

Tips for “crisp prose”

- = Be specific. Avoid vague language or commentary. Use evidence and examples rather than platitudes or sweeping statements;
- = Make use of figures and tables. For example, an organigram may more clearly explain a departmental or institutional structure than a lengthy paragraph;
- = Focus on analysis rather than description;
- = Actions should be cross-referenced and do not count towards the word limit; and
- = Ask a critical friend to read the application.

Notes about word count

The word count includes:

- = All body text, including quotes from qualitative analysis, and words in screenshots.
- = Any standalone text or prose included in tables, graphs, footnotes or references.

For more information about word count and example, please visit our [FAQ on the word count](#).

The following **are not** counted towards the word limit:

- = Details of your self-assessment team. These can be displayed in a table, using a maximum of 20 words for each team member (excluding name and job title).
- = Tables and graphs, providing they do not include standalone prose. Any text included within tables and graphs, should only make sense within the context of the figure (for example, titles and data labels).
- = References, for example, references to data sources such as ECU’s statistical reports.
- = Action plan.
- = Action points quoted within the body of the application and references to action points.

Example 1

A. The extensive and engaging self-assessment process was achieved through collaboration across the department, made possible by the commitment, drive and vision of staff participating in the Self-Assessment Team (SAT) structures and consultation process. This in turn was enabled by the Athena SWAN awareness raising activities and other equality related work carried out prior to the establishment of the formal SAT structure.

Applying for an Athena SWAN Award is an important opportunity for the department to enhance its commitment to gender equality. Significant preparatory work went into raising and building capacity for the initiative internally, prior to putting formal project structures in place. **(101 words)**

B. The extensive and engaging self-assessment process was achieved through collaboration across the department, made possible by the commitment, drive and vision of faculty and staff participating in the Self-Assessment Team (SAT) structures and consultation process.

Significant preparatory work went into raising awareness and building capacity for the initiative internally, prior to putting formal project structures in place through the following:

- = All staff emails were sent from the departmental SAT lead to begin raising awareness about Athena SWAN
- = Workload allocations were made for the Athena SWAN Champions to begin scoping activity
- = Athena SWAN introductory seminar was held and included a town hall with the SAT lead and Vice-Chancellor **(109 words)**

C. To raise awareness and build capacity for the initiative internally, prior to putting a formal self-assessment team together:

- = All-staff emails were sent from the departmental SAT lead to raise awareness of, and signal senior commitment to, Athena SWAN
- = Workload allocations (64 hours) were made for three Athena SWAN Champions to visit an award holding institution, attend regional network meetings, and observe a panel assessment
- = Athena SWAN introductory seminar was held and included a town hall with the departmental SAT lead during core hours (28 attendees, 68% women) **(90 words)**

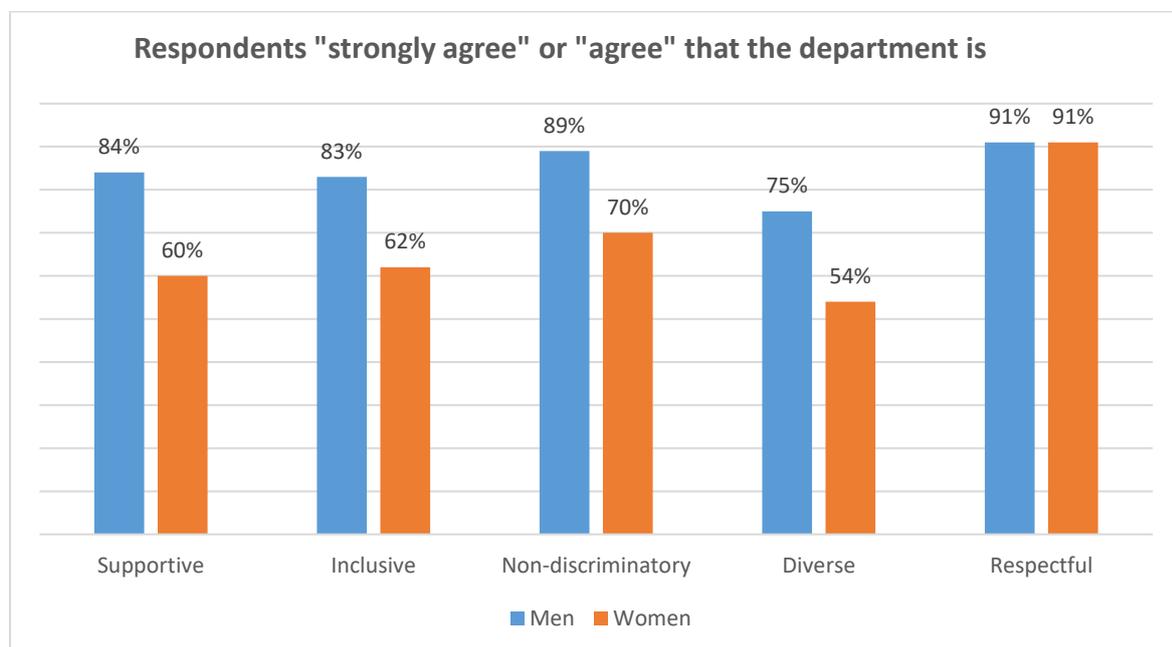
Example 2

A. The department recognises the aspects of how it is organised and governed, particularly organisational culture, are central components of its capacity to address issues of gender equality in both STEMM and AHSBBL departments. Formal organisational elements and less formal cultural matters need to be considered. Changing organisational culture presents a challenge to all organisations. Senior management needs to provide leadership and as an organisation we commit to a wide range of small actions to create better processes that ensure through institutionalisation and habitual practice. This understanding is reflected in the drafting of the SMART action plan. The department recognises that change is needed to meet our gender equality objectives; this involves changes in everyday behaviours and attitudes.

