



The Open
University

**GENDER EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF
RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICIES, PROCESSES
AND PRACTICES FOR INTERNAL STAFF**

MARCH 2011

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1. About this Equality Impact Assessment

This equality impact assessment of the recruitment and selection policy for internal staff in respect of gender was sponsored by the Director of Human Resources. It was led by the Deputy Director, Human Resources with a project team including staff from Human Resources and the Equality and Diversity Team.

Queries about this report or comments about the content should be sent in writing to Hazel Jenner (Head of Strategy and Policy Development), HR Division, The Open University, P.O. Box 75, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AL

Staff are welcome to provide feedback on their experience of the internal recruitment and selection process via the Human Resources Policy in box.

2. Aims of the policy

One of the OU's strategic priorities is to diversify its staff base to reflect an increasingly diverse student body. This policy and associated processes are key to achieving this aim.

The policy is designed to provide a fair, robust and efficient recruitment and selection process which complies with current legislation and best practice. It operates within the framework of our equality and diversity policies to ensure job applicants at all stages of the process are treated solely on the basis of their merits, regardless of age, disability, family circumstance, gender, political opinion, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, trade union membership or other distinctions.

The recruitment and selection process at the University is devolved to units (other than advertising, issuing of the contract of employment, and post appointment stages).

Heads of units are responsible for ensuring that staff involved in recruitment and selection have received appropriate training (including equality and diversity awareness) before being a member of a selection panel. Units are responsible for liaising with HR and ensuring appropriate procedures are followed.

3. Equality relevance

The recruitment and selection policy and processes were screened and are considered to be highly relevant to gender equality because there is the potential for discrimination to take place, particularly forms of indirect discrimination. In addition, the policy can make a significant contribution to the promotion of equality of opportunity for men and women by providing careers which enhance the capabilities and status of individuals in society.

The associated psychometric testing policy was also screened. A full equality impact assessment was not recommended for that policy as the tests are provided and equality tested by Saville & Holdsworth. However we will continue to monitor and review any feedback we receive from staff, managers, applicants and unions in this respect.

4. Data and evidence used

Quantitative data is extracted from the staff database and analysed annually alongside appropriate benchmarks. This data includes the gender of staff, and the gender of applicants, interviewees and appointees.

For the purposes of this assessment the following data has been considered by gender:

Internal data

- The profile of the internal staff workforce (Appendix C).
- The profile of the internal staff workforce by geographical location (Appendix D).
- The profile of the internal staff workforce by Unit (Appendix E).
- The profile of the internal staff workforce by staff category (Appendix F).
- The profile of the internal staff workforce by contract type (fixed-term or permanent) (Appendix G).
- The profile of job applicants, shortlisted applicants and appointments made for the past three years (Appendix H).

External benchmarks

- Gender profiles of staff in Higher Education for the year 2008/2009 (Appendix I). This information includes a breakdown of academic staff and professional and support staff by part-time and full-time appointments. This information is from the Equality in Higher Education Statistical Report 2010, which was produced by the Equality Challenge Unit. It is based mainly on analysis of Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data which covers the whole of the UK.
- An audit was conducted by Opportunity Now (the UK's leading benchmark for gender diversity and inclusion). The benchmark has been developed as a management tool to help employers in improving their performance, whilst providing a systematic approach to managing, measuring and reporting organisational action for gender equality, diversity and inclusion. We achieved a score of 89 and were awarded the GOLD standard (being only 6 points from the Platinum standard).

5. Assessment of impact

Screening Process

A screening process was carried out in 2007. This identified: a large number of women were in support staff roles (80%); a low proportion of men in academic-related roles at grade 7 – 9; a small proportion of women in senior academic related posts (grade 10).

A number of actions were identified in the screening process. These are listed below with an update on action taken:

- a) Undertake annual equal pay review of salaries and special awards and discretionary points. This is an ongoing activity.
- b) Undertake a benchmarking exercise with other universities to establish if they have a similar trend in respect of support staff and academic related roles at grades 7-9. This benchmarking exercise was undertaken. Results showed that other universities had similar patterns, particularly that Academic Related staff were becoming proportionally more and more female.
- c) Monitor applicants for grade 10 posts by gender and review recruitment processes and documentation to ensure there are no barriers to male and female applicants. Assistant HR Advisers routinely analyse monitoring data and action any emerging issues.
- d) Highlight issue of male job applicants being less likely to be shortlisted (and female job applicants for certain posts). Interview panels and request panel chairs have been alerted to scrutinise outcomes closely.

Equality Impact Assessment

Data period

The data used in this full equality impact assessment was for the periods: 1st April 2007 – 31st March 2008 (referred to as 2008 data); 1st April 2008 – 31st March 2009 (referred to as 2009 data); and 1st April 2009 – 31st March 2010 (referred to as 2010 data). This is in line with the reporting periods in the OU annual monitoring report.

Representation of men and women in the OU workforce

The data shows that:

A higher percentage of OU staff are female. The representation of men and women in the OU workforce has remained static over the last three years: in 2008 65.1% of staff were female and 34.9% male; in 2009 65.3% of staff were female and 34.7% male; in 2009 65.1% staff were female and 34.9% male.

