Athena SWAN Bronze department award application

**Name of university:** University of Leicester

**Department:** Department of Computer Science

**Date of application:** April 2013

**Date of university Bronze and/or Silver SWAN award:** Bronze renewal 2011

**Contact for application:** Karen Smith

**Email:** kjs34@le.ac.uk

**Telephone:** 0116 252 3605

**Departmental website address:** [http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/computer-science](http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/computer-science)

Athena SWAN Bronze Department awards recognise that in addition to university-wide policies the department is working to promote gender equality and to address challenges particular to the discipline.

Not all institutions use the term ‘department’ and there are many equivalent academic groupings with different names, sizes and compositions. The definition of a ‘department’ for SWAN purposes can be found on the Athena SWAN website. If in doubt, contact the Athena SWAN Officer well in advance to check eligibility.

It is essential that the contact person for the application is based in the department.

**Sections to be included**

At the end of each section state the number of words used. Click [here](http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/computer-science) for additional guidance on completing the template.

1. **Letter of endorsement from the head of department: maximum 500 words**

An accompanying letter of endorsement from the head of department should explain how the SWAN action plan and activities in the department contribute to the overall department strategy and academic mission.
The letter is an opportunity for the head of department to confirm their support for the application and to endorse and commend any women and STEMM activities that have made a significant contribution to the achievement of the departmental mission.

Please see Appendix A

2. **The self-assessment process: maximum 1000 words**

Describe the self-assessment process. This should include:

   a) A description of the self assessment team: members’ roles (both within the department and as part of the team) and their experiences of work-life balance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Roles (other than Member of Self-Assessment Team – SAT)</th>
<th>Biography</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Karen Smith</td>
<td>Chair and Administrator, Department Manager, Equal Opportunities Officer</td>
<td>New to HE, with management career in other male-dominated sectors (banking and police). Gained science degree by distance learning, whilst working full-time. Married, with no children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Laura Bocchi</td>
<td>Women’s Tutor.</td>
<td>Research Associate with the Department since 2006, after obtaining a PhD at the University of Bologna. Employed on a series of Fixed Term Contracts, expiring in May 2013. During her time at Leicester, has gained teaching experience as co-convenor of an MSc module and on supervision of MSc projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Ruzanna Chitchyan</td>
<td>Department Outreach Officer, Departmental Plagiarism Officer.</td>
<td>Lecturer in the Department since August 2011. She has two young children (1 and 5 years). Appointed to her present post while expecting her 2nd child. Her husband is also a full-time academic. Living away from Leicester, working at the department is possible only due to the flexible working arrangement, working from home part of the week. Achieving a work-life balance is still a struggle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof Thomas Erlebach</td>
<td>Head of Department</td>
<td>Joined Leicester in 2004 and has been Head of Department since August 2011. He has supervised 9 PhD students to completion, 3 of whom were female. One of his three current PhD students is female. He is married to Dr Effie Law, who is a Reader in the department. They have one daughter, aged 13, and are used to juggling academic commitments and family life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Effie Law</td>
<td>Most senior female member of the Department.</td>
<td>Joined the Department as a research fellow in 2005 and became a lecturer in 2009. Promoted to Reader In 2012. Thanks to flexible working hours, she has been able to strike a better balance between her family and job commitments. She has supervised six research associates. Two are female, with young children and having faced similar challenges Dr. Law can share her personal experience and strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabriela Rino-Nesin</td>
<td>Secretary to the group</td>
<td>Second-year PhD student and GTA. Previous studies in STEM areas with high male-to-female ratios. Single, no children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof Rick Thomas</td>
<td>Academic Director for the College of Science and Engineering</td>
<td>Academic in the Department for over 25 years. Former Head of Department. He has two grown-up children and his wife also works part-time at the University. He is currently supervising three PhD students, two of whom are female.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Neil Walkinshaw</td>
<td>Departmental Publicity Officer.</td>
<td>Appointed as lecturer in the Department in 2010. He has a one year-old daughter, and his wife works as a doctor for the NHS (after a phased return to work from maternity leave). His family is based in Sheffield, and he commutes to Leicester, which presents a challenge to the maintenance of a work-life balance. Flexible working arrangements allow him time to work from home.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) An account of the self assessment process: details of the self assessment team meetings, including any consultation with staff or individuals outside of the university, and how these have fed into the submission.

Five meetings, one per month, were held prior to submission of our application:

**November 2012:** Introduction to process and discussion on team membership (considered appropriate given the size of the department). The role of the Chair/Administrator was discussed: it was agreed that all members of the team will take an active role. Tasks were assigned. Regularity of meetings was agreed. It was noted that the department has very low female representation in academic staff and the current support for female members of staff is poorly advertised.

**December 2012:** Reviewed data indicating that our low female representation at academic level stems back to a low intake of female undergraduate students. The
female academics on the Self-Assessment Team were very positive about and felt supported by the Department culture. Action will be taken to improve communication of the policies and support available to staff. Immediate action was taken to update the advert for the new lecturer post to encourage more female candidates to apply. Reporting/feedback mechanisms were also agreed.

**January 2013:** Reviewed and agreed to give greater publicity to sources of support for females, including the Daphne Jackson Trust and BCSWomen. International recruitment of students was identified as a key area where the department has limited influence on the numbers of female students and data was requested. A forum for PhD Students and Post-Docs was taken to the University’s Athena SWAN Working Group, as the small size of this Department precludes organising an effective forum in-house.

**February 2013:** The lack of data on drop-out rates was a concern and will be pursued at University level. Nationalities of students - planning required to overcome this impact on low female student numbers. The application as completed so far was reviewed and tasks allocated. Financial support was agreed with the Head of Department to support students wishing to attend the Lovelace Colloquium or STEMettes events.

**March 2013:** There was a discussion about the validity of staff surveys in small departments; recommendations from the Athena SWAN annual event were considered and adopted where appropriate; review of application completed to date.

**April 2013:** Feedback was received from the University’s Athena SWAN Working Group. Amendments to application ratified and Action Plan updated to ensure that actions are planned over 3 years. Application approved for submission via the University’s Athena SWAN Working Group.

c) **Plans for the future of the self assessment team, such as how often the team will continue to meet, any reporting mechanisms and in particular how the self assessment team intends to monitor implementation of the action plan.**

The team will continue to meet on monthly basis, work towards addressing the issues identified and for progression to the Silver award. We will report as a standing item to the Departmental Staff Meetings. If we are unsuccessful in gaining the ‘Bronze’ award, we will address our deficiencies within 6 months and reapply again in Autumn 2013. If we are successful in gaining the ‘Bronze’ award, we will build on it, further realising our plans for application for ‘Silver’ in 6 to 12 months.

