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# Support for current and aspiring women leaders: an exploration of UK higher education institutions' response.

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# Support for Current and Aspiring Women Leaders: an Exploration of UK Higher Education Institutions' Responses

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# 1. Executive summary

## Background and aim of research

This research was funded by Advance HE's Small Development Fund to explore higher education institutions' (HEIs) mechanisms for the support and advancement of current and aspiring women leaders. Over recent years there has been an increase in the number of women holding senior and executive level positions in the higher education (HE) sector, but there is a continued lack of proportional representation of women at these levels. The aim of the research was to generate findings that could inform policy and highlight best practice to address the support mechanisms needed to develop current and aspiring women leaders within HEIs. This research is important to inform senior leaders, stakeholder policymakers, organisational developers, Aurora champions and aspiring women leaders.

The research explored how HEIs were working with Aurora, a women-only leadership programme, and other mechanisms available to support women's leadership aspirations. The views and experiences of women at all levels within HEIs were sought from the diverse populations of women working in HE. This included women who had held leadership roles and those with no current leadership responsibilities but with aspirations to a leadership role.

## Method

Perspectives on support mechanisms in HEIs were obtained using two online surveys: an institution survey for the HEIs, and a women's survey for women employed at HEIs. Both informal and formal support mechanisms were explored, as well as where responses from the two surveys showed there was agreement and differences in the perspectives of support available.

One thousand two hundred and forty one women completed the women's survey, with the range of academic disciplines and administrative posts within HEIs represented. The survey was open to women and those who identified as women. Thirty four HEIs completed the institution survey, with responses from pre- and post-1992 universities. The majority of these were located in England and Scotland, although the survey was open to HEIs in the UK.

## Key findings

The findings demonstrated the range of support mechanisms available to women in HEIs to facilitate the achievement of their leadership aspirations. There was a high level of agreement from the women respondents that there was support available within their institution to aid their leadership aspirations. However, this perception of support was found to vary, and could be dependent on other aspects such as ethnicity or nationality, having a disability or the type of work role. These aspects, along with care responsibilities and marital status, were also perceived to have had an impact on the women's career aspirations.

A high prevalence of aspiration to a leadership role by both those with current leadership responsibilities and those without was indicated. Over half of the women had applied for a leadership programme, and nearly two thirds had applied for, or sought, promotion once or more.

Generally, there was a positive view of women-only leadership programmes by both the institutions and the women participating in the project. Three quarters of the women respondents, both those who had completed a women-only leadership programme and those who had not, perceived benefits to a women-only leadership programme. This was in accordance with the institutions' perspective, with 86% of institutions responding that they offer women-only leadership programmes, and over half of those who did not currently offer such programmes considering doing so.

The findings highlighted that support mechanisms could be both facilitators of achieving leadership aspirations, but also barriers where these support mechanisms were absent or implemented incorrectly. Furthermore, the findings emphasised that women in HE should not be considered to be homogenous in their experiences, advancement goals and support needs.

## **Recommendations**

Women employed in the higher education sector should not be assumed to have the same support needs or advancement goals and none require the same processes to help them achieve their career aspirations. This should be taken into consideration in the provision of support mechanisms. The findings also suggested a more tailored approach to leadership training, taking into account aspects in addition to gender, such as care responsibilities, that may impact on career aspirations.

HEIs need to respond to the clear interest in advancement to leadership roles and the positive outcomes that can be gained from participation in leadership programmes, and implement outcomes measures for the impact of support mechanisms on women's leadership aspirations. Support may be required for HEIs to implement and maintain these effectively.

## 2. Background

The remit of this small development project was to explore higher education institutions' (HEIs) mechanisms for support of current and aspiring women leaders. The intended audience is comprehensive and includes senior leaders, university stakeholders and policymakers, organisational leadership developers, Aurora champions, and current and aspiring women leaders.

Over recent years there has been an increase in the number of women holding senior and executive level positions in the higher education (HE) sector. However, despite a comparative rate of employment in HEIs of women and men, with women comprising 54% of the workforce in 2016/17, there remains a gender imbalance at senior and executive levels, with women continuing to be under-represented (Higher Education Statistics Agency [HESA], 2018). This lack of proportional representation for women employees has been termed 'absent leaders' (Morley, 2013 p5), with leadership research in academia evidencing gender imbalance and lack of access to leadership positions as a global phenomenon.

In 2016/2017, from details provided by the 162 publicly funded HEIs in the UK, 27% of those academic staff employed on contract levels described as professor or 'other senior academic' were women (eight percent of all women employees), compared to 73% of men (17% of all men employees) (HESA, 2018). A third of HEIs reported gender balanced boards in 2016, though just over a third of these governing body roles were held by women (Jarboe, 2016).

A review of studies conducted into women's leadership in academia, both within and outside the UK, found that these have focused on leadership at senior and executive levels (Shepherd, 2017; Jarboe, 2016; Read and Kehm, 2016; Tessens et al, 2011). However, leadership roles in HE can occur at all levels within an institution and cannot always be clearly defined or recognised. Leadership responsibilities can be formal and clearly delineated, such as department management, people development and research management; or informal, such as project management, committee work, mentoring and student supervision (Barnard et al, 2017).

Research across employment sectors has suggested that although there has been some improvement with the 'glass ceiling', which has negatively impacted on the representation of women at senior levels, a growing issue is that of the 'glass cliff' where women are over-represented in untenable and precarious leadership roles (Ryan and Haslam, 2005 p83; 2007; Ryan et al, 2011).

Research\* evaluating the impact of Aurora, a women-only leadership programme, demonstrated that women in general believed they had the skills and abilities to handle leadership roles but found it a challenge securing opportunities to demonstrate these effectively (Barnard et al, 2017; Barnard et al, 2016).

Barriers and deterrents to leadership positions include: gender bias; implicit and unconscious biases; the prevalence of gendered attitudes; a masculine dominated culture and management style; gender pay gap; inflexible and unsupportive structures; and an attitude to work as an 'all-consuming activity' (League of European Research Universities [LERU], 2018; Barnard et al, 2017; Equality Challenge Unit [ECU], 2014; Morley, 2013 p9). An assumption that women still shoulder the major responsibility for caring roles for family (including children, parents or other relatives) can also impact on leadership aspirations; though women without these responsibilities are also absent from leadership roles (Morley, 2013).

Differences in types of work role may also be potential barriers to advancement. In 2016/17 there was comparable prevalence for women and men employees on academic contracts and full-time contracts. However, of those employed as non-academic staff, 63% were women compared to 37% men, and more than double of those employed on a part-time employment basis were women, 68% compared to 32% (HESA, 2018).



To increase the proportion of women at senior management and governance levels there has been collective action across the sector, including funding councils and membership organisations, and an increase in voluntary aspirational targets for women's representation in leadership roles (Jarboe, 2016). The Board Diversification Project<sup>1</sup> supports greater diversity in board roles in all sectors, and in 2018, as part of the project, a 'board vacancies' portal was introduced by Advance HE and the Committee of University Chairs (CUC) in collaboration with the Association of Heads of University Administration (AHUA) and the 30% Club. The aim was to encourage greater diversity in applications to board appointments by making the appointment process more transparent and accessible (Advance HE, 2018a).

Various interventions to improve the diversity in university governance have been made. In 2014 the Higher Education Code of Governance (revised 2018) was introduced by the CUC and in 2017 the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance for HEIs in Scotland Committee of Scottish Chairs (CSC) did similarly. These reference the responsibility and promotion of equality and diversity throughout an institution, including its governance's own membership and operation.