There is some variation in male/female representation by location in 2010 with the highest female representation in the Southern Region (85.3%) and the lowest at Wellingborough Distribution Services (45.7%). A number of Regions/Nations have female staff representing more than 80% of their workforce these are: South-West Region 81.9%; South-East Region 81.3%; Scotland 82.1%; Ireland 80.3%.

Female representation of staff at the OU in 2010 (65.1%) is higher than that across the HE sector (53.6%).

56.3% of fixed-term staff and 66.2% of permanent staff are female.

6. Findings

Job applicants shortlisted and appointed

The data shows that:

Overall there continues to be more female applicants than male although the percentage dropped by around 5% in 2010: 60.9% of all applicants were female in 2008; 63.5% in 2009; 58.8% in 2010.

The data shows that over the three year period a slightly higher percentage of female applicants were shortlisted in comparison with the percentage of male applicants shortlisted as follows: 28.1% female and 21.1% male in 2008 ; 22.8% female and 18.5% male in 2009; 20.6% female and 16.9% male in 2010. The trend here appears to be that the difference in percentages of male and female applicants who are shortlisted is diminishing. The percentage of male and female applicants shortlisted who were appointed over the 3 year period are more closely in line as follows: 26.6% female and 27.3% male in 2008; 25% female and 23.5% male in 2009; 31.0% female and 29.8% male in 2010.

From the total number of applications of each gender received a slightly higher percentage of female applicants were appointed over the 3 year period: 7.5% of female applicants and 5.8% of male applicants were appointed in 2008; 5.7% of female applicants and 4.4% of male applicants were appointed in 2009; and 6.4% of female applicants and 5.0 of male

applicants were appointed in 2010. The difference has remained fairly static (1.7%, 1.3% and 1.4%).

In 2010 representation of men is low in the support and other and academic-related grades (see Appendix F): 36.5% of academic-related staff are male and 23.2% of support and other staff are male (50% of academic staff are male).

56% of staff holding fixed-term appointments are women and 66% of staff holding permanent appointments are women.

Agency staff

During 2010, 68.5% of Agency staff working at the OU were female.

7. Promotion of equality

A review of flexible working policies and practices (including part-time working) is currently taking place and a number of actions are being considered, with any recommendations being taken forward to Joint Negotiation Committee in October 2011.

Actions already taken to promote gender equality in the recruitment process include:

Job advertisements

All job advertisements include the statement 'We promote diversity in employment and welcome applications from all sections of the community'

Until the post pause (where all posts are to be advertised internally in the first instance) was implemented in 2009 general advertisements to raise awareness of the Open University as an employer were regularly placed. An example of this is an advertisement in March 2008 in International Women's magazine in March 2008. This practice has been temporarily discontinued because of the post pause and financial considerations. If we are looking to raise awareness in this way in the future we need to ensure that any such advertising was appropriately targeted to increase representation of male or female staff where figures show a disproportionate representation.

Information for applicants

The 'Information for applicants' document includes a section on equality and diversity which gives general information on our Equality Scheme and our vision to create an inclusive University community where we anticipate and respond positively to different needs and circumstances so that everyone can achieve their potential.

The document also includes (in the first section) the statement: 'Staff and potential staff are treated solely on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential, regardless of gender, colour, ethnic or national origin, age, socio-economic background, disability, religious or political beliefs, family circumstances, sexual orientation or other irrelevant distinction.'

Monitoring form

There is a monitoring form attached to the application form which states our policy, aims and what happens to the data as follows:

'The Open University is an equal opportunities employer.

We have an equal opportunities policy, the aim of which is to ensure that no job applicant receives less favourable treatment on irrelevant grounds (e.g. sex, race, colour, ethnic or national origins, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation or marital status), nor is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justified and relevant to the job.

Training for interviewers

Training in recruitment and selection is provided for interviewers and this contains an equality and diversity element. The 'Effective Recruitment and Selection Guide' contains specific references to equality and diversity policies and gender throughout. The guide makes it clear that it is the interview panel Chairs responsibility to ensure that equality and diversity policies are actively pursued and that no unlawful or other discriminatory action takes place at any stage in the process. As a minimum requirement every interview chair is expected to be trained in Effective Recruitment and Selection.

An on-line recruitment module was launched earlier in 2011 by Human Resource Development and covers all aspects of recruitment and selection. The module also highlights the equality challenges facing the university and positive action.

Other resources

The University has an ongoing commitment to staff development in equality and diversity and a well established programme of training. The following are examples of resources designed to impact on this area:

- The electronic 'OU Knowhow' system includes information relevant to equality and diversity.
- A website "Valuing Diversity" for staff to continue to develop their capabilities in supporting and working with diverse groups of people and ensure The Open University stays true to its mission and core values. This website has a range of useful resources, including Diversity Compliance e-learning module (to be completed by all staff) which includes information on legislation relating to gender.
- Employment Law for Managers course includes gender employment legislation

Flexible working

There are a wide range of flexible working opportunities at the OU, such as Parental Leave, Contingency Leave, Homeworking, Job share, Dependants Leave, Career Breaks and Flexible Working. Flexible working arrangements are subject to operational requirements.

