



# GENDERED PERSPECTIVES OF RESEARCH ACTIVITY SYMPOSIUM REPORT 2016

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University of  
Chester

The Law School



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University of Chester, Forum for Research into Equality and Diversity

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and

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# ABOUT US

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## University of Chester Law School

<http://www.chester.ac.uk/law>

The School is an established part of the legal community based in Chester and the surrounding area. The School specialises in the delivery of undergraduate and postgraduate law programmes. The staff in the School are dedicated and experienced coming from both academic and practitioner backgrounds. The School is particularly interested in the development of Legal Education and is research active in this area. This research activity ensures that the teaching within the School is to a high standard. Student satisfaction ratings for the undergraduate law programmes are extremely high. For example the Law School came 7th in the NSS survey 2009 on overall satisfaction with the undergraduate law courses and in 2012 the Complete University Guide put us 9th for student satisfaction. The School however is also research active in the areas of Family Law, Criminal Justice and the general area of Human Rights and Discrimination. This research activity is not only focused on the production of conference papers and journal articles but is also incorporated into the delivery of the various courses offered by the School at both undergraduate and postgraduate level.

## Forum for Research into Equality and Diversity, University of Chester

<http://www.chester.ac.uk/FRED>

The University of Chester Law School hosts the Forum for Research into Equality and Diversity. This Forum focusses on and specialises in research and knowledge transfer activities in the area of diversity and equality across a range of disciplines. The Forum provides a much needed knowledge transfer resource for local voluntary organisations, lawyers, HR practitioners, academics and businesses across the North West and beyond. The Forum works with recognised experts to present a series of seminars and training on issues relating to equality and diversity and also hosts a number of national conferences. The Forum is also research active in a number of areas including in relation to positive action, the black and minority ethnic student experience, representations of gender in the REF2014 exercise and more.

## Oxford Brookes University

Set in a historic student city, Oxford Brookes is one of the UK's leading modern universities and enjoys an international reputation for teaching excellence and innovation as well as strong links with business and industry.

## Centre for Diversity Policy Research and Practice

The Centre for Diversity Policy Research and Practice was established in 2004. It is a cross-institutional centre which specialises in inter-disciplinary research and knowledge exchange on equality and diversity with a focus on work- and organisational settings and its (wider) societal impact. The Centre brings together academic and management expertise from the University's Faculty of Business, School of Law and the Directorate of Human Resources. Its main activities include: interdisciplinary research linking legal and management perspectives to inform equality policies and practices in the workplace and around; events to facilitate debate and discussion on equality and diversity issues between academics, policy-makers, trade unions, senior managers and equality specialists; consultancy and knowledge exchange to assist organisations in developing and implementing equality programmes.

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# INTRODUCTION

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## The Symposium

On the 15th-16th June 2016, The Forum for Research into Equality and Diversity (University of Chester), in partnership with the Centre for Diversity Policy Research and Practice (Oxford Brookes University), hosted the Gendered perspectives of research activity Symposium at the University of Chester, Chester, UK. The Symposium brought 30 representatives and researchers from across Higher Education in the UK, Europe and beyond together with sector bodies and policy drivers in order to workshop the gendered barriers and obstacles to research activity in Higher Education.

This report provides a summary of the discussions and findings, as well as the key ideas, themes, questions, challenges and conclusions that came out of the two-day discussion. A further goal of the report is to seek to articulate the participants' deliberations and considerations in order to contribute to the development of an effective strategy in the UK and beyond seeking to break down gendered barriers in relation to research activity. A list of participants and biographies can be found at Appendix A to this report.

## The Context

### The national context

In spite of huge inroads and drivers for change in the pursuit of gender equality in HE (in the UK, see inter alia Athena SWAN; public sector equality duty and globally British Council workshop 2012), the puzzle remains unsolved as to why female progression in HE remains stultified at the higher levels of leadership and research activity. Whilst females have numerical dominance at undergraduate level and are rapidly moving towards equality at the lecturer level in the UK, there has been very slow progression towards representation of women in leadership roles and within the professoriate. This underrepresentation threatens the goal of achieving research excellence and particularly in those areas where the starkest underrepresentation is seen such as within Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) (Rees 2001; Blackmore 2014). Equally, women would appear to be underrepresented in the more powerful decision-making committees of HEI's (Doherty & Manfredi, 2005; Jarboe, 2016; ECU, 2015).

Across the UK in 2013/14 62.7% of professional and support staff were women but in contrast the majority of academic staff were men (55.4%) (ECU, 2015). Women however comprised the majority of academic staff in ten of 23 non-SET subject areas whilst 57.9% of male academic staff worked in SET subjects. Men also had a large majority in philosophy (74.7%), economics and econometrics (72.2%) and theology and religious studies (65.9%). Particularly high proportions of female staff were in education (65.5%) and health and community studies (65.4%) (ECU, 2015). The majority of all professors were men (77.6%) and this was across all subject areas however the gap was most notable among full-time professors working in SET subject areas where 81.8% were male. Equally 76% of men worked full-time compared with 58.3% of women. Women were also significantly underrepresented at senior contract levels with 12.5% of male staff on a senior contract compared to just 4.3% of women (ECU 2015).

The position in relation to Vice-Chancellors/Principals was equally concerning with just 20% of women represented at this most senior level in 2013/14 (ECU 2015). However, in this regard at least it would appear that the drivers for change are starting to bear fruit in relation to representation of female institutional leaders. Women now hold 22% of all Vice-Chancellor roles and this represents a net increase of seven female Vice-Chancellors

since 2013 (Jarboe, 2016). Women now make up 29% of Vice-Chancellors/Principal appointments across UK HEI's (Oakman, 2016).

The gender gap is replicated at governing body level in the UK. There were 3300 HEI governing body members at the end of January 2016 and women held 36% of these roles. Whilst women's representation on governing bodies has increased from 32% in 2013, only a third of all HEIs now have gender-balanced boards (i.e. between 40 – 60% of either gender) (Jarboe, 2016). Equally, almost a quarter of HEIs have no women among their top tier academic heads and a fifth have one or no women on their executive teams. Sixty percent of HEIs have one or no internally appointed female member of the academic or management staff on their governing bodies (Jarboe, 2016).

Drivers for change from the regulatory and funding bodies have assisted in improving gender representation. In 2013 HEFCE was asked to work with the sector to address the insufficient diversity of HEI governing bodies and leadership and asked for this work to continue in its 2015-2016 grant letter. Equally, in 2014 the Committee of University Chairs issued a new Higher Education Code of Governance aiming to identify the key values and practices upon which effective governance of HEIs is based. One of the seven primary elements of the code focuses on the governing body promoting equality and diversity throughout the institution, including in relation to its own operation (Jarboe, 2016).

Since 2013, HEI's have recognized the need to set goals in relation to leadership diversity. Support for this has been given by the specific measures set by HEFCE in its 2015-2020 Business Plan to encourage greater diversity in governing bodies and senior leadership (Jarboe, 2016). In addition the introduction of various diversity and equality awards schemes have been developed (in particular Athena SWAN). The linking of Charter Marks and progress on equality and diversity to grant funding is a major driver. For instance, in 2011, Dame Sally Davies, the Chief Medical Officer, linked the attainment of a Silver Athena SWAN award to being short-listed for National Institute for Health Research funding. Similarly, in 2013 Research Councils UK issued a statement of equality and diversity expectations for applicants of grant funding and in 2015 published diversity monitoring information of grant applicants and recipients for the first time (Jarboe, 2016).

In spite of some progress, underrepresentation of women in leadership positions in UK HEIs remains an issue of concern (ECU, 2015).

### The legal context

The Equality Act 2010 (EA 2010) harmonised and consolidated previous anti-discrimination legislation. The Act covers the protected characteristics of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

As well as prohibiting direct discrimination the Act prohibits indirect discrimination – following a policy that, although applied equally to everyone, is harder for those with a protected characteristic to comply with. Indirect discrimination is not a breach of the Act if it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.



In addition, the EA 2010 places requirements on the funding bodies and HEIs as public sector organisations. The public sector equality duty (PSED) of the Act came into force in April 2011. Under section 149 of the EA 2010, the higher education funding bodies and HEIs in England, Scotland and Wales, in carrying out their functions, must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and person who do not share it.

In order to demonstrate compliance with the PSED, the higher education funding bodies need to consider and understand the impact of their policies on equality. The funding bodies have thus been legally required to consider the equality impact of the RAE in the development of the REF, and equality has been embedded into all relevant elements of the REF. As both employers and public bodies, HEIs have also been required by the EA 2010 to ensure that their REF procedures do not discriminate unlawfully against individuals because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation or because they are pregnant or have recently given birth. When developing their REF procedures, HEIs have also been required to be mindful that under the fixed-term employee and part-time workers regulations, fixed-term employees and part-time workers have the right not to be treated by an employer any less favourably than the employer treats comparable employees on open contracts or full-time workers. This is also a gender equality issue. For this purpose, the relevant regulations are:

- Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000
- Fixed-term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002

As public sector organisations, the PSED has meant that all HEIs conducted EIAs on their policies for selecting staff for the REF. In addition to the PSED, the EA 2010 permits employers and public bodies to undertake positive action to redress disadvantage suffered by the protected groups under the legislation.

The positive action provisions of section 158 of the EA 2010 permit employers (and other organisations covered by the 'work' provisions of the Act in Part 5) to take action targeted at the protected groups, so long as it is a proportionate means of achieving certain stated aims. The stated aims are:

- enabling or encouraging persons to overcome or minimise disadvantage;
- meeting the different needs of the protected group;
- enabling or encouraging persons in protected groups to participate in an activity (section 158(2)).

Thus proportionate measures to alleviate disadvantage experienced by people in protected groups, to meet their particular needs or to address their under-representation in the workplace in relation to particular activities are permitted, but only where person (P) reasonably thinks that:

- Persons who share a protected characteristic suffer a disadvantage connected to that characteristic,
- Persons who share a protected characteristic have needs that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it, or
- Participation in an activity by persons who share a protected characteristic is disproportionately low (Section 158(1)).

In addition, the antecedent legislation did not allow for positive action in recruitment and promotion. However, Section 159 EA 2010 introduces limited provisions that can be relied upon at the point of recruitment. The effect of section 158(4) is that employers cannot rely on the general provisions in relation to recruitment and promotion, but must rely on section 159. This exception allows employers to take a

candidate's protected characteristic into account when offering employment or a promoted post, if certain conditions are met. A candidate in a protected group can therefore be favoured over another candidate in certain circumstances.

### Research activity in the HE context

The gender gap in research activity is widely recognised (e.g. Aiston & Jung, 2015; UNESCO, 2012; Zie & Shauman 1998; Blake & Lavalle, 2000; Kyvik & Teigen, 1996; European Commission, 2008, 2011; European Science Foundation, 2009; Obers, 2015; Schucan-Bird, 2011). The gender gap in relation to research activity varies geographically. For example, in Aiston and Jung's (2015) analysis of the Changing Academic Profession (CAP) survey data across five countries (not including the UK), they found that female academics published less than male colleagues over a 3-year period and this gap in research output was particularly an issue for Asian and Japanese female academics (but less of a gender gap could be seen in the USA). Unsurprisingly we also see significant variation across disciplines. Doherty & Manfredi (2005; 2009) note that women's research profiles were less developed than those of male academics in their study but that this could be due to a high density of women in the more vocationally orientated schools where traditionally research activity is less pronounced (such as nursing and teaching). Equally, it is suggested that the gender gap in research activity in SET subjects is often more pronounced as work patterns require monitoring of experiments outside of working hours and for women this increases the challenge of balancing caring responsibilities with erratic working hours (Howe-Walsh & Turnbull, 2014). Similarly, Knights & Richards (2003) explored the elevated value attributed by HEI's to the 'hard' quantitative research often dominated by men over the 'softer' qualitative study predominantly populated by female academics.

Whilst the academy has undergone a transformation in the last decade, it is still accepted that research is the most important currency in the prestige economy of HE (see inter alia Aiston & Jung, 2015; Morley, 2014; Baker, 2012; Fitzgerald, 2014; Macfarlane, 2012). The performance-based culture of HE still emphasises research activity of international quality and standing (Baker, 2012). Promotion and reward in HE is still significantly linked into performance indicators and reputation capital that research provides. Morley (2016) laments that in the research economy, women are becoming increasingly side-lined. As long as a gender gap remains in the prestige commodity of HE, and promotion still favours research over other academic activities, then women will continue to suffer in relation to academic progression (Doherty & Manfredi, 2005; Baker, 2012). Therefore, developing an understanding of why women are underrepresented in research across the academy has the potential to address the leadership gender gap within HE (Obers, 2015).

