



OXFORD RESEARCH & POLICY

**Report on Good Practice
for the School of Natural Sciences
Trinity College Dublin**

October 2012

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Executive Summary

Data were collected from the School of Natural Science using a checklist which the School completed and discussion sessions with the Head of School and small groups of staff held on 14 June 2012. Recommendations for action were developed based on the information in the checklist and gathered from the discussions. The actions proposed are gender neutral since the evidence is that what is key for the recruitment, retention and progression of women in academic careers is high quality support for all staff. Clearly improved support will benefit men as well as women, but evidence suggests that, for example, proactive approaches to recruitment and promotion are effective in increasing the proportions of women who apply and are successful.

Key areas for action by the School of Natural Sciences are:

Data

The School should gain a thorough understanding of its position in terms of the progression of students and staff (Benchmark 1) through different levels of course and grade, respectively, and in respect of the progression of candidates through the appointments and promotion processes (Benchmark 12) by examining gender disaggregated data. Analyses should be carried out separately for the different Disciplines within the School.

Collegiality

The School should work to build a stronger community across the Disciplines (Benchmark 8). One way to do this is to hold more whole School research meetings (Benchmark 17).

Support for Early Careers Researchers

The School needs to improve the support for early career researchers (ECRs), both post docs and academic staff, by understanding better the needs of ECRs for induction (Benchmark 16) and more general development (Benchmark 17), including the need for mentoring (Benchmark 19).

Preparation and encouragement for promotion

It is important to prepare staff for and encourage them to apply for promotion. The School needs an effective appraisal system that focuses on what staff need to do to ready themselves for promotion and that all eligible staff are considered as to their readiness for promotion prior to each promotion round (Benchmark 13).

Support for flexible working and career breaks

The Schools need to improve its support for flexible working and career breaks. In particular the School needs to implement a formal approach to supporting staff, preparing for, during and returning from career breaks, including parental leave (Benchmark 25).

Resourcing change

Implementing change will take time and resource. It is important that adequate resources are provided both in terms of staff time and other resources (Benchmark 30). It is also important that a diverse range of people are involved in delivering the INTEGER actions at that the whole School is kept informed of progress (Benchmark 29).

Introduction

- 1 Commissioned by the Centre for Women in Science & Engineering Research (WiSER), this independent report by Oxford Research and Policy (ORP) is based on a Good Practice Checklist completed by the School and a visit to the School on 14 June 2012. The ORP Checklist was completed by the Head of School, Professor Celia Holland. The checklist provided background information for the visitors, Mrs. Caroline Fox and Dr Sean McWhinnie. The purpose of the visit was to explore and assess (through discussions with different groups of staff, and PhD students) the working practices and culture of the School, in order to:
 - 1.1 Assess how effectively School good practice policies and procedures (as identified in the Checklist and in discussion with the Head of School) were implemented, and their impact on staff at different career levels.
 - 1.2 Make suggestions on the content of a School Gender Action Plan.
 - 1.3 Report to Trinity College Dublin on issues to be addressed within INTEGER
- 2 The methodology used is based on work by the Royal Society of Chemistry, the Athena Project and the Institute of Physics. This work identified strong evidence to support the view that actions to improve working practices, should, for the most part, be gender neutral (and would benefit all staff and students both male and female).
- 3 The good practice included in the recommendations for action are based on the School's current level of good practice, as demonstrated in its good practice checklist, and the issues identified during the visit. The good practice is drawn from work in UK universities in the Athena Programme (see www.athenaforum.org.uk), and from a number of UK physical science departments.
- 4 Recommendations to Trinity College Dublin and the Faculty of Engineering, Maths and Science (FEMS) are included in a separate report. These cover issues policies, processes and practices that it can more appropriately be considered at institution rather than School level.

The Report

- 5 The report provides a snapshot of the School in mid 2012. It provides a baseline against which to measure progress at the end of the INTEGER project. It is hoped that it will be shared and discussed with School staff and that it will raise awareness, and improve the understanding in the School of the differences in men's and women's career progression, and in the extent to which men and women benefit from their contributions to science
- 6 The observations, comments, recommendations for actions, and good practice proposals are described in the following ten sections:
 - 1 Evidence Base for Action
 - 2 Effective Management
 - 3 Workplace Culture
 - 4 Appointment and Promotion Processes
 - 5 Levelling the Appointment & Promotion Playing Fields
 - 6 Career Development Provision
 - 7 Developmental Activities
 - 8 Flexibility and Sustained Careers
 - 9 Career Breaks and Interrupted Careers
 - 10 Organisation for Action
- 7 There are three benchmarks in each of the ten sections. For all of the 30 Benchmarks there is a short description of what is good practice. The good practice 'advocated' in the statement is all in place in one or more UK universities. The statement of good practice is followed by observations and comments, which are based on the Checklist completed by the School, and discussions during the visit.
- 8 At the end of each benchmark there are recommendations for action by the School. Recommendations for the College are put forward in a separate report and reflect the findings from both the School of Natural Sciences and the School of Chemistry. Recommendations for the School are also listed separately (in Annexe A).
- 9 The visit was short, as was the timescale for the School to complete the good practice checklist, so, it was not possible to be certain that all aspects of the School's processes, practices and systems had been covered. This report will be used by Trinity College as part of the evidence base for its INTEGER action plan.
- 10 Thanks are due to the School and WISER for hosting this visit, and in particular to the Head of School Professor Celia Holland for the time she gave to it. The visit provided the opportunity for the School and its staff to
 - 10.1 Obtain independent, objective feedback on its culture and how well College policies and procedures support the School.
 - 10.2 Obtain input for the development of its INTEGER action plan.
 - 10.3 Engage in a constructive debate on gender issues.
- 11 The visitors were able to see how welcoming, friendly and open the School was, how individuals behaved towards each other, and to get an idea of what it was like to work in. However, given the constraints of time, they had to rely on the comments of those they met, on the physical working conditions, and on the School's geography.

- 12 The staff, who met the panel, were self selected, following an open invitation to staff. All staff groups were represented.
- 13 The visitors undertook a series of short meetings. They started with an introductory session with Professor Celia Holland Head of School (HoS). After this there were separate sessions with the School Executive Committee and Heads of Disciplines, the professorial and associate professorial staff, the senior lecturers and lecturers, post-doctoral researchers, technical staff, administrative staff and Ph D students. A short feedback session with the HoS ended the visit. The Director of WiSER sat in on all the discussions.
- 14 The discussion sessions ranged around the working practices in the School and:
 - 14.1 Appointment, promotion, training and development.
 - 14.2 How staff contributions were supported, encouraged, valued and recognised.
 - 14.3 The allocation and rotation of responsibilities and resources, communications and committees.
- 15 Post doctoral researchers were also asked about:
 - 15.1 Their induction to School, mentoring and networking.
 - 15.2 The extent of their involvement in the academic life of the School.
 - 15.3 How they viewed themselves within the School, i.e., did they feel like staff or students.
 - 15.4 The career counselling and development opportunities available to them and whether these were taken up.
 - 15.5 The level of support and encouragement they were given to raise their profiles internally and externally.

1 Evidence Base for Action

How the School collects, communicates and uses data as the basis for planning and taking action, monitoring progress and measuring success

Benchmark 1: Student data

Good Practice

The University makes sure that student data (Female/Male Undergraduate and Postgraduate - by course of study, student progression offers, acceptances, drop outs and outcomes) are easily available to its Faculties and Schools. It is then easy for Faculties and Schools to use these data for planning, for action, and for measuring progress and for making comparisons with like Schools elsewhere.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 1.1 There is a Trinity College Equality Monitoring Report which provides staff and student data by School. This report is given to all HoS.
- 1.2 The School has female/male data on the student profile, on student progression and time series student data but it is not reported or discussed.

Actions

- 1a Staff and student data, and relevant benchmarking information, should be discussed by the School Executive/INTEGER action committee with particular attention focused on areas where there are gender disparities. Data should be analysed and benchmarked separately for the different Disciplines represented within the School. A report on the finding and conclusions should be made available to staff, and an open meeting held to discuss the findings in order to gain a collective understanding of the School's position.

Benchmark 2: Staff data

Good Practice

The University makes gender disaggregated data and turnover by grade, Discipline, Faculty and School easily available, together with the data it has collected on female and male representation in management and on committees (School, Faculty and College). Then Schools have the data they need for planning, for action, and for measuring progress, and for comparison with like Schools elsewhere.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 2.1 The School has staff data but it is not reported or discussed.

Actions

See Benchmark 4 Action.

Benchmark 3: Qualitative data

Good Practice

The University has, and makes easily accessible gender disaggregated data from staff and student surveys internal and external and from external reports. Then Faculties and Schools can use such data to raise awareness, for comparisons with its own surveys, to identify areas where action is needed, and to assess the effectiveness and impact of changes they have made.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 3.1 Data from the recent INTEGER opinion survey were not available at the time of the visit.
- 3.2 Annual student surveys relate to UG and PG teaching.

Actions

- 3a School INTEGER committee to review and discuss findings from the Trinity College INTEGER opinion survey, and to check that the School action plan takes account of key findings from the survey. Specific attention should be paid to identifying the areas where there are statistically significant gender differences and to areas where there is significant overall staff dissatisfaction, and, where practical, these areas should guide the content of the Action Plan.
- 3b The INTEGER committee to share the opinion survey findings with staff, and an open meeting held to discuss the findings in order to gain a collective understanding of the School's position.

2 Effective Management

How the School ensures that the administrative and academic contributions of its staff are effectively and fairly managed and resourced.

