



Athena SWAN Silver department award application

Name of university: University College London

Department: Institute of Ophthalmology

Date of application: 30/04/13

Date of university Bronze and/or Silver Athena SWAN award: May 2009

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1. Letter of endorsement from the head of department: maximum 500 words

An accompanying letter of endorsement from the head of department should explain how the SWAN action plan and activities in the department contribute to the overall department strategy and academic mission.

The letter is an opportunity for the head of department to confirm their support for the application and to endorse and commend any women and STEMM activities that have made a significant contribution to the achievement of the departmental mission.

List of Abbreviations Used

BRC	Biomedical Research Centre
HoD	Head of Department
IBM	Institute Board of Management
IoO	Institute of Ophthalmology
MEH	Moorfields Eye Hospital
NIHR	National Institute for Health Research
ORBIT	Ocular Biology and Therapeutics
PI	Principal Investigator
RA	Research Assistant
SAT	Self-Assessment Team

2. The self-assessment process: maximum 1000 words

Describe the self-assessment process. This should include:

- a) A description of the self assessment team: members' roles (both within the department and as part of the team) and their experiences of work-life balance*

The self-assessment team (SAT) has twelve members (eight women, four men) comprising representatives of all academic levels, all research departments, both genders, clinicians and non-clinicians and includes members with parenthood and gender equality experience.

The Self Assessment Team

Nick Burt, the laboratory manager of Visual Neuroscience, has taken responsibility for Athena SWAN actions aimed at providing support to parents at the Institute of Ophthalmology (IoO).

Caroline Copeland, a PhD student in Visual Neuroscience and student academic representative, feeds into the SAT the needs and views of postgraduate students and co-organises careers events at the IoO.

Clare Futter, the SAT chair, was recruited as a new lecturer in 2000, and is now a Professor of Cell Biology. She is committed to promoting and supporting female early career scientists at the IoO.

Cynthia Langley, Executive Assistant to the Director, is responsible for updating the IoO website with Athena SWAN activities, planning the pictorial celebration of female scientists at the IoO and organising the SAT meetings.

Phil Luthert, the IoO Director and ophthalmic pathologist, has attended almost all SAT meetings and has taken a leading role in supporting Athena SWAN initiatives and ensuring that they are put into practice.

Francesca Mackenzie, a postdoctoral research associate in Cell Biology, represents the largest group of female researchers at the IoO. She has fed information into the SAT from Women In Science and Engineering (AWISE) events that are aimed at connecting and inspiring women in science and engineering and co-organises careers events at the IoO.

Mariya Moosajee, an NIHR Academic Clinical Lecturer in ORBIT, divides her time 50:50 between research and undertaking specialist clinical ophthalmic training. She is familiar with the pressures experienced by clinician scientists to excel in both areas of work, and the consequent challenges for work-life balance. She has developed the women's page on the IoO website and has taken a leading role in the Athena SWAN discussion groups.

Marko Nardini, a recently appointed lecturer in Visual Neurosciences. He led the design and analysis of the Athena SWAN survey and will ensure that future surveys take place.

Rachael Pearson, a Royal Society University Research Fellow in Genetics. Rachael organises careers events aimed particularly at female early careers researchers at the IoO.

Christiana Ruhrberg, a Professor in Cell Biology. As a powerful role model for female scientists, she is keen to share her experiences of leading a large internationally renowned research group. She has promoted the invitation of female seminar speakers and organised the inaugural Athena SWAN guest lecture.

Alexander Smith, a senior research fellow in Genetics, who is responsible for day-to-day supervision of a group of around 20 postdocs and students. He has undertaken the monitoring of timing and gender balance of external seminar speakers and will organise future annual Athena SWAN guest lectures.

Gill Tunstall, the HR Staffing Administrator and Departmental Equal Opportunities Liaison Officer at the IoO. She has taken a leading role in analysing the staff and student data and developing improved induction and appraisal practices for staff.

- b) an account of the self assessment process: details of the self assessment team meetings, including any consultation with staff or individuals outside of the university, and how these have fed into the submission*

The full SAT has met monthly since March 2012. Further working groups comprising SAT and other IoO members met to organise and implement specific actions, such as the survey, careers events and mentoring scheme. Karen Bonstein, Manager of the Biomedical Research Centre (BRC), attended most SAT meetings, advising on ways in which Moorfields Eye Hospital (MEH) and the BRC could provide support. Additionally members of the SAT attended workshops and seminars run by UCL and Athena SWAN and AWISE, which provided ideas and advice. The design and execution of careers events benefited from consultation with UCL HR, the Royal Society and the Wellcome Trust. The design and training for the mentoring scheme has been facilitated by UCL Partners/NIHR Moorfields BRC staff led by Prof Pete Shah.

Of critical importance was consultation with IoO staff mid-2012, which took two forms: one was a confidential survey, canvassing the experiences of all staff and research students at the Institute. The other was a series of well-attended discussion groups for PhD students, postdocs, support staff and principal investigators (PIs), each facilitated by members of the SAT, to canvass ideas for actions that would help women in their career progression. These initiatives informed our action plan and publicised the aims and objectives of Athena SWAN and the Institute's plan to fulfil the requirements of a Silver award.

- c) Plans for the future of the self assessment team, such as how often the team will continue to meet, any reporting mechanisms and in particular how the self assessment team intends to monitor implementation of the action plan*

The SAT will meet bi-monthly in future and will report to the Institute Board of Management (IBM) every autumn. A survey will be carried out every two years to allow monitoring of progress against the baseline set by the 2012 survey (**Action 1.1**). The discussion groups will also be repeated one year before application for Athena SWAN renewal to discuss progress and future actions (**Action 1.2**). Continued publicity and feedback will be facilitated by an Athena SWAN noticeboard and suggestion box in the Common Room (**Action 1.3**). Each SAT team member has responsibility for monitoring and implementing individual components of the action plan.

994 words

3. **A picture of the department: maximum 2000 words**

a) *Provide a pen-picture of the department to set the context for the application, outlining in particular any significant and relevant features.*

The UCL Institute of Ophthalmology (IoO) is situated about two miles from the main UCL campus, occupying a site adjacent to Moorfields Eye Hospital (MEH). Eye and vision research is our dominant activity and our teaching is largely at the post-graduate level.

The IoO includes 45 Principal Investigators (PIs) and their teams and is organised around four research departments: Cell Biology, Genetics, Ocular Biology and Therapeutics (ORBIT) and Visual Neuroscience. We work closely with MEH and some staff have joint appointments. The NIHR BRC at Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and UCL Institute of Ophthalmology is a partnership that funds the recurrent costs of patient-focussed translational research. The IoO received the Queen's Anniversary Award in 2012 for excellence in research.

The IoO sits within the Faculty of Brain Sciences at UCL, which is part of the School of Life and Medical Sciences. The School itself is the size of a reasonably large university. Within the IoO, as well as the four Research Departments, there are several key components of infrastructure. The Institute Manager leads the core management team with finance, teaching administration and human resources functions. The IoO Director chairs the Institute Board of Management (IBM), which includes the MEH Chief Executive and Director of R+D, the Institute's Director of Education, Research Department Heads (HoDs) and non-professorial representation. The IBM meets every two months and has primary responsibility for high-level strategic decision-making. The Institute Director also chairs, on alternate months, the HoDs meeting, which has an executive focus.

The growth of the Institute over the last 15 years has seen the recruitment of investigators with complementary expertise in areas as diverse as cell biology, genetics, pathology and visual neuroscience. The multi-disciplinary approach to research means that departmental boundaries are largely for administrative convenience as most facilities are available to all investigators and many of the laboratories accommodate staff linked to several PIs. Each Research Department has a small number of support staff (administrative and/or technical) who are usually line-managed by the HoD and indeed day-to-day research management is at Research Department level.

We take very seriously our role in developing the next generation of eye and vision scientists. There are just over 100 postdoctoral research associates and approximately 80 PhD students currently at the Institute. Three MSc courses are based largely on site but many staff members additionally participate in postgraduate and undergraduate taught courses on other UCL sites.

Whilst we benefit enormously from close proximity to our clinical colleagues at MEH, the distance of the IoO from the main UCL campus does impact on staff and students in a number of ways that were highlighted in our Athena SWAN discussion groups. For example, travel time inhibits staff and students from taking advantage of careers events and seminars on the main campus, and consequently many staff feel they lose out on career advice. This finding has led us to set up careers events as part of the Athena SWAN project.

From an estates perspective we have grown incrementally over the last 25 years. Parts of our estate are relatively new but others are in poor condition and in all areas, space is under great pressure. We are currently working closely with MEH over options to rebuild MEH and the IoO in an integrated, purpose-built research, teaching and healthcare facility that will provide a 21st century solution to our estates challenges.

b) Provide data for the past three years (where possible with clearly labelled graphical illustrations) on the following with commentary on their significance and how they have affected action planning.