Other sector related Initiatives to improve the gender gap in leadership include:

### **Athena SWAN Charter**

Established in 2005 by the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) (now Advance HE), to 'encourage and recognise commitment to advancing the careers of women in science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine (STEMM) employment in higher education and research'. In 2015 this was expanded to include arts, humanities, social sciences, business and law departments (AHSSBL), women in professional and support roles, and trans employees and students. The facilitation of gender equality and advancement of women is encouraged through initiatives and practices that promote inclusive working, and the sharing of good practice with regard to recruitment, career development and culture (Advance HE, 2018b).

### **Aurora**

Introduced in 2013 by the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (now Advance HE), Aurora is a women-only leadership development initiative that brings together leadership experts and HEIs to address the issue of under-representation of women in leadership positions, and to share best practice, insights and experiences (Advance HE, 2018c).

In an ongoing evaluation study of the Aurora programme it was reported that participation in the programme had boosted women's beliefs in their skills and abilities. Furthermore, that participation may have stimulated engagement in greater career self-management activity; such as becoming engaged in more mentoring, coaching and networking. Marked increases in self-confidence and assertive action may also have been facilitated by participation; such as seeking new employment, promotion and positions of responsibility (Barnard et al, 2016; Barnard et al, 2017).

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<sup>1</sup> [www.lfhe.ac.uk/en/governance-new/board-diversification.cfm](http://www.lfhe.ac.uk/en/governance-new/board-diversification.cfm)

## Leadership Matters

Designed for senior women leaders in HE, this is a bespoke programme to address technical and personal leadership aims and help women achieve leadership aspirations to executive level (Advance HE, 2018c).

Although not specific to the HE sector, the Women on Boards and 30% Club HE initiatives promote the advancement of women to leadership roles at board level (Advance HE, 2018c); while the Springboard Women's Development Programme is designed to facilitate career development at any stage in a woman's career (The Springboard Consultancy, 2018).

To move towards the achievement of gender balance of leadership roles at all levels within HEIs there is a need to explore the support mechanisms currently available to both aspiring and current women leaders, and to identify both positive and negative factors associated with the facilitation of, and barriers to, advancement.

As indicated above, participation in women-only leadership programmes can have beneficial outcomes. Key areas for investigation include: the attitudes of organisations towards such programmes; the relationship between institutions and programme providers; and the organisational context that maximises the benefits gained from women-only leadership programmes.

To ascertain the effectiveness of support mechanisms and specific women-only leadership programmes, it is crucial to gain the perspectives of both women employed in the HE sector and the institutions in which they are employed in order to identify mutually agreed positive outcomes and potential incongruence.

## 3. Aims and objectives

To explore and report on HEIs' mechanisms for supporting current and aspiring women leaders, from the perspective of women working in the HE sector and the HEIs.

Including:

- + How institutions work with Aurora alumnae and current Aurora participants;
- + How institutions support women in other ways, prior to or complementary to Aurora.
- + What support is available outside of involvement with Aurora.

The findings represent the views and experiences of current and aspiring women leaders in a range of disciplinary and institutional contexts: STEMM and non-STEMM disciplines; academic and administrative posts; pre- and post-1992 universities; and the diverse populations of women working in HEIs, reflecting the protected characteristic groups. They also reflect the views of HEIs towards support mechanisms for current and aspiring women leaders.

The project aims were designed to benefit the HE sector at all levels and Advance HE members through the generation of data and findings that can inform policy and highlight best practice to address the support mechanisms needed to develop current and aspiring women leaders within HEIs.

## 4. Research methods

Online surveys were chosen as the method to gain women's views and experiences in the HE sector and support mechanisms available from institutions' perspectives. This was an appropriate method to cover a wide geographical area and to obtain both quantitative and qualitative information pertaining to women's experiences. Its anonymous nature was appropriate for the collection, analysis and reporting of potentially sensitive data.

Although the Aurora programme is available in the UK and Ireland, this research project focused on HEIs in the UK given the timeframe of the project. This also enabled the inclusion of greater qualitative information for a more detailed exploration of support mechanisms.

The 'talking wall' approach (Parsell et al, 1998) was adapted for use with a focus group in this study. The modification involved implementing a 'talking wall' of comments from participants at each table, a chance for each participant to comment on the other tables and at the end for a plenary discussion of main themes, again allowing additional comments to be made. This 'three phase' approach enabled the facilitators to actively listen to the narratives of the participants and enabled the participants to listen and respond to each other's narratives. The facilitators guided the focus groups using trigger questions and prompts encouraging discussion and participation. The findings from a 'talking wall' workshop held at the Aurora Conference 2018 pertaining to women's experiences of support mechanisms for their leadership aspirations are also reported.<sup>2</sup>

### Online surveys

Two online surveys were designed to obtain information pertaining to perspectives of support mechanisms for the advancement of current and aspiring women leaders. SNAP Professional 11 was used to webhost the surveys.

#### *Institutional perspectives of support mechanisms available*

Questions related to information on support mechanisms; resources available; impact measures; examples of best practice; and any support collaborations or networks. It also collected standard data, such as numbers of women employed in the institutions, and employment and work patterns across gender.<sup>3</sup>

The institutions' survey link was accessed through email to HEIs in the UK, distributed through Advance HE's contacts lists [HR, Staff Developers and Heads of Department], to ensure that the appropriate person completed the survey and to avoid duplicated completions.

#### *The views and experiences of current and aspiring women leaders*

Questions related to their experiences in the workplace of facilitators and barriers to advancement; support available for leadership aspirations; leadership training opportunities available; and the benefits of leadership programmes.<sup>4</sup>

The survey was open to women and those who identified as women. The women's survey link was accessed through a specifically designed webpage that provided information about the project.<sup>5</sup> The link was promoted through a range of media, including: Advance HE mailing lists; Aurora networks; social media (Twitter, Facebook); HE organisations (eg Universities UK); RGU contact lists and networks, and professional networks.

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<sup>2</sup> Appendix 1: Findings from Aurora Conference 2018 workshop

<sup>3</sup> Appendix 2: Higher Education Institutions' Survey

<sup>4</sup> Appendix 3: Current and Aspiring Women Leaders' Survey

<sup>5</sup> [www3.rgu.ac.uk/women-leaders-in-higher-education](http://www3.rgu.ac.uk/women-leaders-in-higher-education) [accessed 1 June 2018]

A participant information sheet provided further details to ensure informed consent for participation in the project. Consent for their details, or their institution's details, to be included in the project was given by clicking on a 'Yes' button that took them to the first page of the survey.

## Sample demographic

### Higher education institutions' survey

- + 34 completed responses were received.
- + This was an approximate UK institution response rate of 21%, with a 53% response rate from institutions located in Scotland (Universities Scotland 2018; Universities UK 2018).<sup>6</sup>
- + Table 1 summarises the institutions' details.<sup>7</sup>

**Table 1: Institutions' details**

<b>Location</b>	England 67% (22)	Scotland 30% (10)	Northern Ireland 3% (1)	Unknown 3% (1)
<b>University type</b>	Pre-1992 47% (16)	Post-1992 50% (17)	Other 3% (1)	

No responses were received from institutions located in Wales.

### Current and aspiring women leaders' survey

- + 1,241 completed responses were received.
- + Tables 2 and 3 summarise the respondents' workplace information and personal details.