Benchmark 4: Management systems

Good Practice

The University provides guidance on HoS' accountabilities, reporting and communication responsibilities. Schools follow this guidance, and are able to demonstrate that their accountability, reporting and communication arrangements are clear, effective, open, and well regarded by staff at all levels. Schools check to make sure that the views of staff concur on this, and take action where necessary. The membership and chairs of committees, heads of sections and functions (heads of Discipline) reflect the School staff gender profile.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 4.1 There was a clear view that the College management system was top down, starting at College, and Faculty level. Discussions suggested that the value of the School was in co-ordinating the different Disciplines.
- 4.2 The School was the result of a 'forced marriage' of disparate Disciplines some 6-7 years ago. The School is spread across a number of locations. None of the Disciplines have a physical entity. There is one centre which does have its own space and facilities, but is part of a Discipline with which it has little synergy. Although the Executive is seen as the decision making body, some members and previous members, of the Executive, felt that in reality they were rubber stamping decisions which had already been made.. The 'criticism' was not directed towards the School, but to Faculty and College.
- 4.3 While the affinity recognised by senior staff was the Discipline; the more junior staff and students related to and saw the value of the School. Dragging out the integration process consumes time and may become counter-productive. Early career and female staff referred positively to the School in reducing their sense of isolation and giving them membership of a wider academic community.
- 4.3 Senior staff with School and Discipline responsibilities referred to the College guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the HoS and HoD. Staff generally appeared to understand who did what and to whom to go for what although it was not clear how this information was obtained.
- 4.4 HoD carry power (for example they get their funding direct from the Faculty), influence (e.g. the career progression of their staff – and see 11.3) and responsibility (e.g. for ensuring good two way communications and staff induction). What is less clear is how the HoS exercises authority over HoDs. The importance of personal autonomy was raised by several groups. Favourable comparisons were made to the UK with its system of research assessment (which some felt was a significant driver in the direction of research undertaken in UK institutions). Some also recognised the down side – it could make it difficult to impose management decisions. (No specific instances were cited).
- 4.5 The role of the School Executive is to co-ordinate the disparate Disciplines which constitute the School. The Executive has representation from all staff groups, including post docs and PhD students. The members of School Executive are responsible for reporting back to their respective Discipline or

staff groups. School meetings have a one hour time limit. School committee meetings, which are open to all, take place 3 times a year. There is no forum solely for academic staff at School level.

- 4.6 The HoS now meets separately with HoDs, technical staff and administrative staff. There are no formal agendas or minutes.
- 4.7 At one session it was suggested that, for some people, the number of meetings they had to attend was a burden, with several meetings covering the same ground; while other people were not kept well informed.
- 4.8 Administrative staff were often the people to whom students turned as a first post of call for welfare advice and guidance.

Actions

- 4a School to undertake actions to move more quickly towards greater integration of its departments into a single School, with a single culture.
- 4b School to undertake a review of its calendar of meetings, (teaching, research and administration), at School, and Discipline level. The aim of the review to be: a reduction of staff time occupied by meetings, with a demonstrable improvement in School communications. The review to take account of:
 - Staff attendance, resource taken to service the meetings (against the purpose /value/outcomes/ impact of the meetings);
 - The importance of bringing the parts of the School together;
 - The introduction of a regular School meeting for academic staff.

Benchmark 5: Resource allocations

Good Practice

Schools have systems for allocating resources (funding, offices, space, equipment and technical support) that are fair, clear, open, and well understood by staff at all levels. Schools check the views of staff on this, and take action where necessary.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 5.1 The School has a small budget with most funding going direct from the Faculty to the Disciplines. Currently there are discussions about the School taking a larger top slice from Discipline allocations.
- 5.2 The only discussion of finance allocation related to the Environment Centre which appears to 'squat' in a Discipline, and to perceive that its treatment was not even handed.

Actions

- 5a School to check that academic, technical staff, and post docs, feel that the system of allocating resources is fair and transparent, both within and between Disciplines. If the system is not felt to be

fair and/or transparent; then changes should be made to the system, and the staff should be consulted again in 2 or 3 years to check on the new arrangements.

Benchmark 6: Workload roles and responsibilities

Good Practice

Schools have a regular rotation of management roles and committee memberships. This rotation takes account of individuals' management experience, the gender balance, and succession planning. Schools also have fair and open workload allocation systems. Schools check staff's perceptions, and take action where necessary.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 6.1 A reduced teaching load is ensured for new academics. Staff perceived that the system in place was fair.
- 6.2 Teaching load was a problem for the School, and was complex.
- 6.3 Generally, staff feel overstretched, which they attribute to the inability to appoint replacements when people leave. The 'freeze' has been in place for three years.
- 6.4 A workload allocation system, designed to ensure fairness, is being introduced. Given the mix of Disciplines, teaching allocation is complex. There was no discussion of post docs gaining teaching experience.
- 6.5 Management and administrative roles are regularly rotated, HoDs change every three years (the appointments rely on 'people emerging') the HoS appointment rotates every three years, both can be extended for a further period.

Actions

See recommendation to College.

3 Culture and Ethos

How the School ensures that its working environment, responds to the ambitions and expectation of staff, recognises their contributions, and enables them to enjoy the rewards of a career in science.

Changing the culture and ethos of a School is not something that can be achieved quickly. Early work in the Athena Project showed that giving staff (particularly early career staff and female staff) a voice that was heard, and the opportunity to suggest changes (always provided that action was then carried through to make the improvements suggested) is a positive way to start making a difference. This early work also demonstrated that making changes to key processes, such as appointments and promotion, and changes to committees, their membership, and the way they worked, did start to make a difference in the culture.

Benchmark 7: Workplace environment

Good Practice

The School sets high standards for the behaviour expected of staff towards other staff and students and ensures that all staff are aware of, and respect these standards. The School would expect timely and effective action to be taken over any reported 'breach'. The School checks staff perceptions on the openness, friendliness and cooperativeness of their working environment and where necessary takes action.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 7.1 In the checklist it was stated that high standards of behaviour were expected of staff, and that the School would be responsive to reported incidents of poor or intimidating behaviour. The general impression from the visit was that staff did look out for each other, behavioural standards were high, and the working environment was open friendly and supportive.
- 7.2 Staff were clear that the School was not overly competitive, and that they did not have the problem of staff members with relentless personal ambition.

Actions

- 7a School INTEGER action committee to provide guidance on standards of behaviour towards colleagues and students (based on College expectations) for inclusion in School staff handbook.
- 7b As part of the proposed review of School the number of meetings held, School to review the way committees work and the gender differences in behaviour and language of chairs and members.(see Athena case study from (Bedfordshire) Luton University on www.athenaforum.org.uk).

Benchmark 8: Collegiality

Good Practice

The School regularly checks whether their academics and post docs feel that they, and other members of their group are supported and encouraged by colleagues (junior, peers, senior, and line manager), that they feel they 'belong', and are included in the work and social activities of the School and their group. Where necessary the School takes action. The School recognises the potential conflict of interest between 'supervisors' and those they supervise and ensures that individuals can access unbiased career advice, in a way that does not damage their career prospects.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 8.1 For senior staff, their sense of belonging was clearly to their Discipline, rather than the School. Women and early career staff saw the development of a School wise culture as a positive advantage.

Actions

- 8a School to set up a working group from across its Disciplines to identify practical steps that can be taken to build a stronger School community.
- 8b School to ensure that administrative and technical staff are included in School social events to encourage the development of an inclusive culture.

Benchmark 9: Individual contributions valued

Good Practice

The School makes sure that individuals' contributions (teaching, research, management, administration and external professional activities) to the School are recognised and valued through, for example, inclusion of a wide variety of activities in promotion criteria, publicising new grants and publications, making announcements when staff join external committees. The School regularly checks the perceptions of academics and post docs, and where necessary takes action.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 9.1 In the checklist it was stated that teaching and research contributions were valued, however, this varied by section.
- 9.2 In the checklist it was stated that external professional contributions were valued.
- 9.3 Some senior technical staff had significant involvement with the management of the School, which they found rewarding.
- 9.4 Administrative staff were often the people to whom students turned as a first point of call for welfare advice and guidance (see 4.8).

Actions

- 9a School to ensure that staff who provide student welfare support themselves can access expert advice and guidance from College and if necessary access to counselling and/or a College network of welfare/student support staff.
- 9b School to ensure that the full range of contribution to its success from all staff, including administrative and technical staff, is recognised and reflected, for example on the school web site and publications, that where roles have been expanded this is taken fully into account in job descriptions, and when promotion is considered.
- 9c School to set up a working group with ECRs on the level of support they receive/need, whether they feel they belong to the School or are isolated, and whether they feel their contributions are recognised.
- 9d School to run an opinion survey in, say, 2014 to establish the impact of any changes.

4 Appointment and Promotion Processes

How the School ensures that its systems, processes, practices, and the decisions that are taken, are open, transparent, and fair.

Benchmark 10: Decision Making

Good Practice

Good practice requires that all School appointments and promotions (academic and post doc) are made by panels which include at least one man and one woman. Training is provided for panel members and is required for panel chairs so that no candidates are disadvantaged by the process. Schools are expected to make sure that individuals who participate in the process are representative of the F/M staff profile of the School.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 10.1 For academic appointments, the Faculty requires two women on appointment selection panels. The down side of this is that the few senior women in the Faculty are called upon frequently.
- 10.2 Post doc appointments are made by the PI/research grant holder. Jobs are not usually advertised or subject to a panel interview.
- 10.3 As part of the selection process candidates are asked to make a presentation, which is open to members of academic staff and PhD students. The School had recognised the arrangements for shortlisted candidates on the day they made their presentations were unsatisfactory, and were now making sure that candidates were looked after. It appeared that the College has restrictive regulations relating to candidates visiting the School in advance.

Actions

- 10a School to survey staff and postdocs to learn specifically how postdoc appointments are made. Issues to be covered are:
 - Were posts advertised, and if so where?
 - How were candidates identified?
 - Was a formal interview held, and if so how many candidates were interviewed and who carried out the interview?
- 10b School to introduce panel interviews for postdoc appointments.

