



Promoting Gender Equality in UK History:

A Second Report and
Recommendations for Good Practice

ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NOVEMBER 2018

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Executive Summary

Three years on from the first Royal Historical Society (RHS) report, *Gender Equality and Historians in UK Higher Education* (2015), this follow-up report reviews the current situation, updates and offers a handbook of recommendations, resources and information for implementing change. It is based on the cumulative findings of two surveys of UK historians, conducted in 2013 and 2018. Part 1 analyses the survey of 2018; part 2 makes recommendations for action; and part 3 is a Glossary of key terms and useful information.

The 2018 survey data and other research carried out by an RHS working group confirmed that there are still major barriers to gender equality in the historical profession, both formal and informal. There has been some progress – 26% of professors were female in 2018, compared to 21% in 2013 – but the survey revealed that in many key ways gender continues fundamentally to shape historians’ experience of work at universities, in ways that make women’s careers harder than those of men.

Key Findings of our History-specific report include:

- **Gender-based discrimination and abusive behaviour was widely reported but so was a lack of knowledge about how to prevent it:**

Gender-based discrimination was reported by 48% of female respondents to our survey and 16% of male respondents. Yet one-third of all respondents did not know what policies were in place to address it and only one quarter reported effective implementation of such policies. High numbers of survey respondents reported being adversely affected by sexual harassment: 18% of women and 5% of men; by bullying: 40% of women and 34% of men; and intimidation: 38% of women and 31% of men. Low levels of confidence were recorded that policies were being effectively implemented to address any of these problems.

- **The gender balance shifts sharply in favour of men at early-career stage:**
 Among A-level, undergraduate and post-graduate taught (PGT) students, there are small majorities of female historians, but amongst post-graduate research (PGR) students and academic staff, there remain notable male majorities. Moreover, 60% of permanent academic posts in History are held by male historians.
- **Discrimination is disproportionately experienced at early-career stage:**
 Early-career historian survey respondents recorded disproportionately high levels of discrimination experienced in all areas of their work. For the future vitality of the subject, there is clearly an urgent need to encourage talented female historians to stay in the profession.
- **Overwork is gendered in its effects on historians,** with disproportionately higher levels of female respondents reporting that they were adversely affected a lot by, for example, having to work at weekends (72.2% female; 56.2% male) or having to give up annual leave to do normal duties (51.7% female; 37% male). These effects are particularly acute for people with caring responsibilities, whether for children or for other family members.
- **Gender inequality was experienced, seen or suspected by a high proportion of all survey respondents, especially ECRs, in all the main fora of intellectual exchange in History:** 43% saw it in journal editorships; 44% in appointments to editorial boards; 49% in seminar programmes; 53% in learned societies; 59% in conference programmes; and 65% in selection of keynote lecturers. Several respondents expressed the view that the whole profession would benefit from rethinking the outdated model of a historian based on stereotypically masculine conceptions of success.

- **There was a high level of consensus among survey respondents about what helps.** High percentages (over 80%) of women and men, at different stages of their careers, reported that the following measures significantly help to improve gender equality: transparent workload allocation; gender-aware recruitment and selection; gender-aware advertisement of all opportunities; visibility of female role models; holding meetings in standard working hours; mentoring of new staff. Measures supported by over two-thirds of all respondents included: gender-neutral language; anonymised shortlisting; and training in equalities legislation, good practice and invisible bias.

Recommendations: We offer a wide range of targeted recommendations for everyone; for Heads of Department/School; Appointment Committees; Promotion Committees; Teaching Staff; Supervisors and Teachers of Postgraduate Students; Journal and Series Editors; Conference and Seminar Organisers, and Learned Societies. The following themes are common to them all:

- Monitor gender equality in all areas of work.
- Ensure robust policies to tackle discrimination are in place and fully implemented.
- Ensure that everyone knows what the policies are and what to do if they experience or observe discrimination or abusive behaviour.
- Promote practices to improve work/life balance and be flexible about accommodating individual needs, particularly those of care-givers.
- Raise awareness and understanding of the informal barriers to gender equality, especially the unconscious bias that affects most people, stereotype threat and everyday sexism.

- Include everyone, staff and students, in discussions about how to improve gender equality for all historians.

The RHS is committed to promoting gender equality through dedicated events and by dissemination of good practice. We invite responses to this report and look forward to learning about measures that have helped to ensure equitable treatment for all historians, regardless of their gender preference. There is no one-off fix and it is crucial to avoid a tick-box approach, as was remarked by many of our survey respondents. Tackling gender-based discrimination is a continuous process of recognising and countering the unconscious bias and stereotyping to which everyone is prone. It requires honesty, attention to evidence (both quantitative and qualitative), inclusivity and persistence. We publish this report in the confidence that with such a commitment from the majority of historians, transformational change can and will happen.

Abbreviations

- BME:** **Black and Minority Ethnic**
- ECR:** **Early Career Researcher**
(for example, postdoctoral researcher)
- ECU:** **Equality Challenge Unit**
(now incorporated into Advance HE)
- H&PS:** **Historical & Philosophical Studies**
(HESA student category comprising History, Archaeology, Heritage Studies, Philosophy and Theology & Religious Studies)
- HEI:** **Higher Education Institution**
- HEP:** **Higher Education Provider**
- HESA:** **Higher Education Statistics Agency**
- PGR:** **Postgraduate Research**
(refers both to students and programmes)
- PGT:** **Postgraduate Taught**
(refers both the students and programmes)
- REF:** **Research Excellence Framework**
- SET:** **Student Evaluation of Teaching**
- TEF:** **Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Frameworks**
- UCU:** **University and College Union**
-

“The previous RHS Gender Equality report has been of concrete help in addressing gender inequality at my institution. However, there is considerable gender inequality and gender discrimination in my department... RHS guidance on practical steps that could be recommended to Heads of Departments and HR would be welcome.”

RHS SURVEY RESPONDENT, 2018

Introduction

The Report you are reading is the second that the Royal Historical Society (RHS) has published on gender equality in UK History. Our work began five years ago when the RHS created its first Gender Working Group. That initiative was prompted in part by new sector-led programmes to promote equality in higher education.¹ As a learned society, dedicated to helping our subject to thrive in all respects, we wanted to collect evidence about the state of gender equality throughout the historical profession, not only in higher education providers but also in any other intellectual fora where History is disseminated and discussed: conferences, seminars, journals and, not least, learned societies like the RHS. We circulated a survey as widely as possible among UK historians and published the results in an RHS Report on Gender Equality in January 2015.² The report identified a series of barriers to gender equality, both formal and informal. It also included a set of recommendations for action, both in universities and across the discipline in journals, learned societies and conferences.

A lot has happened regarding equalities over the last three years - in History, in UK higher education, and in wider society – so much so that by the start of 2018 there was an evident need to take stock of the current situation. We established a new Working Group, including some members of the previous group and some new participants, and conducted a second survey in Spring 2018. It was designed to find out what had changed, and what helps to bring about greater equality. This Second Report on Gender Equality in UK History offers an analysis of the results of our 2018 survey (Part 1); a synthesis of the working party's reflections

1 The first scheme was the Gender Equality Charter Mark, known as GEM, which in 2015 was replaced by Athena SWAN awards (see Glossary).

2 Royal Historical Society, *Gender Equality and Historians in UK Higher Education* (London: RHS, 2015): <https://5hm1h4aktue2uejbs1hsqt31-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/RHSGenderEqualityReport-Jan-15.pdf>.

upon both surveys, presented as Recommendations for Good Practice (Part 2); and a detailed Glossary (Part 3) that explains key terms including unconscious bias, stereotype threat, everyday sexism and silencing, and brings together information and resources for work on promoting gender equality.

Many of the respondents to our survey commented on the importance of thinking about **all kinds of inequalities and how they reinforce each other**. This report is designed to be read alongside our recent report on *Race, Ethnicity & Equality in UK History*, published in October 2018.³ Respondents to the surveys for both reports expressed concern that attention in institutions and departments often focused on only one form of inequality at a time, meaning that action on gender might come at the expense of attention to issues of race.⁴ Our two reports were therefore written in reference to each other, acknowledging that – while mindful of differences – inequalities are shaped by **intersectionality** (multiple ascribed identities and socio-economic factors that combine to intensify discrimination and disadvantage). Race and gender, for example, intersect to exacerbate particular challenges faced by BME female historians.⁵ The two reports together make a start in collecting information about intersectional inequalities in our profession, work which the RHS will pursue further over the next few years.

The RHS has focused on improving its own gender balance since the last report and there is now close to gender parity on Council and among the officers. Our current President, Professor Margot Finn (2016-20), is the second woman to hold the post, after Dame Jinty Nelson (2001-5). A new Vice-Presidential portfolio has been created for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and we are delighted to welcome Professor Frances Andrews of the University of St Andrews to the role from November 2018. The Society recognises the need to be alert to broader inequalities in all that we do,

3 <https://royalhistsoc.org/racereport/>

4 On the use of the term ‘department’ in this report, please see the Glossary.

5 RHS, *Race Report*, esp. Section 3.c.10.

including awards of grants and prizes. But we are also acutely aware that a great deal still remains to be done and that the work has to be continuous to remain effective. The RHS is therefore committed to regular reviews of gender equality both in our own practices and across the historical profession.

What has changed since the first RHS Gender Report of 2015?

The First Gender Report itself has been a stimulus to debate at events on equality in History held across the UK and in Ireland, many attended by speakers from the RHS working party. The report has been discussed in many History department meetings and used as a basis for work on Athena SWAN applications since they opened up to the Arts and Humanities in 2015.⁶ Its recommendations have been taken up and developed further by many of the editorial boards, conference organisation committees and learned societies of the historical profession.

In relation to higher education as a whole, a wealth of new research has been published that presents solid evidence of systematic gender inequalities in pay, recruitment and selection, promotion, student evaluations of teaching, citation indices and journal acceptance rates.⁷ The UCU strike of Spring 2018 highlighted the dependence of HEPs on large amounts of overtime by all academic staff, an excess workload that research – including both RHS surveys – has shown to be gendered in its effects. The strike also drew attention to the fact that the gender pay gap affects both salaries and pensions.

6 Findings of an RHS follow-up questionnaire to Heads of Department in May 2016. Examples include Kent, which cited the RHS report in its successful application for a Bronze award, and KCL.

7 A useful online bibliography is Danica Savonick and Cathy Davidson, 'Gender Bias in Academe: An Annotated Bibliography of Important Recent Studies', which includes some material on intersectionality: <https://www.lfhe.ac.uk/en/research-resources/research-hub/2013-research/women-and-higher-education-leadership-absences-and-aspirations.cfm>

In wider society, both in the UK and many other countries, the #MeToo movement has alerted everyone to the prevalence of sexual harassment and gendered violence, both physical and psychological, in all walks of life.⁸ There is also more public awareness of gender fluidity and of the experiences of trans and non-binary people, which is a welcome development for gender equality. It should be noted that HESA data on the gender of academic staff has previously been collected only for male and female, although this is changing in 2018.

Amongst History academic staff, the basic structural inequalities in gender have improved only marginally. 41.6% of academic historians are female in 2018's ECU data, compared to 38.5% in 2013 (see Figure 3). Of History Professors, 26.2% are female in 2018, up from 20.8% in 2013 (see Figure 4). Here History is close to the average for all subjects in UK HEIs, in which the proportion of female professors has risen slowly from one-fifth in 2013 to one-quarter in 2018 (although it declined at 1 in 3 HEIs).⁹ At this rate of change (a percentage point a year), UCU in 2013 calculated that gender parity among the professoriate will not be attained until about 2050.¹⁰

These figures contrast significantly with the ratio of female to male historians at student level. Amongst Historical & Philosophical Studies undergraduates this is now 55:45, with small increases in the female majority continuing over the past six years, figures mirrored at A-level (see Figures 1.3 & 1.4). At PGT level, too, the ratio is 55:45 (with a similar trend to undergraduates), but there is a sharp shift at PGR level, where the proportions are

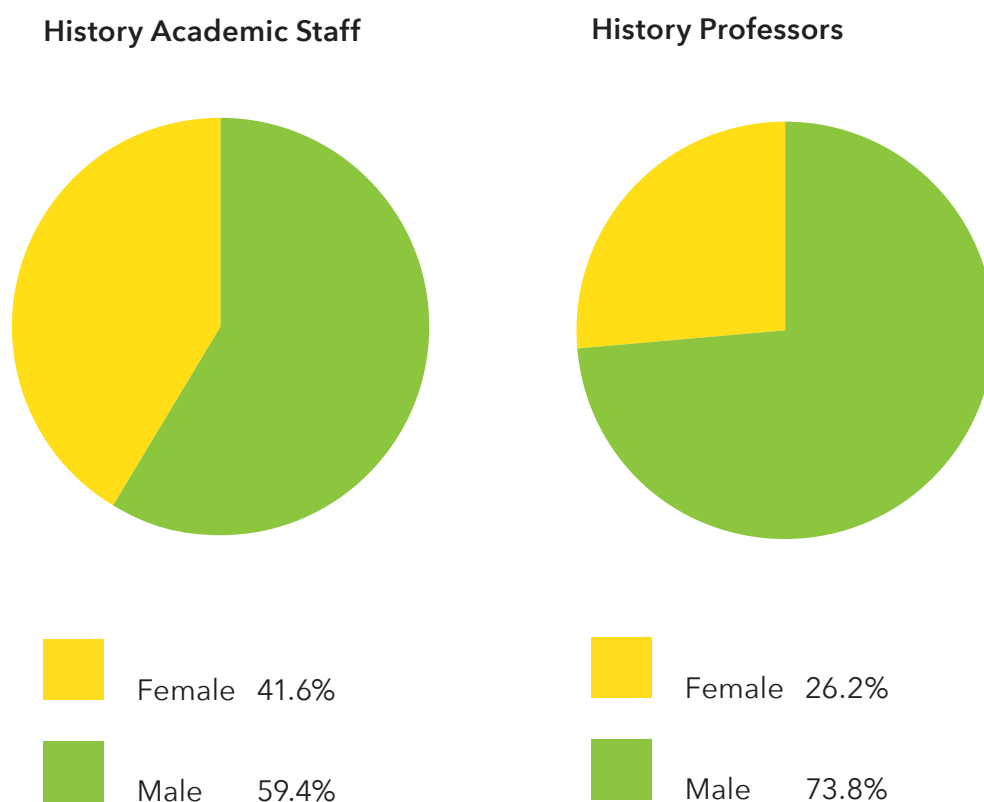
8 The Fawcett Society report of October 2018 into the effects of #MeToo in the UK found that over half of all people said that what was acceptable had changed over the previous year. They also reported a significant shift in overall willingness to challenge sexual harassment in the UK, especially on the part of young men (aged 18-34). <https://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/news/majority-of-young-men-more-likely-to-challenge-sexual-harassment-since-metoo>

9 'One in three UK universities going backwards on female professors', *Times Higher Education*, 25 May 2017: <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/data-bites/data-bite-share-female-professors-now-virtually-quarter>

10 The position of women and BME staff in professorial roles in UK HEIs, January 2013: <https://www.ucu.org.uk/bmewomenreport>

directly reversed: 45% of research students are female, 55% male (see Figures 7 & 8). There is also a big gender gap in History between part-time/fixed-term jobs – where the gender balance is about equal – and full-time permanent posts, over 60% of which are held by male. The pipeline is still leaky and too many women get stuck in mid-career. As has been well publicised (although not yet tracked at subject level), there remains a considerable gender pay gap in the HE sector: 11.1% for all academic staff, and 5.7% for Professors (according to ECU's 2018 report).

Figure 1
Total History staff by gender, 2018



Source: Advance HE Equality Challenge Unit (ECU),
Equality in Higher Education: Statistical Report 2018,
Staff Data.

