

**ONWARDS  
AND  
UPWARDS?  
TRACKING  
WOMEN'S  
WORK  
EXPERIENCES  
IN HIGHER  
EDUCATION**



**YEAR 1 REPORT**

Inspiring  
Leadership

**Leadership  
Foundation**  
for Higher Education

## About the Leadership Foundation

The Leadership Foundation is a membership organisation that delivers leadership development and consultancy advice to higher education institutions in the UK and around the world. The focus of the Leadership Foundation's work is to improve the management and leadership skills of existing and future leaders of higher education. The services provided include consultancy, leadership development programmes and events, including a major series of events for governors. This work is supported by a highly regarded research and development programme that underpins the leadership development programmes and stimulates innovation.

This unique five-year longitudinal study will track the experiences of women to better understand their motivations and leadership aspirations. This report is the first instalment in a series of annual reports and provides a baseline for higher education to identify opportunities for and barriers to women's progression.

[www.lfhe.ac.uk](http://www.lfhe.ac.uk)



## Authors

**Dr Sarah Barnard** is lecturer in sociology of contemporary work in the School of Business and Economics at Loughborough University. Sarah's fields of research and consultancy include organisations, gender, higher education, sociology of science, engineering and technology, private higher education and communications and media. Particular interests include gendered aspects of careers and career choice, organisational practices and policies and the ways organisational culture are related to these aspects.

**John Arnold** is professor of organisational behaviour at the School of Business and Economics, Loughborough University, UK. He is a fellow and chartered occupational psychologist of the British Psychological Society. John's research, teaching and consultancy involve all areas of careers and their management from both individual and organisational perspectives. Particular interests include career choice, personal development and adjustment, work role identities and transitions (including the transition into working life), career success and failure, mid/late career issues, and the impact of career management interventions such as mentoring, development centres and succession planning.

**Dr Sara Bosley** is a research associate and academic supervisor at the School of Business and Economics, Loughborough University. Her fields of research and consultancy include careers, learning and development in higher education, the National Health Service and community contexts. Her particular interests are career coaching and how people navigate careers.

**Dr Fehmidah Munir** is a reader in health psychology at the School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences, Loughborough University, UK. She is a chartered health psychologist. Fehmidah's research and consultancy involves workplace health promotion, health and management of ill-health in occupational and community settings. Particular interests include preventing ill-health at work and managing long term health conditions in the workplace, including improving quality of life work and work engagement through workplace interventions.

Loughborough University  
December 2016

ISBN: 978-1-906627-94-2

# CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>04</b>
	○ Methods and progress in year one	
	○ Key findings	
	○ Conclusions and next steps	
<b>2</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>OVERVIEW OF THE RELEVANT LITERATURES</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>SURVEY FINDINGS</b>	<b>35</b>
	○ Overall descriptive analysis of the data	
	○ Comparisons between subgroups of respondents	
<b>6</b>	<b>INTERVIEW FINDINGS</b>	<b>56</b>
	○ Interviews with Aurorans	
	○ Interviews with mentors	
<b>7</b>	<b>TEN CONCLUSIONS FROM THE FIRST YEAR OF THE PROJECT</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>LINKS BETWEEN OUR FIRST YEAR FINDINGS AND THE EXISTING LITERATURE</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>LIMITATIONS</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>NEXT STEPS</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>82</b>
	○ Appendix A: participant information sheet (Aurorans)	
	○ Appendix B: interview topic guide (Aurorans)	
	○ Appendix C: consent form (Aurorans)	
	○ Appendix D: participant information sheet (mentors)	
	○ Appendix E: interview topic guide (mentors)	
	○ Appendix F: consent form (mentors)	
	○ Appendix G: sample questionnaire (cohort 3)	
	○ Appendix H: the Onwards and Upwards advisory panel	

---

# 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Although women are usually well represented in higher education institutions (HEIs) as a whole, they remain underrepresented in senior positions, particularly in academic posts. In November 2013, the Leadership Foundation launched a women-only leadership development programme – Aurora – to stimulate systems level change. Now in its third year, Aurora continues to be very popular with high uptake and participation of women in academic and professional services roles from across the sector.

The large numbers of Aurora participants provide a unique opportunity to study the impact of the programme on careers over time, and at scale. With support from the Higher Education Funding Council and the funding bodies of the devolved nations, the Leadership Foundation commissioned a research team from Loughborough University to carry out a five-year longitudinal research on career trajectories, aspirations and work experiences of Aurora participants including:

- Tracking the career pathways of Aurora participants.
- Exploring Aurora participants' perspectives on (and engagement with) leadership roles, activities and achievements.
- Exploring perceptions of confidence, aspirations, role and professional development, work-life balance, opportunities and challenges.
- Assessing the commitment of academic and professional services women to role, discipline, higher education, institution and their own professional development.

This report describes the baseline surveys and progress of the project in its first year. We have already collected a large amount of data and developed an initial review of the relevant literatures. We will build on these baseline findings over the next four years through substantial further data collection and analysis. The literature review will be expanded to interrogate and explain emerging findings. Therefore, although we have written this report as a free-standing piece of work, it should be seen as snapshot in time, as "work in progress", to be developed as the project unfolds.

## Methods and progress in year one

Our approach involves several complementary strands of work. Most notably, we have obtained data from 1,576 women. This gives us a very solid basis for making statements about the leadership and career experiences of women working in higher education in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

**Programme-wide survey data collection:** Since the commencement of the study in spring 2015, Aurora programme participants have been invited to contribute to the project by completing an online questionnaire shortly before they start the programme, three to six months after completing the programme, and 15 to 18 months after Aurora completion depending on where they sit in the cohort cycle in year one of the project. Longer-term follow-up questionnaires will be sent about 39 and 51 months post-Aurora completion.

**Progress:** A total of 1,270 Aurora participants from cohort 1 (2013-14), cohort 2 (2014-15), and cohort 3 (2015-16) have completed the survey.

**Comparison group:** Women from HEIs who have not participated in Aurora have been approached to take part in the survey data collection. The comparison group has been identified and recruited in different ways. These included requesting each Aurora participant to nominate a female colleague in the same institution and the Leadership Foundation inviting Aurora Champions to forward the request to women who had not completed Aurora.

**Progress:** 306 "comparison" women who had not undertaken Aurora have completed the survey. This figure is far greater than we anticipated.

**Interviews:** A sample of Aurorans have taken part in qualitative interviews three to six months after Aurora completion (we aim for eight volunteer participants from each of the 2014 to 2017 cohorts). Follow-up interviews are conducted on the same schedule as follow-up questionnaires.

**Progress:** 10 Aurora participants, two of whom participated in the first Aurora programme (2013-14) and eight from the second round of Aurora (2014-15), took part in qualitative interviews.

**Mentors:** The mentors of the 2014 to 2016 cohort interviewees have been or will be approached with the permission of the Aurora participant, to take part in a brief interview to ascertain the mentor's perceptions of the mentee's development post Aurora.

**Progress:** Four mentors of cohort 2 Aurorans have taken part in interviews.

**Electronic diaries:** A small sample of Aurora participants will also take part in electronic diaries (eight volunteer participants from each of the 2015 to 2017 cohorts), where they record over a three month period their recent experiences and reflections on leadership and career. The time gap between Aurora completion and diary entries will vary between three and 18 months. The diaries will commence in year two of the project.

**Progress:** Scoping of existing research that utilises this method has been conducted. Further methodological development is planned for year two.

**Career case studies:** The data generated from the above activities will be used towards the end of the project to develop six to seven anonymised holistic career success case studies that outline the experiences of a small number of Aurora participants.

## Key findings

### Findings from surveys with Aurorans

For those who had completed Aurora (603 respondents) the majority were positive about their experiences of the programme. Only a low proportion of respondents had experienced substantial leadership training apart from Aurora, which suggests that Aurora is a very important aspect of their development.

Two-thirds of Aurora respondents agreed or strongly agreed that leadership is an important part of their official job duties, and almost as many said they seek out leadership opportunities in their work. On the whole the respondents felt they had the necessary social and cognitive skills to be effective in leadership roles but over a third felt uncomfortable with power when they have it. Overall, professional services women rated themselves higher on leadership skills in comparison to academic women. Professional services women were also more likely to agree that they understood how their organisation runs in comparison to academic women.

Thirty percent of respondents somewhat agreed and 12% strongly agreed that they had been placed in impossible leadership positions. Men were seen as having easier access to, and more endorsement in, positions of leadership and responsibility. This perception is more marked among academics than professional services staff. Black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) respondents had more negative views than others of the position of women in higher education workplaces.

Despite the fairly positive view of capacity to take on leadership roles, the majority of respondents reported that their work constrains their non-work life more than they would like. Nearly three-quarters of respondents agreed that support outside work helps to sustain their work, but only about a quarter reported that support at work helps them outside work. Academic staff experienced more difficulties with work-life balance than professional services staff.

Overall it appears that the respondents engage in a fairly high level of career management activity and, for three quarters of the respondents, their career satisfaction is at least moderately high. A majority of the participants felt confident to put themselves forward for positions of responsibility and in seeking career advancement. However, fewer than half agreed that they felt confident in putting themselves forward for a salary increase. Overall, academics outscored professional services staff in the area of career self-management activities. BAME respondents were more ambitious, work-centred and focused on skill development than others, especially relative to white UK women.

A majority of respondents who had completed Aurora felt that the programme helped to increase their motivation to seek leadership, the social skills of leadership, and proactive career management. Those who had yet to start Aurora (cohort 3) hoped that Aurora would enhance their confidence in leadership roles and equip them to be a leader.

### Findings from interviews with Aurorans

Of the 10 interviewees, five identified their role as being academic teaching and research, two as teaching only and three as managerial and/or professional.

Initial analysis of this small number of interviews suggests that interviewees were engaged in more than one type of leadership and that they used a combination of leadership styles.

Leadership practices included activities such as enabling staff development and training, participating in committees, and advising companies. Leadership was expressed through the achievement of measurable outcomes such as improving learning and teaching facilities, developing a career development programme and securing funding.



Most commonly, interviewees referred to their own attributes, self-management, and the support or intervention of others as enabling them to access and engage in leadership activities. Practice and policy enablers were categorised as family-friendly practices and work practices.

The main leadership and career hinderers identified by interviewees were: other people, institutional or sectoral factors, gendered attitudes and the interviewee's own characteristics and behaviour.

### Interviews with mentors

All four mentors were in senior positions and had some formal or informal mentoring experience prior to taking on the role as part of the Aurora programme.

Mentors reported their mentees' concerns as: workplace challenges, negative work experiences, low self-confidence, training, development and career direction/opportunities, management of resources and people, and the tension between work/study and childcare. Specific issues included networking, speaking at meetings with senior colleagues, accessing funds and flexible hours to attend courses of study, and leading change.

Mentors attributed most positive change to the mentees themselves, although they also mentioned mentor neutrality and the tools provided by Aurora to help mentees reflect.

## Conclusions and next steps

From this first set of cross-sectional data we draw 10 key conclusions (a short summary report of these key conclusions is also available at [www.lfhe.ac.uk/yr1aurorasummary](http://www.lfhe.ac.uk/yr1aurorasummary)):

1. Respondents' work in higher education requires and offers substantial opportunities for leadership. However, their leadership activities may frequently go unrecognised and unrewarded.
  2. Respondents believe they possess many of the skills and exhibit many of the behaviours that have been shown to be relevant to leadership.
  3. The impact of respondents' (self-perceived) leadership skills and behaviours is partially negated by negative perceptions of workplace culture and practices which limit their willingness and confidence to seek formally recognised leadership roles.
  4. There are also some more positive perceptions of workplace conditions, which suggest that respondents' efforts to fulfil leadership potential may bear fruit.
  5. There is a mixed picture regarding whether participants in this study are likely to exercise their leadership skills, and use leadership to progress their career.
  6. The interface between work and non-work continues to be problematic for these academic and professional services women working in higher education, with non-work losing out.
  7. The respondents are quite active in career management, but might benefit from doing more.
  8. There are strong indications of positive effects of Aurora.
  9. There are some systematic differences in perspectives and experiences between academic and professional services staff. On the whole, the latter are more positive.
  10. There are some systematic differences in perspectives and experiences between ethnic groups.
-



Subsequent years will build on this work by following participants over time. This will offer a great opportunity to revisit some of the key findings from this report and develop a more nuanced understanding of how women's careers unfold in higher education contexts. In summary, data collection from April 2016 to March 2017 is as follows:

- Conduct pre-Aurora survey with cohort 4 (autumn 2016 to spring 2017).
  - Conduct post-Aurora survey with cohorts 2 and 3 (autumn 2016).
  - Interviews with Aurorans from cohorts 2 and 3 (winter 2016-17).
  - Surveys with comparison groups from cohorts 2 and 3 (winter 2016-17).
  - Diaries with cohort 3 (winter 2016-17).
-

## 2 INTRODUCTION



Despite comprising 44.6% of the academic workforce in higher education institutions (HEIs), women remain poorly represented at senior level. In the academic year 2013-14, only 20% of vice-chancellors/principals, 29.9% of heads of major academic areas and 22.3% of professors were women. Women in support and professional services seem to be somewhat more successful in achieving senior positions. While 62.7% of this staff group are women, they comprise 39.6% of directors of a major function or group of functions and 43.8% of senior functional heads.<sup>1</sup>

Launched in November 2013, Aurora is the Leadership Foundation's women-only leadership development programme. The programme is targeted at women up to senior lecturer level or professional services equivalent working in a university, college or related organisation who would like to develop and explore issues relating to leadership roles and responsibilities. It is delivered primarily through a series of events over several months in different locations in the UK and Republic of Ireland. So far several hundred women each year have participated.

The Onwards and Upwards study builds on the learning and development the Leadership Foundation has achieved with Aurora programme participants by carrying out longitudinal research on career trajectories, aspirations and work experiences. The specified research aims are:

- Track and analyse the career pathways of Aurora participants.
- Explore Aurora participants' perspectives on (and engagement with) leadership roles, activities and achievements.
- Explore perceptions of confidence, aspirations, role and professional development, work-life balance, opportunities and challenges.
- Assess the commitment of women to role, discipline, higher education, institution and their own professional development.

In the first year of the project (up to May 2016) we have:

**Reviewed the literature** on the concept of leadership, the relationship between gender and leadership, and on the impact of leadership on women's wellbeing and work-life balance. We have also examined literature on women's career patterns and aspirations, their attitudes and behaviour in leadership roles, and the external and structural forces that hinder and enable them to flourish as leaders.

**Surveyed** a total of 1,576 women, made up of 195 from cohort 1 of Aurora (2013-14), 408 from cohort 2 (2014-15), 667 from cohort 3 (2015-16), and 306 "comparison" women who had not undertaken Aurora. We committed to donate £1 to charity for every completed questionnaire. As a result, £1,576 has been donated across four charities (Cancer Research UK, Council for At-Risk Academics, Shelter, and Womankind) according to respondents' preferences. These women completed a fairly lengthy and detailed online questionnaire, similar for each group but slightly different according to their circumstances. Minor changes were made to the questionnaire in the light of experience.

**Interviewed** 10 Aurorans, two from the first Aurora programme (2013-14) and eight from the second round of Aurora (2014-15). All of these interviewees were invited to ask their mentors if they would participate in short telephone interviews. All four mentors who agreed were interviewed.

**Investigated methods of using diaries:** Initial scoping of existing research that uses this method and possible platforms for the electronic diaries has been conducted. The diaries will be launched with cohort 3 in October 2016. Diarists will be selected from those who volunteered to engage in this phase of the research and will be a different sample from those who are selected for interview. Further methodological development is planned for 2016 and the description of the diaries method will be included in the year two report.



### Literature search and review

We identified relevant literature initially by drawing on our existing knowledge of the topics and by exploring material on the Leadership Foundation website, in order to inform the development of the empirical research instruments. The bulk of the academic literature was found by conducting searches on Zetoc and the Web of Science. Search terms included: "gender and leadership", "leadership style", "women administrators" and "women leaders", and were limited to English language literature published in or after 2000. Not all the literature identified has been included here. The review will continue to be developed throughout the life of the project. We will include relevant material as it is published and develop an up-to-date review to accompany the final project report. An alert has been set up on Zetoc using the terms: "women administrators" and "women leaders" as one mechanism of keeping up-to-date with new publications.