Benchmark 11: Appointment and promotion criteria, processes and information provided

Good Practice

It is good practice for appointment and promotion processes and criteria (and the information on them that is provided to candidates and panels) to be clear, fair, and appropriate, and for its communication to be timely and effective. Information on advertised posts is useful, attractive inclusive and reflects the School (members and activities) as a whole, and provide practical, up to date information, of interest to the family unit and is attractive to minorities.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 11.1 The discussion of academic appointments focussed on the 'freeze on new appointments', so it was not possible to confirm that 'the information for appointment candidates was clear and fair'.
- 11.2 Concern was expressed at the time it took to make an application for promotion (reference was made to a 40+ page form). It seemed that this was perceived as a hurdle to dissuade too many applications. Currently, this was combined with the knowledge that success rates were very low (because of the government regulation of the ratio of professorial to non professorial appointments). (There had been a three year embargo on promotion).
- 11.3 A fairly general view was that promotion was a black box, with no transparency on how Excellence was demonstrated, and a dependency on metrics, where quantity took priority over quality. It was also felt that promotion should be about potential, but in reality, was decided on past performance.
- 11.4 There was a general concern around the promotion process (and outcomes) for all staff groups including technical and administrative staff. Academic staff generally expressed disquiet about the treatment/consequent level of morale among their support staff.
- 11.5 Both technical and administrative staff were concerned by the lack of opportunities for promotion. The administrative staff in particular suggested that there was little point in applying for promotion as the outcome was most likely to be negative.
- 11.6 Reference was made to one female applicant for promotion whose application had been rejected on the grounds of a poor publication record. The panel had failed to factor in the length of the woman's career breaks.
- 11.7 Concerns were expressed over the system of fixed term (3 or 5 year) lecturer appointments, and the need for the individuals to then go through a full competitive selection process. It seemed that some post holders had been given, what they saw as, assurances that they would get a permanent appointment.

Actions

- 11a School to ensure that staff on fixed-term appointments are supported through mentoring, appraisal and training to ensure that they are in the strongest possible position to gain a permanent position.

Benchmark 12: Monitor Appointments and promotions

Good Practice

It is good practice to monitor appointment and promotion applications and outcomes (to monitor female applications against the 'pool' and to measure progress on female representation compared with the position in like universities). Heads of School are expected to monitor lists of promotion candidates against the gender profile of the School and to take action as appropriate.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 12.1 In the checklist it was stated that the School monitored applications for promotion but not specifically by gender.
- 12.2 In the checklist it was stated that the Faculty monitored applications for promotion, but not outcomes.

Actions

- 12a School to use gender disaggregated data to ensure that appropriate proportions of men and women are apply and are shortlisted for appointments, and are put forward for and are successful at promotion.

5 Levelling the Playing Field

How the School ensures that men and women are equally likely to apply for appointments and promotion, and are equally likely to be successful.

Benchmark 13: Encourage candidates

Good Practice

It is good practice for the promotion process not to rely solely on self nomination/personal applications. Schools expect and encourage their senior staff to identify potential candidates and to inform them of job opportunities as they arise. Schools hold a positive review of all non professorial academics (for their promotion potential), at the beginning of, or before, each promotion round.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 13.1 The School, Faculty and College promotion processes do little to encourage applications for promotion. There is no faith in the fairness of the system and its outcomes.
- 13.2 In the checklist it was stated that the School identified potential candidates for new appointments and kept them informed of job opportunities.
- 13.3 There was no School review of academic staff's readiness for promotion at the beginning of each promotion round.

Actions

- 13a School to support and encourage staff who are considering and/or applying for promotion. In particular to introduce a system (e.g. a review of all junior staff by a group(s) of senior staff) to assess the readiness of all staff who are eligible for promotion, prior to each promotion round.
- 13b School to ensure that during appraisal (when it is reintroduced), discussion focuses around what staff need to do to ready themselves for promotion. Good practice is that:
 - The School should require a minimum of annual appraisal meetings between staff and their managers;
 - In addition to general discussion on workload, progress on objectives, etc., the appraisal discussion should cover the development needs of the staff member in respect of preparing for promotion such as what additional experience is needed and, for academic staff, how best to develop their research and publication record;
 - Clear, realistic feedback should be provided to the appraisee as to how much more work is required before there is a reasonable chance of a successful promotion application.
- 13c School to develop a mentoring scheme for those staff close to promotion whereby mentors are those who have recently been promoted. (Mentors should be trained and, if possible, the opportunity should exist for women to be mentored by women).
- 13d School to make available for all staff case studies of those recently promoted.

Benchmark 14: Support promotion candidates

Good Practice

The University/Faculty will offer and provide regular training courses on promotion (process, criteria and preparing a case for promotion). Take up by School is monitored. Schools offer help (on presenting their case for promotion) and personal support to individuals preparing for promotion. Where Schools identify gaps and/or weaknesses in candidates' cases, during the School's consideration) the candidates are offered advice at the earliest possible opportunity.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 14.1 HoS and HoDs and other senior staff supported candidates with their cases for promotion.
- 14.2 Personal support is provided as above, and by mentors, for those who have them.
- 14.3 Because of the range of Disciplines in the School, the HoS has to rely on HoDs for information on potential promotion candidates, a reliance which would not be so important if there were a regular structured review of the career progression of staff.

Actions

See actions for Benchmark 13.

Benchmark 15: Feedback and follow up for promotion candidates

Good Practice

The University provides regular training on 'giving positive feedback' and monitors the take up. Schools offer positive feedback to all candidates, and in the case of unsuccessful candidates provides them with unbiased advice and career guidance. If candidates receive feedback on the experiences, skills, activities, and opportunities they need, Schools will offer what is required.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 15.1 In the most recent promotion round the HoS made contact with all successful and unsuccessful candidates. Unsuccessful candidates will also get feedback from the Faculty Dean.
- 15.2 A member of the School was on the Faculty panel for the most recent round and the HoS is seeking feedback from him.

Actions

See actions for Benchmark 13.

6 Career Development Provision

How the School monitors and ensures the quality and effectiveness of the career development that is provided.

General Observations and comments

- Without a School structure for the career development of its staff; there is a reliance on individual HoDs and grant holders, who are often not the people to provide unbiased career advice and guidance. This is compounded by the absence of any scheme to appraise staff.
- The School has an energetic group of PhD students who could usefully be engaged to explore a number of the issues identified and asked to make suggestions.

Benchmark 16: Development needs and take up

Good Practice

The University provides regular induction programmes for all new staff and monitors take up. Schools provide a comprehensive School induction. The University checks the usefulness of its central training and development provision for academics and post docs with Schools. Schools are aware of the development training offered by the University. Schools encourage junior staff to take up what is offered and recommend courses they know are useful.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 16.1 New academic staff are allocated a mentor and provided with a start up grant. Their induction is the responsibility of their HoD, and Discipline colleagues. (Administrative and technical staff are 'inducted' by their line managers).
- 16.2 There is no formal induction for post docs.
- 16.3 There is a year's probation for new appointees, but this appeared to be a 'paper signing' exercise.
- 16.4 In the checklist it was stated that the School had a staff development programme, which is open to all staff with a small amount of financial support available. This did not come up in any discussion group.
- 16.5 In the checklist it was stated that staff were encouraged to participate in College provided training and development activities.
- 16.6 Administrative staff acknowledged that their role meant that there were opportunities to move around the College to further their careers. In contrast, the highly specialist nature of technical staff roles meant that technical staff felt that opportunities for career progression through transfers to other Schools were limited.

Actions

- 16a School to ask a group of early career staff, together with one or two senior staff who have joined TCD relatively recently, to make practical proposals for staff induction. (Recommendations might include health and safety arrangements, the identification of which individuals/post holders should be responsible for what, and the time frame- day one, week one, month one.....).
- 16b School INTEGER committee to use their proposals to develop an induction programme and an induction checklist.
- 16c School to identify an academic to be the lead for a year's pilot of the new induction programme and use of the checklist.

Benchmark 17: Early Career Researchers (ECR) development¹

Good Practice

The University provides transferable skills training. It monitors its take up and checks its usefulness with Schools. The University offers (and monitors the take up of) careers advice and guidance to complement the impartial advice that Schools offer their Early Career Researchers (ECRs). Schools ensure their ECRs are aware of their personal responsibility for their own careers, and making informed career decisions and choices.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 17.1 Advice for ECRs is provided through the mentoring system.
- 17.2 There was no discussion of the uptake of transferable skills training by ECRs, or of their understanding of their own responsibility for their career progression and for making informed career choices.
- 17.3 On the basis of information from the post doc session, little career guidance and support was provided other than that available from a post doc's PI, and in some cases the opportunity for publications was limited, even after a number of years of work.
- 17.4 A large number of PhD students attended their session. They were nearly all Irish. They referred enthusiastically to a recent presentation session, where all had been offered the opportunity to make 'flash' presentations of their research. It had been well attended by academic staff. Several students had identified possible opportunities for collaboration outside their own Discipline group.

Actions

- 17a School to ask a group of staff (to include post docs and the College staff development unit) to suggest ways to ensure that ECRs receive independent advice on career progress. (See www.athenaforum.org.uk for post doc career path guidance for ideas).
- 17b School to introduce a distinct appraisal scheme for post docs which focuses on their development as independent researchers and their readiness for, and likelihood of gaining, an academic post. Ideally:
 - Appraisals should be not be carried out by the PI;

¹ Early career researchers include postdocs and recently appointed permanent academic staff who are still learning how to carry out their role.

- The appraisal schedule should match an individual's contract rather than all appraisals being held at the same time of year;
 - Appraisals should be held every six months.
- 17c School to establish the PhD flash presentations as a regular feature of School academic life, and consider the possibility of something similar to 'showcase' the work of post docs.
- 17d School to establish a process to ensure that the development and progress of post docs is monitored and that they are provided opportunities for teaching and to publish and develop as independent researchers.

