



Athena SWAN Bronze university award application

Name of university: Birkbeck, University of London

Date of application: 30 April 2012

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An Athena SWAN Bronze university award recognises that the university overall has a solid foundation (the policies, practices, systems and arrangements) for eliminating gender bias and developing an inclusive culture that values all staff.

At Bronze university level the focus is on:

- The action already taken and planned which demonstrates the university's commitment at a senior level to the [6 Athena SWAN principles](#); and
- The journey to which the university has committed itself in order to achieve a significant improvement in women's representation and career progression in SET, with:
 - An identified starting point;
 - The resources needed;
 - People to lead and support; and
 - The means to monitor its progress (e.g. the action plan).

1. Letter of endorsement from Vice-Chancellor

See attached.

2. The self-assessment process

- a) The Birkbeck Self-Assessment Steering (SAT) group is composed partly of volunteers with an interest in Athena SWAN, and also by those invited to join the team to provide even representation across the College. It is formed mainly of staff from SET departments, including those from outside the School of Science in the Schools of Business, Economics and Informatics (BEI) and Social Sciences, History and Philosophy (SSHP) and a representative of the School of Arts to provide an external view. The team is chaired by Professor Nick Keep, Executive Dean of the School of Science, and includes representatives from Human Resources, Patricia Crampton (HR, Equalities Manager – Athena SWAN co-ordinator) and Jas Manget (HR Officer). Members of the team were invited to describe their roles and experiences in their own words:

Miss Naomi Adams graduated with a BA (hons) in Classics, and for two years worked in publishing as an editorial assistant on scientific journals at Elsevier. Naomi moved to Trinity College of Music to become Curriculum Officer for two years, and then to the History Department in Birkbeck to cover a maternity position as school administrator. This led to another maternity cover at Queen Mary for a year before returning to Birkbeck to join the Psychology Department as School Manager. Since the restructuring at Birkbeck in 2009 she has been the Assistant School Manager for Postgraduate Programmes and Research in the Department of Psychological Sciences, School of Science.

Dr Becky Briant is a Lecturer in Environmental Geography, on the Athena SWAN team as a representative of the School of Social Science, History and Philosophy. She has worked part-time since 2006 because of family responsibilities and is about to reduce her fractional contract further for health reasons.

Professor Hilary Downes has worked full-time for Birkbeck for 26 years. She was originally appointed as a Lecturer 1A, and is now Professor of Geochemistry. She was Head of Department for 8 years and has also done most other major administrative tasks within her Department. She carries a full-teaching load, including fieldwork. She is married with no children, and uses up all her annual leave to holiday with her husband each year to ensure her work-life balance.

Professor Nick Keep took his degrees at Cambridge, before researching at UCL, Leicester and the MRC in Cambridge. He has been at Birkbeck since 1998 rising from Lecturer A to Dean and Professor. He is married with no children and his wife works as an industrial chemist.

Dr Matt Longo is a lecturer in the Department of Psychological Sciences, which he joined in 2010. He studied at the University of California at Berkeley (BA) and the University of Chicago (MA, PhD) before joining University College London as a postdoctoral researcher. His research investigates the mental representation of the human body and its effects on perception.

Dr Carolyn Moores (Biological Sciences) has been a full-time Research Fellow at Birkbeck since her arrival 8 years ago. As such, her primary roles are undertaking academic research and supervising students and postdoctoral researchers in their research activities. Carolyn has relatively few teaching or administrative responsibilities. This is her first academic position. Prior to this, while she was training as a PhD student and postdoctoral research fellow, she was largely unaware of gender differentials amongst her peers, but feels that this is less and less the case

as she has progressed in her career. She is married but has no children or other care responsibilities and her attempts at a work-life balance include singing in a chamber choir.

Alexandra Poulouvassilis is Professor of Computer Science and Assistant Dean for Research in the School of BEI. She has also held posts at Birkbeck as Head of Computer Science and Informatics (2003-6 and 2009-10) and Head of the College Research School (2003-5). Since October 2003 she has been Co-Director of the London Knowledge Lab, a multi-disciplinary research collaboration with the Institute of Education. She served on the RAE 2008 Sub-Panel for Computer Science and Informatics, and is also serving on REF 2014. She has a work profile comprising roughly equal amounts of teaching, research and administration. Throughout her career she has worked full-time. She took a 6-month maternity break in the mid 1990s when her daughter was born.

- b) The SAT has met every two months to discuss the progress of the award application and address the gaps identified to ensure success. Extensive HR data mining and analysis has been required, involving HR representatives and members of the SAT. This process has, amongst other things, highlighted areas for improvement in several aspects of data tracking and data management across the College.

A launch event entitled 'Women, Science and Success' took place in November 2011 to raise the profile of Athena SWAN and the issues it addresses http://www.bbk.ac.uk/hr/policies_services/policies_az/AthenaSWAN

External and internal speakers were invited to participate in a panel discussion of key issues affecting women in SET careers. Audience questions were invited and were followed by more informal discussions over lunch. Further events and activities are being organised to share good practice and generate discussion about gender equality issues within the SET departments at Birkbeck. A workshop is being planned on sharing best mentoring practice across the College in June 2012.

- c) As part of the self-assessment process, an action plan has been prepared based on the findings identified. A separate report based on this submission will be prepared for distribution to key influential College committees, including the Strategic Planning Committee and the Executive Boards of all the College Schools (SET and non-SET). It is proposed that the group will continue to meet every term to address progress towards further accreditation and monitor the action plan.

The SAT will advise departments applying for the Athena SWAN award at Bronze or Silver level. In particular, it will be crucial for Birkbeck, as a

relatively small institution, to establish a realistic and relevant framework for future applications, through discussions with Athena SWAN.

3. Description of the university

a) Birkbeck is a world-class research institution and the UK's leading provider of part-time, evening education for mature students. A member of the 1994 Group of Universities, Birkbeck ranks in the top 25% of UK multi faculty HEIs according to the 2008 RAE results, and in the top 150 in the World University Rankings 2011 published by the Times Higher Education magazine.

Birkbeck has undergone significant restructuring (2009) in response to changes in government funding, particularly impacting providers of part-time Higher Education. The data included in this application reflect the current structure and have been retrospectively sorted. Birkbeck has over 19,000 students (8900 FTE), of which 28% by FTE are in SET departments. The total number of staff at Birkbeck is 1,156. There are also over 800 sessional workers of whom 185 are based in SET departments. There are currently 150 academics, 79 researchers and 81 support staff in SET departments.

