This document is available online at http://www.reading.ac.uk/equality and copies (including those in alternative formats) are available from the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Office on request. Further information and queries may be directed to:

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4 2010-2013 Action Plan
1 Introduction

1.1 General statement

The University is committed to providing equality of opportunity to all its staff and students, potential staff and students, suppliers, providers, contractors and users of facilities regardless of gender.

Evidence of discriminatory behaviour (including gender related discrimination or harassment) will be treated as a potential disciplinary matter which may, in turn, result in sanctions up to and including staff dismissal or student expulsion in line with staff grievance and disciplinary procedures and student complaints and disciplinary procedures.

Through this Gender Equality Scheme 2010-2013 (Scheme), we aim to promote gender equality and eliminate gender related discrimination and harassment. During the period of this Scheme, the University will endeavour to gather information and allocate resources to support the Scheme and meet the objectives detailed in the included Action Plan. This entire process will be strengthened by the involvement of stakeholders and the University’s Equal Opportunities Advisory Group (EOAG) will monitor annual progress and reporting.

1.2 Legal background

The Gender Equality Duty came into force in April 2007 under The Equality Act 2006 and this duty includes a framework of “general” and “specific” duties to enable public bodies (including universities) to meet their gender equality obligations.

The University aims to meet its general duties by having a due regard to the need:

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
- To promote equality of opportunity between men and women (including Trans people).

The University aims to meet the specific duties by publishing this document, our second Gender Equality Scheme running from 2010-2013 and will:

- Consider the need to address the causes of any gender pay gap
- Gather and use information on how the University’s policies and practices affect gender equality in the workforce, in the provision of education and in the delivery of services
- Consult stakeholders (i.e. employees, students and service users) and take account of relevant information in order to determine gender equality objectives
- Assess the impact of the University’s current and proposed policies and practices on gender equality
- Implement the actions set out in our scheme within three years, unless it is unreasonable or impracticable to do so
- Report against the scheme every year and review the scheme at least every three years.

1.3 Other relevant policies and procedures

The Gender Equality Scheme should be read as part of the wider set of policies and procedures within the University including but not limited to the following:
1. Policy on Equal Opportunities and Diversity
2. Code of Good Practice (Valuing Ourselves and Others)
3. Harassment related policy and procedures
4. Policy and Procedures for Supporting Trans Identified staff and students
5. Equality policies/schemes and action plans (race and disability)
6. Staff Grievance and Disciplinary procedures
7. Student Complaints and Disciplinary procedures.

1.4 Raising concerns

Procedures for staff
Any member of staff who considers that they have not been treated in accordance with this Scheme should raise their concerns with their Head of School or Directorate (or equivalent line manager), a Human Resources Partner, the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Officer or a trained Harassment Adviser. Should formal action be taken this would be in line with staff grievance and disciplinary procedures.

Procedures for students
Any student who considers that they have not been treated in accordance with this policy should raise their concerns with their Head of School, Director of Teaching and Learning, Personal Tutor, the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Officer, the Students’ Union or a trained Harassment Adviser. Should formal action be taken this would be in line with the Student Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure.

2 Context and background

2.1 Role of equal opportunities and diversity in our strategic objectives
The University is ranked as one of the UK’s 10 most research-intensive universities and as one of the top 200 universities in the world. We enjoy first-class resources to support world-class teaching. The University has circa 15,000 students (in 2008/9 there were over 2000 full and part-time students from outside the European Union from 120 different countries) and 4,000 staff.

Our commitment to equality of opportunity is evidenced at the highest strategic level via our Corporate Plan 2008-2013, which provides a framework to enable us to develop our national and international reputation for excellence in teaching, research and enterprise. The Corporate Plan is complemented by a range of Sector Strategies and a Mission Statement that underpin our commitment to promote equality. Through our engagement with equal opportunities and diversity across all our functions we aim to make progress towards our vision:

“to translate our excellence into a major contribution to culture, economic wellbeing and quality of life...[and] develop[e] a culture that stimulates and supports our staff and students.”
(Mission Statement)

In regard to gender equality, we welcome the opportunity to improve provision for both staff and students through the implementation of this Scheme, which provides an exciting opportunity to further develop the gender equality agenda which has been actively developing for a number of years. The Scheme will help drive forward change and provide
a formal institutional framework through which to co-ordinate our approach to gender related activity.