Benchmark 18: Appraisal

Good Practice

The University ensures that Schools have appropriate appraisal schemes for academics and post docs (regular and automatic, which identify development needs and the career development support provided). It provides training for appraisers, and specific training for appraisers of ECRs. Schools monitor participation in appraisal, follow up on training needs, and take action as necessary.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

18.1 The PMDs which were introduced as part of a Government pay award arrangement, have been inactive following pay cuts and freezes, and see 14.3 above.

Actions

18a In the absence of a TCD appraisal system, School to introduce its own appraisal system for, at least, new appointees and staff who are preparing for promotion.

7 Career Development Activities

How the School ensures that its staff engage in activities, internal and external which contribute to their career progression and professional profile.

Benchmark 19: Mentoring

Good Practice

The University provides training and support for mentors and training for potential mentees on 'getting the best out of mentoring'. It offers, and supports, mentoring schemes for academics, post docs and post graduates. Schools publicise and provide information on schemes (University/Faculty/external). Schools encourage their staff to act as mentors and to train to become mentors. They monitor the usefulness of mentoring for mentees and mentors.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 19.1 During the discussion, there were frequent mentions of mentoring and mentees. New lecturers are offered a mentor, who might be outside their Discipline. The 'Momentum' mentoring programme is provided through staff development. This scheme is monitored by College Staff Development. There wasn't an opportunity to find out what sort of support was provided by mentors and how useful the scheme was for both mentees and mentors.
- 19.2 There was no mentoring for post docs or PhD students.
- 19.3 Some Disciplines have a steering group for their PhDs (the supervisor, the HoS and a third person who can have a mentoring role). However, no references were made to this in the session with PhD students.

Actions

- 19a School to encourage the use of the post doc/early career mentoring scheme (with mentors coming from a different Discipline from their mentee). This might also help the School in bringing its component Disciplines together as an academic entity.
- 19b School to ensure that all staff are aware of the mentoring opportunities which are available, within the College and Faculty, and what is provided by the professional societies to which they belong.

Benchmark 20: Networks and role models

Good Practice

The University supports and encourages networks at University and Faculty level and monitors their impact. Schools encourage staff to contribute to internal, external, professional, and special interest networks. Schools encourage their academics to use their personal networks (to identify potential female appointees, mentors, visiting academics, examiners and seminar speakers), and Schools encourage their female academics to act as role models.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

20.1 In the checklist it was stated that staff are encouraged to join and contribute to internal and external professional networks.

Actions

- 20a School to initiate a post doc/early career researchers forum/network. (The School could ask the group to make proposals, to the INTEGER action committee, on mentoring, networking and other career developmental activities for post docs).
- 20b School to ensure that, as part of the development of staff, all staff are aware of the networking opportunities that are available within the College and Faculty and what is provided by their professional societies. Ideally this should be done through induction and as part of the appraisal process, whereby senior staff communicate their knowledge of opportunities to more junior staff.
- 20c School to request its INTEGER action committee to identify potential role models among its female academics, to write up case studies for the School website which include information on their scientific careers and events in family life.
- 20d School to feature the contributions of female staff from all staff groups/grade on their web site and in School annual reports/publications.
- 20e School to make sure that their female academics and post docs are aware of their importance as role models to early career staff and post graduate students.

Benchmark 21: Internal and external activities

Good Practice

Schools encourage staff, to engage in activities, which raise their profile and bring them, and their science, to the notice of senior staff at University and Faculty level. Schools also encourage staff to become involved in professional and learned societies. The University expects Schools to monitor, by gender, the nominations, and recommendations they make for professional, representative and management roles and for prizes, awards, and marks of esteem.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 21.1 In the checklist it was stated that HoS and HoDs encouraged their staff to undertake activities in the School, Faculty and College to raise their profile.
- 21.2 Reference was made to nominations for Trinity College Fellowships. It was not clear whether there was any positive encouragement from the School for its staff to become Fellows. Views were mixed on the power exercised through the Fellowship with its evening dining, its accommodation and its committees. Some female Fellows had never dined. Fellowships are only open to full time academics. Nomination for fellowships came from existing fellows. The process from nomination to the award of a fellowship was not discussed.

Actions

- 21a School to monitor by gender the nominations it makes for Faculty, College and external positions and marks of esteem to ensure that there is a representative proportion of female nominations.
- 21b Female College fellows to be encouraged to recognise their status as role models, and actively to encourage women to consider becoming Fellows through the introduction of a Fellow to non-Fellow mentoring scheme.
- 21c School to ensure that there is a consistent approach across the whole School towards the encouragement of staff to undertake activities, such as participation in committees, attendance at networking events, etc., in the School, Faculty and College to raise their profile.

8 Flexibility

How the School ensures the flexibility that underpins successful careers.

Benchmark 22: Approaches to flexible working

Good Practice

The University has policies and practices on flexible working for academics and post docs, which provide practical guidance on managing flexible arrangements. The School is aware of statutory requirements, and what is good practice. The School knows where they, and their staff, can get advice and information. The School discourages a long-hours culture, checks staff perceptions on this, and where necessary takes action to discourage the long-hours culture.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 22.1 In the checklist it was stated that information on the availability of flexible working was not well publicised within the School.
- 22.2 In the checklist it was stated that the School is aware of, and responds to, individuals' needs for flexibility.
- 22.3 The HoS believes that the School does not have a long hours working culture.

Actions

- 22a School to clarify to its Disciplines, heads of research groups and PIs a School position on flexibility which is included in a staff handbook and induction information.

Benchmark 23: Take up of flexibility

Good Practice

The School checks that their sections/groups make it easy for staff to take advantage of flexibility and encourages senior staff to lead by example in their own working arrangements.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 23.1 The School expected Disciplines to make it easy for staff to work flexibly.
- 23.2 Administrative staff would welcome more flexibility to move between full-time and part-time working to suit their changing personal circumstances.
- 23.3 Administrative staff felt their working environment was essentially defined by the Discipline in which worked and that consistent practices did not necessarily exist across all Disciplines.
- 23.4 Administrative staff recognised that the nature of their roles meant that there was less opportunity for flexibility within the working day.

Actions

- 23a School to review the uptake of both formal and informal flexible working, to check whether there are differences between men and women, between the Disciplines and between the different staff groups to determine whether there is an objective rationale for the differences:
- If take up is found to be low in general, then action is to be taken to identify why this is the case, and if appropriate, further action is taken to change the culture;
 - If differences in take up are found between Disciplines then action is to be taken to identify why this is the case, and if appropriate further actions to be taken to change the approach and culture;
 - If differences are found between men and women then action to be taken to develop a culture where it is acceptable for both men and women to work flexibly.

Benchmark 24: Flexibility built into arrangements

Good Practice

The School timetables meetings and events so as make sure as many staff as possible can attend. It expects sections/groups to take individuals' needs for flexibility and personal circumstances into account when teaching is timetabled. The School regularly checks academics' and post docs' perceptions on this and where necessary takes appropriate action.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 24.1 School meetings are arranged so that as many people as possible can attend.
- 24.2 HoDs are responsible for 'timetabling' teaching.
- 24.3 HoDs have delegated responsibility for overseeing the arrangements for meetings in their Discipline.

Actions

- 24a School to clarify to HoDs its expectations on the timetabling of teaching to take account of individuals needs and circumstances and of Discipline meetings; for example by ensuring that all meetings and seminars are scheduled within core hours which themselves are sensible (e.g. 10.00 a.m. until 4.00 p.m.) and by ensuring the culture is one which focuses on output rather than attendance.
- 24b School, having taken action as above, then checks on staff perceptions to make sure the action is effective.

9 Career Breaks and Interrupted Careers

How the School ensures that the arrangements made for career breaks can enable individuals to maintain a career trajectory which meets their circumstances, abilities and ambitions.

Benchmark 25: Supportive approaches to career breaks

Good Practice

The University and Faculty provide practical guidance on support for staff. The School demonstrates its ability and willingness to support staff to cope with the practicalities before, during and after a career break or an unplanned career interruption. The School provides easily accessible advice and information, and checks that section heads are aware of what the School can and does provide.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 25.1 No career breaks have occurred since the present HoS has been in post. However, short term arrangements for parental leave have been made.
- 25.2 Staff from several staff groups made clear that although the School did not have a formal procedure in place, strong and practical support was always available for staff with personal difficulties/crises.

Actions

- 25a School to formalise its arrangements for career breaks/staff returning after extended absence by:
- Holding meetings with staff before they go on a career break in order to identify what arrangements need to be put in place to cover responsibilities and, for academic staff, to discuss how PhD students and post docs are to be supervised;
 - Provide opportunities for staff on leave to keep in touch (e.g. invitations to social events, inclusion in distribution lists for newsletters);
 - Provide an opportunity to meet with staff prior to their return from leave to discuss what support and flexibility they might need on their return;
 - Hold a meeting shortly after return to ensure that support required is in place, and subsequently hold meetings to monitor progress and to agree changes to support;
 - For academic staff, allow a reduced teaching load to enable a focus on research;
 - For all staff, ensure that staff can work part-time if required, and that they are allowed to return to full-time working in the future.
- 25b School to make sure that HoDs, heads of research groups and PIs are aware of its arrangements and where they /their staff can get advice.
- 25c School to incorporate this information in a staff handbook/staff intranet and induction information.
- 25d School to consider whether it is practical to identify an individual who has recently had a career break academic who is willing to offer advice and information to other school staff.

Benchmark 26: Career breaks- before and during

Good Practice

The School arranges a meeting to check that individuals are getting the support, advice and information they want. The School helps with, advises on, and/or makes the support arrangements (for administration/teaching/research responsibilities) before, during and after the career break.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

See 25.1 above.

Actions

See actions for Benchmark 25.

