

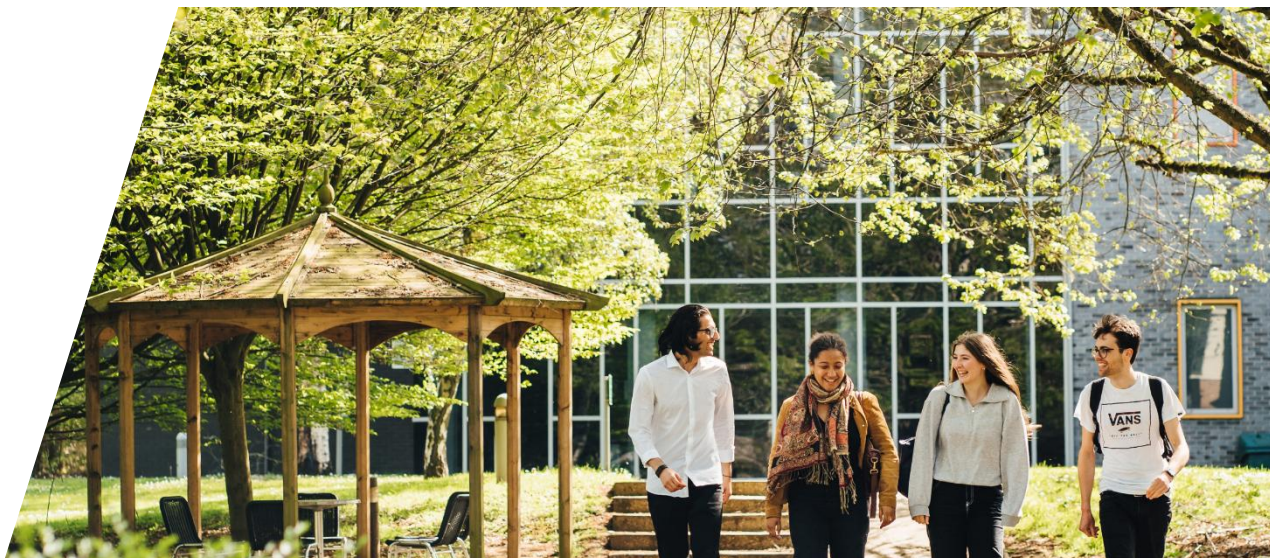


WMG, University of Warwick

Department application for Athena
Swan Silver renewal

September 2025

warwick.ac.uk/wmg





Athena Swan Silver renewal department application

Name of institution	University of Warwick
Department	WMG
Focus of department	STEM
Date of application	September 2025
Level of previous award	Silver

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

1.1 Letter of endorsement from the head of the department

Dear Review Panel,

I am pleased to endorse this submission by Warwick Manufacturing Group (WMG), University of Warwick, for Athena Swan Silver renewal and confirm that the information presented is an honest and accurate reflection of the department's progress.

Having worked at WMG for over 30 years, I have witnessed its growth, resilience, and commitment to gender equality, despite challenges faced in recent years. While WMG has achieved the Athena Swan Silver Award, the department continues to drive meaningful, structural change to ensure that equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) are embedded at all levels.

Like many STEM institutions, WMG has faced gender imbalances in senior roles, barriers to progression for women, and the challenge of fostering inclusivity in a traditionally male-dominated sector. COVID-19 further highlighted the need for enhanced flexible working policies, career support, and staff wellbeing initiatives, which have since been embedded into our long-term strategy.

From recruitment and career progression to leadership representation and student support, the department has demonstrated targeted, collaborative, and education-led solutions.

Key initiatives – including awareness training, mental health first aid training, career-accelerating programmes, wellness activities, and EDI-specific role creation – have led to improvements in gender diversity, particularly the number of female research colleagues on permanent contracts at WMG ([Appendix 2, fig. 31](#)).

We also celebrate the achievements and contributions of female colleagues and students, both internally and externally, which will only increase with the successful completion of our action plan.

Achieving Silver renewal would recognise WMG's work in advancing gender equity, not only within the department but across academia and industry. Where we have had our challenges, the renewal will give us the time we need to fulfil our ambition of applying for Gold in five years. The leadership team remains committed to ensuring that gender equality is not just a policy but a lived experience for all.

I wholeheartedly support this application and know that WMG will lead by example in fostering an inclusive, diverse, and equitable environment.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Kerry Kirwan
Dean of WMG, University of Warwick

1.2 Description of the department and its context

A multidisciplinary academic department at the University of Warwick, WMG was founded 45 years ago and is internationally recognised for enabling collaboration between academia and industry.

It is also renowned for transforming organisations and driving innovation through a unique combination of collaborative research and development, as well as pioneering education programmes.

WMG drives positive economic, societal, and environmental change by applying science, technology, and engineering to real-life problems. Originally rooted in manufacturing and materials, the department has expanded to encompass the areas of expertise featured below.

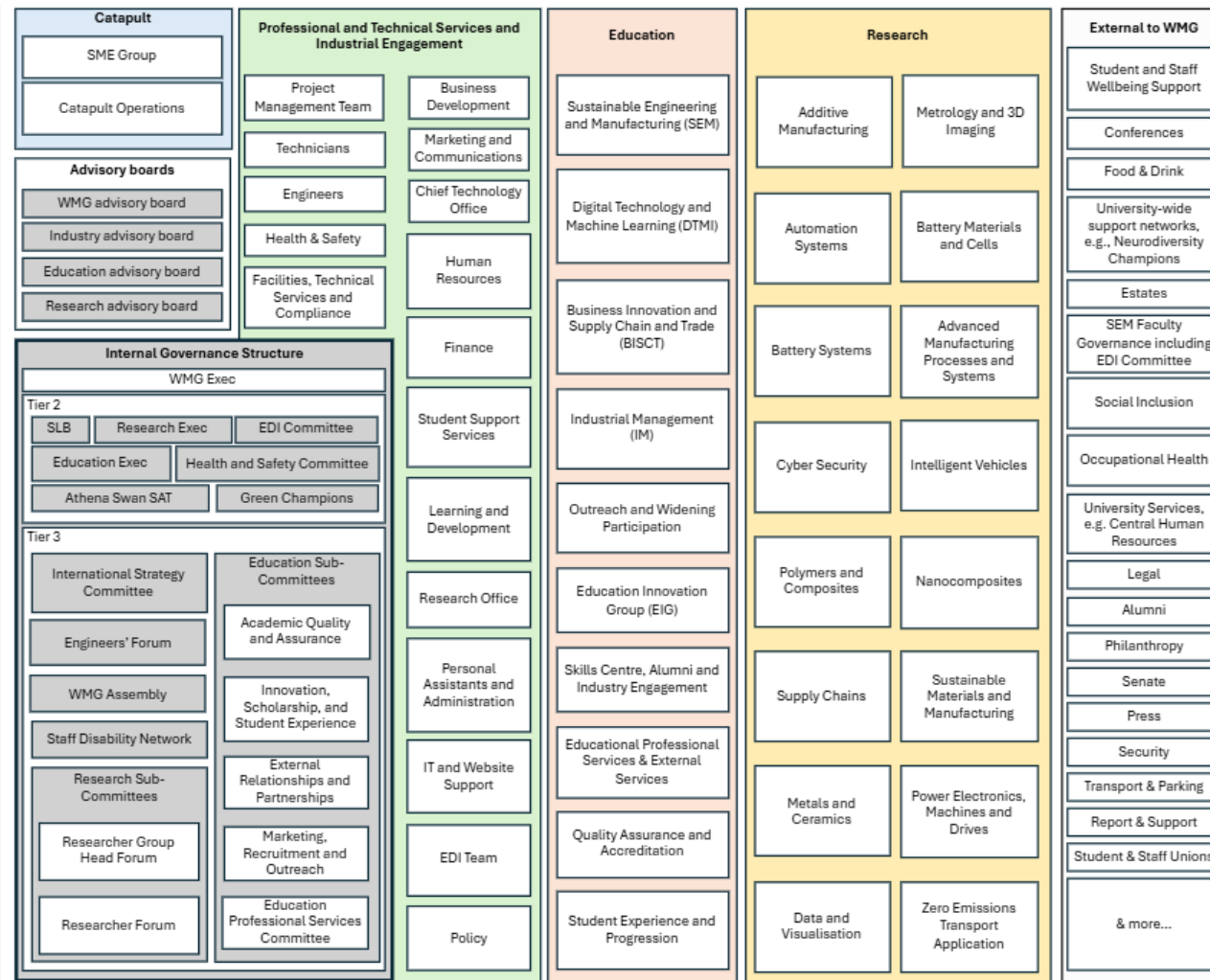


Figure 1: WMG structure and its internal governance. All teams and areas work across the department. See Appendix 4 for a large version.

