**Acronyms and key terms:**

Below are the key terms and acronyms that will prove useful throughout the action plan.

AS = **Athena SWAN**

E&D = **Equality and Diversity**

EDC = **Equality and Diversity Committee**. A formal sub-committee of CEC with the remit of oversight and guidance for all E&D related policy and process. The Chair is a member of CEC and membership includes the Principal and representatives of all RVC staff and student constituents.

SAT = **Self- Assessment Team**. This will disband after the application and all AS activities will be monitored and reported on by EDC. Several EDC members are on the SAT, including the Chair, Secretary and Clerk.

CEC = **College Executive Committee.** The CEC E&D Champion is the Chair of the EDC.

SDM = **Staff Development Manager**

Intranet = **Widely used source of information** and exchange for all RVC staff and students consisting of announcements, news, published policies and procedures, contact details for staff, departmental pages, institutional calendars, the Principal's blog, an E&D page and Athena SWAN page.

HOD = **Head/s of Academic Departments**

MDP = **Management Development Programme.** A series of subject intensive courses available to all staff, but primarily focused on those with management responsibilities. This is mandatory for all new managers.

SWW = **Staff Wellbeing Workgroup.** Established in 2016 to address issues related to staff wellbeing, the group has already generated a number of recommendations to improve all aspects of staff working life. Members include the Head of Governance, Chief Operating Officer, Academic Registrar, Director of Learning and Wellbeing and an independent external consultant.

WMG = **Workload Management Group.** A newly established group tackling workload allocation planning and management, tasked with reviewing current activity, consultation and identifying recommendations for the future. Membership includes academics and HR staff.

## RVC Action Plan
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| No | Rationale | Actions – and how | Target timing | Responsible | Success criteria/outcomes | Progress Update (Dec 2017) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Embed Athena SWAN Charter Principles into RVC culture** | | | | | | |
| 1.1 | **Endorse and support equality and diversity through public avenues** | Include statement on commitment to AS charter principles on RVC intranet and internet and recruitment material | June ' 17 | E&D Manager | Commitment to AS charter principles is visible internally and externally | Statement of commitment is now on the E&D web page and the HR website. |
| 1.2 | | Increased attendance and presentations from staff across the RVC at the CEC | Dec '17 March '18 then quarterly | Principal Secretary to CEC | Data shows increase in attendance. AS2020 survey indicates staff perceives CEC as open and transparent | Agreed in the Terms of Reference for CEC that staff at the RVC will have an open invitation to attend at each CEC meeting. |
| 1.3 | | Host bi-annual 'Town Hall' meetings for CEC to discuss progress relating to Athena SWAN actions | June '17 and Nov '17, then twice yearly as appropriate | Principal Secretary to CEC | AS2020 survey indicates staff perceives forums as valuable, inclusive and informative | First Town Hall meeting held in June, second meeting is scheduled for May 2018. |
| 1.4 | **Identifying role models and creating an inclusive community** | Inclusion of AS in key RVC communications (e.g. community newsletter) to include: <br>• Current E&D and AS issues and activities <br>• Minutes and highlights of EDC meetings <br>• Celebrating role models across the spectrum of staff <br>• Key highlights of annual equal opportunities   monitoring data | Aug '18 and quarterly thereafter | Chair of EDC E&D Manager | Appropriately resourced, and timely communications that cover these key areas | AS updates are being provided on the Message of the Day and the E&D web pages. Departmental E&D Action Plans are being developed by departmental E&D Champions and HoD's. Minutes of the EDC meetings are published on the E&D pages. |
| 1.5 | | Celebrate success such as promotions, | Aug '17 and then | HoDs, VPs | AS2020 survey indicates | This is being embedded in the |

