

# School of Biological Sciences 2019 Gold Renewal Action Plan (Currently under review)



1 Key career transition points

2 Career development

3. Flexible working and managing career breaks

4. Organisation and culture

5. Improving the Infrastructure for SWAN data

## 1. Key career transition points:

No.	Objective	Action to date/Rationale for Objective	Planned Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Measures of Success	Timeframe
1.1	Improve male/female balance of on UG degree programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Steady decline in number of males in UG, from 50% (2013) to 43% (2019). Most affected pathways are: marine biology (large increase in females last year although small numbers overall), zoology, microbiology and biochemistry. FSN is predominantly female while AGTECH the reverse</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan outreach to male schools to attract more male students</li> <li>Showcase successful males and females past students in the needed programs</li> </ol>	Hos/Des/School manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater uptake from Male students</li> <li>Better balance in all courses</li> </ul>	2024
1.2	Rectify the gender discrepancy in UG performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low performance of UG males</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold focus group discussions with male students to identify issues and find strategies to facilitate improvement</li> <li>Identify male students who are underperforming and offer help</li> </ol>	Head of school/ DE	Better grades from male students	2024

1.3	Increase the number of males entering PGT courses	Imbalance with 62% female. Most of our students are internationals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Deconstruct advertising and marketing to identify possible bias and fix</li> <li>b. Widen the representation of staff involved in recruitment</li> </ul>	Director of Internationalisation	5% increase in males	2024
1.4	Decrease completion time for male PGR students	Males taking longer to complete PhD within 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identify students with issues</li> <li>b. Develop a plan of action with these students</li> </ul>	Director of PGR	Better completion rates for males	2024
1.5	Increase the number of females at Professorial level	Increase the number of female Professors to 40%.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Recruit more female professor level applications through individual contacts to identify potential candidates</li> <li>b. Develop a strategy to encourage conversion of existing female fractional Professorial appointments to full time if desired</li> <li>c. If found to be a facilitator, then work with Faculty PVC to secure funding for additional fractional appointments so that potential candidates can develop a relationship with SBS, QUB and Northern Ireland.</li> <li>d. Emphasize the holistic nature of University Academic Progression process so that candidates with all-round contributions to the School can achieve promotion.</li> </ul>	HoS/Faculty PVC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful fractional to full time conversion</li> <li>• More female applications for Professorial posts &amp; progression</li> <li>• More female appointments to Professorial posts through recruitment and/or progression</li> </ul>	2024
1.6	Address the gender imbalance and current lack of promotion within lecturers of education pathway.	Current levels: 8F 2M, and 8/10 at lecturer level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Add positive profiles of Successful lecturers of Education from Faculty on website and highlight when advertising</li> </ul>	HoS/DEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More lecturers in education at high levels including professor</li> </ul>	2024

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Showcase role models from different schools</li> <li>c. Organize information session specifically for lecturers of education on promotion criteria.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More male lecturers of education</li> </ul>	
<b>1.7</b>	Increase opportunity for technical staff to enter academic career path.	Outcome from discussion with new working group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Provide more support, more opportunities for qualifications and direct path visibility</li> <li>b. Showcase Brett (Technician to post doc) as a case study to advertise possibility</li> <li>c. Give support with finance at QUB and school level</li> </ul>	HoS/DRs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful transition with school support</li> </ul>	2022
<b>1.8</b>	Retain more of our academic staff.	There is a small leaky pipeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Liaise with People &amp; Culture (HR in QUB) to ensure exit interviews to capture more information from those leaving SBS, especially at the lecturer level, to understand how we might retain this talent going forward.</li> </ul>	HoS/School manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decrease the number of staff leaving</li> </ul>	2024
<b>1.9</b>	Maintain 50% female applications for academic positions on all external job adverts	While application was 50%:50% in 16/17 this dropped to 30% in 18/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Showcase successful promotions on Website for increased visibility to those applying for posts</li> <li>b. Identify barriers in the process</li> <li>c. Find solutions to the barriers</li> </ul>	HoS/IGFS director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More female applications</li> <li>• More female recruitment</li> </ul>	2022
<b>1.10</b>	Promote sabbatical leave for academic staff	Requested by staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. set up a working group at SMB to investigate resources needed for the scheme</li> <li>b. Present findings to SMB</li> </ul>	HoS/ School management board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals applying for sabbatical leave</li> </ul>	2021 - 2024

