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UL Human Rights eNewsletter is intended for circulation among staff and students of University of Limerick. Extracts from this newsletter should not be published without the permission of the editor.



International Women's Day Conference



Awareness Week



Silver Athena Swan



Gender Equality



Pride Month



Awareness





Welcome to our July 2023 Human Rights, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion eNewsletter

The past 6 months have been very busy months for the Human Rights – EDI Department as you will see in the summer edition of our newsletter. The highlight however was being awarded the first Silver AS Institution award in the Irish Higher Education Sector and the first Silver Award internationally outside of the UK as Athena Swan is now rolled out in Australia (SAGE), Canada, Brazil, Cyprus etc.

The achievement of the first silver institution award was the result of a long journey. To achieve a silver institution award, we had to demonstrate the impact of the actions we had committed to in our 2018 submission. We did this by demonstrating our commitment to embedding gender equality and the broader EDI agenda across the institution. We utilised the AS process as a framework for driving culture change. From achieving 6 AS awards in 2018 to 15 in 2022, including two research centres, we exceeded our target of gaining 11 awards (25 departments) resulting in all our academic faculties, schools with AS awards except for one.

When we submitted our first submission in 2015 - 81% of professorial positions in Irish universities were held by men and, while

women represented 62% of professional, managerial; and support (PMS) staff, 72% of the highest paid PMS staff were men. Today in UL women represent 39% at Associate Professor (now Professor) level a 146% increase from 13(F) in 2019 to 32 (F) today and a 28% increase in our Full Prof levels with a 31% representation of women at full professor level from 18 (F) IN 2019 to 23(F) in 2022. This was achieved through robust governance and demonstrated commitment from the senior leaders of the institution, notably the President as chair of the ASEDI Steering Committee ensuring that the committed actions from our 2018 action plan delivered impactful outcomes.

The establishment of the HREDI Office in 2021 and the aligning our human rights, equality, diversity, and inclusion objectives to our institution strategic and sustainability goals ensures that the core values of equity, inclusivity and diversity are integral to the work of the institution not an 'add on'. More than this, these values have been embraced in UL to create a working and learning culture that empowers all staff and students to reach their full potential.

Major congratulations also to our colleagues in KBS who achieved the

first Silver Business School award in the sector co-led by Dr Caroline Murphy (AS Faculty lead) & Professor Finbarr Murphy, Executive Dean.

The full AS Silver Institution application and action plan is available [HERE](#).

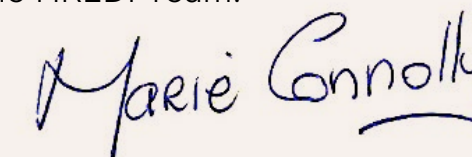
A thank you to all the staff who gave freely of their time to engage in working groups, sat on ASEDI Faculty and department committees etc. We could not have done this without you.

'They say it takes a village to raise a child, well it took the entire UL community to achieve this outstanding award.'

A lot has been achieved but a lot more to do.

Thank you.

The HREDI Team.



Dr Marie Connolly
Director, Human Rights, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, University of Limerick.

Active*Consent Digital Intimacy Workshop Facilitator Training



Active*Consent Digital Intimacy Workshop Facilitator Training took place on the 25th January. A new Active*Consent workshop is being rolled out covering the topic of digital intimacy. The aim of this workshop is to empower students to understand the challenges and benefits of digital intimacy, such as sending nudes safely, how to identify catfishing, and what to do if you experience image based sexual abuse.



6TH - 12TH FEBRUARY 2023
#ITSNOTOK

Active*Consent 30 minute Workshop Facilitator Training took place on the 2nd of February. Training in the facilitation of the online Active*Consent workshops.

Active*Consent 1.5hr Workshop Facilitator Training took place on the 7th of February. Training in the facilitation of the in-person Active*Consent workshops.

#SheWasGoingForARun - On the 12th of January 2022, the nation was shocked to learn of the murder of Ashling Murphy. An outpouring of grief and anger followed. Since Ashling was murdered, 16 more women have been murdered due to gender-based violence. Gorm Media, Her Sport and The Human Collective launched the campaign **#SheWasGoingForARun** in 2022 to raise awareness, start conversations across the country and raise funds for Women's Aid. This year's event took place across the country on Saturday 18th of February 2023.



SUPPORT SERVICES OFFERED TO STUDENTS

Support Services

•**Student Health Unit**

Call (061) 202 534

•**Counselling**

Call 061 202327 or Email counselling@ul.ie

•**Sexual Harassment & Sexual Violence Prevention and Support Officer**

Email Maria.Healy@ul.ie

•**Student Union Support & Advice**

Studentsupport@ul.ie

•**Chaplaincy Centre**

Email john.campion@ul.ie/sarah.orourke@ul.ie

•**Free Crisis Textline**

Text UL to 50808

•**Hotline.ie** – Image Based Sexual Abuse - Report & Support

•**Midwest Rape Crisis Centre**

Call (061) 311 511



Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence Awareness Week



Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence Awareness Week

took place from the 6th -12th February 2023. The Human Rights EDI Office ran an online campaign via Instagram in support of this, where we ran a series of “Myth vs Fact” posts in relation to the topic. Conversations about sexual abuse and sexual violence are difficult, but there are no words to describe how difficult it is to experience these. During Sexual Abuse and Sexual

Violence Awareness Week, our aim was to address some of the myths around this topic. With every post on Instagram we included a list of supports that can also be found **HERE**.

The only invitation for any type of sexual activity is CONSENT. Consent is OMFG (Ongoing, Mutual and Freely Given).