Student data

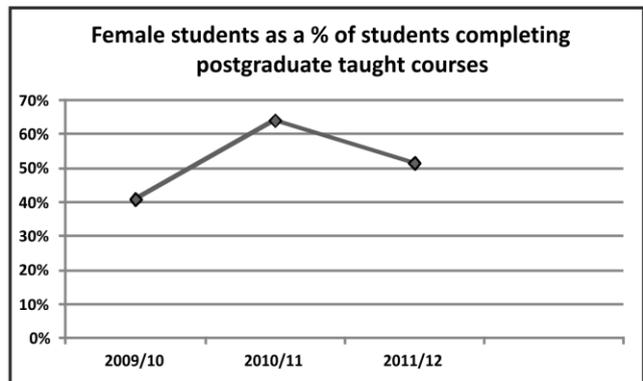
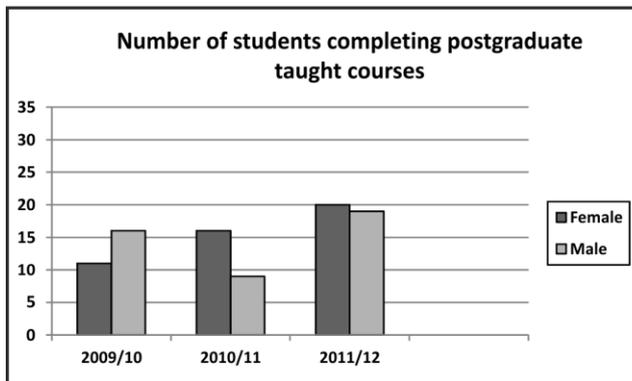
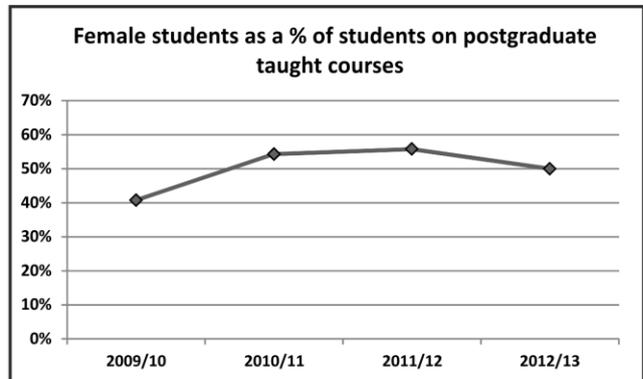
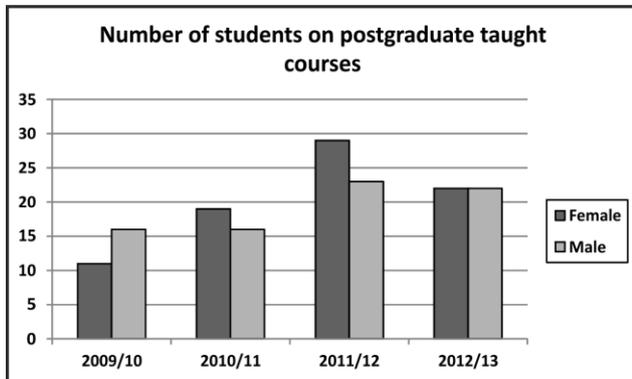
*(i) **Numbers of males and females on access or foundation courses** – comment on the data and describe any initiatives taken to attract women to the courses.*

The IoO does not provide access or foundation courses.

*(ii) **Undergraduate male and female numbers** – full and part-time – comment on the female:male ratio compared with the national picture for the discipline. Describe any initiatives taken to address any imbalance and the impact to date. Comment upon any plans for the future.*

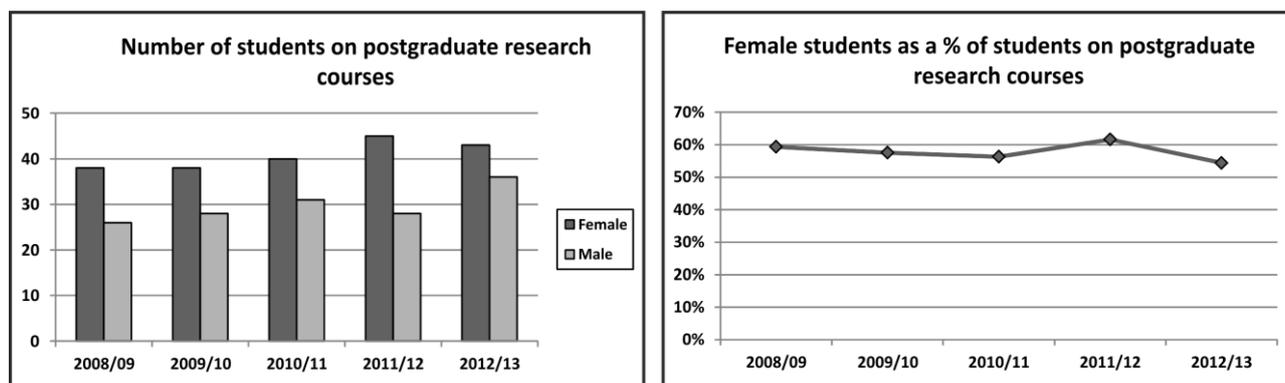
The IoO does not provide undergraduate courses.

(iii) **Postgraduate male and female numbers completing taught courses** – full and part-time – comment on the female:male ratio compared with the national picture for the discipline. Describe any initiatives taken to address any imbalance and the effect to date. Comment upon any plans for the future.



The IoO only recently introduced taught Masters programmes and the data shown represents numbers of students enrolled on our three MSc courses, two of which commenced in 2009 with the third in 2011. Gender balances on these courses have varied but over their four years of operation approximately 50% of students have been female. Most students doing these MSc courses are medicine or biology graduates, which are 57% and 62% female nationally (HESA 2011/12). Thus, female representation on these courses is lower than that in the input cohort and is also lower than the national average on PGT courses in medicine and biology (61% and 68% female respectively). Although the numbers are low, this may indicate a need to make these courses more attractive to women [see 3b(v)]. Our MSc courses contain a higher than average taught component requiring attendance at the IoO at specific times, which may deter women from applying. The Biology of Vision MSc is a one-year full-time course. All students taking this course in the last three years have completed. The Ophthalmology MScs can be taken full-time in one year, or can be completed flexibly in two to five years, explaining why some MSc students have yet to complete. There is little difference in the percentage of men (65%) and women (64%) opting to complete the course in a flexible modular manner.

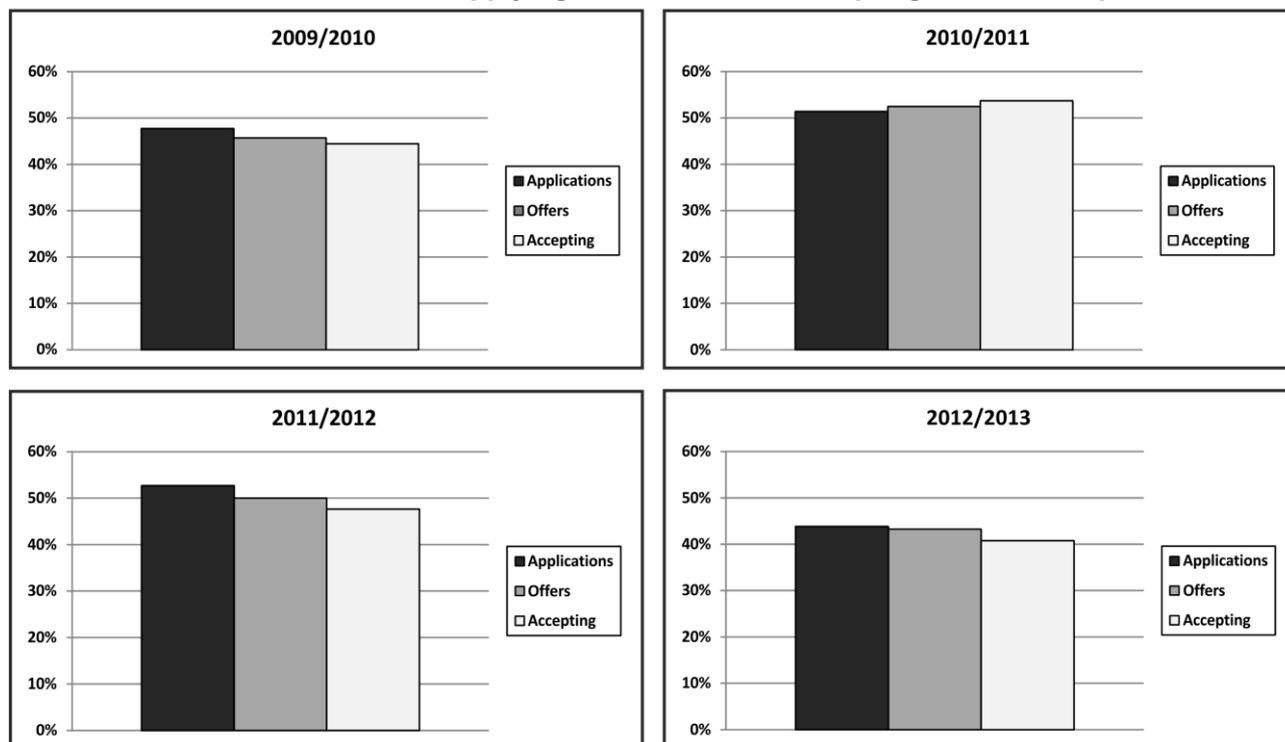
(iv) **Postgraduate male and female numbers on research degrees – full and part-time –** comment on the female:male ratio compared with the national picture for the discipline. Describe any initiatives taken to address any imbalance and the effect to date. Comment upon any plans for the future.



The majority of PhD students at the IoO are graduates of a biological discipline (62% female nationally, HESA 2011/12). 61% of PGR students in biological sciences are women nationwide. Although there has been some year-to-year variation, over the last five years an average of 59% of PGR students have been women, slightly less than the national average. As well as actions to make the IoO more attractive to female students and staff we have developed improved student recruitment procedures [see 3b(v)].

