Action Plan: ***Bridging the Gap in SET***

The Action plan, ‘Bridging the Gap in SET’, identifies 4 areas for action arising from the priorities indicated by the data. In each area, a small number of principal actions are identified, and these are linked to the SWAN Charter principles. These key actions are subdivided into a range of targeted and timetabled specific actions with a success measure identified linking back to the principal action/s. The majority of actions are cross-SET, as at this point all 11 SET schools have designed and are implementing school-specific action plans. Some actions have cross-University application. The 4 areas for action in SET are as follows:

1. Increase the number of female undergraduates and postgraduates
2. Increase the number of women taking up post-doctoral posts
3. Increase the number of SET women in senior academic positions
4. Develop the organisational culture in ways that facilitate female recruitment and progression

## **1. Increase the number of female undergraduates and postgraduates**

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| **Principal action** | **Action already taken since last submission 2010** | **Actions planned from  October 2011** | **Measure of Success** | **Responsibility** |
| *SWAN Principles  1, 2, 4*  Put in place strategies to ensure maximum publicity for SET courses under-subscribed by females, highlighting associated gender-sensitive policies: monitor outcomes. | Schools identified where there is a noticeable gender difference at undergraduate level: Chemistry & Chemical Engineering, Maths & Physics, Electronics, Electrical Engineering & Computer Science, Planning, Architecture and Civil Engineering and Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering | 2011-2014: Monitor success of SET school SWAN initiatives to encourage women onto foundation courses and progress to undergraduate programmes. Discuss outcomes with relevant Champions and Head of School. | An increase in the number of female undergraduates and postgraduates in schools where female undergraduates and postgraduates are less than 50% | HoS, SWAN champions, SET Deans, QGI |
| Welcoming statements directed at potential female students on publicity material and advertised similarly on relevant SET school websites, eg Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, Maths & Physics, Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering.  Women given a high profile on all SET school websites and course promotional material and they are well represented on all outreach programmes and at recruitment days. | 2011-2014: Make recruitment of female students a standard item on SWAN meetings agenda.  2014: Assist schools to review success of measures taken in 2011-2014  2011-2014: Promote sharing of best practice between schools via Champions network, discussion with HoS and with University Education Board. | Communications Office, Dean EPS, SWAN champions, SWAN Steering Group, QGI |
| STEM website is publicised widely (<http://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/STEM>) to students at Key Stage 4. | 2012: Add a section on the STEM website specifically for female students and centralise links to the summer internship opportunities offered by schools.  2013: Evaluate summer internship initiatives with schools and women interns through qualitative survey.  2012/13: Organise a high-profile seminar discussing government-funded study on the uptake of STEM subjects by girls at second level schools in Northern Ireland.  2013/14; Organise a symposium for UK-wide SET schools to share and showcase best practice in promoting science in primary schools. | Dean EPS, SWAN champions, HoS, QGI |

## **2. Increase the number of women taking up postdoctoral/lecturing posts**

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| **Principal action** | **Action already taken since  last submission 2010** | **Actions planned from  October 2011** | **Measure of Success** | **Responsibility** |
| *SWAN Principles 2, 4, 5*  Encourage women to embark on an academic career in SET by developing awareness of the provision for postgraduate students and encouraging them to progress into the research staff and academic grades: monitor impact. | Two QGI/Staff Development and Training Unit courses for postgraduate & postdoctoral females on *Being a Woman in a Male Environment* and *Juggling Home and Laboratory* have been running since 2009 for postgraduate women.  In 2011 the courses were also made available to postdoctoral researchers. | 2011-2014: Continue QGI/ Staff Development and Training Unit’s two courses for early career females  2013: Review feedback from all early career courses with a view to further tailoring courses to meet identified needs.  2012: Develop and deliver new course - *Role Models: the Younger Generation*. | An increase in the number and proportion of women taking up postdoctoral/ lecturing positions, arresting the decline shown in data. | QGI, STDU, SET Schools |
| *SWAN Principles 1, 2, 4*  Increase awareness of policies supporting work-life balance of female academic and research staff among SET schools, and across the University, promoting active endorsement of these policies and practices by senior management: monitor impact. | Staff are supported during and on return from maternity leave through Maternity Leave Cover scheme, individual School initiatives such as ‘keeping in touch’ days (eg Pharmacy) and research semester on return (eg Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, Psychology). | 2011/12: Produce a best-practice guide for schools on supporting staff during and on return from maternity or adoption leave drawing on practices in SET schools  2011-2014: Maintain centrally-funded Maternity/Adoption Leave Cover Scheme.  2013: Explore feasibility of expanding Scheme to include additional paternity leave  2011/12; Support SWAN Champions and HoS in providing academic women in all SET schools with the opportunity of re-engaging with their research for the first semester on return from maternity leave.  2012/13: Discuss the application of the research semester with HoS in non-SET schools, using the experience of women who have availed of the scheme to demonstrate its effectiveness  2012/13: Collect and review data of career progression of academic and research women returning from maternity leave. | A 95% return. | QGI, HR, SWAN champions, HoS, Deans |
| Evidence of career progression for those who have been on maternity leave | QGI, HR, SWAN champions, Planning Office |
| 2012: Keep QUB childcare provision under annual review to ensure the needs of academic mothers are being addressed.  2011-2014: Continue to publicise widely the childcare voucher /salary sacrifice schemes and 7-week summer activity scheme. |  | HR, QGI, SWAN champions, Queen’s Childcare Service |

