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Section 1: An overview of the department and its approach to gender equality

1. Letter of endorsement from the head of the department

FACULTY OF MEDIEVAL & MODERN LANGUAGES
TAYLOR INSTITUTION

41 Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JF
Tel: +44(0)1865 270750 Fax: +44(0)1865 270757
chair@mod-langs.ox.ac.uk www.mod-langs.ox.ac.uk



As Faculty Board Chair, I am pleased to introduce and endorse our application for a bronze Athena Swan award. I have been a member of the Faculty's SAT since the start of our preparations in February 2022, first as deputy-FBC and representative for Spanish and since September 2022 as the Board's Chair. This has involved attendance at all twelve full-team meetings, guided by two different chairs. The AS application process has been a salutary one which has led to an increased awareness of gender inequalities and blind spots within the Faculty. This awareness has emerged from numerous written contributions – some an integral part of this application process – from all constituencies: from undergraduate and graduate students to early-career academics, our teaching staff, researchers and professional services staff, as well as oral contributions to the SAT meetings. Survey results and data analysed have been discussed in lively, always challenging, in-person meetings of the SAT and the wider Faculty, including a 'Town Hall' meeting on AS (January 2023).

Colleagues in the Faculty recognise the importance of the creation (in 2020) of an EDI lead (with a teaching buy-out) and the effect that this position has had especially on developments in our curricula and ensuring EDI issues are considered at every FB meeting. As a result of the meetings dedicated to the AS application and the data-gathering undertaken to support them, a number of areas have emerged on which the Faculty feels that it needs to work hard in order to raise awareness of gender inequalities and to make improvements to the experience of all our staff. These are outlined below in detail: the further and more effective embedding of EDI within the Faculty's structures and ethos; addressing barriers to progression (for students and staff); improving the career development for women in academic and professional roles; and building an inclusive environment.

I understand the challenges the Faculty faces and will continue to face in matters of gender inequality, but I am confident that the self-examination that AS has encouraged will lead to sustained change. At the end of 2024-25, I will be succeeded as FBC by Prof Phillip Rothwell, who has pioneered syllabus reform in his sub-faculty and will act as EDI lead and deputy Chair during this coming year. We will be

leading a Faculty that is firmly committed to the change this AS application has demonstrated to be necessary, one committed to the implementation of the Future Action Plan below.



Prof. Jonathan Thacker
Chair of the Medieval and Modern Languages Faculty Board

2. Description of the department

MML encompasses seven main language-groups (Francophone Studies, German, Spanish, Italian, Slavonic Studies, Portuguese, Modern Greek), each teaching and researching their language and culture in a global context.

The Faculty has c. 900 FTE undergraduates (1,400 individual students), c.60 PGTs and c.100 doctoral students (PGRs), making it one of the largest Modern Languages departments in the English-speaking world. We share undergraduate courses with six faculties in the Humanities Division and contribute to five interdisciplinary masters degrees (e.g. Women's Studies). Four Humanities faculties (English, History, Classics, Music) already hold AS Bronze accreditation.

Our 83 permanent posts (79.2 FTE), a further 18 Language Lecturers (16.35 FTE, 14 permanent) and c.30 researchers/temporary academic posts give critical mass to combine language-specific research and teaching with cross-linguistic, interdisciplinary and intersectional projects.

MML offers association to c. 50 further members employed by colleges (covering language teaching, temporary vacancies, specialist teaching, and ECR posts). They are not employed by the Faculty (and excluded from staffing numbers in this application), but form part of the academic community, and including this wider group is a key strategic priority for the Faculty. In 2019, the Faculty established an Early Career Researcher network, open to all ECRs, whether employed by the Faculty or a college, in order to foster inclusive support.

MML is both research- and teaching-intensive, and one of the leading Modern Languages departments world-wide (second in QS World Rankings, 2024). Students recognise the quality of the education they are offered (2022 Student Barometer: 91%); as in other departments in Oxford, the pressure on staff to achieve high-level research as well as teaching and pastoral care is intense.

Staff are dispersed across Oxford: the Faculty only has rooms for the professional services team and seven statutory professors, 18 Language Lecturers, and 15 temporary researchers/academics. Most academics have a teaching room in their college.

Lectures are held at the Taylorian Institution, the dedicated MML teaching and research library, with some language teaching in Faculty rooms, but the majority of UG and PGT/PGR teaching takes place in colleges. A move to the new Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities in 2025, uniting Humanities faculties in one space, will be an opportunity to foster a greater sense of belonging and interdisciplinary cohesion for staff and students.

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

Recognition that gender identities take many forms underpins the Faculty's research and culture. While data in this application is defined by legal binary sex, we aim to support students and staff in inclusive ways, whether they identify as male, female, or non-binary.

The Faculty Board (FB) is responsible for strategic direction. Membership is updated annually and consists of the Faculty Board Chair (FBC) and Deputy Chair, the chairs of the seven Sub-Faculties (23/24: 4F, 3M), Faculty Officers (Directors of Undergraduate Studies; Graduate Studies; Research; Admissions; 23/24: 2F, 2M). Further permanent postholders, and representatives from the Language Lecturers, ECRs, graduate and undergraduate students are included. The EDI lead and Athena Swan lead are co-opted members (2023/24: 17F, 14M).

Since 2019, EDI has been a standing item on every meeting of the FB. EDI initiatives (e.g. race equality action plan; diversity audit of syllabus) have been led from the FB, and the AS application builds on this initiative. The Faculty seeks to maintain a gender balance in leadership roles such as the FBC and officers; three (31.5%) of the 9.5 statutory chairs are female.

MML appointed an EDI lead in 2020 to emphasize its commitment, recognizing the need for intersectional approaches to address inequalities. The EDI lead is a permanent post-holder, appointed for three years, receiving a 25% teaching remission. EDI matters are raised at the five annual meetings of the FB which refers matters to the seven Sub-Faculties and sub-committees as well as receiving suggestions from there.

MML appointed a separate AS lead in 2022 to co-ordinate the complex process of data-gathering, reflection, and development across the large and de-centralised constituency. The AS lead also receives a 25% teaching remission. Implementation of the AS action plan will be overseen by the EDI lead, as part of a strategy to embed EDI actions and awareness across the entire Faculty.