#ITSNOTOK
#DESTROYTHEMYTH
#UNMUTECONSENT

Gender Equality Enhancement Funded (GEEF)

Lead by MIC, the Director HR-EDI is a lead partner in the GEEF funded “**Transforming Gender Equality and Inclusion within Higher Education in Ireland – Contemporary Perspectives**” publication with University of Galway & TCD. Lead by MIC Partnership Institutions include MIC, UL, NUIG & TCD. The purpose of the publication is to investigate, analyse and highlight recent transformations across higher education in Ireland in terms of pioneering efforts and activities to embed gender balance in a comprehensive and multi-faceted manner. “Transforming Gender Equality and Inclusion within Higher Education in Ireland – Contemporary Perspectives” and illuminates higher education in Ireland as an international pioneer regarding gender equality and inclusion. It analyses challenges

and well as opportunities relating to change and transformation from a national and multi-institutional context. The edited book will thematically reflect on and analyses the nature of change and transformation with respect to gender equality, inclusion, and diversity across higher education in Ireland from the perspectives of those pioneering change.





Active*Consent Workshops

A new **Active*Consent workshop** on Image Based Sexual Abuse has been developed by the Active*Consent team and was rolled out in UL in March. A total of 1074 of students attended workshops for AY 22/23.

Student/Staff Designated Contact Persons Training

was delivered by Dr Michelle Walsh from Rape Crisis Midwest Centre on Thursday 2nd March 2023. The panel recently completed another training workshop in 'Responding to Trauma' facilitated by Dr Sharon Lambert from UCC. We received great feedback from this workshop and a request for further training which we are following up on. These training workshops will help to prepare panel members for their role in supporting students who have experienced or are currently experiencing any form of sexual harassment or sexual violence. Details of the SDCPP and how to contact a member of the SDCPP will be live on the HR-EDI website following the panel's final training sessions.

ANTI-RACISM MONTH 2023

A series of events took place across the University in March as part of **Anti-Racism Month 2023**. Some of these event are as follows:

ANTI-RACISM MONTH 2023

A University for All

WEEK ONE: BUILDING EMPATHY
 March 6th-March 9th: **Narrative 4 Story Exchanges**
 March 8th: **International Women's Day Conference**
 5-7pm, **UL Global Holi event**, between UCH and CSIS
 March 9th: 11-12pm **Irish World Music Cafe (IWAMD)**, City Campus
 5pm **Cultural Conversations with Coffee**, KBS/Cube

WEEK TWO: CELEBRATING CULTURE
 March 13th: **Culture Fair (Student Life)**
 March 15th: 4-5.30pm **Cross Culture Musical Dialogues: Ireland and Ukraine, IWA Theatre 2**
 March 16th: 11-12.30pm **Irish World Music Café (IWAMD)**, UL City Campus
 5pm **Cultural Conversations with Coffee**, Bernal Cafe
 March 17th: 12pm **St. Patricks Day Parade**, Limerick City

WEEK THREE: CHALLENGING RACISM
 March 20th: 11-1pm **How to support the Victims of Racism** (Dr Anca Minescu)
 March 21st: **International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, tbc**
 March 23rd: 11-12.30pm **Irish World Music Cafe (IWAMD)**, UL City Campus
 5pm **Cultural Conversations with Coffee**, Pavilion
 March 25th: 10-4pm **Diversity and Intercultural Education Network Launch**, MIC

WEEK FOUR: PEDAGOGIES OF ANTI-RACISM
 March 28th: 12.15-1pm **Demystifying racism in health care practice and education** (Dr Kathleen Markey)
 March 30th: 10-12pm **Webinar: Pedagogies of Anti-Racism** (Khadija Mohammed, University of West of Scotland)
 11-12.30 **Irish World Music Cafe (IWAMD)**, UL City Campus
 5pm **Cultural Conversations with Coffee**, Pavilion

Dr Anca Minescu provided a workshop on 'How to support victims of Racism: A Psychological perspective' on **Monday 20th March** in the Appellate Court, Glucksman Library from 11-1pm. In this workshop staff and students learned about the following:

- How it feels to be a victim of a racist incident, and what we can do to support others.
- Individual level actions and reactions (in the immediate as well as longer term), and the structural opportunities that victims need for protection (mechanisms to report and access specialised services).
- There are some key principles to supporting victims of racism: having a safe space to share and process their experiences, knowing they are not alone, they have an ally in you and other supports to rely on, and learning how to act and react with concrete actions.

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination took place on Tuesday 21st March. A panel discussion took place in the Appellate Court, Glucksman Library from 1-3pm. This panel discussion was chaired by Professor Máiréad Moriarty and she was joined by panellists Razan Ibraheem and Matsaseng Ralekoala.

Continued on the following page



Razan Ibraheem

Razan Ibraheem is an Irish-Syrian journalist and activist. She came to Ireland to do her Masters in English Language Teaching at the University of Limerick. Her deep sorrow for the tragic situation and the mass displacement in her homeland has led her to volunteer in Greece to help refugees. She gave a speech with the former UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, in Ireland. In 2016, she was invited by the UN to a high-level meeting on global responsibility sharing for pathways for admission of Syrian refugees. Razan is a journalist and editor with extensive expertise in investigative journalism and verifying content from social media.



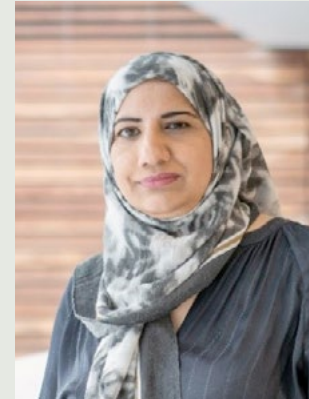
Matsaseng Ralekoala

Matsaseng Ralekoala hails from Lesotho in Africa. He studied Bachelor of Laws (LLB) from National University of Lesotho and practiced law as an Advocate for many years in Lesotho since 2007, with particular interests on human rights matters. He also practiced immigration law in South Africa. He is a consultant of African Peer Review Mechanism which is an African Union peace and security wing. He is a Toastmaster and currently he is on last semester on Masters of Laws on Human Rights in Criminal Justice System with University of Limerick. He is Publicity Officer for Post Graduate Union of UL.