8. Consideration of alternatives

We used the systems diagrams attached as appendices A and B and the available data to consider possible action that could be taken. In summary, the assessment suggests that although much good practice is already in place, intervention may be required to attract more men into support roles and academic-related roles at grade 7-9, and to support more women into senior academic-related posts (grade 10). We may need to look for longer-term results due to the current post pause.

Recruitment and the Equality Act

A number of actions have recently been taken in respect of recruitment processes in order to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act which came into effect in October 2010. The Act is applicable in England, Wales and Scotland. The requirements of the Act are designed to eliminate discrimination. Managers have been informed of these requirements via a Management Guidance memo from Human Resources. They are:

- Managers have been reminded to consider if a job may be suitable for part-time work or job-sharing before advertising.
- Those involved with the selection process have been reminded to think in advance of potential issues with the date/time/location of interviews and aim to be flexible where requests for re-arrangements are made.

Action:

A watching brief will be kept on the gender of applicants who are appointed to the relevant staff categories.

Our Equality Scheme includes a number of actions which relate to gender. For example:

1. Carrying out a review of flexible working policies and practices (including part-time working). This review is currently taking place and a number of actions are being considered, with any recommendations being taken forward to Joint Negotiation Committee in October 2011.
2. Providing equality monitoring data to units and guidance on how to use it effectively
3. Supporting units to implement action to encourage better staffing gender balance
4. Updating information about the equality duties into staff learning and development guides, tools and other resources
5. Reviewing the Career Development & Staff Appraisal process to ensure equality and diversity are valued and recognised

Workshop with PVC (Research and Enterprise) to identify actions

The following actions were identified to carry forward our work in this area:

- a) Working with our advertising agency to analyse job advertisements and documentation to ensure that the OU is as attractive as possible to all applicants
- b) Encourage units to consider recruiting for potential (further information on recruiting for potential is included in the Effective Recruitment and Selection guide).
- c) Setting up a pilot scheme to provide feedback to individual applicants who do not achieve the required standard to be short listed in order to better prepare them for applying for further opportunities.
- d) Providing detailed data to every Head of Unit about the success and failure rates of job applicants by gender in their unit via the Equality and Diversity Annual Report

9. Feedback

We looked to the following for feedback:

- Comments from staff, managers, applicants and unions.
- Consultation carried out with staff for the Gender Equality Scheme and the Single Equality Scheme.

- Complaints to the HR Division through the established complaints procedure for recruitment and selection processes.
- HR Policy feedback link (an e-mail link on the HR Intranet for staff to comment on adverse impact of staffing policies and procedures).
- Comments were requested via the HR Newsletter in an article reporting the recruitment and selection impact assessment.
- Feedback was requested via the HR and OU Intranet News sites.
- The 'Opportunity Now' feedback report following our submission to the gender equality survey 2008/2009.

The draft impact assessment report was then publicised via the OU and HR Intranet sites and staff were asked for feedback on the suggested actions.

10. Decisions and actions

When deciding which actions to take forward and the order of priority, in addition to the feedback and comments received, the economic downturn and the effects on the University's funding from central government will be taken into consideration.

The overall experience of people when they become staff of the University is obviously an important influencing factor for the future recruitment and overall retention of staff.

It has been decided that the following actions will be taken forward at this time:

- a) Continue to implement the single Equality Scheme actions:
 - Carrying out a review of flexible working policies and practices (including part-time working).
 - Providing equality monitoring data to units and guidance on how to use it effectively.
 - Supporting units to implement action to encourage better staffing gender balance.
 - Updating information about the equality duties into staff learning and development guides, tools and other resources.
 - Reviewing the Career Development & Staff Appraisal process to ensure equality and diversity are valued and recognised.
- b) Continue to keep a watching brief on the gender of applications who are appointed to the relevant staff categories.

11. Monitoring arrangements

The Staff Co-ordinating Group (a sub-group of the Staff Strategy Committee, a sub-group of the Council), HR, Equality and Diversity Office and the Equality and Diversity Management Group monitor data on an annual basis, including the following:

- workforce composition by gender
- senior staff composition by gender
- promotions by gender
- applicant monitoring data by gender including applicants, those shortlisted and those appointed

12. Publishing

This report will be published on the University's Equality & Diversity website: www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity. The report will be publicised via the HR intranet and Diversity intranet and the OU intranet news pages.

13. Encouraging ongoing feedback

Feedback is encouraged from job applicants on the recruitment and selection process on an ongoing basis with the following statement has been included in the 'Information for applicants' document:

If you have any comments or concerns about any stage of the recruitment process, please write to the HR Adviser, Human Resources, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA, who will look into the matter.

The following statement has been included in the 'Effective Recruitment and Selection guide':

'We welcome feedback on recruitment and selection procedures and the way they operate. We are interested to know of any possible or actual adverse impact that these procedures may have on any groups in respect of gender or marital status, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age or other characteristics. Feedback can be provided via the HR Policy Feedback button or in writing to the Head of Human Resources (Support Services).'

