

MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY
ANNUAL PUBLIC SECTOR
EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS
DUTY
PROGRESS REPORT
2023-2024

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1 INTRODUCTION

Maynooth University (MU) is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity, valuing and celebrating diversity, and promoting inclusion (EDI). In Ireland, there are a number of laws which speak to these principles, including: the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015; the Equal Status Acts 2000-2018; the Disability Act 2005; and the Irish Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 (which introduced the Public Sector Duty).

1.1 THE PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS DUTY

Section 42 of the [Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act \(2014\)](#) imposes a statutory obligation on public bodies in performing their functions to have regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity and treatment for staff and persons to whom it provides services
- Protect the human rights of staff and services users

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) has published a guide on [Implementing the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty - IHREC - Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission](#).

The 2014 Act requires a public body, having regard to its functions, purpose, size and resources available to it, to:

- **Assess** - set out in its strategic plan an assessment of the human rights and equality issues it believes to be relevant to the functions and purpose of the body;
 - *MU has published an [Assessment of Equality and Human Rights Issues](#)*
- **Address** - set out in its strategic plan the policies, plans and actions in place or proposed to be put in place to address those issues;
 - *MU has published a [Public Sector Duty Implementation Plan](#), which outlines how we are implementing the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty by addressing issues raised in the assessment.*
- **Report** - report on developments and achievements in its annual report.
 - *This Annual Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty Progress Report 2023-24 constitutes the MU report on developments and achievements under the public sector duty in regard to equality and human rights, for the academic year 2023-24.*

2 IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURES

The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Interculturalism Committee (EDIIC) is a joint standing committee of the Governing Authority (GA) and Academic Council (AC). The EDIIC keeps under review the policy framework within which the University meets its equality responsibilities as set out in legislation and in the University's [Equality and Diversity Policy](#).

The EDIIC term is aligned with the term of Governing Authority. The last meeting of the Governing Authority term was held on the 7th of September 2023; this was the last meeting chaired by Dr Séamus Taylor as the President's nominee. Following the appointment of new members to the EDIIC, the EDIIC met again on the 28th of May 2024, following the appointment of Dr Gemma Irvine as the President's nominee for Chair.

The minutes of the EDIIC are discussed at MU Governing Authority meetings.

The GA considered matters relating to equality, diversity, inclusion and human rights at the following meetings, including the Standing Orders of the EDIIC, the EDI Annual Report 2021/22, minutes of the EDIIC and updates provided in relation to the MU Strategic Plan.

- 13th December 2023
- 1st February 2024
- 6th June 2024

Dr Gemma Irvine, the Vice-President for Equality and Diversity is a member of the University Executive.

The Office of the Vice President for Equality and Diversity comprises the Vice President for Equality and Diversity, the Equality Officer, an Equality Project Officer, an Equality Data Analyst, Administrative staff, and the Maynooth Access Office, including the Director of Access and her team. The role of the Office of the Vice President for Equality and Diversity is to lead strategic change in the areas of EDI for staff and students, to create a truly inclusive University where scholarship and learning are enriched by the diversity of our campus community. The Office of the Vice-President for Equality and Diversity is involved in work across the nine grounds of discrimination: Gender, Civil status, Family Status, Sexual Orientation, Religion, Age, Disability, Race, Membership of the Traveller Community, in addition to work in access and inclusion for students and Excellence in Exile (supporting asylum seekers and refugees). A number of networks, forums, working groups and steering groups are coordinated by the EDI Office and the Access Programme.

EDI is a key enabler in the MU Strategic Plan 2023 – 2028, with a commitment to social justice and human rights in line with the Public Sector Duty, to ensure that every member of our University community has the opportunity to thrive, regardless of who they are and where they come from.

3 BUILDING CAPACITY IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DUTY

Information about EDI and the Public Sector Duty is included in MU staff induction and student orientation.

MU includes information on the Public Sector Duty and its implementation in the *Newly Appointed Leaders Programme*.

The University recommends staff engage with (a selection of) online courses, including IHREC's module on implementing the Public Sector Duty.

In 2021/22 MU took part in an Irish Universities Association (IUA) Project to create a values-led implementation of the Duty. The Final Report was presented in May 2022. In 2022/23 MU considered how best to apply this work to our university. A validation exercise was held with MU staff and students as part of the project. In 2023/24, a committee was established to adapt the IUA Project to Maynooth University's needs. This committee met in August 2024 and finished its work by September 2024.

4 COMMUNICATION ABOUT THE DUTY

Information on the Duty is included in all presentations delivered to staff about the university's work on EDI.

MU also now includes a focus on EDI in its Corporate Social Responsibility Statement as part of its [*Financial Statements*](#).

5 MONITORING PROGRESS ON THE DUTY

5.1 STAFF PROFILE

Below is a profile of the staff of MU by gender, age and disability.

5.1.1 BY GENDER¹

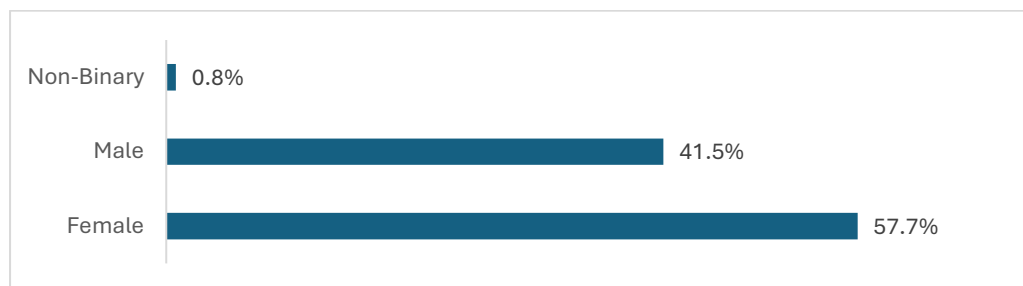
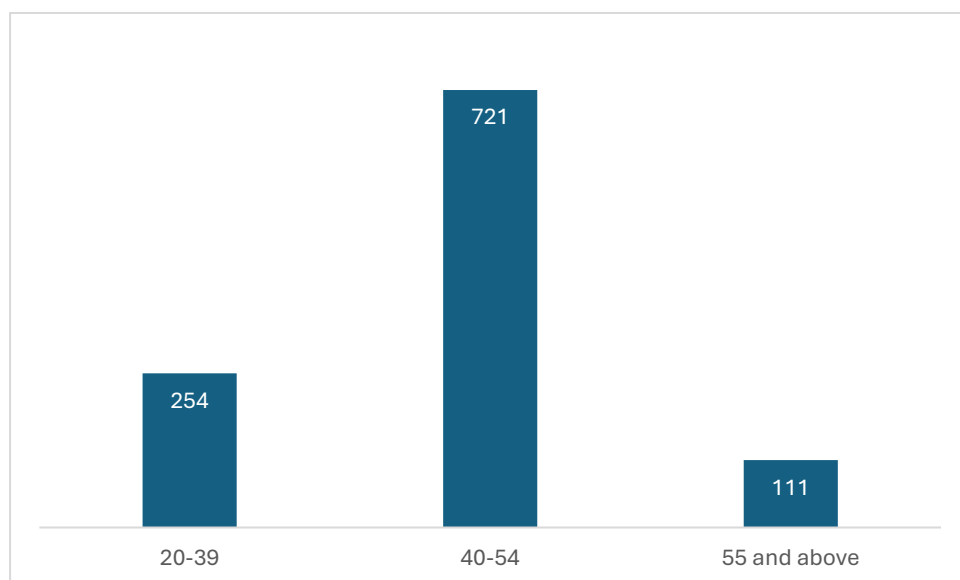


FIGURE 1. MU STAFF (WTE²) BY GENDER (2023)

5.1.2 BY AGE³



¹ Data as of 1 December 2023: [Higher Education Institutional Staff Profiles by Sex and Gender 2023 | Policy | Higher Education Authority](#).