The EDI lead represents MML on the the EDI Strategic Working Group of the Humanities Division, where termly meetings enable sharing of EDI good practice. We work closely with the Humanities Division in developing inclusive practice through pilots and workshops, and are committed to adopting the EDI priorities identified by the University (including its recently renewed AS Silver award) and the Humanities Division (e.g. Bullying and Harassment Guidance, guidance on Parental Leave and Returning Carers, a Race Equality action plan, workshops on inclusive chairing).

MML has a vibrant research environment, in which trans-linguistic and trans-disciplinary approaches have become increasingly important. Questions of gender, equality, and race are part of the Faculty's research, both individual and in collaborative research clusters.

The college structure and division into seven Sub-Faculties works well for the UG course structure, yet poses a major challenge for cohesion and a sense of belonging for staff. Prior to the AS application, we had already identified the need for a more inclusive working and learning environment as well as for better communications as a Faculty, beyond Sub-Faculty groups. We see the AS action plan as a major strand in developing intersectional ways of improving inclusivity.

4. Development, evaluation and effectiveness of policies

The EDI lead disseminates best practice developed by the University and Division, facilitates exchanges between Sub-Faculties (e.g. the diversity audit initiated by the Portuguese SF), and reports on Faculty initiatives and challenges to the University's decision-making bodies.

Ways of seeking and monitoring feedback from members of the Faculty include

- University biennial Staff Experience Survey (SES)
- questionnaires as part of the AS process (eg. culture survey)
- annual mentoring feedback from academic staff in their Initial Period of Office (IPO)
- annual Research Conversations for all academic staff
- participation in the Humanities Division Career Conversations for all academic staff
- annual PDRs for the professional services team
- termly meetings of the ECR network with reports to the Faculty Board
- termly supervision reports for all graduate students
- termly Joint Consultative Committee meetings for graduates (PGT and PGR)
- termly Joint Consultative Committee meetings for undergraduates
- communications to and from Sub-Faculties
- annual student surveys (including student feedback to colleges)

Responses received through these channels are reviewed by relevant committees and/or FB and communicated to Sub-Faculties; the FB and its sub-committees draft and agree responses to the Humanities Division and the University's Education Committee in a cycle of evaluation, review, and improvement.

The Faculty is assessed by the University every five years, addressing research, academic programmes, organisation, and finances. The latest review (2022) commended the Faculty on its race equality action plan, but also noted the gender awarding gaps and communication challenges. As part of the Research Excellence Framework (REF), the Faculty formulated its strategic priorities on EDI in relation to research in the 'Environment Statement'. Bringing together initiatives from these

different strands and embedding them in governance structures and the wider culture will be part of the action plan for the next five years.

Students proactively articulated the need for action during the Black Lives Matter protests. The Faculty set up Town Hall meetings to listen (HT21) and worked with student representatives to develop race equality actions, improve the visibility of gender issues in our syllabus, and provide resources for more inclusive and diverse teaching.

5. Athena Swan self-assessment process

The SAT was first convened in February 2022 and constituted so that it brought together different groups, including all career stages and languages. It was launched by an e-mail from the FBC and highlighted in Faculty and Sub-Faculty meetings; a dedicated section of our Intranet site was established; the Culture Survey was circulated in June 2022. A Faculty-wide meeting on progress was held in January 2023, and two focus groups were held during Trinity Term 2023.

Table 1: SAT Membership

Name	Role in the Faculty	Staff type (specific role on SAT)
Clara Busch	Student	PGT
Machilu van Bever Donker	Humanities EDI Officer	EDI
Ben Bollig	Academic staff	Academic (to 2023) (Spanish)
Dorothee Boulanger	ECR network lead	ECR (to 2023) (Portuguese)
Nicola Brown	Access and Outreach Officer	PST
Joe da Costa	Postdoctoral researcher	ECR (2024, job-share) (Portuguese)
Alejandra Crosta	LL in Spanish	LL representative (Spanish)
Gwendy Davenport	Student	UG (to 2023)
Simon Gilson	Academic staff	Academic (Italian)
Jessica Goodman	Academic staff	Academic (French)
Anna Hashimoto	Student	UG (2024)
Polly Jones	Academic Staff	Academic (Slavonic, from 2024)
Jasmine Kaur	Student	UG (to 2023)
Laura Lonsdale	Academic Staff	Academic (Spanish, from 2024)
Patrick McGuiness	Academic staff	Academic (French, to 2023)
Hayley Morris	HAF	PTO

Joanna Neilly	Academic staff	Academic (German, to 2023)
Claudia Pazos Alonso	Academic staff	AS chair (to 2023) (Portuguese)
Meindert Peters	Postdoctoral researcher	ECR (2024, job-share)
Almut Suerbaum	Academic staff	Academic (FBC 2019-2022, AS chair from 2023, author)
Chris Taylor	Year Abroad Officer	PST (to 2023)
Jonathan Thacker	FBC	Academic (FBC, Spanish)
Elly Walters	Student	PGR

In March 2023, the AS lead had to step down unexpectedly. The Faculty paused the process, appointing a new lead in October 2023 and resuming work, with some changes in membership but overlap to ensure continuity. Overall, the SAT held 12 formal meetings; in 2024 the AS lead also held 10 informal meetings with individual representatives.

MML and the Humanities Division have faced significant challenges due to staff turnover, so that collation and data-analysis took longer than anticipated. Staff and student data by gender are held centrally by the University in a number of databases. Local records frequently do not align with central records, but are considered to be more accurate. We would like to highlight issues resulting from the University's currently data-collection:

- EDI data for college-lead recruitment exercises (e.g. Associate Professor posts) are not available consistently.
- Detailed EDI data are collected at application stage, but due to (institutional) data issues, these are currently not available/too inaccurate for reporting purposes. The Faculty has informal methods for reviewing gender balance of applications/appointment, but these rely on assumptions and are not robust.
- Central records of staff data do not match Faculty records (e.g. Language Lecturers, employed by the Faculty, are key academic staff, but because of their contractual status, they are not reliably identified by central university databases).
- Student data now include gender as well as legal sex; staff data so far only record legal sex.
- Reviewing retrospective data/trends is not reliable; we therefore use snapshots.

