



## All researchers matter! Equality and Diversity

Vitae has recently launched its “Every Researcher Counts” campaign to raise awareness of the equality and diversity (E&D) issues among researcher communities.

While there is a clear moral case for improving E&D backed by legislation, there is a strong business case as well, where progress in E&D translates to an institution being able to attract the best talents from the UK and overseas. The Equality Challenge Unit ([www.ecu.ac.uk](http://www.ecu.ac.uk)) conducted research into the rationale behind E&D in UK universities, and the overwhelming attitude of vice-chancellors was that valuing diversity is critical in achieving excellence. One vice-chancellor commented: “Sociodiversity is valuable to the intellectual environment in the same way as biodiversity is valuable to the natural environment.”

**The importance of legislation and regulation becomes clear** when you look at research into unconscious bias - when our preconceptions, based on our background, cultural environment and personal experiences, affect our decision making unconsciously. The Equality Challenge Unit conducted research in 2012 (<http://bit.ly/1Nz8Gow>) where staff were asked to review identical applications where only the sex of the applicant was changed. The male applications were rated as being better qualified, the staff reviewing them wanted to hire them more often, they were more likely to be judged as deserving a higher starting salary, and staff reported being more willing to invest in their development. For *identical* applications. Clearly an unconscious bias that ‘women are warm and men are competent’ was at play here: it was stereotyped preconception (learned over a lifetime) that affected their

decisions. Systems are therefore required to reduce the effects of unconscious bias for the nine protected characteristics: sex, age, disability, race, religion and belief, gender identity, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity.

**Researchers may feel disadvantaged and discriminated against for a variety of reasons:** younger researchers may feel they are perceived as inexperienced and older researchers may feel they are not given fair opportunities to access new roles and promotions. Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender staff may feel that they cannot be themselves due to insensitive behaviours and attitudes towards them. Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) staff may feel underrepresented and unable to reach higher pay scale positions. The statistics unfortunately prove some of these perceptions to be correct: an ECU statistical report from 2013 found that, out of white male academics, 15.9% were professors, but out of BME female academics, only 2.8% were professors. The pay gap between UK national white and BME academics was 2.1%, and for non-UK BME academics the pay gap was 15.8%.

**University departments now have a set of tools that encourages best practice** in equality and diversity that includes the Athena SWAN and BME charter marks, where implementing policies and evidencing their impact upon improving E&D can lead to chartered status. Here at The University of Manchester these activities are supported by the

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### Note from the Editor

Working in an academic setting ensures working with people with different backgrounds and experiences which creates an environment that improves learning and enriches research and employment. This, however, is predicated on the notion that all groups are treated equally with their specific needs respected, and that diversity is encouraged. This can provide unique challenges and opportunities for universities.

In this issue of *Incite* we explore topics relating to Equality and Diversity in academic settings. We do so with a focus on examining what the University does to advance Equality and Diversity and by highlighting areas where support and assistance can be found. We hope that this issue will add to an important conversation about diversity in academia and that you find it an inspiring and informative read!

Silke Conen, FMHS

Equality and Diversity team: *Patrick Johnson*, Head of Equality and Diversity; *Paul Marks-Jones*, Equality and Diversity Advisor (staff focus), harassment advisor network, Advisor to EPS and FLS; *Catherine Prescott*, Equality and Diversity Advisor (student focus), mediation service, Advisor to MHS and Directorate of Student Experience; *Helen Ryder*, Charter Marks Coordinator; *Veronique Rizzuto*, Administrator and support; and *Heather Walker*, Data Analyst.

[bit.ly/1KuXHOo](http://bit.ly/1KuXHOo)

## A nationwide perspective

By Katie Wheat, Project Manager at Vitae

Vitae's *Every Researcher Counts* project and resources are a unique approach to tackling issues around equality and diversity for all researchers and research staff. The project operates across all academic disciplines, and across nine protected characteristics. *Every Researcher Counts* incorporates a suite of resources which encourages individuals to have ongoing open conversations with their PIs, managers, and colleagues regarding their diversity needs. It takes the stance that equality and diversity (E&D) needs change throughout careers and therefore should be constantly reviewed; for example, a parent might become ill and time might be required to support them. Through ongoing monitoring of needs, alongside discussions around work-life balance and general well-being, diversity becomes part of good team management and ensures that people are in an environment in which they can flourish.

### Why is it necessary?

The recent ECU 2014 statistics demonstrate that some sections of society are clearly under-represented in academia.

- Only 21% of UK professors are female
- The proportion of female academics earning over £50k is less than half that for males
- Only 0.4% UK Professors are black
- Black and minority ethnic academics are less likely to earn over £50k

The reasons to challenge this extend far beyond the simple 'because it's the right thing to do'. Evidence demonstrates that by challenging this, universities improve their performance and are more able to attract staff and students from overseas. Furthermore, there is the growing recognition that diversity brings different life experiences and expertise.

### Where and how should it be implemented?

*Every Researcher Counts* is a UK wide programme which supports work and initiatives already happening in institutions. It is designed to complement and support institutions in achieving other awards such as Athena Swan and principle 6 of the Concordat to Support the Professional Development of Researchers. The resources available are fully flexible and designed to be embedded into institution schemes.

### What are the key characteristics that are covered by Vitae to promote E&D from a nationwide perspective?

Nine protected characteristics were identified in the UK Equality Act 2010, which states that people are not allowed to discriminate against individuals because they have any of the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

### What is the nationwide perspective regarding *Every Researcher Counts*?

The Equality Act 2010 makes it clear that to discriminate against a person on the basis of any of the nine protected characteristics is illegal. Working alongside this, the Equality Challenge Unit's Athena Swan award has been extremely successful in tackling gender issues in STEM areas (science, technology, engineering, maths, and medicine). This will soon be rolled out to all disciplines, and new gender equality charter marks and race charter marks are in the pipeline. Addressing these issues forms part of the REF, and the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers.