**Table 2: Respondents' workplace information**

<b>Location</b>	England 80%	Scotland 14%	Wales 4%	Northern Ireland 2%
<b>University type</b>	Pre-1992 50%	Post-1992 48%	Both 2%	
<b>Main work role</b>	Professional/support 57%	Academic 37%	Research 6%	
<b>Contract type</b>	Permanent 87%	Fixed 9%	Open-ended 2%	Other 2%
<b>Working hours</b>	Full-time 86%	Part-time 15%		

Other (atypical) employment included secondments, mixed contracts, contractors, and voluntary/ honorary positions (HESA 2018).<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> 162 publicly funded UK HEIs that returned data to HESA in 2016/17 (HESA, 2018)

<sup>7</sup> Valid percentages reported, those who responded to the question

<sup>8</sup> Low reporting rate for research as main work role may be due to dual work functions. HESA (2018) reported 48% of academic staff employed on contracts with teaching and research functions

For those holding academic or research positions there was representation of both STEMM and non-STEMM (AHSSBL) disciplines. For those holding professional or support roles there was representation of: academic administration; academic development; central services; student services; corporate/executive services; and research administration.

**Table 3: Respondents' personal details**

<b>Highest qualification</b>	Bachelor degree 15%	Masters degree 35%	Doctorate 40%	Higher doctorate 1%	Professional qualification/other 9%
<b>Age</b>	30 or under 8%	31-40 26%	41-50 35%	51-60 26%	61 or over 5%
<b>Marital status</b>	Married 62%	Cohabiting 17%	Single 15%	Divorced 6%	
<b>Ethnicity</b>	White British 76%	Other white background 16%	BAME/other ethnic background 7%	Information refused/ Not known .4%	
<b>Nationality</b>	UK 86%	Other EU 9%	Other 6%		
<b>Disability</b>	Consider themselves to have a disability 7%	Do not consider themselves to have a disability 93%			
<b>Care responsibilities</b>	Care responsibilities 48%	No care responsibilities 52%			

No responses were received from those aged under 21.

To explore factors associated with personal details, ethnicity was categorised into: (1) white British; (2) 'other white background' and (3) black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME)/'other ethnic background'. Age was categorised into: (1) 30 or under; (2) 31-40; (3) 41-50; (4) 51-60; (5) 61 or over.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Appendix 4: Ethnicity and age profile of respondents

## 5. Key findings

A large volume of both quantitative and qualitative information was obtained. For the majority of closed-ended questions in both surveys, ie 'Yes', 'No' and 'Other' responses, an option was provided for respondents to explicate on their responses. In the women's survey this enabled meaning to be given to responses pertaining to their experiences of working in the HE sector.

In this report a summary of the key findings is presented, with a focus on the aims outlined and the findings from the quantitative information.

### Institutional perspectives of support mechanisms available

#### i. Support and resources available

The institutions' responses indicated that a variety of sources of support and resources were currently available to women and men employees to support their leadership aspirations.

- + 97% offered in-house development; 91% flexible time; 88% mentoring/coaching; 79% skills workshops; 71% sabbaticals; 68% collaborations with other universities; 62% funding; 59% time off; and 53% development forums.

Eighty two percent of institutions offered leadership programmes to all employees to support their leadership aspirations.

- + 77% offered Aurora; 56% access to Advance HE HEA Fellowships; 47% the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM); and six percent the Chartered Management Institute (CMI).
- + 71% offered internal and non-accredited staff development programmes, with 18% offering 'other' leadership programmes, mainly non gender specific.

#### ii. Women-only leadership programmes

- + 86% of the institutions offered women-only leadership programmes; with 68% offering Aurora.
- + Of these, 57% had offered Aurora for five years; 24% for four years; 10% three years, and 10% two years. Ninety one percent responded that participants were fully funded, with nine percent part funded.

Number of women employees at their institutions who had completed Aurora	Percentage
11-20	14%
21-30	9%
31-40	9%
41-50	14%
51-60	9%
61-70	18%
71-80	9%
81-90	5%
100+	9%

Fourteen percent had 11-20 women employees at their institution who had completed Aurora; 21-30 and 31-40 women employees (9%); 41-50 (14%); 51-60 (9%); 61-70 (18%); 71-80 (9%), and 81-90 (5%). Nine percent had 100 or more women employees who had completed Aurora.

In addition, seven institutions offered in-house or other women-only leadership programmes. Of those who did not currently offer women-only leadership programmes, 60% had considered doing so.

### iii. Support for aspiring and current women leaders

In response to specific support available, the institutions indicated that this was available for the advancement of both aspiring and current women leaders, and for the support of women in current leadership roles. Table 4 details the support mechanisms available.

**Table 4: Specific support for the advancement of aspiring and current women leaders**

<b>Support for aspiring women leaders</b>	
Specific initiatives for the advancement of aspiring women leaders	85%
Promoting external networking opportunities	56%
Facilitating internal networking opportunities	85%
Formal collaborations (ie with other institutions)	25%
<b>Support for women currently in leadership roles</b>	
Specific initiatives for the support and advancement of current women leaders	30%
Membership of external networks for current women leaders	30%
Facilitating internal networking opportunities	56%
Formal collaborations (ie with other institutions)	30%

### iv. Impact measures

- + 42% of the institutions had impact measures in place for leadership programmes undertaken by both female and male employees. Of those who did not currently have measures in place, 67% had considered implementing them in the future.
- + 33% had specific impact measures for women-only leadership programmes, 53% had considered implementing them in the future.
- + 45% currently use examples of best practice for the support and development of aspiring and current women leaders.



## Views and experiences of current and aspiring women leaders

### i. Workplace experiences

#### *Leadership responsibilities and aspirations*

- + 74% of respondents currently held leadership responsibilities: with 52% at team or department level and 22% at faculty or university level, while 27% had no current leadership responsibilities.
- + 46% responded that they would like a leadership role; 46% already had a leadership role, and eight percent were not seeking a leadership role.

**Table 5: Percentage of respondents with a leadership remit in their current position**

	Current leadership remit*	Aspire to a leadership role		
		Yes	No	Already have
No leadership responsibilities	27%	79%	19%	2%
Team level	29%	53%	9%	38%
Department level	23%	31%	1%	68%
Faculty level	8%	19%	1%	80%
University level	14%	10%	0%	90%

\*A significant difference was found across current leadership remit and aspirations to a leadership role ( $p < 0.001$ ). Responses indicated a high prevalence of those with no leadership responsibilities aspiring to a leadership role, and those with current leadership responsibilities aspiring to further leadership roles and responsibilities. Table 5 details current leadership remits and aspirations.

#### *Institution support for aspirations*

- + 61% of respondents felt that there was support available at their institution to support their leadership aspirations, while 39% felt that there was not.

A significant difference in perspective was found with ethnicity ( $p < 0.001$ ), and nationality, disability and main work role (all  $p < 0.05$ ). Respondents with a BAME/'other ethnic background' or 'other white background' reported that they felt that there is less support available. Those of 'other EU' nationality also felt that there was less support available, as did those responding 'other' nationality. Those who considered themselves to have a disability also felt that there was less support available. Table 6 details perspective of support available.

**Table 6: Support available for leadership aspirations**

Ethnicity	Support available			Support not available		
	BAME/other ethnic background	Other white background	White British	BAME/other ethnic background	Other white background	White British
	50%	52%	64%	50%	49%	36%
Nationality	Other	Other EU	UK	Other	Other EU	UK
	56%	51%	63%	44%	50%	37%
Main work role	Academic	Research	Professional/ support	Academic	Research	Professional/ support
	65%	49%	60%	35%	51%	40%
Disability	Yes	No		Yes	No	
	50%	62%		50%	38%	

Prevalence within workplace and personal details responses: ie 49% of the six percent who reported their main role as research. No significant differences were found with age, marital status or care responsibilities.

