Preparing for self-assessment

November Webinar

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Outline

1. Purpose of a self-assessment

2. Planning for self-assessment

3. Forming the self-assessment team

4. Self-assessment team activity

5. Future planning

6. What to include in your submission

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Purpose of a self-assessment

Athena SWAN depends on assuming a collective responsibility for gender equality

Purpose of the self-assessment

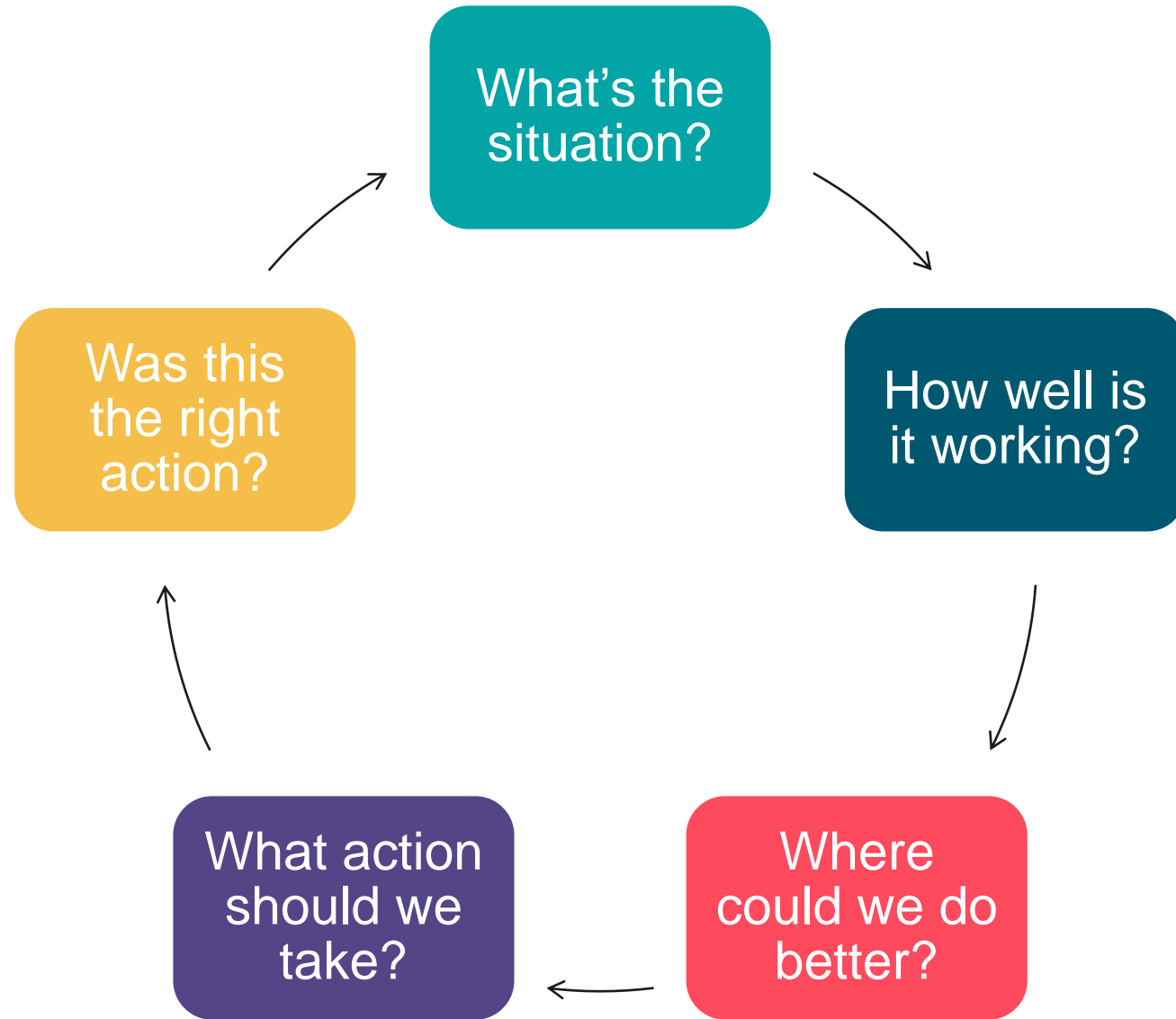| Reflect on a range of quantitative and qualitative data | Evaluate policies, practices & activities | Establish gender equality priority areas & aspirations | Develop an evidence-based action plan | Ensure the effectiveness of the actions |

Planning for SAT activity

Planning for self-assessment

How do senior leaders demonstrate that Athena SWAN activity is valued?

How do organisational structures recognise and reward activity?

Will the process, team and action plan be appropriately resourced?

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How do senior leaders demonstrate that Athena SWAN activity is valued?

- Have they made a public commitment to the Athena SWAN principles?

  Meetings, town halls, formal & informal communications

- Do they understand the time it takes to prepare a submission and maintain momentum through implementation?

  Resourcing should continue for delivery of action plan

- Are they open to honest, difficult and sensitive conversations?

  And self-reflection

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How do organisational structures recognise and reward activity?

- Gender equality is linked to strategy in a way that isn't just about getting an award

- Contributions to the team are recognised in appraisals and development reviews

- Contributions to AS/EDI are recognised in recruitment, progression and promotions opportunities

Will the process, team and action plan be appropriately resourced?

- How will workload be accounted for and recognised?

Workload model or relieve from other duties

- Are people outside of the SAT considered and supported?

Recognise contributions

- Is there a budget line?

Important for understanding what's possible

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A few examples …

1 SAT Chair is formally appointed through open competition on a rotational 3-year basis and allocated 0.3FTE WAM allowance.

2 AS work is recognised as under the broad category of 'service' as part of the Academic Work Distribution Model (AWDM) and in academic promotion schemes. The SAT Chair (Deputy President and Registrar) will write to the Head of Unit of each SAT member once the audit is complete (**Action 3.1**), to emphasise the centrality of their work t   and the importance of this being factored into their workload. All Schools have now committed to applying for an

**3** Membership s recognised by HoSAs in workload allocation; the PGR representative receives payment for attendance

Without wider buy-in and supporting structures, it will be very difficult to apply the framework effectively