The HR Intranet site has a policy feedback link for staff which includes the following message, 'We welcome feedback on staffing policies and procedures and the way they operate. We are also interested in any concerns about possible adverse impact of these on any particular staff group. Please use this button to email any points on these areas you wish to raise with Human Resources.'

The Further Particulars sheet for each post explains the complaints procedure for job applicants as follows, 'If you have any comments or concerns about any stage of the recruitment process please write to the HR Adviser - Student Services/Central Academic Units/Support Services [*delete as appropriate*], Human Resources who will look into the matter.'

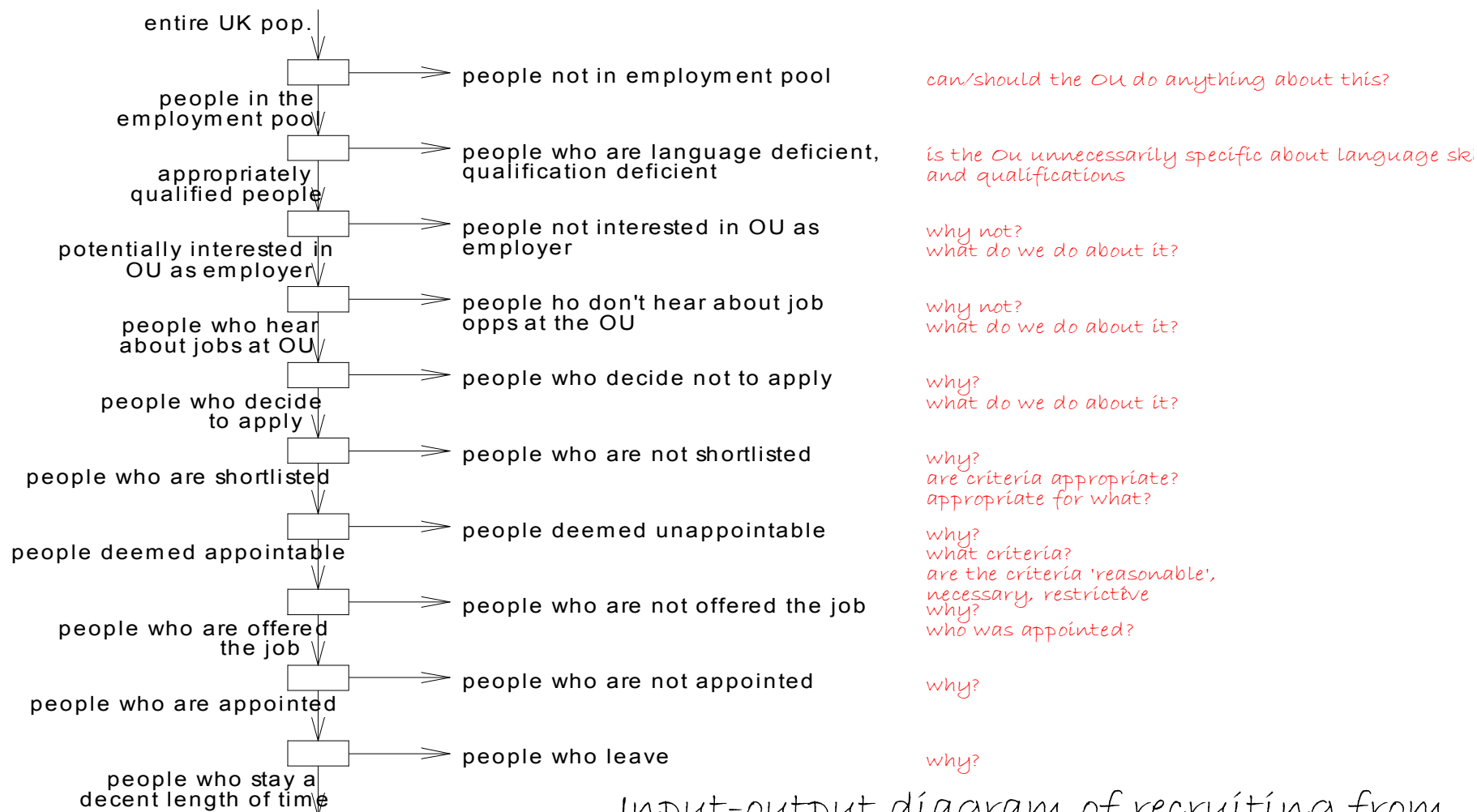
14. Next review

The relevant monitoring data will be collated and analysed on an annual basis. This will enable us to determine if a further review is required in the future.

