SAGE Cygnet Awards

for the SAGE Athena Swan Accreditation Pathway

SAGE Cygnet Award Application

Name of Institution	Macquarie University
Date of Application	June 2024
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INSTITUTION NAME: SAGE CYGNET

Word limit – 2500 words (excluding the institutional context and excluding the action plan)

	✓ Current Cygnet	**Barrier**
[Mandatory] Institution-wide barrier		
[Mandatory] Sub-group barrier	✓	Pipeline and progression: Academic promotion process
[Please select] Institution-wide/Sub-group barrier		
[Please select] Institution-wide/Sub-group barrier		
[Please select] Institution-wide/Sub-group barrier		

Word limit (2500) and word count

Section	Word-count
Cygnet submission	**2,459**
Key Barrier	133
Evidence of Barrier	932
Activities & Outputs	71
Outcomes	950
Impact	324
Further Action	49

CONTENTS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ASBAS	Athena Swan Bronze Award Submission
HoD	Head of Department
MQ	Macquarie University
PDR	Performance Development Review
DPR	Development Performance Review
STEMM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine
HASS	Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences
WD&I	Workplace Diversity and Inclusion
WGES	Workplace Gender Equity Strategy
W	Women
M	Men
X	Gender Diverse Staff
A	Applications/Applicants
AR	Application Rates (%=Applicants/Current Pool)
S	Successful/Successful Candidates
SR	Success Rates (%=Successful/Applicants)
OD	Organizational Development
BIR	Business Intelligence & Reporting

FIGURES

TABLES

KEY BARRIER

In 2017, Macquarie University (MQ) launched a new Academic Promotion program designed to provide a strengths-based, transparent, and inclusive assessment system that better aligns with the University's recruitment and promotion standards. At the time of the MQ 2019 Athena SWAN Bronze Award submission (ASBAS), this program was still in its early stages, and its outcomes had not yet been fully evaluated.

This Cygnet application provides a thorough evaluation of the Academic Promotion program from 2017 to 2023, reflecting on the actions included in the ASBAS Action Plan. It highlights MQ's commitment to fostering an inclusive environment, equitable career advancement, and a systemic approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The analysis demonstrates promising progress toward more equitable career pathways and better gender balance at senior levels, despite the complex factors influencing the academic workforce.

EVIDENCE OF BARRIER

As detailed in the MQ Bronze submission, MQ redesigned its promotion system in 2017 to address bias and support diverse career paths. Drawing on Ernest Boyer's four areas of scholarship: Discovery, Teaching, Application, Integration, plus Leadership and Citizenship, the new model is strengths-based, transparent, and inclusive. It aligns with recruitment standards and ensures fairness through self-assessment, panel reviews, and interviews. Ongoing workshops and info sessions provide clear guidance to applicants and assessment committees.

Application and Success Rates – Overall

Robust analysis and process evaluation in 2019 demonstrated improvements across key academic promotion metrics. Data showed a significant increase in applications since the introduction of the new scheme in 2017, most notably from women[1] i.e. 82% rise compared to 36% rise among men. Application rates for women also surpassed men initially, with a 14% application rate for women versus 10% for men in 2017. By 2018, gender parity was achieved, with both reaching an 11% application rate,

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[1] *In our analysis, we use the term 'women' for gender data collected as female and 'men' for gender data collected as male. We acknowledge the non-binary nature of gender; however, our dataset is limited to female/male data due to current data collection and system constraints. We recognize that this binary approach does not fully capture the diversity of gender identities and are committed to improving our data collection practices in the future to be more inclusive and representative.*

demonstrating the positive impact of gender diversity initiatives and the effectiveness of the revised promotion process.

Figure 1.1 Applications and Application Rates by Year
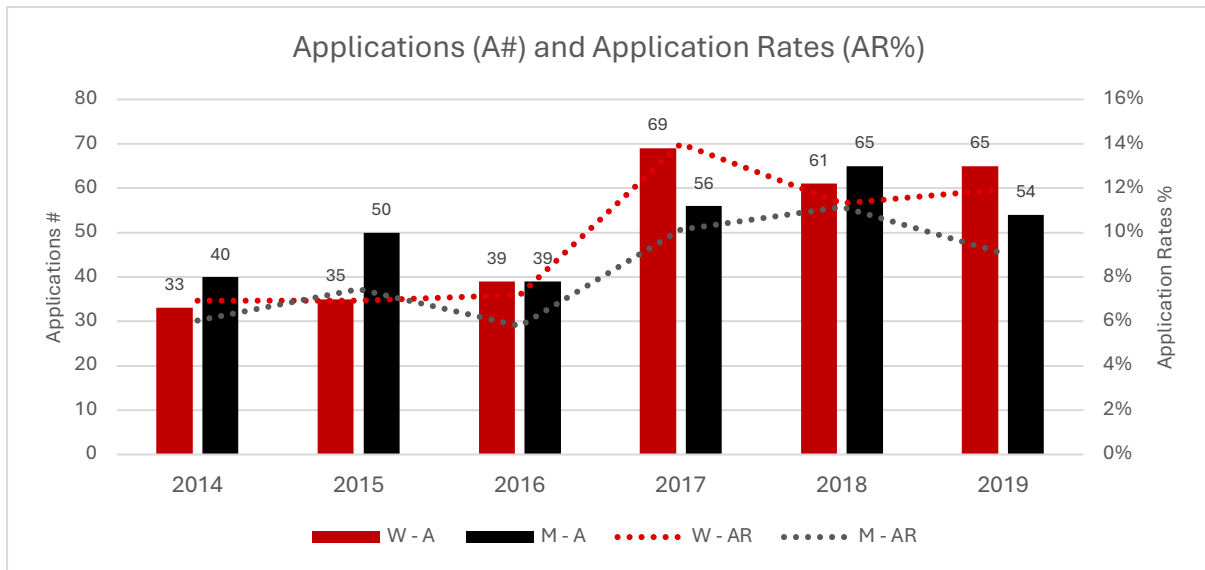
Figure 1.2 Applications and Application Rates by Period
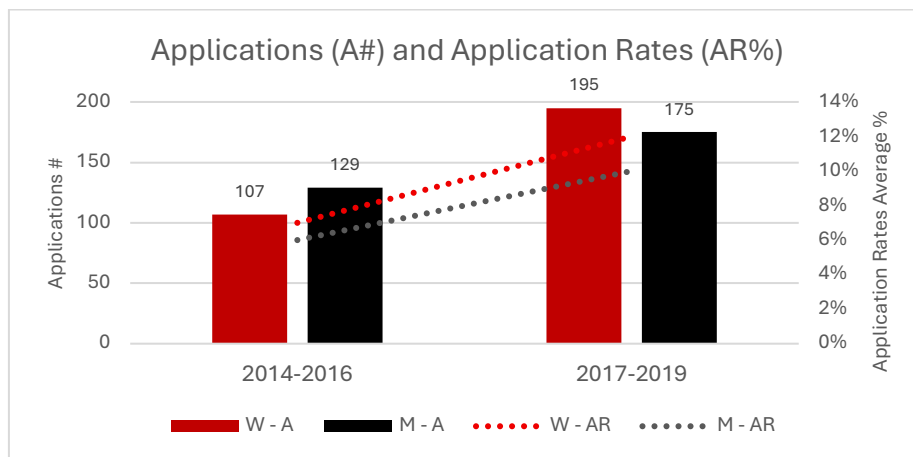
The promotion process saw a significant increase in successful women candidates since 2017, with a 67% rise among women and a 29% rise among men from 2014-16 to 2017-19. Women's success rates ranged from 75% to 94% across the years. Overall, women consistently maintained higher success rates, highlighting their competitiveness and success in securing promotions.

Figure 1.3 Successful and Success Rates by Year
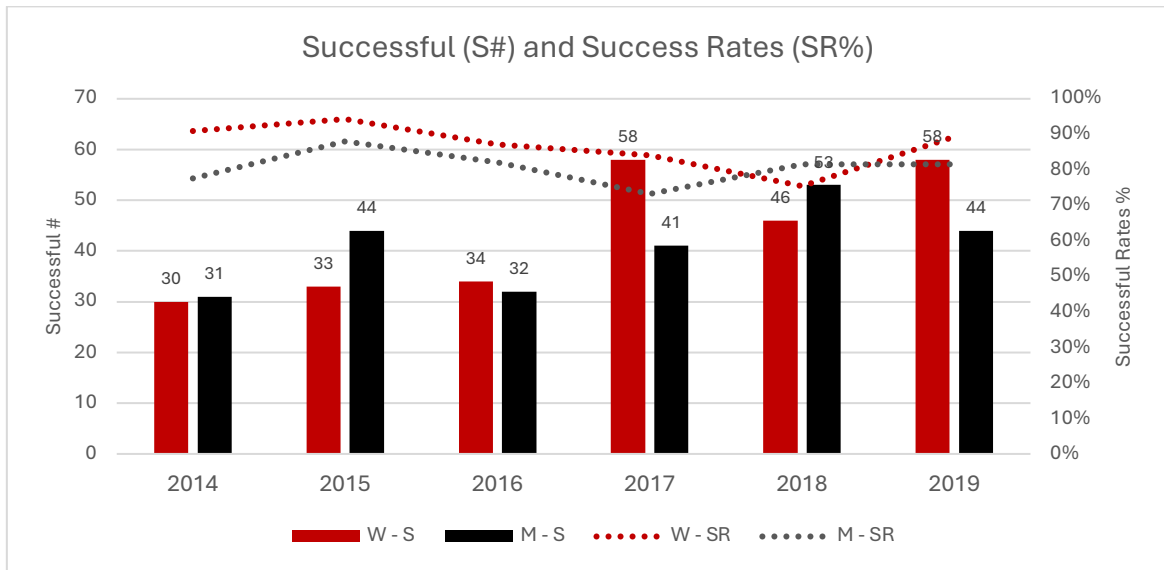
Figure 1.4 Successful and Success Rates by Period
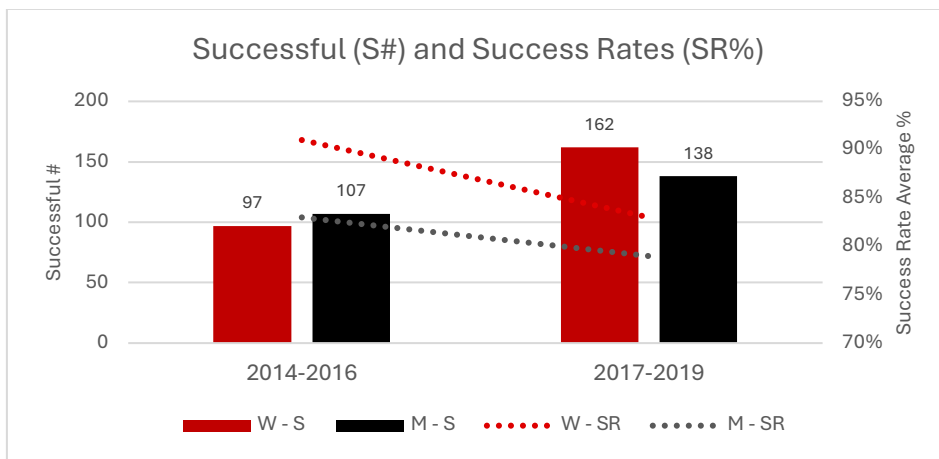
Since 2017, there was a noticeable increase and greater equity in applications and success rates across time.

Figure 1.5 Applications and Successful
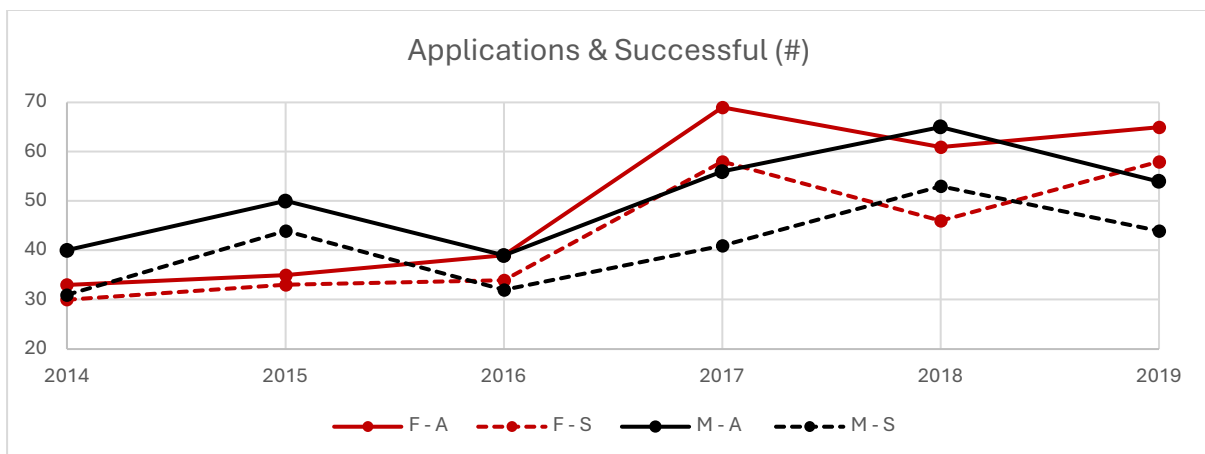
Table 1.1 Applications and Successful

A & S	W - A	W - S	M - A	M - S
2014	33	30	40	31
2015	35	33	50	44
2016	39	34	39	32
2017	69	58	56	41
2018	61	46	65	53
2019	65	58	54	44

Pool and Applications

Over six years, women steadily increased their representation in the applicant pool, with application rates exceeding men's at 55% in both 2017 and 2019. This reflects a positive shift toward gender equity, particularly after the redesign of the promotion process, with women becoming more proactive in seeking advancement opportunities.

