

## Press release

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### **New ECU report finds that women in STEMM academia are at a disadvantage across multiple aspects of their careers**

Research published today by Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) finds that women employed in academia in STEMM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine) subjects experience consistent disadvantages across multiple aspects of their working life.

On average, female STEMM academics reported having significantly:

- = more teaching and administrative duties, with less recognition for these efforts
- = less time to devote to research
- = additional caring responsibilities
- = fewer training opportunities and more barriers to training

In contrast, male STEMM academics were significantly more likely to enjoy:

- = a formally assigned mentor
- = opportunities to sit on important departmental committees
- = access to senior staff

Three quarters of the women in the sample (75.7%) thought that it was easier for a man to get a senior post in their department while almost half of the men (47.3%) did not think there was an advantage for either gender.

Significantly more men were formally promoted to their current post (13.5%) or explicitly encouraged to apply for promotion (59.7%) than women (9.1% and 48.8%, respectively).

These disadvantages are compounded when gender intersects with other protected characteristics.

- = Only 3.0% of LGB women were professors, compared with 8.8% of LGB men, 9.1% of heterosexual women, and 18.3% of heterosexual men.

- = 9.4% of BME women reported that an obstructive line manager had blocked their access to training they needed for career development compared with 6.6% of white women, 6.0% of BME men, and 3.7% of white men.

Responding to the findings of the report, **Sarah Dickinson Hyams, ECU's Head of Equality Charters**, said:

'These findings underline that more work needs to be done if we are to achieve gender equality in higher education. ECU urges the sector to engage with this research and take action to address the issues raised.'

ECU were pleased to learn that women rated holding ECU's Athena SWAN Charter award as the top equality item to consider when deciding to accept a job offer.

## Contact details

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## Notes to editors

- = **The Royal Society, Royal Academy of Engineering, Royal Society of Biology and The Academy of Medical Sciences** commissioned Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) to design and implement the 2016 version of the ASSET survey, and to then publish the results: [www.ecu.ac.uk/guidance-resources/employment-and-careers/asset-2016/](http://www.ecu.ac.uk/guidance-resources/employment-and-careers/asset-2016/).
- = ECU (2017) *ASSET 2016: experiences surrounding gender equality in STEMM academia and the intersections with ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability and age*. [www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/asset-2016](http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/asset-2016)
- = ECU supports higher education institutions across the UK and in colleges in Scotland to advance equality and diversity for staff and students. For more information about ECU's work visit our website [www.ecu.ac.uk](http://www.ecu.ac.uk) or follow us on Twitter [@EqualityinHE](https://twitter.com/EqualityinHE).
- = The **Athena SWAN Charter** is a gender equality charter owned and managed by ECU. The Athena SWAN Charter team are on Twitter [@Athena\\_SWAN](https://twitter.com/Athena_SWAN) and further information about the charter is available on ECU's website: [www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/](http://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/).
- = ECU provides research information and guidance, training, events and equality charters that drive forward change and transform organisational culture in teaching, learning, research, and knowledge exchange. We have over ten years' experience of supporting institutions to remove barriers to progression and success for all staff and students.
- = We are registered charity funded by the Scottish Funding Council, the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales and Universities UK, and through direct subscription from higher education institutions in England and Northern Ireland.