### Survey method

#### *Development*

We designed the first-year survey with multiple goals in mind. Without over-taxing the patience of respondents, it was necessary to collect quite a lot of demographic data as well as opinions, perceptions and experiences across the range of issues covered by this project. It was important to set the survey up well: subsequent longitudinal tracking of the respondents requires good baseline data. Our priority was to cover the necessary ground economically rather than to use full versions of previously validated scales to assess theoretical constructs. Nevertheless, we ensured that wherever possible we used relevant constructs to frame our thinking, and in some cases we adapted questions from those scales for use here.

Three similar but not identical versions of the questionnaire were developed: one for women who had completed Aurora (cohorts 1 and 2, "post-Aurora"), one for cohort 3 ("pre-Aurora"), and one for the comparison group. As an exemplar, the cohort 3 version is included as an Appendix to this report (Appendix G). Inevitably there was some overlap of content between different parts of the questionnaire, but we divided it up as follows:

**Details of current work and career history.** We adapted some classifications of types of work in academic and professional services (for example from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)), and drew upon research on higher education and career development as well as our knowledge of the sector in order to formulate the questions.

**Perceptions of policies and practices at the respondent's workplace, especially concerning the respective roles of women and men and the prevailing culture.** We formulated questions by drawing on existing research on gender at work and/or in higher education.

**Perceptions of support at work, including where relevant support derived from participation in the Aurora programme.** Here we drew on research into social relationships at work as well as the stated goals of Aurora and some of the known issues around it.

**Self-ratings of the respondent's engagement in leadership, leadership skills and leadership behaviours.** Here we formulated questions by drawing upon a range of leadership-related literatures, including various approaches based on skills and styles as well as analyses rooted in gender comparisons of approaches to leadership.

**Caring and other non-work responsibilities, and perceptions of work-life balance.** Questions reflected our knowledge of the sector and also drew upon the extensive work-life balance and conflict literatures.

**For post-Aurorans, perceptions of the effects of Aurora.** For pre-Aurorans, what they hoped to gain from Aurora. As above, we used the goals of the programme, plus the knowledge of those close to it.

**Career self-management strategies used by the respondent.** In this category and the next we drew selectively upon the many strands of work in career development in order to reflect different career values and approaches to career management.

**The respondent's career preferences and intentions.**

**Demographic data such as age, ethnic identity.**

*Inviting participants and processing the data they provided*

An initial invitation from the research team to participate in the study was sent to Aurorans via the Leadership Foundation, along with a link to the online survey, which was set up on Bristol Online Surveys (BOS). Cohorts 1 and 2 were directed to the post-Aurora survey and cohort 3 to the pre-Aurora survey. Information about the study was provided and consent requested before they opened the survey.

Aurorans may not be typical of women in higher education. In order to identify a comparison group, the researchers emailed post-Aurora survey respondents to ask one woman within their employing institution who was in a similar kind of role, but had not participated in Aurora. Aurorans were asked to send this colleague an invitation to take part in the survey element of the research. This recruitment method generated the 60 responses required for the study, but because the team were concerned about attrition, the Leadership Foundation also sent a request for further volunteers to Aurora Champions and other key contacts. This produced many more responses; 306 in time for this report, with more still coming in that will be utilised at subsequent stages of the project.

All respondents were invited to provide an appropriate email address enabling further correspondence to be sent to them directly by the research team. Data were anonymised for purposes of analysis by deleting emails from the main data file and including instead a personal identifier generated by respondents. Data were transferred from BOS to Excel and then into a newly created master SPSS file, to which subsequent years' data will be added. This was a painstaking process, but the care and precision required ensured that the data were carefully scrutinised and checked for validity.

Data analysis was extensive and, at this stage, relatively descriptive. Our main aim was to establish the baseline picture, in most cases question by question. We also conducted comparisons between subgroups of respondents in order to identify any systematic differences between, for example, different ethnic groups, types of employer, country where one worked, and whether one was an academic or professional services member of staff. Of course, some of these factors are inter-related, but at this stage we have treated them one by one rather than in a multivariate way in order to stay close to the data.

Respondents completed the questionnaire between September 2015 and April 2016. We cannot know how many people were approached to participate in the comparison group so the response rate for them is unknown. Using figures kindly provided by the Leadership Foundation, the response rate for cohort 1 was 36%; for cohort 2, 49%; and for cohort 3, 68%. The very high response rate for cohort 3 is no doubt partly attributable to the fact that for them Aurora was new and the invitation appeared along with their joining instructions, so it was hard to miss.

### Interviews with Aurorans

Interviewees were selected from Aurorans who had indicated their willingness to participate in this element of the project on their survey return. In selecting interviewees, we aimed for diversity in respect of role, age, tenure, salary, geographical location, discipline and institution. The intention was to include interviewees from professional services, and some who worked in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subject areas and/or engaged in STEM research.

Potential interviewees were contacted by email and sent a Participant Information Sheet (Appendix A) and Topic Guide (Appendix B). They were invited to contact the research team with convenient dates and times for the interview if they were still interested. Those who did so were sent a Consent Form (Appendix C), which they were asked to sign and return prior to the interview.

Interviews were conducted by telephone during December 2015 and January 2016, and were of between 40 and 60 minutes' duration. Participants were asked about their job role, engagement in leadership activities, their evaluation of their leadership skills, and what had helped and hindered their engagement in leadership and their careers. Interviews were recorded electronically and with handwritten notes. Interview notes were imported to NVivo, with the intention of expanding them if necessary as the researchers reviewed the recordings.

Interview notes were analysed using an initial coding frame developed from the literature and a thorough reading of the interview data. The leadership activity codes were based on discourses of leadership<sup>2</sup> and the concepts of leadership adapted from various conceptualisations discussed in the literature review.

### Interviews with mentors

Aurorans who were interviewed were asked to contact their mentor to see if they were willing to be interviewed and, if so, to contact the research team. Those who did were sent a Participant Information Sheet (Appendix D) and Topic Guide (Appendix E). Mentors who continued to express an interest were sent a Consent Form (Appendix F), which they were invited to sign and return prior to the interview, along with suggested convenient dates and times.

Telephone interviews of between 25 and 30 minutes were conducted during January and February 2016. Mentors were initially asked about their current role, mentoring experience and specific experience with their Aurora mentee. The body of the interview focused on the topics discussed with the mentee, her engagement in developmental activities, reported changes in her performance and the mentor's views of what had enabled and limited her development.

Interviews were recorded in the same way as those conducted with Aurorans and notes saved to NVivo. Initial analysis of mentor interview notes was based on the main topics.



### 3 OVERVIEW OF THE RELEVANT LITERATURES



The Aurora programme does not define leadership or promote a particular model. Participants are encouraged to think in terms of leadership behaviours and characteristics, to construct their own meaning of the concept and to enact leadership in whatever way they choose, appropriate to context. This could be through existing roles, as well as, or instead of, through senior and managerial posts. Within Aurora the emphasis is on raising awareness of the context and encouraging responsiveness in the way leadership is enacted by participants.

The purposes of the initial literature review in this five-year longitudinal study are to: provide the background and context of the study; identify the key findings from, and gaps in, relevant knowledge about leadership and gender; and to inform development of the research instruments for data collection and analysis. At this stage, the review focuses mainly on conceptualisation of leadership, women's leadership and gender issues. As this is an interim report we will develop the literature review further in future, with a view to contextualising the overall empirical research findings that will be presented in subsequent reports.

The review opens with a discussion of the differing conceptualisations and characteristics of leadership and moves on to explore gender and leadership, and the impact of leadership on work-life balance and wellbeing. In the next sections the discussion turns to women's career pathways, aspirations, career attitudes and their behaviour in leadership roles. Closing sections explore current knowledge about external and structural forces that enable and hinder women's leadership.

### Conceptualisation and characteristics of leadership

Leadership as a concept seems difficult to pin down, although Northouse<sup>3</sup> concludes that leadership "is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve common goal", the concept is indistinct and shifting.<sup>4</sup> Despite being commonly associated with senior management, broader conceptualisations of leadership suggest that it can be enacted in a variety of other roles through the application of specific skills and behaviours. Authority, agency, communication, interpersonal

skills and resilience are among the commonly discussed leader characteristics, though their relative emphasis may depend on the particular conceptualisation of leadership<sup>5</sup>.

Common and overlapping conceptualisations of leadership used in academic research have often been presented as dichotomous:

- Transactional v transformational.
- Task-orientation v interpersonal-orientation.
- Authoritarian/directive v democratic/participative.
- "Heroic" v distributed.

Traditional leadership is associated with a transactional style, and is based on self-interest, role clarification, monitoring, reward and punishment.<sup>6</sup> In higher education contexts transactional leadership looks much the same as academic management where the emphasis is on processes and tasks such as performance management and workload.<sup>7</sup> In contrast, transformational leadership emphasises communication, inspiration, empowerment and staff development and motivation, consensus and common goals<sup>8</sup> and as such is considered by many to be more appropriate for modern work contexts.<sup>9</sup>

Task-orientation, like transactional leadership, is characterised by organising tasks to achieve explicit goals, imposing rules and procedures, setting high standards and being explicit about roles. An interpersonal style is one where the leader shows consideration and concern for employees' welfare.<sup>10</sup>

3 Northouse (2015) p6

4 Lumby (2012)

5 Morley (2013a)

6 Berg, Barry and Chandler (2012)

7 Bolden et al (2012)

8 Bass and Riggio (2006), Cheung and Halpern (2010)

9 Eagly and Carli (2003)

10 Eagly and Johnson (1990)

Transformational styles share some similarities with democratic leadership, whereby staff are treated as equals and involved in decision-making.<sup>11</sup> In contrast, an authoritarian or directive leader seeks to control and discipline employees<sup>12</sup> and discourages involvement in decision-making.<sup>13</sup> One criticism and vulnerability of the frequent lauding of transformational leadership is that democracy often loses out to charisma and “vision”. This has been referred to as “pseudo-transformational leadership”,<sup>14</sup> and reflects a situation where a leader uses charisma and persuasion to pursue essentially personal goals without a sense of responsibility for the collective, commitment to its wellbeing, or interest in members’ views and ideas. Tourish analyses this in depth, gives some examples of how it comes about, and illustrates the sometimes dramatic negative consequences.<sup>15</sup> Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe argue that transformational leadership is often seen as too individualised and heroic.<sup>16</sup> They suggest a modified version that places greater emphasis on collaboration and humility, partially at the expense of charisma.

Heroic leaders, who may hold formal leadership positions as department or function heads, bear some similarities with authoritarian leaders, being characterised by individualism, charisma, competition and managerialism. In stark contrast, distributed or collective leadership is practised through sharing leadership responsibilities across a group, department or organisation and staff can use their different skills and preferences to lead a subject, function or staff/student development.<sup>17</sup> A distributed approach seems more compatible with traditional notions of academia, as collegiality is undermined by managerialism,<sup>18</sup> which favours transactional, task-oriented or heroic styles.

An alternative perspective is offered by Jutrasook<sup>19</sup> who identified overlapping discourses of leadership in higher education based on position, performance, practice and professional role model. The positional leader’s power is invested in a formal role such as head of department who has decision-making responsibility. A “performance” leader demonstrates competency and achievement through measurable outcomes such as recognised publications that enable academic progression. Leadership as practice is exhibited by individuals who lead and influence through their interactions. For example, they may mentor colleagues, supervise students, secure and coordinate resources and serve on committees. Professional role model leaders do not engage in specific action but, through their behaviour, inspire and set professional intellectual standards. The value of this model is the recognition that leadership can be expressed and enacted in different domains and is not necessarily tied to position. However, this is not to suggest that an individual leader operates in only one mode: rather they are likely to move between and across modes depending on the situation and context.

The concepts of leadership outlined above are summarised in Table 1.

---

11 Eagly and Johnson (1990)

12 Wang et al (2013)

13 Eagly et al (1992)

14 Christie et al (2011)

15 Tourish (2013)

16 Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe (2005)

17 Berg et al (2012)

18 White, Carvalho and Rordan (2011)

19 Jutrasook (2014)

Table 1: Concepts of leadership

Leadership as dichotomous concepts	
<b>Transactional</b> Self-interest and monitoring	<b>Transformational</b> Inspiration and consensus
<b>Task-orientation</b> Goals and standards	<b>Interpersonal</b> Relationship and team welfare
<b>Authoritarian/directive</b> Control and discipline	<b>Democratic/participative</b> Equality and involvement in decision-making
<b>Heroic</b> Individualism and charisma	<b>Distributed</b> Shared responsibility

In summary, recognising leadership in action is complicated by the lack of consensus about the nature of leadership and blurred distinction between management and leadership. While leadership may be associated with a formal management position, which requires vision, goal setting and control, it may equally well be enacted in other non-managerial roles and distributed between groups. Jutrasook's<sup>20</sup> model of discourses offers a promising framework for understanding leadership in higher education.

*Gender and leadership: are leadership styles gendered?*

Despite different conceptualisations, leadership has historically been most commonly associated with stereotypically "masculine" behaviour that is agentic, competitive and controlling as opposed to "female" communal, empathetic and supportive behaviour.<sup>21</sup> The predominance of men in formal leadership roles in many sectors has probably been both a cause and a consequence of this default view of what leadership is. Nevertheless, it is not all one-way traffic. There is increasing recognition that leadership requires not just a firm hand on the tiller, but also the winning of hearts and minds through skilled interpersonal interaction. Indeed, Paustian-Underdahl et al report a meta-analysis in which they find that women leaders are, on average, rated slightly more positively than men, and that this has been the case for the last 30 years.<sup>22</sup> It is also important to bear in mind that plenty of men have

self-concepts that embrace traditionally "feminine" characteristics, and vice versa, so neither men nor women necessarily feel comfortable behaving in ways traditionally labelled masculine and feminine.<sup>23</sup>

Research lends some support to the view that leadership style is gendered. Women tend to adopt a democratic style and men an autocratic one.<sup>24</sup> Some research has found that men leaders are regarded as authoritarian and women as empowering.<sup>25</sup> Women are more likely than men to adopt some aspects of a transformational style<sup>26</sup> and to focus on relational dimensions of leadership such as respect, communications, role modelling, service, promoting gender equality, seeking consensus and empowerment.<sup>27</sup>

Both women and men adopt transactional leadership styles. However, they differ in those aspects of transactional leadership that they favour, with women being more likely to reward good performance and men paying attention to mistakes and avoiding intervening before problems become serious.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, it appears men are more likely than women to adopt a laissez-faire approach to leadership. Gender differences that are apparent in laboratory and assessment studies are not always shown in organisational ones where socialisation plays a significant role. For example, Eagly and Johnson found this to be the case for gender differences in interpersonal and task-orientation.<sup>29</sup>

20 ibid

21 Schuh et al (2014)

22 Paustian-Underdahl et al (2014)

23 Bem and Lewis (1975)

24 Eagly and Johnson (1990)

25 eg Denmark (1993)

26 Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt (2001)

27 Cheung and Halpern (2010)

28 Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt (2001)

29 Eagly and Johnson (1990)

Gender stereotyping and beliefs about gender affect women and their behaviours as well as the men who select leaders. Both men and women commonly associate leadership with stereotypically male, agentic traits such as competitiveness and aggression, rather than with the “typically” female attributes of communal support and empathy. Such beliefs affect women’s ability to identify themselves as leaders, their willingness to adopt leadership roles, and the judgements others make about them. Women tend to be judged negatively if they are seen as being too male/agentic or insufficiently so.<sup>30</sup> Women whose behaviour is consistent with socially acceptable gender roles are regarded as having less potential for leadership than men and judged less favourably than men when in leadership positions.<sup>31</sup> On the other hand, women who demonstrate “masculine” traits such as assertiveness, elicit hostile reactions for violating cultural beliefs about feminine behaviour<sup>32</sup>, particularly when they are in positions typically held by men and in male-dominated environments.<sup>33</sup>

Berg et al suggest that such differences arise from expectations and opportunities rather than gender preference for one style over another.<sup>34</sup> Women are expected to conform to existing male-determined knowledge practices and beliefs about leadership.<sup>35</sup> Perception of positive leadership may vary according to a number of different factors such as the situation, dominance of one gender; other people’s expectations; whether the leader and the in-group share characteristics,<sup>36</sup> and the success of the organisation.<sup>37</sup>

The theory of role congruency may be helpful here. Leaders’ style and effectiveness are affected by the degree of congruence between leadership role and gender<sup>38</sup> and whether leaders display gender-typical attributes.<sup>39</sup> Leaders tend to be task-oriented when leadership roles are congruent with gender-defined roles, that is, when men are

in roles defined in masculine terms and women in those defined in feminine ones.<sup>40</sup> Wang et al suggest that leaders engage in gender-role congruent behaviours, but that they also adopt behaviours that are viewed in the particular context as positive deviations from gender role.<sup>41</sup> In their study, women leaders were required to demonstrate decisiveness and bravery, as well as being supportive over career development and personal issues.

