

Gender Equality GOOD PRACTICE IN SCHOOLS

Examples from Athena SWAN award winners

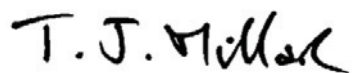


Preface

Queen's has been one of the leading higher education institutions over the last decade in valuing and supporting women's career advancement. Over the years the University has created an environment in which the contribution of women is fully valued. This is a continuing process.

This commitment was recognised in 2011 when the University was listed as a Top 50 Employer for Women. In 2012, Queen's is the only university to hold a silver Athena SWAN* award. It also has the distinction of having 10 of its 11 SET schools holding SWAN awards.

This booklet offers a range of suggestions that have been put into practice, and found to work, in various Schools across the University and in the experience of Athena SWAN Universities (as sourced in Athena SWAN factsheets). We hope it will assist you in tackling the challenges women face as they advance their careers in Queen's.



Professor Tom Millar
Dean, Faculty of Engineering and
Physical Sciences



Professor Yvonne Galligan
Director, Queen's Gender Initiative



*Baroness Susan Greenfield receives an
honorary degree in 2006*

*Athena SWAN (Scientific Women's Academic Network) awards recognise and celebrate good practice on recruiting, retaining and promoting women in SET in higher education. The awards process runs every year and awards are valid for three years.

Promoting Gender Equality in Schools

This booklet presents examples of good practice in supporting women's academic careers. It has its genesis in the sharing of ideas and practices across the sciences generated by the University's and Schools' commitment to supporting women in science. There is evidence to show that the gap between men's and women's careers in the University is closing, and that women are becoming more ambitious in their aspirations. In 2010, five of the six professorial promotions went to women, and in 2011 women comprised eight of the fourteen new professors. Yet the gender gap remains, with women comprising 31% of Academic Grade 4 posts and holding 22% percent of professorial positions in 2010-11.

Current research from science and society shows a positive correlation between women occupying leadership positions in their field and success in science, business and society. Gender diversity, then, is good for individuals, academia and society in general. The 2010 ATHENA ASSET survey found that women:

- Understand less about the promotion process and criteria than men
- Feel invisible to senior managers
- Have less external visibility than men
- Feel less supported than men in continuing their careers in academic science
- Male academics still predominate in positions of power and influence
- Women's employment choice is more constrained by location and availability than men's



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Queen's University is demonstrably committed to the promotion of the ideals set out in the SWAN Charter. Our sustained progress in improving the University's equal opportunities culture was recognised through our selection as Northern Ireland's 'Top Employer for Women' and our inclusion in the Times 'Top 50 Employers for Women'.

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Professor Peter Gregson (2011)

Contents

| | |
|------------------------|--------|
| Organisational Culture | Page 5 |
| Career Development | Page 6 |
| Promotion | Page 8 |
| Work/Life Balance | Page 9 |



'Women Emerging from the Shadows' by Newry-born artist Michelle Rogers

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This award is the first Silver Athena SWAN University award to be conferred since the criteria for this level of award were amended, and as such it confirms your status as a national leader in gender-equitable employment practices.

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**Senior Policy Adviser
Equality Challenge Unit
commenting on Queen's Silver 2012**

Organisational Culture

The culture of an institution concerns the visible structure and practices, such as policies and procedures that can be monitored and changed if necessary. It is also about what people say and believe as well as the underlying unconscious thoughts and beliefs that are much harder to change, though their effects can be mitigated.

- Ensuring greater visibility of women among existing academic staff. This is achieved through replacing generic university images of academics on web home page with real female members of staff; and highlighting women who take on particular roles such as that of Science and Engineering Ambassador
- Taking specific actions to encourage increased representation of women on committees. Steps include: reviewing the selection processes; writing to all eligible women staff to encourage them to apply, asking ex-officio members whether they might nominate a woman to attend in their place, drawing up a suitable list of women to encourage to apply for lay positions on Senate, asking existing committee members to buddy new members, monitoring committee membership annually
- Proactively reviewing the gender balance on all policy and decision-making committees to achieve a substantial increase in the female academic membership of strategic School and Centre committees
- Inviting external women on a regular basis as guest speakers and external examiners
- Including representation from female postgraduate students and post-doctoral fellows at staff meetings
- Ensuring that administrative responsibilities, student supervision and marking workloads are transparent
- Ensuring that pastoral roles within a School are taken up by men as well as women
- In SET Schools, holding an annual lecture on the theme of women in SET at least once a year for women in the School
- In SET Schools, addressing SWAN issues regularly in School Board meetings
- In SET Schools, encouraging female applicants by incorporating the Athena SWAN logo into recruitment advertisements and on School web pages
- Providing a School induction programme for new members of staff which enables them to meet all key school academic and administrative personnel shortly after taking up post
- Inviting all female SET staff to join the GetSET database run by the UK Resource Centre for Women in SET making their details available for media appearances, public appointments, training and other profile raising activities
- Organising a regular 'pot-luck' Women's Lunch for all women academics in the School

Career Development

Each of the SET schools will have identified in their SWAN action plan the particular 'sticking points' for women in their school in terms of career development. Below are some helpful actions that have been used by various universities to address particular stages of the academic career pathway where women are underrepresented.