The REF process in the UK is an important tool for both government and universities. As Broadbent (2010) recognises, research assessment processes allow the state to control universities and universities to control their academics. When the interests of the university and state are internalised by academic staff such exercises can be a powerful and cheap form of control (Broadbent, 2010 p14). Several studies have looked at the gendered consequences of research assessment processes (e.g. Knights & Richards, 2003; Haynes & Fearfull, 2008; Brookes, Fenton & Walker 2013). Whilst research assessment processes such as the REF may create the objectivity and transparency that can be beneficial to women, equally the demands of meeting the evaluative requirements may work against female patterns of working and reinforce discriminatory practices (Harley, 2003; Fletcher et al, 2007; Barrett & Barrett, 2011).

The UK research assessment process has been blighted by accusations of institutional sexism (AUT, 2004; Donald, 2011). In the HEFCE analysis of the 2001 RAE, it was revealed that around 64% of men but only 46% of women were submitted. This gender disparity led to a focused attempt to eliminate gender bias in the RAE2008 when allowance was made for those with reduced productivity due to extenuating circumstances including maternity leave. The REF2014 solidified and developed the concept of 'special circumstances' further.

The HEFCE report (2015) on the REF2014 investigated how disability, age, sex, ethnicity, nationality and early career researcher status related to the selection of staff for inclusion in the REF. As with their previous report in 2009 (HEFCE 2009) the data demonstrated a continued marked difference in relation to selection rates between genders. Whilst the proportion of women selected had increased from the RAE in 2008, analysis still demonstrated that 67% of men compared with 51% of women were selected in the 2014 REF. Analysis demonstrated that the majority of HEIs did not have equal selection rates by gender. Unsurprisingly, differences of selection rates across Units of Assessment were also observed. Equally unsurprising was the finding that there was a larger selection gender disparity for non-early career researchers (58%) when compared with early career researchers (80%). In addition the selection for female early career researchers was actually higher than for male early career researchers. Staff with fractional contracts were significantly less likely to be selected

The HEFCE statistical findings are supported by a survey focussing on the REF2014 undertaken by UCU (2013). UCU received around 7000 responses (43% female, 57% male) from academic staff across 153 HEIs. The data revealed that there were high levels of dissatisfaction regarding the way in which requests for reduced outputs had been handled by individual HEIs. 19% indicated that they had made a reduced output request with female respondents making requests 2.5 times more than male respondents. The unbalanced impact that workload and performance management demands deriving from the REF had placed on women were noted. Close to 75% of female respondents considered they were unable to undertake the necessary work to produce REFable outputs without working excessive hours. Over 60% of respondents (more women than men) felt that pressure to meet expectations in relation to the REF had increased their stress levels. Over a third of those employed on fractional contracts indicated that they had undertaken half or more of their work on REF outputs outside of paid working hours.

The Stern Review (published in July 2016) has considered this data in suggesting ways forward for the REF that 'reduce distortions and burdens whilst maintaining and improving incentives for research excellence' (2016, p7)

### Gendered obstacles to research activity

The gender gap in relation to research activity in the UK continues (HEFCE, 2015; UCU, 2013). Studies and theorists (as per below) have identified a range of complex factors that may act as barriers to women in the academy. These conceptual justifications can largely be divided into two categories i.e. structural views that differences are not attributable to gender per se but rather to external variables and the socialisation view that observed gender differences represent real psychological differences in the motivation to work that arise out of the different socialisation processes of men and women (Shaw & Cassell, 2007). The following provides a basic thematic narrative of current dialogue in this regard:

#### Systemic discrimination

Many argue that the gender gap in higher education is maintained via the masculine norm based practices and structures of the academy (Aiston & Jung, 2015; Morley, 2014, 2016; Husu & Morley, 2000; Thomas & Davies, 2002; Bailyn, 2003; O'Connor & White, 2011). If we follow this logic then simply counting women into senior positions will do little to avoid the inherent disadvantage to female academics caused by a disabling masculine structure. Morley (2011) notes that numeric targets in this regard can 'fail, or be meaningless, while femaleness continues to be socially constructed as second class citizenship' (p230). The lack of visible diversity within leadership and research activity within the academy may also act as a barrier to progression for women. Those who are selected for key appointments send out a clear message about the value of women within an institution (Doherty & Manfredi, 2005; Obers, 2015). Indeed the lack of diversity in leadership and senior research positions may well discourage women from aspiring to leadership or research activity (Blackmore, 2014).

The systemic discrimination against women can be seen in all aspects of the academy and nowhere is it felt as keenly as in relation to research productivity. Masculine structures that run through every element of the research and publication process work to disadvantage and exclude women (Morley, 2014). Male colleagues are less likely to read and cite women's research which leads to lost female visibility (Baker, 2012, Morley, 2014). Equally, academic working patterns would appear to be constructed according to masculine norms. Academia largely roots its culture in male ideologies around structures of work and division of labour (Schlehofer, 2012). Some studies have suggested that the way in which certain women have resolved this is to adopt masculine patterns of working in order to succeed (Goode & Bagilhole, 1998; LeFeuvre, 2009; White, 1995).

### Networking and collaboration

The marginalisation of women in the academy is further impacted by a lack of or exclusion from networking opportunities (Aiston & Jung, 2015; Baldwin, 1985; O'Leary & Mitchell, 1990; Barrett & Barrett, 2011; Van den Brink & Benschop, 2012). Networking opportunities as a form of building social capital are seen as vital to increase female research productivity and to enhance career progression (Gardiner et al, 2007; Forret & Doherty, 2004). Exclusion from informal networks and thus lack of access to relevant information and decision making sources within the organisation can make it more difficult for women to learn to manage and progress within the organisational structure (Thancoody et al, 2006 p 540). Equally, if women are excluded or less able to access influential networks then they will ultimately be disadvantaged particularly when academic promotion often requires endorsement from peers within and without the institution (Howe-Walsh & Turnbull, 2014).

Linked to the importance of networking is the gendered approach towards collaboration in the academy. Importantly Kyvik et al (1996) found that lack of research collaboration was a major factor for women in relation to research productivity. They found that a lack of opportunity to engage in research collaboration had a significant detrimental impact on female productivity but in contrast had little effect on male research productivity. This suggests that women are more dependent on collaborative working environments than their male colleagues (Kyvik et al 1996). The relevance of collaboration can be seen most keenly in relation to publication. Studies suggest that collaboration in the form of co-authorship results in significantly more publications for women (Nederhof, 2006; Stack, 2002). Schucan-Bird (2011) found that within the social sciences, women are more likely to co-author than male colleagues and that collaboration tends to be between colleagues of the same sex.

### Confidence issues

The female confidence deficit is one of the most person centred and thus controversial theories for the gender gap in progression and research activity in HE. Numerous studies have focused on female lack of confidence and belief in academic ability as a fundamental barrier to progression (Asmar, 1999; Saunderson, 2002; Fletcher et al, 2007; Litzky & Greenhouse, 2007; Doherty & Manfredi, 2005; Bagilhole, 1994; Eggins, 1997; Harris et al, 1998; Obers, 2015).

This lack of confidence in their social capital and abilities appears to manifest itself in women having weaker career aspirations than their male colleagues and thus being far less likely to put themselves forward for promotion or engage in competitive activities which will enable career progression (Litzky & Greenhouse, 2007; Doherty & Manfredi, 2005). This lack of professional self-esteem, which may well constrain women from leadership progression and/or pursuing research careers, may mean that they are far more dependent on support in order to progress than their male counterparts (Reskin, 1978). This may also explain why lack of collaboration has a significant negative impact on female (but not male) research productivity (Kyvik et al, 1996).

Morley (2006) however warns against placing too much focus on female lack of confidence as an explanation for the gender gap in the academy. It may be inappropriate to problematize women in this way in terms of the productivity puzzle. Rather, Morley (2006) argues that lack of confidence is a product of the masculine

constructed space that works to disempower women so that they feel less able than they are. Thus it is no surprise that supportive communities in which colleagues feel valued had been found to improve levels of self-esteem (Obers, 2015).

### Mentoring

The centrality of the 'self-esteem' hypothesis to the academy gender gap debate has resulted in a corresponding focus on what many believe to be the solution to the confidence deficit i.e. mentoring. Studies have shown that the presence or absence of effective mentoring can be closely correlated to female progression within HE. Whilst a lack of effective mentors can act to further marginalise women (Aiston & Jung, 2015; O'Leary & Mitchell, 1990), so the presence of effective mentoring can be a significant factor in increasing research productivity and progression (Gardiner et al, 2007; Fletcher, 2007; Chesterman, 2009; Eliasson, Berggren & Bondestam, 2000; Schulze, 2010; Obers, 2015; Joiner et al, 2004; Pyke, 2013; Thanacoody et al, 2006).

Nevertheless, mentoring is contentious and as such should not be pursued as a means of 'fixing the women' (Morley, 2012; Schiebinger, 1999). At its best it can work as a redistribution of feminist knowledge and social capital but at its worst it can seek to assimilate women into dominant masculine structures (Morley, 2012; McKeen & Bujaki, 2007).

### Differential attitudes to career planning

There is some evidence of gendered distinctions in terms of academic career planning within HE (Bagilhole & White, 2013; White, 2005; 2013; Dever et al, 2008; David & Woodward, 1998; Riordan, 2011; Doherty & Manfredi, 2005; Bergmann, 2005; Folbre & Bittman, 2004; Probert, 2005; Pyke, 2013). Many of these distinctions can be linked to other potential obstacles which women face in the academy and in particular the impact of domestic and caring responsibilities on mid-career female academics.

Doherty & Manfredi (2005) found that men and women appeared to have similar patterns of family formation. However, they found that fewer women than men planned their careers and ultimately had more limited career aspirations. Often, academic identity and career trajectories appear to be solidly based on a masculine constructed model of success. Many women do not conform or identify with this male academic model (Bagilhole & White, 2013). As such, they often have less typical academic careers entering HE much later than their male counterparts (White, 2005, 2013; Riordan, 2011). Pyke (2013) found that many women had unconventional routes to academia and had commenced their careers in professions such as nursing where a doctorate had not previously been considered essential. With the increasing focus on the need for a PhD to progress within academia, this will obviously have an impact on progression of those who have entered academia via non-traditional routes and the professions.

### Female driven work patterns

The gendered distinction in career planning can also be seen in relation to gendered academic work patterns and workloads. Recent studies suggest that female work patterns focus on the more undervalued elements of academic life and as such this acts as an obstacle to progression as it leaves women less time to focus on more valuable research and leadership activities (Aiston & Jung, 2015; Turner, 2002; Ropes-Huilman, 2000; Kjeldal, Rindfleish & Sheridan, 2006; Morley, 2007; Barrett & Barrett, 2011; Cotterill et al, 2007; Neale & White, 2004; White et al, 2011; Glazer-Raymo, 2008; Terosky et al, 2008; Poole et al, 1997; Probert, 2005; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004; Dobebe, Rundle-Thiele & Kopanidis, 2014; Knights & Richards, 2003; Morley, 2014; Schlehofer, 2012; Morley, 2006; Shaw & Cassell, 2007).

It would appear that female academics are more likely to be focused on pastoral care, teaching related functions and non-core committee work within institutions (Kjeldal, Rindfleish & Sheridan, 2006). Ropes-Huilman (2000)

described this as women taking on the role of 'academic mummies' and Ward & Wolf-Wendel (2004) referred to this as 'academic motherhood'. Such activity is becoming an ever more time consuming challenge in the consumer driven HE culture and student massification (Knights & Richards, 2003). Aiston & Jung's (2015) study of the CAP, found evidence that junior and senior academic women were spending significantly more time on supporting administration work at the cost to time spent on research activity.

### Caring responsibilities

Central to attempts to solve the gender productivity puzzle are debates around the impact of domestic and caring responsibilities on female productivity and progression in the academy (see inter alia Aiston & Jung, 2015; Bailyn, 2003; Probert, 2005; Baker, 2012; Riordan, 2011; Ledwith & Manfredi, 2000; Blackmore, 2014; Doherty & Manfredi, 2005, 2009; Howe-Walsh & Turnbull, 2014; Fox, 2010; Kyvik & Teigen, 1996; Raddon, 2002; Morley, 2012, 2014; Obers, 2015; Schlehofer, 2012; Pyke, 2013; Thanacoody et al, 2006). Whilst, legislation is attempting to change the gendered culture of caring (e.g. Shared Parental Leave Regulations 2014), statistics unsurprisingly still demonstrate that overall caring remains a gendered task in the UK. Thus any impact of caring responsibilities on productivity and progression is inherently a female issue. In the globalised increasingly commercialised culture of HE, expectations on academics to work increasingly unsocial hours in order to maintain research productivity will clearly impact on women with caring responsibilities who may not have the option to work outside of standard hours (Fletcher et al, 2007).

