University of
**Southern
Queensland**

SAGE Cygnet Award Application: Career Development

Institution: University of Southern Queensland
Date of Application: 30/06/2024
Contact for Application: Professor John Bell
Email: DVC.ResearchandInnovation@unisq.edu.au
Phone: (07) 3470 4124

Contents

Further actions   **35**

Appendices   **37**

Glossary

Abbreviation	Term
ASBA	Athena SWAN Bronze Award
CPO	Chief People Officer
DVC (AA)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs)
DVC (R&I)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)
ECAWDP	Early Career Academic Women's Development Program
ECR	Early career researcher
HDR	Higher degree by research
SAWDP	Senior Academic Women's Development Program
STEMM	Science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine
UniSQ	University of Southern Queensland

University of Southern Queensland: SAGE Cygnet #3

Barrier Type	Current Cygnet	Barrier
Institution-wide barrier		
Sub-group barrier	✓	Career development
Institution-wide/Sub-group barrier		
Institution-wide/Sub-group barrier		

A note on data

Some of the University's broader data collection systems currently collect gender for the categories 'F, M, and X'. As such, this Cygnet Award submission uses these data categories. Where no data has been collected from non-binary or other gender participants (due to participants not identifying a non-binary gender, or system limitations), X is omitted from the data. The terms 'women' and 'men' have primarily been used throughout the narrative rather than 'female' and 'male' in recognition of the gender spectrum, but 'F, M and X' is maintained in tables and graphs to ensure consistency with our systems and previous Cygnet submissions.

Key barrier

The University of Southern Queensland (UniSQ) identified career development as an area that required strengthening for academic women in both science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine (STEMM) and non-STEMM disciplines to support these cohorts to progress upwards in their careers. Evidence gathered for the Athena SWAN Bronze Award (ASBA) application (2017-2020) showed less than 50% of employees in both STEMM and non-STEMM were satisfied with career planning at UniSQ. Other evidence showed the gender balance of women to men in academic positions at UniSQ decreased as seniority increased in STEMM, and that men outnumbered women at the highest level in non-STEMM despite there being more women at other levels. While this imbalance is impacted by many variables, career development is one crucial area in which UniSQ is offering increased opportunities (and support to access them) to academic women to support their career progress.

Evidence of barrier

Academic staff distribution

Among academic staff across 2018-2020, women were typically most highly represented at levels A (annual average 55%) and B (57%) (Appendix 1). This number declined through levels C (48%) and D (45%), with the highest discrepancy at level E, where women made up an annual average 26% of academics.

STEMM staff were the highest contributors to this discrepancy; STEMM women outnumbered men at levels A (annual average 58%) and B (54%), but declined through levels C (42%), D (24%), and E (9%) (Appendix 1; Chart 1). This suggests level B is a critical career point for women in STEMM, after which the gap between women and men widens.

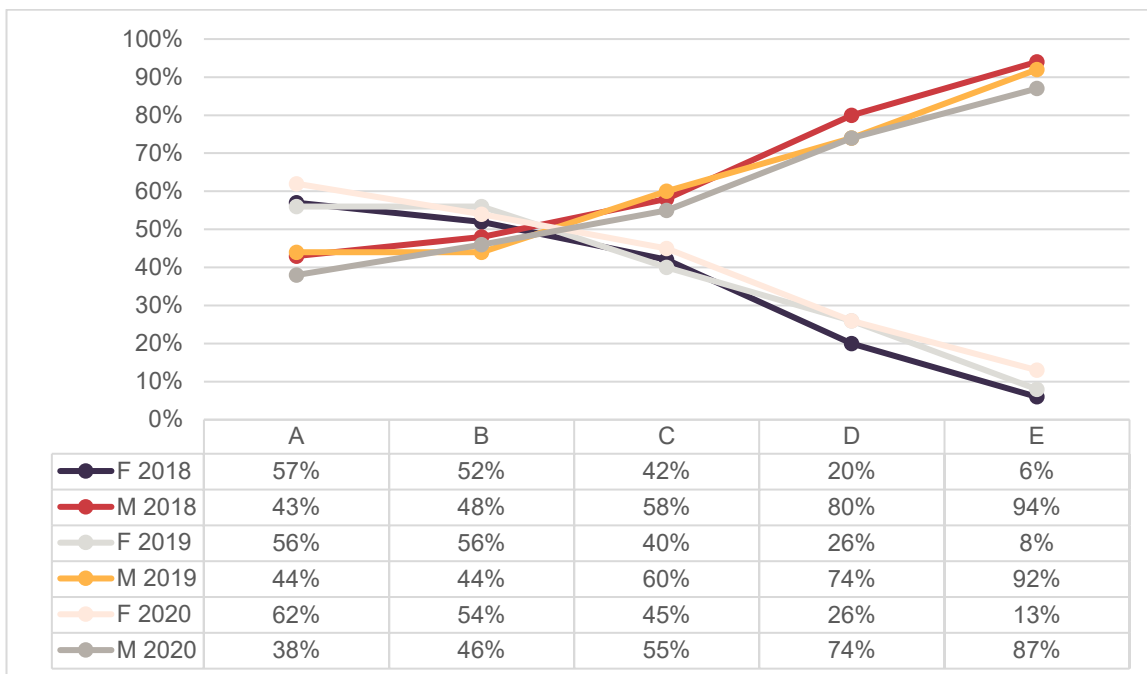|	A	B	C	D	E
F 2018	57%	52%	42%	20%	6%
M 2018	43%	48%	58%	80%	94%
F 2019	56%	56%	40%	26%	8%
M 2019	44%	44%	60%	74%	92%
F 2020	62%	54%	45%	26%	13%
M 2020	38%	46%	55%	74%	87%

Chart 1: Academic STEMM staff 2018-2020 by gender and level.

Comparatively, non-STEMM women outnumbered men (but still within a 60:40 gender ratio) at levels A through C, were overrepresented (annual average 66%) at level D, and had the lowest representation at

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level E (annual average 43%) (Appendix 1; Chart 2). This suggests non-STEMM women may be plateauing at level D and require more support to progress to level E.
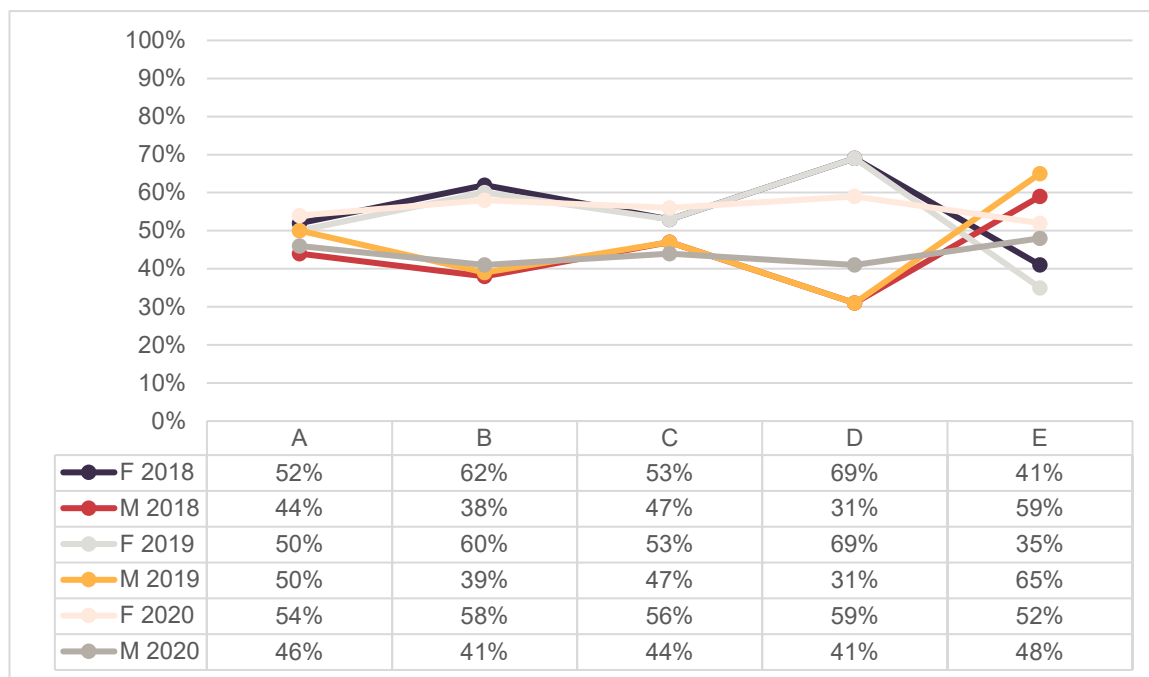

	A	B	C	D	E
F 2018	52%	62%	53%	69%	41%
M 2018	44%	38%	47%	31%	59%
F 2019	50%	60%	53%	69%	35%
M 2019	50%	39%	47%	31%	65%
F 2020	54%	58%	56%	59%	52%
M 2020	46%	41%	44%	41%	48%

Chart 2: Non-STEMM academic staff 2018-2020 by gender and level.

Academic promotion rates

Among STEMM academics across 2018-2020, promotion application rates (as a percentage of same gender at same level) and success rates (as a percentage of applications made by same gender at same level) show women applied for promotion to levels B and C less frequently than men and therefore may need more support to upskill and feel confident to apply (Appendix 2; Table 1; Chart 3; Chart 4). Comparatively, women applied for promotion to levels D and E at similar to or more frequent rates than men (though note this is as a percentage of a smaller pool of women at level).

For promotion to level B, women applied at lower rates (0% to men 15%) and were less successful (0% compared to men 100%; note no women applied in these years).
For promotion to level C, women applied at similar but slightly lower rates (8% compared to men 12%) but were slightly more successful (88% compared to men 79%).
For promotion to level D, women applied at the same rates as men (both 13%) but were more successful (80% compared to men 65%).
For promotion to level E, women applied at similar but slightly higher rates (19% compared to men 14%) and were similarly successful (83% compared to men 85%).

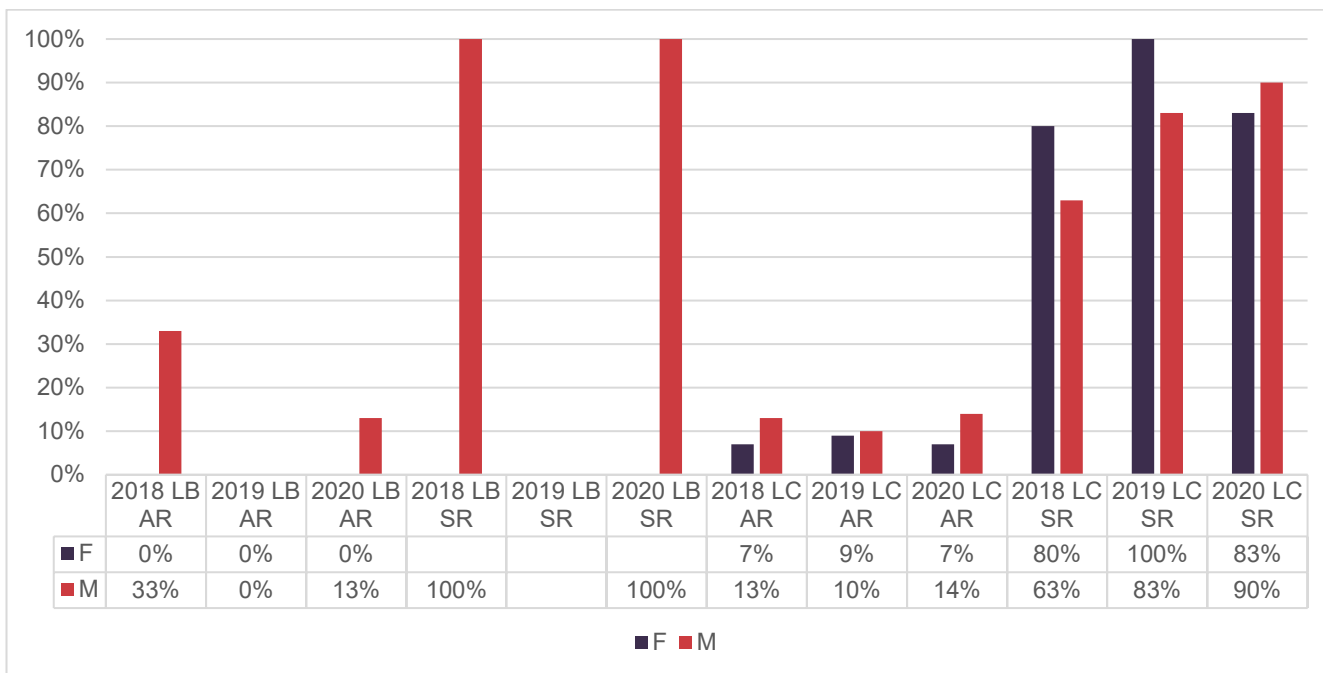Table 1: Annual average promotion application rates and success rates for STEMM academics 2018-2020.

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	2018 LB AR	2019 LB AR	2020 LB AR	2018 LB SR	2019 LB SR	2020 LB SR	2018 LC AR	2019 LC AR	2020 LC AR	2018 LC SR	2019 LC SR	2020 LC SR
F	0%	0%	0%				7%	9%	7%	80%	100%	83%
M	33%	0%	13%	100%		100%	13%	10%	14%	63%	83%	90%

F ■ M

Chart 3: Promotion application rates and success rates to Levels B and C for academic STEMM employees 2018-2020.

Note: AR = Application rate. SR = Success rate. LB = Level B. LC = Level C.