Attracting female undergraduates

- Adopting a more gender-aware strategy for student recruitment, such as having a good gender mix of presenters at recruitment events
- In SET schools, using images of women as role models in the SET workplace
- In SET schools, supporting secondary school girls' work placements or internships in science and engineering schools

Undergraduate to postgraduate

- When advertising studentships in areas where women are underrepresented, clearly state that applications from women are welcome
- Incorporating female student experiences in induction handbooks
- Ensuring that PhD studentships make provision for maternity leave

Supporting Researchers

The UKRC Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers was launched in June 2008 and sets out the duties of universities, research managers and funders to support researchers' careers. The full text can be found at www.researchconcordat.ac.uk



Good practice actions for researchers include:

- Providing a tailored induction seminar from an experienced colleague in the school, covering all aspects of the position, both formal and informal; supplementing the induction programme with 'Things I Wish I'd been Told', drawing on comments from previous new arrivals
- Giving postdoctoral researchers the opportunity of tutorial teaching experience, with formal training beforehand
- Setting up a website for postdoctoral researchers with a range of features and links
- Setting up an informal redeployment system in schools to retain contract researchers by encouraging those at risk of redundancy to place a copy of their CV in a school box-file, and requiring any academic securing grant funds or preparing a grant application to check this file for suitable candidates before advertising the post
- Holding an annual Research Staff Conference to provide an opportunity for networking with other research staff across the University
- Introducing a 'buddy' system whereby a new female PhD student is teamed up with a senior PhD student or a PDRA for support and advice

- Undertaking destination surveys with female PhD students and postdoctoral researchers to discover why many of them exit academia
- Arranging a formal re-induction meeting for postdoctoral women returning from maternity leave with their line manager and other members of the research group
- Encouraging female staff to apply for Nuffield Foundation and Royal Society funding for summer schemes
- In SET schools, publishing the SWAN action plan on the School website; providing links to awards and scholarships available to women
- In SET schools, inviting high profile female scientists/engineers to Schools for seminars

Lecturer to senior positions

- Encouraging all junior lecturing staff to take part in the University's mentoring scheme and to attend the QGI's annual Promotions event
- Including the statement 'Currently women are under-represented in professorial positions and accordingly applications from women are particularly welcome' in recruitment material
- Carrying out a proactive search when recruiting to identify female candidates who appear to fit the post profile and encouraging them to apply
- During short-listing for academic and research posts considering any breaks for maternity/ parental leave
- Encouraging women to prepare personal development portfolios well in advance of applying for promotion
- Encouraging women to take up networking opportunities and join external bodies, and to sit on journal editorial boards and grant- awarding bodies
- Ensuring information about QGI's activities are regularly featured in the School's news to staff



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I now have an extensive network of contacts across the University that has provided me with valuable information on services and grants relevant to my work. The mentoring programme also helped to enable me to see my employment as being with the University rather than just a particular school.

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Mentee on 2011 programme

Promotion

Promotion procedures need to be transparent and recognise excellence and achievement. Women are often less likely to put themselves forward for new promotion and many universities now have proactive programmes to address this issue.

Examples of good practice include:

- Undertaking a review to identify whether women are typically longer in post before being promoted
- Researching career progression barriers experienced by women academics and activating a range of interventions
- Ensuring that women are encouraged to apply for senior positions
- Holding an open promotions seminar for women near the beginning of the academic year to provide a forum for general discussion; following this up with individual meetings to assess current readiness for promotion and discuss areas that may need further development
- Supporting junior female academic staff through collaboration on joint research grants and studentships with more senior colleagues
- Encouraging female staff to attend university-wide programmes for advancement, networking and development



Queen's University Belfast

Women in Leadership

CONFERENCE

challenging times create exciting opportunities

Conference Speakers

Judith Gillespie
Deputy Chief Constable, PSNI

Maire O'Neill
Professor, School of Electronics, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science

Elizabeth Pollitzer
Director, Portia Ltd

Jill Garrett
IT Consulting Ltd

Time and Venue

9.30 am - 1.30 pm
Friday 21 October, 2011
Venue: Riddell Hall

Registration

QUB staff: www.qub.ac/qpl
then select 'Training Courses'

All others:
<https://admin.qpl.qub.ac.uk/e-commerce/wlead/index.php>

Contact

womeninleadership@qub.ac.uk
or Cathy Ryan:
+44 28 9027 3312

Queen's Gender Initiative in partnership with **QUMS Leadership Institute**

The conference speakers are established leaders in public, professional, corporate and academic life. Conference delegates will learn how the speakers created, identified and took advantage of opportunities during good times and in more challenging contexts.