Benchmark 27: Career breaks- on and after return

Good Practice

The School recognises returners' needs (flexibility, personal support, mentoring, training and development to facilitate a smooth return). The HoS/section holds a meeting some weeks after their return, to discuss with the individual what is needed to get their career back on track, and over what time scale.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 27.1 In the checklist it was stated that the School recognises the need for providing support for returners and that the HoS is very supportive of such flexibility: there is an example of and an academic who was given short-term flexibility to facilitate childcare needs.
- 27.2 Information on flexibility that is available on and after their return, is provided and discussed before the career break, and meetings to agree the pattern of return are held prior to the return for administrative staff but not for academic or technical staff.
- 27.3 During discussions it emerged that if a woman opted to work part time on her return from a career break she was not allowed to return to full time at a later date. (Part time academics are not eligible for College Fellowships).

Actions

See actions for Benchmark 25.

10 Organisation for Action on Women And Science

How established and robust the School's organisational framework is to deliver equality of opportunity and reward

Benchmark 28: Leadership and engagement

Good Practice

Experience shows that the successful development of good working practices and processes and their sustainability is dependent on School senior management. Without their endorsement, support and active encouragement women and science/good practice activities and programmes are not sustainable.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 28.1 Based on discussions during the visit, members of the School Executive and other senior staff would be supportive of women in science activities and actions to improve working practices were these to be in place.
- 28.2 Some male and female members of the School executive and other senior staff had a general awareness and or understanding of the issues around the differences between men and women in terms of their experience, expectations, and perceptions of career progression.
- 28.3 The HoS was clearly supportive of WiSER and INTEGER. In the checklist it was stated that some senior staff circulated information and encouraged participation in WiSER activities.
- 28.4 In the checklist it was stated that one professor is the WiSER contact and arranges informal meetings with coffee.
- 28.5 In the checklist it was stated that there was good participation by men and women in WiSER activities.

Actions

- 28a School to share this report with staff and staff to be asked:
- For their views on the suggested actions;
 - Whether they would be prepared to take the lead on any of the suggested actions;
 - For suggestions on individuals, male and female, from all Disciplines staff groups and levels, including post docs and PhD students to become members of the School action committee (including possible chairs and/or INTEGER champions).

Benchmark 29: Accountability for women's career progression and good working practices

Good Practice

For good practice programmes to be successful they need to be managed. Experience shows that what works well is a committee (with male and female members drawn from all staff and student groups) which reports to the School Executive. Individuals, who may, or may not, be members of this committee need to be identified as responsible for specific initiatives, the progress of which is monitored by this committee.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

29.1 The School has no women and science/good practice committee.

Actions

- 29a School to ensure that the INTEGER committee, when established, has a diverse membership, with a good representation of both men and women.
- 29b School INTEGER committee to report directly to the School executive. The School Executive to receive regular reports (at least once every 6 months) on the progress of the School's INTEGER action plan.
- 29c School INTEGER committee to report and disseminate information to staff generally. (Six monthly open sessions for staff would be a way to disseminate interest and to check progress/the impact of plan activities).

Benchmark 30: Resources for "Women in Science" Good Practice Programmes

Good Practice

For activities and programmes (which make a difference and have an impact on the workplace, its culture and the people who work there) to be successful they need resources, people, expertise, time and money and the certainty of their continuing availability (at an appropriate level) Also, the time taken by individual staff members should be taken into account in determining their workload.

Observations and comments on the School of Natural Sciences

- 30.1 The School has no specific women and science programmes.
- 30.2 There is no School women and science budget.
- 30.3 It is not known how much administrative and expert support the School currently accesses from WiSER or the Faculty.
- 30.4 There was no discussion of what other support could be made available from the College centrally or at Faculty level.

Actions

- 30a School to ensure that the work of members of School INTEGER committee, or other staff who lead women in science programmes, is recognised in any assessment of workload.
- 30b The INTEGER committee to make an assessment of the administrative and budgetary support required to execute the Action Plan.
- 30c School Executive to provide the administrative and budgetary support is required to execute the Action Plan.
- 30d The INTEGER committee to make an assessment of the training needs of the personnel involved in executing the Action Plan.

Next Steps

Step 1

With the Head of School, check the findings in the report for errors of fact and/or interpretations. Agree the correct wording/terminology with ORP. Then, use the report as a baseline against which progress will be measured, as evidence of the need for change, and as the source of good practice.

Step 2

A start can be made on framing the action plan, based on the recommendations for school action. WISER, the HoS, and the School INTEGER action committee should be involved in this. If the committee has not yet been set up, likely members, and/or individuals who made useful contributions to the discussions during the visit could also be drawn in, together with anyone else the HoS thinks might be useful. A decision will be needed on how far, with whom and when to share the report. In terms of deciding when to start the action the answer is - as soon as possible. This should retain momentum after the visit, and help deflect interest away from the areas where the report suggests the school doesn't shine, and to focus the interest on what is happening.

In terms of how to prioritise action, focus initially on actions where:

- There is a good fit with the school's plans/strategy/ambitions;
- It can build on existing initiatives/strengths;
- There is a staff group who are keen to contribute/interested/supportive so it is easy to make an early start;
- Changes can make a difference in the short term, for individuals and for the school;
- The change is easy and low cost to deliver;
- What is developed is sustainable and can relatively easily be adopted/adapted by other schools.

Schedule later areas where:

- Action at School level depends on action/policy agreement by TCD;
- Action is going to be complicated and there is likely to be a long time before the action has much effect;
- Significant resources are needed (staff time is usually a major component of any action and budgets can take time to get sorted out);
- It is necessary to get the 'right people' on board and/or where a lot of preliminary discussion and/or consultation is anticipated;
- Vested interests are strongly entrenched;
- The success of the action and or the ability to deliver it is in doubt.

Before the plan is opened up to general discussion, make sure that:

- The champions are in place and briefed, and the individuals who are to lead the initial actions know in broad terms what is expected of them;
- The necessary resources have been identified and secured and the timetable has been agreed (at least for year one activities);
- Communication, dissemination and reporting arrangements are agreed for the initial actions;

- There is an understanding of how initial successes will provide the foundation for the next round of action;
- Thought has been given to what success will look like, how to celebrate it, and how the impact of the changes will be measured.

Step 4

Share the plans with the Faculty and the College and make a start on the quick wins and initiatives that can be piloted in, say, the next nine months. While these are running there is time to plan the more complicated and ambitious actions, in particular those where TCD input is essential. In some cases the time scale for change will be long. It is useful to leave some space and some spare resources to pick up on ideas and initiatives that emerge from the actions that are already in train.

Step 5

Review and celebrate progress at the end of year one, and tweak the action plan to take account of what was learnt/achieved in year one. It may well be that by then, changes that in the beginning looked difficult, or nearly impossible, to make look rather easier.

Action Planning

There are two essential elements - people who are enthusiastic and committed and a realistic action plan. The best action plans contain S.M.A.R.T. goals:

Specific
Measurable
Attainable
Realistic
Timely

Specific: There is a much greater chance of delivering a specific goal than a general one. When setting specific goals, bear in mind:

Who: Who is involved?

It is better to assign the responsibility, for overseeing and driving action forward, to a single named individual, rather than a group, a committee, or a broad function, such as Human Resources. The named individual doesn't have to do all the work. The responsibilities should be spread around. No one individual, or small group of individuals, should be overwhelmed.

What: What is to be achieved?

Be specific. A broad aim might be increased awareness of promotion criteria. A more specific target would be, "an increase to 80% of male and female staff reporting that they understand or understand well the promotion criteria." Note the assumption here is that data already exist on staff's current understanding of the promotion criteria.

Actions might be broken down into separate steps, with specific targets. In the example above, if base line data were not available, then a first step would be to survey staff, and then to use the results to set, or revise the target. A second step would be a work programme to raise staff awareness of the promotion criteria (perhaps running workshops, improving the materials available on the website). The third step would be to survey staff again.

Measurable: The use of numbers, percentages, dates and time to be taken, are ways to clarify objectives. The above target is based on achieving a set percentage. In some circumstances setting a target date is useful, for example, "Investigate the career destinations of PhD students (focusing on the difference between men and women), produce a report on the findings and recommend actions by July 2013."

Attainable: If targets are not attained; there is a risk that momentum will be lost. The achievement of a target (by its planned date) will depend on the resources that are available. Time is often the most important factor; therefore the staff, who are responsible for the action should be given time to do it.

Realistic: A way to establish if a goal is realistic, is to find out if something similar has been achieved elsewhere; alternatively to think through the 'conditions' that are necessary to achieve the goal. A realistic goal is one which people are both *willing* and *able* to work towards. A goal can be both *high* and realistic. In the example above a target of 100% of staff reporting that they "understand or understand well the promotion criteria", although desirable, is probably not realistic. It may be sensible to amend targets as time passes, especially if targets are date related. It is usually better to do this, than to carry on with an unrealistic target. Priorities will change and actions may have to be rescheduled to fit a new focus.

Timely: Goals should have a time frame, without this there is no sense of urgency. The timeframe for individual goals needs to take account of what else will be going on. Actions may need to be prioritised.

Some actions may be dependent on others being completed before they can begin. The need to manage the workload may mean that some goals have to be re-scheduled.

Review the plan regularly, say once a year. The purpose of the review is to assess progress on individual actions. Then, if necessary, revise timescales and targets. The review should re-confirm that the original priorities still hold. If not, timescales may need to be amended to reflect new priorities. New actions may have to be added; where new issues have emerged, to maintain momentum in other areas, and to take forward recommendations from reports.

There are many formats/templates in use for action plans. At the minimum a template should contain column headings for the description of the actions; responsibilities; timescales; and success measures. A "progress column" will also be useful as time goes on.

An example section:

Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Success measure
Set up a forum for postdoctoral researchers	Postgraduate tutor	By end academic year 2012/13	Hold meeting of forum with at least one representative from each research area.

In the annual action plan review, if the action has been achieved it may be appropriate to add a new action such as that below.

Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Success measure
Ensure postdoctoral forum meets regularly and reports to the management team	Postgraduate tutor	By end academic year 2013/14	Meetings of forum take place at least once a term with at least one representative from each research area. Any issues raised are passed to management team.