Forming the self-assessment team

The SAT needs to have authority and the composition and structure of the team is an important factor in its status
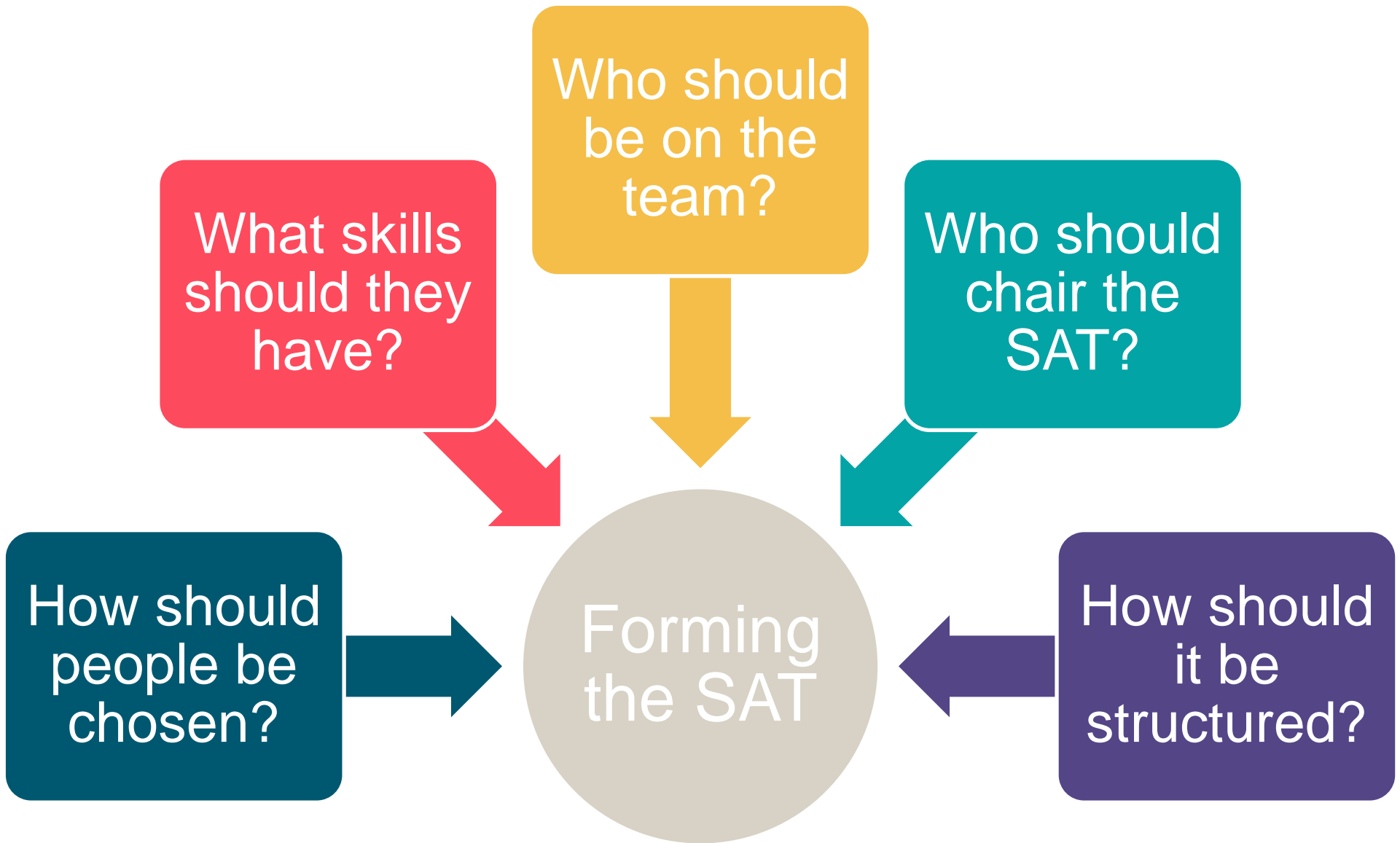
How should self-assessment team members be chosen?

- Facilitate an open call but manage expectations

- Consider a combination of volunteers and ex-officio roles

- Involve others in additional activities

Poll

What skills are needed on the self-assessment team?

- Skills related directly to completing the application requirements

  quantitative and qualitative data analysis, reflective writing, strategic action planning

- Project management skills

  managing time and scheduling, task and quality management, communications

- Ability to advance gender equality

  lived experience, research and scholarship

- Qualities are important too

  Curiosity, say hard truths

- Commitment to upskilling

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Who should be on the self-assessment team?

- People from a variety of backgrounds and with different experiences, with consideration of intersectionality

- A proportion of men and women that reflects the gender profile

- A group of academics, professional and support staff, researchers, and students that is representative of the submitting unit (including organisational structures)

Who should chair the self-assessment team?

- The chair's role is crucial as they are publicly stating their commitment to gender equality

- Someone who understands the Athena SWAN principles - in particular that it isn't about "fixing the women"

- Balance seniority (SL, AP, Prof) with SAT member openness

- Maintains momentum and encourages people

How should the self-assessment team be structured?

- You may have one large SAT with smaller sub-groups to focus on specific activity, or one SAT that undertakes everything together

- How the SAT fits within the structure of your institution or department, and where it reports to are also important in ensuring its status

A few examples ...

There was an open call to all staff in May/June 2018 for expressions of interest for membership of the SAT for the period June 2018 – Dec 2019. Twenty nine expressions of interest were received. The following principles underpinned the creation of the SAT:

- At least 40% of females and males
- Participation from both academic and professional services staff at different grades/levels
- Participation by both full-time and part-time staff, and those on different contract types
- Representation for both the Faculty of Education and Faculty of Arts
- Involvement of key senior management roles, e.g. members of Executive Team
- Involvement of those with knowledge of, skills and experience of advancing gender equality
- Chair of the   Equality Committee
- Student members