² Whole Time Equivalent (WTE)

³ Data as of 1 December 2023: HEA Staff Age and Qualification Return. This figure is the total academic and non-academic core and exchequer-funded research staff as submitted to the HEA as part of the December quarterly staffing statistics. (A+B)

FIGURE 2. MU STAFF (WTE) BY AGE

5.1.3 BY DISABILITY

For 2023, we reported that the MU percentage of employees with a disability under the definition in the Disability Act 2005 was 7%⁴. The minimum statutory employment target for people with disabilities in 2023 was 3% of staff. This target will rise from 3% to 4.5% in 2024, and to 6% in 2025.

⁴ Source CORE Employee Self-Service, Diversity Tool, March 2023 & anonymous disclosure form for staff without ESS access.

5.2 STUDENT PROFILE

Below is a profile of MU students by gender, age, ethnicity and disability.

5.2.1 BY GENDER⁵

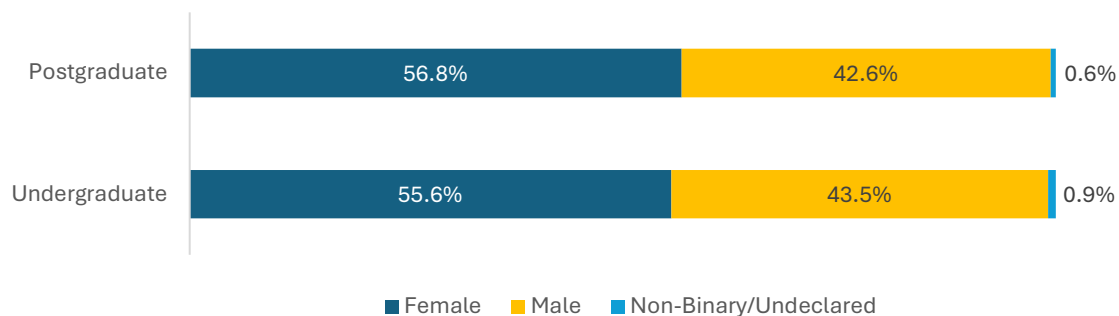


FIGURE 3. GENDER BREAKDOWN OF STUDENTS BY PROGRAMME TYPE (2023-2024)

5.2.2 BY AGE⁶

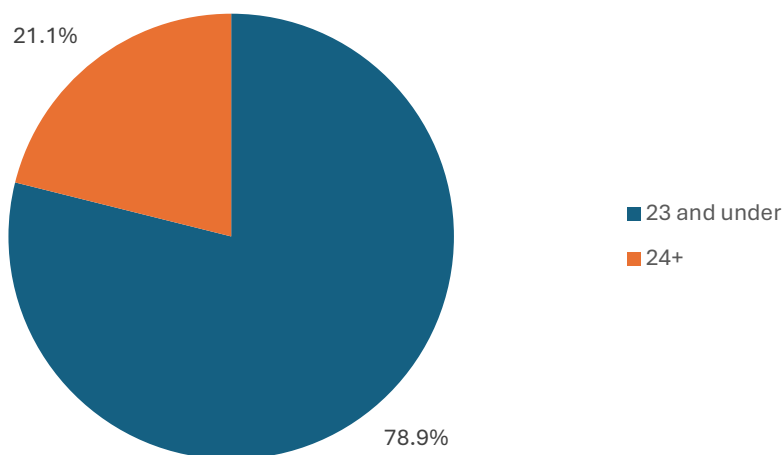


FIGURE 4. STUDENTS BY AGE (2023-2024)

⁵ See *Demographics* dashboard, available at: [Key Facts and Figures | Statistics | Higher Education Authority \(hea.ie\)](https://www.heai.ie/Key-Facts-and-Figures/Statistics).

⁶ Ibid.

5.2.3 BY ETHNICITY

Student ethnic origin is collected via the Equal Access Survey (EAS) — an annual, voluntary set of questions asked of first year full-time and part-time undergraduate students in HEA-funded institutions.⁷

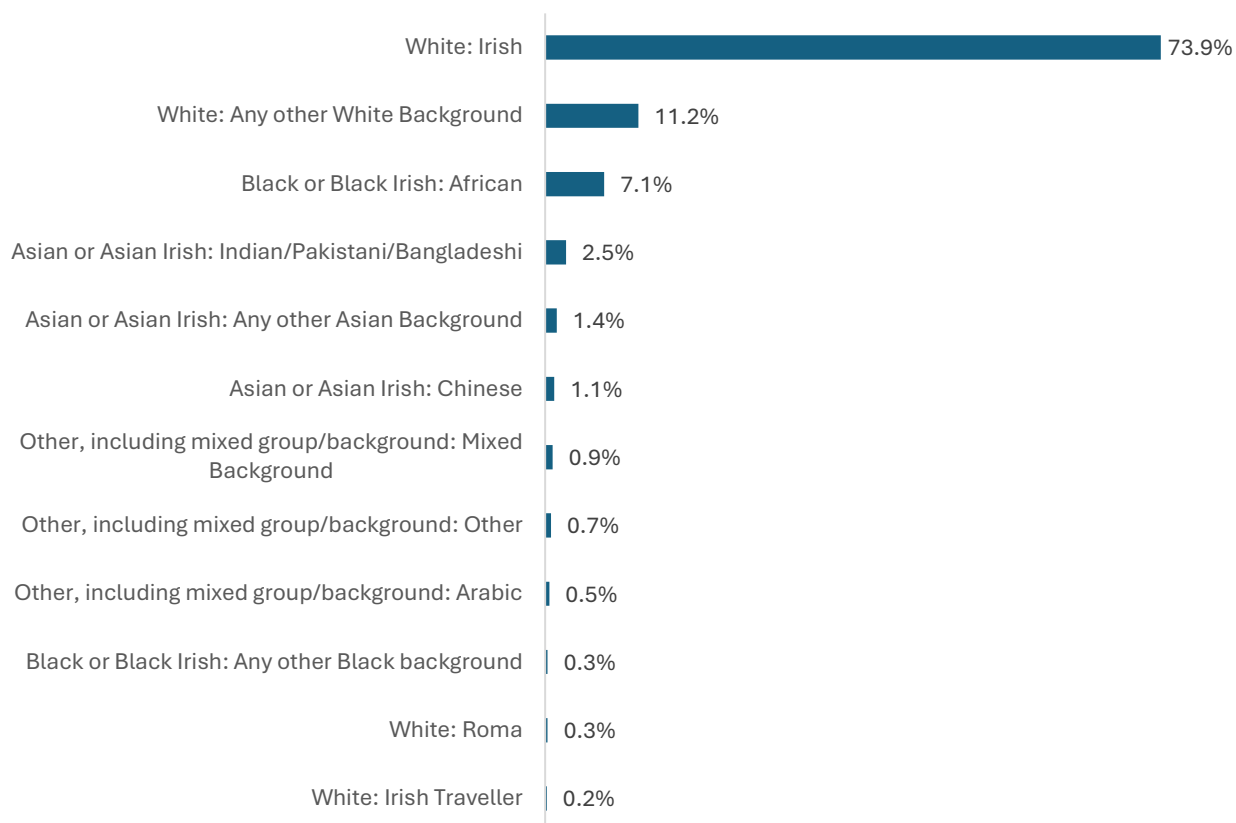


FIGURE 5. PERCENTAGE OF MU NEW ENTRANTS BY ETHNICITY (2023-2024)

5.2.4 BY DISABILITY

1,203 students with a disability registered with the Maynooth Access Office in academic year 2023-2024, representing 8.7% of the total student population⁸, of these 574 were registered on the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE)-pathway.

