GENDER EQUALITY

IN IRISH HIGHER EDUCATION 2016-2021

Centre of Excellence for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, March 2022

CONTENTS

01 INTRODUCTION

Diversity is a key strength of Irish higher education. In recent decades our universities, institutes of technology, and colleges have been transformed, from predominantly national institutions catering primarily for school-leavers, to internationally oriented institutions engaged with an increasingly diverse student body, of all ages, backgrounds and gender identities.

Higher education legislation requires institutions to promote gender-balance among students and staff, and for the Higher Education Authority (HEA) to promote the attainment of equality of opportunity.

The HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions (2016) was an important first step in highlighting the gender inequality that existed at senior academic levels in our HEIs. The HEA Expert Group report outlined a number of recommendations for the higher education institutions (HEIs), HEA, research funding agencies and other key stakeholders. However, despite the publication of the HEA Expert Group report, progress remained slow.

In 2017, the Minister of State for Higher Education established the Gender Equality Taskforce to identify significant measures, drawing on the work of the HEA Expert Group Report published in 2016, that could accelerate progress in achieving gender equality in the Irish HEIs. Their Action Plan, which was launched on 12 November 2018, encompasses a suite of initiatives to bring about sustainable organisational change and to empower a culture of gender equality in the HEIs for all staff, academic and professional, as well as management and support staff at all levels.

While the HEIs are all substantially state-funded, autonomous and self-governing, the commitment and progress of HEIs in developing strategies and meeting targets towards gender equality in HEIs is monitored through annual reporting to the (i) Centre of Excellence for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, (ii) the HEA more broadly through the Strategic Dialogue Process (a process of strategy and performance dialogue with the individual institutions) and (iii) application/attainment of Athena SWAN awards (see below).

The data[1] and analysis provided below is intended to provide a review of the progress towards gender equality since 2015 and an overview of the current situation.

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[1] All data relates to staff whose posts are funded from the core grant allocated to the universities, institutes of technology, technological universities and other colleges by the HEA as voted by the Oireachtas under the OME C4 sub-head except for research staff whose posts are non-core grant funded.

02 HEI LEADERS

In 2015, just 20% of all Irish HEIs (5 of 25 institutions; Table 2.1) were led by women. Consequently, the Expert Group recommended that at the final selection step in the appointment process for new presidents the final pool of candidates comprise an equal number of women and men. Also, when this is not possible, interview panels should account to their governing authority as to why. In relation to this last recommendation, the Gender Equality Taskforce recommended that, in turn, the governing authority of a HEI provide a report of presidential recruitment processes to the HEA and these reports have been requested by the HEA since 2019. Since 2015, the number of women leaders has increased to 38% (8 of 21) indicating that gender balance is close to being achieved in HEI leadership.

FEMALE HEI LEADERS		
	Number	% of total
2015	5	20%
2021	8	38%

Table 2.1 Leadership of higher education institutions in 2016 and 2021.

While the numerical data highlight a significant improvement, it should also be noted that at the time of the HEA National Review (2016), there had never been a female leader (president or provost) of any Irish university since the establishment of the first university in 1592 (Table 2.2). In 2020, the University of Limerick appointed its, and the country's, first female President. This was closely followed in 2021 by the appointment of a female provost in Trinity College Dublin (its first in a 400-plus year history) and a female president at Maynooth University.

FEMALE HEI LEADERS (Universities)		
	Number	% of total
2016	0	0%
2021	3	43%

Table 2.2 Leadership in the Irish university sector 2016 and 2020.

This is an extremely important development in Irish HE with universities comprising the largest sector of the HE landscape in Ireland. In the 2018/19 academic year, the university sector accounted for 51% of all undergraduate, and 70% of all postgraduate, enrolments while attracting 18,567 fulltime non-Irish students – 72% of the national figure[2].

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[2] https://hea.ie/statistics/data-for-download-and-visualisations/data-for-download/2018-2019-enrolments-by-new-entrant-programme-type-institute-mode-domicile-group-and-course-level/

03 GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

In addition to female under-representation at the most senior academic levels, historically, membership of key-decision making groups within Irish HEIs (e.g. governing authority, academic council, executive management team) has not been gender balanced. To address the lack of female staff involved in high-level decision-making (particularly regarding resource allocation, appointments and promotions), it was recommended that all key decision-making bodies consist of at least 40% of each gender and that, across an institution, 40% of chairs of such bodies should be of each gender in any given year. Further, HEIs must submit a gender breakdown of governing authority/body, academic council and executive management annually to the HEA.

In 2015, the percentage of HEIs that had achieved gender balance on governing body/authority, academic council and executive management was 60%, 28% and 28% respectively (Table 3.1).

% HEIs with gender balance on governance & management structures			
	Governing Body/Authority	**Academic Council**	**Executive Management**
2015	60%	28%	28%
2020	65%	91%	61%

Table 3.1 Gender Balance on governance and management structures in Irish HEIs·

While there have been demonstrable increases in the percentage of HEIs with gender balance on their academic councils and executive management structures, there has been little improvement with regard to gender balance on HEI governing bodies / authorities. In fact, the 5% increase seen here results not from an increase in the number of HEIs achieving gender balance, which remains at 15, but from the reconfiguration/merging of some HEIs resulting in a reduced number of institutions in the Irish system. In 2015, 15 of 25 (60%) institutions had achieved gender balance on their governing body /authority while in 2020, this number was 15 of 23 (65%).

04 STAFF BY CATEGORY OF POST

While all staff employed in Irish HE is gender-balanced (Table 4.1), when analysed by category of post, gender differences are evident. The highest proportion of women employed in Irish HE is in Professional Management & Support (PMSS) core-funded posts (38%), compared to the other categories of academic core-funded staff (33%), and research/specialist staff (academic 14%, and PMSS 14%). These data have changed little since 2015 although there has been a small reduction in the percentage of women employed in the PMSS core-funded cohort (41% in 2015 vs 38% in 2020; Figure 7.1). In comparison, the highest proportion of men employed is in academic core-funded posts (45%), compared to the other categories of PMSS core-funded staff (27%), and research/specialist staff (academic 19%, and PMSS 9%).

	2015		2020	
	FEMALE WTE	MALE WTE	FEMALE WTE	MALE WTE
Academic Staff	44%	56%	46%	54%
PMSS	61%	39%	62%	38%
Research/Specialist Academic staff	44%	56%	46%	54%
Research/Specialist PMSS	61%	39%	63%	36%
TOTAL	**52%**	**48%**	**54%**	**46%**

Table 4.1 Staff (WTE) disaggregated by category of post and gender 2015 and 2020.
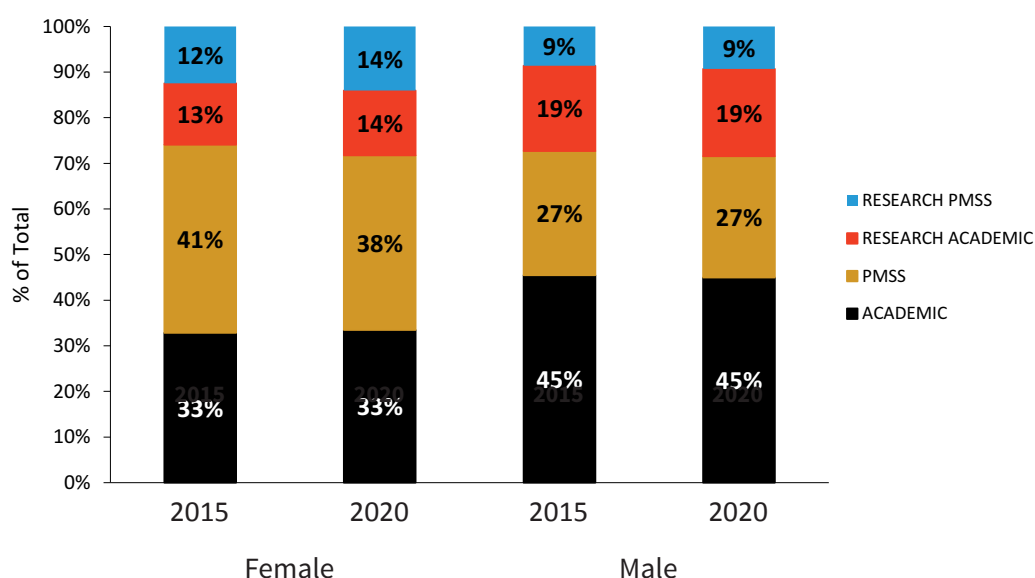

Figure 4.1 Female and male staff cohorts (WTE) disaggregated by category of post and year.

Overall, the proportion of staff in academic and research/specialist academic categories is gender-balanced i.e., 44% of all academic, and research/specialist academic, staff are female (Table 4.1). These data indicate that the higher number of women employed in Irish HE (54% female vs 46% male staff) is due to employment in the PMSS roles since women are over-represented in this post category.

