cont.)		Run focus group with students on this course to understand their experience.	MLiS, EDI	Summer 2025	Focus group run. Feedback reported and discussed at EDI committee. Resulting recommendations agreed by the committee.
JP3 3.4 Promotion	Responses to the Athena Swan survey indicated that some staff in the school may not believe the promotions process to be fair or transparent. Although we see no evidence for this in the available data, and the number of responses to this survey from the school was small, we nevertheless need to understand where staff in the School have concerns to enable us to address them.	Run a school survey of staff perceptions and experiences of the promotions process.	EDI	Spring 2025	At least 50% of staff in the school respond to survey. Percentage of female respondents proportional to percentage of female staff in the School. Findings, and any response required, discussed at EDI committee.
		Create bank of successful promotion applications that could be shared (with the permission of the applicants) within the school.	DHoS	Summer 2026	Bank of successful promotions applications produced and available to staff. Improvement in positive staff perception of promotions process in Athena Swan survey.
		Staff who have not applied for promotion in 5 years to be identified and offered opportunity to discuss progress and prospects with HoS/DHoS.	HoS, DHoS	Annually	Meetings to be held.  Improvement in positive staff perception of promotions process in Athena Swan survey.

JP3 3.5 APM staff career development	APM staff cannot apply for promotion. Progression comes from roles being regraded, or for applying for another position within the University. We want to provide all of our staff with the skills and knowledge they need to progress.	Run team building events for APM staff (jointly with staff in Chemistry). Use these to identify career development support needed by staff.	SOM	Spring 2025	Events have run.  Improvement in APM staff responses to survey questions about support for career progression.
		Offer support for CV and application writing and interview skills.	SOM	Ongoing	Staff accessing support.  Improvement in APM staff responses to survey questions about support for career progression.
JP4 4.1 EDI Communication	Our previous EDI newsletter was not widely read within the school, and so much of the school remained unaware of our work and initiatives.	Work with new school social media manager and newsletter writer(s) to ensure they are aware of university and school events, and months/days for protected characteristics.	EDI, SMM, ESE	Ongoing	EDI activities appear regularly in School newsletters, online noticeboard and social media feeds.
	We would like the decoration of the School to better reflect the current make-up of the School, and provide a more welcoming environment.  Commissioning of some new works representing pioneering women in the School is already underway.	Improve decoration of physics foyer, including pictures and stories of graduates.	EDI, HoS	Summer 2024	Decorations of School foyer have been renewed.
	Many EDI activities and social events take place in the school, but we do not keep records of who attends. This means we cannot see if we are failing to reach or engage with particular groups.	Monitor attendance (and break down by group) at EDI activities. Ensure that, across an academic year, all population groups in the school take part in the activities we run.	EDI, ESE	Ongoing. Data reviewed annually	Records kept of attendance at events.  All population groups in the School participating in events.

4.1 EDI Communication (cont.)	We intend to continue to run our School EDI colloquia. If the speakers agree we will record these Colloquia, and make them publically available, so that best practice can be shared widely in the physics community.	Make colloquia recordings available. Advertise this on School social media.	EDI, SMM	Summer 2023, then annually	Colloquia recordings available on website. Staff from other institutions watching the videos.
JP4 4.2 Community building	The sense of community and connection in the School was hard to maintain during the Covid-19 lockdowns and periods of remote work and study. We aim to rebuild this, and develop new support networks within the school.	Mentoring scheme for new postgraduate students, Community building and careers events for PGRs.	PGR	Ongoing	Each new PGR student has a mentor. Yearly events for PGR students.
		UG community events, including events to get to know staff in the school.	DHoS, SEO	Ongoing	Programme of social events for undergraduates. At least 2 each year aimed at getting staff and students to mix.
	We have a number of mechanisms through which we can hear UG feedback, but such meetings currently happen at most termly meaning that we cannot always quickly respond to issues as they arise.	Monthly meetings between school staff and UG reps.	DT, ESE	Ongoing	Meetings occur on monthly basis.
	We have had an online network for female members of the school since 2021. However traffic in the network has declined since the return to work and study in person.	Run networking events for female staff and students in the school. If successful, run events for other underrepresented groups.	EDI, ESE	Autumn 2023, then ongoing. Provision of events reviewed annually.	Events have taken place. Attended by members of all population groups in the School. Feedback collected at the end and reviewed at EDI committee.

JP4 4.3 Workload	<p>High staff workload remains a key challenge for the school. With staff regularly reporting it as a cause of significant amounts of stress.</p> <p>Some actions to address this have already been taken for example moderating marking, rather than double marking every script.</p> <p>We have begun the process of reviewing our curriculum, and this offers the opportunity to address the issue more broadly.</p>	<p>Reduction in staff workload, to be considered throughout the Curriculum Review.</p> <p>Staff to be consulted through workshops.</p>	DHoS, DT	September 2025	New curriculum requires lower staff workload to deliver than the 2023/23 curriculum.
	<p>We are aware that some forms of assessment cause disproportionate stress for some groups of students, and making our degree courses more inclusive will involve developing a more diverse range of assessment types. Whilst we currently work with individual students to make suitable accommodations wherever possible, the curriculum review is an opportunity to take a more holistic approach.</p>	<p>Run workshops with students to explore where challenges currently arise, and what alternatives approaches would be appropriate.</p>	DHoS	September 2024	Workshops run. Course review reflects student feedback.
	<p>We have run two staff stress surveys, which have shown that high workload is a key cause of stress for staff in the school.</p> <p>We want to continue to monitor this and identify if the changes we are making are having an impact on staff wellbeing.</p>	<p>Re-run staff stress survey. This will help to identify the impact of changes from the curriculum review, as well as helping to identify any other potential issues.</p>	EDI	Summer 2026	<p>Stress survey run. Shows a reduction in staff citing workload as a main source of stress.</p> <p>Percentage of female respondents proportional to percentage of female staff in the School.</p>