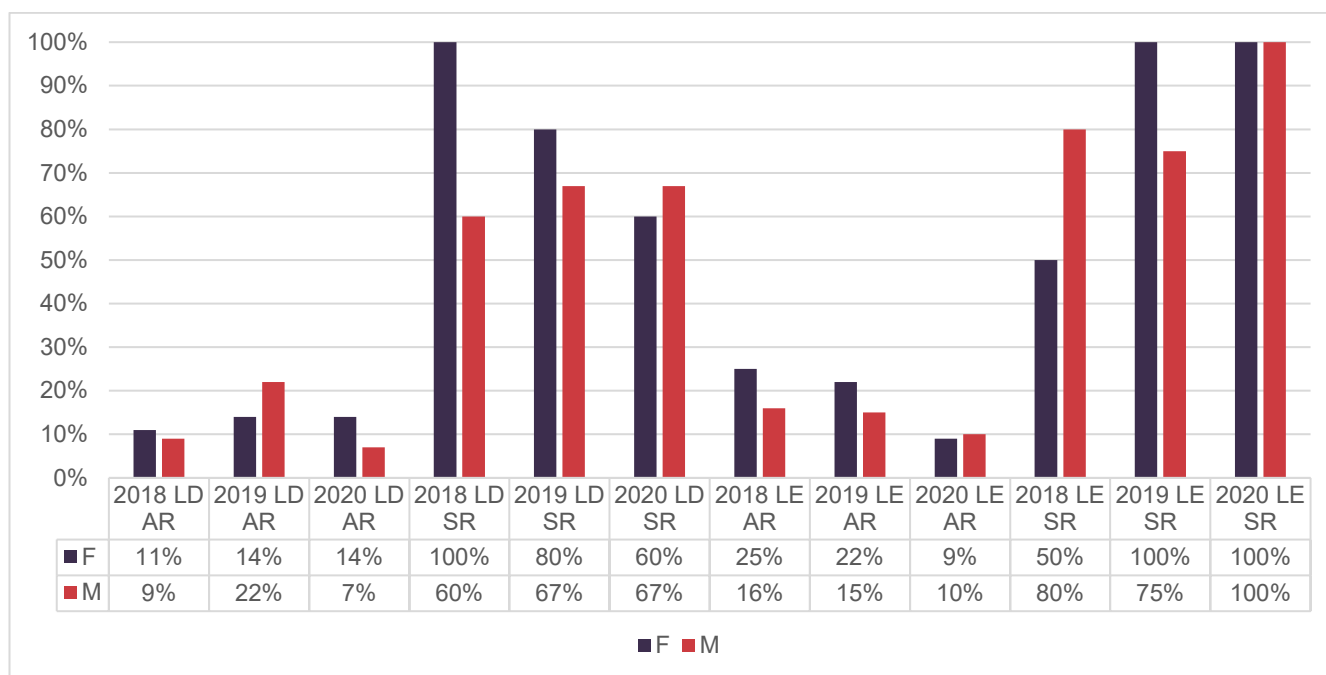|	2018 LD AR	2019 LD AR	2020 LD AR	2018 LD SR	2019 LD SR	2020 LD SR	2018 LE AR	2019 LE AR	2020 LE AR	2018 LE SR	2019 LE SR	2020 LE SR
F	11%	14%	14%	100%	80%	60%	25%	22%	9%	50%	100%	100%
M	9%	22%	7%	60%	67%	67%	16%	15%	10%	80%	75%	100%

F ■ M

Chart 4: Promotion application rates and success rates to Levels D and E for academic STEMM employees 2018-2020.

Note: AR = Application rate. SR = Success rate. LD = Level D. LE = Level E.

Contrastingly, promotion application and success rates for non-STEMM academics 2018-2020 indicate women apply at similar rates and are more successful than men at the lower levels, but apply less frequently to levels D and E and have similar success rates to men (Appendix 2; Table 2; Chart 5; Chart

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6). This suggests non-STEMM women may require more career development support at the senior levels.

For promotion to level B, women applied at similar but slightly higher rates (15% compared to men 12%) and were more successful (83% compared to men 67%).
For promotion to level C, women applied at similar but slightly lower rates (13% compared to men 16%) but were more successful (53% compared to men 37%).
For promotion to level D, women applied at lower rates (9% compared to men 15%) and had similar but slightly lower success rates (80% compared to men 83%).
For promotion to level E, women applied at lower rates (17% compared to men 25%) and were similarly successful (54% compared to men 50%).

Table 2: Annual average promotion application rates and success rates for non-STEMM academics 2018-2020.

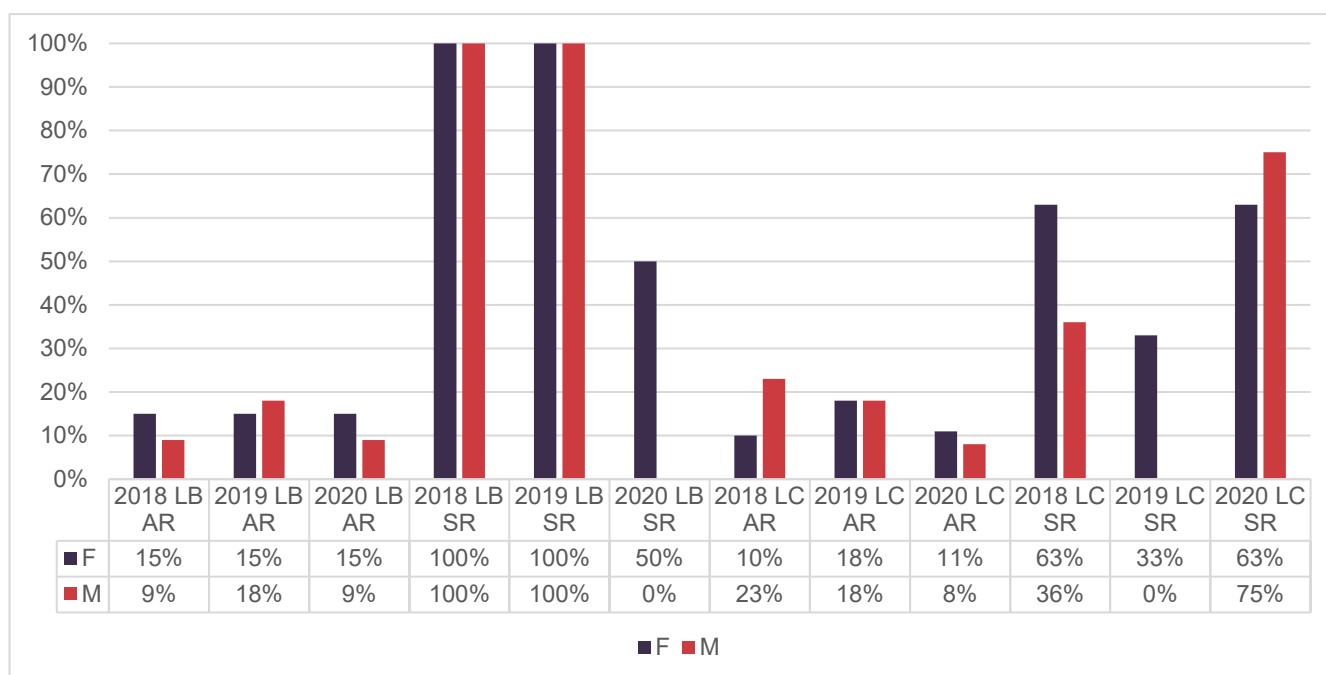|	2018 LB AR	2019 LB AR	2020 LB AR	2018 LB SR	2019 LB SR	2020 LB SR	2018 LC AR	2019 LC AR	2020 LC AR	2018 LC SR	2019 LC SR	2020 LC SR
F	15%	15%	15%	100%	100%	50%	10%	18%	11%	63%	33%	63%
M	9%	18%	9%	100%	100%	0%	23%	18%	8%	36%	0%	75%

Chart 5: Promotion application rates and success rates to Levels B and C for academic non-STEMM employees 2018-2020.

Note: AR = Application rate. SR = Success rate. LB = Level B. LC = Level C.

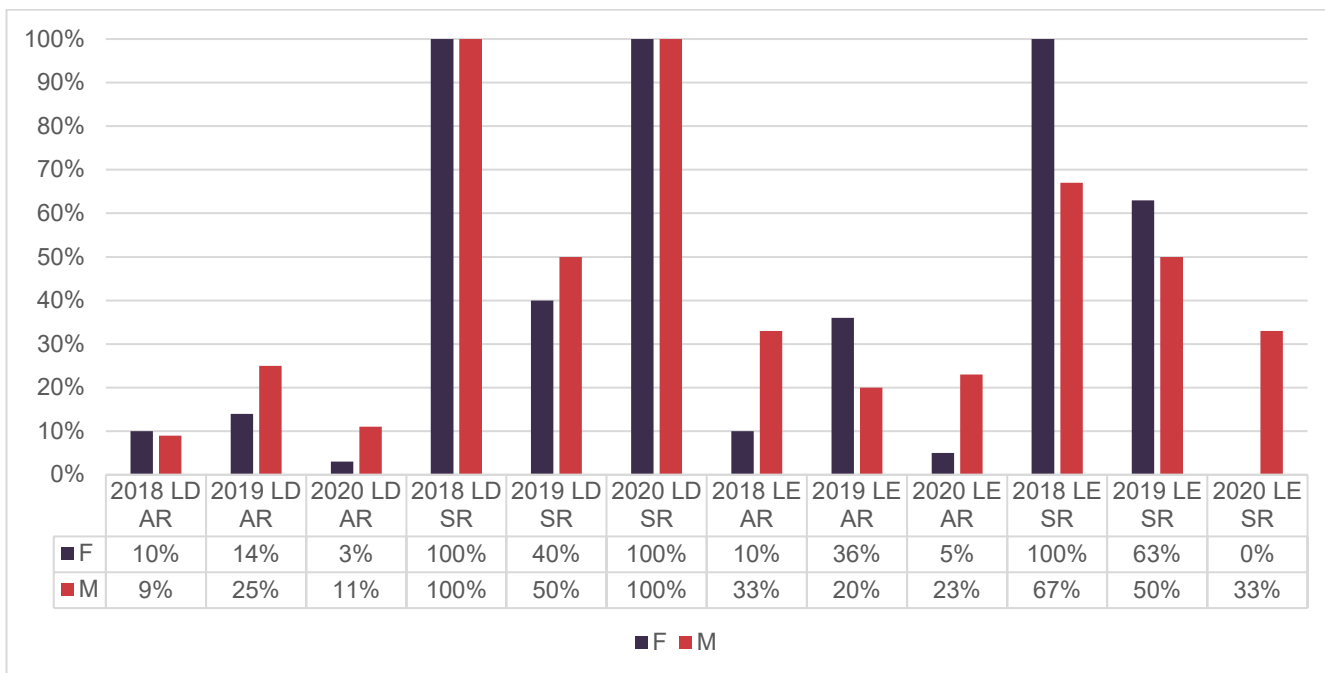|	2018 LD AR	2019 LD AR	2020 LD AR	2018 LD SR	2019 LD SR	2020 LD SR	2018 LE AR	2019 LE AR	2020 LE AR	2018 LE SR	2019 LE SR	2020 LE SR
F	10%	14%	3%	100%	40%	100%	10%	36%	5%	100%	63%	0%
M	9%	25%	11%	100%	50%	100%	33%	20%	23%	67%	50%	33%

Chart 6: Promotion application rates and success rates to Levels D and E for academic non-STEMM employees 2018-2020.

Note: AR = Application rate. SR = Success rate. LD = Level D. LE = Level E.

Staff satisfaction

Dissatisfaction with career development support is reflected in the ASBA self-assessment data, which identified that, in exit interviews, STEMM employees reported higher rates of dissatisfaction with career planning than non-STEMM employees. While feedback about training and development opportunities has historically been generally positive, academics want training to be more clearly aligned with academic needs. In 2018, only 45% of STEMM staff and 37% of non-STEMM staff agreed that enough time and effort was spent on career planning (Table 3). This was also reflected in focus groups, where employees said promotion plans were often not discussed and this was a common reason for not applying or reapplying for promotion.

2018 Voice Survey	**STEMM (n = 431)**		**Non-STEMM (n = 831)**
	F	**M**	
Agree that "Enough time and effort is spent on career planning"	46%	45%	37%

Table 3: Result from 2018 Employee Engagement Voice Survey (Voice Project) of academic and professional staff.

Note: Gender only provided for STEMM respondents due to this being the primary focus of the SAGE program in 2018 (and this being the request made of the third-party data processor).

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Progress (actions and outputs)

Academic development programs

Early-Career Researcher Program

To address the need for greater support at the lower academic levels, the Early Career Researcher (ECR) Program was developed in 2022. The program comprises in-person development activities and provision of a senior researcher as a mentor. Key program themes include career planning; research program, proposal and publication planning; impact and engagement; networking; higher degree by research (HDR) supervision; research leadership; and grant writing development, which reflect vital skills for successful academics (Table 4).

The program is open to ECRs from any discipline and applications are competitively panel-assessed. Participant eligibility considers achievement relative to opportunity, consistent with the Australian Research Council's Eligibility and Career Interruptions Statement, and one program position is specified for a woman in STEMM. Over 2022 and 2023, program participants comprised 62% women, including 38% women in STEMM (Table 5).