### What actions can be taken to improve E&D?

The final output of this phase of the project was to produce Actions for All: Ten Actions to improve equality and diversity in your institution. This was designed to be a list of practical actions that institutions wishing to make a difference to equality and diversity could begin immediately. They include reviewing the makeup of senior management teams from an equality and diversity perspective and introducing unconscious bias training for all staff. See [www.vitae.ac.uk/news/equality-and-diversity-actions-for-all](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/news/equality-and-diversity-actions-for-all)

*"In order to ensure that every researcher achieves their potential, situations in which individuals are disadvantaged by the structure in which they work must be addressed. Tackling equality and diversity through embedded programmes, systemic change and open conversations from senior management teams down is the only way to achieve this."*

Alison Mitchell, Deputy Director Vitae

[www.vitae.ac.uk/erc](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/erc)

## An E&D perspective

**Patrick Johnson is Head of Equality and Diversity at the University of Manchester, and explains here how the University implements the *Every Researcher Counts* programme.**

I have been actively engaged in the *Every Researcher Counts* (ERC) Programme and joined the Vitae Equality and Diversity Advisory Group in 2013 but I have been involved in the project since 2011. I am also an Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) Board Member and am directly involved in helping to shape policy and ensure information is disseminated.

I have been working with the research officers, academics, researchers, and training providers within the University of Manchester to help develop an appropriate framework to support the Research Councils UK's statement of expectations for equality and diversity. Feeding this consultation back to Vitae has helped to shape and develop the ERC resources. I am particularly excited about the 2015 'Actions for all' which I believe will embed equality and diversity (E&D) in debate, recognise diverse pathways and help

us engage with staff, students and society.

In December 2014, the University hosted a Train the Trainer event to provide an opportunity for participants to learn more about the ERC materials as well as understanding how the materials can be used and how to create an operational plan for implementation. *Every Researcher Counts* allows us to be aware, challenge our thinking and take action. As we make progress in embedding E&D in the research environment we need to look beyond fix the *individual* (i.e. complete training) and fix the *knowledge* (i.e. raise awareness) but more broadly towards mainstreaming with strong commitment, accountability, adequate resources and appropriate procedures.

Equality and Diversity was embedded throughout REF 2014 and I believe we are seeing a real shift in the culture of institutions and individual Schools where the rationale and driver for E&D is no longer about compliance or due to external pressures. E&D is now often at the heart of planned actions and anticipated

impact. We note that there is evidence of applying REF-like processes more broadly, for example taking account of personal circumstances for promotions and/or awards in a way that has ensured that individuals were returned for the REF based on performance.



Supportive initiatives, for example Athena SWAN, have helped to tackle some of the issues which affect researchers. Mentors have helped to expand network opportunities, renewed self-confidence and recognition, improved relationships, enhanced interpersonal skills/people management and personal satisfaction, and increased confidence. We are committed to developing good practice to advance equality for researchers and their careers and our engagement with ERC is one of the ways we are able to do this.

Securing funding is one of the key requirements to carry out research. Research funding bodies, for example, the Biotechnology and Biological Science Research Council (BBSRC), Wellcome Trust and the Medical Research Council (MRC), are committed to supporting talented people based on their merit irrespective of their background, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, race or age.

Each funding agency has its own policies to achieve diversity and inclusion. Among these policies are the actions BBSRC has set to increase the percentage of grants awarded to females from a current 22% to 35% by 2017. Their plan also includes a 2.5% increase in awards to investigators with declared disabilities<sup>1</sup>. Wellcome Trust is a member of Employer Network for Equality and Inclusion (ENEI) and in the interest of creating an open culture in the work place the Trust advertises their vacancies on the website portal "Diversity Jobs"<sup>2</sup>. In general the funding agencies aim to prevent gender, disability and ethnic background discrimination.

But what about discrimination based on the age of the applicants? While most of the eligibility criteria for grant applications do not specify the age of the applicants, the perception of "ageism" from the funding bodies has been present in the research community<sup>3</sup>. Statistics show the average age of grant recipients is 41, and the success rate of applicants is fairly similar in all age groups<sup>4,5</sup>. So where is the perception of ageism coming

from? A closer look at the eligibility criteria for first time fellowship applicants reveals period restrictions on the research experience of the applicant. For some grants no more than two years postdoctoral experience is acceptable, while for others no more than seven years from obtaining a PhD degree, and so on. Despite the fact that this eligibility criterion is flexible<sup>6</sup>, by considering time away from research due to maternity, paternity, adoption leave, ill health or work in industry, part of the research community perceives it as ageism<sup>3</sup>. The period restriction has been perceived as discriminatory as it rules out applicants with unsuccessful first postdoctoral positions or multidisciplinary research backgrounds, who are talented and have excellent research ideas.

Recent reviews<sup>7,8</sup> in the funding bodies have drawn attention to this issue and changes have been made to support researchers at any stage of their career, who wish to apply for their first fellowship. In the past months BBSRC and MRC have announced the removal of the eligibility period restrictions from their fellowship applications<sup>9,10,11</sup>. While priority will be given to applicants at an early stage of their career, this new flexibility is in line with the commitment of the funding agencies to support people based solely on their talent. Furthermore, it opens doors for more researchers to establish their independent careers and provides the basis for the development of excellent research ideas irrespective of the years of experience of the applicant.

- <sup>1</sup> <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/about/policies/employment/equality-diversity>
- <sup>2</sup> <http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/About-us/Jobs/Diversity-and-inclusion>
- <sup>3</sup> <https://www.vitae.ac.uk/doing-research/research-staff/the-best-of-the-research-staff-blog/age-discrimination-in-funding-bodies>
- <sup>4</sup> <http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/Managing-a-grant/Grants-awarded/General-funding-stats/index.htm>
- <sup>5</sup> <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/funding/diversity>
- <sup>6</sup> [http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/stellent/groups/corporatesite/@msh\\_peda/documents/web\\_document/wtp056700.pdf](http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/stellent/groups/corporatesite/@msh_peda/documents/web_document/wtp056700.pdf)
- <sup>7</sup> <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/about/policies/reviews/consultations/1503-review-investing-in-fellowships>
- <sup>8</sup> <http://www.mrc.ac.uk/news-events/publications/mrc-review-of-next-destinations>
- <sup>9</sup> <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/news/policy/2015/150326-n-changes-bbsrc-fellowships-following-review>
- <sup>10</sup> <http://www.mrc.ac.uk/news-events/news/signposting-medical-research-career-options>
- <sup>11</sup> <http://www.insight.mrc.ac.uk/2015/03/18/science-doesnt-only-need-sprinters>