Leadership style may also be affected by individuals, their self-perception, internalisation of a leadership identity and whether they have a sense of purpose beyond their self-interest.<sup>42</sup> Identifying as a leader may be problematic for women who equate leadership with male characteristics. While the number of women leaders is limited, those who do attain such positions often report feeling lonely and isolated, particularly if they are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The sense of being an “outsider” in a male domain may be compounded if female colleagues reject women leaders who violate stereotypical female norms and/or fail to improve the position of their fellows.<sup>43</sup> Taking this into account, it may be reasonable to conclude that effective leadership requires flexibility and the application of different styles according to context and situation,<sup>44</sup> which is in line with the approach taken in the Aurora programme.

---

30 Eagly and Carli (2003); Fitzgerald (2013)

31 Eagly and Karau (2002)

32 Aiston (2011); Fitzgerald (2013)

33 Eagly and Carli (2003)

34 Berg et al (2012)

35 Fitzgerald (2013)

36 Berg et al (2012)

37 Haslam and Ryan (2008)

38 Eagly et al (1992); Eagly et al (1995)

39 Wolfram and Gratton (2014)

40 Eagly and Carli (2003)

41 Wang et al (2013)

42 Ely et al (2011)

43 Fitzgerald (2013)

44 Wolfram and Gratton (2014)

### *Leadership in relation to work-life balance and wellbeing*

A much higher proportion of women than men in higher education leadership positions have significant caring responsibilities outside work.<sup>45</sup> The time and emotional labour demands of leadership and caring affect women disproportionately, and impact on their wellbeing and work-life balance.<sup>46</sup> Women leaders are often expected to carry more of the emotional load than their male counterparts, thus further depleting their time and energy, without the compensation of status or recognition.<sup>47</sup> Some women, especially those in their 40s and early 50s, simultaneously have responsibility for caring for children and adults.<sup>48</sup> These “sandwich carers” may face particularly major difficulties in taking on leadership (or other) responsibilities at work.<sup>49</sup>

Tensions around managing the demands of children v career are particularly challenging for those in dual career relationships<sup>50</sup> and if geographical mobility, especially international relocation, is regarded as essential for extending networks and developing research collaborations.<sup>51</sup> However, as Uhly et al report<sup>52</sup>, the role of family in shaping women academics’ careers is more complex. Their analysis of a large sample of data from the Changing Academic Profession International Data Set<sup>53</sup> showed that partner employment status was more significant in engaging in international research collaborations than having children. According to Uhly et al<sup>54</sup>, women with academic partners are more likely to be engaged in international research collaborations than women partnered with full-time employed non-academics, regardless of whether they had children.

Although some institutions offer part-time or flexible working to enable women to manage their responsibilities, such opportunities are often not available for academic women.<sup>55</sup> Working part-time is seen as adversely affecting progression to senior roles.<sup>56</sup> Fulfilling responsibilities at senior management level is not considered compatible with part-time hours.<sup>57</sup> Although employer provision of flexible working is often viewed as enlightened and equalitarian, it is also possible to see it as a way of making it easier for women to keep doing the caring roles even while they are working, thus cementing their traditional position.<sup>58</sup> Mósesdóttir suggests that a strong emphasis has been placed on women, encouraging women into and encouraging them to stay in paid employment, but not on men’s long hours and lack of engagement in unpaid work.<sup>59</sup> There is also a danger that such practices will merely enable women to keep working in their relatively under-privileged roles, rather than facilitating access to greater leadership and other responsibilities.

Successful women senior leaders use various strategies to balance their lives in and outside of work. Some integrate and redefine normative work and family roles<sup>60</sup> and regulate time taken out of work for family and community responsibilities so as to avoid being accused of lacking commitment.<sup>61</sup> Others separate work and family into distinct spheres, even if this results in lengthy commutes to avoid family disruption.<sup>62</sup> Techniques such as measuring output and performance rather than input, prioritising key family and work demands and events, scheduling, multi-tasking, outsourcing and delegating tasks, help to optimise use of time.<sup>63</sup> From the discussion on the impact of leadership on wellbeing and work-life balance, two key points about the role of caring responsibilities on women’s leadership emerge. First, women’s traditional role

---

45 Manfredi et al (2014)

46 Morley (2013a)

47 Fitzgerald (2013)

48 Carers UK (2012)

49 Ben-Galim and Silim (2013)

50 Ford et al (2014)

51 Fritsch (2015)

52 Uhly et al (2015)

53 Changing Academic Profession International Data Set (2007)

54 Uhly et al (2015)

55 Manfredi et al (2014)

56 Ford et al (2014); Fritsch (2015)

57 Fitzgerald (2013)

58 Lewis et al (2007)

59 Mósesdóttir (2011) p36

60 Cheung and Halpern (2010)

61 Fitzgerald (2013)

62 Fritsch (2015)

63 Cheung and Halpern (2010)

as primary carer conflicts with the heavy time and workload demands that organisations place on their leaders. For example, in a systematic examination of men and women's rates of promotion, Kirchmeyer reached the unsurprising conclusion that having a family was more detrimental to women's progress than to men's.<sup>64</sup> Second, caring responsibilities alone do not account for the limited representation of women in senior academic positions.<sup>65</sup> The employment status of partners plays a more significant role.<sup>66</sup>

In summary, the gendered division of labour both in and outside of work, places a disproportionate burden on many women. Successful women leaders use a range of techniques to manage their responsibilities. However, some women may be unable to do this and find their wellbeing and their career progression adversely affected. Most research focuses on children and childcare, with little specific reference to elder care, which is likely to become an increasingly important issue, especially for women.

#### *Women's career pathways and aspirations*

Careers are shaped by multiple individual and external/structural factors including identity, personal agency, luck, opportunity and ability to negotiate working arrangements, and clarity and transparency of promotion procedures and criteria.

Academic careers tend to follow a similar pattern<sup>67</sup> whereby postdoctoral researchers progress through increasingly senior lecturing roles. Some academics secure positions as professor, head of department, followed by head or dean of school and finally principal or vice-chancellor. Fixed term, rotating and internal management positions provide aspiring academics with management experience, but in pre-1992 UK universities and in some research-intensive institutions outside of the UK, do not necessarily lead to career progression.<sup>68</sup> Acker found that women who accepted fixed term administrative

posts in Canadian universities lost valuable research time and did not move on to full management roles.<sup>69</sup> Women are more likely to be offered particularly challenging senior positions, involving high levels of stress and less likelihood of successful outcomes.<sup>70</sup>

Middle management may offer a route more compatible with family life than the traditional academic trajectory,<sup>71</sup> where balancing family and work in senior positions is very challenging.<sup>72</sup> In post-1992 UK universities, positions from head of department upwards tend to be externally advertised and permanent. This practice provides more structured career pathways for manager-academics than in pre-1992 institutions and enables progression from programme leadership to promotion to principal lecturer.<sup>73</sup>

Within this context, two divergent views of women's leadership aspirations emerge. From one perspective, women are seen as becoming more assertive, aspirational and increasingly valuing jobs that offer challenge, leadership, financial reward, achievement, flexibility and the power to effect change.<sup>74</sup> Another perspective suggests that senior positions remain unattractive to women whose image of seniority conflicts with their values and priorities. Senior positions are regarded as dull, associated with sexism, aggression, authority and exclusive male networks<sup>75</sup> and esteem factors such as publication and large research funds.<sup>76</sup> Such images conflict with women's commitment to research, teaching and the application of knowledge and their values of independence, creativity, health and wellbeing<sup>77</sup> over power.<sup>78</sup> With love of subject, the academic environment, flexibility and autonomy as key motivators,<sup>79</sup> women choose meaningful, enjoyable work or attain senior roles serendipitously, rather than aspiring to such roles.<sup>80</sup>

64 Kirchmeyer (2006)

65 eg Aiston (2014)

66 Uhly et al (2015)

67 Manfredi et al (2014)

68 Deem (2003)

69 Acker (2014)

70 Haslam and Ryan (2008)

71 Deem (2003)

72 Fitzgerald (2013)

73 Deem (2003)

74 Eagly and Carli (2003)

75 Ford et al (2014)

76 Aiston (2014)

77 Morley (2014)

78 Schuh et al (2014)

79 Coate and Kandiko (2015)

80 Fitzgerald (2013); Cheung and Halpern (2010)

Some women are inhibited in seeking promotion and engaging in other proactive career behaviours by self-limiting beliefs, low confidence and interpreting setbacks as threats to self.<sup>81</sup> Women tend to rate themselves as lower in ability than men rate themselves,<sup>82</sup> under-rate their bosses' predictions of their leadership potential<sup>83</sup> and believe that other people regarded them as less qualified than they perceive themselves to be. Such self-perceptions are, to some extent, a result of living in a gendered society. Mackenzie-Davey and Arnold among others have noted the distaste many women express for engaging in organisational politics.<sup>84</sup> Perrewé and Nelson have argued that women could operate very effectively in this realm if only they could bring themselves to do it.<sup>85</sup> Their difficulty in doing so is perhaps another consequence of gender roles and socialisation.

Women's choices and behaviours are also affected by structural barriers. Career-shaping factors such as maternity, geographical mobility and internal opportunities disproportionately affect women.<sup>86</sup> Academic careers require mobility if internal opportunities for progression are not available. The need for extended travel or relocation may prevent women with family responsibilities from applying or increase the stress they experience in roles where travel time is considerable.<sup>87</sup>

Manfredi et al found that senior women were more likely than men to have a career in professional service roles.<sup>88</sup> Progression through professional services roles allows for specialism within or outside of academia, combining academic and professional roles, or cross boundary roles by taking more than one specialism.<sup>89</sup>

As noted at the beginning of this section, women are poorly represented in senior roles despite having a strong presence in the higher education sector as a whole. Women in professional service roles have more success in progressing than those in academic positions, possibly because such roles offer a wider range of career paths. Women academics are negatively affected by the predominance of traditional linear career pathways, limited internal opportunities, the need for mobility, and preferences and values which conflict with stereotypical images and expectations of leaders. It's all a far cry from the notions of "Boundaryless"<sup>90</sup> and "Protean"<sup>91</sup> careers where people move around as they see fit, implementing their personal values and re-inventing themselves when it seems opportune to do so.

---

81 Acker (2010)

82 Paustian-Underdahl et al (2014)

83 Sturm et al (2014)

84 Mackenzie-Davey and Arnold (2000)

85 Perrewé and Nelson (2004)

86 Ford et al (2014)

87 Berg et al (2012)

88 Manfredi et al (2014)

89 Whitchurch (2008)

90 Arthur and Rousseau (1996)

91 Hall (2002)

### *Women's career attitudes and behaviours in leadership roles*

Successful women academics plan their career and professional development,<sup>92</sup> engage in leadership and apply for management posts.<sup>93</sup> They engage in career enhancing activities, seek 360 degree feedback, coaching and peer support, and focus on values-led, higher purpose goals, raising their visibility and leading change.<sup>94</sup> Networks are developed, with some women establishing female-only social and professional networks, or transforming male-dominated ones into mixed gender ones.<sup>95</sup> Roles such as pastoral care and quality assurance are avoided and family time regulated to prevent accusations of lacking commitment.<sup>96</sup> Playing by men's rules,<sup>97</sup> women resist stereotypically gendered leadership behaviours and are assertive, confident, resilient and good negotiators.<sup>98</sup>

These behaviours and strategies enable women to attain and be successful in leadership positions such as heads of departments and schools or of curriculum or subject areas. However, they experience difficulty in institutional level management positions,<sup>99</sup> even if they have the same career aspirations, trajectories and plans as their male counterparts.<sup>100</sup> In senior positions, women feel like outsiders, having to negotiate their managerial and gender identities in a culture dominated by male values, behaviours and power. Being proactive and displaying agentic behaviour enables them to advance, but also generates approbation, particularly in female dominated environments, where women are judged as violating gender norms.<sup>101</sup> Women who adapt to hierarchical contexts find their leadership style inhibited, particularly their capacity to engage in collaborative practices. Acker found that most of the women in senior leadership roles in her study were

defeated by the frustrations of the job, excessive workload, pressure or poor managers and the lack of time and energy to undertake prestige academic work.<sup>102</sup>

### *External and structural forces hinder women from attaining and flourishing in leadership positions*

Morley and Fitzgerald argue that women's career progression is hindered by the gendered nature of society.<sup>103</sup> They specifically identify as hindering forces: the gendered division of labour, gender bias, normative views about leadership and gender characteristics, and the demands of the "greedy" institutions of family and university. Their findings, and those commonly identified by other researchers as career-limiting factors, can be categorised as: family and caring roles; gender and leadership stereotyping; organisational practices; and informal social practices and colleagues.

Organisational policies and practices perpetuate stereotypical beliefs and hinder women's progression.<sup>104</sup> Women's advancement is hindered by: the prevalence of traditional career pathways and development opportunities; the practice of rewarding visible, prestige work (such as securing external grants and high status publication); and limited access to development support such as effective mentoring, networks and sponsorship.<sup>105</sup> Mentoring that is available to women focuses on achievement and linear male career trajectories, which may not be helpful to women with complex career pathways or those who evaluate their career success in terms other than of vertical advancement.<sup>106</sup> Furthermore, programmes for women are usually designed to train them to improve their performance according to male norms, thus reinforcing inequities rather than challenging the status quo.<sup>107</sup>

92 Fritsch (2015)

93 Airini et al (2010); Acker (2010)

94 Ely et al (2011)

95 Fritsch (2015)

96 Fitzgerald (2013)

97 Isaac (2011)

98 Acker (2010); Christman and McClellan (2008)

99 Fitzgerald (2013)

100 Manfredi et al (2014)

101 Aiston (2011); Fitzgerald (2013); Isaac (2011)

102 Acker (2014)

103 Morley (2013a); Fitzgerald (2013)

104 Airini et al (2010)

105 Ely et al (2011)

106 Morley (2013b)

107 Fitzgerald (2013)



*External and structural forces that help women to attain and flourish in leadership*

Literature presenting evidence of forces that enable women to develop their careers and progress into leadership positions is limited in comparison with literature about the hindering forces and recommendations for addressing those forces.

Looking at the evidence, family, especially spouses, enable women's mobility and pursuit of their career aims.<sup>119</sup> In particular, family and employed staff can help them to manage domestic responsibilities.

In the work context, Hopkins et al summarise a range of practical recommendations for individual women and organisational policymakers.<sup>120</sup> Role models and mentors support career development and planning, assertiveness, confidence and the ability to obtain senior roles.<sup>121</sup> Career development is also enabled by supportive peers and managers who apply university practices appropriately.<sup>122</sup>

More generally, O'Neil and Bilimoria suggest that the hard time experienced by many women as they juggle competing responsibilities without much help from "the system", can eventually (in mid-life onwards, as the peak of care responsibilities passes) foster a mature and reflective approach to work, relationships and leadership.<sup>123</sup> It combines agency and communion and, by implication, may be more sophisticated than most men manage.

Leadership, mentoring and sponsorship programmes are commonly recommended as a method of addressing barriers.<sup>124</sup> Being selected to participate in formal leadership programmes raises women's visibility among senior staff and helps them to feel valued.<sup>125</sup> Programmes provide opportunities for reflection and networking, raise women's awareness of their potential as leaders, introduce them to a wider range of transformational leadership models<sup>126</sup> and offer opportunities to strengthen their resilience.<sup>127</sup> However, these advantages are not always translated into progression in the workplace.<sup>128</sup> In developing leadership programmes, recommendations include promoting women's motivation to gain power<sup>129</sup> and emphasising discussion of gender, gender role self-concept and assertiveness.<sup>130</sup>



119 Cheung and Halpern (2010); Fritsch (2015); Airini et al (2010)

120 Hopkins et al (2008)

121 Cheung and Halpern (2010); Gander (2013)

122 Airini et al (2010); Fritsch (2015)

123 O'Neil and Bilimoria (2005)

124 eg Morley (2013a); Cheung and Halpern (2010); Manfredi et al (2014); Coate and Kandiko (2015)

125 Berg et al (2012)

126 Dahlvig and Longman (2010)

127 Christman and McClellan (2008)

128 Berg et al (2012)

129 Schuh et al (2014)

130 Wolfram and Gratton (2014)

Most of these interventions are aimed at modifying women's attitudes and behaviours. As the earlier discussion suggests, barriers also need to be addressed at an institutional level through policy and practice. Researchers recommend that institutions recognise different leadership styles<sup>131</sup> and seek to establish gender, and policies and practices that promote gender equality.<sup>132</sup> Practices to address unconscious bias include: monitoring applications and short-lists; transparent selection reasoning and processes, countering stereotyping through the use of inclusive language and images, and training staff.<sup>133</sup> Other enabling practices commonly recommended include: flexible working; valuing different staff contributions; rewarding collaborative work; career breaks from teaching responsibilities; reduced workloads to enable research activity; supporting different career aspirations; and sharing non-prestige roles to avoid gendered work allocation.<sup>134</sup> However, it is unclear whether the effectiveness of such practices in enabling women's careers and leadership opportunities has been assessed.

