

# PALS ACDC NEWSLETTER

UCL Psychology and Language Sciences | Academic Careers and Development Committee



## Welcome back!

Welcome to the 6th of our termly newsletters reporting on the work of the Academic Careers and Development Committee.

Sections in this newsletter:

- Who are ACDC and what we do?
- New ACDC roles
- International Men's Day
- Reporting harassment
- Notable work by women at UCL:
  - Professor Essi Viding's Royal Society Rosalind Franklin award
  - Nichola Raihani's tweets on grant panel interviews (1) and navigating academic life (2)
  - Susan Gathercole's lecture at UCL 'Celebrating Women's Achievements'
- PALS Mentoring Scheme
- UCL Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Transition from part-time to full-time
- Support for students and staff with caring responsibilities
- In the News
- Links to useful info
- Contribute to ACDC



## Who are ACDC and what do we do?

The Academic Careers and Diversity Committee (ACDC) is dedicated to working towards equality for all in UCL PALS. This includes providing information and support on shared parental leave, childcare, career development, and mentoring to PALS staff and students. PALS has three times been awarded an Athena SWAN Silver award (in 2009, 2013 and 2017) in recognition of our progress in addressing the imbalance in career progression between women and men scientists. We are currently working towards an application to upgrade to a Gold Award in our next submission.

The work of the ACDC is important for everyone in PALS regardless of gender because it will lead to a higher quality research output thanks to greater diversity of perspectives and collaboration; an increase in the satisfaction and well-being of staff resulting from improved work-life balance; and more diverse academic role models and mentors for early career researchers.

Further information: [Athena SWAN and Career Development, UCL Support](#)

---



## New ACDC Roles

New Co-Chairs: Liz Wonnacott and Enrico Costanza are the newly appointed co-chairs of the Academic Careers and Development Committee. Liz Wonnacott is also the Divisional Extended Leave Mentor. If you are an academic member of staff at any level (including PhD students) and are planning extended leave such as maternity or paternity leave, or find yourself unexpectedly taking an extended period of sick or bereavement leave, please contact [Liz](#) who will guide you through the various Divisional and College policies and procedures and discuss any worries or concerns you might have.

---



## International Men's Day: Celebrate Men and Boys

This year's International Men's Day was celebrated on Sunday, 19th November. The objectives include a focus on men's and boy's health, improving gender relations, promoting gender equality, and highlighting positive male role models.

Here are some links to Global and UK campaigns:

<http://www.internationalmensday.com>

<http://ukmensday.org.uk>

The work of the ACDC is important for everyone in PALS regardless of gender. UCL provides a number of important support mechanisms for male members of staff, particularly the [Shared Parental Leave](#). Following a minimum two weeks compulsory maternity or adoption leave immediately after the birth or adoption of a child, a mother or primary adopter can choose to bring their maternity or adoption leave to an end and share any remaining entitlement with their partner. This means that parents can take time off together to care for their family and also take separate blocks of leave to share responsibility for child care between them.



## Reporting harassment

With sexual harassment so much in the news, it is important to remind ourselves that UCL has a zero tolerance policy in regards to sexual harassment. No one should put up with any kind of harassment or bullying at work. Here is a reminder of the procedures in place at UCL: [Dignity at Work statement](#) and the [Procedure for dealing with Staff Harassment and Bullying](#) as well as [Student's Union: Zero Tolerance to Sexual Harassment](#).



# Notable Work by Women at UCL



Professor Essi Viding, Division of Psychology & Language Sciences, was awarded the Royal Society Rosalind Franklin Award and Lecture 2017 for her achievements in the field of experimental psychology, her ability to communicate with the public and her imaginative project proposal. In her lecture 'Why do some people become psychopaths?', Professor Viding described our current understanding of psychopathy and the latest genetic research into the developmental disorder. She also suggested how these insights could be used to help prevent the condition. Here is [a link to the lecture](#).

The project, proposed by Professor Viding as part of the award, focuses on pupils from underprivileged or ethnic/cultural minority backgrounds currently underrepresented in STEM careers. It aims to enable them to act as ambassadors for science careers with their own peers. Participants are selected with the help of [UCL Widening Participation programme](#) channels, as well as school contacts established during Professor Viding's programme of research. London schools from ethnically and culturally diverse areas, with a high proportion of underprivileged pupils, are invited to put forward nominations of GCSE-age girls who have shown promise

and interest in science. Introduction to varied science career options and training in basic skills in science communication will be provided in a two-day STEM workshop held at UCL. A web-resource will also be generated in collaboration with the workshop participants, with support from [UCL Widening Participation office](#). This will include blog writing and filming sessions the girls participate in throughout the workshop, and will showcase diversity in science. The website will be launched as a freely available resource to all UK schools.

---



In two twitter threads, Nichola Raihani, Senior Research Associate, UCL Department of Experimental Psychology, shares her experiences with grant panel interviews (1) and navigating academic life (2). We [Storified](#) these so that others can learn from Nichola's experiences.

1. In the first twitter thread: 'Here are some things I learned during my recent ERC Starting Grant interview process that I would like to have known in advance', Nichola shares her experience with a recent ERC (European Research Council) Starting Grant interview. From the responses received, such advice is greatly appreciated and we wish all talented applicants a successful outcome. Click [here for Storified Version](#).