## What barriers prevent women reaching the 'top' in science?

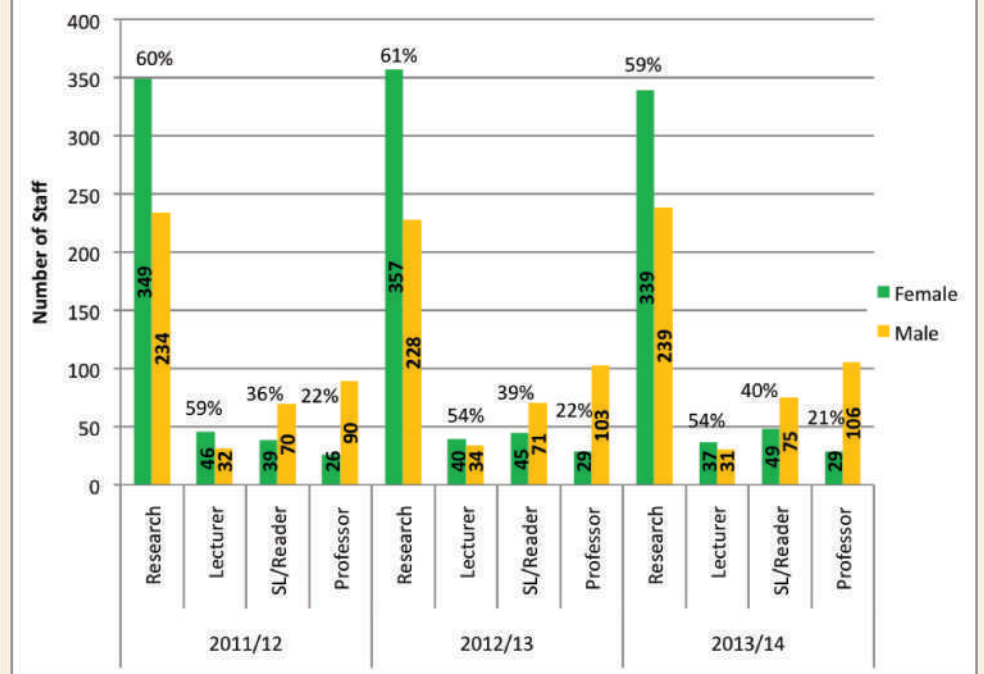
By Dr Laura Parkes, Senior Lecturer and Athena Swan Champion for the Institute of Population Health

As a female physicist I am very familiar with being outnumbered by men, right back to my A-level physics lessons at school. However, I never felt that being a woman held me back. In fact, I felt it sometimes gave me an advantage as universities were keen to improve their gender balance. So, I was somewhat bemused to be asked to take on the role of 'Athena Swan Champion' for the Institute of Population Health. I did not feel there was a problem... until I started to look at the facts.

The figure shows the gender balance of staff in the School of Medicine (Comprising the 6 Medical Research Institutes and Manchester Medical School). This dramatic fall in the proportion of women from lecturer (54% female) up to professor (21% female) is mirrored across the University. What causes women to leave science or get 'stuck' at more junior levels? How can we improve this? These are questions that the Athena Swan scheme is trying to address.

Promotion is a key issue as current policy requires staff to put *themselves* forward, something which men on the whole seem better at than women. We have introduced new approaches such as including promotion as an item for discussion at the annual Performance Enhancement Scheme meetings and encouraging Centre Leads to consider promotion of all staff in their centre on an annual basis. We have also appointed Promotions Advisors in each Institute who offer guidance, support and advice to those wishing to apply for promotion. At more junior levels, we have found that PhD students and postdoctoral researchers do not feel that they receive adequate advice on career progression. One reason for this could be the poor uptake of annual Performance & Development Reviews (P&DR), as low as 6% in some

Gender balance of staff in the School of Medicine



Institutes. We are putting in practices to ensure that all researchers are offered an annual P&DR.

Women tend to take on a greater share of caring responsibilities (for children and elderly parents) and clearly this could also contribute to a slower rate of career progression. In order to tackle this I believe there needs to be more of a cultural change. I feel that there is a general perception in the University that to be 'serious' about science, you should

devote all your time to it. My experience of working in a highly productive research institute in the Netherlands, where many people worked part-time, shows that this does not need to be the case. These changes in culture will benefit both men and women.

For more information and resources, please see: [www.mhs.manchester.ac.uk/about-us/athena/medicine](http://www.mhs.manchester.ac.uk/about-us/athena/medicine)

## 'We Get It' – the zero tolerance to bullying, harassment, and discrimination campaign

'We Get It' is a joint campaign, organised by the University and the Students' Union, in support of our zero tolerance approach to any form of bullying, harassment, and discrimination. It began in February 2014 when a campaign was launched against sexual harassment. Thousands of staff and students signed a pledge to stand up against sexual harassment wherever they saw it. In November the campaign continued and focused on all forms of bullying, harassment and discrimination.

Catherine Prescott is Equality and Diversity (E&D) Advisor at the University and is also one of the members of the anti-bullying campaign group. We spoke with her to find out more about this campaign.



### Q: Why do we need an anti-bullying campaign?

**A:** There were several drivers for the campaign; our team carried out a policy review in early 2013 and as part of that we consulted with stakeholders from across the University. This consultation highlighted that good policies alone were not proactive enough to create a culture of respect and trust that empowers people to be heard.

At the same time the University of Manchester Students' Union was involved in a variety of student led activities to challenge sexual harassment on campus. In late 2013 the results of the staff survey were published and whilst only a small percentage of people felt they had been bullied or harassed, 61% of those had not reported it. Both the University and the Students' Union were keen to take action on these issues and a campaign group was established.



### Q: What are bullying, harassment, and discrimination?

**A:** People can experience behaviours in different ways; thoughtless comments or jokes to one person may be deeply offensive to another and could have a sustained negative impact on their working life. As part of this campaign we have tried to establish some understanding on where people draw the line on bullying, what constitutes harassment and in what way people experience discrimination. We found that we all think differently about these issues, and these differences can make it difficult to navigate these kinds of issues. What we therefore ask is that you consider and respect people's views.

### Q: How does the 'We Get It' campaign help UoM students and staff to deal with bullying?

**A:** As part of the campaign we asked the University community to Think, Talk, Report and Support. To support this message and reinforce our policies we have recruited twelve more harassment advisors, with some being specially trained to deal with sexual harassment. We have also implemented a new way to report bullying, harassment and discrimination online. You can report something anonymously or you can request support from one of our trained harassment advisors.

### Q: What has the campaign achieved so far?

**A:** The campaign video has been viewed over 13,000 times and 5,800 have signed the zero tolerance to sexual harassment pledge. Hundreds of staff and students have attended talk events and told us where they draw the line on bullying and harassment. Staff awareness of their responsibilities under the University's Dignity at Work and Study Policy has increased from 68% to 80%. Students are now accessing the harassment advisory service and usage from staff has increased by over 500%. The types of issues disclosed range from general conflict with colleagues and peers to reports of sexual harassment and gender discrimination. By monitoring the types of cases reported and using the feedback from our events we are now able to identify the key areas of concern and act on them.

