2027 Pleiades Awards: Part 1 – Instructions for Applicants

1. Overview

The intention of the Pleiades Awards is to recognise the effort and progress of Australian astronomy organisations towards promoting inclusion, equity, and diversity and supporting their community. The Awards recognise genuine, evidenced effort in how an organisation identifies barriers, chooses actions, implements them, evaluates results and uses what it learns to improve. We acknowledge that creating an equitable and inclusive organisation is continuing work. In this spirit, a successful application should explain the decisions and evidence behind that work, rather than simply listing activities.

Beyond successes and achievements, applicants are encouraged to describe remaining problems, unsuccessful actions and limitations, with supporting evidence. A mixed or negative survey finding, or an initiative that did not work as expected, does not automatically count against an application. However, the underlying problem remains relevant to assessment, particularly if it is serious, longstanding or has not been adequately addressed. Assessors consider whether the organisation understood the finding, responded appropriately and followed through. **Reflection is not a substitute for action: every application must show implementation and evidence at the level sought.**

Quantitative and qualitative evidence are both acceptable. Use methods proportionate to your organisation, the intervention and its maturity. Explain what your evidence supports and what remains uncertain. Applicants should provide evidence that an action was implemented, evidence of its immediate outcomes (such as uptake or participant feedback), and evidence of broader or sustained organisational change. Feedback from a small or self-selected group is useful but should not be presented as evidence of organisation-wide change.

Different organisations may achieve the criteria in different ways. Examples are illustrative. Assessors weigh the quality, relevance, reach and sustained use of practice.

2. Review committee and conflicts of interest

The Pleiades Award applications will be reviewed and scored by the IDEA Chapter Steering Committee. We record any real or perceived conflicts of interest and ensure that no Steering Committee member will grade or be included in the discussion of the application where a conflict exists. A member of the IDEA Steering Committee is permitted to contribute to their

organisation’s application. All application materials and discussions about applications will be kept confidential.

3. Award levels and application each round

New applicants must apply for Bronze first, because Bronze establishes the foundation (committee, plans, reporting routes and leadership commitment) that Silver and Gold build on, giving all award holders a common baseline and letting assessors verify practice claimed over longer periods. Silver requires prior attainment of Bronze; Gold requires prior attainment of both Bronze and Silver. Each application is assessed afresh against the level sought; holding an award in a previous round does not carry it forward. If the standard for the level sought is not met, the committee will consider the application for the next level down (Gold, then Silver, then Bronze) and award the highest level whose standard is met.

Level	Standard	Relevant period
Bronze	Foundation and commitment: identified priorities, credible plans, accountable leadership and working mechanisms for participation and reporting.	Current arrangements, the past year where specified, and plans for the next two years.
Silver	Implementation and evaluation: sustained delivery, community involvement, evidence of progress and a reasoned response to shortcomings.	At least two years of sustained practice, with plans for the next two years.
Gold	Outstanding sustained and embedded practice: broad ownership, meaningful positive impact and repeated learning and improvement, with shared practice beyond the organisation.	At least four years where specified; effective leadership (O1.a) and impact evidence for at least the past two years, as specified in Part 2.

Awards last for two calendar years from the date of award. Organisations must apply at every biennial round, including when maintaining the same level, but an organisation is not obliged to reapply at the level it currently holds. An organisation may apply for a lower level at any round, and doing so is not treated as skipping a round. Prior attainment of Bronze or Silver is not lost by applying at a lower level. If an organisation skips a round, it must restart at Bronze at its next application, for the same reason. Failure to reapply invalidates the award effective 1 January of the following year, in accordance with the published award policy.

Existing award holders must immediately advise the awards committee if they receive a judgment or adverse final order from a court or tribunal relating to gender discrimination or harassment. The award may be rescinded immediately; in that event, reapplication is permitted only after 12 months have elapsed.

4. Scoring, review and appeal process

Each unconflicted reviewer will score each applicable criterion from 0 to 4 against the requirement for the level sought, its stated assessment purpose and the evidence supplied. Use the following anchors together with the level standards in Section 3. A well-written answer cannot compensate for missing required practice.