05 STAFF BY GRADE / SALARY

5.1 Academic Staff by Grade

Career structure across the **university sector** is typically consistent and includes postgraduate student, postdoctoral fellow, lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor and Professor. Advancement or entry to a specific grade is awarded on merit based on achievements in teaching, research/scholarly activity, and contribution to the department, college and 'community' (academic and wider community). Recruitment or promotion to Senior lecturer, Associate Professor, and Professor, as well as higher management grades within Universities, such as Dean (Head) of Faculty, President (or Provost, in TCD) require internationally recognised research, a substantive publication record as well as a strong record of academic leadership and contribution.
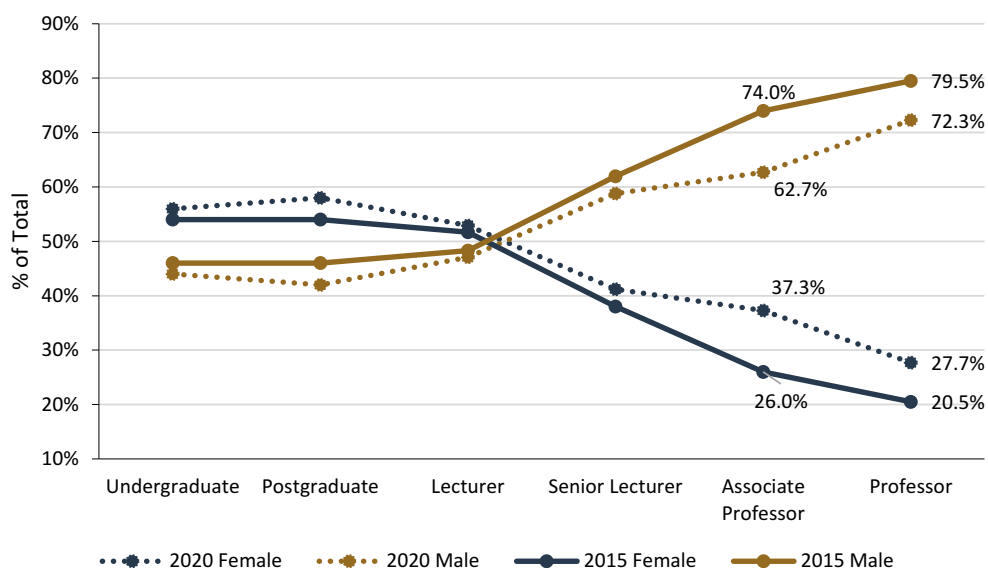

Figure 5.1.1 Gender profile (% headcount) of academic staff and students in the university sector 2015 and 2020.

In 2020, 27.7% of all professors were female, an increase of 7.2% since 2015 (Table 5.1.1; % headcount). The professoriate in universities has risen from 532 in 2015 to 642 in 2020 (representing approximately 18 posts per annum). The total number of female professors has increased by 69 (109 in 2015 compared to 178 in 2020), while the total number of male professors has risen by 41 (423 in 2015 compared to 464 in 2020). This indicates that, of the 110 new professors in the system, females represent 63% of this increase.

Both the Expert Group and Gender Equality Taskforce recommended that HEIs implement a number of initiatives aimed at addressing the acute problem of under-representation of women a full professor level. One of these initiatives was implementation of the flexible cascade model as a minimum (not a maximum), for both promotion and recruitment of academic staff. Recruitment and promotion data was not submitted to the HEA until 2018 and these data indicate that in the 3 years of collection, the flexible model cascade for recruitment/promotion has been exceeded in relation to professor appointments (see **6. Recruitment and Promotion 2018 – 2020** for more detail).

	2015	**2020**
Professor	20.5%	27.7%
Associate Professor	26.0%	37.3%
Senior Lecturer	38.0%	41.2%
Lecturer	51.7%	52.9%

Table 5.1.1 Percentage of female academic staff (headcount) by grade in the university sector.

In the **technological higher education sector**, academics enter the system at Assistant Lecturer level and usually automatically progress to Lecturer subject to fulfilment of certain criteria. Lecturers may progress to Senior Lecturer 1 (Teaching), Senior Lecturer 2 (Head of Department) and Senior Lecturer 3 (Head of School), Faculty Director, and President. These positions are all filled by externally advertised public competitions based on merit. Terms and conditions for these positions require approval of the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and are negotiated nationally by the main academic union, the Teacher's Union of Ireland (TUI), together with the managerial sectoral representative body, the Technological Higher Education Association (THEA). Senior Lecturer positions are permanent, full-time posts and appointees typically remain in these positions for significant periods of time from appointment which reduced the capacity for staff turnover and promotion. Senior Lecturer 3 (SL3) posts, the most senior academic level within the technological HE sector, are academic posts which are generally Head of School or a role at a similar level in senior management and are distinct from the more traditional role of professors in universities.
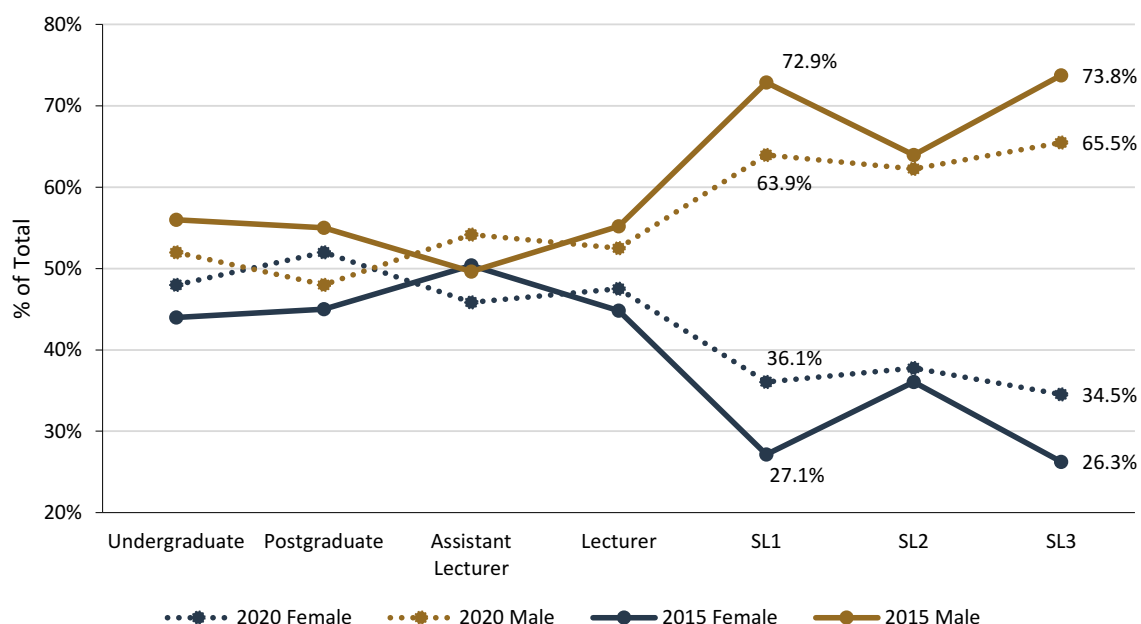

Figure 5.1.2 Gender profile (% headcount) of academic staff and students in the technological HE sector 2015 and 2020.

In 2020, 34.5% of all SL3s were female, an increase of 8.2% since 2015 (Table 5.1.2). The total number of SL3s in the technological HE sector rose by 4 (80 in 2015 compared to 84 in 2020), with the number of female SL3s increasing by 8 and the number of male SL3s decreasing by 4.

	2015	**2020**
Senior Lecturer 3	26.3%	34.5%
Senior Lecturer 2	36.0%	37.8%
Senior Lecturer 1	27.1%	36.1%
Lecturer	44.8%	47.5%
Assistant Lecturer	50.4%	45.8%

Table 5.1.2 Percentage of female academic staff (headcount) by grade in the technological HE sector.