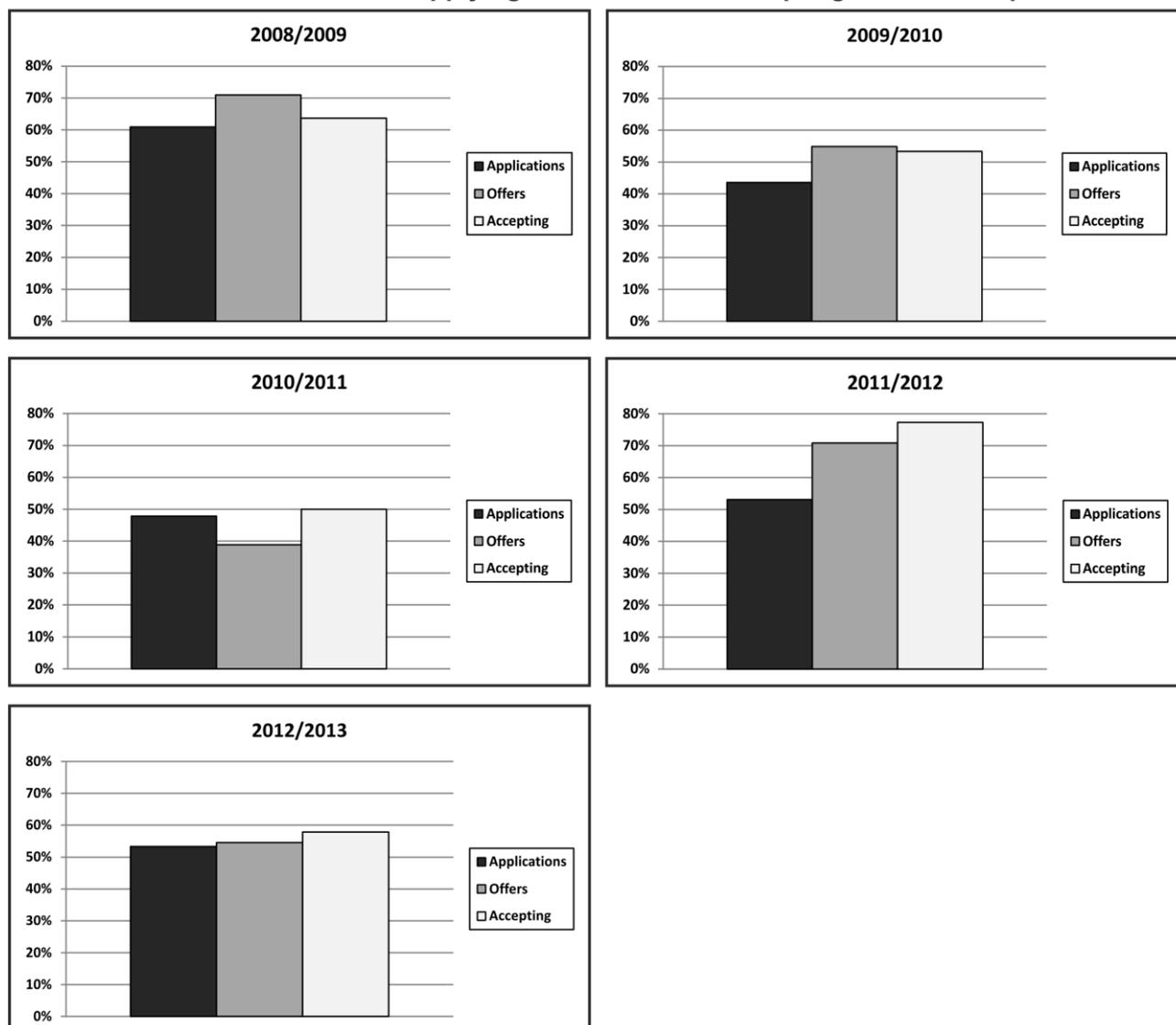
- (v) *Ratio of course applications to offers and acceptances by gender for undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research degrees – comment on the differences between male and female application and success rates and describe any initiatives taken to address any imbalance and their effect to date. Comment upon any plans for the future.*

Females as a % of those applying for, offered and accepting PGT course places



Overall the gender balance of offers and acceptances reflects the gender balance of applicants. Therefore, to increase the number of women on PGT courses we have identified a need to attract more female applicants. We have added a section to the web pages advertising these MScs, emphasising the proactive approach to promoting career development for female staff and students at the Institute (**Action 3A.2**) that will link to the “Women at the Institute of Ophthalmology” web page (**Action 3A.1**). The education committee and MSc course leads and deputies are investigating the possibility of increasing the use of e-learning to enhance the appeal of the courses to women with other commitments.

Females as a % of those applying for, offered and accepting PGR course places



The above data indicates that in most years women are slightly more likely to receive offers and accept PhD positions than men. However, this data applies only to a subset of PhD students as many apply directly to supervisors, rather than through a central UCL system. To ensure a fair process and the monitoring of the gender balance of applicants and success rates, guidelines for PhD student recruitment have been drawn up. These guidelines include keeping records of applicants, those shortlisted and the composition of the interview panel (representing both genders). PhD studentships are advertised through the education office and the recruiting supervisor is given a copy of these guidelines by the education administrator who now ensures that records are kept of the gender of PhD applications, offers and acceptances (**Action 2.1**).

- (vi) ***Degree classification by gender*** – comment on any differences in degree attainment between males and females and describe what actions are being taken to address any imbalance.

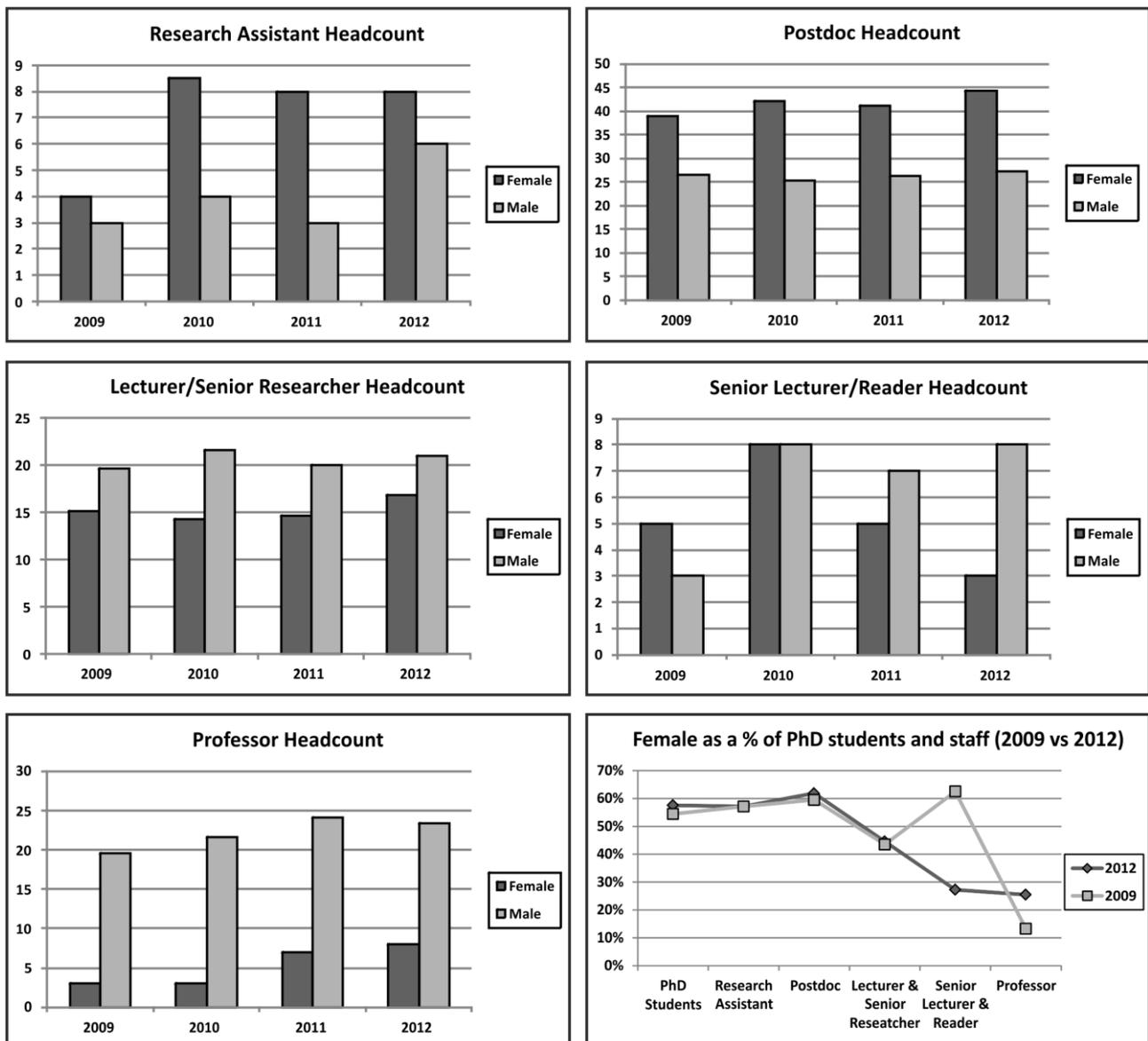
Over the last three years nine female masters students (27.3%) have obtained distinctions, compared with eleven men (31.4%). Following a period of low PhD completion rates, we introduced a new group of graduate tutors five years ago comprising three women and one man and new local procedures. Positive feedback from PhD students, together with improved completion rates (currently 89% compared to a UCL average of 70%), demonstrate the positive

impact that this has had. Data are currently not available for PhD completion rate by gender because student PhD examinations and awards are managed centrally by UCL, and gender is not recorded. IoO records will now be regularly updated and gender of completing students will be recorded so that any gender differences in completion rates can be identified (**Action 2.2**).