			c. set up timeline at SMB for implementation			
1.11	Increase the success rate of female promotion from SL to reader	Data shows this is the lowest rate of promotion	a. Organize SBS specific promotions workshop given by previously successful colleagues, at the beginning of each academic year.	AS champions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in successful promotions</li> </ul>	2023
1.12	Improve REF submission transparency around paper selection and impact case studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While data is collected at the University level we need it at the school level</li> <li>2014: all impact case studies were male PIs</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report on the gender split of papers and case studies</li> <li>Implement institutional equality and gender REF policy at school level</li> </ol>	REF champion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least one female case study</li> <li>At least 40% papers from female PIs</li> </ul>	2021
1.13	Increase awareness of structures and opportunities for career progression for professional and clerical staff	Started in 2016. There are some good examples but limited. One case of Acting up 6 to 7 & 2 cases of Acting from 3 to 4.	a. Design a plan for Support P&S staff career progression.	School manager/HoS	Increase in promotions	2019 - 2024
1.14	Increase awareness and opportunities for career progression for technical staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some methods not possible at the moment as technician numbers are so low.</li> <li>Individuals are completely occupied with delivery of extremely large practical classes, therefore no time or opportunity to learn other tasks/roles</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate ways to introduce work shadowing/mentoring relationships to give exposure to technicians of other roles within the school.</li> <li>Engage with technical training using HEaTED resources. <a href="https://www.stem.org.uk/heated">https://www.stem.org.uk/heated</a></li> <li>Train individuals to be trainers, who can act as mentors to others interested in the school</li> <li>Provide opportunities for Tech staff to get leadership/management training similar to academic staff</li> <li>Investigate ways of removing glass ceiling set at grade 7 for technical staff in line with administrative staff</li> </ol>	HoS/Technical manager	Documented evidence to show implementation	2019 - 2023

## 2. ADVANCING RECRUITMENT AND CAREER PROGRESSION

No.	Objective	Action to date/Rationale for Objective	Planned Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Measures of Success	Timeframe
2.1	Increase post-doctoral engagement with services and opportunities available at school and faculty level	Lack of research funding applications	Increase the number of post-doctoral fellows applying for research funding	Director of PDR/DRs	Increase in the number of research application	2024
2.2	Increase the number of female academics applying for grants	Significant difference between males and females as PI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Realign co-I to Co-PI if equal distribution of work and raise awareness to female PI of the current situation at annual appraisal</li> <li>b. Identify barriers leading to reduced application at annual appraisal.</li> </ul>	HoS request to QUB for change All appraisers	20% increase in female PI funding applications	2024
2.3	Increasing awareness of career progression for Technicians with PhD	Outcome from new working group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Showcase existing individual on website</li> <li>b. Offer Individual help to those who are thinking of going for transition</li> </ul>	HoS	Success when there is an application	2024
2.4	Create flexible entry routes into Technical Career pathways	Outcome of interview with Technical Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Engage with Colleges NI, Department for Economy NI, and other skills-focused agencies to investigate the possibility of setting up apprenticeships/training programs within SBS</li> </ul>	HoS/DEs	Report on feasibility	2022
2.5	Increase visibility of Technical staff contribution	Lack of visibility and lack of acknowledgement of contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Invite all technicians to school board meetings and give opportunity to visit School Management Board meetings</li> <li>c. Showcase technical staff (beginning to happen at faculty/university level, certain events planned, increase visibility at school level)</li> </ul>	HoS/ School manager	Documented evidence to show changes	2020 -2024