(i) Birkbeck consists of five Academic Schools, comprising 19 departments:

- **Arts**
- **Business, Economics and Informatics**
- **Law**
- **Science**
- **Social Sciences, History and Philosophy**

(ii) The SET departments are;

School of Science (Sci)

- Biological Sciences (BIO)
- Earth and Planetary Sciences (EPS)
- Psychological Sciences (PSY)

School of Business, Economics and Informatics (BEI)

- Economics, Mathematics and Statistics (Mathematics only) (EMS)
- Computer Science and Information Systems (CSIS)

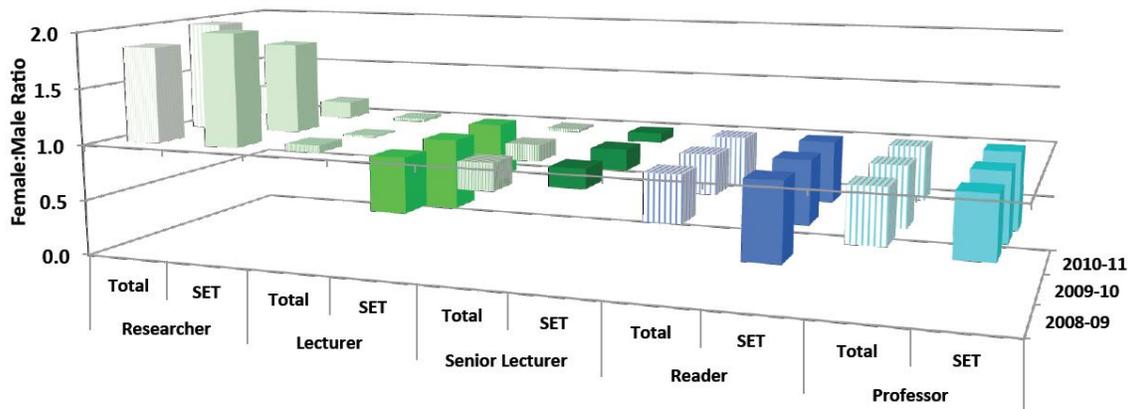
School of Social Sciences, History and Philosophy (SSHP)

- Geography, Environment and Development Studies (Physical Geography and Ecology only) (GEDS)

(iii) A third of Birkbeck's departments contain SET staff. SET is 21.3% by number of staff and; 28% by student number.

b) Note: in all graphs (unless indicated) numbers are presented as female:male ratio; i.e for equal numbers of women and men, ratio =1. The graphs are presented with the plane at ratio=1 so when women are in the majority the bars are above the plane, when in the minority, the bars are below.

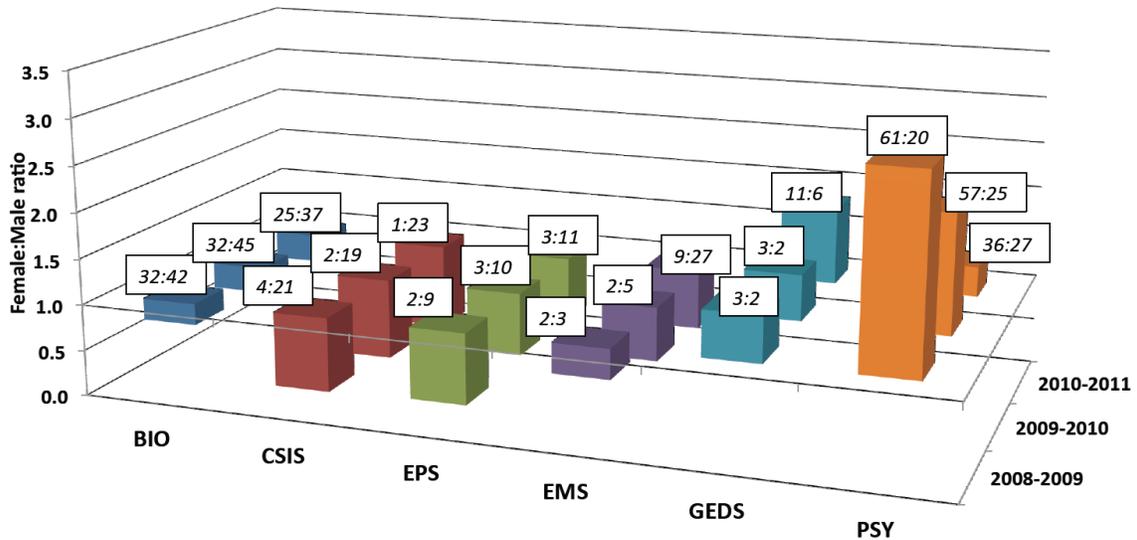
(i) ***Female: male ratio of academic staff and research staff***



In all but one category (research – below), there are fewer women than men in all subjects. There are no major changes during the three years analysed, so whatever effects are being captured are relatively static. The overall trend across all subjects is that there are proportionately fewer women at progressively more senior levels, reflecting women’s historical under-representation in academia.

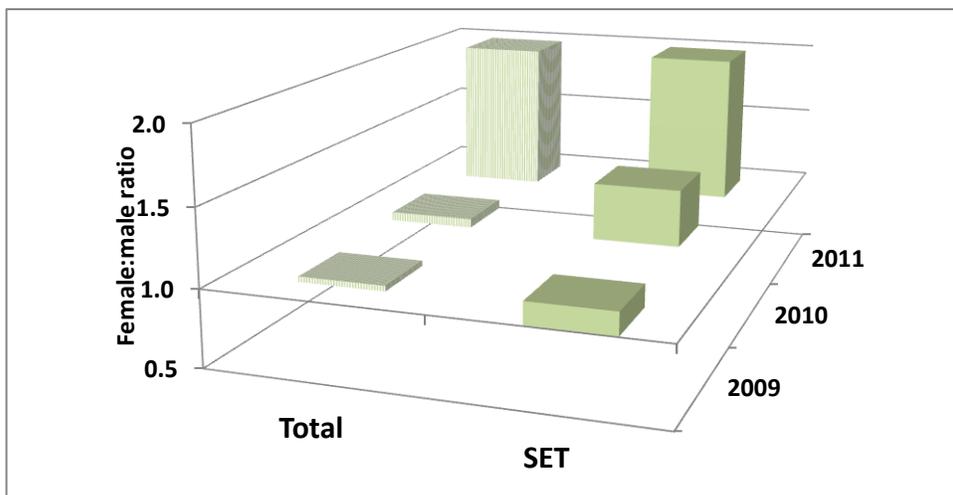
In this context, SET Senior Lecturers and Professors are not disproportionately under represented. For Lecturers and Readers, the female:male ratio is significantly smaller in SET subjects. The female:male ratio <1 trend is bucked in the researcher category. However, this is likely to be due to the distorting effects of one large SET programme in Psychology running between **2001** and **2012** as part of an evaluation of the government’s SureStart initiative. In this programme, there were 22 RES1-3 staff, all of whom were women (nearly all part-time). When the RES1 cohort is subtracted from the researcher data, the average ratio of the remaining researchers over the 3 years is 1.2 for all subjects, as might be expected during training and early career.

The graph below plots the female:male ratio of staff within SET departments, with the boxed numbers showing the actual staff numbers. This emphasises: 1) the wide variation across SET disciplines and 2) that most departments are small.