Appendices

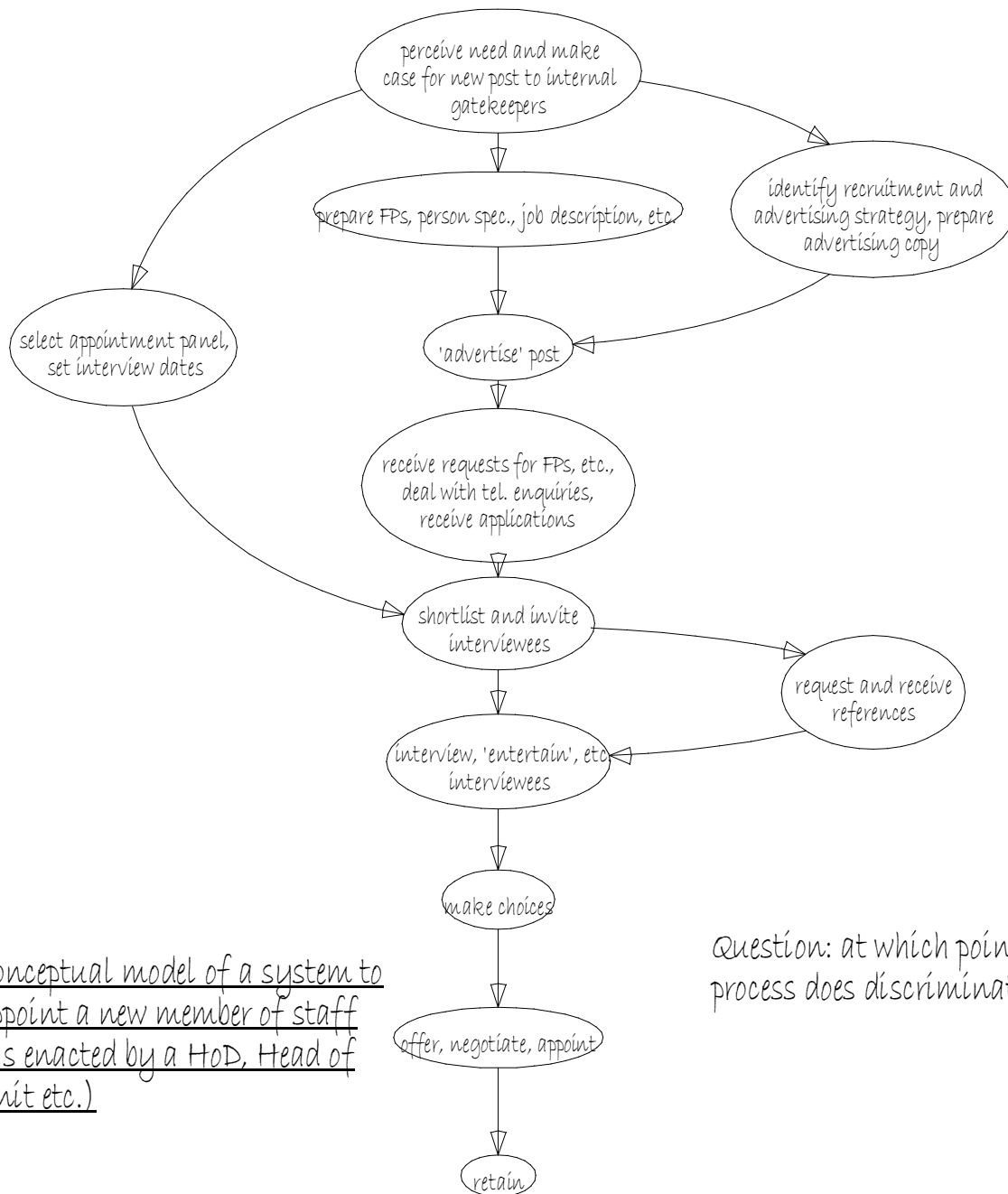
(Some of the key data which was considered in the preparation of this impact assessment)

Appendix A: Systems Diagram – Filtering individuals from the employment pool and intervention questions



Input-output diagram of recruiting from the general UK population

Appendix B: Systems Diagram – The recruitment process



Conceptual model of a system to appoint a new member of staff (as enacted by a HoD, Head of Unit etc.)