Workshop	Topic/s
2022 Program (22 participants including 8 women in STEMM and one SAGE nominee)	
July workshop	• Situating research nationally and internationally • Benchmarking your research – understanding research performance metrics specific to your discipline • How to be a well-rounded academic
August workshop	• Getting the most out of mentoring • Understanding and developing your research plan • Optimising your research plan - enabling strategies to achieve your research plan
September workshop	• Building a research team • Aligning your research plan with building your research team • Identifying and approaching collaborators and considering IP
October workshop	• Peer mentoring • Grant finance 101 • Managing risks and conflicts
ECR Program Retreat (November)	
2023 Program	
March workshop	• Getting to know each other, the Inaugural cohort and the Steering Committee • Situating research nationally and internationally • Mentoring
April workshop	• Benchmarking your research – understanding research performance metrics specific to your discipline • Types of research projects • Developing your research plan • Enabling strategies for optimising your research plan
May workshop	• Publication planning • Publication strategies • Media training
June workshop	• Finding research partners • Identifying and approaching collaborators and considering IP

		Building a research team
July workshop		• Multidisciplinary research panel • What to do now I've got the grant? • Top 5 tips for research project management • Seed grant expectations
August workshop		• Developing a program of research • Research projects – the things you didn't think about • HDR supervision
September workshop		• Pivoting your research and CRC opportunities • Categories of research funding • UniSQ budget expectations, costing model, budget items • Exploring tenders
October workshop		• University expectations & the well-rounded academic • Getting promoted • ECR grants • Recording impact and engagement • Career planning and academic CVs
ECR Program Retreat (November)		

Table 4: Early Career Researcher Program 2022-2023.

	2022				2023				Total HC	Total %
	F		**M**		**F**		**M**			
	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%		
STEMM	8	36%	7	32%	7	41%	4	24%	26	67%
Non-STEMM	5	23%	2	9%	4	24%	2	12%	13	33%
Total	13	59%	9	41%	11	65%	6	35%	39	100%

Table 5: Early Career Researcher Program participants 2022-2023.

Note: % = % of all program participants in same year.

Early Career Academic Women's Development Program

The Early Career Academic Women's Development Program (ECAWDP) was launched in 2023 to provide support at levels A and B in career development. The program is open to applications from all staff but targets women in STEMM and First Nations academics. In 2023, participants comprised majority level B women in STEMM (64%), though unfortunately no First Nations women applied (Table 6).

The program includes a strong focus on preparation for academic promotion and is conducted as workshops over the year. Key themes include career resilience; self-identity and understanding; the ability to think strategically and how to handle difficult career choices; work-life integration; networking/mentoring; and gender and the academic career.

	Academic level	HC	%
STEMM	Level A	1	5%
	Level B	14	64%
Non-STEMM	Level A	0	0%
	Level B	7	32%
	Total	22	100%

Table 6: Early Career Academic Women's Development Program participants 2023.

Senior Academic Women's Development Program

The Senior Academic Women's Development Program (SAWDP) has been running since 2019 and supports women to foster career advancement within the next three years. The program is based on individualised needs and so may include funding for skill development workshops, senior mentorship, strategic research support and more (Table 7).

The program is open to women at Level D in any discipline, and to offer increased support for diverse cohorts, to women at Levels C and D in STEMM disciplines, and at any level who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. 39 women have participated in the program to date, including one First Nations woman (Table 8).

Program year	Examples of funded activities undertaken
2019	• External executive coaching • Managing Yourself and Leading Others Harvard University Program • International Wine Law Association Conference • TEQSA Conference • ACEA Conference • Professional edit of PhD thesis
2020	• External executive coaching • Ethos Envisage Coaching • Residential Company Directors Course
2021	• External executive coaching • Higher Education Women's Leadership Workshop • QLD Women in Leadership Workshop • Oxford Executive Leadership Program • ACEA Correctional Education and Training Conference • Fund research assistant to assist with data collection in order to present a paper at an international conference
2022	• External executive coaching • EDUCAUSE Digital Learning Leaders Institute Program • Oxford Executive Leadership Program
2023	• External executive coaching

Table 7: Senior Women's Academic Development Program activities 2019-2023.

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	Academic level	2019		2020		2021		2022		2023		Total HC	Total %
		HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%		
STEMM	Level C	2	33%	0	0%	2	25%	3	30%	4	40%	11	28%
	Level D	0	0%	2	40%	3	38%	3	30%	3	30%	11	28%
Non-STEMM	Level A	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1*	10%	1*	3%
	Level C	2	33%	2	40%	0	0%	2	20%	0	0%	6	15%
	Level D	2	33%	1	20%	3	38%	2	20%	2	20%	10	26%
	Total	6	100%	5	100%	8	100%	10	100%	10	100%	39	100%

Table 8: Senior Academic Women's Development Program participants 2021-2023.

Note: % = % of all program participants in same year. * HC includes one First Nations employee.

Targeted initiatives

The University offers a range of supports to address specific development areas, outlined below.

Mentorship

UniSQ provides several formalised avenues for mentorship; one is a catalogue of academic promotion mentors, which identifies previous successfully promoted academics who can be contacted for guidance. The catalogue is updated following annual promotion rounds, though information about how staff engage with these mentors is not recorded.

Another avenue is the Mentorship Program, which is participant-driven and open to all staff. The program operates as an online hub listing mentors and resources to guide the development of a productive mentor/mentee relationship, and in-person training is available to mentors. The program was developed to supplement the informal, localised mentoring that reportedly occurs across the University. Utilisation of the program is not tracked and so it's unclear exactly how this program impacts staff, which will be a focus of future evaluation.

UniSQ also offers an annual Research Mentoring Program, which pairs mentees with mentors according to their career and research goals. This program has been active since 2021 and includes mentors from diverse academic backgrounds (predominately Health & Medical Sciences, Nursing & Midwifery, and Business fields). The program has had majority uptake from academic women (70%), including nine women in STEMM (14%) (Table 9).

		2021				2022				2023				Total HC	Total %
		F		M		F		M		F		M			
		HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%		
Mentor	STEMM	0	0%	1	3%	1	6%	1	6%	0	0%	0	0%	3	5%
	Non-STEMM	6	19%	7	22%	5	31%	1	6%	2	13%	6	38%	27	42%
Mentee	STEMM	3	9%	0	0%	3	19%	1	6%	2	13%	0	0%	9	14%
	Non-STEMM	14	44%	1	3%	4	25%	0	0%	5	31%	1	6%	25	39%

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	Total	23	72%	9	28%	13	81%	3	19%	9	56%	7	44%	64	100%

Table 9: Research Mentoring Program participants 2021-2023.

Note: HC = Head count. % = % of all program participants in same year.

Grant-Writing Support

Data collected over the ASBA period indicated that women had historically low rates of success in acquiring category 1 grants. To combat this, from 2021 UniSQ has provided dedicated budget for the external review of five category 1 funding applications by women in STEMM annually. The University promotes this during grant application rounds and earmarks STEMM women for external review based on the criteria of strong or emerging publication/external income track record and competitive application/proposal. Between 2021 and 2023, 10 women received application reviews, due to low applications for category 1 grants (Table 10). 20% of these grant applications were successful, which is above the national average success rate. UniSQ is currently working with the vendor on the capability of our research management information systems to improve data capture of the gender ratio of category 1 grant applications and successes.

Category 1 Grant Application	External Grant Round	Awarded Grant Y/N
Applicant 1	ARC Linkage Project LP22	Y
Applicant 2	ARC DECRA23	N
Applicant 3	ARC Industry Fellow IE23	Y
Applicant 4	ARC DECRA24	N
Applicant 5	ARC DECRA23	N
Applicant 6	ARC DECRA23	N
Applicant 7	FT22	N
Applicant 8	ARC DECRA24	N
Applicant 9	DE25	TBC (grant round not yet finalised)
Applicant 10	FT24	TBC (grant round not yet finalised)

Table 10: External reviews of category 1 women in STEMM grant applications 2021-2023.

HEA@UniSQ Program

The HEA@UniSQ program supports participants to develop applications for fellowship with Advance Higher Education. Fellows are recognised as experts in their field and join a community of practice to leverage global teaching expertise. In 2022, HEA@UniSQ made ten positions available to a women in STEMM cohort. This initiative supports the teaching function of academic women by providing recognition and engagement with teaching practice and scholarship, to in turn support promotion applications. Seven women in STEMM participated over 2023, with six successfully becoming Fellows (one extended their application) (Image Grid 1).
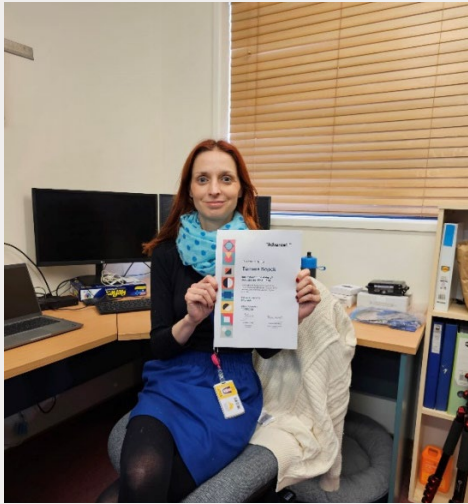
Dr Tamara Sopek, Vice Chancellor's Postdoctoral Research Fellow for Women in STEMM

Dr Meg Edwards, Lecturer (Wildlife Science)

Dr Sachithra Lokuge, Lecturer (Information Systems)

Dr Aastha Malhotra, Senior Lecturer (Social Work and Human Services)

Dr Jenny Spence, Lecturer (Pathways)

Image Grid 1: Successful Higher Education Academy fellowship recipients (women in STEMM cohort).

Awareness and visibility

To increase staff awareness of the available programs and resources to support career progression, the SAGE program team supplements the communications of other work areas by disseminating quarterly communications about available supports to women in STEMM. Information is also shared via the SAGE program's internal site; University-wide SAGE updates; the SAGE team's involvement in various Committees and working groups; and via regular Women in STEMM Sessions, where participants hear from senior leaders and learn about important topics in academic career development.

Outcomes

Academic staff distribution

Among academic staff 2018-2020, the highest ratios of women were at levels A (average 58%) and B (54%), with less representation at levels C (42%), D (24%), and E (9%) (Appendix 3; Chart 7; Chart X).

Comparing 2018-2020 to 2021-2023, STEMM academics had similar gender ratios across levels A to C, but women's representation at level D increased from an average of 24% across 2018-2021 to an average of 32% across 2021-2023, and at level E from an average of 9% to an average of 21% (Appendix 3; Chart 7; Chart 8).

	A	B	C	D	E
F 2021	63%	53%	43%	30%	18%
M 2021	38%	47%	57%	70%	82%
F 2022	64%	57%	39%	31%	22%
M 2022	36%	43%	61%	69%	78%
F 2023	52%	57%	38%	34%	23%
M 2023	48%	43%	62%	66%	77%
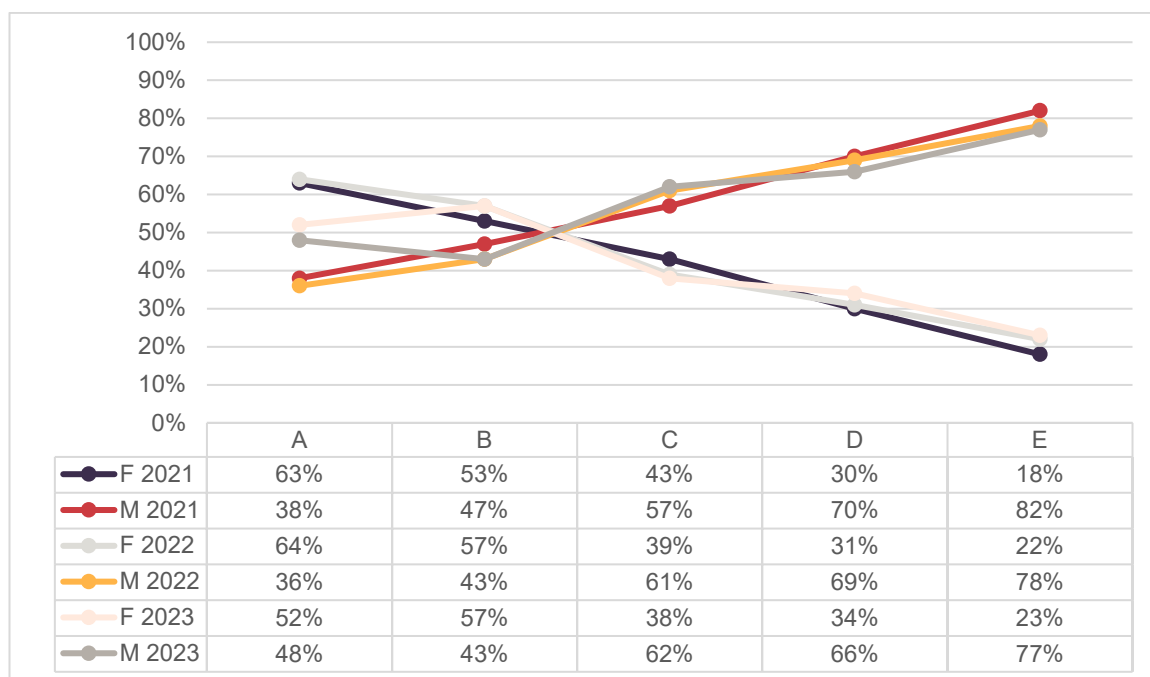
Chart 7: Academic STEMM staff 2021-2023 by gender and level.