However, some argue that a perceived or over emphasis on the impact of gendered caring responsibilities on female progression may well disguise the systemic discrimination creating barriers to women in the academy (Aiston & Jung, 2015). By not focusing on a 'deficit model' of female performance, it is not argued that caring responsibilities have no impact on women's careers but rather that the productivity puzzle is complex and cannot be explained by a single factor. It is arguable that too readily viewing motherhood as an inhibitor to career success perpetuates the perceptions of others that women are unable to balance work and family. This perception in itself will act as a formidable obstacle to progression (Sax et al, 2002). As stated by Bagilhole & White (2013, p10): 'The problem is often the perception among senior colleagues that women must choose between a career and a family and that it is not possible to have both...rather than the career aspirations of the women themselves'.

Added to this is the reported phenomenon that having a child actually acts as a facilitator and gain to productivity (Brookes, Fenton & Walker, 2013 p991). Indeed, more recently some would argue that the 'motherhood penalty' (Baker, 2012) is not always borne out by evidence in academia. Some studies have suggested that caring responsibilities are not a significant obstacle to productivity and thus progression (Sax et al, 2002; Aiston & Jung, 2015; Cole & Zuckerman, 1984; Fox & Faver, 1985; Fox, 2005). Indeed, in some situations women who had taken a break from the academy to have children were actually more productive than their counterparts (Aiston & Jung, 2015). However, Kyvik & Teigen (1996) caution against direct comparisons between women with children and those without. They argue that 'when children's age is introduced as a variable childcare turns out to be an important determinant for women's publishing activity' (p55).

Linked to the impact of caring responsibilities on academic progression and productivity is the issue of fractional working within the academy (Barrett & Barrett, 2011; Doherty & Manfredi, 2005, 2009). More women than men in HE work on a fractional contract often due to the need to balance work with caring responsibilities. Data from the HEFCE return from the REF 2014 (2015) clearly demonstrate that those working on fractional contracts are less likely to be submitting to the REF. Thus the impact on profession and productivity from fractional working becomes a gender issue once again.

# SUMMARY OF KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS

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## **Professor Simonetta Manfredi and Professor Lucy Vickers (Centre for Diversity Policy Research and Practice, Oxford Brookes University)**

**Professor Manfredi and Professor Vicker's biographies can be found at Appendix A.**

Lucy and Simonetta's presentation titled 'Equality issues in research careers' commenced with a consideration of the underpinning research in this area and in particular looked at how this has informed the development of institutional and national policy in relation to gender equality guidance in HE. They then moved on to discuss gender equality in relation to the REF process and how we can learn from the experiences of the REF2014 equality process (taking into account the findings in the EDAP Report from January 2015). This was followed by an exploration of gender equality issues beyond the REF and in particular the implications of maternity leave/career breaks, work-life balance issues, the intersection of gender with other characteristics such as race, culture, social class, disability, age. Lucy and Simonetta then considered the enablers to research productivity and ways in which gendered barriers and obstacles to research activity in HE can be overcome. In particular focus was placed on the need to conduct Equality Impact Assessments, equality training, managing workload models, developing measures to support staff at critical times in their career. Finally, future challenges were considered with a call for vigilance in relation to the possible consequences for gender equality in relation to the application of metrics in the HE sector.

**Professor Manfredi and Vickers presentation can be found at Appendix B to this report.**

## **Gary Loke, Head of Policy, Equality Challenge Unit**

**Gary Loke's biographies can be found at Appendix A.**

Gary provided a keynote titled 'Gendered research careers and content'. He commenced by setting out the background in relation to women in HE in the UK making reference to the most recent data available which demonstrates a continuing gender disparity particularly in relation to the higher academic staff levels. This is in contrast to the fact that female students comprise the majority of students in all degree levels with the exception of research postgraduates. Gary moved on to look at issues of intersectionality particularly around gender and race in HE. He then considered the implications of gender in relation to research funding in the context of ERC (European Research Council) and UK research funding. A fascinating exploration followed of the necessity to integrate gender analysis into the research process and the work of the GENDER-NET project ([www://www.gender-net.eu/](http://www.gender-net.eu/)) in implementing the IGAR (Integrating Gender Analysis into Research) initiatives in this regard. Finally, Gary looked at the need to effect change via work with individuals (e.g. Aurora), structures (e.g. Athena SWAN), and also knowledge. The significant gap exists in relation to this third element of ensuring gender equality in knowledge generation and this requires more focus.

**Gary Loke's presentation can be found at Appendix C to this report.**

## Professor Fiona Beveridge, University of Liverpool

### Professor Beveridge's biography can be found at Appendix A.

Fiona gave a presentation titled 'Following the Money: New Strategies for Promoting Gender Equality in Science and Research'. Fiona commenced by looking at the core issues for women in research in particular educational segregation; leaky pipeline; gendered workplaces and practices; lack of family-friendly policies and expectations; exclusion from decision-making; gender blind research agendas. She then provided some background to the context of gender and research funding in the UK and Europe. In particular referring to the announcement of Dame Sally Davies, Chief Medical Officer in July 2011 that the National Institute for Health Research, in response to the 'frankly appalling' things they had just heard in a funding round from some Medical Schools, would not award RCUK Biomedical Research Centre and Unit grants in the following round, 5 years later, unless the Medical Schools had by then achieved at least a Silver Athena SWAN Award. She also made reference to the European Research Council developing agenda with gender equality in its funding programmes. Equally, the Horizon 2020 Research Funding Programme announced in 2013 that it was making gender a cross-cutting issue in all elements of the Programme, with expectations of gender balance in research teams, a target of 40% women members in expert groups and evaluation panels and a target of 50% women members in Advisory Groups, including at least one expert on gender equality in each panel, with potential penalties and clawbacks for non-compliance. In her presentation Fiona considered how effectively these efforts to 'Follow the Money' have been put into practice and what needs to be done if they are to bear success in promoting gender equality in UK and EU science and research.

### Professor Beveridge's presentation can be found at Appendix D to this report.

# SYMPOSIUM DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

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Over a two-day period, participants worked in groups on very specific questions related to 1) the core gendered obstacles faced by academics in relation to research activity within Higher Education, and 2) utilising an evidence based approach identifying what measures have been or can be put in place in order to break down these gendered obstacles. Unsurprisingly, the task of reviewing the gender puzzle in relation to research activity in HE was challenging but also instructive as group members with diverse academic and professional backgrounds brought their individual views, perspectives and research to the discussions. It should be noted that this Symposium took place in June prior to the publication in July 2016 of the Independent Review of the Research Excellence Framework commissioned by the Minister of Universities and Science (Stern, 2016). Below is a summary of the participants' discussions.

Day One provided the opportunity for participants to explore gendered obstacles to research activity in Higher Education in light of their experience and/or research. Day Two built upon the discussions in Day One with delegates being asked to consider examples of good practice and pointers for action in light of gendered barriers to research activity.



## DAY ONE:

Following keynote presentations from Gary Loke (Head of Policy, Equality Challenge Unit) and Professor Simonetta Manfredi and Professor Lucy Vickers (Oxford Brookes University), delegates were asked to focus on gendered barriers and challenges to research activity in Higher Education. Participants were split into three randomly selected working groups and asked to share their own experiences as well as findings and knowledge from relevant research they had conducted or were aware of. Delegates were pointed towards the research of O'Neil and Bilmoria (2008) and their identification of a three-phased model of women's career development encompassing: an early phase, defined as "idealistic achievement", driven by a desire for career satisfaction, achievement and success; a mid-career phase of "endurance" when women are likely to be managing multiple roles both in their personal and professional life; an advanced career phase defined as "reinventive contribution", characterised by new energy and sense of purpose. In this third phase women have re-thought and reclaimed their careers as both learning opportunities and the chance to make a meaningful contribution to society. Whilst this three-phased model through which to view gendered barriers was offered to delegates as a possible lens for discussion, this was a suggestion only and it was not intended to restrict or bind debate. Indeed participants ultimately felt that the O'Neil and Bilmoria model was not necessarily appropriate or useful in light of concerns that a 'typical' career cycle does not necessarily exist within the academy.

### The following concerns emerged from the Day One discussions:

#### The gendered impact of fractional contracts

Debate centred around the predominance of women in fractional temporary research positions within HE. It was considered that often women were more likely to take on fixed-term fractional contract research posts in order to create work-life balance either due to caring responsibilities or due to postgraduate study. However, it was felt that temporary fractional contracts often limited research progression. In particular, progression was limited by research council rules which enter into funding contracts with the institution rather than the individual and often do not permit temporary contract holders to act as Principal Investigator. Equally, in order to progress within HE, many temporary fractional research contract holders feel pressured to engage in additional teaching opportunities in order to attempt to move out of the casual, temporary academic labour market into more lucrative and beneficial permanent posts. The pressure to undertake heavy visiting lecturer and temporary teaching posts alongside a fractional research contract can leave little time for more valuable research activity which is fundamental to progression.

Aside from the predominance of women in fractional research contracts, participants also explored the statistical evidence (see above) that women are more likely to be employed in part-time academic contracts within the HE sector. Debate centred around research and anecdotal evidence which suggested that part-time working can be a burden to female academics in that they often find it necessary to use hours beyond their formally contracted hours to create the space to research which the institution has not provided. Participants explored the issue that this would only be possible for women with children where the woman received childcare/partner support to enable her to do this. Thus, this potentially suggested an intersectionality issue with gender and socio-economic status since costly external childcare would only be an option for those women whose financial circumstances permitted them to fund this beyond their part-time hours.

Further discussion focussed on anecdotal evidence that there is a perception in HE that part-time working can't be productive and that it can be viewed as creating additional burdens to research team members. In particular, part-time working was perceived to be problematic for those researching in the Sciences due to the increased need for researchers to work outside of standard hours on experiments and laboratory work.

### Caring responsibilities

Linked to debate around fractional and temporary working within the academy was unsurprising discussion around the impact of caring responsibilities on female academics and research activity and progression. It was felt that idealised notions of the unencumbered worker was no longer justifiable in the academy or within society more generally. In particular, it was recognised from participant research and anecdotal evidence that caring responsibilities were still largely (although of course not exclusively) the charge of women. The view was expressed that increasingly there was a 'squeezed middle' of those women within HE whose career and research productivity was being limited by obligations to elders and children. Participants discussed the literature that suggests that child care does not necessarily adversely impact upon female productivity and progression and explored the view that those who aren't impacted upon are those who are able to outsource care elsewhere (see above in relation to intersectionality and socio-economic status).

Participants also explored the issue of whether there is a danger of conflating the need for work-life balance with the need to reconcile family and work responsibilities. Due to the contentious nature of this issue further debate on this topic was encouraged in Day Two (see below).

### Gendered workloads

Participants discussed the gender implications of workload models within HE. Debate centred around the more general issue of a lack of allocation within many institutional workload models for research hours. In the current climate many institutions are primarily focusing on teaching hours within workload models and the anticipated Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) is now further driving this. Participants discussed anecdotal evidence of diverse approaches to workload planning within their own institutions. The approach towards workload planning differed significantly across institutions and indeed even within institutions. Participants explored the discretionary nature of workload planning and allowances and the fact that this often depended on the attitudes of managers as to the value of duties and work outside of teaching hours.

Whilst the above was seen as a general issue affecting male and female academics equally, it was felt that there was a gendered impact of this discretionary often non-transparent approach towards workload planning in HE. In particular, it was perceived that female academics were more likely than their male colleagues to take on additional individual supervision and pastoral support with students often approaching female rather than male members of staff for non subject specific support. It was perceived by participants that this was not adequately recognised and valued within workload planning. Equally, activities such as mentoring, collaboration and peer-reviewing academic papers (which it was felt women were more likely to undertake as part of their academic role) was equally not recognised and valued within workload models. The issue of women being more likely to take on wider teaching duties was also debated with participants perceiving that teaching was considered to be a less valuable academic activity that can limit and eat into valuable research time.