Staff data

(vii) **Female:male ratio of academic staff and research staff** – researcher, lecturer, senior lecturer, reader, professor (or equivalent). comment on any differences in numbers between males and females and say what action is being taken to address any underrepresentation at particular grades/levels

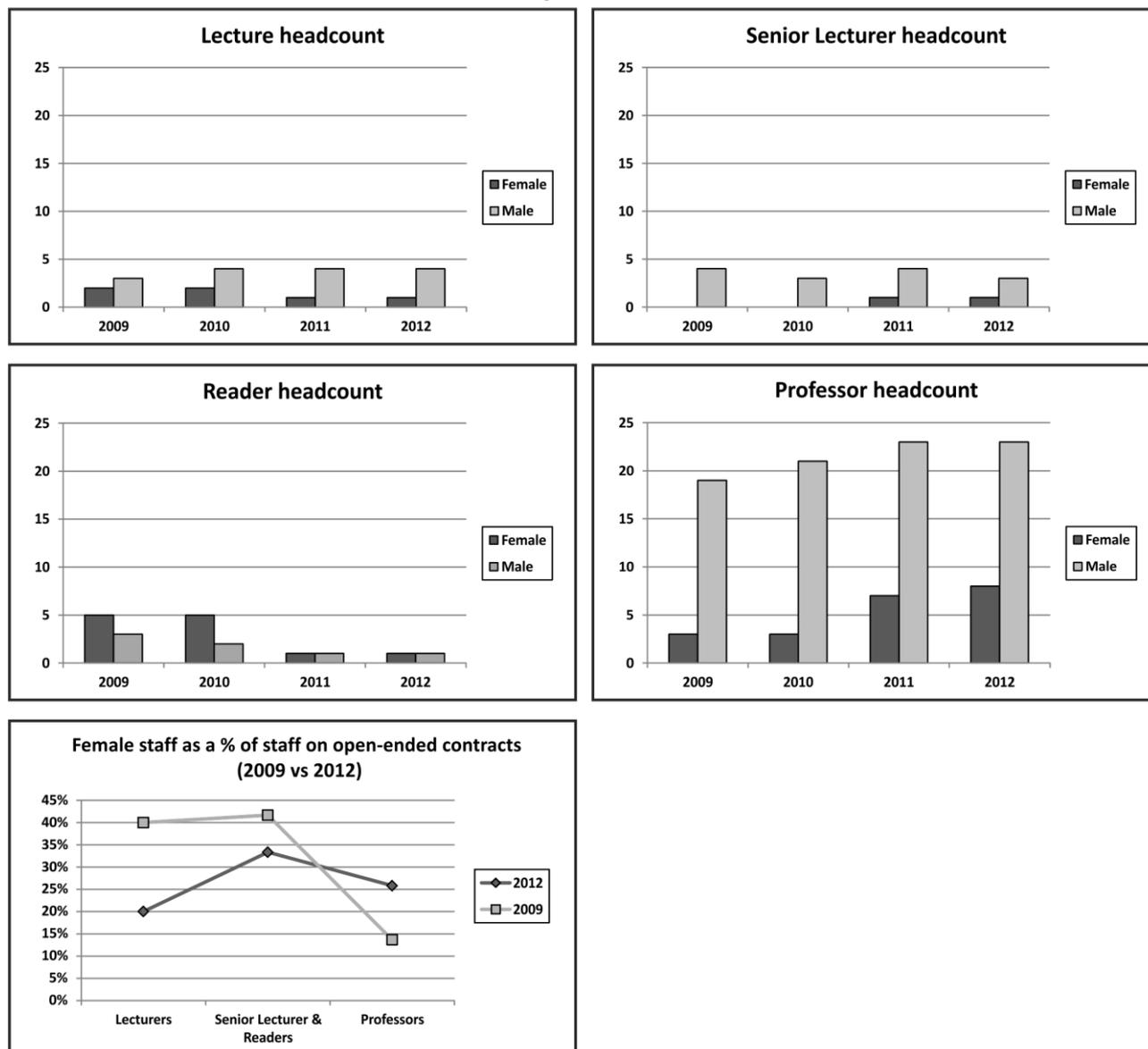
Female:male ratio of academic and research staff



Over the last four years, the gender balance of the comparatively small numbers of research assistants (researchers without a PhD) at the IoO has been variable but has always been >55% female. Postdocs form the largest group of staff and the percentage of female postdocs has remained fairly constant and is similar to the percentage of female PhD students at the IoO (61%

versus 59% respectively). Also consistent over the last 4 years is the gender balance of senior researchers/lecturers (40-43% female), identifying the postdoc to senior researcher/lecturer as a key stage at which the percentage of women significantly falls. We have, therefore, targeted many of our Athena SWAN actions at postdocs [see section 4b(ii)]. The senior researcher/lecturer category includes senior postdocs, fellowship holders and lecturers, some of whom have academic positions with open-ended contracts and some of whom do not. We therefore also examined the gender balance of academic staff with open-ended contracts.

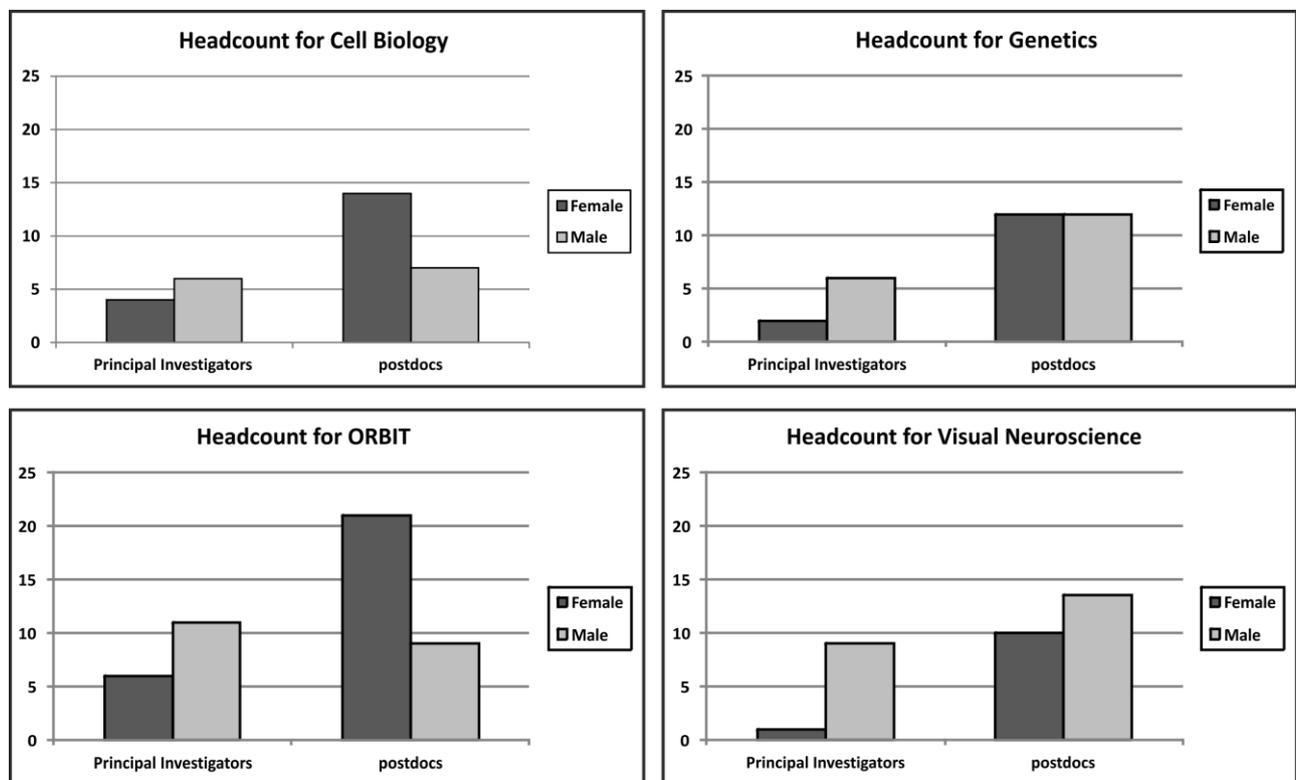
Staff with open-ended contracts



These data identify a second transition stage where women were lost in 2009/2010, that of non-professorial academic staff to professor. In 2009 only three Professors (14%) were women, whilst the non-professorial academic staff was 42% female. However this second stage of attrition has disappeared by 2012 when eight professors (26%) are women, very similar to the percentage of non-professorial academic staff. This increase was due to the promotion of three female staff and the generation of two new academic chairs that were filled by existing female IoO staff (explaining the reduced number of female Readers in 2011/2012). It is clear, therefore, that the IoO now supports and promotes female academic staff once recruited, suggesting that the comparatively small numbers (eleven) of female academic staff with open-ended contracts out of a total of forty two is due to comparatively small numbers of women being recruited. We therefore investigated

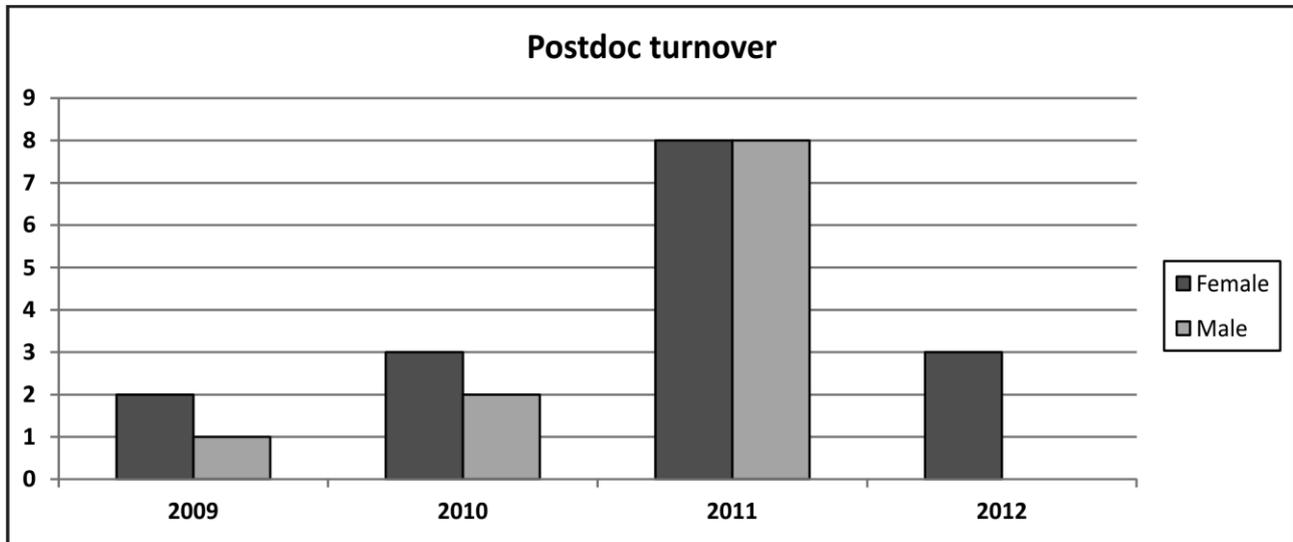
the academic staff recruitment history over the previous fifteen years. In 2000, six academic staff were recruited to the new Department of Cell Biology: four Lecturers (three women), a Reader (male) and a Professor (male). In the next decade new academic appointments were comparatively rare and totalled four Lecturers (two male, two female), three Senior Lecturers (all male) and four Professors (all male). Thus the gender balance of recruitments during that decade, particularly in the senior grades, was considerably more male than female. Encouragingly, the last three years have seen a shift in the relationship between gender and seniority in appointments, with two female Professors (as well as two male) and a Lecturer and Senior Lecturer (both male) being appointed. The Institute management recognises the need to increase the proportion of female academic staff, and the business plan for the next five years includes seeking the funding for new posts and space in the redevelopment of IoO and MEH. Additionally the Institute is actively encouraging senior postdocs, where women are in the majority, to seek independent funding with a view to their being considered for permanent academic positions at the end of their fellowships (see case study 2) (**Action 3D.7**).