Since our last submission in 2019, the department's portfolio has grown.

We maintained our income of £128m per annum (approximately), and student and staff numbers have risen from 2,605 to 3,440 and 767 to 850, respectively. This information is accurate as of 2024 (data for 2025/26 is not yet available).

WMG's place within the University remains the same:

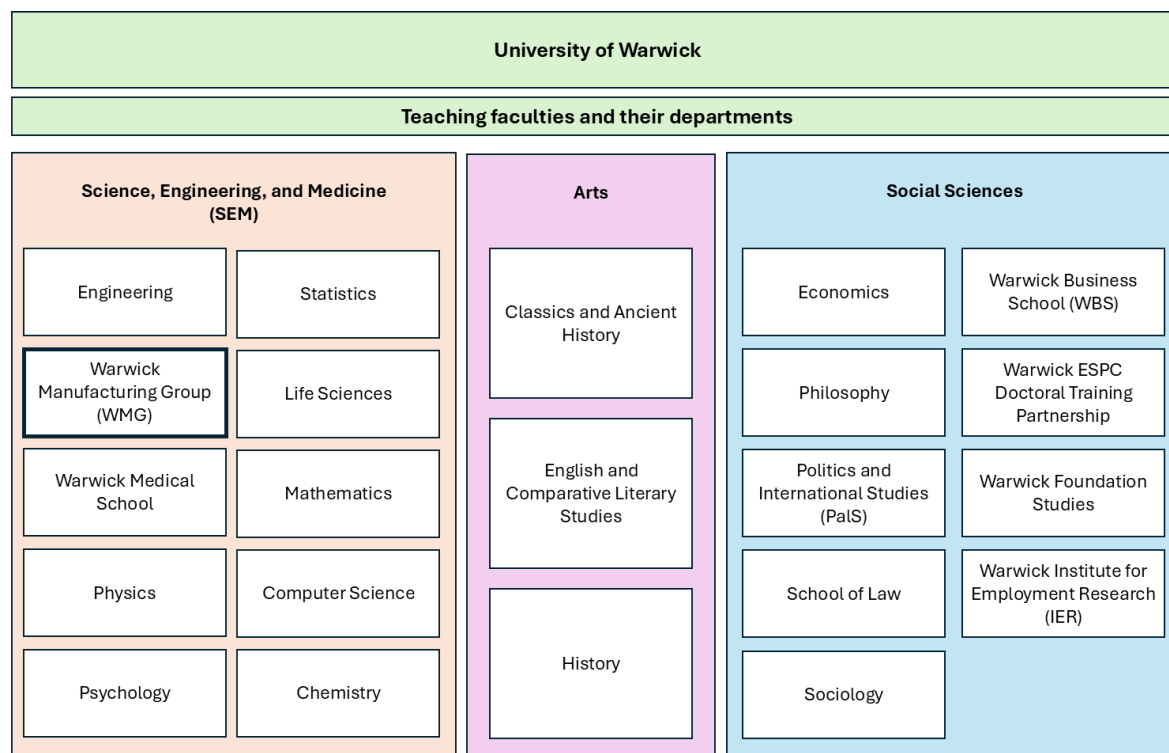


Figure 22: WMG's place in the University's structure.

Our education portfolio has developed since our last submission and continues to incorporate undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, as well as Degree Apprenticeships.

Our newly developed [Skills Centre](#) offers expert-led short courses designed specifically for business and industry, equipping individuals and groups with the skills required for successful progression.



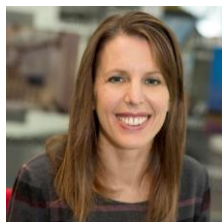
Image 1: WMG Degree Apprentices.

WMG Academy Trust is a separate education entity that we're proud to partner with. The trust operates two academies that encourage young people to study science, technology, engineering and maths.

Our strategy refresh, which will follow the recent appointment of our new Dean (our current Athena Swan SAT chair), will be instrumental in forming the new action plan supporting this application.

1.3 Athena Swan self-assessment process

Name	Role in department <i>Role on SAT</i>	Name	Role in department <i>Role on SAT</i>
Kerry Kirwan 	Dean <i>Chair of SAT and leadership of school</i>	Charlie Ward 	Project Officer for EDI and Athena Swan <i>Co-Chair of SAT, Co-Chair EDI Committee, Faculty EDI Committee Member, Neurodiversity Champion, and Mental Health First Aider</i>
Name and image redacted	Recruitment Coordinator (HR) <i>Professional Services Voice and Data Coordinator</i>	Danielle Bonsor 	Head of Facilities, Technical Services, and Compliance <i>Professional Services Voice, EDI Committee member, and Mental Health First Aider</i>
Tarek El-Said 	Assistant Professor (Teaching Focused) <i>Data Support and Student Voice</i>	Helen Lyman Smith 	Director of Marketing, Communications and Advocacy <i>Editor and Communications (internal and external) Mental Health First Aider</i>

Stuart Coles 	Professor <i>Editor Chair - Athena Swan PGR Subgroup Associate Dean (Research), Deputy Director of Research Degrees, and Academic Convenor of PGR SSLC</i>	Celine Martin 	Associate Professor (Teaching Focus) <i>Education Innovation Group Voice</i>
James McDade 	Research Degrees Manager <i>PGR Voice</i>	Lisa Rosser 	People Advisor <i>Secretary of SAT and HR Data Coordinator</i>
Pranav Jain 	Research Officer <i>Data and Stats Expert</i>	Mel Loveridge 	Associate Dean Electrochemical Materials (Research Focused) <i>EDI Committee Chair, Associate Dean of Culture, and Racism Taskforce Member</i>
Matt Finerty 	Head of Research Support Operations <i>Collaborator and Research Voice</i>	Sophie Meeson 	Department Administrator <i>Application Coordinator and EDI Committee Mental Health First Aider</i>

Freeha Azmat 	Associate Professor Digital and Technology Solutions (Teaching Focused) <i>Teaching Voice</i>	Sarah Wilson 	Head of Research Support – Talent and Development <i>Data Collector, Academic Promotions Insight, EDI Committee Member, and Research Voice</i>
Chun Chiu 	PGR Student <i>Student Voice</i>	Jennifer Rolls 	Former PGR Student, now Research Fellow <i>Research Post Doctorate Voice, EDI Committee Member, Neurodiversity Champion, Mental Health First Aider, and disabled staff member</i>

The WMG Athena Swan SAT has undertaken the self-assessment process through HR data pooling, research and education office data, and a department-wide survey.

HR has provided statistics on staff populations by characteristics and job roles ([Appendix 2, figures 24 – 37](#)). Research and education offices have provided data on progression and degree attainment ([Appendix 2, figures 38 – 41](#)).

The department-wide survey collected quantitative and qualitative data regarding the six Athena Swan themes: wellbeing; career development; bullying and harassment; work-life balance; gender equality; and belonging and inclusion.

49% of staff responded to the survey ([Appendix 1](#)). Survey data was collected through Microsoft Forms to ensure confidentiality and anonymity; no personal identifiers were collected, although participants were asked to share their grade and gender identity.

Survey data has been analysed, shared with staff, and used to inform our Future Action Plan.

The SAT met every three months between 2020 and 2023, every month in 2023, and every two weeks in 2024-25. In each instance, the team met to discuss relevant topics and initiatives to aid completion of actions from the previous submission, using the data available to identify progress and next steps.

We recruit members based on Expressions of Interest, matched with a targeted approach, to ensure a broad and inclusive group (AP2020/2).

WMG will deliver and maintain gender equality activity over the next five years (AP2025/1). To support this, in 2024, the first full-time Project Officer for EDI and Athena Swan was hired. They champion and coordinate the objectives, as well as manage Athena Swan SAT meetings to ensure actions are implemented, evaluated, and updated through spreadsheets and evidence. They also identify and act upon new initiatives where relevant, coordinating with the wider University and beyond.

Governance and leadership structure

At WMG, EDI is embedded into everyone's remit. Oversight is provided by the Exec and Senior Leadership Boards, which define department values, set priorities, and address EDI challenges raised by staff and students. While the leadership team is not yet fully diverse, it has expanded over the past five years to be more inclusive.

The WMG Strategy (developed in 2021) consists of six pillars: Valuing People; World-leading and Innovative Education; Excellent and Impactful Research; Transforming Industry and Wider Society; Positive Regional and Global Relationships; and a Robust Internal Environment for Growth. EDI is embedded across all, rather than being confined to "Valuing People", ensuring that inclusion remains integral to all aspects of WMG's work.

Research with Impact - Education for Life





Figure 3: Taken from our 2021-2026 WMG strategy, these are our missions, values, vision, and strategic objectives.