The Chair is   representative on the College Promotions Committee and a member of the School Promotions Panel, with experience as College Associate Dean for Undergraduate Admissions. All   staff were invited to volunteer for the SAT, which was selected to reflect   gender balance (58%F); experience of caring for dependents; and including part-time and fixed-term contracts. Membership
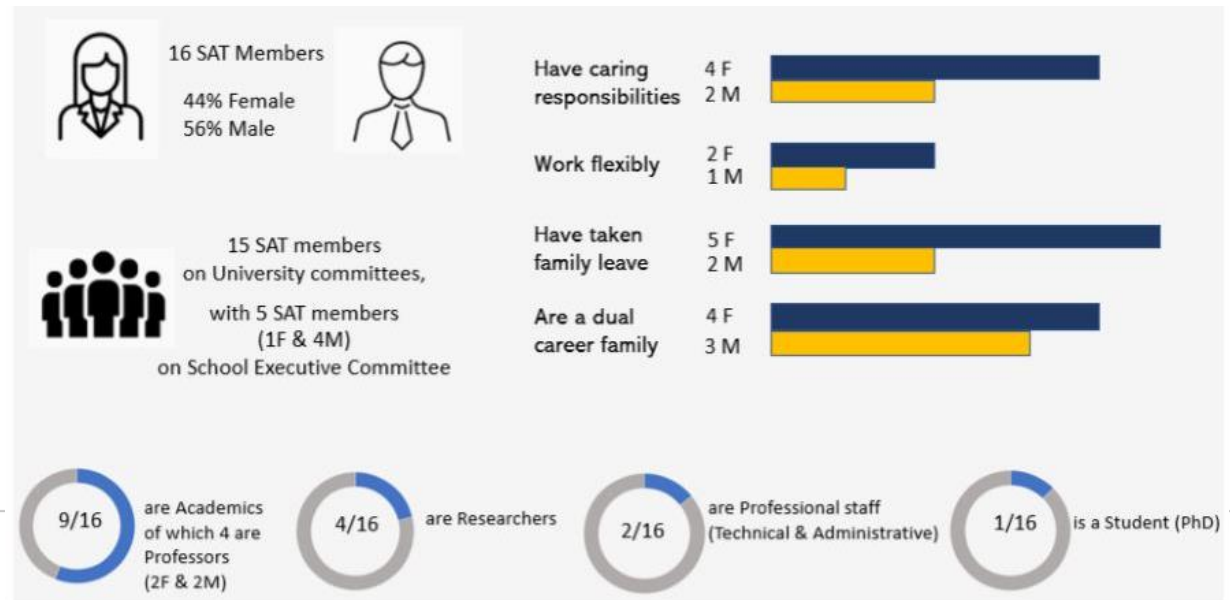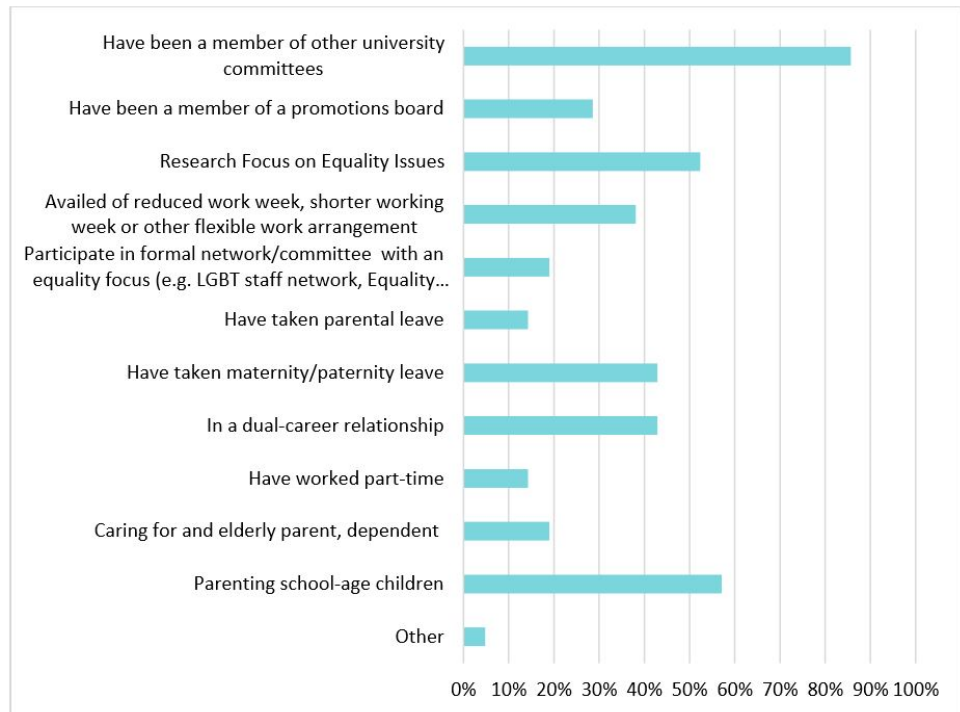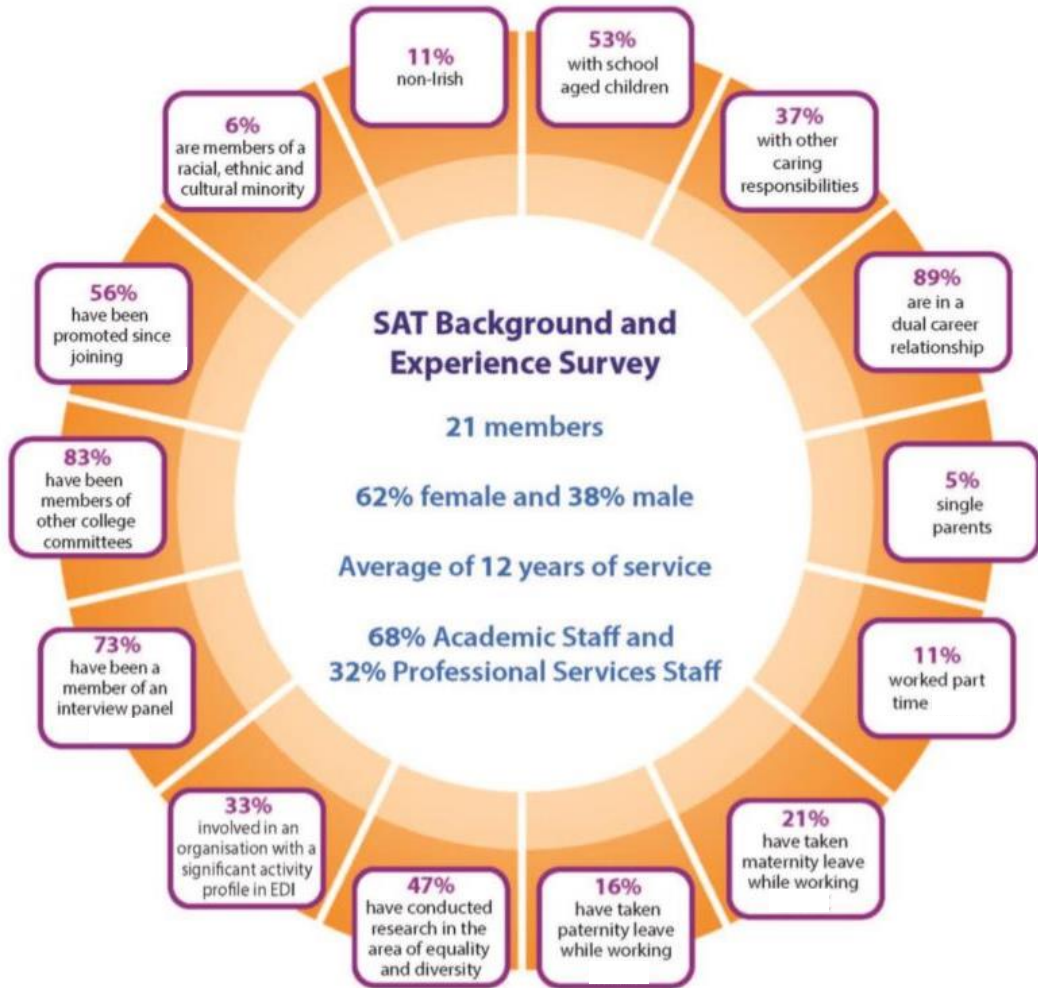
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SAT Background and Experience Survey

21 members

62% female and 38% male

Average of 12 years of service

68% Academic Staff and 32% Professional Services Staff

- 11% non-Irish
- 53% with school aged children
- 37% with other caring responsibilities
- 89% are in a dual career relationship
- 5% single parents
- 11% worked part time
- 21% have taken maternity leave while working
- 16% have taken paternity leave while working
- 47% have conducted research in the area of equality and diversity
- 33% involved in an organisation with a significant activity profile in EDI
- 73% have been a member of an interview panel
- 83% have been members of other college committees
- 56% have been promoted since joining
- 6% are members of a racial, ethnic and cultural minority

Figure 3.3: Background and experience of SAT members

- Have been a member of other university committees
- Have been a member of a promotions board
- Research Focus on Equality Issues
- Availed of reduced work week, shorter working week or other flexible work arrangement
- Participate in formal network/committee with an equality focus (e.g. LGBT staff network, Equality...)
- Have taken parental leave
- Have taken maternity/paternity leave
- In a dual-career relationship
- Have worked part-time
- Caring for and elderly parent, dependent
- Parenting school-age children
- Other

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

16 SAT Members

44% Female
56% Male

15 SAT members on University committees, with 5 SAT members (1F & 4M) on School Executive Committee

Have caring responsibilities	4 F	2 M
Work flexibly	2 F	1 M
Have taken family leave	5 F	2 M
Are a dual career family	4 F	3 M

- 9/16 are Academics of which 4 are Professors (2F & 2M)
- 4/16 are Researchers
- 2/16 are Professional staff (Technical & Administrative)
- 1/16 is a Student (PhD)

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1

Working Groups	Tasks	
WG1: Data Collection & Analysis *Section 2 and 4*	Analyse staff survey (both qualitative and quantitative) Provide data as required to assist the other working groups	
WG2: Career Transition Points & Career Development Section 5.1 & 5.3	Analyse and benchmark data on career transition points and career development Generate evidence-based actions	
WG3: Flexible Working & Managing Career Breaks Section 5.5	Analyse and benchmark data on flexible working and managing career breaks Generate evidence-based actions	
WG4: Organisation & Culture Section 5.6	Analyse staff survey responses re organization and culture Generate evidence-based actions	
WG5: Supporting Trans-People & Intersectionality Section 6	Collect and analyse relevant data Generate evidence-based actions	
WG 6: Communication	Examine methods (both internally and externally) to communicate on the Athena SWAN application, build greater awareness of Athena SWAN	

2

Figure 3.1: SAT working groups

3

Table 3.2. Sub-committee team mem...