The gender profile of students and staff in the specialist colleges has remained relatively unchanged though it might be expected that greater disparity in favour of female staff might be observed at senior lecturer (51%) level given the over-representation of female staff at lecturer level (70.9% in 2020).
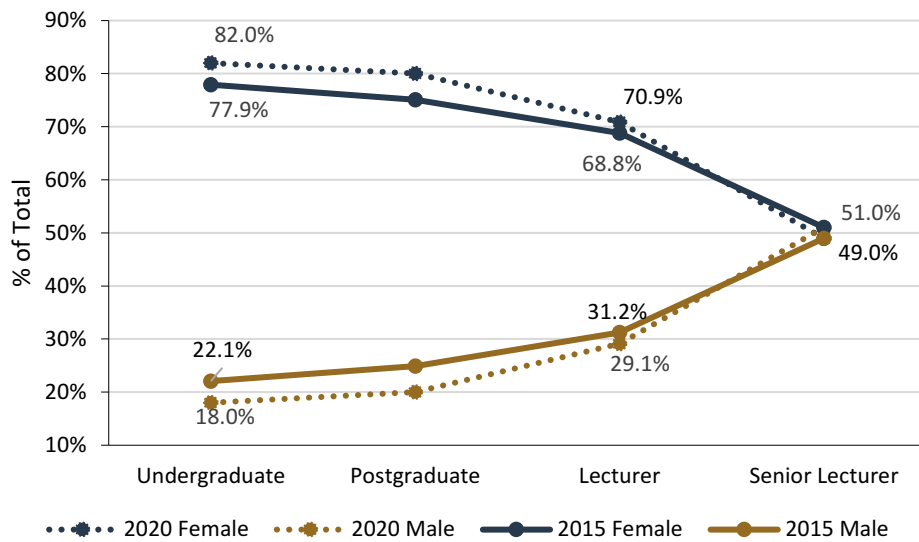

Figure 5.1.3 Gender profile (% headcount) of academic staff and students in the specialist colleges 2015 and 2020.

5.2 Professional, Management and Support Staff (PMSS) by Pay Grade (Headcount data)

In 2015, women represented 60% of the PMSS cohort (headcount) while only 27% of the most highly paid PMSS positions across the sector were held by women (Table 5.2.1).
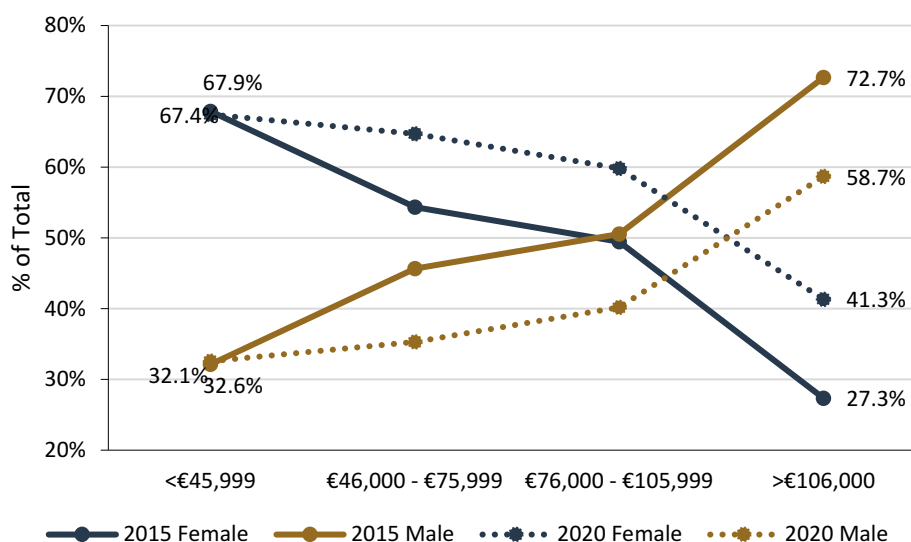

Figure 5.2 Professional, Management & Support Staff (PMSS) disaggregated by pay grade and gender, 2015 and 2020.

The lowest-paid positions were predominantly held by women (68%; Figure 5.2) and this continues to be the case in 2020 (67%). Therefore, unlike the academic career pipeline, where there is gender equality at entry level, there is a twofold issue among PMSS in terms of vertical segregation (Figure 5.2). The Expert Group recommended that in order to drive change at the highest-paid PMSS positions the final of pool of shortlisted candidates must comprise a minimum 50% women and 50% men for all PMSS positions where the salary scale reaches or exceeds €76,000. In 2020, 41% of the most highly paid PMSS positions across the sector were held by women (Figure 5.2 and Table 5.2.1) which more closely represents the gender profile of the total PMSS cohort (65%) than it did in 2015. However, it should be noted that the over-representation of women in the PMSS cohort has become larger since 2015 and stands at 65%.

	2015	**2020**
>€106,000	27%	41%
€76,000 - €105,999	49%	60%
€46,000 - €75,999	54%	65%
<€45,999	68%	67%
TOTAL	**60%**	**65%**

Table 5.2.1 Percentage of female Professional, Management & Support Staff (headcount) by pay grade 2015 and 2020.

06 STAFF BY CONTRACT-TYPE

6.1 Academic Staff by contract-type

Precarious work, as defined by '*Precarious work from a gender and intersectionality perspective, and ways to combat it'*, a study commissioned by the European Parliament's Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs, is '…*taken to mean employment that satisfies at least one of the following criteria: very low pay, very low intensity working hours, or low job security[3]'*. In 2014, 26.5% of female employees (18 – 64 years) were considered to have precarious employment in comparison to 15.1% of male employees while in 2019, of those in part-time employment, 73.8% were women.

While women represent 46% of academic staff, 66% of those on part-time temporary contracts are female (Table 6.1). This indicates an over-representation of women on precarious contracts in Irish HEIs and, significantly, represents an increase in female representation in this cohort since 2015 (58%).

	2015	2020
Full-Time Permanent	42%	44%
Full-Time Temporary/Contract	45%	52%
Part-Time Permanent	63%	62%
Part-Time Temporary/Contract	58%	66%
Hourly Paid	48%	45%
TOTAL ACADEMIC STAFF	**44%**	**46%**

Table 6.1 Academic staff (WTE) by contract-type 2015 and 2020

6.2 Professional, Management and Support Staff (PMSS) by contract-type (WTE data)

While female staff comprise 62%[4] of the total PMSS cohort (whole-time equivalent WTE data), 79% of those on part-time temporary contracts are female (Table 6.2). This indicates an over-representation of women on precarious contracts in Irish HEIs and, significantly, represents an increase in the proportion of staff on part-time temporary contracts who are female in comparison to data from 2015 (61%). Though some caution should be noted in interpreting these data as this represents a small number of staff (n=239.8 in 2015 and n=197.9 in 2020) – approximately 2.2% of the entire PMSS cohort.

	2015	2020
Full-Time Permanent	57%	58%
Full-Time Temporary/Contract	61%	64%
Part-Time Permanent	92%	89%
Part-Time Temporary/Contract	61%	79%
Hourly Paid	60%	79%
TOTAL PMSS	**61%**	**62%**

Table 6.2 PMSS (WTE) by contract-type 2015 and 2020

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[3] https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/662491/IPOL_STU(2020)662491_EN.pdf
[4] The disaggregation of PMSS cohort was performed using whole-time equivalent (WTE) data in comparison to section 4.2 where headcount data has been analysed.

07 STAFF DISAGGREGATED BY DISCIPLINE

The data presented here show the proportion of staff that were female in 2015 and 2020 disaggregated by discipline. The disciplines are classified as follows: Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Business and Law (AHSSBL), Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths and Medicine (STEMM) and all categories that fall outside of these disciplines (OTHER).

These data show that the while the total numbers of academic staff were gender balanced in 2015, there were some discipline-specific differences (Table 7.1). For instance, the percentage of staff working in the STEMM disciplines was not gender-balanced (37% female; Figure 7.1) and was below that expected based on the proportion of academic staff who were female (44%).

	Academic Staff		PMSS		Research Staff		Research PMSS	
	2015	2020	2015	2020	2015	2020	2015	2020
AHSSBL	52%	54%	76%	78%	52%	56%	73%	75%
STEMM	37%	39%	56%	58%	45%	44%	60%	62%
OTHER	41%	50%	60%	61%	33%	41%	59%	63%
TOTAL	**44%**	**46%**	**61%**	**62%**	**44%**	**46%**	**61%**	**63%**

Table 7.1 Staff disaggregated by discipline (WTE).

Since 2015, this figure has increased to 39% but remains below that of academic staff that are female (46%; Table 7.1 and Figure 7.1).
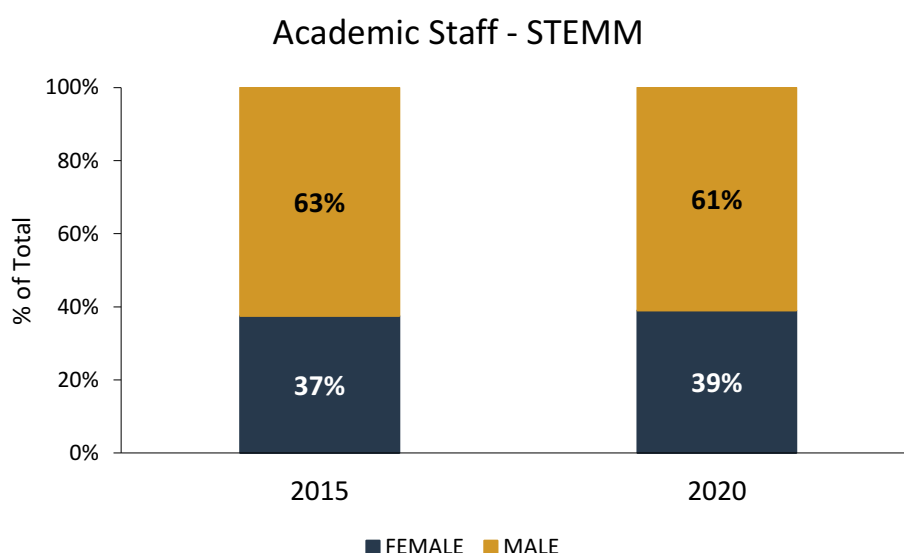
Academic Staff - STEMM

Figure 7.1 Academic staff in STEMM disaggregated by gender 2015 and 2020.