More generally, there is a tension in UK higher education between what may be effective in addressing inequalities, for example, positive action, and the organisational cultures that resist such strategies and stress meritocratic discourses. Quotas, for example are a contentious issue in higher education and society more generally. Despite this "radical" surface, quotas have been shown to have mixed outcomes. Research by Wroblewski in Austria, where there has been considerable use of positive action approaches to address gender inequality, shows that while quotas are effective in increasing the proportion of women in higher education management, they do not result in changes to organisational culture.<sup>135</sup> Therefore, the outcomes of positive action in terms of changes in representation *and* culture cannot be assumed. The dominance of gender mainstreaming approaches, and the embedding of gender equality remits into the normal business of universities in the European context have, in part, resulted in the downplaying of the need for positive action.<sup>136</sup> There is now a movement to counter this, particularly in relation to the gender pay gap. Smith describes how the social regulation of the gender pay gap has moved from "soft" to "hard" law, in response to the glacial speed of change.<sup>137</sup> At institutional level in the UK, the University of Essex is implementing a one-off salary increase for women professors to try to eliminate the gender pay gap in the institution, as previous "less radical" approaches had little impact.<sup>138</sup> How this plays out at institutional and sector level is yet to be seen. What is clear is that radical strategies to decrease structural gender inequalities may be resisted by institutions and individuals in higher education.

---

131 Ford et al (2014)

132 Morley (2013a); Aiston (2011)

133 ECU (2013)

134 eg Coate and Kandiko (2015)

135 Wroblewski (2014)

136 Stratigaki (2005)

137 Smith (2012)

138 THE (2016b)

### Intersectionality

Discussing leadership in relation to gender alone may overlook the significant characteristics of ethnicity, class and age, which also affect attitudes, behaviour, aspirations and how people perceive women in senior and leadership roles.<sup>139</sup> Ethnicity adds another layer of potential bias and inequality or potential power and advantage, depending on context. As recruitment and selection bias in relation to BAME groups is reported in higher education,<sup>140</sup> this is likely to be further reflected in the experiences of those who are recruited and aspire to or attain leadership positions in higher education. However, ethnicity and gender intersect rather than being layered one on the other. Plowman sought to explore this notion of intersectionality of gender, power and race in a study of a South African non-governmental organisation.<sup>141</sup> She found that personal reflections in participants' diaries, both male and female, "... revealed the complex and nuanced ways in which gender and race shape experiences of inclusion and exclusion".<sup>142</sup> However, race was easier to identify in diarists' accounts because of the gendered nature of the case study organisation.

Other studies have used intersectional approaches to explore women's experiences in academia: these include on migrant women academics,<sup>143</sup> sexuality in a study of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) academics in science and engineering,<sup>144</sup> how race and ethnicity intersect with gender in an analysis of academic publications,<sup>145</sup> and gender inequality across the academic life course.<sup>146</sup> Intersectional approaches to researching women's experiences in higher education are important as they contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how social inequalities play out in work contexts and acknowledge that women should not be considered a single group. Sang et al demonstrate this in their research in which migrant women academics "display greater levels of agency, connectedness, and entrepreneurial flair to mobilise their varied resources in order to achieve career

success".<sup>147</sup> Therefore, studies that homogenise or downplay the differences between women may miss the complex interplay between gender and other identities. The literature on intersectionality of gender with other forms of identity will be further explored in relation to the empirical study results in the final project report.

### *Conclusion and summary of findings from the literature*

In summary, recognising leadership in action is complicated by the lack of consensus about the nature of leadership and blurred distinction between management and leadership. While leadership may be associated with a formal management position, which requires vision, goal setting and control, it can also be enacted in other non-managerial roles and distributed between groups. In the context of academia, the most applicable and useful of the many conceptualisations of leadership is four discourses of position, performance, practice and professional role model.<sup>148</sup>

To some extent, women and men conform to gender stereotypical behaviour. Men tend to be more autocratic and controlling, and women more democratic and empowering. However, these behaviours are likely to be the result of expectations and work contexts, and are not necessarily preferences. Bringing about change is likely to demand a challenge to accepted styles of leadership and regarding effective leadership as the capacity to combine contextually defined positive aspects of different styles and characteristics.

139 Morley (2013a); Fitzgerald (2013)

140 eg ECU (2103)

141 Plowman (2010; 2016)

142 Plowman (2016) p34

143 Czarniawska and Sevón (2008); Skachkova (2007); Sang et al (2013)

144 Bilimoria and Stewart (2009)

145 Hopkins et al (2013)

146 Winslow and Davis (2016)

147 Sang et al (2013) p160

148 Jutrasook (2014)

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, women are poorly represented in senior roles despite having a strong presence in the higher education sector as a whole. This is in part because the gendered division of unpaid labour places a disproportionate burden on many women. Women in professional service roles may have more success in progressing than those in academic positions, because such roles offer a wider range of career paths. Women academics' career advancement is limited by a range of hindering forces including gender stereotyping, organisational practices, time constraint and their own attitudes and behaviours. Ethnicity is one aspect of identity other than gender that is likely to affect women's aspiration to, and ability to flourish, as leaders. Indeed the intersection of gender and ethnicity may have a particularly significant impact.

Successful academic women use a range of career development techniques, and are likely to be resilient and assertive, avoid low prestige activities and manage their time effectively. However, the combination of leadership and domestic responsibilities can be burdensome and negatively affect wellbeing and life outside of work as well as career progression. The limited evidence about forces that enable women's leadership suggests that mentoring and leadership/career development programmes are helpful. However, these interventions may focus on changing women's behaviour and attitudes. The literature suggests that more attention is needed to changing institutional culture, policy and practice, and evaluating the impact of change initiatives. In future reports we will return to this point to check whether research has addressed these issues more fully over the duration of the five-year longitudinal study.

Understanding women's leadership seems to be limited by an apparent dearth of research evidence on three relevant topics and the conflation or lack of clarity about some concepts. Evidence seems to be slim in relation to:

- The careers and leadership of professional service staff in HEIs.
- Leadership not associated with position, specifically distributed leadership and performance, practice and professional role model leadership.<sup>149</sup>
- The impact of elder care on women and their aspirations to leadership and their success as leaders.

Lack of conceptual distinction is particularly problematic around career advancement and leadership; and management and leadership.



## 4 GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS



### Survey respondents

Table 2 gives a range of occupational, demographic and biographical information about the 1,576 women who responded. Fifty-seven percent are academics and 43% professional services staff. They are fairly evenly distributed between different kinds of UK universities, with fewer in Republic of Ireland universities and a significant but small number in other higher education bodies. Of those whose location is known, two-thirds are in England, and one-fifth in Scotland.

Both median age and median earnings are in the low 40s of age and pounds respectively. The vast majority of respondents work in full-time and permanent jobs. The professional services staff work in a wide range of departments and roles, and the academics work across the full range of disciplines, with health and biological sciences particularly well represented. Almost 80% of the academics describe their role as research and teaching.

Over 90% of respondents describe themselves as white, of whom nearly three-quarters are UK or one of its constituent countries. Only 20 are registered disabled, but 112 (7% of the total respondents) consider themselves to have a disability or health impairment. An almost identical proportion self-identify as LGBT (104, 6.6%).

Nearly 60% of respondents describe themselves as having primary responsibility for the management of a household of two or more people. Almost a quarter care for one or more primary school children, and around 15% report care responsibilities for pre-school children, secondary school children or adults. Roughly the same proportion report time-consuming leisure activities and other substantial commitments. Of course, many women report more than one of these responsibilities – the median is two and the mean about 1.7.

Three-quarters of respondents have worked outside higher education, and over 20% have done so for more than 10 years. Median time working in higher education is about 11 years, and with the current employer about seven years. More than 60% have never taken maternity or adoption leave, and only about 15% have taken more than a year.

More than two-thirds of the respondents have experienced one or more promotions within the same HEI, but only a little over a quarter report one or more between-HEI promotions. Slightly more respondents (28%) have experienced at least one sideways or downward move within an HEI, and around 22% have done so between HEIs. Just under one third have made at least one job move primarily for family or relationship reasons.

Just over two-thirds of respondents have applied for a job move unsuccessfully at least once, and nearly 20% have done so four times or more. Specifically, regarding unsuccessful promotion applications, nearly half have experienced at least one, and more than 11% have tried and failed at least four times.

In terms of the information presented in Table 2, the comparison group is not, on the whole, very different from the Aurora cohorts. This is encouraging for drawing generalisable conclusions as the project continues. However, this group, relative to the Aurora groups, tends to be a little older, in slightly less secure employment conditions, working slightly fewer hours, and slightly more likely to be in the Republic of Ireland. The two cohorts who have completed Aurora report more successful and unsuccessful attempts at job moves than the cohort about to start Aurora and the comparison group. At the moment it is not clear whether these attempts to move happened before or after doing Aurora.

Relative to academics, professional services staff are more likely to be UK white. They work slightly fewer hours, are slightly younger and paid slightly less, and are more likely to have worked for a significant period outside higher education. They are more likely to have experienced within-HEI job moves than academic staff.

Relative to professional services staff, on average academic staff have taken more maternity/adoption leave and career breaks, possibly partly because they are rather older. Academics are also more likely to be in full-time employment, and in fixed-term employment – though the latter is still relatively rare. Academics have also made more unsuccessful attempts at job moves.

Table 2: Survey Respondents

	Major differences between cohorts	Major differences between academics (AC, n=897) and professional services (PS, n=679)
<b>Cohort</b>	CM (not undertaken Aurora, n=306); C1 (Aurora 2013-14, n=195); C2 (Aurora 2014-15, n=408); C3 (Aurora 2015-16, n=667).	Low proportion of PS in C1
<b>Type of organisation</b>	Russell Group 349; Other pre-1992 UK university 525; Post-1992 UK university 498; University in Republic of Ireland 125; FE or other college 13; Other HE-related organisation 39; Organisation outside HE 6; Self-employed 4; Other 17.	High proportion of PS in Other HE-related orgs; somewhat low proportion in Russell group and Republic of Ireland universities
<b>Country where working</b>	England 932; Northern Ireland 18; Republic of Ireland 137; Scotland 283; Wales 63; Other 5. Note: 138 unknown.	High proportion of PS in Scotland; low in N Ireland
<b>Professional services department</b>	General departmental, school or faculty management 94; Human resources 64; Research management 61; IT services 45; Marketing/external relations 43; Library 42; Student services 40; Other 40; Student recruitment/access 32; Registry 31; Learning & teaching 29; Finance 26; Planning/policy 24; Others all < 20.	N/A
<b>Academic type of work</b>	Research only 71; Teaching only 84; Research and teaching 705; Clinical or professional practice 20; Other 17.	N/A
<b>Academic school/department (simplified from original list of 20)</b>	Medicine and related subjects 211; Biological sciences 138; Physical sciences 104; Engineering 54; Social sciences and law 128; Business and management 75; Arts and humanities 104; Education 49; Other 34.	N/A
<b>Contracted hours</b>	Full-time 1346; Part-time 21+ hours 185; Part-time 20- hours 30; Other 15.	AC more full-time
<b>Type of employment contract</b>	Permanent 1376; Fixed-term 133; Open-ended 47; Other 20.	AC more fixed-term
<b>Hours per week typically worked</b>	Up to 30 118; 31-37.5 339; 38-45 601; 45.5-52.5 294; Over 52.5 204; DK 20.	AC higher
<b>Annual gross earnings (£, or equivalent in Euro)</b>	< 20,000 29; In the 20s 122; In the 30s 455; In the 40s 539; In the 50s 286; In the 60s 74; In the 70s 26; 80,000+ 24.	AC higher
<b>Complete years worked outside HE</b>	None 395; Up to 5 531; 6-10 288; 11-15 191; 16-20 100; 21+ 71.	PS higher
<b>Complete years worked in HE</b>	Up to 5 303; 6-10 472; 11-15 419; 16-20 221; 21-25 110; 26+ 51.	

	Major differences between cohorts	Major differences between academics (AC, n=897) and professional services (PS, n=679)
Complete years worked for current employer	Less than 1 71; 1-5 532; 6-10 478; 11-15 305; 16-20 111; 21-25 52; 26+ 25.	
Maternity/adoption leave	Months: None 969; Up to 6 135; 7-12 233; 13-18 106; 19-24 93; 25+ 36. Spells (if not zero): 1 276; 2 280; 3+ 40.	Months: AC higher
Time on career break(s)	None 1242; Up to 1 year 168; 1-3 years 133; 3+ years 16.	AC higher
Promotions experienced	In same HEI: None 503; 1 558; 2 306; 3 134; 4 46; 5+ 21. Between HEIs: None 1,163; 1 295; 2 81; 3+ 31.	Same HEI: PS higher
Sideways/downward moves experienced	In same HEI: None 1,123; 1 300; 2 93; 3+ 54. Between HEIs: None 1,208; 1 279; 2 50; 3+ 23	Same HEI: PS higher Between HEIs: AC higher
Moves primarily for family or relationship reasons	None 1,088; 1 321; 2 100; 3 21; 4 24.	
Unsuccessful job move applications	Total: None 519; 1 319; 2 251; 3 148; 4 81; 5 167; 6+ 85. For a promotion: None 815; 1 320; 2 179; 3 88; 4 39; 5+ 133.	AC higher
Caring and other non-work responsibilities	Primary responsibility for managing a household of 2+ people 949; Care for pre-school age children 248; Care for primary school age children 388; Care for secondary school age children 273; Care for adults 251; Major time-consuming leisure activities 250; Major community or societal roles 197; Other substantial out-of-work commitments 262. Total no. of commitments: None 273; 1 375; 2 493; 3 309; 4 103; 5 20; 6 3.	PS higher on major time-consuming leisure activities
Age	25-29 49; 30-34 233; 35-39 362; 40-44 356; 45-49 293; 50-54 180; 55-59 74; 60-64 21; 65+ 4	AC older
Highest qualification	Sub-degree 27; Bachelors 247; Masters 395; Doctorate 783; PG Diploma or Cert 47; Professional quals 33; Other 22	AC way more likely to specify Doctorate. PS all other quals
Ethnic identity (simplified from original list of 24)	White British 721; White English 113; White Scottish 145; White Welsh 28; White Northern Irish 16; White Irish 155; Other White Background 249; All others combined 114 (including 23 Asian or Asian British – Indian; 21 Chinese); Prefer not to say 14.	PS more likely to be White British or UK constituent country. AC more likely to be White Irish or Other White Background
Disability and health	Registered disabled: 20 Consider self to have disability or health impairment: 112	
Sexual orientation & gender identity	LGBT 104	

### Interviewees

Table 3 summarises key demographic data for interviewees in cohort 2. Data for cohort 2 interviewees were extracted from their survey returns. P1 and P2 were approached directly by one of the researchers, not via their survey return. Data confidentiality protection measures preclude tracing interviewees' survey data from participant names. Consequently, only minimal data are included for these interviewees.