Quantitative Survey Team

Qualitative Focus Group Team
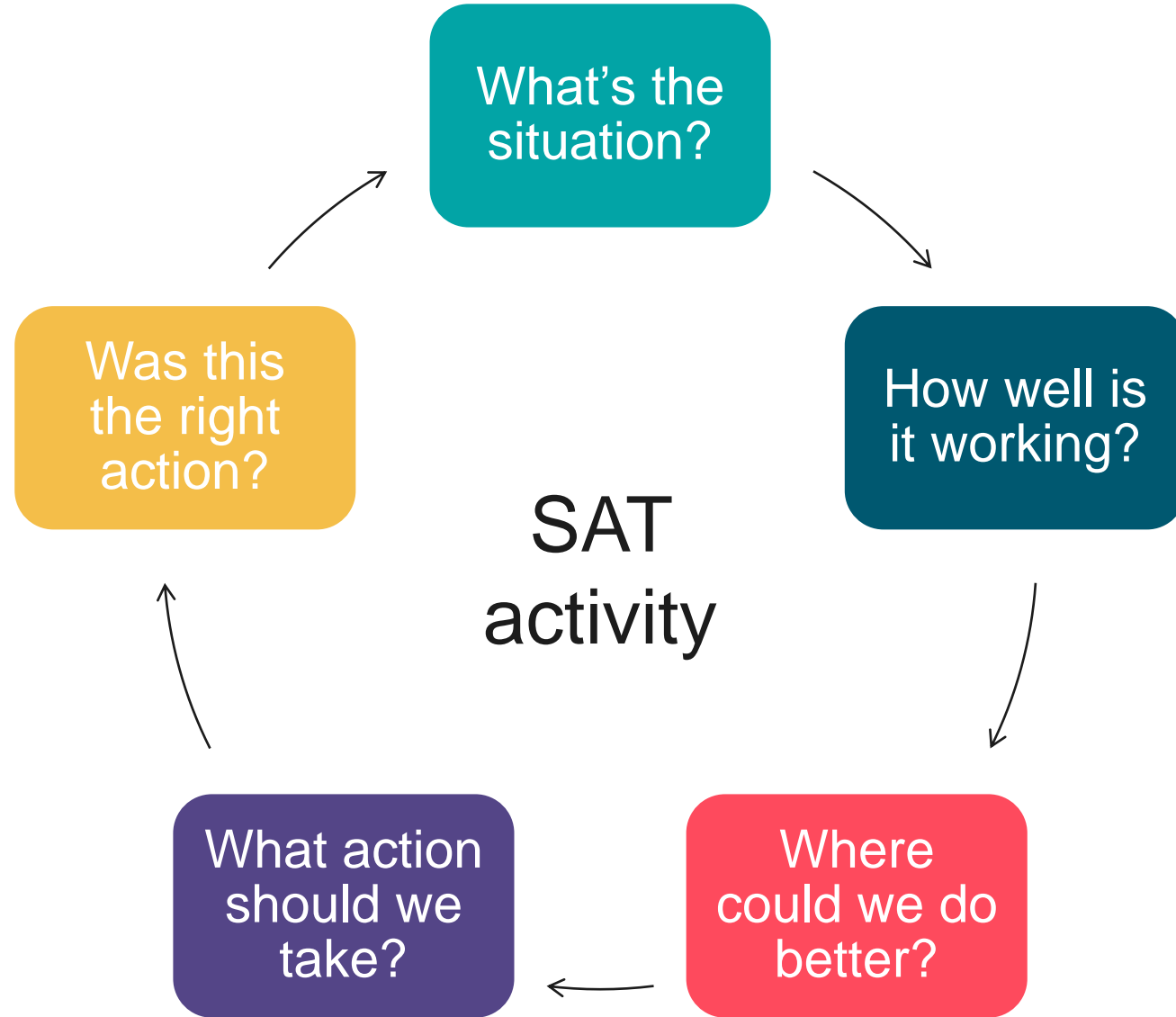
Action Plan Sub Team

Editorial Sub Team

4

SAT sub-teams tackled specific sections of the application based on members' interests and expertise and committee needs. Sharing work across the SAT, sub-teams collected and
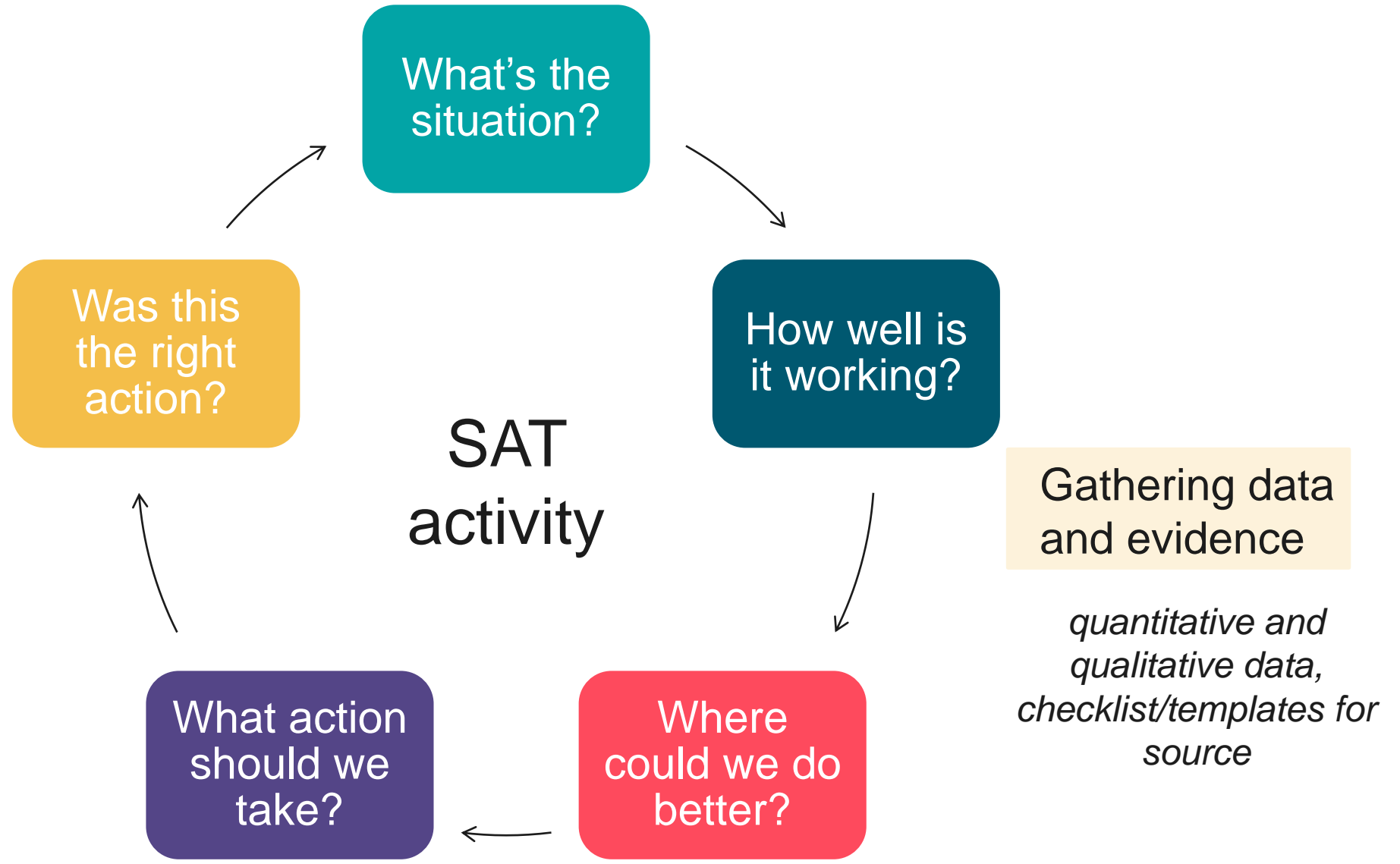
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Self-assessment team activity

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SAT activity

What's the situation?