Leadership decisions are informed by collaborative meetings across all areas of WMG. All areas have a leadership board, which is represented on the department Executive and is responsible for the two-way flow of information.

Additionally, the WMG Assembly (established in 2022) provides a structured way for staff and PGR representatives to collect feedback and present it to leadership, ensuring staff voices shape policy and departmental improvements.

Formal structures for ED&I work

WMG's EDI Committee meets monthly to develop and implement initiatives. Members volunteer to lead on special interest areas, such as neurodiversity, caring responsibilities, wellbeing, gender equality, and LGBTQUIA+ inclusion.

Workload is considered when allocating EDI-related tasks beyond core job roles, with line managers reminded of the importance of allowing staff time for these activities. A Code of Practice has been developed.

Implementation is supported by the full-time Project Officer for ED&I and Athena Swan, who attends meetings, runs initiatives, creates a database of resources, and is a passionate advocate for people.

To ensure alignment with University-wide policies, the Project Officer participates in institutional EDI forums and support groups, exchanging best practices and ensuring WMG's approach remains progressive and collaborative.

Images redacted

Image 2: Games and crafts events to boost staff wellbeing.

In addition, a member of senior leadership was allocated the role of Associate Dean of Culture. They work closely with the internal communications team to distribute EDI updates through WMG's weekly newsletter, TV screens across campus, departmental meetings, and the staff intranet.

Tracking EDI progress has been challenging due to unpredictable gaps in dedicated resources. Currently, EDI work is monitored through initiatives, marketing efforts, and staff wellbeing surveys, with new methods being investigated.

Recognition and reward for EDI work

WMG formally recognises and rewards contributions to EDI through:

- Values in Action Awards (since 2021) - quarterly and annual awards presented at department meetings.
- Annual STAR Awards Event - recognising outstanding contributions, including to EDI.
- PDR integration (2023) - Personal Development Reviews now formally document EDI contributions (AP2020/9).
- Contribution Awards (2024) - a monetary award introduced for staff nominated by their managers for exceptional work, including work in EDI.
- Recruitment and promotion criteria - EDI knowledge and participation are now considered desirable for promotions and hiring decisions (P2020/6).

Furthermore, Athena Swan accreditation is recognised by WMG's funding bodies as essential – often requiring a named EDI champion in larger consortia – which serves to reinforce the strategic importance of gender equality initiatives.

Images redacted

Image 3: WMG staff celebrate success at the STAR Awards 2024.

Section 2: An evaluation of the department's progress and success

2.1 Evaluating progress against the previous action plan

WMG's Action Plan (2020-25) addressed 17 priority areas: six have been completed (Green), 10 are partially complete (Amber); no actions have yet to be progressed (Red).

Action Point	Priority	RAG rating	Outcome summary	Next steps
AP2020/1 - Positive Action Campaign	High	Amber	Positive Action Campaign is partially complete and has been merged into broader EDI work.	Strengthen race and religion initiatives and reporting guidance (AP2025/3, 4, 5, 6, 7).
AP2020/2 - Gender balance on SAT	High	Green	Gender balance on SAT improved through targeted recruitment. Process now embedded.	No further action required (AP2025/2).
AP2020/3 - Athena Champions and EDI Committee integration	Medium	Green	Athena Champions restructured into EDI Committee members.	Ongoing embedding of responsibility and visibility through EDI reps (AP2025/2, 3, 4).

AP2020/4 - Gender imbalance in SAE MSc	Low	Amber	Limited progress on addressing the Sustainable Automotive Electrification course gender gap. However, due to low student numbers, the gender ratio is not statistically significant (<19). The course will be discontinued from 2027.	Review included in broader curriculum diversification plans.
AP2020/5 - Student outcomes by gender (Distinction rates)	Medium	Green	Gender gap in MSc Distinctions awarded closed; remains under review.	Continue annual monitoring (AP2025/9).
AP2020/6 - Talent development and career progression	High	Amber	Talent development initiatives are in place (e.g., PDRs and pathways), but uptake is inconsistent.	Integrate into the Engineering Pathway and line manager training (AP2025/1, 2, 3).
AP2020/7 - Promotion pathways for Professional Services staff	High	Amber	Work on Professional Services (PS) promotion is slow due to institutional limitations.	Encourage WMG-specific clarity about promotion pathways (AP2025/3).
AP2020/8 - Career pathways for engineers and project managers	Medium	Amber	Engineering pathway to be launched imminently with broad support. Project management job families have been mapped and implemented, and a pathway is under discussion.	Reassess feasibility and relaunch or formalise in 2025 (AP2025/4).

AP2020/9 - Personal Development Reviews (PDRs)	High	Green	PDR process improved and embedded; usage has increased.	Sustain current process and encourage PDR quality feedback (AP2025/4).
AP2020/10 - Understanding grant application disparities	High	Amber	Data on female grant applicants analysed; barriers identified.	Targeted support planned under AP2025/6 (AP2025/1, 2).
AP2020/11- Maternity leave integration and belonging	Medium	Green	Maternity return guidance has been created and integrated into support tools.	Maintain visibility and update resources as needed (AP2025/3, 4).
AP2020/12- Athena Swan visibility among PGRs	Medium	Amber	Athena Swan awareness is improving among PGRs.	Deepen visibility and link to SSLC via AP2025/7 (AP2025/4, 7).
AP2020/13 - Committee and leadership representation	High	Green	Committee diversity audits and awareness raised.	Maintain yearly review and embed into Terms of Reference (AP2025 3, 8, 9).
AP2020/14 - Embedding and promoting flexible working	Medium	Green	Flexible working is widely adopted and promoted.	Ensure visibility via induction and recruitment materials (AP2025/5).
AP2020/15 - Showcase Athena Swan	Medium	Green	Conference supported and showcased Athena Swan values.	No further action planned.

values through high-profile events				
AP2020/16 - Support networks for women and minoritised staff	Medium	Amber	People of Warwick, Inspiring Women at Warwick, and Women of WMG are active, but have inconsistent engagement.	Pilot mentoring software and review event series effectiveness (AP2025/1, 2).
AP2020/17 - New Starter Buddy Scheme	High	Green	Buddy scheme launched and embedded in induction.	Sustain programme and review annually (AP2025 4, 5).

AP2020/1 - Positive Action Campaign	Amber
Goal: Encourage applications from underrepresented groups and reduce barriers to progression.	
Summary: The Positive Action Campaign (PAC) was launched in response to survey findings of prejudice and discrimination within WMG. It evolved into the department-wide Dignity & Respect initiative and was embedded in the WMG EDI Committee and Assembly. It delivered mandatory “Challenging Inappropriate Behaviour” training (led by the Executive team), along with the appointment of dignity contacts for staff and PGRs, promotion of the University’s Report & Support tool and Inclusive Recruitment Guide, and continued training (e.g., Building Anti-Racism, Unconscious Bias). To tackle barriers in research careers, WMG secured £10,000 from the University to deliver “Breaking Bad Barriers to Pursuing Research”: a concordat-aligned project investigating structural inequities in research access for underrepresented groups. Findings will inform future actions. Representation of racially minoritised staff has improved. In 2025: • 5.4% of WMG staff identify as coming from a Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic (BAME) background. • 1.8% identify as Black - matching the 2020 SET sector average (1.8%). The 2025 Department Culture Survey revealed persistent concerns (Appendix 1, fig. 9): • 27% experienced bullying; 35% witnessed it. • 31% felt unprotected when reporting it.	Completed actions: • Delivered the Positive Action Campaign (2021). • Introduced mandatory behavioural training. • Increase in BAME academic representation (above baseline) (Appendix 2, fig. 33).

These insights now inform the committee's focus: stronger race, religion, anti-discrimination, and anti-harassment efforts, supported by the Dean's new leadership structure.	
	Next steps: • Implement recommendations from the Enhancing Culture and research equity projects (AP2025/1). • Strengthen signposting and proactive support on race, religion, and harassment via the WMG EDI Committee (AP2025/4, 5). • Promote diverse panel composition in recruitment and progression processes (AP2025/2).

AP2020/2 - Gender balance on SAT	Green
Goal: Improve gender balance in the Self-Assessment Team (SAT), particularly by increasing male participation.	
Summary: At our last application, the SAT was 76% female and 38% male. A targeted campaign and focus group boosted male engagement, increasing male SAT membership to 44%, which is now within 10% of the department average. A gender audit of all committees reinforced the importance of balanced representation in leadership.	Completed actions: • Targeted recruitment campaign increased male membership to 44%. • Gender audit conducted across leadership and committee structures. • SAT Terms of Reference revised to reflect gender balance considerations.
	Next steps: • Regular monitoring of SAT composition (AP2025/2).