Figure 1.6 Available Pool and Applicants Percentage Comparison by Year
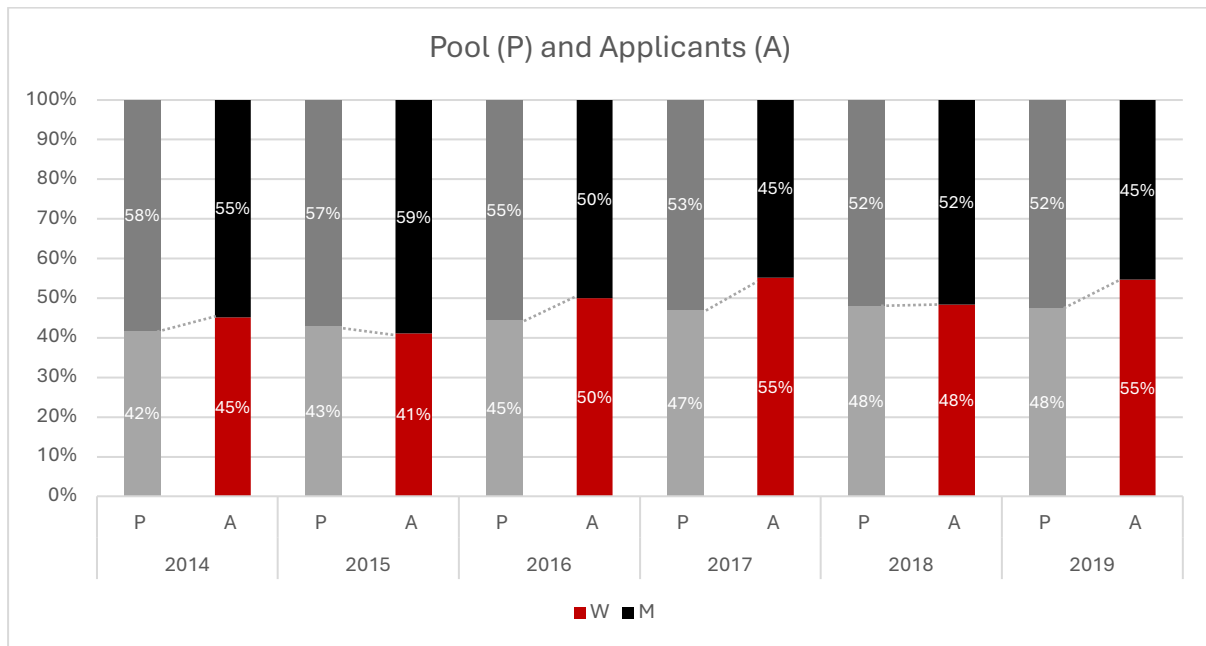
Application and Success Rates – By Level

From 2017-19, women's applications grew significantly at all academic levels. Level B rose by 104% and Level C by 103%, surpassing men's increases. Women's applications at Level D rose by 29%, and Level E by 107%. Post-2017, women's application rates steadily increased, from 5% to 11% at Level B, 12% to 14% at Level C, and 9% to 13% at Level E. Despite lower overall applications at Level D, gender parity was achieved at 10%.

Figure 1.7 Applications and Application Rates by Level and Period

Figure 1.7 Applications and Application Rates by Level and Period
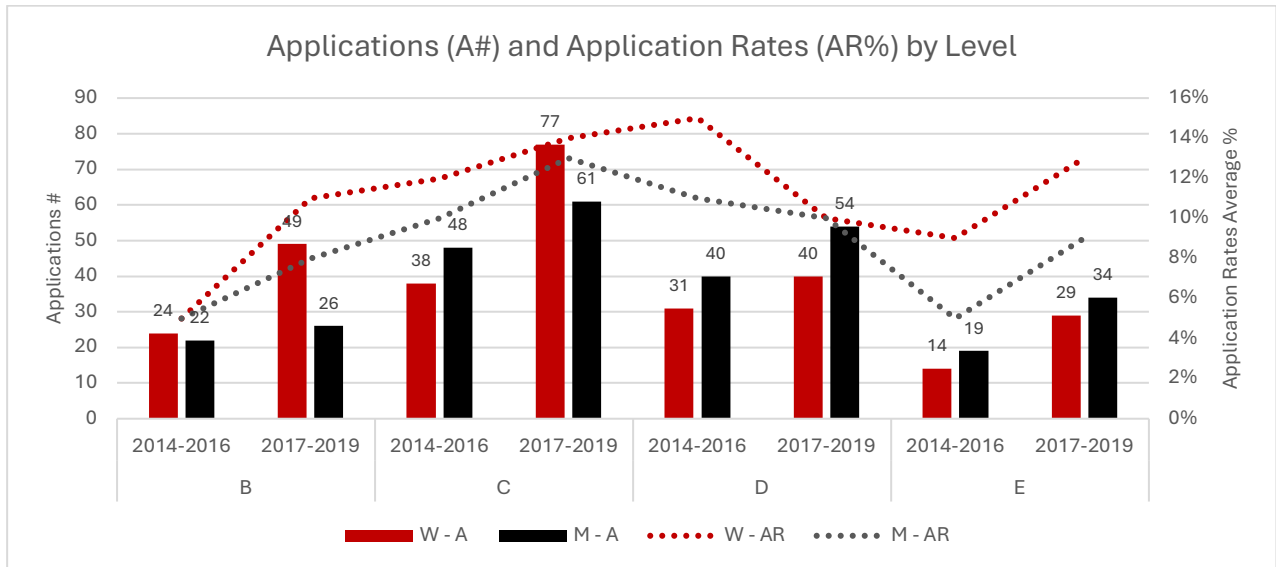
From 2014-2016 to 2017-2019, successful women at Level B rose from 21 to 47, with their success rate improving from 89% to 96%. However, women's success rates declined at higher levels, falling from 85% to 68% at Level D and from 100% to 83% at Level E. Men's success rates remained stable or increased, with Level D rising from 73% to 79% and Level E dropping slightly from 79% to 76%. While women advanced at lower levels, they encountered challenges at senior levels.

Figure 1.8 Successful and Success Rates by Level and Period
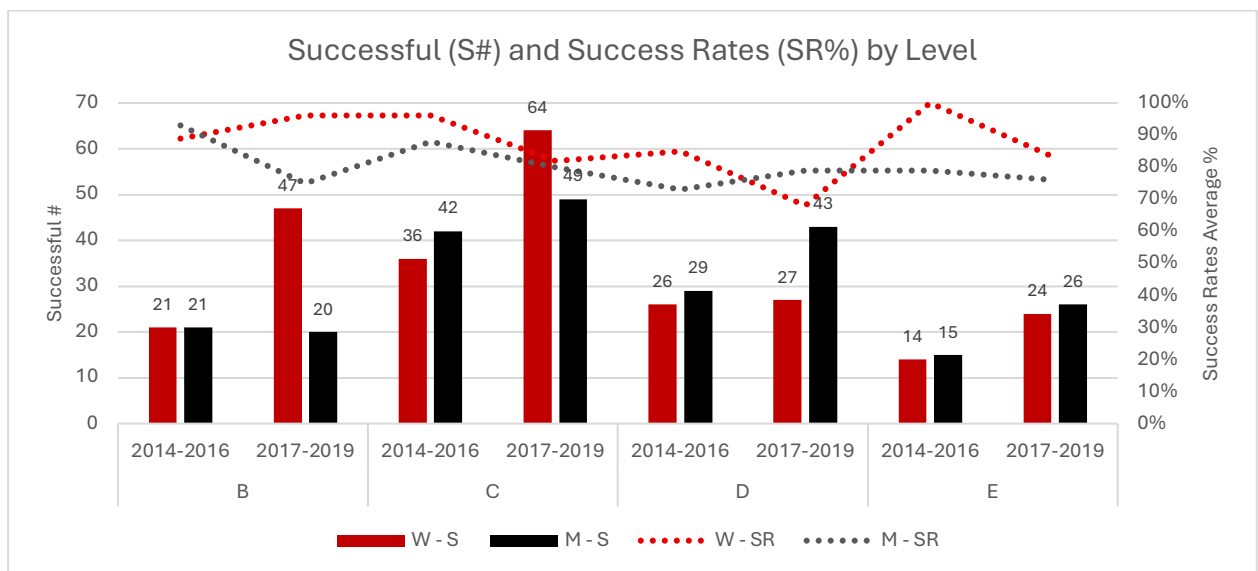
Application and Success Rates – STEMM v HASS

The new scheme increased application rates and successful candidates in both STEMM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine) and HASS (Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences) faculties, with more women than men succeeding, indicating progress toward more gender-balanced academic staff. Despite rising application

rates, success rates declined for all genders. In STEMM, women's success rates dropped from 98% to 88%, and in HASS from 82% to 77%. This suggests growing competition is making success more challenging.

Figure 2.1 STEMM Applications by Period
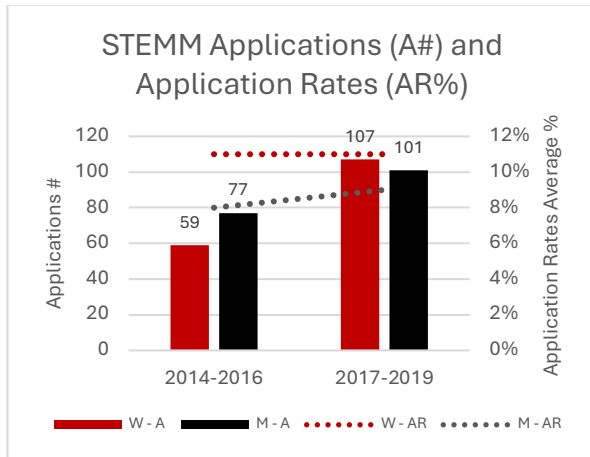
Figure 2.2 STEMM Successful by Period
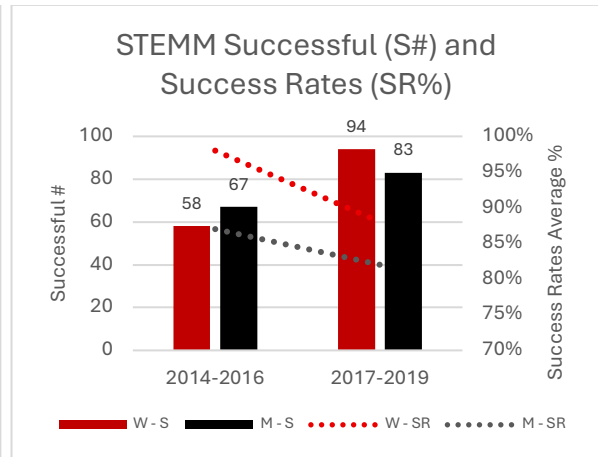
Figure 2.3 HASS Applications by Period
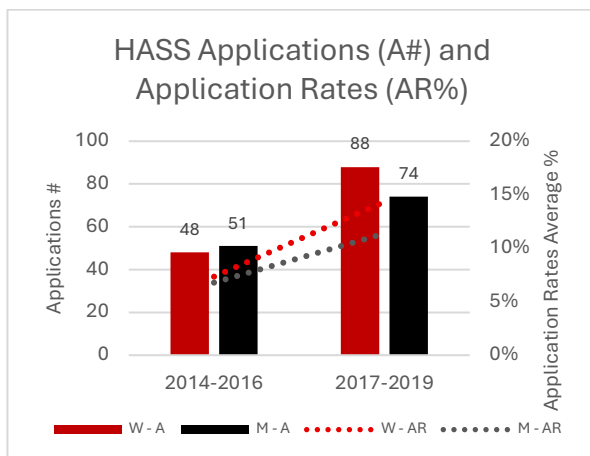
Figure 2.4 HASS Successful by Period
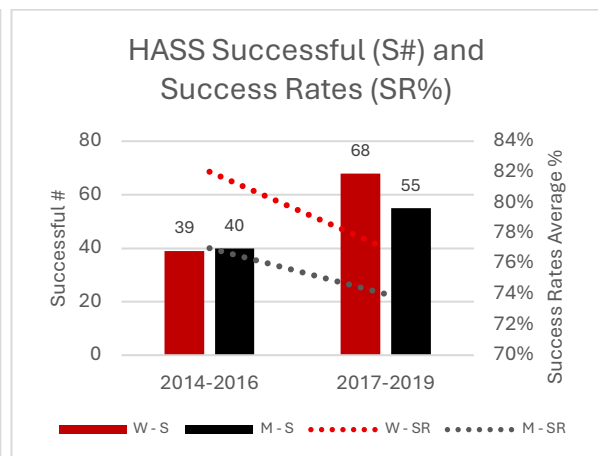
Qualitative Feedback

Periodic online surveys among applicants showed response rates of 59% in 2017 and 47% in 2019. Women's engagement dropped from 59% to 38%, while men's rose from 50% to 54%, indicating a decline in women's participation over time.
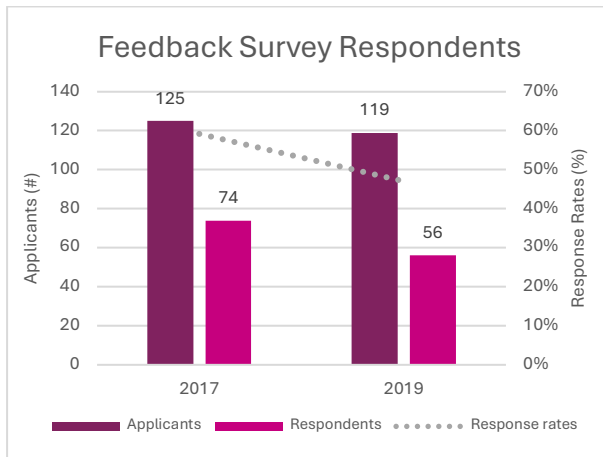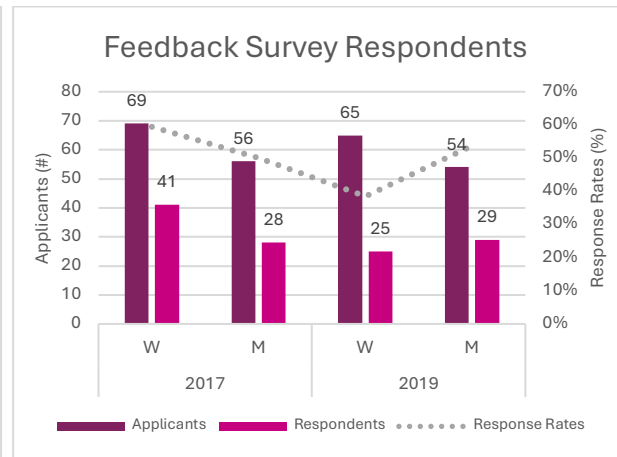
The 2019 survey showed a 10% decrease in women's satisfaction and a 1% increase in men's, highlighting the need for further adjustments.