How well is it working?

Where could we do better?

What action should we take?

Was this the right action?

Upskilling

Consultation

Analysis and reflection

Writing

Communications

Meetings

Gathering data and evidence
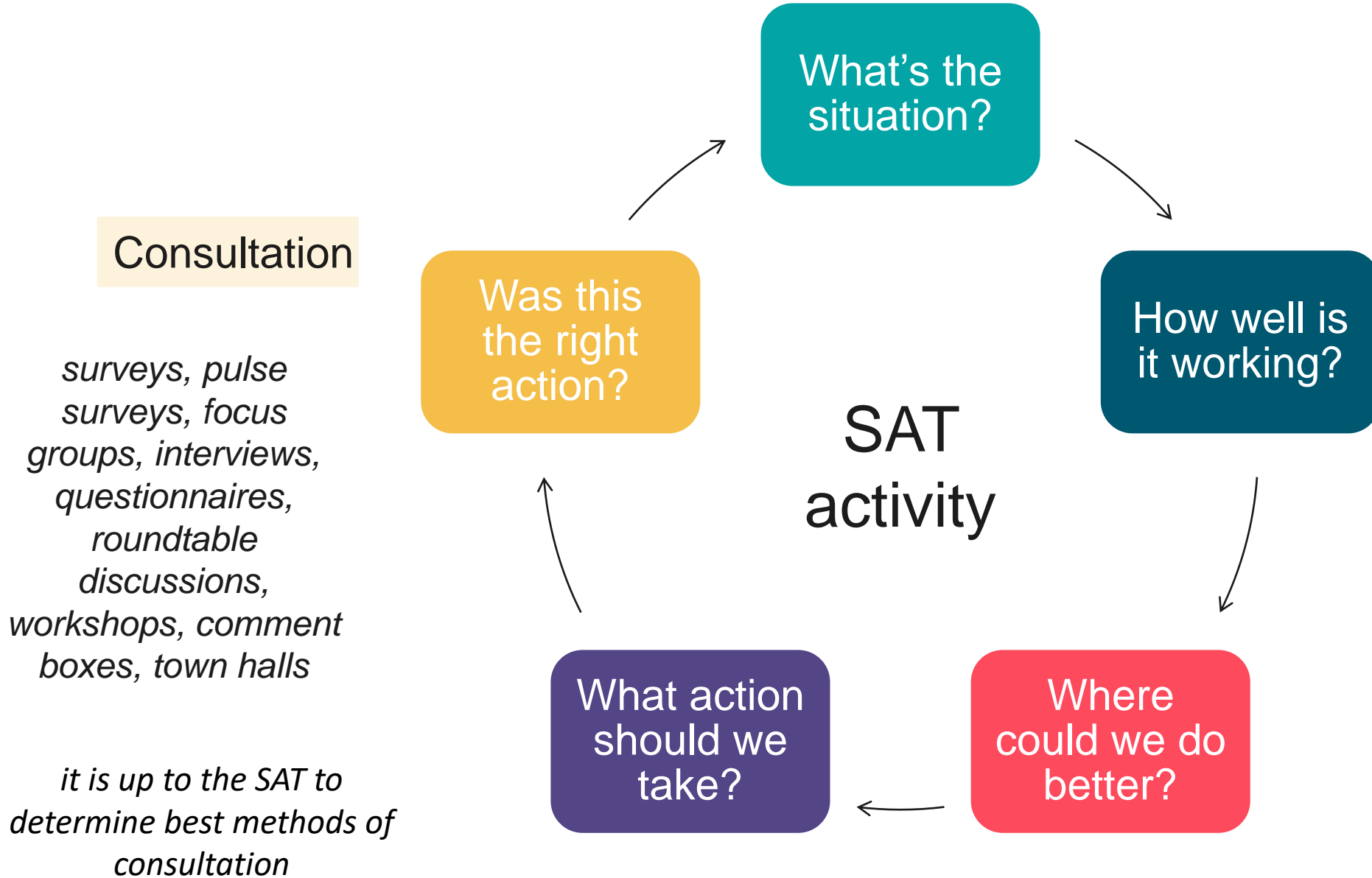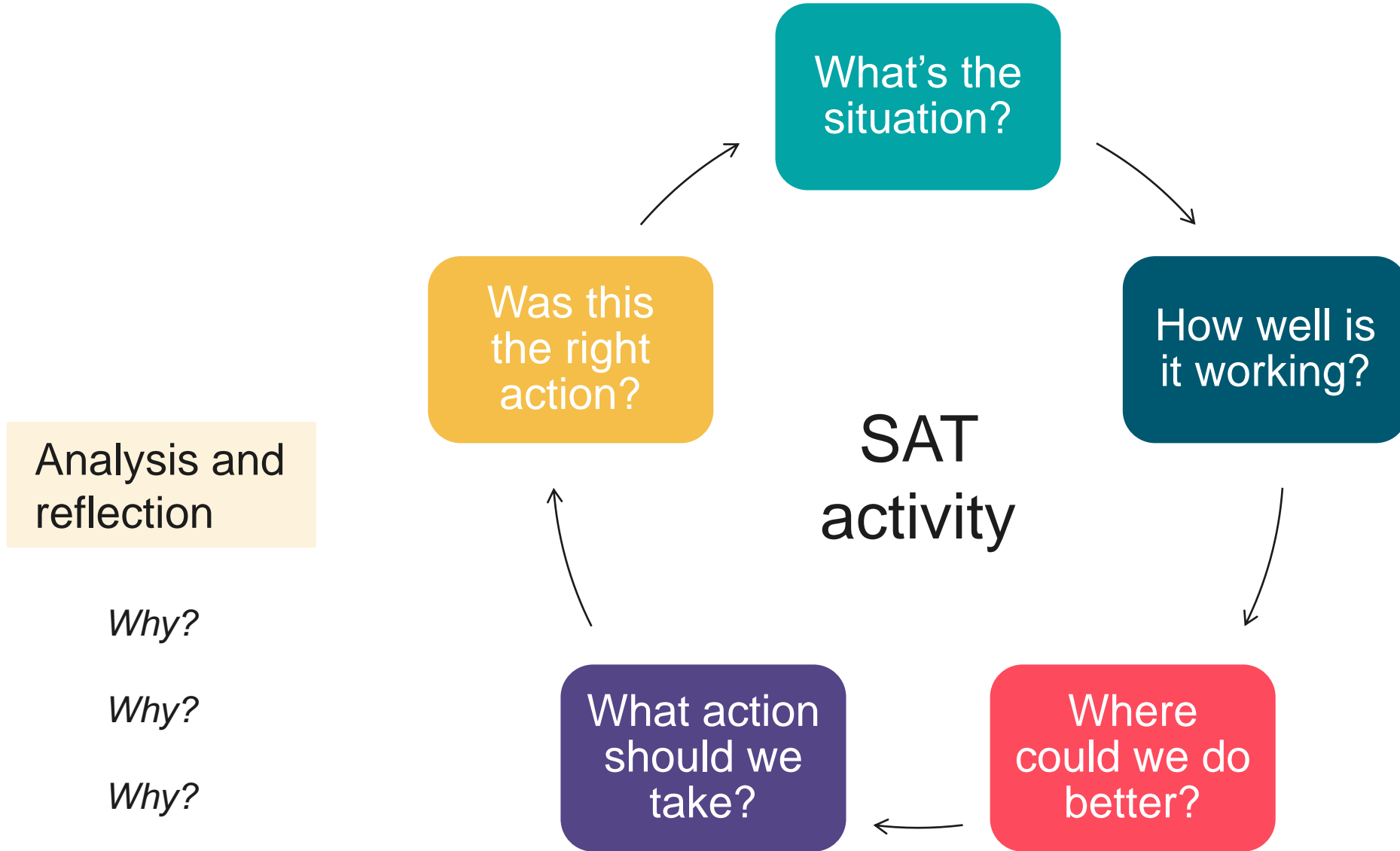
Action planning and implementation