**Table 3: Interview participants**

Interviewee identity code	Institution	Job role	Discipline	Work contract	Salary (pa)	Age	Childcare/ elder care
C2-SHBT5LZ-T1	Post-1992	Academic	Social studies	Part-time	£45,000 to £49,999	40-44	Primary children
C2-MAYFIFE-T1	Pre-1992	Professional services	N/A	Part-time	£20,000 to £24,999	30-34	None
C2-KEGD6PS-T1	Post-1992	Academic-teaching only	Allied to Medicine	Full-time	£40,000-£44,999	50-54	Pre-school children
C2-HNASBSB-T1	Post-1992	Professional services	N/A	Part-time	£30,000 to £34,999	45-49	Secondary school children
C2-JRRN7HA-T1	Russell	Professional services	N/A	Full-time	£40,000-£44,999	35-39	Pre-school children
C2-SAVUD13-T1	Pre-1992	Academic	Biological sciences	Full-time	£45,000 to £49,999	35-39	None
C2-BADA2RA-T1	Post-1992	Academic	Biological sciences	Full-time	£35,000 to £39,999	35-39	None
C2-CELD8JF-T1	Russell group	Professional services	N/A	Full-time	£50,000 to £54,999	35-39	None
P1	Post-1992	Academic-teaching only	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown
P2	Pre-1992	Professional services	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown

# 5 SURVEY FINDINGS

*Most questions in the survey were responded to on a five point scale where 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = somewhat disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = somewhat agree; 5 = strongly agree.*

## Section 1: Overall descriptive analysis of the data

### Local working practices

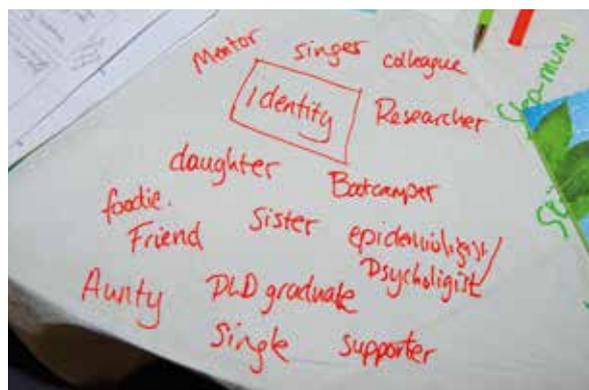
Fourteen questions were asked about working practices and policies in the respondent's workplace. Table 4 summarises the responses, in descending order of mean score.

**Table 4: Responses on working practices (n = 1,576)**

	Mean score	% somewhat agree or strongly agree
Men have a better chance than women of attaining leadership roles	3.75	72
Family-friendly policies are in place	3.43	56
Teamwork and co-operation are encouraged	3.41	58
Flexible working opportunities are readily available	3.35	55
Women tend to get the least prestigious leadership roles	3.35	52
Women and men have equal opportunities in recruitment processes	3.24	48
Using family-friendly or flexible working is taken as a sign that you are not serious about your career	3.16	43
Aggressive leadership styles are the norm	3.10	43
Women and men have equal opportunities in promotion	2.84	35
Women and men leaders receive equal respect	2.81	35
Promotion criteria and processes are clear	2.79	36
Staff review and development processes work well	2.56	25
There is extensive consultation before important decisions are made	2.46	23
Women are appropriately represented on the major decision-making bodies	2.38	25

In general, perceptions of local working practices tend towards the negative. Men are seen as having easier access to, and more endorsement in, positions of leadership and responsibility. Easily the most agreed-with statement is “Men have a better chance than women of attaining leadership roles”, and only a quarter of respondents agree that women are appropriately represented on decision-making bodies.

Nevertheless, the picture is not entirely negative. There is moderately strong agreement about the existence and availability of family-friendly practices, and the encouragement of teamwork. There is slightly more agreement than disagreement with the proposition that women and men have equal opportunities in recruitment. Even so, in all these areas there are plenty of dissenters.



The dominance of men in the eyes of our respondents may be exacerbated by the perceived lack of consultation and the lack of clarity in promotion and development processes, both of which could serve to keep men and women in their respective power positions. The relatively positive perceptions of family-friendly policies relative to promotion and development policies, and the opinion among a fair proportion of respondents that using them could be detrimental to one's career, can also be interpreted in that light.

There are some apparent contrasts in these data. The perceived lack of consultation does not sit easy with the encouragement of teamwork and co-operation. Perhaps the latter is strictly for the ground level day to day work. The dominance of men is not, it seems, universally achieved through aggressive leadership styles.

### Experiences of support at work

Five questions were posed regarding respondents' perceptions of the support they received in work, especially regarding leadership responsibilities. Table 5 below summarises the results.

Table 5: Perceptions of Support (n = 1,576)

	Mean score	% somewhat agree or strongly agree
My job requires me to influence people over whom I have no formal power or authority	4.25	86
There are supportive people I can confide in at work	4.04	80
My line manager supports my development	3.86	73
My line manager backs me up when I need him/her to do so	3.75	67
I have been placed in leadership situations where success has been almost impossible to achieve	3.15	42

Perhaps most academic and professional services jobs require a person to influence others over whom they have no formal power. Even so, it is striking that six of every seven respondents say this is the case for them. It perhaps attests to the importance of equipping women with leadership skills even where their roles are not officially leadership.

Most respondents feel they have supportive people at work in whom they can confide. Also, views of the supportiveness of line managers are positive on the whole. Then again, the majority of respondents have either completed Aurora or are about to undertake it, so they may not be typical.

Although easily the lowest scoring of the five questions, it is also notable that two-fifths of respondents are inclined to agree that they have been placed in well-nigh impossible leadership positions (12% strongly agreed). We do not know whether men would say the same, but this might bear out claims of a “glass cliff” for women leaders.<sup>150</sup>

For the 603 respondents who have already completed Aurora, we asked five further questions about support associated with the programme. Two of these questions (asterisked below) were also asked of those about to undertake Aurora (i.e. cohort 3).

Although perhaps not surprising in a group of women who have been put forward for the programme, the positive perceptions of organisational support for Aurora are encouraging. Perceptions of the supportiveness of Aurora contacts are reasonably positive. Perhaps a somewhat higher rating for mentors and action learning sets would be desirable, but the “follow-up” elements of development programmes are notoriously difficult to deliver consistently.<sup>151</sup> The low proportion of women who have experienced substantial leadership training apart from Aurora suggests that Aurora is a very important aspect of their development. No pressure then!

**Table 6: Perceptions of Aurora (n = 603)**

	Mean score	% somewhat agree or strongly agree
My organisation actively promotes Aurora*	4.15	81
My Aurora mentor provides helpful support	3.56	58
Members of my Aurora action learning set provide helpful support	3.29	48
Other people I have met on Aurora provide helpful support	3.20	44
I have had considerable leadership training outside Aurora*	2.31	22

<sup>150</sup> Haslam and Ryan (2008)

<sup>151</sup> Inkson et al (2014)

### Personal leadership skills and strategies

We asked respondents 22 questions about how they went about leadership. These questions were based on a number of extant analyses of leadership skills

and behaviours. A summary of responses is shown in Table 7.

**Table 7: Personal leadership skills and strategies (n = 1,576)**

	Mean score	% somewhat agree or strongly agree
I behave in a manner that is thoughtful of other people's needs	4.43	95
I encourage a team attitude and spirit	4.38	93
I try to be a good role model for others to follow	4.38	93
I think through the consequences of alternative courses of action	4.27	90
I make time to relate to my colleagues	4.22	88
I am able to incorporate others' ideas into my thinking	4.20	93
I work constructively with leaders higher than me in this organisation	4.18	87
I try to involve people in important decisions, even when time is tight	4.14	87
I structure tasks carefully so that everyone knows what they are supposed to be doing	4.04	82
I play a mentor role (formal or informal) for at least one colleague	4.02	76
I challenge others to think about old problems in new ways	3.94	75
I can usually see innovative solutions to problems	3.93	74
I use my intuition to see the best way ahead	3.90	75
I am able to anticipate how my colleagues will react to most situations	3.81	74
I engage in leadership at work that isn't part of my official job duties	3.81	73
I am good at bringing team members around to my way of thinking without forcing them	3.76	68
I am able to inspire others with my ideas for the future	3.75	67
Leadership is a major part of my official job duties	3.69	68
I seek out leadership opportunities in my day to day work	3.63	62
When I have power, I am comfortable using it	3.61	64
I tell others what I think they need to do to be rewarded for their efforts	3.47	54
I know a lot about how my employing organisation runs	3.43	56

The generally high level of scores is notable. On the whole the respondents view themselves as exhibiting the necessary social and cognitive skills to be effective in leadership roles. In some areas their self-ratings are exceptionally high. This is particularly notable in social co-operative and affiliative behaviours, perhaps rather reflecting traditional feminine stereotypes.

High self-ratings are also evident in more task-oriented areas such as thinking through alternatives and task structuring, and to a slightly lesser extent in assertive behaviours such as challenging others. However, comparatively speaking, these tend to be somewhat lower than in co-operative social behaviours. For example, 93% agree that they encourage a team attitude and spirit, but “only” 64% agree that they are comfortable with power when they have it, and 68% that they are good at bringing others around to their way of thinking.

Two-thirds of respondents agree or strongly agree that leadership is an important part of their official job duties, and almost as many say they seek out leadership opportunities in their work. Clearly leadership as an activity is salient to the majority. Only about 11% of respondents say both that leadership is not an important part of their official job duties and that they do not seek out leadership opportunities.

Finally, the comparatively low score for knowledge of how the organisation runs may be both a constraint on leadership opportunities and a consequence of a lack of them. It may also be connected with some of the perceptions of local work culture noted above, especially the lack of women on decision-making bodies and consultative processes.

### Work-life balance

Drawing on literature about what is often called work-family conflict and other sources, we formulated 12 questions about the interface between work and non-work life. The responses are summarised in Table 8.



**Table 8: Perceptions of work-life balance (n = 1,576)**

	Mean score	% somewhat agree or strongly agree
My earnings are crucial to keep my household going	4.23	81
In five years' time, I expect my circumstances to be compatible with taking on leadership roles	4.15	78
The support I receive outside work helps me in my work life	3.90	73
My work keeps me from other activities more than I would like	3.84	72
When I get home from work, I am often too tired to participate fully in home activities	3.73	70
My current circumstances are compatible with taking on substantial leadership roles at work	3.61	64
My current circumstances make it difficult for me to relocate geographically for my work	3.60	61
The support I receive at work helps me in my personal life	2.73	28
The time I need to spend on my commitments outside work often interferes with my work	2.44	25
My home responsibilities mean I often have a hard time keeping my mind on my work	2.20	15
My commute to work is difficult to manage	2.02	17
I am currently doing long-distance commuting, often staying overnight close to my workplace	1.41	7

It is clear that for most respondents their income is a necessary part of their household finances. About two-thirds indicate that their current circumstances are conducive to taking leadership roles, but significantly more (over three-quarters) anticipate that this will be the case five years hence. Despite the fairly positive view of capacity to take on leadership roles, the majority of respondents report that their work constrains their non-work life more than they would like. In contrast, the time and energy required for non-work commitments intrudes much less on work.

This one-way traffic between work and non-work life is also evident in the two questions about support. Nearly three-quarters of respondents agree that support outside work helps to sustain their work, but only about a quarter think that support at work helps them outside work. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that home and other aspects of non-work life are "subsidising" work much more than vice versa.

Table 9: Adoption of career management strategies (n = 1,576)

	Mean score	% somewhat agree or strongly agree
I seek opportunities to develop skills I need for my career	4.23	89
I seek opportunities to be mentored or coached	3.70	66
I volunteer for tasks that will get me better known	3.68	67
I take the time to maintain my existing work contacts	3.67	66
I make myself visible to people who could help me in my career	3.55	63
I set myself goals for career progression	3.53	60
I know what I want from my career	3.51	58
I seek opportunities to mentor or coach others	3.47	58
I seek out new work contacts	3.47	57
I keep my cv up to date	3.38	57
I proactively seek out job opportunities	3.30	50
I conform to the organisational culture more than I'd really like to	3.11	41
I ask people for feedback about me and my career prospects	2.95	40
I make a point of behaving in ways that challenge the organisational culture	2.92	31
I use social media to build and maintain my profile	2.64	33
I enjoy the cut and thrust of organisational politics	2.31	18

### Career management strategies

The academic and practical literatures on career self-management were used to generate 16 questions about things that respondents might be doing to steer their career in the way they want. Responses are summarised in Table 9.

Overall it appears that the respondents engage in a fairly high level of career management activity. The clear "winner" is skill development, while the lowest scoring item reveals distaste for organisational politics. Clarity about career goals and values is moderately high, with around 60% of respondents saying that this describes them.

Activities that centre upon one-to-one co-operative relationships and putting oneself in the "shop window" in a general way are among the more strongly endorsed. More proactive and perhaps potentially risky activities like asking for feedback are less often used. The low score for use of social media might seem surprising these days, but it aligns with data obtained by one of us in a project with university researchers.<sup>152</sup>

Table 10: Attitudes to career (n = 1,576)

	Mean score	% somewhat agree or strongly agree
I want to ensure I have job security	4.43	91
I want to be of service to my organisation	4.30	89
I want to be a leading expert in my work domain	4.09	78
I feel confident to put myself forward for positions of responsibility at work	4.00	81
I feel confident to put myself forward for career advancement	3.72	69
I need to behave in ways that don't come naturally to me if I want to get on in this organisation.	3.51	59
I want to rise to a very senior position	3.47	56
Overall I am satisfied with the way my career is going	3.39	61
I feel confident to put myself forward for a salary increase	3.14	46
I intend to seek a new job in the next year or so	2.91	38
My work is more important to me than my life outside work	2.25	15

### Career attitudes

A final set of 11 scaled questions asked respondents about their career attitudes and priorities. Some of these questions are somewhat similar to those in the previous section. The difference is that these questions focus more on attitudes and intentions rather than current self-promoting actions.

Job security and being a good servant of the employing organisation are the most strongly endorsed items, and very strongly so with nine out of 10 respondents agreeing. The very high priority on job security perhaps reflects the earlier finding that the income derived from it is essential to household finances for many of these women. These two values are appreciably ahead of being an expert in one's area of work (though this also scored highly) and wanting to achieve a very senior position. Even so, over half the respondents agreed that they would like that.

Encouragingly for the representation of women in positions of leadership, four-fifths of our survey respondents report that they feel confident to put themselves forward for positions of responsibility. Rather less assertively, however, fewer than half agree that they feel confident in putting themselves forward for a salary increase. This is considerably lower than the 69% who agree that they feel confident seeking career advancement (which presumably would usually involve a salary increase) and the 81% who are confident going for positions of responsibility. There seems to be a danger here of women being willing to take on responsible tasks but not being so willing to seek rewards for doing so. As a reviewer of this report pointed out, in some cases this may be a consequence of being at the top of their pay scale and therefore not so much a reflection of lack of willingness as a lack of opportunity.

Overall career satisfaction is moderately high. Still, more than a quarter positively disagree with the proposition that overall they are satisfied with the way their career is going. More than a third intend to look for a new job in the coming year.

Finally, only a low proportion of respondents report that work is more important than non-work. This perhaps sits uneasily with the earlier finding (in the work-life balance section) that non-work activities are more impeded by work than vice versa. So the avowedly less important domain of life is biting chunks out of the avowedly more important domain of life.

### The perceived impact of Aurora

We asked those who had completed Aurora whether they thought that Aurora had increased, decreased or had no effect on their behaviour and attitudes in 12 areas. Results are shown below in Table 11.

Very few respondents report that Aurora has led to a decrease on any of these 12 items. The most frequent is "I know what I want from my career" (3%). On average the respondents report increases in five or six of the 12 items.

The strongest perceived effects of Aurora concern the motivation to seek leadership, the social skills of leadership, and proactive career management. There are less strong, but still significant, perceived effects in the more task-oriented elements of leadership, the interface between work and non-work, and the extent to which other people seem to see the Auroran as a leader.

Cohort 1 finished Aurora more than a year before completing the questionnaire, whereas cohort 2 finished in the previous few months. On the whole the perceived effects of Aurora are similar for the two cohorts. This suggests (but because the data are cross-sectional, does not prove) that the effects of Aurora on self-concept and behaviour are maintained over time. They neither build up, nor decay.

Table 11: Perceived impact of Aurora

	% reporting an increase attributable to Aurora		
	Cohort 1 (n = 195)	Cohort 2 (n = 408)	Overall (n = 603)
I seek out leadership roles	59	66	64
I demonstrate the people skills needed for leadership roles	59	63	61
I actively develop my career support network	61	59	59
I put myself forward for career advancement	56	55	56
I feel comfortable in positions of authority	54	52	53
I know what I want from my career	48	47	47
I engage in leadership at work that is not part of my job description/role	45	47	46
I act as a mentor at work	45	47	46
I communicate a clear vision of what needs to be done at work	42	43	43
I am decisive at work	36	38	37
Other people see me as a leader	35	37	36
I manage my work-life balance effectively	23	22	22

Table 12: Expectations of the Aurora programme (n = 667)

	Mean score	% somewhat agree or strongly agree
Enhance my confidence in leadership roles	4.80	97
Equip me to be a leader	4.74	98
Help me clarify my career aspirations	4.50	89
Enable me to meet women in a similar position to me	4.49	91
Enable me to make contacts who can help me in my career	4.39	88

### Hopes of Aurora

Members of cohort 3 were asked, just before they started the Aurora programme, what they were seeking from it. Five questions were used here. It is clear from Table 12 that this cohort's hopes for Aurora are very high.