Figure 2
Total History Academic Staff and History Professors, 2018

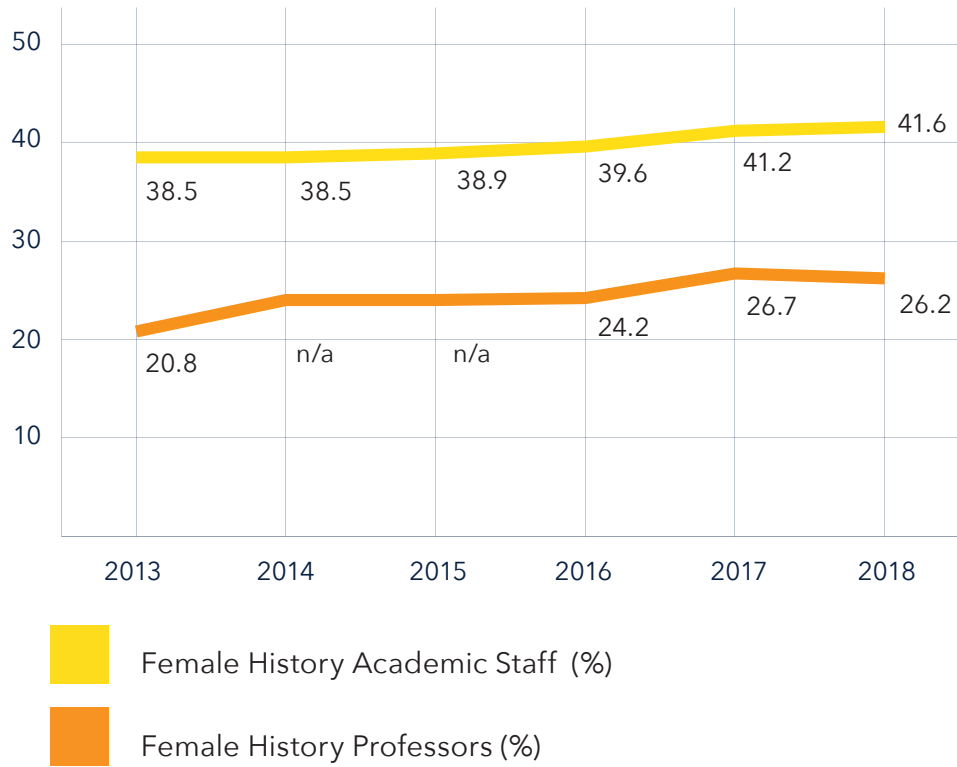


Figure 3
History Academic Staff by Gender, %

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Female	38.5	38.5	38.9	39.6	41.2	41.6
Male	61.5	61.5	61.1	60.4	59.8	59.4

Figure 4
History Professors by Gender, %

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Female	20.8	n/a	n/a	24.2	26.7	26.2
Male	79.2	n/a	n/a	75.8	73.3	73.8

Source: ECU Staff Data 2013-2018

Figure 5

History A-level Candidates by Gender, %

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Female	51.7	52.4	53.1	53.9	54.2	55.4
Male	48.3	47.6	46.9	46.1	45.8	44.6

Source: JCQ A-Level Results Data 2013-18

Figure 6

Historical & Philosophical Studies First Degree Undergraduates by Gender, %

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Female	53.1	53.3	53.6	53.9	54.3	54.9
Male	46.9	46.7	46.4	46.1	45.7	45.1

Source: ECU Student Data 2013-2018

Figure 7

Historical & Philosophical Studies Postgraduate Taught Students by Gender, %

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Female	52.4	52.6	52.5	53.3	53.7	55.0
Male	47.6	47.4	47.5	46.7	46.3	44.0

Source: ECU Student Data 2013-2018

Figure 8

Historical & Philosophical Studies Postgraduate Research Students by Gender, %

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Female	44.4	44.2	44.3	43.7	44.7	45.0
Male	55.6	55.8	55.7	56.3	55.3	55.0

Source: ECU Student Data 2013-2018

Yet the picture is not all bleak. In terms of evidence, information and examples of good practice we are in a wholly different world from the year in which our first report was written. As awareness of inequalities has increased over the last three years so too has the range of material proposing constructive ways to promote equality, through both policy change and cultural change. The promotion of equality is increasingly being adopted as a formal criterion by funding bodies. The History Sub-Panel Report on REF 2014 emphasised that they took equality and diversity guidelines very seriously and that many units of assessments fell down on that criterion.¹¹ It is probably only a matter of time before research grant funding in the humanities is linked to good practice in reducing inequalities, as it already is in (some) sciences. More and more History departments are embarking on systemic change through the Athena SWAN Charter, either on their own or as part of a broader Humanities group.

One of the most heartening findings of our second survey was evidence of a high level of consensus among all respondents about which measures help to promote gender equality. Other research has identified considerable support among academic men for gender equality.¹² All historians, in constant intellectual dialogue between present and past, will be acutely aware that the stakes on gender equality are currently very high. If ever there was a moment when real, transformational change is possible, this has to be it. Everyone can help and everyone will benefit.

11 <https://www.ref.ac.uk/2014/media/ref/content/expanel/member/Main%20Panel%20D%20overview%20report.pdf>

12 Murray Edwards College, *Collaborating with Men: From Research to Everyday Practice*, 2017: <https://www.murrayedwards.cam.ac.uk/sites/default/files/files/Report%202%20-%20Collaborating%20with%20Men%20July%202017.pdf>

Part 1. The Second RHS Survey on Gender Equality: Analysis of Results

1.1 The Survey and its Respondents

Our online survey was conducted in March and April 2018. It used the Jisc (Joint Information System's Committee) Online Surveys platform – with the assistance of the University of Edinburgh, Information Services. It drew a total of 472 responses. The survey and its full results can be accessed at: <https://royalhist-soc.org/genderreport2018>. The survey was distributed widely to the RHS Fellowship and Membership (over 3,000 UK-based historians), to our contacts in all HEP UK History departments and through our social media. Our focus was on all practising historians from early-career researchers (including postgraduate students), to professors. Regrettably, it was beyond our resources this time to survey undergraduate or students in secondary education, but we hope to do work along these lines in the future. Many of the findings are also likely to be relevant to undergraduates and we include some recommendations about students in the section “For Teaching Staff and Tutors”.

The survey's questions covered the following areas: the working environment; career development; teaching and learning; research and publication; and the historical profession. The final section asked which measures helped to improve gender equality. The questions were designed to elicit information about experiences, perceptions and levels of understanding of how gender affects working life as a historian.

The survey's aims were to find out if there was greater awareness of gender inequality in 2018 than in 2013, when the RHS ran its first survey; if policies to tackle gender inequality were better

implemented; if there had been cultural change; and if so, which measures helped. We also wanted to collect data on Teaching and Learning in higher education, which we could not do in 2013. Although acutely aware of the gender pay gap, we decided it would not be possible to collect reliable data on it by means of a survey.

We received 472 replies, a pleasing result for a second survey, especially given that the survey period overlapped with UCU strike action. (The duration of the survey was extended to provide greater opportunities for all staff to complete it in this context.) More than two-thirds of respondents identified as female and most identified as White, with only 3.4% from a range of other ethnic groups—a disappointingly low result given the Society’s goal of improving its knowledge of race-based barriers in the discipline; 6.3% of History staff in the UK are from BME background. 8.2% declared a long-term disability, reminding the RHS of the urgency of equalities work in that area as well. A significant portion of our sample were mid-career and senior staff: 59.4% were Senior Lecturer (or equivalents such as Associate Professors) or Professors. As in our Race and Ethnicity survey, the most represented regions were London (18.6%) and the South East (17.5%). 22.5% of respondents worked in ‘Post-92’ institutions.

In analysing the results, we broke them down by male and female respondents; by career level; mode of working (full/part-time); and pre- or post-92 institution. We also asked about other gender identities, but regrettably the sample size was too small (only 8 respondents) for any meaningful quantitative analysis of those respondents’ experiences. The RHS acknowledges that there is much work to be done to address inequalities for trans and non-binary people and we hope to contribute in the future. In the Glossary, under Trans and non-binary, we include resources to help, especially on policies in relation to students. Our sample of BME historians was also small, so we have drawn upon data from the RHS Survey on Race and Ethnicity, where 9.4% of respondents were BME women.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE RHS SURVEY ON GENDER EQUALITY, 2018

- A high level of consensus exists about the policies and practices that help: we have the information we need to take rapid and effective steps towards gender equality throughout the historical profession;
- Discrimination, sexual harassment, bullying and intimidation are widespread, but only a quarter of respondents reported effective policies to address them;
- Widespread lack of awareness persists both of equalities legislation and of HEI policies to prevent discrimination and abusive behaviour, with high proportions of ‘don’t knows’ in all areas, especially among early-career, part-time and temporary staff;
- Caring responsibilities are still not given due recognition, with many respondents reporting a lack of support and career guidance for all care-givers; evidence of partial implementation of parental leave policies, especially for mothers; disregard for other caring responsibilities e.g. for relatives in poor health;
- High levels of gendered bias were reported not only in the curriculum but also in teaching practice and class/seminar discussion, with higher than average experience of such biases recorded by early-career historians;
- Notable gender differences were evident in attitude towards inequality in the profession, with men consistently more positive about their experience overall;
- A deeply worrying lack of confidence was expressed by early career researchers, in the commitment to equalities of the main vehicles of intellectual exchange in History: journals, conferences and learned societies;
- A strong sense that since chronic overwork in HE is gendered in its effects, we would all benefit from rethinking what we mean by ‘the ideal academic’, particularly the ideal historian, with the aim of encouraging a move away from a full-time, full-on model associated with stereotypical masculinity and with outdated working practices.

1.2 Key Findings

The most positive finding from the survey was that it showed a high level of consensus about the policies and practices that improve gender equality. In many respects –although not all– there was little difference between female and male respondents about what constitutes good practice. We already have in hand much of the information needed to take rapid and effective steps towards gender equality throughout the historical profession. In their qualitative comments, many respondents expressed a strong sense of commitment to transformational change and a cautious degree of optimism that it was possible. The report includes a range of measures that could be implemented over the next academic year.

There is much work to be done, however, to counter the many gendered aspects of the working lives of historians. It starts with knowledge and awareness. Universities need to do far more to ensure that everyone is well-informed and equipped with the tools they need to understand and speak out about gender inequality. Alarming high proportions of the sample—and a disproportionate number of female respondents—reported being affected by discrimination (48% of female, 16% of male). Yet one-third of all respondents said they did not know about policies to prevent gender-based discrimination and only one quarter of all respondents reported effective policies to deal with it. Other forms of abusive behaviour were reported by significantly higher proportions of female than male respondents: sexual harassment (18% of female, 5% of male); bullying (40% of female, 34% of male), intimidation (38% of female, 31% of male). The comments also revealed concerns about the lack of mechanisms for dealing with everyday forms of sexism.

Chronic overwork emerged as a serious concern from all types of respondents, as did a sense of gendered and outdated expectations of academic life as a historian. Care-giving was again identified, as it was in the First Gender Report, as an area of serious discrimination, with a lack of support, resources or career guidance for individuals with caring responsibilities, whether for children or for other members of the family. The responses on teaching

and learning (an area we could not cover in 2015) indicated disturbing levels of gendered bias not only in the curriculum but also in teaching practice and class/seminar discussion. Higher than average experience of such biases was recorded by early-career historians. More research will be needed to understand these problems better, but our findings give major cause for concern, especially in light of the increasing importance of the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcome Framework (TEF), which is planned to move to subject-level in 2020.

The survey results also pointed to a striking lack of confidence in the main vehicles of intellectual exchange in History. Gender inequality had been experienced, seen or suspected by over 40% of respondents in all the intellectual activities of our subject: journal editorships (43%); appointments to editorial boards (44%); seminar programmes (49%); learned societies (53%); conference programmes (59%) and keynote lectures (65%). In all cases, female respondents were significantly more likely than their male colleagues to say that they had observed or experienced inequality. This finding fits with the survey's overall picture of notable gender differences in attitudes towards inequality throughout the profession, with men consistently more positive about their experience overall. Our Race and Ethnicity survey likewise found White respondents more positive than their BME colleagues.

1.3 The Legal Framework

All institutions of higher education in England, Scotland and Wales are subject, like any other body, to the **Equality Act 2010**. It does not apply in Northern Ireland, where there are however similar provisions in the Northern Ireland Act of 1998, plus other legislation. There are also some differences in the other devolved nations.¹³ The Glossary provides further information on the legal frameworks governing equalities.

It is therefore a major cause for concern that fully *half* (50.1%) of the survey respondents stated that they did not know of written policies to implement the Act in their institution. 26% said that policies were fully implemented, 15% that they were partly implemented, 7.5% that they were hardly implemented. One respondent summarised that across the sector “practice is not visibly informed by legislation.” Overall, there is a worrying lack of awareness of the legal framework for promoting equalities.

Some comments referred to ‘a tick-box culture’, ‘paying lip-service’ to gender equality at senior management levels, although there were also appreciative comments about the commitment of some Heads of Department, Deans and HR staff. The picture is very mixed, but what does stand out is that committed leadership on equalities, especially at subject level, can make a significant difference. In sum, although there are some exceptional institutions that are taking equalities seriously at all levels, the pattern is one of institutions gradually doing more to promote general awareness but not putting the resources into the specific measures that are likely to percolate down to subject level and drive real change.

13 The 2010 Equality Act, chapter 15: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/pdfs/ukpga_20100015_en.pdf

For legislation passed from 1998-2003 for Northern Ireland, see <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/external/anti-discrimination-law-in-ni.pdf>

For a helpful summary of equalities law in all the devolved nations, see the UCU briefing: https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/8162/Devolved-nations---Equality-difference-briefing-May-16/pdf/Devolved_Nations_-_Equality_differences_briefing.pdf

1.4 Career Progression

“

Many of these issues begin at the hiring stage.

”

RHS SURVEY RESPONDENT, 2018

Less than half of our sample reported that policies to ensure gender-aware **recruitment and selection** are fully or partly implemented at their institution. The limited commitment to training in unconscious bias,¹⁴ to anonymised shortlisting or to gender-neutral language is almost certainly making the situation worse. A number of comments referred to ‘one token woman’ being put on the shortlist to tick gender equality boxes but not getting the job. Some respondents commented on the ways gender bias can come into play at interviews. “Interviewing for a new head”, recounted one respondent, “one of my strong female colleagues told me she’d realised she was biased against thinking of a woman in the top role - and she had to talk herself round. She’d found herself favouring a less qualified man rather than the more qualified woman. If that sort of unconscious bias can happen with women themselves, then we have to really work hard with role models, so it simply stops being an issue.” “I would strongly recommend”, wrote another, “that the kinds of biases that come into play at interview stage are considered very carefully. There is no point anonymising written applications if this work is undone at interview.”

14 The Gender Working Party has followed the definition of unconscious bias used in the RHS *Race Report*: “A bias that we are unaware of and which happens outside of our control. It is a bias that happens automatically and is triggered by our brain making quick judgments and assessments of people and situations, influenced by our background, cultural environment and personal experiences.” For further information see the Glossary.

Training in equalities legislation and good practice is evidently spreading, with about half (49.2%) of respondents reporting full or partial implementation of mandatory training. Less than one-third (31.6%) reported full or partial implementation of mandatory training in unconscious bias. Only a third (33%) knew of written policies on gender-neutral language, with 16.9% seeing full implementation. Anonymised shortlisting, which has been shown to make a positive difference in other sectors of employment (see Part 2), is still little practised across the higher education sector (only 12.5% were aware of written policies). Among our ECR respondents, a strikingly high proportion (77.8%) thought it was helpful.

Survey respondents thought that **mentoring**, when undertaken actively, could help a lot to improve working life, but several survey respondents expressed the view that it was rare for institutions to do it well. Many universities now have a scheme for new academic staff. Yet respondents pointed to several other areas where they identified either an absence of mentoring, e.g. ‘for mid-career staff, especially women, to avoid “plateau”, or a lack of effective mentoring, e.g. for early-career staff on temporary contracts, who can find it hard to have ‘an honest conversation’ because of the need ‘to impress them with your competence’.

“ I would like a broader understanding of the caring responsibilities and pressures facing women in academia who are not parents. ”

RHS SURVEY RESPONDENT, 2018

The survey indicates the persistence of considerable problems for those with **caring responsibilities**. Less than one-fifth of the sample (17.8%) said that policies on accommodating caring responsibilities were fully implemented by management. Many

respondents had a strong sense of continuing discrimination against those with caring responsibilities and against those whose publication records reflect periods of parental leave or part-time work. 36.7% of respondents ticked the ‘don’t know’ box with respect to policy on accommodating caring responsibilities, indicating that policies are not sufficiently communicated to academic staff. Many departments lack a culture of understanding about the extra pressures experienced by many carers.

Alongside the importance of providing good support for parents, several respondents called attention to the need to recognise that there is a range of other caring responsibilities undertaken by members of staff, for example for elderly parents or grandparents, for family members with disabilities or ill health (physical or mental). The survey evidence from 2018 reaffirms that many care-givers experience a lack of recognition, from managers and/or peers, of the extra pressures with which they are dealing. The unwillingness of universities to take caring responsibilities into account, either in enabling flexible working or in evaluating the performance of job applicants, appears to be one of the factors behind the loss of early-career historians, especially women, to the profession.