### Q: What would be your advice for staff to protect themselves from bullying and how can we effectively contribute to anti-bullying in our everyday life?

**A:** We are all responsible for ending bullying, harassment and discrimination in our community. Whether you are a member of staff, a student, or a visitor to the University, we are asking you to Think, Talk, and Report and Get Support:

**Think** One person's "harmless banter" could be deeply offensive and have a negative impact on the work and lives of others. No one should have to feel uncomfortable for the sake of a joke.

Consider and respect other people's views and feelings so that we can all work, study, and live in an inclusive and supportive environment.

**Talk** Talk with your colleagues and friends about where you draw the line.

If you think you or someone you know is being treated badly, talk to someone about it and if you feel safe to do so, challenge it. Sometimes just explaining to someone how it makes you feel and asking them to stop is enough.

**Report and Support** Report bullying, harassment, or discrimination. If you like, your report can be passed to a trained advisor, who can get you the right advice and support. You can also report something anonymously.

Web links to the anti-bullying campaign 'We Get It':

<http://www.socialresponsibility.manchester.ac.uk/strategic-priorities/responsible-processes/we-get-it>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vElrU30c0FA>

<http://manchesterstudentsunion.com/wegetit>

Did you know that you can now share parental leave between parents? Or that you can take unpaid parental leave or an unpaid career break to care for your children or other relatives? Or get Special Leave to deal with a domestic crisis?

The University offers a wide range of support to parents and carers to promote equality for staff members with family responsibilities. Note that eligibility for paid leave often varies with length of service at the University; for full details read the policies (links can be found below).

## Support

**Childcare:** Two on-site nurseries for children from 6 months to 5 years with money-saving payment schemes.

**Peer support groups:** There is a peer support group for parents returning from maternity/paternity or adoption leave, and another peer support group for staff with caring responsibilities.

## Flexible working

Some staff members with caring responsibilities have a legal right to request flexible working hours and the University recognises that other staff may also wish to make such requests. All requests are given serious consideration. See the University's flexible working policy for more details.

## Family or carer-friendly leave

Full information regarding eligibility and how to apply for leave can be found on the StaffNet web portal.

**Ante-natal appointments:** Includes paid leave for expectant mothers to attend ante-natal appointments, and unpaid leave for fathers/partners to attend two appointments. Similar opportunities are available for adopting parents to attend adoption appointments. Proof of appointments is needed. Contact HR for more information.

**Maternity leave:** All expectant mothers are entitled to take 52 weeks maternity leave. If the mother has 26 weeks continuous service she may also be entitled to salary during part of her leave.

The maximum entitlement available if you are eligible and are returning to work after maternity leave is 26 weeks with full pay followed by 13 weeks on statutory maternity pay and 13 weeks unpaid leave.

**Adoption leave:** The maximum amount of leave and pay available to staff who are adopting a child is the same as for maternity leave.

**Shared Parental Leave:** Mothers and adopters may now choose to share their leave and pay entitlement with their partners. This gives parents more flexibility in how they care for their child.

**Paternity leave:** As a father or same sex partner with 26 weeks continuous service, you can take 2 weeks leave on full pay after the birth or adoption of your child.

**Special leave:** Leave for dealing with domestic crises.

**Parental leave:** This is unpaid leave. If you have 12 months continuous service at the University you may take up to 4 weeks additional unpaid leave in a year to take care of your children. A total of 18 weeks leave is available to be taken during the first 18 years of your child's life.

**Career break:** You can apply to take a career break to care for your family, for example, your children, your parents or a family member who is ill. This break will be unpaid and may last up to 2 years. To apply you must have worked at the University continuously for at least 2 years.

## Links

Article based on information from StaffNet:  
[www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/employment/leave-work-arrangements/family-friendly](http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/employment/leave-work-arrangements/family-friendly)

Policies:  
[www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/employment/policies-procedures](http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/employment/policies-procedures)

Childcare information:  
[www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/employment/benefits-rewards/family-friendly/childcare](http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/employment/benefits-rewards/family-friendly/childcare)

Peer support groups information and contacts:  
[www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/equality-and-diversity/staff-network-groups](http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/equality-and-diversity/staff-network-groups)

## Award-winning achievements in Equality and Diversity at The University of Manchester

Shortlisted for the Diverse Company Award for Education in the Excellence in Diversity Awards 2015

Network Group of the Year in the North West Stonewall 2015 Workplace Equality Index

Highly Commended 'Make a Difference' Award for Social Responsibility 2015 in recognition of the 'We Get It' Campaign Team (Zero Tolerance to Bullying and Harassment)

Business in the Community Award Winner 2014 for our inclusive approach to our BME population

Inclusive Communications Award Winner at the 2014 ENEI Awards (Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion) for our Diversity Calendar

Manchester Pride Awards – Best Public Service Parade Entry (2012) and Best Themed Entry (2013)

Bronze Athena SWAN University Holder since 2008 for our ongoing support for our female academic and research staff

### Did you know...

Non-disclosure rates are high for gender identity, religion and belief, and sexual orientation, so assessment is difficult in these areas.

## Training courses

Taking some time out to attend a training course (even just a few hours) is an investment in your career development, and is a great way of meeting other researchers in the same boat as you. Keep an eye on your faculty researcher training and development office for up-to-date course lists and dates – contact details are on the back page. Access the training calendar at <https://app.manchester.ac.uk/training/calendar.aspx>

### Upcoming courses:

**Research Staff: Perspectives, Opportunities and Support at The University of Manchester** 20 October 2015

**Interview Skills** 20 January 2016

**CV Clinic** 11 February 2016

**Promotions Workshop for Early Career Research Staff** 8 June 2016

## Marie-Claude Asselin, FMHS



Working in academia whilst also being a mother can be challenging, even more so when running projects that can't be paused during maternity leave. Here we talk to Marie-Claude, who is a Senior Lecturer, about her experiences and views of working in academia as a mother.