AP2020/3 - Athena Champions and EDI Committee integration	Green
Goal: Broaden engagement with Athena Swan by increasing visibility and embedding accountability through formal roles.	
Summary: The Athena Champions scheme has been integrated into the WMG EDI Committee, embedding Athena Swan into governance and streamlining responsibilities. Champions are now core members, guided by a formal Code of Conduct. Following survey feedback, the committee received Athena Swan training to strengthen delivery of the new action plan.	Completed actions: • The Athena Champions initiative was reviewed and embedded into EDI Committee membership. • Code of Conduct established to guide EDI Committee operations. • Post-survey training was delivered to all committee members to enhance their understanding of Athena Swan.
	Next steps: • Maintain visibility of Athena Swan and promote engagement through internal comms (AP2025/4). • Track progress of the 2025 Action Plan via the EDI Committee, with Athena Swan responsibility embedded (AP2025/5).

AP2020/4 - Gender imbalance in SAE MSc	Amber
Goal: Investigate and address the low proportion of female students on the MSc in Sustainable Automotive Electrification (SAE).	
Summary: Despite targeted efforts, the proportion of female students enrolled on the SAE course remains low (Appendix 2, fig. 23). Actions included marketing campaigns and scholarship bids (e.g., Women in STEM), but interest was stronger for other MSc courses, such as Digital, Technology & Health, Healthcare Operations Management, Applied AI, and Games Engineering. No clear reason for the imbalance was identified, and applications remain low despite efforts. The number of students each year is approximately 12-19; therefore, the gender disparity may not be statistically significant. When viewed across all MSc courses (see Appendix 2, fig. 23), WMG performs well: five of twelve courses consistently have more female than male students. Against the 2023 Engineering in Higher Education benchmark of 27.8% female on STEM PGT courses, WMG's combined MSc cohort compares favourably.	Completed actions: Proactive marketing and scholarship bids aimed at recruiting more female SAE applicants.
	Next steps: Monitor gender balance across MSc portfolio (Appendix 2, fig. 23) (AP2025/9).

AP2020/5 - Student outcomes by gender (Distinction rates)	Green
Goal: Investigate and address any disparity in the proportion of women achieving Distinctions on full-time MSc programmes.	
Summary: A review of outcome data showed a gender disparity in Distinction rates. A detailed analysis was conducted. As of 2023/24, female students are achieving Distinctions at rates equal to or slightly higher than male students (Appendix 2, fig. 21). The gender difference now fluctuates within $\pm 1\%$, equating to a variation of around 13-15 students, indicating overall balance. However, the analysis revealed a new area of focus: a potential attainment gap between White and BAME students. Further analysis is required.	Completed actions: - Reviewed distinction data across multiple cohorts (2021-2024) (Appendix 2, fig. 21). - Achieved gender balance in Distinction outcomes.
	Next steps: Investigate racial attainment gaps across MSc programmes (AP2025/9).

AP2020/6 - Talent development and career progression	Amber
Goal: Establish a structured and inclusive approach to talent development, reducing reliance on self-direction and ensuring equitable access to promotion opportunities.	
Summary: While one-third of staff still report concerns around training, progression, and departmental support (2025 survey), WMG has made progress in developing accessible and structured talent development tools. A refreshed Personal Development Review (PDR) process was launched in 2023, offering clearer guidance and improved usability. Uptake has increased, with more staff completing PDRs. In-house training supported 40 line managers before pausing due to resource limitations. University programmes have remained available and well-utilised, with over 50 staff completing centrally-run training. Targeted leadership development was prioritised, with WMG funding staff participation in initiatives such as Aurora, Inspire Leaders, EmpowerUs, and Accelerate. Additional offerings included Mental Health First Aid, Henpicked's Menopause Awareness, and anti-racism training. "Aurora was transformational. As I stepped into a more senior role, it gave me the tools and, most importantly, the confidence to believe in my abilities and strengths. The network is invaluable, and I still draw support and inspiration from fellow Aurorans today." – Alison Osborne, Associate Director of Marketing and Communications WMG also contributed to the University-wide, 36-month Technicians' Commitment Action Plan, focusing on visibility, recognition, sustainability, and career development for technical staff, and remains an active member of the Steering Committee.	Completed actions: • Relaunched PDRs with improved structure and engagement. • Delivered or funded access to targeted leadership programmes. • Trained 40 line managers through in-house sessions. • Supported diverse University training offers. • Contributed to Technician Commitment Action Plan. Next steps: • Promote development opportunities and the Engineering Pathway (AP2025/4).

	• Continue to support central learning and leadership programmes (AP2025/2, 4). • Pilot a departmental mentoring platform and trial STAR Coaching for managers (AP2025/1 , 2, 4).
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AP2020/7 - Promotion pathways for Professional Services staff	Amber
Goal: Improve Professional Services (PS) staff members' understanding and perception of promotion and job evaluation processes.	
Summary: Career progression for PS staff has consistently been highlighted as an area for development. Although promotion opportunities for PS staff remain constrained by institutional policy, WMG has improved clarity around career development routes. Surveys conducted in 2023, 2024, and 2025 captured PS staff perceptions of promotion and job evaluation. Results confirmed a lack of understanding, limited access to information and opportunities, and frustration. In response, the PDR process was updated to better align with the University's values and include career development conversations. WMG continues to invest in improving staff knowledge and access to guidance. Communication is being strengthened to clarify expectations, especially for line managers. The department also supports the University's trial of mandatory PDR completion.	Completed actions: • Conducted department-wide surveys (2023-2025), capturing PS staff views (Appendix 1, figures 4 - 13). • Revised PDR process to align with values and career development conversations.
	Next steps: • Develop an onboarding approach to embed promotion awareness and equip managers with the information needed to support staff (AP2025/4). • Introduce advocacy training to support PS staff development (AP2025/3). • Monitor outcomes of the University's mandatory PDR pilot (AP2025/4).

AP2020/8 - Career pathways for engineers and project managers	Amber
Goal: Pilot structured job families for engineers and project managers (PMs), to improve clarity and access to progression opportunities outside academic promotion routes.	
Summary: Career progression for staff in research teams, particularly engineers and project managers, was previously unclear. In response, WMG developed a dedicated Engineering Career Pathway, which has been submitted to the University for institution-wide adoption. While progress has been slower than hoped, interest indicates strong potential. The Project Management job family review was conducted, and recommendations around promotion pathways developed. Roll-out has been paused due to wider University transformation projects. In addition, WMG led the design and piloting of the Technical Specialist Promotional Pathway, an enhancement of the existing Technician Commitment framework. As of 2024, 14 technical specialists across four departments, including WMG, have been promoted through this route. This has become a sector-leading model for non-academic career progression.	Completed actions: • Developed and submitted the Engineering Career Pathway for University-wide rollout. • Implemented a job family and progression model for project managers. • Led and delivered the Technical Specialist Promotional Pathway. • Promoted access to development tools through departmental comms. Next steps: • Sustain support for PM and Technical Specialist progression (AP2025/4). • Evaluate the Engineering Pathway rollout in collaboration with University HR (AP2025/4).

AP2020/9 - Personal Development Reviews (PDRs)	Green
Goal: Ensure all staff members have access to meaningful, consistent PDRs, with line managers equipped to provide developmental feedback and support career progression.	
Summary: While feedback from the 2019 PDR survey reflected generally positive experiences, it revealed inconsistencies in delivery, completion, and feedback quality, particularly among new line managers and male support staff. In response, WMG has strengthened its PDR process and guidance. WMG redesigned PDR forms to include reflection on EDI contribution and alignment with departmental values, becoming the first department at Warwick to do so. This change has been adopted across the institution. For academic staff, PDRs were revised to better align with promotion criteria. A communications campaign raised awareness of the importance of PDRs, clarified expectations, and tracked submission rates. Managers were reminded of their accountability, and guidance was incorporated into WMG's broader management programme.	Completed actions: • Redesigned PDR templates to reflect EDI and values. • Revised academic PDRs to align with promotion pathways. • Promoted the process through communications and tracked submission rates. Next steps: • Integrate PDR guidance into induction for new starters (AP2025/3, 4). • Explore ways to highlight examples of high-quality PDR practice (AP2025/4).

AP2020/10 - Understanding grant application disparities	Amber
Goal: Investigate and address the lower proportion of female staff applying for grants and awards, relative to the academic gender balance.	
Summary: In response to internal data showing lower application rates from female academics, WMG sought to better understand and remove barriers to grant and award applications. With funding from the Enhancing Research Culture Initiative, WMG delivered a departmental survey and workshop in 2023 to explore the experiences of women and underrepresented groups. The quantitative findings – published in the academic journal, <i>Exchanges</i> – highlighted barriers, including time constraints, reduced confidence, and lack of mentorship opportunities. A second publication is exploring the qualitative findings in more depth. These insights will be used to shape more targeted support and interventions for women pursuing research funding.	Completed actions: • Delivered department-wide survey and workshop on barriers to research funding. • Published quantitative findings on structural and psychological barriers.
	Next steps: • Analyse qualitative data and publish second report (AP2025/1). • Engage the Research Office to co-create improved support mechanisms (AP2025/1, 3).