Monitoring implementation of action plan: SAT to report to Staff meetings; issues outside the department - report/work through university-wide AS committee which reports to Vice Chancellors Advisory Committee.

*(Total for Section 2 - 990 Words)*
3. A picture of the department: maximum 2000 words

a) Provide a pen-picture of the department to set the context for the application, outlining in particular any significant and relevant features.

The department is part of the College of Science and Engineering and comprises 19 academic staff (2 female, 17 male), 6 Research Associates, 30 PhD students, 150 MSc and 207 BSc students, plus 8 support staff. A male Lecturer will be joining the department in September 2013.

The department is engaged in internationally competitive research funded from a range of sources including Research councils, charities, industry and the EU. Historically research was focused on formal foundations of Computer Science (which in practice does not tend to attract a large female interest). Within the last 8 years, this focus has been gradually broadened to eight broad themes, including software engineering and human-computer interactions.

b) Provide data for the past three years (where possible with clearly labelled graphical illustrations) on the following with commentary on their significance and how they have affected action planning.

All data tables/figures correct as at September 2012

Student data

Figure 1 Student numbers by gender, across all degree classes. Lines indicate the national average proportions of males and females, scaled to our student numbers. This is discussed in the respective subsections.

Fig. 1a  Fig. 1b  Fig. 1c
(i) **Numbers of males and females on access or foundation courses** – comment on the data and describe any initiatives taken to attract women to the courses.

The University of Leicester no longer offers foundation courses in individual subject areas. Our International Study Centre offers a ‘Foundation in Science’ which prepares and supports overseas students wanting to access our science undergraduate degrees, including Computer Science, but this does not involve the department.

(ii) **Undergraduate male and female numbers** – full and part-time – comment on the female:male ratio compared with the national picture for the discipline. Describe any initiatives taken to address any imbalance and the impact to date. Comment upon any plans for the future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>National Average (HESA)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007/08</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008/09</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/10</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Figure 1a, the department consistently attracts a higher proportion of female undergraduates than the national average (the solid line). However, absolute numbers remain significantly lower than males.

**Actions:** To increase the proportion of females the department has made concerted efforts to motivate female interest in Computer Science through its outreach programme by:

- Increasing the visibility of women in Computer Science at Leicester, e.g., by showcasing the work of our women academics on the departmental website, in quarterly newsletters distributed to the schools, and via events such as open lectures and hands-on activities (e.g., at BBC Stargazing Live event, and GSTEM 2013). **ACTION 2.1.b**
- We have appointed a female Student Ambassador, whose responsibilities include participating in open days and stimulating interest in girls towards
CS, visiting schools and showcasing her own project/sharing her experience. Presently we are setting up a blog for our Student Ambassadors to write about her experience at the department. ACTIONS 2.1.a, 2.1.c

(iii) **Postgraduate male and female numbers completing taught courses** – full and part-time – comment on the female:male ratio compared with the national picture for the discipline. Describe any initiatives taken to address any imbalance and the effect to date. Comment upon any plans for the future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2 Taught postgraduate male and female numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the years 2007-2010, the proportion of female postgraduate students was approximately in-line with the national figures. In 2011/2012 there was a sharp decline in the number of male students, coupled with a significant increase in the number of females. This almost doubled the proportion of females to 30%, well above the national trend (see Figure 1b).

The increase can be explained by changes in the applicant profile. As will be elaborated below (3 a-iv), there has been a significant increase in the proportion of female applicants from China, India, Saudi Arabia, and the EU.

**Actions:** The department is proactively seeking to continue the positive trends shown here in two ways:

- Gathering feedback from female graduates. **Action 2.2.a**
- Increasing visibility of female graduates, students and staff to each other and to prospective applicants. **Actions 2.2.b, 2.2.c**
(iv)  **Postgraduate male and female numbers on research degrees** – full and part-time – comment on the female:male ratio compared with the national picture for the discipline. Describe any initiatives taken to address any imbalance and the effect to date. Comment upon any plans for the future.

Table 3 Research postgraduate male and female numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>National Average (HESA)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007/08</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008/09</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the data (Figure 1c/Table 3) shows a slight fluctuation in the proportion of females over the past five years, the numbers have been slightly above the national average. There has been a slight overall increase in females since 2007/08.

Explaining such small increases is difficult; potential factors include an increase in the diversity of the countries of origin of the applicants (which rose from four in 2008 to eleven in 2011), and an increase in the proportion of home / EU applicants, who tend to have better entry qualifications.

**Actions:** The department will consider additional strategies for encouraging applications from potential female research students; this will include a review of the materials distributed online and via overseas recruitment fairs, overseas agents and the British Council. **Action 2.3.a**

(v)  **Ratio of course applications to offers and acceptances by gender for undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research degrees** – comment on the differences between male and female application and success rates and describe any initiatives taken to address any imbalance and their effect to date. Comment upon any plans for the future.
### Table 4 Undergraduate application statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intake</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007/08</td>
<td>87 (16%)</td>
<td>454 (84%)</td>
<td>78 (90%)</td>
<td>331 (73%)</td>
<td>19 (24%)</td>
<td>71 (21%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008/09</td>
<td>86 (18%)</td>
<td>384 (82%)</td>
<td>69 (80%)</td>
<td>292 (76%)</td>
<td>8 (12%)</td>
<td>47 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/10</td>
<td>122 (19%)</td>
<td>516 (81%)</td>
<td>99 (81%)</td>
<td>333 (65%)</td>
<td>23 (23%)</td>
<td>48 (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>127 (14%)</td>
<td>761 (86%)</td>
<td>90 (71%)</td>
<td>479 (63%)</td>
<td>18 (20%)</td>
<td>65 (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>83 (10%)</td>
<td>724 (91%)</td>
<td>66 (80%)</td>
<td>511 (71%)</td>
<td>13 (20%)</td>
<td>70 (14%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 5 Postgraduate application statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intake</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007/08</td>
<td>60 (14%)</td>
<td>360 (86%)</td>
<td>45 (75%)</td>
<td>225 (63%)</td>
<td>11 (24%)</td>
<td>75 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008/09</td>
<td>123 (15%)</td>
<td>680 (85%)</td>
<td>76 (62%)</td>
<td>425 (62%)</td>
<td>15 (20%)</td>
<td>93 (22%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/10</td>
<td>184 (19%)</td>
<td>795 (81%)</td>
<td>142 (77%)</td>
<td>487 (61%)</td>
<td>38 (27%)</td>
<td>166 (34%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>210 (19%)</td>
<td>882 (81%)</td>
<td>161 (77%)</td>
<td>538 (61%)</td>
<td>22 (14%)</td>
<td>115 (21%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>194 (24%)</td>
<td>623 (76%)</td>
<td>137 (71%)</td>
<td>406 (65%)</td>
<td>34 (25%)</td>
<td>63 (16%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 2 Student applications for BSc. And MSc. courses