2. In the second twitter thread: 'In academia, there are lots of things that no one really tells you. Pls feel free to add your thoughts. Here are some of mine', Nichola shares her thoughts on navigating academic life. Having such information before stepping into the first negotiations can make the job much less stressful. Click [here for Storified Version](#).



In June 2017, Professor Susan Gathercole presented at UCL as part of our series of talks 'Celebrating Women's Achievements'. In this inspiring talk, Professor Gathercole told us about her fascinating academic journey from her BSc in York (1997) to her current position as Director of the MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit, Cambridge. [Slides from her talk can be viewed here.](#)



## PALS Mentoring Scheme

The first pilot round (2015-2017) of World of Work PALS Mentoring scheme (WoW Mentor) is completed, with an average satisfaction rate of 8.2/10. The scheme will proceed to its next, 2-year round (2017-2019), as commissioned by the PALS Academic Career and Development Committee, and as recently recommended by the 'Early Career Researchers Committee' of the Faculty of Brain Sciences. Most senior professors and HoDs at PALS have kindly volunteered as mentors in the last round, with wonderful feedback. All suggestions were implemented and the current round promises to be supportive, confidential, NON-BUREAUCRATIC and light-touch (a single, friendly induction session and about 3 mentorship meetings a year), but with some direction/intervention to those that prefer it. Further information on mentorship, the scheme and its timeline can be found [here](#).

Currently, WoW is looking for expressions of interest to take part as a mentor. If interested, please email [Katerina Fotopoulou](#) stating your (1) department, (2) your position, (3) whether you have any experience as a mentor and (4) what would you like your mentee to know about you (300 word max). The scheme is open to ALL academic staff, of any gender, position and department. UCLIC, SHaPS and Language and Cognition are particularly underrepresented among current mentors. Women are particularly encouraged to apply as both mentors and mentees.



## UCL Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: StudyUCL videos

PALS ACDC have been working on the issue of why so few males apply to do UG psychology degrees and why females 'leak' out at later levels of the academic process. Peter Howell, Professor of Experimental Psychology, successfully applied for UCL intersectionality award for a Video to encourage pupils with diverse backgrounds to consider UCL as their choice of place to study. This led to the two diversity videos (UCL Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - short and long version) that were released and hosted on the StudyUCL YouTube channel. Here is a link to the [short version of the YouTube Diversity video](#) and to the [long version of the YouTube Diversity video](#).



---

## Transition from Part-time to Full-time Work

UCL is committed to supporting its employees in maintaining a 'work life balance'. Employees who take extended leave such as ML, AL, ShPL, PL or Ordinary Parental Leave sometimes wish to return to work on a part-time basis. This arrangement may only be required in the short to medium term. If an employee wishes to return to working full-time, there is no automatic financial barrier to prevent them from doing so. Such requests should be considered on a case-by-case basis and refused only where there is an objective business reason. The option of reverting to full-time working should be discussed ahead of the extended leave being taken. For further information about UCL's commitment and approach to balancing family and work commitments see the [Work Life Balance Policy](#).



# Support for students and staff with caring responsibilities

Here are a few services available to UCL students:

- [Student Parents and Carers at UCL](#), a Student's Union working with parents and carers to improve their experiences by making UCL and Union services more child friendly, including better, more suitable facilities.
- Parents and Carers Together (PACT), [uclu.parentsandcarers@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:uclu.parentsandcarers@ucl.ac.uk), is a social network that aims to support UCL staff members who are balancing ongoing caring responsibilities with work. It is a peer support group led by network members for members so new ideas and activities are always welcomed and encouraged

Services available to UCL staff:

- Support available for UCL staff members who are balancing ongoing caring responsibilities with work at the [UCL PACT network](#).
- [Find out about UCL staff benefits](#)



## In the News

[Men from poor backgrounds twice as likely to be single and have lower earnings than their rich counterparts \(UCL Institute of Education News\)](#)

[Physically active mid-lifers more likely to be active into old age \(UCL News\)](#)

[Teenage depression linked to father's depression \(UCL News\)](#)

[Sexual Harassment is rife in universities but complaining means risking your career \(The Guardian\)](#)

[The Weinsteins of academia can no longer be tolerated \(Times Higher Education\)](#)

[Sexual harassment 'at epidemic levels' in UK universities \(The Guardian\)](#)

[Confronting Sexual Harassment in Science](#)

[Family Caregivers of Older Adults, 1999–2015: Trends in Characteristics, Circumstances, and Role-Related Appraisal \(Oxford Academic\)](#)

[How can universities create a carer-friendly culture? \(The Guardian\)](#)



### Links to useful online information at UCL

- [Athena SWAN and Career Development, UCL Support](#)
- [Dignity at Work statement](#)
- [Procedure for dealing with Staff Harassment and Bullying](#)
- [Student's Union: Zero Tolerance to Sexual Harassment](#)
- [Work Life Balance Policy](#)
- [Student Parents and Carers at UCL](#)
- [UCL PACT network.](#)
- [Find out about UCL staff benefits](#)
- [UCL Parental Leave and Pay Policy](#)



### Contribute to the ACDC newsletter

If you would like to contribute to future editions of the ACDC Newsletter, please email [Daniela Singh](#) or [Elizabeth Wonnacott](#)