(ii) Female: male academic staff turnover rates by grade

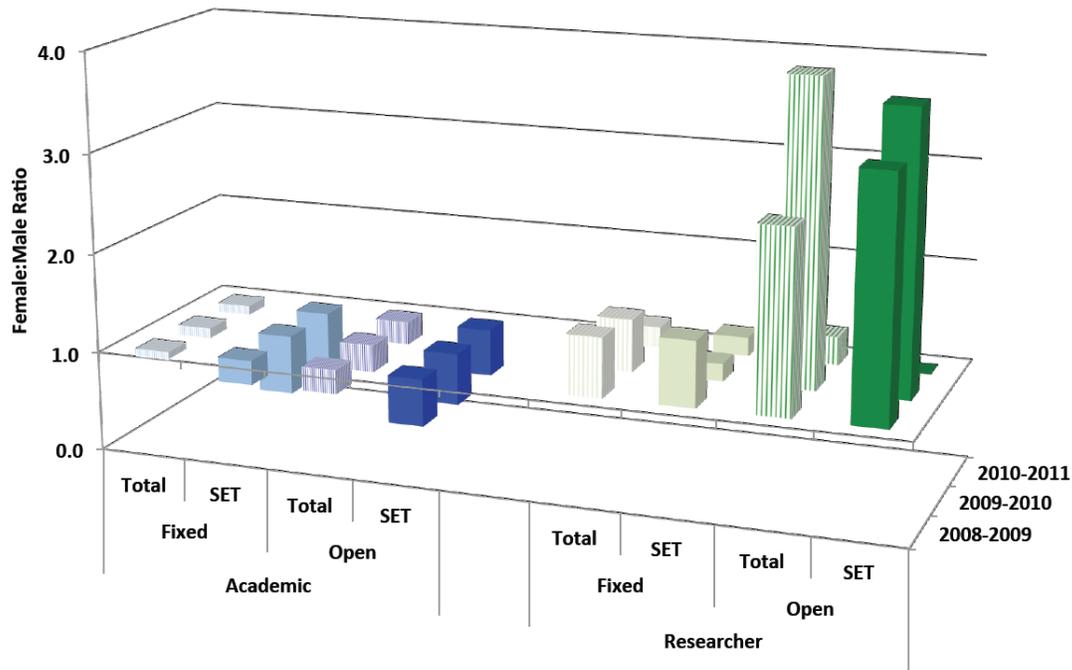
The graph shows the ratio of female to male leavers (researchers and academics) across the College and in SET departments. SET staff turnover represents 50-70% of total staff turnover in the period assessed primarily due to fixed term contract. In 2009 and 2010, the numbers of men and women leaving were roughly the same, but in 2011, the number of women leaving was around twice that of men due to 21 female researchers leaving at the end of the SureStart programme. Turnover is not reported by department as the numbers are very small.



Leavers are invited to complete exit questionnaires but generally the response rate is low. HR also gathers information through HESA returns and resignation notifications. Academic staff leave either because of retirement or career move/change of job. Most researchers leave at the end of their funding due to redundancy. They receive two week's salary uncapped per year worked (as with

all other staff), whereas many institutions in the sector only pay statutory redundancy.

(iii) Female: male ratio of academic and research staff on fixed-term contracts vs. open-ended (permanent) contracts



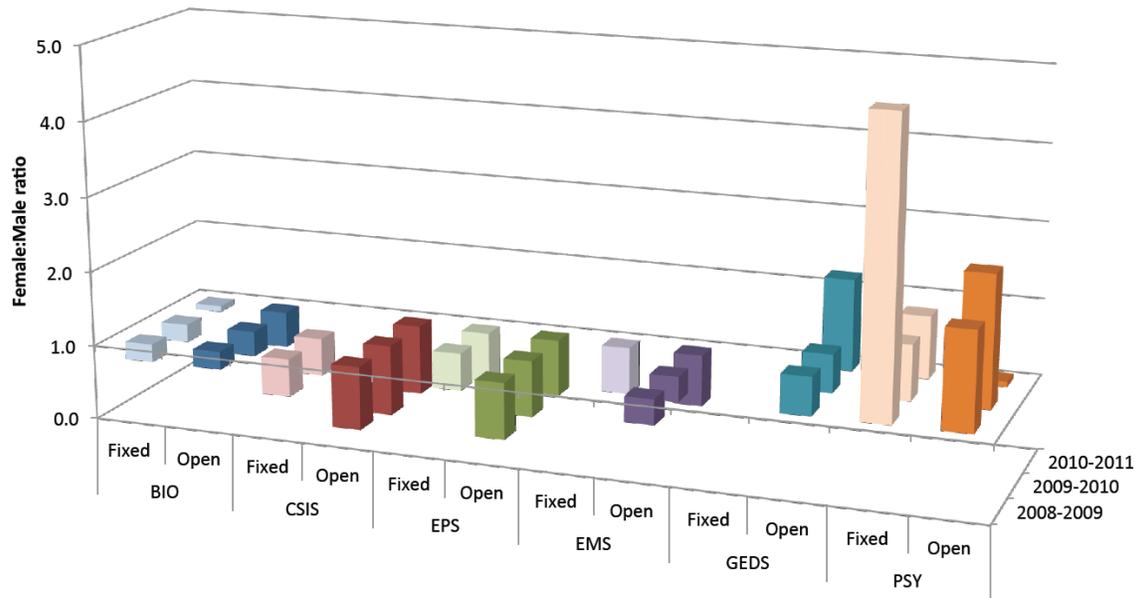
Amongst academics, there are no significant differences in the female:male ratio of those on fixed term compared to open ended contracts. Similarly, although there is some variation over the period analysed, there are no significant differences in the female:male ratio in SET subjects.

The situation amongst researchers appears dramatically different, but it should be noted that SET researchers dominate the total population such that on average across the 3 years sampled, 70% on fixed term contracts and 84% (34 out of 36 in 2009-2010) on open ended contracts are in SET subjects.

This reflects the different career stages amongst SET compared to non-SET subjects, e.g. where postdoctoral stints (often fixed-term) are effectively mandatory in SET subjects, while Research Lab Managers on open-ended contracts are also rather SET-specific. Thus comparisons between SET and non-SET subjects are not meaningful. Based on the SET numbers, it is encouraging that women are not over-represented on fixed term contracts. However, there are proportionately many more women researchers compared to academics in SET (see B2i).

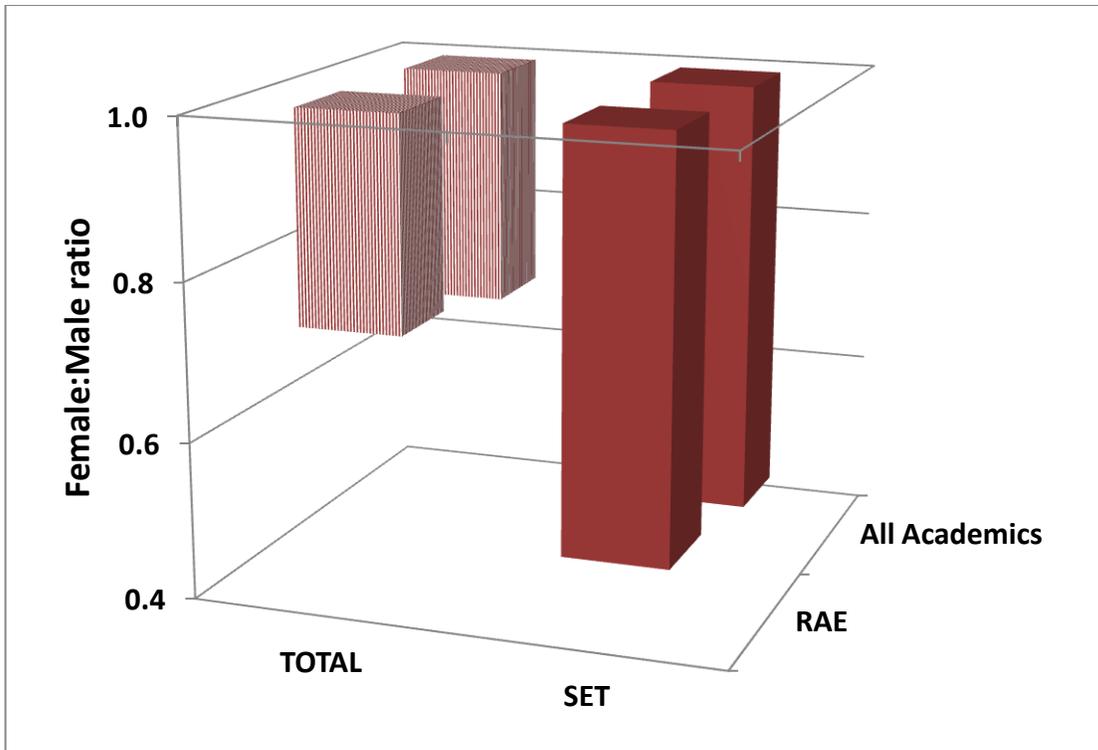
The graph below plots the female:male ratio of staff within SET departments on fixed and open contracts. This, again, emphasises the wide variation across

Birkbeck SET departments, some of which is due to small departmental size.
 (Where no bar is shown, female or male staff number = 0).



iv) An Equal Pay Audit was undertaken in 2008. The outcome of the review does not give major cause for concern as there are no consistent and significant pay differentials in terms of gender, ethnicity, disability, working pattern, type of contract or employment, or age. A further Equal Pay Audit will be undertaken in due course.