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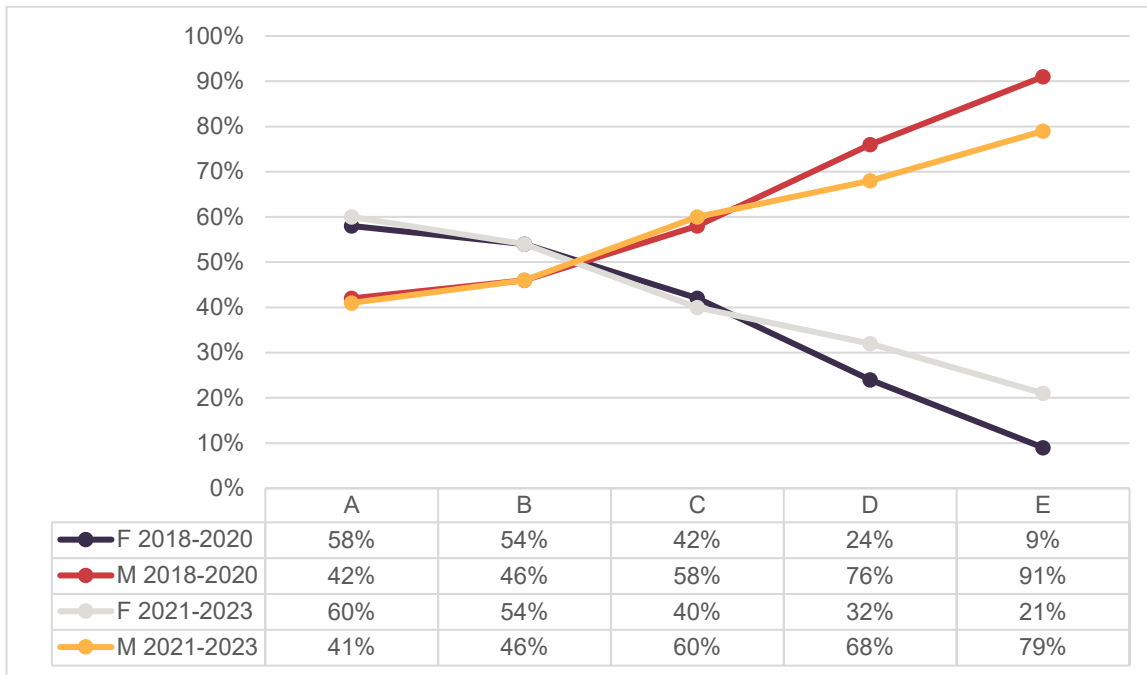|	A	B	C	D	E
F 2018-2020	58%	54%	42%	24%	9%
M 2018-2020	42%	46%	58%	76%	91%
F 2021-2023	60%	54%	40%	32%	21%
M 2021-2023	41%	46%	60%	68%	79%

Chart 8: Academic STEMM staff, comparing averages across 2018-2020 to averages across 2021-2023.

Goal for STEMM academics: Improve gender parity and either achieve or maintain within a 60:40 gender balance ratio at each level.

Goal not achieved, but progress towards goal made.

Outcomes (2018-2020 compared to 2021-2023):

- Women's representation at level A increased 2% and maintained within a 60:40 gender ratio
- Women's representation at level B did not change and maintained within a 60:40 ratio
- Women's representation at level C decreased 2% and maintained within a 60:40 gender ratio
- Women's representation at level D increased 8% though is still short of a 60:40 ratio
- Women's representation at level E increased 12% though is still short of a 60:40 ratio

Similarly to 2018-2020, in 2021-2023 non-STEMM academic women outnumbered men within a 60:40 gender balance at nearly every level (Appendix 3; Chart 9; Chart 10). At level D, women's representation decreased from an average of 66% over 2018-2021 to a more equal average of 54% over 2021-2023, and at level E increased from an average of 43% to an average of 56%.
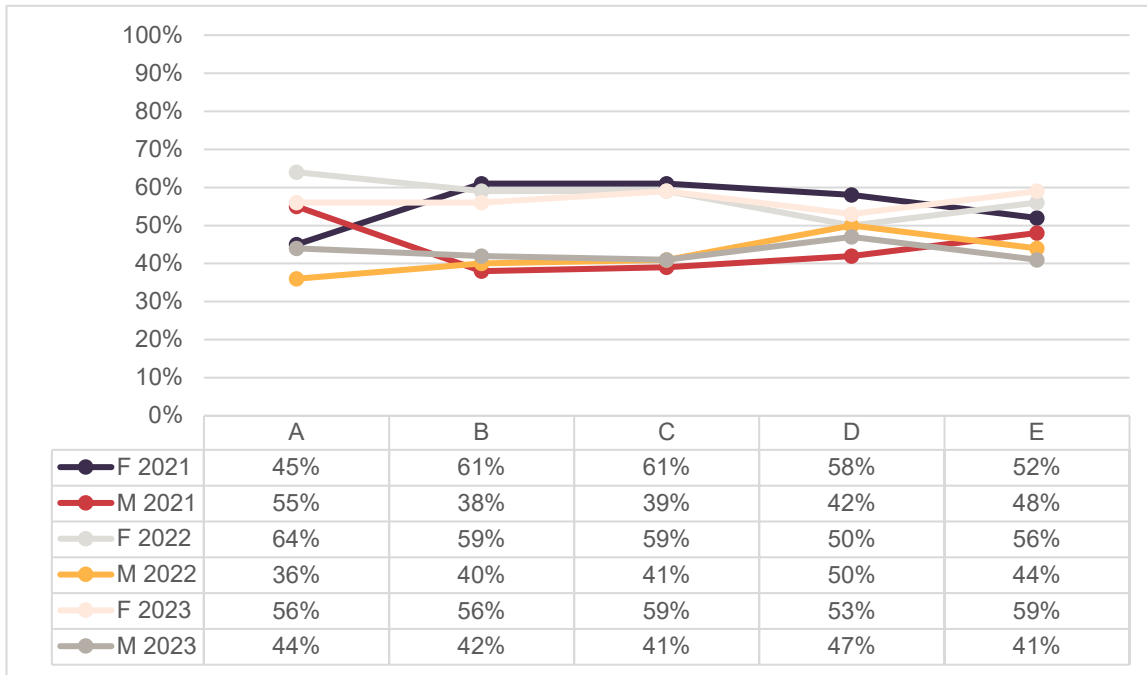
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	A	B	C	D	E
F 2021	45%	61%	61%	58%	52%
M 2021	55%	38%	39%	42%	48%
F 2022	64%	59%	59%	50%	56%
M 2022	36%	40%	41%	50%	44%
F 2023	56%	56%	59%	53%	59%
M 2023	44%	42%	41%	47%	41%

Chart 9: Academic non-STEMM staff 2021-2023 by gender and level.

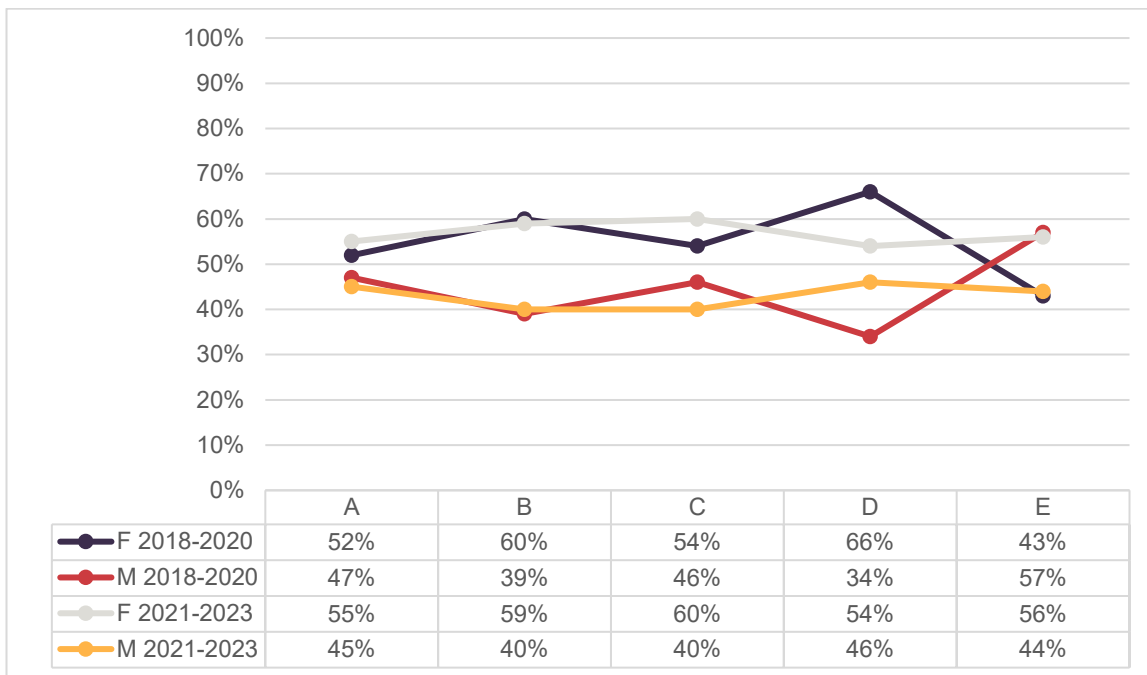|	A	B	C	D	E
F 2018-2020	52%	60%	54%	66%	43%
M 2018-2020	47%	39%	46%	34%	57%
F 2021-2023	55%	59%	60%	54%	56%
M 2021-2023	45%	40%	40%	46%	44%

Chart 10: Academic non-STEMM staff, comparing averages across 2018-2020 to averages across 2021-2023.

Goal for non-STEMM academics: Improve gender parity and either achieve or maintain within a 60:40 gender balance ratio at each level.	**Outcomes (2018-2020 compared to 2021-2023):** • Women's representation at level A increased 3% and maintained within a 60:40 ratio • Women's representation at level B decreased 1% and maintained within a 60:40 ratio

	Women's representation at level C increased 6% and maintained within a 60:40 ratio
Goal achieved.	• Women's representation at level C increased 6% and maintained within a 60:40 ratio • Women's representation at level D decreased 12% and entered into within a 60:40 ratio • Women's representation at level E increased 13% and maintained within a 60:40 ratio

Comparing 2018-2020 to 2021-2024, overall gender parity slightly decreased across levels A-C for both STEMM and non-STEMM academics, but increased at levels D and E, where women are typically most underrepresented (Table 11).

		F:M ratio		Outcome (towards gender parity)
		2018-2020	2021-2023	
STEMM	**Levels A-C**	1.00	1.03	↓
	Levels D & E	0.20	0.37	↑
Non-STEMM	**Levels A-C**	1.35	1.44	↓
	Levels D & E	1.32	1.23	↑

Table 11: Gender ratio (as decimal) of academic staff, comparing 2018-2020 to 2021-2023.

Academic promotion rates

Among STEMM academics, women's rates improved for promotion applications to level B, when in 2018-2020 women made no applications and in 2021-2023 had slightly higher application rates than men (Appendix 4; Table 12; Chart 9; Chart 10). However, over 2021-2023, women's application rates to levels C and higher decreased compared to their 2018-2021 rates, while men's rates increased. Application success rates over 2021-2023 decreased for both women and men to level C, increased for both women and men to level D, and increased for women but decreased for men to level E, compared to their respective 2018-2020 rates.

The reasons for STEMM women's reduced application rates across 2021-2023 are unclear and require further interrogation, but suggest those at level B and higher require more support to upskill and feel confident to apply than in the promotion process itself, where they typically have similar or higher success rates than men.

For promotion to level B: • Women's application rates increased from an average of 0% across 2018-2020 to 18% across 2021-2023 and were more successful than previously (0% to 90% respectively). • Men's application rates decreased slightly from an average of 15% across 2018-2020 to 13% across 2021-2023 and were as successful as previously (100% across both time periods).
For promotion to level C:

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- Women's application rates decreased slightly from an average of 8% across 2018-2020 to 7% across 2021-2023 and were less successful than previously (88% to 62% respectively).
- Men's application rates increased from an average of 12% across 2018-2020 to 18% across 2021-2023 but were less successful than previously (79% to 61% respectively).

For promotion to level D:

- Women's application rates decreased from an average of 13% across 2018-2020 to 8% across 2021-2023 but were more successful than previously (80% to 92% respectively).
- Men's application rates increased slightly from an average of 13% across 2018-2020 to 15% across 2021-2023 and were more successful than previously (65% to 79% respectively).

For promotion to level E:

- Women's application rates decreased from an average of 19% across 2018-2020 to 16% across 2021-2023 but were more successful than previously (83% to 100% respectively).
- Men's application rates increased slightly from an average of 14% across 2018-2020 to 15% across 2021-2023 but were less successful than previously (85% to 65% respectively).