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| | | grants, papers, clinical advancements and teaching awards | ongoing | | Improved perception of role models for all and that this activity is supportive and inclusive | Departmental Equality and Diversity Action Plans. |
| 1.6 | | Host inaugural lectures and other activities promoting role models | Aug '17 and then ongoing | | | |
| 1.7 | | Review barriers to participation and make changes to committee constitutions to ensure gender balance and better representation where that is an appropriate solution | Sep '18 | Head of Governance, Planning and Compliance, COO & Principal | Actions complete and impact monitored with the aim of no less than 40% of any gender on any committee | A survey of RVC Committee Terms of references & constitutions is underway. Analysis and recommendations for actions will follow. |
| 1.8 | **Encourage diverse committee representation and balance workload impact** | Report representation on committees, including information on gender, grade, FTE, disability and ethnicity data to CEC annually | Sep '17, then annually | Committee Chairs and Secretaries | Data to be used by Head of Governance, Planning and Compliance to ensure that committees are representative of the RVC community | Gender data was gathered for Athena Swan in 2017 - an appropriate mechanism is being developed for the 2018 report. |
| 1.9 | | Ensure that all 'representative' committee roles operate on a fixed term basis, supported by timely monitoring and flagging of expiration of terms and a transparent published process for nominations | Sept '18 | Head of Governance Planning and Compliance | Documented rotation of committee roles. AS2020 survey once again indicates committees value diverse opinions and are inclusive. | This is dependent on the completion of 1.7 whereupon advice will be given to Chairs and Secretaries on this issue. |
| 1.10 | | Monitor accurate attendance at committees to subsequently | Sep '17 onwards | Head of Governance | Data used to ensure a fair and appropriate balance | Monitoring data is currently being collected. The next |

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|  |  | identify next steps needed to address committee workload impact on individuals |  | Planning and Compliance & WMG | of committee attendance and workload, dependent on role. | steps are dependent on the completion of 1.7 and 1.8. |
| 1.11 |  | Embed E&D as an agenda item into all committee business, including Academic Board and other key committees. | December '17 | Head of Governance Planning and | E&D is considered in all discussions and decisions | This is being embedded through the Committees project (see 1.7) |
| **2. Strengthen E&D training by adding tools to tackle and address unconscious bias** | | | | | | |
| 2.1 |  | Appraisal and Promotions processes to include a requirement to check E&D training is completed. | Jan '18 and then annually | Deputy Director of HR & Head of HR Operations | Processes amended and adhered to. Progress reported annually to CEC. | Amended appraisal form now includes a question on E&D training completion. Promotion process is being achieved via HR E&D Action Plan. |
| 2.2 | **Ensure E&D training is completed by all new and existing staff, particularly staff managers** | Ensure access to and promote positive benefits of undertaking this training through targeted communication to all staff. Report levels of completion to CEC during the three month period in which staff are told to complete the training, for their follow up with staff directly. | Feb '18 | SDM EDC Chair & E&D Manager | Training completion rates >85% by Dec '18, 100% by Dec '19 Reports included in CEC meeting agendas. A decrease in formal/informal complaints, measured via annual monitoring and staff engagement survey. | Infrastructure is in place to capture training completion rate. |
| 2.3 |  | Include unconscious bias training in all MDP programme courses that relate to decision making. | July '18 | SDM E&D Manager | Unconscious bias training is incorporated into all decision making training within MDP. | Partially completed. Recruitment and selection and appraisal courses now includes Unconscious Bias. |

