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30th November 2023

Dear Head of Athena SWAN

I am pleased to confirm my personal endorsement and commitment to our Silver Athena SWAN application. I am very proud of our inspiring staff and students, who have worked hard to progress equality, diversity and inclusivity (EDI), particularly gender equality, at UWE Bristol. My daughters are pursuing careers in accountancy, medicine and teaching and I have seen how important it's been to support them to achieve in male dominated professions. I have also, through my Presidency of Universities UK witnessed first-hand the inspiring and positive impact across our universities of Athena Swan. There is still much work to do in our universities to support equality and inclusion and the Athena Swan framework provides a positive foundation to build upon.

Over the last six years, we have kept Athena Swan engagement high on our priorities and have implemented a new governance structure, increasing investment and aiming to 'institutionalise inclusion' - across all areas of our operations, systems, policies, curriculum, and culture. We have also encountered numerous challenges, both anticipated and unforeseen, which have required us to adapt, innovate and support each other like never before.

I am proud of the gender equality impacts we have achieved in the last six years, despite these challenges.

1. We transformed our **job advertisement, shortlisting and interview processes**, including the introduction of an *Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit*. As a result of these actions 82% of managers have completed recruitment and selection training, **female applicants** to academic, professional, technical and operational posts have **increased** and **female applicants are more likely to be shortlisted** than male applicants.
2. We introduced a new **Academic Promotion Scheme**, including regular opportunities to apply for promotion to Associate Professor and Professor. Female applicants are as likely to be successful as male applicants when applying through this scheme, and since its introduction in 2021, 43 female staff have been promoted to Associate Professor, and 14 female staff to Professor.
3. We launched a new **Trans and Non-Binary Policy**, along with supporting resources, and mandatory EDI training for staff now includes *Trans Inclusivity*. Evaluation of the policy has found strong agreement with the policy commitments, with **88% of staff practicing allyship**.

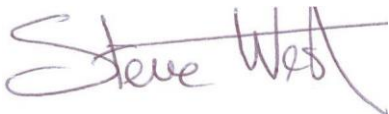
We recognise there is more to do and our priorities in our next action plan include:

- Growing **Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic appointments** for females at **Professor** and **Associate Professor** level and in the senior management team, whilst addressing identified systemic issues associated to gender and race at UWE through a new **UWE Anti-Racist Strategy** and Anti-Racism programme of learning.
- Further reducing the **gender pay gap**.
- Working with our female staff to understand the **organisational, structural and social barriers** that may be detrimentally impacting on women's outputs being included within **REF**, including ongoing implications of the pandemic.
- Assessing the **impact of our recent academic restructure** on the gender of our leadership team, as well as the impact of our transformation on *governance* processes, including processes around EDI and impacts on staff wellbeing and whole life balance.
- Facilitating a *Listening Event* for all staff on **gender equality**, with the UWE Chief People Officer, from which we will develop a *Pulse Survey* focussed on gender equality to be conducted in 2024.

Since our previous application, we have successfully moved from four Faculties to three Colleges, and I look forward to seeing how the new Schools, work together and alongside professional services to do things differently, more efficiently and more collaboratively, opening up all kinds of exciting opportunities, including a proposed new *People Board* in which gender equality, diversity and inclusivity is embedded.

On behalf of the Vice-Chancellor's Executive, I confirm we're committed to listening and acting. I see the future plans for gender equality at UWE as integral to my personal EDI commitments as Vice-Chancellor.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Steve West". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

Professor Sir Steven West CBE, DL

Vice-Chancellor, President and Chief Executive Officer