Some discipline-specific differences were apparent amongst the research staff cohort where, in 2015, there was gender balance in all disciplines except the OTHER category (33%; Table 7.1). Gender balance has been achieved in this discipline (41%).

Greater disparity was evident amongst the PMSS cohort where, in 2015, women represented 61% of the PMSS cohort (WTE) but 76% of those working in the AHSSBL discipline. This disparity is relatively unchanged in 2020 (78%), as is the proportion of PMSS who were female (62%; WTE data; section 6.2). Research PMSS reflect a similar profile to that of the PMSS group.

While this data is useful, it does not provide sufficiently granular information, particularly in relation to STEMM where under-representation is more apparent in some fields and is 'cancelled out' by the over-representation of women in other STEMM fields.

08 RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION 2018 – 2020

Following the financial crisis in 2008, a moratorium on recruitment and promotion was instigated across all public sector bodies in Ireland. This impacted heavily on staffing profiles in HEIs however, in view of the critical mission of HEIs, some flexibility was afforded. The employment control framework (ECF) introduced by the then Ministers for Education and Skills and Finance, set out a number of measures designed to reduce the levels of exchequer-funded employment by 12% between 2009 and 2014. In essence, this framework restricted recruitment of exchequer-funded posts to those that were absolutely necessary for the continued provision of essential services, imposed a retention of the ratio of junior to senior academic posts and imposed a fixed term or fixed purpose contract on any new appointments. Salary reductions for current staff as well as revised salary scales for new entrants were also introduced. Many HEIs had started to address gender equality issues in the last decade and this reduction in employment numbers significantly affected their ability to achieve real change. While the institutions are autonomous in terms of their recruitment and appointment processes, their overall ability to respond to the growth in student numbers and research demand is severely limited by the public sector Employment Control Framework, resulting in significant increases in recent years in student: staff ratios and in early-stage researchers in precarious employment. The ECF has remained in place, though relaxed to a certain extent and has continued to impact the staffing profiles in Irish HEIs, restricting opportunities for promotion and recruitment thereby limiting progress towards achieving gender equality/balance, particularly at senior academic and management levels.

Both the Expert Group and the DES Taskforce recommended that to increase the gender balance at senior academic grades the **flexible cascade model** of gender quotas should be implemented by all HEIs – i.e., where the proportion of women and men to be recruited or promoted to a certain level is based on the proportion of each at the career level directly below.

Academic recruitment and promotion data has been submitted to the HEA since 2018 and the data (headcount) presented in subsequent sections represents all data gathered in the period 2018 – 2020.

8.1 Academic recruitment and promotion in the university sector

Analysis of academic recruitment and promotion data reveals that while females represented 58% of postgraduate students in 2020, 34% of applicants to entry-level lectureship positions were female (Figure 8.1.1). Similarly, the percentage of female applicants to Senior Lecturer (40%), Associate Professor (35%) and Professor (28%) positions were below those predicted based on the applicant pool in the academic grade immediately below (Lecturer grade: 52%; Senior Lecturer grade: 41%; Associate Professor grade: 37%).

TOTAL APPLICANTS BY GRADE AND GENDER
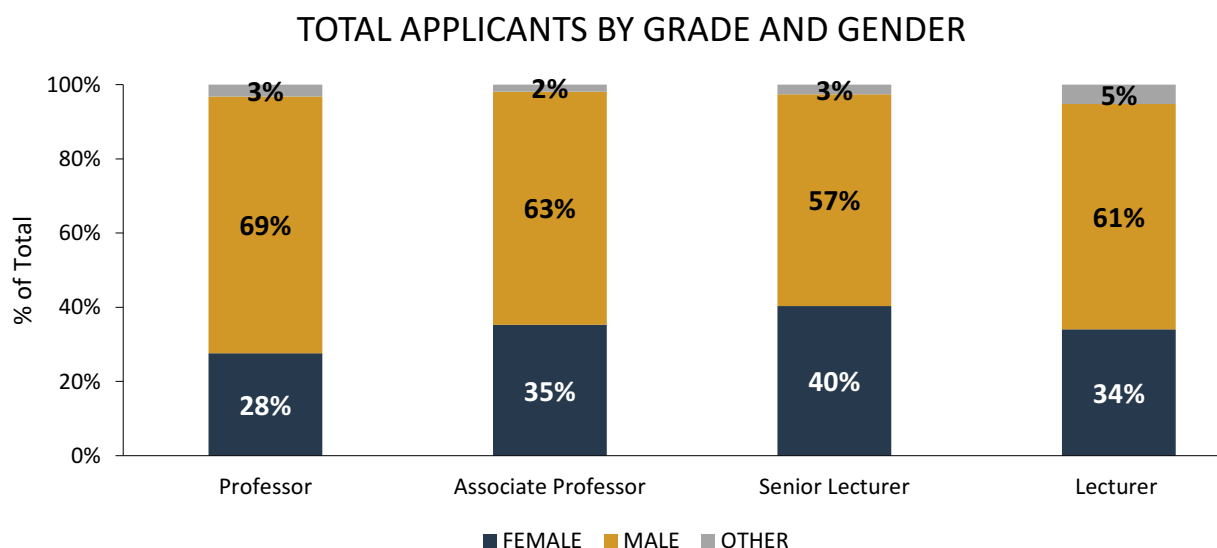
Figure 8.1.1 Applicants (% headcount) to recruitment and promotion disaggregated by grade and gender in the university sector.

The total number of applicants to each grade disaggregated by gender can be found in Table 8.1.1.

	ALL APPLICANTS 2018 -2020			
	FEMALE	**MALE**	**OTHER**	**TOTAL**
Professor	598	1500	69	2167
Associate Professor	390	695	21	1106
Senior Lecturer	904	1282	58	2244
Lecturer	9599	17122	1482	28203

Table 8.1.1 Academic recruitment and promotion (no. headcount) disaggregated by grade and gender.

While the percentages of female applicants to academic positions within the university sector were lower than those predicted, appointments to each grade within the sector were gender-balanced, and in the case of Associate Professor (46%) and Professor (45%), significantly higher than might be predicted based on implementation of the flexible cascade model (Figure 8.1.2).
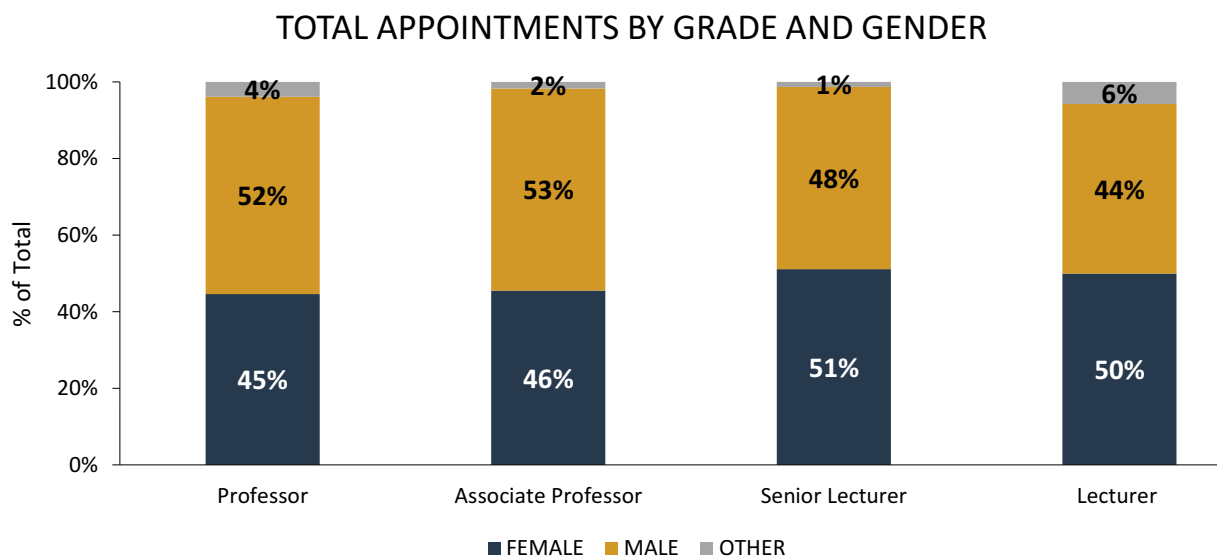
TOTAL APPOINTMENTS BY GRADE AND GENDER

Figure 8.1.2 Appointments (% headcount) disaggregated by grade and gender in the university sector.