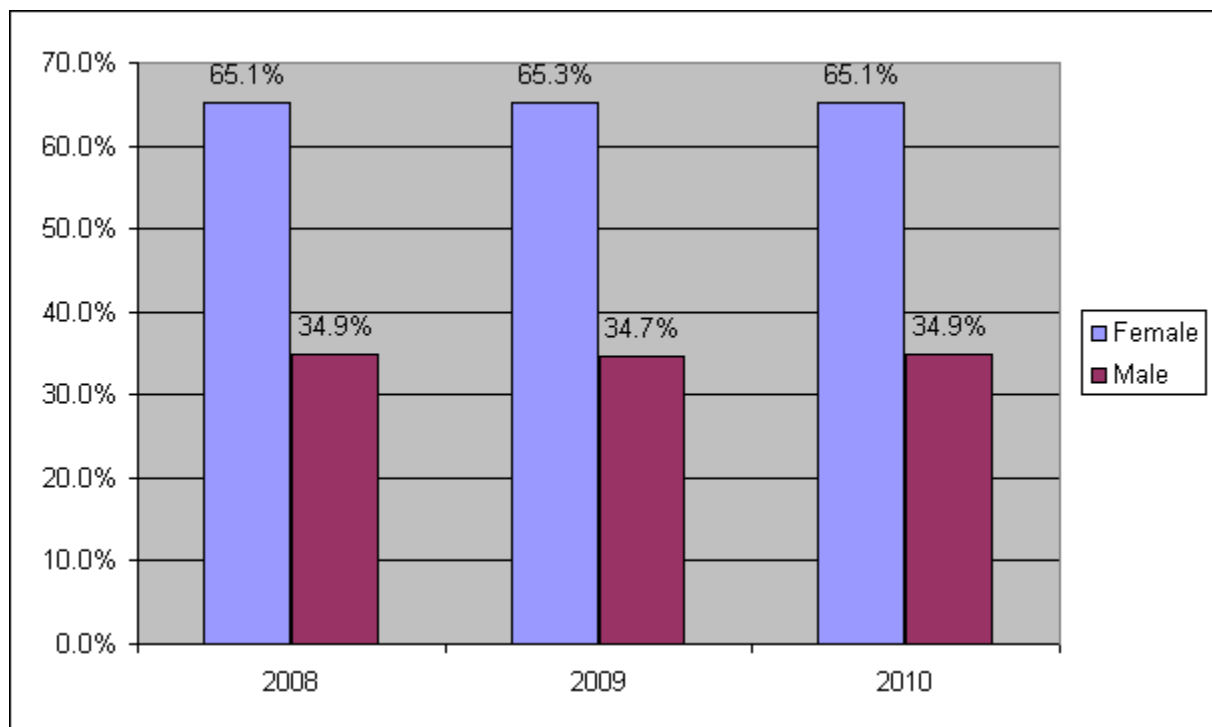
Question: at which points in this process does discrimination occur?

Appendix C

Overall workforce composition by gender (2008 – 2010)

	2008	2009	2010
Female	65.1%	65.3%	65.1%
Male	34.9%	34.7%	34.9%
Total University	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Distribution of staff by gender (2008-2010)



Appendix D

Gender by location area (2010)

	Female		Male		Total	% of Total
	Total	% Total	Total	% Total		
Region 01 (London)	77	72.6%	29	27.4%	106	100.0%
Region 02 (South)	99	85.3%	17	14.7%	116	100.0%
Region 03 (South West)	59	81.9%	13	18.1%	72	100.0%
Region 04 (West Midlands)	55	77.5%	16	22.5%	71	100.0%
Region 05 (East Midlands)	79	69.9%	34	30.1%	113	100.0%
Region 06 (East of England)	62	78.5%	17	21.5%	79	100.0%
Region 07 (Yorkshire)	57	78.1%	16	21.9%	73	100.0%
Region 08 (North West)	125	75.3%	41	24.7%	166	100.0%
Region 09 (North)	50	67.6%	24	32.4%	74	100.0%
Region 10 (Wales)	45	75.0%	15	25.0%	60	100.0%
Region 11 (Scotland)	96	82.1%	21	17.9%	117	100.0%
Region 12 (Ireland)	53	80.3%	13	19.7%	66	100.0%
Region 13 (South East)	65	81.3%	15	18.8%	80	100.0%
Walton Hall (Milton Keynes)	2,367	61.6%	1,473	38.4%	3,840	100.0%
Wellingborough Distribution Services	32	45.7%	38	54.3%	70	100.0%
Total University	3,321	65.1%	1,782	34.9%	5,103	100.0%

Appendix E

Gender by location Unit (2010)

	Female		Male		Total	% of Total
	Total	% Total	Total	% Total		
Audit	3	60.0%	2	40.0%	5	100.0%
Centre for Higher Education Research & Information	8	80.0%	2	20.0%	10	100.0%
Centre for Outcomes-Based Education	6	54.5%	5	45.5%	11	100.0%
Communications	28	62.2%	17	37.8%	45	100.0%
Computing Services	79	36.6%	137	63.4%	216	100.0%
Development Office	19	79.2%	5	20.8%	24	100.0%
Estates	39	31.0%	87	69.0%	126	100.0%
Faculty of Arts	101	61.6%	63	38.4%	164	100.0%
Faculty of Education and Language Studies	178	76.7%	54	23.3%	232	100.0%
Faculty of Health & Social Care	143	81.7%	32	18.3%	175	100.0%
Faculty of Mathematics, Computing and Technology	153	42.5%	207	57.5%	360	100.0%
Faculty of Science	159	48.0%	172	52.0%	331	100.0%
Faculty of Social Sciences	119	62.3%	72	37.7%	191	100.0%
Finance	89	75.4%	29	24.6%	118	100.0%
Human Resources	82	79.6%	21	20.4%	103	100.0%
Institute of Educational Technology	63	64.3%	35	35.7%	98	100.0%
Knowledge Media Institute	24	38.7%	38	61.3%	62	100.0%
Learning and Teaching Solutions	203	47.4%	225	52.6%	428	100.0%
Library and Learning Resources Centre	79	79.0%	21	21.0%	100	100.0%
Marketing & Sales	78	69.0%	35	31.0%	113	100.0%
OU Worldwide	34	82.9%	7	17.1%	41	100.0%
Office of the Vice-Chancellor	20	83.3%	4	16.7%	24	100.0%
Open Broadcasting Unit	14	77.8%	4	22.2%	18	100.0%
Open University Students Association	15	93.8%	1	6.3%	16	100.0%
Open University Validation Services	26	86.7%	4	13.3%	30	100.0%
Strategy Unit	110	74.3%	38	25.7%	148	100.0%