“The University will promote equality and diversity in all staffing matters, with particular emphasis on maintaining our progress towards achieving a more representative proportion of female staff in senior positions and having greater influence in the STEM subjects.”

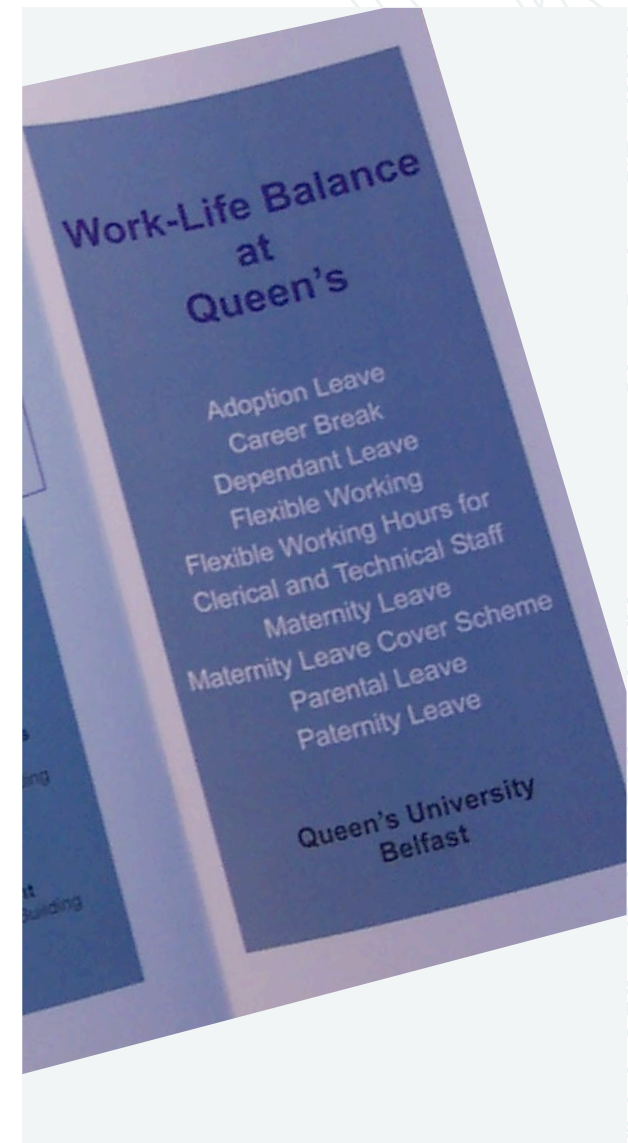
**University's Draft Corporate Plan
2011-2016**

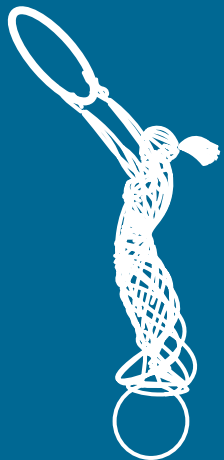
Work-Life Balance

One of the most common points at which women abandon an academic career is at the level of postdoctoral researcher. This career stage correlates with the time at which many female researchers are raising young children. As women commonly still take responsibility for the majority of childcare and domestic work, a lack of flexible working provision and a long-hours culture will disadvantage more women than men as they will be unable to put in the hours required to advance their careers.

Good practice in this area includes:

- Offering a range of flexible working and part-time working arrangements to help women and men balance work and family commitments
- Providing one term without teaching commitments for research-active academics returning from maternity, adoption, extended carer's or long-term sickness leave
- Creating a support group to link women going off on maternity leave with those recently returned from it
- Allowing maternity leavers with research grants to place them in abeyance while the school employs contract research staff (CRS) from the grant as temporary teaching fellows
- Setting dates of key school meetings several weeks in advance to allow staff to organise their time
- Using School e-zine to raise awareness of the University's family-friendly policies





Queen's Gender Initiative
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