

## **Good Practice Implementation Plan: Gender Equality**

(as adopted by the School Meeting for the whole of SPAH 03/12/14, and, in part, inspired by the work of the Society of Women in Philosophy (SWIP))

- 1.) Adopted a pamphlet explaining the impact of implicit bias both on the webpage and to the following groups (see Appendix 1):**
  - a.) Hiring panels
  - b.) Lecturers and GTAs
  - c.) Senior Staff meeting members (when considering promotions)
  - d.) REF selection committees
  - e.) Conference organizers
  
- 2.) Formally committed to the following principles:**
  - a.) Including a least one woman on hiring panels wherever this is logistically feasible. [This is also a University-level requirement, and we are already in compliance.]
  - b.) Encouraging people to put themselves forward for promotion (e.g. at the annual personal development review).
  
- 3.) Adopted the following steps to promote diversity:**
  - a.) A policy of including women in seminar series/conferences (monitored by Head of School and member of faculty responsible for speaker invitations)
  - b.) Make every effort that every syllabus has publications by women listed among its recommended secondary readings (monitored by DUGS/Director PGT).
  - c.) Strongly recommend that every syllabus include at least one publication by a woman among the required readings (monitored by DUGS/Director PGT).
  - d.) Produce a “Philosopher of the Month” picture and brief write-up to appear in the philosophy common room. Philosophers chosen should be alternating male and female. This will be implemented by PG students
  
- 4.) Established – and committed to communicate – a seminar discussion policy including the following (see Appendix 2):**
  - a.) Take a break between the end of the talk and the beginning of the Q&A to allow less confident participants to formulate their questions.
  - b.) Specify that people may only ask one question during their allotted turn.
  - c.) Specify that people are only permitted one “come back” in response to the speaker’s answer.
  - d.) Specify that graduate students are given the first opportunity to ask questions
  - e.) Prioritize those in the question queue who do not tend to asked questions often (this will require the moderator to have a sense of how often people in the SPAH community tend to ask questions).
  - f.) Actively prevent aggressive or unprofessional behavior
  
- 5.) Adopted a trial of anonymous marking at the UG level in 2014-5, and committed to a review in the light of this trial in Summer Term 2015. The anonymous marking policy involves:**
  - a.) Asking students that they should not include their name (only their registration number) when submitting course work. [This already is the case for exams.]
  - b.) Staff to assign a mark to the work without knowing the student’s name.

- c.) In order to then complete the feedback in a more personalized form that will allow staff to track educational development of the student in question, staff will be provided with a list of names against registration numbers.

It is recognized that PGT coursework and dissertations will be more difficult to anonymise (due to the students choosing their titles in consultation with staff members and the smaller numbers involved), but we are committed to anonymise them to the extent that this is feasible.

**6.) Committed to provide sexual harassment regulations and links to the harassment network (see Appendix 3):**

- a.) During induction for staff and GTAs, including tutor induction.
- b.) In the student handbooks
- c.) On the webpage

**7.) Developed a policy handout for members of the department (see Appendix 4):**

- a.) Specifying our commitment to gender equality
- b.) Encouraging members of SPAH to consider ways in which their behavior may create an atmosphere that is damaging to women.
- c.) Emphasizing that it is everyone’s responsibility to cultivate a healthy work environment
- d.) Encouraging them to implement inclusive and responsible practices in all aspects of their professional life: e.g. when editing collections, establishing advisory or editorial boards, when refereeing papers (especially in conditions of compromised anonymity).

**8.) Established the following policy regarding caregivers:**

- a.) Make every effort to schedule all events between 9am and 5pm.
- b.) Commitment from the Head of School to be receptive to part time and flexible working requests.
- c.) Establish a named contact person as the liaison for students who are caregivers (Senior Personal Tutor).
- d.) Include a reference to sensitivity to caregiver needs in the handbook under “what you can expect from your supervisor”.

**9.) Established and communicated a romantic relationships policy (Appendix 5):**

- a. Communicate to teaching staff and GTAs (during induction) that relationships with students are discouraged
- b. Encourage a practice of full disclosure
- c. Specify that when they occur the senior member of the relationship must withdraw from all positions of power or assessment.