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Upskilling

Training, discussions, reading lists, engaging in Athena SWAN networks, or other resources

What's the situation?

How well is it working?

Where could we do better?

What action should we take?

Was this the right action?

SAT activity

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What's the situation?

How well is it working?

Where could we do better?

What action should we take?

Was this the right action?

SAT activity

Gathering data and evidence

quantitative and qualitative data, checklist/templates for source

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Consultation

surveys, pulse surveys, focus groups, interviews, questionnaires, roundtable discussions, workshops, comment boxes, town halls

it is up to the SAT to determine best methods of consultation

What's the situation?

How well is it working?

Where could we do better?

What action should we take?

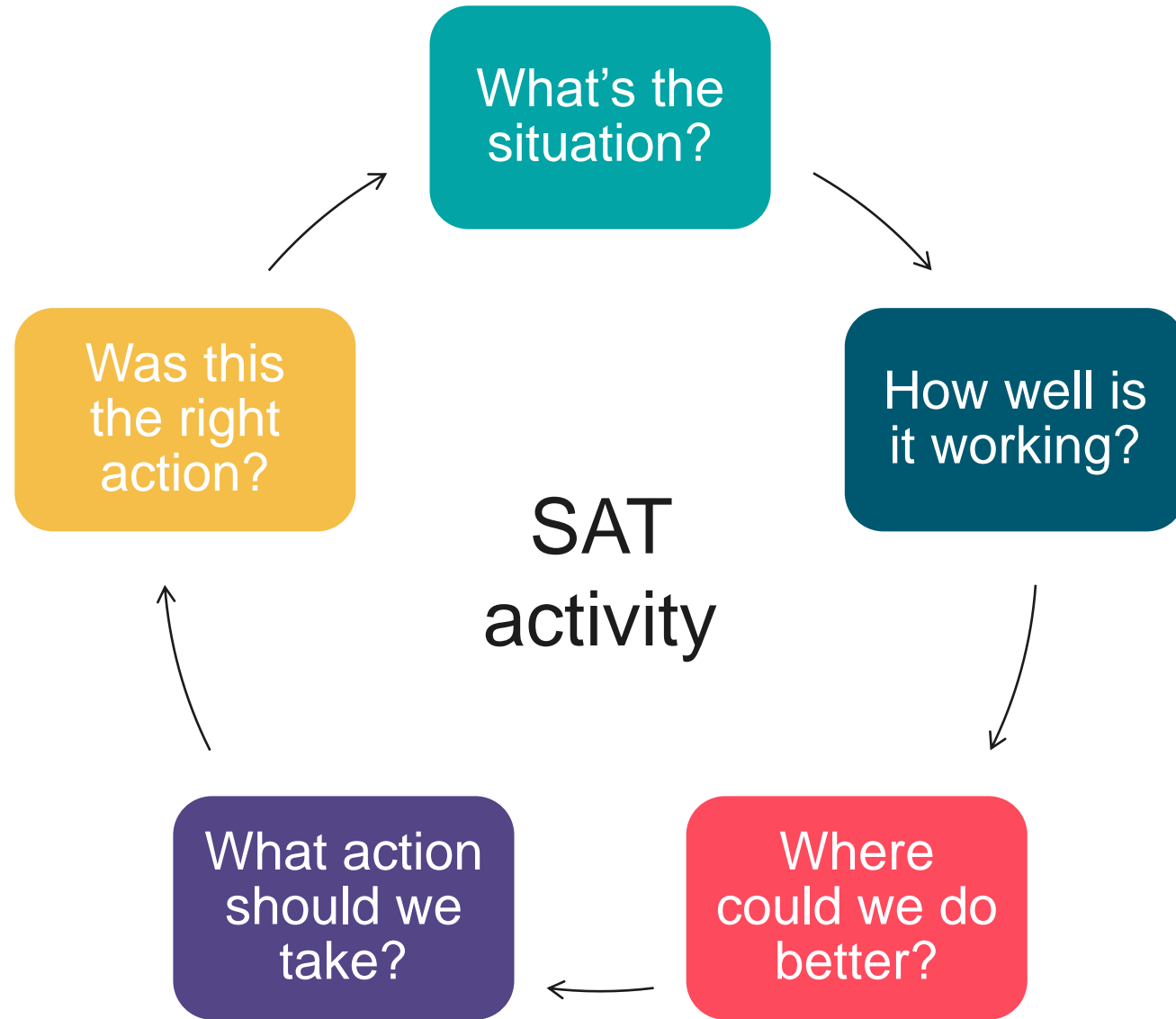Was this the right action?

SAT activity

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It isn't about describing your institution or department in perfect terms, demonstrate that you have looked at the issues, understand the factors at play, and have a plan of action.

Writing cannot fall on one person - but it can be unwieldy to have multiple people writing the document – consider a writing working group.

Writing

What's the situation?

How well is it working?

Where could we do better?

What action should we take?

Was this the right action?

SAT activity

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What's the situation?

How well is it working?

Where could we do better?

What action should we take?

Was this the right action?

SAT activity

specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound

Action planning and implementation

AdvanceHE

What's the situation?

How well is it working?

Where could we do better?

What action should we take?

Was this the right action?