Further work is needed and data cannot be fixed retrospectively. We understand that the University is prioritising data improvements and hope to see the outcome of this over the next five years. Working to ensure better quality of data is one of the key action points [AP 1.4].

The SAT carried out two surveys in May 2022, one for staff (response rate 40%) and one for students (response rate 9%); a summary of findings is attached in Appendix 1. The questionnaires were developed by the SAT, taking into account the AS Culture Survey template, but in line with the Faculty's teaching and research and

recognising that gender identities are much more diverse than the legal binary, they included an option to identify as 'other' rather than the female/male binary (6.3% of staff, 11.9% of students). The SAT also drew on the biennial University Staff Experience Surveys (SES) from 2021 and 2023. SES responses by gender are attached in Appendix 1.

Our Action Plan focusses on gender equality within a wider agenda to remove barriers for non-binary staff and students, increase diversity in intersectional ways (esp barriers of class and race), and make the Faculty and its committees more representative of all its members.

The questionnaire results as well as qualitative and quantitative data were reviewed by the SAT and reported to the FB. The SAT discussed and agreed issues of particular concern and areas to emphasise in the Action Plan. The AS lead also conducted a series of informal discussions with ECRs, PST and student members, seeking views on the broader environment and culture. The SAT highlighted the need to embed EDI concerns in the academic culture of the constituent Sub-Faculties.

In response to the issues identified by the SAT (details in section 2.1), four key priority (KP) areas, aimed at addressing gender gaps in responses, were identified. These form the basis of our Action Plan (AP, section 3). The Faculty EDI lead will have responsibility for reporting on progress against the Action Plan to the FB on a yearly basis.

Section 2: An assessment of the department's gender equality context

1. Culture, inclusion and belonging

The Faculty recognizes the challenges which its size, range, and de-centralised structure pose for creating a sense of inclusion and belonging. We are aware that a culture in which everyone has a voice, feels able to contribute and has support in addressing barriers not only benefits individuals but also ensures better governance and helps to secure the future of the discipline. The dispersal of staff and students across 28 colleges and seven Sub-Faculties has benefits, because each college and Sub-Faculty allows individuals to be part of a smaller collective, but makes it harder for the Faculty to develop a sense of community, whether in teaching and learning or in research.

The Faculty is acutely aware of structural inequalities within the collegiate structure of the University and works actively with the Humanities Division and the University to address these while recognizing that it has limited control. Recent actions, while not necessarily informed by gender considerations, have aimed to increase inclusivity:

- establishing an ECR network which is open to all ECRs, whether employed by the Faculty or a college, and whether on a teaching-only or a research contract;
- supporting research applications by non-postholders;
- offering mentoring and support with research applications for all ECRs, whether Faculty-employed or not;
- responding to student concerns on race equality by introducing an annual diversity audit of the syllabus, recognizing that barriers of race, class, and gender often intersect taking a leading role in EDI policy development in the University (e.g. the first two Humanities EDI leads were from MML).

We recognize that a Faculty which brings together students from many different countries and educational systems and recruits staff internationally needs to communicate expectations and processes clearly, and are aware that we need to improve in this area, through better information on the website, clearer and more explicit formulation of expectations, and better communication between the FB and the wider faculty community. We have contributed to the discussion in the wider university by drawing on research expertise on issues of gender, gender identity, and race in the very different regions and cultures studied by students and researchers of the Faculty.

We aim to be a community in which everyone feels welcome and able to contribute. New staff are given an induction, and we are working on ways of making this more substantial while also improving access to information. Undergraduates receive a structured first year course which aims to consolidate their language skills while building critical analysis, and faculty-run language classes in the majority of

languages form an important part in fostering a sense of community for first year students, but we aim to incorporate EDI issues more explicitly [AP 4.3]. There is faculty funding for student-led EDI events, and we aim to publicize this more widely (e.g LGBTQ+ workshop for YA students). PGT and PGR students are welcomed by the Faculty at the start of each academic year, and graduate students meet their supervisor (every two weeks in the first year, at least twice a term, to suit their progress, in later years).

The Faculty has three Harassment officers (2F, 1 M). There have been few formal complaints of Harassment, which have been dealt with in accordance with the university's processes. But we are acutely aware of the disproportionately high number of women who report having been exposed to or witnessed bullying and harassment [Appendix 2, figures 10, 11, 12 and 13], and the uncomfortably high number of students and staff who consider their gender to be a barrier to succeeding [Appendix 2, figures 15, 25]. We aim to address and improve this through a range of actions.

As the survey results highlight, challenges and barriers differ between staff and students, but also across the range of different types and career stages of staff. They are therefore discussed here for each group.

Undergraduates

At UG level, the proportion of F:M is broadly stable (median 69%), slightly below the benchmark (which may be the result of the broader range of languages offered) but in line with application rates.

A very large majority of students agree that they are given the opportunity to contribute irrespective of their gender (90.8%), and 66.6% agree that their identity is not a barrier to their educational achievement. We are, however, aware of the gender awarding gap (difference in the percentage of Firsts), which has fluctuated between 3% and 44% over the last 12 years for which data are available by gender. [Appendix 2, section 2]. During the pandemic, assessment methods were adapted in different ways each year, so that comparisons are not straightforward. In 2020, the radical changes in assessment necessitated by the pandemic reduced the proportion of students who withdrew from assessments, but increased the gender awarding gap. Overall, the introduction of dissertation and portfolio assessments and open book assessments broadly correlates with a reduction in the awarding gap, whereas the return to more closed-book, 3-hour examinations has reintroduced a significant awarding gap [AP 2.1].

Qualitative comments in the AS questionnaire highlight the need for more diversity in the syllabus, especially in the first year, and for greater visibility of options which focus on issues of gender and intersectional approaches. Students also comment that Modern Languages as a subject may be regarded as less significant than others because it is perceived as female-dominated.

Some comments suggest that while women may face challenges, the greater barriers are those of class, disability, and gender-identity, and highlight that type of school may convey advantage in the language part of the course.

