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Athena SWAN for geography departments

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**Royal
Geographical
Society**
with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

Welcome

Housekeeping

Introductions



Agenda



- ECU presentation with Q&A
Dr Ruth Gilligan, Athena SWAN Manager, Equality Challenge Unit
- Getting started, maintaining momentum – teams, applications and cultures
- Supporting progression
- SMART action planning and measuring impact
- Wrap-up, actions and next meeting

Getting started, maintaining momentum

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Female 8 (26-34yrs):

I have been decidedly discouraged to pursue a career in academia - notably by unhelpful, disinterested and indifferent (male) lecturers during my undergraduate degree - which of course made me more determined to carry on! I have subsequently met a few inspiring academics who have taken an interest in my work and been supportive - they are, however, few and far between. Sadly, I think more 'senior' academics are caught in a whirlwind of administration and putting out fires - which means that 'younger academics' like myself are often given little support or overlooked completely when we need encouragement.

Male 67 (26-34yrs):

I could name several, both male and female, but the common characteristic was their critical and reflexive approach to understanding things, refusing to take things for granted and always looking for difference or another perspective, and the way they tried, always generously and patiently, to instil a similar approach in me

What does it mean for a department or school to have a culture or ethos of equality?

How can we encourage all staff to become part of that cultural change?

Getting started, maintaining momentum

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- Lessons from geography departments (from previous meetings/workshops):
 - Think about how Athena SWAN is positioned: for women vs for everyone; for academics vs for everyone. Do you even need to call it Athena SWAN?
 - This is a mechanism for cultural change. It takes effort, energy, enthusiasm and time to introduce, effect and embed change.
 - Self Assessment Teams (SATs): pay attention to hierarchy/decision-making and task allocation. Who will inspire others to participate? Who will do the work (application; implementing actions)? How will it be fairly shared?
 - Consider the use of an impartial facilitator and/or external reviewer

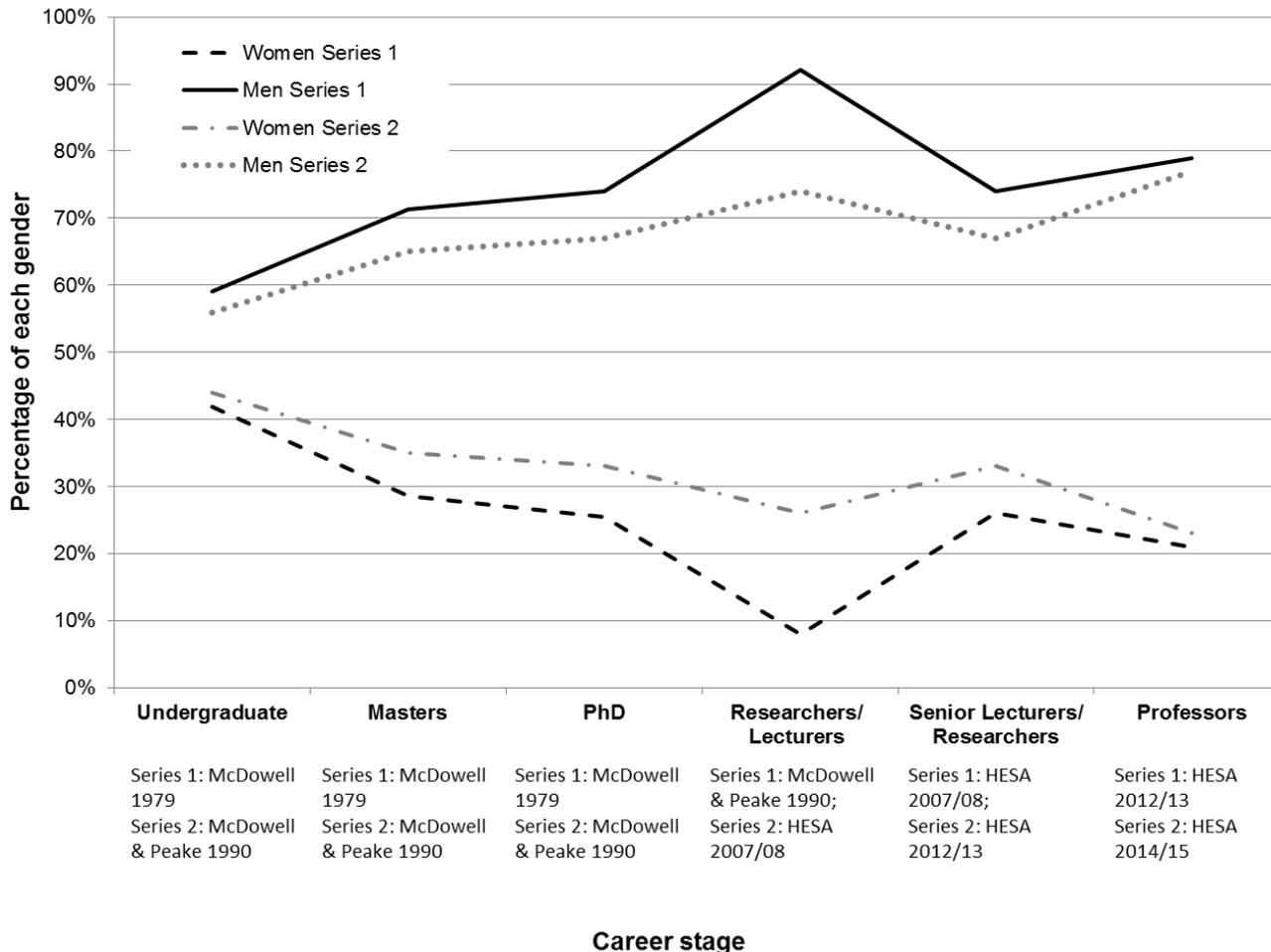
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In your groups...