⁷ See Access Dashboard, available at: [Key Facts and Figures | Statistics | Higher Education Authority \(hea.ie\)](https://www.heai.ie/key-facts-and-figures/statistics). Data collected via the HEA *Equal Access Survey, Academic Year 2023/24*.

⁸ This figure, taken from 31 May 2024, comes from the annual disability return to AHEAD (Association for Higher Education Access and Disability).

TABLE 1. MU STUDENTS REGISTERED WITH A DISABILITY (2023)

Disability Category	UG	PG
Asperger's Syndrome/Autism	172	22
ADD/ADHD	108	15
Blind/Visually Impaired	11	1
Deaf/Hard of Hearing	31	5
DCD (Dyspraxia/Dysgraphia)	65	6
Mental Health Condition	157	29
Neurological Conditions/Speech and Language Disabilities	44	6
Significant Ongoing illness	123	23
Physical Disability	52	12
Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia/Dyscalculia)	294	27
Total	1057	146

5.3 STAFF RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION

Below is a profile of staff recruitment and promotion by gender.

TABLE 2. ACADEMIC RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTIONS BY GENDER (2023)

Grade	Academic Recruitment				Academic Promotions				Appointments in Total			
	Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male	
Professor A												
No. of Applicants	44	22%	155	78%	0	0%	0	0%	44	22%	155	78%
No. Successful	2	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	100%	0	0%
Professor B												
No. of Applicants	16	44%	20	56%	0	0%	0	0%	16	44%	20	56%
No. Successful	1	33%	2	67%	0	0%	0	0%	1	33%	2	67%
Senior Lecturer												
No. of Applicants	19	50%	19	50%	17	34%	33	66%	36	41%	52	59%
No. Successful	2	67%	1	33%	11	41%	16	59%	13	43%	17	57%
Lecturer												
No. of Applicants	725	34%	1427	66%	5	62.5%	3	37.5%	730	34%	1430	66%
No. Successful	21	57%	16	43%	4	80%	1	20%	25	60%	17	40%

TABLE 3. ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL PROMOTIONS BY GENDER (2023)

Administrative and Technical Promotions				
Grade	Female		Male	
Senior Executive Assistant				
No. of Applicants	34	92%	3	8%
No. Successful	29	91%	3	9%
Administrative Officer II				
No. of Applicants	0	0%	0	0%
No. Successful	0	0%	0	0%
Senior Technical Officer				
No. of Applicants	0	0%	0	0%
No. Successful	0	0%	0	0%

5.3.1 ADMINISTRATION (PERMANENT)

TABLE 4. JOB APPLICANTS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE (PERMANENT) ROLES BY GENDER – 76 ROLES ADVERTISED

Job Applicants (Total)	Female applicants	Male Applicants
1,394	902 (65%)	492 (35%)

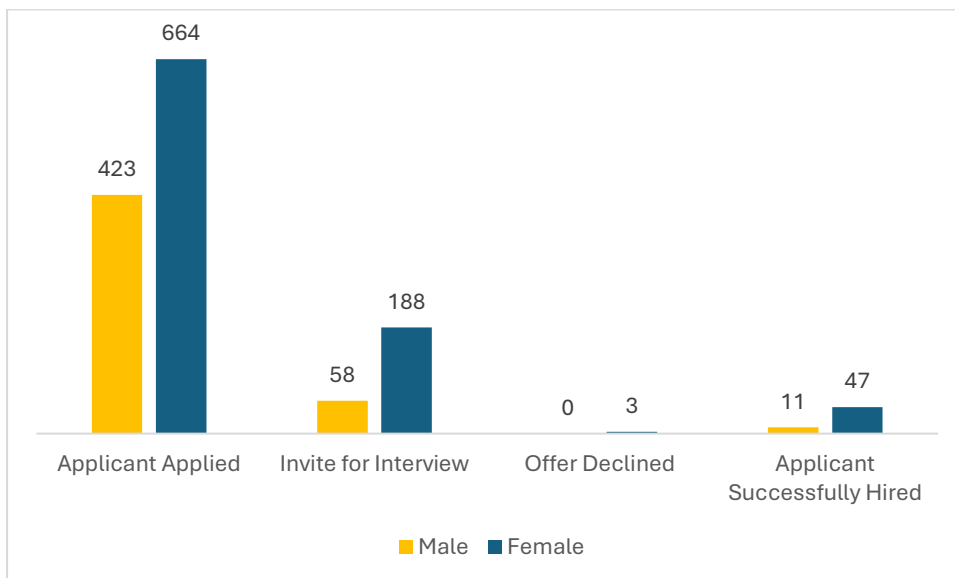


FIGURE 6. FINAL APPLICANT STATUS - ADMINISTRATIVE (PERMANENT), 2023

5.3.2 ADMINISTRATIVE (CONTRACT)

TABLE 5. JOB APPLICANTS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE (CONTRACT) ROLES BY GENDER – 99 ROLES ADVERTISED

Job Applicants (Total)	Female applicants	Male Applicants
1,357	828 (61%)	529 (39%)