We also determined whether there were differences in the gender balance of staff in the different Research Departments, focussing on the key area of attrition from postdoc to PI.



Interestingly the department with the lowest percentage of female PIs (Visual Neuroscience) also has the lowest percentage of female postdocs while Cell Biology and ORBIT have the highest percentage of both female PIs and postdocs. We plan to better understand this relationship by investigating the gender balance of postdoc applications, and success rates by department and gender of PI (**Action 2.4**). The new postdoc committee [see organisation and culture b (i)] will run focus groups to investigate why postdocs applied for the positions they occupy (**Action 2.4**).

- (viii) **Turnover by grade and gender** – comment on any differences between men and women in turnover and say what is being done to address this. Where the number of staff leaving is small, comment on the reasons why particular individuals left.



In the last four years no principal investigators left. The greatest turnover occurred in the postdoc category although, again, numbers are small. Of the 27 postdocs who left 59% were female, very similar to the total percentage of females in this group. Most went to academic and related positions in the UK and overseas. Of the remainder three went to scientific industry, one moved abroad to be with her husband and another left due to ill health. Four female research assistants and two male left to take up PhD studentships and two female research assistants took up other research assistant positions.

1973 words

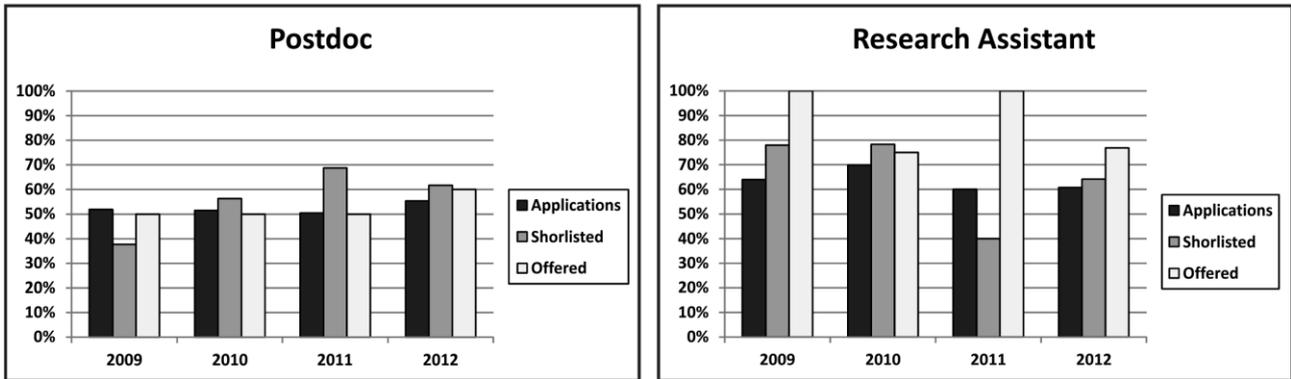
4. Supporting and advancing women's careers: maximum 5000 words

Key career transition points

a) Provide data for the past three years (where possible with clearly labelled graphical illustrations) on the following with commentary on their significance and how they have affected action planning.

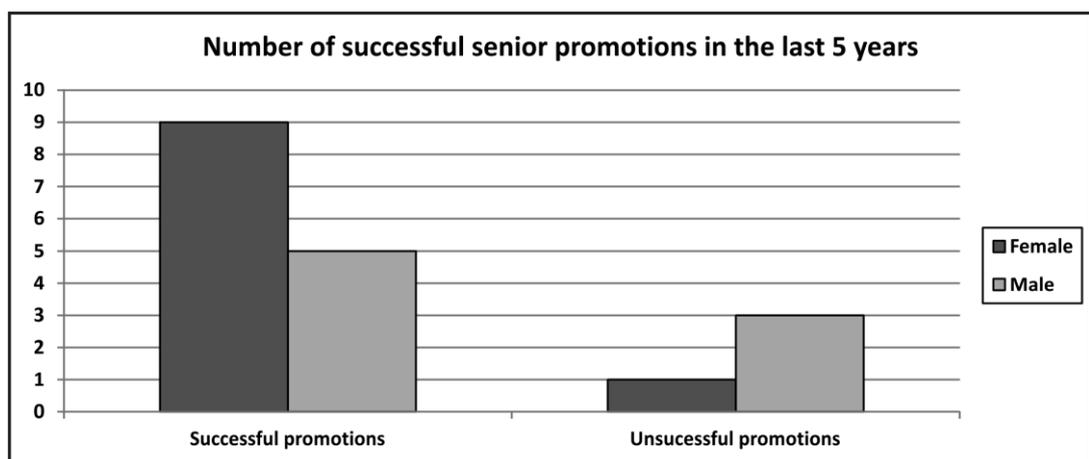
- (i) **Job application and success rates by gender and grade** – comment on any differences in recruitment between men and women at any level and say what action is being taken to address this.

Females as a % of those applying, short-listed and offered, research assistant and postdoc positions



The only senior academic appointments in the last four years involved creation of posts for existing staff and one lecturer was appointed. The majority of job applications in the last four years have been at the postdoc and research assistant level. There is generally an increased likelihood of female compared to male applicants being appointed to research assistantships. With respect to the postdoc applications the gender balance of short-listed and successful candidates generally reflects the gender balance of applicants (about 60% female). Candidates for this type of a position would be completing PhD students, and existing postdocs and the gender balance of applicants reflects that of PhD students both at the Institute and in Biology nationally. We will seek to increase the percentage of female applicants for PI positions as they become available and for postdoc positions to above the national average by clearly presenting the Institute as a good place for women to work [see 4b(i)].

(ii) Applications for promotion and success rates by gender and grade – comment on whether these differ for men and women and if they do explain what action may be taken. Where the number of women is small applicants may comment on specific examples of where women have been through the promotion process. Explain how potential candidates are identified.



The above comprises promotions to Senior Lecturer, Reader and Professor. As the numbers are small the data over five years have been pooled. All staff eligible are automatically considered for promotion by the IoO promotions committee against UCL criteria, whether or not they have applied [see career development a (i)]. The majority of successful senior promotions have been women.

b) For each of the areas below, explain what the key issues are in the department, what steps have been taken to address any imbalances, what success/impact has been achieved so far and what additional steps may be needed.

- (i) **Recruitment of staff** – comment on how the department’s recruitment processes ensure that female candidates are attracted to apply, and how the department ensures its short listing, selection processes and criteria comply with the university’s equal opportunities policies*

To attract women to apply to work at the Institute we are developing a “Women at the Institute of Ophthalmology” page on our website, [see section 4b(ii) and **Action 3A.1**]. We will add a description of our Athena SWAN activities to the section portraying the Institute in all future job descriptions (**Action 3A.1**). Where women are underrepresented in specific research teams, women will be encouraged to apply in the job advert by including “We particularly welcome female applicants as they are under-represented within research positions in the laboratory” (**Action 3A.1**).

Institute policy since 2004 has been for recruitment panels to be composed of at least three members who have undergone recruitment training, including training in gender equality, and to contain representatives of both genders. This may have contributed to the lack of gender bias in recruitment, at least in research assistant and postdoc positions shown above. Recruitment of staff is now made through ROME (recruitment online made easy), which is a system introduced by UCL in 2009 to improve the efficiency of the recruitment process and ease of access for applicants, recruiting departments and managers. The system offers reporting functionality and full monitoring data on recruitment success, quality, and equality of opportunity to inform management decision-making. However, this functionality is only effective if all data are routinely collected and entered on the system. The SAT discovered that the composition of interview panels is frequently decided after the adverts are placed and not recorded on ROME. Departmental administrators will ensure that these missing data are collected in future (**Action 2.3**). This will allow us to ensure compliance with what has now become a UCL regulation of a minimum of 25% female presence on recruitment panels.

- (ii) **Support for staff at key career transition points** – having identified key areas of attrition of female staff in the department, comment on any interventions, programmes and activities that support women at the crucial stages, such as personal development training, opportunities for networking, mentoring programmes and leadership training. Identify which have been found to work best at the different career stages.*

UCL provides a comprehensive staff development programme involving courses covering training in leadership and management, personal effectiveness, specific skills for academic and researcher development and also includes the recently introduced Springboard Women’s Development Programme. This constitutes four one-day workshops aimed at enabling women to “take control over their own lives” and “develop skills and confidence”. The SAT, local HR and Institute Director have actively promoted this programme and at least four female postdocs have already taken advantage of it. IoO attendees found this course inspirational, it “challenged negative self beliefs”

and “identified personal strengths and achievements”. It has also provided them with a new network of supportive female peers. All staff are made aware of the UCL development programme at induction and are encouraged to make full use of it at appraisal. It was clear from the results of our survey and discussion groups that, although staff were aware of the UCL staff development programme, they were inhibited from participation by our distance from the main UCL campus. We are therefore supplementing the UCL-run programme by providing specific events aimed at supporting female researchers on the IoO site.