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| 2.4 | | Review E&D training to increase focus on Unconscious Bias (including gender bias). | Nov '17 | SDM E&D Manager | Unconscious bias training embedded within the repertoire of E&D training.<br><br>2020 AS staff survey indicates >80% of feel comfortable in addressing bias. | Online E&D training currently includes unconscious bias. Unconscious Bias now forms part of the management recruitment and appraisal training. Further review of E&D training will take place upon licence renewal in Oct 2018. |
| 2.5 | | Conduct additional briefing session on Unconscious Bias (including gender bias) with CEC. | Mar '18 | E&D Manager Secretary to CEC | Increased awareness of barriers towards the promotion of E&D and what their roles and responsibilities are in advancing E&D practices across the RVC. | Briefing session on Unconscious Bias has been organised for March 2018. |
| 2.6 | **Engage and consult with staff regarding E&D issues and ensure this is considered at the highest level.** | Investigate perception of E&D training, policy and practice through local E&D champions. Areas for concern will be fed into HR services for action planning.<br>• Action plan developed to address key areas of concern<br>• Action plan progress reported to CEC and published on E&D intranet page. | June '17 | E&D Manager EDC Chair Departmental E&D champions | Action plan to address key areas of concern, with leadership from EDC Chair and all those responsible. | Actioned via Departmental E&D Action Plans and fed into HR E&D Action Plan. |

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| | | | Feb '18 | | Action plan approved by CEC and published. Actions being monitored by EDC | |
| **3. Develop and enhance the RVC's E&D policy and support framework** | | | | | | |
| 3.1 | **Update policy to reflect the diversity of the RVC and include guidance on transgender staff and students and other under-represented groups** | Broadening the E&D Policy to include policy and practice on transgender staff and students, to be recommended to CEC by EDC. Policy impact to be monitored in future surveys and review of systems data. | Dec '17 | EDC Chair and EDC Deputy Director HR | Policy approved, implemented and published on staff intranet. Advertised as available to all staff.<br><br>AS 2020 survey indicates >80% of staff are aware of policy and feel able to support trans staff and students and tackle discrimination | E&D Policy is has been reviewed and now includes the promotion of inclusive practice for transgender staff and students. |
| 3.2 | | Provide briefing sessions on Transgender Awareness to a range of stakeholders, such as senior staff, departmental E&D Champions and HR department. | Nov '17 | E&D Manager | Briefing sessions held | Session has been delivered by a member of the Equality Challenge Unit to E&D Champions, HR colleagues and a range of stakeholders. Next step is to offer course to the wider College community. |
| 3.3 | | Hold staff consultations, including members from the staff transgender community, to support the development of Transgender Awareness Policy. | Aug '17 | E&D manager Deputy Director HR | Staff working group meetings completed and policy and impact agreed. | Initial discussions have taken place with a transgender staff member and external members from the transgender community with |

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| | | | | | | the view to informing transgender policy development. |
| 3.4 | | Publish Policy to support trans staff and students on the intranet | Feb '18 | Website Manager | Guide published | |
| 3.5 | Ensuring alignment between policy and practice. | Develop and conduct an Equality Analysis, Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to measure any adverse impact including barriers to gender equality on all relevant new or existing policy, procedure and practice. | Sep '17, ongoing | Principal, CEC, E&D manager and Depart-mental E&D Champions | Equality Analysis guidance and developed. All relevant policies, procedures and functions equality impact assessed. | Equality Analysis (EA) has been developed, it will be launched in Jan 2018 which will include a series of short training sessions on how to conduct EA. |
| 3.6 | | Gather data and analyse steps needed to bring policy and practice together, and implement change with CEC approval. | Sep '19 | | CEC review and approve actions | |
| **4. Develop a culture that supports and encourages flexible working** | | | | | | |
| 4.1 | Improve awareness and support of flexible working policy and process | Run bi-annual staff workshops to increase visibility of flexible working options, resources and RVC policy. To be held at various times to allow attendance of staff on different work patterns and attended by members of CEC, local E&D champion and RVC role models who successfully use flexible working arrangements. | April '18 | E&D Manager Employee Relations (HR Advisor) | Workshops held successfully on a bi-annual basis.