Given the positioning of Aurora as a way to develop leadership skills and confidence, it is not surprising that the two questions that refer to leadership get the highest scores. Those mean scores are exceptionally high, and the other items are not far behind. As we have seen in the previous section, women do tend to perceive some effects of Aurora. The expectations revealed here suggest that this is just as well! The questions about hopes/expectations of Aurora before starting it and perceived impact after finishing it are not exactly the same and the response options aren't the same either, so direct comparison is not possible. However, it might be argued that Aurorans' high expectations of development of leadership confidence and skills come closer to being met than their almost equally high hopes of developing clarity about their career direction.



## Section 2: Comparisons between subgroups of respondents in views of leadership, work and career

### Differences between cohorts

Table 13: Differences between cohorts

	Comparison group (n = 306)	Cohort 1 (post-Aurora) (n = 195)	Cohort 2 (post-Aurora) (n = 408)	Cohort 3 (pre-Aurora) (n = 667)
I seek out leadership opportunities in my day to day work	3.54	3.87	3.73	3.55
I engage in leadership at work that isn't part of my official job duties	3.71	3.99	3.90	3.75
I know a lot about how my employing organisation runs	3.41	3.52	3.58	3.32
I make myself visible to people who could help me in my career	3.46	3.77	3.75	3.39
I feel confident to put myself forward for career advancement	3.68	3.88	3.93	3.57
<b>Leadership</b>				
When I have power, I am comfortable using it	3.72	3.77	3.75	3.43
I am able to inspire others with my ideas for the future	3.82	3.93	3.82	3.63
I am good at bringing team members around to my way of thinking without forcing them	3.78	3.83	3.85	3.67
I know what I want from my career	3.65	3.64	3.55	3.39
<b>Work</b>				
In five years' time, I expect my circumstances to be compatible with taking on leadership roles	3.94	4.14	4.06	4.30
I want to rise to a very senior position	3.30	3.45	3.43	3.58
My line manager supports my development	3.60	3.90	3.84	3.99

Statistically significant differences between the four cohorts are quite frequent across the 80 questions concerning perceptions and behaviour around leadership and career. They are least prominent in the section on perceptions of local work culture and practices.

Some trends can be discerned in the data. A selection of the responses that illustrate these is shown in Table 13. The first block of the table (five questions) illustrate some of the areas where the two post-Aurora cohorts score higher than the other two. This does not prove that Aurora had affected them, but it is consistent with that proposition, and with the data discussed above. Post-Aurorans show more evidence of seeking out leadership roles and seeking to create career opportunities for themselves than the other two cohorts.

The four questions in the middle block of Table 13 illustrate another trend in the data. In some respects, cohort 3, who were about to start Aurora, are less confident than the other three groups. This suggests that they are undertaking Aurora at least in part to make up for a “deficit” in perceived comfort and impact in leadership roles, and perhaps also some uncertainty about career direction. It will be interesting to see later in this project whether their scores in these areas have increased by the end of Aurora.

Despite the relative career uncertainty of cohort 3 as they embark on Aurora, the bottom section of Table 13 shows that they are somewhat more ambitious in a “climbing the ladder” sense than the other groups, and that they expect their future circumstances to be able to accommodate leadership roles. This suggests that cohort 3 is a quite ambitious group but not (yet) very confident about its capacity to get on.

In general, members of the comparison group do not especially seek the limelight, but are relatively confident about their leadership skills and career direction. This may be why they are not embarking on Aurora. However, the bottom line of Table 13 suggests (and so does much of the human resources literature) that the role of the line manager may

be crucial. The comparison group reported the least supportive line managers regarding personal development.

### Differences between academic and professional services staff

Demographic, biographical and work history differences between academic and professional services staff are fairly numerous, and are reported in the section describing the respondents. Here we examine differences in perceptions, attitudes and self-reported behaviours. In some areas, but not all, these too are quite numerous. Table 14 shows an indicative selection of the questions where professional services and academic staff responded statistically significantly differently.

As noted earlier, respondents in general tend to have negative perceptions of the culture and practices of their workplace. However, the top section of Table 14 shows that this negativity is more marked among academics than professional services staff. Academics are (even) less inclined than their professional services colleagues to say that women get a fair crack of the whip in access to leadership positions and career development. It is difficult to know whether this reflects real differences in practices in the respondents’ immediate work environments, or different levels of awareness of what “really” happens, or that academics demand higher standards. The Times Higher Education (THE)<sup>153</sup> reports on the university workplace survey 2015, in which a similar disparity of views is apparent, with academics being more jaundiced than professional services staff about many aspects of the way their workplaces are managed. One explanation for this suggested by the THE is that professional services staff are more likely to have worked outside higher education and, in comparison with other sectors, regard universities and allied organisations as relatively benign and inclined to do things by the book.

Table 14: Differences between academic and professional services

	Professional services staff (n = 679)	Academic staff (n = 897)
Men have a better chance than women of attaining leadership roles	3.53	<b>3.91</b>
Women are appropriately represented on the major decision-making bodies	<b>2.56</b>	2.25
Women and men have equal opportunities in promotion	<b>2.98</b>	2.74
Women tend to get the least prestigious leadership roles	3.16	<b>3.50</b>
There is extensive consultation before important decisions are made	<b>2.62</b>	2.35
Family-friendly policies are in place	<b>3.62</b>	3.29
My line manager supports my development	<b>3.99</b>	3.77
My job requires me to influence people over whom I have no formal power or authority	<b>4.38</b>	4.15
I have had considerable leadership training outside Aurora	<b>2.43</b>	2.23
I use my intuition to see the best way ahead	<b>3.99</b>	3.84
I am able to anticipate how my colleagues will react to most situations	<b>3.87</b>	3.75
I know a lot about how my employing organisation runs	<b>3.67</b>	3.25
My work keeps me from other activities more than I would like	3.62	<b>4.00</b>
The time I need to spend on my commitments outside work often interferes with my work	2.24	<b>2.58</b>
When I get home from work, I am often too tired to participate fully in home activities	3.59	<b>3.83</b>
My home responsibilities mean I often have a hard time keeping my mind on my work	2.09	<b>2.28</b>
The support I receive at work helps me in my personal life	<b>2.88</b>	2.61
I seek opportunities to be mentored or coached	3.57	<b>3.80</b>
I set myself goals for career progression	3.33	<b>3.68</b>
I keep my CV up to date	3.12	<b>3.59</b>
I know what I want from my career	3.35	<b>3.63</b>
I want to rise to a very senior position	3.36	<b>3.55</b>
I want to be a leading expert in my work domain	3.96	<b>4.19</b>
I want to be of service to my organisation	<b>4.41</b>	4.22
I intend to seek a new job in the next year or so	<b>3.08</b>	2.78

Note: Higher score is shown in **bold**.

Regarding self-rated leadership skills and experiences, the professional services staff have a small but consistent advantage. This is shown in the second section of the table. Professional services staff are also slightly more likely to report having had leadership training outside Aurora and a line manager who supports their development. The biggest difference, however, concerns self-rated knowledge of how the organisation runs, where professional services staff score quite a bit higher.

Regarding work-life balance, academic staff experience more difficulties than professional services staff. This is the case in both directions ie work affecting non-work life adversely, and non-work life affecting work adversely, though in general the latter is much less prevalent than the former. Such a finding accords with the Higher Education Leadership and Management Survey (HELM) published by the Leadership Foundation<sup>154</sup> and also the recent Times Higher survey of university staff referred to above, in which 89% of academic staff compared with 57% of professional staff report working beyond their normal hours.<sup>155</sup>

In contrast to self-rated leadership skills, academics outscore professional services staff in the area of career self-management activities, despite being less likely to say they will seek another job in the next year or so. They report more clarity about and focus on career goals. Interestingly, academics are more likely to say they want to rise to a very senior position. This does not sit well with their lower self-estimates of leadership skills (though still quite high in an absolute sense) and in particular with their lower sense of awareness of how the organisation runs.

Notably absent from the table are any differences in perceived impact of Aurora. It seems that academic and professional services Aurorans evaluate the benefits similarly.

### Differences between departments and schools

As indicated in the section describing the respondents as a whole, **professional services staff** are distributed across a wide range of departments and functions. There is no easy or valid way of grouping these into types, so we ran comparisons between all of them. Partly because of the relatively low numbers of people in each department and the high number of departments, statistically significant differences are few and far between, and patterns in those that are significant are not easy to discern.

That said, there appears to be a tendency for staff working in libraries, quality, finance and, to a lesser extent, marketing to have a more favourable view of their working situation and the opportunities for women, than other professional services staff. Enterprise/business development staff tend to be less positive than average. A reviewer suggested this might be due to challenging targets and conspicuous performance management. Perhaps reassuringly, respondents working in careers tend to report more proactive career self-management than average, as do those working in alumni offices. However, these findings must be treated with caution. Notably, significant differences in perceptions of leadership skills are particularly scarce.

Regarding **academic staff**, the long list of different departments/schools was grouped into eight broader subject areas, as shown earlier in the section describing the respondents. As long as the groupings are meaningful, this should make it easier than for the professional services staff to pick up any systematic differences between subject areas. In fact, there are very few indeed. There is a tendency for academics working in medicine and related areas, engineering or education to have the most favourable (or rather, given the generally negative perceptions in this area, least unfavourable) views of the respect in which women leaders are held and their representation on decision-making bodies. Staff in biological and social sciences tend to have the least favourable perceptions of those things.

154 Peters and Ryan (2015)

155 THE (2016a)

The only other finding of note is a strong tendency for Aurora to be perceived as helping one to be more decisive by staff in social sciences, whilst staff in biological sciences and education are much less likely to report Aurora has had this effect. However, overall, there is not a statistically significant difference between staff in different subject areas in the total number of effects attributed to Aurora. Nor are there any notable differences in perceptions of leadership or career attitudes and strategies.

### Differences between kinds of academic role

The vast majority of academic respondents have both research and teaching in their roles (and quite a few added management to that). However, smaller numbers are research only, teaching only (or more fairly, teaching and scholarship), and just a few are primarily engaged in clinical or professional practice. Overall, differences between the four groups are not particularly strong or numerous. Table 15 shows some of those that do occur.

In some respects the research-only respondents seem to feel somewhat more supported than others, and despite their specialist role they are not noticeably less interested in leadership than the other groups are. If anything, it is the clinical professional practice respondents who feel least supported and perhaps least engaged with leadership.

### Differences between ethnic identities

Because of very small numbers in each black and minority ethnic category, we simplified the ethnic groups as shown in the description of the respondents and in the tables below. In order particularly to clarify the experiences of white Irish women, analyses were carried out only on respondents working in the UK.

Table 15: Differences between academic contract types

	Research only (n = 71)	Teaching only (n = 84)	Research and Teaching (n = 705)	Clinical or Professional (n = 20)
My line manager backs me up when I need him or her to do so	4.07	3.61	3.61	3.50
I challenge others to think about old problems in new ways	3.45	3.74	3.90	3.06
I support I receive at work helps me in my personal life	2.99	2.73	2.56	2.35
I make myself visible to other people who could help my career	3.56	3.42	3.62	2.80
I want to be a leading expert in my work domain	4.17	3.79	4.24	4.20

Table 16: Differences by ethnicity

	White UK (n = 1023)	White Irish (n = 155)	Other White (n = 249)	Any BAME (n = 114)
Men have a better chance than women of attaining leadership roles	3.61	4.14	3.95	<b>4.20</b>
Men and women leaders receive equal respect	<b>2.89</b>	2.48	2.75	2.45
Women are appropriately represented on the major decision-making bodies	<b>2.45</b>	2.12	2.21	2.06
Women and men have equal opportunities in promotion	<b>2.97</b>	2.67	2.74	2.59
Family-friendly policies are in place	<b>3.55</b>	3.17	3.35	3.33
My job requires me to influence people over whom I have no formal power or authority	<b>4.26</b>	3.93	3.69	4.08
I know a lot about how my employing organisation runs	<b>3.50</b>	3.10	3.15	3.39
I have had considerable training outside of Aurora	<b>2.35</b>	1.64	2.18	2.35
I seek opportunities to develop skills I need for my career	4.18	4.12	4.30	<b>4.46</b>
I keep my CV up to date	3.29	3.36	<b>3.69</b>	3.44
I want to rise to a very senior position	3.31	3.57	3.71	<b>3.97</b>
I want to be of service to my organisation	4.32	4.10	4.14	<b>4.47</b>
The time I need to spend on my commitments outside work often interferes with my work	2.35	2.40	<b>2.71</b>	2.51
My work is more important to me than my life outside work	2.21	2.19	2.43	<b>2.58</b>

Note: Highest score is shown in **bold**; lowest in *italics*.

Regarding perceptions and attitudes, there are some significant differences between ethnic groups. The most notable are shown in Table 16. In many cases it is the white UK rather than BAME respondents who are the outliers. This is particularly the case for perceptions of the leadership and career opportunities for women relative to men (see first five questions in the table). White UK respondents tend to see things in a more favourable way than others. White Irish respondents tend to be negative relative to other groups, especially about the presence (or not) of family-friendly policies.

Regarding careers, the BAME respondents appear to be more ambitious than their white counterparts in terms of wanting a senior position (especially relative to white UK), wanting to be of service to the organisation, and centrality of work in life. In a few respects, BAME and white UK respondents are similar, and different from the two other white groups. For example, they both report having had slightly more leadership training and knowing more about how their organisation runs. In these specific respects, the white Irish respondents are least positive.

### Comparisons between full-time and part-time workers

As one might expect, respondents with part-time jobs are more likely than full-timers to have caring responsibilities, to have taken maternity leave, and to indicate that their home responsibilities limited their opportunities to take on leadership roles or make geographical moves. Part-timers tend to have worked somewhat longer for their current employer, experienced fewer between-HEI promotions, and fewer unsuccessful job move applications but more within-HEI sideways or downward moves. Part-timers are also more likely to report having made moves primarily for family or relationship reasons.

Aside from these career-history differences, there are some significant differences in attitudes and perceptions between full-time and part-time respondents. Some of these are shown below in Table 17. Part-timers are somewhat less engaged with leadership than full-timers, and feel less able to take it on. They are also somewhat less ambitious and active in career self-management, and less clear about their career goals. Having said that, the table shows part-timers are still above the mid-point of the scale on all these things, so it would be wrong to conclude that part-timers are uninterested in leadership and development.

Part-timers and full-timers do not differ significantly in their self-rated leadership skills, nor in their career satisfaction. They also rate the impact of Aurora on them in very similar ways.

Table 17: Differences by full-time and part-time contracts

	Full-time (n = 1,346)	Part-time (n = 215)
Women and men leaders receive equal respect	2.75	<b>3.15</b>
Flexible working opportunities are readily available	3.32	<b>3.60</b>
I seek out leadership opportunities in my day to day work	<b>3.66</b>	3.47
My current circumstances are compatible with taking on substantial leadership roles at work	<b>3.67</b>	3.20
I make myself visible to people who could help me in my career	<b>3.58</b>	3.36
I know what I want from my career	<b>3.54</b>	3.28
I want to rise to a very senior position	<b>3.51</b>	3.24
I feel confident to put myself forward for career advancement	<b>3.76</b>	3.54

Note: Higher score is shown in **bold**.

### Differences between types of employer

Comparisons were made between respondents working for one of the five types of employer with sufficient numbers for sufficient analysis. These were Russell Group university, other pre-1992 UK university, post-1992 UK university, university in the Republic of Ireland, and other types of organisation in the higher education sector.

There are no major differences between types of employer in terms of the perceived effects of Aurora or on self-reported leadership skills and behaviours. The only notable difference concerning career attitudes and strategies is that respondents in post-1992 UK universities are slightly less likely to aspire to be an expert in their work domain than respondents in the other types of organisation.

However, there are some statistically significant differences in the area of local working practices and culture, as shown in Table 18.

**Table 18: Differences by type of higher education institution**

	Russell Group (n = 349)	Other pre-1992 (n = 525)	Post-1992 (n = 498)	Universities in ROI (n = 125)	Other HE organisations (n = 39)
Men have a better chance than women of attaining leadership roles	3.76	3.80	3.63	4.07	3.56
Women are appropriately represented on the major decision-making bodies	2.35	2.24	2.56	2.18	2.46
Women and men have equal opportunities in promotion	2.79	2.81	2.98	2.54	2.97
Family-friendly policies are in place	3.53	3.46	3.44	3.11	3.33
Using family-friendly or flexible working is taken as a sign that you are not serious about your career	3.11	3.15	3.11	3.51	3.05

It is clear that respondents in universities in the Republic of Ireland have more unfavourable views on the position of women relative to men in their workplaces than women in the other types of organisation. This applies to access to leadership roles, promotion opportunities, representation in decision-making, availability of family-friendly policies, and potential negative career consequences of using them.