Figure 3 Student offers for BSc. And MSc. courses
Undergraduates: There is a significant difference in trends between applications from male and female undergraduates (Table 4/Figure 2). Whereas the number of female applicants has remained stable, the number of males has risen from 454 in 07/08 to 724 in 11/12 - a net increase of 59%.

The significant overall increase in applications observed in 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 could be attributed to the successes of Leicester in the National Student Survey in 2008 and 2009, which saw overall applications to the university increase. However, it is not clear why female applications to Computer Science have not matched the increases in male applications.

Actions: To stimulate interest from female applicants, we have started to explicitly engage with schools through our outreach programme. This includes:

- Showcasing work of women in the department via printed newsletter distributed to schools. Action 2.1.b
- Improving visibility of women in CS at Leicester on our website. Action 2.1.b
- Employing female student ambassadors to engage with schools via direct teaching and experience sharing. Action 2.1.a
- Representing women students in the department via web/blogging. Action 2.1.c
- Undertaking a survey of applicants from the more successful recruitment years to better understand what attracted females to the department. Action 2.1.d
Figure 5 Proportion of postgraduate applicants from each country that are female (0.1 = 10%)

Figure 6 Overall proportions of female postgraduate applicants by nationality
Postgraduate students: There has been a substantial increase in female applications for our MSc degrees, both in absolute and proportional terms, as shown in Figures 2 and 6. Encouragingly, the proportion of acceptances by females (shown in Figure 4) has risen sharply from around 12% in 2007 to 35% last year.

One possible explanation lies in the nationality of the applicants. Figure 6 shows the female applicants in terms of those nationalities that have supplied three or more female students. The majority female postgraduates originate from India. Until 2009, there were no more than 2-3 females from any other single country. However, since 2010 increasing numbers of female applicants have come from Saudi Arabia, China, and the EU.

Changes in gender balance vary from country to country. The chart in Figure 5 shows the changes in the proportion of female applicants from these countries. Only in the case of Pakistan has the proportion of females declined. In contrast, the proportion of female Saudi Arabian applicants has risen to 63%.

One potential reason for increased female interest could be the introduction of broader course choices. We now offer seven taught postgraduate programmes, which provide interdisciplinary courses (e.g., in finance, geospatial intelligence) alongside traditional computer science courses.

The department has recently launched Distance Learning programmes. It is hoped that the flexibility of these courses will help to attract female students from countries such as Pakistan, as well as female students with family commitments.

Actions: The department will continue building on the success of this broader engagement by:

- Undertaking a survey to elicit the particular reasons for choosing our postgraduate degree, with a view to strengthening these factors. Action 2.2.a
- Providing a facility for postgraduate students to share their experience via blogs and testimonials with potential female applicants from their ethnic and cultural background. Action 2.2.c
- The department will collect data to see whether particular courses are favoured by females to better inform our marketing strategy. Action 1.1 and 1.2

(vi) Degree classification by gender – comment on any differences in degree attainment between males and females and describe what actions are being taken to address any imbalance.
Table 6 Degree classification by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of completion</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1 (25%)</td>
<td>2 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1 (20%)</td>
<td>2 (40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1 (13%)</td>
<td>2 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>8 (42%)</td>
<td>4 (21%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7 Bar plot of classification by gender
Numbers of female graduates are in line with the applications statistics in Table 5/Figure 2. We expect a fall in the number of female graduates next year, commensurate with the fall in the number of female acceptances (see Figure 4).

Given the relatively small number of female students in 2008-2011, discussion of individual years is inconclusive. However, looking at the aggregate data and the general trend (Figure 7), the graduation data looks encouraging. The bar plots indicate an increasing trend in the proportion of female graduates. The quality of the degrees is generally favourable for females too; a similar proportion of females receive first and 2:1 degrees but, at the lower end, females tend to achieve a 2:2 instead of a 3rd class degree.

**Action:** As there is no particular imbalance, no specific action is planned here, other than to continue monitoring.

**Staff data**

**(vii) Female:male ratio of academic staff and research staff** – researcher, lecturer, senior lecturer, reader, professor (or equivalent). comment on any differences in numbers between males and females and say what action is being taken to address any underrepresentation at particular grades/levels

**Academic and Research Staff**

Table 7 Proportion of female academic staff by post

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Teaching Fellow</th>
<th>Lecturer</th>
<th>Senior Lecturer</th>
<th>Reader</th>
<th>Professor</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>1/2 (50%)</td>
<td>1/12 (8%)</td>
<td>0/2 (0%)</td>
<td>0/0 (N/A)</td>
<td>0/5 (0%)</td>
<td>2/21 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1/2 (50%)</td>
<td>0/ 6 (0%)</td>
<td>0/3 (0%)</td>
<td>0/1 (0%)</td>
<td>0/5 (0%)</td>
<td>1/17 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1/2 (50%)</td>
<td>0.5/8.5 (6%)</td>
<td>0/3 (0%)</td>
<td>0/1 (0%)</td>
<td>0/5 (0%)</td>
<td>1.5/19.5 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>0/1 (0%)</td>
<td>1/11 (9%)</td>
<td>0/3 (0%)</td>
<td>0/1(0%)</td>
<td>0/5 (0%)</td>
<td>1/21 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>0/1 (0%)</td>
<td>1/11 (9%)</td>
<td>0/3 (0%)</td>
<td>1/2(50%)</td>
<td>0/4 (0%)</td>
<td>2/21 (10%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8 Proportion of female research staff by post

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Grade 6</th>
<th>Grade 7</th>
<th>Grade 8</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>1/7 (14%)</td>
<td>1/1 (100%)</td>
<td>2/8 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>2/7 (29%)</td>
<td>1/1 (100%)</td>
<td>3/8 (38%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>1/6 (17%)</td>
<td>0.5*/0.5 (100%)</td>
<td>1.5/6.5 (23%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1/1 (100%)</td>
<td>1/5 (20%)</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>2/6 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>3/6 (50%)</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>3/6 (50%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*2010 - One female academic worked with a split role of 0.5 Research Fellow and 0.5 Lecturer. She became a full-time Lecturer in 2011 and Reader in 2012.