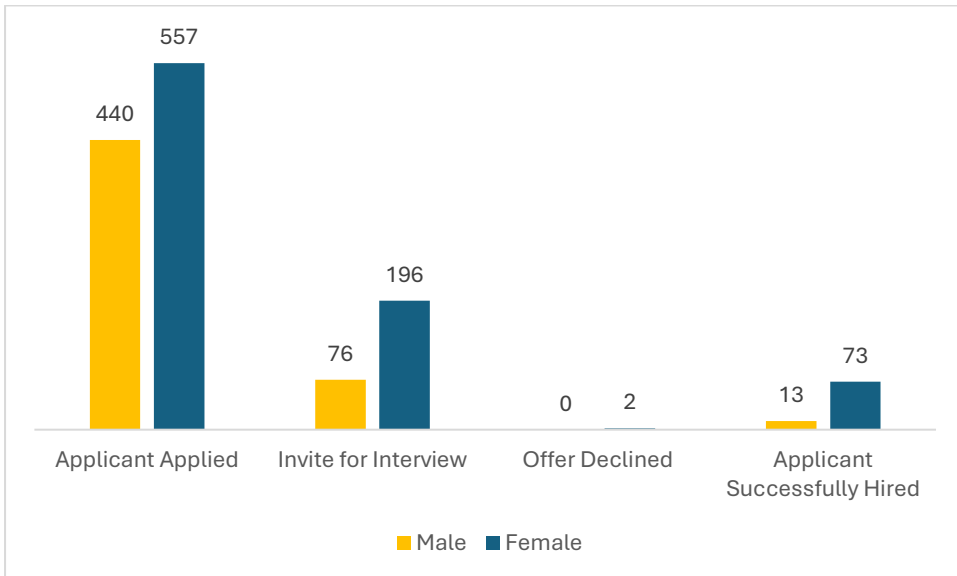


FIGURE 7. FINAL APPLICANT STATUS - ADMINISTRATIVE (CONTRACT), 2023

5.3.3 TECHNICAL (PERMANENT AND CONTRACT)

TABLE 6. JOB APPLICANTS FOR TECHNICAL (PERMANENT AND CONTRACT) ROLES BY GENDER – 8 ROLES ADVERTISED

Job Applicants (Total)	Female applicants	Male Applicants
74	19 (26%)	55 (74%)

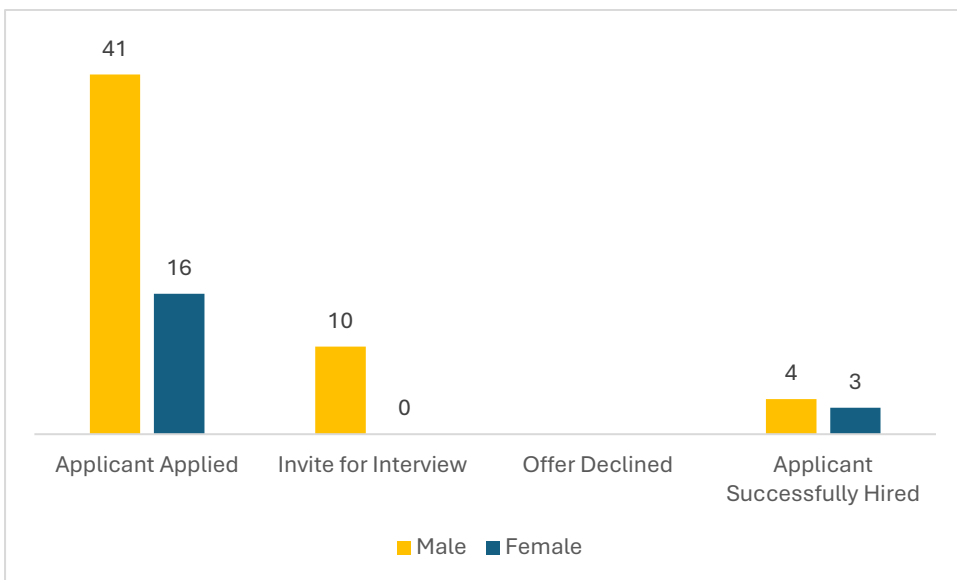


FIGURE 8. FINAL APPLICANT STATUS – TECHNICAL, 2023

5.3.4 RESEARCH

TABLE 7. JOB APPLICANTS FOR RESEARCH ROLES BY GENDER – 110 ROLES ADVERTISED

Job Applicants (Total)	Female Applicants	Male Applicants
1,790	641 (36%)	1,149 (64%)

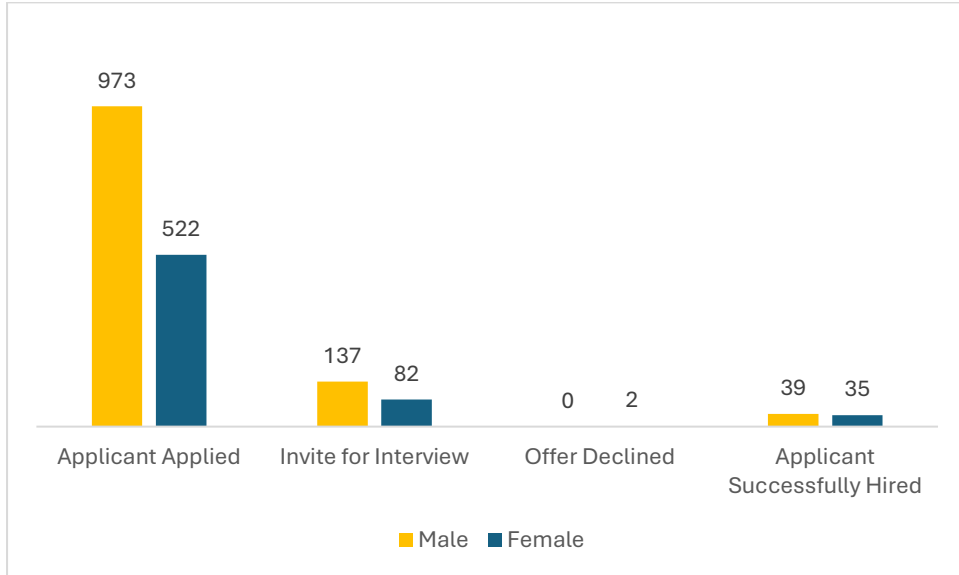


FIGURE 9. FINAL APPLICANT STATUS - RESEARCH, 2023

5.3.5 RECRUITMENT DIVERSITY DATA

Applicants are given the opportunity to voluntarily disclose diversity characteristics.

4% of respondents to the Recruitment Diversity Characteristics Form in 2023 disclosed a Disability.