Both the survey and specific individual instances communicated in confidence to the working group indicate that ***pregnancy and maternity leave*** remain areas of sharp discrimination against women. Maternity leave is of course a statutory requirement, but the way in which it is applied and the effects that it has on a woman’s career can vary dramatically within and across different institutions. Worryingly, nearly a fifth of respondents (19%) reported that maternity leave policy was implemented partly or hardly at all.

A lack of full cover for the duties of women on maternity leave has multiple adverse effects: pressure to return quickly to full-time working; a build-up of tasks to catch up with on return; and possible resentment among colleagues who have had to pick up extra work. Valerie Troeger’s research on maternity leave in UK HE has shown that HEIs with poor maternity leave provision

have significantly fewer female staff in senior positions.¹⁵ It is common for women to report being overloaded on their return from maternity leave, and some female respondents reported that their colleagues equate maternity leave to research leave, either formally in refusal of sabbatical or informally in the attitudes of managers and/or colleagues. There is also the question of how to count periods of maternity leave in applications for promotion or funding. Among external funding bodies, the European Research Council leads the way on best practice, allowing an additional 18 months for each child born during its 10-year reporting period for research record. The AHRC allows the time taken on maternity leave to be added on to the definition of early-career status. Among HEPs and among subject units within them, there seems to be wide variation in practice.

“ **This sector looks increasingly hostile to women and in particular makes virtually impossible the transition from fixed-term to permanent contracts for those with care responsibilities, resulting in a leaky pipeline effect and the loss of potentially excellent permanent staff.** ”

RHS SURVEY RESPONDENT, 2018

Some universities, although by no means all, now offer an additional period of leave (or reduction in some duties) after a return from maternity leave. Low percentages of our respondents recorded implementation of sabbatical leave to catch up with research after maternity leave (13.1% said fully implemented and 5.4% partly implemented). These are welcome policies but again they have to be carefully implemented and, crucially, fully funded.

¹⁵ ‘Maternity Benefits Across UK HEIs’: <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/staff/vetroeger/maternity/>

Full cover is needed for women then as well as when they are on maternity leave, in order to prevent adverse effects on their own careers or their working relationships with colleagues. Further advice can be found in the Recommendations for Heads of Department.

A similar lack of effective implementation was recorded for **paternity leave and adoption leave**, with 50.8% saying that paternity leave policy was fully implemented and, even worse, only 40.3% saying that adoption leave policy was fully implemented. There were high levels of ignorance about policies on paternity leave (25.4%) and adoption leave (43.4%).

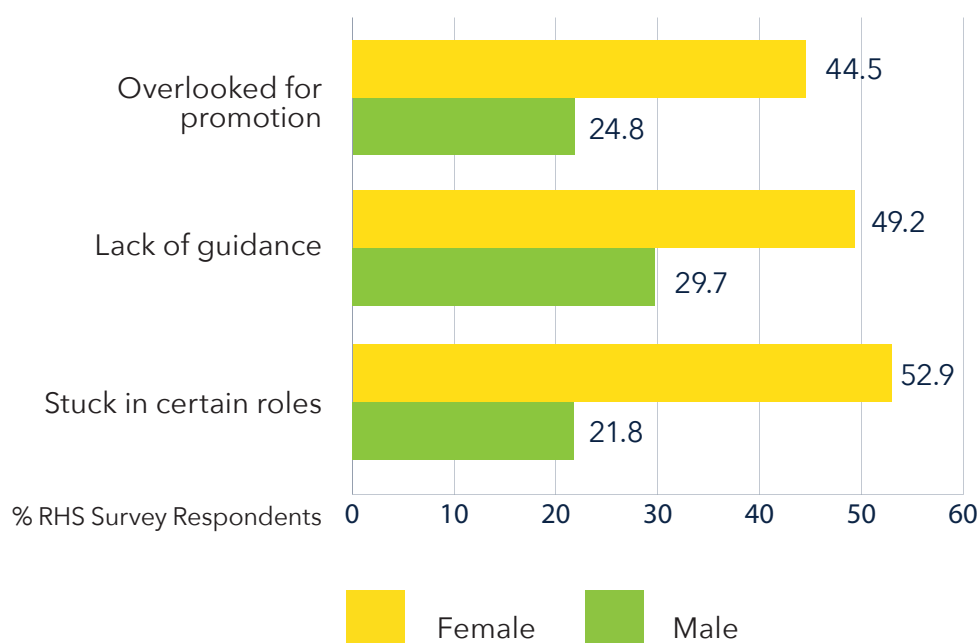
In general, the comments showed that parents returning from leave would benefit from more support, especially for resuming research and publication. In History, where much research is conducted by individuals rather than research teams funded by multi-year grants, it is very often research that recedes into the background when new parents return to teaching and administrative duties. This is likely to have an adverse effect on career progression.

Perceptions remain that **promotion** processes are affected by gender-based discrimination, not so much in terms of *how* cases are assessed by promotion committees but *whose* cases are put forward for consideration. Our evidence also indicates that this is an area in which universities could make rapid improvements in equalities, by increasing transparency, adopting more flexible criteria and ensuring that good career development advice is available to everybody. Perceptions of gender inequality in promotion processes are pervasive among UK historians.

38.6% of respondents stated they felt they had been overlooked for promotion. Here the figures are sharply gendered: 44.5% of female respondents compared to 21.8% of males reported being adversely affected in that way. Only 10.7% of all respondents reported that their institution had a gender-sensitive promotion policy that was fully implemented, with a further 13% reporting partial implementation. A deeply concerning 40.1% didn't know of any

such policy. A high proportion (43.2%) said that they had been adversely affected by lack of guidance on applying for promotion. Here again there was a significant gender disparity: 49.2% of female respondents compared to 29.7% of males. The situation was worse in post-92 institutions. In post-92 HEIs, 33.7% said they had been affected ‘a lot’ by lack of guidance, compared to 20.5% in pre-92, in line with research on the variation of gender promotion by institution type.¹⁶

Figure 9
Gender and experiences of promotion processes



History is predominantly a monograph discipline: the production of substantial books, typically sole-authored, plays a decisive role in appointments and promotions. In this context, mid-career historians with increasing family responsibilities (either as parents or carers or both) often face new challenges. The survey indicates that there is a problem of women disproportionately getting ‘stuck’ in their careers: 52.9% of female respondents stated they had been negatively affected by getting stuck in certain roles, compared to 21.8% of males.

¹⁶ <https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/blog/how-maternity-pay-impacts-academic-careers>

1.5 The Working Environment

“ What is barely being addressed is the casual tolerance of sexual discrimination, harassment and derogatory comments towards female students and staff [...] specially lacking is a way to address milder forms of discrimination and harassment.

”

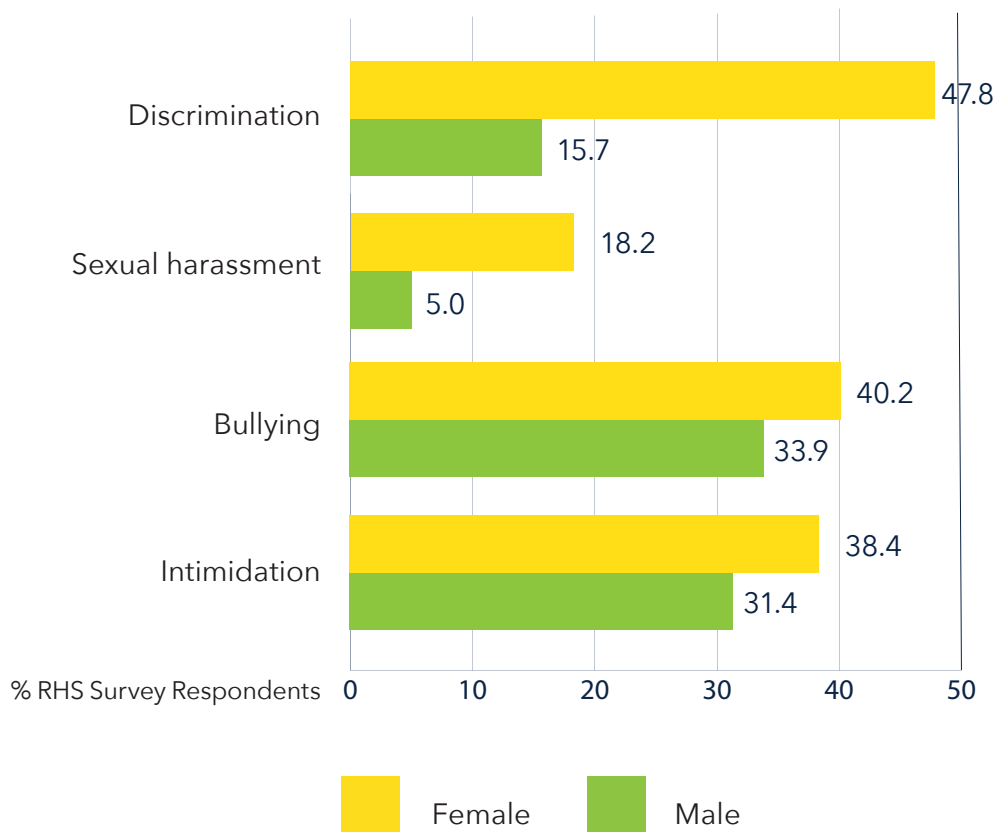
RHS SURVEY RESPONDENT, 2018

Many respondents raised the issue of *everyday sexism* (for a definition, see Glossary) and the difficulties of knowing how to address it or to counteract its creeping effects in undermining women’s sense of belonging to the historical profession. Our survey also indicates that HEIs have a lot of work to do to communicate their policies for dealing with serious cases of discrimination, sexual harassment, bullying and intimidation—especially to the part-time and temporary staff upon whom they now often rely for substantial teaching and research duties—and to ensure effective implementation for all staff and students.

Alarmingly high proportions of respondents reported being affected by discrimination (39.1%), bullying (38.6%), intimidation (36.3%) and sexual harassment (14.6%). These experiences are gendered: in each of these four areas, significantly higher proportions of female respondents reported being affected.

Female respondents were far more likely than men to say that their working life had been affected ‘a little or a lot’ in the last five years by *discrimination* (47.8% female; 15.7% male). Discrimination is widely experienced by women, with only 30% of female respondents saying that they had ‘not been affected at all’ by it during that time. The problem may be worse in post-92 universities, where only one-third of all respondents said they had not been affected at all, compared to 43% from pre-92 universities.

Figure 10
Experiences of discrimination and harassment



Sexual harassment has affected 18.2% of our female respondents over the last five years and 5% of the male respondents. Both figures give major cause for concern. Female respondents were far less likely to say that they had not been affected by sexual harassment (70.1% female, 91.7% male). 20.9% of ECRs said that they had been affected by sexual harassment, which is higher than the figure for female respondents.

40.2% of female respondents and 33.9% of males said that they had been affected by **bullying** over the last five years. A number of female respondents raised specific cases of gendered bullying affecting themselves or (specifically) younger female colleagues with one summarising that the issue “is NOT being taken seriously”.

These figures indicate that our discipline is seriously affected by the bullying that is ‘ingrained’ in UK universities, as was reported in *The Guardian* in September 2018.¹⁷

Furthermore 38.4% of female respondents reported being affected “a lot” or “a little” by **intimidation**, compared to 31.4% of the men. One respondent reported that “numerous instances of appalling behaviour (bullying, harassment, intimidation, offensive emails), typically by male colleagues, seem to be ignored for fear of upsetting people who produce good research and funding bids”.

Although most HEPs now have policies on the books to take action against all these abuses, our evidence suggests that in many cases **policy implementation** is lagging. Full implementation of policies to deal with any of these abuses was reported by a quarter of respondents at most (25.1% on sexual harassment; 21.5% on bullying and intimidation; 18.6% on discrimination;), with similar numbers reporting partial implementation (25.1%, 21.9%, 22.3% respectively). Moreover, female respondents were much less likely to say that policies had been implemented than their male colleagues (see Figure 9).

Part-time and early-career staff were more likely to say that they didn’t know about any of the policies about which we asked, a situation that calls for urgent remedy given that these categories of staff are disproportionately vulnerable. Survey respondents also recorded concerns about complaints being made but managers being slow to respond, and about a lack of effective institutional support for either party in complaints. As a result, everyone involved may feel unprotected. Poor implementation of policies to tackle discrimination and abusive behaviours may partly be related to a general **lack of awareness** of them: around one-third of all respondents consistently answered “don’t know” to questions about all such policies. There is clearly a lot of work for everyone to do in informing themselves and others about their rights and responsibilities in these matters.

17 <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2018/sep/28/academics-uk-universities-accused-bullying-students-colleagues>. The newspaper’s investigation found ‘aggressive behaviour, extreme pressure to deliver results, career sabotage and HR managers more concerned with avoiding publicity than protecting staff’. Nearly 300 academics have been accused of bullying students and colleagues in the past five years.

Figure 11
Reporting of written and fully or partly implemented policies



“ **The confident male voice in department meetings still carries disproportionate weight (and sometimes even among women).** ”

RHS SURVEY RESPONDENT, 2018

The survey results suggest that ***participation in decision-making*** in UK History departments is highly gendered and that female staff disproportionately feel excluded from decisions that affect their work as historians. Over half (52%) of respondents stated that their opportunities to participate in the decision-making of their unit were restricted, with a clearly gendered effect: 31.9% of female respondents said that they were affected ‘a lot’, whereas only 16.8% of males did. The situation was reported to be worse in post-92 institutions, with 38.5% of respondents saying they had been affected ‘a lot’, compared to 25.1% for pre-92.

Over a third said their participation had been restricted by the way meetings were conducted (16.4% of females said ‘a lot’, 5.1% of males) or by silencing of their views (42% of females said ‘a little or a lot’, while only 15.1% of males did). Likewise, one-third (34.6%) in total felt adversely affected by limited opportunities to participate in informal departmental life, with 19.7% of female respondents compared to 5.9% of male stating that this affected them ‘a lot’. Many ‘precarious’ staff noted difficulties with participation in their departments, with one commenting that “with variable hours and short-term contracts, I am part of the History department but on the periphery at all times. Doing the student-facing work but not included in department ‘business’”.

“

The culture of overwork is the root of the problem for women.

”

RHS SURVEY RESPONDENT, 2018

Transparency in **workload allocation** received the highest score of all the measures listed to improve gender equality, with 62.3% of respondents saying that it helps a lot and a further 21.3% that it helps a little, making a total of 83.6% who believe it improves conditions of work. Yet only 27.9% reported full implementation of policies on workload allocation, with 43% saying it was partly or hardly implemented. In particular there a widely shared sense of an absence of fair and transparent decision-making in those areas where gender bias is likely to be a factor: allocation of pastoral care roles, major administrative roles and committee work.

Committee work, where well over half of all respondents felt they had a heavy burden, with more male (38.3%) than female (27.2%) respondents saying they felt it ‘a lot’, suggesting that men still are disproportionately represented on many committees or perhaps are more likely to object to such responsibilities. As noted above, Athena SWAN applications have not yet led to significant improvements in these crucial areas.

The survey results confirmed other research findings that ***overwork is chronic and endemic throughout the sector, and gendered in its effects***. Three-quarters (75.3%) of respondents said their working life was affected “a lot” by having to work evenings, two-thirds (66.9%) by having to work weekends and nearly half (47.1%) by having to give up annual leave. Most of the effects are clearly gendered: on working weekends, 72.2% of female and 56.2% of male respondents said it affected them a lot; on giving up annual leave, 51.7% of female respondents were affected compared to 37% of males. Everyone was affected by working evenings (95% female, 87.6% male). More than two-thirds of our whole sample said they felt the weight of excessive management expectations (45.4% ‘a lot’; 24.5% ‘a little’). Female respondents (49.4%) were again more likely to say ‘a lot’ than their male colleagues (35.3%). The situation again may be worse in post-92 universities, where 52.9% of respondents said ‘a lot’ compared to 42.9% in the pre-92 institutions.

Figure 12
Being affected “a lot” by overwork



While expectations are increasing, facilities for working effectively are declining.

Nearly a third of respondents were sharing offices (24.9%), working in open-plan offices (3.1%) or hot-desking (3.3%). Female respondents were less likely to say that they had their own office than their male colleagues (65.3% female, 78.7% male). The lack of a dedicated working space makes it harder to keep books and research materials to hand, reinforcing the myth that Humanities research is a leisure pursuit. It may also make it harder to carry out the research-led teaching that many institutions champion. If research activity is not visible to students, because it has to take place outside of “work” time and space, there are likely to be spin-off effects in making it harder for prospective academics to see at student stage what an academic life looks like—an especially important point given the need for History to attract more postgraduate students and staff from underrepresented gender, racial, ethnic and socioeconomic groups. Reports to the working group indicate that poor facilities can lead to more staff working from home, exacerbating inequalities for those who lack a home workspace or have caring responsibilities at home, reducing quality research time, and damaging staff morale, participation and collegiality.