Female academic staff have always been poorly represented in the department. (10% or less, compared to UK average of 20% as per HESA data 2011/2012 - based on Cost Code 25). There have been at most 2 female academics at any point.

Research staff numbers are too small to draw meaningful statistical conclusions, except to observe that overall, women tend to be less represented at the Grade 7 Research Associate level.

The main reasons for this imbalance are possibly explained by the small size of the department and the historical focus on topics of formal foundations of computer science (traditionally a research area that has been particularly male-dominated). These factors have probably contributed to limited opportunities for new appointments and little interest from female applicants. However, the department has been gradually broadening its research focus, spurring interest from a broader academic community, including areas preferred by women.

**Actions:** To encourage female academic applicants, the department has already taken several steps:

- New academic and research appointments are advertised with an explicit note on the possibility of flexible and part-time working, as well as mention of the department’s commitment to the Athena Swan charter. **Action 3.1**
- The Athena Swan team identifies and encourages potentially suitable female applicants (both from within the department and elsewhere). This is intended not only to boost the number of good female applicants, but also to provide feedback and improve the chances of appointing senior female researchers to academic positions. **Action 3.2**
- A support group for female academic and research staff is being considered at University level; with only 5 female staff, a departmental group is not practical. This initiative has already been brought to the attention of the University-wide Athena Swan Working Group. **Action 3.3**
• The department is committed to continuous support to female research and academic staff, providing part-time and flexible working arrangements suited to individual circumstances (see Flexible Working section). Any issues arising from the Women’s support group will be brought in as more formal procedures (e.g., meetings to be set up between 10.00 and 15.30 to account for school times, etc.) **Action 3.1**

**(viii) Turnover by grade and gender** – comment on any differences between men and women in turnover and say what is being done to address this. Where the number of staff leaving is small, comment on the reasons why particular individuals left.

Between September 2010 and March 2013 one female teaching staff and 4 male academics left the department. In the past, reasons for leaving have not been formally recorded (they are now – **Action 3.4**). From informal discussions with the Head of Department, reasons for leaving have included health issues, location, and the pursuit of research interests.

In the case of the female teaching staff whose health condition prompted her to leave, the department has provided her with continuing support, allowing her to return to part-time contract-based teaching. This allows her to continue with her teaching interest, while managing her health.

Within the same period 2 female and 3 male research staff left when their projects ended (the only evident reason for leaving in all cases). The fixed and short-term nature of postdoctoral employment is one factor that renders this career path particularly challenging for both women and men with families.

In summary, the ratio of leaving female and male staff is in line with the numbers employed; there does not appear to be any issue to address.

*(Total for Section 3: 1748 words)*
4. Supporting and advancing women’s careers: maximum 5000 words

Key career transition points

a) Provide data for the past three years (where possible with clearly labelled graphical illustrations) on the following with commentary on their significance and how they have affected action planning.

(ii) **Job application and success rates by gender and grade** – comment on any differences in recruitment between men and women at any level and say what action is being taken to address this.

Table 9 Job application and success rates by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Applications</th>
<th>Offers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Positions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>52 (20%)</td>
<td>198 (75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>19 (20%)</td>
<td>73 (75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-22 JAN 2013</td>
<td>30 (19%)</td>
<td>125 (80%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Positions:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>10 (48%)</td>
<td>11 (52%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>11 (25%)</td>
<td>29 (66%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>9 (32%)</td>
<td>18 (64%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-22 JAN 2013</td>
<td>4 (36%)</td>
<td>7 (64%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportion of female applications for teaching posts (these were all Grade 8 Lectureships) is in line with the national average of female academics. The proportion of offers made to female applicants reflects the split in applications, with a total of 1 out of 6 offers (2009 to date) made to female applicants.

For research posts (these were mostly Grade 7 Research Associate posts), the proportion of female applicants has been higher, and the percentage of offers

---

\(^1\) U = undeclared. The University is responsible for collating this information and is taking steps to reduce the number of undeclared candidates as part of the institution’s Action Plan.
made to female applicants has been at 50% on average from 2009-10 to 2011-12. In spite of the lack of offers to female applicants in 2012-13 so far, we see the general trend as very encouraging.

We will continue to encourage female applicants for teaching and research posts, e.g. by adjusting the text of adverts and by encouraging suitable applicants directly. **Actions 3.1 and 3.2**

**(ii) Applications for promotion and success rates by gender and grade** – comment on whether these differ for men and women and if they do explain what action may be taken. Where the number of women is small applicants may comment on specific examples of where women have been through the promotion process. Explain how potential candidates are identified.

Between 2010 and 2013 there have been one successful and one unsuccessful application for a senior lectureship position (both by males) and two successful applications for a readership (one female and one male). These numbers are too small to draw meaningful statistical conclusions.

Identification of candidates is covered in Career Development, section (a), below.

b) For each of the areas below, explain what the key issues are in the department, what steps have been taken to address any imbalances, what success/impact has been achieved so far and what additional steps may be needed.

**(i) Recruitment of staff** – comment on how the department’s recruitment processes ensure that female candidates are attracted to apply, and how the department ensures its short listing, selection processes and criteria comply with the university’s equal opportunities policies

The Department adheres to the University’s policy on recruitment and selection. Once applications are received a panel, consisting of at least three members, shortlists applicants for interviews, and an interview panel is formed to select the candidate. We aim to ensure that interview panels have at least one female member. Given the lack of female representation in the department, this may sometimes be from outside the Department; this is not a problem per se, as the recruitment procedures do require someone from outside the department on the interview panel. All interviewers are required to undertake recruitment and selection training, which includes an equality and diversity element.