Score	Assessment anchor
0	Not addressed, or no relevant evidence supplied.
1	Only partly addressed; major required elements or credible evidence are missing.
2	Largely addressed, but one or more important elements, periods or links to evidence are missing.
3	Requirement met with relevant evidence. Limitations and remaining issues are explained and addressed.
4	Requirement met with particularly strong, context-relevant evidence of quality, learning and sustained practice beyond the expected standard. More activities or a longer answer alone do not justify this score.

Assessors use the purpose and level-specific requirements in Part 2 to judge each criterion. They consider any stated constraints and alternative evidence on its merits. A score of 4 at Bronze does not mean the Silver or Gold requirement is met. No total or average score decides an award automatically, and there is no pass mark.

After scoring, the committee discusses differences and agrees one whole-number score for each criterion. Scores and decisions must rely on what is in the application and rejoinder. If an assessor knows something relevant that is not in the submission, they must declare it. The committee may ask about it in the rejoinder but must not treat it as evidence. The committee records the reason for each score and any gaps in evidence. For returning applicants, the progress summary is used to compare with the previous round.

The committee sends each applicant specific rejoinder questions or requests approximately six weeks after the application deadline, and states the word limit for the response. Applicants

normally have four weeks to respond. The rejoinder may clarify submitted evidence and include clearly dated additional data collected since submission. It should not be treated as a substitute for a complete initial application.

Following the rejoinder, the committee considers the whole application, level standards and agreed scores and reaches a consensus award decision. Applicants are normally notified approximately four weeks after the rejoinder deadline. Feedback should identify the reasons for the decision, material strengths, unmet requirements and priorities for the next round.

An organisation may make one written appeal to the IDEA Chapter Steering Committee Chair within two weeks of receiving its result. Explain the disputed decision and grounds with reference to the criteria and submitted evidence. Following this appeal opportunity, the award decision is final.

5. Key definitions

Equity, diversity and inclusion means actions that support fair opportunities, remove barriers and create an environment where people can participate and succeed. Relevant dimensions include, but are not limited to, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, race, age and religion. Consider intersecting barriers and the experiences of staff and students in different roles and career stages.

Relevant work may include demographic and climate survey monitoring, culturally safe workplaces, accessible participation, equitable recruitment and promotion, training, flexible work, professional development, succession planning and fair workload allocation. The appropriate mix depends on the organisation and identified needs.

Misconduct, for these criteria, includes behaviour that inhibits a person's opportunity to succeed in their work: offensive comments relating to personal or protected attributes; unwelcome comments about lifestyle or practices; deliberate misgendering or use of rejected names; inappropriate sexual images or behaviour; non-consensual physical contact; threats or incitement of violence or self-harm; intimidation, bullying, stalking or following; harassing photography, recording or online monitoring; sustained disruption; unwelcome sexual attention or inappropriate demands for intimacy; and continued contact after a request to cease. Apply the organisation's relevant formal policies when classifying reports, and explain the scope used.

Impact means a meaningful difference to people's experiences, access, opportunities or organisational practice. Qualitative evidence is **credible** when the application states how it was collected, how many people and which groups it covers, who gathered it (ideally someone independent of the initiative's delivery), and includes dissenting or negative views. Where possible, support it with at least one other source, such as participation data, policy records or survey results. **Best practice** means well-supported practice appropriate to the context, implemented and reviewed in use. Novelty, publicity and activity counts alone do not establish quality or impact.

6. Notes on eligible organisations

Research organisations, institutes, joint ventures, centres of excellence, university schools, departments and other bodies in Australia or New Zealand employing ASA members in astronomy-related activities may be eligible. Confirm eligibility with the IDEA Chapter Chair if your organisation is not already recognised as eligible. Requests to join the eligible list should be made in writing and signed by the head of the organisation.

Identify the organisational unit applying, its size, staff and student groups, sites, partner institutions and relevant external committees. Where a parent body and a constituent group both apply, coordinate the applications and distinguish their responsibilities and evidence.