A heavy workload makes it harder to implement equalities policies, not least because they take time. So too does creating and sustaining a departmental culture in which everyone feels included, appreciated and – why not? – happy. Lack of time to reflect or to talk and listen to colleagues, the need to make quick decisions to bring a discussion to a close so people can dash off to the next meeting, the constant pressure to be done with one task and move on to the next, combine to create a pressure-cooker atmosphere in which everyone, however committed to tackling inequalities, becomes more vulnerable to unconscious bias.

The ***pressures of overwork*** are unlikely to go away anytime soon, which makes it all the more important to promote general awareness of gendered effects, so that it becomes an embedded practice to tackle them in all aspects of working life.

1.6 Teaching and Learning

High levels of suspected, observed or experienced gender inequality were reported by all respondents in all questions related to teaching and learning: especially **seminar/class discussion** (54%), **teaching practices** (49.9%) **curriculum content** (47.6%) and **curriculum management** (41.1%). The early-career researchers among our sample were particularly likely to have either experienced or observed gender inequalities in curriculum content (40.3%) and teaching practice (36.4%).

These findings indicate an aspect of gender inequality that has received relatively little attention. If the whole sphere of teaching, including what happens in the classroom as well as the content and management of the curriculum, is subject to gender bias, then there are likely to be serious knock-on effects for gender equality in career progression. Such biases will compound the acknowledged tendency for women to be allocated primarily teaching roles, to the detriment of their research careers. A related cause for concern is that large proportions of respondents stated that student evaluations of teaching (SETs) fed into staff evaluation procedures such as probation (43.1%), staff reviews (63.4%), and promotion (60.3%), even though there is a growing body of evidence that SETs are biased in favour of teachers who are male and also in favour of those who are white.¹⁸

18 The EU project Effective Gender Equality in Research and Academia (EGERA) analysed a sample of over 20,000 first-year evaluations and found a clear gender bias.

Anne Boring, 'Gender biases in student evaluations of teaching', *Journal of Public Economics*, vol. 145, Jan. 2017, 27-41: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0047272716301591>

The Times Higher Education (3 October 2018) reported on these findings: <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/blog/student-evaluations-teaching-are-biased-and-unreliable>

See also Dana Williams, 'Examining the Relation between Race and Student Evaluations of Faculty Members: A Literature Review', *Modern Languages Association* (2007); <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/growing-evidence-anti-female-bias-student-surveys>; <https://www.insidehighered.com/ad-vice/2018/02/09/teaching-evaluations-are-often-used-confirm-worst-stereotypes-about-women-faculty>

HEPs rightly focus on improving the students' experience of teaching. But if they are to implement the legal protections afforded by UK equalities legislation, they must also pay attention to gender bias in the tutors' experience of teaching. In any case, working conditions for teachers affect the quality of teaching, so the pursuit of sustained excellence will depend upon a commitment to equality and inclusion. This is particularly the case given the high figures (36.4%) of observed/experienced inequality in teaching practices among early career historians noted above. Action to root out inequalities of both gender and race in teaching is all the more urgently required given the increasing importance of TEF (Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework; see Glossary).

The figures on observed/experienced gender inequality were lower for assessment modes (12.4%, with a further 18.6% who suspected it) and student results at all levels, but they still give cause for serious concern, especially given concerns that some assessment models may have gendered biases.

Clearly there is an urgent need for more research at local level. It would be worthwhile for departments to make the area of Teaching and Learning, especially classroom practice and modes of assessment, a priority in an Athena SWAN application, either as part of the working environment section or as an extra element in the submission.

1.7 Athena SWAN Charter

“

It made us realise how sexist we are.

”

MALE PROFESSOR,
AFTER PARTICIPATION IN AN ATHENA SWAN APPLICATION

Since the Athena SWAN Charter was opened up to the Arts and Humanities in 2015, an increasing number of historians have been involved in making applications. To summarise, a Bronze award is mostly about identifying problems and devising actions to address them; a Silver award requires evidence of impact from these actions to bring about change; a Gold Award is based on showing that they have had a measurable effect in reducing inequalities. By mid-2018 eight History Departments and a further seven Humanities groupings had received Bronze awards.¹⁹ Other departments have applied but not yet met the standard (the overall success rate was 54% from 2015 to 2017) and yet more have applications in train. Athena SWAN has helped to raise the profile of gender equality and put it on the management agenda. For more information about the scheme, see the Glossary.

Over three-quarters of our survey respondents reported some involvement in an Athena SWAN award, of whom 59% said it had resulted in greater awareness of inequalities, although only 23% thought it had helped a lot. Just under half (46.8%) of respondents said it had led to improvements in the attitudes of managers and colleagues, to the introduction of new policies to promote gender equality and to better implementation of existing policies. Only just over a quarter (27.6%), however, saw improvements in workload allocation, assignment of administrative roles, teaching and learning models or revisions to the curriculum.

¹⁹ Updates can be found at: <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/athena-swan-november-2017-award-round-results/>

In general, female respondents were somewhat less convinced about the positive effects of the process, with consistently more female (median 36.5%) than male (median 25.5%) respondents reporting that it had not helped much or not at all in the nine areas specified in the survey.

The implications of our survey results are that ***at Bronze stage Athena SWAN is seen to operate at the level of generalities rather than addressing the sticky specifics where real change needs to take place.*** Our findings were in line with the cautious endorsements of the Athena SWAN process recorded in the report by Alana Harris and Abigail Woods of King's College London, 'The Impact of Athena SWAN on Arts and Humanities Departments', summarised in the Glossary.²⁰

As with any other policy to promote gender equality, ***the quality of implementation makes all the difference.*** If poorly organised or resourced, it runs the risk of being dismissed as “a box-ticking exercise” (as it was described by some respondents) that enables university managements to claim that they have dealt with equality and diversity while the real problems continue to be ignored. However, if implemented with commitment, sensitivity and inclusivity, then the process itself is likely to have beneficial outcomes, whether or not the award is made.

²⁰ <https://www.lfhe.ac.uk/en/research-resources/publications-hub/index.cfm/SDP2018-02>

1.8 Research and Publication

Many female respondents reported experiencing or observing gender inequalities in preparations for **REF 2014**. 17.8% of female respondents (compared to 3.7% of males) experienced or observed such inequalities in the allocation of workload for the submission, 14.2% (2.8% of men) in the selection of staff to be submitted, 13% (1.9% of men) in the selection of outputs, 12% (3.7% of men) in dry-run assessments. On the question of participation in REF-related decision-making there were more concerns: 22% of female respondents (compared to 6.5% of male) experienced or observed gender inequality in this area. Worryingly, the picture looks worse in relation to preparations for **REF 2021**, with 19.5% of female respondents already reporting experienced or observed inequality in the process.

This result may be an early indication of the adverse effects caused by the initial proposal by Research England in its REF consultation of summer/autumn 2018 to remove the previous automatic output provisions for maternity leave. The explanation given for doing so was that the reduction in number of outputs per staff member from 4 to an overall average of 2.5, together with the requirement for Units of Assessment to submit a collective total of outputs rather than a certain number per person, removed the need for provisions to recognise the impact of maternity leave and to mitigate any possible adverse effects on women's careers (such as being excluded from the REF). The proposal has been strongly resisted, including by the RHS and other subject associations, but the outcome is unknown at the time of writing this report. The process is a sharp reminder of how easily progress towards greater equality can be eroded or reversed.

1.9 The Historical Profession

“ The kinds of history we value, the particular qualities we value, the types of work we value - all tend to be typecast on male role models, implicitly or explicitly. ”

RHS SURVEY RESPONDENT, 2018

The figures here were striking, with high levels of gender inequality experienced, seen or suspected in all the central intellectual activities of our subject. **Keynote lectures** (64.6%), **conference programmes** (59.8%), **learned societies** (53.1%) and **seminar programmes** (49.1%) were particular causes for concern. There were also high reports of experienced or observed inequality in journal editorships (42.5%) and appointments to editorial boards (44.2%). In all cases, female respondents were significantly more likely to say that they had observed or experienced inequality (see Figure 13). Early career historians also registered high levels of experienced or observed inequality in these two areas: 50% in conference programming and 55.8% in keynote lectures.

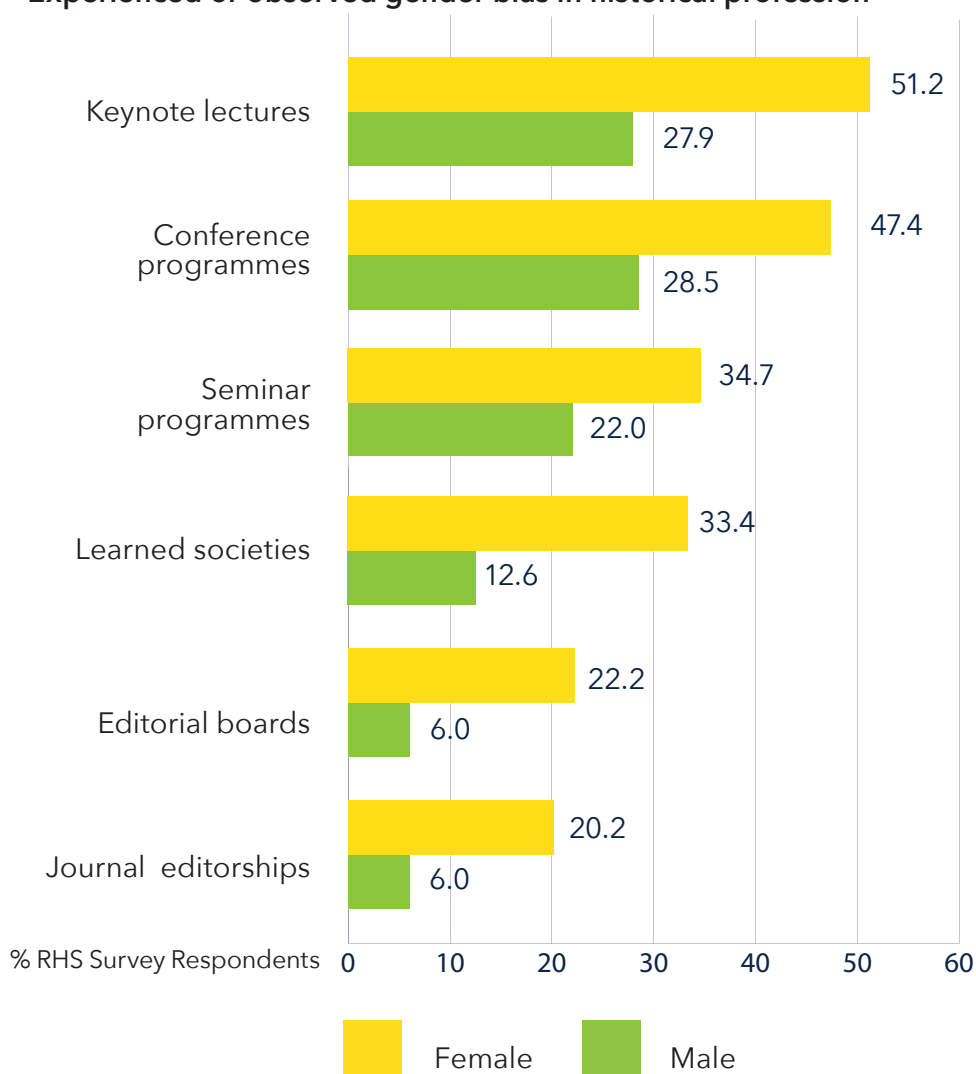
It is fair to deduce that there is a deeply worrying lack of confidence, especially among early career researchers, in the commitment to equalities of the basic vehicles of intellectual exchange and dissemination in History. The nature of our survey data does not allow us to equate perceptions of inequality with experiences of inequality. However, the high levels of perceived inequality are themselves very concerning. Proactive attention by the discipline's gatekeepers is clearly in order.

Several of our respondents raised the question of the **implicit role models** historians follow. Female scientists often say that a scientist is imagined as male.²¹ Although the overall gender

21 <https://theconversation.com/most-people-think-man-when-they-think-scientist-how-can-we-kill-the-stereotype-42393>

balance is better in History than in many areas of science,²² a Google image search for “historian” still brings up a page of white men. Even if it is no longer the case that all historians are imagined as male, there is still a perception that successful, leading historians are men. For example, at a 2018 RHS workshop on gender equality ECR historians reported that they had observed a strong tendency to envisage senior figures, such as candidates for a keynote speaker, as men.

Figure 13
Experienced or observed gender bias in historical profession



22 *Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics: The Talent Pipeline from Classroom to Boardroom: UK Statistics 2014*: https://www.wisecampaign.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/WISE_UK_Statistics_2014.pdf

The question of role models relates to the question of **expectations**. Academic jobs are typically envisaged not only as full-time but as all-consuming, both by university managements and by many academics themselves. Such a conception of the academic role arises from a combination of pressures, some of which have a long history (the old ideal of dedication to knowledge, with its related assumption that someone else will take care of domestic necessities), some of which are decades old (the marketisation of higher education with its emphasis on competition) and some of which are contemporary (government pressures to take on more and more duties unrelated to the core academic role).

The RHS recognises that there are real merits to the new attention being directed toward **teaching quality** in higher education broadly, and History more specifically. Our first annual prize for inspirational teaching and supervision (named after our former President, Dame Jinty Nelson) was awarded in 2018. However, new expectations with respect to teaching and student pastoral care have typically been added onto existing staff workloads. At many institutions, this additional work has been accompanied in History by a sharp increase in undergraduate student numbers, with several Russell Group departments in England in particular expanding student numbers dramatically without accompanying increases in full-time permanent staff. Both the ‘precariat’ and permanent staff are placed under new pressure by these developments, exacerbating inequalities experienced by staff with protected characteristics to whom additional pastoral duties are often assigned.

In general, the idea that doing the job well involves regular and extensive overtime is hard for anyone to live up to, but even more difficult for those with caring responsibilities -- which increasingly encompasses most people, at least some of the time, because of the rise in need to care for elderly relatives as well as for children. As one respondent observed: “Crushing workloads mean that anyone not able to work long hours is less competitive”. Our survey shows that many historians believe **excessive expectations are damaging the working culture of the profession**, with

comments pointing to a “need to shift the notion of ideal academic to human being embedded in normal contours of life”.

Evidence is emerging that working long hours is detrimental to reflection, imagination and creativity,²³ all of which are qualities conducive to high quality research and writing. Many of the recent approaches and methods – global and transnational history that is multi-lingual and multi-archival, digital data processing – require skills in collaboration and coordination of teams of people. Working alone or together in teams are equally valid ways of being historians (and many of us do both at different moments). As a number of respondents commented, the future vitality of the discipline requires us to rethink a competitive model of being a historian. Everyone involved in researching, writing and teaching History needs to think about what kind of a subject we want it to be.