**Further points to note:**

- The Head of School will investigate with HR the extent to which the hiring process can be anonymised.
- The Head of School will also look into the possibility of assisting with childcare for visiting speakers and conference participants.

## APPENDIX 1: IMPLICIT BIAS

### What is implicit bias?

Controlled research studies demonstrate that people typically hold unconscious assumptions about groups of people that influence their judgments about members of those groups in negative ways. This is particularly true for traditionally discriminated-against groups like women, minorities, and disabled people. All people display these biases, include those who belong to the discriminated-against groups. Counteracting these biases requires us to become aware of the ways they might be affecting our assessments of our colleagues, teachers, and students.

### Examples of Implicit Bias:

- Recommendation letters for women tend to be shorter, provide ‘minimal assurances’ rather than solid recommendation, raise more doubts, portray women as students rather than professionals, and mention their personal lives more (Trix and Psenka).
- Job applicants with “white-sounding” names are more likely to be interviewed for open positions than equally qualified applicants with “African-American-sounding” names (Bertrand & Sendhil)
- When the *same* CV is randomly assigned a female or a male name, both male and female assessors rate male applicants better in terms of teaching, research, and service experience, and are more likely to hire them (Steinpreis et al).
- Female post-doc applicants to the Medical Research Council of Sweden needed substantially more publications to achieve the same rating as male applicants (Wenneras & Wold).

### Counteracting Implicit Bias

#### Remember that you are not immune.

- A recent meta-analysis of 122 research reports (involving a total of 14,900 subjects, revealed that implicit bias scores better predict stereotyping and prejudice than explicit self-reports (Greenwald et al.).

#### Promote diversity

- Research shows that assumptions are more likely to negatively affect evaluation of women and minorities when they represent a small proportion (less than 25%) of the relevant group.
- Exposure to “positive” exemplars (e.g. Martin Luther King in history class) decreased implicit bias against Blacks. (Dasgupta & Greenwald).

#### Work on your own Prejudice:

- Awareness of statistical discrepancies between the ideal of impartiality and actual performance – coupled with a commitment to that ideal – helps counteract implicit bias.
- E.g. In one study, a mental imagery exercise of imagining a professional business woman decreased implicit stereotypes of women (Blair et al).
- E.g. Contact with female professors and deans decreased implicit bias against women for college-aged women (Dasgupta & Asgari)

## **APPENDIX 2: Philosophy Seminar Discussion Policy**

In an effort to create productive and inclusive philosophical dialogue, we encourage moderators/chairs to abide by the following principles during the Q&A period of School seminars:

- *Take a 5 minute break between the end of the talk and the beginning of the Q&A.* This will not only allow less confident participants to formulate their questions – and possibly vet them with a friend – but it will also give the speaker and audience members a chance to have a drink of water or a bathroom break as needed. This policy will also provide an opportunity for those who cannot stay for the Q&A to exit gracefully. This cannot be a 20 minute smoke break, however!
- *Explicitly specify (i.e. so that the speaker herself knows) that graduate students are to be given the first opportunity to ask questions.*
- *Prioritize those in the question queue who do not tend to ask questions often (this will require the moderator to have a sense of how often people in the SPAH community tend to ask questions).*
- *Permit only one question to be asked during the questioner's allotted turn.*
- *Permit only one "come back" in response to the speaker's answer to a question.*
- *Actively prevent aggressive or unprofessional behavior.*

### APPENDIX 3: Sexual Harassment Regulations and Policy

The University of Essex defines sexual harassment as: “The inappropriate introduction of sexual comments or activities into teaching, learning, working or social situations.”

Examples of sexual harassment include:

- Unnecessary and unwelcome physical contact
- Sexual assault
- Suggestive and unwelcome comments or gestures emphasising the gender of an individual or a group
- Persistent unwelcome requests for social or sexual encounters and favours
- Display or transmission of pornographic, degrading, or indecent picture or email containing threatening, abusive or unwanted comments of a sexual nature

These activities will be considered to be very serious if they are accompanied by one or both of the following:

- Explicit or implicit promises for compliance that are a misuse of an institutional position (e.g. promises of higher assessment marks for a student or a recommendation for a promotion for a member of staff)
- Explicit or implicit threats of penalties for non-compliance that are a misuse of an institutional position (e.g. refusal to provide appropriate support/advice or resources)

**For dealing with sexual harassment**, the University strongly advises individual to contact the Harassment Advisory Network, a trained network of advisers who offer a confidential ‘signposting’ service for staff, students and visitors experiencing some form of bullying or harassment.