(v) The graph shows the female:male ratio of academics included in the RAE 2008 and compares it to the female:male ratio of academics at Birkbeck in 2008. There is no evidence that women were under-represented.

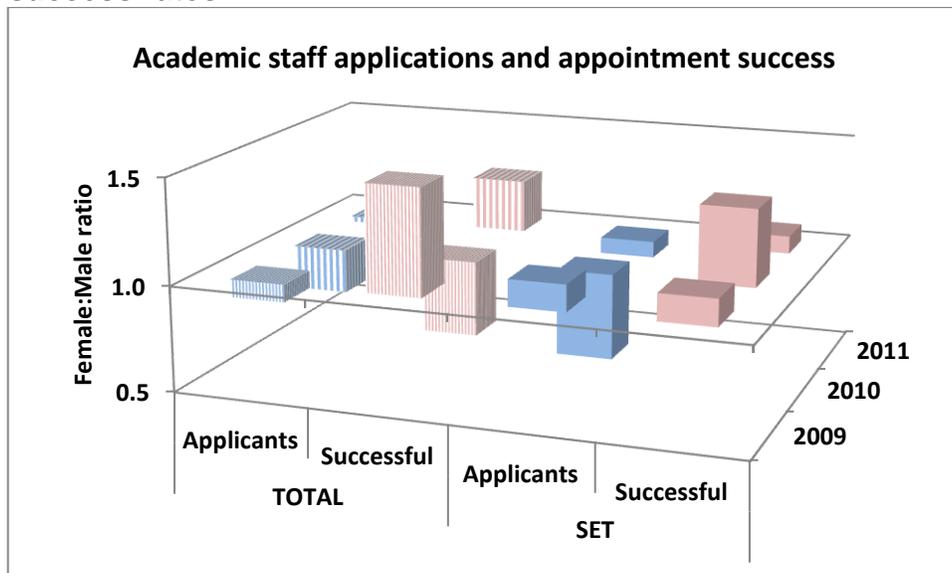


Supporting and advancing women’s careers

4. Key career transition points

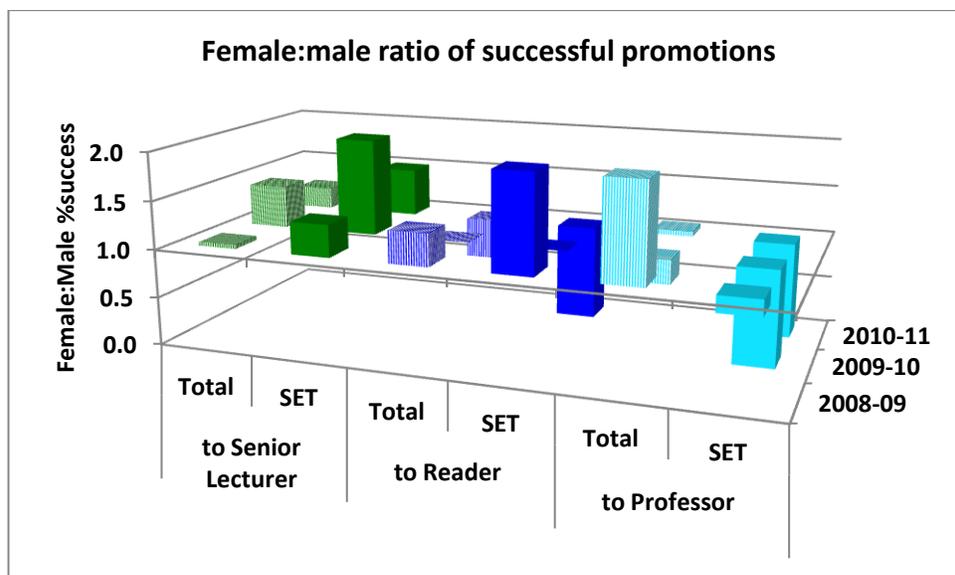
a)

(i) **Female:male ratio of academic staff job application and appointment success rates**



Over the three years tracked, there is considerable variation in the female:male ratio both in total and successful applicant populations; this is partly due to the small numbers involved in the successful applicant populations. However, there is no evidence that women are under-represented in the applicant pool or amongst successful applicants, either in SET subjects or across all subjects. This observation has been reported in a larger US study (National Research Council Committee on Gender Differences in the Careers of Science, Engineering, and Mathematics Faculty; Committee on Women in Science, Engineering, and Medicine; and Committee on National Statistics; *Gender Differences at Critical Transitions in the Careers of Science, Engineering, and Mathematics Faculty* (National Academies Press, Washington, DC, 2010)).

(ii) **Female:male ratio of academic staff promotion rates**



The graph shows the female:male ratio of the percentage of successful promotion applications for all subjects and in SET subjects: e.g in 2008-09, in promotions to Senior Lecturer (green) across all subjects (stripes) the percentage of successful women was nearly the same as the percentage of successful men, giving a ratio of ~1. Over the three years tracked, there is considerable variation in the female:male ratio of successful promotions, across all subjects and in SET. This again reflects the small size of the College: in all years the numbers of SET applicants are less than 10 per grade per year, and therefore the differences observed are not necessarily significant: e.g. in 2010-11 there was one woman SET applicant to Professor, who was unsuccessful, compared to two men SET applicants, one of whom was successful. However, overall there is no evidence that women are disadvantaged in promotion applications, either in SET subjects or across all subjects.

In all Departments there is a policy of review and support for promotions (detailed below) which means that everyone thought to have a chance of promotion is

encouraged to apply. This positive review may be of particular help to women who may tend to be more cautious about applying for promotion than men.

- b) Within the College and specifically within all SET departments support is provided at the key transition points in a career. Probationary advisors and annual progress review meetings and reports are compulsory for probationary academic staff. Probation is normally three years.

Positive review for promotions and for applications to the Remuneration Committee are undertaken each year by the Executive Deans in conjunction with the subject Assistant Deans (Heads of Department). Staff judged to have a good chance of success are encouraged to apply. All applicants are encouraged to speak to the Executive Dean before applying, and informal guidance is also provided by the subject Assistant Deans.

In addition, internal candidates are proactively encouraged to apply by their mentors or line managers for any vacancies that may arise for research posts or academic posts. There is also support for flexible working, both in terms of working patterns and in terms of fractional contracts. Birkbeck's unique mission and London location mean that flexible working hours are the norm for all academic staff, with no expectation of lengthy core working hours.

5. Career development

- a) There are a range of policies, which support all women across the College. The Single Equality Strategy (SES) was developed in 2009 setting out Birkbeck's commitment to equality and diversity and was further reviewed to reflect the Equality Act 2010 in 2011. The SES is the College's overarching strategic framework, articulating Birkbeck's equality and diversity objectives, and supersedes the Race Equality Policy, Disability Equality Scheme and **Gender Equality Scheme**. All the nine equality 'protected characteristics' including gender equality have been captured in the SES.