23 Shinya Kajitani, Colin McKenzie and Kei Sakata, ‘Use It Too Much and Lose It? The Effect of Working Long Hours on Cognitive Ability’, Melbourne Institute Working Paper No. 7/16: <https://melbourneinstitute.unimelb.edu.au/downloads/working-paper-series/wp2016n07.pdf>

1.10 What Helps

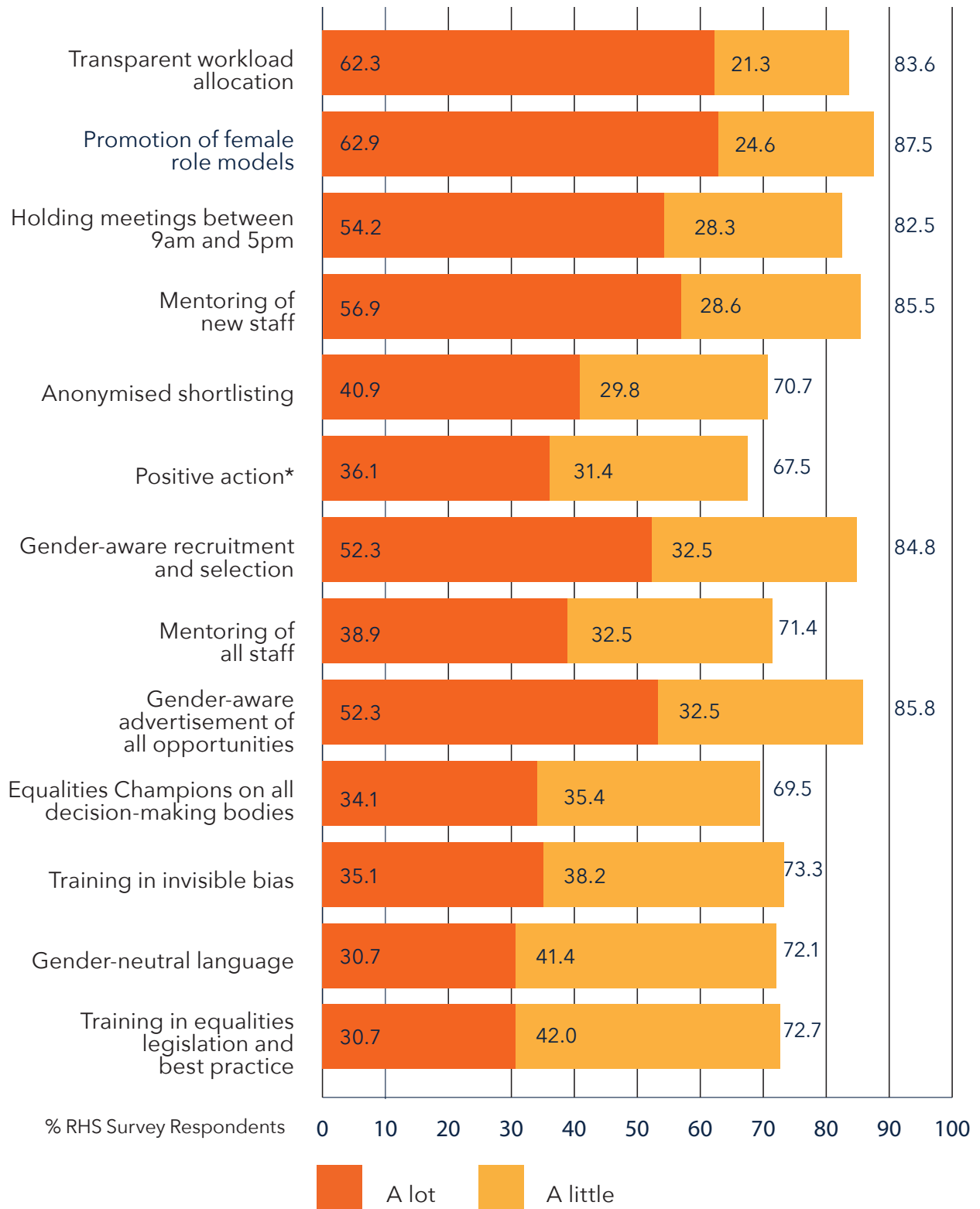
The good news is that the survey showed a high level of consensus among all categories of respondent about what would improve their working lives. In most instances there was no significant difference by gender.²⁴ A lot of these measures can be implemented at departmental level. Good leadership can be transformative, as can a strong collective commitment to change. Introducing even a couple of these policies is likely to bring about substantial and rapid improvements. There are plenty of steps that any department or learned society could take in this forthcoming academic year to enhance the working culture for everyone.

Key measures:

- transparent workload allocation
- gender-aware recruitment
- visibility for work of women and non-binary historians
- non-macho role models
- holding meetings in standard working hours
- mentoring; targeted career advice, especially on promotion
- attention to the needs of care-givers
- raising awareness of gender inequality
- raising awareness of intersectionality

²⁴ There were clear gender differences in three areas: positive action (42% of female respondents and 26% of male answered that it would help ‘a lot’); anonymised shortlisting (44% of female respondents and 37% of male thought it would help ‘a lot’); and the promotion of female role models (69% of female respondents compared to 51% of male. said it would help ‘a lot’).

Figure 14
Policies that help



* The Equality Act (2010) draws a clear distinction between positive action, which is both legal and supported, and positive discrimination, which is neither (see Glossary).

Part 2. Recommendations for Good Practice

For Everyone

Disseminate this report as widely as possible. Discuss it at meetings with staff and students in your Department, your field of History and any professional organisations to which you belong. Make sure copies go to your Vice-Chancellor, your Dean and your HR Director.

Read up on the research about unconscious bias, stereotype threat and research on gender discrimination, and encourage your colleagues and students to do so as well. Remember that the evidence is that most people in Higher Education are not intentionally prejudiced, but everyone is subject to unconscious bias, after years of social stereotyping. Familiarise yourself with the legal framework and with your own institution's policies to promote equalities.

Think about what you personally could do to help. Be aware of potential inequalities in all your work: teaching, reviewing, organising and conducting academic events, at meetings in your department and in your subject area. If time is limited, choose one specific area for initial focus, adding others as time permits or needs dictate. Question and challenge working practices based on unexamined gender stereotypes: work with colleagues to devise better ways of doing things.

Be especially alert to the possibility of gender bias in all evaluation processes, not only in formal employment practices of recruitment, probation and promotion, but also in allocation of grants, prizes and other awards. It's in these less obvious areas, so important to the accumulation of professional capital, that unconscious bias is likely to go undetected.

When writing references for students and colleagues, be aware that there is considerable evidence that references are often a source of unconscious bias and gendered language.²⁵ Avoid writing in code or using language that evokes gender stereotypes, e.g. compassionate, conscientious, helpful for women; confident, ambitious, outstanding for men. The University of Arizona has published a helpful one-page guide to avoiding gender bias in references. It urges referees to mention research and publications (4 times more likely to appear in letters for men); to focus on accomplishments not effort (letters for women were 50% more likely to praise hard work rather than ability); and to keep it professional (letters for women were 7 times more likely to mention personal life). Use formal titles for historians of all genders.²⁶

Think about visual images in any slide presentation you prepare for a lecture, seminar, conference or training event: how representative and how inclusive/diverse is the picture you are projecting? These considerations apply not only to gender, but to all 'protected characteristics' under UK equalities legislation (see Equality Act 2010 in the Glossary).

Promote the work of women historians, current or past, on your department's website; put up photographs of women historians; talk about their ideas; include them in your reading lists; nominate

25 Frances Trix and Carolyn Psenka. "Exploring the Color of Glass: Letters of Recommendation for Female and Male Medical Faculty." *Discourse & Society* 14, no. 2 (2003): 191-220; Chris Houser and Kelly Lemmons. 'Implicit Bias in Letters of Recommendation for an Undergraduate Research Internship,' *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 42:5, 2018: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/0309877X.2017.1301410>.

26 https://csw.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/avoiding_gender_bias_in_letter_of_reference_writing.pdf

women for prizes. You could even write Wikipedia entries on them: read about the scientist who writes a Wikipedia entry a day on high-achieving women scientists.²⁷

Making women more visible may help to shift the stereotype; it also creates a virtual set of more diverse role models for new entrants to the profession. The same applies to trans-gender and non-binary historians.

²⁷ <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2018/jul/24/academic-writes-270-wikipedia-pages-year-female-scientists-noticed>

For Heads of Department/School

Act on the basis that you can make a difference. A good Head of Department can do a lot to stimulate a change in culture. Equalities measures require time and resources in the short term but, apart from being necessary to ensure compliance with the law, they are likely to save work in the medium to long term, by creating a more productive and collegial working environment for everybody.

Include as many people as possible in equalities work. People with protected characteristics (see Equality Act 2010 in the Glossary) should not be expected to disproportionately carry the additional burden of doing the equalities work. It is not possible to achieve gender equality without the participation of men.²⁸

Monitor gender inequalities in all the work of your unit. Even if not undertaking an Athena SWAN application, carry out an audit of gender inequalities – and other inequalities too if possible, keeping intersectionality in mind. A survey and a short report will get people thinking and talking. You could adapt some of the questions from the RHS surveys on gender and race, for example, or from Athena SWAN material.²⁹

Do what you can to close the gender pay gap: The decisions that will make a real difference here are of course usually taken at the top levels of university managements, but those HoDs who have access to salary information can assess the gender pay gap in their unit and make appropriate recommendations to Deans; any HoD can encourage and support women professors to apply for any salary increases offered by the institution that could help to rectify the pay gap.

28 R. W. Connell, 'The Role of Men and Boys in Achieving Gender Equality', paper for the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, 7 October 2003: <http://gender.care2share.wikispaces.net/file/view/UN+-+Working+Paper+-+Connell.pdf/176593591/UN%20-%20Working%20Paper%20-%20Connell.pdf>

29 <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/athena-swan-resources/>

If your unit has a poor gender balance, plan a strategy for recruiting in fields of history where there is a better balance. Be mindful of intersectionality and of the risks of improving equality for one protected group at the expense of another. For suggestions about how to attract the most inclusive possible applicant pool, see Recommendations for Appointment Panels.

Implement transparent workload allocation, with fair distribution both of load and of the more and less prestigious tasks. According to our survey results (see p. 52), this is probably the single most important measure you could implement to improve working culture in your unit. It is also worth thinking hard about when and whether it's appropriate (or, instead likely to increase gender bias) to ask for volunteers: experiments have shown that in mixed-sex groups women volunteered twice as often as men to take on a non-promotable task.³⁰

Make sure that all students and staff know what to do if they experience, observe or suspect sexual harassment, discrimination, bullying and/or intimidation. Open discussion of these abuses in general terms and of effective ways to counter them can help to create an atmosphere in which individuals feel able to report incidents without detriment.

Train, encourage and support speaking out against sexual harassment and misconduct:

- bystander training can give people the strategies and confidence they need to intervene safely. Public Health England has a comprehensive briefing based on a research project carried

30 See Babcock, L., Recalde, M. and Vesterlund, L., 'Why Women Volunteer for Tasks that Don't Lead to Promotions', *Harvard Business Review*, 16 July 2018: <https://hbr.org/2018/07/why-women-volunteer-for-tasks-that-dont-lead-to-promotions>; Heijstra, T. M., Steinhorsdóttir, F. S. and Einarsdóttir, T., 'Academic Career Making and the Double-Edged Role of Academic Housework', *Gender and Education*, 29, 2017, 760-80; and <https://wonkhe.com/blogs/women-who-volunteer-still-dont-get-the-credit/>

out at the University of the West of England in Bristol and other useful material is available.³¹

Ensure full implementation of provisions for Maternity Leave, Paternity Leave, Adoption Leave, and Shared Parental Leave.³²

Good practice entails:

- Make sure that full cover is arranged and that either the HoD or a delegate does the work of finding it; the staff member should never be left to arrange their own cover;
- If the staff member is taking up any university-wide schemes for additional leave to catch up on research, ensure full cover for that period too;
- Ensure that the employer's duty of care during pregnancy is fully discussed with the member of staff and that her individual needs are met;
- Implement policies flexibly, taking individual circumstances into account. Good communication and sensitive management are crucial;
- Plan and discuss integration back into the department with anyone returning from parental leave;
- Ensure that there is no attempt by anyone to require the person to take on extra work on return from a period of parental leave;

31 Public Health England briefing: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/515634/Evidence_review_by-stander_intervention_to_prevent_sexual_and_domestic_violence_in_universities_11April2016.pdf. A website called 'The Intervention Initiative' offers guidance based on the same research project at UWE, now hosted by Exeter University: <http://socialsciences.exeter.ac.uk/research/interventioninitiative/>. A short set of guidelines is available at <https://www.breakingthesilence.cam.ac.uk/prevention-support/be-active-bystander>.

32 ECU (2018) Improving Uptake of Shared Parental Leave – guidance for UK HEIs and Colleges in Scotland <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/improving-uptake-shared-parental-leave-guidance-uk-higher-education-institutions-colleges-scotland/>

- Offer career guidance, especially on resuming research and publication;
- Advise the staff members about any university-wide informal support schemes, such as a Parents' and Carers' network, as has been introduced at various HEPs;
- Ensure that all members of your unit know and understand about provisions for parental leave, in order to foster a supportive and collegial atmosphere. Again, it is crucial to ensure full cover so that there is no cause for resentment against the individual on leave;
- If maternity leave policy at your institution is less than generous, make the argument for improving it: institutions that offer generous maternity leave provision have twice the number of female professors than institutions providing only the legal minimum.³³

Be as flexible as possible to help and support anyone with regular caring responsibilities, a category that extends far beyond bringing up children to caring for sick or disabled family members. Bear in mind that students may well be affected. Ask any care-giver what would help, implement it if possible and keep them informed about what can be done. Advise them of any informal Parents' and Carers' support networks at your institution. Ensure that all members of the department are informed about and understand the need for policies to help care-givers.

Career Guidance: History-specific career advice should be readily available to everyone, whether through a mentoring scheme or other routes (e.g. annual discussion with HoD or another senior figure, separate from any formal review process).

³³ See the British Academy blog of 7 February 2018 by Professor Vera Troeger, introducing her British Academy/Leverhulme-funded research project on the impact of maternity pay on academic careers: <https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/blog/how-maternity-pay-impacts-academic-careers>

Stages to be particularly aware of are:

- New staff, including temporary or part-time staff;
- ECRs/postdoctoral researchers/teaching fellows: writing the book of the thesis;
- Lecturers/Assistant Professors: planning the second monograph;
- SL/Associate Professors: getting stuck, especially in student-facing roles.

At any stage, all staff or students returning from parental leave, or leave for any other caring responsibilities may particularly welcome career guidance, especially on research planning. It is also notable that increasing precarity, and an increasing diversity of choices about career direction, mean that many historians no longer follow a traditional linear career path, and therefore departments need to think flexibly about the guidance and support they offer.³⁴

Early career researchers: bear in mind that the various problems identified in this report – precarious employment, overwork, experiences of discrimination and/or sexual harassment, caring responsibilities – may combine in particularly acute ways for ECRs, especially if they are employed on a short-term or part-time basis, and that these effects are all gendered. Active mentoring, career guidance and ensuring that ECRs know what to do if they experience abusive behaviour can do a good deal to retain talented women historians in the profession.

Ensure inclusivity in the intellectual and social life of your unit: Ask staff and students what would help them to participate, both formally and informally. In many places, holding meetings in normal working hours has been found to help care-givers, those with a long commute and part-timers. Skype may be a helpful

³⁴ See for example Aileen Fyfe, “Women’s Careers are not like Pipelines”, *Times Higher Education*, 12 February 2018: <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/blog/womens-careers-are-not-pipelines>

tool to increase inclusivity at meetings or committees, especially if it can save colleagues from a commute so that they can maximise research time. Podcasting of seminars may also help. But these things are likely to vary and no single measure in itself will be the answer: evening seminars often cause problems for care-givers, but may open up opportunities for part-time students to participate. Try to find out what people would prefer. Don't assume that you know the 'right' answer to these questions before you have asked them.

In general, strive to create a working culture in which women, men and non-binary people are equally able to realise their potential. The report *Collaborating with Men*, published in 2017 by Murray Edwards, an all-women college at Cambridge, analysed how men perceive women in the workplace and why men think women are sidelined or not heard. It offers suggestions for sharing views, making action visible, increasing transparency, bystander training and building better relationships between men and women at work. They will also supply on request a sample questionnaire to measure gender biases.³⁵ See also the United Nations HeForShe campaign, in which ten global universities participated, including Leicester and Oxford.³⁶

35 For details of the research project: <https://www.murrayedwards.cam.ac.uk/about/Collaborating-with-Men>. For their report and recommendations: <https://www.murrayedwards.cam.ac.uk/sites/default/files/files/Report%202%20-%20Collaborating%20with%20Men%20July%202017.pdf>. See p. 19 of their report for contact details to obtain their sample questionnaire.

36 <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/tag/heforshe/>

For Appointment Panels

“

Unconscious bias means that we recruit in our own image, whether we mean to or not.

”

JOANNA READ
PRINCIPAL OF THE LONDON ACADEMY OF
MUSIC AND DRAMATIC ART

Learn about and discuss unconscious bias and stereotype threat (defined in the Glossary) and strive to minimise their influence on your decision-making. The Royal Society provides a helpful briefing document.³⁷ Chairs of panels should ensure that everyone involved in the process, including anyone invited to attend job presentations or teaching sessions, is aware of unconscious bias and understands its effects. It may help to ask all panel members to read a definition of unconscious bias at the start of each stage of the evaluation process. There is evidence in relation to racial inequalities that greater awareness in itself can help to reduce bias.³⁸

Define the remit of your post as inclusively as possible. How the job is defined is crucial to attracting a diverse pool of applicants.³⁹ Women are less likely than men to apply for a job unless they think they are fully qualified for it. The famous claim (from a Hewlett

37 <https://royalsociety.org/~media/policy/publications/2015/unconscious-bias-briefing-2015.pdf>

38 Devine, Patricia, E. Ashby Plant, David M. Amodio, Eddie Harmon-Jones, and Stephanie L. Vance, “The Regulation of Explicit and Implicit Race Bias: The Role of Motivations to Respond without Prejudice.” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 82, (2002), 835- 848: http://www.uky.edu/AS/PoliSci/Peffley/pdf/Sniderman/Devine_Plant_2002_The%20Regulation%20of%20Explicit%20and%20Implicit%20Race%20Bias_JPSP.pdf

39 The evidence is that bias is more likely to affect outcomes if there is imbalance in the applicant pool: Van Ommeren, J., R.E. de Vries, G. Russo, and M. van Ommeren. “Context in selection of men and women in hiring decisions: Gender composition of the applicant pool.” *Psychological Reports*, 96, no. 2 (2004): 349–360.