Once the postdoctoral forum is up and running, and is part of normal practice, it can be removed from the action plan. However, it may be appropriate to revisit this at a future date, with an action to check with postdoctoral researchers whether they feel the forum is operating well and that it provides an effective way for their views to be heard by management.

Annexe A: List of Actions Recommended to the School

Benchmark 1: Student data

- 1a Staff and student data, and relevant benchmarking information, should be discussed by the School Executive/INTEGER action committee with particular attention focused on areas where there are gender disparities. Data should be analysed and benchmarked separately for the different Disciplines represented within the School. A report on the finding and conclusions should be made available to staff, and an open meeting held to discuss the findings in order to gain a collective understanding of the School's position.

Benchmark 2: Staff data

See Benchmark 4 Action.

Benchmark 3: Qualitative data

- 3a School INTEGER committee to review and discuss findings from the Trinity College INTEGER opinion survey, and to check that the School action plan takes account of key findings from the survey. Specific attention should be paid to identifying the areas where there are statistically significant gender differences and to areas where there is significant overall staff dissatisfaction, and, where practical, these areas should guide the content of the Action Plan.
- 3b The INTEGER committee to share the opinion survey findings with staff, and an open meeting held to discuss the findings in order to gain a collective understanding of the School's position.

Benchmark 4: Management systems

- 4a School to undertake actions to move more quickly towards greater integration of its departments into a single School, with a single culture.
- 4b School to undertake a review of its calendar of meetings, (teaching, research and administration), at School, and Discipline level. The aim of the review to be: a reduction of staff time occupied by meetings, with a demonstrable improvement in School communications. The review to take account of:
- Staff attendance, resource taken to service the meetings (against the purpose /value/outcomes/ impact of the meetings);
 - The importance of bringing the parts of the School together;
 - The introduction of a regular School meeting for academic staff.

Benchmark 5: Resource allocations

- 5a School to check that academic, technical staff, and post docs, feel that the system of allocating resources is fair and transparent, both within and between Disciplines. If the system is not felt to be fair and/or transparent; then changes should be made to the system, and the staff should be consulted again in 2 or 3 years to check on the new arrangements.

Benchmark 6: Workload roles and responsibilities

See recommendation to College.

Benchmark 7: Workplace environment

- 7a School INTEGER action committee to provide guidance on standards of behaviour towards colleagues and students (based on College expectations) for inclusion in School staff handbook.
- 7b As part of the proposed review of School the number of meetings held, School to review the way committees work and the gender differences in behaviour and language of chairs and members.(see Athena case study from (Bedfordshire) Luton University on www.athenaforum.org.uk).

Benchmark 8: Collegiality

- 8a School to set up a working group from across its Disciplines to identify practical steps that can be taken to build a stronger School community.
- 8b School to ensure that administrative and technical staff are included in School social events to encourage the development of an inclusive culture.

Benchmark 9: Individual contributions valued

- 9a School to ensure that staff who provide student welfare support themselves can access expert advice and guidance from College and if necessary access to counselling and/or a College network of welfare/student support staff.
- 9b School to ensure that the full range of contribution to its success from all staff, including administrative and technical staff, is recognised and reflected, for example on the school web site and publications, that where roles have been expanded this is taken fully into account in job descriptions, and when promotion is considered.
- 9c School to set up a working group with ECRs on the level of support they receive/need, whether they feel they belong to the School or are isolated, and whether they feel their contributions are recognised.
- 9d School to run an opinion survey in, say, 2014 to establish the impact of any changes.

Benchmark 10: Decision Making

- 10a School to survey staff and postdocs to learn specifically how postdoc appointments are made. Issues to be covered are:
 - Were posts advertised, and if so where?
 - How were candidates identified?
 - Was a formal interview held, and if so how many candidates were interviewed and who carried out the interview?
- 10b School to introduce panel interviews for postdoc appointments.

Benchmark 11: Appointment and promotion criteria, processes and information provided

- 11a School to ensure that staff on fixed-term appointments are supported through mentoring, appraisal and training to ensure that they are in the strongest possible position to gain a permanent position.

Benchmark 12: Monitor Appointments and promotions

- 12a School to use gender disaggregated data to ensure that appropriate proportions of men and women are apply and are shortlisted for appointments, and are put forward for and are successful at promotion.

Benchmark 13: Encourage candidates

- 13a School to support and encourage staff who are considering and/or applying for promotion. In particular to introduce a system (e.g. a review of all junior staff by a group(s) of senior staff) to assess the readiness of all staff who are eligible for promotion, prior to each promotion round.
- 13b School to ensure that during appraisal (when it is reintroduced), discussion focuses around what staff need to do to ready themselves for promotion. Good practice is that:
- The School should require a minimum of annual appraisal meetings between staff and their managers;
 - In addition to general discussion on workload, progress on objectives, etc., the appraisal discussion should cover the development needs of the staff member in respect of preparing for promotion such as what additional experience is needed and, for academic staff, how best to develop their research and publication record;
 - Clear, realistic feedback should be provided to the appraisee as to how much more work is required before there is a reasonable chance of a successful promotion application.
- 13c School to develop a mentoring scheme for those staff close to promotion whereby mentors are those who have recently been promoted. (Mentors should be trained and, if possible, the opportunity should exist for women to be mentored by women).
- 13d School to make available for all staff case studies of those recently promoted.

Benchmark 14: Support promotion candidates

See actions for Benchmark 13.

Benchmark 15: Feedback and follow up for promotion candidates

See actions for Benchmark 13.

Benchmark 16: Development needs and take up

- 16a School to ask a group of early career staff, together with one or two senior staff who have joined TCD relatively recently, to make practical proposals for staff induction. (Recommendations might include health and safety arrangements, the identification of which individuals/post holders should be responsible for what, and the time frame- day one, week one, month one.....).
- 16b School INTEGER committee to use their proposals to develop an induction programme and an induction checklist.
- 16c School to identify an academic to be the lead for a year's pilot of the new induction programme and use of the checklist.

Benchmark 17: Early Career Researchers (ECR) development²

- 17a School to ask a group of staff (to include post docs and the College staff development unit) to suggest ways to ensure that ECRs receive independent advice on career progress. (See www.athenaforum.org.uk for post doc career path guidance for ideas).

² Early career researchers include postdocs and recently appointed permanent academic staff who are still learning how to carry out their role.

- 17b School to introduce a distinct appraisal scheme for post docs which focuses on their development as independent researchers and their readiness for, and likelihood of gaining, an academic post. Ideally:
- Appraisals should not be carried out by the PI;
 - The appraisal schedule should match an individual's contract rather than all appraisals being held at the same time of year;
 - Appraisals should be held every six months.
- 17c School to establish the PhD flash presentations as a regular feature of School academic life, and consider the possibility of something similar to 'showcase' the work of post docs.
- 17d School to establish a process to ensure that the development and progress of post docs is monitored and that they are provided opportunities for teaching and to publish and develop as independent researchers.

Benchmark 18: Appraisal

- 18a In the absence of a TCD appraisal system, School to introduce its own appraisal system for, at least, new appointees and staff who are preparing for promotion.

Benchmark 19: Mentoring

- 19a School to encourage the use of the post doc/early career mentoring scheme (with mentors coming from a different Discipline from their mentee). This might also help the School in bringing its component Disciplines together as an academic entity.
- 19b School to ensure that all staff are aware of the mentoring opportunities which are available, within the College and Faculty, and what is provided by the professional societies to which they belong.

Benchmark 20: Networks and role models

- 20a School to initiate a post doc/early career researchers forum/network. (The School could ask the group to make proposals, to the INTEGER action committee, on mentoring, networking and other career developmental activities for post docs).
- 20b School to ensure that, as part of the development of staff, all staff are aware of the networking opportunities that are available within the College and Faculty and what is provided by their professional societies. Ideally this should be done through induction and as part of the appraisal process, whereby senior staff communicate their knowledge of opportunities to more junior staff.
- 20c School to request its INTEGER action committee to identify potential role models among its female academics, to write up case studies for the School website which include information on their scientific careers and events in family life.
- 20d School to feature the contributions of female staff from all staff groups/grade on their web site and in School annual reports/publications.
- 20e School to make sure that their female academics and post docs are aware of their importance as role models to early career staff and post graduate students.

Benchmark 21: Internal and external activities

- 21a School to monitor by gender the nominations it makes for Faculty, College and external positions and marks of esteem to ensure that there is a representative proportion of female nominations.
- 21b Female College fellows to be encouraged to recognise their status as role models, and actively to encourage women to consider becoming fellows through the introduction of a Fellow to non-Fellow mentoring scheme.
- 22c School to ensure that there is a consistent approach across the whole School towards the encouragement of staff to undertake activities, such as participation in committees, attendance at networking events, etc., in the School, Faculty and College to raise their profile.

Benchmark 22: Approaches to flexible working

- 22a School to clarify to its Disciplines, heads of research groups and PIs a School position on flexibility which is included in a staff handbook and induction information.

Benchmark 23: Take up of flexibility

- 23a School to review the uptake of both formal and informal flexible working, to check whether there are differences between men and women, between the Disciplines and between the different staff groups to determine whether there is an objective rationale for the differences:
 - If take up is found to be low in general, then action is to be taken to identify why this is the case, and if appropriate, further action is taken to change the culture;
 - If differences in take up are found between Disciplines then action is to be taken to identify why this is the case, and if appropriate further actions to be taken to change the approach and culture;
 - If differences are found between men and women then action to be taken to develop a culture where it is acceptable for both men and women to work flexibly.

Benchmark 24: Flexibility built into arrangements

- 24a School to clarify to HoDs its expectations on the timetabling of teaching to take account of individuals needs and circumstances and of Discipline meetings; for example by ensuring that all meetings and seminars are scheduled within core hours which themselves are sensible (e.g. 10.00 a.m. until 4.00 p.m.) and by ensuring the culture is one which focuses on output rather than attendance.
- 24b School, having taken action as above, then checks on staff perceptions to make sure the action is effective.