Invited panellists spoke about the following aspects:

- Their backgrounds and journeys of coming to Ireland as asylum seekers.
- Their life at UL and Ireland, and further career.
- Their human rights work and activism.
- Rights of asylum seekers, issues of racial discrimination and lessons to be learned.

On **Tuesday 28th March** Dr Kathleen Markey gave a lecture on 'Demystifying racism in healthcare practice and education: What do we need to think about?'



Dr Khadija Mohammed

Thursday 30th March - Webinar: Dr Khadija Mohammed 'Anti-racist pedagogies' - The Ethnic Diversity Forum as part of the Office of Human Rights, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion hosted an event for week 4 of Anti-Racism month called 'Race Talk: Towards an Anti-Racist Pedagogy' by Dr Khadija Mohammed, University of the West of Scotland.

Khadija is Associate Dean for Equality, Diversity, Inclusion, and a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy at the University of the West of Scotland. She is a sector leader on racial equity and anti-racism education. Her research centres on the lived experiences of Black and Minority Ethnic communities in Scotland with a focus on

acknowledging, nurturing and celebrating their diverse identities. Khadija is the co-founder and Chair of SAMEE. Khadija chaired the Advance HE/ Scottish Funding Council project 'Tackling Racial Harassment in Universities and Colleges'. She is currently the chair of the Scottish Government Anti-Racism in Education Programme Board (AREP).

This webinar focused upon the uncomfortable truth that racism is 'normal'. It is in our everyday, it is pervasive, and it is in our institutional settings. In order to understand and facilitate difficult dialogues on race there is a need to create safer and braver spaces for all.

All staff and students were asked to show their support by completing the **Let's Talk About Race in HE** e-learning programme. This training takes about 30 minutes to complete. This programme aims to provide training for staff and students to show their solidarity and improve their own EDI understanding and competence levels.

Click [HERE](#) to complete this training.

For anti-racism month, UL module leaders were asked to play a short video in lectures/tutorials sometime in March. Click [HERE](#) to view this video.

The HEA launched the Anti-Racism Principles [HERE](#) in Irish HEI's at the first Anti-Racism in HEI Conference on Monday 20th March. The principles were launched internally at our own International Day against Racism Workshop on Tuesday 21st March by the Director HR-EDI Dr Marie Connolly. We ask all staff to familiarise yourself with the principles and line managers to ensure the principles are discussed at each of your team meetings.

There is an open invitation to interested staff and students to join the Ethnic Diversity Forum. Further information available [HERE](#).

International Women's Day Conference – Wednesday 8th March 2023

An engaging, enlightening and thought-provoking series of talks, keynote addresses and panel discussions formed the programme of events for International Women's Day 2023 on Wednesday 8th March. The theme this year was #EmbraceEquity. The conference partners included Johnson & Johnson, Northern Trust, Dell Technologies and Bank of Ireland. Caitriona Hamill of Northern Trust chaired this event. Feedback on the programme of events delivered was very positive. A total of 264 people registered for this conference. Click [HERE](#) to view the schedule of speakers on the day.

International Women's Day 2023 at UL also included the Inaugural Lecture of Professor Norma Bargary. Norma is a SALI (Senior Academic Leadership Initiative) Professor of Data Science & Statistical Learning in the Department of Mathematics & Statistics at the University of Limerick. She is co-director of MACSI research centre and UL vice-Director of the SFI Centre for Research Training in Foundations of Data Science. Her research focuses on the development of statistical models for large, high-dimensional data that are measured over time (e.g. data measured using sensors, human movement data, etc.). Her work helps to answer questions about the world around us and to empower decision-making. She has played a leading role in numerous successful European and national grant applications with a total of €1.6 million awarded to her as PI. Norma's passion for accurate communication around the conclusions drawn from data is particularly relevant these days for bolstering our faith in science, and confidence that we are making well-informed decisions.

It was wonderful to see Professor Bargary deliver her Inaugural Lecture to a packed auditorium of family, friends and colleagues.



Pictured above (l-r): Joe Power, Noel Gavin, Dr Máire Treasa NíCheallaigh, Jenna Bromell, Caitriona Hamill, Kingsley Aikins, Marie Moynihan, Dr Sindy Joyce, Mamobo - Oghene Oghoro, Dr Marie Connolly, Prof. Patricia Mannix McNamara, Provost and Deputy President Professor Shane Kilcommins.

Pictured far left (l-r): Caitriona Hamill, Dr Sindy Joyce, Mamobo - Oghene Oghoro and Noel Gavin. They were members on a panel discussion on 'What Intersectionality means and how it affects inclusivity and dignity and respect in Organisations'.

Pictured left (l-r): Dr Máire Treasa Ní Cheallaigh, Caitriona Hamill and Jenna Bromell. They were members on a panel discussion on 'The Changing world of women in sports'.

INTERNATIONAL DAY TO COMBAT ISLAMOPHOBIA

*International Day to
Combat Islamophobia
Wednesday 15th of
March*

"Let us counter the forces of division by reaffirming our common humanity. And let us always stand in solidarity with our Muslim brothers and sisters." –

@antonioguterres

on Wednesday's International Day to Combat Islamophobia.