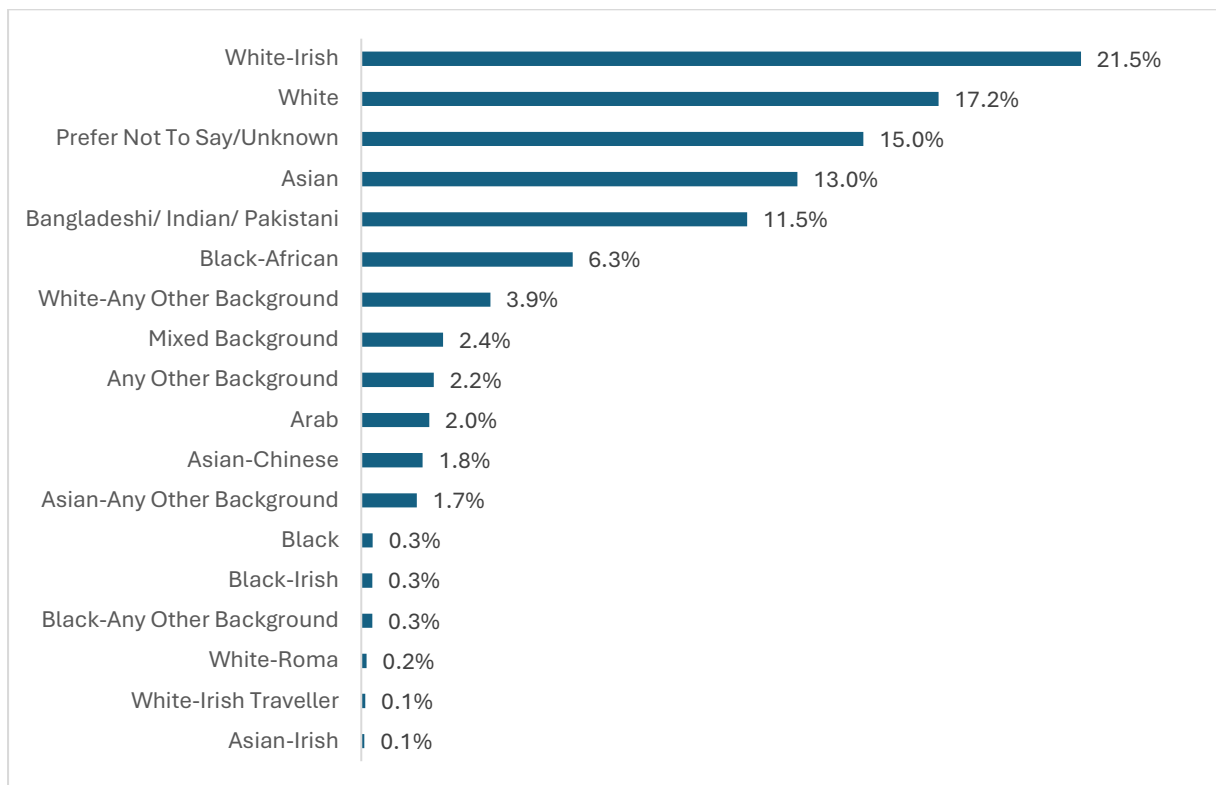


FIGURE 10. RESPONDENTS TO RECRUITMENT DIVERSITY CHARACTERISTICS FORM BY ETHNICITY, 2023

5.4 GENDER EQUALITY DATA

5.4.1 GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES

MU representation on governance and management structures was 'gender balanced' as of December 2023:⁹

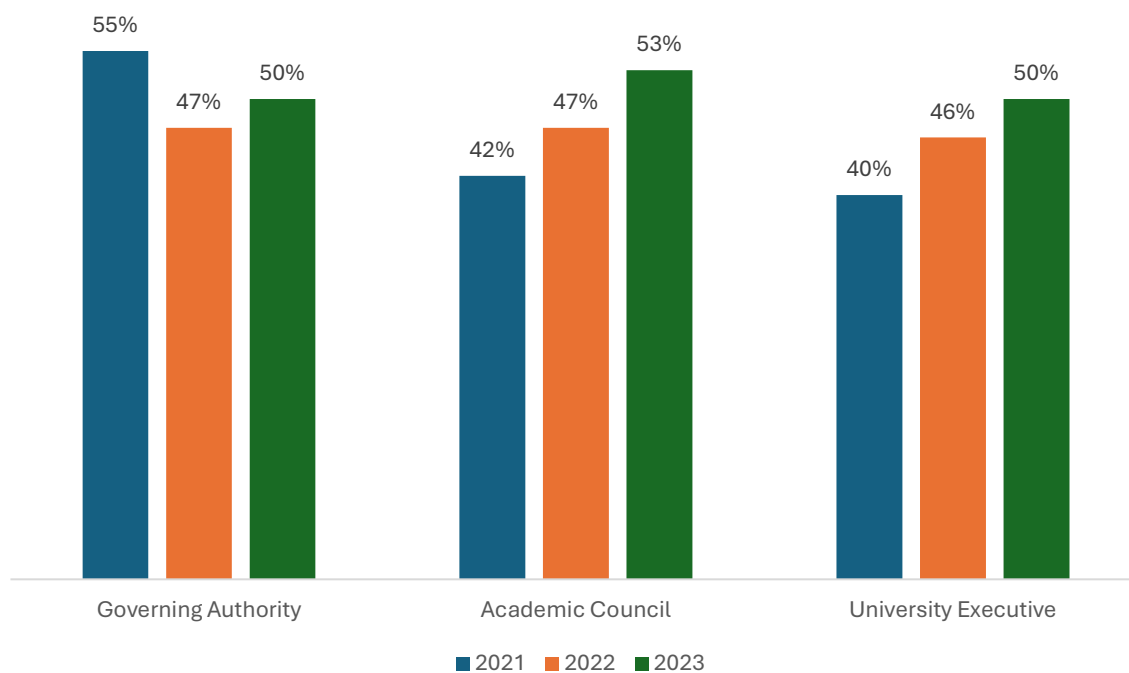


FIGURE 11. MU FEMALE REPRESENTATION ON GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES (2021-2023)

⁹ The HEA defines 'gender balanced' as: 'A Governance and Management Structure is considered to be gender balanced when not less than 40% of members are female and not less than 40% are male'. See dashboard *Female Representation on Governance and Management Structures* available at: [Higher Education Institutional Staff Profiles by Sex and Gender 2023 | Policy | Higher Education Authority](#)

5.4.2 PROFILE OF ACADEMIC STAFF BY GENDER¹⁰

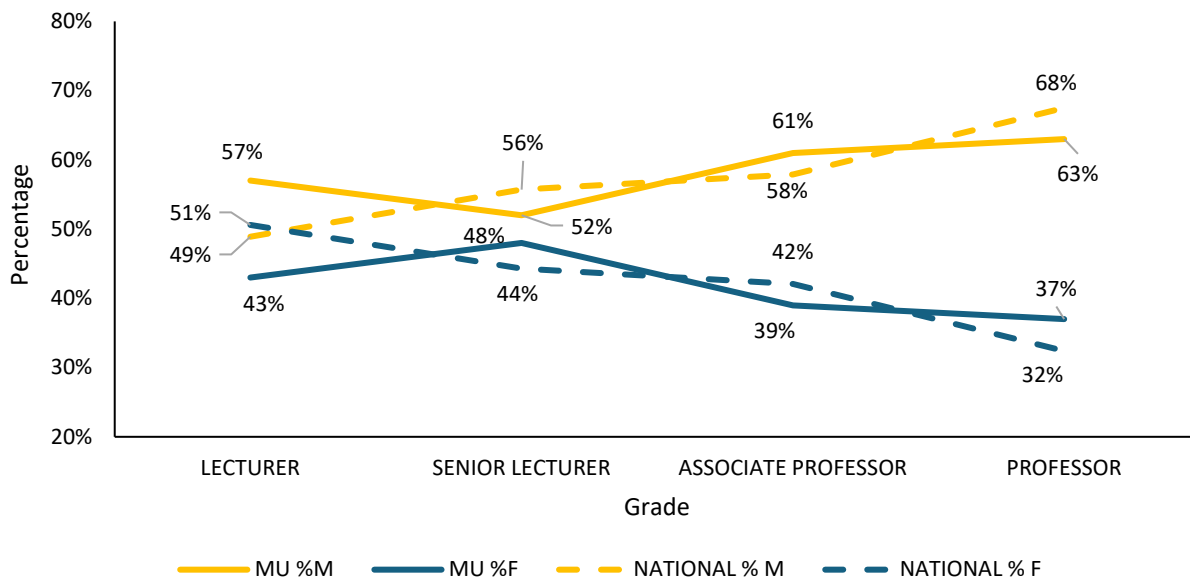


FIGURE 12. PERCENTAGE OF MU ACADEMIC STAFF AT EACH GRADE BY GENDER, COMPARED TO THE NATIONAL PERCENTAGE (ALL HEIS, WTE), 2023