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- Who are the most useful people on a SAT? Think about...
 - Career-level, job roles, skills, knowledge, work-life experiences, *getting things done*
- How do you fairly distribute the work on your SAT? What workload allocation principles might apply?
- What tools, resources, skills or opportunities are you missing to make a strong application and deliver a good action plan?

Gender ratios of university geography students and teachers, 1978 to 2014/15 [HESA and other data]



*Series 1:
Undergrad in 1978/9, to
Professor in 2012/13*

*Series 2:
Undergrad in 1990, to
Professor in 2014/15*

HESA data is for Cost Centre 124: Geography and environmental studies (2012/13 and 2014/15, or 28: Geography (2007/08).

Benchmarking for your department may also need to take into account *Cost Centre 111: Earth and Environmental Sciences*

HESA cannot accept responsibility for any inferences or conclusions derived from the data by third parties.

THIS FIGURE IS A WORK IN PROGRESS AND NOT FOR PUBLICATION. Please contact s.wyse@rgs.org for information.

Barriers to (academic) progression

Female 42 (45-44yrs):

My first attempt [at promotion to Senior Lecturer] was after I had had two babies, two maternity leaves and been part-time for a couple of years. I asked for this to be taken into account when they measured my research output against others applying. When I was turned down I asked the Prof in charge how this issue had been dealt with. He looked at me in complete puzzlement; it was evident that he had no idea to what I was referring

Female 30 (35-44yrs):