Harassment Advisory Network:

9.00am – 5.00pm weekdays only

01206 87 4334 / 07948 187107

[harass@essex.ac.uk](mailto:harass@essex.ac.uk)

[www.facebook.co./UoE.harassment.advisory.network](http://www.facebook.co./UoE.harassment.advisory.network)

You can also contact:

- Your Head of Department/Section
- Other support agencies e.g. Student Support, Student’s Union Advice Centre, Nightline, etc.

You are advised to make it clear to the person causing offence that such behaviour is unacceptable to you. Please be aware that if you do not report the harassment to a Harassment Adviser and/or your head of Department/Section or ask the person harassing you to stop, this may seem to constitute consent.

It is important to make a note or keep a diary of the details of any relevant incidents which distress you – particularly if you feel unable to speak to the person concerned or if, having spoken to them, the behaviour persists. If the harassment has caused you

to change the pattern of your work or social life of if it has any effect on your health, you should include this information as well.

All staff (including GTAs) should read the following advice on how to deal with individuals who approach them to discuss a particular incident.

**Advice for Conversations:**

Determine quickly what the individual approaching you wants. Ask "What would you like me to do?" or, "How would you like me to help you?" This will help you avoid misunderstandings and clarify the person's objective in approaching you. Respect his or her decisions and don't impose what you think you would do under the same circumstances.

Be respectful. Do not dismiss the complaint as trivial; avoid telling the person to "grow a thicker skin" or saying that the alleged perpetrator "means well, but sometimes slips." Although they may be intended to help, these comments can make the person feel discounted. Try to keep in mind that what may seem unimportant to you may be offensive or threatening to someone who has different life experiences or less power.

Acknowledge the courage needed to approach you and the difficulty of the situation. If the person cries, remember that tears have various meanings and are often a sign of frustration and anger in professional settings. Acknowledge the person's emotions without labelling them, by saying something like: "This must be difficult for you." Something as simple as handing the person a box of tissues can be helpful and also can serve to decrease your discomfort. Avoid asking the person to leave because he or she is in tears; instead, allow time for the person to regain composure.

Remember that the fear of retaliation is common among those who have been sexually harassed and is often the reason they do not bring complaints forward. Reassure the person and explain that the university has created a network of resources to assist in responding to harassment complaints. University policy operates in conjunction with federal and state laws to prohibit retaliation against complainants. Retaliation against persons who participate in an investigation or assist someone in making a complaint also is prohibited. The policy applies even when a complaint ultimately is not substantiated to a degree required by law.

Be neutral. Avoid comments such as, "I'm sure he didn't mean anything by it" or, "Oh, she does that to everyone," which may sound as if you are defending the accused. Also avoid comments such as, "Well, you're so young and pretty" or, "You shouldn't have been in the lab by yourself at night," which may sound as if you are blaming the person confiding in you.

If you elect to support the person, you should not feel obligated to follow the matter through to its final conclusion. If you become uncomfortable with your involvement at any time, acknowledge your discomfort and let the person know that you are sorry but you cannot continue in the support role. Acknowledge how difficult it must be for him or her and encourage the person to consult a campus resource to receive appropriate assistance.

If the person asks you to contact a campus resource, be sure you understand whether you are free to mention his or her name, or other identifying information such as the department or the alleged harasser's name, before you approach the campus resource for assistance.

It is generally best for all persons involved and for the effectiveness of any investigation into the matter if confidentiality is maintained. You should not discuss the situation with anyone unless the person has the authority to assist in the investigation or resolution of the matter.

Remember that conversations between a faculty or staff member and another individual are not privileged communication and can be elicited in the course of legal or administrative proceedings that might ensue.

### **Bystander advice**

Maintaining a healthy climate for all department members, especially those from under-represented groups and including non-academic staff is **everyone's responsibility**. An important part of this is challenging unacceptable, inappropriate, or aggressive behaviour if and when it happens. Any person who witnesses an act of harassment is a bystander. **Active bystanders** can take steps to address the situation by intervening or helping in some way.