The total number of appointments to each grade disaggregated by gender can be found in Table 8.1.2.

	ALL APPOINTMENTS 2018 - 2020			
	FEMALE	**MALE**	**OTHER**	**TOTAL**
Professor	58	67	5	130
Associate Professor	107	124	4	235
Senior Lecturer	232	216	6	454
Lecturer	585	519	67	1171

Table 8.1.2 Academic recruitment and promotion (no. headcount) disaggregated by grade and gender.

To measure the relative success of applicants at each grade, the yield ratio for the applicant pool was calculated (Table 8.1.3). This ratio presents the number of applicants that are successfully appointed as a ratio of the total number of applicants.

YIELD RATIO FOR ALL APPLICANTS (RECRUITMENT & PROMOTION 2018 - 2020)			
	FEMALE APPLICANTS	MALE APPLICANTS	ALL APPLICANTS
PROFESSOR	9.7%	4.5%	7.2%
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR	27.4%	17.8%	19.0%
SENIOR LECTURER	25.7%	16.8%	10.3%
LECTURER	6.1%	3.0%	4.5%

Table 8.1.3 Yield ratio for applicants to academic recruitment and promotion disaggregated by gender.

The data indicate that, all things being equal, an applicant to Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor and Professor has a predicted success rate of 4.5%, 10.3%, 19% and 7.2% respectively. Comparison of the data for female and male applicants indicates a more successful yield ratio for female applicants for all grades in comparison to the yield ratio of male applicants. While this data reveals more favourable outcomes for female applicants than their male counterparts, it should be considered that this ratio is calculated based on the total number of female applicants and, as is evident from Table 8.1.1, the number of male applicants at each grade is larger (in some cases more than double) than the number of female applicants. The data here do not provide a sufficient level of data to reveal why this may be the case, though research has shown that a perceived lack of confidence in one's chance of success, which results in women not putting themselves forward for roles, is often not due to a lack of confidence in themselves, but rather a lack of confidence in the environment to judge them fairly.[5] What can be stated is that female applicants, when they apply, appear to be more successful than their male counterparts.

Further in-depth analysis of the data reveals that women represent just 26% of the applicant pool to professorship via recruitment processes, but 53% of the applicant pool via promotion processes (Table 8.1.4). These data are difficult to interpret – it may be possible that women feel more likely to achieve professorship via the promotions process within their own institution or that women are less 'free' to move at the stage of life where they would be applying for professorship.

	APPLICANTS TO RECRUITMENT PROCESS			APPLICANTS TO PROMOTION PROCESS	
	FEMALE	MALE		FEMALE	MALE
PROFESSOR	26%	70%		53%	47%
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR	30%	66%		41%	59%
SENIOR LECTURER	36%	60%		49%	51%
LECTURER	34%	61%		41%	59%

Table 8.1.4 Academic recruitment and promotion (% headcount) disaggregated by grade, gender and process.

Interrogation of the relative yield ratio (the female yield ratio relative to that for all applicants; Table 8.1.5) indicates that female applicants were more successful when applying via recruitment than promotion (1.7 vs 0.9), though it should be noted that in each case, appointments are gender-balanced and the difference in the yield ratio results from the disparity in the number of female applicants to each process. Furthermore, the data should be considered with caution given the relatively small observation (N) numbers (n=89 and n=41 for recruitment and promotion appointments respectively) and the limited time for which data has been collected (2018 -2020).

	RELATIVE YIELD RATIO RECRUITMENT	RELATIVE YIELD RATIO PROMOTION
PROFESSOR	1.7	0.9
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR	1.4	1.1
SENIOR LECTURER	1.5	1.0
LECTURER	1.5	1.2

Table 8.1.5 Relative yield ratio for female applicants to each academic grade disaggregated by recruitment/promotion.

[5] McKinsey and Co. (2010) *Women Matter* 2010, p11.

8.2 Academic recruitment and promotion in the technological HE sector

Analysis of academic recruitment and promotion data within the technological HE sector reveals that the percentage of female applicants to all grades (except Senior lecturer 3; SL3) are either ≥40% or consistent with that predicted based on the percentage of female staff at the career level directly below (Figure 8.2.1). However, the percentage of applicants who were female to SL3 positions was lower (28%) than that predicted based on the percentage of female SL2s (37.8%) currently in the system.

TOTAL APPLICANTS BY GRADE AND GENDER
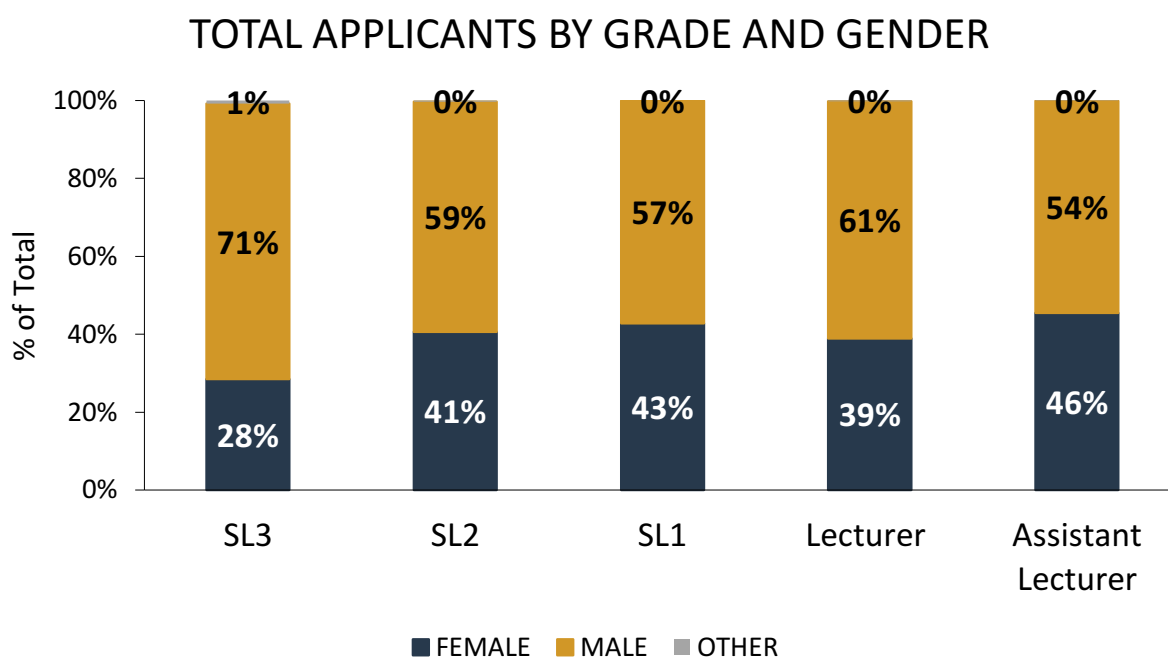
Figure 8.2.1 Applicants (% headcount) to recruitment and promotion disaggregated by grade and gender in the technological HE sector.

The total number of applicants to each grade disaggregated by gender can be found in Table 8.2.1.

	ALL APPLICANTS 2018-2020		
	FEMALE	**MALE**	**OTHER**
Senior Lecturer 3	74	184	2
Senior Lecturer 2	245	356	2
Senior Lecturer 1	62	83	0
Lecturer	438	684	2
Assistant Lecturer	4033	4825	5

Table 8.2.1 Academic recruitment and promotion (no. headcount) disaggregated by grade and gender.

Appointments to each grade (except SL3) within the sector were gender-balanced (Figure 6.2.2), and in the case of SL2 (49%) and SL1 (62%), significantly higher than might be predicted based on the grades immediately below, where 36.1% of SL1s and 47.5% of Lecturers were female (see Table 5.1.2).