The United Nations assembly has declared the 15th March as International Day to Combat Islamophobia calling for global dialogue that promotes tolerance, peace and respect for human rights and religious diversity. Muslims worldwide often face bigotry and prejudice simply because of their faith. Muslim women suffer "triple discrimination" because of their gender, ethnicity, and faith (UN Secretary General). Let all of us stand up against discrimination and become 'active bystanders' when we see such behaviour.

Digital Intimacy Workshops were rolled out to students on the 13th, 15th and 21st March 2023. Digital Intimacy and sending nude photos have become common practice in modern relationships. Research shows that over 48% of people aged 18-30 have sent an intimate image (Klettke et al., 2014), with 23% of 15-18 year olds in Ireland having sent a nude image of themselves (Foody et al., 2021), so it is important for people to learn how to do this safely while still enjoying themselves.

This workshop explored:

- The benefits and challenges of digital intimacy
- Image based abuse and the Irish laws around it
- How to identify catfishing
- How to be an Active*Bystander online
- Signposts support services and helplines

DISCLOSURE TRAINING

"The Do's and Don'ts" Handling Disclosures 1 hour Workshop **for Staff** took place for staff on Friday 31st March 2023.

"The Do's & Don'ts" Handling Disclosures 1 hour Workshop **for Students** took place on Monday 3rd April 2023.

A total of 46 people attended. The online training was facilitated by Dr Michelle Walsh from the Rape Crisis Centre Midwest who has over 20 years of experience providing counselling and therapeutic support in this area.

The purpose of this training was to:

- Enable individuals to feel comfortable and confident when handling disclosures.
- Highlight relevant support services and how to signpost individuals to these supports.
- Provide an overview of effects of sexual violence through the emotional, psychological and physical impacts that it has on the individual.

Knowing how to respond to a survivor of sexual harassment or sexual violence matters. Have you ever wondered how you'd respond? Studies have found that a positive response to a disclosure can have a significant impact on the health and happiness of the survivor.

Active*Consent and USI's (Union of Students in Ireland) 2020 national Sexual Experiences Survey revealed that 79% of college students who disclose sexual misconduct (rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment)told a close friend.



Sexual Assault Awareness Month

April was Sexual Assault Awareness Month

We used this opportunity to highlight resources such as **SpeakOut**, an online anonymous reporting tool, and the **online Bystander Intervention training** available on the HR-EDI Webpage to all staff and students.



Athena Swan Workshops

UL Departments preparing for award submissions benefited greatly from workshops facilitated by Dr Sean McWhinnie in April. He engaged with the Department of Chemical Science by holding in person focus groups with staff & researchers. While here, he also supported the Department of Maths & Stats and the School of Design with their Athena Swan applications.

VP EDI & EDI Data Practitioners Network

UL took over chairing the IUA's meetings of VP EDI & EDI Data Practitioners Network in 2023. The practitioners network is made up of staff who support EDI data activities within their Institutions. EDI Data practitioner are involved with curating, analysing and benchmarking equality data to support Athena Swan submissions, monitoring action plan progress and to improving the quality of equality data in their institution.

The network is an opportunity for colleagues to share experiences and identify core challenges that impact EDI activities across the member institutions.

Members include Maynooth University, Trinity College, UCD, DCU, UCC, University of Galway, TU Dublin and the University of Limerick.



Double Silver Athena Swan Success for University of Limerick – Monday 5th April

On Wednesday 5th April UL became the first institution in the Irish Higher Education Sector to receive a prestigious Silver Athena Swan Institution Award.

In addition, the Kemmy Business School (KBS) also received a Silver Faculty Award, making it the first business school in Ireland to do so. This was co-led by Dr Caroline Murphy and Professor Finbarr Murphy.

In addition, the School of Allied Health led by Professor Judi Pettigrew, the School of Education led by Dr Petra Elftorp and the School of Medicine led by Dr Evelyn Murphy, also achieved Bronze Athena Swan Awards for their work promoting equality for all.

Advance HE, which administers the awards on behalf of the sector, said the university had demonstrated real impact in ensuring more female academics and staff had been able to progress and achieve promotion within the institution. “University of Limerick has shown a deep-rooted commitment to delivering gender equality and that is shown in the

comprehensive review it has conducted into the way it recruits and promotes its staff,” said Sarah Fink, Advance HE’s Head of Athena Swan Ireland.

“As a result, in the last three years, its number of female Associate Professors has more than doubled while its number of female Professors has increased by a third. Together with its appointment in 2021 of Ireland’s first female university president, the university has clearly demonstrated to us the transformational impact it is having as a result of its steps to addressing gender inequality.

University of Limerick (UL) President, Professor Kerstin Mey, said: “UL has always led the way in pursuit of gender equality as is evident in my own appointment as the first woman president of an Irish university in 2020. “To achieve a Silver Athena Swan Award an institution must demonstrate the impact of the committed actions in our previous submissions. “This is evident in that 92 per cent of our academic faculties, schools and departments are recipients of Athena Swan Bronze Awards.

Continued on the following page



Above: University of Limerick Athena Swan Group members and President Kerstin Mey.



Above: University of Limerick Kemmy Business School (KBS) Group members.



Above: University of Limerick President Kerstin Mey, right, with Dr Marie Connolly, Director Human Rights, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

“While our commitment to gender equality is long standing, we know that there remain significant challenges to be faced to address gender equality across all levels and, very importantly, intersectional inequality. “I am personally committed to fully integrating Human Rights, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion into our structures, actions, and culture and to dedicating resources to achieve this end. My vision for UL is to rebalance social progress within environmental constraints and become a truly egalitarian university.”