Marie-Claude started working at the Wolfson Molecular Imaging Centre in 2006 as a Senior Methodologist in positron emission tomography (PET), and became a Senior Lecturer in Quantitative Imaging in 2008. In that year she also became the Manchester PI for a large, multi-centre, FP7-funded research project called EURIPIDES, which investigated the role of efflux transporters in drug-resistance. The aim was to develop imaging biomarkers of drug resistance using epilepsy and Alzheimer's disease as examples for validation. This project ran for 4 years and whilst working on this project Marie-Claude gave birth to her son, Laurent, one year after the start of the project.

“There are still plenty of opportunities to improve gender equality. More equality could be created by offering the same opportunity for both parents, such as equal length maternity and paternity leave.”

**During the time you had Laurent, how did that go together with working on a large grant?**

The main problem is that the University does not provide maternity cover for academic staff. In a way this is understandable; it is difficult to find someone with the same expertise, on a senior level, who is able to cover maternity leave for 9 months in my case. But even without maternity cover, you can't put a large multi-centre project that funds a PhD student and a clinical fellow on hold for such a long time either. I managed to carry on running the project because colleagues took over some of the workload, and because I decided to keep working on it from home whilst on maternity leave.

**Would there be a way the University could provide better assistance with maternity leave?**

Despite staying in contact with the project and using the allowed 10 keep-in-touch days, I found the return to full-time work extremely challenging and it took me 6 months to feel on top of things again. A measure that could help would be to offer the opportunity to phase-in leave and the return to work, as done in other European countries. For example, one could start working again after 4 or 6 months, but only for 2 days per week and gradually increasing the time at work to full time. In that way, you can ease into work and keep better track of work. It would also help if maternity and paternity leave were more flexible and even interchangeable after a given period to allow the partner to take these 2 days as paternity leave.

**What are the advantages and disadvantages of having young children when working on a research career?**

An advantage is that you improve your time management, because you have to plan more in advance and leave room for events out of your control. Another advantage is that you can use your parenting skills to provide better pastoral care to students; as a parent you become more sensitive to all needs, not only the academic ones, of your students.

A disadvantage is that I have less ability to attend meetings and conferences, but that is also partially my own choice. For instance, I have decided not to go to conferences held outside Europe because it would take too long to travel back in case of an emergency. It is also rarely possible to attend local meetings after work hours, because that would impede my family time. This gives me fewer possibilities to network, which probably makes me less promotable for a professorship.

**In your view, what would improve gender equality regarding parenthood in academia?**

There are still plenty of opportunities to improve gender equality. More equality could be created by offering the same opportunity for both parents, such as equal length maternity and paternity leave. It should become just as easy for men to take care of their children as for women. Also, with equal parental leave, the disruption of staff becoming parents would be more similar between men and women, making this reality less of a consideration in the decision of hiring or promoting a man or woman.

**Do you have any advice for female researchers thinking of becoming parents?**

Don't delay having children for an academic career; it becomes more difficult to have children with age and even though it might never feel like the right time to have a child, it is worth it and you should embrace it!

## Rainer Hinz, FMHS



Rainer is Marie-Claude's husband and also a Senior Lecturer at the University. Here we talk to Rainer about his views of working in academia as a father.

Rainer has worked at the Wolfson Molecular Imaging Centre, Institute of Population Health, since 2006 as a Senior Lecturer in Functional Imaging. In February 2009 his son Laurent was born.

### How do you find working at the University as a father? Is it just as easy for you as for a mother to leave work earlier when your child is ill?

Because we moved to the UK for our work, we don't have any grandparents or other family members nearby who could help with Laurent. So as a family we are quite autonomous. That is why Marie-Claude and I share our family tasks (such as bringing to and picking up from school) during the day. We both work full-time, but because we have flexible working arrangements and our office, home, nursery and GP are all in the same area, we manage fine. At work it makes no difference whether I or Marie-Claude would pick up Laurent; our line-managers have similar family situations. They are very supportive and wouldn't treat fathers or mothers differently.

### Do you think the University could do anything differently to help researchers to plan a family?

The first step for planning a family would be that it is possible for partners to live in the same country or ideally even the same city! In academia it is usual that one moves to different countries for work, but it is not always possible for the partner (who is often also highly qualified) to find work at the level of their qualification there as well. This can mean that a partnership becomes a long-distance relationship, which has an impact on starting a family. It also affects the University, because chances will be greater that the researcher will look to move after a short period to be with their partner. In some continental European countries, universities offer support to dual-career couples by facilitating the job search for partners of new members of staff. I think it would be worthwhile for the University to consider to also start offering support to dual-career couples.

### What are the advantages and disadvantages of having young children when also working on a research career?

With a child you more often have to be able to make compromises between your family life and professional life which can mean that you progress slower in your career. Personally, I think it's healthy to have my family as a priority and not work, thus I don't feel disadvantaged by having a family.

### In your view, what would improve gender equality regarding parenthood in academia?

As a woman you go on maternity leave, and during that time you can't publish, get new grants in or deliver teaching. This means that you don't score on these key performance indicators set by the University. Being out of the professional network for a period of time continues to be a disadvantage even after official return to work as you lag behind with new PhD students or grants compared to your colleagues without families. Because the main part of family responsibilities initially lies with women (giving birth, breastfeeding), they are more affected than the fathers. The only way to change this is by applying different performance measures.

### Do you have any advice for researchers thinking of becoming parents?

From a job point of view, there is never a good time to have a child. Therefore be a bit selfish and put yourself and your family first! Neither the University nor the world will collapse because of it!

“ In some continental European countries, universities offer support to dual-career couples by facilitating the job search for partners of new members of staff. I think it would be worthwhile for the University to consider to also start offering support to dual-career couples. ”

## Hamied Haroon, FMHS



“My personal experiences have made me passionate about disability equality and I have realised that people with hidden impairments face more significant challenges than people with visible disabilities, like me.”

I am a Research Associate in the Centre for Imaging Sciences, within the Institute of Population Health in the Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences. My research focuses on using novel and advanced biomedical magnetic resonance (MR) imaging and analyses techniques to study how the human body works in health and the changes that occur with ageing, disease and treatment. I currently work with Professor Geoff Parker and Dr Laura Parkes on an EPSRC-funded project developing brain imaging techniques to detect the early signs of dementia.

I love being a scientist in this field, and having the opportunity to work with some amazing people and to travel the world to present our cutting-edge work and findings! I believe that public engagement and fulfilling our social responsibilities are vital if we, as scientists, wish society to continue to support and value the science we do.

I have a keen interest in equality and diversity (E&D). I am physically disabled and have been all my life. My personal experiences have made me passionate about disability equality and I have realised that people with hidden impairments face more significant challenges than people with visible disabilities, like me.