The key area of attrition at the IoO occurs at the postdoc to lecturer stage. A big problem is limited availability of posts. We are trying to best equip female postdocs to compete for the academic posts and fellowships that are available by developing a programme of tailored careers events and mentoring at the IoO and providing early career scientists with female role models from both within and outside the IoO.

Careers events at the IoO

We organised a half-day careers event in February 2013. The enthusiasm for this type of event was shown by the 150% subscription, attendance being limited by the capacity of the IoO lecture theatre. Attendees were given an exit questionnaire to gauge impact and usefulness. The first pre-coffee section entitled “the academic career path” included a description of typical career paths by a senior IoO PI, followed by a session on how to prepare academic CVs and for interviews and a session from the IoO research administration manager describing funding opportunities available to new investigators. The second post-coffee section was focussed specifically on women in academia and included a session from the SAT chair on what the IoO is doing for female researchers, a session from UCL HR on UCL maternity/paternity and flexible working policies and a session on funding opportunities for women from representatives from the Royal Society and Wellcome Trust. A final very popular session was one in which four female academics at the IoO shared their personal experiences of their own career paths. Both sections were followed by panel discussions.

This event had a clear positive impact: 86% of attendees were women, 98% gave a positive response to the event, 95% felt that it provided novel and/or useful information and 89% heard information that they felt would affect how they plan their career. Alarming, 70% of attendees claimed not to have received careers advice or attended careers events previously at the IoO. This, together with the over-subscription to this event, has made us determined to ensure that all students and postdocs at the IoO receive the careers advice that they need. All the speakers’ slides were made available to all IoO students and staff. Natalie Reeves, our research administration manager, has generated a chart clearly showing fellowship schemes with eligibility criteria that has been circulated to all staff and students and will be available on the IoO website and on the Athena SWAN noticeboard in the Common Room (**Action 3D.1**). Natalie will update this chart regularly. We will organise another similar event in the autumn (with those unable to attend the first one given priority), to be followed by an annual event modified according to the feedback received (**Action 3D.2**). Furthermore, we plan to run grant-writing workshops to help postdocs prepare fellowship applications, utilising the experience of Rachael Pearson who runs this type of workshop for the UCL Early Career Neuroscience Forum (**Action 3D.3**). Additionally we will set up a network of experienced PIs to review and comment on junior fellowship and grant applications, a scheme that will be administered by the research office (**Action 3D.4**)

Mentoring scheme for early career researchers

We aim to make mentoring available to every postdoc, fellowship holder and junior faculty at the IoO. In order to devise an effective scheme that is fit for purpose we are setting up a 12-month pilot (**Action 3D.5**). Volunteer mentors and mentees have been invited and, although the pilot is open to both sexes, 85% of mentees expressing an interest have been female. There has been an enthusiastic response from potential mentors (senior lecturers and above) of both genders, demonstrating a real commitment to helping postdocs. Mentees have been offered a mentor of the same gender if they wish. We are taking advantage of the mentoring experience, expertise and track record of Prof. Pete Shah, Director of Education of UCL Partners Eyes and Vision theme, and his team. They are directing a four-phase mentoring programme. Phase 1, already underway, consists of 1:1 interviews with both mentors and mentees to determine existing and potential challenges perceived by both. Phase 2 is an on-site half-day training for mentors, aimed at increasing mentoring capacity of individuals and teams at the IoO. Mentors will receive specific training in issues that tend to affect the career progression of women, such as how and when to seek promotion, how to balance family and career, and how to promote oneself in job and grant applications. Mentees will also receive a half-day training session to enable them to get the maximum benefit from mentoring. Phase 3 consists of pairing of mentors and mentees and initiation of the mentoring process, allowing mentors and mentees to integrate ideas and techniques learned into the ongoing mentor:mentee relationship. The final phase will be a joint half-day mentor and mentee session that will encourage sharing of ideas and feedback, as well as action planning for future development and sustaining momentum. This pilot will establish a blueprint for a mentoring scheme to be made available to all postdocs, fellowship holders and junior faculty at the IoO (**Action 3D.6**) and will generate a core of skilled and committed mentors who are particularly well able to support women at this challenging stage in their careers.

The Annual Athena SWAN Guest Lecture

To celebrate and promote distinguished female scientists we will invite an eminent female scientist, to be chosen by each Research Department in turn, to give a scientific seminar, followed by a panel discussion publicising and reviewing our Athena SWAN activities, and a reception (**Action 3E.1**). The inaugural guest lecture was given by Luisa Iruela-Arispe in November 2012 and served to kick-start our Athena SWAN programme following the consultative process over the summer. The lecture theatre was filled to capacity (>60 people), more than 90% of attendees stayed for the panel discussion led by members of the SAT and this event allowed us to publicise our programme of action to benefit women at the IoO.

Female Seminar Speakers

All four Research Departments have seminar programmes, inviting external speakers. A survey of the last three years revealed that 26% of invited seminar speakers were female, although considerable departmental variation existed. We decided to set a target of 35% female for invited seminar speakers, agreed at the Institute Board of Management (**Action 3E.2**). This will be monitored, the target reviewed annually at the Annual Guest Lecture and HoDs reminded by the Institute Director.

The Marcelle Jay Meeting Room

The SAT noted that the only two images of scientists in the corridors and meeting areas in the IoO were of men. We therefore decided to rename one of the meeting rooms after Marcelle Jay, an eminent vision scientist who collaborated with many scientists currently working at the Institute (**Action 3E.3**). Nominations were sought from all PIs at the Institute of female vision scientists who we could celebrate by putting up photos and achievement summaries in the Marcelle Jay Room. Refurbishment is underway and, when complete, we will hold an opening ceremony, which Marcelle Jay has agreed to attend and give a presentation on her own career path.

Women at the Institute of Ophthalmology Web Page

We are developing a page on the IoO website entitled “Women at the Institute of Ophthalmology” which has a photo and a list of the thirteen female PIs at the Institute - with links to their webpages (**Action 3A.1**). This webpage also includes publicity of our Athena SWAN programme and links to personal development training at UCL. An initial version of this page is already live and will be incorporated and given prominence on the new IoO website currently being developed.

Career development

a) *For each of the areas below, explain what the key issues are in the department, what steps have been taken to address any imbalances, what success/impact has been achieved so far and what additional steps may be needed.*

(i) ***Promotion and career development*** – *comment on the appraisal and career development process, and promotion criteria and whether these take into consideration responsibilities for teaching, research, administration, pastoral work and outreach work; is quality of work emphasised over quantity of work?*

According to our staff survey, among academic staff in particular, the rates of those reporting having received careers advice were unequal for women (22%) and men (44%). This was reinforced by the exit questionnaire at our careers event described above. This indicates that the appraisals are not fulfilling the purpose of promoting career development. Furthermore the appraisal rate at the Institute was previously poor (only 71% in May 2012). Over the last year all line managers have been strongly encouraged to complete all appraisals annually and a system of reminders has been set up to ensure that this happens (**Action 3C.1**). The success of this policy is shown by the 98% completion rate achieved by March 2013. We set up an appraisal review committee, which has drawn up a new checklist for appraisals to ensure that promotion, training opportunities and career progression are discussed at every appraisal (**Action 3C.2**).

The IoO promotions committee, chaired by the Director, meets approximately one month before the UCL deadline for senior promotion applications. Recognising that some staff may be reticent about seeking promotion, all eligible staff are considered, irrespective of whether or not they have submitted a formal application. Staff who have not submitted an application are either encouraged to do so or are advised on how to place themselves in a position to make a successful application in future rounds. The promotion criteria are set by UCL but line managers and the promotions panel support staff to present the best possible case for promotion. This includes ensuring that teaching, administrative, pastoral and outreach work are given due prominence in the application. The impact of the promotions panel and its policy (since 2010) to consider all eligible staff is clear from the number of recent successful female applicants. The Institute Director

also considers all professorial staff eligible for promotion to different professorial bands and invites and supports any suitable applicants in their application (see Case study 1 for an example).

*(ii) **Induction and training** – describe the support provided to new staff at all levels, as well as details of any gender equality training. To what extent are good employment practices in the institution, such as opportunities for networking, the flexible working policy, and professional and personal development opportunities promoted to staff from the outset?*

All new staff meet with Gill Tunstall, the local HR Staffing Administrator and member of the SAT, who provides a general welcome and induction. A new induction checklist has been drawn up (**Action 3B.1**) to ensure that, as well as payroll, and IT matters, induction includes information about UCL's flexible working policy, personal development training courses, and the new initiatives put in place by the Athena SWAN Action plan, including the Institute parenting network (**Action 3I.2**) and pilot mentoring scheme. At this meeting staff are invited to complete the compulsory web-based training on "equality in the workplace" which covers topics such as disability, race, sex and sexual orientation discrimination. Completion of this training is checked at the final probationary review for all new staff. However, the SAT noted that many existing staff had not completed this training, especially those recruited before the new equality act in 2010. All staff will be asked to complete this training in the next three months and send their certificate of completion to Gill Tunstall who will monitor compliance (**Action 1.4**).

There is also the opportunity for new staff to attend a UCL induction event which includes the Provost's welcome and the chance to learn about staff benefits and courses available at CALT (The Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching).

*(iii) **Support for female students** – describe the support (formal and informal) provided for female students to enable them to make the transition to a sustainable academic career, particularly from postgraduate to researcher, such as mentoring, seminars and pastoral support and the right to request a female personal tutor. Comment on whether these activities are run by female staff and how this work is formally recognised by the department.*

MSc students receive an induction and all staff and students are invited to a social event specifically aimed at welcoming MSc students each year. Those on the Biology of Vision course have a pastoral tutor. There is an MSc student representative who acts as a contact point for the UCL Student Union and so ensures that students are kept in touch with student activities on the main UCL campus.

