



Athena SWAN Silver institute award application

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| Name of institute: | British Geological Survey (BGS) |
| Name of Research Council that governs institute: | Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) |
| Date of application: | October 2013 |
| Date of Institute membership to Athena SWAN: | Not applicable (pilot) |
| Contact for application: | Marion Squires or Denise Langley |
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| Institute website address: | www.bgs.ac.uk |

Athena SWAN **Silver Institute** awards recognise that in addition to its own formal policies the institute is working to promote gender equality and to address challenges particular to the discipline.

Not all organisations use the term 'institute' and there are many equivalent academic groupings with different names, sizes and compositions. The definition of an 'institute' 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 institute.

Sections to be included

At the end of each section state the number of words used. Click [here](#) for additional guidance on completing the template.

1. Letter of endorsement from the institute director or chief executive: maximum 500 words

An accompanying letter of endorsement from the institute director or chief executive should explain how the SWAN action plan and activities in the institute contribute to the overall institute strategy and academic mission.

The letter is an opportunity for the institute director or chief executive their support for the application and to endorse and commend any women and STEM activities that have made a significant contribution to the achievement of the institute's mission.



Mr James Lush
Athena SWAN Charter
Equality Challenge Unit
7th floor, Queens House
55/56 Lincoln's Inn Field
London
WC2A 3LJ

14 October 2013

John Ludden
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Dear Mr Lush

I am pleased to enclose an application from the British Geological Survey (BGS) of the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC).

As the Executive Director of BGS since 2006, I have introduced a number of significant changes in the structure of the organisation and in enhancing the science outputs of the organisation.

BGS is the provider of geological information on the UK, with a public good role in informing government. Recently BGS impact cases were recognised at 91% excellent to outstanding in a NERC sponsored peer review, and our research recognised as internationally leading or better in 78% of the cases submitted.

We do not award degrees but we currently have 516 scientists working with more than 40 Universities and institutes and more than 150 current private sector customers. We run about 20 bespoke science laboratories, the National Geoscience Data Base and five NERC and national science facilities. All of these facilities and data bases underpin the UK economy and research with HEI.

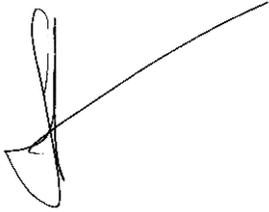
BGS has been actively addressing gender issues for some time because to achieve our aims it is important to attract and retain excellent scientists. Recent changes in the workforce profile have resulted in significant sharpening of the employment pyramid within BGS. To an extent, this has reduced the numbers of opportunities for promotion at the highest levels in BGS, but it has resulted in an influx of new talent.

BGS has the highest ratio of males to females in NERC (2:1). In part the imbalance can be attributed to the discipline of Earth Sciences. However, we are now managing to create a near equal M:F balance with new hires and the statistics in this paper show an increase in the proportion of female staff being promoted. I want to see the overall proportion be much closer to 1:1. It will take a number of years to redress the balance, hence the need for us to continue the progress already made and to have a strong programme within the Athena Swan initiative.

I am confident that BGS has the appropriate processes in place to address the major issues in gender balance across the organisation. The assessment team has undertaken an excellent job evaluating the current state of the workforce and the processes that need to become routine to ensure success, and we have made considerable progress since 2007, as indicated in this document. We must ensure that we support staff recruited, especially the female staff, in moving through the promotion process, thus ensuring a better ratio in the senior staff posts and better success in the merit promotion schemes.

I sincerely hope that the committee feels able to award BGS with the Silver standard for Athena SWAN. As Executive Director I underline that I am fully supportive of the programme outlined here as is the entire BGS senior team.

Yours sincerely



Professor John Ludden
Executive Director

Letter word count: 470

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 institute and as part of the team) and their experiences of work-life balance

Professor Mike Stephenson, Director of Science and Chair of the Equality and Diversity Group – responsible for the Science Programme at BGS. He is committed to supporting equality of opportunity for female scientists and to fostering a creative atmosphere for all scientists in BGS.

Ann Evans, Secretary – worked at BGS for 26 years in both secretarial and administrative roles. Has taken two periods of maternity leave and varied her working hours as her children have grown and been promoted during this period.

Dee Flight, Head of BGS Laboratories and Skill Leader - held both science and management roles and had successful promotions. Throughout been able to work flexibly including reduced hours and home working while raising two children.

Marieta Garcia-Bajo, Geological Modeller - is a Spanish geologist who joined the BGS in 1999. After three promotions and two children she is now working part-time. She is a member of the Dignity Support Team (explained later) and has an interest in promoting women in science.

Kathryn Goodenough, Survey Geologist – During 12 years in BGS she has achieved a significant profile in the UK's geological community, working for long periods away from home. She therefore understands work life balance demands and is passionate about finding ways to support career development.

Tracy Henson, HR Adviser – during 25 years in BGS she has had two periods of maternity leave and works part time. She will gather and maintain the equality data.

Denise Langley, HR Business Partner - joined BGS in 2011 after 20 years working within HR in the NHS. As part of a dual career family, works a compressed week and uses the flexi-time scheme to work longer or shorter days.

Sarah Nice, Communications Officer - worked at BGS for 21 years both in Science and Communications. In this time she has taken maternity leave and now works part time. She is the scheme coordinator for the mentoring scheme and also a member of the Dignity Support team.

Barry Rawlins, Team Leader - joined BGS in 1996. As part of a dual career family he has taken the opportunity to work more flexibly (working a 4-day week) to share childcare. This has not affected his career and Barry is now a principle scientist and Team Leader.

Jim Riding, Biostratigrapher - is a leading researcher in his area. He has been a mentor in the mentoring scheme since its inception, and sits on the Dignity Support Team. Jim works full time, and has experience of balancing work with the demands of childcare.

Chris Rochelle, Geochemist - was a member of the BGS Investors in People working group that achieved accreditation in 1996 and also a member of the Childcare working group. He has three children, and has made use of flexible working arrangements to balance home life and work commitments.

Marion Squires, Head of HR - gained a BGS funded PGDip in HRM in 1998. Achieved four promotions whilst bringing up two children and now has caring responsibilities. She co-authored a paper on equal opportunities for women scientists.

Rob Ward, Director of Groundwater - manages a research group of 35 people (46% female). Previously worked at the Environment Agency where he mentored early career scientists and was a member of its Technical Talent Pilot Scheme to establish and develop pathways for career progression.

Professor Julia West, Geomicrobiology - Joined BGS as a junior Scientist, achieved several promotions, including a BGS supported PhD. She co-authored 2 reports reviewing career development opportunities for female scientists. She mentors many of her colleagues assisting them in developing their careers, is a magistrate and works part time.

- 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

Diversity has been a long-standing part of the HR agenda, but in April 2013, it was agreed that we would establish a “Diversity and Equality Group” to provide more focused effort in identifying priorities and actions, and further the progress already made. The Group will consider all areas of diversity but initially has concentrated on the Athena SWAN submission. The Athena SWAN process has provided a framework to use in supporting

our broader aim to ensure an inclusive culture in BGS. The group has published its terms of reference to staff on the intranet but will ensure further communication to the staff and public. **(Action 3.4)**

At its inaugural meeting in April 2013, the Group established a clear understanding of BGS's progress to date in relation to promoting women's careers in order to agree priorities for action. The Group agreed to:

- Undertake a thorough analysis of its statistical data
- Review the initiatives already implemented
- Commission an independent organisation to undertake a survey of all BGS staff to understand their views and experiences from an equality and diversity perspective.

We contracted an independent Diversity and Inclusion Consultancy to run a staff survey on Diversity in July 2013. The resulting quantitative and qualitative data were presented to the Group at a meeting early in July 2013 and used throughout this submission. The information has played a major role in informing development of the group's action plan.

We will use the data for 2007, 2010 and 2013 throughout this submission to demonstrate how things have changed and progress has been made since our first report on equality and diversity in 2006, which identified some key issues. Note that BGS first introduced initiatives specifically aimed at addressing female scientists' career progression issues in 2007.

- 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 Diversity and Equality Group has committed to meeting at least 3 times per year to review progress against the action plan and update as appropriate. The doctoral training programme is undergoing a review and once complete we will invite a student to join the group **(Action 3.5)**. The Diversity and Equality Group action plan will form part of the overall Strategic HR Action Plan which is discussed and monitored by the BGS Executive Committee. Both Mike Stephenson and Marion Squires are members of the Executive Committee as well as the Diversity and Equality Group and will ensure that the action plan is reviewed and supported at that level.

(Section 2 word count 999)

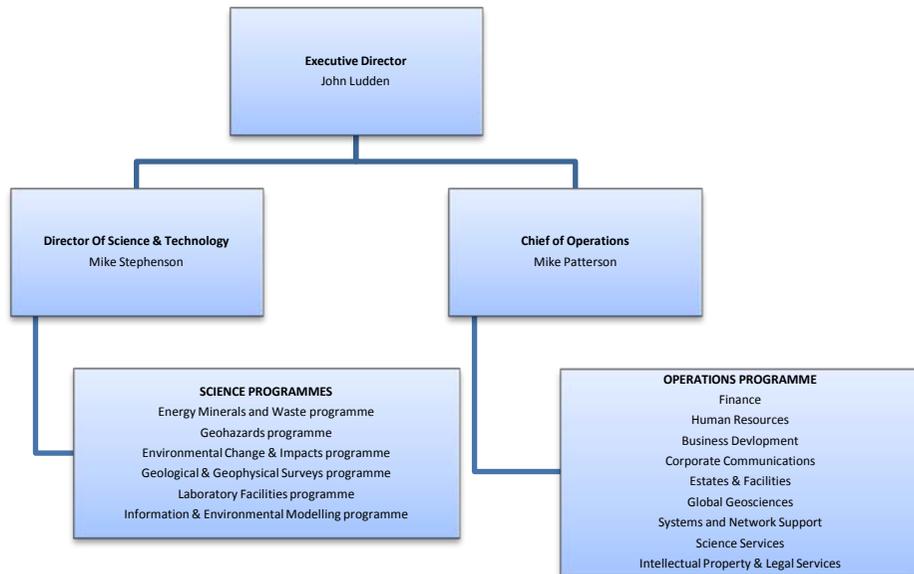
3. A picture of the institute: maximum 2000 words

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

The British Geological Survey is part of the Natural Environment Research Council and, in partnership with key universities and other NERC institutes, is its supplier of national capability in the geosciences. As a public sector organisation, BGS is responsible for advising the UK government on all aspects of geosciences, as well as providing impartial geological advice to industry, academia and the general public. The institute works

overseas, where it plays an important role in building geological infrastructure and capacity in developing countries. Our annual turnover is approximately £42m, about 50% of which comes from NERC's Science Budget, with the remainder from the public and private sectors. BGS employs approximately 680 people (with 22% working part-time), and operates from three main sites. These are Keyworth, near Nottingham (HQ), Edinburgh and Wallingford in Oxfordshire, with smaller offices in London, Belfast and Cardiff, and a number of small science facilities.