SAT activity

Meetings

Sometimes the whole SAT might meet, other times might be reserved for working group meetings, a consultation activity, an event or training. How often you meet will depend on the systems you already have in place to collect data, how complex your unit is, the level of support you have outside the SAT – and the other things you are working on!
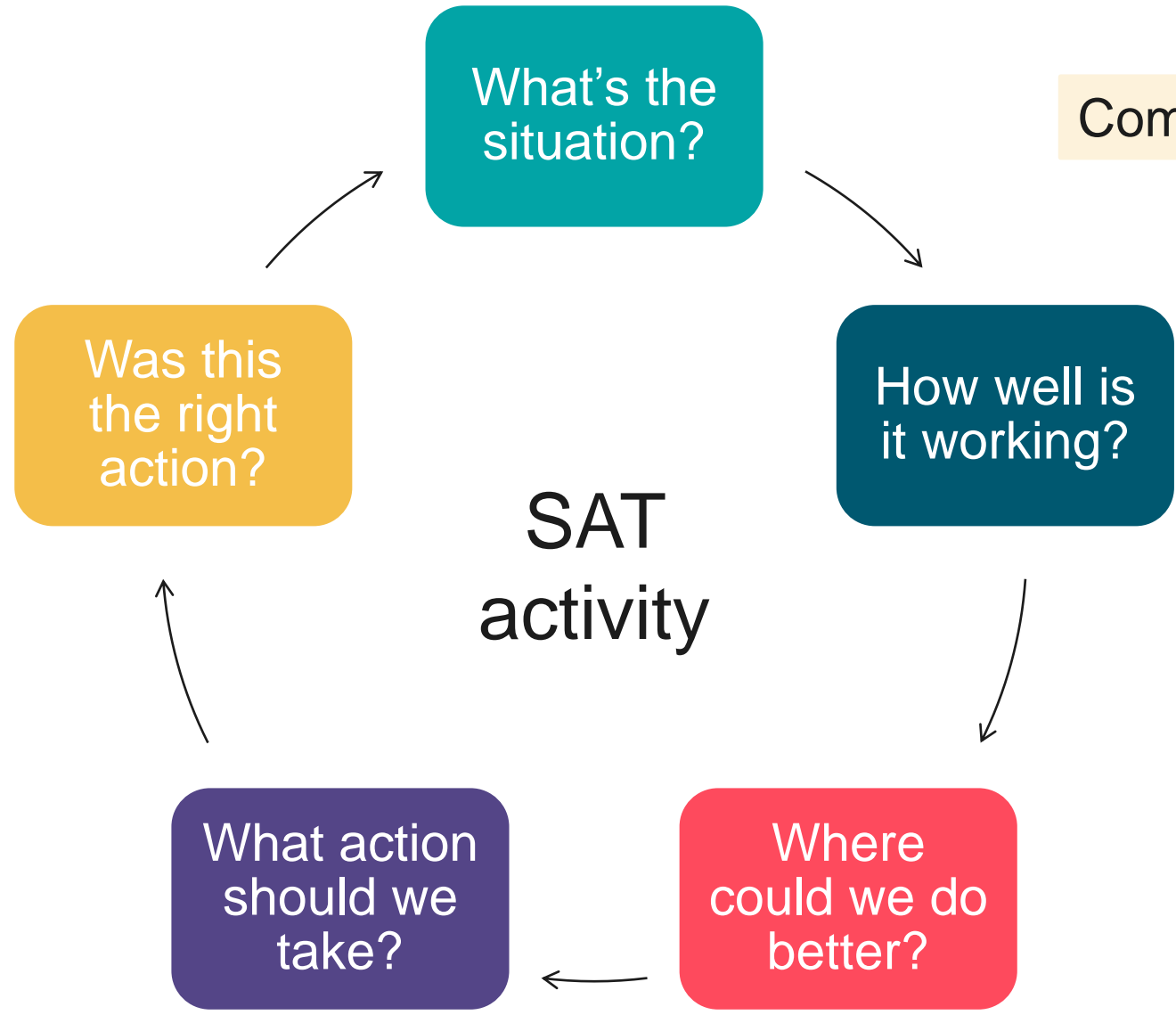
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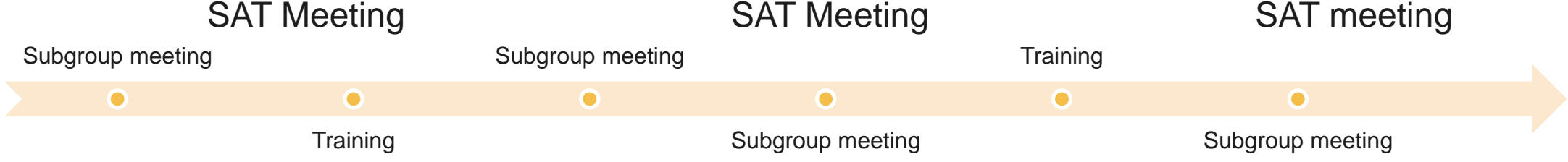
A few examples …

Overall, SAT activities were informed by:

- AS guideline documentation;
- Experience from our unsuccessful application and reflection on the feedback received;
- Collaboration with institutional-level AS committees (Figure 3.1),   Head of Equality & Diversity and other   . AS champions;
- Benchmarking (internal): consultation with university departments, both successful and unsuccessful in attaining an AS Bronze award;
- Benchmarking (external): most notably with the School of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering (SCCE) in Queen's University Belfast (QUB), holder of its second Silver AS award, and
- National/international learning and benchmarking: SAT members attended a number of AS events, including Women in STEM Conference (London, May 2019) and All-Island Sharing of Best Practice (QUB, August 2019).

AS is a standing item on the school executive and the SAT Chair provides regular updates. She presented the AS survey results at the annual away day in June 2017 and updates in 2018 and 2019.

our SAT and administered a staff AS survey. We modified the institutional survey adding questions on organisational culture, work-life balance, career development and mentoring. The response rate (RR) was 77% (50% M/92% F).

Wider staff consultation in 2019 included a school-wide assembly and 'post-it notes' in our staff kitchen on how to increase male representation on the BSc

Pic 4: Post-it note collection

Once data collection was completed, survey and focus group findings were collated and distributed to staff. The data and initial Action Items were presented to the School at an "Away Day," the goal of which was to stimulate discussion on gender issues. These discussions fed into the current application, particularly the Action Plan.

The SAT further consulted with academic staff members via 2 separate 'pulse' surveys in 2019 to seek specific feedback on

- operation of the School Workload Model - 16 of 18 academic staff members responded (89%)
- experience of induction procedures for staff appointed since 2016 – 4 academic staff (100%) and 7 researchers responded (50%)

Women in technical (1) and administrative (2) staff categories in SoP are extremely few, and are therefore easily identifiable in surveys; they have directly communicated their very understandable reluctance to respond to the SAT Chair. In response, all women staff members will be invited to an initial meeting to discuss whether a School of Physics Women's Forum would be an effective mechanism to provide a voice in the SoP for female support/professional staff. (Action 3.1)

Our extensive self-assessment process identified an ecology of colour-coded actions:

Priority commitments (blue) demonstrate the seriousness of ambitions regarding gender equality, seeking to (a) raise the Irish HE sector standard (e.g. academic maternity cover **Action 5.5.7**) or (b) take a historic step in the context (providing a pathway to promotion to Professor in **Action 5.1.3**).

Capacity building actions (red) support equality infrastructure needed to deliver on commitments in this action plan. This includes establishment of College-based Athena SWAN School support (**Action 5.6.11**) and development of a fit-for-purpose Athena SWAN/Equality Data Infrastructure (**Action 5.6.12**)

Cultural change actions (yellow) make up the majority of actions, and will consolidate strong policies and enable staff and students to embed and implement lasting change.

Athena SWAN Application Timeline

Data Analysis 2019

Jan: Data Group identify data requirements

Mar: Staff Survey developed

May: EDI Survey disseminated

Jun: Data reviewed & shared with WGs (WGs meet monthly)

Jun: Report on survey responses shared with WGs

Jul: WGs and EDI project team analyse data and draft assigned sections

Employee Consultation 2019

Jul: Focus groups and consultation organised.

Aug: WG Focus Groups x3

Sept: All staff consultation-gender

Oct: All staff consultation-ethnicity

Nov: Hourly-paid 1-2-1 interviews

Action Plan Development 2019

Aug- Nov: Staff consultation feedback circulated to WGs and analysed.