Table 12: Annual average promotion application rates and success rates for STEMM academics 2021-2023

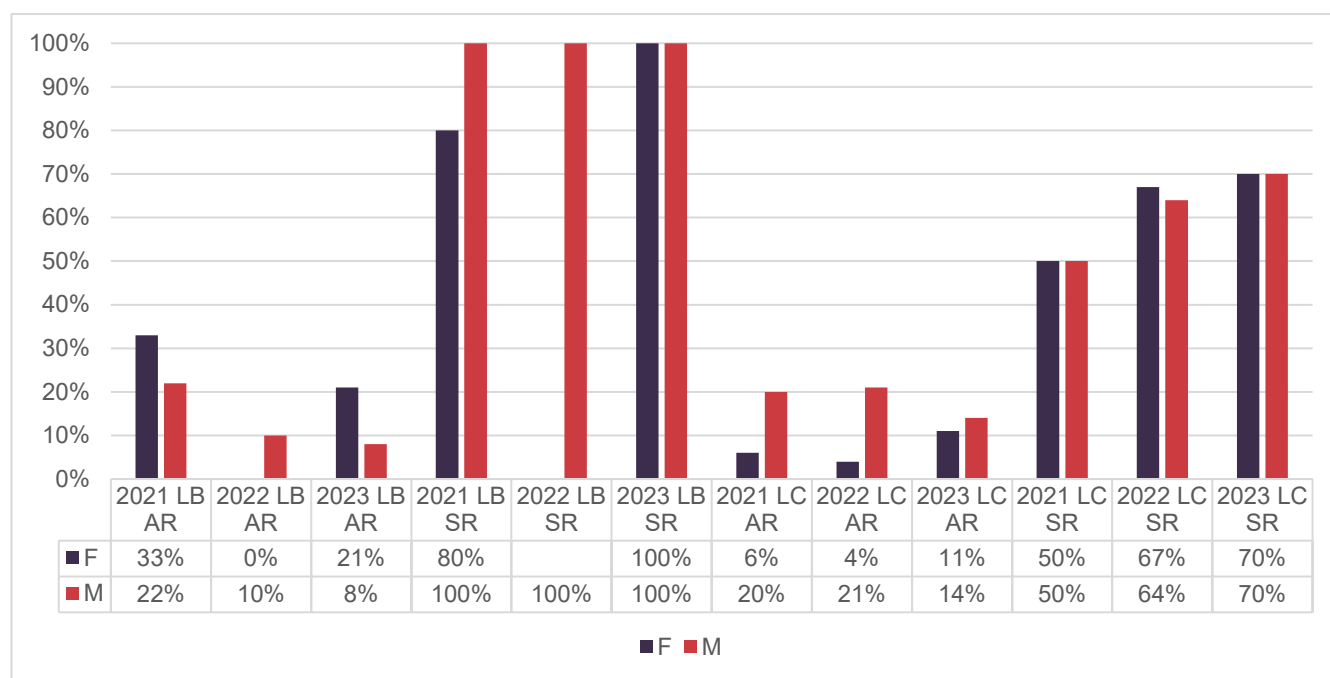|	2021 LB AR	2022 LB AR	2023 LB AR	2021 LB SR	2022 LB SR	2023 LB SR	2021 LC AR	2022 LC AR	2023 LC AR	2021 LC SR	2022 LC SR	2023 LC SR
F	33%	0%	21%	80%		100%	6%	4%	11%	50%	67%	70%
M	22%	10%	8%	100%	100%	100%	20%	21%	14%	50%	64%	70%

Chart 9: Promotion application rates and success rates to Levels B and C for academic STEMM employees 2021-2023.

Note: AR = Application rate. SR = Success rate. LB = Level B. LC = Level C.
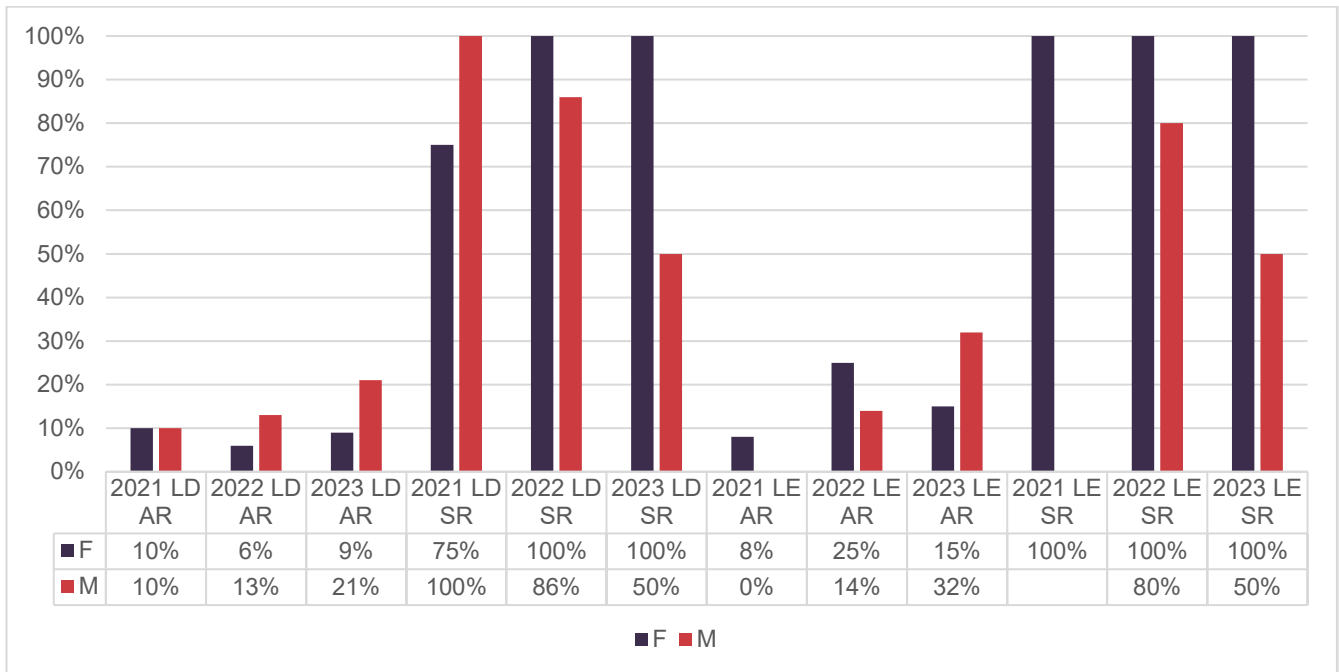
	2021 LD AR	2022 LD AR	2023 LD AR	2021 LD SR	2022 LD SR	2023 LD SR	2021 LE AR	2022 LE AR	2023 LE AR	2021 LE SR	2022 LE SR	2023 LE SR
F	10%	6%	9%	75%	100%	100%	8%	25%	15%	100%	100%	100%
M	10%	13%	21%	100%	86%	50%	0%	14%	32%		80%	50%

Chart 10: Promotion application rates and success rates to Levels D and E for academic STEMM employees 2021-2023.

Note: AR = Application rate. SR = Success rate. LD = Level D. LE = Level E.

Among non-STEMM academics, promotion application rates over 2021-2023 increased for women to levels B and D, but decreased slightly to levels C and E, compared to 2018-2020 rates; comparatively, men's rates increased to all levels except E (Appendix 4; Table 13; Chart 11; Chart 12). Women's promotion success rates 2021-2023 compared to 2018-2020 were higher to all levels except D, while men's success rates did not change to level B, increased to levels C and E, and decreased to level D. The improvements for women are promising, but the lack of clear patterns in the data indicate that further investigation is required to better understand the supports required to improve women's application rates and outcomes at all academic levels.

For promotion to level B:

- Women's application rates increased from an average of 15% across 2018-2020 to 18% across 2021-2023 and were slightly more successful than previously (83% to 84% respectively).
- Men's application rates increased from an average of 12% across 2018-2020 to 31% across 2021-2023 and were as successful as previously (67% across both time periods).

For promotion to level C:

- Women's application rates decreased slightly from an average of 13% across 2018-2020 to 12% across 2021-2023 but were more successful than previously (53% to 72% respectively).
- Men's application rates increased from an average of 16% across 2018-2020 to 25% across 2021-2023 and were more successful than previously (37% to 72% respectively).

For promotion to level D:

- Women's application rates increased from an average of 9% across 2018-2020 to 14% across 2021-2023 but were less successful than previously (80% to 65% respectively).
- Men's application rates increased from an average of 15% across 2018-2020 to 17% across 2021-2023 but were less successful than previously (83% to 80% respectively).

For promotion to level E:

- Women's application rates decreased from an average of 17% across 2018-2020 to 15% across 2021-2023 but were more successful than previously (54% to 84% respectively).
- Men's application rates decreased from an average of 25% across 2018-2020 to 14% across 2021-2023 but were more successful than previously (50% to 100% respectively).

Table 13: Annual average promotion application rates and success rates for non-STEMM academics 2021-2023

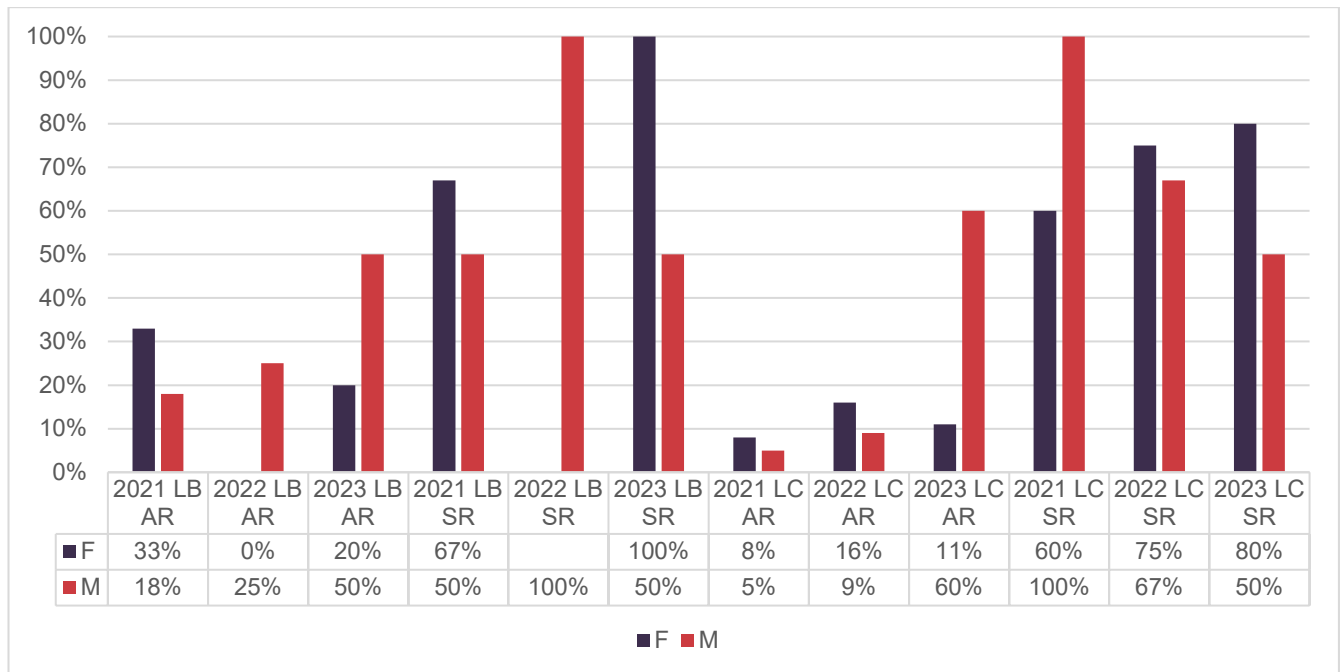|	2021 LB AR	2022 LB AR	2023 LB AR	2021 LB SR	2022 LB SR	2023 LB SR	2021 LC AR	2022 LC AR	2023 LC AR	2021 LC SR	2022 LC SR	2023 LC SR
F	33%	0%	20%	67%		100%	8%	16%	11%	60%	75%	80%
M	18%	25%	50%	50%	100%	50%	5%	9%	60%	100%	67%	50%

Chart 11: Promotion application rates and success rates to Levels B and C for academic non-STEMM employees 2021-2023.

Note: AR = Application rate. SR = Success rate. LB = Level B. LC = Level C.
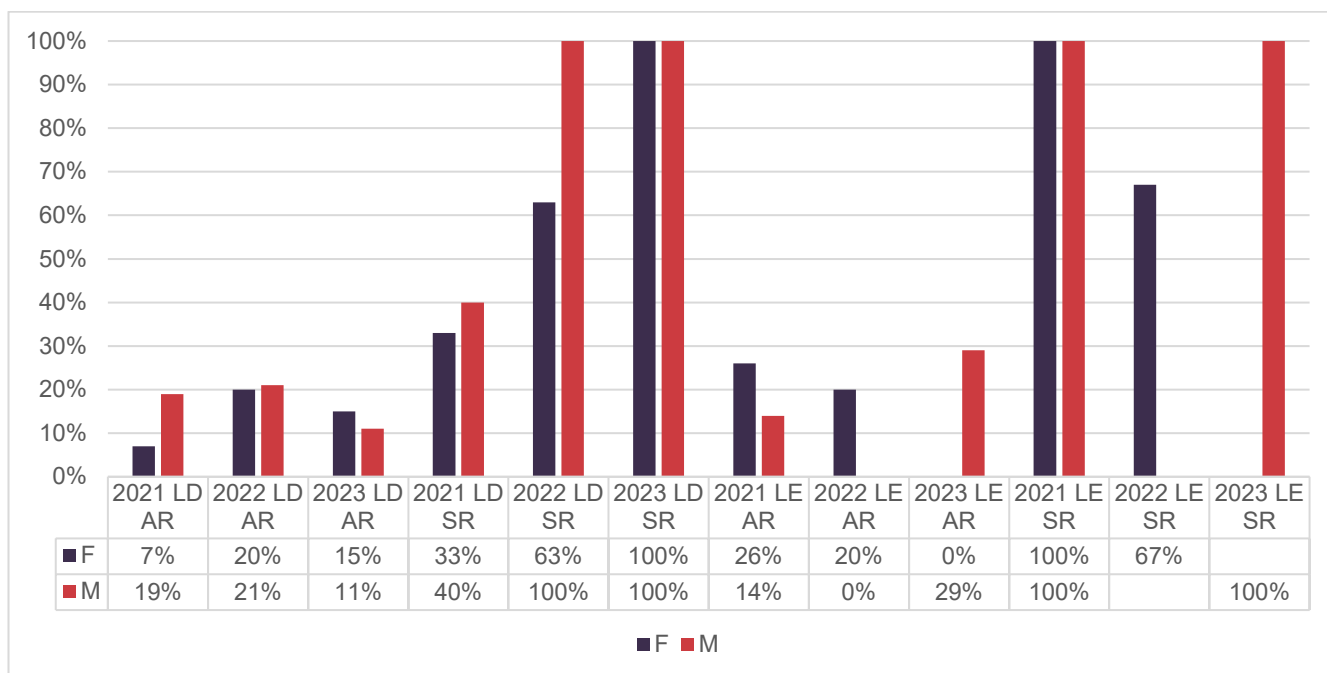
Chart 12: Promotion application rates and success rates to Levels D and E for academic non-STEMM employees 2021-2023.