Student Services	1,326	76.9%	399	23.1%	1,725	100.0%
The OU Centre for Professional Learning and Development	15	65.2%	8	34.8%	23	100.0%
The Open University Business School	108	65.1%	58	34.9%	166	100.0%
Grand Total	3,321	65.1%	1,782	34.9%	5,103	100.0%

Appendix F

Gender by staff category (2010)

	Female		Male		Total	% of Total
	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total		
Academic Related Staff	1,209	63.5%	694	36.5%	1,903	100.0%
Academic Staff (incl. researchers)	646	50.0%	645	50.0%	1,291	100.0%
Support & Other Staff	1,469	76.8%	444	23.2%	1,913	100.0%
Total University	3,324	65.1%	1,783	34.9%	5,107	100.0%

Appendix G

Gender by fixed-term/permanent appointment (2010)

	Female		Male		Total	% of Total
	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total		
Fixed term	323	56.3%	251	43.7%	574	100.0%
Permanent	3,001	66.2%	1,532	33.8%	4,533	100.0%
Total University	3,324	65.1%	1,783	34.9%	5,107	100.0%

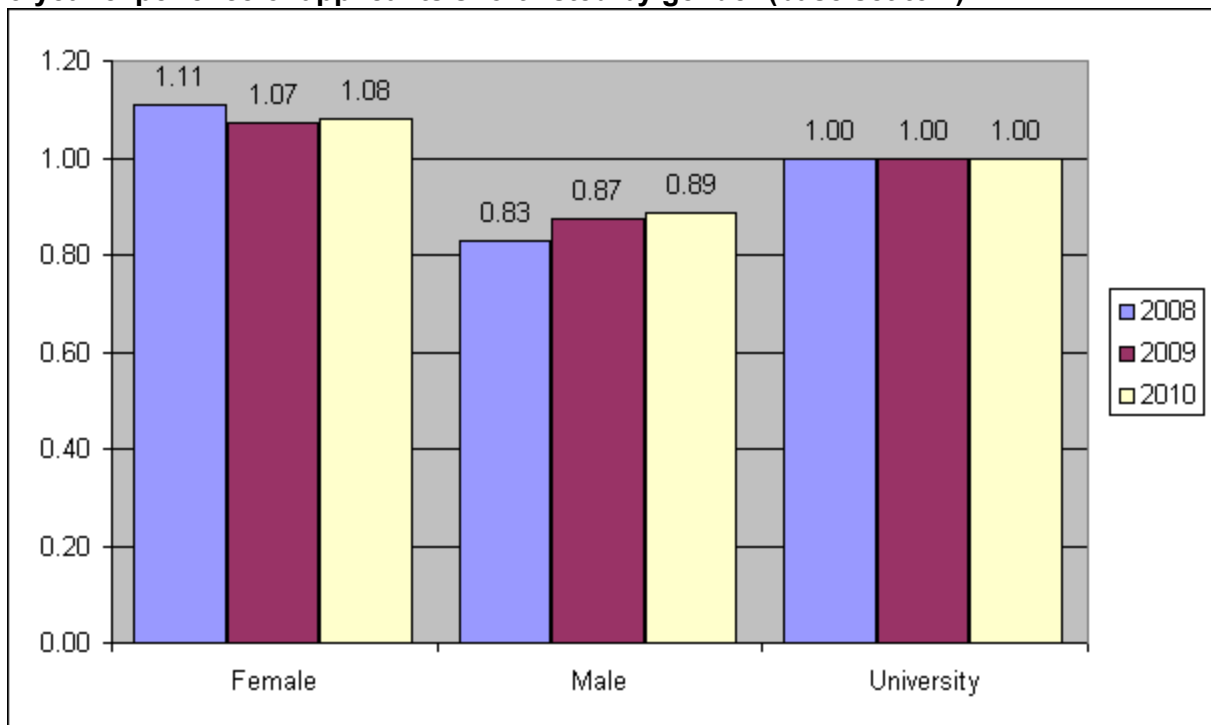
Appendix H

3-year experience of applicants short listed and appointed by gender (2008 – 2010)

	Applicants shortlisted (percentages)		
	Female	Male	University
2008	28.1%	21.1%	25.4%
2009	22.8%	18.5%	21.2%
2010	20.6%	16.9%	19.1%

	Applicants shortlisted (inc)		
	Female	Male	Univers
2008	1.11	0.83	
2009	1.07	0.87	
2010	1.08	0.89	