5.4.3 PROFILE OF ATP STAFF BY GENDER

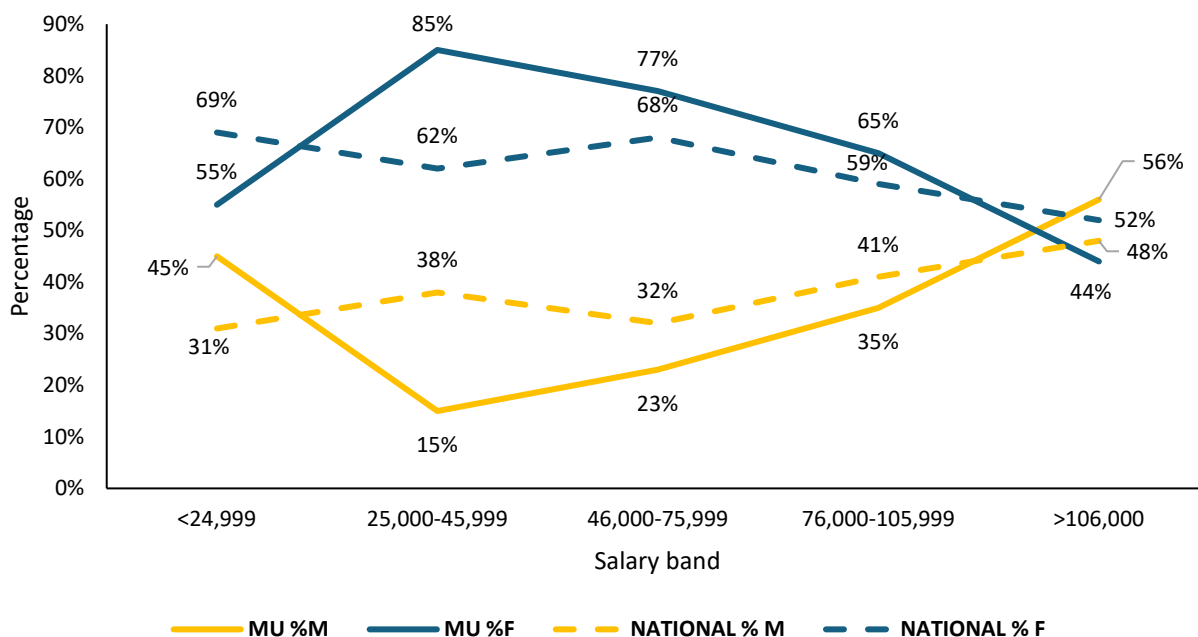


FIGURE 13. PERCENTAGE OF MU ADMINISTRATIVE, TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL (ATP) STAFF AT EACH SALARY BAND BY GENDER, COMPARED TO THE NATIONAL PERCENTAGE (ALL HEIS, HC), 2023

¹⁰ Please note that the titles used here are those used nationally when reporting to the HEA. For the purposes of this graph, Lecturer refers to MU Assistant Professor, Senior Lecturer refers to MU Associate Professor, Associate Professor refers to MU Professor B and Professor refers to MU Professor A.

5.5 GENDER PAY GAP

MU has a deep commitment to equality and inclusion. Since 2022, all organisations with over 250 employees are required to report on their Gender Pay Gap, as per the Gender Pay Gap Information Act 2021.

Using the snapshot date of 30/06/2023, MU's mean hourly pay gap for all staff is 9.99%.

TABLE 8. MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY GENDER PAY GAP DATA (2023)¹¹

	Mean Hourly Pay Gap - All Staff	Median Hourly Pay Gap - All Staff	Mean Hourly Pay Gap – Temporary Employees	Median Hourly Pay Gap – Temporary Employees	Mean Hourly Pay Gap – Part Time Employees	Median Hourly Pay Gap – Part Time Employees
Maynooth University	9.99%	10.60%	13.90%	2.88%	7.12%	9.69%

MU has a higher percentage of female staff in the lower, and lower middle quartile pay bands compared to the upper middle and upper quartile pay bands which are gender balanced.

TABLE 9. PROPORTION OF MALE AND FEMALE EMPLOYEES IN THE LOWER, LOWER MIDDLE, UPPER MIDDLE AND UPPER QUARTILE PAY BANDS (2023)¹²

	Quartile 1	Quartile 2	Quartile 3	Quartile 4
Male	33.23%	34.29%	42.31%	51.76%
Female	66.77%	65.71%	57.69%	48.24%

¹¹ Using the snapshot date of 30/06/23.

¹² *Ibid.*

5.5.1 REASONS FOR THE GENDER PAY GAP

MU recognises the importance of addressing the gender pay gap to ensure we continue to attract, develop, and retain talented people. Reasons for the Gender Pay Gap are likely to comprise a combination of institutional and external factors, including differences between men and women in length of service, historically gender segregated occupations, career progression, educational attainment and qualifications, the prevalence of fulltime and part-time working, gender differences in early career salary expectations (see HEA Graduate Outcomes Survey 2021 – Earnings Analysis¹³), the gendered nature of caring and family responsibilities, and the impact that this has on female career advancement.

5.6 HOW IS EDI DATA USED?

MU greatly values the enrichment that comes from a diverse community. It is important that we have a data-informed perspective of staff and student experiences as we strive to improve areas where further focus may be needed. The EDI Office aggregates, anonymises and analyses data from various sources (including the Employee Self-Service (ESS) Diversity Page, and biennial Institutional EDI Staff Surveys). EDI data collected informs the work of MU in relation to our:

- Governance and Management Structures
- Steering/Advisory Groups (e.g. Gender Equality Steering Group, Race Equality Steering Group, Healthy Campus Steering Group, Public Sector Duty Advisory Group);
- Working Groups (e.g. Athena Swan Ireland, Intersectionality, Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment, Mental Health);
- Staff Networks (e.g. Parents & Carers', LGBTQIA+, Enable Network); and
- Forums.

MU also uses this data to fulfil our external reporting requirements, for example:

- Report on Compliance with Part 5 of the Disability Act 2005 to the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science

¹³ The gender salary gap in 2021 stood at **€4,766** for all graduates and **€3,555** for younger graduates. When like-for-like graduates are compared, the gender pay gap reduces by approximately half to **€2,421** for all graduates. Average salaries were highest for ICT graduates at **€45,197**, while Arts & Humanities graduates reported the lowest salaries (**€29,770**) Given that women are underrepresented in Data/ICT related courses, the gendered impact on pay is clear.

<https://hea.ie/statistics/graduate-outcomes-data-and-reports/graduate-outcomes-2021/graduate-earnings-analysis-go-2021/>

- [Gender Pay Gap Report](#) per the Gender Pay Gap Information Act 2021
- MU Staff Profile by Sex and Gender for the Higher Education Authority, which now includes staff ethnicity - the sectoral reports are [available here](#).
- MU Equal Access Survey and Student Records System information feeds into the [HEA Student Facts and Figures website](#). This website allows MU to systematically monitor student enrolments by gender, analyse graduation trends by gender, and track admissions of underrepresented groups through the Access Dashboard. This dashboard provides insights into entry basis, mature student demographics, ethnicity, and disability.
- The [System Performance Framework Dashboard](#) also enables us to systematically analyse the access and participation of underrepresented groups and disadvantaged new entrants at MU.
- HEA HEI Progress Update - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

5.7 MU GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN (GEP)

Through the *MU Gender Equality Action Plan 2023-2026*, the University aims to advance gender equality at MU and other equality grounds enshrined in Irish employment legislation.