Figure 3.3 2017 & 2019 Survey: Overall Experience by Gender
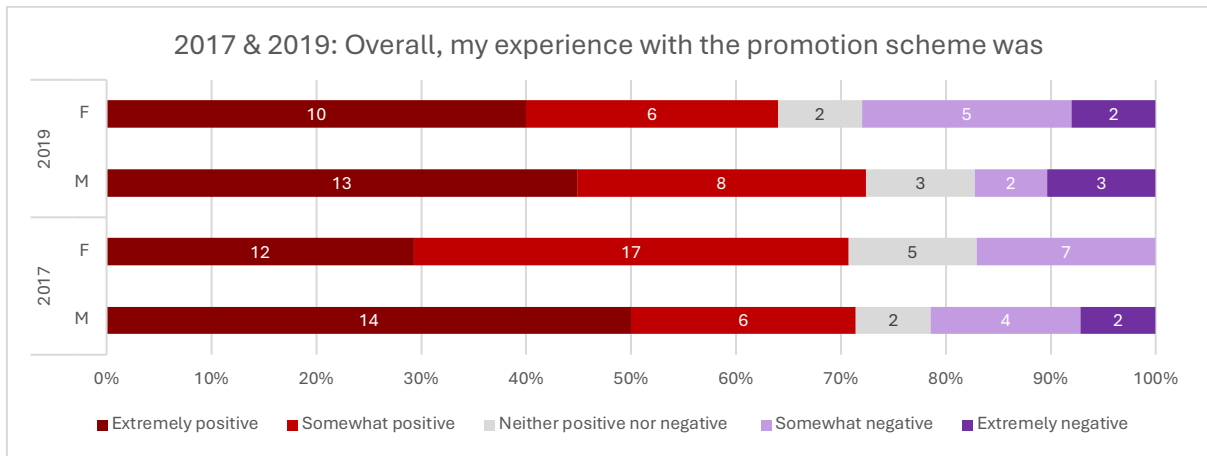
Most respondents agreed that the promotion scheme recognized the diversity of academic work and was tailored to individual strengths.

Figure 3.4 2017 & 2019 Survey: Scheme Strength by Gender
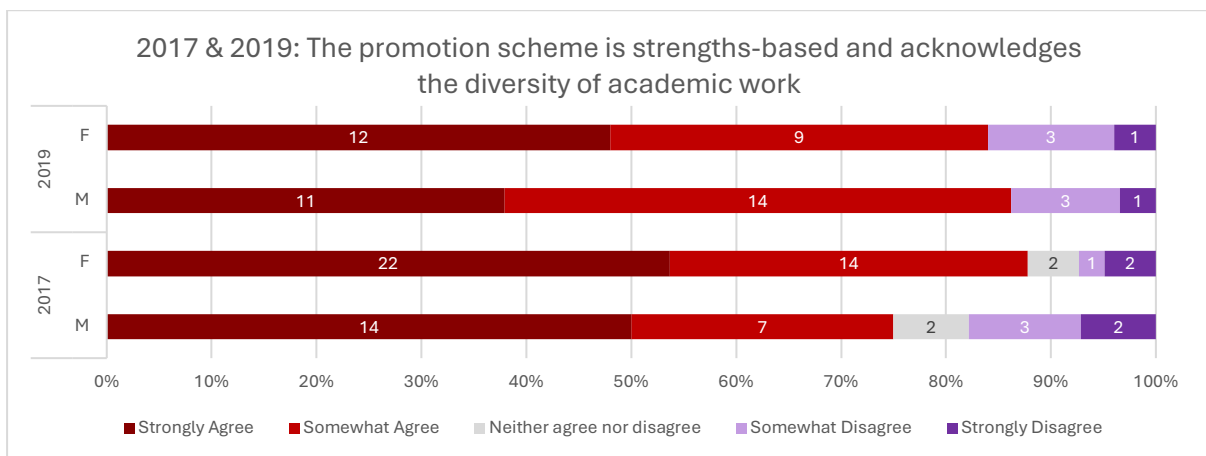
2017 Feedback

The 2017 survey praised the promotion scheme for fairness, gender equity, and its holistic approach. However, challenges included the process being complex and lengthy, with calls for clearer guidance and streamlined forms to reduce workload.

Table 2.1 2017 Survey Feedback – Strengths

I think the changes are excellent - much fairer and much more gender equitable. I think the focus on being a good academic citizen is particularly welcome.
I found the new policy very holistic and useful for reflection. I really like Boyer's ideas and enjoyed writing the application. I thought I stood a better chance with this. I liked the application criteria - it was a way of demonstrating impact and in line with the new ERA processes
I would never have applied under the old scheme as it was too rigid. Having the Application and Integration sections opened the opportunity to demonstrate impact and skills beyond the traditional. I applaud the Leadership and Citizenship section as it acknowledges a wider range of contributions both academic and non-academic that go well beyond the standard service.
Overall, a positive experience and helpful experience for planning future goals and acknowledging achievements. Thanks, and congratulations to our colleagues that developed the new promotion scheme. It's fantastic and I have no doubt that other institutions will adopt it, too.

Table 2.2 2017 Survey Feedback – Improvement Areas

| |
|---|
| *I do understand from colleagues that this process is a huge improvement on its predecessor and congratulations are for that improvement. Nonetheless, I think the process was bewildering in its complexity and wildly excessive for its purpose.* |
| *The time frames were unnecessarily drawn-out and highly stressful. It is an almost 12-month process, which is unparalleled in other industries. The huge time lags between stages, and in particular between the interview and notification of my successful promotion were particularly difficult. I compare this to my friends and family working in other industries, and I can see no reason why it needed to be this lengthy.* |
| *Clarity about whether to include a supporting evidence document and what kind of thing might be most relevant if this supporting evidence is recommended. Further reduction on the expected length of the forms would be appreciated.* |

2019 Feedback

The 2019 survey highlighted positive feedback on the competence pathways but concerns about the lengthy process and assessments remained. Suggestions included fewer reviewers and more career-focused feedback.

Table 2.3 2019 Survey Feedback – Strengths

All the staff I dealt with, both administrative and academic, were very helpful and supportive. Thank you!
I was extremely pleased that the university adopted this more streamlined approach. I appreciated the time to wholistically assess my career to date, being considered for work relative to opportunity, and giving priority to quality of work rather than quantity.
Multiple pathways for demonstrating competence. Preparing my application was a useful exercise. I appreciated the opportunity to meet with the Dean for feedback on my unsuccessful application.
I must admit that I enjoyed compiling my promotion application. I didn't realise how much I had contributed as a university academic, and it made me very proud of my career so far.

Table 2.4 2019 Survey Feedback – Improvement Areas

Reduce number of peers, nominated and external reviewers--we are not in line with international standards. We are over assessing and asking too much from too many.
Feedback must be actionable. It should be oriented towards career activities and performance rather than just about the application as a genre of writing.
The process was not a positive experience for me as I was not successful. It was time consuming to write and the assessment process dragged on over such a long period of time. I am especially concerned about the time we request from nominated and confidential external reviewers relative to the weight that seems to be given to these assessments.
Generally, I think it was a good experience but still a lot of work for very busy academics.

Assessment Process

The MQ Academic Promotion process involves a three-stage points-based assessment: self-assessment, pre-interview panel, and post-interview panel. Analysis of scores by gender between 2017-2019 revealed men generally rated their performance higher in Discovery, Leadership, and Citizenship, while women rated themselves higher in Application. Overall, women's self-assessments were closer to the average score (2.38) compared to men's (2.31), indicating women may be more balanced in self-evaluation, whereas men tend to be more optimistic.

Figure 4.1 Self-Assessment by Criteria

Figure 4.1 Self-Assessment by Criteria

Self Assessment (2017-19)
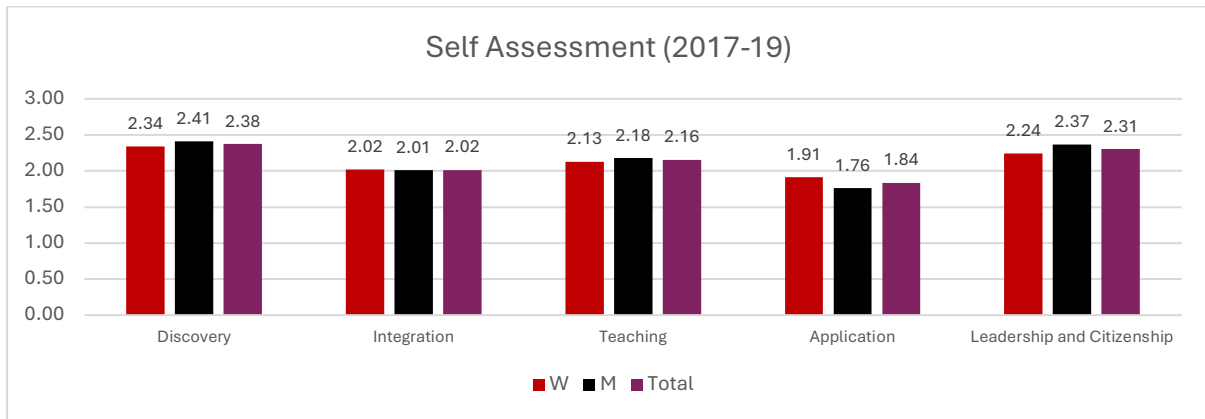
Women's self-assessments are closer to their final scores, with variances from -0.03 to -0.22, compared to men's variances of -0.07 to -0.39. Men, especially in Leadership and Citizenship (-0.39), tend to overestimate their performance more than women.

Figure 4.2 Self-Assessment and Final Scores – Variance by Criteria

Self Assessment vs Final Scores - Variance (2017-19)
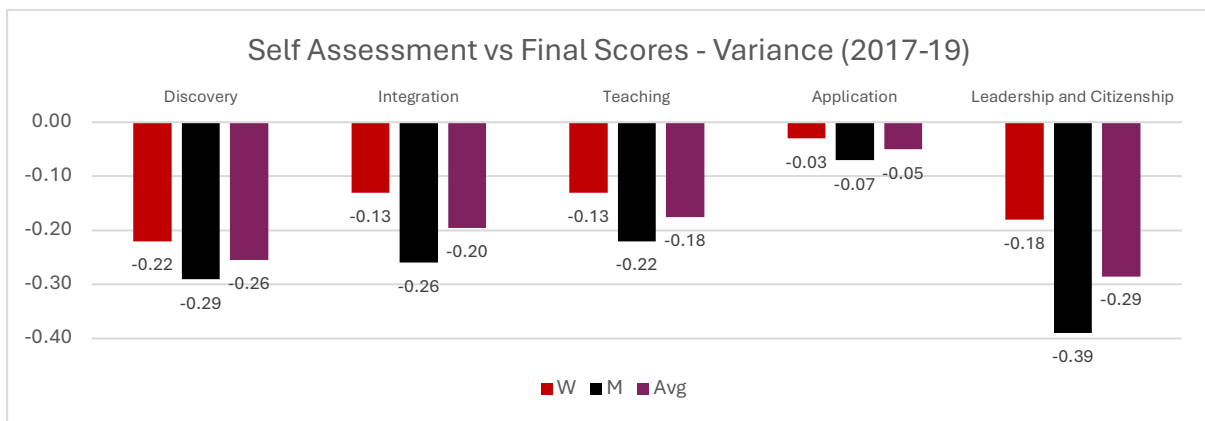
Despite higher self-assessments, men achieved lower final scores from 2017 to 2019, suggesting the evaluation process is impartial and women's self-assessments more accurately reflect their performance.