2.2 Scope and vision

Scope
The scope of the Scheme is far reaching and covers all stakeholders at the University\(^1\). The Scheme will help drive forward change and provide a formal institutional framework through which to co-ordinate our approach. This Scheme is a means of achieving our gender equality aims and not an end in itself.

By involving stakeholders in identifying barriers and unsatisfactory outcomes and working with them to set priorities for action plans and assisting in planning activity, we aim to focus on the right priorities. Our overarching goal is to promote equality of opportunity and to eliminate gender related discrimination and harassment.

Vision
Our vision is to continue to secure meaningful outcomes which will have a real impact on the experiences of stakeholders through our three year action plan (2010-2013).

In implementing this Scheme we will use accessible mechanisms to enable a wide range of stakeholders to participate in the Scheme, adopt a proportionate and influential approach and be transparent in our progress reporting. We envisage many practical ways in which the University will benefit from implementing the requirements of the Gender Equality Duty, notably that women and men from all groups feel effectively engaged in decision and policy-making around issues that directly impact on them and that women and men are represented at all levels of the workforce and in all areas of work.

Through our 2010-2013 Action Plan we will plan for specific, measurable, achievable, and timely objectives with clear timelines and lines of accountability to ensure our success.

2.3 Social and political context

The Gender Equality Duty is intended to address the fact that, despite 30 years of individual legal rights to sex equality, gender inequality still exists as do unlawful acts of sex discrimination. The duty is intended to improve this situation for males, females and trans people. The term ‘sex’ is used to describe biological differences between women and men whereas the term ‘gender’ refers to the wider social roles and relationships which structure men’s and women’s lives. Gender inequality exists in all aspects of society and refers to lasting and embedded patterns of advantage and disadvantage. For example:

“Women are significantly more likely than men to work part-time, often because of childcare and other caring responsibilities. Part-time work in Britain is characterised by particularly low rates of hourly pay and reduced access to promotion and development opportunities. In addition, lack of availability of suitable childcare restricts women’s employment choices” (Gender Equality Duty Code of Practice for England and Wales, Section 3.53)

However, it is now recognised that it is not only women who face barriers, Indeed, the roles of men have changed leaving increased numbers of men with caring responsibilities. This, coupled with the widely acknowledged barriers faced by trans people is also recognised in the gender duty.

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\(^1\) Staff (potential and actual), students (potential and actual), suppliers, providers, contractors, visitors and users of university facilities.
2.4 Legal Context

As previously sated, the Gender Equality Duty introduced by the Equality Act 2006 gives public authorities (including universities) general and specific duties to promote gender equality. Unlawful discrimination includes discrimination as defined by the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (SDA) and discrimination that is unlawful under the Equal Pay Act 1970.

2.5 Institutional context

Prior to this scheme the University has made sound progress in terms of promoting gender equality and eliminating discrimination and harassment. This includes:

- Robust equal opportunities and anti-harassment policies
- Publication of a specific Policy and Procedures for Supporting Trans Identified Staff and Students
- Implementation of the Framework Agreement and Job Evaluation activities (including an equal pay audit completed during the duration of the 2007-2010 Scheme)
- Launch of a staff childcare voucher scheme in 2006, which continues to present
- Students’ Union provision of childcare for students with children, which saw a new nursery facility built during the duration of the 2007-2010 Scheme
- Informal availability of flexible work options, this continues and all staff are now permitted to request formal flexible work options through our Health and Well-being Policy.

Projects with a significant impact on gender equality in the life-cycle of this scheme may include:

- Implementation of the Internationalisation Strategy
- Thematic Review of Curriculum
- Reshaping Project.

The University is pleased to highlight that the following key projects linked to our 2007-2010 Scheme have been successfully completed:

- The implementation of a new Human Resources System with increased management information capabilities for gender related data and improved provision for the management of sickness absence and tracking of other types of leave use (this system has been implemented and has led to improved data collection and improved ability for staff to update their own personal data)
- Launch of an Employee Health and Wellbeing Policy (the Policy was launched and has lead to the creation of an annual well-being week for staff)
- Implementation of the Framework Agreement and Job Evaluation activities including an equal pay audit (The Equal Value Audit is complete and as a result of that exercise the University is exploring further where gender pay gaps have been identified).