Postgraduates

The proportion of F:M in PGT cohorts is broadly stable (average 69%), significantly higher than the benchmark (53%). For PGRs, the fluctuation has been higher (average 66%, range 53% to 79%), broadly in line with the benchmark (67%). There is fluctuation in the awarding gap at PGT level, which reversed in the pandemic year (2020: -12%), when the mitigations were long extensions to the submission deadlines and advice that the dissertation would be marked as if it were a long essay. Doctoral submission rates were affected by the pandemic, but impact on women was less severe [Appendix 2, section 2].

PGR numbers are broadly in line with benchmark institutions. Qualitative comments in the AS student questionnaire indicate a desire for more support in considering and making PGR applications. In line with national trends, lack of financial support is likely to be more of a barrier for females.

Academic staff

The Faculty comprises staff on very different contracts [data by post-type in Appendix 2, section 3]:

Statutory Professors	(9.5) Faculty-only, permanent posts
Titular Professors	(Currently 34) Substantive post is that of Associate Professor but have been awarded the title of professor in the Recognition of Distinction exercise, with no change in duties (but some increase in pay)
Associate Professors	(Currently 36) Joint College-Faculty posts, permanent
(Faculty based) Language Lecturers	(Currently 18) Faculty-only posts (three different grades); all permanent apart from two career development posts and two externally funded posts.
Departmental Lecturers	(Between 5-10 posts at any one time) Temporary posts (1-3 years), Faculty-only, but often have some college duties. Appointed to cover vacancies.
Research staff	(Between 5-10 posts at any one time). Temporary posts (1-3 years), Faculty-only. Almost exclusively externally funded.
College-only staff	These include a small number of permanent staff, but are more commonly temporary posts, including college-based language staff (in French and German); individuals on teaching only contracts (to cover vacancies); college-funded ECR/Career development posts

The proportion of female Statutory Professorships has increased in 2022, but is still lower than males. The proportion of female Titular Professors has decreased slightly over the last 5 years, but has consistently remained higher than males. There are active efforts to encourage women to apply for Recognition of Distinction, and each year the full cohort of Associate Professors are reviewed to identify individuals who should be encouraged to apply. The proportion of female APs has increased slightly over the last 5 years (23/24: 58%F, 42%M).

Language Lecturers play an integral part in the Faculty's undergraduate course. They are predominantly female; proportions of F:M have been stable (14F, 4M). There are concerns about a lack of career progression for teaching-only staff within the University. A change of contractual structures and grades is not within the Faculty's power, and there is no evidence from Faculty data that these concerns are related to gender. That does not make them less pressing, and we are committed to working with the Humanities Division and the University to improve career structures so that every member of staff can feel valued and recognised for their achievements.

The proportion of female Departmental Lecturers has consistently been higher than that of males (23/24: 67%F, 33%M). This may reflect less stability/increased precarity for females, but also shows some improvement to the pipeline as the proportion of ECRs joining academia better reflect undergraduate and graduate numbers.

Research-only post-doctoral staff hold fixed-term contracts; most are funded by external bodies (eg. BA post-docs; Leverhulme), so that selection and salary levels are outside the Faculty's control. Overall numbers are small (median 11), and the proportions of male to female post-docs varies (average over 5 years: 61%F).

Results from the 2023 (University) staff survey [Appendix 1, tables 1 and 2] highlight gendered differences: Only 7% of females consider that they have been actively encouraged to take up career opportunities (M: 29%); Only 27% are clear about the training and development opportunities available to them (M: 38%). Only 52% feel supported to apply for grant funding as a PI (M: 60%).

Awareness of harassment policy and procedures amongst female respondents has improved somewhat to 83% (M: 100%). The proportion of females who report having either experienced bullying and harassment, or witnessed it, has increased significantly to 36%, and is much higher than in males (M: 19%). Female respondents are less confident that bullying and harassment reports would be dealt with seriously by the University (F: 37%, M: 76%), and of those who reported bullying and harassment, 0% of females (M: 50%) were satisfied with how their report was handled.

Fewer females report being able to meet the requirements of their job without regularly working excessive hours (13%F, 57%M), a significant drop from 2021 (27%F, 12%M) against a much more marked improvement for males.

The AS culture questionnaire supports these findings [Appendix 1, Figures 1-6]. The majority of respondents (73%) consider their contributions are valued, with no discernible difference by gender (76%F), and a similar majority (75%, no gender difference) is comfortable expressing opinions. Yet 57.6% of women consider their workload unmanageable, and this proportion rises to 71.4% for those with caring responsibilities (M and F). More males than females believe that the Faculty takes their caring responsibilities into account when scheduling meetings, and overall, 21.2% of female respondents considered that the Faculty was not committed to achieving gender equality. Qualitative responses highlight the long-lasting effect of Covid on research productivity and the resulting impact on career development for women and those with caring responsibilities.

The Faculty ECR network and programme of inclusive mentoring has resulted in some improvement: amongst research-only staff, female respondents are more likely to feel supported (63%F, 38%M), and all female respondents were aware of the Concordat (25%M).

Professional Services Team

The majority of PST members are female, and both SES and AS questionnaires indicate that offering an induction (SES 2023: 14%), career development, and opportunities for flexible working are the most pressing issues.

2. Key priorities for future action

Based on available data, key issues are gender awarding gaps at both UG and PGT, career development, incidents of harassment, and workload, as well as pay and conditions. The latter is not within the Faculty's control, though we will use our voice in University-wide discussions to advocate. In developing our action plan, we note that all four issues are likely to be the result of multiple factors, and that addressing them will not only improve the situation for affected individuals, but make for a better and more constructive working and learning environment for all faculty members.

KP1. Embedding and underpinning EDI in governance, ethos, and communication

AP1.1 Raise awareness of harassment policy and embed measures for tackling bullying/harassment, particularly of women, in order to reduce its incidence

AP1.2 Ensure that EDI, including considerations of gender and caring responsibilities, is embedded in SFs as well as the FB committees

AP1.3 Ensure EDI, including considerations of gender and caring responsibilities, is embedded in the Faculty research environment

AP1.4 Improve the quality of data and embed processes to monitor and review the effectiveness of EDI policies.