OVERVIEW OF BGS ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE:



BGS is not a formal academic institution; it has no remit for undergraduate teaching, and does not award degrees, however, during the last six years, via the BGS University Funding Initiative (BUFI), the organisation has increased its investment in doctoral training, spending £250–300k annually. Supervision and training responsibilities for all BUFI PhDs are shared between BGS and the respective partner research organisations, with some students experiencing several research environments in addition to that provided by BGS and their host Higher Education Institute (HEI). Project and student selection is through a review of projects by an external panel to ensure excellent, innovative and relevant research opportunities for doctoral training. BUFI students also have opportunities for technical training through the BGS GeoSchool and, if appropriate, access to personal development

training provided by RCUK. The scheme is changing to Doctoral Training Partnerships and BGS will ensure that the selection process is in line with best practise with regard to equal opportunities **(Action 2.12)**.

In 2010, the Research Councils implemented a Shared Services Centre (now UK Shared Business Centre) that took on responsibility for transactional elements of HR, finance and procurement. In this submission, there is a gap in certain statistical information (specifically recruitment) as a result of this transition and we are working to resolve this situation **(Action 1.3)**.

We have long been aware of the need to develop the potential of its staff, particularly in addressing the impact of gender on career progression. A brief report of statistical data in 2002¹, provided baseline information on male/female numbers at different grades through the organisation but no action was taken at that time. Changes in senior structure and HR responsibilities resulted in a more detailed assessment of staff career experiences being presented in 2006², which identified issues with career progression for women and made the following recommendations:

- An independent survey should be undertaken to explore the perceptions regarding career progression for women within BGS;
- A mentoring scheme should be introduced;
- A review of staff and their careers should be undertaken.

These recommendations were reviewed by the Executive and a number of positive initiatives were implemented to promote and support women's careers following that report which will be explained in the submission:

- 2007 - The launch of a BGS mentoring scheme
- 2008 - The launch of the role of Skills Leader to help staff plan and develop their careers. Skills Leaders are individuals who continue to work as scientists, but also have a significant proportion of their time to lead on strategic people management issues such as workforce planning and people development for a specified group of staff.
- 2009 - A programme of Staff Surveys was commenced. After each survey action plans drafted with progress reported regularly to the Executive and to staff
- 2011/12 – Creation of a Dignity at Work Team to assist with any relationship issues.
- 2013 - The introduction of a BGS specific management training programme and electronic toolkit.

Early in 2013 we identified that, whilst progress had been made, it has been HR led and we should include a wider range of people in taking this further and developing a specific action plan for diversity issues. In April 2013 we established the Diversity and Equality Group to be responsible for producing that plan and reviewing progress. Members of the Group would take the lead on specific initiatives and some already had that experience. In July 2013 the group agreed to commission an independent Diversity and Inclusion consultancy to undertake a survey to explore the experiences

¹ Gender Issues at the BGS – West J – 2002, Career Development for Female Staff – Orr J - 2002

² Career Development Opportunities in BGS – Squires M and West J - 2006

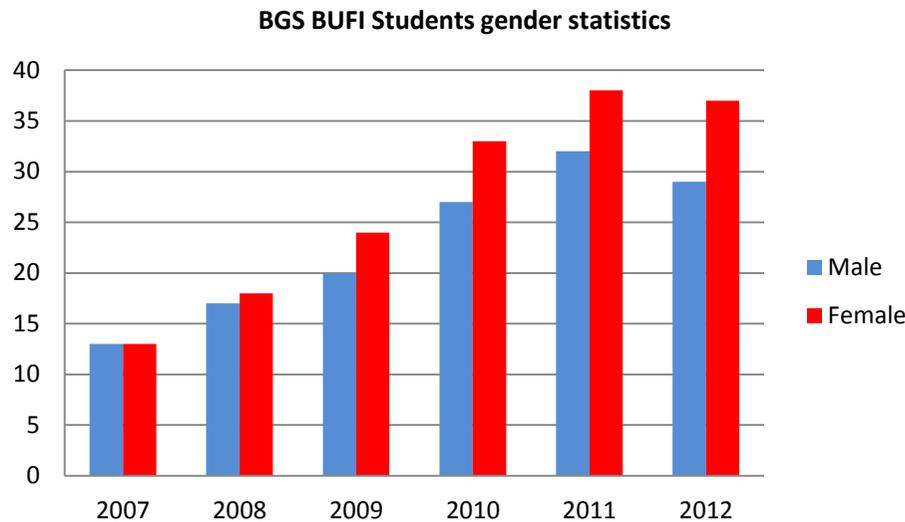
and perceptions of staff in relation to equality and diversity, with a particular emphasis on gender related issues. This survey was distributed to all 674 staff, and a 61% completion rate was achieved. More detail about this Survey is included in section 5.

- 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.

Student data

The BUFI scheme currently supports, through co-funding with HEIs, a cohort of 77 PhD students. These students are hosted by a range of HEIs, and located in over 35 research organisations, with a network of collaboration that includes industry, other NERC Centre-Surveys, the Nuclear Decommissioning Agency and the Natural History Museum.

Graph 1 shows the total number of students funded through the BGS University Funding Initiative (BUFI) by gender. The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) statistics for 11/12 show that 55.7% of undergraduates were female and this may explain why there are increasingly more females in this scheme than males.



Graph 1

In addition to the BUFI scheme, through the NERC Isotope Geosciences Laboratory (NIGL), BGS plays a key national role for doctoral training in isotope geosciences. Student visitors studying for bachelor degrees, master's courses and PhDs receive one-to-one training in isotope geoscience. Each student is assigned to a member of NIGL staff, who guides them through their analytical training, and provides advice on interpreting the resultant data. During financial year 2012/13, a total of 62 students received training in this way and of these, 58% were female.

- (i) **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.

Not applicable

- (ii) **Visiting students more than 6 months: male and female numbers** – full and part-time – comment on the female:male ratio compared with the national picture for the discipline or topic area. Describe any initiatives taken to address any imbalance and the impact to date. Comment upon any plans for the future.

We do not keep these data. Though in the future, with NERC Doctoral Training Partnerships there is scope to keep more statistics on this aspect. **(Action 2.12)**

- (iii) **Ratio of applications to offers and acceptances by gender for visiting students more than 6 months, and for 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.

We do not keep these data as the application process is handled by the host HEI. Though in the future, with NERC Doctoral Training Partnerships there is scope to keep more statistics on this aspect. **(Action 2.12)**

- (iv) **Research degree submission rates by gender** – comment on any differences in submission rates between males and females and describe what actions are being taken to address any imbalance.

See (V)

- (v) **Time taken to complete research degree by gender** – comment on any differences in research degree completion time between males and females and whether any breaks were needed e.g. maternity/paternity leave, career break.

The completion rate (submission in four years equivalent or less) since 2002 for BUFI-funded students is 92%. There have however, been two cases where researchers took maternity leave (they continued to receive their stipend) and returned part-time (50%) to complete their studies. These two cases have yet to submit their PhD, but they are still within the 4-year equivalent periods for submission. We do not keep statistics that enable distinction of time taken to complete PhDs to see if there are any gender differences on a 3–4 year timescale. For the small number of students who have not completed in four years there is an equal balance between male (4%) and female (4%) students

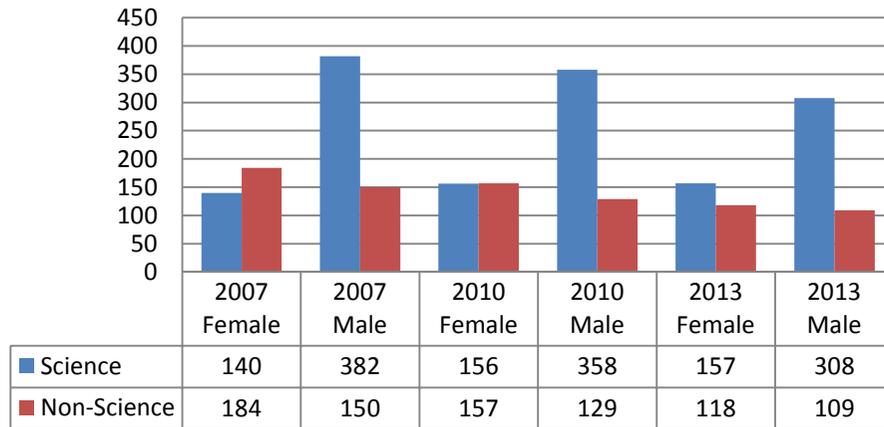
Staff data

- (vi) **Female: male ratio of all academic staff (including teaching academics) and research staff** – where suitable include post-doc, tenure track or fixed-term scientists and tenured scientists and different grades. Comment on any differences in numbers between males and females, benchmarked against national averages and say what action is being taken to address any underrepresentation at particular grades/levels.

Since 2010, we have been working through a restructuring programme to equip the organisation to meet its future strategic direction. This programme will see a total reduction of 105 posts compared to 2007 figures, including a reduction of 57 science posts. As part of this programme, we have also reduced the number of senior posts, and recruited significant numbers of specialist postdoctoral researchers.

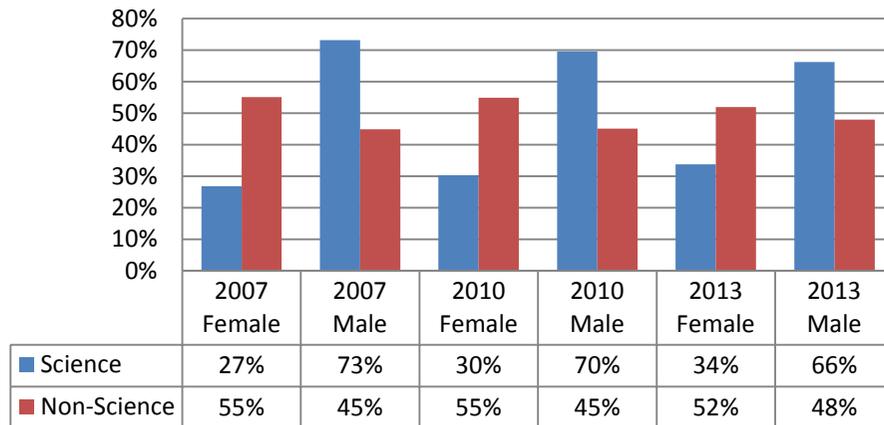
The data in Graphs 2 and 3 show staff numbers by gender and science/non-science categories over a 7-year period, and demonstrates that staff numbers have reduced in all categories *apart from* female scientists, which have increased by 16 (a rise of over 12%) and demonstrates that the initiatives we have implemented are being effective.

**BGS staff (n) by gender in science and non-science roles
(2007, 2010, 2013)**



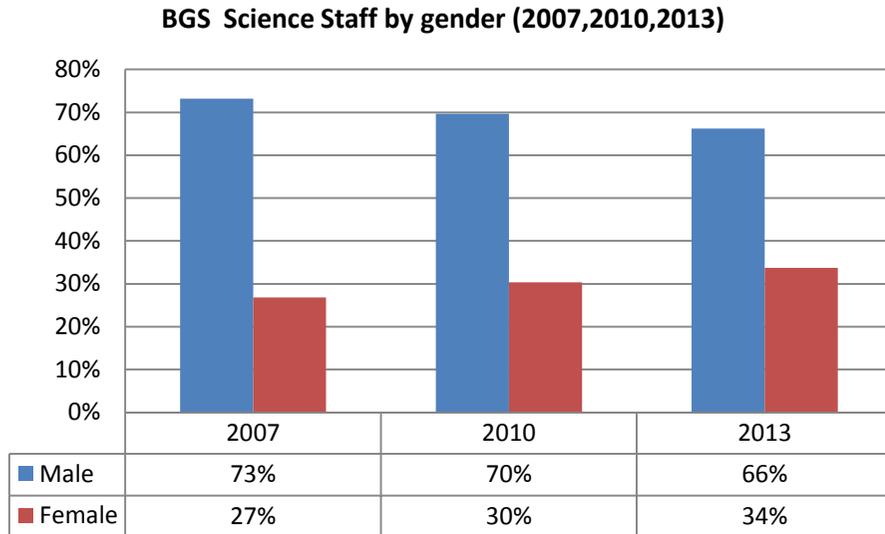
Graph 2

**BGS Staff - percentages by gender in science and non-science
roles**



Graph 3

Recent analysis following the additional recruitment as part of the restructuring shows changes to the science gender demographic which are evident in our current data set out in Graph 4. This currently shows an increase in the proportion of females employed from 27% to 34% between 2007 and 2013. We forecast that the female complement will increase further to 36% from April 2014 based on existing knowledge of confirmed leavers and starters between now and March 2014.