Some participants perceived that any flexibility beyond teaching hours was utilised in different ways by the genders i.e. that men use flexibility to increase productivity whilst women often use it to improve work-life balance.

Finally, the impact of a perceived culture of 'competitive busyness' within HE was discussed. It was felt that often women were provided with unattainable role models who may well have perfected the appearance of 'busyness'. These role models rather than acting as motivators for those women seeking to progress were seen as providing a benchmark which was impossible to meet and thus became a disabling barrier to progression. Equally, it was felt that for those working within some institutions the only means of ensuring valuable research time was to learn to cut corners in learning, teaching and assessment duties (such as not updating course materials, reducing contact hours and availability to see students etc). It was felt that women would be more reluctant than men to do this and therefore were limiting their time to engage in research.

## Gendered implications of research funding and the REF process

Following on from the keynote discussions, participants recognised that mainstreaming gender equality awareness into the research funding process was fundamental. In July 2011, in her letter to the Medical Schools Council the Chief Medical Officer Professor Dame Sally Davies' announcement that the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) would only expect to shortlist medical schools for biomedical research centre and unit funding if the school holds a Silver Athena SWAN Award had led to increased national institutional focus on mainstreaming gender equality issues throughout the research process. In spite of research funders increasing the drive for gender equality, participants discussed the importance for HEI's to recognise the benefits of gender equality aside from funding requirements and initiatives. Concern was raised that forced focus on gender equality in order to attract funding would mean that institutional benefits will be neglected or lost if funding is removed.

The REF process was viewed as a central driver towards this. In particular, the gender trajectory in relation to the REF in the UK was moving forward and could be linked to the research and developmental work which has informed changes to the process in order to engage with the equality agenda. The sub-panels of the REF2014 were required to assess the research environment in terms of its 'vitality and sustainability', including its contribution to the vitality and sustainability of the wider discipline or research base. Participants questioned whether in future more focus on gender equality issues could be utilised in relation to the assessment of 'environment' and indeed whether this could be linked to the Athena SWAN Award process to encourage institutional engagement with equality issues.

At an institutional level, participants questioned how the value of knowledge is changing and the extent in particular that research into equality issues is valued across institutions. Participants explored the extent to which knowledge needs to be mobilised in relation to gender equality issues with a two-tier approach by funders and institutions towards ensuring equality. A two tier approach involves: firstly, to question and monitor the type of discipline involved in the research in order to evaluate and ensure that women are appropriately represented; secondly, to consider whether the gender equality issues have been accounted for in the project design and implementation of the research process.

## Publications

As part of the research profile cycle, participants reflected on the gendered impact of the academic publication process. It was perceived and supported by participant's research (Schucan-Bird, 2011) that the publication process generally could be viewed as subjecting women to a detriment. The academic culture, which had traditionally been supported by research assessment exercises, was that there was either an explicit or implicit focus on what were considered to be 'appropriate journals' for publication. In particular, participants reflected on their own research and expressed the view that interdisciplinary journals in particular were viewed as 'less appropriate'. The literature in this area suggests that women are more likely to engage in interdisciplinary collaborative research activity (see before) and therefore the devaluing of such work was likely to impact detrimentally on women. It was perceived that the journals, which were viewed as more relevant and valuable, were those in which a predominant focus on publishing male work could be seen. Participants expressed the view that women were disadvantaged in the research cycle by an over focus on the journal in which work was published rather than the quality of the individual piece. This is an issue that is currently being addressed in the Stern Review (Stern, 2016).

## Confidence

Some debate centred around one of the core themes in the literature i.e. the nature of 'confidence' and whether a lack of confidence has impacted upon women's development in relation to research activity. Some participants felt that an overt focus on a female lack of confidence perpetuates the problem in that if

women are constantly told they are less confident than their male counterparts this will become a self-fulfilling prophecy. In particular, participants debated the now infamous McKinsey/Hewlett-Packard 'research' in which Desvaux, Devillard-Hoellinger and Meany (2008) stated that 'Internal research at HP showed that women apply for open jobs only if they think they meet 100 percent of the criteria listed, whereas men respond to the posting if they feel they meet 60 percent of the requirements' (2008, p4). This was then widely reported by Sheryl Sandberg (2013) in her popular book and has more recently been criticised for lacking the necessary evidential rigour (Rice, 2014). Indeed Rice argues that sketchy and vague research underpinned the original attestation and that this popular myth has now become a dangerous potential obstacle for female progression.

The issue of confidence in plenary debate was contentious and as such time was set-aside on Day Two for further exploration of this issue (see below).

### Gendered implications of non-traditional career trajectories

Participants explored anecdotes and evidence from their research that female academics were more likely to have had atypical career structures (Davies, Healey & Cliffe, 2016; Manfredi & Doherty, 2005). In this way it was considered difficult to apply O'Neil and Bilmoria's (2008) three-phased model of female career development. It was considered by most participants that often women (more so than their male counterparts) could not be said to have had a 'typical' career path. Indeed it was questioned whether a 'typical' career path as espoused by O'Neil and Bilmoria could be said to exist in the current HE climate. This was particularly true within the newer universities and in relation to academic disciplines such as law, business, teaching and health. Participants explored the research that suggests that women from 'professional' areas had often made the choice to enter into academia from a professional career in order to seek the flexibility that a corporate environment often does not offer. However, on entering academia such women often find their professional expertise devalued within the academy even though this experience is recognised by discipline experts as vital to both undergraduate and postgraduate education. Equally, the lack of a research background and PhD can mean such women struggle to break into valuable research activity and thus struggle to progress within HE.

In addition and linked to this was discussion around participant research (Davies, Healey & Cliffe, 2016; Manfredi & Doherty, 2005) and anecdotal evidence that women are less likely to plan their careers whereas men were more likely to apply a focused structured approach which can lead to a more linear academic development and thus a more traditional career trajectory. It was debated whether this impacted upon female productivity, direction and progression within HE.

### DAY TWO:

Day Two of the Symposium commenced with a keynote presentation from Professor Fiona Beveridge. This was followed by a brief summary of the discussions from Day One. Delegates were then asked to consider some of the issues arising from the discussion in Day One in more detail. In particular delegates were asked to address the following questions:

- Is there a distinction between work-life balance and reconciliation of family and work? Should we and are we conflating the two?
- Is there a gendered construction of excellence and is this discipline specific? If so, what measures can be put in place to challenge this?
- Is there a gendered valuation of confidence?

Delegates were then asked to consider (in light of the discussion on gendered barriers to research activity from Day One) any examples of good practice to promote gender equality in research activity from their own institutions and/or emerging from their own research and/or practice. Delegates were again guided but not restricted to some suggested themes including:

- consideration of how to address workload distribution;
- how to develop measures to support staff at critical times in their careers;
- the role and value of mentoring.

## Confidence

Unsurprisingly debate around issues of confidence was central to both Day One and Two discussions. Participants were asked to consider whether confidence could be objectively defined and whether there currently existed a gendered valuation of confidence particularly within the academy. Some participants felt that confidence could be distilled down into a subjective belief in ones experience and understanding. If so, the question was whether mentoring was inextricably linked to ensuring access to this experience and understanding. As such, it was felt that confidence in academia was also related to an ability to understand and follow the 'rules of the game'. Participants referred to research evidence from Professors that in carrying out their mentoring role they were in some cases providing a 'game plan' to their mentees (Yarrow, 2016). This idea of confidence centring on a definition of experience and understanding linked into Day One discussion around those (particularly women) with atypical career paths coming into academia from the professions. These are the women who are most likely to be ignorant of the 'rules of the game' and thus to lack the necessary confidence to engage in research activity and progress within HE.

Debate also revisited Day One discussions around the perpetuation of the confidence deficit as a result of negative reinforcement of the issue both within and outside of the academy. However, this centrality of perception to the confidence puzzle could also be seen in the importance of others (particularly those in positions of power and responsibility) having confidence in the abilities of those women within their institutions. The need for outsider confidence in order to drive self-confidence was viewed by participants as fundamental to productivity and progression.

Participants also explored possible societal interpretations of confidence. Anecdotal evidence and participant research (Davies, Healey & Cliffe, 2016) suggested that women who exhibit confidence in their abilities often feel that they are viewed as aggressive rather than assertive in a way which does not seem to be true for their male colleagues. Thus, it was perceived that women had a tendency to be apologetic about their confidence and abilities in order to avoid being viewed as aggressive and problematic. Participants discussed the importance of recognising that confidence suggesting that it may be a key driver in progression but cannot be equated with competence. It was felt that confidence (based on self-belief in ones knowledge and experience) often resulted in an objective assumption of knowledge and experience that was not necessarily reflective of reality.

Finally, Louise Morley's work (see before) around the confidence deficit was explored and participants reflected on the fact that we had to be careful in HE not to base our narrative on masculine principles of confidence. Whilst confidence may be seen as a 'valuable' characteristic we should be willing to break down and question a male dominated definition of confidence, rather than seeking to fix the women, and instead seek to fix the system which perpetuates its value.

## Work-life balance

One of the most contentious questions throughout the Symposium centred on the issue of work-life balance and how this should be defined and dealt with within HE. It was recognised by participants that caring responsibilities (not just in relation to children) was a fundamental gender issue within academia and beyond. Participants expressed the view that caring was largely unpaid leave which could lead to gendered career pathways and thus have a significant detrimental impact on research productivity and progression for women (see above). Some participants however equated caring with lifestyle choice and felt it should therefore be viewed as no different from any other external commitment that may place a burden on academic time and

productivity. Others felt, however, that childcare could not be distilled into choice in this way as once you have a child this is not something you can 'choose' to disengage with as you might with other activities. Equally, in relation to elder care there was often not even an initially choice as to whether to engage in the caring.

The question therefore was whether a commitment towards promoting work-life balance in the academy in order to provide equality of opportunity for women in relation to progression and research activity should focus on those with caring responsibilities. In order to avoid a blurring of the lines in relation to the obstacles faced by those with caring commitments, participants largely felt that the concept of work-life balance should be reconsidered. Whilst a commitment to work-life balance may well indirectly benefit women with caring responsibilities it should more generally be about well-being and the need and value in everyone having quality of life beyond the workplace. Some felt that whilst this should be recognised as an important goal within HE, it should not be equated with policy considerations around the issue of reconciling family and work commitments. Thus in making recommendations to seek to remove the obstacles faced by women within academia, some felt that a distinction should be made between work-life balance drivers and the more specific need for family/work reconciliation.

Other participants however felt that we need to reconsider assumptions that people with children should be treated differently and that there is a danger of placing 'care free' women in the 'male camp' and thus creating distinct divides in this regard. Instead, some participants felt that a more inclusive approach to work-life balance within HE was required in which adjustments and policies focussed at changing cultures towards greater balance should be directed at a variety of individual circumstances including but not exclusively caring commitments.

More generally it was discussed whether a dedication towards work-life balance could be achieved in relation to research activity within the academy. Participants discussed whether the inherent flexibility within academia was actually a penalty rather than a privilege with academics often working far beyond standardised hours of 9-5. Whilst this flexibility will work for some (including those with caring and external commitments), for others it becomes a burden that precludes any commitments beyond work. It was perceived by some participants that the cultural expectations of HE capitalises on the flexibility 'privilege' in order to require academics to undertake the more valuable research activity beyond the standard day that is often filled with administrative and teaching commitments. This inevitably impacts upon work-life balance more generally as well as family/work reconciliation.

### Definitions of excellence

With the emerging academy in the UK focusing on definitions and assessments of 'excellence' in relation to both teaching and research, it was felt necessary for participants to address their minds to whether it was possible to have an objective definition of excellence and the gendered impact of this. Participants felt that research excellence in academia can be defined by reference to funding, discipline and impact. In this regard, it was felt that the emergence of impact as an indicator of excellence has possibly created broader opportunities for women outside of the traditional focus on publication outputs in a respected journal. However it was also felt that those disciplines in which women predominated were often devalued by the academy and that it was perceived as easier to have impact within the mainstream (largely male dominated) disciplines. Equally, issues such as non-typical female career trajectories and an unawareness of the 'rules of the game' (discussed above) could result in a negative gender impact in relation to funding opportunities for research and the ability to demonstrate 'excellence' in this regard.