Organisations spanning several institutions should explain how initiatives operate across sites and how concerns between members at different institutions are addressed. Where the organisation oversees external committees, such as time allocation, steering or advisory committees, explain how relevant policies and initiatives apply to them.

Small organisations, including those with fewer than 10 full-time staff and students, should address the criteria as fully as possible and explain constraints. Use safe aggregation, qualitative evidence and proportionate arrangements where appropriate. Small size does not remove the requirement to demonstrate the relevant standard. If a criterion is not applicable, explain why and how its underlying purpose is addressed; assessors will consider the explanation.

If organisational structure has changed considerably since the previous application, explain the change. The new organisation will be considered on its merits as a new entity. Seek clarification from the Chair before choosing an award level where continuity is uncertain.

7. Illustrative examples

These examples illustrate the type and level of detail expected when addressing selected criteria. They are not templates or prescribed activities; applicants should explain their own context, actions and evidence. Note that the criteria wording has changed slightly since these applications.

S1. Established a committee to identify, implement and monitor positive changes in equity and inclusion within the organisation. Planned for committee members to undertake relevant diversity training as soon as possible within the next 2 years.

> **S1.a. Maintained a committed team over the past 2 years (4 years for *Gold*) with a quorum meeting regularly (at least four times a year) to identify, monitor and implement positive changes, and ensured that a majority of committee members have undertaken relevant diversity training.**

The Diversity Committee was established in October 2014 with the support of the Executive to monitor, encourage and promote equity, diversity and inclusivity. The Diversity Committee meets monthly, with a minimum of 60% members required for a quorum and is comprised of 10 members (~40% women) that represent a cross-section of the community, including science, engineering/operations, administrative staff, senior staff, and at least two PhD student representatives (one of whom is an international student). Members rotate after two year terms (one year for students), and a new Chair, Deputy Chair and Secretary are elected every year.

On 28 March 2018, all 10 members of the committee, plus 15 other staff/students, participated in an Inclusive Practice training workshop (see S2). On 28 September 2018, committee members and other staff/students also participated in a Cultural Intelligence workshop run by PRISMA Cross-Cultural Consultants.

O2. Established the number of reported cases of misconduct, the number resolved and the average time to resolution over the past year. If the applying organisation is a new entity, plans for such reporting should be clearly outlined.

Where an organisation is restricted in what can be reported - or, with reference to criterion O2.b, what support can be provided to complainants - by institutional policy or legal considerations, these constraints should be explicitly stated, and, where appropriate, supported by additional documentation.

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Wards keep a confidential record of all confidential complaints and reports made to them, including cases of misconduct, their dates, nature and resolution. The statistics since 2017 are as follows:

Year	Total number of reports	Cases of factual misconduct	Resolved	Resolve time [days] (mean)	Resolve time [days] (median)
2017	5	3	5	15.2	3
2018	3	1	3	5.1	2.5

O2.a. Published, where institutional and legal constraints permit, the number of reported cases of misconduct, the number resolved and the average time to resolution over the past 2 years (4 years for *Gold*) in a public document (e.g., an annual report). The location of the document should be specified in the application.

The numbers of reports since 2014, as well as their nature and resolve time (as shown in O2 for 2017/18) are published online. A more detailed, confidential document is kept by the Wards. The number of reports remained low (~1/year) during the first three years. The reason for the rise in 2017 and 2018 can be attributed to a much more proactive approach

of the Wards, who continually motivate all members to report any concerns and cases of misconduct.

O2.b. Demonstrated support for complainants in misconduct cases, including, where institutional and legal constraints permit, the freedom to publicly speak about such cases. Demonstrated unequivocal strong support of complainants when retaliation for a complaint has occurred.

All our reported cases of actual and suspected misconduct have been dealt with confidentially and as quickly as possible. If appropriate and as far as legal constraints permit, the committee chair or Wards officer inform the plenum of resolved cases. Two examples of the last four years, made public without naming the complainants and offenders, are:

- A student reported a course coordinator for making sexually offensive comments online while identifying themselves as staff. The committee and executive decided to escalate the case to HR who decided to launch a formal investigation. The investigation included long (~60 min) interviews with several members and concluded after 60 days with measures that are kept confidential. The student expressed satisfaction with the process and result.