### Promotion

+ 61% of the respondents had applied for, or sought, promotion; 23% only once, and 38% several times.

Responses indicated a higher prevalence of success. Sixty four percent of those who had applied for promotion once had been successful, and 37% of those who had applied more than once reported being successful every time; while seven percent reported never having been successful.

### Other aspects

A number of questions related to personal aspects to ascertain whether the respondents felt that these had had a positive or negative impact on their career aspirations. This was in consideration of the fact that other factors aside from gender can impact on women's career advancement and may have a compounding effect.

The questions were worded to include both positive and negative experiences, as it was acknowledged that these aspects could be associated with both outcomes, due to their complex nature. It was therefore appropriate to assess positive and negative impacts together rather than independently. Responses to impact of ethnicity, nationality, marital status and care responsibilities demonstrated that, for some respondents, these had had both a positive and negative impact on their career aspirations experiences.

- + 14% (174 respondents) reported that they felt that their ethnicity had had an impact. Significant differences were found across ethnicity ( $p < 0.001$ ): with 45% of BAME/'other ethnic background' respondents reporting an impact, compared to 19% of those responding White British and 18% 'other white background'.
- + 11% (138 respondents) reported that their nationality had had an impact. Significant differences were found across nationality ( $p < 0.001$ ): with 46% of those responding 'other' nationality reporting that it had had an impact, compared to 18% of those responding 'other EU' and five percent responding 'UK'.

- + Nearly half of respondents (47%) who considered themselves to have a disability felt that this had had an impact.
- + 61% of those who reported having care responsibilities felt that these had had an impact (358 respondents, 29% of respondents in the study).
- + 10% (125 respondents) felt that their marital status had had an impact. Significant differences were found across marital status ( $p < 0.001$ ): 17% divorced; 14% single; 10% married; and seven percent cohabiting.

However, no significant differences were found with applying for, or seeking, promotion with ethnicity, nationality or disability. A significant difference was found with care responsibilities ( $p < 0.001$ ) and marital status ( $p < 0.01$ ), with those with care responsibilities, and married and divorced respondents, reporting higher prevalence of applying for promotion. Applying for promotion more than once was found to significantly increase with age ( $p < 0.001$ ), with prevalence of success also significant ( $p < 0.05$ ).

No significant difference was found with prevalence of successful promotion application with ethnicity, disability, care responsibilities or marital status. A significant difference was found with nationality ( $p < 0.05$ ), with those responding 'other EU' reporting highest prevalence of success (50% compared to 33% 'other' nationality).

## ii. Leadership programmes

- + 59% of the respondents had applied for a leadership programme (including internal training).

Of the overall number of 1,277 applications for leadership programmes, including internal and external programmes, 88% had been successful; with some respondents applying for more than one. Table 7 details application numbers across leadership programmes.

Fifty six percent (711) reported that they had received funding. However, of those who had not received funding, the majority commented that this was because it was an internal programme and the organisation had paid for the course. Additionally, some had ticked the 'No' box for receiving funding, but commented that they had been funded by their organisation.

**Table 7: Leadership training opportunities**

Programme	Applied for programme	Application successful	Received funding for programme
Aurora	19% (229)	82%	96%
Fellowship of the HEA	22% (227)	96%	66%
Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM)	7% (85)	84%	81%
Chartered Management Institute (CMI)	3% (33)	100%	75%
Internal non-accredited staff development leadership training	36% (443)	91%	41%
Other leadership/training course	17% (210)	79%	84%

To explore outcomes associated with types of leadership programmes, the category 'other' leadership/training programme was re-categorised into: (1) own university internal development programme, ie Athena SWAN; (2) other university development programmes; (3) other externally provided development programmes; (4) Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (now Advance HE) programmes, ie Leadership Matters, Future Professional Directors; (5) professional body development programme; and (6) coaching. Although this SDP aims primarily to reflect on support for current and aspiring female leaders, the findings reported demonstrate that positive outcomes were gained from both gender specific and non-gender specific leadership training opportunities.

### iii. Post-training leadership experience

#### *Leadership role*

- + 65% of those who responded had completed a leadership programme.
- + 59% had taken a leadership role since completing a leadership programme.

(It was indicated that some respondents may have already held a leadership role prior to undertaking a programme.)

- + Taking on a leadership role was found to vary across programmes: Aurora 47%; Chartered Management Institute (CMI) 62%; Fellowship of the Advance HE HEA 67%; Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) 65%; Leadership Foundation for Higher Education programme 71%; internal non-accredited staff development leadership training 66%, and 'other' leadership/training course 70%. (Some respondents had completed more than one leadership programme, and some were still undertaking a programme.)

#### *Promotion*

Responses indicated that applying for promotion after completing a leadership programme was prevalent, with some respondents having applied on more than one occasion, with mixed success. In addition, 44% had undertaken further training while 14% had moved HEI and two percent had left academia.

- + 41% had applied for promotion and been promoted, with the majority of this being internally (84%).
- + 26% had applied for promotion and not been promoted; again, the majority of this had been internally (89%).

Twenty seven percent felt that taking part in a leadership programme had changed how they were perceived at their institution, 30% were unsure. Forty eight percent felt more valued for taking part in a leadership programme, but 52% felt that they were not.

### iv. Women-only leadership programmes

- + In response to outcomes achieved for those who had completed a women-only leadership programme, 89% felt that they had gained benefits. Thirty five percent responded that there had been negative aspects to undertaking such a programme.
- + In general, 75% of all respondents thought that there were benefits to a women-only leadership programme.

## 6. 'Talking wall' workshop findings

Approximately 20 attendees at the Aurora Conference 2018 participated in a 'talking wall' workshop. Attendees included: Aurora participants (current and alumnae); Aurora champions, and Aurora mentors and role models. A 'talking wall' approach was chosen as it can elicit information from a wide range of experiences, and the initial sharing and discussing of experiences can encourage the participation of others in sharing their experiences. The approach does not require the disclosure of any personally identifying details.

Five areas were explored with reference to leadership aspirations:

1. What support have you had?
2. What support would you have preferred not to have?
3. What support would you have preferred?
4. What support do you think all women should have in higher education?
5. Any blue sky ideas for women to become leaders in higher education?

The 'talking wall' method was found to be effective in obtaining participants' perspectives and experiences. The simplicity of the questions was appropriate for the aim of the workshop: the identification of facilitators and barriers to aspirations.

A wide range of support mechanisms within HEIs were identified, across all levels of the institution, with both formal and informal sources of support referenced. These are detailed in the appendices.<sup>10</sup> The feedback demonstrated that support mechanisms can be facilitators of leadership aspirations or barriers where these are absent or incorrectly implemented.

Key areas of support were identified as: (i) organisation commitment; (ii) organisational culture; (iii) professional development; (iv) mentoring; (v) support networks, and (vi) resources.

Blue sky ideas for women to become leaders in HE included:

- + Acknowledgement that not enough is being done.
- + General culture change to address gender barriers: starting from primary school with role models and mentoring.
- + An organisational culture that incorporates both women and men's leadership styles, rather than women adapting to masculine styles: working together rather than against each other and women mentoring men in leadership.
- + Awareness at senior management level of unconscious and conscious bias.
- + Encouragement for women to apply and take up leadership roles.
- + Recognition of differences in perspective of career 'success'.
- + Suitable work structure options and initiatives: for example, flexible working and job share, and 'returnships'.
- + Change in attitudes/assumptions regarding care responsibilities: recognition of shared parental leave and de-stigmatisation of caring responsibilities.