AP2020/11 - Maternity leave integration and belonging	Green
Goal: Improve sense of belonging and workplace integration for staff before, during, and after maternity leave.	
Summary: To strengthen support for parents, WMG introduced initiatives to improve communication, encourage take-up of KIT/SPLIT days, and reduce isolation during family leave. The WMG Parent Squad was launched in July 2022, offering a space for staff with parenting or caring responsibilities to connect. Now embedded into the EDI structure, the group has 23 active members and continues to grow. A dedicated MS Teams space supports peer-to-peer networking and resource sharing. Departmental team cascade meetings now include regular input from the People Team and EDI Officer, who use the platform to raise awareness of family-friendly policies with line managers and ensure they are cascaded across teams. Staff are routinely reminded of their right to take KIT days and are signposted to guidance through the WMG website and maternity policies. "Before going on maternity leave, I was given the opportunity to discuss options for flexible working to support my transition back into work. I am extremely grateful for those early conversations as they allowed me to put into place a clear plan for my return, review arrangements, and make any adjustments to support a smooth transition. This has been a huge benefit for me during a significant period of life change and helped me maintain a healthy work/life balance." – Caroline Drage, HR Assistant	Completed actions: • Launched Parent Squad and accompanying Teams site for staff with caring responsibilities. • Established regular policy communication via Team Cascade meetings. • Embedded EDI and family-friendly messages in Team briefings. • Maintained visibility of the Parent Squad and encouraged participation. Next steps: • Develop a standard pre-leave communication reminding expectant

	staff of KIT/SPLIT days, annual leave, and communication preferences during leave (AP2025/4). • Incorporate support for new parents into future EDI survey questions and explore use of returner surveys to inform future enhancements (AP2025/4).
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AP2020/12 - Athena Swan visibility among PGRs	Amber
Goal: Raise awareness and engagement with the Athena Swan Charter among Postgraduate Researchers (PGRs).	
Summary: A 2023 survey revealed that 40.7% of PGRs were unfamiliar with the Athena Swan Charter, highlighting a need to better communicate its relevance and benefits to the PGR community. Athena Swan content has since been embedded into PGR induction presentations, departmental newsletters, and the WMG website and intranet. A PGR representative now attends SAT meetings, and the previous representative has become a staff member and SAT contributor, maintaining continuity and insight. "I joined the Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team as a Student Voice because I was interested in supporting WMG's efforts to champion equity, diversity, and inclusion. Being part of the team has given me a deeper understanding of the barriers that can affect anyone at WMG, be it students or staff. It has also given me the opportunity to collaborate with a diverse group of people, who are committed to making positive improvements, and an interesting insight into data analysis, action planning, and inclusive leadership." – Name redacted, PGR student Although progress has been made, continued effort is required to fully embed Athena Swan into PGR communications, representative structures, and feedback loops.	Completed actions: • Integrated Athena Swan information into PGR induction and communications. • Secured PGR representation on the SAT. • Raised visibility via departmental platforms. Next steps: • Investigate PGR awareness of Athena Swan and related EDI work (AP2025/9). • Maintain a rolling PGR presence on the SAT, with succession planning in place (AP2025/2). • Explore embedding Athena Swan into SSLC agendas or dedicated PGR forums (AP2025/2).

AP2020/13 - Committee and leadership representation	Green
Goal: Ensure committee memberships and chairs are reflective of the department's diversity in terms of gender and ethnicity.	
Summary: WMG recognises the importance of diverse and inclusive leadership and committee structures. There appears to be a disparity in terms of gender, ethnicity, and the inclusion of Grade 1a-5 staff and students. However, this reflects the overall makeup of the department and the level of seniority typically required for committee membership. We have had gender imbalance across departmental leadership and aim to resolve this through departmental changes. A department-wide committee audit was completed to map current diversity and identify gaps. This work has raised awareness across leadership, and we are now embedding diversity considerations into committee formation and review processes. While a Governance Review conducted from 2021 to 2023 identified no major concerns, we acknowledge the need for sustained attention to improve balance and inclusion.	Completed actions: • Conducted a full audit of committee memberships to assess gender and ethnic diversity. • Identified areas for improvement and shared findings with committee chairs and leadership. Next steps: • Apply positive action to address underrepresentation on key committees (AP2025/2). • Encourage inclusion of students and staff from all grades in committee structures (AP2025/2). • Formalise annual diversity reviews as part of the

	committee's Terms of Reference (AP2025/2).
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AP2020/14 - Embedding and promoting flexible working	Green
Goal: Further promote and embed WMG's Flexible Working Policy, ensuring consistent implementation of core hours and inclusive practices.	
Summary: While WMG has made significant progress in normalising flexible working, a 2025 survey showed 22.4% disagreed that meetings and activities consistently occur within core hours (Appendix 1, fig. 12). Focused actions have therefore been taken to increase awareness and promote consistency across the department. Flexible working opportunities are now clearly communicated in recruitment materials and interview processes, and guidance is shared with hiring managers. The "Happy to Talk Flexible Working" logo is displayed on student career webpages. Focus on culture shift continues through regular messaging, training, and EDI reinforcement. "As a working parent, it's a juggle to balance work, childcare, and spending quality time with my young child. My 10 over 9 working pattern means I have 2 days in a month to have some well-earned quality time with him 1 on 1." – Laura Summerton, People Partner, WMG	Completed actions: • Flexible working embedded in job adverts and interview discussions. • Updated HR processes and templates used across recruitment. • Hiring managers briefed on promoting flexible options. Next steps: • Implement comms every quarter to re-clarify flexible working and core hours, as well as making it clear in the induction process (AP2020/4). • Investigate knowledge and compliance of the policies to monitor impact (AP2025/4).

	Communicate the difference between working and teaching core hours (AP2025/4).
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AP2020/15 - Showcase Athena Swan values through high-profile events	Green
Goal: Support and deliver impactful events that promote gender equality and inclusive practice, aligned with Athena Swan values.	
Summary: WMG successfully co-delivered a major online event in September 2020, securing sponsorship from National Grid and Thales. The event featured WMG experts Dr Mel Loveridge and Dr Freeha Azmat on panels, and a keynote plenary from the then Executive Chair, Margot James. The event helped raise the profile of WMG's commitment to gender equity and inclusion in engineering. WMG staff were invited as Keynote Speakers at the STERIS Gender Equality Round Table in June 2023. The event highlighted WMG's EDI achievements and our approach to embedding EDI. Its success has led to further collaborations with STERIS, strengthening and extending WMG's EDI impact. Following the success of this event, WMG has been invited to contribute to broader EDI conversations across the sector, including leading events on neurodiversity in the workplace; presenting at funding body conferences (e.g., the Faraday Institution) on embedding EDI; and sharing inclusive design practices in WMG facilities.	Completed actions: - Major online Athena Swan-aligned events delivered in 2020 and 2023. - Participation from high-profile internal and external speakers. - Increased visibility and credibility of WMG as an EDI thought leader. Next steps: - Ensure WMG's Athena Swan work is visible in future panels and talks (AP2025/4).

AP2020/16 - Support networks for women and minoritised staff	Amber
Goal: Strengthen internal peer support, mentoring, and development opportunities through groups such as PoW (People of WMG) and Women Advancing in Leadership.	
Summary: To support women and underrepresented groups at WMG, two internal networks – PoW and Women Advancing in Leadership – have offered peer engagement and development opportunities. An EDI Community Teams space was launched to facilitate inclusive dialogue and connection. In 2025, WMG acquired automated mentoring software for a 12-month pilot to expand access to peer mentoring across all staff groups. While positive engagement has been observed, sustained participation across all groups remains a challenge, and there is a need to tailor development content more clearly by career stage and community.	Completed actions: • EDI Community Teams site created to centralise updates and peer exchange. • Mentoring software selected for 12-month pilot. • Continued delivery of events through PoW and Women Advancing in Leadership.
	Next steps: • Ensure the recognition process fairly represents departmental diversity (AP2025/2, 3). • Implement Mentoring and Coaching programmes (AP2025/1).