### What are your personal experiences of working at The University of Manchester with a disability?

I was an undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral student at this University before becoming a member of staff. The departments I studied in were brilliant at making the adjustments I needed. As a student, I knew I could always go to the University's Disability Support Office (DSO)<sup>1</sup> for advice, support, equipment and funding if and when I needed it.

However, when I became a member of staff in 2004 I found that I could no longer approach the DSO because it didn't cater for disabled staff at that time. I was really lucky that I was working in the same department that I did my PhD in so all the physical adjustments I needed were already in place. But I became really stuck when I needed to find funding to pay for my assistant to travel with me to my first international scientific conference as a member of staff (in Hawai'i). I talked to Greg Pass in HR and he pointed me in the direction that eventually led me to find out about the Government's Access to Work scheme<sup>2</sup>. Without this dedicated source of funding it would have been impossible for me to attend any conferences or meetings outside of Manchester and I would have been isolated from interacting with colleagues and collaborators, presenting my work and learning from others – all crucial components of being an active research scientist.

### What does the Disabled Staff Network group do? How was it established?

The Disabled Staff Network started in 2006/2007 when the University's E&D Team<sup>3</sup> brought together staff who had disclosed a disability to consult us on the University's Disability Equality Statement (DES) – a legal obligation at that time. Quite quickly the E&D Team wanted to give disabled staff autonomy over our own Network and that was when I was elected Chair of the Disabled Staff Network.

Our Network's<sup>4</sup> aims:

- To promote disability equality through active involvement and consultation on the University's plans, strategies, policies and guidance
- To provide the opportunity to share experiences about working at the University
- To work with the E&D Team to develop effective solutions to any problems encountered
- To provide support, advice and guidance, or signposting, where appropriate
- To raise awareness around disability equality
- To work closely with other projects, initiatives, departments and organisations which raise awareness around disability equality

One of our first accomplishments was to gain agreement from our University to be one of the first in the country to provide dedicated advice and support for disabled staff. In 2008, I sat on the panel that appointed the first dedicated Disability Adviser for Staff, based in the DSO.

In 2012, Professor Clive Agnew – the University's Vice President for Teaching, Learning and Students – was named "Champion" for the Disabled Staff Network in the University's Senior Leadership Team. In 2013, I became Co-Chair of the Network together with Melanie Sharpe, who is a Training Officer in IT Services.

The Network has led a number of initiatives for disabled staff. One of the most recent and significant was the first National Conference of the UK's disabled workforce, entitled "What Are We Hiding?"<sup>5</sup>, held on 6th June 2014 in our University's Alan Turing Building. This targeted disabled staff at Higher Education Institutions across the country and had a double theme of "hidden" disabilities (e.g. mental health conditions, HIV, etc.) and the "hidden" contribution of disabled employees to our nation's economy. Melanie was Chair of our Network's Conference Steering Group and I worked closely with Melanie to organise this event. Prof Agnew opened the Conference and welcomed everyone on the University's behalf. I co-led a session on "Disabled Staff Networks" and launched the National Association of Disabled Staff Networks (NADSN<sup>6</sup>) at the Conference.



### Have you noticed changes regarding E&D with respect to disabilities over your working years?

I have noticed positive developments in E&D since 2006. In that year, Professor Aneez Esmail was appointed as the University's first Associate Vice President for E&D, which ensured a senior level commitment to E&D. Prof Esmail set up and chaired the University's biannual Equality & Diversity Forum where staff and student representatives could raise E&D issues directly with senior management, including the University's President & Vice Chancellor. In 2007, Patrick Johnson became Head of E&D. Patrick supported the development of the staff networks and was keen that they became independent and self-determining, facilitated by the E&D Team. Currently, there are 13 staff networks covering a wide range of equality areas<sup>7</sup>, and all have a place on the E&D Forum giving them all a real "voice"!

Prof Esmail, Patrick and the E&D Team have really supported the Disabled Staff Network to succeed on various important projects. We convinced the University to sign an Organisational Pledge with the Time To Change Campaign<sup>8</sup> in June 2013, and Patrick led on putting together the action plan for this. Our Network also persuaded the University to commission a bespoke development and coaching programme for its disabled staff called "Achieving Your Potential", provided by Result CIC<sup>9</sup> in 2014 and 2015, which Patrick and Paul Dixon – Head of the University's STDU – worked on together to make happen.

In the University's "Manchester 2020" strategy, Social Responsibility – which includes E&D – was made Goal 3. Prof Esmail stepped down last year after 8 years as Associate Vice President for E&D and Professor James Thompson was appointed Associate Vice President for Social Responsibility.

The University held its first ever "Making A Difference" Awards for Social Responsibility in May 2015. Shockingly, Melanie and I won the "Outstanding Contribution to Equality & Diversity (Staff)" Award<sup>10</sup> in recognition for the overwhelming success of the National Conference for disabled staff that we organised and hosted in June 2014!

### What next steps do you think the University should take to improve E&D for people with disabilities?

The UK Government recently announced further cuts to the funding available for the Access to Work scheme. The University needs to consider how it will respond to these challenges and ensure that disabled colleagues are able to do their jobs to their full potential. We have so much more to do to realise disability equality – we mustn't step back!

#### Links

- <sup>1</sup> <http://www.dso.manchester.ac.uk/>
- <sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/overview>
- <sup>3</sup> <http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/equality-and-diversity/>
- <sup>4</sup> <http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/equality-and-diversity/staff-network-groups/disabled-staff-network-group/>
- <sup>5</sup> <https://www.meeting.co.uk/confercare/DSNConference2014/>
- <sup>6</sup> <http://nadsn-uk.org/>
- <sup>7</sup> <http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/equality-and-diversity/staff-network-groups/>
- <sup>8</sup> <http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/equality-and-diversity/timetochange-mentalhealth/>
- <sup>9</sup> <http://www.resultcic.com/latest-news/1>
- <sup>10</sup> <http://www.socialresponsibility.manchester.ac.uk/news/stories/name-379129-en.htm>

## Mediation and counselling services for staff

Also, the University mediation service is available when conflicts cannot be resolved in-house.  
[www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/equality-and-diversity/mediation](http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/equality-and-diversity/mediation)

Finally, the University counselling service is always available when things are going wrong and you're struggling to find solutions or are finding it difficult to cope.