Nov: Action plan developed

Nov: 1st draft submitted to EDI Project team

Nov: EDI Project team review application

Consultation with Leadership 2019/2020

Dec: Meeting with President on draft application

Jan: feedback incorporated

Feb: Critical Friends Review

Feb: UMT discuss draft

Mar: Meeting with Faculty Promotions Committee on draft application

Mar: SAT review application & feedback incorporated

Review & Submission 2020

Apr: Mock Assessment Feedback from external reviewers

May: Feedback incorporated

Jun: UMT review application and sign-off

Jun: Application submitted to Advance HE

Figure 3.4 Athena SWAN Application Timeline 2019-2020

Future planning

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How do you future proof the Action Plan?

- Who will have accountability of and responsibility for implementation?

- How will the you ensure that actions are owned and implemented within existing governance structures?

- How will you monitor the progress and impact of interventions?

Some examples…

In the course of preparing this application, the SAT concluded that creating a new School Officer would be the best way to ensure effective embedding of equality principles and implementation of the Gender Action Plan (GAP). With strong support from HoS and Executive, it was agreed a new Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) would replace the SAT Co-Convenors as an Executive member.

The academic co-convenor has agreed to take on this role and her workload will be reduced by 30%. The SAT will be replaced by an EDI sub-committee, chaired by the new Director, to assist with monitoring implementation of the GAP; gender will remain the core focus and existing SAT members invited to re-join. It will meet regularly (every 6-8 weeks).

	Objective	Rationale for Actions	Associated Actions	People Responsible	Success Criteria and Outcome
9.3	Establish a culture of increased inclusivity in the School by making key committee meeting times more suitable for those with caring responsibilities.	In the School AS Survey only 33% of academic staff (21% women, 38% men) agreed that committee meetings were completed in core hours (10am to 4pm) to enable those with caring responsibilities to attend.	Ensure that all key School meetings are held in core hours between 10am and 4pm.	Responsible: Dean Implemented by: All Committee Chairs	All key committee meetings are held in core hours by start of 2020 onwards.
9.4	Ensure that membership of School committees is representative of the School gender proportion.	Several committees, notably Research Committee (9% women) and Ethics Committee (no women members) are not representative of the School's gender make-up.	a. Introduce an annual review of committee membership for gender proportion; b. Ensure gender proportionality in all committees/panels, especially in Research and Ethics Committees, revising, if needed, relevant terms of reference; c. Regularly consider rationalising the committee structure where possible to avoid 'committee overload' for members.	Responsible: Dean Implemented by: All Committee Chairs	Gender proportionality in all committees and panels by October 2020.
9.5	Establish a culture of increased inclusivity in the School by improving the scheduling of social events.	In the School AS Survey only 67% of women and 51% of men agreed that social activities in the School are welcoming to all staff.	a. Ensure, where possible, that social events are scheduled within core hours; b. Ensure that social events scheduled in the evening allow sufficient notice to enable staff to plan their attendance.	Responsible: Deputy Dean Implemented by: Event organisers	1. School social events' 'calendar' shows, where possible, compliance by the start of 2020. 2. Increase in the positive outcome on social activities to at least 75% in the School AS Survey in 2022.
9.6	Improve the gender composition of speakers and participants at School events.	There has been an absence of data collected regarding such events. In the past 5 years only one of the five speakers has been a woman for the long-standing ▆▆▆▆ Lecture series	a. Data about the gender composition of events will be recorded annually, both at the School, Department, and Research Centre level, and reviewed by the EDC; b. Each seminar or event series to consider gender proportionality when planning their events.	Responsible: Chair of EDC Implemented by: Research Centres	Evidence of better gender balance from recorded data: 1. increase to 30% women in Honorary Degree nomination; 2. 30% women speakers in the School signature public lecture event (the ▆▆▆▆ Lecture); 3. 30% women speakers in other seminars. All to be achieved by the end of 2022.

What to include in your submission

What to include in your submission

3. THE SELF-ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Recommended word count: Bronze: 1000 words | Silver: 1000 words

Describe the self-assessment process. This should include:

(vi)   a description of the self-assessment team

(vii)   an account of the self-assessment process

(viii) plans for the future of the self-assessment team

(vi)   a description of the self-assessment team

✓ Identify the members of the self-assessment team and their roles

✓ Include when the team was established

✓ How and why members were selected

✓ Demonstrate how representative the team are of the submitting unit

✓ Detail how participation is recognised and valued

✓ Explain the reporting structures of the SAT

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(vii)   an account of the self-assessment process

✓ When meetings and other activity has taken place

✓Focus of meetings and activity

✓Information on and rationale for consultation activity, including number of responses by gender and other relevant staff or student categories - % and #s

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(viii) plans for the future of the self-assessment team

✓Explain reporting mechanisms and structures for the future

✓How often the team will continue to meet

✓Plans to evaluate implementation of the action plan

✓How the SAT intends to communicate progress with staff and students

✓Whether the membership of the group will change

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Poll

A few examples …

1

Table 3.1: Self-assessment team (SAT) March 2019 to April 2020

Time on SAT	Name	Gender	Role in dept.	Role on SAT
03-2019 to 12-2019		M	Outgoing HoD	SAT co-chair (until Dec 2019); contributed to all aspects of submission
03-2019 to present		F	Lecturer above the Bar (LAB)	SAT co-chair; lead for section 3; contributed to all aspects of submission
03-2019 to present		F	Senior Technician	Data collection, management and analysis; section lead for sections 5.1 and 5.3
03-2019 to present		F	Senior Administrato	Represents administrators; lead for sections 5.5 and 5.6
03-2019 to 09-2019		M	Professor	Contributed sections 2 and 4
03-2019 to present		F	PhD student then lecturer below the Bar (LBB)	Lead for sections 2 and 4
10-2019 to present		M	PhD student	Oversaw the action plan
03-2019 to 08-2019		M	UG student on cooperative work placement in the department	Supported data collection
03-2019 to 08-2019		F	UG student on cooperative work placement in the Dept	Supported data collection
09-2019 to 01-2020		M	PDR	Supported section writing, editing, action planning
01-2020 to present		F	UG student on cooperative work placement in the department	Supported section editing and gave a student voice to the application

2

conducted an attitude survey with open to all members of staff in March 2018. The response rate was 53%; Table 2.1 shows response rates by gender.

Table 2.1 Staff survey response rates by gender

	M	**F**	**Non-binary***	**Other****	**Overall**
N	192	469	3	167	831
%	23%	56.5%	0.4%	20.1%	53%

As the three non-binary respondents are <5, we will not be reporting their responses to protect anonymity (a survey condition).

**'Other' comprises respondents who did not give their gender. Because respondents in this category did not answer some of the remaining survey questions, gender comparisons in tables and graphs in this application are restricted to female and male only.

3

The ASSC will continue to meet on a quarterly basis to oversee the implementation of the action plan. The membership of the ASSC will be reviewed annually to ensure inclusivity and broaden its diversity (**Action 3.1**). Specifically, we aim to have a 50/50 gender representation by September 2020 (**Action 3.1**). Through open calls, each academic unit will nominate an AS champion from the unit's SAT (**Action 3.5**). The AS champions will attend quarterly AS Network events, and this will be recognised through the workload allocation model (WAM)

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We don't see this as a paper exercise; we see it as a process through which we can deliver real cultural and behavioural change: ensuring the attitudes and behaviours that support equality and diversity are embedded within our school and everything we do is an essential part of achieving this cultural change.

- Head of Department, Male

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Thank you!

For more information, tips, and resources:

https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/equality-charters/international-charters/athena-swan-ireland

Contact: athenaswanireland@advance-he.ac.uk

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