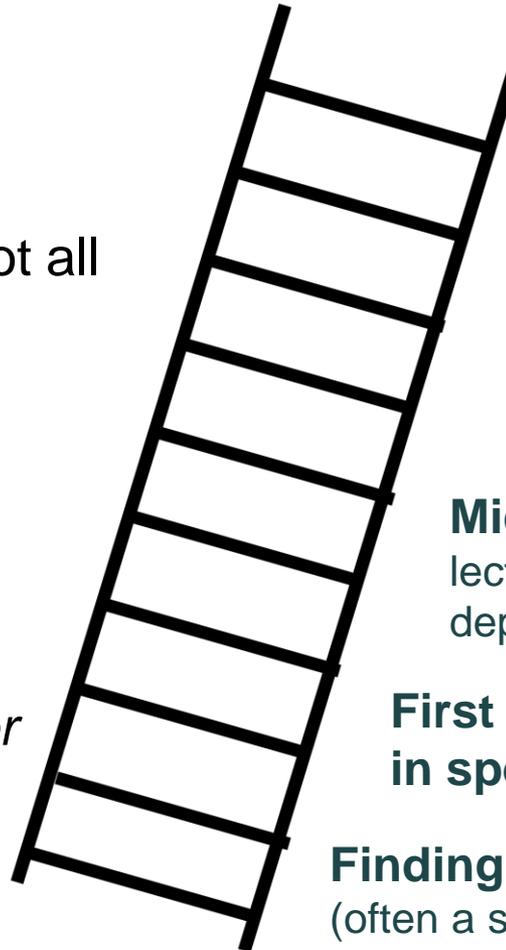
The move to [Senior Lecturer] is primarily judged at our institution on research activity. Despite a nod to taking teaching and administration seriously, this really doesn't count. So I'm refocusing my attention towards a research profile and being more ruthless at refusing admin roles - though I think that also makes the place less collegial and supportive

Female 559 (26-34yrs):

I have been in job application situations (job talks and interviews) where I, as the candidate, have been the only woman in the room. I don't know whether this has actually hindered my career but it has made me feel uncomfortable, especially as a junior academic

In your groups...

- Barriers to progression exist all the way up the career pathway, and not all careers are ladders!
- **Suggest a way to address one barrier to progress for each career stage.**
- *Consider: How is the experience the same or different for support & professional staff?*



Higher management

(e.g. Heads of schools/faculties, deans, pro-VCs and other roles – institutional view & influence)

Senior promotions

(e.g. Reader/Assoc Prof to Professor; manager status in department or school)

Mid-career promotions (e.g. lecturer to senior lecturer or to senior departmental administrator)

First permanent role (or first role in specialism?)

Finding a job post-graduation

(often a series of contract roles for academics)

SMART action planning and measuring impact

- Lessons from geography departments. Actions should:
 - Be SMART-S (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, timely, and strategic)
 - Pay attention to context: don't adopt just adopt a 'popular' action from other universities/departments, think about how it will have an impact in your context for your particular gap/challenge
 - Be spread out over **four** years
 - Clearly link to your discussion of data and experience/context
 - Be able to be understood/delivered/acted upon by a member of staff who was not involved in writing the application.
 - Be part of a living document – how will you keep your plan alive?



In your groups



- Each group has been given ‘real world’ challenges from a departmental applications
- Choose a few to focus upon, and for each one identify a possible SMART action and a way to measure the impact (for your Silver application!)

Resources and ideas

- Past applications and action plans
 - Via www.ecu.ac.uk and www.rgs.org/equalitydiversity
- ECU: <http://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/>
- Email lists:
 - Athena SWAN Charter members' network: athenaswan@jiscmail.ac.uk
 - Athena SWAN geography: geography-athena-swan@jiscmail.ac.uk
 - Equal Opportunities administrators: ADMIN-EO@JISCMail.AC.UK
- Search for institutional support materials with advice for making an application, for example...
 - UCL Athena SWAN toolkit (has examples of data presentation):
<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/equalities/gender/1.%20UCL%20SWAN%20Toolkit-%202015.pdf>
 - Bristol Athena SWAN:
<http://www.bris.ac.uk/equalityanddiversity/act/protected/gender/swancharter/guidance.html>
 - University of Cambridge:
http://www.equality.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/athena_swan_departmental_guidelines_2014.pdf
 - University of Lancaster: <http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/hr/equality-diversity/AthenaSWAN-guide.pdf>

Please be aware that guidance given by other institutions may not always reflect the latest award process for Athena SWAN or your own institution's guidance – please use with caution and always consult the ECU website for the latest information.