The SES action plan was developed in consultation with colleagues from different departments to ensure buy-in and ownership. Gender equality issues have been incorporated into the action plan. The College has committed to:

- Develop appropriate actions to address gender representation across the College; and reduce the differentials in the number of men and women in academic positions;
- Increase the number of women in senior positions in professional and support jobs;
- Increase gender representation on the Governing body, College Committees and other decision making bodies;

- Undertake regular Equal Pay Audits to identify gender pay gap issues that may exist and address any gaps identified.

(i) **Researcher career support and training**

Birkbeck is committed to 'The Concordat' initiative to support the career development of researchers in the UK. The Concordat encourages equality and diversity in all aspects of the recruitment and career management of researchers.

Birkbeck participates in the Bloomsbury Postgraduate Skills Network, together with UCL and several other University of London institutions based in Bloomsbury. The network provides generic research training for research students and postdoctoral researchers of the Bloomsbury Consortium. In addition, Birkbeck offers several workshops each year for research students and postdoctoral researchers, covering topics such as Writing Your CV, Time and Stress Management, IPR and Ownership of Research, Networking and Forging Academic Contacts, and Getting Your First Academic Job.

(ii) **Mentoring and networking**

The Personal Development Review (PDR) process is available to all staff but take up is voluntary for post-probation academics. It is possible for staff to select their PDR reviewer from a range of colleagues and thus for women to choose a female reviewer if they prefer, from within or outside of their own department.

In some departments there is access to a Research Mentor for each member of academic staff (this is in addition to their Probationary Advisor for new staff). This mentor provides guidance in the development of the member of staff's research, including identifying appropriate training opportunities, opportunities for research funding, possible avenues for research collaboration with other institutions, and drafting of research proposals.

The Heads of Department and other senior academic staff also proactively encourage collaborations within and beyond the departments, and identification of research funding and research impact opportunities. In addition to a basic allocation of conference support that all academic staff receive, staff can apply to their Schools for additional financial support in attending conferences.

In some SET areas such as Structural Biology at Birkbeck there is a higher than expected level of senior female staff. This is both due to a discipline that has historically attracted women in greater numbers and a long tradition of a collaborative rather than competitive department.

b) Describe any activities at the university that raise the profile of women in SET generally and also help female staff to raise their own profile such as:

(i) Conferences, seminars, lectures, exhibitions and other events.

Most departments run weekly internal and external seminar series during term-time. The internal series gives senior PhD students and all postdoctoral researchers an opportunity to give 30 minute presentations which are excellent practice for conference talks. A previous male bias in the invited speakers for the external series in two departments has been addressed by the senior female members of the department clearly pointing this out and encouraging the invitation of female speakers.

The School of Science runs an annual Science Week, where staff have the opportunity to present their research to the general public. The School of Business, Economics and Informatics similarly runs an annual Business Week, aimed at alumni and showcasing the School's research. The SET departments regularly host Open Days, showcasing their teaching and research for prospective applicants and the wider community.

The College has a Rosalind Franklin Prize for researchers and a Tress prize for early career academics. Nominations are invited from each School on a rotational basis.

(ii) Providing spokeswomen for internal and external media opportunities.

The External Relations department has a database of potential media contacts based on their area of speciality whether they are men or women. The Executive Deans put forward stories from within their Schools several times a year for internal and external publicity.

(iii) Nominations to public bodies, professional bodies and for external prizes.

Within the SET departments nominations are regularly put forward for a wide range of external prizes and professional/public bodies.

In consultation with senior department staff, the Head of Psychology actively nominates individuals for prizes within their fields, with multiple recent successes amongst both female and male staff: Spearman Medal (an early-career award); The British Psychological Society Presidents' Award for Distinguished Contributions to Psychological Knowledge; European Psychological Society mid career award; BPS Lifetime Achievement Award for Distinguished Contributions to Psychological Knowledge and the American Psychological Society rising star award

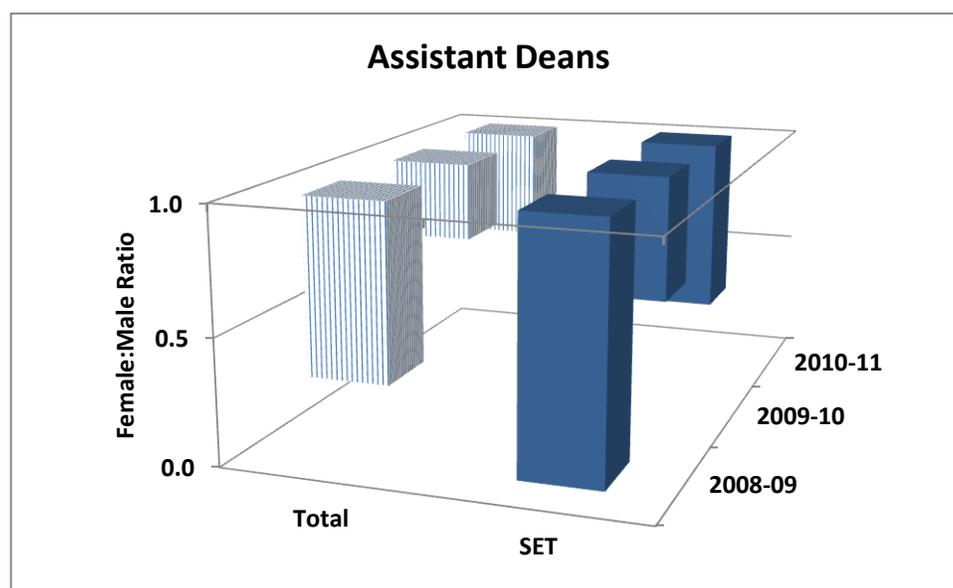
Biological Science female staff have won Royal Society of Chemistry and Astra Zeneca Prizes and Parliamentary SET prizes. There are many more professional groups within Biology who perhaps offer fewer prizes than the Chemistry or Psychology communities.

Staff in EPS are active at senior levels within the Geological Society. Staff in GEDS are active within a wide range of professional bodies, reflecting the breadth of this research area. This includes the American Association of Geographers and the Quaternary Research Association. Academic staff in Maths and Computer Science participate in the activities of the British Computer Society and the London Maths Society.