AS 2020 survey indicates >70% of staff are aware of policy and flexible working options at the RVC | Regular workshops are currently delivered to managers on 'Understanding and Managing Flexible Working'. These sessions will be extended to all staff in 2018. |
| 4.2 | | Monitor workshop attendance and report to CEC through the annual | Oct '18 and then annually | E&D Manager | CEC receives report and ensures staff attend. | |

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| | | Equal Opportunities Monitoring report. | | EDC Chair | | |
| 4.3 | | Investigate how to support clinical staff with flexible working and create a list of actions for future implementation. | June '18 | VP Clinical Services HoD CSS | Update policy and process if changes are required. | This investigation is being progressed via departmental E&D Action Plan. |
| 4.4 | | Develop a 'Flexible Working' section on the intranet as a focused hub of information for all staff with links to Flexible Working toolkit and Guide for Managers, as well as specific examples of RVC best practice. | April '18 | Deputy Director of HR Employee Relations Advisor. | Intranet page set up. AS2020 survey shows the staff access this new resource and find it useful. | |
| 4.5 | | 'Managing Flexible Working' training to become a mandatory part of MPD, and include understanding the benefits to business. All new managers of staff trained. Attendance reported to CEC on an annual basis through the Equal Opportunities Monitoring report. | Sep '18 | SDM | Attendance by new managers 100%. CEC monitors attendance. AS2020 survey shows staff feel the RVC is supportive of flexible working arrangements. | The foundation stage of the MDP now includes a module on flexible working which targets all new managers. |
| 4.6 | | Remind managers to consult with HR prior to an official refusal of a flexible working request.  The staff member will also be consulted. | Ongoing | SDM | AS2020 survey indicates >80% of those who go through this process see it as fair and transparent. | Progressed via Departmental E&D Action Plans. |

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| 4.7 | | Review ICP/APPP to include a focus on compatibility with models of flexible working | Dec '17 | Head of HR Operations | Update the ICP/APPP process if review identifies changes is required. | Barriers have been removed to support part-time workers progressing their careers. ICP's are reviewed to ensure objectives are now aligned to hours of work. |
| **5. Commitment to improving career progression** | | | | | | |
| 5.1 | **Ensure the appraisal process maintains a focus on career progression and development** | Ensure that effective professional and career development and training discussions form part of the appraisal process by providing guidance on career goals, workload management and perceived barriers to success. | Sep '18 | HODs Deputy Director of HR SDM | Guidance shared with all staff<br><br>AS2020 survey indicates >80% of staff find their appraisal includes discussion of key subjects and appraisers are perceived as capable. | Guidance referring to career development discussions is now available within the frequently answered questions of the appraisal section on the intranet. |
| 5.2 | | Appraisal training to be a mandatory part of the MDP and for all new appraisers. It will be made available to existing appraisers to update their training. Training to include specific information on how to encourage women to develop their careers | Sep '18 | SDM | Training updated and delivered.<br><br>Completion rates<br><br>reported. AS2020 survey<br><br>indicates >80% of staff perceive the appraisal as supportive of career progression | First course set for Dec 4th on "Managing Development" a core part of the MDP. |

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| 5.3 | | Inform CEC of completion rates for appraisals to identify areas where this process is not occurring and take explicit action to achieve the target of all staff being appraised annually | Sep '17, then monthly during the last three months of appraisal cycle | Director of HR | >95% appraisal rate by 2020. | 68.9% appraisal completion rates as at Aug 2017. |
| 5.4 | | Focus on succession planning and the creation of deputy leader roles, developing and promoting leadership skills. | Ongoing | Principal CEC HODs | Increased numbers of deputy positions by next AS application. | A project group has been established to look at the succession planning approach. |
| 5.5 | | Evaluate training for value added to career progression and/ or developmental objectives identified at appraisal by adding a question to training evaluation form. | Sep '17, then annually | SDM SWW | Training feedback updated and evaluated training is reviewed and necessary changes are made to ensure training is fit for purpose. | A question which evaluates this process has been added to the feedback form. |
| 5.6 | **Ensure training supports career progression and is valued** | Review the MDP to determine if courses available form a coherent framework for development. | Sep '18 | SDM Deputy Director of HR | Changes to MDP courses if review identifies the framework could be enhanced. | MDP has been reviewed and initial changes have been made. An additional review to take place at the end of the 2018 academic year. |
| 5.7 | | Review the types of professional development opportunities that are valued by each cohort of staff, including non-clinical and clinical academics, researchers and professional staff in order to map to institutional support and expenditure. CEC to approve a strategy based on audit | Sep '19 | Workgroup led by SDM and Deputy Director HR | CEC approve strategy for professional development | |