The Gender Equality Steering Group meets four times per year to assess progress on the plan.

The 54 actions in the plan include the following 19 priority actions:

	Priority Action
1	Leadership and Decision Making
1.1	Ensure that key decision-making bodies comprise at least 40% women and 40% men, and there is gender balance across chairs.
1.3	The Vice-President for Equality & Diversity (VPED) will continue to be a member of the University Executive (UE) with responsibility for equality, diversity, inclusion, and inter-culturalism (EDI) and will report directly to the President.
2	Data Collection, Analysis, Monitoring and Reporting (EDI Assurance Process and Dedicated Resources)

2.1	EDI data collection and audit conducted annually and published in an EDI Annual Report.
3	Recruitment and Promotion Procedures
3.1	Regularly review recruitment and selection policies, procedures and practices currently used to ensure that they are gender-sensitive and align with the HEA Race Equality Implementation Plan requirements.
3.3	Regularly review academic promotion policies, procedures and practices regularly and ensure that they are gender sensitive.
3.5	Improve awareness and knowledge of what is required, and when to apply, for academic promotion, incorporating a gender sensitive approach.
3.8	Introduce Call for Promotion for Administrative staff.
4	Career Development and Progression
4.4	Implement Planning and Development review framework (P&DR)
4.5	Introduce a University Workload Allocation Model (WAM) enhancing transparent processes and procedures in the allocation of work.
4.7	Reinstate MU <i>Eochair</i> research funding scheme.
4.8	Participate in the Preparing for Academic Advancement scheme.
5	Gender Dimension in Teaching & Learning and Research Content, and EDI Development Supports
5.1	Mainstream EDI awareness in Teaching & Learning content with a particular focus on gender equality
5.3	Mainstream EDI awareness in Research with a particular focus on the gender dimension in research content.
6	Organisational Culture, Inclusion and Belonging
6.1	Develop an updated policy on anti-bullying and harassment, and a new sexual misconduct policy for staff and students,

	and renew and expand trained contact people network.
6.2	Implement the recommendations and actions for HEIs in the HEA’s Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment in Higher Education Institutions Implementation Plan.
6.6	Update Maternity/Adoptive Leave Supports and Returners Grant for Staff, and identify gaps in policy for students.
6.8	Pilot an extension of eligible costs to enable conference attendance for those that otherwise would not be able to go (incl. childcare costs, disability costs).
7	Additional EDI Grounds
7.1	Advance race equality at MU through the development of a MU Race Equality Plan.
7.3	Improve policy, procedures and supports for staff with disabilities.

6 DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW OF PLANS, POLICIES, PROGRAMMES AND STRATEGIES THROUGH THE DUTY LENS (2023-24)

6.1 STRATEGIC PLAN

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is one of five ‘key enablers’ in realising the objectives of *Maynooth University’s Strategic Plan 2023-2028*, launched in October 2023. The University is committed to:

1. Consolidate and increase our existing reputation and leadership in widening participation through the establishment of a *National Centre of Excellence for Inclusive Higher Education*.
2. Provide a data-informed, strengths-based education model for ensuring progress across our EDI objectives.
3. Develop a culture in which consideration of EDI is embedded across all University activities, supported by EDI professional development supports, including a Practice Partner model approach.

4. Attain an Institutional *Athena Swan* Silver Award by 2026¹⁴.

6.2 EDI/ACCESS DATA ADVISORY GROUP

In September 2023, MU set up the EDI/Access Data Advisory Group. The purpose of the EDI/Access Data Advisory Group is to advise and support the enhancement of Maynooth University's commitment to EDI and widening participation by ensuring the most effective and efficient data collection, analysis and reporting and visualisation. The advisory group role includes:

1. The review and analysis of existing data related to EDI/Access within the University.
2. Assessment of the quality, availability, and reliability of data related to EDI/Access, widening participation, and propose strategies for improvement.
3. Identification of gaps in data collection and the development of approaches to enhance data collection methods.
4. Collaboration with relevant stakeholders to streamline data related processes and improve accessibility of the data for their use, including University departments, administration units, staff and student groups.
5. Raising awareness and educating the University community about the importance of data-driven decision-making in advancing EDI/Access and widening participation.

The advisory group is chaired by Dr Teresa Lee and membership consists of representatives from key University departments and units, including: EDI Office; Access Office; Strategy and Quality Office; IT Services; Registry; Graduate Studies Office; Research and Development Office; Human Resources; Student Services; and the All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO).

6.3 MAYNOOTH ACCESS PROGRAMME (MAP) 25

The Maynooth University Access Programme (MAP) was established in 1998-99 to improve participation in higher education at Maynooth University. In the 25 years since, MAP has shaped the University by introducing alternative pathways, reaching into schools and communities to raise

¹⁴ This has now changed to 2027 in line with an additional year added to the timeline of all Athena Swan Ireland Awards across Irish Higher Education Institutions.

aspirations among target equity groups, and providing top class student supports increasing retention and progression rates.

To mark the 25th anniversary, a number of events were held, including the launch of the inaugural MAP fundraising campaign, and the Alumni Reunion Ball 2024, at which former MAP students and staff gathered to celebrate, and a special tribute was made to the legacy of MAP. Three 1-year research projects were also selected and commissioned by the Maynooth Access Office with the support of the Research and Development Office (RDO) Network and Collaboration Support Fund, including:

- Neurodiversity: A Student Lived Experience at Maynooth University Through Images (School of Law and Criminology).
- From LaunchPad to LaunchPods: an exploration of Ukrainian colleges' process of peer-led student support groups as a model for the MAP Ambassador programme (Department of Adult and Community Education).
- The lived academic experience of MAP in the Biological Sciences: A student and staff review and gap analysis (Department of Biology).

6.4 SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE MANAGER RECRUITMENT

In January 2022, the HEA published the reports of the [National Surveys](#) of Staff and Student Experiences of Sexual Violence and Harassment in Irish HEIs. With the support of the HEA Advisory Group on Ending Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment in HEIs, the '[Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment in Higher Education Institutions Implementation Plan, 2022-2024](#)', was developed to address the recommendations that emerged from an analysis of the survey findings. The actions outlined in the implementation plan represent a comprehensive and ambitious response to the survey findings. The plan was formally launched in October 2022.

The implementation plan aims to create a campus community in which everybody assumes responsibility for addressing sexual violence and harassment. It promotes positive behaviours around sex, which necessitates highly visible messaging and regular affirmation from senior Higher Education Institution (HEI) leadership. There is a set of aims applicable for all institutions, as well as the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research and Science (DFHERIS)/HEA – these include funding the provision of services on campus and facilitating systems for reporting of

incidences. To oversee this implementation, and with funding provided by the HEA, Maynooth University have hired Gary Cogan to the role of Sexual Violence Prevention and Response (SVPR) Manager.

6.5 EXCELLENCE IN EXILE

MU has a long history in promoting peace and reconciliation, working with partners globally, including in regions of conflict. MU is a certified University of Sanctuary and our Excellence in Exile work promotes a culture of welcome for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants into our university community.