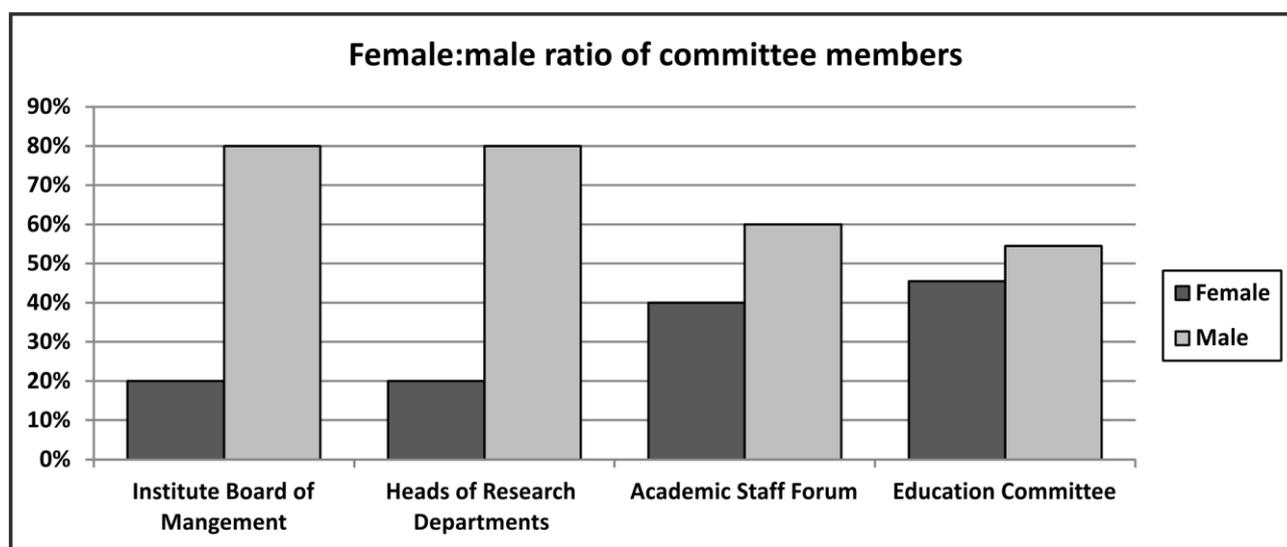
All PhD students receive an induction from the graduate tutors and the education administrator, at which the education process and the support available at the Institute is explained, as well as the personal development courses run by the UCL Graduate School. At induction PhD students are assigned a graduate tutor who is independent of the primary and secondary supervisor and can provide advice and support. Female students have the right to request a female graduate tutor. Meetings take place with the graduate tutor at least twice a year and the student can contact and arrange a meeting at any time. The annual careers events that have been started as a result of our Athena SWAN activities are aimed at PhD students as well as postdocs (**Action 3D.2**). Each Research Department also has a PhD student representative. In the past, student representatives

organised local events at the Institute that were well-attended and very popular, but these had become very rare at the time of the self-assessment process. The new PhD student representatives are now being encouraged and supported to organise career-related seminars and pizza evenings, the latter where individual students can present their data in a friendly PI-free environment (**Action 3F.3**).

Organisation and culture

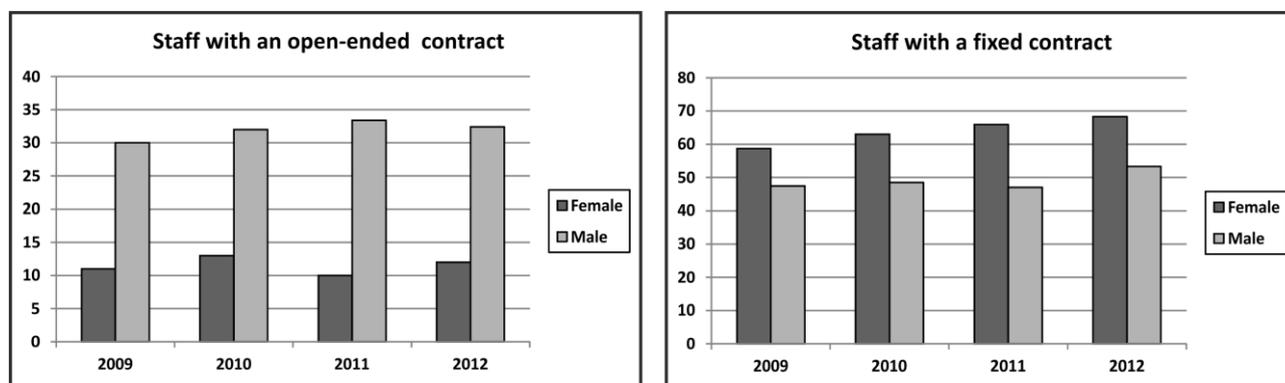
a) Provide data for the past three years (where possible with clearly labelled graphical illustrations) on the following with commentary on their significance and how they have affected action planning.

(i) **Male and female representation on committees** – provide a breakdown by committee and explain any differences between male and female representation. Explain how potential members are identified.



The Institute Board of Management is composed of the four male HoDs, the Institute Director, Moorfields R&D Director and chief executive (all male), the Director of Education (female), a non-professorial PI (female) and another senior PI (male). The HoDs Committee comprises the Institute Director and the four HoDs and the Institute Manager (female). The Academic Staff Forum consists of all academic staff (26% female) plus representatives from support staff and the Institute Manager.

- (ii) **Female:male ratio of academic and research staff on fixed-term contracts and open-ended (permanent) contracts** – comment on any differences between male and female staff representation on fixed-term contracts and say what is being done to address them.



There are more female staff on fixed-term contracts which reflects the fact that most on fixed-term contracts are postdocs, 61% of whom are female. The majority of postdocs are funded by grants usually awarded for three years. This is something that we cannot change but we are introducing measures to ensure that female postdocs are aware of funding and career opportunities that are available to them, including funding streams specifically for women [see 4b(ii)]. We also anticipate that other initiatives, such as the mentoring scheme, will help women through the career pipeline, and therefore increase the number of women on open-ended contracts.

- b) For each of the areas below, explain what the key issues are in the department, what steps have been taken to address any imbalances, what success/impact has been achieved so far and what additional steps may be needed.

- (i) **Representation on decision-making committees** – comment on evidence of gender equality in the mechanism for selecting representatives. What evidence is there that women are encouraged to sit on a range of influential committees inside and outside the department? How is the issue of ‘committee overload’ addressed where there are small numbers of female staff?

We recognise that there is gender imbalance on some of our committees. We have three women and eight men on the Institute’s main strategic committee, the Institute Board of Management (IBM). To improve this we are reconfiguring the committee, making the role of individual IBM members more clearly defined and adding two new (female) members with specific responsibilities for equality and diversity, and for knowledge transfer. This will increase female representation from 20% to 33% (**Action 3F.1**). The Education Committee has a reasonable gender balance, as does the Athena SWAN group. The Research Department Heads are all male and there are no immediate plans to rotate those positions but for all such positions the process now is for all vacancies to be advertised internally and for gender balance to be a determinant of selection whilst remaining alert to the need to manage an individual’s workload. To ensure that the views of postdocs and research assistants are fed into decision-making committees a new gender-balanced postdoc committee is to be set up, comprising postdoc and research assistants from all four research departments and chaired by the Institute Director (**Action 3F.2**).

- (ii) **Workload model** – describe the systems in place to ensure that workload allocations, including pastoral and administrative responsibilities (including the responsibility for work on women and science) are taken into account at appraisal and in promotion criteria. Comment on the rotation of responsibilities e.g. responsibilities with a heavy workload and those that are seen as good for an individual's career.

We monitor workload in our relatively small department in a number of different ways, both formally and informally. Firstly, workload is evaluated at appraisal and is now a specific item on our revised appraisal checklist (**Action 3C.2**). For clinician scientists, this is formally captured in the Job Plan, as part of joint University/NHS appraisal. For non-clinicians, we review the breakdown of research, teaching, enabling and knowledge transfer activities and link this to meeting promotions and professorial banding criteria. The Institute Director also reviews PI workload as part of the annual staff review to assess progress and promotion prospects. We capture research activity using standard metrics, teaching student load and representation on committees as a minimum. Survey respondents' workload allocation was mostly (86%) judged fair, with no evidence for differences in this judgment by gender or grade. We do, however, see that there is scope to make the existing system more robust through a more quantitative model, which we are currently developing. We have been looking at best practice across UCL and will borrow from that model to implement our own system (**Action 3H.1**). The new system will include weightings for each category of work and should provide a more consistent method of quantifying workloads. It will then be possible to make annual workload comparisons between staff based on total weightings to ensure that workloads are equitable across gender and task categories. These data will also inform the introduction planned for more formal rotation of responsibilities.

- (iii) **Timing of departmental meetings and social gatherings** – provide evidence of consideration for those with family responsibilities, for example what the department considers to be core hours and whether there is a more flexible system in place.

All IBM, Academic Staff Forum, HoD meetings and departmental staff meetings are in family-friendly hours (between 10 and 4). We have set a target of holding 90% of seminars during these hours (**Action 3G.1**). This is set at only 90% because some of our seminars are of considerable interest and importance to our clinical colleagues who find it difficult to attend seminars in core hours because of clinical and surgical commitments. To address this issue we are exploring the possibility of recording seminars and making them available on the intranet for a limited period, allowing access to all clinicians and anyone with caring responsibilities (**Action 3G.1**).

- (iv) **Culture** – demonstrate how the department is female-friendly and inclusive. 'Culture' refers to the language, behaviours and other informal interactions that characterise the atmosphere of the department, and includes all staff and students.