Benchmark 25: Supportive approaches to career breaks

- 25a School to formalise its arrangements for career breaks/staff returning after extended absence by:
- Holding meetings with staff before they go on a career break in order to identify what arrangements need to be put in place to cover responsibilities and, for academic staff, to discuss how PhD students and post docs are to be supervised;
 - Provide opportunities for staff on leave to keep in touch (e.g. invitations to social events, inclusion in distribution lists for newsletters);
 - Provide an opportunity to meet with staff prior to their return from leave to discuss what support and flexibility they might need on their return;
 - Hold a meeting shortly after return to ensure that support required is in place, and subsequently hold meetings to monitor progress and to agree changes to support;
 - For academic staff, allow a reduced teaching load to enable a focus on research;
 - For all staff, ensure that staff can work part-time if required, and that they are allowed to return to full-time working in the future.
- 25b School to make sure that HoDs, heads of research groups and PIs are aware of its arrangements and where they /their staff can get advice.
- 25c School to incorporate this information in a staff handbook/staff intranet and induction information.
- 25d School to consider whether it is practical to identify an individual who has recently had a career break academic who is willing to offer advice and information to other school staff.

Benchmark 26: Career breaks- before and during

See actions for Benchmark 25.

Benchmark 27: Career breaks- on and after return

See actions for Benchmark 25.

Benchmark 28: Leadership and engagement

- 28a School to share this report with staff and staff to be asked:
- For their views on the suggested actions;
 - Whether they would be prepared to take the lead on any of the suggested actions;
 - For suggestions on individuals, male and female, from all Disciplines staff groups and levels, including post docs and PhD students to become members of the School action committee (including possible chairs and/or INTEGER champions).

Benchmark 29: Accountability for women's career progression and good working practices

- 29a School to ensure that the INTEGER committee, when established, has a diverse membership, with a good representation of both men and women.
- 29b School INTEGER committee to report directly to the School executive. The School Executive to receive regular reports (at least once every 6 months) on the progress of the School's INTEGER action plan.

29c School INTEGER committee to report and disseminate information to staff generally. (Six monthly open sessions for staff would be a way to disseminate interest and to check progress/the impact of plan activities).

Benchmark 30: Resources for “Women in Science” Good Practice Programmes

30a School to ensure that the work of members of School INTEGER committee, or other staff who lead women in science programmes, is recognised in any assessment of workload.

30b The INTEGER committee to make an assessment of the administrative and budgetary support required to execute the Action Plan.

30c School Executive to provide the administrative and budgetary support is required to execute the Action Plan.

30d The INTEGER committee to make an assessment of the training needs of the personnel involved in executing the Action Plan.

Annexe B: Key Learning From UK Experience

How Long will it Take?

Work with UK departments, who are leading the way, shows that it can take ten years of good practice and culture change, before there is measurable impact on the recruitment, retention and progression of women in the department. As a result of their work, and work by the Athena Project, the IOP and RSC there is now much more information about what to do and how to go about doing it.

A department beginning its work today could expect to progress more quickly than those pioneering departments, but even with the knowledge now available, it will still take years to see noticeable changes in the proportion so of women in senior positions.

Some departments, with a long track record of good practice, find that their changes are not sustainable, as people move on, departments and faculties are restructured, where complacency creeps in, or a new HoD has a different agenda. The keys to continuing success are to embed the culture change, and the good practice that supports it, firmly in the way the department works, and to get to a position where all the staff recognise the benefits, and consequently object if things slip.

Early work in the Athena Programme showed the importance of starting with the simple things where it was possible to make a difference easily, cheaply and quickly. The effect of making simple changes was that people started to feel that it was possible to change the way things worked. They also recognised that simple changes (often introduced specifically to improve the position and progression of women like for example, women's networks and women only mentoring schemes) actually improved the situation for department as a whole.

These early successes encouraged universities to tackle more difficult areas. Following the success of changes aimed towards individual women, several universities in the Athena Programme choose to address their culture through what they saw as their key processes (key in terms of academic progression). They variously reviewed, proposed and made changes to their appointment and promotion processes and in the way their committees operated (reviewing their membership, the representativeness their chairs, and the ways in which business was conducted including understanding the differences in the way man and women contributed and how their contributions were regarded).

Why so few References to Women in the Recommendations

Work in the UK showed clearly that whereas good practice benefits all, men and women, staff and students (the department and its work) bad practice incrementally damages women's career progression. This does not mean that actions aimed specifically towards women are not important. What it does mean is that major changes to processes and procedures, such as the introduction of a more open and transparent promotion system, will benefit both men and women.

The Importance of Early Career Researchers

Work in the UK has identified the importance of action at the early career stages. In the majority of disciplines, women are less likely, than men, to move on to the next stage; whether from bachelors degree to a doctorate, from a doctorate to post doctoral work, or into a permanent academic position.³ It is therefore important that students and post doctoral researchers have positive experiences, and that they receive the support they need. It is also important that those who supervise students and post doctoral researchers are aware of the barriers that women scientists in particular may face.

Working in Partnership

Early work in the Athena programme identified that partnership was important for success:

Initially it was important to engage with and empower women, to give them a voice and to make clear that the problem was not the women, but that the loss of women was a significant one for the success of UK science.

Scientists work in departments, they are loyal to their departments, their discipline and the professional bodies to which they belong. Departments and professional societies need to make a public commitment and an active contribution if change is to happen and to be sustained. Professional societies exercise a strong influence on the culture of their disciplines.⁴

Departments cannot achieve a culture change on their own. The processes that present a higher barrier to women's career progression are usually centrally driven, and governed by university requirements.

If a university wants to improve the representation of women in its departments and in university management, it has to recognise that although much of the work has to be at department level it will need to review and change its processes. It will also need to make staff and student data accessible to departments, and to make clear to departments what it expects of them.

Are the Recommendations Achievable?

All the good practice recommended for action are in place, or have been used by universities and departments in the UK. The wording has been varied to take account of local terminology practice. In the UK, the research intensive universities are most likely to be active members of the Athena SWAN Charter. It would seem that good practice and good science often go hand in hand.

³ See for example, *The Molecular Bioscience PhD and Women's Retention: A Survey and Comparison with Chemistry; The chemistry PhD: the impact on women's retention; Change of Heart - Career intentions and the chemistry PhD*, Reports are available at www.rsc.org/diversity

⁴ Women in University Physics Departments: A Site Visit Scheme 2003–2005, (http://www.iop.org/publications/iop/archive/file_42616.pdf); *Project Juno: An introduction to Project Juno and the process involved*, (http://www.iop.org/publications/iop/2009/page_42647.html)

Action Area Specifics

1 Evidence Base for Action

Accurate data on female and male differences in representation and progression at all career stages, is fundamental to the development of effective plans to tackle inequalities in career progression. Data help to identify the need for action, and to persuade managers and staff of that need. Often departments make limited use of the data they supply to their university.

Academics, who are not aware of differential female and male representation, of the key attrition points for women in their discipline, or of how their department compares with others, may not realise why action is needed. However, in most departments, the turnover of academic staff is low; so in the short and medium term, changes in female staff numbers will not reflect changes in practices/processes. Measuring the representation of female applicants and short listed candidates, against the proportion of women in the recruitment pool does provide a useful indicator.

2 Effective Management

It is often the case that what is clear to those who take decisions, is often less clear to others. Junior staff are often not well informed on how the department's systems for workload and resource allocation are organised, or on the basis on which these allocations are made. Consequently, they may question their fairness. Uncertainties about who makes which decisions and on what basis, can give the appearance of a 'closed shop'. In contrast the best departments have transparent systems in place to ensure that all staff are informed. Minutes of management meetings are published and the basis on which resources are allocated are made clear, and staff workloads are available.

In the best departments there is a regular rotation of senior posts which provides opportunities for the membership of the senior management team, and membership of important committees. It is seen as beneficial for the department, if more staff acquire the management experience they need for promotion, as there are then more staff who have the experience necessary for more senior management positions.

Some departments appoint staff into assistant or deputy positions to enable them to gain experience prior to taking on major administrative roles. Staff who do take on major management or administrative roles have the work involved recognised in the workload model and in consequence have a reduction in their teaching load.

3 Workplace Culture

Work by the RSC and IOP showed that staff working in 'good practice' departments had clear view of how they and their colleagues, senior and junior, were expected to behave towards each other, and on the importance of looking out for each other. Some departments articulate their values in terms of a shared responsibility for the quality of the department's research, its teaching, and developing the potential of all its staff.

4 Appointment and Promotion Processes

In most departments the major turnover is of post docs. Here selection is often the responsibility of groups/sections, and not 'controlled' by the department. Departments, who monitor their data, have noted the relationship between the appointment of female candidates and the presence of women on the appointing committees.

Universities who identify problems with academic promotion, sometimes find obstacles and systems at department level which restrict the value of the changes made at university level. In other cases,

department processes are transparent and well understood, but are a “black box” at faculty and university levels. Publicising successful promotion case studies can help to demystify the promotions process.

5 Levelling the Appointment and Promotion Playing Fields

Those staff who are not given information on their readiness for promotion, or who are not directly approached and encouraged to apply for promotion, may assume they are either not eligible for promotion, or not yet ready. Work by Athena suggested women were more likely than men to make such assumptions. Work also showed that heads of departments often found it difficult to provide positive feedback to candidates in particular to unsuccessful candidates. Anecdote suggests that women’s confidence is knocked back more by failure than men’s, and so it is particularly important that they receive positive feedback.

Departments, which monitor their data, have noted that women are likely to wait longer than men before they apply for promotion especially to senior positions. If staff are not made aware of new appointments/vacancies, they may assume the post is intended for a known candidate.

6 Career Development Provision

Across UK universities the provision of staff development and training, and the regard in which it is held is mixed. Some universities provide high quality, targeted training which is valued by their departments. In others, the perceived burdensome, inappropriate and poorly presented training courses required, for example for probationary lecturers makes it difficult to persuade the academic community of the value of other centrally provided training and development. It is therefore important that the take up and usefulness of training is monitored, and where problems are found solutions are put in place.