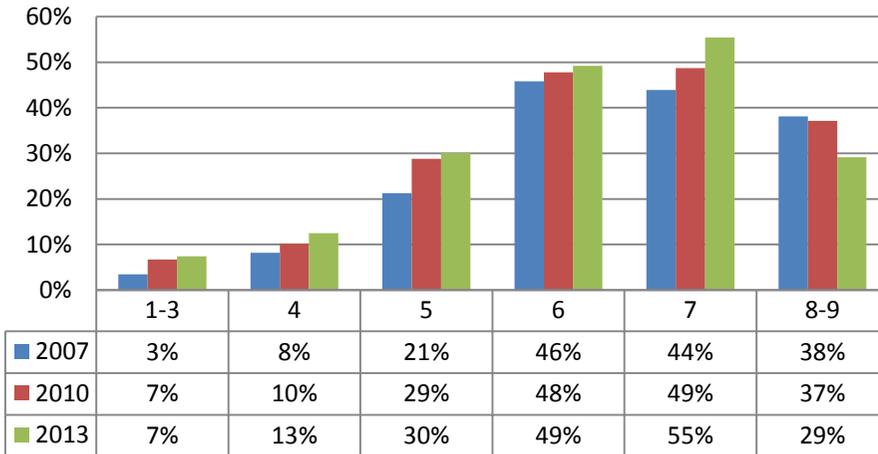
Graph 4

BGS employs scientific staff as researchers and applied scientists:

- Scientists normally join the BGS at Band 8 as support scientists, Band 7 (with a degree and/or MSc) or Band 6 (with a PhD).
- Band 5 and 4 are our senior scientists and principle investigators.
- Bands 1 to 3 are our Directors or senior research scientists.
- BGS does not employ teaching academics.

The female scientist breakdown by band in Graph 5 shows a continuing upward trend female numbers for bands 1-7 since 2007 and the introduction of the initiatives. However we need to ensure that this trend continues and the action plan has actions that will look at areas that may impact on career progression. The numbers of band 8-9 have reduced as a result of promotions and reduction in recruitment at those levels through government policy on administrative functions and the introduction of the shared services centre.

BGS Female Science staff percentages by payband (The smaller numbered pay bands respresent more senior staff)



Graph 5

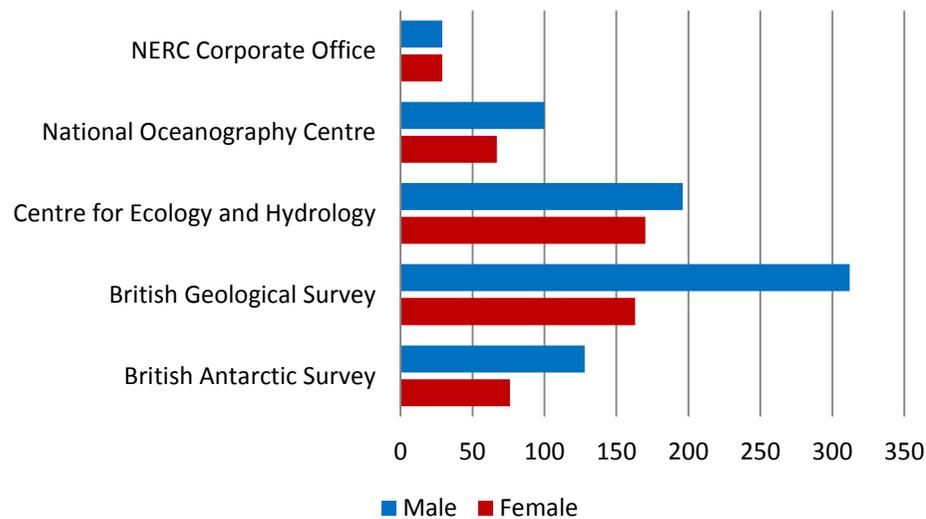
Table 1 shows a comparison of BGS Bands with HEI.

| HEI Grade UEA | University Staff Category | BGS Band | BGS Category | Athena Swan Classification |
|------------------|------------------------------------|----------|---|---|
| Grade 1 | Technical Staff | Band 9 | Science Support | Research and Support Staff |
| Grade 4 | Technical Staff | Band 8 | Science Support | Research and Support Staff |
| Grade 6 | Research Assistant | Band 7 | Graduate/ MSc Scientists | Research and Support Staff |
| Grade 7 | Senior RA/lecturer A | Band 6 | Post Doctoral Scientists/Research staff | Postdoctoral Scientists/Research and support staff |
| Grade 8 | Research Fellow/Lecturer B | Band 5 | Senior Scientists/Research staff | Research Leaders/Postdoctoral Scientists/Research and support staff |
| Grade 9 | Senior Research Fellow / Senior | Band 4 | Principle Scientists/Research staff | Research Leaders/ Research and Support Staff |
| Prof | Professor | Band 3 | Science Directors/ IMP Scientists | Research Leaders |
| Prof | Professor | Band 2 | Executive Director | Research Leaders |
| Prof | Professor | Band 1 | Executive Director | Research Leaders |

Table 1

We have compared these results with information from other NERC Research Institutes; Graph 6 shows the current number of scientific staff in these Institutes. We have the second largest number of female scientists, but the percentage of female scientists as a proportion of all staff is smaller (34%) at BGS compared to other NERC research institutes (37 to 50%) BGS is not particularly unusual; female staff account for 34% of scientists at BGS compared to 37% at the British Antarctic Survey. It is noteworthy that BGS also has the largest number of scientific staff, between 1.3 and 8 times more than the other centres.

NERC Institute science staff (n) by gender (August 2013)



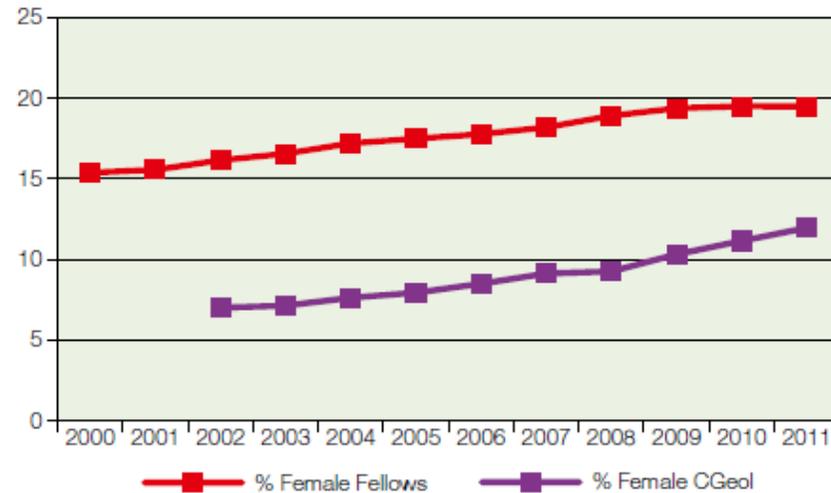
Graph 6

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) statistics helps to explain this percentage:

- BGS draws its Band 6 science appointments mainly from the physical sciences, and the 2012 HESA data shows that only 37.3% of PhD researchers in that area are female. This figure is comparable to the 34% figure for female scientists employed by BGS (Graph 3).
- The Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) and to some extent the National Oceanography Centre (NOC), on the other hand, draw their applicants from biological/environmental science where the percentage of female PhD researchers is 61%.

Furthermore, the chart below, produced by the Geological Society of London in 2013, shows the percentage of their female Fellows and Chartered members, and illustrates that they continue to be a significant minority within this field:

Percentage Female Fellows & CGeol, 2000-2011

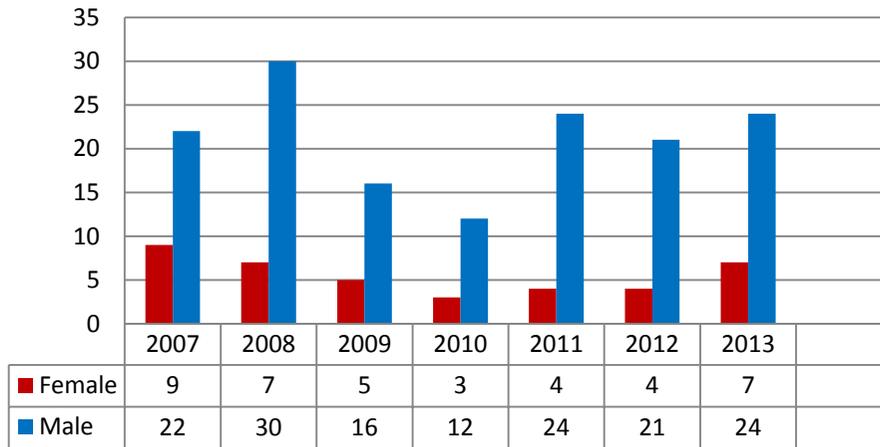


BGS will seek to identify similar external organisations where we can benchmark our data. **(Action 1.4)**

- (vii) **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.

The current restructuring programme will result in the departure of a substantial number of staff, largely as part of the voluntary early exit scheme. Around 35% of the staff who were in post in 2010 will leave the Survey by 2015. This is an exceptional change in comparison to the long-term pattern and needs to be accounted for when considering the turnover figures. The turnover figures in Graph 7 exclude staff departures associated with the restructuring and therefore demonstrate other exits over the past 7 years:

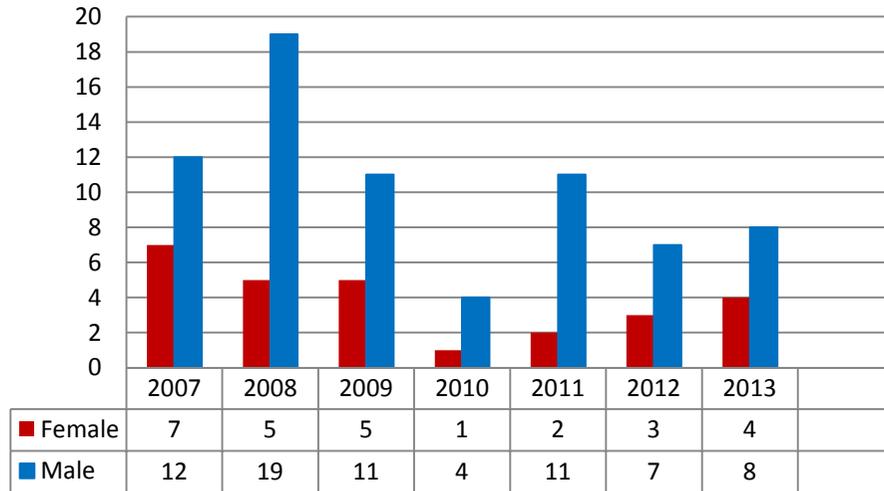
**BGS staff exits in Science areas
2007 -2013 (excluding restructuring)**



Graph 7

Considering resignations specifically, Graph 8 shows an overall decrease in staff resigning. We have a track record of long service; the average length of service at Band 4 is currently 20 years for females and 27 years for males. No specific trends are apparent when analysing the exit questionnaires for male and female resignations.