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| | | outcomes | | | | |
| 5.8 | | Embed training time into the workload allocation model | Jan '19 | WMG | Workload models recognise time for training. | |
| 5.9 | | Target annual promotions workshops targeted to role types (teaching, research, clinical) . | Mar '18 | Head of HR Operations | Workshops held | Progressed via HR E&D Action Plan. |
| 5.10 | **Improve awareness and support of promotions process** | Appoint promotions advisors/ mentors/ role models, who receive additional training on current policy and support mechanisms. These may be targeted to role types (teaching, research, clinical). Publish via a list on the intranet | Sep '18 | Head of HR Operations and HoDs | List published and available AS2020 survey indicates promotions advisors are a helpful resource | |
| **6. Supporting and developing female leaders** | | | | | | |
| 6.1 | **Understand why staff feel unsupported with their leadership responsibilities** | Conduct staff focus groups to identify key issues regarding 'leadership' and 'support' | July '18 | SWW | Focus groups held. | |
| 6.2 | | Establish a working group and deliver an action plan to be implemented | July '18 | SWW | Action plan presented to CEC March '18 and put into action. | |

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| 6.3 | **Formal approach for development of future female leaders** | Identify 10 female individuals with leadership potential to participate in management/leadership activity each year. Budgetary allowance to be made to facilitate this. Nominations by HODs or CEC after obtaining individuals permission or by application to a panel.<br>HODs to ensure their workload allows for these activities. A panel to decide on successful candidates | Mar '18 | Principal and CEC HoDs | Individuals report benefit of undertaking these activities through training evaluation forms. AS2020 survey shows improved perceptions of diversity at Grades 8&9. | Initial discussions have been held with HoDs, with the view to offering tailored leadership development approaches for individuals.  This action will be progressed via Departmental E&D Action Plans. |
| 6.4 | | Feature those selected  in the RVC newsletter as role-models and their activities and success celebrated | Aug '18 and quarterly thereafter | Director of Marketing, E&D Manager | AS2020 survey shows women perceive that there are good role models at the RVC. | |
| 6.5 | | Clearly define 'mentorship' and 'coaching' with regard to the RVC's provision and identify further mentoring, coaching and shadowing opportunities for staff within and beyond RVC | Jan '19 | SDM | AS2020 survey shows that (particularly female) staff perceive mentorship as valuable and supported at the RVC. | |
| 6.6 | **Create a culture of mentorship and support** | Introduce mentorship into management responsibility by upskilling line managers on how to mentor staff:<br>Include mentorship module in MDP and open this up to non- managers to enhance skills within the RVC as a whole.<br>Include mentoring time in workload allocation model. | Mar '19 | Head of HR Operations HR Deputy Director SDM | MDP module developed and active<br><br>Mentoring time an accountable activity in the workload allocation model | Mentoring is now included in the module 'Managing Development' within the MDP. |

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| 6.7 | | Review and evaluate current mentoring arrangements including investigating the feasibility of automatic mentor allocation for new staff (at least 2 meetings within probation period) | Mar '19 | CEC EDC Chair E&D champions | CEC approves future mentoring arrangements and implementation begins | |
| 6.8 | | Introduce a buddy system for staff planning extended periods of leave to provide informal support and guidance during leave and upon their return to work in a mentoring capacity | Sep '18 | Line managers (as part of appraisal). | Buddy system in place | |
| 6.9 | **Development of an efficient, transparent workload allocation model to ensure equality.** | Identify activities that should be included in this model in addition to standard activities, including mentoring and professional development to ensure fair allocation of workload | Jan '19 | WMG | Workload allocation model in place. AS2020 survey indicates >80% of academic staff find the model fair and equitable | A project group consisting of a variety of stakeholders has been established to develop a workload allocation model. |