While individuals need to take responsibility for their own career development; the view held by some senior academics that individuals are intelligent enough to ‘push’ themselves, and to know what was needed, is unhelpful. Junior staff can feel that the need to ask/the need for support is an admission of ignorance and uncertainty which might reflect negatively on them.

Well managed appraisal systems, which are focused on career development rather than on formal assessment of staff, are important in giving staff the space to discuss their development needs and their readiness for promotion. The best departments monitor the take up of appraisal and periodically assess its effectiveness. Post docs require a different appraisal to permanent staff. For post docs the key questions to be answered are whether they have the potential for a permanent academic job, and what they need to do to improve their chances of gaining such a role.

7 Career Development Activities

Across UK universities the picture is mixed. Some departments recognise the need to ensure that their staff; particularly early career staff, engage in activities which are valuable for their career development. Many departments have mentoring schemes for new staff. A few departments also have mentors available for post docs. Again it is important to assess the effectiveness of mentoring schemes and to provide training for both mentors and mentees. Some departments also offer mentors for those preparing for promotion, or for those returning from maternity leave.

The absence of female role models is often cited as significant to women’s career progression and retention. Departments often see networking and role models as external ‘activities’, which they encourage, rather than activities for which they are responsible. The best departments ensure that at least a representative proportion of seminar speakers are women and that ample opportunity is provided for, in particular early career researchers, to meet and network with the seminar speakers.

Departments often do not recognise networking across the university/outside their discipline as an important developmental activities for their early career staff. Universities and faculties have a role here in establishing opportunities for their staff to network among each other, and this may have the beneficial spin off may be that new research collaborations are formed.

8 Flexibility and Sustainable Careers

Individuals' needs and priorities change at different life stages. Staff with young families, living away from their family support network, will have different perspectives, from those who are more established, and different from those without family responsibilities. In some departments, staff feel that they would be 'letting the side down' by taking time out for family events. In others staff know that their contribution to the department is measured not by time in the lab, but by the quality of their output, and heads of departments actively discourage staff from overworking. Departments which have good flexible working practices and arrangements in place do, however, have to accept that in reality the take up is a matter for individuals and for research groups. It is not something which they control and much of it is self driven.

It has been noted that in departments where senior staff to take up opportunities for flexible working, flexible working is legitimised for all staff.

9 Career Breaks and Interrupted Careers

Good practice departments see managing maternity leave (and other planned and unplanned, career breaks), as a responsibility to be shared. They do not leave individuals to find their own cover and/or to make arrangements to catch up on their return. They have developed 'procedures' which can swing into action smoothly. There are significant differences in the ways departments approach keeping in touch with members of staff on a career break.

Some universities offer reduced teaching and/or administrative workloads on return. However, a few offer career development/professional updating and/or mentoring to returners, and others had formal progress reviews for returners to ensure that they receive the support they need to make a smooth transition back into work.

10 Organisation for Action

Women and science activities and programmes need to be embedded. Initiatives led by women, but not endorsed or encouraged by senior management, are unlikely to make any long-term difference to department culture, or key processes. Departments, with successful women and science programmes, recognise their value, and resource them by recognising the staff time involved and by providing administrative support. Success also require senior management buy in and involvement. The most successful departments often have the head of department heavily involved, and he or she often chairs the programme committee. In contrast, leaving one or two female academics to run women and science programmes with no administrative support, funding or any recognition of the time taken, does not generally lead to the success, and may be detrimental to the individuals' own career progression.

Annexe C: Site Visit Participants' Invitation and Briefing

The letter below was sent to all staff prior to the visit

Dear

On behalf of the School of Natural Sciences, I am inviting you to take part in the INTEGER site visit as part of Trinity's commitment to improving working practices in College. This will be held on **Thursday, 14th June 2012** and will be facilitated by consultants, Dr. Sean McWhinnie and Ms. Caroline Fox, from Oxford Research Policy.

INTEGER is an FP7 project, managed by the Centre for Women in Science and Engineering Research, WiSER. The project INTEGER is being implemented in the Faculty of Engineering, Maths and Science to address the continued underrepresentation of women researchers in the Faculty. The aim of INTEGER is to identify and support good working practices in TCD that improve the career sustainability and progression of women scientific researchers. Research demonstrates that good working practices benefit all – staff & students alike; however, poor working practices adversely affect women more than men.

The School of Natural Sciences & the School of Chemistry are committed to the INTEGER process. This includes site visits, group discussions, data collection, and the development and implementation of an action plan. The INTEGER site visit is of benefit to both Schools, allowing them to:

- obtain independent, objective feedback on their culture and management and how well the university's policies and procedures are applied in the School
- to find how they compare with other Schools
- provide input for the development of Gender Action Plans in support of the INTEGER project and to improve employment practices generally
- engage staff in a constructive and open debate on gender issues

What to expect on Thursday, 14th June

During the course of the visit, Dr. McWhinnie and Ms. Fox will talk to a number of different groups of staff (see below table).

The topics the consultants intend to cover is within the general theme of what makes this School good place to work, and include:

- appointment, promotion, appraisal, training and development processes
- how staff and their contributions are supported, encouraged, valued and recognised
- the allocation of responsibilities and resources, and communications and committees

Not all the above topics will be relevant to all groups and we will tailor the discussion accordingly.

Site Visit: Thursday 14 th June 2012		
Time	Session	Personnel
9.30 – 9.45	Introduction Meeting	Head of School
9.45 – 10.25	Session 1	Executive Committee
10.30 – 11.10	Session 2	Professor & Associate Professor staff (former grades)
11.15 – 11.55	Session 3	Lecture & Senior Lecturer staff (former grades)
12.00 – 12.40	Session 4	Technical Staff
12.45 – 13.30	Lunch	All welcome
13.30 – 14.10	Session 5	Administrative staff
14.15 – 14.55	Session 6	Postdoctoral researchers
15.00 – 15.40	Session 7	PhD Students
15.45 – 16.15	Feedback session to HOS	Head of School
Location for all meetings: <i>Luce Hall Seminar Room</i>		

The focus of the INTEGER project is very much on what it is like to work in your School and what CAN be done at a practical level to improve the working environment. INTEGER will examine what changes the working culture for the better, and what makes academic science an enjoyable career and one you would be happy for your son, daughter, nephew or niece to follow you into. The things that do make a difference are often small and appear to be just common sense, but by putting them together (or taking some of them away!) a real difference can be made.

Confidentiality

The visit will be short and we will have relatively little time in each session to talk to you/your colleagues. The process is developed to ensure that all participants have the chance to contribute. If, at the end of your session, you feel the consultants have not covered something important, or may have misinterpreted what was said, please feel to contact wiser@tcd.ie. Although the aim of the visit is to collect material to include in the benchmarking report, the consultants will respect confidences, and would ask that all members of the group observe the confidentiality of what is said in the discussions.

Post-visit

The School has already completed a “good practice checklist” and provided some other background information, including staff and student data. A report on the visit will be sent to the Head of School and the Centre for Women in Science & Engineering Research (WiSER). The report will provide examples of good practice, which, if adopted by the School, should help in improving working practices.

Please confirm your attendance to wiser@tcd.ie for the appropriate session by Thursday, 7th June 2012.

I know that Sean and Caroline look forward to meeting you for a lively and interesting discussion.

Celia Holland

Oxford Research and Policy

This report was prepared for the Centre for Women in Science & Engineering Research (WiSER), Trinity College Dublin by Sean McWhinnie and Caroline Fox of Oxford Research and Policy.

Oxford Research and Policy is a consultancy which carries out research and evaluation, and specialises in higher education, science policy, and equality and diversity.

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“Good working practice benefits all - staff and students; however, research demonstrates that bad working practices adversely affect women more than men. There is a relationship between good practice and good science, individuals in “good practice” departments can contribute more. Departments with good working practices have fewer management problems.” Dr. Sean McWhinnie

Sean McWhinnie and Caroline Fox have worked together since 2003. Their first joint project was a Royal Society of Chemistry/Athena Project initiative to identify, validate, encourage and disseminate good practice in the recruitment, retention and career progression of academic chemists. As part of this project they developed a good practice checklist for use by departments. This led to the development of the Athena Action Framework. Between them Sean McWhinnie and Caroline Fox have over 20 years of experience in working with STEMM departments on good practice including the Chemistry Department at the University of York.

Dr. Sean McWhinnie worked in science policy at the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) for 12 years. Before that Sean was a lecturer in the Chemistry Department at Brunel University for over 7 years. At the RSC Sean developed work in diversity and built partnerships with STEM stakeholders in particular the Athena Project, UK Resource Centre for Women in SET, and the Institute of Physics. Sean has commissioned, and carried out, research on the career intentions and experiences of PhD students in chemistry and molecular biosciences, and of research staff in chemistry and physics. In 2009, Sean set up Oxford Research and Policy and has since consulted for a number of clients including the Institute of Physics, the Royal Astronomical Society, the London Mathematical Society, Vitae, the UK Resource Centre for Women in Science, the Equality Challenge Unit, University of Oxford, University of Southampton, St Andrews University, University of Kent and the Science and Technology Funding Council.

Mrs Caroline Fox was Human Resources Director at Imperial College London for 6 years, and has for the last 15 years worked as consultant, mainly in the public sector. Caroline was one of the founders of the Athena Project in 1999. She was responsible for the development and launch of the Athena SWAN Charter in 2005 and ran the SWAN recognition award scheme in its first two years. Caroline acts as Advisor to Athena Forum, and is a member Athena SWAN Steering Committee. She has recently completed a joint Imperial College and Royal Society project funded by HEFCE to complete the development of the Athena Survey of Science, Engineering and Technology (ASSET).

Athena SWAN Award Scheme: <http://www.athenaswan.org.uk>

Athena Forum and ASSET: <http://www.athenaforum.org.uk/>