### Good practice discussion

In light of discussion in relation to gendered obstacles to research activity from Day One and in light of conceptual debate and follow-up discussion around work-life balance, confidence and excellence, participants were asked to consider examples of good practice based on their personal and institutional experience and research in this area. Whilst many of the good practice considerations were not specifically

gender directed and involved inclusive practice, some pointers are specifically focused towards female academics in light of historic evidenced disadvantage and statistical underrepresentation. The following is a summary of the key themes and pointers for action explored:

### Mentoring

Participants discussed the importance of targeted mentoring in the development of female progression and research productivity within the academy. Participants suggested the following pointers for action some of which are examples of inclusive practice but which are considered to indirectly benefit female academics:

- I. Institutions should consider expanding their definition of mentoring to include collaborative activity and joint publication between mentor and mentee.
- II. Cross-gendered mentoring should be encouraged with focus placed on the relevance of expertise and experience of the mentor rather than gender.
- III. Remission should be provided for mentoring activities and institutional reward and promotion criteria should include mentoring support provided to others in relation to research activity.
- IV. Mentoring should not just be provided in relation to research activity but also in assisting mentees to ensure and develop an appropriate work-life balance.
- V. Mentors and role models should be sought to counter the 'competitive busyness' culture by demonstrating research productivity within reasonable working hours.
- VI. There is a need to engage more men with an understanding and appreciation of the female academic and research context to act as mentors in relation to research activity.

### Funding

Participants explored the gendered impact of research funding and suggested the following pointers for action at an institutional level:

- I. Institutions should consider making available specific research funding/grants to individuals returning from caring leave that should be available to both genders. It may be that this could be expanded to encompass returners from any form of leave rather than being specific to caring.
- II. Remission from teaching and/or administrative duties could be provided for returners from caring leave in order to enable them to engage in research activity.
- III. Gender should be mainstreamed into institutional research funding and grant processes and the gender impact of any such decisions should be monitored and evaluated at regular intervals.
- IV. Institutions should consider introducing a 'tie-break' provision into institutional research or funding decisions so that in applications of equal merit, the gender of the applicant can be taken into account in order to redress particular need, disadvantage or underrepresentation.
- V. Institutions should consider the gender balance of research project teams in granting institutional research funding and when supporting external applications from academics for research funding.

### Publication and writing space

Participants considered the need to provide women with the space and confidence to develop their writing and publication output and suggested the following pointers:

- I. Institutions should consider providing specific writing spaces and mentoring support for women to address the gender disparity in publication evidenced by research in this area.
- II. Those who are organising, mentoring and developing such specific support should be provided with remission for this and such activities be recognised in the promotion process.
- III. In order to avoid the feeling of 'otherness' in relation to knowledge production, institutions should encourage, at a discipline specific level, a focus on gender balanced literature reviews and reading lists both in teaching practice and research development and activity.

## Dissemination

Participants discussed the importance of engaging all academics in the gender equality agenda. It was felt that experience of disadvantage and inequality (even by association) informed better practice in resolving gender inequality in HE. Yarrow (2016) pointed to her PhD research that suggested that in some instances male managers were able to use their female partner's experience of gender inequality to inform good practice for their staff in this area. In this way the way in which policies are implemented by individuals are shaped by their experience and understanding of the issues and ability to better understand the role of gender in academia. In this way the way in which policies are implemented by individuals are shaped by their experience and understanding of the issues. Therefore, participants pointed to the following suggestions for action:

- I. Institutions should not only seek to collect relevant evidence of disadvantage, need and underrepresentation on the basis of gender but should also ensure this is appropriately and effectively disseminated and communicated to all staff.
- II. Institutions should seek to use case studies of real events pointing to gender inequality in development and training activities in the area of equality and diversity.
- III. Institutions should ensure that any role models who are utilised in promoting gender equality are carefully chosen to reflect the diversity of female experience and career trajectories.

## Workload planning

Participants explored their experience and research around the impact of gendered workloads and suggested the following pointers for action:

- I. Institutions should review workload-planning models to ensure that implementation is objective and transparent and does not disadvantage women.
- II. Institutions should ensure staff understand workload model operation and feel able to challenge accuracy of data and ensure transparency of workload, roles (including pastoral roles) and opportunities for staff.

## Work-life balance

Following on from discussions regarding the definition and approach towards work-life balance (above), participants considered that any pointers in this regard should be dealt with inclusively and not specifically focused on family/work reconciliation (which is dealt with below). Therefore, participants suggested the following pointers for action in relation to the promotion of work-life balance:

- I. Institutions should take responsibility for enabling and promoting the importance of work-life balance for all staff. This could include consideration of initiatives such as a non-email day per week, shutting down the server at certain times etc.
- II. Managers need to engage with staff to address issues around setting expectations for both staff and students regarding working hours and academic availability.
- III. Management should set an example to other staff by engaging in reasonable and appropriate working patterns.
- IV. Training should be provided to managers to demonstrate the importance and value for the institution and individual in having an appropriate work-life balance.

## Family/work reconciliation

Participants decided to consider family/work reconciliation issues as separate to the more general work-life balance agenda. As such, the following pointers for action were suggested:

- I. Institutions should consider whether those returning from maternity or parental leave could be provided with a reduced teaching load in order to enable re-engagement with research activity.
- II. Institutions should consider acknowledging that flexibility in workload and timetabling be considered for those with caring commitments in order to enable an appropriate balancing of work and family



responsibilities. A transparent and objective institutional process should be applied in order to avoid inconsistency at discipline level.

- III. Institutions should consider providing support for childcare and breastfeeding on return to work from maternity or parental leave.

### Training and change initiatives

Participants explored the need for institutions to address gender disparity and inequality via evidenced based training and change initiatives. The following pointers for action were suggested:

- I. Institutions should consider implementing unconscious bias training for all academic staff in relation to gender equality.
- II. Institutions should consider engaging equality champions across disciplines and levels in order to channel gender equality issues without individuals necessarily having to take responsibility for bringing a complaint.
- III. Institutions should apply a considered evidence-based approach towards implementing positive action initiatives in relation to research activity.

### Further research

Participants discussed the need for further institutional and sector research in key areas in order to inform further policy and development in relation to the gender barriers faced to research activity in HE with particular focus on the following:

- I. The barriers and disincentives to collaborative research.
- II. The gendered consequences of research funding decisions.

## WAY FORWARD AND NEXT STEPS

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Furthering understanding of gender equality in relation to research activity is not only vital to the support of emerging dialogue of national research in this area but also in relation to the development of the female academic profile and research productivity more generally. In order to develop successful strategies and policies aimed at resolving the gender disparity in female research productivity, particularly to feed into future research evaluation exercises (i.e. the REF or equivalent processes), it is necessary to provide a strong evidential basis for particular need, disadvantage and/or underrepresentation. It has been the intention of this Symposium to attempt to do this through the collaborative construction of a clear understanding of gendered perceptions of research activity so as to inform the development of policy and practices within Higher Education.

The materials presented in this report have documented the key presentations and discussions that occurred over the course of the two-day Gendered Perspectives of Research Activity Symposium hosted by Oxford Brookes University and the University of Chester in June 2016. These discussions produced a wealth of information and ideas taken from participant's own experience and research that have been set out above.

In moving forward, the Forum for Research into Equality and Diversity and the Centre for Diversity Policy Research and Practice will seek to continue to advance the development of these ideas in the endeavour to remove gendered obstacles to research activity within HE in the UK and beyond.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

### Participant biographies

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#### **Dr Sarah Barnard, Loughborough University**

Dr Sarah Barnard is Lecturer in Sociology of Contemporary Work in the School of Business and Economics at Loughborough University. Sarah's fields of research and consultancy includes organisations, gender, higher education, sociology of science, engineering and technology, private higher education and communications and media. Particular interests include gendered aspects of careers and career choice, organisational practices and policies and the ways organisational culture are related to these aspects. She is Principal Investigator on a longitudinal study of women's careers in higher education for the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education.

#### **Professor Fiona Beveridge, Liverpool University**

Fiona is a Professor of Law, specialising in international and EU law, in particular foreign investment law and gender equality law and policy. She has a particular expertise in gender mainstreaming (that is, the idea that gender concerns should be addressed systematically in all areas and by all actors), and how this is implemented in international institutions, the EU, and in individual states. In the UK this approach is best exemplified by the public sector equality duty, now contained in the Equality Act 2010. She has recently completed two studies for the European Parliament FEMM Committee, 'A New Strategy for Gender Equality Post 2015' and 'The EU Budget for Gender Equality'.

#### **Dr Alison Chapple, Oxford University**

Alison Chapple is a University Research Lecturer at the University of Oxford. She is a member of the Health Experiences Research Group and has conducted research for various sections of the award winning website [www.healthtalk.org](http://www.healthtalk.org). Her research at Oxford has included work on the experiences of people with prostate, testicular, lung, and pancreatic cancer, PSA testing and bowel screening. She has also led projects about people's experiences of bereavement due to suicide and other forms of traumatic death. More recently she has worked on a project about people's experiences of Living with a Urinary Catheter. Alison is now leading a project about Women in Science <http://www.womeninscience.ox.ac.uk/> which explores the experiences of successful women scientists, all working at the University of Oxford. The aim of the project is to provide support to women making career decisions, by offering them the opportunity to explore a broad range of experiences shared by other women through video interviews. The women talk about many issues, including the culture of science, work-life balance, publishing, obtaining fellowship funding, having a mentor and Athena SWAN.

#### **Dr Elizabeth Christopher, Director of Research Policy, University of Chester**

Elizabeth Christopher completed her undergraduate and doctoral studies in chemistry at Durham University, and then spent time in the nuclear industry as a research scientist and manager. She joined the University in 1999 with responsibilities for research activities including the submission to the Research Activity Exercise 2001 and research degrees. Since 2010 she has been within Research, Postgraduate and Knowledge Services and continues to have wide-ranging responsibilities for policy developments. Other responsibilities include research governance and ethics, Research Excellence Framework, the HR Excellence in Research and Athena SWAN awards.

### **Anthony Cliffe, University of Chester**

Anthony Cliffe is a Postgraduate research assistant in the department of Geography and International Development at the University of Chester. He is currently the research assistant for Dr. Chantal Davies and Dr. Ruth Healey's project entitled the Gendered perception of the Research Excellence Framework. He has been working on this project for just under a year now. His main duties have been to conduct literature reviews, collection of data (both quantitative and qualitative) including analysing, digesting and disseminating the quantitative data for the project. His personal research background is in sustainable aviation after completing an MSc in Sustainability for Community and Business, following my BSc (hons) in Geography. He has worked as a research assistant for the department for just under two years, completing and assisting in a variety of research projects, as well as assisting in admin duties and student support roles in the department.

### **Dr Fiona Cowdell, University of Hull**

Fiona Cowdell is a Reader in Wellbeing in Long- Term Conditions at the University of Hull. She is a Registered Nurse who worked for many years in clinical practice. Her current academic activity is in three main areas. Research interests focus on promotion and maintenance of skin health particularly with older people and supporting self-management in long- term skin conditions. She is involved in a number of publically funded trials. In June Fiona begins a National Institute for Health Research Knowledge Mobilisation Research Fellowship in which she will investigate methods of moving skin health research findings into everyday practice. Fiona is a co-lead of the Programme for Women Achieving Excellence in Research (PoWER), this new theory-based programme is designed to enhance the experience and career prospects of female academics working at the University of Hull.

### **Sophie Cowell, University of Chester**

Sophie Cowell is studying for a PhD at the University of Chester Law School, and is a researcher within the Law School's Forum for Research into Equality and Diversity. Sophie's main research area is discrimination law, with a particular focus on positive action, and equality and diversity issues within football. Her PhD considers the use of positive action to increase the representation of professional football managers and coaches from a Black and Minority Ethnic ('BME') background, in response to the Football League's proposals to introduce an equivalent to the "Rooney Rule". Sophie's research will consider whether such measures are legal and beneficial, and how they are likely to be received. Sophie is a Young Ambassador for Kick It Out - football's leading anti-discrimination charity - and is a member of their Youth Guidance Group, who work on engaging young people with the promotion of equality and inclusion within the game.