40 See footnote 39.

Packard internal report)⁴⁰ is that while men apply for a job when they meet only 60% of the qualifications, women apply only if they meet 100% of them. Women’s reluctance is not necessarily the result of any lack of confidence; instead it arises because they are more likely than men to assume that the person hired will actually meet all the stated criteria and correspondingly more likely to take literally the guidelines about who should apply.⁴¹ If there is truth in that, it is worth thinking very carefully about how to define your post, e.g. “history of warfare” might attract a wider field than “military history” or “history of technology, culture and society” a more diverse pool than “history of technology”.

Follow the EHRC (Equality and Human Rights Commission) recommendations to consider jobs as job-share/flexible working as default, then think more critically about when and how that might not be possible (and how it could be mitigated).⁴²

Carefully consider the wording of the advertisement, the Job Description and the Person Specification, especially any essential criteria. Prioritise evaluation criteria, because if criteria are not clear and prioritised it becomes more likely that evaluators will shift criteria according to stereotypes. Think about gendered expectations and language in evaluation criteria: terms such as “leadership”, “rigour” and “ambition” tend to be coded male. “Excellence” has been shown to be construed as male in science.⁴³ There is an online tool to help check for gender bias in language.⁴⁴

Consider using a pro-forma for applicants’ CVs, so that all applications contain the same kind of information, in the same order and using the same terms (e.g. for the status of a journal article: in progress, submitted, being revised, accepted, in press). Consistent information can help to reduce bias.

41 Tara Sophia Mohr, ‘Why Women Don’t Apply for Jobs Unless They’re 100% Qualified’, *Harvard Business Review*, 25

42 <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-work/news/shake-working-culture-and-practices-recommended-reduce-pay-gaps>

43 T. Rees, ‘The Gendered Construction of Scientific Excellence’, *Interdisciplinary Science Reviews*, 36:2, 2011, 133-45.

44 <http://gender-decoder.katmatfield.com>. See also Global Academy blog <https://blog.globalacademyjobs.com/competitive-committed-gender-coded-bias-recruit>

Think hard about where to place the advertisement and also about how it will be disseminated informally – try to ensure it goes beyond the established patronage networks. Twitter can be a useful tool, especially for early-career posts. For senior leadership roles, be alert to the fact that Recruitment Agencies, now commonly used for senior posts, can increase the prominence of informal back channels of communication about candidates, reducing transparency and therefore increasing the likelihood of both invisible bias and stereotype threat affecting the outcome. If you use a recruitment firm, appoint them only after they have provided convincing evidence that they are committed to enacting equal opportunities.

Draw attention in your recruitment literature to any policies your department has in place to help care-givers, including help with attending an interview. Giving information about specific initiatives (as distinct from general statements of support for equalities) could help to convince applicants that your department takes these matters seriously.

Consider anonymising applications (if practicable). There are different views about whether it is helpful or not. There is some evidence that anonymous applications can help to counter unconscious bias in many sectors of employment,⁴⁵ but it is not clear how far these findings translate to highly specialised roles such as academic historian. In certain small fields of History, anonymity may even be counter-productive because it is bogus, i.e. certain applicants will be recognisable to certain selectors, while others remain unknown, thereby reinforcing established patronage networks. The potential advantages of anonymity are that by signalling an employer's commitment to equalities it may help to encourage a wide range of applicants. At both longlisting and shortlisting stage, it may also help to reduce the proven tendency to judge men on future promise and women on past achievement. Introducing anonymity entails a thorough analysis of job criteria which in itself is likely to alert everyone to

45 For a summary of research on anonymous hiring in the overall labour market in several European countries, see: <https://wol.iza.org/articles/anonymous-job-applications-and-hiring-discrimination/long>

their tendencies towards bias. That said, there may be more efficient ways of reducing unconscious bias, such as making everyone aware of its effects,⁴⁶ or explicitly taking inequalities into account when specifying the job remit and criteria. In any case, like any other policy, anonymity on its own is no panacea. It is crucial to ensure that discrimination is not simply postponed to a later stage, at interview (see below).

If you decide to request references, bear in mind that they are often a source of unconscious gender bias (for the research evidence, see *Recommendations for Everyone*). Think about what role they will play in the selection process, at what stage the panel will read them and if they are necessary at all beyond formal HR requirements.

Allow sufficient time for evaluation at all stages. This is probably the single most important step you can take to minimise the effects of unconscious bias. If pressed to make quick judgements, research shows that we all tend to resort to stereotypes,⁴⁷ because we have been absorbing them unconsciously all our lives. Rushed evaluation of applications is prejudicial to women and/or other underrepresented groups. Consider creating a long list and reading the work of the people on it, instead of moving straight to a short-list on the basis of the application materials. The reading can be divided up between members of the panel, so long as every long-listed candidate's work is read by more than one person. It will take more time, but it will be time well-spent. At the end of the process, if there is uncertainty about the final decision and time is running out, let everyone take a day or two more to consider rather than making a rushed appointment.

46 For evidence that awareness plus motivation to reduce prejudice actually does so: Devine, Patricia, E. Ashby Plant, David M. Amodio, Eddie Harmon-Jones, and Stephanie L. Vance. "The Regulation of Explicit and Implicit Race Bias: The Role of Motivations to Respond without Prejudice." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 82, (2002): 835- 848.

47 Devine, Patricia G., E. Ashby Plant, David M. Amodio, Eddie Harmon Jones and Stephanie L. Vance, "The regulation of implicit and explicit race bias: The role of motivations to respond without prejudice." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 2002, 82: 835 848.

“

People become more likely to stereotype when they are distracted, tired, rushed.

”

PATRICIA DEVINE ET AL

Strive for gender balance on panels, selecting externals as appropriate, but bear in mind that parity will not on its own correct for bias, because everyone is subject to unconscious bias. Many HEPs now require a certain proportion of any panel to be female, which can exacerbate the work overload for senior women and/or require women at earlier stages of their careers to take on work for which they are not trained or prepared. Monitor how many panels individuals serve on over a period of time and ensure compensation in workload allocation.

At interview stage, be sure not to undo all your previous work against unconscious bias. Interviews can unthinkingly privilege qualities culturally associated with men. One unnecessarily hostile question or intervention can throw anyone subject to stereotype threat in a way that would not affect someone not subject to it. Make sure candidates know exactly what to expect on the interview day. Consider sending out some interview questions in advance. You would then test each candidate's best thinking, without the risk of stereotype threat affecting performance. There would in any case always be unknown follow-up questions, so there would still be an opportunity to test thinking under pressure, should you wish to do so. On the day, before job presentations and interviews start, remind everyone present of the ways in which equality is being protected.

Hiring staff committed to equality and inclusion: After taking all possible steps to prevent unconscious bias entering into recruitment, it is also worth thinking about how to ensure that the person you decide to employ has a good understanding of equalities. Here the difference between general and specific questions can make all the difference: most candidates are likely to enthuse about how

important equalities are to them; fewer may be able to give specific examples of women and/or BME scholars who have inspired them, or whose work is central to their teaching or scholarship.⁴⁸

When making the decision, remember to ensure that there is enough time to discuss all the candidates thoroughly. Don't forget about the written work you have read, which may lead to a different decision than if it all comes down to performance on the day. Think very hard about and openly discuss hard-to-define qualities that often influence the final decision, such as "fit to the Department" or "collegiality".

48 For a vivid account in relation to race, see: <https://activisthistory.com/2018/08/29/academic-racism-the-repression-of-marginalized-voices-in-academia/>

For Promotion Committees

Carry out annual reviews of *everyone* eligible for academic promotion, including part-time staff and Professors (if there is a banding scheme). Requiring everyone to submit an updated CV is the best way to neutralise any supposedly ‘natural tendency’ to hold back. No-one should have to put themselves forward for promotion.

Give regular advice to all staff about what they need to do to meet the criteria for promotion. Ensure that any changes in university policies are communicated. Planning needs to start many years before an application is made. For example, it takes time to build up the networks from which referees will be drawn. If someone appears to be stuck, which, as we have seen, happens particularly to women in mid-career, review their workload to ensure that they have fair opportunities to do the work that will enable them to meet the criteria. The second project is often a sticking point when advice and support is particularly important.

Care-givers may need particular help to find ways of meeting the criteria e.g. an international reputation is harder to achieve for anyone unable to travel regularly, but there are ways to help, such as submitting articles to international journals. Give due weight to periods of leave for care-givers, both in policy and practice. Ensure anyone returning from any kind of career break is given the help and advice they need to resume their research and publication as well as their teaching.

Give History-specific guidance. Promotion criteria are usually university-wide and generic; it is helpful to set out what is expected of a historian. Is a range of strong journal articles sufficient, or must there be a monograph? Does a large research grant count in place of a second monograph? What kind of administrative jobs do you need to have done? Can a case be made on teaching alone, or must it be both research and teaching? What about public engagement or impact work? Ensure applicants for promotion are aware that their impact work is likely to be evaluated

by panels that include academics from other disciplines, so it needs to be presented with a wider audience in mind.

Promotion Workshops for women can help a lot to clarify expectations and improve presentation of applications.

A senior person should review all applications for promotion to ensure that the case is presented as effectively as possible.

Work with HR Departments to audit promotion criteria for unconscious bias, gendered language and “ideal academic” expectations that fail to make allowance for care-giving, career breaks or periods of ill health.

Targets: some HEPs have introduced targets for the proportion of women in the professoriate; it is too early to evaluate their success, but in general there is evidence that targets increase awareness and improve outcomes.⁴⁹

49 <http://www.ox.ac.uk/staff/news-listing/2015-04-21-gender-equality-targets>
<https://www.nwo.nl/en/news-and-events/news/2018/03/the-netherlands-gains-100-female-professors.html>

For Teaching Staff and Tutors

Be aware of **stereotype threat** and its potentially adverse effects on attainment, participation and intellectual confidence. Apply mitigating strategies, e.g. maintain and communicate high expectations for all students, regardless of gender, race, class or demonstrated ability; foster an inclusive culture in all academic meetings; and promote the view that diversity is an educational asset.

Promote gender equality across the curriculum. History curricula that do not embed the perspective of gender are intellectually incomplete. Review the curriculum as a whole as well as individual modules. Take sabbatical leave patterns (if relevant) into account: is it only possible to study history in a gender-balanced way in certain years when certain teachers are available? As with histories of race and ethnicity, avoid women's history or gender history as an add-on – an extra week – the approach should be integrated into every topic. A toolkit on improving gender equality in the curriculum is available online.⁵⁰ Curriculum content is an area in which intersectionality features strongly. Students at UCL started a campaign to diversify the curriculum, “Why is My Curriculum White?”, which offers thought-provoking ideas about how to diversify the curriculum in other ways.⁵¹

Ensure explicit critical reflection on the gender balance of reading lists. What is the overall proportion of publications by women and non-binary authors on a reading list? How often does work by women and non-binary historians feature in required readings? Think particularly about core courses that are compulsory for all students: what messages do they convey about who writes the history that is worth reading? Encourage everyone to use authors'

50 EU project Effective Gender Equality in Research and Academia (EGERA), led by Anne Boring, an economist at Sciences-Po, produced a toolkit 'D4.4 Collected Good Practices in Introducing Gender in Curricula', available at <https://www.egera.eu/de/publications/public-deliverables.html>

51 https://studentsunionucl.org/sites/uclu.org/files/u136288/documents/why_is_my_curriculum_whiteb2.pdf and <https://www.nusconnect.org.uk/articles/why-is-my-curriculum-white-decolonising-the-academy>

given names (not initials) in module bibliographies, both to increase ease of checking gender representation, and to send students of all genders a clear message that men are not the only excellent historians.

Introduce guidelines for students on best practice in completing evaluations of teaching. These should be discussed and agreed by students and staff. Recommendations include:

- Be specific: leave comments, give examples of what worked/ what didn't, suggest improvements;
- Never use discriminatory, sneering or bullying language;
- Don't make personal remarks: it's about the teaching not the teacher.

Student expectations of staff have also been shown to be gendered, with both male and female students expecting female members of staff to be more available to them, both in person and on email. Hence the importance of discussing equalities with all students as well as staff.

Discuss how to diversify student recruitment: The Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) compiled a set of guidelines drawn from the Attracting Diversity initiative in Scotland, which promoted creative policies to tackle barriers to participation from gender, race or socio-economic status. Policies tested out included amending entry criteria, changing degree titles, devising new forms of outreach in schools.⁵²

⁵² <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/guidance-resources/student-recruitment-retention-attainment/student-recruitment/attracting-and-increasing-student-diversity/lands-gains-100-female-professors.html>

For Supervisors and Teachers of Postgraduate Students

This is the stage at which the gender balance shifts sharply in favour of men (women:men 55:45 UG and PGT; 45:55 PGR), so it is worth taking a close look at what might be happening here. Of course, most supervisors are committed to giving their students the best possible intellectual guidance. Yet as in all other areas of work, we are all subject to unconscious bias.

Ensure that advice on securing degree funding, research grants, career guidance, encouragement to publish, recommendations to colleagues, introductions into networks and all the other informal mechanisms that can make or break a career are given equally to all your research students, not only those who ask.

Be explicit, not implicit, in offering guidance: never assume that “everyone knows that” something is the case in career progression. Try to elicit what assumptions your student has picked up on the ECR grapevine and explain or refute them as need be.

Departments should ensure that any PhD student with any concerns about the relationship with the supervisor knows how to raise it, in confidence, without detriment and in the knowledge that it will be fairly heard and if necessary acted upon. Second supervisors can help here or encouragement to turn to the staff member responsible for graduate study.

Draw students’ attention to advice on the RHS website about publishing a monograph, preparing journal articles and open access requirements.⁵³

Be mindful of the circumstances of student care-givers: The BBC investigation of 2018 into teenage carers was a salutary reminder that perhaps one-fifth of students are likely to have caring

53 <https://royalhistosoc.org/early-career-historians/publishing>

responsibilities and institutions need to develop ways of helping them beyond ad hoc individual support.⁵⁴

Be aware of provisions for parental leave (see Recommendations for Heads of Department) and care-givers (see Recommendations for Teaching Staff).

54 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/35420196>. See also research by Carers Trust and Nottingham University from 2014; <https://carers.org/news-item/research-shows-young-adult-carers-struggling-cope-higher-education>

For Journal Editors/Series Editors/Editorial Boards

Monitor gender balance of editors; advisory boards; peer reviewers; submissions and acceptances of articles ; and book reviews. Some of the mainstream History journals have begun to do this (e.g. *Economic History Review*, *Past and Present*, *Historical Journal*, *English Historical Review*). If you are involved in a journal that is not doing equalities monitoring, apply pressure to start. Seek advice from journals that have already done so.

Be pro-active about attracting more submissions from women and non-binary historians. Possibilities include themed issues; advertising your journal to new audiences; holding publication workshops for women and non-binary people at conferences or through learned societies.

Even if the gender balance of the submission rate improves, it may also be worth being alert to gender bias in *citations* of work. One study of six social science journals from 2007-2016 showed that an increase in women authors did not translate into higher citation of women's research. Even in a journal in which 75% of published articles were authored by women a significant citation gap was still observed in favour of men.⁵⁵ One journal in Political Science asks authors to explain any citation gap, giving them an extra 100 words to do so (*International Studies Review*).

55 Michelle L. Dion, Jane Lawrence Sumner and Sara McLaughlin Mitchell, 'Gendered Citation Patterns Across Political Science and Social Science Methodology Fields', *Political Analysis*, 2017: <http://michelledion.com/files/DSM2018PAfinal.pdf>

For Conference and Seminar Organisers

It is not only discriminatory but also intellectually indefensible to have events completely dominated by men. Ensure that there are no all-male workshops, conferences or seminar series, and preferably no all-male panels.⁵⁶

Be alert to the gender balance of panels, especially concluding round-tables when the discussions are summed up and the main questions pinpointed. A good resource for finding women speakers is available online.⁵⁷

Invite women to give keynote lectures, an area long dominated by men and one of high perceived gender bias. Organising committees tend to look for someone who has worked on the topic for a long time, but looking more recently, say in the last ten years, might yield more work by women historians.