[www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/personalsupport/counselling](http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/personalsupport/counselling)



## 'And what does your partner do?' Case studies of displaying a same-sex relationship in the workplace

Em Temple-Malt explored in her thesis *'After the Act: Narratives of Display and the Significance of Civil Partnership'* the effects of implementation of the Equality Act on displaying same-sex relationships in the workplace. The *Incite* editorial team invited her to summarise her findings.

Over the course of your career have you ever felt the need to pause and assess the potential impact that revealing aspects of your home-life, or disclosing the 'gender' of your partner to workmates will have on interactions at work?

In theory, when the Equality Act 2007 was implemented in UK workplaces it should have lessened the need for such 'risk' assessments. This is because employees have a legal responsibility to police themselves in interactions with others because 'openly' homophobic remarks could result in disciplinary action.

Findings from my doctoral project *After the Act: Narratives of Display and the Significance of Civil Partnership* (2010-2014) with 42 civil partners, indicate that the implementation of the Equality Act (2007, 2010) had made a 'difference' and had given participants, such as Gerald (51) a range of options to help him manage interactions with co-workers. Gerald likened the equality legislation to a 'cloak' that keeps him safe during interactions with work colleagues. The knowledge of this legislation meant he was able to challenge in a 'nice, friendly way' a colleague who was uninformed about how couples in same-sex relationships organise their daily lives.

The type of workplace they were employed in gave some the confidence to display their relationship. Academia, retail and the civil service were identified as professions that are characterised as tolerant of diversity by these interviewees. Kate (36) characterised

university environments as 'extremely open and liberal'. For others, it was the sorts of people they encounter in their workplace. Christopher (43) described retail as being populated by 'loads of gay people', meaning he did not need to conceal his same-sex relationship. While Monica (53) commented that the civil service is renowned for only recruiting 'professional people who are comfortable with diversity' enabling Monica to display her relationship.

Others explained that occupying certain professional positions was a factor that 'closed down' opportunities for displaying that they were in a same-sex relationship to work colleagues. Working as a university lecturer, primary or secondary school teacher, doctor or nurse, social worker, probation officer, therapist or business consultant meant they routinely encountered people they had never met before which encouraged them to be cautious about displaying their relationship to these others. For example, Luke (53) a self-employed consultant said: 'I quite often work with people I've never met before... I don't walk in and say, "I'm here to do some training; by the way I'm gay"'.

Maria (39) identified that her job brought her into contact with two groups of people 'regular' colleagues and clients or students. Her regular colleagues knew she was in a same-sex relationship but she avoided displaying her relationship to clients or students. Maria said: 'I know that if I present myself as a gay woman to particular Muslim men, I might ruin that relationship between tutor and student...my job is to have the relationship, and [if there is the slightest risk] that my personal life affects it, then I'd rather not'. Maria perceived that there is a greater demand for her to avoid displaying anything about her sexual identity and same-sex relationship to these students because the conflict between faith and sexual minorities would undermine her professionalism: a risk she is unwilling to take.

These few stories illustrate that the different environments people work in and the various people they encounter in the workplace alongside the Equality Act were identified as integral to opening up or closing down opportunities for displaying that people are in a same-sex relationship.

### Resources and further information

Government Equalities Office (June 2015) 'Equality Act 2010: Guidance':

<https://www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance>

Acas Homophobia in the workplace:

<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=3640>

Feldman (2013). 'What to do if you face homophobic discrimination at work':

<http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2013/12/06/comment-what-to-do-if-you-face-homophobic-discrimination-at-work>

Stonewall 'Employment and the workplace':

[http://www.stonewall.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/research\\_and\\_policy/2868.asp](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/what_we_do/research_and_policy/2868.asp)

### Did you know...

82.7% of staff are heterosexual, 5.8% are not heterosexual, and 11.5% prefer not to say

"Should I start a family during my early research career?" A very real and immediate concern for a lot of early-career researchers, yet this topic is so little discussed. Knowing the particulars of policies, such as maternity, paternity, and/or adoption leave and pay, can contribute to the decision-making when thinking about having children. However, whilst working on a relatively short fixed-term contract and competing to establish a career, it can be difficult to broach the subject of children with your line manager/peers or even know who to ask for this information. Additionally, researchers returning to work may face a confusing and challenging, sometimes isolating, time whilst they adjust to establish a new work-life balance. A special event took place on the 24th June to address these concerns and provide valuable information to early career Research Staff.

The Researcher Parent Trap was established to provide information on national and University policies and practices during pregnancy and/or leave and the support available for returning parents; the ironic title reflected the misperceived notion amongst many that starting a family is a step towards career failure.

The event featured talks by Karen Scoresby (HR Policy Manager) who outlined policies, procedures and support for expectant and existing parents; Helen Ryder (Athena SWAN Coordinator/E&D Advisor) discussed the Athena SWAN and how it benefits you and where you choose to work. Sarah Mohammad-Qureshi (EPS Researcher Development Officer) informed researchers of the University's 'Peer Support Group for Staff Returning from Maternity/Paternity and Adoption Leave', which welcomes all staff – including Research

Staff. We were also honoured to have a special talk by Katie Perry, Chief Executive of the Daphne Jackson Trust, who described some of the ways to return to research if you decide to take a career-break or move away from academia for caring responsibilities. Researchers were also presented with stories kindly provided by current and ex-researchers who had first-hand knowledge on raising a family whilst in an academic career, sharing their experiences and advice on maintaining a positive balance. The event was very popular, attended by over 80 researchers across the University, demonstrating the requirement for communication on the subject. This was a positive step towards encouraging early career researchers to discuss these common-placed issues more.

## University Staff network/peer support groups and resources

A number of networking and peer support groups have been set up by the University Equality and Diversity (E&D) team to support staff members and their careers. These groups offer a place to meet new colleagues, to discuss issues you are facing, to network, or to just meet new people and share experiences. All members of staff can join. If none of these are relevant to you, you could suggest starting another to the E&D team!

### Race, religion or belief

- Black and Ethnic Minorities Staff Network Group
- Christian Staff Network Group
- Muslim Staff Network Group

### International staff

- International Staff Network Group
- International staff handbook

### Disability

- Disabled Staff Network Group

Other useful information:

- Disability Support Office: <http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/personalsupport/disabled-staff/>
- DisabledGo map and DisabledGoApp have information about accessibility to buildings on campus.