- A member of our community received anonymous emails attacking their religion. As soon as this case was reported, the committee, in consultation with the executive, logged a report to the Australian Cybercrime network and IT analysed the emails for traces to the offender. While no individual could be identified, the attack stopped and the complainant was satisfied with the approach. We haven't had any notable cases of retaliation but would, of course, strongly support the complainants. Staff and students trust that the Wards do their best, as shown by the increase in consultations in the past 2 years.

8. Application requirements

Complete the application form for the current round and a criteria response using the identifiers in Part 2. Combine both into a single searchable PDF. Use the filename InstitutionOrDepartment_PleiadesYYYY_AwardLevel.pdf, replacing YYYY with the published round year. Submit using the address or process announced for the round.

Silver and Gold applicants must include the Culture and Climate Survey Summary; all returning applicants must include the Progress Since the Previous Application summary (Section 9). Both count towards the overall page limit.

Include a coversheet at the front of the application, as part of the application form. It must state the organisation and award level sought; the name and role of the preparer; confirmation from

the head of the organisation that the application is approved for submission; the dates on which the privacy-safe application was circulated to staff and students (at least two weeks before submission); and the total page count. The coversheet is not counted in the page limit.

Page limits

Award sought	Maximum response length
Bronze	8 pages
Silver	9 pages
Gold	10 pages

The criteria response must not exceed the page limit in the table above, which includes any supporting pages: 8 pages for Bronze, 9 for Silver and 10 for Gold. The application form and coversheet are not counted. Within that limit, you may include up to four pages of supporting factual tables, figures or photographs. These pages supplement the criteria response and must not contain extra narrative responses. Make the application self-contained: links may verify sources but must not substitute for necessary evidence. Do not attach full survey reports, policies or confidential case files unless requested in the rejoinder. Refer to each supporting item in the relevant criterion.

Accessible formatting

Use a clear, legible font at 12 pt or larger for body text. Arial, Helvetica, Aptos, Calibri and Verdana are examples, not a compulsory list. Keep tables and captions readable, with adequate spacing and contrast. Use descriptive headings and meaningful link text, avoid colour as the only way to convey information, and provide text descriptions of material visual evidence. Submit searchable text rather than scanned pages wherever possible. Contact the Chair early if an accessible submission format or adjustment is needed.

Where a facility is relevant, describe its location, accessibility and use. A small photograph may be included where it adds evidence; it is not compulsory and must respect privacy.

Organising the response

Address P1, P2, S1–S4 and O1–O3 and every subcriterion applicable to the level sought. Higher-level applications must also address the foundation requirements. You may integrate overlapping answers and cross-reference evidence within the document, provided every applicable criterion is clearly identifiable. Repeated text is unnecessary.

For each main initiative, explain:

- the issue, action and responsible owner;
- when it was implemented;
- who it reached and the evidence of its effects;
- limitations or unintended effects;
- and what changed as a result of evaluation.

Distinguish completed work, work in progress and future commitments. State the period covered and the source of evidence.

9. Required summaries

Culture and climate survey summary for Silver and Gold

Silver and Gold applicants must include a summary of their anonymous climate survey and subsequent consultation. Bronze applicants may include it where available. Address the following fields consistently; explain unavailable or withheld information.

Field	Information required
Scope and method	Survey dates, population covered, method, anonymity arrangements and consultation undertaken.
Participation	Number invited, number responding and response rate, where safely reportable; limitations in representation.
Main findings	Principal strengths and concerns, including mixed or negative findings; use safe aggregate results or qualitative themes.
Comparison over time	Change since an earlier survey or consultation, if available, and limitations in comparability. Do not imply a trend from one survey.
Response and ownership	Priority actions, responsible owners, resources, milestones and how staff and students influenced the response.
Progress and next steps	What was completed, what changed, remaining issues and next review date. Gold applicants must report delivery within two years of the findings.