BGS resignations in Science areas by gender 2007 -2013



Graph 8

Section 3 word count 1900

4. Supporting and advancing women's careers: maximum 5000 words

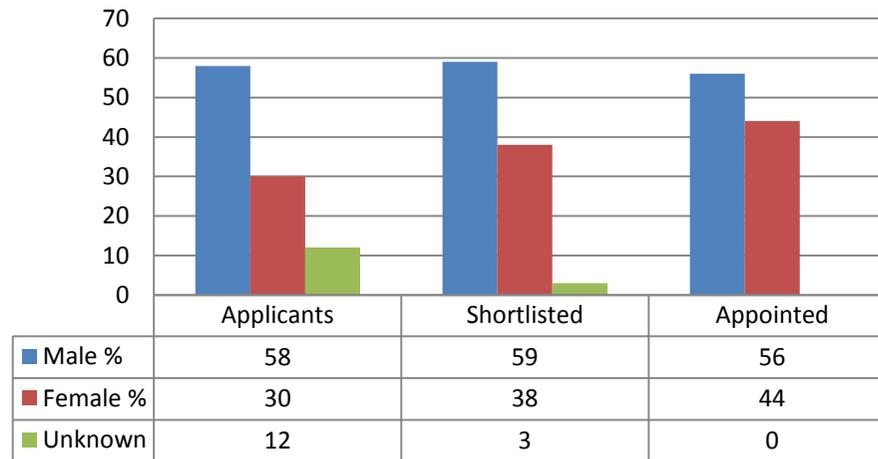
Key career transition points

- 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.
 - (i) **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.

The job application data is only available in a consistent format from February 2011 onwards due to problems with data being provided by the Shared Services Centre and earlier data being destroyed. Between February 2011 and August 2013, there were a total of 55 recruitment campaigns for science posts at BGS and these attracted applications from 2322 persons.

Graph 9 provides a summary of these campaigns, showing the breakdown by gender at application, short-listing and appointment. Gender is not a mandatory field in the application process and we therefore have unknown gender for applicants and shortlisted applicants. The data shows that whilst females account for 34% of known applicants the figure appointed increases to 44%. This indicates a greater success rate for female candidates at that stage. To increase the percentage of applicants we will secure external assessment of our advertisements to identify if we can attract further females (**Action 4.6**). We will continue to advertise all posts in Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) website, which we started this year (**Action 4.3**).

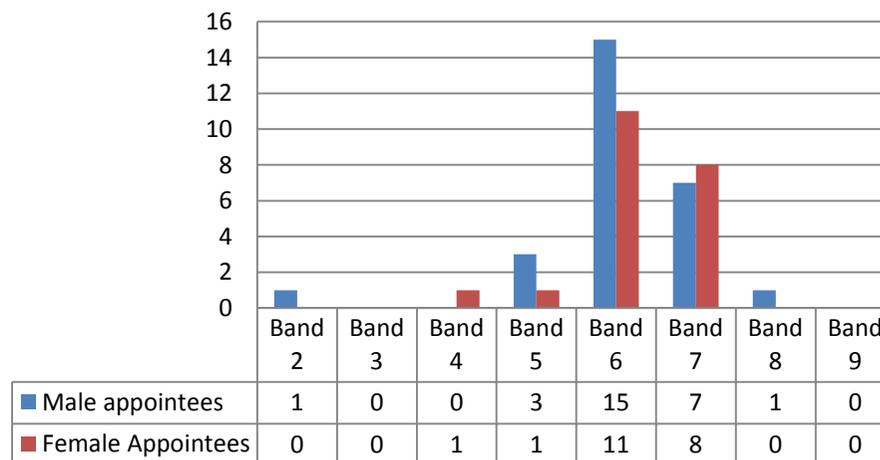
Science Recruitment & Selection Process statistics - by gender
(Feb 2011 - Aug 2013)



Graph 9

An analysis of appointments to science posts by band is illustrated by Graph 10. The numbers of appointments to the more senior bands (i.e. Bands 5 to 2) are relatively small and, although there are a number of female appointees at this level, they are too small to draw any broad conclusions. Direct appointment to Bands 4 and 5 are rare and staff are more likely to achieve those bands through promotion but it will be important to continue to monitor these recruitment data to analyse the position more effectively. **(Action 1.1 - 1.2)**

**Science Recruitments by gender and Band
(Feb 2011 - Aug 2013)**



Graph 10

- (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.

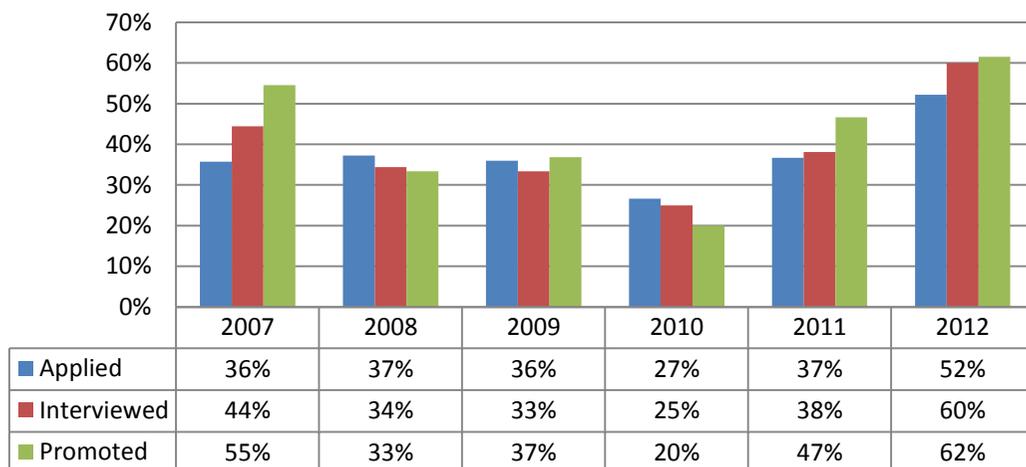
The majority of science staff who are promoted achieve this through the annual NERC merit promotion scheme which is a self nomination scheme with clearly established criteria to demonstrate achievement as opposed to potential. BGS have 12 fully trained staff who sit on the promotion assessment panels alongside NERC colleagues and 42% of BGS panel members are female.

In the 2013 survey, staff were specifically asked whether they felt that the NERC merit promotion scheme as it is currently designed favoured male applicants. Only 10% of respondents agreed that it did. A significant number of the written staff comments suggest that the merit promotion scheme needed to be simplified, and evidence of scientific outputs was more difficult to achieve if working part-time. We will work with NERC on an equality impact assessment of the process. (Action 2.6)

The evidence from the promotion scheme statistics shows that, although there are usually less female applicants for merit promotion, once they submit an application, they have a high success rate. (Graph11). We will therefore investigate the career progression of female science staff to determine if there are any barriers preventing them from submitting an application, which we can address. **(Action 2.8)**

Merit Promotion Statistics (Female Scientists only)

Figures shown are females as a % of all applicants / interviewees / promotions

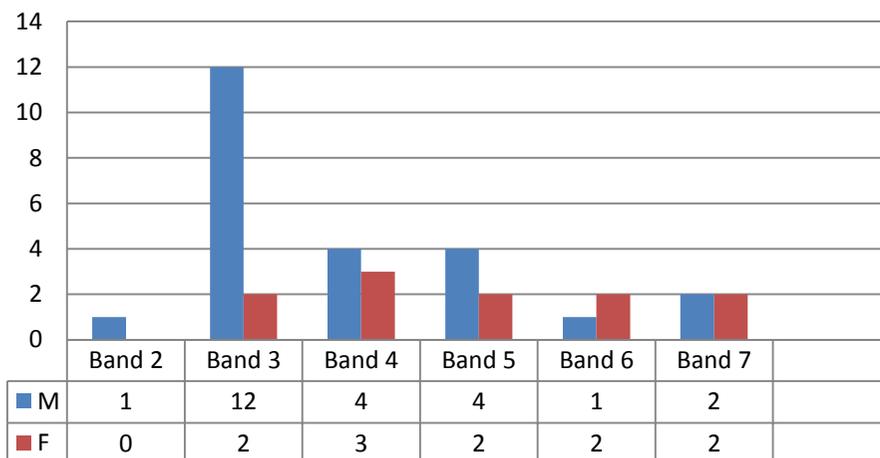


Graph 11

To support staff in understanding what is expected from the merit promotion process, we have introduced a number of workshops and drop-in sessions during 2012/13. BGS panel members discuss how individuals are progressing, and where they need to focus future development in order to submit a successful application. The content of these sessions will be reviewed following staff feedback. **(Action 2.5)**

In addition to the merit promotion scheme, there are opportunities for science staff to obtain promotion through applying for internal vacancies. Data presented in graph 12 demonstrates success at internal competitions. In further reviewing the applications the data shows that both males and females are being promoted through competition equally, considering the gender profile at each band. We will review this as part of the career development review. **(Action 2.8)**

Science staff achieving promotion through internal competition
by gender (2007 - 2013)



Graph 12

b) For each of the areas below, explain what the key issues are in the institute, 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 institute’s recruitment processes ensure that female candidates are attracted to apply, and how the institute ensures its short listing, selection processes and criteria comply with the institute’s equal opportunities policies.

A number of actions have been taken to promote BGS vacancies to a diverse range of applicants:

- All vacancies are advertised (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, web, universities and agencies).
- Scientific and Engineering vacancies are advertised on the WISE website (<http://www.wisecampaign.org.uk/>).
- Increasing numbers of female managers has ensured that many interview panels have female membership. Between July 2012 and August 2013, a total of 26 panels were convened for recruitment to science vacancies, and 54% included one or more female representatives. As a member of HR sits on all panels we will look to ensure that where possible 75% or more panels have a female representative. **(Action 2.13)**

- Approval to recruit requires managers to specifically review if part-time/flexible working patterns can be considered unless a specific and business-related reason to the contrary is provided. All job advertisements will include reference to flexible working arrangements where appropriate. **(Action 4.3)**
- Qualified HR professionals oversee all documentation to ensure that these contain appropriate job-related criteria and all panel members are trained.
- Gender related information is removed from panel selection documentation.
- All recruitment processes are monitored in relation to equal opportunities, and reports are regularly discussed at People and Skills meetings.

(ii) **Support for staff at key career transition points** – having identified key areas of attrition of female staff in the institute, 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.