<http://www.disabledgo.com/blog/2015/03/world-first-for-higher-education>

### LGBT

- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Staff Network Group

### Retirement

- Retirement Peer Support Group

### Parents returning from maternity/paternity/adoption leave

- Returning for maternity, paternity or adoption leave support group

### Carers

- Staff with Caring Responsibilities Peer Support Group



### Women

- Women in IT
- Women in Life Sciences
- Women in Science, Engineering and Technology (WASET)
- Women Professors Network

See the StaffNet E&D pages for more information about peer support and networking groups including contact details <http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/equality-and-diversity/staff-network-groups>

### All staff

University of Manchester Staff Association (UMSA) have regular events for all staff members:

<http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/societiesandclubs/umsa>

The University offers support to all staff; support includes dealing with problems at work, health and fitness, support/networking groups, places of worship, parents, and safety. For more information see:

<http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/employment/staff-support>

## Surveys of research staff opinion

By Rebecca Elvey

Spring 2015 saw the return of two large biennial surveys gathering the opinions of university research staff about their careers, roles and employer.

The Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS) is run by Vitae and distributed to university research staff across the UK; the University uses the findings to monitor its performance in relation to The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers and the HR Excellence in Research award.

The University of Manchester Staff Survey 2015 was open to all research, academic and professional support services staff. It is run by an external consultancy and overseen by a steering group, which includes a research staff representative. The results of the Staff Survey 2015 have been published on Staffnet at [www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/staff-survey-2015/results](http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/staff-survey-2015/results)

This year, 1,333 research staff responded to the survey. There were interesting findings around Performance and Development Review (PDR); 55% of research staff (who responded to the survey) had undergone a review in the last 12 months. Whilst this is an increase since the previous survey (in 2013), research staff as a group still have a lower rate of PDR uptake than academic or professional support services staff.

In another key area, opinions about involvement in the organisation, the percentage of research staff who agreed or tended to agree with the statement 'I feel part of my school/ other organisational unit' rose from 71% to 76%, although, again, these levels are lower than for other staff groups.

These results will inform a planning process, during which school and centre leads will consult with staff locally to develop action plans, which will be shared with staff in September 2015.

### Did you know...

At UoM, 39.6% of staff report no religion or belief, 38.8% are Christian, 12.3% prefer not to say

Are we covering the issues you want to read about?

- Who would you really like to hear from in our Q&A slot?
- Could you write a short article about your experiences or opinions to feature in *Incite*?
- Have you been to any interesting conferences or heard any research news that you would like to see highlighted?

We would like to expand *Incite*, 'the research newsletter written for you, by you', so we would like to hear from you regarding issues that you'd like to see covered. Even if you don't want to write a whole article, we'd like to hear your ideas about what you'd like to see featured in your Research Staff Skills Training newsletter. We'll make it a priority to follow up your leads and address the topics that are relevant to you, the reader.

We also encourage input from budding journalists wishing to gain writing experience. The style and content of input is open to experimentation as we would like *Incite* to be led by, and respond to, our community's needs. You



may want to discuss funding issues, managing your research manager/collaborators, the dilemmas of fixed term contract research, or you may like to write a gonzo-style conference report.

For further information about submitting contributions, to subscribe or to give us your feedback on this newsletter, please email the editorial team at [incite@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:incite@manchester.ac.uk)

*Incite* also has a blog; check us out at: [www.manchesterincite.wordpress.com](http://www.manchesterincite.wordpress.com)

## The University of Manchester

Careers

[www.careers.manchester.ac.uk](http://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk)

IT training courses

[www.manchester.ac.uk/itservices/trainingcourses](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/itservices/trainingcourses)

John Rylands University Library

[www.library.manchester.ac.uk](http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk)

Manchester Enterprise Centre

[www.msec.ac.uk](http://www.msec.ac.uk)

Manchester e-scholar

[www.escholar.manchester.ac.uk](http://www.escholar.manchester.ac.uk)

Staff Training and Development Unit courses

[www.manchester.ac.uk/training](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/training)

The University of Manchester Intellectual Property Limited

[www.umip.com](http://www.umip.com) or

[www.manchester.ac.uk/ipresource](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/ipresource)

IT services

[www.itservices.manchester.ac.uk](http://www.itservices.manchester.ac.uk)

email: [itservicesdesk@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:itservicesdesk@manchester.ac.uk)

tel: 0161 306 5544

Counselling Service

email: [counsel.service@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:counsel.service@manchester.ac.uk)

tel: 0161 275 2864

.....

## ... and beyond

FindAPostDoc.com

[www.findapostdoc.com](http://www.findapostdoc.com)

Naturejobs

[www.naturejobs.com](http://www.naturejobs.com)

New Scientist Jobs

[www.newscientistjobs.com](http://www.newscientistjobs.com)

Research Councils UK

[www.rcuk.ac.uk](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk)

ResearchResearch

[www.researchresearch.com](http://www.researchresearch.com)

Research Concordat

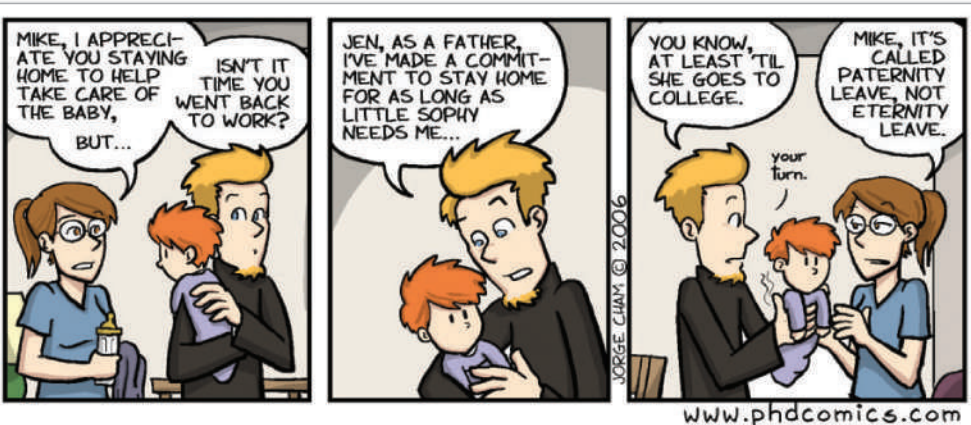
[www.researchconcordat.ac.uk](http://www.researchconcordat.ac.uk)

United Kingdom Research Office (UKRO)

[www.ukro.ac.uk](http://www.ukro.ac.uk)

Vitae

[www.vitae.ac.uk](http://www.vitae.ac.uk)



You can check out previous issues online at the *Incite* blog: <http://manchesterincite.wordpress.com>

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