A full survey dataset is not required. Protect anonymity, particularly in small cohorts. State where results cannot be disaggregated safely. Assessors consider the quality of identification, response and follow-through, rather than expecting uniformly favourable findings.

Progress since the previous application

Every returning applicant must explicitly report progress against the main issues, recommendations and commitments from its previous application and assessor feedback. First-time applicants should state that this section is not applicable. Include unresolved concerns even where an award was previously granted. Do not assume assessors remember the previous round.

Required field	What to report
Issue or commitment	Previous priority, commitment or recommendation and its source or date.
Action and status	Action taken, responsible owner and status: completed, continuing, changed or not completed.
Evidence and learning	Evidence of progress or impact, limitations, and reasons for changes or non-completion.
Next step	Outstanding action, owner and expected timeframe.

This summary counts towards the page limit. Cross-reference current criteria to avoid repetition. If previous assessor feedback is unavailable, state this and report against your previous commitments; contact the Chair if clarification is needed.

10. Evidence and confidentiality

Suitable evidence may include survey findings, consultations, focus groups, staff and student feedback, participation and uptake, safely aggregated demographic or workload data, policy changes, documented removal of barriers, and anonymised case studies. A policy being adopted is evidence of implementation; demonstrate how it is used and what difference it makes when claiming impact.

Use counts alongside percentages where safe, give relevant dates and denominators, and describe missing data or small samples. Explain plausible alternative explanations for changes. Qualitative evidence should describe how it was collected, whose perspectives it represents and its limitations. Apply the credibility test in Section 5, and keep evidence of implementation, immediate outcomes and sustained change distinct (see Section 1). Avoid claiming that an initiative caused an outcome unless the evidence supports that conclusion.

Never include identifying details of complainants, respondents or individual cases. Explain institutional, privacy or legal restrictions and provide safe alternative evidence where possible. Examples include aggregate themes, suppressed small counts, a description of the reporting

process or confirmation from the responsible office. Clearly distinguish data not collected, not accessible, withheld for privacy, and zero cases.

Application materials and assessment discussions are confidential. This does not override criterion O3: circulate a privacy-safe version of the application internally for comment. Remove confidential case details before circulation and explain any necessary redactions. The Awards do not investigate or adjudicate individual misconduct cases.

11. Timetable and applicant support

The published round announcement will specify the application opening and closing dates, rejoinder issue and response dates, expected decision date, contact details and submission method. The committee should set dates to avoid the beginning-of-academic-year workload, Easter and institutional shutdowns where practicable, while preserving reasonable preparation and response time.

Use the Chair contact listed on the IDEA website for eligibility, scope and process questions. Raise accessibility needs and foreseeable timetable difficulties early. Any adjustment must be confirmed by the committee; the published deadline applies unless an adjustment is granted.

12. Submission checklist

- Confirm eligibility, organisational scope and the award level permitted by previous awards.
- Complete the current-round application form and address every applicable criterion.
- Complete the coversheet: preparer, head-of-organisation confirmation, circulation dates, and page count.
- Include the climate survey summary for Silver and Gold and the previous-round progress summary for returning applicants.
- Explain evidence periods, limitations, privacy restrictions and any non-applicable criteria.
- Circulate a privacy-safe application to staff and students at least two weeks before submission and report how comments were considered.
- Check the page limit (supporting pages included) and accessible formatting.
- Combine the documents into one searchable PDF with the correct filename and submit by the published deadline.

2027 Pleiades Awards: Part 2 – Award Criteria

Each criterion states the requirement, its assessment purpose and examples of evidence. The examples are optional. Bronze requirements apply to all levels unless a higher-level requirement extends them. Two-year and four-year requirements refer to the period preceding submission unless otherwise stated.

Philosophy

All applicants must address P1 and P2. Silver and Gold applicants must also meet the additional evaluation requirement stated under P2.

P1. Understanding priorities

Required for: Bronze, Silver and Gold

Requirement. Examine the organisation's culture, practices and conduct in relation to equity and inclusion. Identify specific priorities for improvement, including whose experiences informed them.

What we assess. Whether priorities arise from an honest, sufficiently broad understanding of barriers and strengths.