3 Scheme Implementation

3.1 Leadership, accountability and responsibility
Role of the Council and the Vice Chancellor
The Council and Vice Chancellor have overall responsibility for ensuring that the University complies with its gender equality statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2006.

Role of a member of senior staff with gender responsibilities
Currently a Dean, as Chair of the University’s EOAG has responsibility for monitoring progress towards the strategic aims and objectives articulated via this scheme. In this role the Dean works closely with other senior management, key staff and the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Officer as appropriate. Specifically, the Dean with equal opportunities responsibilities is responsible for:

- Giving a consistent and high profile lead on gender equality issues
- Promoting the Scheme internally and externally
- Making sure the Scheme is fully implemented.

Role of Deans/Heads of School/ Heads of Directorate/Faculty Directors of Teaching and Learning/equivalent line manager
The above are responsible for the following:

- Implementing the Scheme within their area of responsibility
- Assisting with reviewing and revising the scheme as appropriate
- Making sure that staff are aware of gender related legislation and requirements
- Taking action against staff or students who may be discriminating unlawfully on gender related grounds.

Responsibilities of all members of the University community
All members of the University community have a responsibility to adhere to the principles of the Scheme at all times, specifically by:

- Promoting equal opportunities
- Having due regard to consider how they can promote equal opportunities generally (and gender equality specifically) in their work and how the scheme will effect the way they carry out their duties
- Keeping up to date with the law on gender equality and taking up training and learning opportunities as appropriate to their study or work
- Adhering to the Gender Equality Duty requirements in contracts or agreements.

3.2 Scheme Priorities

Our institutional priorities/objectives are as follows:

- working toward equal pay, equal representation and career progression
- identifying, understanding and improving gender balances in our workforce and student enrolment across fields of study
- promoting and managing flexible working
- managing leave for parents and carers
- eliminating discrimination, harassment and bullying on gender related grounds
- developing an understanding of, and plan for the needs of, trans staff and students
- promoting positively gender equality and the benefit it provides to the University.

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2 The Director of Postgraduate Research Studies and Researcher Development will Chair EOAG starting next term. Chair responsibilities may change, but the University ensures EOAG has relevant senior manager leadership.

3 University staff, students, suppliers, providers, contractors (including external examiners) and users of facilities.
These priorities are at the heart of our scheme and are reflected in our action plan. We have developed these objectives because we believe that they represent the major gender challenges in work and study at the University and that they will have significant impact on gender equality over the three year period of this scheme.

3.3 Publication, monitoring and review of the Scheme and progress reporting

Publication
The Gender Equality Scheme will be clearly identifiable and published on the University’s Equal Opportunities website. Hard copies will be available from the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Office and alternative formats are available on request.

Monitoring and Reviewing the Scheme
The University is committed to actively involving stakeholders throughout the life-cycle of the Scheme and the content and effectiveness of the Scheme will be monitored on an ongoing basis by the University’s EOAG. EOAG is committed to reviewing the progress made on the implementation of the Gender Equality Scheme.

Formal review of the Scheme will take place every three years (or as required by the Equality Act 2010) and changes will be made to ensure that the Scheme is having a meaningful impact on the experiences of stakeholders. The revision process will make use of the evidence gathered to date, the impact assessments carried out and the involvement of stakeholders via inclusive consultation. Consultation will be part of an on-going process with stakeholders monitored through EOAG. Review of the Gender Equality Scheme will be followed with a programme of communications to facilitate dissemination and action within the various functions of the University.

Reporting Progress:
Our Gender Equality Annual Report will contain a summary of steps taken to fulfil our Gender Equality Duty. This will include the results of information gathering activity showing what evidence has been obtained and how, and what the results indicate. This report will be made available on the website and promoted amongst University committees. Publishing this information will demonstrate our commitment to making progress on gender equality and will allow our staff, students and the community to assess how successful we have been at achieving gender equality.