### Differences between countries

There are just a few notable differences between respondents working in different countries (see Table 19). The small number of respondents from Northern Ireland means that it is necessary to be cautious about inferring too much about that country. Respondents in the Republic of Ireland are especially inclined to report that men have more ready access to leadership positions than women do, and that using family-friendly policies is taken to mean you aren't serious about your career. Both these findings are in line with the finding above regarding respondents working in universities in the Republic. However, they are among the least likely to think that aggressive leadership styles are the norm, along with respondents in England who (with Scottish respondents) also have less negative views of the career consequences of using family friendly policies.

Table 19: National differences

	England (n = 932)	Northern Ireland (n = 18)	Republic of Ireland (n = 137)	Scotland (n = 283)	Wales (n = 63)
Men have a better chance than women of attaining leadership roles	3.73	3.67	4.08	3.70	3.75
Aggressive leadership styles are the norm	3.01	3.44	3.10	3.28	3.29
Using family-friendly or flexible working is taken as a sign that you are not serious about your career	3.12	3.50	3.46	3.11	3.24
I want to be of service to my organisation	4.26	4.00	4.45	4.37	4.40

### Associations between career biographical characteristics and leadership/career perceptions

We examined the correlations between the career biographical variables shown earlier in Table 2 and responses to the questions about local working practices, leadership, work-life balance, and career strategies and attitudes. Not surprisingly given the large number of respondents, most correlations are small in magnitude, even the statistically significant ones. Therefore, the following summary of findings is indicative of discernible but modest trends in the data. There will be many individuals who buck the trend. Most of the trends reported below are perhaps predictable, but there may nevertheless be one or two surprises. As always, it is not possible to be specific about causal direction, if any.

**Age:** with increasing age comes greater leadership as part of the job description, and consistently higher self-rated leadership-related skills. Older respondents tend to report less proactive career self-management and less ambition. Work tends to become *more* central in life, and job security becomes less important.

**Non-work responsibilities:** those with more responsibilities outside work (primarily but not only caring responsibilities) report more negative impact of non-work on work life, less capacity to move geographically or take on leadership roles, and less work centrality. About 10% of respondents 40 years of age or more report caring for both children and adults but only 2% of those under 40. The “sandwich carers” are slightly *more* likely than others to report engaging in informal leadership and seeking out leadership responsibilities.

**Hours per week worked:** the more hours per week worked (not necessarily the same as contracted hours), the more negative the view of local working practices, including flexible working and line manager support. The more hours worked, the more leadership is sought, and mentoring undertaken, and the more work is perceived to intrude on non-work life. Nevertheless, those working longer hours tend to judge their circumstances as being more suitable for taking on leadership roles, and are more ambitious regarding rising to a senior position and being an expert in their field. They also regard career as more central in life than those working fewer hours.

**Earnings:** the higher the respondent’s earnings, the more negative perceptions tend to be of the position of women in the workplace, and about teamwork and development in general. Higher earners tend to report more leadership in their job, both formally and informally. There are also some associations with higher self-rated leadership skills, as well as more clarity about career goals, career satisfaction, and ambition.

**Years worked outside higher education:** there is a slight tendency for those who have worked longer outside higher education to be more positive in general about their workplace, and less ambitious.

**Years worked in higher education:** longer tenure in higher education is associated with greater self-rated leadership skills and more leadership in the job. It is also associated with less career self-management activity and less ambition.

**Years worked for current employer:** similar to years worked in higher education, but slightly stronger associations.

**Maternity/adoption leave taken:** the more such leave taken, the more inclined respondents are to report that taking advantage of family friendly policies is taken as a sign that you are not serious about career. There are also perceptions of more non-work to work life conflict, and less compatibility of current circumstances with taking on leadership roles and moving geographically.

**Career breaks:** similar to maternity/adoption leave, but the statistical associations are a little weaker.

---

**Within-HEI promotions:** the more of these that have been experienced, the higher the respondent's career satisfaction, leadership in the job, knowledge of how the organisation runs and being a mentor. There is also a slight tendency for those who had been promoted more times within an HEI to be more positive about the local work culture and practices. The more-promoted respondents are more likely to see their current circumstances as compatible with taking on leadership roles, but interestingly they are *less* likely to think that their circumstances in five years' time will be conducive to leadership.

**Between-HEI promotions:** those who have experienced more of these promotions tend to report more career self-management activity, and more ambition to rise to a senior position and be an expert in their domain.

**Within-HEI sideways or downward moves:** no identifiable trends.

**Between-HEI sideways or downward moves:** those who have experienced more (or indeed any) of these moves tend to be slightly less positive about women's position in the workplace.

**Job moves made primarily for family or relationship reasons:** respondents who have made more such moves tend to rate themselves higher on the innovative and visionary aspects of leadership. They also tend to report more overspill from non-work to work life, and are less geographically mobile.

**Unsuccessful job move applications (including promotions):** the more of these a respondent has experienced, the more negative a view she tends to have of women's position and of support from Aurora mentors and colleagues. Nevertheless, these women have not given up. They tend to be seeking leadership, somewhat more active in career self-management, higher in work centrality and more likely to intend to move jobs in the next year or so.

**Disability:** there are no major differences between those who describe themselves as having a disability or health impairment and those who do not regarding the impact of Aurora or on self-rated leadership skills. However, proportionately more women without a disability are confident to put themselves forward for a salary increase; and proportionately more women with a disability feel too tired when they get home compared to those without a disability.

**LGBT:** there are no major differences between LGBT and non-LGBT respondents in perceptions of the effects of Aurora or on self-perceived leadership skills.

## 6 INTERVIEW FINDINGS



## Interviews with Aurorans

Each section is headed by the interview question that generated the data reported in that section. Please refer to Appendix B for the topic guide.

Of the 10 interviewees, five identified their role as being academic teaching and research, two as teaching only and three as managerial and/or professional.

### Leadership activities

Although not all interviewees had job titles that suggest formal leadership or management roles, they were engaged in a range of leadership activities. Most interviewees described themselves as engaged in leadership activities that fall into more than one of these categories.

**Position.** These interviewees had titles such as “manager” that denote leadership and/or undertook activities such as setting a vision, developing strategy, leading and/or developing courses or systems change, managing staff and/or budgets.

**Practice.** Interviewees who led through their practice did so by influencing others by their interactions with those people. Leadership practices included activities such as enabling staff development and training, participating in committees, and advising companies.

**Performance.** Leadership was expressed through the achievement of measurable outcomes such as improving learning and teaching facilities, developing a career development programme and securing funding.

**Professional role modelling.** Those who acted as role models set an example, established a new model of working practice which others subsequently followed, and were recognised as being an expert.

## Describing leadership skills

The interviewees drew on more than one concept of leadership and it was not always clear how best to represent their statements using existing concepts of leadership. Overall, characteristics of interpersonal leadership, particularly communication skills, and transformational leadership were the most prominent.

**Interpersonal leadership** was expressed through interviewees’ emphasis on communicating, including listening and developing and maintaining teamwork.

**Transformational leadership** was illustrated by talk of being “passionate” about helping staff to develop, understanding “where other people are at, and helping them move further along”, building confidence and encouraging aspiration and independence.

**Task orientation leadership** was less commonly mentioned, although a few referred to being “tough but fair”, setting and achieving goals and establishing clear roles and structures.

**Participative leadership** was evident in references to consulting and listening to staff before making decisions and giving staff authority over their work.

**Heroic leadership** was only referred to in terms of having and communicating a vision.

### Enablers

Data reported here were generated in response to two sets of questions:

- What (who) has enabled you to:
  - Gain leadership experience.
  - Gain leadership positions.
  - Succeed in leadership roles and positions.
  - Progress your career in other ways?
- How have you made the most of these opportunities?

Most commonly, interviewees referred to their own attributes, self-management, and the support or intervention of others as enabling them to access and engage in leadership activities. Aurora and institutional policy and practice were also mentioned. Half of the interviewees seem to give themselves more credit for their success than external factors, while the others seem to attribute their success more to other people and external factors.

### Personal attributes

Personal attributes referred to by interviewees fall into the three categories of: practical and strategic skills; communication and interpersonal skills; and personal qualities.

**Practical and strategic skills.** Time management/work load management strategies included being selective about projects and choosing overlapping projects. Interviewees also mentioned problem-solving, organisational skills, being well informed and able to see both sides of an argument.

### Communication and interpersonal skills.

Interviewees specifically mentioned building relationships, being empathetic, trustworthy and consistent and being assertive when necessary.

**Personal qualities.** Most commonly mentioned were resilience, determination, being ambitious, energetic, hardworking and passionate, challenging oneself and doing things well. "I want to lead things and do well. I don't want to make excuses. I'm inquisitive. I find things out about the organisation. So personality matters."

### Self-management

**Self-development.** Interviewees reported using a range of methods to develop their personal and professional skills. These included engaging in coaching, mentoring, counselling, leadership courses and formal study, self-reflecting, self-talk and building networks.

**Managing situations.** Interviewees developed specific strategies to address challenging situations. For example, detachment and deciding which battles to fight helped them when they felt belittled; assertiveness prevented work overload; and negative student feedback was used as a basis for improving teaching. Sexism and unfair work practices were addressed with challenge or humour, or were ignored.

**Volunteering and self-promotion.** Looking ahead: "seeing what's coming down the road", being proactive by volunteering both inside and outside of work, and creating opportunities and making the most of opportunities were commonly mentioned by interviewees as playing a part in their success. Self-promotion featured less commonly, but included recording successes and raising visibility.

Some of the interviewees described how they applied their particular combination of skills and personal qualities with the intention of developing their careers or leadership roles. Others were not strategic in their approach, but thought that their skills and qualities contributed to their engagement in leadership and/or career progression.

### Other people

The majority of comments referred to workplace enablers, and a few mentioned their upbringing and parents, or other members of their family, as enablers.

**At work.** Supportive line managers and heads of department/school were most commonly mentioned for encouraging aspiration and progression, providing challenging opportunities, recognising and valuing interviewees' skills. For example, one woman talked about a "fantastic" manager who had faith in her abilities, and another said that: "a supportive line manager has been crucial for opportunities". Workplace formal and informal mentors, sponsors and role models were acknowledged. Senior women were specifically mentioned by a few as enabling their leadership and providing inspiring role models. "The VC and HoD are both women. I look at them and it inspires me".

**Outside of work.** Informal mentoring from a family member and a partner who worked part-time helped interviewees to pursue and succeed in leadership. A few referred to their family background and upbringing as having a positive effect. For example, one talked about how her mother who was a businesswoman acted as a positive role model. Others referred variously to resilience gained through responsibilities as a child, leadership acquired through participating in school sports teams and a teacher's encouragement.

### Institutional/sectoral practice and policy

Practice and policy enablers were categorised as: family-friendly practices and work practices. Interviewees referred to the value of flexible working, which enabled them to balance family/childcare and work. One described her employing university as: "incredibly family friendly" and how important this had been to her as a single mother unable to be flexible with her work hours.

Employers also provided support with further study and training, allowed autonomy and recognised those who secured funding. One reported that the university's growth as a result of polytechnics leaving local authority control presented her with many opportunities.

### Aurora

Aurora enabled interviewees to increase their self-awareness and challenge their views and behaviours. Through Aurora, one woman realised that she: "put a glass ceiling on herself". Others gained the confidence to volunteer and learnt practical tools such as the "courageous conversations technique". Aurora mentors were singled out for praise by some who described them as "fab" and "very good". One talked about her mentor, who "reeled me in when I was putting too much energy and effort into too many things" and another said that hers had: "validated a lot of what I have done" when senior colleagues were not doing so.

### Hinderers

Data reported here were generated in response to two sets of questions:

- What (or who) has hindered you in:
  - Gaining leadership experience.
  - Gaining leadership positions.
  - Succeeding in leadership roles and positions.
  - Progressing your career in other ways.
- How have you addressed these challenges?

The main hinderers identified by interviewees were: other people, institutional or sectoral factors, gendered attitudes and the interviewee's own characteristics and behaviour. The first three of these categories are interwoven. It is also difficult to disentangle the relationship between gendered attitudes, socialisation, institutional culture and individual characteristics.

**Other people.** In the workplace, interviewees reported encountering individual senior staff and line managers who were unsupportive.

**Institutional/sectoral hindrances.** The most commonly cited institutional hindrance was workload, which negatively affected time to think, write and publish. Both professional and academic staff felt that their careers were inhibited by lack of suitable promotional opportunities within (and sometimes beyond) their employing institution. Short-term contracts, poor job security and unfair selection practices were issues for a few.

**Gendered society.** Having responsibility for balancing work with childcare/family and elder care was challenging and affected interviewees' flexibility and time to develop their careers. Interviewees talked of the negative effect of some of their male colleagues' attitudes and behaviours, including stereotyping, differential treatment of applications for re-grading, men not letting women's voices be heard, not acknowledging women and belittling them. For example, one commented that the same behaviour was labelled as "bitchy" when exhibited by women but "straight talking" when expressed by men. A few had also encountered women who made unpleasant comments, treated them unfairly, and lacked empathy about the need for flexibility to manage childcare.

**Personal characteristics.** Many interviewees blamed themselves, at least to some extent, for the difficulties they encountered. They expressed this in general terms as: "the way I think about things" and "the biggest hindrance is me". More specifically they talked about how lack of confidence and concern about other people's opinions limited their willingness to apply for jobs, speak out and to say "no". Being unsure about their career direction was a hindrance for a few.

### Conclusion

This initial analysis of this small number of interviews suggests that interviewees were engaged in more than one type of leadership and that they use a combination of leadership styles. They credited themselves for their success or otherwise in accessing and succeeding in leadership and careers, but also thought that their attitudes, particularly their self-confidence, had negatively affected their behaviour and their opportunities. Being proactive by volunteering, developing skills, challenging and managing their lack of confidence seemed to be particularly important. Other people, especially senior staff in the workplace, were regarded as making a significant difference to individuals' success both in practical terms by providing or denying access to opportunities, and increasing or undermining confidence. However, as the analysis indicates, individual attitudes and behaviours are embedded in societal and institutional practices and culture. In particular, flexible working practices, the long hours culture and gendered attitudes and behaviours played a part in shaping individuals' attitudes towards themselves and others, and their freedom to act.

## Interviews with mentors

Each section is headed by the interview question that generated the data reported in that section. Please refer to Appendix E for the topic guide.

### Mentoring experience

All four were in senior positions and had some formal or informal mentoring experience prior to taking on the role as part of the Aurora programme. They mentored Aurorans while they were on the programme (and in one case beforehand as well), and met between three and nine times during this time. The pair that met three times also communicated by telephone and email. Three of the four pairs continued to meet after the mentee had completed Aurora.

All described their experience mentoring their Aurora mentee in positive terms: "a fantastic opportunity for me"; "I was supported in my earlier years, so I like to do the same". They regarded the role as worthwhile and they learnt about themselves. On the negative side, one reported her frustration at being unable to help her mentee access funds for development.

### Mentee concerns

Mentors reported their mentees' concerns as: workplace challenges, negative work experiences, low self-confidence, training, development and career direction/opportunities, management of resources and people, and the tension between work/study and childcare. Specific issues included networking, speaking at meetings with senior colleagues, accessing funds and flexible hours to attend courses of study, and leading change.

One mentor reported that her mentee had attended courses and developed through having varied workplace experiences. Mentors perceived positive changes in their mentee's confidence and self-esteem, clarity about their future, awareness of others, capacity for reflection and independent and unemotional thought.

### Enablers

Mentors attributed most positive change to the mentees themselves, although they also mentioned mentor neutrality and the tools provided by Aurora to help mentees reflect. Mentees were perceived to have gained by reflecting on the limitations of their autonomy within existing structures, and by improving their understanding and knowledge of their job and university system.

### Hinderers

All mentors regarded the hindering factors as structural, and variously identified these as: university systems, processes and politics; the mentee's development and promotion opportunities; inequitable access between academics and professional staff to funding and time for training, study and networking.

### Conclusion

Mentors enjoyed their experience as Aurora mentors, but did not give themselves much credit for enabling their mentees' development. However, it seems likely from their comments that mentor meetings played a part in enabling changes in mentees' thinking. Although mentor interviews were short and give "second hand" accounts of mentee development, it is notable that mentors only credit mentees as enablers and structural limitations as hindrances, while mentees themselves give a wider range of explanations for their development.