AP2020/17 - New Starter Buddy Scheme	Green
Goal: Support the onboarding and integration of new staff through a structured buddy scheme.	
Summary: To ease the transition of new staff into WMG – particularly during the post-COVID return to campus – a buddy scheme was launched in early 2021. The programme aimed to familiarise new colleagues with WMG’s culture and operations, and to provide informal peer support. Ten new starters were matched with trained buddies, who reported positive feedback on the value of early connection and guidance. Initial training and matching processes were coordinated by the EDI team, and feedback mechanisms were used to review early outcomes. While engagement was initially strong, there is now a need to reduce reliance on key individuals and ensure the continuity of the scheme. Due to time and resource, WMG has defaulted to using “Coffee Roulette”, which offers a similar but University-wide buddy scheme.	Completed actions: • Buddy scheme launched and piloted. • Positive feedback received via new starter feedback forms. • Established a group education model that fosters buddy and peer relationships among team members, incorporating contingency planning to ensure continuity.
	Next steps: • Extend buddy support for international and distance learning staff.

2.2 Data Analysis

Following feedback, priorities have been refined to be evidence-based and distinct from actions.

Staff data

The staff profile reflects sector-wide patterns; women are more represented at earlier career stages and under-represented at senior grades. Similarly, staff from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds are under-represented at higher levels. Analysis of progression data (Appendix 2, Figure 42 & 44) does not indicate substantial disparities by gender or ethnicity. However, disaggregation by staff group reveals more.

Within Professional Services (PS), progression is predominantly achieved by white staff across all grades. BAME staff are better represented in mid-grade progression but remain under-represented at senior levels (FA7-FA9). Gendered patterns are also evident; women are well-represented at FA4-FA6, but less so at senior grades. This is further pronounced for BAME women, although numbers are small. Progression pathways are not consistently available across all PS job families; patterns may reflect application and acceptance rates. Engineering and Technician pathways were also introduced late in this review period, and their impact is not yet evident.

Analysis of academic progression (Appendix 2, Figure 45) highlights disparities at the intersection of gender and ethnicity. Progression among BAME men is consistently higher than for BAME women. While BAME women are increasing as a proportion of the academic workforce, this is not reflected in progression outcomes. Understanding under-representation for women and BAME staff at senior levels underpins Priority 1.

Perceptions of gender equality and fairness vary.

Male staff report more positive experiences overall than female staff, with those selecting 'prefer not to say' or 'other' to describe their gender reporting the least positive experiences (Appendix 1, Figure 11). Due to concerns around anonymity, the survey did not collect ethnicity data, limiting intersectional analysis.

19% of respondents did not agree that the department is committed to leadership gender balance. This rises from 10% among men to 22% among women. Among PS staff, 30% of women disagreed compared to 12% of men. More broadly, 32% of respondents felt promotion and progression processes are unfair and 29% of respondents did not find performance review helpful. This has helped shape Priority 2.

Experiences of workplace culture and behaviour highlight concerns.

26% reported experiencing bullying or harassment and 34% reported witnessing it. Women were almost twice as likely to report experiencing bullying or harassment (31% vs. 16% of men), and more likely to report witnessing it (39% vs. 25%). Additionally, 29% of respondents were dissatisfied with how issues were handled (32% of women: 21% of men). Around 30% felt unsupported by their line manager, and a similar proportion did not feel their mental health was supported or felt able to seek help. Addressing these concerns forms Priority 3.

External Research Funding

Research grant data indicates that female staff submit fewer applications, and the average value of bids led by women is lower than those led by men (Appendix 2, Figure 46 & 47). Men and women submit mid-size grants equally, but larger grants (>£1M) are dominated by male researchers, reflecting in part the lower representation of women at senior grades.

Research in 2024 explored perceived barriers within the research community. Eligibility is largely determined by external criteria, such as contract length and seniority, meaning the eligible applicant pool is partly shaped by factors beyond departmental control. Early career researchers noted unclear expectations and hidden rules, highlighting the value of structured mentoring, now being piloted. Staff with caring responsibilities, regardless of gender, reported greater difficulty balancing flexibility and periods of intense work, such as bid submission deadlines. There were no statistically significant findings relating ethnicity or disability dimensions.

These findings contribute to Priorities 1 and 2, emphasising the importance of strengthening the pipeline of eligible applicants and supporting those able to apply.

Student data

Student data does not show consistent gaps in continuation, completion, or attainment by gender or ethnicity (Appendix 2, Figure 14-23). Analysis therefore focuses on representation, admissions, and student experience.

The undergraduate (UG) cohort is small compared to postgraduate provision. In 2023/24, there were 353 UG students and 653 Degree Apprentice (DA) students. As DA recruitment is employer-led, this data is excluded from analysis.

Female UG representation has improved from 12% to 23% (2024/25), bringing it in line with sector benchmarks for engineering disciplines (typically 15-25%, HESA). BAME students comprise approximately 35% of the UG population, although representation is lower than in a neighbouring comparator department,

particularly for BAME male students. In 2024/25, the department's White:BAME split was 58:35, compared to 40:59 in the School of Engineering. These differences may reflect recruitment pipelines and subject specialisation, including programmes such as Cyber Security. This has led to the development of Priority 4.

The postgraduate student population is highly diverse, with BAME students comprising over half of postgraduate taught cohorts in most years (65–70% in recent intakes), compared to undergraduate cohorts.

The planned Robotics programme provides an opportunity to embed inclusive recruitment practices from the outset. Admissions data shows higher conversion rates for male applicants (67%) compared to female applicants (36%). Although BAME conversion rates appear high, these figures should be treated cautiously due to possible distortion from deferrals. Data quality is a concern: 57% of offers have "ethnicity not known," reducing to 2% at enrolment. Across datasets, equality characteristics, particularly disability and caring responsibilities, are frequently unknown or undeclared, limiting intersectional analysis. Improving data completeness is a key element of Priority 6.

Students with caring responsibilities represent a small but increasing proportion of the cohort (typically under 5%). While comparison is limited, this highlights the importance for flexible support. Previous work on flexible working for staff has proved to be successful, and Priority 5 is aimed at extending this to students where appropriate.

Student experience insights are primarily derived from qualitative sources, including staff feedback, informal conversations, and Staff Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) discussions. While useful, these insights are not consistently captured or quantified. Strengthening the systematic collection and analysis of student feedback will enable more robust evaluation and targeted action (Priority 6).

Summary

The evidence gathered informs priorities focused on improving representation, strengthening fairness and transparency in access to opportunities, supporting a diverse student population, and enhancing the quality and use of equality data to inform targeted action.

2.3 Evaluating success against the department's key priorities for the future

The following priorities are derived directly from the analysis of staff and student data presented in Section 2.2

Staff priorities

1. Gender imbalance persists in academic roles, particularly at senior grades (FA7-FA9), with women, particularly BAME women, under-represented in senior positions, and research funding activity.
2. Staff survey data indicates concerns relating to fairness, transparency, and equitable access to opportunities, including training, progression, and decision-making processes.
3. Survey feedback identifies bullying and harassment as a concern, highlighting the need to strengthen workplace culture, reporting confidence, and accountability.

Student priorities

4. There are low numbers of female and BAME undergraduate students compared to relevant benchmarks.
5. Students with caring responsibilities may face barriers to participation, indicating the need for consistent and accessible support and flexibility.
6. Student experience insights are primarily captured through qualitative feedback and are not yet consistently quantified, limiting the department's ability to identify patterns, evaluate impact, and target interventions effectively.

Section 3: Future Action Plan

AP2025/1 - Increase female participation in promotions, and funding applications (Links to priority 1)

Objective and reasoning:

To address the under-representation of women at senior academic grades, targeted support will be provided for women applying for promotion, and research funding. This will include mentoring, sponsorship, peer review of applications, and workshops focused on criteria, and expectations, to increase participation and success rates.

Measurable action(s) required:

- Establish baselines of applications by gender for promotions (from yet collected data)
- Establish baseline % of applications by gender for grants (from yet collected data)
- Work towards achieving parity, or near parity, in promotion and research funding application rates between eligible men and women relative to the 2025 baseline
- Monitor application annually by gender and grade (2026–2030). Observe success rates as a measure of success.
- Track uptake of mentoring, workshops, and peer review support annually

Responsible staff:

- Head of Research Support (data collection)
- Strategic People Partner (data oversight)
- Project Officer for EDI and Athena Swan (coordination and delivery support)
- Pro Dean of Research (oversight and implementation support)

Timeline:

- By Dec 2026: Collect baseline data on promotion applications and research funding applications by gender and grade.
- By Mar 2027: Analyse baseline data and identify gaps in participation and success rates.
- From Mar 2027: Launch and monitor support mechanisms including mentoring, sponsorship, peer review, and workshops.
- Annually (2027-2030): Monitor:
 - application rates by gender and grade
 - success rates by gender
 - uptake of support activities
- Jan 2028: Conduct first annual review to assess changes in participation and uptake.
- Feb 2029: Review effectiveness of interventions and refine support based on findings.
- By 2030: Evaluate overall progress against baseline and determine whether targets have been met.