In accordance with a suggestion from the Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team, the Department has reviewed the wording of academic and related job advertisements, which now include clear statements on opportunities for job-share, the department’s commitment to the Athena Swan programme, and support of women’s equality and flexible working for balanced work and family life. In addition, a senior female member of staff is named as a contact with whom prospective applicants can discuss female-specific issues.
The department has adopted the recommendation of the Athena Swan self-assessment team to explicitly identify and invite potentially suitable internal and external female candidates to apply for any open positions. While this does not guarantee that any of these female applicants will get the positions, it helps to ensure the presence of strong female contenders, thus increasing the probability that the available position may be won by a female.

**Action Point:** To further improve interest from potential female applicants, the department will increase the presence of female representation (both staff and students) on the web and in its marketing and other materials. **Actions 2.1.b, 2.2.b, 2.3.a, 5.1**

(ii) **Support for staff at key career transition points** – having identified key areas of attrition of female staff in the department, comment on any interventions, programmes and activities that support women at the crucial stages, such as personal development training, opportunities for networking, mentoring programmes and leadership training. Identify which have been found to work best at the different career stages.

As discussed above, there are no explicit points of female staff attrition, except for normal contract expiry or course completion. However, the low number of female applicants for academic positions is an issue.

**Mentoring:** as per the department’s established policy, all new staff members, including females, are provided with two mentors - one for issues related to teaching, and one for research. The mentors help new staff members familiarise themselves with the established processes and procedures. The feedback on the mentoring programme has always been overwhelmingly positive. On the one hand, the new staff members feel empowered to ask their mentors for help. On the other, the mentors take responsibility for guiding the newly appointed colleagues.

**Personal Development and Training:** the department encourages all staff members to avail themselves of the wide range of training and development courses offered by the Staff Development and Careers Services. In fact, completion of some of these training courses is mandatory for persons assuming particular duties (e.g., the Recruitment and Selection course has to be completed by any person who sits on a recruitment and selection panel).

**Women’s Tutor:** there is a dedicated role of Women’s tutor in the department to support both female students and researchers regarding questions which they may not feel comfortable discussing with male colleagues. The women’s tutor then acts as an intermediary in resolving such questions (while preserving anonymity of the concerned female).

**Networking:** As previously mentioned, the Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team has identified a clear desire from the female PhD students and Post Doc researchers for networking and social interaction opportunities. To address this issue (in view of a small number of females in the department), the feasibility of a cross-college/university network for social interaction and mutual support for female
postgraduates and researchers is being investigated. Moreover, the department widely supports (both via advertisement and contribution towards costs) participation of female academics and students in events organised by Computer Science professionals for women, such as BCSWomen, Lovelace colloquium and the like. Actions 3.3, 4.1

Action Points:

- It has been observed that although a number of amenities and support services (e.g., flexible working arrangements, etc.) for females are already available in the department (and the university at large), they are not well communicated to relevant staff and prospective applicants. To redress this, we will aggregate the relevant information and make it available via the Athena Swan page of the department website. Actions 6.1, 6.2, 6.3
- The department will consider conducting an annual staff survey to identify any issues that may cause difficulties to staff and students. A section dedicated to gender-specific topics will also be included. The size of the department may be a barrier to implementation, as anonymity of responses could not be guaranteed. Action 5.5

Career development

a) For each of the areas below, explain what the key issues are in the department, what steps have been taken to address any imbalances, what success/impact has been achieved so far and what additional steps may be needed.

(i) Promotion and career development – comment on the appraisal and career development process, and promotion criteria and whether these take into consideration responsibilities for teaching, research, administration, pastoral work and outreach work; is quality of work emphasised over quantity of work?

Promotion and Appraisal: The promotions round for promotion to Senior Lecturer, Reader and Chair is annually initiated by the university. Individuals can put themselves forward or be nominated by the Head of Department (HoD). The state of an individual’s career with respect to a possible promotion is discussed in their annual appraisal meeting, which is a compulsory department requirement, overseen by the Head of Department. This ensures that women, who tend to fare less well in an environment where they have to apply themselves, receive appropriate consideration for promotion.

In the annual promotion round, the HoD identifies suitable individuals to put forward for promotion, consulting also the other members of the departmental Management Committee. If a case appears to be strong, the HoD discusses the potential submission of a promotion case with the respective member of staff in more detail, assessing the likelihood for a successful case. If the HoD and the individual agree to put a case forward, the case is prepared by the HoD with input from the Management Committee and the member of staff and submitted to the
university’s promotions committee. That committee then decides whether the case progresses to the next stage and external referee reports are sought. When the referee reports are received, the committee makes a final decision based on these reports.

**Action 3.5:** Head of Department will brief all appraisers to ensure that they adhere to the department procedure for promotions to be discussed with all staff during their appraisal. Discussions, outcomes and guidance to be recorded.

The criteria for promotions are clear and available from the HR website. The promotion to Senior Lecturer requires demonstration of excellence in several areas among Research, Teaching, Enterprise and Citizenship/Management. For promotion to Reader, the candidate must demonstrate the distinction gained through contribution to research and scholarship and the development of knowledge in his or her subject by published works. For promotion to Chair, the candidate must demonstrate either exceptional and internationally recognised achievement in original research and/or scholarship and/or innovative application, or distinction in academic management and/or teaching in conjunction with research or scholarly work of at least national standing, together with demonstrable evidence of academic leadership.

**Career Development:** The department fully supports the Concordat and takes active steps to promote career development. Staff are encouraged to utilise various training and development courses offered by the university. Each year, during their annual appraisal, individual development and training goals for staff and researchers are identified and agreed upon. In some cases, the Job Summary Form (completed for any appointment) also includes a percentage of time to be used for personal development activities.

The department is also supportive of researchers who wish to progress into academia and want to gain teaching experience. In the past 12 months, all of the 3 female Research Associates and 2 out of 3 male Research Associates have given lectures and/or supervised projects. Similarly 1 female (out of 9) and 1 male (out of 30) PhD students have done the same.

All academic teaching staff must achieve the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice in Higher Education; training sessions are provided for postgraduate students and researchers who undertake teaching.

Moreover, the department conducts an annual peer observation round for teaching and marking, which ensures that best teaching practices are shared between colleagues in both teaching and marking of exams/assessment.