Note: AR = Application rate. SR = Success rate. LD = Level D. LE = Level E.

Comparing 2018-2020 to 2021-2024, the gender parity of promotion applications and successes improved at nearly every level for STEMM staff. Though parity decreased at levels D and E, women still had higher success rates than men (Table 14). For non-STEMM staff over the same time periods, parity decreased for applications to B and C but increased for success rates, and parity increased for applications to D and E but decreased for success rates.

			F:M ratio		Outcome (towards gender parity)
			2018-2020	2021-2023	
STEMM	To levels B & C	Application rates	0.28	0.79	↑
		Success rates	0.60	0.76	↑
	To levels D & E	Application rates	1.20	0.81	↑
		Success rates	1.09	1.57	↓
Non-STEMM	To levels B & C	Application rates	0.99	0.53	↓
		Success rates	1.32	0.92	↑
	To levels D & E	Application rates	0.64	0.94	↑
		Success rates	1.01	0.83	↓

Table 14: Gender ratio (as decimal) of academic promotion applications and successes, comparing 2018-2020 to 2021-2023.

Note: Application rates are calculated as a proportion of same gender at same level in same timeframe. Success rates are calculated as a proportion of application rates by same gender at same level in same timeframe.

Staff satisfaction

In 2018, 45% of STEMM staff and 37% of non-STEMM staff agreed that enough time and effort was spent on career planning. Due to organisational changes, unfortunately the University-wide Employee Engagement Survey used to collect that data was discontinued and so similar data could not be collected in 2023. Instead, a survey of all women in STEMM received 15 responses, in which 20% agreed enough time and effort was spent on career planning, 40% were neutral, and 40% disagreed, highlighting a need to increase career support for this cohort (Table 15). Positively, 80% agreed that they felt supported to develop their career and were given the opportunities to do so.

Survey question	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
There is commitment to ongoing training and development of staff in my organisational unit.	67%	33%	0%
There is equal opportunity for all staff in my organisational unit to develop their career.	53%	40%	7%
I feel supported to develop my career.	80%	13%	7%
Enough time and effort is spent on career planning.	20%	40%	40%
The training and development I've received has improved my performance.	73%	20%	7%
I am given opportunities to develop the skills needed to progress my career.	80%	13%	7%

Table 15: Career Development Survey responses from women in STEMM (1).

Note: Direct comparisons to Table 3 (Employee Engagement Voice Survey result) are not possible due to the discontinuation of the University-wide Voice Survey and the low number of responses to the current survey (n = 15).

Example items of feedback (Table 16) received in survey responses highlight key areas for future improvements to career planning initiatives at UniSQ.

Example responses to the question ""What would help you to be more aware of resources, supports, training etc. available at UniSQ to support your career development?"
"Training and workshop sessions and support from the senior colleagues in the school."
"More support from Supervisor/manager."
"More information in School Forums."
"University email communication works well."

Example responses to the question "Do you have any other feedback about career planning at UniSQ?"
"With the advent of the ECR program this has greatly helped in this regard but it has a limited cohort each year. It would be good to have a broader reach. There isn't really anything like it for MCRs and senior academics so there is a gap here crying out to be filled. I recognise there are individual training opportunities but it would be nice to have a structured program."
"Experience in leadership roles are required to move through the academic levels/steps but it seems that the time required to fulfil these roles is not adequately work loaded eg the role of Program Director is seemingly wide ranging without a clear position description and as such the Program Directors continue to be allocated actions to complete as part of their role. Yet the hours allocated in WAMS are not indicative, not a fair indication of the time the role of Program Director requires. It is the research that then suffers. This is simply not fair on those of us that are willing to put our hand up and take on leadership roles and try and do them well. As a result as part of my own career plan and mental health preservation I am planning on stepping away from the Program Director hours."
"More support on training and capacity building."
"I would like more personalised support. I think the mentoring should expand not just at the research level, but also academic."

Table 16: Career Development Survey responses from women in STEMM (2).

Impact

Academic development programs: Qualitative insights

Early Career Researcher Program

Feedback was sought from participants of the ECR program, though no demographic information was recorded. Most respondents described a general satisfaction with the program and how it positively impacted their career progression, which is highlighted by example items of feedback received in response to the questions "What worked well?" and "Which session/s were the most valuable?" (Table 17).

Key positive theme 1: Development of research skills
"Great opportunity for academics who spend more time on the teaching side. This program makes us think and work towards our research side."
"The 5-year research plan has helped me immensely as a researcher to figure out who I am as a researcher, and why I am doing what I am doing. I met with ▉▉▉▉ recently to discuss my career plan/projects, and ▉▉▉▉ commented that my projects are very focused on working towards my goal (circular economy analyst working on translation into industry). If ▉▉▉▉ had talked to me before this program, ▉▉▉▉ would have said something very different as I previously had more bloat (projects not related to my goals) and also did not understand the common themes between my projects."
Key positive theme 2: Development of non-research skills
"I like the talk about pivoting, it allows me to reflect how my skills might be transferrable and how my research can be applied to wider areas."
"The session with media training was most valuable to me, as it helps you improve my confidence for communicating my research."
Key positive theme 3: Taking inspiration from others
"I really enjoyed the panel and hearing their stories about creating research teams and forming collaborations. It was great to hear real world stories, especially of women coming back to work are having children and reigniting their research careers."
"I liked discussing the publication plans with other researchers and finding what works well with other people. I also enjoyed listening to the personal experiences of senior researchers."

Table 17: Qualitative feedback from Early Career Researcher Program participants (1).

Example responses to the questions "How could this session be improved?" and "What was missing?" highlight key areas for future program improvement (Table 18).

"A longer session on understanding team dynamics/teamwork preferences etc. would be good, both for understanding ourselves but also of others in our team. Some actual examples of how teams have accommodated these differences could be useful too."
"Segregating ECRs by discipline hindered rich table discussion re: inter-discipline research planning and collaboration. Career & research planning uses same strategies across disciplines. Depending on the table size, many didn't have opportunity to add substantial feedback in table discussion."

Table 18: Qualitative feedback from Early Career Researcher Program participants (2).

Overall, feedback indicated the ECR program supported participants to strengthen their skills and engage with other academics to collaborate and learn.

Early Career Academic Women's Development Program

Feedback was sought via survey from all 22 ECAWDP participants, with 17 responses received. No demographic information was recorded. Themes of feedback were that the program was particularly valuable for connecting early-career academics with individualised career coaching; as an opportunity to network; and as dedicated time to self-reflect and goal-set towards promotion. Example responses to the question "On a personal basis, what is the one thing that you found most useful, that you will act upon in the near future?" highlight how the program has supported career development (Table 19).

"Developing a career plan and making connections with others - I now have two (hopefully three!) research project connections that will help with my career plan."
"My career goals - will reflect these in my Enrich" (ENRICH was the previous name for the University's performance, planning and review system)
"Career plan for promotion"
"Start my promotion application draft!"
"I felt the objectives helped me to initiate and build confidence to reach out to others to build a new research collaboration. I am currently in the process of writing a grant with them."

Table 19: Qualitative feedback from ECAWDP participants (1).

Example responses to the questions "What would make this program even better?" highlight key areas for future program improvement (Table 20).

"Someone from the university providing tips for promotion and tangibly talking about how to apply."
"A little bit more focus on time management and how to juggle university expectations. The homework is a little bit wishy washy sometimes and the link of importance is sometimes unclear to the overall goal of the session or program."
"I think this is a great initiative. However, I saw differences in career stages, which is good for diversity, but it is challenging at times to find common ground for the discussion. Some peers have been seniors and academics for a long time, but I can see how being research active is still a challenge for them. I am glad I was given this opportunity at this point of my career as ECR."

Table 20: Qualitative feedback from ECAWDP participants (2).

Overall, feedback suggests that the ECAWDP provides a strong platform for participants to strengthen their academic networks and to actively prepare to seek promotion.

Senior Academic Women's Development Program

Feedback was sought from all participants of the SAWDP via direct email. The number of responses and demographic information was not recorded so information is presented generally (Table 21). Leadership coaching was the most commonly accessed resource through the program, which women found invaluable for supporting them to better understand and utilise their skills; to debrief and strategically plan; and in writing their application for, or seeking out, promotion. Many women noted that coaching helped them to feel more confident in their leadership skills and to apply for promotion.

2022 Program | Summarised general feedback (1 row = 1 participant)
• Coaching was excellent and incredibly useful • Helped me succinct my research and to refine approach in all 3 academic categories • Gave me confidence to apply for Assoc Head Research in School and was successful in taking on position in October 2022 • Will happily do coaching again in future
• Program exceeded expectations • Coach helped to conceptualise and frame my story/narrative as an academic • Helped with my promotion application and can now apply some of the info when updating my bios/LinkedIn etc. • 360 tool was most helpful – coach was great at navigating feedback and work on strategies to grow from strength to strength (also filtered in personal life) • Had some unexpected challenges and coach's insight helped me to navigate these and 'survive' the year • Coach was more than generous with her time and effort
• Coaching sessions was extremely helpful • Provided me with really practical skills to improve my leadership practice and coach shared some great written resources
• It was a fabulous program and would have liked more sessions • Did the Hogan Leadership 360 and found that my skills were underutilised at the university (although I have leadership positions in my school) • I had strong leadership scores and that has empowered me to apply for promotion to Level D (next year) and get into more leadership roles • Made me bolder and more able to assert myself • Will access coach again in the future
• Really valuable experience, especially returning from maternity leave • Found sessions extremely valuable from a career planning perspective • Love the flexibility of Program for people to select their activities (eg coaching) that interests them and best support their individual circumstances
• Coaching sessions were brilliant and very helpful – far exceeds my expectations • Provided much need objective advice going for promotion this year as well as with facing the restructure in the Faculties
• Really enjoyed the sessions and had the opportunity to reflect on my career and gain insight into career progression – sessions finished too soon • Hogan 360 identified my strengths and also opportunities to grow which is the main highlight for me • Really appreciated meeting with my manager together with the coach
• Program exceeded expectations and the flexibility provided the opportunity to develop my capacity, reflect on and receive advice on specific issues (through the coaching)
• Leadership coaching interconnected with the Institute competencies • Provided with opportunities to engage with leaders, have robust conversations and provided a better understanding of leadership in the higher education context • Have a much clearer pathway now for the future and where I want to be and go

	• Internal Mentor provided invaluable information and support for my research goals and I hope to continue this in 2023
2023 Program | Responses to email query: "Did the program/coaching meet your expectations (personal and career-wise)? Briefly explain why or why not."	

"Yes, the program exceeded my expectations. Before winning the 2023 Senior Women's Academic Development Program, I had already established the Special Interest Group AI for Business (SIGAIB). As the group leader, I had much to learn, and the coaching provided valuable insights into my leadership style, enhancing my emotional intelligence and communication skills. Practical strategies, such as effectively running workshops and gaining meaningful feedback from research seminars, positively impacted both personal and professional interactions. The coach suggested my participation in the Hogan 360 feedback survey program. She studied the results and explained them to me, identifying areas for further growth. Throughout the training and survey, I became more confident in my leadership ability."

"Yes it did. The coach was able to help me focus on my goals and aspirations towards Level D looking at my strengths and weaknesses using the LSI Tool."

"I found the program/sessions exceptionally helpful from both a personal and career perspective. The personalised sessions targeted on developing my leadership skills. Outcomes from these sessions far exceeded my expectations. I would highly recommend coaching for other UniSQ staff."

"The coach has been instrumental in helping me with my promotion application. Her feedback was insightful and constructive. She organised our meeting in such a way that she also discusses with me tips on my new position and how to leverage myself."

"I just wanted to take the opportunity to email my appreciation for being able to engage with my executive coach as part of this program. I have found it incredibly beneficial in various ways including the ability to take the time to self-reflect and debrief, plan strategic initiatives, and also identify ways in which I can be more effective as a leader. I would highly recommend this to all academics regardless of level, once again thank you."

Table 21: Qualitative feedback from SWADP participants.

Participation in the SWADP was related to successful promotion outcomes, with a number of participants being promoted to a higher academic level within several years of undertaking the program (Table 22).

Program year	Direct benefits/outcomes for participants and UniSQ
2019	• 1 participant appointed to Associate Dean (Research) - 2021 • 2 participants promoted to Associate Professor - 2020; 2021 • 2 participants promoted to Professor - 2020; 2022 • 1 participant awarded PhD - 2019
2020	• 1 participant lead/coordinate an international team project grant application – 2021 • 3 participants promoted to Professor (2022; 2023) • Credentials gained as a Graduate of the AICD company director's course
2021	• 2 participants promoted to Professor (2022; 2023) • 2 participants promoted to Associate Professor (2022; 2023)
2022	• 2 participants promoted to Professor (2023) • 1 participant promoted to Associate Professor (2023) • 1 participant appointed to Associate Head (Research)
2023	• 1 participant promoted to Professor • 1 participant promoted to Associate Professor

Table 22: Senior Women's Academic Development Program benefits/outcomes 2019-2023.

***Associate Professor Jessica Marrington from the School of Psychology and Wellbeing** participated in the Senior Academic Women's Development Program in 2022. Here's what she had to say about the program:*

What encouraged you to apply for the Senior Academic Women's Development Program?