The actions that we have taken to date have been focussed on any barriers to career progression but following the 2013 survey we will arrange a focus group to further understand the reasons for this. **(Action 3.3)**. Actions already taken are:

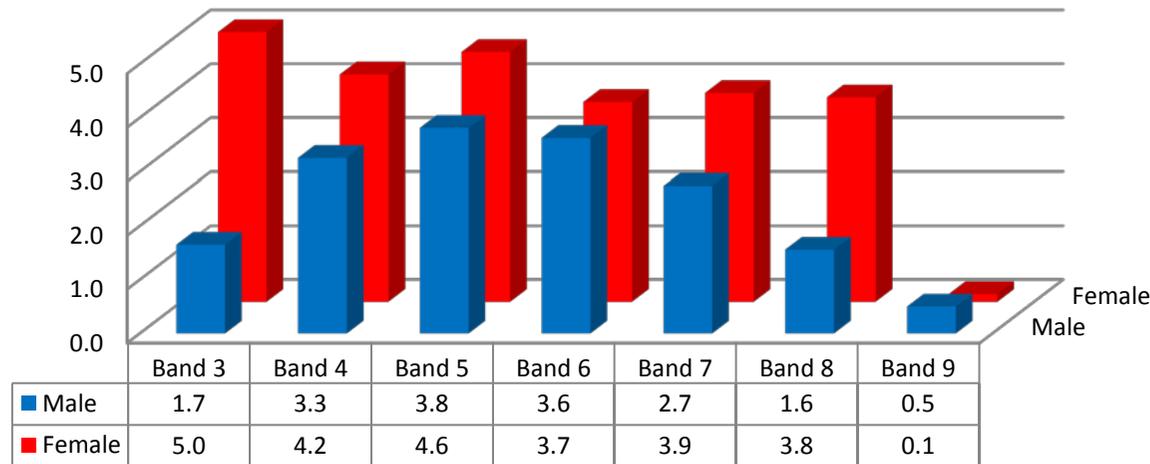
- Creation in 2008 of the Skills Leader role. 40% of these are now female: an increase of 24% since that date, achieved by actively marketing the opportunities as they arise. To address career development issues raised in the 2006 report all staff are allocated a Skills Leader who provides one-to-one support for them in both career development and managing work schedules. Skills Leaders work in partnership with the manager. Since introduction we have seen greater numbers of female scientists moving into management positions (from 9% to 25%).
- Since 2007 development programmes and activities and other areas of support have been reviewed and implemented by a BGS People and Skills Group, attended by HR and the Skills Leaders.
- **DEAL** – This is a NERC scheme allowing staff a formal opportunity to have a long-term career discussion with either their immediate management, or more senior managers. The meeting is intended for both parties to be clear about the potential for career development within the context of business strategy and needs. In BGS, we had already created this opportunity by having both the manager and Skills Leader present at an annual appraisal meeting and discussing long term career plans. An action plan is produced as part of this process.
- **Mentoring** –We launched the mentoring scheme in 2007 and since then we have completed 11 programmes, with 84 staff being mentees during this period. Analysis of the data suggests that, whilst providing a personal development opportunity for all staff, the scheme has particularly benefitted females. Fifty-five mentees (65%) were female and, of the 19 mentees who have subsequently achieved promotion, 12 (63%) were female. In March 2010, an evaluation was undertaken by surveying staff that had taken part, and the feedback was positive and supported the direction of the scheme. One of the concerns raised in the 2013 survey was the lack of role models in BGS, and we are therefore aiming to expand the mentoring scheme by providing external mentors to ensure that there is a wider range available to female

scientists. We are committed to the continuation of this scheme, and will seek to increase the proportion of female mentors (to date 32% of mentors have been female) (**Action 2.1**).

- **Coaching** - There are a number of coaches that BGS/NERC uses as part of the Leadership programme, for senior staff. To assist staff at career transition points and those who are new to management we agreed to provide access to additional coaching support. To date, there have been six staff using a coach, and 50% have been women. Staff unsuccessful at a merit promotion interview have been offered coaching to improve their interview skills and in 100% of cases they were all successful the following year. We are now going to offer the coaching prior to the first interview. It is planned to review this process and seek to make it more transparent and available through annual appraisal meetings (**Action 2.10**).
- **Fellowships** – There are various fellowship schemes open to staff which include European schemes and other government funded schemes. Since 2008 there have been 48 opportunities with 38% being pursued by females. After selection, 54% of the successful applications were from females, with only 27% of the rejections being female. NERC has a fellowship scheme available for staff to increase the impact of NERC-funded science through a programme of work of their own choosing. We actively target to encourage applications. Whilst NERC advise that, of the fellowships awarded, only 28.6% are awarded to females, of the three fellowships awarded to BGS staff that figure is 100%.
- **Springboard:** We facilitated the attendance of two female scientists on the Springboard Women’s Development Programme in 2012, a series of workshops designed to help female early career researchers to develop their self-awareness, build self-confidence, enhance their ability to present themselves positively, and identify career goals and barriers to success. The feedback from the participants was very positive and we will seek to offer this opportunity to other staff. (**Action 2.4**)
- **Women as Leaders:** this is a course run by Cranfield Business School aimed at women in more senior positions. An initial three-day course will be attended by two staff, and we will then assess the value of the course with a view to offering the opportunity to other female staff. NERC are funding two attendees but we have decided to fund additional staff where cases are identified. (**Action 2.4**)
- **Training** – We have held Investor in People (IiP) status since 1996, and have a comprehensive training strategy that supports personal development as well as scientific and technical training. We ensure that all staff get equal access to training and in the last assessment by the IiP team those part-time staff sampled were consistent in their view that “being part-time makes no difference whatsoever” to their access to any of the people processes.

Looking at Graph 13, it is clear that female staff who access the training opportunities attend more courses per head than males and whilst this may support the additional career guidance given we have no evidence from the liP surveys to explain the data. We will include a review of data for science only staff in our action plan. **(Action 1.5)**

**Average number of courses per capita attended by BGS staff
April 2010 to August 2013**



based on staff numbers at 30 June 2013

Graph 13 - based on staff numbers at 30 June 2013

Career development

- a) For each of the areas below, explain what the key issues are in the institute, 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 the broad responsibilities of the researcher such as teaching, research, administration, pastoral work, fund raising, mentoring and support and outreach work; is quality of work emphasised over quantity of work?

We look to have staff with a balanced portfolio of work which includes non-science activities. The merit promotion criteria require staff to demonstrate that balance in a promotion case. Science staff can undertake mentoring, coaching, knowledge-transfer and outreach, in addition to their science role. Some staff have a split role which covers duties such as Welfare, Dignity Support, Skills Leader and Trade Union representative, in addition to their science role. The promotion criteria are based on the quality and level of work that they are undertaking, as well as the impact of their work. The balance between quality and quantity is discussed as part of the process.

Career development is a partnership between the individual, their manager and their Skills Leader. To support this:

- Development needs assessed annually by both Manager and Skills Leader and long-term career plans discussed. Additional discussions held as required.
- Further qualifications supported and funded
- Training courses and schedules advised to staff
- In 2013, performance assessments of all Band 4 and 5 science staff were undertaken. Staff received feedback, and any actions were then incorporated into forward job plans.
- Mentoring scheme organised regularly
- Coaching and support in developing a promotion case in place
- Central budget for conference attendance in place
- In September we designed a sabbatical scheme which will be implemented this year (**Action 2.7**)

The 2013 survey indicated that some staff felt that career paths were not clearly identified. Whilst we try and address this on an individual basis, we will produce guidance to staff on various career paths and the support available. (**Action 2.11**)

- (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?

From the first day all new staff begin an induction process with a number of initiatives, most of which have been introduced since 2007, to help staff in their early days at BGS:

- They are nominated a “buddy”: someone outside of their work area and management chain who has time provided to enable them to meet with them to find out more about working at BGS.
- There are formal induction processes that involve both practical support and education about their role and the organisation.

- We encourage networking both formally and informally. We have created areas that staff can meet for networking as well as supporting sports and social facilities.
- All staff have a designated Skills Leader, who works with their manager to assess early training needs, and the Learning and Development team then work with managers to agree an initial training programme.
- We have a number of internal pastoral support initiatives which includes trained internal welfare advisors and dignity support advisors.

For managers we have a number of courses that we require them to attend and in 2013, we introduced a “People Management Essentials” course to introduce managers to a range of scenarios relating to staff management, including some specifically relating to equal opportunities issues. This course has been attended by 74 managers, and has received outstanding feedback through the evaluation process.

We have launched an electronic “Management Toolkit” to support managers. This provides them with advice on policies, processes, systems and developing their skills. This makes it easier for managers to access a wide range of information and advice to facilitate effective and consistent management.

After the 2007 review, we contracted a diversity trainer to design a bespoke programme for our staff. All senior managers and new starters attended diversity training prior to rolling it out to all staff. However the trainer and the programme were not working effectively so we agreed to review the process. We are currently piloting new courses which will be rolled out to all staff (**Action 2.3**) and will also include training in unconscious bias, which was mentioned by staff as something to review in the 2013 survey. (**Action 2.2**)

Support for female PhD students – describe the support (formal and informal) provided for female students to enable them to make the transition to a sustainable scientific 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 institute.

Whilst at BGS, postgraduate students are treated as members of staff so the support for female students is the same as for staff. In addition they are embedded in a science team, and interact on a daily basis with researchers who have a broad range of skills. PhD students are exposed to how science is used in policy decisions; something that is perhaps less common at their host Higher Education Institution (HEI). They also have opportunities for technical training through the BGS GeoSchool and, if appropriate, access to personal development training. To aid communication, BGS has significant infrastructure for video conferencing, webcam-equipped PCs and large screen monitors. In addition, we have subscriptions to industry standard web conferencing facilities (e.g. WebEx). There is an annual BUFI Science Festival held at the Keyworth office. The focus of this event is on communicating BUFI science to non-specialists. This is done via a poster to a broad range of stakeholders, and there are a range of prizes for the best presentations.

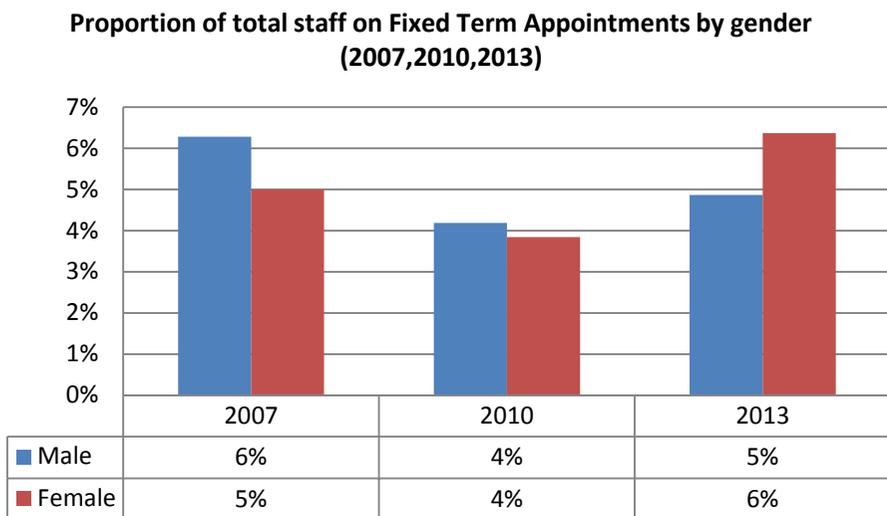
BUFI PhD students have a variety of post-PhD careers; most remain in research and are often employed by NERC, working at one their Research Centres. For example, one former female BUFI PhD student is now a senior manager in BGS.

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) **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.

We use fixed term appointments sparingly, which is shown in Graph 14, and the gender breakdown is proportionate. Where we have been awarded a specific grant or the funding is limited, we will appoint on a short contract.