Figure 4.3 Final Scores

Assessment Final Score
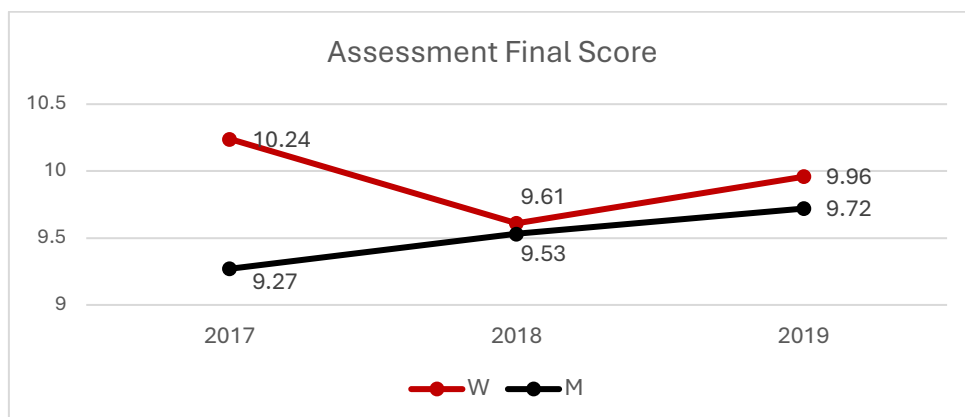
Academic Pipeline

The final metric was gender balance in the academic pipeline. Alongside rising application and success rates for women, women representation at Levels C and D increased by 2%.

Figure 5.1 2017 Academic Pipeline 2017[2]   *Figure 5.2 Academic Pipeline 2019*
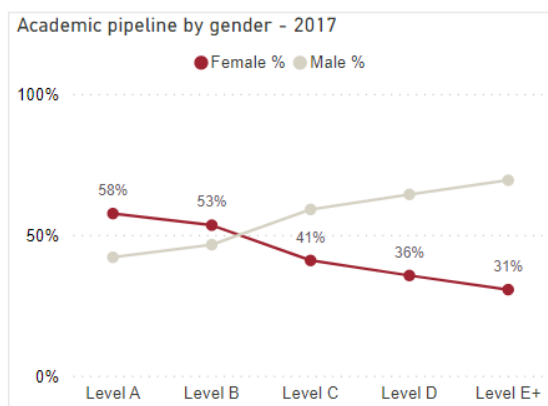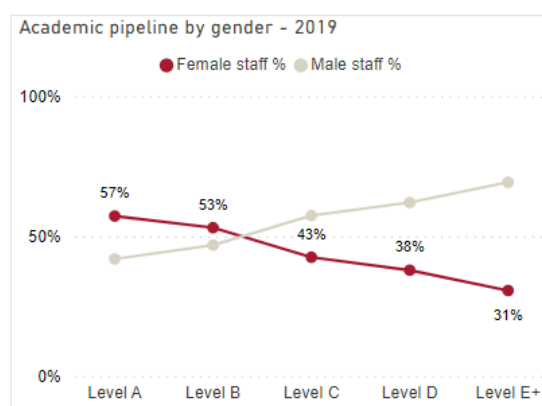
ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

Based on the review of Academic Promotion data and feedback, the University implemented two targeted actions to enhance the effectiveness and equity of the promotions process.

1) **Upgrades to the Academic Promotion process** (*ASBAS Action Plan 4.2 and 4.3: simplify the application process, introduce tailored information sessions and enhance evaluation*)

Table 3.1 Academic Promotion Process Review and Upgrade – Actions in 2019-2020

Timeline	Initiative	Description of Changes
2019-2020	**Academic Promotion Process review and upgrade**	In 2019, Macquarie University reviewed its academic promotions process. The review involved data analysis, including gender equity outcomes, and qualitative feedback from panel members and applicants. Several changes were made to streamline the process: • **Scoring:** The previous 0–3-point system was adjusted to allow an additional point in Teaching for Teaching and Leadership job family, supporting staff in teaching-focused roles. This better aligned the promotion process with new Academic Job Families introduced in

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[2] *Pipeline and promotion pool data points used in this document are data snapshots as of 31 March each year, in alignment with the annualised analytics schedule of Macquarie University.*

| | | 2019 i.e. Teaching and Research Academic, Teaching and Leadership Academic, and Technical/Industry/Commercial Academic. |

- **Applications:** The previous system required a narrative section of up to 15 pages, a structured CV, and optional evidence. The new system streamlined this to an 8-page narrative and a free-form CV with suggested headings.
- **Referees:** The number of required referees was reduced from four to two, with an emphasis on considering referees outside academia when appropriate.
- **Exemptions process:** There were two important amendments. Applicants who were granted exemption to apply in the current round (e.g. with less than 2 years of service) are now required to attach evidence of exemption with their application; and generally, exemption to apply for promotion will not be granted to applicants with less than 12 months of service at their current level.
- **Annual workshops and information sessions** to support the promotion process these were updated in 2019 to include information about the revised process. These sessions have been successful, offered both in-person and via Zoom during COVID-19, with online recordings for ongoing reference. Additionally, annual training and refresher sessions are held for Assessment Committee Members to maintain excellence and mitigate bias in selection.

2) Upgrade of the annual performance process *(ASBAS Action Plan 4.4: revamp and align the annual performance with the promotion scheme)*

Table 3.2 Review and Launch of the new Performance Process in 2021

| Timeline	Initiative	Description of Changes
2021	**Review of the annual Performance process and shift from PDR to DPR**	ASBAS revealed that the old Performance Development Review (PDR) was inconsistently applied and misaligned with the new promotion process. In response, the University introduced the Development and Performance Review (DPR) system in 2021, aligning with annual goals and the promotion process. The DPR process prioritises development and reflective discussions around contributions, achievements, and learning. It aligns with the Academic Promotion process, incorporating the five pillars of academic scholarship and promotion criteria. During the annual DPR, Academic Staff assess their contributions, provide ratings for the five pillars of scholarship, set priorities for the coming years, indicate intentions to apply for promotion, and identify areas for development. The process aims to support academic career success and diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace. The new DPR process allows system-based accumulation of evidence over time making promotion application submission and collecting evidence faster and more streamlined. There is also a clearer connection between performance, development, achievement, and academic mobility.

OUTCOMES

Achieving gender balance in the academic workforce is a key goal for Macquarie University, with a fair promotion process central to this effort. Seven years of data now drive continuous improvements in the promotion process and career support. The analysis below underscores the lasting impact of systemic changes from 2017 and 2019, highlighting Academic Promotions, the DPR program, and broader university metrics.

Application and Success Rates - Overall

Following the 2019 review, application rates remained high overall, with a slight dip due to COVID-19 in 2021. Women's applications remained relatively stable from 2020 to 2023, while the gender-diverse category reached 25% in 2021. Women's and men's application rates held steady at 12% and 11%, respectively, indicating ongoing progress and increased recognition of gender diversity.

Figure 6.1 Applications and Application Rates by Year[3]

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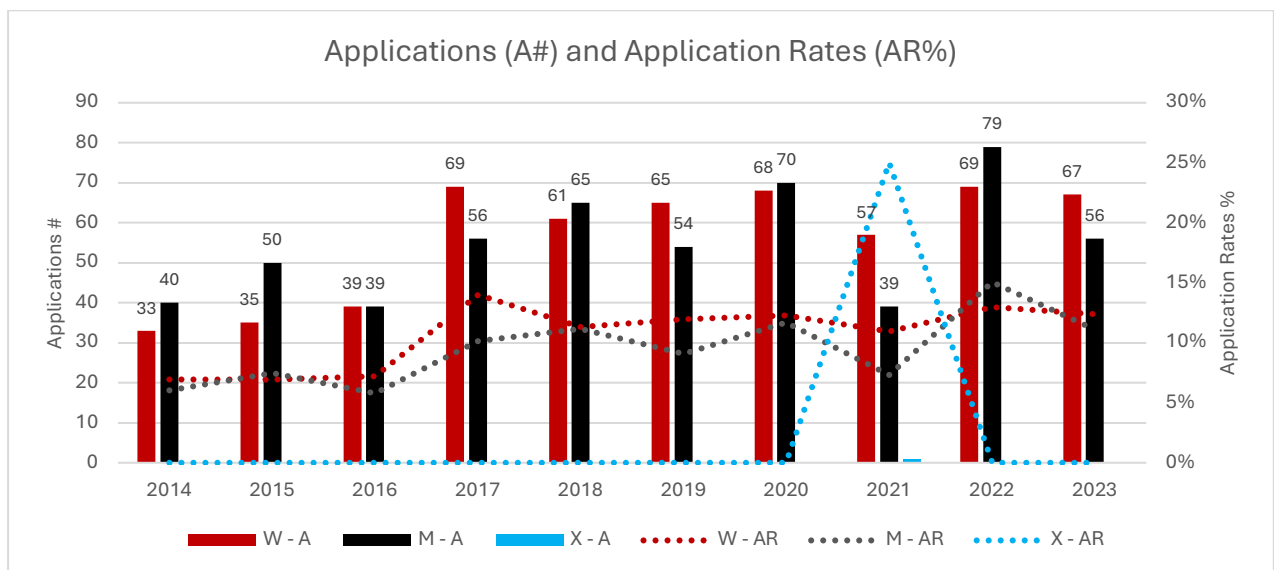
[3] *Category 'X' pertains to gender-diverse staff and is voluntary, so it may not fully reflect the number of gender-diverse employees at Macquarie University. As awareness of the LGBTQIA+ community has grown, more individuals have begun to self-identify in recent years, which explains their underrepresentation in past data.*

Figure 6.2 Applications and Application Rates by Period[4]
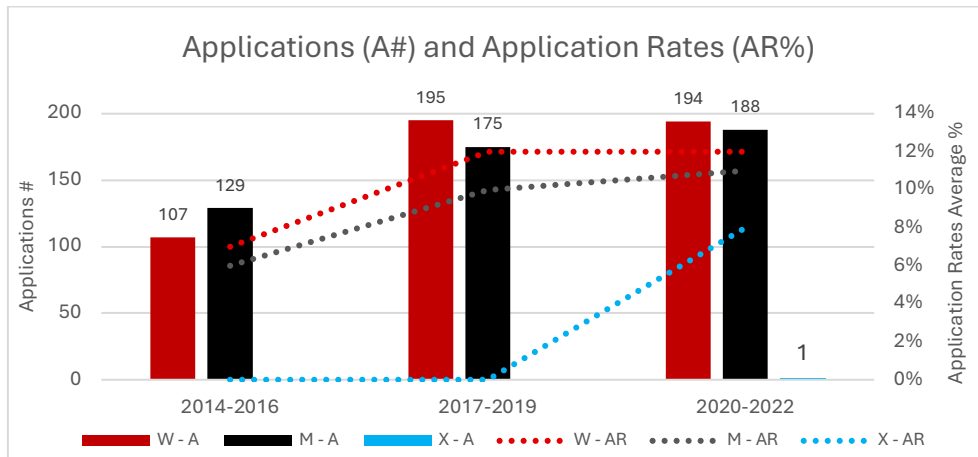
The number of successful applications and application rates for both women and men remained relatively stable between 2017–2019 and 2020–2022. Successful applications have closely tracked overall application levels, with a slight dip in 2021. By 2023, success rates had reached 76% for women and 75% for men, reflecting progress and a narrowing gender gap.