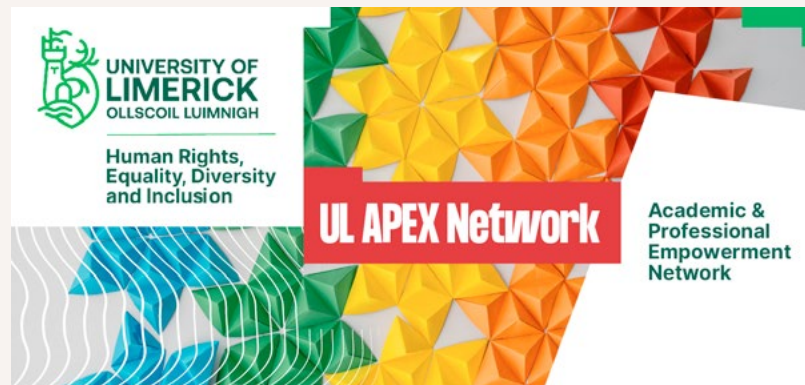
Since the Kemmy Business School (KBS) were awarded the Bronze award in 2019, the faculty has committed to deliver on a range of clear measurable actions that result in impactful outcomes. Key successes that contributed to the school winning the award included the increased representation of female staff at the most senior academic grades meeting the HEA target for female professors. Additionally, the school increased outreach activities to support increased representation of female students on programmes where participation had been low along with the provision of targeted career development supports particularly benefiting early and mid-career academics. Recognising the efforts of the EDI committee and broader faculty, Executive Dean Finbarr Murphy stated “this is a tremendous accomplishment, that underscores the impact of creating a working and learning culture that embodies the principles of Athena Swan, empowering staff and students to reach their full potential.”

Commenting on the achievement, Chair of the KBS EDI committee, Dr Caroline Murphy stated

“the Silver award recognises the progress achieved in addressing gender equality since our Bronze award, and marks the starting point of a broader and more ambitious action plan of activities to be achieved over the next four years.”

Thank you to the **UL Athena Swan Steering Committee Members 2022**, and to the Chair and Co-Chair of the KBS EDI committee, Dr Caroline Murphy and Professor Finbarr Murphy and their team on their successful silver application. Special thanks too must go to the members of the working groups and the chairs who contributed greatly to the successful submission:

- Supporting Researchers Working Group: Professor Norelee Kennedy (chair)/ Professor Seán Arkins (co-chair)
- Career Development and Supports (PMSS) Working Group: Ms Ursula Mullane (chair)/ Mr Peter Reilly (co-chair)
- Organisation Culture Working Group (Professor Finbarr Murphy)
- Career Development and Supports (Academic) Working Group (Dr David Coughlan)
- Inclusivity Working Group (Dr Lydia Bracken/ Professor Shane Kilcommins)
- Survey Design Working Group (Professor Donald Truxillo)
- Grainne O’Donovan Technical Writer
- Leticia Scheidt and Gemma McCarthy (Survey Analysis)



THE UL APEX NETWORK

The UL APEX Network (Academic Professional Empowerment Network) invited staff to an online lunchtime workshop on Tuesday 18th April exploring anxiety and providing a toolkit for managing stress and anxiety on a daily basis. This workshop called 'Red 2 Green', was a 60 minute workshop taking a deep dive into:

- Our body-mind reactions
- The Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)
- Anxiety and Well-being Strategies.

GENDER EQUALITY ENHANCEMENT FUND

Following an interview review process to identify the lead project to be submitted from the institution under the Gender Equality Enhancement Funding call the Department of Maths & Stats submitted a project called "Irish Committee for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Mathematics - Advancing Women in Academia (ICEDIM-AWA)" on the 31st May.

This project addresses the well-recognised issue of gender imbalance in mathematics related to Higher Education, which results in the underrepresentation of female mathematicians at senior leadership-level positions. The project will sustain the newly formed Irish Committee for Equality and Diversity in Mathematics (ICEDIM)'s goals of supporting secondary school female pupils, early and mid-career female mathematicians to become high-profile academics in Ireland. ICEDIM is chaired by Dr Gaburro under the umbrella of the Irish Mathematical Society (IMS).



Intergenerational Week – 24th – 30th April 2023



Intergeneration Week took place from the 24th – 30th April 2023. This is a campaign aiming to connect everyone who is passionate about everything intergenerational. The following two events took place during the week supported by the HREDI Department:

1. Intergenerational Community Event – Organised in collaboration with EDI and the office of the VPGCE, Student Community Engagement Liaison

Officer, Andrea La Touche planned an intergenerational community event in Bobby Byrnes, Limerick City on Tuesday 25th April. Probus is a retired group of professionals/business people who are delighted to meet with UL students with the aim of merging their experiences through Narrative 4 Story Exchange. This wonderful event was facilitated by Narrative 4 facilitators Dr Florence Le Baron – Earle, Dr Niamh Lenahan,

Dr Maria Rieder and PhD candidate Leticia Scheidt. Click [HERE](#) for more information on Probus.

2. Afternoon Tea Event: Ellen Fitzmaurice hosted an afternoon tea event in Plassey Village Hall on Thursday 27th April from 2.30-3.30pm for the retirees from The Park and residents of the villages. A very talented harpist Grainne Fitzgibbon played some music for the retirees.

SPEAK OUT TOOL



Data from the UL Speak Out tool has been uploaded to the national dashboard for the National Speak Out Annual Report. A date for the release of this report is yet to be confirmed. An evaluation of the Speak Out tool with an external consultant took place on 10th May with all the Speak Out administrators.

Click [HERE](#) to view the Speak Out Tool.

“Striking a balance: The post-pandemic workplace”

The **UL APEX Network** organised a talk entitled “Striking a balance: The post-pandemic workplace” with Professor Deirdre O’Shea in the Appellate Court, Glucksman Library on Tuesday June 6th from 12-1pm. This event was open to all staff and offered staff the opportunity to re-connect and network with colleagues across campus.