Graph 14

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

Male and female representation on decision-making committees – provide a breakdown by committee and explain any differences between male and female representation. Explain how potential members are identified. 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 institute? How is the issue of ‘committee overload’ addressed where there are small numbers of female staff

Science staff are encouraged to participate in internal and external committees and promotion panels will expect to see evidence of participation.

External committees - Science staff are normally approached to participate through reputation. Science Directors provide financial support for attendance and there is a central budget for staff to apply for financial support. There is a culture of staff also undertaking a number of these roles in their own time if it is an area they particularly want to be involved in.

Internal Committees - There are committees within BGS that have governance authority at different levels, and the profile of the combined groups is shown in Graph 15. The total number of management roles has increased substantially, and representation of female staff in these roles has increased from 9% in 2007 to 25% in 2013.

We are not aware of committee overload but we do not keep data for this area. We will identify how to gather that data and investigate the impact of this task on workload and gender breakdown. **(Action 1.6)**

(i) 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.

We have a formal project management system that allocates staff to projects and records working hours spent. Time is allocated and managed by the Managers and Skills Leaders to ensure that all staff have a balanced work portfolio.

Staff discuss their time allocation with their Manager and Skills Leader within the appraisal system when they are drafting and reviewing forward job plans. It is reviewed throughout the year as work priorities or personal circumstance change. If there is a conflict in this allocation, there is an escalation process to enable any issues to be resolved. There are numerous examples of where, for various personal and work related reasons, we have adjusted the workload of staff for a period of time.

The 2013 survey and discussions at the Diversity and Equality group indicated that workload and work allocation is an issue for any staff that do not work full-time. We note that 53% of respondents felt that it is harder for staff with childcare or other personal responsibilities to succeed in the organisation than it is for those without these responsibilities. A recent report by Salford University³ analysed workload management. We will discuss

³ Promoting Positive Gender Outcomes in Higher Education through Active Workload Management – Barrett P, Barrett L - University of Salford -2013

this at a future Diversity and Equality group meeting, and consider appropriate actions to further support the appropriate allocation of work (**Action 4.4**).

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

We use Microsoft Outlook calendars, and these allow staff to arrange meetings around their availability, and we require all staff to keep these up-to-date, and enter any logistical constraints.

We have actively sought to increase the availability of video conferencing (VC) equipment which allows staff to interact with clients and NERC sites and to share information. This significantly reduces the need for travel. The first VC equipment was purchased 14 years ago, but in the last three years we have significantly increased this facility to approximately 20 bookable meeting rooms across all of our sites, as well as individual licences for software versions on individual personal computers for over 50 users. No specific data are available on the use of this equipment, but it is clear from anecdotal feedback and experience that the equipment is well used and is valued by staff.

We have many examples of accommodating those staff with school age children –

- The majority of meetings take place between 10am and 3pm.
- We try to arrange training courses so that they can be undertaken within a short day (for example the People Management course starts at 10am and ends at 2.30)
- We have lunch-time lectures on a range of science topics relevant to BGS staff, so that everyone can easily attend.

There is a formally recorded flexi-time system which allows staff to accrue time, which can be used later. In addition due to travel patterns science staff can work an informal flexi-system that allows them to agree their working schedules with their managers and there is a policy for taking time accrued.

We review the formal system regularly and in the past have:

- included additional working patterns for part-time staff
- reduced the “core” hours three times. Core hours are now 10am to 11.45am and 2.15pm to 3.15pm. This allows staff to deliver and collect children from school.
- extended the available lunch period so staff could make more use of the social facilities.
- On a case by case basis we support additional flexibility where there are special circumstances, which includes periods of home working both short and long term.

We will be implanting a new recording system and will review the systems and documentation to ensure process is clear to all staff. (**Action 4.2**)

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

We introduced a staff “Work and Well-being survey” in 2010. This was administered by an independent consultancy and based on the HSE stress risk factors. The survey was repeated in 2012. The survey data allowed us to understand the staff’s perceptions about corporate environment, process and culture.

In 2011/2012, we introduced a Dignity Support Team, to complement the existing internal welfare service, which provides the opportunity for individuals to have a confidential discussion with a trained colleague if they are experiencing any form of work relationship problems. The team currently consists of 7 members, spread across our 3 main sites; 5 members are female and 2 are male. Whilst the work of the team is, by definition, strictly confidential, informal feedback suggests that it is used by a range of staff – and provides an alternative to the more formal routes available. The effectiveness of the team will be kept under review. **(Action 3.2)**

The 2013 survey included a section on Organisational Culture. The report states:

- 77% of males and 84% of females are proud to be employed by the BGS
- 67% of males and 57% of females feel that BGS has an inclusive culture
- 56% males and 51% of females stated that they have a supportive manager

We provide opportunities for staff to promote their science and achievements:

- All promotions, appointments, academic achievements and other awards are included in the formal Staff Notice;
- We have a monthly newsletter (“Core Matters”) that staff use to informally recognise professional achievements as well as personal activities and events such as sponsored charity events;
- We have poster competitions where groups of staff can create a poster to promote their science. Staff are invited to judge the posters, have coffee and cake and vote for the winner who receives a prize.

We support a number of social activities at our sites:

- We have active sports and social clubs at all the main sites with sports facilities provided on-site or locally;
- There are coffee /networking areas and staff restaurants.
- Regular theatre and exhibition trips are organised.
- There are charity funding initiatives by staff

(iv) **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.

High-level policy for public engagement activities is set out in the RCUK Concordat for Engaging the Public with Research so there is significant support for staff undertaking outreach activities which is also recognised in the merit promotion criteria. Outreach activities are funded from within Directorate projects and staff respond to a range of ad hoc requests; as a result, there is no detailed data on all activities being undertaken. However we:

- Have 30 trained STEM Ambassadors⁴ working with schools at all educational levels, from Early Years, through Key Stage 1 to A-level and Further Education. Currently, 70% of these Ambassadors are female.
- Actively engage with the National Science Week organising events each day for school children to visit the Keyworth site. In 2012, 43 staff supported this event, 51% of whom were female.
- Hold Open Days for the general public at Keyworth and Edinburgh. In 2013 the Keyworth event attracted approximately 2000 visitors and in Edinburgh 900.
- Have hosted 27 work experience students aged 14 – 18 years at Keyworth and Edinburgh sites in the past 12 months, usually for one-week placements, of whom 15 (58%) were female. It is our intention to review the process used for applying for and allocating work experience to ensure that our approach continues to offer equality of opportunity. **(Action 3.1)**
- Have selected university students to work on a voluntary basis to undertake the major Geochemical Baseline Survey of the Environment project, which has an annual campaign of geochemical sampling. In 2013, 35 students were chosen to take part, 42.8% of whom were female. In 2012, 28 students were chosen to take part, 46.4% of whom were female. Team Leaders actively select a mixed gender team.

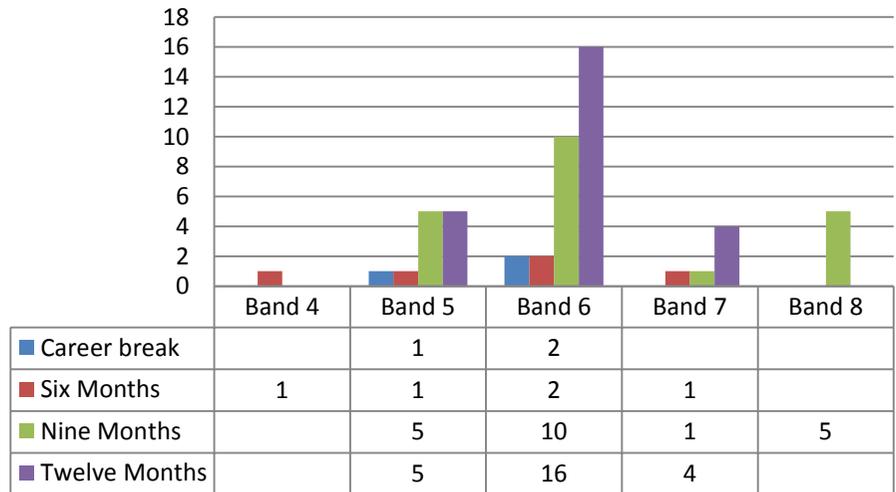
Flexibility and managing career breaks

- 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 institute has improved or deteriorated and any plans for further improvement. If the institute is unable to provide a maternity return rate, please explain why.

We have an excellent maternity return rate and one reason for that is the flexibility we provide in working patterns on return for science staff. **Graph 16** shows the total cases and the amount of maternity leave they took. We pay six months full pay and three months at statutory pay. With the accrued annual leave most staff take additional time which is why so many take 12 months in total.

⁴ STEM Ambassadors is a scheme administered by STEMNET and funded by BIS; it provides staff with training to prepare them for working with young people, disclosure and personal insurance.

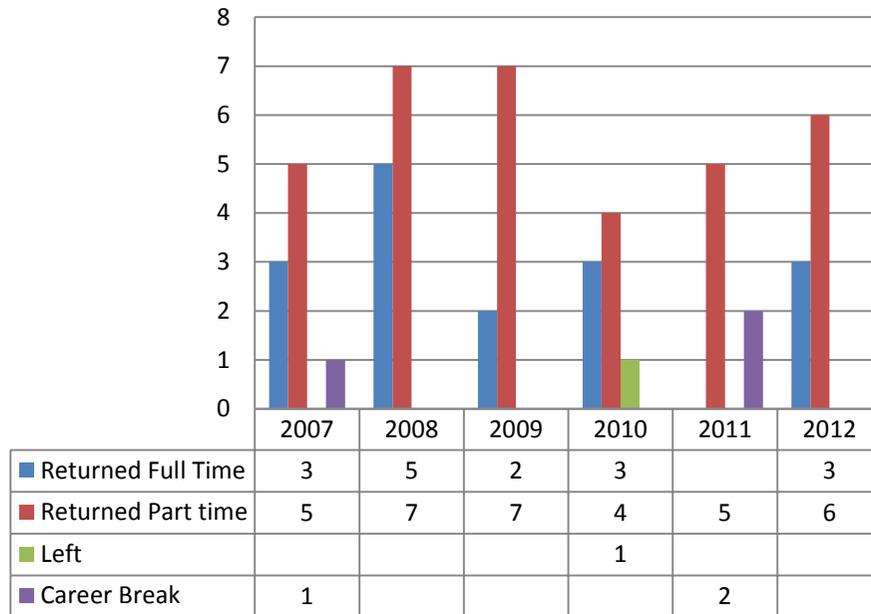
Length of Maternity Leave 2007-2012



Graph 15

Graph 17 shows the return rate following maternity leave; the single person that did not return was because they moved abroad after the birth. The majority of science staff return to work part-time and discuss working patterns with their managers, benefitting from a range of flexible arrangements to support that choice. These data are set out in Graph 21.