## **3. Increase the number of SET women in senior academic positions**

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| **Principal action** | **Action already taken at  October 2011** | **Actions planned from  October 2011** | **Measure of Success** | **Responsibility** |
| *SWAN Principles 2, 3, 5*  Support SET women to apply for promotion through one to one mentoring, development of job portfolios, and access to procedural information. | A review of female academic positions showed AC3 to be a particular sticking point. | 2012: Consult with AC3 women on their perception of barriers to progress.  2012/13: Review university policies on work-life balance to address these specific concerns.  2013: Inform university senior management and HoS of outcome and discuss strategies for overcoming barriers. | An increase in the number of women in senior academic positions (AC4, Professor) | QGI, EOU, HoS, Personnel, Deans |
| A mentoring report has been drafted, evaluating the career progression of the first cohort of mentees 2000-2006. | 2011-2014: Continue to provide the personal mentoring programme for contract research/lecturing staff in order to increase recruitment of females into academic posts.  2013: Review job success rate and destination data of both mentors and mentees.  2013/14: Mentoring report evaluating the career progression of second cohort of mentors/mentees 2007-2012. | Improvement in female success rates with respect to application for and success in securing promotion. | QGI,EOU, HR, HoS |
| Annual preparing for promotion seminar held in 2011. This event was widely publicised and there has been an increasing number of attendees over the years. | 2011-2014: Continue to hold an annual Preparing for Promotions seminar for academic women, led by a female PVC/senior academic.  2011-2104: Encourage SET schools to be more proactive in mentoring for promotion and demystifying the promotions processes.  2011/12: Modify/adapt programmes, including mentoring, in response to women’s needs, e.g. in particular for women at AC3 level  2011-2014: monitor the gender ratio of Directors of Research/Directors of Education (normally AC4 positions) as these are considered important management positions leading to individuals acquiring skills relevant to the Head of School position. | QGI, SWAN champions, Heads of School, HR |
| Appointment of Director for Equality in Medicine, Dentistry & Biomedical Sciences in close partnership with QGI and EOU. | 2011-2014: Director drafts and implements gender action plan for Medicine, Dentistry & Biomedical Sciences. | Equality Director, SMDBS, QGI, EOU |
| QGI/LAWN network reactivated with symposium on REF, **’**Supporting Research Excellence.’ | 2011-2014: Continue to use the QGI/LAWN network, develop knowledge and expertise in addressing the wider research environment by organising symposia on:  2012: Entrepreneurship and Enterprise 2013: Internationalisation | QGI, DGE in SMDBS |
| Reviewed promotions in liaison with EOU and HR | 2011-2014: Continue to investigate the pattern of applications / success rates of women in SET for promotion to Senior Lecturer /Reader/ Professor  2012-2014: If a particular block to women’s career progression is identified, address the cause/s. |  | HR, EOU, QGI |
| *SWAN Principles 1, 2, 4*  Promote gender-sensitive policies in recruitment procedures. | Advertisements for senior academic positions carried welcoming statements encouraging women to apply. | 2011-2014: Use the positive welcoming statement in adverts and information packages for senior academic posts, as appropriate.  2011-2014: Encourage schools to proactively assist in the identification of potential female applicants at early stages of recruitment.  2011-2014: Ensure breaks for maternity leave during applicant’s career are taken into consideration at shortlisting and interview stages.  2011-2014: Give detailed feedback to unsuccessful internal applicants to help them with future applications.  2011-2014: Deans to monitor and support their Heads of Schools’ efforts in increasing the proportion of women in their SET school. |  | HR, EOU, Deans, HoS |
| *SWAN Principles1, 3*  Improve the gender balance in Head of School and other senior academic positions across the University | QGI engaged in intensive informal discussion and networking with senior women, encouraging them to consider leadership positions.  Staff Development and Training Unit was main sponsor of flagship *Women in Leadership* conference, October 2011 attracting attendance of over 100 participants. | 2011-2012; Work with Staff Development and Training Unit to promote the Leadership Excellence Programme among senior women.  2011/12: Develop a peer-support initiative for women holding DR, DE, HoS positions  2012-2014: Work with Staff Development and Training Unit to promote leadership development courses as being relevant to women at all stages of their careers  2011-2014; Monitor the take-up of leadership development courses by women. |  | QGI/STDU |
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| Equal Pay Review outcome was discussed within the HR Directorate. | 2012: Publicise widely criteria for professorial advancement.  2011-2014: Encourage HoS to examine professorial salaries in their schools for salary anomalies and take corrective action where required. | Deans, HR, HoS, QGI |
| *SWAN Principle 4*  Increase the representation of women on school/ university committees /working groups. | In 2011 a QGI report on the representation of women on committees prompted Deans to identify and appoint women to vacancies on university boards and working groups. | 2013/14: Repeat survey of women’s representation on university committees and working groups. Consult widely on findings and recommendations. | An increase in the number of women on university committees and working groups | QGI, HR, Registrar’s Office, Deans |