This in-person discussion covered the following topics:

- Pros and cons of hybrid, remote and on-site working
- Changes in the psychological contract
- Moving into the future of work

UL APEX Network is the Academic & Professional Empowerment Network set up in 2021.

Click [HERE](#) to find out more about this network.



UL50 Jubilee Avenue Tree Planting

The Human Rights EDI Office planted a tree as part of the **UL@50 celebrations**.

Pictured above (l-r): Maria Healy, Sexual Harassment & Sexual Violence Prevention and Support Officer, Dr Marie Connolly, Director Human Rights, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Michael O’Brien, EDI Athena SWAN Data Analyst/Projects Officer and Maureen Keogh, Senior Administrator.

IUA Data Practitioners Meeting

The IUA Data Practitioners In-Person meeting took place on Tuesday 20th June in UL. IUA members involved in EDI Data analysis met with colleagues from the University of Manchester and Newcastle University to share knowledge and examples of EDI analysis.

ADDRESSING SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION – POLICY & PRACTICE SEMINAR

Dr Marie Connolly and Maria Healy attended the ‘Addressing Sexual Violence in Higher Education Policy and Practice Seminar with Clarissa J. DiSantis Humphreys from the University of Durham on **Friday 16th June** at the University of Galway. This half-day seminar presented practical guidance on how to address sexual violence and related forms of gender-based violence in a higher education setting, utilising a comprehensive institution-wide approach. This ethical method is trauma-informed and survivor-centred whilst being intersectional and requiring perpetrator accountability. Following the seminar the University of Galway President Ciarán Ó hÓgartaigh and the Active*Consent team launched their new five-year cycle [2023-2027] of the Active*Consent programme.



Pictured above (l-r): President Ciarán Ó hÓgartaigh University of Galway, Dr Marie Connolly, Dr Pádraig MacNeela, Dr Charlotte McIvor, Dr Siobhan O’Higgins and Maria Healy.

UL Silver Athena Swan Ceremony – Friday 23rd June



Pictured above (l-r): Sarah Fink (pictured on the right) presented the award to President Kerstin Mey and Dr Marie Connolly Director Human Rights, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion who led the institution application.



Pictured above (l-r): Dr Jennie Rothwell Head of the HEA Centre of Excellence for EDI, President Kerstin Mey and Laura Austin Executive Assistant HEA.

On Friday 23rd June the Head of Athena Swan Ireland and members of the HEA and AdvanceHE joined Staff and Student members of the Athena Swan/EDI Committees, the Human Rights EDI Committee, the Ethnic Diversity Forum, and the Age Friendly University Forum to celebrate the University's outstanding achievement on being the first institution in Irish HE Sector to be awarded a Silver Athena Swan Institution Award.

In welcoming attendees to the celebrations Dr Connolly set out that achieving this award was the result of a long and committed journey to achieving gender equality across the institution this she set out could not have been achieved without robust governance and committed leadership.

President Kerstin Mey welcomed all to the celebrations and was particularly delighted that not only were we celebrating the Institution's Athena Swan Silver Award but also availing of the opportunity to publicly sign the Anti-Racism Principles with Dr Jennie Rothwell and Laura Austin of the HEA and commented that *"People's identities are shaped by multiple factors, creating unique experiences. We in UL are mindful of this intersectionality when exploring issues and developing solutions. I am therefore delighted that today we are also availing of the opportunity to publicly sign the Anti-Racism Principles. The establishment of the Ethnic Diversity Forum in December 2021 has been an initiative that I have fully supported. The forum members are doing excellent work and the Race Equality Action Plan is I believe in the final stage of development and will*

shortly be presented to HREDI Steering Committee, the Executive Committee, and the Governing Authority for approval."

Sarah Fink Head of Athena Swan Ireland commended the institution on its exceptional performance in achieving the first silver award and noted a number of best practices which the institution had implemented to deliver the required impactful measurable outcomes to achieve a silver award.

Dr Ruth Gilligan Assistant Director for UK Equality Charters at Advance HE presented on the day commenting that *"The University of Limerick is part of a global community of equality charter participants and award holders."*

Continued on the following page





Back row (l-r): Michael O' Brien & Maria Healy (HR-EDI office), Dr Jennie Rothwell (HEA); Maureen Keogh (HR-EDI Office); Tonya Watts (AdvanceHE). **Front row (l-r):** Laura Austin (HEA); Sarah Fine AdvanceHE; Dr Marie Connolly (Director HR-EDI); Professor Yvonne Galligan (TUD); & Ruth Gilligan (AdvanceHE).

You can see that we have iterations of our equality charters in the UK, Ireland, Canada, the US, Brazil, Australia and Cyprus – with other countries considering the feasibility of a pilot programme” “I am delighted to be here to celebrate your success as the first institution to achieve a Silver award in Ireland – and in fact, UL is not only the first in Ireland to achieve a Silver institutional award, but the first in any country outside of the UK.”

Dr Jennie Rothwell Head of the Centre of Excellence for EDI in Advance HE set out the commitment that UL was making in signing the Anti-Racism Principles.

Professor Yvonne Galligan presented an excellent paper on **‘Getting to Silver, Staying at Silver: sharing insights’** providing some excellent advice a reminding us that there is ‘no room for complacency’.

In closing the celebrations Dr Connolly paid particular tribute to members of the Human Rights EDI office in particular Michael O’Brien Athena SWAN/EDI Data Analyst and Maureen Keogh Senior Administrator for their outstanding work.



National Advisory Committee (NAC)

The launch of "Towards a Zero Tolerance Approach: A Good Practice Guide to implementing 'Safe, Respectful, Supportive and Positive – Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment in Higher Education'" took place on 26th of June, followed by an Implementation workshop.

HEA's National Working Group on Equality Data

The first meeting was held on Wednesday 28th June.