Figure 6.3 Successful and Success Rates by Year

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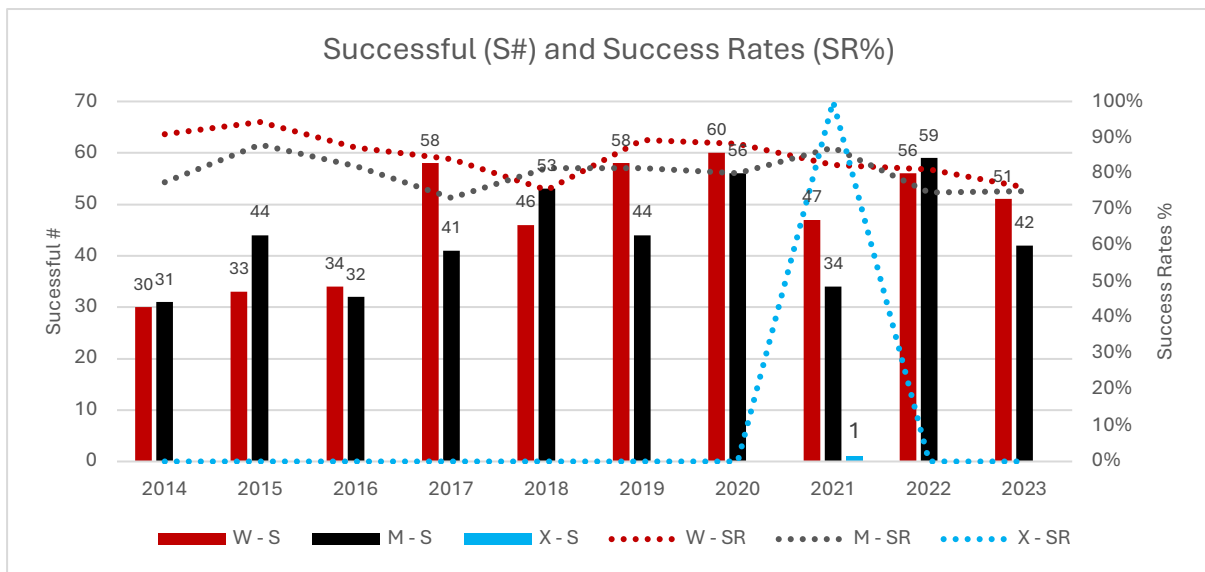
[4] *Charts displaying trends across this Cygnet are aggregated into three-year periods to illustrate the impact over time, concluding with 2022 data.*

Figure 6.4 Successful and Success Rates by Period
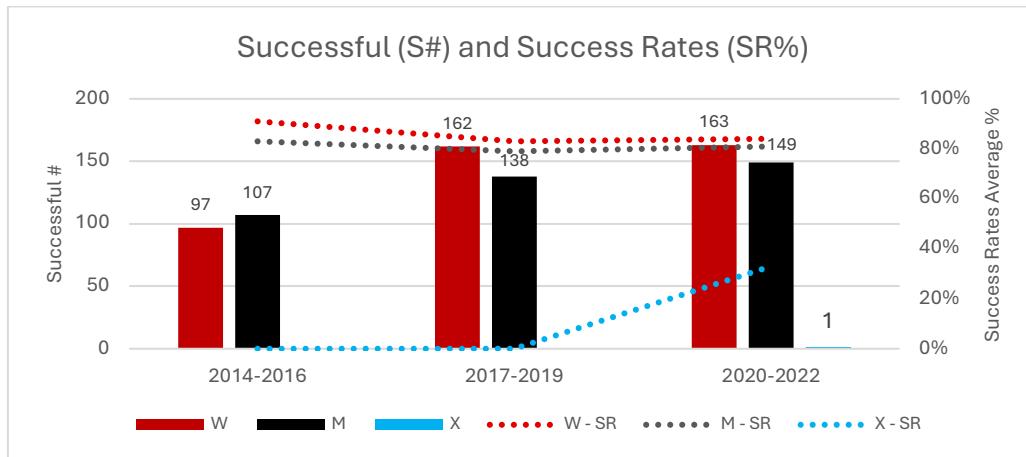
Pool and Applications

From 2014 to 2020, women made up about 48% and men 52% of the applicant pool. Since 2017, women's representation in promotions generally exceeded their pool proportion, peaking at 59% in 2021. The introduction of gender-diverse staff (X) in 2021, though small, indicates progress in diversity. Overall, these trends show improvements in equity and inclusion in the promotion process.

Figure 6.5 Available Pool and Applicants % Comparison by Gender and Year
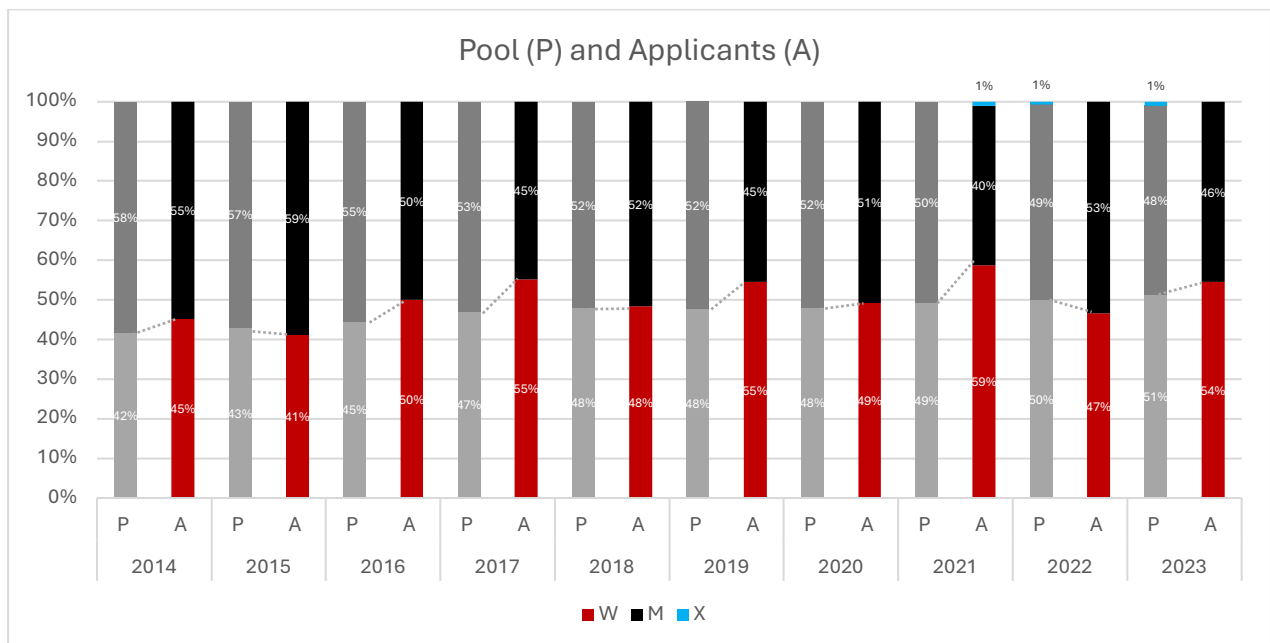
Applicants vs Successful

From 2014 to 2020, applications from women grew from 33 to 68 and from men from 40 to 70, with success rates similar by 2020. From 2021 to 2023, successful outcomes for both genders fluctuated slightly. Overall, women's success has improved, though recent trends show variability for both genders.

Figure 6.6 Applications and Successful by Year
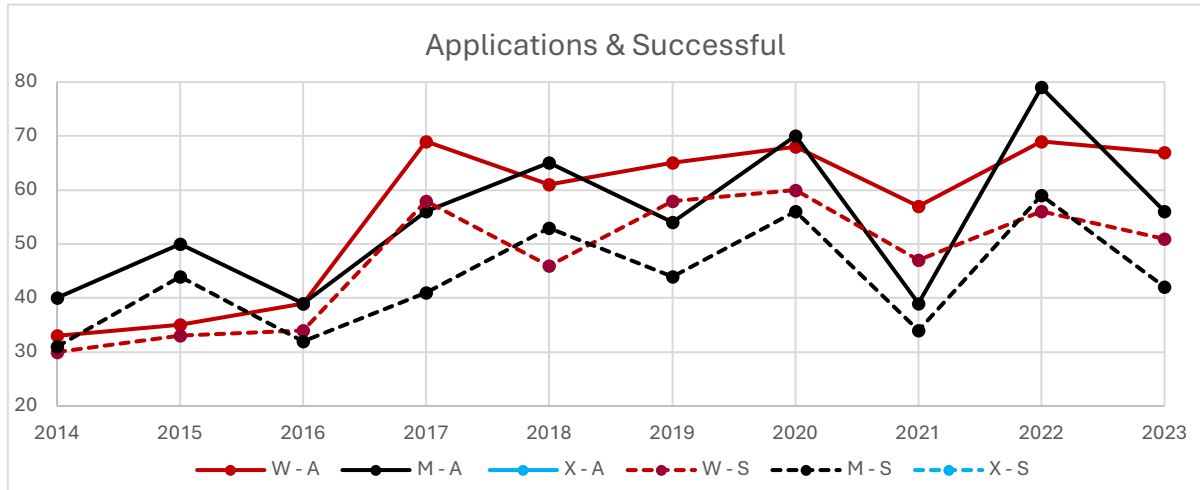
Table 4.1 Applications and Successful by Year

Year	W - A	W - S	M - A	M - S	X - A	X - S
2014	33	30	40	31		
2015	35	33	50	44		
2016	39	34	39	32		
2017	69	58	56	41		
2018	61	46	65	53		
2019	65	58	54	44		
2020	68	60	70	56		
2021	57	47	39	34	1	1
2022	69	56	79	59		
2023	67	51	56	42		

Application and Success Rates – By Level

From 2014 to 2022, women's applications grew by 75% at Level B and by 92% at Level C, with rates increasing from 5% to 10% and 12% to 15%, respectively. Men's applications varied, especially at Level B. The introduction of gender-diverse staff in 2020-2022, with a 25% rate at Level C, underscores progress in gender equity.

Figure 6.7 Applications by Level and Period

Figure 6.7 Applications by Level and Period
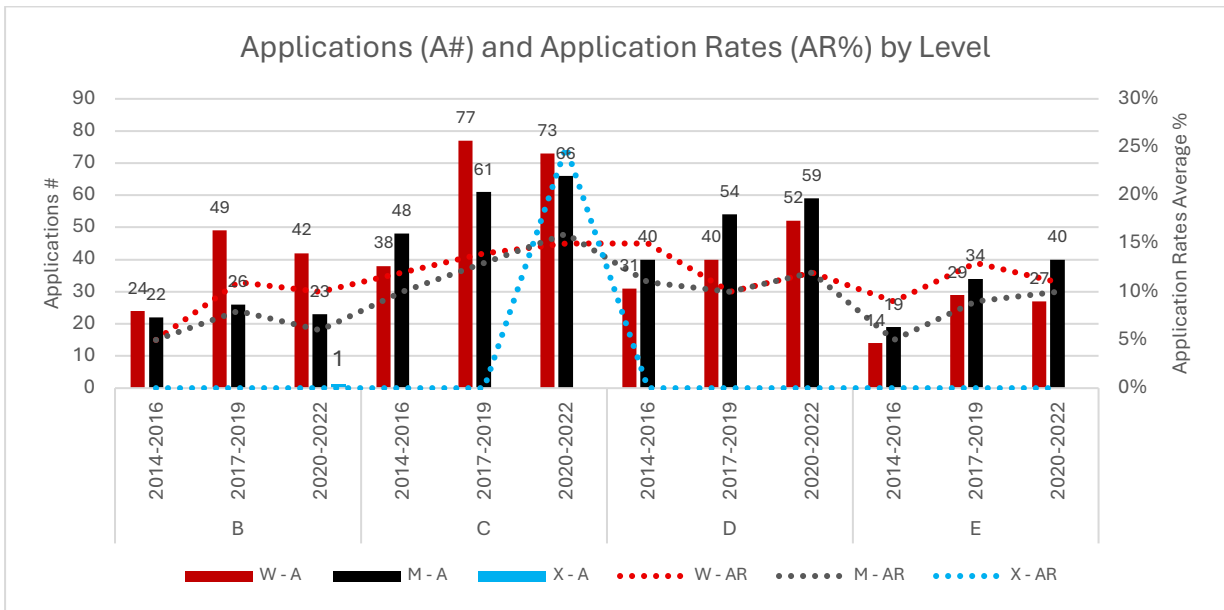
From 2014 to 2022, women's success rates varied but generally remained strong. At Level B, successes rose from 21 to 47, then slightly fell to 39, with women at 92% and men at 88%. Women peaked at 64 successes in Level C, compared to 54 for men. At Level D, women's successes increased from 26 to 39 with a 74% success rate, while men stayed at 43. Successes at Level E dropped to 22 for women with an 80% rate, while men had 33 successes with an 81% rate. Gender-diverse applicants achieved 33% success rate in 2020-2022, reflecting progress in inclusion.

Figure 6.8 Successful by Level and Period

Figure 6.8 Successful by Level and Period
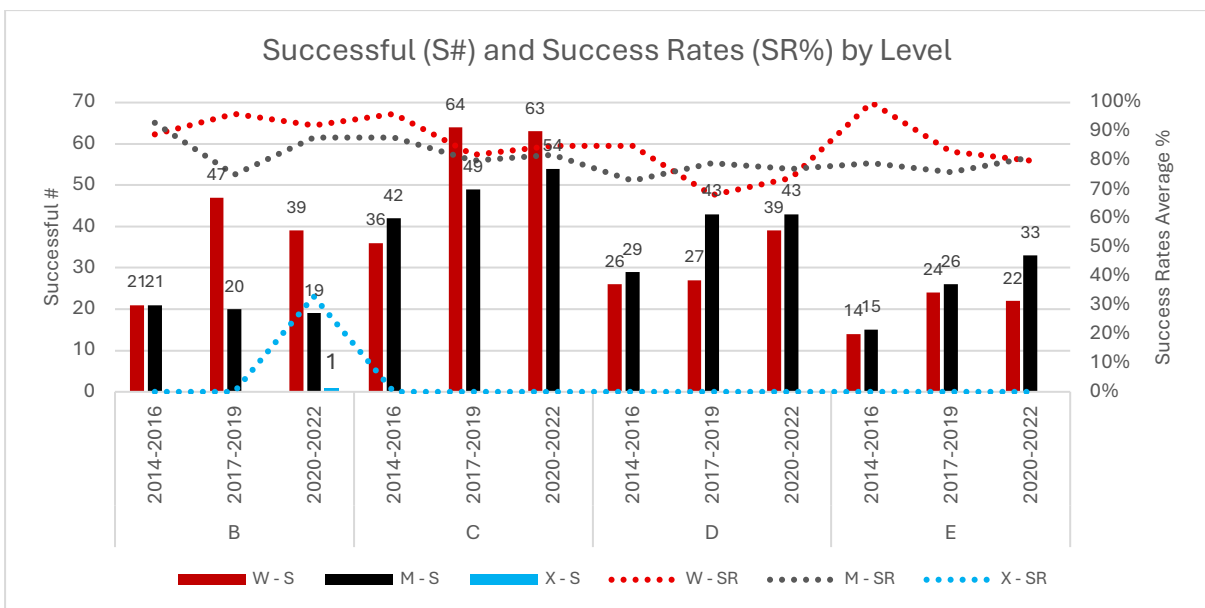
Application and Success Rates – STEMM v HASS

From 2014 to 2022, women's STEMM applications rose significantly, though success rates slightly declined. Men's applications grew with stable success rates. In HASS, women's applications increased, but success rates fell, while men's applications and success rates remained steady.