I applied for the program because I was looking for additional opportunities to support my career planning and build leadership capacity.

What did you like about the program?

I liked that there was choice in the program, that I was able to select a type of support that would suit my needs. Initially, I was unsure what supports might work best for me. I was able to talk broadly about what I thought would be of benefit and received guidance from a member of the People Portfolio in terms of what might work well for me. I chose to do executive coaching in the program, and I found this really beneficial. I also liked the flexibility to select my coach from quite a large and diverse sample.

Was there anything you did not like about the program?

While having the opportunity to choose tailored support was a positive of the program, at first, I did find this a bit challenging.

What element of the program was most beneficial to your career development/progression?

I commenced the program after returning from a period of parental leave, and there had been some significant organisational changes while I was away. One of these changes was the introduction of a new academic expectations framework that outlined performance expectations for each level of academic appointment. As part of the executive coaching, I mapped out my current performance against the framework. This assisted me in identifying areas where there was opportunity to grow, and to see where I was already performing well. I then made some specific goals – aligning with the appointment level above the one I was on – that I could work towards over the coming years, with the end goal of being promotable. Another benefit of doing the program was simply that there was dedicated time set aside in my schedule, to engage in career reflection and planning, with a person to support this.

Did your participation in the program support you to realise any specific career goals?

The mapping I did in the program made me realise I was likely ready to apply for promotion in the subsequent year. I also received valuable insights into my leadership capabilities from a 360-degree feedback instrument. I was a bit apprehensive about doing this activity initially, however, it was really valuable to see how my peers, colleagues, and supervisor viewed me as a leader. It helped me to see what my leadership strengths were, and I think helped strengthen confidence in my own capabilities. It also helped me to better understand the "Service" portfolio, and therefore, I was able to reflect on and plan activities more effectively in that space.

How has your approach to your career shifted since participating in the program?

My goals now are probably more specific. Having a good understanding of the expectation framework has greatly assisted me in seeing where I am performing strongly, and where I need to further develop. I also think more about where I am putting my time and energy, and I keep a better record of contributions I am making. I also feel strongly about supporting my colleagues with their career planning and/or working towards promotion. I have shared the mapping tool developed during my coaching with other staff and encouraged others to engage with the framework while they reflect on performance and set future goals.

UniSQ

Associate Professor Kerstin Braun from the School of Law and Justice participated in the Senior Academic Women's Development Program in 2022. Here's what she had to say about the program:

What encouraged you to apply for the Senior Academic Women's Development Program?

I was encouraged to apply for the Senior Academic Women's Development Program (Program) as I had seen more senior colleagues participate in previous years. They all mentioned to me the high quality of the Program and how much they benefitted from it especially in relation to developing and affirming one's career direction.

What did you like about the program?

An outstanding aspect of the program is that participants are able to select an external coach from a list of approved coaches. Participants are then able to engage in a set number of sessions with their chosen coach. Receiving one-on-one coaching from someone outside the University who is able to look at everything with 'fresh eyes' and who has extensive knowledge in academic career coaching was uttermost beneficial.

Was there anything you did not like about the program?

I thought the Program was excellent. I believe that only more senior academics are able to participate in it. Yet, I think also more junior staff members would benefit greatly from this Program as it would allow them to create a career vision right from the start.

What element of the program was most beneficial to your career development/progression?

I worked through different leadership options and opportunities with my coach including what I could bring to potential roles. The sessions inspired me and gave me the confidence to apply for the Associate Head (Research) role in my School. I was successful in the application process and have been in this role for the past two years.

Did your participation in the program support you to realise any specific career goals?

Yes, as above.

How has your approach to your career shifted since participating in the program?

I have taken on board much of the advice my coach has given me in different areas. For example, in the research space, I reduced the number of areas of research and instead went **into greater depth** in the remaining areas. This has allowed me to forge a reputation as an international expert which, for example, has resulted in me being heard as an expert witness at the 2024 public consultation of the ACT Legislative Assembly Select Committee on Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2023.

Any other thoughts?

Every participant I have spoken to has found this program extremely beneficial. If possible, it should be opened up to more junior academics as well.

Targeted initiatives: Qualitative insights

Mentorship

Feedback on mentorship was sought via survey from 88 staff members identified as having previously participated in the Mentorship Program or Research Mentoring Program, with ten responses received (seven mentors, three mentees) (Table 23). Feedback highlighted:

- Common topics of discussion in mentoring included research (developing a research plan, research goals and strategies); preparing for promotion; and aspirations and motivation.
- Mentors would feel better supported to provide mentorship if given workload allocation.

Using a rating scale where 1 = strong disagreement or dissatisfaction and 5 = strong agreement or satisfaction, ratings from the same survey indicated that mentees were neutrally satisfied with their mentoring experience overall, and did not agree that UniSQ is a diverse and inclusive workplace (Table 24). Mentees' satisfaction may have been impacted by the lack of structure or sufficient time with their mentor (based on feedback), but only three mentee responses were received and so further investigation is required to better understand mentees' experiences and views. Comparatively, mentors reported satisfaction with their overall mentoring experience, and were in strong agreement that UniSQ is diverse and inclusive.

Mentors	
Survey Participant	**Information about nature of mentorship delivered** **Responses to survey questions:** • **"How often do you engage in active mentoring, and how does this take place? (i.e., do you have a regular schedule of meetings, or discuss issues on a needs basis as they arise?)"** • **"Briefly describe the main topics you have discussed with your mentee/s."**
Participant #1	"I participate in UniSQ programs. I also mentor ECRs by involving them in research and HDR supervision" "HDR supervision, publications and grant applications"
Participant #3	"Regularity and nature of meetings has been based on the needs of the mentee as discussed during the initial meeting." "Mentor's role to support the mentee - including regularity and nature of meetings, agenda of meetings Mentee's goals depending on their current academic status - mostly EC so it has focused on the goals of adjusting to academia, workloads, research goals, career aspirations."
Participant #5	"One every 2-4 weeks for an hour." "How to pursue research and build a research profile post PhD. Encouraging enrolment into PhD."
Participant #6	"Adhoc meetings at the mentees discretion" "Career Conversations"
Participant #7	"As needed. But this usually equates to fortnightly/monthly during intensive periods, and every 1-3 months per person in quiet periods." "Personal encouragement, motivation, career planning, promotions, and research strategies and prioritising."
Participant #9	"Yes, fortnightly, straight after our joint PhD supervision meeting for 15 to 30 minutes." "Researcher Identity, Academic writing process, Journal Selection and Submission; HDR Supervision support"
Participant #10	"I never met with the mentee. We had two email exchanges and two meetings planned that the mentee cancelled because they 'weren't ready'." "via email discussed need for a research plan and career progression topics"

Survey Participant	Information about supporting mentees in career development
	Responses to survey questions: • **"Are there specific skills or competencies that you find your mentee/s commonly seek advice on, and how do you approach cultivating those skills?"** • **"How do you navigate discussions about career advancement and help your mentee/s plan for the next steps in their professional journey?"**
Participant #1	"how to apply for grants and how to win industry support for grant applications" "identify the components that will help - HDR completions, h-indices, publications, management roles/committees, grants, and a strong CV"
Participant #3	"It varies, but one would be knowing who to reach out to, and how to approach those beyond the mentor/mentee relationship for further support. Depending on the specific need, it can also depend on the confidence of the mentee, I prefer to encourage the mentee to make the contact with the nominated support but am willing to offer observance of protocols if required." "First, become familiar with their stage of career, then their aspirations, and discuss the reality of how these two align, before moving forward to relevant suggestions/discussions about specific career advancement and/or promotion."
Participant #5	"Usually mentee don't know where to go or what to do to build their research profile." "Firstly, the mentee outlines their research interest, then we discuss specific research topics that they are interested in. We discuss writing for publication, grant writing and explore funding opportunities. I use Academic Employee Expectations Framework as a guide for their professional journey."
Participant #6	"Listen to their story and highlight transferrable skills"
Participant #7	"Preparing CVs, applying for promotions. I give them examples, help them develop their own CVs and promotion applications, give feedback on drafts, and discuss strong/weak points and how they can be highlighted or strengthened." "I always discuss their career goals, try to plan and strategise about their advancement with them, and help break down the larger goal into bite-size steps they can work towards."
Participant #9	"Develop a researcher profile - I co-research initiatives and activities with mentee with a screen share feature of Teams" "Regular discussions of our work into academic expectations framework at UniSQ"
Participant #10	"Through knowledge of uni requirements for career advancement and through stories of experience"
Survey Participant	**Information about developing as a mentor**
	Responses to survey questions: • **"Have you experienced any challenges in your mentoring relationship (please describe) and how have you worked to overcome these?"** • **"What (if any) further resources or supports would help you to develop as a mentor?"**
Participant #1	"need to have patience for the mentee to develop their own pathway" "recognition in workload"
Participant #3	"perhaps more collegial sharing of the mentoring program. Beyond the introductory session, I felt the success depended heavily on the mentor's skills/character/... with which I had no problem, but am always keen to learn from others."
Participant #5	"The only challenges are time. It is difficult to squeeze in the mentoring on top of an already heavy workload." "It would help if our Mentoring hours were included in WAMs."
Participant #7	"No real challenges. Although I work remotely a lot of the time, so if there was one thing i'd like to do better, it would be to spend more face-to-face time with my mentees." "It would be great to develop some sort of metrics to measure mentor effort and performance, like a simple survey that mentees can complete to indicate how valuable the experience has been for them; something that mentors can use to identify areas of improvement, and to demonstrate their performance for their own promotion ambitions."

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| Participant #10 | "With this one, only that the mentee didn't feel ready to meet. After I set up two meetings and both were cancelled at the last minute I left it with the mentee and never heard from them again." |
| | "None but ensure that the mentees actually want to do it and have something they wish to focus on" |

Mentees	
Survey participants	**Information about nature of mentoring** **Responses to survey questions:** • **"How often do you engage with your mentor, and how does this take place? (i.e., do you have a regular schedule of meetings, or discuss issues on a needs basis as they arise?)"** • **"Briefly describe the main topics you have discussed with your mentor."**
Participant #2	"Unfortunately there were not any mentors that aligned with my interests, so I did not end up participating in the initiative."
Participant #4	"Once every 2 months. Face to face meeting." "Getting to know you stage - both ways. Where I work, what I do on a daily basis. We have also discussed about my skills and capabilities."
Survey Participant	**Information about career development support** **Responses to survey questions:** • **"Are there specific skills or competencies you sought advice on from your mentor, and has mentorship helped you to cultivate those skills? (Please describe.)"** • **"How has mentorship helped you to consider career advancement and plan for the next steps in your professional journey?"**
Participant #4	"Yes, career development. My mentor was able to provide advise specially in constructing resume/CV and Career Statement. She provided me the links from our work website of which I wasn't aware that we have one." "We are currently on this stage. I am considering career advancement. On our next session, this will be in my agenda. It is actually the other way around like, I have applied for career advancement but put back last year due to restructuring hence I decided to seek mentoring. Then I don't think I will also get it next year..."
Survey Participant	**Information about mentee support** **Responses to survey questions:** • **"Have you experienced any challenges in your mentoring relationship (please describe) and how have you worked to overcome these?"** • "**What (if any) further resources or supports would improve your mentoring experience?"**
Participant #4	"The challenge really is finding the common time as my mentor works only on certain days and we are also very busy in the labs. We are so busy in the labs that every time I go to my mentoring session, I feel it as an impose to my team that I am not in the lab even for only 30 minutes. If we have session, I feel like 30mins is not enough. We only meet once every couple of months, so I believe, 30 minutes of allotted time is not enough. We can overcome this by catching up regularly on emails or Teams."

Table 23: Qualitative feedback from mentors and mentees.

	Mentors	**Mentees**	**Grand average**
Satisfaction with overall mentoring experience	4.3	2.7	3.8
Agreement that UniSQ is a diverse and inclusive workplace	4.9	2.3	3.7

Table 24: Satisfaction with mentoring 2024.

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HEA@UniSQ program

Feedback was sought from the seven women in STEMM who participated in the HEA@UniSQ program. Feedback was received from two participants and was overwhelmingly positive, with highlights being the opportunity to collaborate and network with peers, and access to new knowledge and possible avenues of future career development (Table 25). Both respondents indicated the program contributed to their career development by providing an avenue for personal growth and acting as an external acknowledgement of teaching success (clear measures of success are particularly important for academic promotion applications).

What worked well / positive feedback	
Responses to survey question: "What worked / what did you like about the HEA@UniSQ program?"	
Participant #1	"HEA fellowship and the presentation sessions to network with other members"
Participant #2	"The program was well executed with frequent sessions. The opportunity of write-ups and peer group really stood out for me. I had a buddy all along and this support motivates me and helped immensely to submit on time"
Suggestions for future topics and improvement	
Responses to survey question: "What could be improved about the HEA@UniSQ program?	
Participant #1	"Better to have more ONC sessions to network with other researchers/academics. This will open up collaborations."
Participant #2	"I believe we have all the right blocks already and that makes it a very successful initiative."
Personal feedback regarding career development support	
Responses to survey questions: • **"What value does HEA Fellowship add to your career?"** • **"How do you intend to utilise the Fellowship in your career going forward?"**	
Participant #1	"Community of practice, new practices, new knowledge" "Planning to further and become a mentor. Also in future apply for senior fellowship"
Participant #2	"This Fellowship offers a multitude of advantages for my career. It facilitates the personal growth and I believe it also serves as an invaluable indicator of success acknowledged on a global scale." "The skills and experiences gained from the fellowship would directly help to achieve my professional and academic goals."

Table 25: Qualitative feedback from HEA@UniSQ (women in STEMM cohort) participants.