The Working Group:

- Provide a platform for staff representatives in eligible HEIs and relevant stakeholders to discuss challenges, learning, opportunities and differing perspectives on issues related to equality data collection and monitoring;
- Provide input into the development of a standardised approach to equality data identification, collection and mining to support all HEI reporting requirements in relation to equality issues;
- Contribute to the development of a voluntary disclosure campaign focused on highlighting the importance of equality monitoring data (as outlined in the HEA Race Equality Implementation Plan 2022-2024);
- Provide a mechanism for consultation and feedback to the HEA and the National EDI Committee as relevant.



Pride Month – June 2023

The LGBTQ+/Inclusive Pennant was flown from the flagpoles at the main entrance during the month of June up until July 9th.

Limerick Pride 2023/Staff LGBTQ+ Network took place from July 3rd to July 9th this year. Colleagues interested in being part of UL Staff LGBTQ+ Network click [HERE](#).

Sexual Harassment & Sexual Violence Policy

Work on this policy is nearing completion. Final comments from the review group have been requested with a final meeting in August to agree the draft. The Draft Policy was sent to the Executive Committee of Student Life Clubs & Societies for student feedback and to the Student Designated Contact Persons Panel (SDCPP) for comment.



Cohort 3 – Preparing for Academic Advancement Programme (PAA)

On Friday 30th June we were delighted to welcome Cohort 3 of the Gender Equality Enhancement funded Preparing for Academic Advancement (PAA) Programme to the Kemmy Business School. This sectoral initiative is led by UL - Dr Marie Connolly (Project Lead), Dr Caroline Murphy and Dr Elaine Kinsella.

24 Senior Lecturers from all 7 Universities with formal promotions processes are represented on the programme bringing to 72 the number of women that have been supported to avail of the opportunity to participate on the programme.

As participation on the programme is sought after an independent assessment of expression of Interests is undertaken by an external review panel of senior academics from each of the participating institutions.

The aim of this sectoral modular Programme is to provide support and expert advice to Senior Lecturer level/Associate Professor level academic women to prepare a successful professorial portfolio application to Associate Professor/Professor B/Professor level and in so doing support institutions in achieving the very ambitious HEA target of 40% representation of men and women at full professorial level by 2026.

Part of our commitment in securing the funding was to demonstrate the impact of providing such transformative interventions which includes 4 modules; one to one coach and senior academic mentors external to participant institution's for a 12-month period.



SOME STATS:

- 68.42% of participants from cohort 1 and 71.43% of participants from cohort 2 indicated that they were highly prepared to apply for promotion upon completion of the programme.
- In UL alone 4 of 5 participants on the Pilot PAA programme were successful in professorial promotions.
- 50% of cohort 1 had applied for promotion within two years, of which 75% were successful in their application.
- Of those that hadn't applied for promotion 75% intended on doing so within the next 12 months or when the next promotion call was announced.
- 26.3% of participants from cohort 2 had applied for promotion within 1 year. Of those that had not applied for promotion, 91.67% intended on applying within the next 12 months, or at the next available time.
- 66.6% of respondents from cohort 1 and 72.73% of respondents from cohort 2 felt that the PAA programme had significantly/very significantly prepared them for submitting a portfolio.

The programme is delivered by Dr Maeve Lankford and Professor Eileen Savage with Guest Speakers from the participating institutions.

European QS Higher Education Summit



Dr Marie Connolly joined an exceptional panel of speakers at the **#QShighereducation** summit, the first European QS Higher Education Summit held in the Dublin Royal Convention Centre on Tuesday 27th & Wed. 28th June. Chaired by Prof. Colin Scott VP EDI UCD with panel members Dr Eburn Joseph, Director Institute of Antiracism and Black Studies; Ms Susan Fang, International Education Top 50 Voices 2023 Director and founder, Academic Powerhouse and Bolanie Tajudeen Founder and Director Black Blossoms, the panel discussed Women in Leadership in HE. Marie spoke about the leaky pipeline for women progressing through academic and leadership careers and asked about UL's success to-date in achieving the first Silver Institution AS Award what the award signified and what strategies and measures UL had taken to achieve such an accolade. The panel will explore the decisions universities should take in meeting the goal of gender equality in leadership and the need to draw in wider challenges of intersectionality of gender with race and other equality grounds.