6. Organisation and culture

a)

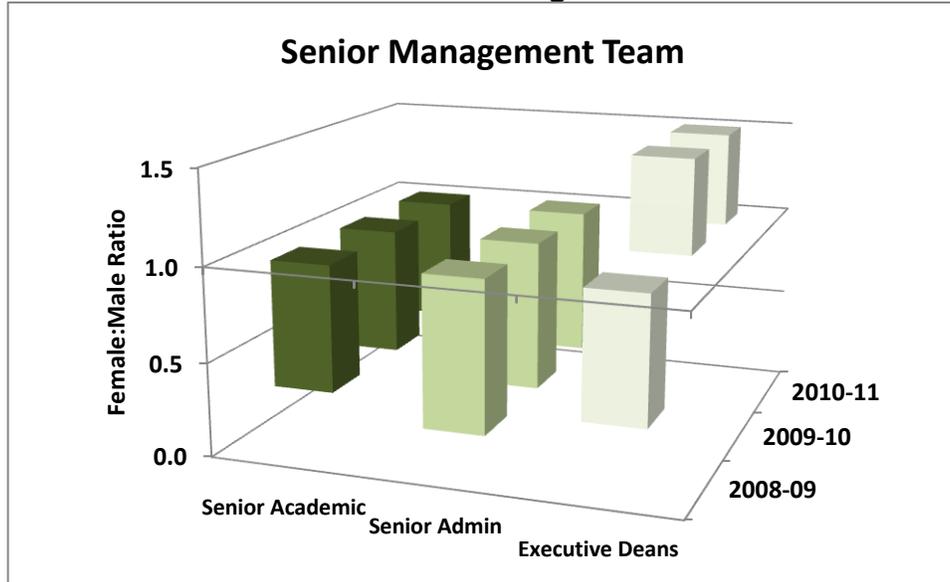
(i) Female:male ratio of Heads of School/Faculty/Department



Women are under-represented at the level of Assistant Dean* across Birkbeck, but these proportions are on a par with those of academics on open-ended contracts, the population from which Assistant Deans would typically be drawn (section 3Biii). Similarly, although SET women are more under-represented at this level, this is approximately proportional to the SET academic population. It is pleasing to note that the female:male ratio has increased from 0 in the last 3 years. Under-representation of women at senior management level will be highlighted in the report to be presented to Birkbeck senior management as part of our Athena SWAN action plan.

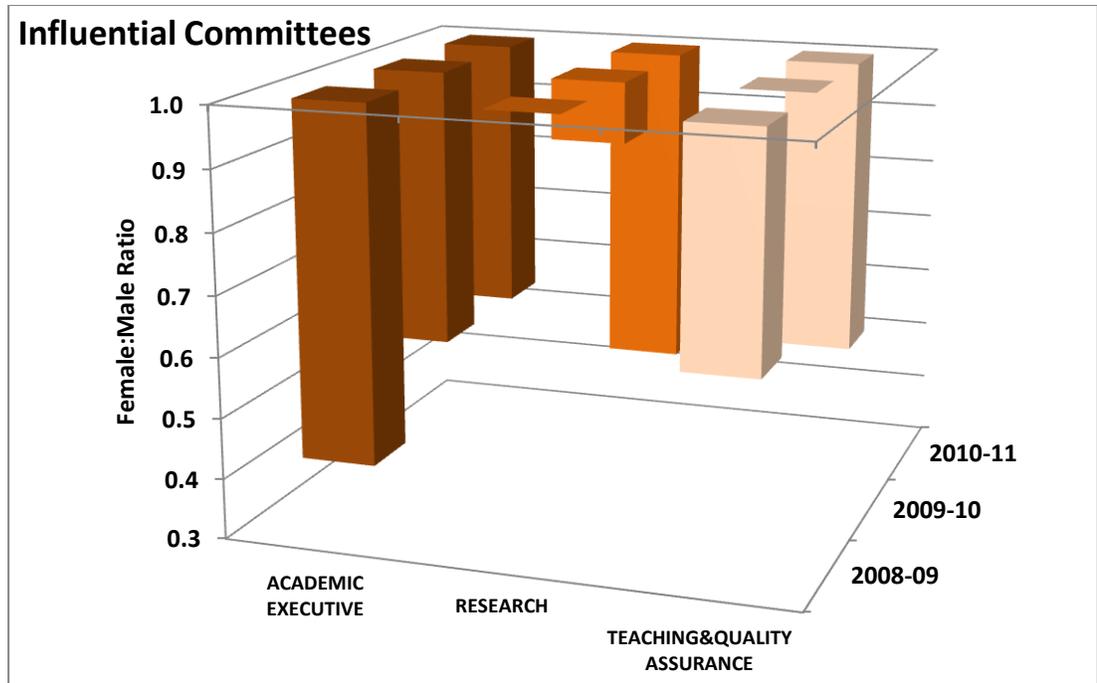
**Following restructuring at Birkbeck, Assistant Deans include Heads of Department as well as other senior administrative roles within Schools (e.g. Assistant Deans for Teaching and Learning, and for Research).*

(ii) **Gender balance on the senior management team**



The Senior Academic Management Team includes the Master, the Vice-Master and the Pro-Vice Masters, while the Senior Administrative Team includes the Academic Registrar, the College Secretary and the Directors of Finance, Planning, Human Resources. Following restructuring at Birkbeck, Executive Deans for each School are equivalent to Deans of Faculty. Women are significantly under-represented in both Senior Academic and Administrative teams but are currently well represented amongst the Executive Deans (3 out of 5 of whom are women, compared with 1 out of 4 in 2008/9).

(iii) **Gender balance on influential committees**



Women have been under-represented on all these influential committees for the last three years, although the proportions roughly reflect the academic population (Section 3Biii). Therefore, committee overload, which is an undesirable side effect of promoting equal rather than proportional representation for women, may not be a significant problem for Birkbeck's women academics at the moment. The fact that the number of women on the Research, and Teaching and Quality Assurance committees has fallen in the last year, is a matter for concern. This probably reflects two factors: the committees have reduced in size, with School-level rather than departmental representation, but without a reduction in the number of *ex officio* (male-dominated) senior managers on these committees. Representative positions on these committees are filled by the relevant Executive Dean. Women are not specifically encouraged to apply but instead, those whose career portfolio can be enhanced by committee membership are put forward for membership. It is not clear whether a more transparent process would enhance women's representation on these committees, but reviewing the committee membership criteria will be highlighted in the briefing document that will arise from the Athena SWAN action plan.

- b) Describe the policies and activities at the university that show a supportive organisation and culture in university SET departments.

(i) **Transparent workload models**

Workload modelling is practised in different ways across the college.

The Psychology Department operates a transparent workload model that was implemented 6 years ago, in agreement with all department members. Annual

hours are set equally for all staff (pro rata for part-time staff) and tasks - e.g. administrative roles, allocated research time, research support and teaching - are weighted according to agreed formulae and distributed to ensure equity. The model is also flexible, such that if time associated with different responsibilities changes, workloads can be adjusted accordingly. Such a system ensures that task distribution is based on the reality of the agreed model rather than subjective perceptions of fairness and effort. If necessary due to staff absence e.g. (illness, sabbatical), the model also facilitates fair task reassignment.

The Head of Department tracks the workloads of individual staff in confidence. Workload reports are issued annually and staff are invited to discuss concerns and requests for workload adjustment with the Head of Department to ensure that the model continues to run fairly.

The departments of CSIS and EMS have a transparent workload allocation, and a transparent process by which academic staff can request sabbatical leave as with all academics. Academic staff generally rotate administrative responsibilities every few years. The teaching and administrative load of early career researchers is kept below the departmental average in order to foster the development of their research at this critical early stage.

Biological Sciences was recently formed from the merger of the teaching intensive Biological and Chemical Sciences and research intensive Crystallography, which has meant very different historical workload patterns. Coupled with a significant percentage of staff (roughly a quarter, mainly recent appointments) having joint appointments with UCL, an explicit workload model has not yet been attempted.

GEDS have a workload spreadsheet on a shared computer drive that can be accessed by all staff. This details the teaching and administrative commitments of all staff and attempts to assign realistic numbers of hours to each task.

(ii) **Publicity materials**

An Athena SWAN webpage has been created and has been linked with appropriate and relevant sites which can be found at <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/equalities/general/athenaswancharterscheme>

Athena SWAN has been promoted through the internal *Birkbeck Matters* online magazine, all-staff emails, posters, webpages and will continue to be publicised internally and externally through different media and other appropriate sites and links on an ongoing basis.