Active bystander strategies:

Strategies in the moment:

- Name or acknowledge an offense
- Point to the 'elephant in the room'
- Interrupt the behaviour
- Publicly support an aggrieved person
- Use body language to show disapproval
- Use humour **with care**
- Encourage dialogue
- Help calm strong feelings
- Call for help

Strategies after the act:

- Privately support an upset person
- Talk privately with the inappropriate actor
- Report the incident, with or without names – depending on whether sexual harassment can be reported by someone other than the victim.

## **APPENDIX 4: SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY AND ART HISTORY POLICY ON GENDER EQUALITY**

The School of Philosophy and Art History aims to treat all staff and students who are part of the School, and also visitors to the School, equally in all relevant respects, regardless of gender. We acknowledge that historically women have been disadvantaged in many aspects of university and academic life, through both conscious and unconscious assumptions, biases, and prejudices, and through practical arrangements which were not favourable for women, and we are committed to changing this situation. We believe that not only female students and staff of the School, but the School in general will benefit academically, intellectually and socially from an energetic commitment to promoting gender equality.

1. This commitment entails that all students and staff of SPAH should strive to be conscious of ways in which their behaviour may be disrespectful, detrimental or damaging to women, to their activities or to their equal status.
2. It is part of the responsibility of everyone in the School to maintain an atmosphere for work and study in which gender equality is the norm. On occasions, this may require us to bring contrary behaviour to the attention of the person concerned, as well as to accept appropriate criticism of our own behaviour.
3. Within the School our commitment to gender equality involves consideration of the following (non-exhaustive) list of issues:
  - a) Ensuring a female presence on committees and decision-making bodies within the School.
  - b) Ensuring female participation in selection processes (e.g. regarding applications for PGT and PGT studentships, regarding posts – academic and administrative – within the School).
  - c) Giving consideration to the representation of female thinkers, writers and artists on the syllabi for modules within the School.
  - d) Taking measures to allow women’s voices to be adequately heard during seminars, discussions, question and answer sessions, etc.
4. In terms of broader professional activities, our commitment to gender equality involves consideration of the following (non-exhaustive) list of issues:
  - a) Invitation of female speakers when setting up conferences.
  - b) Inclusion of female authors when editing collections of articles.
  - c) Inclusion of female representation on editorial/advisory boards.
  - d) Awareness of possible bias when refereeing/assessing non-anonymized work by female authors.



## APPENDIX 5: POLICY ON SEXUAL/ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

The School believes that the professional relationship between students and members of staff makes a vital contribution to the educational development of students. It is vital that trust and confidence exists between staff and students to ensure that students are treated fairly, that they derive maximum benefit from their studies, and that they do not suffer any damaging emotional or psychological consequences. In this context a professional relationship is defined as one where there occur any of the following (this list may not be exhaustive):

- tutoring;
- teaching;
- supervision;
- assessment;
- pastoral care.

Staff are strongly advised not to enter into a sexual and/or romantic relationship with a student for whom they have any responsibility of one of the above kinds. ***It should be noted that staff are also discouraged from entering into any other relationship with a student or student – business, commercial, financial, or a close friendship of a social nature – which could compromise, or could be perceived to compromise, the relationship of trust and confidence.***

The School recognises, however, that sexual/romantic relationships may exist, either when a member of staff is appointed or when a student enrolls, and that a relationship may develop between a member of staff and a student during a course of study. Where a member of staff involved in such a relationship has an assessment, supervising, tutoring, teaching and or pastoral role for that student, it is the responsibility of the member of staff to inform his or her Head of School immediately in order that alternative arrangements can be made. This is to protect both the staff member and student from accusations of unfair and/or preferential treatment.

Where a sexual/romantic relationship exists, has existed or develops between members of staff where one party has a management or supervisory responsibility over the other, the existence, or former existence, of the relationship should be disclosed to the Head of School. Staff who have, or have had, a such a relationship should not be involved in any recruitment, selection, performance and development review, promotion or other processes, which could be perceived to give unfair advantage or disadvantage to the person with whom they have or have had such a relationship.