AP2025/2 - Increase gender diversity in decision-making, recruitment panels and nomination processes (Links to priority 1 & 2)

Objective and reasoning:

To support progression and strengthen confidence in fairness, the department will monitor and improve gender balance across promotion panels, recruitment panels, award nominations, and funding review processes. Where imbalances are identified, targeted actions will be implemented to address them. Single-gender panels will only be permitted where unavoidable, with justification recorded. The current baseline is that 44% of panels are mixed gender (in 2024 data), and 75% were male dominated, with 49% being all male.

Data regarding the gender balance will be obtained from 2024 onwards. The evolving process will expand the diversity of who reads applications to improve and build on the confidence in a fair process.

Measurable action(s) required:

- Achieve $\geq 80\%$ of panels with mixed gender representation
- Increase by 10% annually between 2026 and 2030 (where baseline is below target)
- Produce an annual monitoring report on panel composition and trends
- Record and review reasons for single-gender panels annually
- Extend annual monitoring reporting to intersectionality considerations.

Responsible staff:

- Strategic People Partner (data collection and monitoring)
- Project Officer for EDI and Athena Swan (coordination and reporting support)
- Senior Leadership Team (implementation and accountability)

Timeline:

- By June 2026: Ensure panel composition data is consistently recorded, including gender and, where appropriate and feasible, intersectional characteristics.
- By July 2026: Identify and implement actions to improve panel diversity, including guidance on balanced panel composition and widening participation in panel roles.
- From September 2026 onwards: Produce and review annual reports on panel composition, including trends, single-gender panel justification, and progress toward targets.
- Annually (2027–2030): Review effectiveness of interventions and refine actions where progress is below target.

AP2025/3 - Understand and address concerns relating to fairness and access to opportunities (Links to priority 2)

Objective and reasoning:

To better understand concerns identified in staff survey data, confidential focus groups and listening sessions will be held with staff, with particular attention to women and under-represented groups. Insights will be used to identify structural, cultural and progression related barriers, inform targeted actions, and improve transparency and confidence in decision-making processes.

Baseline (2025 survey): Results indicate that 64% of respondents agree or strongly agree that there is equal access to advancement opportunities, 60% that policies support gender equality, and 62% that workload is distributed fairly.

Measurable action(s) required:

- Deliver a minimum of two focus groups per year (first sessions by March 2026)
- Identify and report key themes (by May 2026)
- Agree and implement actions in response to findings (by Sept 2026)
- Repeat focus groups in 2027 to assess progress and identify remaining/ new issues
- Monitor changes in staff perceptions of fairness, transparency, and access to opportunities through staff survey data
- Target: improvement in positive responses to fairness-related survey questions in next and subsequent staff surveys.
- Target: Increase positive responses by ~10% to approximately 70% against the baseline by 2030.

Responsible staff:

- Director of Marketing, Communications, and Advocacy (coordination, reporting, and communication)
- Project Officer for EDI and Athena Swan (coordination and delivery support)

Timeline:

- By March 2026: Deliver initial online and in-person focus groups/listening sessions with staff, including women and under-represented groups.
- By July 2026: Analyse findings and report key themes and identified barriers.
- By September 2026: Agree and begin implementing actions in response to findings.
- From 2027 onwards: Repeat focus groups/listening sessions annually to assess progress, identify emerging issues, and refine interventions.
- Following each staff survey cycle: Review changes in staff perceptions relating to fairness, transparency, workload distribution, and access to opportunities.
- Annually (2027-2030): Review progress against survey targets and implement further actions where required.

AP2025/4 - Improve transparency and equitable access to opportunities (Links to priority 2)

Objective and reasoning:

To address concerns relating to fairness and access to opportunities, particularly for women and under-represented groups, the department will review how internal opportunities (distinct from formal recruitment processes), including funding, leadership roles, committees, training, and acting-up roles, are advertised and allocated. The aim is to ensure opportunities are communicated transparently, consistently, and are accessible to all eligible staff.

Measurable action(s) required:

- Conduct an audit of how opportunities are communicated and allocated, including consideration of participation and access by gender where the data is available (by December 2026)
- Develop and implement clear guidance for advertising and allocating opportunities (by June 2027)
- Establish a consistent mechanism (e.g. centralised communications or platform) for sharing opportunities
- Monitor staff survey responses relating to fairness, transparency, and access to opportunities, with improvement expected in the next survey cycle by 10% more positive results.

Responsible staff:

- Director of Marketing, Communications, and Advocacy (communication and implementation)
- Strategic People Partner (data monitoring and evaluation)
- Department Administrator (operational delivery and dissemination of opportunities)

Timeline:

- By December 2026: Complete an audit of how internal opportunities are communicated and allocated.
- By February 2027: Review audit findings and identify actions to improve transparency and equitable access.
- By June 2027: Develop and implement guidance for the transparent advertising and allocation of opportunities.
- By June 2027: Establish a consistent mechanism for communicating opportunities to eligible staff.
- Following the next staff survey cycle: Review staff perceptions relating to fairness, transparency, and access to opportunities.
- Annually (2027-2030): Review effectiveness of actions and refine approaches where improvement is below target.
- By 2029 staff survey cycle: Evaluate longer-term improvements against baseline measures.

AP2025/5 - Strengthen awareness of expected behaviours, reporting routes, and available support for addressing bullying and harassment. (Links to priority 3)

Objective and reasoning:

To address concerns relating to bullying, harassment, and workplace culture, particularly where these may disproportionately affect women and under-represented groups, the department will strengthen awareness of expected behaviours, reporting routes, and available support. This will be delivered through staff induction, manager guidance, and regular communications. Targeted training will support line managers to recognise, prevent, and respond appropriately to bullying, harassment, and microaggressions, including how to support staff who raise concerns.

Measurable action(s) required:

- Publish updated guidance on expected behaviours, reporting routes, and support (by December 2026)
- Embed information on respectful behaviour, dignity at work, and reporting processes within all staff induction materials
- Achieve $\geq 80\%$ completion of relevant training by line managers by 2030, considering an approximate line manager cohort of 400.
- Increase staff awareness of reporting routes, measured through staff survey responses
- Achieve a 20% improvement in positive staff survey responses relating to workplace culture, respect, and confidence in reporting

Responsible staff:

- Director of Marketing, Communications, and Advocacy (communication and awareness)
- Associate Dean of Culture (strategic oversight and culture leadership)
- Strategic People Partner (training, reporting processes, and data monitoring)
- Senior Leadership Group (role modelling and accountability)
- Project Officer for EDI and Athena Swan (monitoring and coordination)

Timeline:

- By December 2026: Publish updated guidance on expected behaviours, reporting routes, and available support.
- By January 2027: Embed information on respectful behaviour, dignity at work, and reporting processes within staff induction materials.
- From January 2027 onwards: Deliver regular communications to increase awareness of reporting routes and available support.
- From 2027 onwards: Monitor line manager completion of relevant training annually, with a target of $\geq 80\%$ completion by 2030.
- Following the next staff survey cycle: Review staff perceptions relating to workplace culture, respect, and confidence in reporting.
- Annually (2027-2030): Review effectiveness of interventions and implement further actions where required.
- By the 2029 staff survey cycle: Reassess progress against baseline measures and identify any further areas for improvement.

AP2025/6 - Monitor, respond to, and communicate actions on bullying and harassment (Links to priority 3)**Objective and reasoning:**

Building on the awareness and prevention activity outlined in AP2025/5, the department will strengthen accountability and confidence in reporting processes through the systematic analysis of bullying and harassment data, including different experiences by gender and other characteristics, and the implementation of targeted actions where concerns are identified. An anonymised quarterly report will be prepared for the Senior Leadership Group.

Measurable action(s) required:

- Conduct annual analysis of bullying and harassment data (staff survey, culture survey, HR data), disaggregated by gender, grade, job family, and contract type
- Review findings annually through the EDI Committee and Senior Leadership Group
- Agree and implement targeted actions where concerns are identified
- Provide regular anonymised updates to staff on actions taken in response to feedback
- Achieve a 20% reduction in negative survey responses relating to bullying and harassment over the lifetime of the action plan
- Achieve a 20% increase in staff confidence in reporting concerns via a survey.

Responsible staff:

- Strategic People Partner (data analysis and action support)
- Senior Leadership Group (accountability and implementation of actions)
- Department Administrator (communication of outcomes)

Timeline:

- From January 2027 onwards: Prepare anonymised quarterly reports relating to bullying and harassment themes and trends for review by the Senior Leadership Group.
- By December 2027: Conduct the first annual analysis of bullying and harassment data, disaggregated by gender, grade, job family, and contract type.
- From 2027 onwards: Review findings annually through the EDI Committee and Senior Leadership Group and agree targeted actions where concerns are identified.
- From 2027 onwards: Provide regular anonymised updates to staff on actions taken in response to feedback and identified concerns.
- Following the next staff survey cycle: Review changes in staff perceptions relating to bullying, harassment, and confidence in reporting.
- Annually (2028-2030): Monitor progress against survey targets and refine interventions where required.