These 'blue sky' ideas indicated that the main reasons for the apparent lack of success of women moving to leadership roles were cultural – both institutional and in respect of the women themselves. More needs to be achieved to change the culture to make it easier for women to move into leadership roles.

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<sup>10</sup> Appendix 1: Findings from Aurora Conference 2018 workshop

## 7. Key insights and recommendations

### Survey development

- + Gender categorisation in the survey was based on previous Aurora research categories for comparison of findings. However, in correspondence, some of the respondents felt that by being inclusive, we may have excluded trans women and non-binary.
- + After considerable discussion and consultation it was decided that ethnicity categorisations used by the HESA would be used to collect information pertaining to respondents' ethnicity. Using the recognised HESA categories would allow comparisons with existing papers.
- + However, in correspondence, one respondent felt that we had 'implicit bias' towards 'white' in our survey and challenged us to rethink our categories. While appreciating the comments, and taking into consideration the short period available for the survey, further discussions were held with this respondent. The issue of 'implicit bias' has previously been identified in the HE sector (ECU, 2014 p1) and a recommendation would be for further research to be developed around ethnicity.
- + Further research should be developed around ethnicity and 'implicit bias' to facilitate the understanding of the diversity of the female experience.
- + The benefit of personal contacts and networks, and the value of social media, was highlighted by the resulting increased response rate of the Institution survey through follow-up invitations sent through RGU's HR department to organisational development specialists contacts; and the women's survey through Jisc mailing lists.

### Current and aspiring women leaders' perspectives

- + The findings demonstrated that, regardless of their role, women in HE are still experiencing similar barriers to their career advancement and leadership aspirations.
- + Personal aspects, such as ethnicity, nationality, disability and care responsibilities, were found to impact on career aspirations; the findings are summarised for report length reasons. This has also been reported in other research in academia/HE, with mainly negative, but some positive, impacts indicated (Brown and Leigh, 2018; Martin, 2017; Moreau and Robertson, 2017; Bhopal and Brown, 2016).
- + There was a high level of leadership aspiration reported in the study, for women with both current or no leadership responsibilities, at all levels within an institution. There was high prevalence of both applying for, or seeking, promotion and successful applications.
- + There was agreement between survey responses and workshop feedback that women in HE should not be considered to be homogenous with the same experiences and career and leadership aspirations; with the same support needs, advancement goals and processes required to help them achieve their aspirations. This should be taken into consideration in the provision of support mechanisms.
- + There is a clear appetite for leadership roles among women employees in HE. HEIs need to continue to actively and positively respond to and monitor this.
- + The suggestion that more tailored training, ie for women with caring responsibilities, for black and minority ethnic women or with a disability, might be of interest.

## Institutional perspectives

- + The institutions' perspective that they offer a range of support and leadership programmes to support employees' leadership aspirations, with funding support available, is relatively in agreement with the women's perspective. Nearly two thirds reported that there is support available for their leadership aspirations. Responses indicated that this perspective varied across personal aspects, job role and level of leadership within the institution.
- + There was awareness of the need for access to women-only leadership programmes to meet women employees' aspirations, with the institutions either currently offering women-only programmes or considering doing so. There was clear appreciation of women-only leadership programmes, such as Aurora, among both the institutions and women respondents.
- + There is a lack of impact measures to ascertain the effectiveness of leadership programmes, including women-only programmes; even though many of the institutions had offered Aurora for four to five years.
- + The impact of support mechanisms for supporting current and aspiring women's leadership in HE should be followed through for the foreseeable future.
- + HEIs may need further support in the monitoring of impact of leadership programmes on women's leadership aspirations.

There has been interest in the project, and the relevance of the findings, from a number of industry sectors, including public services and the third sector. It is anticipated that the findings from the project will facilitate further research into women's leadership in the HE sector, and other sectors; to explore further those factors identified in the project as facilitators and barriers to women's leadership aspirations.

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## 9. Author biographies

### **Professor Lesley Diack**

Experienced researcher in survey methodology, having led more than 30 research projects totalling £1.3m. Aurora role model and mentor. Member of the advisory board for the International Network for Health Workforce Education.

Interests: women's health, interdisciplinary education and collaborative practice.

### **Professor Sarah Pedersen**

Robert Gordon University Gender Equality Champion. Research focus on women's engagement with politics, leadership and feminism via the media. Experienced in engaging research participants via social media. Part of a cross-city collaboration on a Women and Politics Festival in November 2018 with a focus on women and leadership.

### **Susan MacLennan**

Institutional Aurora champion, responsible for recruiting and supporting our women through the programme and beyond. Senior organisational development specialist and strategic lead for leadership and management development at Robert Gordon University.

### **Dr Midj Falconer**

Research Fellow. Extensive experience of working with, and undertaking research with, vulnerable persons, and the strategic development of service provision. Research interests: individual and community resilience and the mechanisms that promote the coping with, and adaptation to and growth from, adverse experiences.

### **Dr Emma Gillibrand**

Research Strategy Manager, supporting academic staff in obtaining research funding. Member of the self-assessment team for the 2017 Athena SWAN bronze award submission. Member of the university's Gender Group and part of team that wrote the Gender Action Plan for Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and an Aurora alumnae.

### **Dr Morag McFadyen**

STEMM ambassador, experienced researcher, Auroran alumnae and role model. Research interests: science into practice, educational outreach and innovative pedagogies.

### **Alison Watson**

Business Intelligence Implementation Manager, Strategy, Planning and Policy Development. Chair of the RGU Women's Group, part of the management group for Aurora and Athena SWAN and Gender Action Plan for SFC.

# Appendix 1: Findings from Aurora Conference 2018 workshop

## Key themes were identified at the 'talking wall' workshop pertaining to the questions:

1. What support do you think all women should have in HE?
2. What support have you had?
3. What support would you have preferred not to have?
4. What support would you have preferred?

### Organisational commitment

The encouragement of general professional development to facilitate leadership development was identified as a key area in support for leadership aspirations. Commitment at institution and senior management levels to staff development was cited as an important support preference.

### Organisational culture

Unconscious and conscious biases were commented upon as barriers to women's career aspirations and development. Support mechanisms that all women in HE should have included: awareness training for senior staff regarding bias; a recognition of work/life balance and that women's careers may be interrupted by care responsibilities; and not feeling pressured about taking maternity leave.

### Professional development

Support received and opportunities available included: encouragement and support for training applications for current roles and development; coaching; career planning; secondment; deputising; and autonomy within their role. Development of an external profile had been achieved through opportunities for wider networking, increased public recognition and research sabbaticals. These could be formal arrangements, or informal encouragement and opportunities from more senior colleagues.

- + Where there was a lack of access to networking, both informal and formal, this was cited as a support preference, as was support for a greater profile, 'being more visible'. Other preferences were opportunities for acting leadership experience at their level, shadowing and credit being given to their ideas and suggestions.
- + Mentioned as not being helpful was enforced development that did not take personal circumstances into account. Also the assumption of development as vertical in its nature, rather than occurring horizontally across current level; with development being targeted horizontally in certain roles. There was preference for authentic accounts of leadership and phased development over time.
- + With regard to support that all women in HE should have, continued access to leadership development for both current and aspiring women leaders was cited, as was career planning, clearer pathways to advancement, transparency of promotion processes, and the recognition of transferable skills.

## Mentoring

Mentoring was highlighted as a key support mechanism that all women in HE should have. Mentoring as part of the Aurora programme had been found to be helpful. Mentoring from colleagues at all levels of their Institution (from both women and men colleagues) was also cited as beneficial, and this could be through a formal programme, or informal. Positive role models across all levels were found to be supportive of leadership aspirations.