Examples of evidence. Survey or consultation themes, demographic or workload analysis, accessibility reviews, feedback and a reasoned explanation of priorities.

P2. Planning and evaluating change

Required for: Bronze, Silver and Gold

Requirement. Explain how the organisation will assess the effects of planned initiatives and review them over time. Use specific objectives, relevant indicators and realistic review dates.

Additional requirement for: Silver and Gold. Show how evaluation informed implemented work.

What we assess. Whether evaluation is suitable for the intervention and context, capable of detecting lack of progress, and connected to decisions. SMART objectives are encouraged where appropriate; numerical targets are optional.

Examples of evidence. Baseline information, qualitative evaluation questions, indicators, consultation methods, milestones, review records and changes made after feedback.

Strategy

All applicants must address the base requirements for S1, S2, S3 and S4. Silver and Gold applicants must also address S1.a.

S1. Accountable governance and capability

Required for: Bronze, Silver and Gold

Requirement. Establish a committee to identify, implement and monitor positive change, and plan relevant training for members within the next two years.

What we assess. Whether there is a functioning, accountable structure with the knowledge and organisational access to deliver change. Committee existence alone is insufficient.

Examples of evidence. Terms of reference, membership and representation, meeting dates and quorum records, decisions, action tracking, training participation and succession arrangements.

S1.a Sustained committee activity and training

Additional requirement for: Silver and Gold

Requirement. Maintain an active committee for at least two years for Silver or four years for Gold, with a quorum meeting at least four times a year; provide evidence that a majority of members have undertaken relevant diversity training. Explain responsibilities, representation and continuity.

What we assess. As for S1, plus whether the committee has worked consistently for the required period, with continuity across changes of membership.

Examples of evidence. Meeting dates and quorum records covering the full two- or four-year period, membership changes and handovers, training records showing the proportion of members trained, and decisions and tracked actions.

S2. Credible plans for the next two years

Required for: Bronze, Silver and Gold

Requirement. Commit to a range of context-relevant initiatives for the coming two years. Identify intended outcomes, owners, resources, milestones and review arrangements, and connect plans to identified priorities and learning.

What we assess. Whether plans are feasible, supported and directed at meaningful barriers; how ongoing needs and unfinished work will be addressed.

Examples of evidence. An action plan, resource commitments, assigned responsibilities, consultation and a rationale for choosing or changing initiatives.

S3. Code of conduct and reporting awareness

Required for: Bronze, Silver and Gold

Requirement. Ensure staff and students are aware of the applicable code of conduct and formal misconduct reporting processes. Explain how awareness is established and maintained.

What we assess. Whether people can understand expected conduct and find reporting routes, including when they join or change roles.

Examples of evidence. Induction materials, accessible guidance, reminders, training and feedback checking understanding.

S4. Safe feedback and reporting routes

Required for: Bronze, Silver and Gold

Requirement. Provide safe ways to raise concerns or suggestions without repercussions, typically including an avenue outside formal Human Resources reporting. Explain who receives reports, what happens next, confidentiality limits, whether anonymity is possible, and protection from retaliation. Ensure staff and students know these arrangements.

What we assess. Whether people have usable, trusted routes and understand their options. Do not promise absolute confidentiality or anonymity where it cannot be provided.

Examples of evidence. Independent contacts, reporting guidance, referral pathways, anonymous feedback mechanisms, consultation about trust and records of improvements to the process.

Outcomes

All applicants must address the base requirements for O1, O2 and O3. Silver and Gold applicants must also address every extension applicable to their award level. Extensions add to the base requirements.

O1. Leadership commitment

Required for: Bronze, Silver and Gold

Requirement. Provide an announced, credible commitment from the head of the organisation to its equity and inclusion goals.

What we assess. Whether the head of the organisation has made a credible and clearly communicated commitment.

Examples of evidence. Leadership statements and communications identifying the organisation's equity and inclusion goals.

O1.a Effective leadership commitment

Additional requirement for: Silver and Gold

Requirement. Demonstrate effective leadership commitment over the past two years (four years for Gold).

What we assess. Whether leadership is expressed through decisions, resources and accountability.