**AP2025/7 - Increase the balance of gender and ethnicity of the undergraduate courses Cyber Security and Robotics
(Links to priority 4)**

Objective and reasoning:

Cyber Security programmes currently show an imbalance in gender and ethnic representation, reflecting wider sector trends. Robotics is a newly established course, providing an opportunity to embed inclusive practices from the outset. This action aims to improve diversity in Cyber Security while proactively monitoring and shaping the demographic profile of Robotics. Enhancing diversity will support a more inclusive student experience and align with institutional ED&I priorities.

Measurable action(s) required:

- Analyse application, offer, and enrolment data for Cyber Security annually by gender and ethnicity to identify key gaps and trends.
- Monitor the demographic profile of Robotics from first intake onwards, with annual review points.
- Use insights from Cyber Security data to inform targeted interventions for Robotics recruitment and outreach.
- Develop targeted activities aimed at underrepresented groups (minimum 1 per year), with a focus on both programmes.
- Ensure marketing materials for Robotics are inclusive from launch, including diverse representation and role models.
- Establish student ambassador activity
- Clear baseline established for Robotics in Year 1
- Year-on-year improvement in diversity of Cyber Security applicants and enrolments (target: +5% over 3 years).
- Evidence of data-informed changes to recruitment strategies.

Responsible staff:

- Programme Directors (Cyber Security and Robotics course leads)
- Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programmes (Leadership)
- University Admissions (Recruitment)
- Director of Student Experience and Progression (Onboarding and recruitment)
- Project Officer for EDI and Athena Swan (Data monitoring)
- Director of Marketing, Communications, and Advocacy (Student recruitment advertising)

Timeline:

- By October 2026: Establish baseline admissions, offer, and enrolment data for Cyber Security and Robotics by gender and ethnicity.
- By December 2026 and annually thereafter: Analyse application, offer, and enrolment trends for both programmes.
- By March 2027: Identify key areas of underrepresentation and compare trends against relevant sector benchmarks.
- By June 2027: Develop and begin implementing targeted outreach and recruitment activities aimed at underrepresented groups.
- From 2027 onwards: Ensure marketing and promotional materials for Robotics and Cyber Security include inclusive representation and visible role models.
- From 2027 onwards: Establish and maintain student ambassador activity to support inclusive recruitment and outreach.
- Annually (2027-2030): Review recruitment and enrolment trends and refine interventions where progress is below target.
- By July 2029: Establish initial Robotics continuation/completion baseline data as the first cohort progresses through the programme.

AP2025/8 - Strengthen support for students with caring responsibilities (Links to priority 5)

Objective and reasoning:

To ensure students with caring responsibilities are supported to participate fully, the department will review existing data and student feedback to better understand their needs. In collaboration with Student Support services, the department will improve the visibility and accessibility of support, including mitigating circumstances and reasonable adjustments. Guidance will be developed for staff to ensure consistent and inclusive support in practice. This recognises that caring responsibilities can disproportionately affect participation, flexibility, and progression for some student groups, including women.

Measurable action(s) required:

- Complete a review of existing data, student feedback, and current support provision (by January 2027)
- Increase student awareness of support for caring responsibilities (By January 2027)
- Develop and disseminate guidance for staff on supporting students with caring responsibilities (by February 2027)
- Ensure clear and accessible information on support is included in student handbooks and webpages, and ensure guidance is applied consistently across programmes (by December 2028)
- Monitor student feedback relating to support, inclusion, and flexibility on an annual basis (discuss in next submission, 2030)

Responsible staff:

- Strategic People Partner (data analysis and review)
- Pro Dean of Education (oversight and implementation)
- Project Officer for EDI and Athena Swan (accessibility and content review)
- Director of Student Experience and Progression (data collection and student insight)

Timeline:

- By January 2027: Complete a review of existing data, student feedback, and current support provision relating to caring responsibilities, and identify areas for improvement.
- By March 2027: Agree and begin implementing actions to improve visibility, accessibility, and consistency of support.
- From September 2027 onwards: Regularly communicate available support relating to caring responsibilities through student induction materials, handbooks, and departmental communications.
- By December 2028: Ensure clear and accessible guidance relating to caring responsibilities is consistently embedded across student handbooks, webpages, and programme materials.
- Annually (2027-2030): Review student feedback relating to support, inclusion, and flexibility, and refine support provision where required.

AP2025/9 - Strengthen systematic collection and use of student experience data (Links to priority 6)**Objective and reasoning:**

To improve the use of student experience data in decision-making, the department will develop systematic approaches to capturing, recording, and analysing student feedback and engagement. This will focus on translating qualitative insights (e.g. SSLC informal feedback) into structured, quantifiable data to enable identification of patterns and differential experiences across student groups, including by gender, evaluation of impact, and more targeted action planning.

To strengthen understanding of engagement in extracurricular activity, the department will develop systematic approaches to capturing, recording, and analysing participation data across postgraduate and undergraduate students. This will focus on identifying under-represented groups and participation patterns by demographic characteristics, including gender, informing targeted and inclusive activity, and supporting community building, with the aim of improving student satisfaction, sense of belonging, and reducing feelings of isolation.

Measurable action(s) required:

- To improve the use of student experience data in decision making, the Student Experience Team will establish a clear process for identifying key themes from student feedback. This will draw on PTES, NSS, and SSLC feedback, to ensure that themes are identified consistently, reported clearly, and addressed through agreed actions (by January 2027).
- Establish a centralised system for storing and analysing student experience data (by January 2027).
- Categorise and quantify key themes from qualitative feedback to enable trend analysis
- Use analysed data to inform annual review of student priorities and Athena Swan action planning
- Annual reporting of key student experience themes and trends.
- Develop a Student Experience MyAdvantage dashboard incorporating demographic data (including ethnicity, disability, and gender) from Student Experience Team led extra-curricular events. Analyse this data to identify any access or participation gaps and provide termly reports to the Departmental Innovation, Scholarship and Student Experience Committee.

Responsible staff:

- Strategic People Partner (data governance and anonymity)
- Director of Student Experience and Progression; Student Experience Manager (data collection and implementation of systems)
- Pro Dean of Education (oversight, systems, and integration into decision-making)

Timeline:

- By January 2027: Establish structured and accessible systems for storing, recording, and analysing student experience and engagement data.
- By February 2027: Agree processes for identifying, categorising, and responding to key themes emerging from qualitative student feedback.
- By December 2027 and annually thereafter: Produce annual reports summarising key student experience themes, trends, and identified actions.
- By March 2027: Launch a Student Experience MyAdvantage dashboard incorporating demographic participation data for extracurricular activity.
- From 2028 onwards: Review participation and engagement data termly to identify underrepresented groups and inform targeted interventions and inclusive activity planning.
- Annually (2027-2030): Use analysed student experience data to inform student priorities, departmental action planning, and Athena Swan review processes.



Appendix 1: Culture survey data or equivalent



The survey was launched in January 2025 and ran until March 2025. We received 418 responses, which equated to approximately 49% of all surveyed staff. The survey was shared in internal newsletters, department-wide emails, MS Teams spaces, a departmental meeting, and advertised via posters around our buildings. The survey was anonymous, and any details that could identify an individual were removed after collection.

Redacted due to large volume. Data can be requested if justified reason. Email wmgathenaswan@warwick.ac.uk.



Appendix 2: Data tables



All graphs show 5 years' worth of data and are taken from our Tableau Reader programme; we are unable to edit the colours, labels, and titles of the graphs.

Redacted due to large volume. Data can be requested if justified reason. Email wmgathenaswan@warwick.ac.uk.

Appendix 3: Glossary

Abbreviations and initialisms	Expanded
AS	Academic staff
Exec	Members of the Executive Senior Leadership Team
HE	Higher education
IMC	International Manufacturing Centre
PGR	Postgraduate Research
PS	Professional Services
SLB	Senior Leadership Board
TS	Technical Services
WMG	Warwick Manufacturing Group
EDI or ED&I	Equality/Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity
PDR	Personal Development Review
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths
SAT	Self-assessment Team
HR	Human Resources
SSLC	Staff Student Liaison Committee
SET	Science, Engineering, and Technology
AP	Action Plan
BAME	Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic
LMD	Leadership and Management Development
FT	Full-time
PT	Part-time
FA	Faculty Allowance
PAC	Positive Action Campaign
NSS	National Student Survey
PTES	Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey

Appendix 4: The structure of WMG and its internal governance