	Key positive impacts
Early Career Researcher Program	• Supported networking, collaboration and peer teaching between researchers • Improved participants' confidence in refining their goals and confidently communicating their research
Early Career Academic Women's Development Program	• Supported development of career goals and plans • Encouraged participants to start planning towards promotion
Senior Academic Women's Development Program	• Developed participants' confidence in role and leadership skills • Supported participants to upskill and apply for promotion
Mentorship	• Helped mentees to develop their career goals and actionable steps towards them • Supported mentees directly with specific work problems they encounter

HEA@UniSQ Program	• Engaged participants with a teaching community of practice and new knowledge • Acknowledged participants professionally for teaching excellence

Table 26: Key positive impacts of targeted initiatives based on qualitative feedback from participants

Summary/Conclusion

The University identified career development as a key area for improvement for academic women in both STEMM and non-STEMM disciplines. Evidence highlighted that these cohorts were not highly satisfied with career development and planning support at UniSQ, and this was a contributing factor to staff distribution trends, where STEMM women outnumbered men at levels A and B but steadily decreased from level C up, and non-STEMM women outnumbered men at most levels except the highest (E). Evidence also highlighted that women may need more support to feel confident to apply for promotion, where they often had high success rates.

A range of initiatives and programs were implemented (or maintained with improvements) to provide more career development support for women, including the Early Career Researcher Program, Early Career Academic Women's Development Program, Senior Academic Women's Development Program, mentorship support, grant-writing support, and the HEA@UniSQ Program for teaching fellowships.

These initiatives contributed to improvements from 2018-2020 to 2021-2023, with STEMM women's representation increasing 8% at level D and 12% at level E, and non-STEMM women's representation increasing 13% at level E. The ratio of women to men at UniSQ moved closer towards gender parity at the highest levels in academia (D and E) from 2018-2020 to 2021-2023.

The ratio of women to men in promotion application and success rates showed smaller improvements but still moved closer to gender parity at various levels from 2018-2020 to 2021-2023.

Overall, the positive impact of these initiatives was that academic women felt better supported and upskilled to thrive, progress and seek promotion in their careers at UniSQ. The increases towards gender parity and positive feedback from women highlight that UniSQ is on a positive trajectory of continual improvement towards long-lasting and sustainable change, which takes time and is an ongoing priority for the University.

Further actions

Reference	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person/Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Desired Outcomes/Targets/Success Indicators
1	Academic women in STEMM promotion application rates to levels C, D and E 2021-2023 plateaued or decreased, compared to 2018-2020 rates.	Conduct focus groups with academic women in STEMM to identify opportunities for improved promotion support.	Q1 2025 – Q2 2025	Office of the DVC (R&I) People Portfolio	DVC (R&I) CPO	• Development and implementation of relevant promotion support for academic women in STEMM at levels B and higher.
2	Academic non-STEMM women promotion application rates to levels B and C 2021-2023 plateaued for women (when compared to men) compared to 2018-2020 rates.	Conduct focus groups with academic non-STEMM women to identify opportunities for improved promotion support.	Q1-2025 – Q2 2025	Office of the DVC (R&I) People Portfolio	DVC (R&I) CPO	• Development and implementation of relevant promotion support for academic non-STEMM at levels A and B.
3	Feedback highlights women in STEMM feel that not enough time and effort is spent on career planning.	Revise management training and resources to refine content regarding career planning with direct reports.	2025	People Portfolio Academic Affairs Portfolio	CPO DVC (AA)	• Improved women in STEMM satisfaction ratings with career planning over time.
4	Data collection regarding grant applications and successes is not reliable or granular enough to accurately identify trends.	The University's new research information management system (rolled out in 2022) can capture more granular data regarding grant applications and successes.	2025	Office of the DVC (R&I)	DVC (R&I)	• More detail included in reporting on grant applications and successes year-on-year
5	Data and feedback highlight the positive impact of the University's existing academic development programs on academic staff at different career stages.	Continue delivery of the following programs and identify a number of positions in each for diversity cohorts: • Early Career Researcher Program • Early Career Academic Women's Development Program • Senior Academic Women's Development Program	Annual	Office of the DVC (R&I) People Portfolio	DVC (R&I) CPO	• Continued high satisfaction ratings and positive feedback from participants.

6	Mentorship is not consistently delivered or evaluated at the University.	Review the University's mentorship programs and resources to identify opportunities for streamlining and improving mentoring support.	2025	People Portfolio	CPO	• Improved staff satisfaction ratings with UniSQ mentoring offerings over time.
7	Feedback highlights the positive impact of the HEA@UniSQ program on participants' growth in their teaching practice.	Continue delivery of the HEA@UniSQ program and identify a number of positions for diversity cohorts.	Annual	Learning and Teaching Futures	Provost	• Improvements in gender balance of overall program participation year-on-year.
8	The breadth of evaluation indicates that UniSQ's data collection systems and methodologies should overall be more rigorous and systematic to better capture impact and stakeholder experience.	Identify required evaluation when developing and delivering initiatives in order to build in robust data collection approaches from early on.	Annual	Whole University	Senior leader of work unit delivering initiative	• Improvements in available data to evaluate initiative impact and stakeholder experience.

Appendices

Appendix 1

	Academic level	2018						2019						2020					
		F		M		X		F		M		X		F		M		X	
		HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%
STEMM	A	4	57%	3	43%	0	0%	10	56%	8	44%	0	0%	13	62%	8	38%	0	0%
	B	69	52%	63	48%	0	0%	74	56%	59	44%	0	0%	84	54%	71	46%	0	0%
	C	38	42%	53	58%	0	0%	37	40%	55	60%	0	0%	37	45%	46	55%	0	0%
	D	8	20%	32	80%	0	0%	9	26%	26	74%	0	0%	11	26%	31	74%	0	0%
	E	2	6%	29	94%	0	0%	3	8%	36	92%	0	0%	6	13%	40	87%	0	0%
	Unknown	2	14%	12	86%	0	0%	3	21%	11	79%	0	0%	3	21%	11	79%	0	0%
Non-STEMM	A	13	52%	11	44%	<6	4%	13	50%	13	50%	0	0%	13	54%	11	46%	0	0%
	B	79	62%	48	38%	0	0%	67	60%	44	39%	<6	1%	71	58%	50	41%	<6	1%
	C	39	53%	34	47%	0	0%	36	53%	32	47%	0	0%	34	56%	27	44%	0	0%
	D	20	69%	9	31%	0	0%	22	69%	10	31%	0	0%	19	59%	13	41%	0	0%
	E	7	41%	10	59%	0	0%	7	35%	13	65%	0	0%	11	52%	10	48%	0	0%
	Unknown	7	35%	13	65%	0	0%	10	53%	9	47%	0	0%	9	50%	9	50%	0	0%
	STEMM Total	123	39%	192	61%	0	0%	136	41%	195	59%	0	0%	154	43%	207	57%	0	0%
	Non-STEMM Total	165	57%	125	43%	<6	<1%	155	56%	121	44%	<6	<1%	157	56%	120	43%	<6	<1%
	Total	288	48%	317	52%	<6	<1%	291	48%	316	52%	<6	<1%	311	49%	327	51%	<6	<1%

Academic staff distribution 2018-2020.

Note: HC = Head count. % = % of cohort at same level in same year.

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Appendix 2

		To Academic Level	2018 F		2018 M		2019 F		2019 M		2020 F		2020 M	
			HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%
STEMM	Application Rates	B	0	0%	1	33%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	13%
		C	5	7%	8	13%	7	9%	6	10%	6	7%	10	14%
		D	4	11%	5	9%	5	14%	12	22%	5	14%	3	7%
		E	2	25%	5	16%	2	22%	4	15%	1	9%	3	10%
	Success Rates	B	0	-	1	100%	0	-	0	-	0	-	1	100%
		C	4	80%	5	63%	7	100%	5	83%	5	83%	9	90%
		D	4	100%	3	60%	4	80%	8	67%	3	60%	2	67%
		E	1	50%	4	80%	2	100%	3	75%	1	100%	3	100%
Non-STEMM	Application Rates	B	2	15%	1	9%	2	15%	1	18%	2	15%	1	9%
		C	8	10%	11	23%	12	18%	8	18%	8	11%	4	8%
		D	4	10%	3	9%	5	14%	8	25%	1	3%	3	11%
		E	2	10%	3	33%	8	36%	2	20%	1	5%	3	23%
	Success Rates	B	2	100%	1	100%	2	100%	1	100%	1	50%	0	0%
		C	5	63%	4	36%	4	33%	0	0%	5	63%	3	75%
		D	4	100%	3	100%	2	40%	4	50%	1	100%	3	100%
		E	2	100%	2	67%	5	63%	1	50%	0	0%	1	33%

		2018 F		2018 M		2019 F		2019 M		2020 F		2020 M	
		HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%
STEMM	App Total	11	9%	19	10%	14	10%	22	11%	12	8%	17	8%
STEMM	Success Total	9	81%	13	68%	13	93%	16	72%	9	75%	15	88%
Non-STEMM	App Total	16	10%	18	14%	27	17%	19	16%	12	8%	11	9%
Non-STEMM	Success Total	13	81%	10	77%	13	48%	6	32%	7	58%	7	64%

Promotion application rates and success rates for academic employees 2018-2020.

Note: HC = Head count. For application rates, % = % applied of same gender at same level in same year. For success rates, % = % successful as a proportion of application rates by same gender at same level in same year.

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Appendix 3

| | | 2021 | | | | | | 2022 | | | | | | 2023 | | | | | |
| | | F | | M | | X | | F | | M | | X | | F | | M | | X | |
	Academic level	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%
STEMM	Level A	15	63%	9	38%	0	0%	18	64%	10	36%	0	0%	14	52%	13	48%	0	0%
	Level B	66	53%	59	47%	0	0%	70	57%	52	43%	0	0%	93	57%	70	43%	0	0%
	Level C	40	43%	52	57%	0	0%	34	39%	53	61%	0	0%	35	38%	56	62%	0	0%
	Level D	13	30%	30	70%	0	0%	16	31%	35	69%	0	0%	20	34%	38	66%	0	0%
	Level E	8	18%	36	82%	0	0%	9	22%	32	78%	0	0%	12	23%	41	77%	0	0%
	Unknown	1	13%	7	88%	0	0%	1	13%	7	88%	0	0%	5	36%	9	64%	0	0%
Non-STEMM	Level A	9	45%	11	55%	0	0%	7	64%	4	36%	0	0%	5	56%	4	44%	0	0%
	Level B	62	61%	39	38%	<6	1%	49	59%	33	40%	<6	1%	46	56%	35	42%	<6	1%
	Level C	42	61%	27	39%	0	0%	41	59%	29	41%	0	0%	41	59%	28	41%	0	0%
	Level D	19	58%	14	42%	0	0%	15	50%	15	50%	0	0%	16	53%	14	47%	0	0%
	Level E	15	52%	14	48%	0	0%	22	56%	17	44%	0	0%	22	59%	15	41%	0	0%
	Unknown	4	36%	7	64%	0	0%	3	30%	7	70%	0	0%	4	29%	10	71%	0	0%
	STEMM Total	143	43%	193	57%	0	0%	148	44%	189	56%	0	%	179	44%	227	56%	0	0%
	Non-STEMM Total	151	57%	112	42%	<6	<1%	137	56%	105	43%	<6	<1%	134	56%	106	44%	<6	<1%
	Total	294	49%	305	51%	<6	<1%	285	49%	294	51%	<6	<1%	313	48%	333	51%	<6	<1%

Academic staff distribution 2021-2023.

Note: HC = Head count. % = % of cohort at same level in same year.

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Appendix 4

		To Academic Level	2021 F		2021 M		2022 F		2022 M		2023 F		2023 M	
			HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%
STEMM	Application Rates	B	5	33%	2	22%	0	0%	1	10%	3	21%	1	8%
		C	4	6%	12	20%	3	4%	11	21%	10	11%	10	14%
		D	4	10%	5	10%	2	6%	7	13%	3	9%	12	21%
		E	1	8%	0	0%	4	25%	5	14%	3	15%	12	32%
	Success Rates	B	4	80%	2	100%	0	-	1	100%	3	100%	1	100%
		C	2	50%	6	50%	2	67%	7	64%	7	70%	7	70%
		D	3	75%	5	100%	2	100%	6	86%	3	100%	6	50%
		E	1	100%	0	-	4	100%	4	80%	3	100%	6	50%
Non-STEMM	Application Rates	B	3	33%	2	18%	0	0%	1	25%	1	20%	2	50%
		C	5	8%	2	5%	8	16%	3	9%	5	11%	2	60%
		D	3	7%	5	19%	8	20%	6	21%	6	15%	3	11%
		E	5	26%	2	14%	3	20%	0	0%	0	0%	4	29%
	Success Rates	B	2	67%	1	50%	0	-	1	100%	1	100%	1	50%
		C	3	60%	2	100%	6	75%	2	67%	4	80%	1	50%
		D	1	33%	2	40%	5	63%	6	100%	6	100%	3	100%
		E	5	100%	2	100%	2	67%	0	-	0	-	4	100%
STEMM	App Total		14	10%	19	10%	9	6%	24	13%	19	11%	35	15%
	Success Total		10	71%	13	68%	8	89%	18	75%	16	84%	20	57%
Non-STEMM	App Total		16	11%	11	10%	19	14%	10	10%	12	9%	20	19%
	Success Total		11	69%	7	64%	13	68%	9	90%	11	92%	9	45%

Promotion application rates and success rates for academic employees 2021-2023.

Note: HC = Head count. For application rates, % = % applied of same gender at same level in same year. For success rates, % = % successful as a proportion of application rates by same gender at same level in same year.

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