			d. Add profiles of all technical staff to new school website			
<b>3. Flexible working and managing career breaks</b>						
No.	Objective	Action to date/Rationale for Objective	Planned Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Measures of Success	Timeframe
3.1	Identify a school-wide maternity/family champion	We need an individual to officially coordinate maternity/family leave	a. Do an internal SBS call for interested individuals to take up the role	SWAN SAT	Person in post	Sept 2020
3.2	<i>Devise policy for lecturer of education return from maternity/career break</i>	Lecturers get 6 months non-teaching to help with research, equivalent strategy needed for Lecturers in Education	a. Consult Lecturers in Education to identify what would help b. Set up a scheme c. Publish the scheme	HoS/DEs	Take up of the scheme	2021
3.3	Devise official policy to support staff dealing with premature babies	One of our case studies highlight the issues faced	a. Work together with Tiny life to design better arrangements	AS champions/ HoS/School Manager	New policy in place	Sept 2021
3.4	<i>Increase visibility of paternal leave provision</i>	Uptake is low	a. Mention at induction b. Showcase individuals who have opted for parental leave	AS champions	Increase awareness on the culture survey	2021,2024
<b>4. Enhancing ORGANISATIONAL culture and life at work</b>						
No.	Objective	Action to date/Rationale for Objective	Planned Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Measures of Success	Timeframe
4.1	Embed gender equality in new SBS website	Move to new building has given us an opportunity	a. Use gender neutral language b. Omit stereotypes from photos/figures c. Represent equally males and females across all levels	School manager	New website reflecting AS values	2022

4.2	Increase visibility of female role models in the new building	There are fewer female staff visibility as researchers	a. Initiate showcasing of a selection of female academics within SBS prominently on the main entryway. Rotate pics of female researchers and their research in the Foyer monitor	School manager/ AS champions	Number of female staff displayed	2019 - 2024
4.3	Embed gender equality and diversity into the UG and PGT curriculum	Queen's is currently examining inclusivity and diversity in the curriculum and is using the Canvas platform to enhance delivery of education.	a. Implement when designed by the University the 'Designing Inclusive Curriculum to improve Equality and Diversity' (DICED)	Directors of Education	Visibility on Canvas	Sept 2022
4.4	Increase SWAN engagement within all categories of staff and students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We want to increase engagement with students in areas relating to Athena SWAN.</li> <li>• Address staff needs relating to equality and diversity</li> <li>• Encouraging staff to tell us the problems they face anonymously and help to find solutions to the problems</li> <li>• Inclusion of P&amp;S staff within the SWAN agenda is a welcome and recent development. It is important to increase awareness of Athena SWAN within the P&amp;S cohort and promote engagement with initiatives.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Promote awareness at School level at open days</li> <li>b. Place anonymous ideas box in the building</li> <li>c. Co-create with Staff workshops possible solutions</li> <li>d. Present co-created solutions at SMB</li> <li>e. Feedback accepted solutions to staff at SB meeting</li> <li>f. Celebrate P&amp;S female staff in Queen's with a networking event every March to coincide with International Women's Day</li> </ol>	Directors of AS champions & SAT team Education School manager/Technical manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agenda item on all open days</li> <li>• Increase in number of staff involved</li> <li>• Show increase in participation</li> </ul>	2021- 2024
4.5	Engage with wider community with the new building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The new build offers new opportunities for engagement within QUB and across Northern Ireland</li> </ul>	a. Use building for new bands, art, and poetry reading etc. to bring in the public through eh door to see what we do in science. Reaching different groups especially those who do not	DRs/DEs/School manager/ AS champions and SAT team	Documented increase in engagement	2019 - 2024