When survey respondents were asked to rate the culture of their work environment, men rated their work environment more favourably across all categories than women (except for 'respect' where the work environment was rated almost equally by both men and women at 91% agreement.) For example, 86% of men considered the work environment supportive, 83% said it was inclusive, 87% rate it as non-discriminatory and 78% rated it as diverse.

The department will not be complacent about the gender imbalance in staff satisfaction levels and will introduce a series of actions to ensure all staff within the department feel supported and respected. The Department will conduct a series of focus groups with women academics and support staff (**AP 6.1**). At the next Away Day, the Head of Department will reiterate the zero tolerance stance on harassment, discrimination and bullying (**AP 6.2**). To increase visibility and diversity within the Department, we will celebrate women and BME staff and students in monthly newsletters (**AP 7.1**) and ensure marketing and web media materials showcase diversity of gender and race (**AP 7.2**). (295 words)

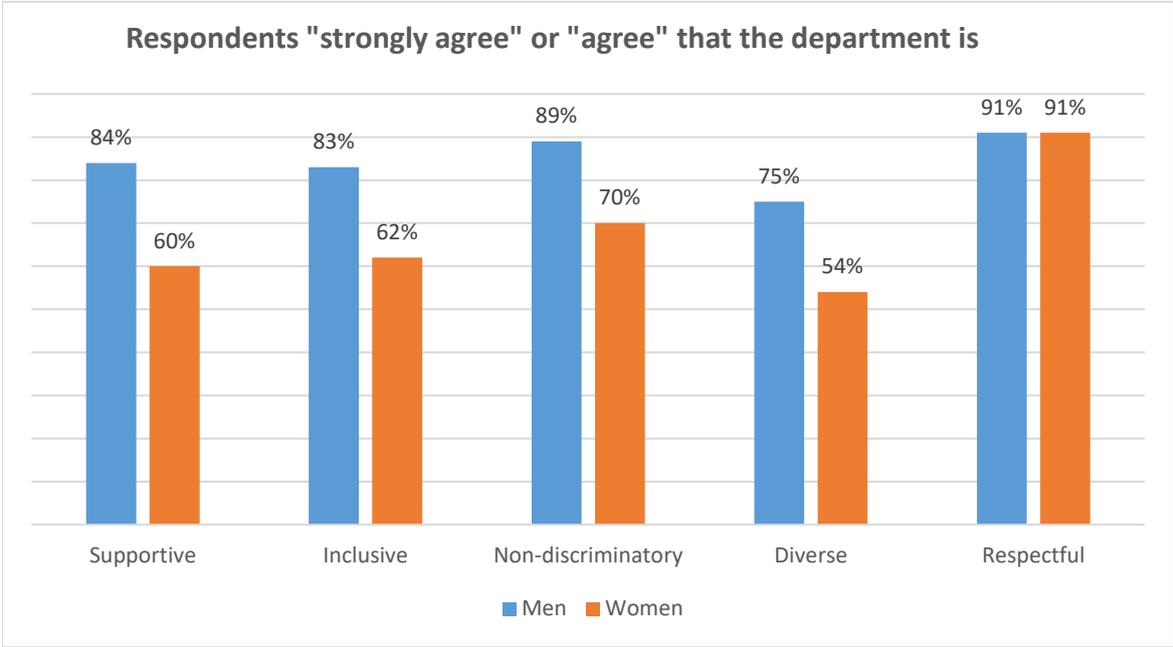
B. Survey respondents were asked to rate the culture of their work environment. Men rated their work environment more favourably across all categories than women (except for 'respect' where the work environment was rated almost equally by both men and women).



It is particularly concerning that women are less likely to agree that the department is non-discrimination, supportive and inclusive. We will explore the underlying reasons for these responses in a series of focus groups with female academic and support staff (**AP 6.1**). In the meantime, the Head of Department will use the upcoming Away Day to reiterate the department's zero-tolerance stance on harassment, discrimination and bullying (**AP 6.2**)

The survey data also highlight that many staff, particularly women, do not agree that the department is diverse; while this is something that will be addressed by the department's recruitment-related actions over the coming years, we will ensure that successes of our women and BME staff and students are celebrated in our monthly newsletters (**AP 7.1**) and that our marketing and website media show diversity in terms of gender and race (**AP 7.2**).
(181 words)

C. Survey respondents were asked to rate the culture of their work environment. Men rated their work environment more favourably than women in all categories.



The Department intends to introduce a series of actions to tackle the gendered imbalance within staff experiences and promote diversity, these include:

- Conduct a series of focus groups with women staff (**AP 6.1**)
- Ensure the Head of Department reiterates the zero tolerance policy on harassment, discrimination and bullying (**AP 6.2**).
- Celebrate women and BME staff and students in monthly newsletters (**AP 7.1**)
- Ensure marketing and web media showcases diversity of gender and race (**AP 7.2**).

(99 words)