Good Practice Guide: Principle 4
Open and inclusive culture

“Through Project Juno we have people in the department talking about important matters of how the department runs.”
Dr Lyndsay Fletcher
University of Glasgow

Departmental organisation, structure, management arrangements and culture that are open, inclusive and transparent, and encourage the participation of all staff.

Promote an inclusive culture
Ensure that all processes in the department are open, transparent and fully inclusive, all staff receive general equality and diversity training, that there are inclusive social activities for all staff, positive images are used in all communications, and female seminar speakers are encouraged and supported. Monitor the number of female seminar speakers and take action where appropriate.

- In the last few years, the department has initiated staff training workshops and events that include undergraduates, postgraduates and staff to increase connectivity. Minutes of meetings and news highlights are now updated regularly on the main departmental websites. New prizes have been created for staff and students, celebrated annually.
- To verify that all staff perceive that the departmental processes, procedures and practices are fully inclusive, we have implemented three feedback methods:
  - Annual Equal Opportunity events, in which staff have the opportunity to address and discuss equal opportunity issues and to express any concerns that they may have.
  - We have the “Clickers” events in which the academic and research staff are asked questions from the Good Practice checklist (and additional questions). Members of the Research Staff Forum are asked to complete an appropriately edited version of this checklist to gauge their opinions on departmental processes and procedures. There is also the opportunity at the end of each event for staff to provide comments and suggestions to the Juno Champion.
  - The Research Staff Forum and Postgraduate Forum have been established to ascertain if departmental practices are inclusive and to give feedback.
- The department has now run in two successive academic years a series of informal lunchtime science seminars entitled “SIESTA” (Student Informatives on Experimental Science, Techniques and Applications), which mostly comprise talks given by postgraduate students about their research. The SIESTA talks take place weekly during term time and continue outside of term time when participants are available. The sessions are held at lunchtime, with food and drink available, and provide an inclusive social and learning activity for undergraduates, postgraduates, academic and research staff. They have proved extremely popular with students and staff at all levels.
- We regularly review the departmental undergraduate admissions publicity material (leaflets, web pages, etc) to ensure female representation in images and student profiles, and this has contributed towards the portrayal of a gender-balanced image to prospective applicants. There is a healthy female proportion of UCAS student guides on UCAS days, and part of the “mini lectures” on UCAS days have been given by female members of staff.
- Junior staff, women and other under-represented groups, and postdoctoral research assistants, are encouraged to raise their profile internally, e.g. by contributing to departmental research seminars and presenting to research sponsors. The department aims to ensure that speakers...
The distribution of departmental teaching, administration and research duties among academic staff is guided by a Work Allocation Model, in which a nominal number of hours are assigned for each task. The total number of hours is computed for each academic staff member. The entire spreadsheet is e-mailed to all academic staff and presented annually at the Physics Committee. The spreadsheet is managed by our director of teaching and by the head of department (for research). Any staff member who has concerns about their share of the workload can discuss the situation with the DoT and/or the head of department. This system has been in place for many years (but with the addition of research allocation in the last couple of years) and has seemed to work well, with modifications being made to accommodate requests wherever possible. It is an excellent example of transparency and fairness, yet it can and will be improved by changing the procedures to systematically include longer-term (as opposed to just one academic year) information about each staff member’s workload. This will ensure that where a staff member has a disproportionately heavy load for a few years, they can be given a lighter load in subsequent years in the interests of fairness.

The Work Allocation Model was not transparent to all staff before the Juno process began. Teaching was assigned by the director of undergraduate studies in the department, and administrative tasks by the head of department. To increase transparency, the proposed duties, covering the whole spectrum, are tabled at the annual summer departmental board meeting as an A3 spreadsheet. This spreadsheet is then open to amendments. In response to negative staff-survey results about the model, the head of department recognised that a quantitative workload allocation model would be more transparent. We are therefore working towards a target of developing such a model for implementation. This will involve scrutiny of workload models used by other departments in the science faculty, the formulation of a proposal by the department's senior management team and consultation with academic staff. The duties allocated to each academic are considered through discussion in the appraisals process. They are also considered at the Academic Staff Review, with a view to taking steps to support career progression.

We have made significant investment in our outreach activities, appointing a full-time Outreach Officer and working with a freelance journalist to produce a suite of YouTube videos. These videos have collectively attracted millions of hits worldwide. This medium has provided particularly high visibility for several of our female academics.