### **Dr Melanie Crofts, University of Northampton**

Dr Melanie Crofts is a Senior Lecturer in Law at the University of Northampton and has been lecturing since 2001. She is currently the Programme Leader for the 3 year LLB and Joint Honours Law. She was awarded her doctorate in 2014 which focussed on the implementation of the Public Sector Equality Duties within higher education, with a particular emphasis on race and disability. The research, which was based on a case study, involved interviewing staff and students about their experiences. The research also considered a number of broad policy implications in relation to the implementation of equality legislation in higher education. She has been involved in a project looking at the effect of pedagogy, in particular Team Based Learning, on different student groups with a focus on the impact in relation to gender and race and is also researching the impact of empowerment on achievement and academic misconduct. She has taken an active role in furthering the equality agenda within higher education and within her own institution. She is the Equality and Diversity Representative on the University and College Union Branch Executive Committee and has sat on a number of committees within the institution in this capacity, for example the Equality Forum. Melanie is also a member of the Inclusive Student Experience Group and she was a member of a working group at the

University considering data as part of an equal pay audit. She is also taking the lead on setting up a working group looking into issues of BME student achievement at the University. Melanie is also a Director with the Northamptonshire Rights and Equality Council and a member of the Northamptonshire Football Association Inclusion Group as well as a member of the Discrimination Disciplinary Panel. Melanie has also been a member of the Athena SWAN panel, judging applications for the Equality Challenge Unit.

### **Professor Chantal Davies, University of Chester**

After graduating with a law degree from Oxford University, Chantal qualified as a solicitor with Eversheds in Cardiff specialising in Employment, Human Rights and Discrimination Law. She then moved on to practice as a Senior Solicitor in Davies Wallis Foyster in Manchester. In 1998, she moved to work as a solicitor for the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) in Manchester heading up a Unit tackling strategic and wider enforcement of the gender equality legislation. Whilst working as a solicitor for the EOC, apart from undertaking a number of major legal test cases, including to the Court of Appeal and the European Court of Justice, she also sat on several European and National bodies and gave several keynote lectures to leading national organisations. Chantal has been a qualified solicitor for 18 years and her practice has specifically focused on areas of equality law and human rights. Chantal is now a Senior Lecturer in Human Rights Law and Discrimination Law in the Law School at the University of Chester. Chantal has recently completed a 12 month funded project considering the experiences of BME undergraduate students and is currently undertaking follow-up research in relation to the perceptions of BME students towards employability. Chantal is the Director of the Forum for Research into Equality and Diversity ([www.chester.ac.uk/FRED](http://www.chester.ac.uk/FRED)). She has sat on the review panel for the Subject Benchmark Statement for Law and also sits on the board of the Equality Challenge Unit and Cheshire Halton and Warrington Race and Equality Centre. She is currently leading a research project looking at gendered perspectives towards research activity in Higher Education.

### **Dr Judith Dyson, University of Hull**

A qualified General and Mental Health Nurse with a Masters degree in Public Health and a PhD investigating the use of psychological theory in influencing the adoption of best practice by health care practitioners Judith is currently a Senior Lecturer at the University of Hull. Her research interests involve the use of psychology in influencing health, implementation or other behaviours. She is actively engaged in using theory to support best practice in her work as an Academic Improvement Fellow for the Improvement Academy (part of the Yorkshire and Humber Academic Health Science Network) and to support academic output of attendees of the Programme for Women Achieving Excellence in Research (PoWER) at the University of Hull.

### **Niel Gillard, University of Chester**

Niel is a Ph.D. student and visiting lecturer in law at the University of Chester. Niel's main research area is in the area of discrimination law, his focus centres on the relationship between legislation, culture and women's progression in law firms. Prior to enrolling onto the programme, Niel graduated from the University of Chester with a Law degree. During his undergraduate degree Niel developed a real enthusiasm for research, with a particular interest in the general areas of discrimination and employment law and more specifically how the two areas overlap attempting to provide equality for women in the workplace. Niel recently started a three year funded PhD in September 2014, he is conducting a socio- legal study exploring the impact of legislation and culture on women's progression in law firms. Initially his research will focus on legislative and cultural impact in the UK, Niel plans to replicate his research in China to allow for a comparative study.

### **Dr Ruth Healey, University of Chester**

Ruth Healey is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Chester, UK. She obtained her bachelor, masters, and doctorate degrees in geography from the University of Sheffield. Since 2009 she has lectured at the University of Chester. In 2009 she was also appointed to the editorial board of the *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*. She became External Examiner at the University of Central Lancashire in 2012, and University of South Wales in 2013. In the same year she was awarded her MA in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education from the University of Chester. In 2014 she became a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. Ruth has researched into a range of areas in higher education including: teaching for social transformation, teaching through debates in small groups, teaching ethics, conducting ethical scholarship of teaching and learning research, student-staff partnerships, and gendered perceptions and attitudes towards research activity. She has written 16 teaching and learning publications and given more than 20 teaching and learning workshops and presentations.

### **Dr Vicky Jones, HEFCE**

Vicky is a senior policy adviser in the Research Policy Team at HEFCE. The team covers a wide variety of areas from the annual allocation of £1.6 billion of research funding, to developing policies on open access and equalities in research careers, in support of a dynamic and internationally leading research base. Vicky had particular involvement in the programme of activities to evaluate REF 2014 and is currently working on the development of a future REF exercise. Prior to this Vicky was Deputy Manager for the REF with responsibility for delivery of the REF submission system and working with the panels during the assessment phase. Prior to joining the REF team Vicky worked in HEFCE's Research Policy Team and was involved in research funding policy and research information issues. Before joining HEFCE Vicky spent six years at EPSRC, following a PhD in analytical chemistry.

### **Darta Kajeja, University of Chester**

Darta Kajeja is currently a law student with the University of Chester. In September 2016 she will be commencing her PhD with the Law School focussing on the use of positive action aimed at gender disparity for female academics. She is currently a legal advisor with Cheshire, Halton and Warrington Race and Equality Centre. She is also a trustee and director of Chester University Student Union and is currently the Communications Officer of the Chester University Debating Society.

### **Kathryn Leighton, HR Manager, University of Chester**

Kathryn Leighton is HR Manager for Diversity and Development at the University of Chester and has worked at the University for 13 years. Actively involved in Equality and Diversity (E&D) at the University for the last 10 years, Kathryn has played a key role in the University's successful ECU Gender Equality Mark and Athena Swan Institutional Bronze applications, developed and delivered a range of E&D training sessions for managers and staff, including the 20-credit Work Based Learning and Integrated Studies (WBIS) E&D module and organises the University's successful annual Diversity Festival, trying to ensure each year is better than the last! As HR lead for staff E&D at the University, Kathryn is responsible for all equality monitoring, ensures staff related equality objectives are met and is a lead member of the University's Equality Form, ensuring all departments are kept updated on legal and sector changes. Kathryn is a chartered member of the CIPD, an active member of the North West EO Network of E&D practitioners in HE, an experienced trainer and a qualified mediator. Kathryn works part time as she has two young daughters.

### **Dr Dawn Llewellyn, Institute of Gender Studies, University of Chester**

Dawn Llewellyn is Senior Lecturer in Christian Studies, Department of Theology and Religious Studies and Deputy Director of the Institute for Gender Studies at the University of Chester. Her research has focused on Christian and post-Christian women's reading practices, third wave feminism and religion, feminist generations, motherhood and elective childlessness in Christianity, and methodologies in religious studies.

She is the author of *Reading, Feminism, and Spirituality: Troubling the Waves* (Palgrave MacMillan 2015), and has co-edited *Religion, Equalities and Inequalities* (Routledge, 2016) and *Reading Spiritualities: Constructing and Representing the Sacred* (Ashgate 2008).

### **Gary Loke, Head of Policy, Equality Challenge Unit**

Gary has responsibility for overseeing and coordinating ECU's policy and research activities. His career has been in equality policy and public affairs. He previously worked for an older persons' charity, Independent Age on age-related policy issues in health and social care and for a rural race equality organisation on projects including minority ethnic people's access to information and public services, racist incident reporting and capacity building of small minority ethnic and faith groups. Gary has also worked within the student's union movement, both at a local and national level. At the ECU, Gary is currently leading a three year European Commission funded project, GENDER-NET, the first European Research Area network exploring gender equality in research careers and content. He has been on a number of UK advisory bodies, including the Research Excellence Framework equality and diversity panel, the Quality Assurance Agency's advisory group on the Quality Code on student support, learning resources and careers education, information, advice and guidance, as well as the Legal Education and Training Review Diversity and Social Mobility Expert Advisory Group. He is currently a member of the policy advisory group on migration and ethnicity of the UK Economic and Social Research Council Research Centre on Micro-Social Change at the University of Essex and a member of the gender equality commission of the Swiss National Science Foundation.

### **Professor Simonetta Manfredi, Oxford Brookes University**

Simonetta Manfredi is Professor of Equality and Diversity Management and Director of the Centre for Diversity Policy Research and Practice at Oxford Brookes University. Her research interests include gender and careers, work-life balance, age equality with a focus on the Higher Education sector. She has published widely and led several projects on these topics funded by organisations including the European Commission, the former Department of Trade and Industry, the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, the Higher Education Funding Council for England and Equality Challenge Unit. Simonetta's book on *Managing Equality and Diversity* (co-authored with Dr Kumra), published by Oxford University Press, received the Chartered Management Institute Management Book of the Year Award 2013 (under the management and leadership category). In 2011 she received the outstanding paper award by the Emerald Publisher for her article (co-authored with Professor Liz Doherty) on *Improving Women's Representation in Senior Positions in Universities*.

### **Dr Annick Masselot, University of Canterbury, New Zealand**

Annick Masselot is an Associate Professor in Law at the University of Canterbury in New Zealand. Her area of expertise focuses on gender equality, social and employment law. Annick is the author of *Reconciling Work and Family Life in EU Law and Policy*, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010) (with E. Caracciolo di Torella). She has recently co-edited *Importing EU Norms? Conceptual Framework and Empirical Findings* (Springer 2015). She is also guest co-editor of the 2015 Special Issue *Asia-Europe Journal: 'Rising' Asia and 'Normative Power Europe': New Perspectives in the Dialogue on Norms and Values*.

### **Professor Alis Oancea, University of Oxford**

Prof Alis Oancea is Pro-Proctor at the University of Oxford, Professor of Philosophy of Education and Research Policy and Director for Research at the Oxford University Department of Education. Her research addresses questions about research policy and governance, including research impact and quality, research assessment, research capacity, and public discourses about research, as well as philosophical questions about research methodology. In her writing, she has challenged divisive interpretations of research methodologies and of research governance and strategies, and has critiqued conceptually underdeveloped metrics for

research, while arguing for a tighter relationship between philosophical, theoretical and empirical inquiry in the social sciences and the humanities. Books include “Assessing Quality in Applied and Practice-Based Research” (Routledge), “Introduction to Research Methods in Education” (Sage), and ‘Education for All’ (Routledge). Most recent publications include “The ecologies and economy of cultural value from research” (2015) and “The aims and claims of research” (2016).

### **Clare Owens, University of Chester**

Clare has an extensive background working as a practitioner and manager in the field of Adult Literacy. The main focus of her career has been the empowerment of young people and adults who have left education with limited or no formal qualifications. This lack of qualifications and its subsequent impact on confidence, education progression, career aspirations, both for the individual and also for their families, has been key to Clare’s work. Her strategic role in national community mentoring/ volunteering projects provided an insight into the lives of people living in some of the most deprived wards and in English prisons. At its most successful, the individual stories portray people who have progressed to gaining higher qualifications and employment in order to provide better homes and life chances for themselves and their families, thus striving to break the poverty cycle. Clare is currently involved in the creative aspects of the MakerSpace movement, using her teaching and learning skills in a complementary way to enable relaxation and learning at the same time!

### **Dr Kate Carruthers Thomas, Birmingham City University**

Dr Kate Carruthers Thomas is Research Fellow and Project Manager for Athena SWAN at Birmingham City University. Her doctoral research (Birkbeck, University of London) investigated dimensions of ‘belonging’ for mature part-time undergraduates in English higher education. She is about to embark on a qualitative research project focused on gendered experiences of work and career progression in the higher education context. Kate is also a Co-Convenor of the SRHE Access and Widening Participation Network.

### **Dr Karen Schucan Bird, UCL Institute of Education**

Karen Schucan Bird is a Research Officer in the Department of Social Science, UCL Institute of Education, London. Her day to day work involves designing and conducting systematic reviews, in a range of policy areas from crime to culture and sport. Karen has a long standing interest in gender issues, which she is currently channelling into research and action: Karen founded and runs a ‘Women’s Writing Collective’ at UCL, she is interrogating the gender and ethnicity of authorship in key methodological texts in systematic reviews, and she is Equality and Diversity Representative for her Department.