We identified that tackling EDI issues would require structural underpinning, so that change could be supported at all levels of the Faculty's work. Making everyone aware of what constitutes harassment, whether of Faculty committees, research seminars, or Sub-Faculty meetings will be integral, as will training for everyone who hold a position of responsibility. Working with the Humanities Division and the University in developing active bystander training and encouraging all staff and graduate students to participate will ensure that the onus is not on the individual who experiences bullying or harassment, but on all witnesses. Enabling participants to speak up and challenge unacceptable behaviour will improve discussion culture for all [AP 1.1, 1.2].

In order to take evidence-based decisions, we will need to work with the Humanities Division to improve the quality of staff and student data, not just on sex, but also on other protected characteristics, so that such data can inform the Faculty's strategic decision-making [1.4].

Supporting all members of staff in conducting research is a priority. Progress has already been made in offering research support to those who have been particularly affected during the pandemic due to caring responsibilities, and we plan to communicate and strengthen applications to the returning carers fund [4.5].

Communicating with all Faculty staff rather than just those who serve on committees will be key, and we will work to make the Faculty web-site and intranet site a more effective and affirmative tool to highlight the Faculty's values as well as EDI resources [4.2].

KP2. Addressing barriers to progression

AP2.1 Review and address gender awarding gaps at undergraduate level

AP2.2 ~~Improve support for women to progress from UG to PGT to PGR~~ Strengthen the academic pipeline of women progressing into research

AP2.3 Improve support for women ECRs, identifying barriers and mitigating these

AP2.4 Improve distribution of Faculty workload, recognising the need for flexible work patterns at different career stages, and particularly those with caring responsibilities.

We are aware from the data collection that barriers to progression differ by group. For UGs, we refer to 'awarding' rather than 'attainment' gaps [Appendix 2, section 2]

in order to highlight that the differences are likely to have structural reasons, and we aim to address these through data-based consideration of the impact which assessment regimes and reduction of assessments have on outcomes [AP2.1]. This will require an initial period of data gathering, tracking progression for PFE to FHS, comparing awarding gaps in language versus content assessments, closed-book assessment versus dissertation/portfolio assessment, the reduction in the number of assessments overall, as well as adoption of best practice from other Faculties within the Humanities Division. Regular reviews of the syllabus so that it fosters an understanding of intersectional inequalities and tolerance will support student learning for all [4.3], and we will create structures to facilitate exchanges of best practice in teaching in order to promote self-reflexive teaching [4.4].

Fostering a greater sense of belonging is an issue for ECRs as well as PGT and PGR students who join from other institutions. Reverting to in-person inductions and regular meetings since the pandemic has already made some difference [2.2, 2.3, 4.1], but the lack of physical faculty space for PGTs and PGRs is a challenge. We aim to provide clear communication from the outset about structures and processes through a radically revised website, and plan to use the move to the Schwarzman centre to foster dialogue between PGRs and ECRs.

Workload is an issue for all staff, but the proportion of female respondents who consider their workload to be manageable is very low [Appendix 1, figure 2]; this intersects with caring responsibilities. Female staff have been disproportionately affected by the combined effect of caring responsibilities and greater pastoral care needs from students. Our aim is to be more transparent about distributing workload equitably [2.4], recognising the need for flexible working.

KP3. Improve career development for women in academic (including ECR, research and language lecturer roles) and professional roles

AP3.1 Improve mentoring and career planning for women (particularly those after the IPO)

AP3.2 Improve opportunities for all staff to flourish within the University structures of posts

AP3.3 Improve support for women in applications for external research grants

AP3.4 Improve the support for career development and progression for the PST

Positive responses from female respondents in the IPO and from ECRs highlight the impact which good mentoring can have on career development. While the Faculty has improved the proportion of women in leadership roles, either as Faculty officers or amongst the statutory chairs, female respondents have highlighted the need for better and more proactive mentoring. [3.1] While the proportion of female Associate Professors (AP) has increased from 51% to 58%, the percentage holding the title of professor as a result of the Recognition of Distinction exercise has declined (61% to

56%) [Appendix 1, section 6], though this may in part reflect the fact that the majority of most recent appointments to AP posts have been female. Over the same period, 8 female staff were awarded the title of professor (M: 5), though it is notable that in the pandemic years 2021 and 2022, no women put themselves forward – pointing to the gendered effect of caring responsibilities which we aim to address [4.5]. We are aware of the concerns over a promotion exercise which relies on self-nomination, and will incorporate explicit discussion of when to apply into mentoring /career review discussions [3.1].

As the responses highlight, it can be challenging to develop research careers and maintain momentum for research where the immediate pressures of undergraduate teaching are overwhelming, and when students have often required additional support to mitigate the effects of the pandemic on them. We will embed EDI awareness more firmly in our research culture [3.3].

For Language Lecturers, the lack of career progression is an area of significant concern. A change of the University's career paths is outside our control, but we will aim to use available routes to advocate for more appropriate ways of recognising teaching excellence, and to reward and recognise achievements [3.2].

As a result of the physical separation, the PST can feel quite remote from the core activities of the Faculty, which we aim to address by communicating the values and EDI aims of the Faculty more clearly [4.2]. As for academic staff, the immediate needs of UG teaching have an effect on workload, which we aim to mitigate by creating structures such as mentoring to support career development.

KP4. Build an inclusive environment for staff and students

AP4.1 Strengthen existing induction programmes for staff

AP4.2 Improve communication about faculty ethos and expectations around EDI, and gender equality

AP4.3 Improve the diversity of course programmes and communicate these effectively

AP4.4 Embed EDI in the teaching practices of the Faculty

AP4.5 Mitigate the gendered impact of caring responsibilities

Fostering a stronger sense of belonging in a de-centralised faculty will support women and benefit all staff. Raising EDI issues at FB meetings has had some effect, but in order to improve female respondents' sense of having a voice and being able to contribute to decisions, we will work to strengthen awareness of the Faculty's ethos of inclusivity and diversity as well as commitment to EDI issues from the start at inductions for all staff and graduate students [4.1]. This will be supported by clearer signposting of EDI policies and resources on our website, as well as clearer reporting on principles for decision-making [1.2, 1.3].

As the student responses highlight, gender identity, class, and disability can be even more significant barriers than sex. In improving awareness about the intersectional nature of barriers, we aim to strengthen a culture of self-reflexive awareness of barriers faced by individuals. We have successfully trialled initiatives to embed diversity in language teaching materials, and aim to build on this by offering workshops on best practice in teaching [4.4].