Figure 7.1 STEMM Applications by Period

STEMM Applications (A#) and Application Rates (AR%)
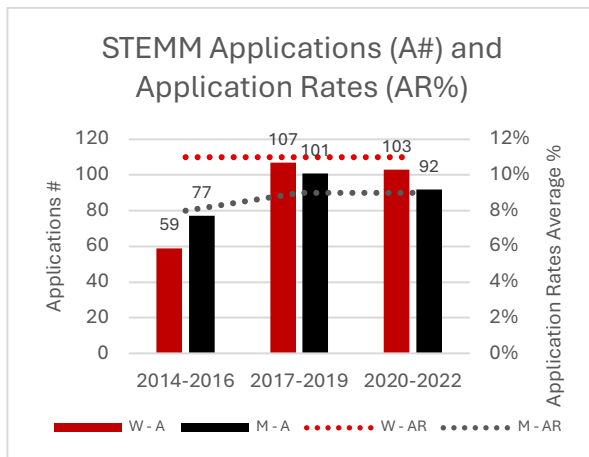
Figure 7.2 STEMM Successful by Period

STEMM Successful (S#) and Success Rates (SR%)
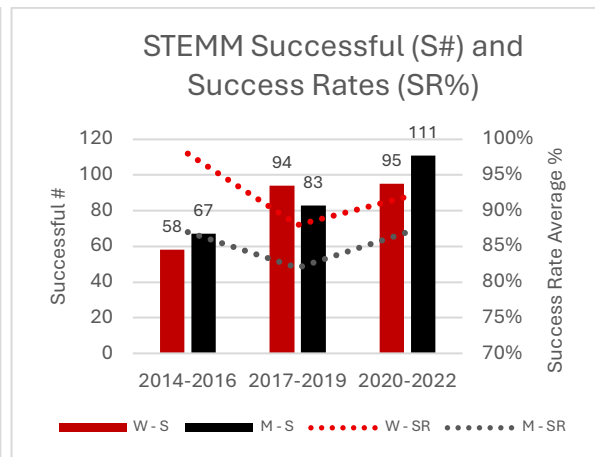
Figure 7.3 STEMM Applications by Period

HASS Applications (A#) and Application Rates (AR%)
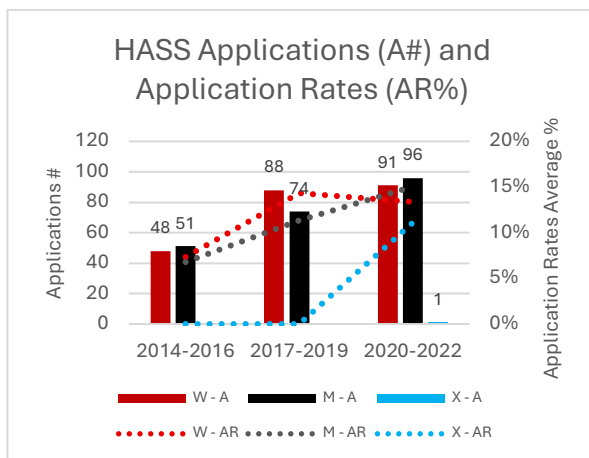
Figure 7.4 STEMM Successful by Period

HASS Successful (S#) and Success Rates (SR%)
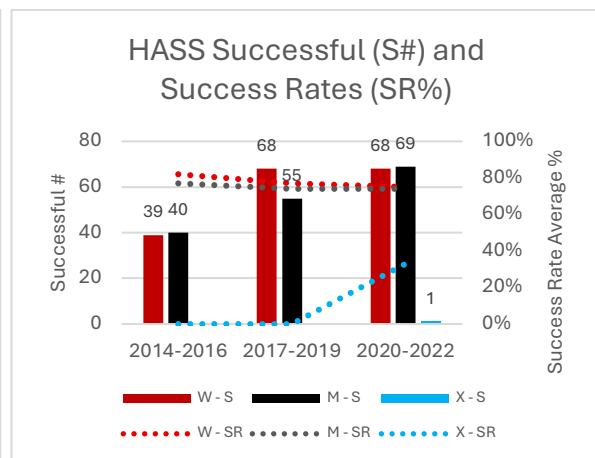
Qualitative feedback

Since 2017, the University's surveys averaged a 48% response rate. In 2022, rates fell to 25% for women and 30% for men, likely due to post-pandemic factors. By 2023, overall responses improved to 54%, with women at 54% and men at 38%, reflecting successful re-engagement.

Figure 8.1 2017-2023 Survey Respondents

Feedback Survey Respondents
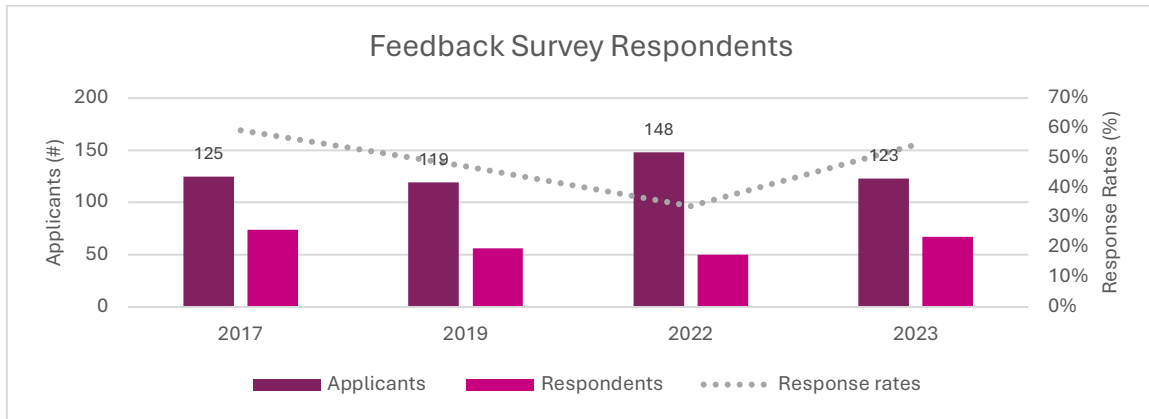
Figure 8.2 2017-2023 Survey Respondents by Gender

Feedback Survey Respondents
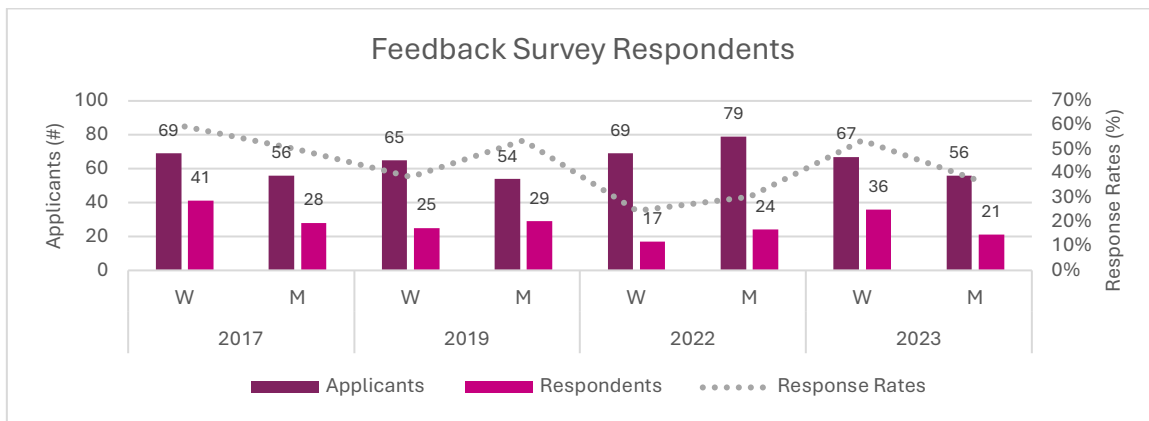
From 2017 to 2023, overall satisfaction remained high, though negative feedback increased slightly, especially among women. This trend highlights areas for improvement.

Figure 8.3 2017-2023 Surveys: Overall Experience by Gender

2017-2023: Overall, my experience with the promotion scheme was
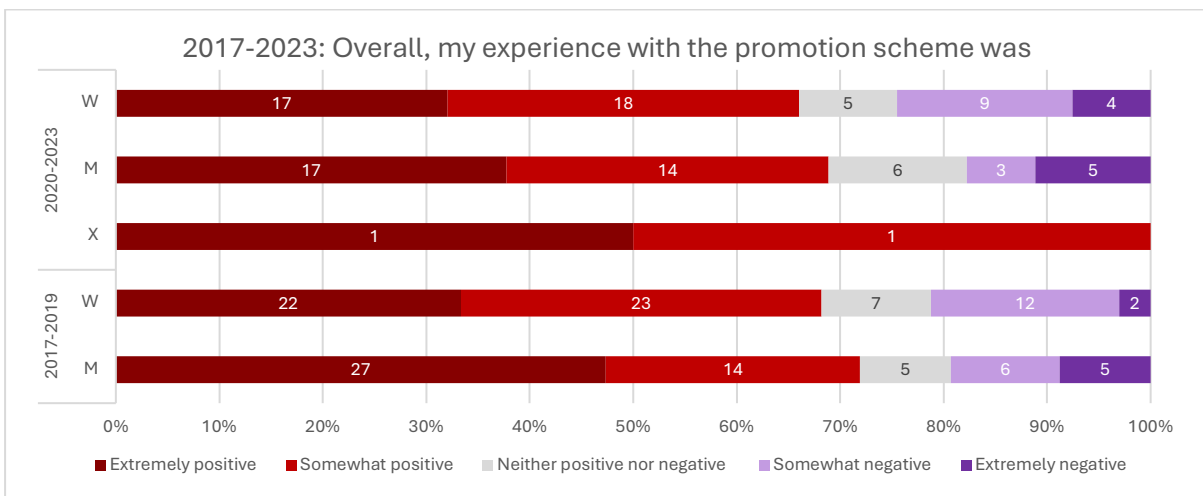
Support for the promotion scheme was high from 2017-2019 but fell from 86% to 68% for women and 80% to 71% for men from 2020-2023, indicating a need for further improvements.

Figure 8.4 2017-2023 Surveys: Scheme Strength by Gender

Figure 8.4 2017-2023 Surveys: Scheme Strength by Gender
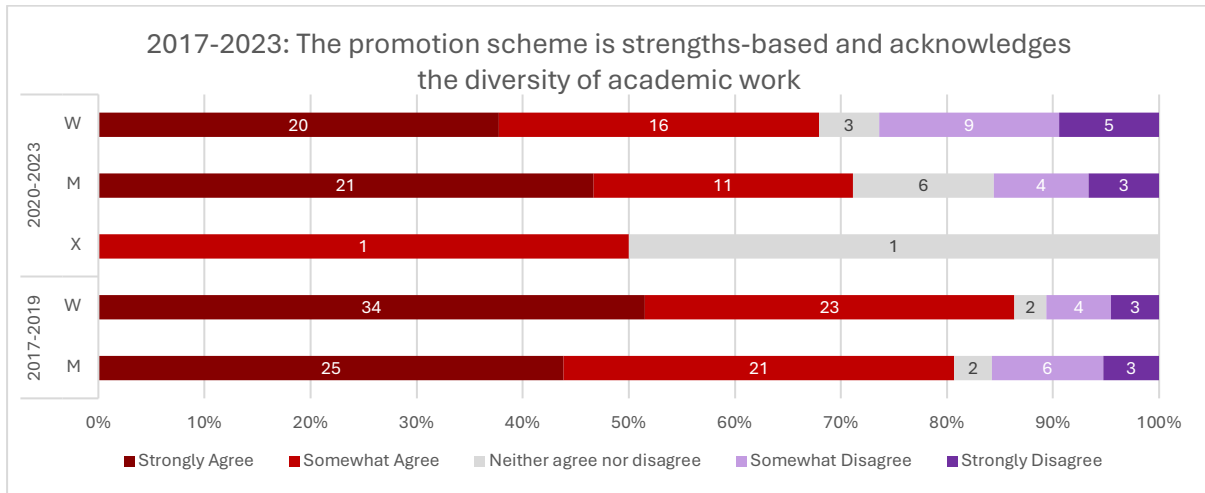
2022 Feedback

The 2022 survey noted improved application support but highlighted inconsistent departmental help and suggested better feedback on applications and interviews.