---

2 The University has been awarded the European Commission ‘HR Excellence in Research’ award in recognition of its commitment to a new Concordat Action Plan from 2011-2013.
(ii) **Induction and training** – describe the support provided to new staff at all levels, as well as details of any gender equality training. To what extent are good employment practices in the institution, such as opportunities for networking, the flexible working policy, and professional and personal development opportunities promoted to staff from the outset?

All new members of staff must attend the ‘Introduction to the University of Leicester’ induction offered by the Staff Development Team. This includes an introduction to equalities issues and the University’s Equalities Unit. Equality and Diversity training is an essential part of the training undertaken by appraisers and anyone sitting on a selection panel. In line with University policy, the department has appointed a Department Equalities Officer, who is responsible for advancing equality in the Department through the public equality duty. Training is provided and the Officer is able to pursue issues to the College and (if necessary) the University Equal Opportunities Committee. As discussed in section 4.b.ii, all new academic staff in the Department are allocated a teaching and a research mentor.

The University has a checklist to help with the induction of new staff; this has been reviewed and found to be lacking. A Departmental checklist has been drawn up and circulated to all line managers; this covers departmental information and missing areas. A department information sheet has also been prepared to signpost new staff to the University’s family friendly policies and support available.

The extensive training and support offered by the University’s Staff Development Team is signposted from the Induction Checklist, Staff Home Page and regular emails to staff. (E.g., the Recruitment and Selection training, training for delivery of teaching via PG. Cert. in Academic Practice, training of writing grant proposals, etc.).

(iii) **Support for female students** – describe the support (formal and informal) provided for female students to enable them to make the transition to a sustainable academic career, particularly from postgraduate to researcher, such as mentoring, seminars and pastoral support and the right to request a female personal tutor. Comment on whether these activities are run by female staff and how this work is formally recognised by the department.

All students are appointed a Personal Tutor to support their welfare; they are free to request a change of initial assignment or ask specifically for a female personal tutor. There is extensive pastoral support from the University centrally, which is available to both female and male students.

To support the academic side of the student life, the department assigns two supervisors to each final year project student and MSc student to allow for more diverse feedback and progress monitoring.

The Department has a female Women’s Tutor, who is available to provide support to female students at all levels. It was agreed that the role needed to be more pro-
actively publicised (e.g., via the Athena SWAN page and Student Information sections of the Department website).

**Actions:**

- The Women’s Tutor will attend the Staff Student Committee meetings for Undergraduate, Postgraduate and PhD students. She will also organise periodic forums for female students and staff to share experiences and provide a mechanism for raising issues. **Action 5.2.b, 5.2.c**

- Consideration is being given to a college-wide group to be set up via an Athena Swan initiative, for networking opportunities. **Action 3.3**

- In addition, the department has offered bursaries to students for attending BCS-Women and Lovelace colloquium events. This practice will continue in the future. **Actions 4.2, 4.3**

The University has recently introduced rooms on campus for the exclusive use of mothers who wish to express breast milk or breastfeed their babies. This has been communicated by the Department Equality Officer and the information is on the Department Athena SWAN website and staff notice board. Individuals who may benefit from this will be advised personally as the situation arises. This support is also available to all female staff members.

**Organisation and culture**

a) Provide data for the past three years (where possible with clearly labelled graphical illustrations) on the following with commentary on their significance and how they have affected action planning.

(i) **Male and female representation on committees** – provide a breakdown by committee and explain any differences between male and female representation. Explain how potential members are identified.

Membership at most key committees is determined by the role undertaken in the department. The small ratio of female representation in these committees is the direct consequence of the small number of women (only 2) in academic positions. Moreover, one of the two women academics is relatively young in her career, and, as yet, has not undertaken a significant administrative or teaching role, while the senior female academic is employed mainly in a research capacity.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>Role and Membership</th>
<th>Female/Male Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management Committee</td>
<td>Chaired by the Head of Department and comprises all professors. It is an advisory committee to the HoD. Membership: All current members are male, reflecting the current lack of females at professorial level.</td>
<td>100% male due to absence of female professors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Committee</td>
<td>Defines and implements the departmental teaching and learning strategy. Membership is determined by roles, for instance Directors of BSc/ MSc, Progression Tutors, Examination Officers. All members are currently male.</td>
<td>100% male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Committee</td>
<td>Defines and implements the departmental research strategy and decides requests for departmental support for conference travel by members of staff. Membership: all professors and readers in the department.</td>
<td>14% female Over the past 3 years has comprised 6 males and 1 female.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Committees</td>
<td>Monitors student progress and performance and handles mitigating circumstances forms submitted by students. Membership of the committee is based on roles.</td>
<td>100% male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-Staff Committees</td>
<td>Establishes a means of communication between students and staff and to discuss matters of mutual concern relating to the activities of the department. Membership is based on roles.</td>
<td>100% male academics, although the Equal Opportunities and Library members are female. In the past 3 years this committee has had 1 female member.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Postgraduate Committee

Defines and implements the departmental policies for Postgraduate Research Students.

Membership of the committee consists of all professors and readers and the PhD progression tutor.

| 14% female Over last 3 years has had 6 males and 1 female member. |

**Action point:** Following the Athena SWAN review process, a decision has been made to invite applications from any interested member of staff to join these committees. Suitable candidates will be given training to enable them to participate. **Action 5.4**

**(ii)** *Female: male ratio of academic and research staff on fixed-term contracts and open-ended (permanent) contracts* – comment on any differences between male and female staff representation on fixed-term contracts and say what is being done to address them.

**Academic and teaching support staff**

All academic staff in the department are employed on open-ended contracts. This is in line with University of Leicester policy that all new staff employed for more than 24 months are on open-ended contracts; existing staff are converted following two or more successive fixed term contracts totalling over four years.

In the past additional teaching support for modules (including the recently introduced Distance Learning courses) was provided on an ad hoc basis via casual contracts. Henceforth all such work is now undertaken via Fixed Term Contracts. For the 2 male and 4 female staff involved this gives greater employment rights and allows flexible working around other work and family commitments. The female staff include two of our previous MSc students and a former full time employee who wanted to work more flexibly. Thus, the female to male ratio on fixed term contracts for academic staff will now come to 67% and 33% respectively.