### **Professor Lucy Vickers, Oxford Brookes University**

Lucy Vickers is Professor of Law at Oxford Brookes University. Her main research area is the protection of human rights within the workplace and aspects of equality law. She has written extensively on issues relating to religious discrimination and age discrimination at work. She is the author of Freedom Of Speech and Employment (2002) OUP, and Religious Freedom, Religious Discrimination and the Workplace (2008) Hart Publishing, and a report for the European Commission on Religion and Belief Discrimination in Employment – The EU Law (2007), as well as numerous academic articles. She has undertaken research for HEFCE on managing age diversity in the HE sector, and managing without a retirement age. Her teaching areas include Criminal Law and Discrimination Law and she has also been involved in teaching and training on diversity issues at work.

### **Dr Wen Wang, University of Wolverhampton**

Dr Wen Wang is a senior lecturer in Economics at the University of Wolverhampton Business School. Her current focus of research spans gendered career gap and employment relations; she has been involved in projects on women career progress at the UK higher education institutions (2010-2012) and gender balance on boards in the EU (2014-2016). She has extensive experience in quantitative research; predominantly focus on workplaces in the UK and EU. Wen has a PhD in Labour Economics from the University of East Anglia (Norwich).

### **Sarah Wilson-Medhurst, Independent HE Consultant**

Sarah Wilson-Medhurst is a Higher Education consultant and academic developer with a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate teaching experience in the fields of computing, management and education including HE teacher education and development. Sarah has worked in both industry and higher education settings. Her teaching and research interests include work-based and work-related learning and organisational development especially through pedagogies and research activities that develop learners through cooperative, inclusive, co-creative activity. Sarah has a particular interest in inclusive practices in STEM education that promote attainment in all its forms especially for under-represented groups not least women. Sarah's work in this area encompasses curriculum design and innovation, course structure and delivery as well as building an inclusive learning environment and culture. She has an interest in interventions that provide for facilitating women's and other under-represented groups' interest and self-concept in their chosen field, not least pursuing research and becoming confident in their ability to conduct independent research and succeed in their chosen profession. Sarah is currently an external educational developer consultant at The London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine in the Talent and Educational Development unit.

### **Emily Yarrow, Queen Mary, University of London**

Emily Yarrow is a PhD student in The Centre for Equality and Diversity (CRED) at Queen Mary, University of London and wishes to make a unique and timely academic contribution to the struggle for a true meritocracy in Higher Education in the UK, exploring research evaluation and gendered academic careers. Emily's research aims to be at the forefront of research into the REF2014, contributing empirical findings to the discourse in an original and innovative way. Emily's research adopts a case study approach, employing semi-structured interviews to provide rich insight into the lived experiences of female academics in the context of REF2014. Emily is also a part-time lecturer at Newcastle University Business School, teaching on the International Business Management MA programme and Business Management BA programme. Prior to returning to academia, Emily worked in the Banking and Finance sector with Scottish Widows, and Proctor and Gamble as a buyer in the global FMCG marketplace. Emily has written MA (Dist.) and BA Hons Dissertations (First Class) on:

- 'Fiduciary Responsibility and Trust in UK Pensions Providers'
- 'World Bank Pensions Reform, Creating Opportunities for UK Providers Overseas? An Investigative Study'\*

\*This paper was also shared with members of the World Bank and won the Newcastle University Business School prize for Best Dissertation in 2010.

Emily is also a keen rugby player, and outdoor swimmer in her spare time.

# APPENDIX B

Keynote from Professor Simonetta Manfredi and Professor Lucy Vickers

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**Equality Issues in Research Careers**

Professor Simonetta Manfredi  
Professor Lucy Vickers

**Centre for Diversity Policy Research and Practice**

(<https://www.brookes.ac.uk/the-centre-for-diversity-policy-research-and-practice/>)



## Underpinning research

### Three studies

- *The impact of the process to promote equality and diversity in the Research Assessment Exercise 2008, (ECU, 2009)*
- *Gender and Higher Education Leadership: Researching the Careers of Top Management Programme Alumni (LFHE and ECU, 2014)*
- *Equality issues in research careers (LFHE, 2015)*

What can we learn from staff's experiences of the REF 2014 equality process?

## Putting equality on the research agenda

There was 'nervousness' in 2001 about submitting staff with fewer research outputs for equality related circumstances. Funding Council Equality Guidance for 2008 much clearer and selector felt more confident to include staff with fewer outputs.

### Key recommendations from first study:

- *Clearer guidance to facilitate staff self-disclosure of equality-related personal circumstances*
- *Equality training should be REF focussed and take a case study approach*
- *Greater consistency in the equality guidance*
- *Continue to use EIAs*

## Staff experiences of the REF equality process

**REF 2014 equality guidance was better communicated** compared to RAE 2008: *"It has been a lot more visible this time"*

**The REF process was more transparent:** *"There has been a much more supportive culture around this REF...It is all very transparent..."*

**The equality guidance helped to put equality issues in research careers on the agenda:** *"these topics [equalities] are on the agenda... that can only be a good thing...we talk too little about equality issues in research"*

**The process highlighted that there are more complex gender issues:** *"[there are] much bigger problems than simply women's careers being disrupted by maternity leave".*

## Staff's experiences of having equality-related personal circumstances taken into account



Several benefitted by having clearly defined personal circumstances e.g. maternity leave

Equality-related personal circumstances handled with greater care and sensitivity:

- *We were told who would and who would not be able to see that information, who would review it etc. and that nobody in your unit would know."*

Disability/illness – reluctance to disclose because fear stigma, eg, mental health issues; lack of support, eg. for dyslexia:

- *'the signals that it might send in terms of my professional identity, my capacity and capability' 'making excuses for herself'.*

Culture among academic staff of 'carrying on'

## Equality issues in research careers: Key findings about use of equality guidance in REF 2014



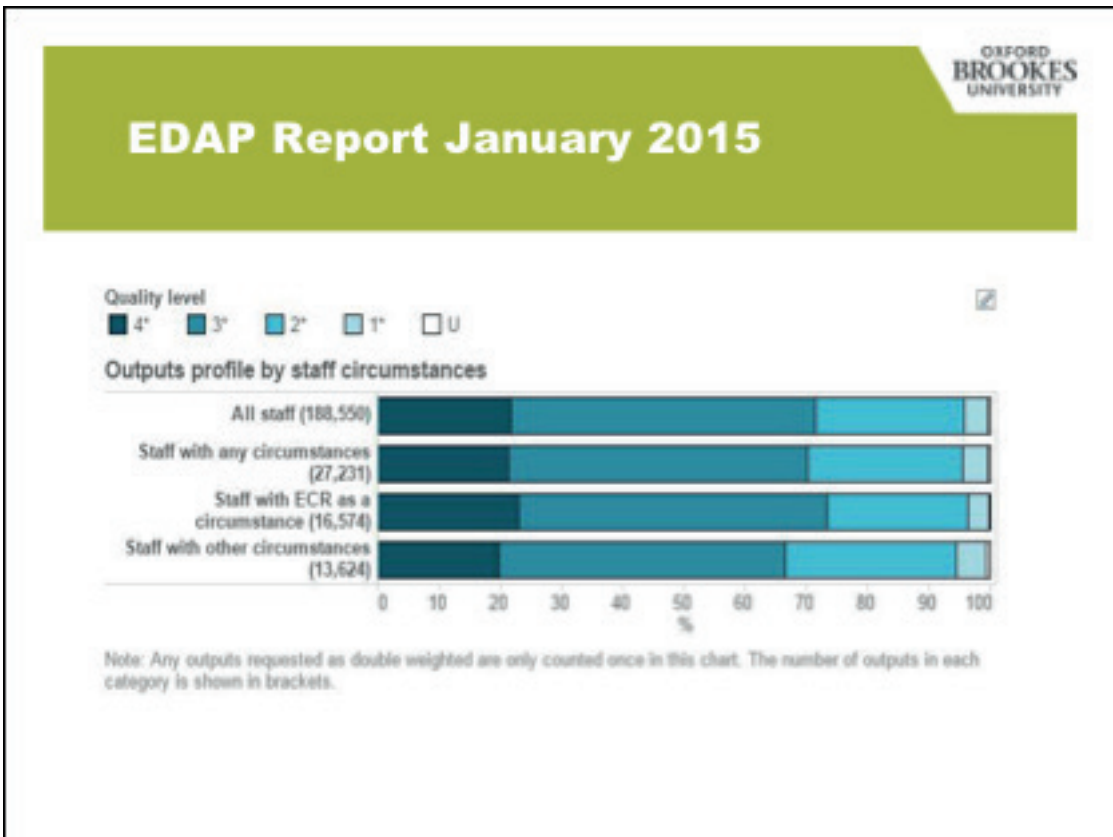
- EIAs were very detailed and of significantly better quality in 2014, and proved a useful tool
- Most of the institutions set up REF equality advisory group to monitor the implementation of the equality guidance
- Clear separation between decision-making process about inclusion in REF and decision-making process relating to complex circumstances.
- Dealing with complex circumstances generated more case work than expected.
- It was noted that there is a culture among academic staff of 'carrying on'
- institutions need to do more to support staff during critical periods of their careers

## To what extent was the equality guidance used in REF 2014?

### REF 2014: Staff submitted with individual circumstances Submissions

(source EDAP Report January 2015)

Staff circumstances	Total	Panel A	Panel B	Panel C	Panel D
Staff with individual circumstances	16,361	4,302	3,142	4,819	4,098
Staff with complex circumstances	1,032	205	121	386	320
Staff with clearly-defined circumstances	15,329	4,097	3,021	4,433	3,778
Staff with ECR as a clearly-defined circumstance	10,099	2,595	2,435	2,972	2,097
Staff with part-time working, career break or secondment as a clearly-defined circumstance	3,358	772	410	886	1,290
Staff with maternity, paternity or adoption leave as a clearly-defined circumstance	2,601	822	276	806	697



**Equality issues beyond the REF**

## Equality issues beyond the REF: Maternity leave/career breaks

*'I don't think in an academic world you could take a significant career break...you would find it very hard to get back into an academic environment, particularly in a research-intensive university'*

*'I instantly became a better mother when I...went back to work'*

*'...if I hadn't had a family I would be a lot further on in my career but I would be much more impoverished personally by not having [had children]'*

## Equality issues beyond the REF: Work-life balance issues

**Lack of work-life balance disproportionately disadvantages academics with caring responsibilities, disability and long-term medical conditions:**

*"I think there is a culture in academia which assumes that people will work at the weekend and the evening which just isn't possible when you've got little children and you are a single mother"*

*"I've never been married and I am childless, so I can stay here [at work] until half past nine...or I can work until midnight at home...when I have had caring responsibilities – my father became ill last year – it really did reveal how much of my own time and headspace I was drawing on...it felt that my own working life was crashing down around me like a house of cards and that I was risking my research status"*

## Work-life balance issues: views from some research leaders

*"There is a certain deal you get when you decide to be an academic and part of the deal is you get to travel and you go to conferences and you get to do what interests you, you can pretty much choose what you do as a researcher, but the other part of that deal is don't expect to do it from 9 to 5 Monday to Friday".* (Male respondent)

*"All of the excellent academics that I know work all the time because that's what their passion is and that's their choice".* (Female respondent)

## Equality issues beyond the REF

### Culture and Race:

*"And all of a sudden your standard of English is being questioned"*

*"Not fitting with the rest of the team"*

*"Unspoken racism"*

*"BME academics feel more respected in other countries"*

### Social class:

Men and women may find it more difficult to be accepted as academics or to have *"legitimate aspirations to an academic career, let alone academic leadership"* because of their working class background

## Equality issues beyond the REF

### Disability/illness:

- Reluctance to disclose because fear stigma, eg, mental health issues; lack of support, eg. for dyslexia  
*'the signals that it might send in terms of my professional identity, my capacity and capability' 'making excuses for herself'.*
- Culture among academic staff of 'carrying on'

### Age:

- Too young or too old?
- Pressure to advance quickly when joining academic life in middle age

## Enabling others to fulfil their potential and develop a successful research career

**EIAs:** Support for the idea of undertaking EIA at departmental level as EIAs can be a useful tool to track inequality as well as a useful starting point to draw up a talent map

**Equality Training:** support for face to face equality training based on case studies; it could be part of away days and it needs to be recurrent to keep people's knowledge and understanding up to date



## Enabling others to fulfil their potential and develop a successful research career

OXFORD  
BROOKES  
UNIVERSITY

**Distribution of workload:** workload models need compensatory mechanisms for admin tasks; light terms for staff who had undertaken heavy admin duties e.g. head of department; senior tutor role to deal with complex pastoral care issues; noted that some staff have chosen management as an alternative career route

**Develop measures to support staff at critical times in their careers:** make better use of 'keeping in touch days'; smaller period of leave (e.g. 8 weeks) to complete outputs; flexible teaching buy out; phased return to work but tricky if people are not absent from work

## Future challenges: metrics and research impact

OXFORD  
BROOKES  
UNIVERSITY

We need to be vigilant about the unintended consequences relating to the application of metrics:

- Too much emphasis on the 'signals' of excellence rather than the substance could lead to unconscious bias (Adams and Gurney, 2014)
- Risk of reinforcing a gendered construction of excellence (Rees, 2004)
- One size does **not** fit all: different disciplines favour different types of research outputs which may be more difficult to evaluate through metrics
- How is metrics going to be used in decision making and performance management of academic staff?
- Research impact?