Table 5.1 2022 Survey Feedback – Strengths

There was a lot of support in my department. The clearer application process made it easier for me to submit a strong, timely application.
It is good to start with your career development review files. Interview panel was very supportive.
What did you like most about the promotion scheme? Top 3 responses from all applicants: 1. *Application process was clear (47.5%)* 2. *Consultations and guidance from my Head of Department (47.5%)* 3. *Application forms were easy to use (45%)*

Table 5.2 2022 Survey Feedback – Improvement Areas

The interviewers were lovely and encouraging but the process was a bit intimidating.
There is inconsistent support offered across schools and departments. For example, some departments host mock interviews, whereas others do not. I think this is something Faculties should be offering to ensure equity of access to preparation resources.
What could be improved? Top 3 responses from all applicants: 1. *Promotion criteria (50%)* 2. *Feedback I received on my application and interview (40%)* 3. *Ease to make a case for promotion (37.5%)*

Assessment Process

Over time, men typically rate themselves higher in most areas except Application, where women score slightly better. Self-assessment scores are generally higher than panel scores, but women achieve better final ratings. This indicates promotion outcomes are fair, with women benefiting from the opportunity to present and respond during the process.

Figure 9.1 Self-Assessment by Criteria
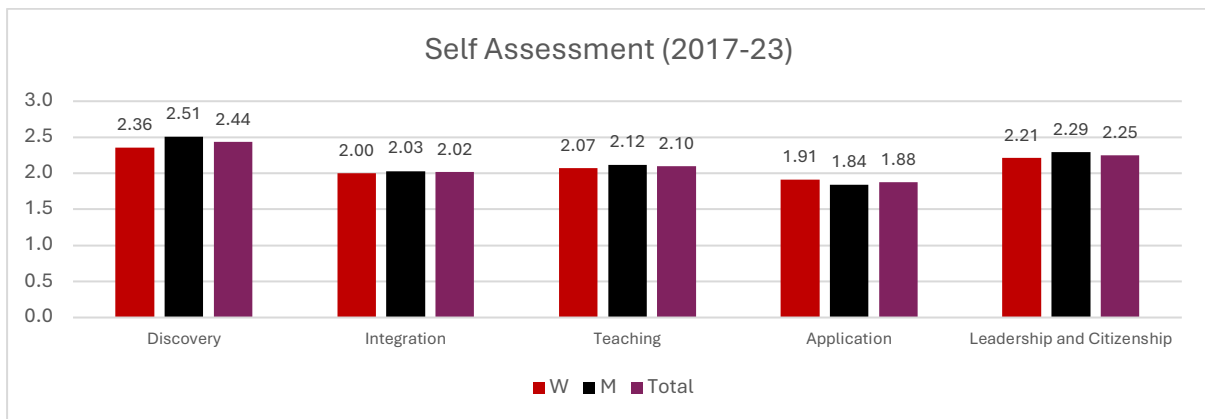
Women's self-assessment scores align more closely with their final scores than men's. Men's variance, particularly in Leadership and Citizenship (-0.41), is larger, suggesting they may overestimate their performance more than women.

Figure 9.2 Self-Assessment vs Final Scores – Variance by Criteria
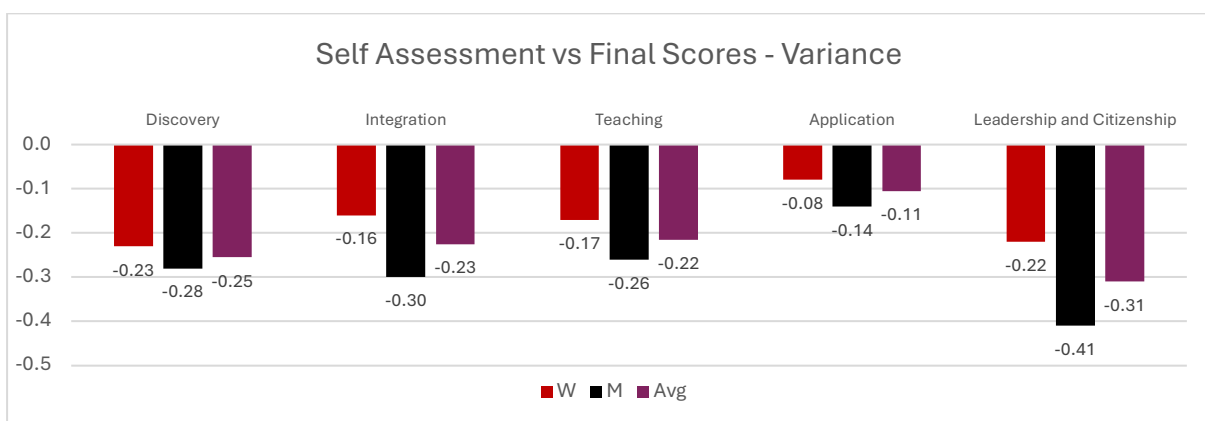
Over time, women's scores fell from 10.24 to 9.35, with declines in 2018 and 2020, though they improved in 2019 and 2022. Men's scores stayed steady at 9.23, highlighting a need to address the decreasing trend in women's scores.

Figure 9.3 Final Scores
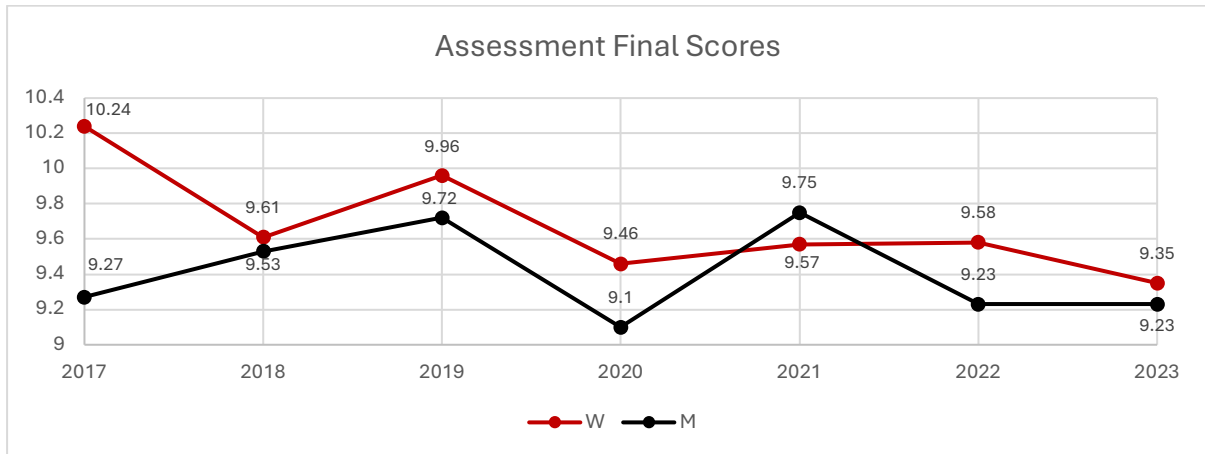
DPR Completion

Since the new DPR process started, 52% of academic staff have participated. Recent data includes gender-diverse participation and allows for future intersectional analysis. The 2021-2022 DPR Survey found that 80% discussed work with supervisors, 84% talked about career and promotion, and 75% explored academic pillars, with two-thirds finding these discussions useful.

Figure 10.1 DPR Completion – Overall (2021-23)
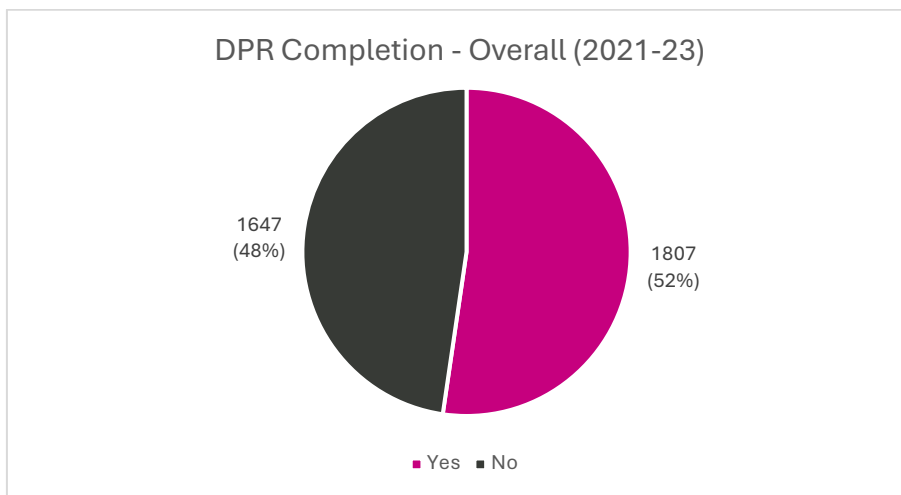
Figure 10.2 PDR/DPR Completion Percentage by Period
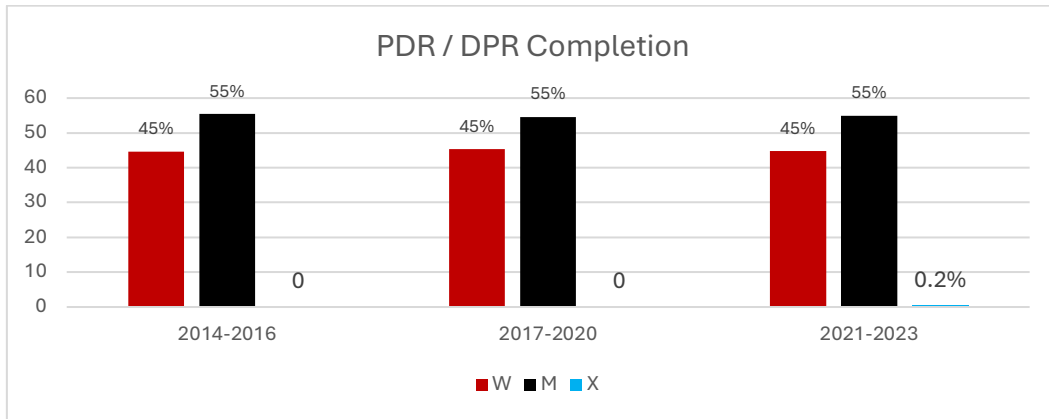
Academic Pipeline

Since refining the Academic Promotion process in 2019, MQ has improved gender balance. From 2020 to 2021, gender representation shifted slightly across levels, with increases at Levels C and D and a decrease at Level E due to post-Covid redundancies. Data for 2022 and 2023 shows continued progress, with Levels B, C, D, and E, at 58%, 50%, 41%, and 34%, respectively.

Figure 11.1 Academic Pipeline 2020
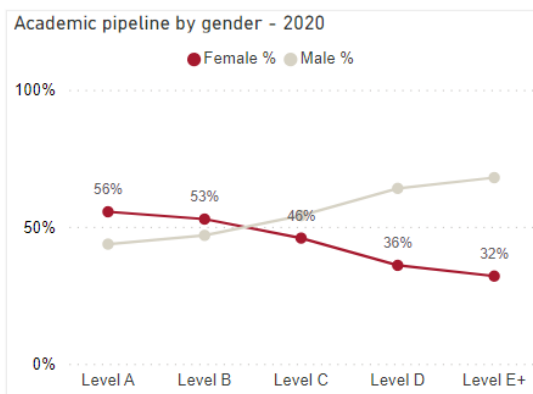
Figure 11.2 Academic Pipeline 2021
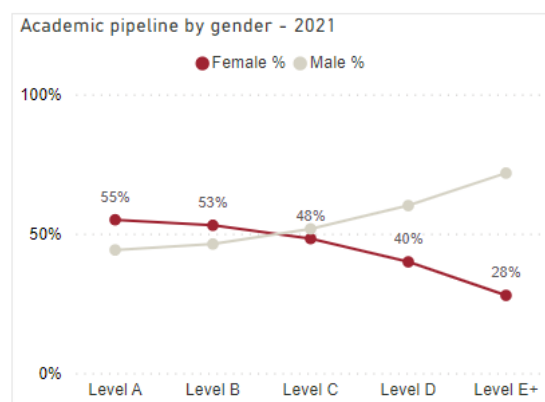
Figure 11.3 Academic Pipeline 2022
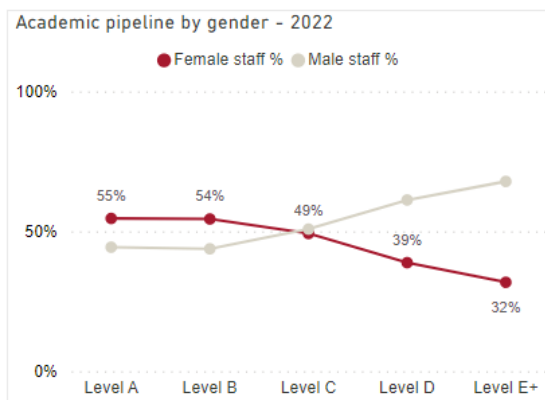
Figure 11.4 Academic Pipeline 2023
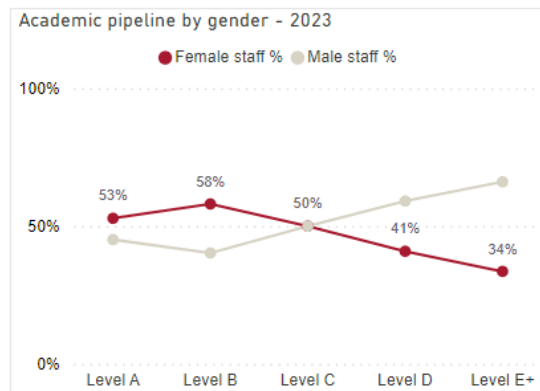
The 2023 pipeline data underscores our commitment to gender equity, as shown by the narrowing scissor graph and our dedication to equitable opportunities. This progress demonstrates MQ's effective efforts in advancing gender balance.