Return from Maternity Leave 2007 -2012 (Science Staff Only)

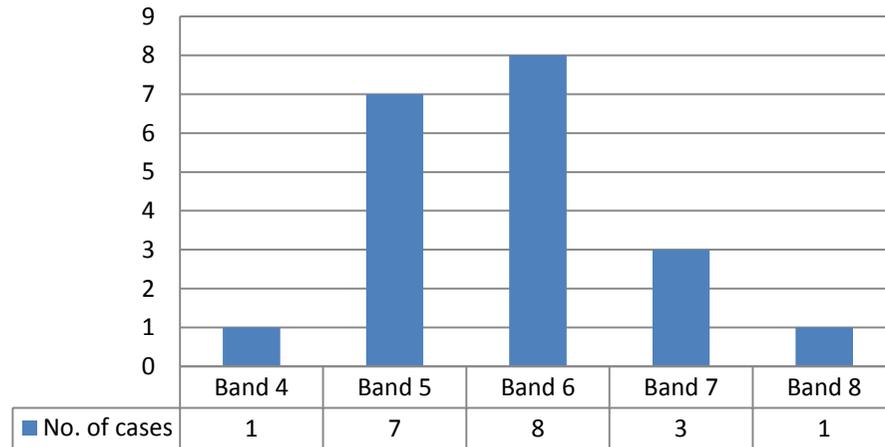


Graph 16

(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.

We have always paid full pay for paternity leave and allow flexibility as to when the actual days are taken. This means that eligible staff take the full allowance. Graph 18 shows the number of cases by Band.

Paternity Leave cases by band 2010 -2013 (Science Staff only)



Graph 17

Parental leave is detailed in Graph 19 and shows that male staff utilise this allowance more than female staff. All requests were approved. We have no information as to why that is although we do know that female staff often retain annual leave that has accrued during maternity leave. We

will review this as part of the return to work action. **(Action 2.9)** We know that we have a number of dual career partnerships and the male parental

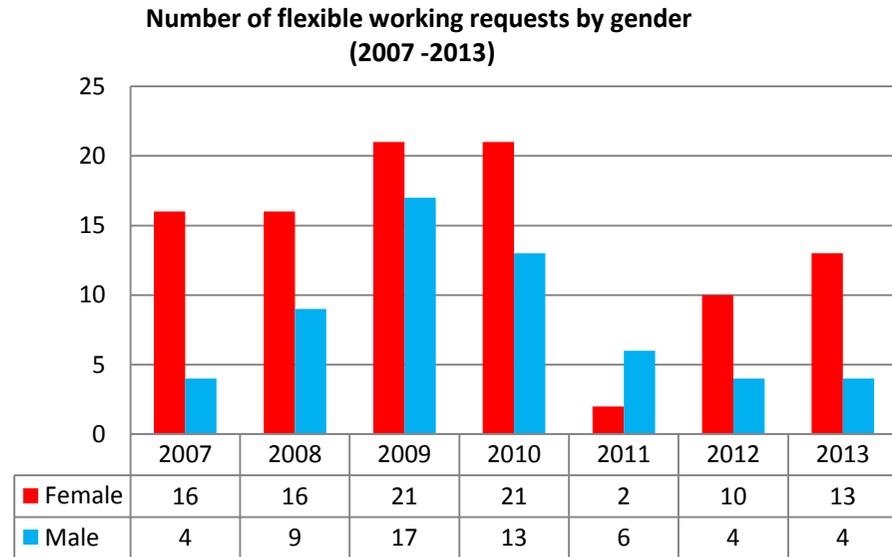


leave will support other female scientists returning to work.

Graph 18

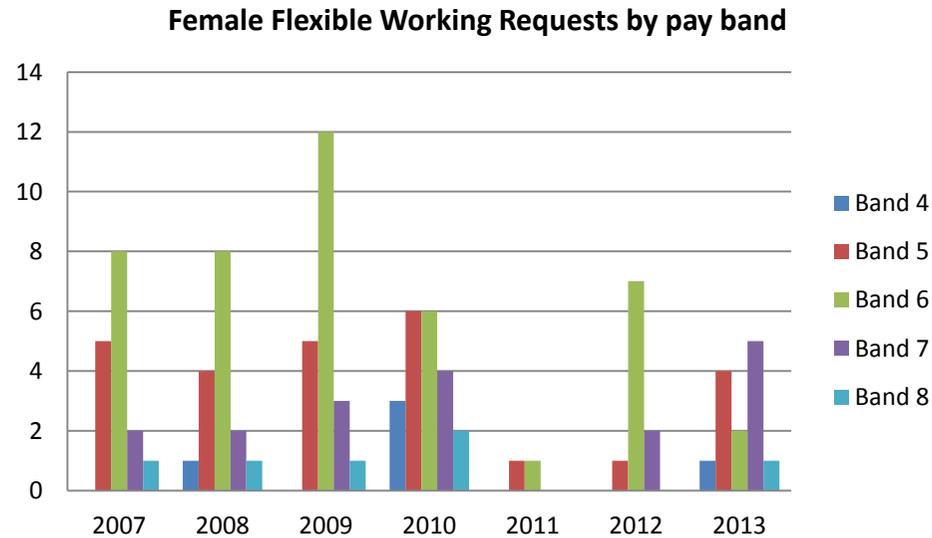
(iii) **Numbers of applications and success rates for flexible working by gender and grade** – comment on any disparities. Where the number of women in the institute is small applicants may wish to comment on specific examples.

We have always been flexible in allowing staff to vary their working patterns. During this 7 year period, no request has been declined by management. Graph 20 shows the number of flexible working requests.



Graph 19

Graph 21 analyses the flexible working requests made by female scientists by band, and illustrates that the requests occur across a variety of bands, although there are undoubtedly smaller numbers at band 4 and above (to some extent reflecting the smaller proportion of females working at these grades).



Graph 20

b) For each of the areas below, explain what the key issues are in the institute, 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 institute raises awareness of the options available.

We advertise that we support flexible working and it is discussed at interview as well as at induction on appointment. Staff are made aware of flexible working opportunities through staff policy documents as well as career discussions with their Skill Leaders. We cover flexible working in management training.

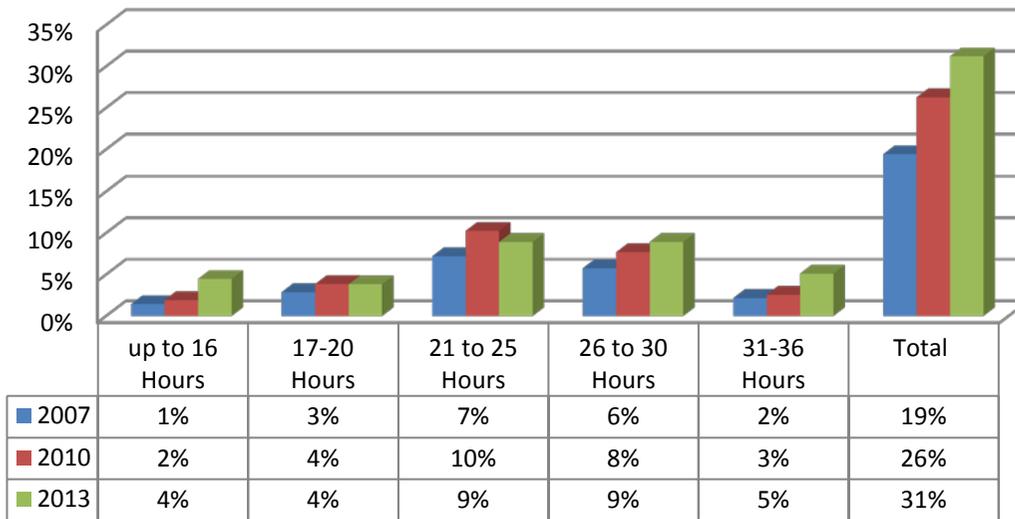
Contractual working patterns

Contractual working patterns are varied and the majority of requests to change contractual hours are supported. There are only two examples where these have been initially declined due to Health and Safety concerns. In both cases, a flexible working arrangement was ultimately agreed that was felt to be mutually beneficial.

We have staff working various patterns of part-time as well as compressed hours. We recognise that circumstances change and support many requests for subsequent changes (including increases and decreases in working hours) over a period of time following the implementation of an initial flexible working request.

The number of part-time female scientists has increased over the past 7 years as Graph 22 shows.

Female scientist part time working pattern (in hours)



Graph 21

Home working

We have a home working policy that supports long term arrangements and managers also have the authority to support occasional instances when this will facilitate the completion of a piece of work or other appropriate circumstances. We do not know the number of instances of informal arrangements as they are not currently recorded but we will review this process and ensure that it is consistently applied. **(Action 4.5)**

Career breaks

We support unpaid leave and have a policy that enables staff to request a career break to take time to pursue personal commitments. A number of female staff request a career break at the end of their maternity leave. Since 2007 there have been 3 cases of staff (5% of maternity cases)

requesting this leave. However, in total there have been 18 female staff taking a career break in this period in contrast to 11 male cases. As the 2013 survey indicated a concern about scheduling of work on return a focus group will review this issue. **(Action 4.1)**

The 2013 survey explored the impact of existing working practices within the BGS and staff attitudes to these. 79% of respondents feel that work schedules take account of the needs of those who work part-time or have flexible working arrangements; 75% feel that they are able to have a good work/life balance in the BGS and 82% say that they feel confident that if they asked to work flexibly, their request would not be seen as career limiting.

- (ii) **Cover for maternity and adoption leave and support on return** – explain what the institute does, beyond the institutes' 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.

A member of the HR team provides support and advice to the employee throughout the pregnancy, keeping in touch and helping with the return to work. In addition the following support is provided in each case:

- Managers liaise with the employee and HR to agree how to review work plans and to cover the absence.
- Staff can request a career break for a further four years following their maternity leave. Graph 17 demonstrates the take up of this opportunity.
- The 2013 survey indicated that the work scheduling on return is variable and we therefore intend to review this process. **(Action 2.9)**
- We support Keeping in Touch days in addition to statutory requirements but these are not universally taken up which we need to investigate as part of action 2.9.
- We support a work life balance through a range of flexible options as detailed in the Flexible Working section above.
- We support a salary sacrifice scheme for childcare

Section 4 word count 4950

5. Any other comments: maximum 500 words

Please comment here on any other elements which are relevant to the application, e.g. other STEMM-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.

BGS started the current journey to ensure that female scientists could develop their careers without any internal barriers in 2007 and the work we have done since then has seen progress. Moving forward the Equality and Diversity Group will ensure that an action plan is produced, managed and reviewed with

regular reports to the Executive on progress. Evaluating the success of the action plan will be partly seen through statistics but more importantly we will need to maintain a programme of staff surveys to evaluate the feeling of the staff. As explained previously, we have held staff surveys and then this year in July we contracted an independent Diversity and Inclusion Consultancy to run a survey on Diversity. This specifically covered gender issues and the questions and responses were organised into four areas:

1. Equality of Opportunity
2. Career Progression
3. Organisational Culture
4. Working Practices

Whilst there were recommendations for action in each of these areas, the consultancy awarded a “RAG” status (Red Amber Green) and three out of the four were awarded Green status. Career progression was awarded Amber status which confirms that focusing on that area in our actions plan is appropriate. Under each of the sections, staff were encouraged to provide free text responses as well as “ticking boxes”, and a significant number of staff did this. These comments provide a valuable insight into the issues that staff view as a priority for change and will be addressed in the action plan. They included:

- The lack of women in senior positions and the need to increase this number; **(Actions throughout the work plan will assist with this issue)**
- Difficulties with the merit promotion process – especially for women;**(In section 2 of the Action plan)**
- The need to support staff who work part-time in achieving promotion. **(Included in section 4 of the action plan)**

The free text responses also provide valuable information as to what staff particularly enjoy about working at the BGS, including:

- The support of their team and colleagues
- Working in an environment with a diverse range of scientists
- The opportunity to pursue interesting, engaging and useful research
- Flexible working arrangements
- A belief that equality of opportunity does exist.
- The word “friendly” was frequently used.