The Athena SWAN images were used as part of the publicity for the 'Women, Science, Success' event held in November 2011 which included website links, flyers and posters.
http://www.bbk.ac.uk/hr/policies_services/policies_az/AthenaSWAN

7. Flexibility and managing career breaks

a) (i) **Flexible working**

The **Flexible Working Policy** provides flexibility around working hours and arrangements to established and temporary employees who meet the eligibility criteria. Birkbeck exceeds the statutory minimum requirement by giving consideration to requests for flexible working from all staff.

Flexible working is advertised on the HR website for all staff and is also advertised during induction.

The Flexible Working Policy needs to be read in conjunction with Birkbeck's Family, Paternity and Parental Leave, Career Breaks and Hours of Work Policies.

http://www.bbk.ac.uk/hr/policies_services/policies_az/FlexibleWorking/index.html

http://www.bbk.ac.uk/hr/policies_services/Careerbreaks/

http://www.bbk.ac.uk/hr/policies_services/policies_az/hoursovertimeandtoil/index.html

The self-assessment team have identified a lack of clarity in the application of promotion criteria to staff on fractional contracts. Addressing this is a point for action in the action plan.

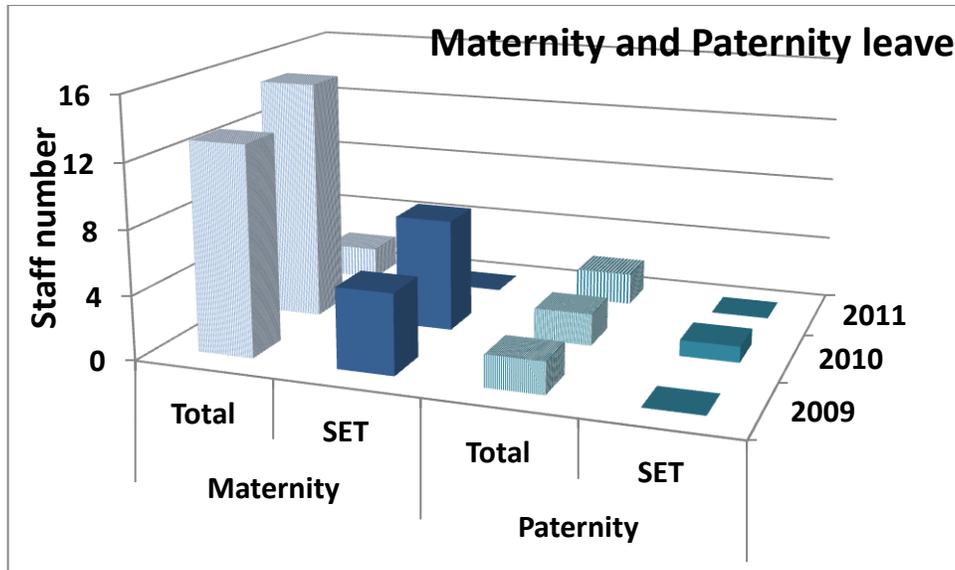
(ii) **Parental leave**

The College's parental leave policies can be found at:

http://www.bbk.ac.uk/hr/policies_services/Familyleave/

It should be noted that the College's paid provision for both maternity and adoption leave is considerably more generous than both the statutory minimum and that of a number of other Colleges within the University of London, comprising of 26 weeks (six months) at full pay for both types of leave.

Maternity/paternity leave data is available on the Alta HR system and is produced when Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) payments are made. The chart shows the numbers of total academic staff who have taken maternity/paternity leave in the last 3 years. No adoption leave has been taken during this period.



Among all staff taking maternity leave: in 2009, only two women returned to work on reduced hours, one of whom gradually returned to full-time; in 2010, all staff returned to work on the same number of hours, apart from one woman who did not return to work following maternity leave, and who subsequently successfully applied for voluntary severance; in 2011, all maternity leave staff returned to work on the same number of hours. Among SET staff taking maternity leave, all returned to work on the same number of hours as prior to their leave.

Maternity leave for research staff normally triggers an extension to the length of the grant from the funding body, so the grant is extended rather than cover being hired. For academic staff, parental leave is normally covered by other staff members, or hiring sessional staff to undertake their teaching, as happens for study leave as well. Administrative or technical staff are normally covered by fixed term hires.

There is College wide flexible working in place; which applies to all staff across the College.

(iii) **Childcare**

Birkbeck's nursery scheme is open to all staff and students during the College's evening teaching period, from 17.30 to 21.00, and it is centrally located at Gordon Square. This enables staff to address the potential impact of evening teaching on family responsibilities. The nursery scheme is open to all Birkbeck staff if they are a parent or have parental responsibility for the child, and the child must be aged between 2 – 10. The nursery can take up to 20 children per evening and is usually able to accommodate all requests.

Birkbeck does not offer a childcare facility during the main working day. However, nursery places including baby places which are available through UCL subject to availability, although there is a long waiting list. http://www.ucl.ac.uk/current-students/support/wellbeing/day_nursery

Childcare vouchers

Childcare vouchers are available to provide financial help towards the cost of childcare if registered or approved childcare is used.

- Childcare must be registered or approved
- A staff member's annual salary must not fall below the minimum wage after the salary has been reduced through the sacrifice scheme
- Staff members will need to join the scheme for a minimum of 12 months. By signing up to the scheme staff members are agreeing to a change in terms and conditions of employment and a letter is sent confirming this.

http://www.bbk.ac.uk/hr/policies_services/Childcare/index_html
<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/nursery>

(iv) Work-life balance

Due to the evening teaching model, the working day starts later than at other HEIs with meetings tending to be scheduled later in the day. Work patterns vary between department and individual teaching loads also vary (for example, grant holders, younger staff developing a research profile, and people with large admin loads may have less teaching). It is rare for staff to teach more than three evenings a week, and a term without teaching is possible for many staff within a two year cycle (many modules are taught alternate years).

Due to many people commuting into London, there is a general expectation that academic staff will work from home frequently and only come into College when necessary, although this is less the case for laboratory based SET subjects, where both researchers and academics attend the premises most working days.

8. Any other comments

As part of a consortium led by the Italian Government Department for Equal Opportunities, Professor Helen Lawton Smith, Director for the Centre for Innovation Management Research in BEI recently submitted an EU project bid on strengthening the role of women in scientific research and in scientific decision making bodies. If successful, the TARGETS project will be co-ordinated by Birkbeck's Centre for Innovation Management Research and the Royal Veterinary College, University of London. It will involve developing structural

change initiatives aimed at encouraging institutional practices and culture in research and scientific making bodies, to better support gender diversity and equal opportunities between women and men.

A TARGETS Board will be established to monitor the project and this will comprise two full professors, one representing each institution one of whom will be the project leader, a full professor of management with an expertise in women and entrepreneurship, a full professor representing the Athena Swan Project in the Business Economics and Informatics School, a full professor representing the Athena Swan project in the School of Science, a researcher and a PhD student, the Birkbeck Director of Human Resources and the Human Resources representative of the Athena Swan project.

9. Action plan

Please find attached appendix.

Action	Key area of assessment	Actions	Responsibility	Timescales	Progress Log	Success Measure
1	Baseline Data and Supporting Evidence					
1.1	Better data capture and management reporting	- Improve centralised data management system	HR	1 year	Data has been generated for 2010/2011 cycle	Athena SWAN report data to be calculated once a year. This process should become more rapid and require less manual collation
1.2	Monitor staff data	- Monitor staff by grade and department throughout the different stages of the recruitment cycle	HR	Ongoing	Data has been generated for 2010/2011 cycle	SET women data captured in 2011/12 will be reported in Autumn 2012 and future reports. Present an annual report to Governing body, Equalities Committee and HR Strategy Committee (HRSPC) to include women in SET statistics.