Within the joint employment structures, cover for adoption and parental leave as well as options for part-time work can be challenging, because the interests of colleges and the Faculty do not always align. We have been pro-active in negotiating with colleges for appropriate levels of cover (i.e. contracts which include research and lecturing rather than just college teaching). We recognise the need for an inclusive environment which supports all staff with caring responsibilities, irrespective of sex and gender identity. However, we recognize that the impact of caring responsibilities during the pandemic was gendered, and will foster awareness of that and appropriate mitigations, especially on research activity [4.5].

Section 3: Future Action Plan

KP1. Embedding and underpinning EDI in governance, ethos, and communication						
AP	Objective	Planned action	Owner	Timeline	Outputs	Measure of Success
1.1	Raise awareness of harassment policy and embed measures for tackling bullying/harassment, particularly of women, in order to reduce its incidence	1.1.1 Clearer signposting of university policy and process on harassment and available actions on website and Faculty intranet site	HAF	By 1 Oct 2024	Updated website/intranet site	Increased awareness by all staff of the bullying and harassment policy reported in the biannual University Staff Experience Survey (SES)
		1.1.2 Highlight harassment policy and research seminar statement on inclusivity policy annually, and at each research seminar and Faculty Committee	FBC /HAF/ DoR	From Yr 1 (2024-25) By Yr 5 (silver submission)	Evidence of agendas/e-mails prompt from HAF Guidance for seminar convenors and evidence of inclusion on programmes	Baseline (2023): 87%Target (2029): 95% Decreased numbers reporting that they have experienced and/or witnessed bullying/harassment in SES.
		1.1.3 Standing EDI item on FB to review and track actions, including AS progress	FBC/Faculty EDI lead	Termly update of actions from Yr 1 (2024-25)	Action plan updated on a termly basis	Reducing the % of women who have witnessed bullying/harassment and closing the gap between M & F responses: Baseline (2023) 46% (M: 21%); Target (2029): 31%
		1.1.4 Inclusive chairing training mandatory for all SF Chairs and Faculty Officers [To be included in existing SF Chair/Fac Officer induction sessions or where timing does not allow – attendance at a Divisional run session]	FBC /Divisional EDI Officer	From Yr 1 (2024-25)	Evidence of attendance at Faculty-run induction sessions or Divisionally run session	Reducing the % of women who have witnessed bullying/harassment and closing the gap between M & F responses:
		1.1.5 Encourage all faculty staff to complete (Divisionally run) Active Bystander training, and record	FBC/HAF/ Divisional EDI Officer	From Yr 1 (2024-25)	Recorded participation rates (Division)	

					End of 2025: All Faculty Officers Attended All Faculty members: End of 2026: 20% End of 2027: 40% End of 2028: 60% End of 2029: 80%	Baseline (2023): 38% (M: 17%); Target (2029): 23%
		1.1.7 Review the faculty data from the University 'report and support' scheme and encourage the sharing of/review of data regarding uptake, including data disaggregated by gender	FBC/HAF/ Divisional EDI Officer	From Yr 1 (2024-25)	Annual report and statistics (Division/Central)	
1.2	Ensure that EDI, including considerations of gender and caring responsibilities, is embedded in SFs as well as the FB committees	1.2.1 Require explicit consideration of EDI on each SF and committee agenda, including yearly circulation of Divisional PSED guidance and Equality Impact Assessment Guidance	FBC/HAF	From Yr 1 (2024-25)	New agenda format and evidence from minutes	Increased feeling that department is committed to promoting EDI as reported in SES
		1.2.2 Annual audit of SF EDI initiatives and best practice reported to the FB	Faculty EDI lead	From Yr 1 (2024-25)	Annual Report to FB, showcasing the EDI achievements of each SF, to be published on the faculty webpage	Baseline (2023): % of staff who think dept is committed to promoting EDI: 67% [63% of F A&R compared to 71% of M A&R; and 56% of F PS staff compared to 67% overall PS staff Target (2029): 82%
1.3	Ensure that EDI, including consideration of gender and caring responsibilities, is embedded in the	1.3.1 Consider EDI impact of all new research initiatives before introduction, particularly on women and those with caring responsibilities	DoR and Faculty EDI lead	From Yr 1	Annual review (TT) by Research Committee of new research initiatives and success rates – reported to Faculty Board	New initiatives have demonstrated proportional uptake by women and women have equal success rate

	Faculty research environment	1.3.2 Develop cross-sub-faculty research opportunities in response to requests by women in annual research return for initiatives to bring colleagues together who work on different languages/geographical areas	DoR/Faculty EDI lead	End of Yr 1 (2024-25)	Pilot scheme for 2 years and collect annual reports on activity and its benefits in order to evaluate benefits (outputs, new collaborations, development of new methods)	Review reports in Y1 and Y2 at Research Committee to identify benefits achieved and decide whether to continue
		1.3.3 Review timing of research seminars and adjust as advised	FBC/DoR/EDI lead	End of HT25	Confirmed review and decisions made to be reported to FB by end of HT25.	More women consider the Faculty takes caring responsibilities into account according to SES Baseline (2023): 43% (M: 58%) Target (2029): 58%
		1.3.4 Collaborate with the Humanities Division in developing criteria for new university-wide Academic Career and Rewards Framework, especially gendered effect of current focus on single-author monographs versus collaborative research	FBC	By Yr 5	Data on application and success rates by gender to be monitored. Start collecting data about how many years from PhD award that staff apply for RoD (including career breaks).	Female staff succeeding as frequently, and as early, in achieving RoD, as males Baseline/targets to be developed once data is available.
1.4	Improve the quality of data to monitor and review the effectiveness of EDI policies	1.4.1 Increase number of staff disclosing protected characteristics in central HR systems	HAF	By Yr 3	Staff communications to encourage filling out of information Induction packs to include importance of completing this data	To increase the % of staff records where individuals have updated their EDI data Baseline (2023) [% of unknown data]:

					Targeted data drive asking all new staff (Yr 1); then all current PS staff (Yr 2); then all postholders (Yr 3) to complete data collection on HR system	Disability: 28.2% Ethnicity: 25.2% Nationality: 25.2% Religion and Belief: 67.5% Sexual Orientation: 66.9% Legal Sex: 0% [i.e. data complete] Target (2029): 80% completion across all categories
		1.4.2 Review data on (University run) recruitment processes in collaboration with the Humanities Division/University HR data team	HAF/Divisional EDI project co-ordinator	By Yr 5	Yearly reports for division on trends in recruitment by gender	Equal success rate of women and men throughout recruitment processes (who meets essential criteria, longlisting, shortlisting, appointment)
		1.4.3 Collaborate with the Humanities Division and the university in reviewing appointment process for Aps where recruitment is run by the College and data collection	FBC/Divisional EDI Officer	By Yr 3	Revised guidance in the Divisional manual Accurate and complete data	[Note: Baseline data unavailable due to previous data issues, but will be available from 24/25 onwards]

KP2. Addressing barriers to progression and the pipe-line						
AP	Objective	Planned action	Owner	Timeline	Outputs	Measure of success
2.1	Review and address gender awarding gaps at undergraduate level	2.1.1 data collection of AG by language/SF; comparison language / content; closed book (papers IV,V) versus open-book (papers VI-XI); timed assessment (papers IV-XI) versus coursework/dissertation (papers XII,XIV); tracking of AG gap from First Public Exam (FPE) to final exam (FHS)	FBC in collaboration with DUS	End of Yr 1 (2024-25)	Clear data and annual monitoring/reporting of this data	Decrease gender awarding gap in FHS (1 st /2:1) Baseline (2023): 1 st : Female 26% (M: 50%) 2.1: Female 71% (M: 50%) Target (2029):

		2.1.2 evaluation, discussion and implementation of assessment changes to reduce the awarding gap, including a reduction in the number of assessments and an increase in the range of available assessment modes	FBC/DUS	End of Yr 3 (2026-27)	Evidence backed-changes in assessment	Equal % of men and women achieving 1 st class
2.2	Strengthen the academic pipeline of women progressing into Research	2.2.1 information sessions targeting female PGRs on ECR opportunities, and encouragement of female PGRs to apply for research positions	DGS	Yr 1 (2024-25)	Information sessions	Improved proportion of women progressing from PGR to Researcher
		2.2.2 Sending information about research opportunities to PGRs with explicit encouragement that women should consider applying	FBC/HAF	From Yr 1	Flagging that women should consider applying on research opportunity circulations	Baseline (2023): Researcher (F) 30% Target (2029): Researcher (F) 40%
		2.2.3 Targeted advertising of research opportunities in Women's academic associations	FBC/HAF	From Yr 1		
2.3	Improve support for women ECRs, identifying barriers to career progression and mitigating these	2.3.1 Induction sessions for new starters	FBC/HAF	Yr 1 (2024-25)	Records of induction participation	Increase in new staff reporting that they were offered an induction Baseline (2023): 55% Target (2029): 100%
		2.3.2 ECR handbook	HAF/DoR	Yr 1 (2024-25)	Handbook/guidance available	ECRs take up 10 days of training (faculty/division) as per concordat with all genders participating to the same degree

		2.3.3 Annual workshop on career options with the participation of senior female colleagues	FBC/DoR	Yr 1 (2024-25)	Record of workshops run	
		2.3.4 Guidance for mentors, including on the additional barriers faced by those with caring responsibilities	FBC/DoR	Yr 1 (2024-25)	Evidence of training/guidelines	Baseline data to be developed (end of yr conf of mentoring arrangement)
		2.3.5 Exit questionnaire for (Faculty employed and – where possible - college only) staff (NB: Likely to be ECRs)	HAF	Yr 1 (2024-25)	Data available and reported annually to Research Committee	Completed exit questionnaires for Faculty employed staff: 2025: 60% 2026: 80% 2029: 90% For college only staff: 2025: 30% 2029: 70% Baseline data to be established by end of 24/25 (question in exit questionnaire)
		2.3.6 Early meeting with mentor and ongoing monitoring of mentoring arrangements	HAF	Yr 1 (2024-25)	Faculty monitoring of mentoring arrangements	Baseline data to be established by end of 24/25 (end of yr conf of mentoring arrangement)

2.4	Improve distribution of Faculty workload, recognising the need for flexible work patterns at different career stages, and particularly for those with caring responsibilities	2.4.1 FB to review rota and how officer roles are publicised	FBC/HAF	Yr 1 (2024-25) End of Yr 5	Evidence of review/ongoing monitoring	Increase percentage of women academics, researchers, and language lecturers being able to strike the right balance between work and home life Baseline (2023): 28% (M: 46%) Target (2029): 42%
		2.4.2 Ensure that SF-run rotas/roles consider EDI and that the roles are inclusive	FBC/SF chairs	Yr 1 (2024-25)	Evidence of review/ongoing monitoring at FB Evidence of agreed arrangements/best practice	
		2.4.3 Work with Conference of Colleges on flexible working requests from APs	FBC/HAF/Humanities EDI Officer	Yr 5	Collaborate on paper to Conference of Colleges/Senior Tutors Committee/University Pay and Conditions review	
		2.4.4. Streamline administrative processes and examining duties that women report encroaching into research time	HAF	By Yr 3	Develop digital solution for Year Abroad Risk assessments and monitoring of YA students Reduced examining as part of UG reform process	
		2.4.5. Increase lead time for internal funding opportunities to minimum 8 weeks (excluding school holidays)	DoR	By Yr 3	8 week lead time for funding opportunities	