Make arrangements for childcare if possible.

Create and implement guidelines for chairing academic discussions to make them more inclusive and less aggressive. The Chair of a meeting, seminar or conference sets the tone of the discussion. If that individual is aggressive and/or confrontational, the only people likely to participate are those who are comfortable with that kind of behaviour. Everyone would benefit from rooting out the idea that aggression and contempt are signs of academic rigour and cleverness: they are not, they are signs of bullying and intimidation. Women philosophers offer the following guidelines:⁵⁸

56 Women's Classical Committee, "How to Avoid a Manel and beyond": <https://wcc-uk.blogs.sas.ac.uk/files/2017/10/WCC-UK-Diversity-Guidance-2017.pdf>

57 <https://womenalsoknowhistory.com/>

58 <https://bpa.ac.uk/uploads/Good%20Practice%20Scheme/Seminar%20chairing.pdf>

- 1) Take a short break before any Q&A session (to allow people to think about and/or discuss how to formulate their question).
- 2) Don't always operate on a first-come, first-served basis, which prioritises the most assertive, who will often be the same people in every session.
- 3) Adopt and enforce a hand/finger distinction, i.e. hand = new question; finger = follow-up or request for clarification.
- 4) Limit everyone to one question at a time, so that more people have a chance to speak.
- 5) Make it clear that follow-up questions are at the Chair's discretion.

For Learned Societies

Carry out gender audits on all areas of activity: membership, fellowship, officers and policy-making bodies; all grants, prizes or other awards; visual image of website – how visible are women historians in your field?

International Women’s Day is a good opportunity to publicise women’s achievements and points of view, for example by publishing interviews with women historians, as the RHS did in 2016.⁵⁹ Or arrange an event to celebrate the work of women historians, such as ‘London’s Women Historians’, jointly organised by King’s College London and the Institute of Historical Research, in 2017.⁶⁰

Consider conducting a survey of the field. This was done in 2018 on American History in the UK, by three societies working together (British Group of Early American Historians, BGEAH; British American Nineteenth-Century Historians, BrANCH; and Historians of the Twentieth-Century United States, HOTCUS). They found a 70:30 male:female ratio and under-representation of BME historians.⁶¹

The Economic History Society Women’s Committee, founded over thirty years ago in 1987, is an inspiring example of the kind of work that can be done to promote women’s careers, in this case in economic and social history. They run an annual workshop on women’s and/or feminist history; holds training days for women, for example on publication and media work; an annual networking event for women; and a dedicated session at the annual EHS conference.⁶²

59 <https://royalhistsoc.org/interviews-female-historians-international-womens-day/>

60 An account of the discussions, including videos and photographs from a portrait exhibition of 20 leading women historians, is available here <https://www.history.ac.uk/exhibitions/womenhistorians/>

61 <https://hotcus.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/2018-American-History-in-the-UK-survey-results.pdf>

62 See: <http://www.ehs.org.uk/the-society/womens-committee/index.html> and the special issue of *Economic History Review* (68:2, 2014) marking the 25th anniversary of the Women’s Committee: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/page/journal/14680289/home-page/women_s_committee_a_virtual_issue.htm

Include discussion of diversity in high-profile academic events, for example the Social History Society's 2018 Conference featured a panel on History and Diversity.⁶³

Apply to host an RHS Symposium on equality and diversity, for example the Diverse History/Hanes Amrywiol event held at the University of South Wales in Cardiff in April 2018.

63 <https://socialhistory.org.uk/events/conference>

Part 3. Glossary of Key Terms and Resources

AdvanceHE

Founded in March 2018 from a merger of the **Equality Challenge Unit (ECU)**, the **Higher Education Academy (HEA)** and the **Leadership Foundation**, Advance HE is jointly owned by GuildHE and Universities UK. Its purpose is to provide resources, expertise and recognition for HEPs to improve equality and diversity; teaching and learning; leadership; and governance. It is both a membership body and a charity, and lies outside the regulatory framework for higher education.⁶⁴

Asking About Gender

For advice about how to ask about gender identifications, see the Human Rights Campaign, Working for LGBTQ Equal Rights guidelines.⁶⁵ Their main point is that the most inclusive way is to invite people to self-identify.

See also **Transgender** and **Non-binary**.

Athena SWAN Charter

The Athena SWAN Charter was launched in 2005 by the Equality Challenge Unit (now Advance HE) to promote the careers of women in the sciences. It was extended to the arts and humanities in 2015. At that point, its remit was also expanded to recognise “work undertaken to address gender equality more broadly, and not just barriers to progression that affect women”.⁶⁶

64 <https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/about-us>

65 <https://www.hrc.org/resources/self-identification-of-lgbt-employees>

66 <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/about-athena-swan/>

Applications cover four areas: Representation; Progression of students into academia; Journey through career milestones; and Working environment.

So far 8 History units have achieved a Bronze award.⁶⁷ The success rate of all applications in the 2017 round was 57.8%. Many resubmissions and new applications are in process, so the number of History units involved in Athena SWAN is likely to increase significantly over the next few years.

It is quite possible that before long an Athena SWAN award will be made a pre-requisite for some research funding schemes in the humanities, as is already the case in some areas of science. Even if it is not made a formal requirement, it is still one of the most convincing ways of meeting the criterion of commitment to equality and diversity required by the AHRC and the REF.

Awards can be given both to departments/schools and to institutions. Many more HEIs than History units have awards. If your university is one of them, it has signed up to the Athena SWAN Charter.⁶⁸ The Charter can therefore be a valuable tool for lobbying management for improvements in gender equality.

Making an Application: Any History unit considering applying for an Athena SWAN award will find a wealth of information and guidance in the report: ‘The Impact of Athena SWAN on Arts and Humanities Departments’, Alana Harris and Abigail Woods, Kings College London, 2018.⁶⁹

Harris and Woods’ report was based on a survey in May 2018 of Arts and Humanities units involved in working towards an Athena SWAN application. The survey was followed up by focus groups. The report is a one-stop-shop for any humanities scholar interested in Athena SWAN and includes a bibliography of other research on the process. You can also play their Athena SWAN Gender Equality Snakes and Ladders.⁷⁰

67 <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/athena-swan-members/>

68 <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/>

69 <https://www.lfhe.ac.uk/en/research-resources/publications-hub/index.cfm/SDP2018-02>

70 <https://athenaswan.kdl.kcl.ac.uk>

In brief, their findings were:

Done well, making an Athena SWAN application creates a baseline for action and can stimulate root-and-branch reform to promote gender equality. However, care needs to be taken to ensure that it does not backfire, reinforcing or at worst creating a tick-box culture. The process is at least as important as the outcome.

It is a lot of work and too often the work has been done mainly by women, usually without credit or relief from other duties.

It has worked best at Department level, where it was easier than in a larger unit, e.g. School or Faculty, to generate the widespread commitment from both men and women that is crucial to success. However, we know that many historians are based in larger units, especially in post-92 universities, so it is worth paying particular attention to their other recommendations to make the process as effective as possible.

The Bronze Award, which is valid for four years, is for having identified problems and devised an action plan to address them, so if successful it is crucial not to let anyone assume that the problem has been solved: push on for Silver, where improvement in equalities has to be demonstrated, and Gold. It is also indispensable to tackle other kinds of inequality as well, given all the evidence that inequalities reinforce each other. From 2015 Athena SWAN has included a requirement for intersectionality to be considered.

Going Beyond the Tick-Box Approach:

- Ensure that credit is given for the work with relief from other duties
- Ensure gender balance on the working group
- Include people at all stages of their careers on the working group
- Carry out at department (or single-discipline) level if possible
- Use as stimulus for both structural AND cultural change
- Don't stop at Bronze: go on to Silver and Gold

Aurora Programme

The Aurora Programme run by the **Advance HE** (previously the Leadership Foundation) is designed to develop leadership skills in women up to the level of Senior Lecturer. Since 2013 nearly 5,000 women have attended their workshops.⁷¹

For a report on the career trajectories, experiences and views of women who have attended the Aurora programme, see ‘Onwards and Upwards? Tracking women’s work experiences in Higher Education – Year 2 Report’.⁷²

For a recent study of how women define and practice the role of professor, based on interviews with 25 women and five men professors from nine universities, both pre- and post-92, STEM and arts, humanities and social sciences, see Bruce Macfarlane and Damon Burg, *Women Professors as Intellectual Leaders*, May 2018.⁷³

For a selected history of milestones in women’s leadership, see The Leadership Foundation, ‘150 years of Progress for Women in Higher Education’.⁷⁴

A good stimulus paper is Louise Morley, ‘Women and Higher Education Leadership: Absences and Aspirations’.⁷⁵

71 <https://www.lfhe.ac.uk/en/programmes-events/equality-and-diversity/aurora/>

72 <https://www.lfhe.ac.uk/en/research-resources/publications-hub/leadership-insights/leadership-insights-detail/onwards-upwards-tracking-womens-work-experiences-in-higher-education-year-2-report.cfm>

73 <https://www.lfhe.ac.uk/en/research-resources/publications-hub/index.cfm/SDP-2016SouthamptonB>

74 <https://www.lfhe.ac.uk/en/programmes-events/equality-and-diversity/international-womens-day/timeline.cfm>

75 <https://www.lfhe.ac.uk/en/research-resources/research-hub/2013-research/women-and-higher-education-leadership-absences-and-aspirations.cfm>

BME (Black and Minority Ethnic)

The Second Gender Report uses the term BME for the same reasons as were given in the RHS *Report on Race, Ethnicity and Equality*. BME is “the terminology normally used in the UK to describe people resident in the country who are of non-White descent. Typically this refers to people who through one or both parents descend from non-White populations in Africa, Asia (from East Asia to the Near and Middle East), Latin America, or the First Nations populations of North America and Australasia. Sometimes Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) or ‘People of Colour’ are used instead.

BME has been used throughout the report in lieu of alternative terms, such as BAME and People of Colour. There is no consensus within UK BME populations concerning these terms; indeed, members of our Working Group have different preferences on this score. Our decision to use BME consistently (other than in direct quotations) reflects the prevalence of this term in the secondary literature on race and ethnicity in UK universities, and in associated UK statistical data. The selection of BME is utilitarian. It is not a value judgment and is not intended to imply a fixed or uniform set of identities, characteristics or experiences. We also recognise that BME is an official category which greatly reduces complex ethnic, cultural and religious differences.”

Department

In this report, following the usage in the RHS Report on Race, Ethnicity and Equality, the term ‘department’ is used to describe the full range of administrative units in which History is taught and researched at UK HEIs. It encompasses, for example, History subject-units that are located within wider multi-disciplinary groupings, as well as History units that are denominated departments, faculties and schools. The term is used for clarity and convenience, not to imply preference or esteem for one form of organisation over any other.

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 applies in England, Scotland and Wales, with some differences in the two devolved nations. It does not apply in Northern Ireland, where there are similar provisions in the Northern Ireland Act of 1998, plus other legislation.⁷⁶

The Act specifies nine protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership (in employment only); pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. The ECU offers a summary focussed on HE.⁷⁷

The Act makes provision for positive action to tackle inequalities. On recruitment it states (Section 159) that “an employer, when faced with making a choice between two or more candidates who are of equal merit to fill a particular vacancy, to take into consideration whether any of the candidates is from a group that is disproportionately under-represented or otherwise disadvantaged within the workforce”. If inequalities in your unit are particularly sharp, it may be worth investigating the possible use of these provisions. Great care has to be taken, however, in defining the cohort in which a group is claimed to be under-represented. Furthermore, the “of equal merit” criterion may be particularly difficult to define precisely in relation to academic posts. Each instance where positive action is taken needs to be on an individual, case-by-case basis; any action taken has to be justified and proportionate and, if there is an opportunity for another ‘test’ or ‘task’ to distinguish between equally matched candidates, it should be taken. Advice from HR departments should always be sought. AdvanceHE is also willing to offer guidance on Positive Action measures.

76 The 2010 Equality Act, chapter 15, is available at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/pdfs/ukpga_20100015_en.pdf. For legislation passed from 1998-2003 for Northern Ireland, see <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/external/anti-discrimination-law-in-ni.pdf>. For a helpful summary of equalities law in all the devolved nations, see the UCU briefing: <https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/8162/Devolved-nations---Equality-difference-briefing.-May-16/pdf/Devolved-Nations-Equality-differences-briefing.pdf>

77 <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/guidance-resources/equality-legislation/>; <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/guidance-resources/inclusive-environment/providing-support/>

A government briefing summarises how to use the positive action provisions of the 2010 Act to promote equality.⁷⁸

Equality Challenge Unit (ECU)

The UK sector body for furthering equality, diversity and inclusion for staff and students in higher education across the UK (and in Colleges in Scotland), now part of **Advance HE**, offers resources and advice, as well as running the Athena SWAN Charter.

Everyday Sexism

This term refers to the accumulation of what are known as micro-aggressions, incidents of harassment that in themselves and/or cumulatively reduce confidence and increase exclusion.

Examples of such behaviour include unwanted touching, gendered personal remarks, condescension, derogatory comments about intellectual ability, especially remarks assuming that any weakness in performance arises from an innate lack of intelligence rather than the absence of a learned skill. Everyday sexism can be both overtly hostile and apparently “benevolent”, for example praising women for stereotypically feminine qualities such as compassion, neatness, diligence, intuition, which are rarely if ever the attributes required for success in competition for jobs, grants or prizes.

See the website launched by feminist Laura Bates, for reporting and discussion of sexist incidents.⁷⁹

78 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/85015/positive-action-practical-guide.pdf 79 <http://everyday-sexism.com>

79 <http://everydaysexism.com>

Gender Pay Gap

In 2018 it became a legal requirement to declare figures on the gender pay gap. You can find the data for HEPs online. ECU has analysed institutional data.⁸⁰

UCU also has useful information and analysis.⁸¹ Regrettably, there is still no information on specific disciplines. Recent national figures indicate that the gender pay gap is falling, especially for younger women, with the most significant gaps notable for women over 40, indicating issues in mid-career.⁸²

Athena SWAN Charter point 4 is ‘We commit to tackling the gender pay gap’, so if your institution has an Athena SWAN award then they should be living up to this commitment.

Gender Recognition Act (2004) and Public Consultation on Reform (2018)

The Gender Recognition Act of 2004 makes provision for certain trans people to be granted a Gender Recognition Certificate, but low numbers of trans people have applied. According to a government survey, this was because the process was found to be intrusive, bureaucratic and expensive. Moreover, **non-binary** people are not eligible. In July 2018 the government launched a public consultation on reform of the Act.⁸³ Stonewall and other organisations representing trans people seek legal self-determination, as already happens in countries such as Ireland,

80 Advance HE (2018) Research Insight – The gender pay gap in English higher education <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/research-insight-gender-pay-gap-english-higher-education/>; Advance HE (2018) Research insight - Actions to mitigate the gender pay gap in English higher education <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/research-insight-actions-mitigate-gender-pay-gap-english-higher-education/>

81 <https://www.ucu.org.uk/genderpay>

82 “UK’s gender pay gap falls to lowest on record”, Financial Times, 25 October 2018: <https://www.ft.com/content/b194daa8-d837-11e8-a854-33d6f82e62f8>

83 <http://everydaysexism.com>

Malta and Norway.⁸⁴ Thoughtful and respectful discussion of the issues is presented by the Oxford Human Rights Hub.⁸⁵

It is important to note that trans people have protections under the Equality Act 2010 (the protected characteristic of ‘gender reassignment’) regardless of whether they have a GRC or not.

Intellectual Self-Confidence

The American Historical Association helpfully defines intellectual self-confidence as *a skill* that can be acquired rather than an attribute that is innate or the product of a privileged background: “the ability to work beyond subject matter expertise, to be nimble and imaginative in projects and plans [and] to adapt to new professional challenges--a skill necessary in any career.” They are beginning to develop online resources to help historians to learn and teach intellectual self-confidence.⁸⁶

Intersectionality

An approach to understanding discrimination, inequality and disadvantage that foregrounds the impact of power structures upon interlinked aspects of people’s identities, especially their race, gender, sexuality and disability, without treating these categories as discrete or separable.⁸⁷

Invisible Bias

See **Unconscious Bias**

84 <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/gender-recognition-act>

85 <http://ohrh.law.ox.ac.uk/womens-rights-and-the-proposed-changes-to-the-gender-recognition-act/> and, for a different view: <http://ohrh.law.ox.ac.uk/gender-recognition-elf-determination-and-segregated-space/>

86 <https://www.historians.org/jobs-and-professional-development/career-diversity-for-historians/career-diversity-resources/five-skills/intellectual-self-confidence>

87 The Gender Working Party follows the definition in the RHS Race, Ethnicity and Inequality Report, 2018, <https://royalhistsoc.org/racereport>. For intersectionality, see Kimberlé Crenshaw, ‘Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Colour’, *Stanford Law Review*, 43: 6 (1991), 1241-1299.