Our focus is on:

- **MU University of Sanctuary Student Scholarships:** Details of the scholarships can be found on our [MU University of Sanctuary Scholarships webpage](#), these are for students who are asylum seekers or refugees in Ireland and who do not have access to state support for their studies. In any given year we are able to support c.20 students in this regard.
- **MU Scholars at Risk (SAR) Research Fellowship:** MU offers a Research Fellowship for an academic who is facing grave threats to their life and who has had to flee their home country. MU works with external partners who specialise in identifying and helping academics at risk who are interested in coming to Ireland to continue their research while they are in exile. Our Fellowship includes both an academic mentor in the host department and an administrative mentor in the EDI Office who provides support in navigating the higher education and research system as well as relocation to Ireland.
- **Scholars at Risk (SAR) Europe:** MU is proud to be the host of [SAR Europe](#), the European office of the Global [Scholars at Risk \(SAR\) Network](#). SAR Europe coordinates [Inspireurope+](#) with ten European partners supporting researchers at risk; it works to increase understanding, protection for, and implementation of academic freedom Europe-wide; and supports SAR's European network members consisting of over 350 institutions in 26 European countries, including 13 national SAR sections and 10 major partner networks.
- We're also working with our **European partners in Arqus** to share learnings and identify potential additional funding to support students and staff who face grave threats to their lives in their home countries.

6.6 RACE EQUALITY PRINCIPLES

In MU we have been proactive in engaging with our students and staff on [MU Race Equality](#) through joint VPED/MSU Open Discussion Panels and Forums (2019, 2020), and the subsequent establishment of a Student Race Equality Forum and a Staff Race Equality Forum. We have hosted sessions on intercultural curriculum development, the Library has looked at decolonising its collection, and we've held a Race Equality Reading group with staff. Anti-racism training has been organised with key front-line staff and the MU Intersectionality Working Group (a subgroup of the Gender Equality Steering Group) has hosted guest lectures from experts on a range of related topics.

In December 2022, MU joined other HEIs to sign the *Anti-Racism Principles for Irish Higher Education Institutions* and has committed to bringing our ongoing work together under a strategic approach to implementing the HEA Race Equality Implementation Plan requirements.

MU has approved appointment of a Race Equality Coordinator and the establishment of a Race Equality Steering Group.

6.7 DEPARTMENTAL ATHENA SWAN IRELAND AWARDS

6.7.1 DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS ACHIEVES ATHENA SWAN IRELAND BRONZE

The MU Department of Mathematics and Statistics achieved the Athena Swan Ireland Bronze Award, in recognition of work undertaken to advance gender equality for staff and students in Higher Education.

The Self-Assessment Team (SAT) for the application was led by Dr Niamh Cahill along with 9 colleagues from the Department. The SAT was supported in its work by the EDI Office, Human Resources and the Institutional Research Office.

To achieve the Bronze award, departments are required to collect data (quantitative and qualitative), perform a critical self-reflection and analysis of the evidence, and to identify good practice as well as areas in need of targeted actions to achieve cultural and organisational change.

6.7.2 DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY ACHIEVES ATHENA SWAN IRELAND SILVER

In a first for Maynooth University, the Department of Biology achieved an Athena Swan Ireland Silver Award in April 2024, in recognition of the impact of work undertaken to advance gender equality for staff and students in Higher Education.

The Self-Assessment Team (SAT) for the application was led by Dr Mark Robinson along with 19 colleagues from the School. The SAT was supported in its work by the EDI Office, Human Resources and the Institutional Research Office.

To achieve the Silver award, departments are required to collect updated data (quantitative and qualitative) and perform a critical self-reflection and analysis on their previous Bronze actions to demonstrate impact in addressing gender inequality.

APPENDIX 1 - MU ESS DIVERSITY PAGE: 9 EQUALITY GROUNDS

The ESS (Employee Self-Service) Diversity Page was launched in 2022. A total of 502 staff members had engaged with the page as of December 2023, representing approximately 39% of staff.¹⁵ We will aim to increase the numbers disclosing under each equality ground in future years to improve the accuracy of this data thereby enabling better informed evidence based decision-making and practice. The data gathered is included as an appendix in this report.

TABLE 10. ESS DIVERSITY PAGE RESULTS BY EQUALITY GROUND

EQUALITY GROUND	ESS RESPONSE BREAKDOWN	ESS DISCLOSURE RATE (N=502) ¹⁶
<i>GENDER IDENTITY</i>	58% Female; 32% Male; 8% Prefer not to disclose/Did not answer; 0.8% Non-Binary; and 0.2% Identify in another way.	92%
<i>CIVIL STATUS</i>	64% Married; 17% Single; 12% Living with a partner; 3% Divorced; 2% Prefer not to disclose/Did not answer; 17% Separated; 1% Another option not listed; 0.2% In a civil partnership, and 0.2% Widowed.	98%
<i>FAMILY STATUS</i>	46% Parent; 31% Prefer not to disclose/Did not answer; 15% Not	70%

¹⁵ ESS Diversity Data Captured December 2023.

¹⁶ This refers to the proportion of ESS respondents who voluntarily provided data for each Equality Ground. For example, 92% of ESS respondents selected a gender option, and 8% of ESS respondents selected 'prefer not to say'/left the question blank.

	Applicable; 6% Parent & Carer; 2% Another option not listed; and 1% Carer.	
<i>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</i>	71% Heterosexual; 18% Prefer not to disclose/Did not answer; and 11% LGBTQIA+.	82%
<i>RELIGION</i>	31% Roman Catholic; 21% Prefer not to disclose/Did not answer; 14% No Religion; 13% Atheist, 8% Agnostic; 3% Islam; 2% Church of Ireland; 6% Other Religions.	79%
<i>AGE</i>	2% 18-24; 16% 25-34; 30% 35-44; 33% 45-54; 19% 55-64; and 1% 65+.	100% ¹⁷
<i>DISABILITY</i>	7% of ESS respondents answered 'yes' to having a disability. Of those who have a disability: 55% have a medical condition; 36% are neurodivergent; 18% have a mental health condition; 12% have a physical disability; 6% have a sensory disability; 3% have a specific learning disability; and 3% have another option not listed. 33% of those who disclosed their form of disability selected more than one of the forms above. Of those who answered 'no' to having a disability, prefer not to answer or left the question	74%

¹⁷ Age is captured at Recruitment and prepopulated to this dataset.

	blank, 1% selected 'Mental Health Condition', 1% selected 'Medical Condition', 1% selected Neurodivergent.	
<i>ETHNICITY and BELONGING TO THE TRAVELLER & ROMA COMMUNITIES</i>	More than half of respondents selected 'White Irish' at 55%, with 'White' at 21% and 'White-Any other background' at 5%. 10% Prefer not to disclose/Did not answer. 2% are 'Black'/'Black Irish'/'Black-African' and 2% are 'Bangladeshi/Indian/Pakistani'. 3% are 'Asian'/'Asian Chinese'/'Asian-Any other background'. 1% 'Mixed Background', 1% 'Any other background', 1% 'Arab', Less than 1% of staff selected 'White-Irish Traveller'. No member of staff selected 'White-Roma' as an ethnicity option.	90%