## **4. Develop the organisational culture in ways to facilitate female recruitment and progression**

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| **Principal action** | **Action already taken and outcome at October 2011** | **Actions planned from October 2011** | **Measure of success** | **Responsibility** |
| *SWAN Principle 6*  Celebrate women’s achievements and improve the culture for all women in the University. | Organised a major ‘Women in Leadership Conference’ highlighting women’s leadership role in academia, with particular attention to women role models in HE, SET and non-traditional subject areas/disciplines  In 2011 the University won recognition in the *Times Top 50 Employers of Women* list, only one of two UK universities | 2011/12: Consult women across the University on initiatives they would like to see happen that put women’s achievements in the spotlight. 2012-2014: Take action arising.  2011-2014: Organise high profile celebrations of SWAN success and women’s achievements in the University. | Monitoring the number of press releases that feature women in SET. | QGI, Communications Office |
| In June 2011, a senior female engineer from the construction engineering sector gave the QGI’s Annual Lecture, *Engineering Leadership for Transformational Change* | From 2012 the QGI Annual Lecture will be known as the Annual Claire Macmahon Lecture in recognition of the achievements of the university’s first female Pro-Chancellor  The annual speaker will be chosen in consultation with each SET school in turn | QGI, SET SWAN Champions |
| A special working group was set up to organise and promote International Women’s Day events in 2012. | 2011-2014: Highlight women’s contribution to the University by celebrating International Women’s Day through an eclectic programme of events and activities. |  | QGI |
| The name of the Women’s Forum changed to QGI Executive Committee to reflect the mainstreaming of gender equality in the University.  In 2011 the membership of the Executive Committee was reviewed and updated to ensure it continues to be representative of women across the University. SWAN champions have been integrated into the Executive Committee’s structure. | 2011-2014: Continue to hold meetings of the QGI Executive Committee on a monthly basis, with actions arising. |  | QGI |
|  |  | 2011-2014: Nominate outstanding women for honorary degrees, conferring annually.  2011-2014: Continue to make honorary degrees for women a standing agenda item on QGI’s Executive Committee’s monthly meetings. | An increase in the number of women receiving honorary degrees. | QGI |
| *SWAN Principle 1, 2, 6*  Promote continued awareness of SWAN award ideals at school / university levels.  . | SET School Champions networked with regular meetings to share information and reviews of school/university policies on issues as they impact on equal opportunities in SET.  Three representatives from non-SET schools now sit on the SWAN champions subgroup. | 2011-2014: Continue to ensure SET school Self-assessment team meetings are a continuous process and SWAN activities a regular item on School Management Board agendas.  2011-2014: Continue regular meetings of the SWAN Steering Group to provide ongoing advice and support on school and university delivery of Action Plans.  2011/12: Plan for next Action Plan period with SET schools and SWAN champions. |  | Dean EPS, SWAN champions, HoS |
| A best practice guide produced by QGI was widely circulated, including to non-SET schools interested in following Athena SWAN guidelines. | 2011-2014; Continue to encourage non-SET schools to follow SWAN initiatives including developing gender action plans. |  | Deans, HoS, EOU, QGI, Communications Office, |