KP3. Improve career development for women in academic (including ECR, research and language lecturer roles) and professional roles						
AP	Objective	Planned action	Owner	Timeline	Outputs	Measure of success
3.1	Improve mentoring and career planning for women (particularly those after the IPO)	3.1.1 Encourage uptake of annual Career Conversations for APs beyond the IPO, using faculty and cross-faculty schemes	FBC/Research Culture Facilitator	From Yr 1	(Divisional/Faculty) Records of career conversations	Women academics report that they can develop and grow here
		3.1.2 EDI training for those who conduct research conversations, career conversations and PDR reviews	(Res Conv) DofR (Car Conv) Div Training Officer/Research Culture Facilitator (PDRs) HAF	From Yr 1 (2024-25)	Evidence of attendance at Faculty-run induction sessions or Divisionally run sessions	Baseline (2023): 60% (M: 44%) Target (2029): women 75%
		3.1.3 Mentoring on planning and support for RoD application	FBC	Yr 5	Female staff succeeding as frequently, and as early, in achieving RoD as males evidenced in data on women applying and achieving RoD	Staff Culture Survey (2023): Rate people progress not affected by gender (42% F agree compared to 59% M); Decisions about appointments & promotions made fairly (42%F agree; 59% M). Target (2029) F 60%
3.2	Improve opportunities for all staff to flourish within the University structures of posts	3.2.1 Advocate on career progression for Language Lecturers, the majority of whom are women	FBC	Yr 5	Change in university policy related to teaching-only posts	Increase in proportion of staff who report that they can develop and grow here
		3.2.2 Regularly review awards as part of the annual 'reward and recognition' scheme	FBC/HAF/Divisional EDI Officer	Yr 5	Annual review and reporting of 'reward and recognition' awards by gender at Divisional level	Baseline (2023): 57% Target (2029): 72%

3.3	Improve support for women in applications for external research grants	3.3.1 Proactive sharing of information on research funding opportunities with explicit encouragement for underrepresented groups; plus consideration for targeted encouragement	DoR/EDI lead	Yr 5	Annual improvement(s) in number of research grant applications submitted by women	More women academics report being supported to apply for grant funding as principal investigators Baseline (2023): 52% (M: 60%) Target (2029): 70% Baseline: Applications submitted by women (as PI or Co-I) in 2023-24. 13/22 applications (59%)
		3.3.2 Ensuring that the termly research sessions include examples of success by women and are appropriately representative; and that research seminars have appropriate gender balance	DoR/EDI lead	From Yr 1	Ongoing review and annual report (TT)	
		3.3.3 Highlighting of success stories on the website and in comms	DoR/EDI lead	From Yr 1	Ongoing review and annual report of faculty web-site news items	
3.4	Improve support for career development and progression for the PST	3.4.1 Include career development in team meetings	HAF	From Yr 1	Evidence of career development sessions/discussions	Increased proportion of women in professional services roles report that they have the opportunity to develop and grow in SES
		3.4.2 Ensure PDRs are completed annually	HAF	From Yr 1	Records of PDRs completed	Baseline (2023): 56% (overall: 58%, too few men to include) Target (2029): 71%
		3.4.3 Encourage transparency about working hours and model best practice	HAF	Yr 5		Increase proportion of women in professional services roles report that they are able to strike the balance between work and home life in SES

						<p>Baseline (2023): 33% (overall: 50%, too few men to include)</p> <p>Target (2029): 48%</p>
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KP4. Build an inclusive environment for staff and students						
AP	Objective	Planned action	Owner	Timeline	Outputs	Measure of success
4.1	Strengthen existing induction programmes for staff	4.1.1 In-person induction for all new staff	FBC/HAF	From Yr 1 Yr 5	Record of induction sessions	<p>Increase in the proportion of women reporting being offered an induction (SES, 2023: 40%, Males (70%); Target: 60%, 2029</p> <p>Increase the proportion of all staff reporting their induction was useful (67%, 2023) Target (2029): 80%</p>
		4.1.2 Update and disseminate handbooks	HAF	From Yr 1	Updated handbooks	
4.2	Improve communication about faculty ethos and expectations around EDI, and gender equality	4.2.1 Explicitly include EDI initiatives in inductions	EDI lead	From Yr 1	Updated induction sessions	<p>Increased feeling that department is committed to promoting EDI as reported in SES by all staff</p> <p>Baseline (2023): % of staff who think dept is committed to promoting EDI: 67%</p> <p>Target (2029): 79%</p>
		4.2.2 Update and improve the website, including a review of EDI issues around images and development of the EDI tab	HAF/EDI lead	Y2	Updated website	
		4.2.3 Develop EDI page on intranet site and populate with information about policies and tools	HAF/EDI lead	Y2	Updated intranet site	
4.3	Improve the diversity of course programmes and communicate these effectively	4.3.1 Annual diversity audit in each SF	SF chairs	From Yr 1	Report to FB	<p>Baseline (2023): 71% of SFs completing diversity audit</p> <p>Target (2029):</p>
		4.3.2 Improve visibility of diverse syllabus in student handbooks, reading lists and on the website, explicitly highlighting	FBC/EDI lead in collaboration	Yr 2	Diversity audits included on website	

		works (both academic and literary) by women studied as part of the course	with DUS/DGR			100% SFs to complete audit Baseline data to be established by end of 24/25 (annual student survey)
4.4	Embed EDI in the teaching practices of the Faculty	4.4.1 Create a forum for best practice in teaching, including language teaching	FBC/EDI lead	Yr 3, after the Schwarzman move	Participation from all SFs and different staff group	Baseline data to be established by end of 24/25 (annual student survey)
		4.4.2 Disseminate information about suitable tools for inclusive teaching from the Centre for Teaching and Learning	DUS/DGS/EDI lead	Yr 1	Evidence of information circulated	
		4.4.3 Review and disseminate information about initiatives in other Divisions (e.g. MPLS workshops)	DUS/DGS/EDI lead	Yr 2	Evidence of information circulated	
4.5	Mitigate the gendered impact of caring responsibilities	4.5.1 Raise awareness of the Returning Carers fund	HAF/Divisional HR	Yr 3	Evidence that all returning carers have been made aware of the fund and encouraged to apply	100% of returning carers to have been encouraged to apply
		4.5.2 Ongoing promotion/monitoring of the Faculty Research buy-out scheme (with explicit encouragement for under-represented groups)	FBC/DoR	From Yr 1	Monitoring on an annual basis	2024 Baseline, 3 applications all F, all successful. 2029 5 year average – proportional success rate
		4.5.3 Review of the timing of meetings as well as Seminars (e.g. FB meetings on Bank Holiday Mondays) and reduce overall number of meetings	FBC/HAF	Proposals by end of MT24 Yr 5	Rescheduled committee meetings	More women report that the Faculty takes caring responsibilities into account when scheduling meetings

						<p>Baseline (SES 2023): 50% ARL (45%F, 57%M); 45% PS (38% F).</p> <p>Target (2029): 60%</p>
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