- + However, mentoring was also cited as an area of dissatisfaction when mentoring was not available, or the mentor allocated had not been suitable; either through allocation by the institution, or unsolicited offers to mentor. Mentoring was commented on as being an ongoing process throughout leadership development, particularly at higher levels where there are fewer colleagues for peer support. Access to external mentoring and coaching was also indicated as a preference.
- + Being promoted as a role model, particularly reflecting a 'protected characteristic', without discussion was negatively remarked upon. Comments overall suggested greater participation in the decision-making process for allocation of mentors and the endorsing of role models.

## Support networks

Support networks included both formal support arrangements and informal networks. These included: peer support and support from colleagues in similar roles; line management support; informal support from more senior colleagues (again both women and men); and 'old girl's networks' with former colleagues. 'Women networks' often set up on an informal basis, which had then become formalised, were also sources of support.

Personal networks were also remarked upon, such as family and friends in senior professional positions.

## Resources

Resources that had been provided to facilitate professional and leadership advancement were positively commented upon, including time to discuss advancement and undertake advancement (sabbaticals).

- + Support preferences included: flexible working, on-campus childcare, correct information when applying for promotion, time and space to reflect, and car parking.

## Appendix 2: Higher Education Institutions' Survey



## Exploring Higher Education Institutions' mechanisms for support of current and aspiring women leaders

### Project Team

Lesley Diack, Sarah Pedersen, Susan MacLennan (RGU)

**We would appreciate your completed responses by Friday 20th July, V2.2 100718**

### Study information sheet

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You are being invited to take part in a research study about current Higher Education Institutions' (HEIs) mechanisms for the support and advancement of current and aspiring women leaders. The research is being undertaken by Robert Gordon University (RGU) and funded by Advance HE.

Please read the information below before deciding if your Institution would like to participate.

#### What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of the study is to explore support mechanisms in the Higher Education sector for the advancement of current and aspiring women leaders. The study will generate data and findings that can inform policy and highlight best practice, to address the support mechanisms needed to develop the leadership aspirations of women in the Higher Education sector.

#### What kind of information are you asked to provide?

The questions relate to resources available at your Institution to support current and aspiring women leaders. This will enable us to explore current support for women's leadership aspirations at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) across the UK. Responses are anonymous in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR, May 2018).

#### What will happen to the information provided?

The data provided will remain confidential and will only be seen by the RGU research team, and will be stored under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR, May 2018) [reformed Data Protection Act 1998].

#### What will happen at the end of the study?

A report of the findings will be submitted to Advance HE. This will help them to assess the current situation with regard to support in HEIs for current and aspiring women leaders. Findings will also be disseminated through publications and presented at conference.

#### How do you take part?

Please complete and submit the online survey. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. The survey can be exited at any time by closing the browser.

**Please click the 'Yes' button below to give consent for the details you provide about your Institution to be used in the study and the 'Next' button, and this will take you to the first page of the survey.**

If you would like further information about participating in the study please contact:

The Project Team:

Email: [WomenLeadersProject@rgu.ac.uk](mailto:WomenLeadersProject@rgu.ac.uk)

If you would like more information please visit: <http://www.rgu.ac.uk/women-leaders-in-higher-education>

**I confirm that I have read the information sheet and agree to respond on behalf of my Institution**

Yes  No

## Section 1 - Institution information

### 1. Please select your type of Higher Education Institution

Pre 1992 University

Post 1992 University

Other

*If Other, please enter below:*

### 2. Please select your Institution's location

England

Northern Ireland

Scotland

Wales

## Section 2 - Support and resources

### 3. What support and resources are currently available in your Institution to support leadership aspirations of women and men employees?

a. Mentoring/coaching

b. In-house staff development

c. Skills workshops

d. Development forums

e. Funding

f. Sabbaticals

g. Time off

h. Flexible time

i. Collaboration with other Universities

j. Other

*If Other, please provide details*

## Section 3 - Support and resources

### 4. Does your Institution currently offer leadership programmes to support the leadership aspirations of women and men employees?

Yes

No

**4(i). What leadership programmes does your Institution currently offer?**

- a. Aurora
- b. Fellowship of the HEA
- c. Institute for Leadership and Management (ILM)
- d. Chartered Management Institute (CMI)
- e. Internal non-accredited staff development leadership/management programmes
- f. Other

*If Other, please provide details*

**Section 4 – Women-only leadership programmes**

**5(i). Does your Institution currently offer women-only leadership programmes?**

- Yes
- No

**What proportion of your training budget supports women-only leadership programmes? (in percent)**

**Which women-only leadership programmes does your Institution currently offer?**

- a. Aurora

**5(i)a. For how many years has your Institution taken part in the Aurora programme?**

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

**5(i)b. How many women employees have completed the programme overall?**

- |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>10 or fewer</i>       | 11-20                    | 21-30                    | 31-40                    | 41-50                    | 51-60                    | 61-70                    | 71-80                    | 81-90                    | 91-100                   | 100+                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**5(i)c. Are the participants on the programme? (please tick all that apply)**

- Fully funded*
  - Part funded*
  - Self-funded*
- 

**5(i)d. Do you have any other comments regarding the Aurora programme?**

- b. In-house women-only leadership programmes
- Please provide details*



c. Other women-only leadership programmes   
*Please provide details*

**What are the main benefits to your Institution in offering women-only leadership programmes?**

**What are the main challenges to your Institution in offering women-only leadership programmes?**

## Section 4 – Women-only leadership programmes

**5(ii). Has your Institution considered offering women-only leadership programmes?**

Yes

No

*If Yes, please comment on why it has been considered*

*If No, please comment on why it has not been considered*

**What might be the benefits to your Institution of offering women-only leadership programmes?**

**What might be the challenges to your Institution of offering women-only leadership programmes?**

## Section 5 - Support for aspiring women leaders

**Thinking about aspiring women leaders:**

**6. Does your Institution have any other specific initiatives for the advancement of aspiring women leaders?**

**[e.g. return to work programmes, women-only short lists, Athena Swan Action Plan]**

Yes

No

*If Yes, please provide details*

**7. Does your Institution promote external networking opportunities for aspiring women leaders?**

Yes

No

*If Yes, please provide details*

**8. Does your Institution facilitate internal networking opportunities with aspiring women leaders?**

Yes

No

*If Yes, please provide details*

**9. Does your Institution have any formal collaborations (for example with other Institutions) to support aspiring women leaders?**

Yes

No

*If Yes, please provide details*

**10. What other support is available for the advancement of aspiring women leaders?**

## Section 6 - Support for women currently in leadership roles

**Thinking about current women leaders:**

**11. Does your Institution have any specific initiatives for the support and advancement of current women leaders?**

Yes

No

*If Yes, please provide details*

**12. Does your Institution belong to any external networks for current women leaders?**

Yes

No

*If Yes, please provide details*

**13. Does your Institution facilitate internal networking opportunities for current women leaders?**

Yes

No

*If Yes, please provide details*

**14. Does your Institution have any formal collaborations (for example with other institutions) to support current women leaders?**

Yes

No

*If Yes, please provide details*

**15. What other support is available for current women leaders?**

## Section 7 - Impact measures

**16. Does your Institution have impact measures that you use to assess the impact of leadership programmes/training on women and men employees?**

Yes

No

*If Yes, please provide details*

**If No, are you considering implementing measures in the future?**

Yes

No

*If Yes, please provide details*

**17. Does your Institution have specific impact measures to assess the impact of leadership programmes/training on women employees?**