TOTAL APPOINTMENTS BY GRADE AND GENDER
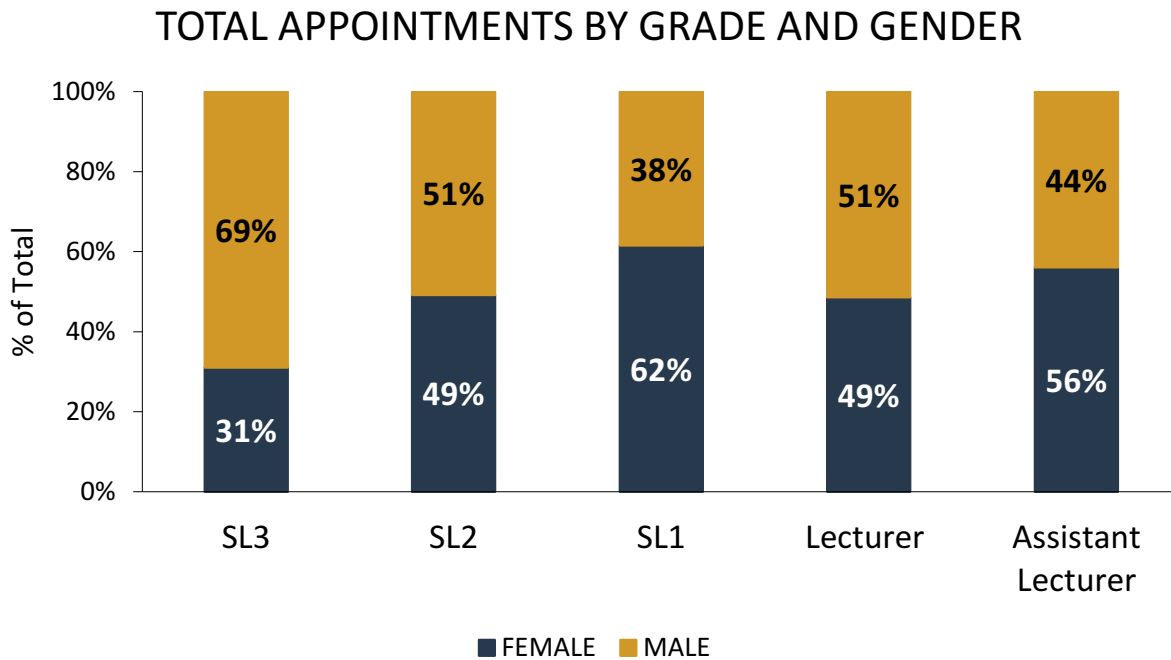
Figure 8.2.2 Appointments (% headcount) disaggregated by grade and gender in the technological HE sector.

While appointments to SL3 reveal a lower percentage of female applicants than might be predicted using the flexible cascade model, caution should be taken in interpreting these findings. Recruitment and promotion to SL3 in the technological HE sector represents a much smaller cohort (just 29 appointments during the period 2018 – 2020; Table 8.2.2) than that in the university sector. Senior Lecturer positions are permanent, full-time posts and appointees typically remain in these positions for significant periods of time from appointment.

	ALL APPOINTMENTS 2018-2020		
	FEMALE	**MALE**	**OTHER**
Senior Lecturer 3	9	20	0
Senior Lecturer 2	31	32	0
Senior Lecturer 1	8	5	0
Lecturer	52	55	0
Assistant Lecturer	388	304	0

Table 8.2.2 Academic recruitment and promotion (no. headcount) disaggregated by grade and gender.

To measure the relative success of applicants at each grade, the yield ratio for the applicant pool was calculated (Table 8.2.3). This ratio presents the number of applicants that are successfully appointed as a ratio of the total number of applicants.

The data indicate that, all things being equal, an applicant to Assistant Lecturer, Lecturer, SL1, SL2 and SL3 has a predicted success rate of 7.8%, 9.5%, 9.0% 10.4% and 11.2% respectively. Comparison of the data for female and male applicants indicates a slightly higher yield ratio for female applicants at Assistant Lecturer, Lecturer and SL1 (9.6%, 11.9% and 12.9% respectively) in comparison to the equivalent yield ratios for male applicants (6.3%, 8.0% and 6.0% respectively).

YIELD RATIO FOR ALL APPLICANTS (RECRUITMENT & PROMOTION 2018 - 2020)			
	FEMALE APPLICANTS	MALE APPLICANTS	ALL APPLICANTS
Senior Lecturer 3	12.2%	10.9%	11.2%
Senior Lecturer 2	12.7%	9.0%	10.4%
Senior Lecturer 1	12.9%	6.0%	9.0%
Lecturer	11.9%	8.0%	9.5%
Assistant Lecturer	9.6%	6.3%	7.8%

Table 8.2.3 Yield ratio for applicants to academic recruitment and promotion disaggregated by gender.

The relative yield ratio (Table 8.2.4) indicates that at SL3 level, female (1.1) and male (1.0) applicants have approximately equal chances of success while at all other grades, female applicants have slightly higher chances of success (1.2, 1.4, 1.2 and 1.2 for SL2, SL1, Lecturer and Assistant Lecturer respectively) in comparison to their male counterparts (0.9, 0.7, 0.8 and 0.8 for SL2, SL1, Lecturer and Assistant Lecturer respectively).

RELATIVE YIELD RATIO (RECRUITMENT & PROMOTION 2018 -2020)		
	FEMALE APPLICANTS	MALE APPLICANTS
Senior Lecturer 3	1.1	1.0
Senior Lecturer 2	1.2	0.9
Senior Lecturer 1	1.4	0.7
Lecturer	1.2	0.8
Assistant Lecturer	1.2	0.8

Table 8.2.4 Yield ratio for applicants to academic recruitment and promotion disaggregated by gender.

8.3 Academic recruitment and promotion in the specialist colleges

Analysis of academic recruitment and promotion data reveals that while females represented 82% of postgraduate students in 2020 (see Figure 5.1.3), 65% of applicants to entry-level lectureship positions were female (Figure 8.3.1). Similarly, the percentage of female applicants to Senior Lecturer (SL; 55%), was below that predicted based on the applicant pool in the academic grade immediately below (Lecturer grade: 70.9%).

TOTAL APPLICANTS BY GRADE AND GENDER
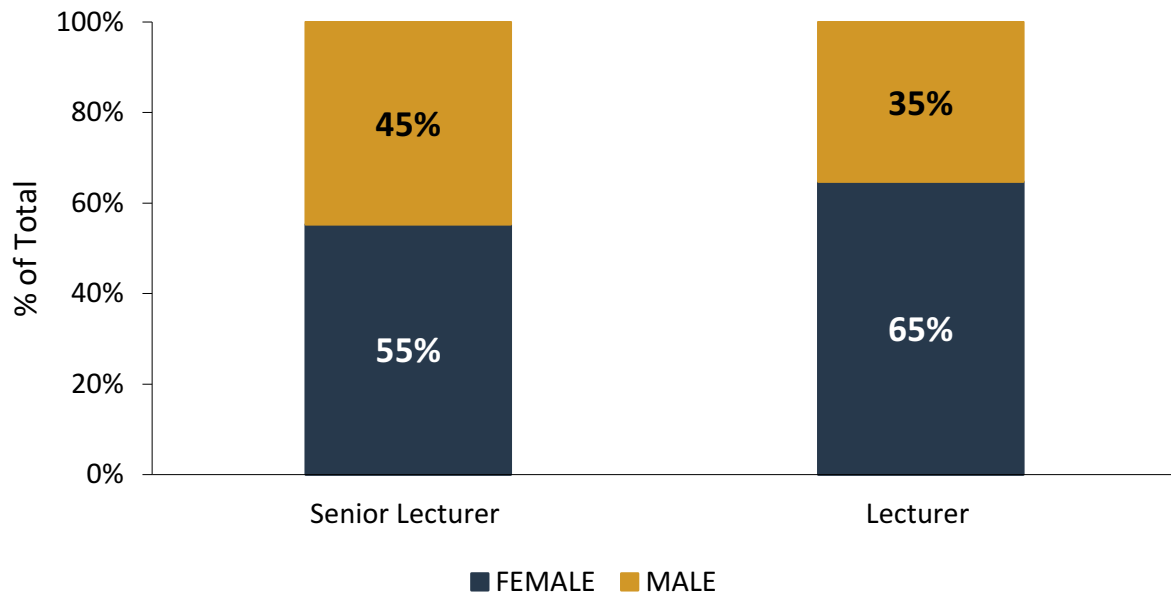
Figure 8.3.1 Applicants (% headcount) to recruitment and promotion disaggregated by grade and gender in the specialist colleges.

While the percentage of female applicants to academic positions within the specialist colleges were lower than those predicted, appointments to each grade within the sector were either in line with the flexible cascade model or slightly lower (Figure 8.1.2). For instance, the percentage of appointments in the lecturer grade that were made to female candidates was 82% which is in line with that predicted based on the postgraduate student cohort (81%). The percentage of applicants appointed to senior lecturer that were female (62%) is slightly lower that might be predicted based on the percentage of lecturers who were female (70.9%) in 2020.