Examples of evidence. Leadership communications, funded work, management responsibilities and responses to barriers to participation.

O1.a.G Organisational ownership and public leadership

Additional requirement for: Gold

Requirement. Demonstrate broad organisational ownership and active public leadership by senior managers over the past four years. Show how appropriate training reaches relevant staff and students, including coverage, gaps and plans to address them.

What we assess. Whether practice extends beyond the EDI committee or a few individuals. Gold requires broad participation and sustained action, rather than an unexplained claim of universal attendance.

Examples of evidence. Senior leadership communications, training coverage and role-based expectations, workload recognition, management responsibilities and responses to barriers to participation.

O2. Understanding misconduct reporting

Required for: Bronze, Silver and Gold

Requirement. Report the number of reported misconduct cases, number resolved and average time to resolution over the past year, where safely available. Explain definitions, period, data source, unresolved cases and limitations. New entities must provide a clear plan for collecting and reporting this information.

What we assess. Whether the organisation can identify reporting patterns, monitor response and learn about systemic issues. Complaint numbers alone are not a measure of performance: few reports may reflect low trust, and more reports may reflect increased confidence. Explain interpretation without assuming either.

Examples of evidence. Safely aggregated statistics, reporting methodology, anonymised themes, process reviews, and documented restrictions with alternative evidence. Where no cases were resolved, record the average resolution time as not applicable rather than zero.

O2.a Publishing misconduct reporting statistics

Additional requirement for: Silver and Gold

Requirement. Publish these statistics in a public document where institutional and legal constraints permit, covering two years for Silver or four years for Gold, and identify the document's location.

What we assess. Whether reporting statistics are publicly accessible for the required period, with appropriate interpretation and an explanation of any publication restrictions.

Examples of evidence. The public document and its location, dated reporting statistics, and documented restrictions with alternative evidence.

O2.b Support and protection for complainants

Additional requirement for: Silver and Gold

Requirement. Demonstrate support for people who raise concerns and a clear response to retaliation. Explain how complainants are supported to exercise available options, including

speaking publicly where institutional and legal constraints permit, without pressure to disclose. State any restrictions and how support remains available.

What we assess. Whether support is accessible, timely and centred on the person's needs, with practical protection from retaliation and appropriate referral. Assessors do not determine the merits of individual complaints.

Examples of evidence. Support pathways, access to independent advice or advocacy, anti-retaliation procedures, anonymised process examples and feedback about the reporting experience. Where no cases arose, explain preparedness and how routes are maintained.

O3. Community participation and communication

Required for: Bronze, Silver and Gold

Requirement. Communicate specific plans and the commitment to improve equity and inclusion to staff and students. Share a privacy-safe application with all staff and students for comment at least two weeks before submission. Explain how comments were invited, considered and incorporated.

What we assess. Whether the application and plans reflect community participation, with accessible opportunities to contribute.

Examples of evidence. Circulation dates, consultation channels, a summary of feedback and resulting changes, and an explanation of necessary privacy redactions.

O3.a Monitoring culture and practice over time

Additional requirement for: Silver and Gold

Requirement. Show how the organisation monitored culture and EDI performance over at least two years for Silver or four years for Gold. Explain what was examined, how often, limitations and how findings informed priorities and decisions.

What we assess. Whether there is sustained organisational awareness and learning, rather than a one-off survey or an assertion that monitoring occurred.

Examples of evidence. A dated monitoring timeline, surveys, consultation, recruitment or workload reviews, exit feedback, reporting themes and decisions based on findings.

O3.b Reporting progress and sharing learning

Additional requirement for: Silver and Gold

Requirement. Regularly communicate goals, progress and remaining problems to staff and students.

What we assess. Whether communication enables accountability and participation, and whether Gold applicants help others learn from their work. Publicity alone is insufficient.

Examples of evidence. Dated internal updates, consultation following updates, public resources, presentations, collaborative learning and examples of sharing limitations or unsuccessful approaches.

O3.b.G Sharing learning outside the organisation

Additional requirement for: Gold

Requirement. Also demonstrate regular sharing of practice and learning outside the organisation, with appropriate privacy safeguards.