3.4 Gathering and using information on stakeholders by gender

We aim to ensure that information gathering is not an end in itself but that the information obtained be analysed and used as the basis for preparing gender activity, and reviewing the effectiveness of actions taken. The information gathered will act as evidence of our progress in relation to gender equality and will provide us with quantitative and qualitative data for the purpose of impact assessing our policies and procedure to identify adverse impact (potential or actual) on stakeholders by gender (e.g. low participation levels, low success levels, etc).

Our arrangements for gathering data:
Staff and student data systems are in place and allow the gathering of information in relation to race, disability and gender. The University is committed to continually developing monitoring capabilities with a view to effectively monitoring the following quantitative and qualitative data:

- Student admissions and progress by gender
- Staff recruitment and career progression
• Reported cases of alleged harassment.\textsuperscript{4}

Those responsible for generating staff and student data will forward their data to the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Office in the appropriate format as soon as is practicable following the end of each academic year. The Equal Opportunities and Diversity Office will then assimilate the data into the Gender Equality Annual Report which will be presented to the EOAG before being made publicly available.

In addition to these quantitative measures, we will consider qualitative feedback to inform our improvement activity, including information on the extent to which the services we provide and the functions we perform take account of the needs of men and women, the issues and barriers affecting trans people and gender issues affecting potential staff/students. We may use the following mechanisms to gather such data:

• Staff and student surveys
• Feedback from staff and student network groups
• 1-2-1s where appropriate
• Relevant internal and external data.

Our commitment is to analyse any differentials in these areas between genders, investigate the reasons for them and take proportionate action to remedy them. All staff and student data listed above may be used in the following ways:

• To evidence the impact our policies and procedures are having upon our duty to promote gender equality
• To evidence whether our action plan is delivering greater equality and whether the priorities underlying the action plan are the right ones
• To review on an annual basis the effectiveness of the steps set out in the action plan
• To inform subsequent revision of the Gender Equality Scheme.

3.5 Equal Pay Statement

The University supports the principle of equal opportunities in employment and believes as part of that principle that male and female staff, those from different racial groups and those with and without disabilities should receive equal pay for work of equal value.

The University implemented a new pay and grading structure under the terms of the Framework Agreement, which provided the opportunity to create a coherent reward strategy by harmonising key terms and conditions of employment such as: annual leave, maternity, paternity and adoption pay and leave and sick pay.

In developing the new structure, the University carried out an extensive job evaluation exercise to determine the allocation of roles to grades, to ensure that the structure is robust and that it meets the University’s obligation to provide equal pay for work of equal value.

The University is committed to developing robust and transparent reward procedures applicable to all staff. The procedures for rewarding staff have been designed to be fair and transparent and have been agreed in consultation with the recognised trades unions. Rewards will be monitored for equity and consistency and the information will be made available to the recognised trades unions.

\textsuperscript{4} Cases reported informally and confidentially through the volunteer Harassment Adviser network
Equal pay audits will be conducted to ensure the validity of the pay and grading structure and that it continues to provide equal pay for work of equal value.

3.6 Recruiting and retaining Trans staff and students

Prior to our first Gender Equality Scheme, the University developed policy and procedures to support staff and/or students who are intending to undergo or have undergone gender re-assignment. This policy gives a detailed guide as to the procedures to follow and can be accessed on the Human Resources website http://www.rdg.ac.uk/humanresources/rdg-only/equal_opportunities.htm

3.7 Procurement

The Purchasing Department aims to ensure that the University meets its legal obligations to make sure that suppliers and contractors supplying goods and services to (or performing services on behalf of) the University comply with the requirements of relevant legislation. This will be done by ensuring that equality considerations are mainstreamed into terms and conditions and the provision of supplier questionnaires with staff trained in how to evaluate corporate responsibility questions.

3.8 Impact Assessment

The University of Reading is committed to mainstreaming gender equality throughout all of its functions\(^5\) and through impact assessment we will assesses the impact of our policies and practices, or the likely impact of its proposed policies and practices, on gender equality. Where possible, this assessment will be built in to the arrangements the University already has for reviewing policies. Impact Assessment activity will vary depending upon the degree of relevance of a policy on gender. Also, this activity will be guided by the various ‘functions’ of the University as carried out by the faculties/directorates, which are:

- Faculty of Arts and Humanities
- Faculty of Social Sciences
- Faculty of Life Sciences
- Faculty of Science
- Henley Business School
- Academic Services
- External Affairs
- Finance and Corporate Services
- Governance
- Facilities Management
- Student Services.