TOTAL APPOINTMENTS BY GRADE AND GENDER
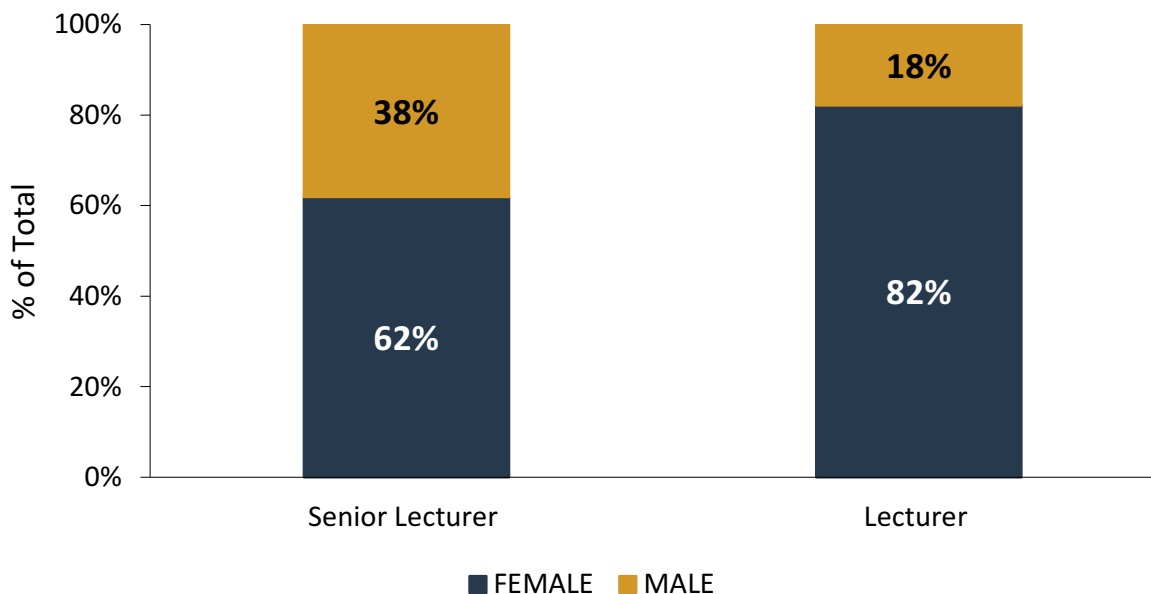
Figure 8.3.2 Appointments (% headcount) disaggregated by grade and gender in the specialist colleges.

09 FUTURE ESTIMATES OF RATES OF CHANGE

The Gender Action Plan 2018 – 2020 provided projections on the estimated rate of change in senior academic leadership in the university and technological HE sector. This analysis suggested that adoption of a flexible cascade model alone could take more than 20 years to achieve gender balance. The Taskforce reinforced the recommendation of the Expert Group that gender-specific posts be established in the sector.

Variable	GAP 2018 - 2020 projections	2022 projections
Recruitment/ Promotion rate	based on application of flexible cascade model.	based on actual 2018 - 2020 recruitment and promotion data (45% of total appointments to Professor and 31% of total appointments to SL3 were female).
Number of new Professors / SL3s	based on 10 new Professors / SL3s per annum.	based on 2015 - 2020 data (approximately 17 new Professors and 1 new SL3 per annum + 45 SALI gender-specific posts entering system from 2020 to 2024).
Retirement rate	retirements (40 per annum).	retirements (26 Professors and 9 SL3s per annum). Likely gender profile of retirees is estimated and incorporated into the analysis.

Table 9.1 Key differences between GAP projections and analysis presented here (2022 projections).

9.1 Estimated rates of change and gender parity at Professor level

The analysis presents the likely rate of change in the gender profile of the professoriate under four different scenarios, assuming there continues to be approximately 43 recruitments/promotions per annum (as has been seen over the last 3 years). Four illustrative scenarios are presented in Figure 9.1 and the estimated year gender balance would be achieved based on these projections is provided in Table 9.1.1.

Scenario 1: appointments are made in line with the flexible cascade model including a 2% increase per annum until gender equity (50%) is reached.

Scenario 2: appointments continue to be made at 45% (that observed in recruitment/promotion data 2018 – 2020) and no further increase is included.

Scenario 3: appointments continue to be made at 45% (that observed in recruitment/promotion data 2018 – 2020) including a 2% increase per annum until gender equity (50%) is reached.

Scenario 4: appointments continue to be made at 45% (that observed in recruitment/promotion data 2018 – 2020), including a 2% increase per annum until gender equity (50%) is reached and 30 gender-targeted posts[6] are added to the system.

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[6] 45 gender-targeted posts to be added via the Senior Academic Leadership Initiative (SALI) between 2020 and 2024. It is predicted, based on the first 2 rounds, that 30 of these posts will be awarded to the university sector.

Projections for Gender Balance (Professor)
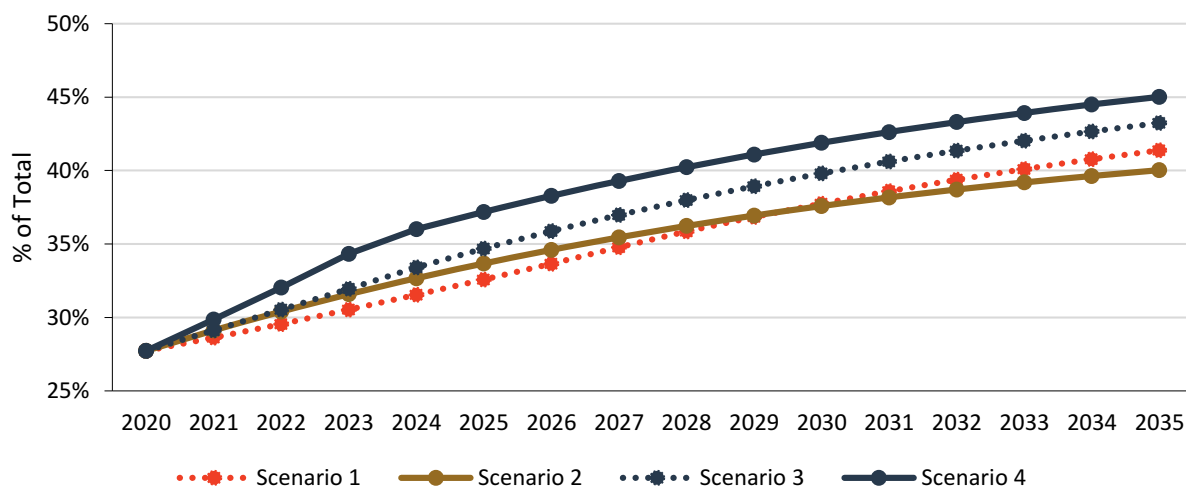
Figure 9.1 The projected percentages of female Professors under 4 possible scenarios.

Updated analyses on gender parity at Professor and SL3 grades are provided here with the key differences between calculations for current projections and the Gender Equality Action Plan projections listed in Table 9.1.

It should be noted that, while actual recruitment/promotion data has been used to estimate the future rate of female appointments to Professor (45%; **scenarios 2-4**), this number exceeds the flexible cascade model (**scenario 1**) and may be reduced in future years.

Projected Year Gender Balance achieved	
Scenario 1	2033
Scenario 2	2035
Scenario 3	2031
Scenario 4	2028

Table 9.1.1 The year gender balance would be achieved in the professoriate in each scenario.

Since publication of the Gender Action Plan 2018 – 2020, a positive action initiative, run by the HEA on behalf of the DFHERIS was introduced. The Senior Academic Leadership Initiative (SALI) aims to help achieve equality of outcome in the HE sector by the creation of 45 new and additional senior academic leadership posts. These posts are new and additional to the sector, i.e. they are in addition to the existing Employment Control Framework (ECF), and are funded through new and additional funding provided specifically to help progress gender balance among academic staff at senior levels. Cycles 1 (2019) and 2 (2020/2021) of the initiative are complete with the award of a total of 30 posts to the HE sector so far. Recruitment for several of these posts is now complete and posts resulting from this initiative, as well as predicted post awards for the third, final round of SALI have been incorporated into the calculations for the updated projections (**scenario 4**).

9.2 Estimated rates of change and gender parity at Senior Lecturer 3 level

The analysis presents the likely rate of change in the gender profile of the SL3 cohort under a range of different scenarios, assuming there continues to be 10 recruitments/promotions per annum. Four illustrative scenarios are presented in Figure 10.1 and the estimated year gender balance would be achieved based on these projections is provided in Table 10.1.

Scenario 1: appointments continue to be made at 31% (that observed in recruitment/promotion data 2018 – 2020).

Scenario 2: appointments continue to be made at 31% (that observed in recruitment/promotion data 2018 – 2020) including a 2% increase per annum until gender equity (50%) is reached.