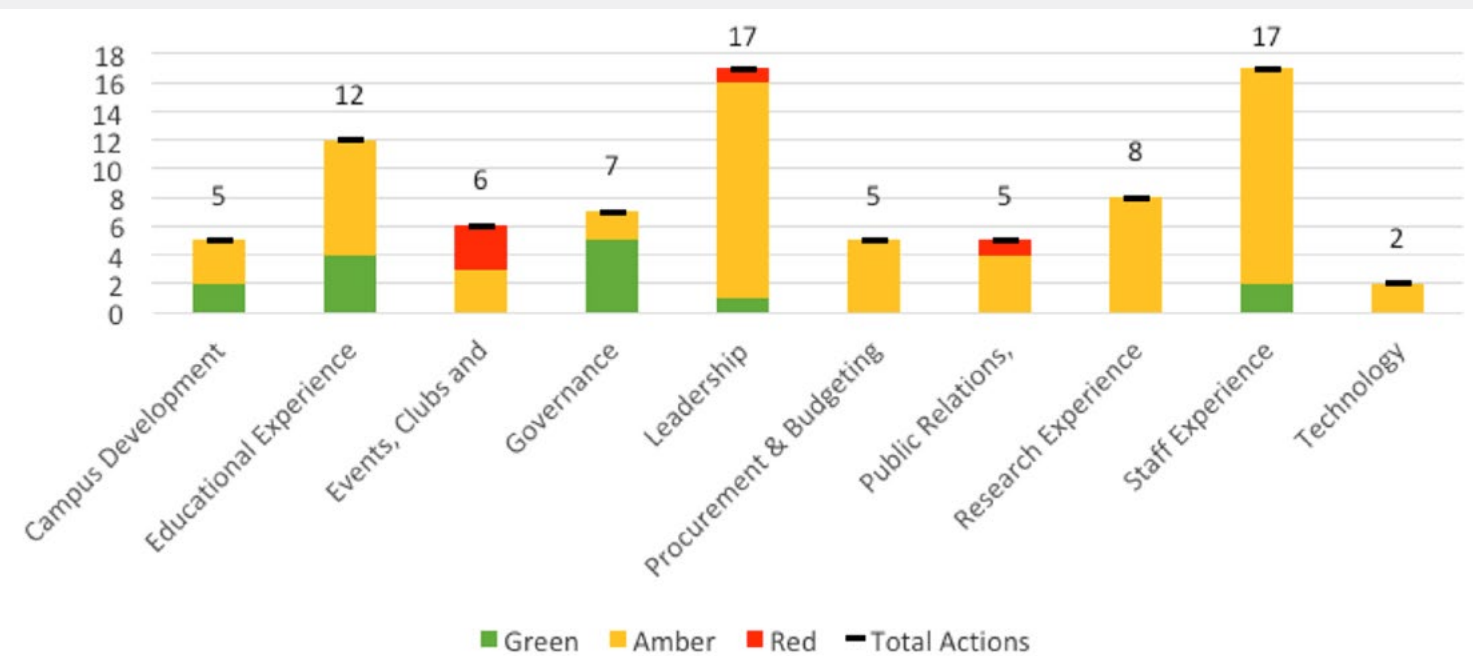
Equality and Human Rights Strategy 2019 -2022 Update

The 10 themes of the Equality and Human Rights Strategy as follows:



The theme goals were:

Governance	Foster inclusive org culture & implements best practice.
Leadership	Champion H-ER within UL, monitor progress & respond to statutory requirements
Staff Experience	Staff would experience supportive working environment where equality & HR recognised & championed
Educational Experience	Students experience a supportive educational environment with equal opportunity to succeed.
Research Experience	E-HR recognised & supported. Human participation open to all
Campus Development	Inclusive and accessible so everyone feels safe & welcome
Events, Clubs and Societies	Inclusive & accessible to all students & staff.
Public Relations, Marketing & Communications	Will be inclusive & non-discriminatory
Technology	Pro-actively promote E-HR in design, provision and maintenance of technology
Procurement & Budgeting	Will be inclusive and non-discriminatory



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2019 – 2022 PROGRESS TO DATE:

RED Action never undertaken, started but discontinued, Further work needed to begin the action or revise the approach.

AMBER Begun but not completed (or is on-going), Action completed but outcome or impact were not as predicted/desired, Further work needed to complete the action or obtain the desired outcome.

GREEN Action implemented leading to desired outcome or impact or close to predicted/desired, No further work needed on this action.

The 2019 strategy was successful in:

- Extending knowledge and understanding of Equality and Human Rights across the University Campus, Governance, Teaching Learning & Research, Staff & Student Experience & Operating Model.

Examples include:

- New buildings require Disability Access Certificate to meet regulations.
- UL Policy Management Framework includes equality impact assessment.
- Leadership.
- Establishing Equality & Human Rights office.

- Silver Athena Swan (AS) Award Institution (1st in Ireland).
- Staff Experience.
- 92% of academic departments covered by AS Awards.
- Expanding into PMSS directorates 2022 – 2026.

The Challenge now:

- Is to embed HR-EDI fully into all aspects of UL by incorporating a values based E-HR strategy to shape UL's culture, priorities and operations.
- Values led Organisations.
- Explicit in naming, defining & communicating their values.
- Coherent expressing values across all areas & functions.
- Consistent in applying values at all times and all contexts.

The aim is the systemic & proactive implementation of our public sector Equality & Human Rights duty

- Social Justice, Empowerment and Agency, Inclusivity & Respect.
- Assess -> Address -> Report.
- Includes evidence based assessments of E-HR issues facing service users and staff.
- Plans and actions proposed or implemented to address issues raised during assessment.
- Annual reporting developments and achievements.

Human Rights EDI Strategy 2023 -2027

The University of Limerick is undertaking a review of the Equality and Human Rights Strategy. A new strategy is in the final stages of development using the IUA Framework for the implementation of the Public Sector Duty.

An external facilitator Niall Crowley has facilitated a number of workshops with the Human Rights EDI Subgroup members since January. Niall has compiled a full implementation plan based on the work completed to date by the Human Rights EDI Subgroup and a final in person meeting was held in the Armitage Room on Thursday 29th June from 10-1pm.



Pictured above (l-r, from front to back): Niall Crowley (Values Lab); Dr Marie Connolly (Director HR-EDI Office); Michael O'Brien (HR-EDI Office); Caroline Murphy (KBS); Cristiano Storni (Autism@UL SIG); Lydia Bracken (AD-EDI AHSS); Aoife Neary (AD-EDI EHS); Katie Martin (UL Student Communities Officer); Carol Jane Shanley (PCC); Rhona McCormack (Director Student Affairs); Cliona Donnellan (Buildings & Estates).

Sexual Health & Wellbeing Policy

The **Sexual Health & Wellbeing Policy** has been finalised. The policy will be launched in conjunction with the Sexual Harassment & Sexual Violence Policy scheduled for publication in September 2023.



Stay connected:

Instagram
Twitter
Human Rights EDI website
EDI@ul.ie



**UNIVERSITY OF
LIMERICK**
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

**Human Rights,
Equality, Diversity
and Inclusion**