We are a comparatively small institution with a single pedestrian entrance. The porters are the first point of contact for anyone entering the IoO. They know all staff and students and generate a welcoming and friendly atmosphere. They also look after all the communal areas where people interact both formally and informally. The IoO has a Common Room with a hot and cold drinks dispenser, fridge and microwave, and is currently being refurbished to include a reading area with bookcase (where staff and students swap books) and armchairs and also a notice board dedicated to advertising Athena SWAN events and a suggestion box (**Action 1.3**). This is where people can meet for coffee and and/or lunch. To encourage networking and social interactions between

different departments free coffee, tea and biscuits are provided between 10.30 and 11.00 each morning. There is no café at the IoO but staff and students can and do go to the canteen at the hospital (MEH) for hot meals, only a few minutes' walk away. The Common Room is also the usual venue for social events, which include Christmas parties, Hallowe'en parties, and photographic and art competitions. All staff, from porter to professor, participate in these events, reflecting the friendly and inclusive atmosphere at the Institute. Offsite, an annual IoO fun day is organised at the local cricket club of one of the HoDs, where children of staff and students are welcome. Staff and students participate in a wide range of sporting and cultural activities centred at the IoO, including informal squash and badminton ladders, a running club, weekly football sessions (attended by both genders), a film club, weekly yoga sessions, and a knitting club (where the recent project to knit a retina has encouraged male participation). Some of these activities are organised by students, some by professors, and some by support staff. Both male and female staff and students participate in them, generating a warm and inclusive atmosphere.

In keeping with the Director's inclusive approach he recently invited all staff to attend one of a series of meetings at which he presented the plans for redevelopment of the Institute and Moorfields buildings. One issue limiting interactions at the IoO is the size of our lecture theatres, which have a maximum capacity for 60 people. A large capacity lecture theatre is a priority in the new build/redevelopment.

*(v) **Outreach activities** – comment on the level of participation by female and male staff in outreach activities with schools and colleges and other centres. Describe who the programmes are aimed at, and how this activity is formally recognised as part of the workload model and in appraisal and promotion processes.*

Both male and female Institute staff engage in a wide range of outreach activities with schools, patient groups, charities, and religious organisations. For example, last year saw the first "Retina Patient Day" that was attended by 250 patients and their relatives and included talks from IoO staff and MEH clinicians, an arts workshop and poster sessions aimed at introducing patients to IoO and MEH research. Members of the IoO working on gene and cell therapy have extensively engaged with the public through the media, including giving TV and radio interviews and through newspapers. IoO staff engaged in Stem Cell Research have given talks to church groups on the ethics of this type of research. Staff of both genders have visited local schools, participated in the Cheltenham and Edinburgh Science Festivals and two (male) staff members have participated in "I'm a scientist, get me out of here", an online forum which engages school children with scientific research. Many laboratories accept secondary school students on one-week work placements and it is worth noting that the majority of these students are girls. Beau Lotto, from Visual Neuroscience, engages with the public through "street science", involving the staging of physical structures and events in schools, galleries and even at the side of the street. In 2011 he published a paper where the authors were primary school children. Outreach activities specifically targeted at women include presentations to the Women's Institute and to girl Guides about becoming a scientist. In 2012 Christiana Ruhrberg was a recipient of a Suffrage heirloom at the Suffrage Science Event that celebrates the achievements of leading female scientists. Members of Visual Neuroscience are developing plans for primary school visits to the IoO, which will include a presentation from female PIs promoting women in science (**Action 3E.4**).

The many and varied outreach activities of Institute staff are performed by both men and women and this activity is considered at appraisal, and given due weight on promotion applications.

Flexibility and managing career breaks

a) *Provide data for the past three years (where possible with clearly labelled graphical illustrations) on the following with commentary on their significance and how they have affected action planning.*

(i) **Maternity return rate** – *comment on whether maternity return rate in the department has improved or deteriorated and any plans for further improvement. If the department is unable to provide a maternity return rate, please explain why.*

All staff going on maternity leave in 2009 (seven women), 2010 (four women) and 2011 (three women) returned to work. In 2012, three out of nine women going on maternity leave did not return: two because their funding ended and one left to move abroad with her husband.

(ii) **Paternity, adoption and parental leave uptake** – *comment on the uptake of paternity leave by grade and parental and adoption leave by gender and grade. Has this improved or deteriorated and what plans are there to improve further.*

Whilst we have records of the six male staff members who applied for paternity leave over the last four years, this is an incomplete picture of those who take paternity leave or fathers who choose not to take paternity leave. Details of paternity provision are discussed at induction, together with the need to inform HR when paternity leave is taken so that accurate records can be kept in the future (**Action 3B.1**).

(iii) **Numbers of applications and success rates for flexible working by gender and grade** – *comment on any disparities. Where the number of women in the department is small applicants may wish to comment on specific examples.*

In the last four years, four members of staff, all women, have made formal applications to reduce their working hours (see Case study 2 for an example). All were supported in their applications.

b) *For each of the areas below, explain what the key issues are in the department, what steps have been taken to address any imbalances, what success/impact has been achieved so far and what additional steps may be needed.*

(i) **Flexible working** – *comment on the numbers of staff working flexibly and their grades and gender, whether there is a formal or informal system, the support and training provided for managers in promoting and managing flexible working arrangements, and how the department raises awareness of the options available.*

Respondents to our staff survey were overwhelmingly (96%) able to work flexibly, and those having changed their hours mostly (90%) found this easy to arrange. This implies that the IoO has a working culture that is supportive of flexible working practices and of allowing staff to arrange a healthy work/life balance. Most staff have informal arrangements to work flexibly and make these through discussion with their line manager. UCL's flexible working policy is discussed with every new member of staff during induction. A number of women take up the option of working from home for part of the week, facilitated by UCL IT support enabling remote access to UCL computers.

- (ii) **Cover for maternity and adoption leave and support on return** – explain what the department does, beyond the university maternity policy package, to support female staff before they go on maternity leave, arrangements for covering work during absence, and to help them achieve a suitable work-life balance on their return.

To put parents in touch with other parents at the IoO we have generated a Parents' Mailing List which is a tool for distributing useful information, including parent support at IoO, local childcare options and parental schemes, such as childcare vouchers (**Action 3I.2**). Information is disseminated through regular bulletins from the mailing list administrator. Also, parents at IoO post questions to other parents. At present there are 33 members. New staff are made aware of the mailing list at induction and information will be available on the intranet. Annual reminders to join the list will also be sent by the list administrator. UCL policy on parental leave provision, local childcare options, and childcare vouchers are all covered at induction and links to the relevant information will be clearly available on the intranet (**Action 3I.1**).

In accordance with UCL policy all staff are entitled to ten "Keep in Touch" days whilst on maternity leave. Following publicity of our Athena SWAN activities, it was brought to the attention of the SAT that there were no baby-changing facilities at the IoO and no private rooms in which to feed babies or express milk. Space constraints meant that it was not possible to find a room to dedicate for this purpose at the IoO. However a lockable parents' room has been identified at MEH next door and permission has been obtained for IoO staff to use it (**Action 3I.3**). Furthermore baby-changing facilities have been installed in the ground floor toilets by the IoO foyer and guidelines have been modified to allow babies into office space (**Action 3I.3**). Plans for the new development of MEH/IOO will also include baby-changing facilities and a private rest room, which may be used for expressing milk.

Respondents to the staff survey who had a child in the past three years were mostly (80%) happy with information about parental leave, but few (30%) were happy with information about local childcare. Most (95%) were happy with the support provided on their return from leave. Respondents also reported specific issues with childcare costs and the discussion groups highlighted distance of the IoO from the UCL nursery making it inaccessible to Institute staff. A 10% discount at the local "Places for Children" nursery has been negotiated for MEH and IoO staff and at least six IoO parents have sent their children to this nursery. This is now being publicised more widely at induction (**Action 3B.1**), through the parents' mailing list and will be clearly available on the intranet. As a result of further consultation with parents we are also exploring the possibility of negotiating a discount at a second local nursery to give parents more choice (**Action 3I.4**).

4905 words

4. Any other comments: maximum 500 words

Please comment here on any other elements which are relevant to the application, e.g. other STEMM-specific initiatives of special interest that have not been covered in the previous sections. Include any other relevant data (e.g. results from staff surveys), provide a commentary on it and indicate how it is planned to address any gender disparities identified.

The process of applying for the Athena SWAN silver award has already had a positive impact on Institute staff and students at all levels. At the highest managerial meetings, the principle that our female staff are vital to the competitiveness of the Institute has been embraced. It is recognised that they may have different needs to their male colleagues and that these should be prioritised if we are to attract and retain the very best scientists in our field. Enthusiasm and commitment from the Institute senior management to focus on the needs and achievements of female staff has enabled us to begin to make a difference.

The self-assessment team has brought together staff of all levels from all departments to introduce Institute-wide events to raise the profile of female scientists and support and promote their careers. This has generated a sense of optimism and excitement. Several PIs have noted a lift in the morale of their female students and staff, particularly following our careers day. The profile of female PIs at the Institute has undoubtedly been raised: everyone knows who they are; we know how they got to where they are and we have given credence to the value of their sharing that earned wisdom with the next generation of scientists. As the postdoc to lecturer transition is the key stage where women are lost we have particularly targeted this group with mentoring and careers events, the latter already having impact on the career planning of our female postdocs.

We know that it may take many years of concerted effort to generate a truly gender-balanced Institute and we are determined to maintain the momentum generated by the self-assessment process and the actions implemented so far. In short, we think we have reminded ourselves that a career in science is about discovery and forever challenging pre-existing concepts: increasing opportunities for female scientists can only increase our contribution to science.

318 words

5. Action plan

Provide an action plan as an appendix. An action plan template is available on the Athena SWAN website.

*The Action Plan should be a table or a spreadsheet comprising actions to address the priorities identified by the analysis of relevant data presented in this application, success/outcome measures, the post holder responsible for each action and a timeline for completion. The plan should cover current initiatives and your aspirations **for the next three years**.*