			<p>engage with science – boys of low SES.</p> <p>b. Invite the public for inaugural lectures</p> <p>c. Invite school children to see the building</p>			
4.6	Recognise the contribution of all staff to SBS	How technical, clerical and professional staff are addressed can lack inclusivity	<p>a. Actively encourage the use of the term 'staff' to include everyone and not just the academics.</p> <p>b. Implement appropriate job titles (e.g. technical manager, not chief technician), consistent with QUB and in line with other UK HEIs.</p> <p>c. Give authorship on publications, or included in acknowledgments when appropriate</p> <p>d. Name Individuals on research grants (pros and cons), a requirement for technical time to be included in grant proposals</p> <p>e. Recognise contribution to the actual delivery of teaching, particularly in practical classes. Often the most experienced and skilled contribution to the class is made by the technician overseeing the practical.</p> <p>f. If desired, give the technician more responsibility and receive recognition for this by the academic staff, postgrad demonstrators and undergrads.</p> <p>g. Facilitate technician be involved in training of demonstrators.</p>	HoS/School manager/ Technical manager	Documents to show change	2020 - 2024



4.7	Increase connectivity between all staff	We are in a new building together for the first time ( 2019) thus we need to facilitate engagement and harmonious working together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Run a family day once/twice a year where all partners and children invited</li> <li>b. Find engaging ways to celebrate international men's and women's day</li> <li>c. Set up an International students gathering at the beginning of the term social</li> <li>d. Run a coffee mornings once a month</li> </ul>	School manager/ AS champions	Attendance and participation	Dec 2019 - 2024
4.8	Implement a more inclusive working WAM	We have collected WAM data and know what each academic staff is contributing. We need to use this information to identify unfair scaring of tasks and rectify	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Every year look at the WAM data to identify individuals whose work load is substantially high and reduce</li> <li>b. Identify individuals whose workload is not balanced in terms of teaching; research, management and rebalance</li> </ul>	HoS; DRs and DEs	Individual case studies shown to be successful	2021-2024
4.9	Investigate why external females disproportionately reject invitations to engage with SBS	Females reject invitations to speak at our school seminar or to join the IGFS scientific advisory board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Deconstruct invitations to identify if language used in the text is a barrier</li> <li>b. Set up a working group to come up with new ideas for recruitment</li> </ul>	AS Champions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barriers identified</li> <li>• New ideas implemented</li> </ul>	2024
4.10	Increase number of females in positions of leadership to 50% by 2024	<p>We wish to achieve gender-balanced membership in our committees.</p> <p>Several of these do not reach minimum 40% female representation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Rotate Committee chairs membership and encourage women to apply</li> <li>b. Encourage females to gain management training and leadership experience</li> </ul>	Current Chairs of Committees	40% females on all committees	2021 – 2024
4.11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase awareness of minority groups including Trans and BAME communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• QUB data shows 12% of academic and research staff are BAME. We are keen to explore any intersectional issues from</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Monitor at University level and implement University policy and practices</li> </ul>	HoS/School manager/AS champions	Effective resolution of any arising issues	2019 onwards

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase awareness of Transgender equality in the workplace at SBS.</li> </ul>	<p>gender and ethnicity at the school level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Queen’s has implemented a Transgender Equality policy and has worked with an external organisation, Sail NI, to deliver Transgender Awareness training.</li> </ul>				
---	--	--	--	--	--

**5. Improving the Infrastructure for SWAN data collection**

No.	Objective	Action to date/Rationale for Objective	Planned Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Measures of Success	Timeframe
5.1	Collect longitudinal data (5 years post graduate) on the employments and/or future studies UG students	This data will help us to market and promote our programmes to get a better gender balance in all pathways	a. Get relevant data from QUB regularly	School manager	Relevant data obtained	2021 - 2024
5.2	Establish a mechanism of formalized reporting of outreach activities by academic staff that informs WAM accurately	SBS is committed to engaging externally with school pupils, community groups, the business sector and policy makers. We currently do not know how much of this work is carried out and whether this done on an equitable basis by women and men. Media engagement activity is recorded but currently is not in a format that can be disaggregated by gender and grade. It is important to show that the public face of SBS is both female and male, and to take action if the data indicates otherwise.	a. Create a School wide database that records staff activities in relation to outreach, AS engagement and sharing of best practice. b. Collect information on staff media engagement by gender.	School manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No of items recorded</li> <li>No statistical different between genders in engagement</li> </ul>	2021 - 2024