Mentoring

Being mentored can help people overcome the effects of stereotype threat or career stagnation. It is not a solution to structural inequalities and is no substitute for addressing them, but a good mentoring scheme can help everyone to improve their career prospects.

It is also likely to have spin-off benefits in promoting various kinds of awareness among colleagues: that most people have periods of uncertainty about their work; that most people have had experiences of failure; that many people have been adversely affected by inequalities. It can be such a relief to hear, for example, that even well-established historians have had the experience of having a journal article rejected. If the scheme is carefully planned (see below) the increased communication between people at different stages of a career can do a lot to improve the working culture of a department.

Most HEIs now require mentoring of new staff. It is highly desirable also to mentor all early-career historians, including those on part-time and/or fixed-term contracts. Some History Departments have gone further and introduced mentoring schemes for all staff.

Recent research into the effects of mentoring has led to the advocacy of what Jennifer De Vries calls ‘Mentoring for Change’. Her paper includes a checklist of questions to address when setting up a mentoring scheme.⁸⁸

This approach makes the needs of the individual being mentored central to the relationship. Advice about how to negotiate the career labyrinth is likely to be part of the exchange, but is only one aspect of the relationship, which will also involve encouraging independence and risk-taking. There are multiple benefits to this less instrumental approach to mentoring, not least to allow mentors to draw upon the mentoring experience to inform and influence policy decisions and organizational change within the HEI.

88 https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/uaew_final_mentoring_for_change.pdf

Here mentoring can inform cultural and structural change, when problems identified by the mentor are passed up through the system and used to drive change. Thus it brings benefits to the organisation as well as to the individual. Voluntary and reciprocal mentoring seems to work best in a scheme open to everyone: i.e. if you'd like to be mentored you also have to be a mentor. This helps to counteract the tendency for mentoring to fall on already overburdened senior women.

Mentoring is made more effective by the following:

- Clear understanding by both mentor and mentee of how the scheme relates to career progression within the HEI, especially any HR requirements for appraisal
- Clear agreement from the outset about the expectations of both parties about the remit of discussions, the frequency of contact and the rules of confidentiality
- Regular review of the process because individual needs change
- Creation of an atmosphere of trust and openness, so that the mentor does not become yet another person that the individual being mentored feels the need to impress
- Willingness of both parties to engage in dialogue (not to issue or seek instruction)
- Willingness of both parties to be reflective, honest and open about problems and fallibility
- Ability of mentors to share institutional knowledge and culture, especially the informal ways of doing things.
- Ability of mentors to advise on career development, especially publishing strategy and getting your work known and read (i.e. they need a good track record themselves)

- Training of mentors, especially in unconscious bias and stereotype threat
- Institutional recognition of the importance of mentoring as integral to everyone’s professional obligations, with due credit for it in workload allocation

Micro-aggression

A term developed to capture the subtle, brief and everyday indignities, whether intentional or not, that suggest, imply or directly communicate prejudice.⁸⁹

Non-binary

The definition of non-binary cited by the LGBT Foundation is:

“Identifying as either having a gender which is in-between or beyond the two categories ‘man’ and ‘woman, as fluctuating between ‘man’ and woman’, or as having no gender, either permanently or some of the time.”⁹⁰ Although many non-binary people also identify as ‘trans’, a significant proportion do not.

See also **Transgender** and **Gender Recognition Act**.

Oxford Women in the Humanities Group

A research programme started in 2013 at the Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities (TORCH), which aims to develop new approaches to gender equality, including feminist scholarship and feminist pedagogy.⁹¹

89 The Gender Working Party follows the definition in the RHS Race, Ethnicity and Inequality Report, 2018, <https://royalhistosoc.org/racereport>

90 Scottish Trans Alliance, Including Non-binary People: Guidance for Service Providers and Employers: <https://www.scottishtrans.org/non-binary/>. For further information, see <https://lgbt.foundation/who-we-help/trans-people/non-binary>.

91 <https://torch.ox.ac.uk/womenandhumanities>

REF (Research Excellence Framework)

The History Sub-panel has emphasised that it took equality and diversity seriously in the 2014 assessment. The relevant paragraph (no. 33) of their report is as follows:

“A significant number of submissions did not demonstrate fully satisfactory working practices, particularly with regard to the treatment of early career staff (including lighter workloads), post-early career staff development, regular study-leave with transparent procedures, and equality and diversity (units that discussed gender often did not address other forms of diversity). Frameworks of support for staff and their research (at all stages of their careers) did not always appear to be as robust as those for research students. Staff development is however a crucial part of a sustainable research environment, and the sub-panel took the REF guidelines for what to include in the template as seriously here as it did elsewhere. Overall, that sub-section scored less highly than others.”⁹²

The Stern Report on REF 2014 said little about gender equality and gender differential analysis of the REF was not broken down by subject. Across all subjects, women aged 30-50 were the least likely group to be returned. An RHS analysis of the Impact Case Studies for History indicated a clear gender bias in favour of men.⁹³

Initial drafts of the rules for the next REF proposed abandoning the previously established output allowance for maternity leave (which was a reduction in requirement of one output per period of leave). At the time of writing, the matter was still unresolved. It is a salutary reminder of the need for constant vigilance.

There was also evidence from our survey of increased gender bias in allocation of workload and selection of materials for the next REF,⁹⁴ so it's crucial to ensure that all REF selectors are made aware of unconscious bias.

92 <https://www.ref.ac.uk/2014/media/ref/content/expanel/member/Main%20Panel%20D%20overview%20report.pdf>

93 <https://royalhistsoc.org/analysis-ref2014-impact-case-studies/>

94 See p44.

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct

The Equality Act 2010 (Part 2, Chapter 2, section 26) definition of sexual harassment is “unwanted conduct of a sexual nature” which “has the purpose or effect of violating [a person’s] dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment”. It is also sexual harassment for person A to treat person B “less favourably than A would treat B if B had not rejected or submitted to the conduct”.⁹⁵ The Citizen’s Advice Bureau gives examples, which are “sexual comments or jokes; physical behaviour, including unwelcome sexual advances, touching and various forms of sexual assault; displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and sending emails with a sexual content”.⁹⁶

The AHA (American Historical Association) carried out a survey on sexual harassment in 2018 and has held a series of follow-up discussions as well as creating a set of guidelines for AHA events.⁹⁷

The 1752 Group is “a UK-based research and lobbying organisation working to end sexual misconduct in higher education”. In September 2018 they published a report on responses to sexual misconduct by academic staff towards students, drawing on data from interviews with students and early career academics at 14 UK HEIs, plus analysis of policies at 25 UK HEIs. They are also working with a law firm to develop guidelines for good practice in disciplinary processes relating to staff sexual misconduct.⁹⁸

See the entry on **UCU** for details of their helpline for anyone experiencing sexual harassment. AdvanceHE also have HE-specific guidance on tackling sexual harassment.⁹⁹

95 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/26>

96 <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/discrimination/what-are-the-different-types-of-discrimination/sexual-harassment/>

97 <https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/october-2018/results-of-the-2018-aha-survey-on-sexual-harassment>

98 <https://1752group.com>

99 <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/guidance-resources/inclusive-environment/tackling-sexual-harassment-and-violence/>

Silencing

Male constructions of the norms for public speech have been analysed by Mary Beard.¹⁰⁰

She identified various forms of aggressive behaviour: interrupting; talking over someone; looking blank when they speak, as if they weren't saying anything; referring to previous male speakers but not female ones; misattributing to a man ideas or proposals that meet with approval and were first made by a woman.

Other commonly observed ways of silencing include: turning something a woman says into a joke, either by wilful misinterpretation of its sense or by bringing out an improbable but absurd implication, then depicting the woman as humourless when she protests; attacking something a woman has said not at the time, but later, in an inappropriate context, when it is more difficult to respond; urging women to talk but creating such an aggressive or awkward atmosphere than many of them are likely to see it as pointless and/or unpleasant to do so.

The fact that women sometimes deploy these modes of behaviour does not make them any the less male in orientation.

Stereotype threat

The term “stereotype threat” was coined in Claudia Steele and Joshua Aronson, in 1995, to describe their findings that individuals negatively stereotyped by gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, age or disability were at risk of confirming those low expectations of their group by performing poorly.¹⁰¹

100 Mary Beard, *Women and Power: A Manifesto*, Profile Books/London Review of Books, London, 2017.

101 Claude M. Steele and Joshua Aronson, ‘Stereotype Threat and the Intellectual Test Performance of African Americans’, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69:5, Nov. 1995, 797-811. They extended their work to gender in Joshua Aronson, Diane M. Quinn and Steven J. Spencer, ‘Stereotype Threat and the Academic Underperformance of Minorities and Women’, *Prejudice: The Target's Perspective*, Academic Press, 1998, 83-103. For a summary of research on stereotype threat and student attainment gaps in the United States: <https://www.edglossary.org/stereo-type-threat/>

Given the persistence of gender stereotypes in all areas of life, it is worth reading the scientific evidence that deconstructs the myth that men and women have differently evolved natures.¹⁰²

Student evaluations of Teaching (SETs)

The evidence for gender bias in student evaluation forms is conclusive. For a recent example, see the project Effective Gender Equality in Research and Academia (EGERA), led by Economist Anne Boring of Sciences-Po. They analysed a sample of over 20,000 evaluations by first-years at Sciences-Po and found a clear gender bias: e.g. male students were 40% more likely to rate a male professor as “excellent” compared with a female professor. The *Times Higher Education* (3 October 2018) published an article on these findings and there is other supporting data.¹⁰³

Given the proven bias and unreliability of SETs, HEPs should be wary of using them for evaluating teaching quality unless the content has been given a thorough equalities audit.

TEF (Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework)

The TEF is a voluntary exercise, introduced in 2017 by the government in England, to provide prospective students with a resource for judging teaching quality across the sector, awarding Gold, Silver or Bronze awards on the basis of quantitative and qualitative data supplied by HEPs. It is managed by the Office for Students, the regulator for higher education in England. Higher education is a devolved area, but HEPs in Northern

102 Cordelia Fine, *Testosterone Rex: Unmaking the Myths of Our Gendered Minds*, Icon Books, London, 2017. Angela Saini, *Inferior: How Science Got Women Wrong and the New Research that's Rewriting the Story*, Fourth Estate, 2017 and pb 2018.

103 <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/blog/student-evaluations-teaching-are-biased-and-unreliable>. See also Dana Williams, ‘Examining the Relation between Race and Student Evaluations of Faculty Members: A Literature Review’, *Modern Languages Association* (2007); <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/growing-evidence-anti-female-bias-student-surveys>; <https://www.insidehighered.com/ad-vice/2018/02/09/teaching-evaluations-are-often-used-confirm-worst-stereotypes-about-women-faculty>

Ireland, Scotland and Wales are eligible to apply for TEF recognition. TEF applies only to undergraduate teaching. The first two rounds of TEF were conducted at institutional level, but in 2017-18 there were consultations and a pilot on rolling it out at subject level, with another pilot planned for 2018-19. In the first pilot History and Archaeology were reviewed together.

To date, the equalities agenda has featured little in discussions about TEF, either at institutional or subject level. It needs to be embedded, both in the making and reviewing of policy and in the procedures for making the application in HEPs. Two key areas are the selection of assessors, both national and local, and the disaggregation of student outcomes by race, gender and socio-economic background, so that there is rigorous testing of claims about “good outcomes for all students”. A persuasive argument has been made by Jess Moody of the ECU that the whole TEF process has so far missed an opportunity to address inequalities.¹⁰⁴

Transgender

Transgender (increasingly Trans) people have a gender identity or expression that is different from the sex assigned to them at birth.

The LGBT Foundation presents a Trans umbrella, including Trans Non-binary people, Trans men, Trans women and Cross-dressing people.¹⁰⁵

The Equality Challenge Unit has published guidance on Trans inclusivity, which includes suggestions for supporting trans students through the application processes (for which they may sometimes face additional barriers).¹⁰⁶

104 <https://wonkhe.com/blogs/tef-results-an-opportunity-missed-for-progress-on-equality/>

105 <https://lgbt.foundation/who-we-help/trans-people/non-binary>

106 ECU (2016) Trans staff and students in HE and colleges: improving experiences <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/trans-staff-and-students-in-he-and-colleges-improving-experiences/>

The UK government has recently published an action plan for improving the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, which includes specific actions for the Higher Education sector to improve experiences for students.¹⁰⁷

Helpful advice on acting as an ally of transgender people is available online.¹⁰⁸

See also **Non-binary** and **Gender Recognition Act**

Unconscious Bias

Unconscious bias is making judgements or decisions about a person on the basis of prior experiences, assumptions or thought-patterns rather than on an evaluation of evidence of their skills and qualities. It is sometimes referred to as invisible or implicit bias. There are differences in the precise meanings of these terms, but in this report we have used the terms interchangeably.

Philosopher Jennifer Saul, who led a research project at Sheffield on the phenomenon, argues that “even those who explicitly and sincerely avow egalitarian views—hold what have been described as implicit biases against such groups as blacks, women, gay people, and so on. This is true even of members of the ‘targeted’ group. So, for example, women as well as men are biased against women.”¹⁰⁹ Everyone is subject to unconscious bias and, precisely because it is unconscious, no-one can be blamed for it. The challenge for all of us is to work to counter our unconscious bias.

107 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lgbt-action-plan-2018-improving-the-lives-of-lesbian-gay-bisexual-and-transgender-people/lgbt-action-plan-2018-improving-the-lives-of-lesbian-gay-bisexual-and-transgender-people>

108 <https://www.glaad.org/transgender/allies>

109 Jennifer Saul, ‘Implicit Bias, Stereotype Threat and Women in Philosophy’, 2013, quotation at p. 40: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.394073!/file/saul_implicit.pdf. On Saul’s research project on implicit bias and stereotype threat: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/philosophy/research/implicit-bias-jennifer-saul-tackling-gender-bias-academia>

Saul's work fed into the British Philosophical Association Good Practice Scheme: Gender Bias.¹¹⁰ The Royal Society also provides a useful briefing paper.¹¹¹ Another short, to-the-point briefing on unconscious bias, most of which is relevant to historians is 'Reviewing Applicants: Research on Bias and Assumptions', by Women in Science and Engineering Institute, University of Wisconsin-Madison.¹¹²

UCU (University and College Union)

UCU offers its members a Sexual Harassment Support Helpline, which is free, confidential and open 24/7. The number is 0800 138 8724.

It also has a range of leaflets available online, giving advice on various types of discrimination, bullying and harassment.¹¹³

Violence, Gender-Based (GBV)

Gender-based Violence is sometimes used interchangeably with 'violence against women', but it is now more usually used to refer to all violence related to a person's gender, for example against Trans or non-binary people. In all cases the violence arises from unequal power relations based on gender.

In light of the World Health Organisation's view that gender-based violence is at epidemic levels throughout the world,¹¹⁴ the Scottish government has pioneered an initiative called Equally Safe to tackle gender-based violence, including physical and psychological

110 <https://bpa.ac.uk/resources/women-in-philosophy/good-practice>

111 <https://royalsociety.org/~media/policy/publications/2015/unconscious-bias-briefing-2015.pdf>

112 http://wiseli.engr.wisc.edu/docs/BiasBrochure_3rdEd.pdf

113 <https://www.ucu.org.uk/equality>

114 <http://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women>

violence, coercive and controlling behaviour. In 2018 the University of Strathclyde conducted a pilot study to determine how best to apply the policies in HEIs.¹¹⁵

They have developed a Toolkit, offering advice on effective training for staff on how to respond to reports of GBV and on how to intervene safely; how to collect better data; and how to ensure all students and staff are aware of where to go for support.¹¹⁶

115 <https://www.strath.ac.uk/humanities/schoolofsocialworksocialpolicy/equallysafeinhighereducation/>

116 <https://www.strath.ac.uk/humanities/schoolofsocialworksocialpolicy/equallysafeinhighereducation/eshetoolkit/>

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