The survey results were considered in some depth by the Diversity and Equality Group. They provide assurance that our actions over the past few years have had a positive impact and are also a valuable source of information for developing our action plan. We expect to see that over the next three years the number of women in senior positions has increased. The most appropriate approach to future surveys will be discussed. **(Action 5.1)**

Section 5 word count 453

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**.

See pages 34 - 41

7. Case study: impacting on individuals: maximum 1000 words (word count 998)

Describe how the institute's SWAN activities have benefitted **two** individuals working in the institute. One of these case studies should be a member of the self assessment team, the other someone else in the institute. More information on case studies is available in the guidance.

Not included for reasons of confidentiality

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| <p>1.</p> | <p>Analysis of Data</p> <p>Progress to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce data available • Basic data on recent recruitment activity available <p>Issues raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment data incomplete, difficult to manipulate and analyse • Workforce data could be used more effectively to inform management decision / action planning • Limited equal opportunities data on learning and development • Limited organisations identified to benchmark data against | | | |
| | <p>Action Planned</p> | <p>Responsibility</p> | <p>Time-scale</p> | <p>Success measure</p> |
| <p>1.1</p> | <p>Implement robust process for monitoring the gender (and other diversity data) of all job applicants and selection panels and present this data to the People and Skills meeting for regular review</p> | <p>People and Skills Group</p> | <p>December 2013 Revised version (based on 1.3 below) by December 2014</p> | <p>Statistics submitted to, and discussed at, the People & Skills meeting quarterly</p> |
| <p>1.2</p> | <p>Review workforce data – including gender equality data – on regular basis at senior level</p> | <p>Executive Team</p> | <p>March 2014</p> | <p>Workforce data discussed as part of Executive Team agenda quarterly</p> |
| <p>1.3</p> | <p>Work with NERC IT specialist to design reports</p> | <p>HR Adviser/HR Business Partner</p> | <p>June 2014</p> | <p>Reports available and being used to</p> |

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| | from Oracle system – in particular to improve the analysis of recruitment activity and equal opportunities measures | | | provide more detailed analysis of recruitment activity / identification of areas for action |
| 1.4 | Seek to identify organisations against which we can benchmark staff data and, as appropriate, carry out benchmarking | Diversity and Equality Group | December 2014 | Further bench-marking undertaken and areas for action identified |
| 1.5 | Produce and review statistics on take up of formal training to review female attendance on this training by science and non-science categories | Learning and Development Manager | December 2014 | Statistics presented to People and Skills Group and any resulting actions agreed |
| 1.6 | Identify the numbers of staff that sit on external committees, the impact of this work on individuals involved and the gender breakdown of these individuals. Produce appropriate guidance for staff and managers re these responsibilities. | Science Director / Senior Scientist from Diversity and Equality Group as project lead | June 2014 | Statistics on committee membership by gender presented to Diversity and Equality Group and any resulting actions agreed |

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| 2. | <p>Career Development</p> <p>Progress to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring Scheme in place with positive up-take and outcomes. • Pilot of Springboard training – specifically aimed at supporting female scientists – taken place • Skill Leaders in place to support staff in relation to career development • Regular presentations / drop ins available for those interested in merit promotion and female representation of BGS management on some panels • Diversity training carried out for many staff and incorporated in recent management training <p>Issues raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of females in senior science posts • Concerns that workload makes it difficult to pursue scientific interests / write papers in core working hours |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns re consistency of support for staff returning from maternity leave • Diversity training needs to be relaunched and implemented; unconscious bias training should be explored • Concerns about merit promotion process and the fact that smaller numbers of female scientists apply • Little assurance that equal opportunities are applied to selection of students • Lack of clarity about career options and support for progression | | | |
| | Action Planned | Responsibility | Time-scale | Success measure |
| 2.1 | Seek to increase the proportion of mentors who are female - to include consideration of external mentors | Mentoring Scheme Co-ordinators | June 2015 | Increased number of female mentors available |
| 2.2 | Implement Unconscious Bias training for senior managers and Skill Leaders – with a view to cascading further if successful | Learning and Development Manager | December 2014 | Course designed and pilot arranged |
| 2.3 | Pilot new NERC diversity course and then, following any adaptations, roll out this course to all staff | Learning and Development Manager | 1. Pilot by Dec. 2013 2. Staff attended by March 2016 | All staff attended training and plan in place for new staff to access this training in future |
| 2.4 | Raise awareness of opportunities specifically aimed at female scientists – eg. Springboard, ensuring that Skill Leaders and Science Directors discuss these with individuals as appropriate | Learning and Development Manager / Science Directors / Skill Leaders | Guidance produced by March 2014 Increased up-take by Jan 2016 | Guidance for managers added to Management Toolkit; awareness raised with Science Directors / Skill Leaders Increased up-take of these courses |
| 2.5 | Continue to actively promote the merit promotion scheme; | Head of Skills / BGS panel | Presentation | Content of presentation revised |

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| | review the format of workshops / presentations for staff to incorporate feedback from the 2013 Survey – in particular the fact that this is open to part-time as well as full-time workers | members | revised : December 2013 Increased applications from part-time staff by May 2016 | Increased up-take of scheme by part-time workers |
| 2.6 | Participate in NERC Equality Impact Assessment (EIP) of merit promotion scheme. Ensure that membership of merit promotion panels is discussed at NERC Heads of HR meeting with a view to increasing the proportion of females on these panels. | Head of HR and Head of Skills | EIP completed in 2014 Panel membership revised by March 2016 | EIP complete and female panel membership increased |
| 2.7 | Implement paid sabbaticals scheme, allowing scientists to take time out from their regular duties to progress their science | Science Directors / Head of Skills | Scheme advertised by Dec. 2013 First sabbaticals taking place by Dec. 2014 | Staff sabbatical process advised to staff; up-take monitored by gender |
| 2.8 | Undertake project to evaluate the career progression of female staff appointed to science posts since 2011 seeking to identify any barriers to progression and recommend actions to address these (if appropriate). | Skill Leaders | Commence project by March 2014 and formally review in March 2016. | Data collected and progress reviewed annually at People & Skill Group |
| 2.9 | Review the return to work process following maternity | HR Adviser | Review carried | Review carried out and clear |

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| | leave and ensure there is a formal work plan for all staff; ensure that the benefits of Keeping in Touch days and Parental Leave opportunities are effectively communicated. | | out by: Sept 2014 Monitoring of effectiveness: March 2016 | guidance on return to work plans in place and monitored |
| 2.10 | Produce guidance note for managers on coaching opportunities | Head of HR | March 2014 | Guidance in managers toolkit |
| 2.11 | Review available career paths and produce clear guidance for staff | Head of HR/Head of Skills/Science Directors | March 2015 | Guidance on HR intranet site |
| 2.12 | Review the selection process for the doctoral training programme to ensure equality of opportunity | BUFI Team Leader | March 2014 | Process reviewed and action taken to ensure that equality of opportunity is promoted |
| 2.13 | Ensure that HR representation on interview panels is managed to ensure female representation | HR Business Partner / Recruitment Co-ordinator | March 2015 | 75% of panels to have female representative |

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| 3. | <p>Organisation and Culture</p> <p>Progress to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidential support available to staff through NERC Welfare Service and Dignity Support team • Many examples of workplace gatherings / social events accommodating those with family responsibilities • Work and Well being Survey and Equality and Diversity Survey both contain much positive feedback about the culture • Outreach work accessed by a diverse range of individuals <p>Issues raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of females in senior posts and relatively few applications for merit promotion from females at more senior levels • Limited equal opportunities data available on work experience programme • Lack of PhD student representation on Diversity and Equality Group | | | |
| | Action Planned | Responsibility | Time-scale | Success measure |

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| 3.1 | Review current arrangements for work experience with a view to collating more robust data and continuing to ensure equality of opportunity – and a more diverse range of opportunities - for applicants | HR Administrator / HR Business Partner / L&D Manager | Dec 2014 | Work experience programme redesigned. |
| 3.2 | Review effectiveness of Dignity Support Team and continue to up-date / refresh publicity about this | HR Business Partner / Dignity Support Team | March 2014 | Reduction in incidence of bullying reported in next staff survey |
| 3.3 | Hold a focus group to understand if there are barriers that prevent mid grade scientists progressing into senior positions | HR Business Partner/Skills Leader | June 2014 | Meeting held and conclusions fed to Diversity & Equality Group |
| 3.4 | Ensure that both Intranet and extranet clearly promotes our commitment to equality and Athena SWAN principles | Head of Communications | Dec 2013 | Web sites redesigned |
| 3.5 | Following re-organisation of PhD student programme, identify representative to become member of Diversity and Equality Group | BUFI Team Leader / Chair of Diversity and Equality Group | Dec 2014 | PhD student regular attendee and participant in Diversity and Equality Group meetings |

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| 4. | <p>Working Practices</p> <p>Progress to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many examples of flexible working in place – including flexi time, part-time working, home working, career breaks • High return rate following maternity leave <p>Issues raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to ensure consistency of flexible working arrangements – in particular flexi system / time off in lieu • Concern that those working part-time may find it difficult to manage their workload and expectations • Concern that job advertisements may not fully represent the flexibility available within working patterns and may not be attracting as many female applicants as they could |
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| | Action Planned | Responsibility | Time-scale | Success measure |
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| 4.1 | Undertake focus group with staff who have undertaken a career break (including maternity leave) to explore areas for improvement on work programmes | HR Business Partner/Advisor | December 2014 | Outcomes discussed at Diversity & Equality Group and actions for improvement agreed |
| 4.2 | As part of an implementation of a new flexi system, review existing arrangements for flexi time / Time Off in Lieu and seek to ensure greater consistency in the application of these systems | HR Business Partner / Skills Leader | March 2015 | Revised guidance issued to staff and managers |
| 4.3 | Ensure that all job adverts include reference to flexible working opportunities (unless business reason for excluding this) and that the WISE web-site is used as a standard site for BGS science advertisements | Recruitment and Selection Co-ordinator / HR Business Partner | October 2013 | All adverts carry this statement; adverts on WISE web-site |
| 4.4 | Facilitated discussion regarding workload and work allocations at Diversity & Equality Group to explore possible areas of concern and how these might be addressed | Skills Leader/Senior Scientist | September 2014 | Item on meeting agenda and any follow up actions agreed |
| 4.5 | Review the home working policy and application – in particular providing clear guidance on the use of ad hoc home working to support flexibility for staff. | Head of HR/HR Business Partner / Skill Leaders | February 2014 | Guidance provided to staff and managers |
| 4.6 | Have external Equality Impact Assessment of adverts – particularly focussing on gender and the use of appropriate language / information | Recruitment and Selection Co-ordinator | December 2014 | EIA carried out and appropriate actions identified as a result |

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| 5. | <p>Equality and Diversity Survey</p> <p>Progress to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial survey completed, report analysed by Diversity and Equality Group and made available to all staff on intranet <p>Issue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to use the survey to monitor progress in relation to equality and diversity, without overloading staff with too many surveys | | | |
| | Action Planned | Responsibility | Time-scale | Success measure |
| 5.1 | Explore possibility of combining key questions from Equality and Diversity survey with Health and Well-being Survey to stream-line surveys for future work | People and Skills Group | March 2014 | Agreed approach and implementation of next staff survey |