The impact assessment will be lead by the policy owner and is likely to involve:

- Consideration of available data and research
- Engagement with stakeholders to help determine the effect the policy has (or will have) on stakeholders by gender
- Consideration of measures which might mitigate any adverse impact and alternative policies which might better achieve the promote gender equality.

\(^5\) ‘Functions’ are the full range of a public authorities duties and powers.
Where a negative impact or an opportunity for improvement is identified the University will give due regard to the need to respond appropriately and institute changes. Results of initial impact assessments have helped guide our equality related activity and future impact assessment activity will continue with the involvement of stakeholders and with reference to internal and external data. We aim to continually review and improve the effectiveness of our impact assessment programme.

### 3.9 Preventing harassment

The University has had a formal policy on the prevention of harassment for a number of years, with specific reference to harassment on grounds of gender. The University offers support and advice for students and staff who believe that they are being harassed on grounds of gender up to and including advice on how to make a formal complaint. Support structures (both formal and informal) include:

- Students can seek advice from a Harassment Adviser, the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Officer, their Personal Tutor or Head of School, the Counselling Service or the Students’ Union, etc.

- Members of staff can seek advice from a trained Harassment Adviser, a Human Resources Partner, the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Officer, their Head of School or Directorate (or equivalent line manager), a Trade Union representative or a range of occupational health services, etc.

Incidents of alleged harassment are, and will continue to be, regarded as extremely serious. Behaviour which amounts to harassment may be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including staff dismissal or student expulsion. Procedures for dealing with harassment are given in the University’s Policy Statement on Harassment and Notes of Guidance. These documents are included and highlighted in key University publications and are readily available on the University website. To help prevent harassment we have also developed a Code of Good Practice (Valuing Ourselves and Others).

The number of staff and students who have made informal complaints of alleged harassment to a Harassment adviser will be monitored annually. The findings will be published in the Gender Equality Annual Report.

### 3.10 Compliance

The EHRC has both promotional and enforcement powers over public bodies (including universities) to ensure the Gender Equality Duty is satisfied. Our aim is to follow EHRC guidance and work with the EHRC in a constructive way to ensure the success of our Scheme and gender related activity.

### 4 2010-2013 Action Plan

Following consultation with staff and students and other interested stakeholders, the University has identified the actions noted below. To support this Scheme, additional action items may be added over the next three years to ensure our activity covers all University functions and priorities in regard to gender equality.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>University function</th>
<th>Lead person</th>
<th>Objective/Proposed action</th>
<th>Annual Progress/result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Finance and Corporate Services</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td><strong>Objective:</strong> Explore the results of the equal value audit to support the promotion of gender equality. <strong>Proposed Action:</strong> Identify and address any gender pay gaps.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Finance and Corporate Services</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td><strong>Objective:</strong> Take the opportunity to link our Gender Equality Scheme and related aims to the Employee Health and Well-being Policy (e.g., providing support upon return from maternity leave). <strong>Proposed Action:</strong> Provide guidance materials at the time of contract signing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Staffing Committee Athena Swan Working Group/ Departments and Schools going forward for Athena awards/Equal Opportunities and Diversity Officer</td>
<td><strong>Objective:</strong> Continue Athena SWAN activity and use data collected for Athena SWAN purposes to guide wider gender equality aims/projects. <strong>Proposed Action:</strong> Use Athena data as appropriate and report back to EOAG for reporting in the Gender Equality Annual Report(s).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Student Services Directorate</td>
<td>Director of Student Services</td>
<td><strong>Objective:</strong> Consider student results data by gender. <strong>Proposed Action:</strong> Review and analyse Schools’ results data by gender.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Student Services Directorate</td>
<td>Counselling and Psychological Services</td>
<td><strong>Objective:</strong> Assess whether gender impacts use of the service. <strong>Proposed Action:</strong> Monitor use of service by gender and review how service is publicised in Schools.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>