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| 6.10 | **Improve transparency** | Create of a standardised Academic, Research and Clinical RVC CV which is publically available | Sep '18 | Principal, HODs | CV published

AS2020 survey indicates that staff understand promotion criteria | |
| **7. Support for Staff with Caring Responsibilities** | | | | | | |
| 7.1 | **To understand better the underlying reason for staff resignations and failure to return** | Collect data to identify reasons for non-return after maternity/ adoption/ parental/caring leave and those that return and leave within six months. | May '17 | Staff Relations Adviser | Data available for trend analysis. | A structure is in place to capture this data. The exit interview process now includes a question to identify reasons for non- return after maternity, adoption, parental and carers leave. This data will be analysed annually from Jan 2018. |
| 7.2 | **To ensure that numbers of females eligible for return in the REF assessments increase.** | Collect data on the number of staff that make a specific request to increase their hours after a period of decreased hours of work | ongoing | Deputy Director HR/HoD | Data collected available for analysis in reapplication for Bronze or application for Silver in 2021 | |
| 7.3 | **To keep childcare** | Formal review included in all capital | Triggered by | Capital | Review nursery provision | |

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| | **provision on the agenda for future capital works** | planning projects, including community engagement. | COO as appropriate | Projects Manage-ment Group | in the future capital works | |
| 7.4 | **To support those with caring responsibilities** | Evidence interest in introduction of a carers' network at the RVC through a staff consultation via EDC | Mar '18 | EDC E&D Champions | Development of actions to improve support. | |
| **8. Additional Actions** | | | | | | |
| 8.1 | **Data collection** | Collect more meaningful data at the exit interview, including specific questions to identify any inequality issues involved in the decision to leave. | May '17 | Head of HR | Data collected and analysed for | |
| | | | Jan '18 | Operations, Employee Relations Adviser | E&D impact, issues reported to EDC and E&D Manager | |
| 8.2 | **To support equality of pay objectives** | Implement modernisation of grade 9. All new grade 9 staff will start on the first spine point with progression through the scale, subject to performance. All existing grade 9 posts will be assimilated on to the appropriate spine point and red circled as appropriate | Jan '18 | Director of HR | Spine point structure implemented and publicised broadly. AS2020 survey indicates staff perceive fair pay distribution across genders | Proposed modernisation of the grade 9 pay structure was approved by the Senior Staff Remuneration Committee in Nov 17. First stage of implementation will begin in Dec 17 when affected staff will be consulted on the proposal to introduce a career profile framework for academic staff |

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| | | | | | | beyond Senior Lecturer level. Following the consultation, the new procedure for promotion to Reader level and beyond, will be implemented. |
| 8.3 | **To determine why women are not progressing to senior roles.** | Produce data to identify timing of milestones for individuals progressing to senior staff positions and their length of time in the institution, to assess which critical points are causing the 'leak' | Jan '20 | EDC | Better information on career progression and mentoring within the institution resulting in an action plan to address the leaky pipeline | |
| 8.4 | **To ensure that numbers of females eligible for return in the REF assessments increase.** | Continue to monitor and encourage gender parity in REF submissions, with ongoing commitment to ensuring all researchers are supported in producing returnable work | ongoing | VP Research and Innovation | Improved gender parity in submissions, more accurately reflecting the gender composition of the RVC. | |
| 8.5 | **Publicise available resource** | Publicise Harassment Advisor Network as a resource to ensure staff are aware, particularly within the academic cohort. To be shared on the intranet, via Equality and Diversity Champions and the harassment advisor network. | May '18 and thereafter annually | Deputy Director of HR | Communications in place AS2020 survey indicate a much improved awareness amongst academics | |