**Initial Gender Equality Plan**

Through the GenderTime project we expected to thoroughly investigate gender inequalities in our institutional context and devise tailored activities to counter the challenges that women face in participating and thriving in academic research.

Our action plan objectives were to: Evaluate existing institutional policies; Identify the ‘leaky pipeline’, causes and counter measures; Improve support for research staff; Review careers development and networking; Improve culture, communications and departmental organization; and Disseminate good practice.

One GenderTime Transfer Agent says – A crucial task was conducting surveys with staff in 2014 and 2016, and qualitative interviews over the course of the project. This provided us with insights into the effectiveness of our policies and practices and their impact over time.

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**Challenges**

- Some institutional data needed supplementing
- Informal nature of some existing processes
- Not possible to have internal women-only fellowship scheme, but these are available from external funders
  
  Solutions include: Building good working relationships with key people in the institution.

**Success Factors**

- Institutional data was shared with the team
- Supportive environment at School and Institution level
- Proactive team members and Transfer Agents
- Institutional commitment to Gender Equality work through Athena SWAN.

The Athena SWAN Charter is a national scheme that promotes the advancement of gender equality; representation, progression and success for all in Higher Education Institutions in the UK.

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**Achievements and Reflection**

- Over a twelve month period six female researchers from the School have moved onto lectureships: There is an increase in the success of female ECRs in securing permanent academic appointments.
- The staff surveys conducted in 2014 and 2016 show perceptions of an improvement in useful networking opportunities and a large increase in understanding why the School takes action to encourage underrepresented groups to apply for posts, with increasing support for actions to tackle gender inequalities.
- Sustainability legacy of the project is ensured as committees established will continue and in the Athena SWAN action plans.
- The LoU team Transfer Agents – one Associate Dean for Research, the other the School Operations Manager - have played a crucial role in ensuring the project objectives have been met.

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**Good Practice Example**

To improve the culture, communications and departmental organisation two new committees were established: The Hub Committee is made up of and represents research staff and PhD students in the school and is centred on the working environment. The committee has held regular professional development seminars and social events.

The Welfare and Communication Committee is made up of representatives from a range of staff groups and students in one of the key aims of the committee is to promote gender equality.

The purpose of these committees is to encourage better information flow across all members of the school and to support initiatives that develop an inclusive working environment. Both committees are fully established in the School structure and will continue beyond the duration of the GenderTime project.

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**Research Papers**


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