

University of Nottingham, School of Psychology: Athena SWAN Silver Award May 2008

The context

Nottingham School of Psychology is ranked in the top 10 of UK Psychology Departments. It is a thriving research and teaching community with 40 full-time academic staff 29 research fellows and assistants, 550 undergraduate students and 74 postgraduate students.

What the data indicates

- The proportion of female undergraduate students is almost double that of the national distribution at around 80%
- Nine female appointments at lower academic level and four male. But still only 1 female professor for 8 male professors.

Support for women at key career transition points

- A wide range of career development opportunities for contract research staff (CRS) on topics such as career management and progression.
- Reduced teaching and administration loads for lecturers in their first year to enable acclimatisation to new roles and responsibilities.
- The School implements an accelerated promotion track for “rising star” new appointments. One female lecturer (appointed in 2007) was promoted to Associate Professor only months after her initial appointment.

Changing the culture and gender balance in decision making

- In order to maximise the influence of the School's relatively small number of senior women and limit demands on their time, senior female staff sit on high profile University decision-making committees such as the Institute of Neuroscience management, Ethical review Committees, Senate, Biomedical Services management committee, Humanities and Social Sciences Strategy Group. The school's only female Professor has recently been appointed as Dean for postgraduate studies for the University.
- As a result of the self-assessment exercise the school has now doubled the number of women on research and teaching committees for the coming year.

Work-life balance

- Maternity leavers with research grants are permitted to place them in abeyance while the school employs the CRS from the grant as temporary teaching fellows. The CRS are then re-employed once the grant is resumed on the staff members return. This allows continuity of staff, gives CRS teaching experience, allows some work on the grant to continue as teaching duties are typically only 2 days per week, and means that the grant can be resumed relatively uninterrupted on return.