Yes

No

*If Yes, please provide details*

**If No, are you considering implementing measures in the future?**

Yes

No

*If Yes, please provide details*

**18. Does your Institution use any examples of best practice for the support and development of aspiring and current women leaders?**

Yes

No

*If Yes, please provide details*

## Section 8 - Institution information

**19. Number of employees in your Institution (Full Time Equivalent)?**

**20. Percentage of women employees in your Institution?**

**Women**

**Men**

**21. Percentage of full-time and part-time employees in your Institution?**

Full-time (male)

Full-time (female)

Part-time (male)

Part-time (female)

**22. Percentage of permanent and fixed-term contracts in your Institution?**

Permanent

Fixed-term

**23. Which job role has responsibility for women leadership support in your Institution?**

**Thank you for your time**

## Appendix 3: Current and Aspiring Women Leaders' Survey



## Exploring Higher Education Institutions' mechanisms for support of current and aspiring women leaders

### Project Team

Lesley Diack, Sarah Pedersen, Susan MacLennan (RGU)

**We would appreciate your completed responses by Tuesday 10th July.**

V3.1100718

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### Participant information sheet

You are being invited to take part in a research study about current Higher Education Institutions' (HEIs) mechanisms for the support and advancement of current and aspiring women leaders. The research is being undertaken by Robert Gordon University (RGU) and funded by Advance HE. Before you decide if you would like to take part please read the information below.

**Please note: we are interested in the views and experiences of women in academic, research, professional and support roles in HEIs; including women with [aspirations to leadership roles](#) and women in [current leadership roles](#).**

#### What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of the study is to generate data and findings that can inform policy and highlight best practice, to address the support mechanisms needed to develop current and aspiring women leaders within HEIs.

#### What kind of personal details will I be asked to provide?

The questions we ask relating to your personal details and workplace experiences will enable us to explore their potential impact on your leadership aspirations and advancement. We have worded them so that your responses are anonymous in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR, May 2018).

**Please note: You do not have to answer any personal details questions that you do not want to.**

#### What will happen to the information I provide?

The data you provide will remain confidential and will only be seen by the RGU research team, and stored under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR, May 2018) [reformed Data Protection Act 1998].

#### What will happen at the end of the study?

A report of the findings will be submitted to Advance HE. This will help them to assess the current situation with regard to support in HEIs for current and aspiring women leaders. Findings will also be disseminated through publications and presented at conference.

### How do I take part?

If you decide to take part in the research, please complete and submit the online survey. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You can change your mind at any time by closing the survey browser.

Please click the '**Yes**' button below to give your consent for the details you provide to be used in the study. Click '**Next**' to begin the survey.

If you would like further information about participating in the study please contact:

The Project Team

Email: [WomenLeadersProject@rgu.ac.uk](mailto:WomenLeadersProject@rgu.ac.uk)

**I confirm that I have read the information sheet and give my consent to participating in this survey**

Yes       No

## Section 1 - Demographic information

### 1. What is your legal sex?

*Woman or identify as a woman*  
 *Man or identify as a man*

### 1a. Is your gender identity the same as the gender you were originally assigned at birth?

Yes  
 No

### 2. What is your age?

*Under 21*       *21 - 25*       *26 - 30*       *31 - 35*       *36 - 40*  
 *41 - 45*       *46 - 50*       *51 - 55*       *56 - 60*       *61 - 65*  
 *66 or over*

**3. What is your ethnicity?**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>White - British</i>                      | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Gypsy or Traveller</i>                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other White background</i>               | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Black or Black British - Caribbean</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Black or Black British - African</i>     | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other Black background</i>             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Asian or Asian British - Indian</i>      | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Asian or Asian British - Pakistani</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Chinese</i>                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other Asian background</i>               | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Mixed - White and Black Caribbean</i>  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Mixed - White and Black African</i>      | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Mixed - White and Asian</i>            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other Mixed background</i>               | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Arab</i>                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other Ethnic background</i>              | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Not Known</i>                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Information refused</i>                  |  |

**4. What is your nationality?**

- United Kingdom*
- Other EU*
- Other*

**5. Do you consider yourself to have a disability?**

- Yes*
- No*

**6. What is your marital status?**

- Married*
- Divorced*
- Single*
- Co-habiting*

**7. Do you have any care responsibilities (i.e. children/family members)?**

- Yes*
- No*

**8. What is your highest qualification?**

- Bachelor degree*
- Masters degree*
- Doctorate*
- Higher Doctorate (e.g. DSc)*
- Professional qualification or Other (please provide details)*

Please provide details of Professional qualification or if you have chosen Other



## Section 2 - Workplace information

### 9. For which type of Higher Education Institution do you work?

(Pre 1992 (HEIs with University status prior to 1992) and Post 1992 (HEIs that gained University status after 1992))

- Pre 1992 University  
 Post 1992 University  
 Both

### 10. Please select your workplace location

- England  
 Northern Ireland  
 Scotland  
 Wales

### 11a. What would you describe as your main work role?

- Academic  
 Research  
 Professional/Support

### 11b. In which discipline/subject area do you work?

### 11c. What is your main discipline/subject area of research?

### 11d. In which department do you work?

### 12a. Do you work?

- Full-time       Part-time

### 12b. Is your job?

- Permanent  
 Fixed term  
 Open ended (e.g. same post, subject to renewal)  
 Other (please provide details)

If Other, please provide details:

**13. What do you feel is the remit of your leadership responsibilities?**

- No current leadership responsibilities
- Leadership responsibilities at team level
- Leadership responsibilities at department level
- Leadership responsibilities at Faculty level
- Leadership responsibilities at University level

**Section 3 - Workplace experience**

**14. Would you like a leadership role?**

- Yes       No       Already have

**15. Do you feel that there is support available at your Institution to support your leadership aspirations?**

- Yes  
 No

*If Yes, please comment on the support you feel is available*

*If No, please comment on why you feel support is not available*

**16a. Have you applied for/or sought promotion?**

- Yes, several times       Yes, only once       No

*If No, please comment on why you have not applied for/or sought promotion*

**If Yes, were you successful everytime?**

- Yes       No       Never

*If No or Never, what was the reason given, if any? [please leave blank if you prefer not to answer]*

**17. Do you feel that your ethnicity has had a positive or negative impact on your career aspirations?**

- Yes       No

*If Yes, please provide details*

**18. Do you feel that your nationality has had a positive or negative impact on your career aspirations?**

- Yes       No

*If Yes, please provide details*

**19. Do you feel that your disability has had a positive or negative impact on your career aspirations?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, please provide details*

**20. Do you feel that your marital status has had a positive or negative impact on your career aspirations?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, please provide details*

**21. Do you feel that your care responsibilities have had a positive or negative impact on your career aspirations?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, please provide details*

## Section 4 - Leadership training opportunities

**22a. Have you applied for any leadership programmes? (including internal training)**

Yes  No

***Have you applied for the following leadership programme?***

**22b. Aurora**

Yes  No

**22c. Were you successful in your application for Aurora?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, what support did your Institution provide for your application?*

*If Yes, what support did your Institution provide whilst you were undertaking the programme?*

*Was there more support you would have liked?*

**22d. Did you receive funding?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, please provide details*

*If No, how did you fund your programme?*

**22e. What have been the benefits of undertaking the programme?**

Please rank the benefits below i.e. select the most beneficial, then 2nd most, 3rd most etc.

	Most beneficial	2nd most beneficial	3rd most beneficial	4th most beneficial	5th most beneficial	6th most beneficial	N/A
Action learning sets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keynote speakers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inspirational and motivational speakers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Role models	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Networking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please provide details							

**Have you applied for the following leadership programme?**

**23a. Fellowship of the HEA**

Yes  No

**23b. Were you successful in your application for Fellowship of the HEA?**

Yes  No

If Yes, what support did your Institution provide for your application?