We should also note, that although in general fixed term contracts are not the most preferred employment options, in many cases females employed here have chosen this part-time flexible working arrangement to suit their own personal circumstances (such as unwillingness to commit to long-term contract due to child care preferences; or flexibility to terminate contract due to personal choice and health condition change, etc.).
### Research staff

#### Table 11 Research staff numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Open ended</th>
<th></th>
<th>Fixed term</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1.5*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With respect to the open-ended research contracts the 50/50 male-female parity is well preserved.

On the other hand, the fixed-term contracts for research staff are clearly male-dominated with females overall employed on 31% and males on 69% of contracts. This, however, is not surprising, considering the previously discussed application ratios for postgraduate research positions. Thus actions outlined in addressing the PGR progression imbalance would also have a positive impact on increasing female research staff numbers.

b) For each of the areas below, explain what the key issues are in the department, what steps have been taken to address any imbalances, what success/impact has been achieved so far and what additional steps may be needed.

(i) **Representation on decision-making committees** – comment on evidence of gender equality in the mechanism for selecting representatives. What evidence is there that women are encouraged to sit on a range of influential committees inside and outside the department? How is the issue of ‘committee overload’ addressed where there are small numbers of female staff?

All staff in the department attend departmental staff meetings, where decisions about future developments of the department are discussed. We currently have two female academics in the department; one is 100% research funded but still undertakes limited teaching duties and is a member of the departmental Postgraduate Research Committee and the departmental Research Committee. She also sits on the University’s Research Ethics Committee. Due to her commitments in several funded research projects, she cannot find the time to serve on additional committees. The other female academic is in her first year following maternity leave; she has a reduced workload and works from home part of the time. Both women are part of the Department’s Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team.

**Action point:** Having recognised the male dominated and role-based nature of the decision making committees, the Athena Swan self-assessment group has recommended a review of the membership procedures for these committees. It is suggested that the committees should be open for secondment opportunities for the interested academic teaching and research staff. It is suggested that the HoD
will receive such requests and approve, where appropriate. This proposal is currently under review. **Action 5.4**

(iii) **Workload model** – describe the systems in place to ensure that workload allocations, including pastoral and administrative responsibilities (including the responsibility for work on women and science) are taken into account at appraisal and in promotion criteria. Comment on the rotation of responsibilities e.g. responsibilities with a heavy workload and those that are seen as good for an individual’s career.

The departmental workload model incorporates teaching (taught modules, project supervision, and PhD supervision), administration (including roles such as Outreach Officer, Women’s Tutor, or being a member of the Athena-SWAN Self-Assessment Team), industry engagement, and management of research projects (the time spent on the administrative aspects of a funded project). One-off external duties (such as chairing the programme committee of a major conference) can be incorporated into the model in the year when they happen.

The workload model is used to balance the teaching and administrative load among all academics, so that they can spend the same proportion of their time on research. (All academics in the department are research active.) New lecturers are typically assigned a reduced load for one or two years. Teaching fellows, whose role does not include research, are assigned a higher teaching and administrative load.

Appraisals discuss all aspects of the staff member’s contributions as well as plans for the year ahead and the career development in the longer term.

On an annual basis, the HoD invites comments from all staff regarding responsibilities that they would like to undertake, or that they would like to pass on to someone else. When a role needs to be filled (within the department or as departmental representative on a university panel or committee), the HoD invites expressions of interest from all staff. Junior academics with sufficient experience are encouraged to take on roles with more responsibilities over time.

The University’s promotion criteria are based on merit and require demonstration of excellence in some of the areas of Research, Teaching, Enterprise and Management/Citizenship.

(iii) **Timing of departmental meetings and social gatherings** – provide evidence of consideration for those with family responsibilities, for example what the department considers to be core hours and whether there is a more flexible system in place.

Departmental meetings are intended to take place between the core hours of 9.30am and 3.30pm, to allow for childcare responsibilities. Where it is not possible to keep to these times (e.g., larger university-wide meetings, etc.) staff are given sufficient notice to allow for childcare arrangements.
Where staff have flexible working arrangements (e.g., working from home part of the week, etc.) provision has been made for attending departmental meetings via Skype.

Over the last year most social activities, such as coffee mornings, charity fund-raising and discussion groups, have largely also been set within these core working hours.

(iv) **Culture**—demonstrate how the department is female-friendly and inclusive. ‘Culture’ refers to the language, behaviours and other informal interactions that characterise the atmosphere of the department, and includes all staff and students.

The department is small but very inclusive. All colleagues are truly supportive of each other and the students, irrespective of gender. The Head of Department is very approachable and has an open-door policy, which provides an opportunity for all staff to drop in (even without a prior appointment) and discuss any concerns they may have.

The department accommodates individual staff needs for flexible working hours for both female and male colleagues, which is particularly attractive for staff with children and childcare responsibilities. For instance, one female staff member works 3 days from home, uses Skype to attend meetings scheduled on these days, and has all her teaching timetabled to allow for this work pattern, as she cares for two young children. Similarly a male colleague uses the flexible working hours to have a break between 15.30 and 16.30 to collect his child from school.

Within this environment, the department has succeeded in promoting its first female staff to Reader level. Also, as previously discussed, female students in the department tend to achieve good degrees, with a similar proportion of first and 2:1 degrees but fewer third class degrees than their male peers.

The department still needs to improve representation of women on its website and marketing literature, which has already been noted as an action point. Informal consultation with female researchers, postgraduate students, and academics within the department has indicated that they feel supported and that their opinions are welcomed by their colleagues at all levels.

(v) **Outreach activities**—comment on the level of participation by female and male staff in outreach activities with schools and colleges and other centres. Describe who the programmes are aimed at, and how this activity is formally recognised as part of the workload model and in appraisal and promotion processes.

Our outreach activities are aimed at secondary school pupils in years 10 to 12. We offer training days within the University (e.g., as part of National Science and Engineering Week and GSTEM) and lectures at schools and maintain an Outreach web site.
Until recently there was a small team of dedicated enthusiasts in the department who delivered all of the outreach activities. Recently, the department has defined the role of a Widening Participation and Outreach Officer (undertaken by a female academic) and set up a more formal team to further the outreach activities. The department has now set up a programme of lectures to be delivered to schools, which currently consists of 10 lectures to be delivered by 5 academics (1 female and 4 male) and 2 student ambassadors (one female and one male, both to be accompanied and supervised by the outreach officer).