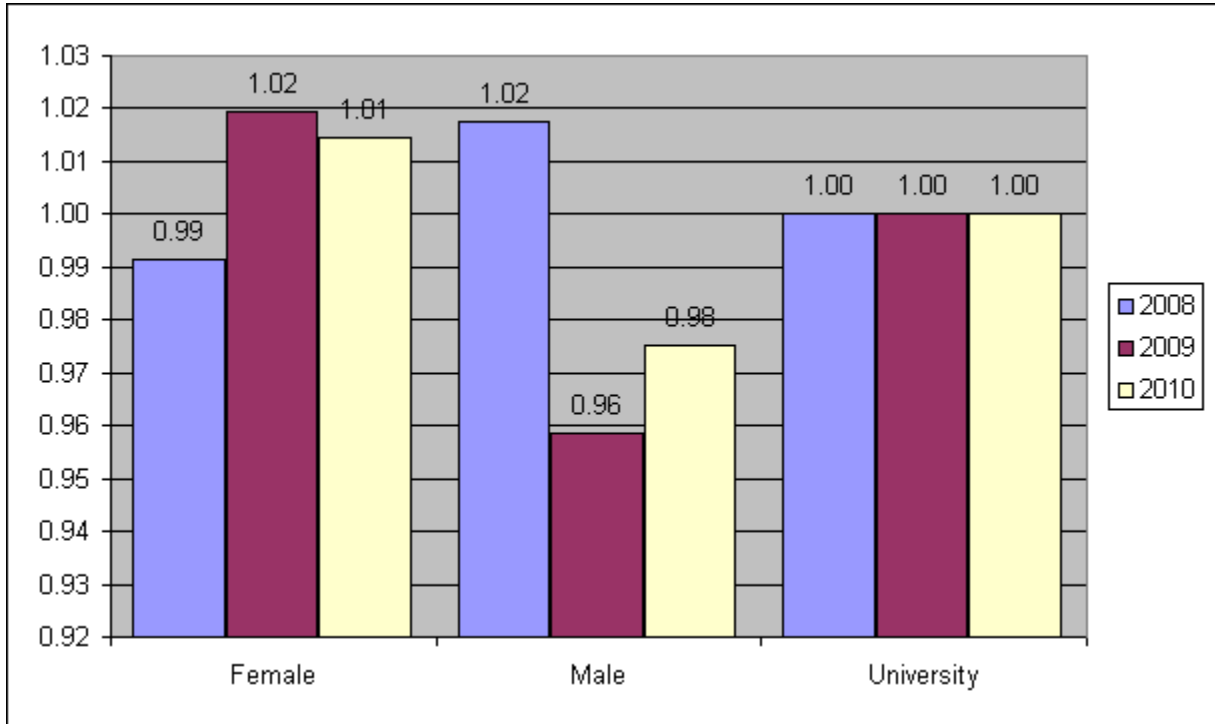
3-year experience of applicants short listed by gender (base set to 1)



	Shortlisted applicants appointed (percentages)		
	Female	Male	University
2008	26.6%	27.3%	26.8%
2009	25.0%	23.5%	24.6%
2010	31.0%	29.8%	30.6%

	Shortlisted applicants appointed (index)		
	Female	Male	University
2008	0.99	1.02	
2009	1.02	0.96	
2010	1.01	0.98	

3-year experience of short listed applicants appointed by gender (base set to 1)



Recruitment by gender (2008)

	Applicants		Shortlisted	% Applicants Shortlisted	Appointed	% Shortlisted Appointed
	Total	% of Total				
Female	7,360	60.9%	2,071	28.1%	551	26.6%
Male	4,723	39.1%	996	21.1%	272	27.3%
University Total	12,083	100.0%	3,067	25.4%	823	26.8%

Recruitment by gender (2009)

	Applicants		Shortlisted	% Applicants Shortlisted	Appointed	% Shortlisted Appointed
	Total	% of Total				
Female	10,600	63.5%	2,417	22.8%	605	25.0%
Male	6,093	36.5%	1,130	18.5%	266	23.5%
University Total	16,693	100.0%	3,547	21.2%	871	24.6%

Recruitment by gender (2010)

	Applicants		Shortlisted	% Applicants Shortlisted	Appointed	% Shortlisted Appointed
	Total	% of Total				
Female	6,923	58.8%	1,423	20.6%	441	31.0%
Male	4,842	41.2%	819	16.9%	244	29.8%
University Total	11,765	100.0%	2,242	19.1%	685	30.6%

Appendix I

Gender breakdown of staff in Higher Education

This information is from the Equality in Higher Education Statistical Report 2010, which was produced by the Equality Challenge Unit. It is based on analysis of Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data. The data covers the whole of the UK.

Full-time and part-time staff by gender 2008/09

	Female	Male
	%	%
Academic staff	43.4	56.6
Full-time	37.8	62.2
Part-time	54.2	45.8
Professional and support staff	62.5	37.5
Full-time	54.0	46.0
Part-time	79.1	20.9
Total	53.6	46.4

The percentage of male academic staff in 2008/09 stood at 56.6%, a decrease over time from 60.0% in 2003/04.

The percentage of women within professional and support staff in 2008/09 stood at 62.5% compared with 62.2% in 2003/04.