# APPENDIX C

Keynote from Gary Loke

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## **Gendered research careers and content**

**Gary Loke, Head of Policy**

**15 June 2016, University of Chester**

Advancing equality and diversity in universities and colleges

## Equality Challenge Unit



ECU works to further and support equality and diversity for staff and students in higher education and seeks to ensure that staff and students are not unfairly excluded, marginalised or disadvantaged because of age, disability, gender identity, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity status, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or through any combination of these characteristics or other unfair treatment.

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## GENDER-NET

**Coordinator:** CNRS (France)

**13 Partners** (all national programme owners) from 12 countries:

- 5 Ministries / State Secretariats (France, Spain, Slovenia, Switzerland, Israel)
- 6 National RFOs or National Academy (Norway, Ireland, Belgium, Cyprus, Canada, US)
- 1 National RPO-RFO (France)
- 1 National non-profit (ECU)

**10 Observers**

(Germany, Canada, Austria, Norway, Czech Republic, Iceland, US, NordForsk)

<http://www.gender-net.eu/>

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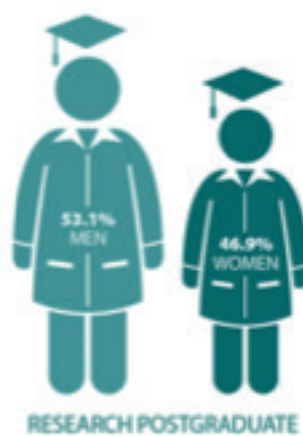
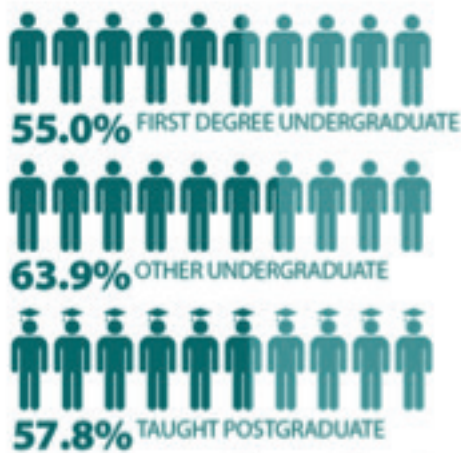
## 1. Women in HE: the picture today

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### Student data



Female students comprised the majority of students in all degree levels with the exception of research postgraduates.



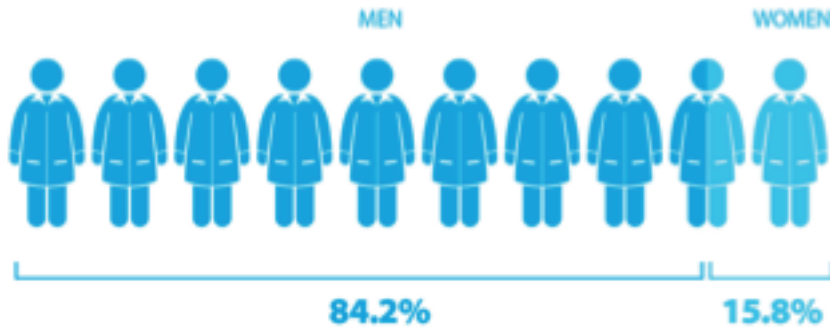
HESA: 2012/13;  
ECU Know your numbers 2015

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## Student data: horizontal segregation



There was a significant gender gap in science, engineering and technology (SET) subjects.



SET subjects with the largest gender gap across all degree levels were engineering and technology.

HESA: 2012/13;  
ECU Know your numbers 2015

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## Staff data



The majority of **academic staff** were men.

37.4%



The majority of **professional and support staff** were women.



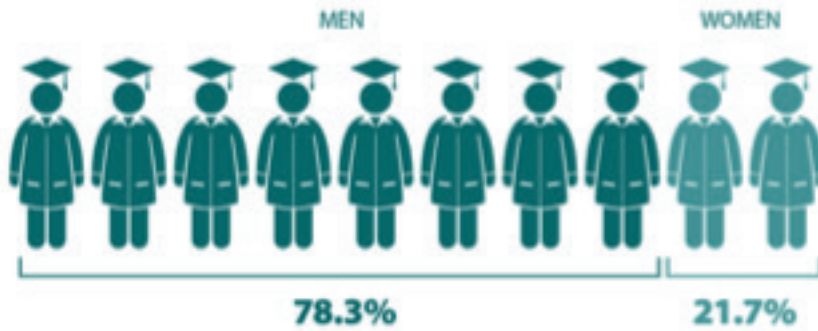
HESA: 2012/13;  
ECU Know your numbers 2015

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## Staff data: professoriate



The majority of all professors were men.



This gender difference was most notable among full-time professors working in science, engineering and technology subject areas (male professors 82.8% and female professors 17.2%).

HESA: 2012/13;  
ECU Know your numbers 2015

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## Staff data: heads of institution



**ONLY 20.1%** OF ALL HEADS OF INSTITUTIONS WERE **WOMEN**

HESA: 2012/13;  
ECU Know your numbers 2015

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## Identity



Ethnicity	Disability	Age
Sexual orientation	Religion and belief	Caring responsibilities
Marital or civil partnership status	Gender identity	Socio-economic status
Nationality and migration history	English as a second language	International

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## Intersectionality



**PROPORTIONALLY FEWER BME AND WHITE FEMALE ACADEMIC STAFF WERE PROFESSORS COMPARED WITH WHITE MEN**



HESA: 2013/14;  
ECU Know your numbers 2016

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## Research funding



- = European Research Council (ERC) for 2007–13 show that women make 25% of grant applications, and receive 20% of awards.
  - = Different across disciplinary domains:
    - = in the physical sciences and engineering, women submit 17% of grant applications and receive 15%
    - = in the life sciences, 30% and 21%
    - = the social sciences and humanities, 36% and 31%
- [https://erc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document/file/Gender\\_statistics\\_April\\_2014.pdf](https://erc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document/file/Gender_statistics_April_2014.pdf)
- = Similar pattern in UK research funding
- <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/skills/rcukdiversitynarrativesanddata-pdf/>

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## 2. Integrating gender analysis into research (IGAR)

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## Considering sex analysis

- Heart disease is biggest killer of women in the USA and Europe
- Historically, heart disease mainly seen as a male disease (research commonly all-male subjects)
- Gender bias in heart research:
  - Women experience different symptoms to men (usually less intense and more varied): less recognised
  - Men with abnormal test results treated more intensively than women with the same results
  - Women twice as likely to receive a psychiatric diagnosis



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## Considering gender analysis



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## GENDER-NET: Mapping and Analysis of national IGAR initiatives



Five key areas:

1. **Policies and strategies** aimed at integrating sex/gender analysis in research
2. **Research funding programmes** fostering the integration of sex/gender analysis in research
3. **Guidelines/training for applicants**
4. **Guidelines/training for grant proposal reviewers**
5. **Recommendations and/or models for university curricula development** in scientific and technological fields (other than humanities & social sciences)

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## GENDER-NET: IGAR survey: 40 responding national organisations



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### 3. Making changes

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1

## What you can change



Structures



?

(Schiebinger, 1999)



Knowledge

Individual

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# APPENDIX D

Keynote from Professor Fiona Beveridge

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## Following the Money

### Professor Fiona Beveridge

Executive Pro-Vice-Chancellor – Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences



## Women and Research

- What is the problem (supposed to be)?
  - Educational segregation.
  - Leaky pipeline.
  - Gendered workplaces and practices.
  - Lack of family-friendly policies and expectations.
  - Exclusion from decision-making.
  - Gender blind research agendas (women as beneficiaries).

AMBITIOUS  
INSPIRING  
SPIRITED  
CHALLENGING  
INSPIRING  
AMBITIOUS  
SPIRITED  
INSPIRING  
CHALLENGING  
AMBITIOUS  
SPIRITED



## Following the Money: Athena Swan

- Dame Sally Davies, 2011
- RCUK 2013:
  - Promote and lead cultural change in relation to equalities and diversity.
  - Engage staff at all levels with improving the promotion of equality and diversity.
  - Ensure all members of the research workforce are trained and supported to address disincentives and indirect obstacles to recruitment, retention and progression in research careers.
  - Provide evidence of ways in which equality and diversity issues are managed at both an institutional and department level.



## Athena Swan: progress report

- 112 HEI members (21 for REC) of whom 85 have Athena Swan award
- At Departmental level, there are:
  - 315 Bronze
  - 149 Silver
  - 7 Gold Awards

Data supplied by ECU, June 2016



## A Serious Challenge?

Applied for since 2012	Bronze	Silver upgrade	New Silver	Gold Upgrade
Awarded Bronze	332		78	
Awarded Silver		29	47	
Awarded Gold				5
No Award	214	29	19	10

Data from ECU: Celebrating Ten Years of the Athena Swan Charter, July 2015.

“Changing embedded cultures and behaviours is a long-term commitment”

Prof. J Sanders,

PVC Institutional Affairs, U of Cambridge, quoted in ECU 2015, above.



## Following the Money: Gender in Horizon 2020

Three objectives underpin the strategy on gender equality in Horizon 2020:

- Fostering gender balance in research teams, in order to close the gaps in the participation of women.
- Ensuring gender balance in decision-making, in order to reach the target of 40% of the under-represented sex in panels and groups and of 50% in advisory groups.
- Integrating the gender dimension in research and innovation (R&I) content, helps improve the scientific quality and societal relevance of the produced knowledge, technology and/or innovation.



## Horizon 2020: detailed targets

- Expert groups and evaluation panels: 40% women
- Advisory Groups: 50% women
- Delivery team on projects: gender balance at all levels
  
- Allocation of funds: gender used only where all else is equal
- Researchers: must promote equal opps. in project
- Research: in some areas must include gender perspective



## Horizon 2020: Monitoring and Enforcement

- Performance indicators include:
  - Inclusion of gender in content of research; and
  - Workforce statistics by gender

### Annual Evaluations will cover:

- % of women MSC Fellows, from 2015.
- % of women as ERC principal investigators, from 2015.
- % of women in advisory groups, expert groups, evaluation groups and panels, from 2014.
- % of projects with gender dimension in the project design, from 2015.





## Horizon 2020: Training emphasis

Training is recognised as important:

Training on gender is eligible cost within projects.

Commission staff and evaluation staff all given access to training.

Evaluation panels briefed with programmes.



## Progress to date?

- % women project coordinators - nya.
- % of women as ERC principle investigators, from 2015. nya
- % of women in advisory groups, expert groups, evaluation groups and panels, from 2014 – 19,336 experts in database of which 35.56% are women; actual expert contracts signed, 36.27% women; women in H2020 Advisory groups in 2014, 52% women.
- % of projects with gender dimension in the project design, from 2015. Nya. But from the first 58 calls, the report identified there were around 63 topics with a gender dimension.

(First report on Horizon 2020, covering 2014).



## Commission's Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality 2016-19

Priority is further 'institutional change in research organisations to remove barriers to gender equality and engage all research organisations to implement gender equality plans'.

Action from the Commission is promised in 2016-17, aimed at raising the number of research organisations with gender equality plans in place from the 2014 baseline of 36% (across Europe).



## Observations and Conclusions

- New era of gender equality policies for HEAs: following the money.
- Contrast in approach between Athena Swan and Horizon 2020 (inputs v outputs) but both result in threat to research funding.
- Focus beyond award-holders to other aspects: whole culture in Athena Swan; decision-making and science in Horizon 2020.
- Approach puts risks from gender equality onto whole institutions but also onto senior researchers – PIs and investigators – and leaders: only wholesale cultural change will protect institutions.
- Precise weight of long-term threat will depend on willingness of RCUK and EU bodies to resort to sanctions, but threat pretty effective.





University of  
Chester

The Law School