What we assess. As for O3.b, plus whether the organisation shares practice and its limitations in ways others can use and learn from.

Examples of evidence. Dated public resources, conference or workshop presentations, collaboration with other organisations, shared tools or templates, and examples of sharing limitations or unsuccessful approaches, with audiences identified.

O3.c Implementation and sustained practice

Additional requirement for: Silver and Gold

Requirement. Demonstrate implementation of a range of relevant initiatives over the past two years, identify remaining opportunities and provide plans for the next two years.

What we assess. Whether actions address identified needs, reach relevant groups and operate in practice. For Gold, assess sustained quality, reach and embedded use. Novel or high-profile initiatives may contribute, but are not mandatory; effective adapted or established approaches are equally valid.

Examples of evidence. Implemented recruitment, promotion, development, flexibility or workload changes; uptake and access evidence; operational responsibilities; resources; review and succession records.

O3.c.G Sustained and embedded practice

Additional requirement for: Gold

Requirement. Additionally demonstrate sustained good practice across a broad range of relevant measures over at least four years, with substantial reach and contribution to equity and inclusion. Show how practice is embedded in ordinary organisational responsibilities and survives changes of personnel.

What we assess. As for O3.c, plus whether practice is sustained, broadly reaching and embedded in ordinary responsibilities. Novel or high-profile initiatives may contribute but are not required; effective adapted or established approaches with evidence of progress are equally valid.

Examples of evidence. Four years of implementation and uptake records; evidence that responsibilities sit in role descriptions, budgets or standing procedures; handover records showing continuity through changes of personnel; and reach across staff and student groups.

O3.d Evaluating effects and demonstrating impact

Additional requirement for: Silver and Gold

Requirement. Evaluate the effects, including lack of effect, of initiatives over at least two years, and explain how findings changed decisions.

What we assess. Whether the organisation can substantiate progress, recognise shortcomings and improve practice. Qualitative evidence can demonstrate positive impact; limited statistical power is not itself a failure. Gold still requires evidence of positive effects, not only intentions or participation counts. Evidence should distinguish implementation, immediate outcomes and sustained change (Section 1), and qualitative evidence should meet the credibility test in Section 5.

Examples of evidence. Changes in experiences or access, credible consultation findings, removal of documented barriers, safely interpreted trends, case studies and evidence of adaptation after evaluation.

O3.d.G Demonstrating positive impact

Additional requirement for: Gold

Requirement. Demonstrate meaningful positive impact over at least two years using evidence appropriate to the intervention and context. Distinguish emerging outcomes from established effects.

What we assess. As for O3.d, plus whether positive effects, not only intentions or participation, are shown, and whether emerging outcomes are separated from established ones.

Examples of evidence. Comparisons over time or between groups where safe; consultation findings and case studies describing positive changes; a clear separation of emerging outcomes from established effects; and alternative explanations considered.

O3.e Climate survey findings and follow through

Additional requirement for: Silver and Gold

Requirement. Conduct an anonymous climate survey, develop an action plan addressing the findings, and actively consult staff and students about both. Include the required Culture and Climate Survey Summary.

What we assess. Whether survey findings lead to owned, timely action shaped by the community. Negative findings do not themselves lower the assessment; inadequate response, unsupported claims of completion, or a serious or longstanding problem left unaddressed may do so. Explain confidentiality constraints and any requirement that cannot be met rather than silently substituting another method.

Examples of evidence. Survey summary, consultation records, dated action plan, assigned owners, completion evidence, communicated updates and subsequent review of unresolved concerns.

O3.e.G Implementing the climate survey action plan

Additional requirement for: Gold

Requirement. Show that the action plan was implemented within two years of the survey findings. Identify completed actions, ongoing measures, delays, changes and further review.

What we assess. As for O3.e, plus whether the plan was delivered within two years of the findings, with delays and changes explained.

Examples of evidence. A dated action-plan status log; completion evidence for each action; explanations of delays or changes; and records of review or follow-up consultation within two years of the survey findings.