Figure 11.5 Academic Pipeline 2023 – Year End Data
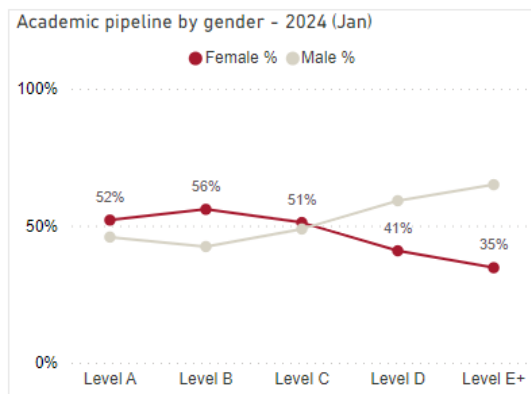
STEMM and HASS Pipeline

In HASS, women's representation increased across Levels B to E from 2017 to 2023, notably rising by 10% at Level B and 8% at Level C. In STEMM disciplines, women's representation grew in Levels B to D, with an increase of 12% at Level C and 4% at Level D.

Figure 12.1 HASS Academic Pipeline 2017   *Figure 12.2 HASS Academic Pipeline 2023*
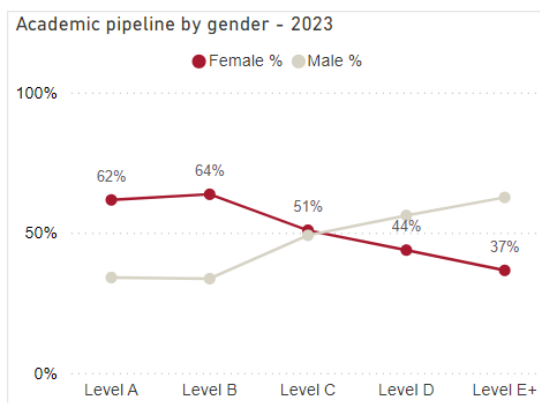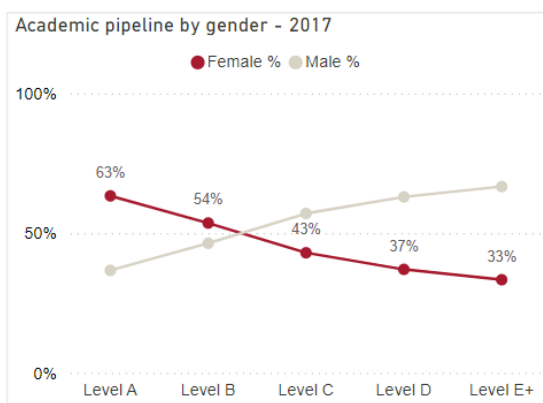
Figure 12.3 STEMM Academic Pipeline 2017   *Figure 12.4 STEMM Academic Pipeline 2023*
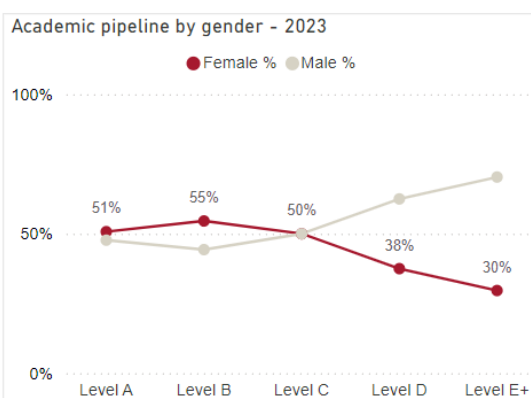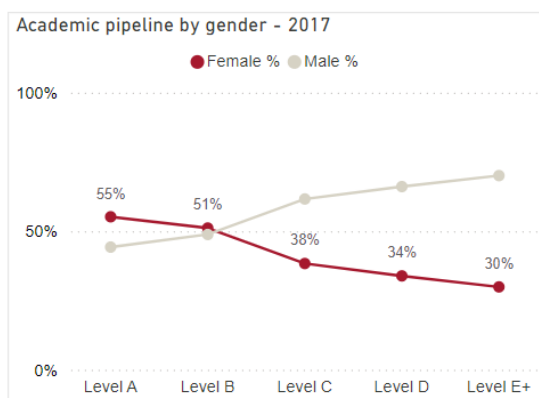
IMPACT

Statistical Impact

The Academic Promotion process has been a key focus in the MQ Gender Equity Strategy. The University has reshaped the process, added support strategies, and enhanced Talent and Development infrastructure to drive priorities. These initiatives have contributed to significant enhancement in career opportunity for academic staff and increased gender parity across the Academic Pipeline, particularly at the point from Level B to C and C over the past seven years.

Academic Staff Experience Impact

Over time, feedback surveys show that 66% of applicants have had a positive experience with the Academic Promotion scheme, and 74% believe it values the diversity in academic work.

Figure 13.1 Overall Experience   *Figure 13.2 Scheme Strength*

2017-2023: Overall, my experience with the promotion scheme was

Extremely positive	86 — 35%
Somewhat positive	76 — 31%
Neither positive nor negative	28 — 11%
Somewhat negative	36 — 15%
Extremely negative	21 — 9%

2017-2023: The promotion scheme is strengths-based and acknowledges the diversity of academic work

Strongly Agree	103 — 42%
Somewhat Agree	80 — 32%
Neither agree nor disagree	17 — 7%
Somewhat Disagree	28 — 11%
Strongly Disagree	19 — 8%

The 2023 survey found the promotion scheme generally positive. Information sessions were praised, and the process is considered fair and comprehensive. Key improvement areas included clearer evidence requirements, better support for candidates on leave, more diverse panels, and improved feedback on applications and interviews.

Table 6.1 2023 Survey Feedback – Strengths

Overall, a positive and motivating experience. There could be more clarity on the difference between Level D and E but the Zoom sessions on preparing for the interview were excellent. A fair and well-documented process.

I had an extremely positive experience with the interview. I felt the panel's questions were considered and fair and I was thrilled to have had the opportunity to speak to my work and my career plans. I also appreciated the panel's post-interview feedback, which has helped me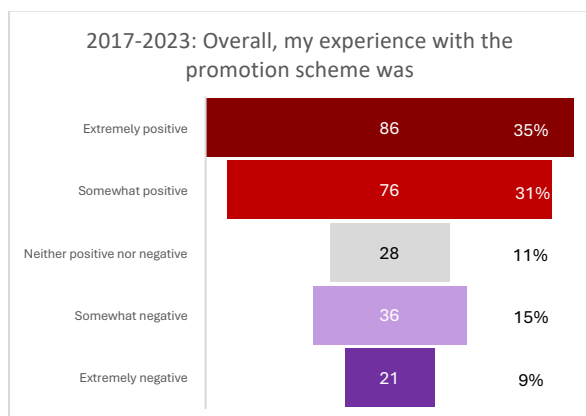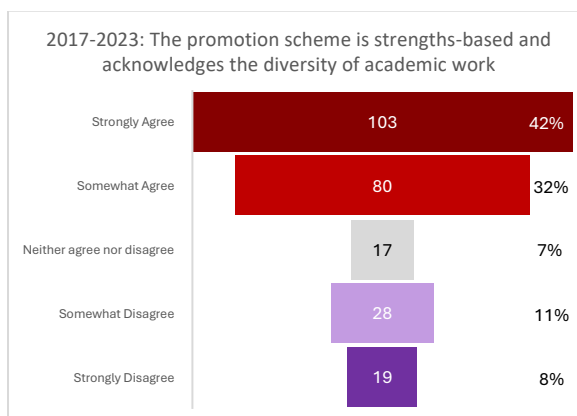 start planning for my next promotion application. Unfortunately, I tested positive for COVID on the day of my interview. I was very grateful that the promotion team was able to assist with switching my face-to-face interview to a virtual one. Many thanks to the promotion team!

Moving to the 5-pillar promotion scheme has been very beneficial, both in terms of recognising the work done outside research/teaching, and in supporting colleagues to frame their work around a broader understanding of academic work. It has prompted people to consider broader avenues to engage with the world beyond academia and bring that world into what we do here.

What did you like most about the promotion scheme? Top 3 responses from all applicants:

1. *Application process was clear (46%)*
2. *Consultations and guidance from my HoD (42%)*
3. *Interview experience and opportunity to speak to my work (42%)*

Table 6.2 2023 Survey Feedback – Improvement Areas

There really needs to be more support for candidates going for promotion while on leave (e.g. parental leave). You are at a distinct disadvantage and opportunities to practice and receive useful advice are limited. It's worth noting to the interview panel how difficult it is to go for promotion while on leave too (e.g. heavily disrupted sleep, unpaid preparation etc). I wouldn't want to discourage anyone from going for promotion while on leave and the panel were lovely, but it was an intimidating process and there needs to be more support for people on leave who have potentially been disconnected from work for a long time.

It would be great to have an Indigenous person on the panel. There needs to be someone on the interview panel that supports the applicant, and the interview should provide the applicant with the opportunity to advocate for their promotion at the end of questions and for the applicant to ask the panel questions.

The criteria need to be more reflective/adapted to the diversity of roles and allocations within academia

What could be improved? Top 3 responses from all applicants:

1. *Feedback I received on my application and interview (48%)*
2. *Promotion criteria (36%)*
3. *Ease to make a case for promotion (30%)*

Ongoing feedback is crucial for continuously improving the promotion scheme, enhancing fairness and inclusivity, and ensuring it reflects the diverse roles of academic staff.

New DPR Process Feedback

The new DPR system, centred on the five pillars of scholarship, now aligns with promotion criteria. Transitioning to this system has been complex and time-consuming, but increasing awareness and support could further streamline the process, reducing workloads and enhancing efficiency for both staff and managers.

Table 6.3 2021-22 DPR Survey Feedback

Good opportunity to spend some time thinking of the next year, to get their CV and Sapphire profiles up to date and take stock. Great opportunity to for positive feedback both ways and a conversation on what is working or not.
I think the five-pillar structure is useful, especially since this now aligns with the structure for promotion.
It is a good idea to align the new DPR with the five pillars of scholarship underpinning promotion, however it has made the process more complex and time-consuming. If the form could be streamlined in some way to reduce the complexity, this could contribute to reducing manager and staff workloads.
The online system is not all intuitive or easy to use. The user interface is not particularly friendly. The new DPR system is far more detailed than the previous system and requires more time to fill out.

Additional outcomes and impacts

Past surveys indicate that women have historically undertaken more citizenship and service roles due to gender stereotypes, which traditional promotion models undervalue. Feedback suggests that the new promotion process has led to greater recognition of these activities, with an outcome being that more men are encouraged to take on roles in teaching, committees, and leadership. By redefining the work that is valued and rewarded, MQ's promotion scheme has created the foundation for an important cultural shift towards greater gender equality in academic workload. The impacts of this will be explored more deeply in future evaluation of the program.

FURTHER ACTIONS

Macquarie University is committed to gender equity, guided by our Workplace Gender Equity Strategy and ASBAS Action Plan. Continued monitoring of the Academic Promotions process is a priority to ensure an equitable framework is maintained, and to optimise the contribution of the process towards a gender balanced academic workforce.

Table 7.1 Academic Promotions: Further Actions and Plans

Reference	Rationale/ Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Responsible for implementing action	Accountable for action delivery	Desired Outcomes/ Targets/ Success Indicators
Data and reporting	Use evidence to drive decisions	Review existing AP data and reporting capability and identify improvement opportunities especially within the enhanced reporting capabilities for the AP Team.	2024/2025	WD&I and OD	Head of OD	Transparent reporting capability
	Provide data to leaders	Use the recently created AP Dashboard to track mobility and provide comprehensive reports on AP trends by Faculty to the Executive Group	2024/2025	WD&I and HR Business Partners	Head of HR	Regular reporting format and cadence
	Identify intersectional outcomes/ experience	Update Workday system and implement campaign to encourage staff to share diversity demographic data. Integrate intersectional analysis into reporting dashboards.	2H of 2024/ 2025	WD&I, IT, BIR	Head of HR	Intersectional D&I reporting embedded within program evaluation
Ongoing AP Process improvement	Further process improvement to meet applicants' needs	Review the AP process and identify opportunities for further improvements based on participants' feedback; incorporate feedback into design of the AP info sessions for applicants and panel members.	2H of 2024	OD and WD&I	Head of OD	Ongoing feedback collection, analysis, and actions; Improved staff satisfaction
		Integrate qualitative and quantitative D&I analysis into annual	2H of 2024, the annual	OD and WD&I	Head of OD	Continuous program improvement

		program evaluation and report outcomes at University and Faculty levels.				against D&I metrics
	Transparency and accountability on faculty level under Gender Equity Action Plan.	Track gendered promotion status and share the data on the faculty level to drive accountability locally.	2H of 2024	HR and WD&I	Head of HR	Ongoing local reporting with gendered lens; gender equity in AP metrics
Drive stronger link between the DPR and the AP Outcomes	Pillars embedded in both; DPR as a tool to support Academic Staff with the promotion preparedness	Use the annual DPR process to facilitate promotions readiness and manage expectations on career development. Encourage increased participation in the DPR process	2024/2025	OD and WD&I	Head of OD	Increased participation in DPR process by academic staff