The department also provides three campus-based masterclasses in Computer Science delivered by 3 male colleagues (1 Professor, 1 senior lecturer, and 1 teaching fellow) and 1 female lecturer; (all supported by teaching assistants when available).

**Action:** The programme is currently promoted to local schools for delivery in the 2013/2014 academic year. We intend to target at least 5 schools per year, with at least one of them being a girls-only school. **Action 2.4**

Delivery of outreach activities and membership of the Outreach team is formally recognised as part of the workload model of the department and it contributes towards the administrative and citizenship criteria of the promotion processes.

**Flexibility and managing career breaks**

a) Provide data for the past three years (where possible with clearly labelled graphical illustrations) on the following with commentary on their significance and how they have affected action planning.

(i) **Maternity return rate** – comment on whether maternity return rate in the department has improved or deteriorated and any plans for further improvement. If the department is unable to provide a maternity return rate, please explain why.

Due to the very small number of female staff, there has only been one instance of maternity leave taken by an academic since 2008. This was a lecturer who was appointed by the Department just as she started her maternity leave and subsequently returned to work full time in her new post.

In 2012 an Associate Tutor on a casual contract took maternity leave; the University has recently changed its policy and casual contracts have been replaced by Fixed Term Contracts. This Tutor now has a contract to provide support to students taking one of the newly launched Distance Learning modules. This allows her to work from home most of the time and so balance her childcare requirements.

In both case the maternity leave has had no negative effect on the career progression of the staff concerned; indeed the Associate Tutor now has a better contract.
(ii) **Paternity, adoption and parental leave uptake** – comment on the uptake of paternity leave by grade and parental and adoption leave by gender and grade. Has this improved or deteriorated and what plans are there to improve further.

The University of Leicester provides enhanced benefits of one week’s paternity leave on full salary for fathers or partners of new and adopted babies; the second week, together with Additional Paternity Leave (if applicable) is at statutory rates. In the last 5 years 4 fathers (3 academics and 1 Research Associate) have applied for and used the formal leave. There were no applications for adoption or parental leave in the department over that period.

(iii) **Numbers of applications and success rates for flexible working by gender and grade** – comment on any disparities. Where the number of women in the department is small applicants may wish to comment on specific examples.

Flexible working is supported by the Department and is considered on either a formal or informal basis. Since 2008 there has been one formal application by a male Grade 4 Support Assistant, for reduced working hours to meet his caring responsibilities. This application was granted and the arrangement works well.

Several academic staff, both male and female, work flexibly under informal arrangements. The current number of academic staff working flexibly are 2 female (grades 8 and 9) and 2 male (grades 8 and 9). In two instances (1 male and 1 female), the staff working flexibly having been promoted.

The arrangements allow staff to work from home when they are not required to be on campus to teach or attend meetings. In the case of one female lecturer, teaching duties are scheduled on consecutive days to allow her to continue to live in the family home (located several hours away from the university) on her non-teaching days.

It can also be argued that most academics, Post-Docs and Graduate Training Assistants work flexibly as, outside their teaching and meeting attendance duties, there are no fixed times when they are required to be in the office.

b) For each of the areas below, explain what the key issues are in the department, what steps have been taken to address any imbalances, what success/impact has been achieved so far and what additional steps may be needed.

(i) **Flexible working** – comment on the numbers of staff working flexibly and their grades and gender, whether there is a formal or informal system, the support and training provided for managers in promoting and managing flexible working arrangements, and how the department raises awareness of the options available.

The flexible working arrangements used in the department are discussed in the previous point. However, as a result of this application, the Athena Swan Self-Assessment team has identified that, although some staff use flexible working, the
existence of the formal University’s Flexible Working Policy is not widely known in the department. This will be addressed by making it more visible on the Department website, adding links to the department website and advising all staff at the staff meeting. **Actions 6.1, 6.2, 6.3**

(ii) **Cover for maternity and adoption leave and support on return** – explain what the department does, beyond the university maternity policy package, to support female staff before they go on maternity leave, arrangements for covering work during absence, and to help them achieve a suitable work-life balance on their return.

There has been one instance of maternity leave in the last 3 years; the staff member was appointed at the start of her maternity leave, so there was no work to cover during her absence. By agreement, during her maternity leave, the Head of Department maintained contact and she was included on all relevant mailing lists. Access was given to the staff intranet, allowing her to read staff meeting minutes etc. This enabled her to keep in touch with all announcements and what was happening in the department.

Upon her return to work, a reduced teaching and administration load was given for the first year. On-going flexible working has been agreed to allow her to work from home several days per week; the timetabling of her classes takes into account this arrangement. Skype is used to enable her to participate in meetings remotely.

*(Section 4 total: 4346 words)*
5. Any other comments: maximum 500 words

Please comment here on any other elements which are relevant to the application, e.g. other SET-specific initiatives of special interest that have not been covered in the previous sections. Include any other relevant data (e.g. results from staff surveys), provide a commentary on it and indicate how it is planned to address any gender disparities identified.

A staff survey will be considered as part of our Action Plan, but for reasons already discussed, there are concerns about preserving anonymity, given the size of the department. Action 5.5

The Department holds regular seminars for staff and students, with invited speakers. A breakdown of the gender of the speakers reveals a strong bias in favour of male speakers (number of female/total number of speakers):

PhD SEMINARS (organised by students)

March 2011 to November 2012: 2/12

DEPARTMENT SEMINARS (organised by academic)

2010/11 - 2/26

2011/12 - 2/19 (both female seminar speakers in Semester 2)

2012/13 - Semester 1: 3/7

Representation of women has increased over the past 12 months, but this is because there are more women involved in the research area of the current organiser. In areas beyond his research interests he relies on other members of the department to make suggestions; this does not happen often. It was felt that this was a key area to address and that more pro-active action is required to raise the number of female speakers. Action 5.3

(Total for Section 5 - 180 words)

6. Action plan

Provide an action plan as an appendix. An action plan template is available on the Athena SWAN website.

The Action Plan should be a table or a spreadsheet comprising actions to address the priorities identified by the analysis of relevant data presented in this application, success/outcome measures, the post holder responsible for each action and a timeline for completion. The plan should cover current initiatives and your aspirations for the next three years.

The action plan does not need to cover all areas at Bronze; however the expectation is that the department will have the organisational structure to move forward, including collecting the necessary data.

Please see accompanying Action Plan – Appendix B