If Yes, what support did your Institution provide whilst you were undertaking the programme?

Was there more support you would have liked?

**23c. Did you receive funding?**

Yes  No

If Yes, please provide details

If No, how did you fund your programme?

**23d. What have been the benefits of undertaking the Programme?**

Please rank the benefits below i.e. select the most beneficial, then 2nd most, 3rd most etc.

	Most beneficial	2nd most beneficial	3rd most beneficial	4th most beneficial	5th most beneficial	6th most beneficial	N/A
Action learning sets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keynote speakers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inspirational and motivational speakers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Role models	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Networking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please provide details							

**Have you applied for the following leadership programme?**

**24a. Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM)**

Yes  No

**24b. Were you successful in your application for ILM?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, what support did your Institution provide for your application?*

*If Yes, what support did your Institution provide whilst you were undertaking the programme?*

*Was there more support you would have liked?*

**24c. Did you receive funding?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, please provide details*

*If No, how did you fund your programme?*

**24d. What have been the benefits of undertaking the programme?**

*Please rank the benefits below i.e. select the most beneficial, then 2nd most, 3rd most etc.*

	<i>Most beneficial</i>	<i>2nd most beneficial</i>	<i>3rd most beneficial</i>	<i>4th most beneficial</i>	<i>5th most beneficial</i>	<i>6th most beneficial</i>	<i>N/A</i>
Action learning sets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keynote speakers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inspirational and motivational speakers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Role models	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Networking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Other, please provide details</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Have you applied for the following leadership programme?**

**25a. Chartered Management Institute (CMI)**

Yes  No

**25b. Were you successful in your application for CMI?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, what support did your Institution provide for your application?*

*If Yes, what support did your Institution provide whilst you were undertaking the programme?*

*Was there more support you would have liked?*

**25c. Did you receive funding?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, please provide details*

*If No, how did you fund your programme?*

**25d. What have been the benefits of undertaking the programme?**

*Please rank the benefits below i.e. select the most beneficial, then 2nd most, 3rd most etc.*

	<i>Most beneficial</i>	<i>2nd most beneficial</i>	<i>3rd most beneficial</i>	<i>4th most beneficial</i>	<i>5th most beneficial</i>	<i>6th most beneficial</i>	<i>N/A</i>
Action learning sets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keynote speakers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inspirational and motivational speakers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Role models	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Networking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Other, please provide details</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Regarding leadership programme applications; if none of the previous, have you applied for:**

**26a. Internal non-accredited staff development leadership/management programme?**

Yes  No

**26b. Were you successful in your application for internal non-accredited staff development?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, what support did your Institution provide for your application?*

*If Yes, what support did your Institution provide whilst you were undertaking the programme?*

*Was there more support you would have liked?*

**26c. Did you receive funding?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, please provide details*

*If No, how did you fund your programme?*

**26d. What have been the benefits of undertaking the programme?**

*Please rank the benefits below i.e. select the most beneficial, then 2nd most, 3rd most etc.*

	<i>Most beneficial</i>	<i>2nd most beneficial</i>	<i>3rd most beneficial</i>	<i>4th most beneficial</i>	<i>5th most beneficial</i>	<i>6th most beneficial</i>	<i>N/A</i>
Action learning sets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keynote speakers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inspirational and motivational speakers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Role models	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Networking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Other, please provide details</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Regarding leadership programme applications; if none of the previous, have you applied for:**

**27a. Any other leadership/management programme?**

Yes  No

**27b. Please provide details of other leadership/management programme**

**27c. Were you successful in your application for any other leadership/management programme?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, what support did your Institution provide for your application?*

*If Yes, what support did your Institution provide whilst you were undertaking the programme?*

*Was there more support you would have liked?*

**27d. Did you receive funding?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, please provide details*

*If No, how did you fund your programme?*

**27e. What have been the benefits of undertaking the programme?**

Please rank the benefits below i.e. select the most beneficial, then 2nd most, 3rd most etc.

	Most beneficial	2nd most beneficial	3rd most beneficial	4th most beneficial	5th most beneficial	6th most beneficial	N/A
Action learning sets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keynote speakers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inspirational and motivational speakers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Role models	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Networking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please provide details							

**Section 5 - Post-training leadership experience**

**28. Have you completed a leadership programme?**

- Yes     
  No     
  I am still undertaking a programme

**Since undertaking a leadership programme which of the following have you achieved?**

**28a. Taken a leadership role?**

- Yes     
  No

If Yes, how many years have you now held a leadership role?

**28b. Applied for promotion and been promoted?**

- Yes     
  No

**28c. If Yes, was this?**

- Internally     
  Externally

**28d. Applied for promotion and not been promoted?**

- Yes     
  No

If Yes, were you given a reason [please leave blank if you prefer not to answer]

**28e. If Yes, was this?**

- Internally     
  Externally

**28f. Undertaken further training?**

- Yes     
  No



**28g. Left Academia?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, reasons for leaving*

**28h. Moved Higher Education Institution?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, reasons for moving*

**29. Since undertaking a leadership programme what support have you been given to undertake a leadership role within your Institution?**

**30. What additional support would have been useful for your career development?**

**31. Do you feel that taking part in a leadership programme changed how you are perceived at your Institution?**

Yes  No  Unsure

*If Yes, please provide details as to whether this had a positive or negative impact*

*If No, please provide details*

**32. Do you feel valued for taking part in a leadership programme?**

Yes  No

**33a. If you have completed a women-only leadership programme, such as Aurora, did you gain any benefits from taking part in the programme?**

Yes  No  N/A

*If Yes, please comment on the benefits you gained*

*If No, please comment on why you feel you did not benefit*

**33b. If you have completed a women-only leadership programme, were there any negative aspects?**

Yes  No  N/A

*If Yes, please provide details*

## Section 6 - Gender and leadership

**34. In general, do you think that there are benefits to a women-only leadership programme?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, what do you think these benefits might be?*

**35. Are you aware of gender differences in leadership?**

35a. In your Institution  Yes  No

*If Yes, please provide details*

35b. Within the Higher Education sector  Yes  No

*If Yes, please provide details*

35c. In the UK  Yes  No

*If Yes, please provide details*

**36. What changes would you like to see in helping women to achieve leadership roles?**

a. In your Institution

b. Within the Higher Education sector

c. In the UK

## Thank you for your time

If you would like more information please click on the link below

<http://www.rgu.ac.uk/women-leaders-in-higher-education>

## Appendix 4: Ethnicity and age profile of respondents

Ethnic background	Response	Percent
Arab	6	.5
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2	.2
Asian or Asian British – Indian	15	1.2
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	5	.4
Black or Black British – African	6	.5
Black or Black British – Caribbean	8	.6
Chinese	9	.7
Information refused	4	.3
Mixed – White and Asian	9	.7
Mixed – White and Black African	1	.1
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	.1
Not Known	1	.1
Other Asian background	10	.8
Other Ethnic background	5	.4
Other Mixed background	15	1.2
Other White background	199	16.0
White – British	943	76.0
No response	2	.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1241</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Age group	Response	Percent
21 – 25	24	1.9
26 – 30	80	6.4
31 – 35	131	10.6
36 – 40	192	15.5
41 – 45	198	16.0
46 – 50	237	19.1
51 – 55	180	14.5
56 – 60	138	11.1
61 – 65	46	3.7
65 or over	13	1.0
No response	2	.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1241</b>	<b>100.0</b>





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