Scenario 3: appointments continue to be made at 31% (that observed in recruitment/promotion data 2018 – 2020) including a 2% increase per annum until gender equity (50%) is reached and 15 gender-targeted posts[7] are added to the system.

Scenario 4: Flexible cascade model is applied including a 2% increase per annum until gender equity (50%) is reached and 15 gender-targeted posts are added to the system.
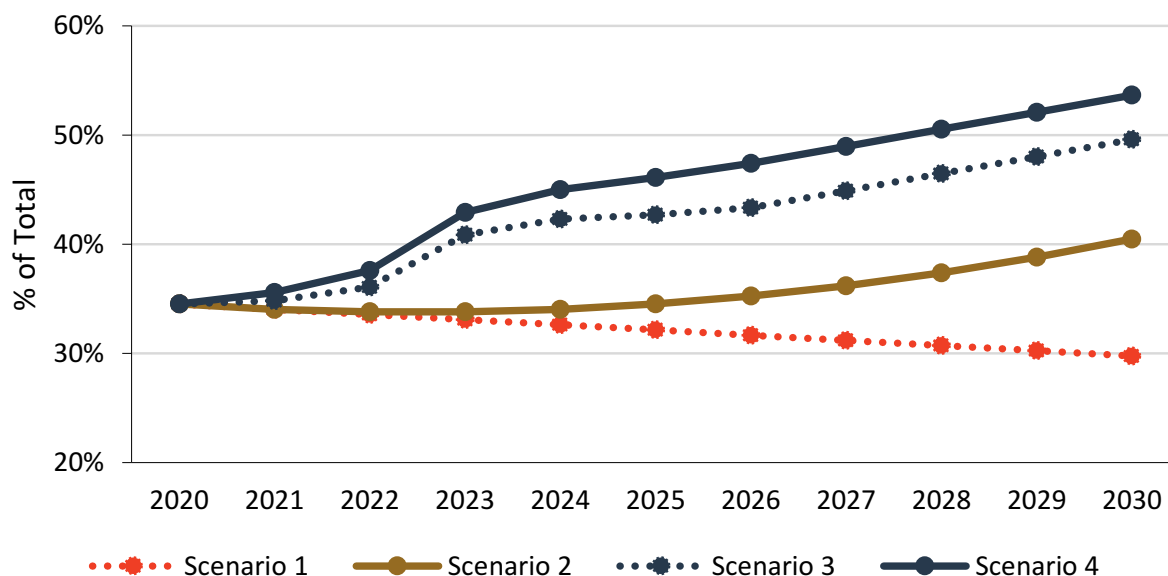
Figure 9.2 The projected percentages of female SL3s under 4 possible scenarios.

It should be noted that, while actual recruitment/promotion data (2018 – 2020) has been used to estimate the future rate of female appointments to Senior Lecturer 3 (31%; **scenarios 1-3**), this number falls short of the flexible cascade model (**scenario 4**) where the % of appointments made should match the % of SL2s that are female (currently 37.8%).

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[7] 45 gender-targeted posts to be added via the Senior Academic Leadership Initiative (SALI) between 2020 and 2024. It is predicted, based on the first 2 rounds, that 15 of these posts will be awarded to the technological HE sector.

Projected Year Gender Balance achieved	
Scenario 1	-
Scenario 2	2030
Scenario 3	2023
Scenario 4	2023

Table 9.2.1 The year gender balance would be achieved in the SL3 cohort in each scenario.

If future appointments were to continue to be made at 31%, the proportion of female SL3s would decline over time (**scenario 1**).

10 ATHENA SWAN CHARTER

The Athena SWAN charter is a framework that is used across the globe to support and transform gender equality in higher education and research. The charter launched in Ireland in 2015 with a specific remit to encourage and recognise commitment to advancing the careers of women in science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine (STEMM) employment. The charter has since been expanded to include arts, humanities, social sciences, business and law (AHSSBL) and staff working in professional, managerial and support roles (PMSS). The framework also now recognises work undertaken to address gender equality more broadly, including consideration of the experience of trans staff and students, as well as the underrepresentation of men in particular disciplines. The Athena SWAN Bronze, Silver and Gold awards testify to institutions' and departments' success in advancing these goals and a list of current Athena SWAN award holders in Ireland can be found here.

Engagement with the charter is a key pillar of Ireland's national strategy for gender equality in higher education and institutional access to the charter is nationally funded by the HEA.

In addition to the HEA's statutory responsibility to promote the attainment of equality of opportunity in higher education, both the HEA's Report of the Expert Group: HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions (June 2016) and the Department of Education and Skills' (DES) Gender Action Plan 2018-2020 have explicit recommendations and actions for HEIs in relation to the attainment of Athena SWAN certification and eligibility for research funding. The Report of the DES Gender Equality Taskforce revisited the 2016 National Review, endorsing many of its recommendations and expanding on some where appropriate. In response to these recommended actions, the HEA issued a Statement on the Athena SWAN Charter in Ireland (July 2019) revising the requirements for Athena SWAN certification and eligibility for research funding. Briefly:

> HEIs shall apply for an Institutional Bronze award by 2019

>> // HEIs shall apply for an institutional Bronze award within 18 months of notification of a failed Bronze award application.

>> // HEIs shall attain an institutional Bronze award within 4 years of a first failed Bronze application.

> HEIs should retain their Bronze award until such time as they obtain a Silver award.

>> // HEIs shall apply for an institutional Silver award after one successful renewal of an institutional Bronze Award and on every subsequent application.

> Institutes of Technology working towards TU status will be required to show evidence to the HEA, annually through their institutional gender action plans, that they are working together to build gender equality into their merger process.

> Once a TU has been established, it shall be required to achieve a TU bronze award within three years.

If these targets are not achieved, HEIs are ineligible for Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Health Research Board (HRB), Irish Research Council (IRC) and Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) funding calls until such time as they are achieved.

In 2015, just 2 institutions had achieved an Athena SWAN bronze award with only 5 departments achieving awards (Figure 10.1). Since then, and likely linked to the eligibility for research funding requirement, there has been a significant increase in institutional (almost all HEIs have achieved an institutional award) and departmental awards (Figure 10.1). While the technological HE sector has made a huge leap in terms of the number of institutional awards (Figure 10.2), all departmental awards are currently held by universities (Figure 10.3).

Athena SWAN Awards
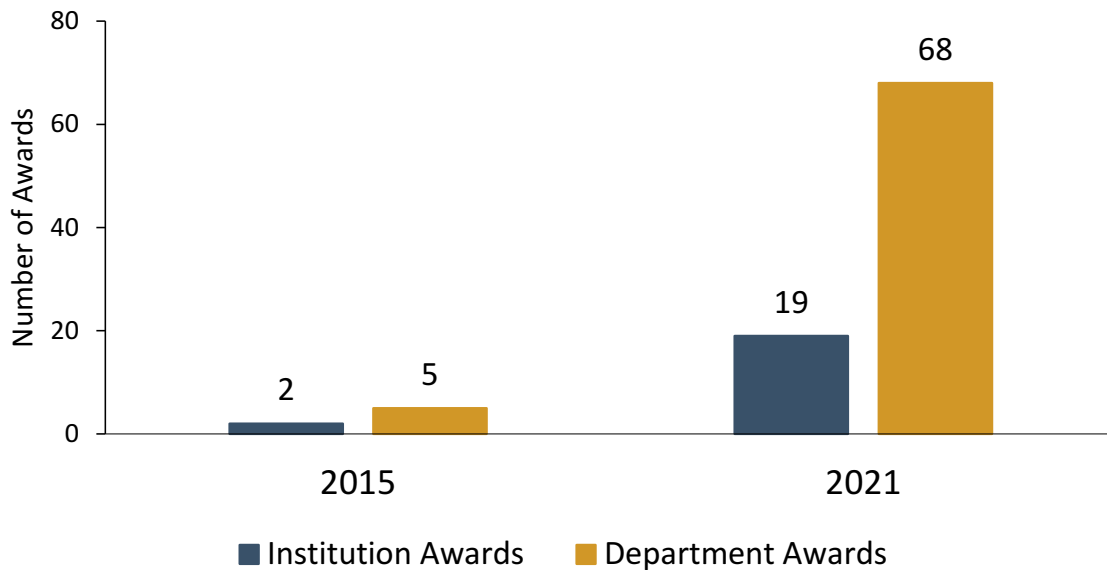
Figure 10.1 Total number of Institutional and departmental Athena SWAN awards 2015 and 2020.

Institutional Athena SWAN awards

Figure 10.2 Institutional Athena SWAN awards 2015 and 2020 disaggregated by institution type.

Departmental Athena SWAN awards

Figure 10.3 Departmental Athena SWAN awards 2015 and 2020 disaggregated by institution type.

Appendix 1 – List of Figures

Appendix 2 – List of Tables