JP4 4.4 Mentoring	All members of staff in the school are assigned a mentor at their induction, and we know that some staff also choose to take up other mentoring opportunities (including reverse mentoring). But we do not have data on how useful this is, or if staff are happy with, and feel able to access the opportunities available to them	Run staff mentoring survey	EDI	Summer 2025	50% of staff in the School have completed the survey. Percentage of female respondents proportional to percentage of female staff in the School. Results to be discussed and recommendations agreed at EDI committee.
JP5 5.1 Flexible working policies	<p>Whilst the School has a number of policies to support staff taking leave and working flexibly, we have some evidence that these are not widely known in the School.</p> <p>We aim to improve the awareness of these policies, and as a result increase the number of staff accessing them. This will require improved monitoring of the take-up of these schemes.</p>	<p>Advertise policies clearly on internal staff Moodle page.</p> <p>Responsible staff to include regular reminders at Staff meeting. E.g. Safety Officer to remind staff about need for and benefit of a risk assessment when pregnant.</p>	EDI, Safety	Annually	<p>Reminders in Staff Meetings.</p> <p>Improvement in Athena Swan survey responses on awareness of these policies.</p>
	The school has a policy of support for staff taking sick leave and maternity or parental leave. But we want staff to feel comfortable asking for support around miscarriage. A written policy should help both staff and managers feel more comfortable having these conversations.	Create a school policy to support staff who have (or whose partner has) experienced miscarriage.	EDI, HR	Summer 2025	Written policy available on internal School webpages, and discussed at EDI and Staff committee meetings.



5.1 Flexible working policies (cont.)	We have introduced several initiatives to support staff taking periods of leave. However we have not kept clear records of which staff have accessed these methods of support. This information is necessary in order to know if our support is adequate and staff are aware of it.	Monitor take up of initiatives to support staff taking leave – develop actions to improve where necessary.	DHoS, SA, EDI	Autumn 2026	Confidential records kept of which staff have taken periods of leave and what support they have been offered and used.  Anonymised report discussed, and recommendations agreed at EDI committee.
JP6 6.1 Exit / end of contract interviews	Exit interviews are a way of getting information about potential problems in the school that staff may not be comfortable discussing while they are in post. This may be particularly true for PDRAs on short term contracts.  Currently only around 50% of those invited choose to attend such an interview, meaning we may be missing out on hearing useful information.	Rewrite invitation letter to make purpose of meeting clearer.	SOM	September 2024	Invitation letter rewritten and used.
		Explain value of these interviews to line managers, so they can encourage leavers to take them up.  Discussion about what should be asked.	SOM	September 2026	Exit interviews discussed in staff meeting.  75% of staff who leave the School take part in exit interviews.
JP6 6.2 Staff induction	Our staff induction process does not, currently, include a detailed discussion of EDI or expected standards of behavior. We want our values and expected standards of behavior to be clear to all staff from the start of their time with us.	Include discussion of University Code of Conduct and require completion of University Unconscious Bias Training and training around Bullying and Harassment as part of staff induction.	OM	Spring 2025	Revised induction process in place.  100% of new staff have completed training.
JP6 6.3 Reporting	Both the School and the University have anonymous reporting tools for staff and students to let us know of any incidents.  We need to make sure that everyone is aware that they exist and how to find them.	Continue to highlight anonymous reporting methods in staff meetings and student induction. Remind students at the start of each academic year.	EDI	Annually	Reminders included in Staff meeting, student inductions, and at the start of each academic year.

6.3 Reporting (cont.)	Students are also able to raise issues through reporting forms on internal Moodle pages for their modules and year groups. Currently these messages may go to everyone listed as a teacher on the module, which may share information too broadly, and obscure who is responsible for responding.	Review information flow from internal student reporting mechanisms.	DHoS	Summer 2024	Improved reporting mechanisms rolled out across all School Moodle pages.
JP6 6.4 Bullying and Harassment Survey	We have policies and reporting mechanisms in place in case misconduct occurs. But we do not know how well members of the School are aware of them, and if they feel comfortable using them, and if they are working.	Run bullying and harassment survey	EDI	Summer 2026	Survey run. At least 50% of School staff to respond. Percentage of female respondents proportional to percentage of female members of the School.  Results discussed, and recommendations agreed at EDI committee.
JP6 6.5 Code of Conduct	For the PGWiP conference in 2020 we created a Code of Conduct for everyone at the conference to safeguard and facilitate discussion.  We would like to have a related code of conduct which would apply to, and would be shared with, anyone visiting the School.	Update PGWiP code of conduct, so that it can be shared with all visitors to the School.  To be agreed at EDI committee after consultation with the School.	EDI	Spring 2024	New Code of Conduct agreed, shared on internal School webpages, and included in invites to external speakers and visitors.

## **ABBREVIATIONS FOR RESPONSIBLE ROLES**

DHoS	Deputy Head of School
DT	Director of Teaching
EDI	Director of Equality Diversity and Inclusion
ESE	Senior Administrator for Education and Student Experience
HoS	Head of School
HoO	Head of Operations
HR	Human Resources
MLiS	Machine Learning in Science Lead
OM	Operations Manager
PGR	Postgraduate Director
PGAT	Postgraduate Admissions Tutor
SA	Senior Administrator – PA to Head of School
SEO	Student Experience Officer
SOM	Senior Operations Manager
SMM	Social Media Manager