Action	Key area of assessment	Actions	Responsibility	Timescales	Progress Log	Success Measure
1.3	Improve staff leavers information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and improve centralised system for collecting and collating data for leavers College wide - Improve gathering of data for leavers at School level and reasons for leaving 	HR/SET departments	3 years	Various methods currently in use for capturing data	<p>Integrated system that generates staff turnover rates.</p> <p>Improve analysable data on leavers to at least 33% of leavers.</p>
1.4	Track staff data by contract length	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fixed term v permanent contracts - Length of time on grade (by gender and fractional contract) 	HR	1 year and then ongoing		<p>Are SET women spending longer on a grade than men?</p> <p>What is the effect of having a fractional contract?</p>

Action	Key area of assessment	Actions	Responsibility	Timescales	Progress Log	Success Measure
1.5	Equal Pay Audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertake Equal Pay Audit to ensure there are no differentials - Address any issues identified 	HR	2 years	Equal Pay Audit is undertaken on a regular basis as part of College's monitoring cycle	<p>Ensure no pay gaps greater than 5% which cannot be explained.</p> <p>Disseminate audit findings to key College Committees and Senior Management Groups.</p>

Action	Key area of assessment	Actions	Responsibility	Timescales	Progress Log	Success Measure
2	Key Career Transition Points, Appointments and Promotions					
2.1	Monitor staff applications and appointment success rates	- Monitor applications and success rates by grade, gender and department	HR	1 year		Automatic capture of gender, ethnicity and disability of applicants and their progress in recruitment. This will be a criteria in procurement of new e-recruitment software.
2.2	Monitor academic staff promotion rates	- Monitor promotion rates of academics and analyse percentage of male and females by grade SET/non-SET	HRSPC/SAT	Ongoing		Report details to HRSPC and SAT. Improve system for promotion data within the next 12 months in line with the next promotion cycle.

Action	Key area of assessment	Actions	Responsibility	Timescales	Progress Log	Success Measure
2.3	ASSET Questionnaire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage staff to participate in the survey - Raise awareness about questionnaire 	SET departments	When invited to participate		Increase return rates. Feedback findings and implications to respective departments.
3	Career Development					

Action	Key area of assessment	Actions	Responsibility	Timescales	Progress Log	Success Measure
3.1	Mentoring and Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigate effectiveness of existing mentoring arrangements - Workshop on sharing best mentoring practice planned - Review and monitor mentoring opportunities within SET Departments 	SET departments/ SAT	Ongoing June 2012	Launch event June 2012	Improved mentoring schemes in place across SET departments and guidelines developed.
3.2	Research Excellence Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communicate REF Code of Practice and ensure all staff are aware of the guidelines for submission - Monitor percentage of female submissions and compare to RAE 2008 	HR/REF Working Group/SET departments	1 year		Female SET submission to REF at least representative of the female SET population.

Action	Key area of assessment	Actions	Responsibility	Timescales	Progress Log	Success Measure
3.3	Training and support for women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review current career development provision in SET departments 	SET departments	2 years		<p>Women achieving promotion see 2.2</p> <p>Integrate findings into PDR process.</p>
4	Organisation and Culture					

4.1	Improve awareness of Equality and Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welcome and induction sessions for all new staff - Staff departmental meetings 	HR	2 years	'Equality , Diversity and You' online course developed and available online	<p>Online course as part of induction for all new staff.</p> <p>Existing staff/ departments to undertake course as part of wider rollout for College.</p>
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Action	Key area of assessment	Actions	Responsibility	Timescales	Progress Log	Success Measure
4.2	Review how best to promote female representation on Birkbeck Committees and Senior Management bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review committee membership criteria - Review how committee roles could be reflected in women's promotion aspirations/objectives - Investigate ways of encouraging female academics to put themselves forward - Monitor committee membership and develop activities to increase female representation on committees 	HR/College Secretariat/ SET departments/E qualities Committee/ HRSPC	2 years		Maintain at least representational gender balance of staff on committees and increase number of women on Governing Body, and other key decision making committees.

Action	Key area of assessment	Actions	Responsibility	Timescales	Progress Log	Success Measure
4.3	Transparent work load models to reflect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal and External committees - College teaching load - Research time - Outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop models where not implemented and share best practice between departments - Promote and communicate workload models in SET departments 	SET departments	3 years		Implementation of workload model in the majority of SET departments.
4.4	External and internal publicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure both men and women continue to be featured in any external and internal SET publicity activities to ensure representative balance 	External Relations/SET departments	Ongoing		Reviewed annually by SAT.

Action	Key area of assessment	Actions	Responsibility	Timescales	Progress Log	Success Measure
4.5	Publicise awards and prizes on web, in staff meetings etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Celebrate successes in teaching and research excellence - Promote and advertise career success stories of women with families in SET departments 	External Relations/ SET departments	Ongoing		Reviewed annually by SAT.

Action	Key area of assessment	Actions	Responsibility	Timescales	Progress Log	Success Measure
4.6	Outreach Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to run Science Week and engage with a wider audience - Run SET department Open Days and events 	Executive Dean of Science	Annually	Science week March 2012 - 2013 planning started	Proportional representation of women in Science Week.
5	Flexibility and managing career breaks					
5.1	Advertise parental leave (as part of Family, Paternity and Parental Leave Policy), return to work and flexible working policies widely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advertise policies - Monitor take up of parental leave 	HR	Ongoing	Policies are accessible on HR websites	<p>Policies widely communicated and accessible to all within Schools.</p> <p>Issues identified addressed as part of continued improvement of process.</p>

Action	Key area of assessment	Actions	Responsibility	Timescales	Progress Log	Success Measure
5.2	Review flexible working and effect on career progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review how flexible working is factored on promotion - Review promotion criteria for staff on fractional contracts - Monitor take up of flexible working 	HRSPC	2 years		<p>Clearer guidelines developed and communicated to all staff.</p> <p>Address issues identified and feed into flexible working process.</p>

Action	Key area of assessment	Actions	Responsibility	Timescales	Progress Log	Success Measure
5.3	Advertise policy for workload after return from maternity leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve procedure for capturing data of women returning from maternity leave - Deal with this explicitly in workload model 	HR	1 year		Accurate data on maternity leave and return obtainable from a single source.
5.4	Childcare facilities/assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review childcare provision and look at flexible ways of supporting staff as part of College's work/life balance 	HRSPC	2 years	Review of childcare provision has begun	Survey of childcare usage by staff Review outcomes which will inform on childcare provision.

Action	Key area of assessment	Actions	Responsibility	Timescales	Progress Log	Success Measure
6.	Athena SWAN					
6.1	Athena SWAN applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SAT to meet each term to progress towards further accreditation - Monitor progress of action plan - SAT to advise and encourage SET departmental applications - Raise awareness of the work of Athena SWAN and disseminate widely, including to College Strategic Planning Committee - Work with Athena SWAN on issues associated with small SET departments 	SAT	2 years		<p>Develop realistic and relevant framework for future applications to Athena SWAN.</p> <p>Encourage SET departments to work on their submissions.</p> <p>Integrate/ streamline Athena SWAN action plan into Single Equality Strategy action plan.</p>

Key to Action Plan

HRSPC: Human Resources Strategic Planning Committee

SAT: Self-Assessment Team

PDR: Professional Development Review