# 7 TEN CONCLUSIONS FROM THE FIRST YEAR OF THE PROJECT



In this section we summarise the main themes we discern in the data from the first year of this project. Of course, at the moment we only have cross-sectional data, so in some respects we are cautious about what we can say. Nevertheless, there are over 1,500 respondents split neatly into three Aurora cohorts and a group who have not undertaken Aurora. Therefore, we have an unusually large and systematic dataset, so it is possible to draw some conclusions with reasonable confidence.

**CONCLUSION 1: Respondents' work in higher education requires and offers substantial opportunities for leadership. However, their leadership activities may frequently go unrecognised and unrewarded.**

In the survey data, a very high proportion (86%) of respondents indicate that their job requires them to influence others over whom they have no power or authority. Two-thirds agree that leadership is a major part of their job description, nearly as many say they seek out leadership opportunities, and almost three-quarters say that they engage in leadership above and beyond the job description. This point was also strongly emphasised in interviews. About two-thirds report that their current circumstances are consistent with taking on leadership positions, and nearly four-fifths expect this to be the case in five years' time. However, there is a danger that respondents' leadership activities frequently constitute going "above and beyond" what they are recognised for.

**CONCLUSION 2: Respondents believe they possess many of the skills and exhibit many of the behaviours that have been shown to be relevant to leadership.**

This is particularly notable regarding the social skills of collaborative work and consideration, which are perhaps most congruent with traditional female stereotypes. However, they are also strongly evident in socio-cognitive skills such as innovative thinking, using intuition, and embracing the ideas of others. Slightly lower, though still high, are self-estimates of more assertive behaviour such as influencing others and structuring their tasks. Similarly, communication and interpersonal skills, including assertiveness, were identified by interviewees as enabling them to be successful leaders. These high scores are not confined to those who choose to undertake Aurora. There may be an element of socially desirable responding about this. On the other hand, women are known to be somewhat conservative in their self-estimates, certainly relative to men, so mean scores above four on a one to five scale on half the questions about leadership skills and behaviours are quite striking. This suggests that their most pressing need regarding leadership is not so much to develop their skills, but instead to learn how to deploy them in a political workplace. Furthermore, interview data suggest women might benefit from more support in developing their self-belief and self-confidence to manage (and challenge?) structural inhibitors, including gendered attitudes.

**CONCLUSION 3: The impact of respondents' (self-perceived) leadership skills and behaviours is partially negated by negative perceptions of workplace culture and practices which limit their willingness and confidence to seek formally recognised leadership roles.**

On the whole respondents say that men have a better chance of getting into leadership positions and are more respected in those positions. They believe that promotion and development policies and practices are opaque and poorly run, decisions tend to be made without much consultation, women are not well-represented on decision-making bodies, and that women are not afforded equal opportunities in promotion decisions. Thus women participating in the Aurora programme, and indeed other women aspiring to leadership roles in higher education, are operating in an environment that they perceive as putting up barriers to their progress. Interview data strongly reinforce these findings, with Aurorans identifying structural factors among the forces, and mentors considering them as the prime restraint on mentee development. These workplace culture and practice issues are even more salient to academic staff than to professional services staff, and to respondents in the Republic of Ireland. On its own, the development of women's leadership skills is unlikely to change them, so it is appropriate that Aurora focuses on structural conditions as well as personal skills.

**CONCLUSION 4: There are also some more positive perceptions of workplace conditions, which suggest that respondents' efforts to fulfil leadership potential may bear fruit.**

On the whole the respondents think that teamwork and co-operation are encouraged in their workplace, and aggressive styles of leadership are far from universal. Also, most of them report that they have some supportive colleagues and a line manager who encourages their development and backs them up (this last perception is especially strong for professional services staff). Similarly, Auroran interviewees commonly identify supportive managers and senior work colleagues as enablers. However, Aurora participants appear to have more supportive managers on average than others so caution is needed here. Aurora participants also, perhaps not surprisingly, report that their organisation is supportive of the programme.



**CONCLUSION 5: There is a mixed picture regarding whether participants in this study are likely to exercise their leadership skills, and use leadership to progress their career.**

The participants in our research report having moderate knowledge of how their employing organisation runs (56% somewhat or strongly agree), and that it is necessary to behave in ways that don't come naturally in order to "get on" (59%). Less than one-third say they make a point of challenging the organisational culture. This may mean that the respondents do not readily find ways to deploy their leadership skills effectively. Also, only one in five agree that they enjoy the "cut and thrust" of organisational politics, though, on the other hand, nearly two-thirds say that they are comfortable using power if they have it. Nevertheless, they express quite high levels of confidence about putting themselves forward for positions of responsibility and to a somewhat lesser extent for career advancement. Then again, they are considerably less confident about going for salary increases, so their employers may be getting these women's motivation somewhat "on the cheap." "A mixed picture" is also an accurate description of the Aurorans' interview findings. While many interviewees report being proactive in developing and using their skills and seeking opportunities, not all are doing so in a planned way with the intention of progressing their careers. Desire to rise to a very senior position is moderately high, but well outstripped by wanting to be an expert in one's work domain, to be of service to the organisation, and (most of all) a desire for job security. This last point is consistent with the high proportion who say their income is vital to keep their household going. These relative priorities suggest a "needs must" and/or "servant" approach to leadership, both of which might lead to taking on responsibilities for little or no extra reward or future prospects (see also conclusion 1).

**CONCLUSION 6: The interface between work and non-work continues to be problematic for these academic and professional services women in higher education, with non-work losing out.**

Perceptions of the availability of flexible and family-friendly working tend to the positive in both the survey and interview data. Nevertheless, many survey respondents report otherwise, and nearly half say they believe that working flexibly is taken as a sign that you are not serious about your career. Over 70% of women report that the time and energy required by work detracts from their non-work lives, but only a quarter or fewer indicate that non-work commitments intrude on work (the more non-work commitments women have, the more likely they are to report this conflict). A similar disparity is observed for support from others: support at home facilitates work much more than vice versa. This seems particularly unfortunate given that only 15% of women indicate that work is more important to them than their life outside work. Interviewees also report the challenges of balancing work and child/family care as negatively affecting their flexibility and time to develop their careers. The problems described in relation to conclusion six are significantly greater for academics than for professional service staff, and academics also report working longer hours. Morley points to the negative impact on women's wellbeing of balancing leadership and caring responsibilities<sup>156</sup>. While this seems to be possible at the middle management level<sup>157</sup> it becomes less so in more senior roles.<sup>158</sup>

156 Morley (2013a)  
157 Deem (2003)

158 Fitzgerald (2013)

**CONCLUSION 7: The respondents are quite active in career management, but might benefit from doing more.**

Self-reports of seeking opportunities for skill development are extremely prevalent, and to a lesser extent (around two-thirds) women also report doing things to be visible, seek mentoring, and maintain work contacts. Slightly less prevalent are more cognitive tasks such as career goal-setting and CV maintenance/updating and proactive or “risky” behaviours such as asking someone for feedback, making new contacts, and self-publicity via social media. A similar picture emerges from the interview data, but not all are approaching their careers in a planned way or engaging in self-promotional activity. More is not necessarily better in career management, but probably going beyond the most frequently reported activities (which equate to putting oneself in the shop window) would reap rewards. At present the level of career satisfaction is moderately high (61% agree that they are satisfied with the way their career is going) but there is plenty of room for improvement there. Academic staff tend to report more career management than professional services staff, even though the latter are more likely to say they intend to seek a new job in the next year.

**CONCLUSION 8: There are strong indications of positive effects of Aurora.**

Interviews with Aurorans and mentors support this, and so do the survey data. More than half of the women who have completed Aurora say that it has led to an increase in their leadership skills and motivation, career networking, attempts to advance their career, and ease with positions of authority. Vision and decisiveness, and clarity of career goals, are somewhat less often affected, but still quite often. On average women report between five and six effects of Aurora from a list of 12 potential effects. This is just as well because it seems that women have high hopes of the programme before it starts. Other data show that the two post-Aurora cohorts score higher on seeking out and doing leadership, and on getting themselves noticed for career purposes, than both the cohort that is about to start Aurora and the comparison group. There are some signs that Aurora comes closer to meeting participants’ hopes of developing leadership confidence and skills than it does to meeting their hopes of greater clarity about their career direction. The Aurora mentor and, to a lesser extent, members of the action learning set, are seen as helpful on the whole. Perhaps more benefit could be leveraged there even though it is more difficult to obtain benefits from formal mentoring schemes than informal mentoring.<sup>159</sup> Women who have completed Aurora report more within-HEI promotions and more unsuccessful job applications than the other cohorts, though at this stage we don’t know whether these are a cause or a consequence of being on Aurora, or both. Longitudinal data that will become available as this project progresses will shed further light on the effects of Aurora.

**CONCLUSION 9: There are some systematic differences in perspectives and experiences between academic and professional services staff. On the whole, the latter are more positive.**

The previous conclusions in this section have alluded to some of these, but the general point is worth making in its own right. Professional services staff are consistently more positive (or, more commonly, less negative) than academics about workplace culture and practices, particularly regarding opportunities for women. In some respects, professional services staff report, relative to academic staff, that they are better equipped for leadership roles; that their roles require leadership; and that their line manager supports them. One especially notable difference here is that professional services women are more likely to say they understand how the organisation runs. If this is accurate, they are at an advantage relative to academic women, since effective manoeuvring of self into leadership roles and successful performance in them is likely to require that knowledge. Professional services staff report fewer work-life balance problems than do academic staff, though these are still far from negligible. Academic staff are somewhat more engaged in career self-management, perhaps out of necessity, and are clearer about their career goals, despite being less likely to be contemplating changing jobs in the near future. Academics report working longer hours, being paid more, being older, and, perhaps partly as a consequence of greater age, having taken more maternity/adoption leave and career breaks, moved more between HEIs, and had more unsuccessful job applications. Professional services staff are much less likely to have a doctorate, more likely to have moved jobs (including promotions) within the same HEI, and more likely to be white and from a UK constituent country.

**CONCLUSION 10: There are some systematic differences in perspectives and experiences between ethnic groups.**

As a generalisation, BAME respondents have (even) more negative views than others of the position of women in higher education workplaces relative to men. They are less likely, for example, to say they think that men and women leaders receive equal respect. The contrast here is particularly stark with white UK respondents who are the most sanguine about these things, and least strong with white Irish (working in the UK) who are particularly sceptical about the operation of family friendly policies. Despite (or perhaps because of) perceiving particularly strong barriers against women, BAME respondents are more ambitious, work-centred and focused on skill development than others, especially relative to white UK women. The mean score for "I want to rise to a very senior position" is 3.97 for BAME women, and 3.31 for white UK women. However, this is not necessarily a self-serving ambition, because BAME respondents are also highest on "I want to be of service to my organisation".



## **8 LINKS BETWEEN OUR FIRST YEAR FINDINGS AND THE EXISTING LITERATURE**



Our questionnaire and interview data suggest that, in Jutrasook's terms, women think about leadership predominantly in terms of practice, through interactions with others and doing things that contribute to the collective good.<sup>160</sup> They emphasise the leadership concepts on the right hand side of Table 1 in the literature review, especially interpersonal and democratic/participative. However, in general, the women evaluate their leadership skills and behaviours very positively, including some of the more cognitive and task-orientated ones. Perhaps the styles women most commonly exhibit say more about how they are perceived by others, and what society and organisations expect of them, than their inherent abilities.<sup>161</sup>

The tendency noted in some research for women to be placed in leadership situations where success is particularly hard to achieve is somewhat borne out in our data, with about two fifths of our respondents somewhat or strongly agreeing that this had happened to them.<sup>162</sup> Because some of our respondents are relatively junior, this may understate the magnitude of the problem in higher echelons. Paradoxically, there also seems to be a tendency for women to take on or be allocated low prestige work that is less likely to attract reward.<sup>163</sup> The women in our study perceive this to some extent, with just over half agreeing that women tend to get the least prestigious leadership roles (and a quarter disagreeing). Perhaps part of the reason for this lies in women's stated motives and values, which in turn are likely to have been shaped by socialisation and experience. We pick up on this point again below.

Acker's work suggesting that women lack confidence and have self-limiting beliefs is not entirely borne out here.<sup>164</sup> Women seem to be confident about their leadership skills and behaviours, on the whole, and about putting themselves forward for leadership roles. On the other hand, they tend to see the dice as loaded against them when they engage with staff development and promotion processes, and indeed decision-making processes of all kinds. This may be a self-limiting belief, and/or it may well be accurate. It may also be a defence mechanism to avoid thinking that one has failed. Even so, it does seem that the limitations to women's leadership and career development are, in their eyes, not primarily attributable to a lack of self-belief. Another potentially self-limiting factor is the contrast between women's willingness to seek responsibilities but their relative reluctance to push for a salary increase. This is in line with a previous study of women leaders in higher education.<sup>165</sup>

160 Jutrasook (2014)

161 Berg et al (2012)

162 Haslam and Ryan (2008); Ohlott et al (1994)

163 see Morley (2014) and Fitzgerald (2013)

164 Acker (2010)

165 Ford et al (2014)

Ford et al's reminder of how women's careers are shaped and in some ways limited by maternity and difficulties with geographical mobility is echoed in our data.<sup>166</sup> Nearly 40% of respondents have taken maternity/adoption leave and just over 20% a career break. Over 60% agree with the statement that their current circumstances make it difficult for them to relocate geographically. These are of course linked – those who have taken maternity leave or a career break are more likely to say they are geographically constrained. Sixty percent of respondents describe themselves as having primary responsibility for managing a household of two or more people, and typically one or two other care or community responsibilities such as caring for primary school age children (the most common category). Not surprisingly, the extent of care responsibilities is negatively associated with perceived capacity to take on leadership roles.

Many of our respondents, especially academics, report considerable work-life balance issues. This is despite a fairly positive view of the availability of family-friendly and flexible working practices, though Manfredi et al found that part-time and flexible working was in practice often not available to academic women.<sup>167</sup> The negative impact of work on non-work is much more evident than the opposite direction, although respondents with more care responsibilities and maternity leave do tend to report rather more negative impact of non-work on work than others (but still less than the overspill of work to non-work). This supports the view of Fritsch, among others, that partners and other household members are important in enabling or constraining women's careers.<sup>168</sup> They are, in effect, subsidising the workplace demands.

Manfredi et al and Whitchurch have discussed whether professional services women have more scope and opportunity to pursue a structured career with progression than academic women do.<sup>170</sup> Our data are broadly consistent with that proposition. Whether it is a perceptual difference or a factual one is not clear, but professional services women experience a system that is less stacked against them than academics do. Nevertheless, the practice of externally advertising senior posts may not be beneficial to those with limited mobility. This is seen by some as a limiting factor for women in professional services and it might be true for academics too. Professional services staff also report making more internal moves than academics, and their work-life balance issues are less acute. In some respects they are less active career managers than the academics, but that may be because they have less need to take matters into their own hands. Successful academics engage in career self-management.<sup>171</sup>

A number of the findings already discussed are consistent with the proposition that women, especially academics, have less access than men to networks and decision-making bodies that would enable them to understand how things work in the organisation.<sup>172</sup> The combination of perceptions that men get into leadership positions more easily and dominate decision-making bodies, that promotion and career development processes are mysterious and apparently stacked against women and, perhaps most of all, women's apparently modest knowledge of how their organisation runs, all suggest that women struggle to get access to situations and contacts who can help them work the system.

---

166 *ibid*

167 Manfredi et al (2014)

168 Fritsch (2015)

169 Manfredi et al (2014); Whitchurch (2008)

170 Shine (2010); Wild and Wooldridge (2009)

171 See Fritsch (2015); Airini et al (2010); Ely et al (2011)

172 *eg* Morley (2014); Aiston (2014); Jo (2008)

As Morley says, many career development interventions are geared to traditional, and arguably male, conceptions of career as a linear and agentic climb up a hierarchy.<sup>173</sup> This may work against people who have different definitions of career success, especially subjective experiential ones, which for many people take precedence.<sup>174</sup> In our data, women express quite a lot of interest in attaining a very senior position, but considerably more interest in being of service, being an expert, and having job security. This might imply that it would be helpful for development programmes for women in higher education to focus on how to identify opportunities to make a contribution, establish oneself as a leading authority, and evaluate a potential employer's financial and HR policies to determine how safe its jobs are. Yet this risks leaving the higher positions and higher salaries the domain of men, as women make themselves useful but do not secure power or material resources.<sup>175</sup>



## 9 LIMITATIONS



Although we believe that the data presented here are well-founded and authoritative, they are of course not without limitations. Women working for higher education employers in roles that are not academic or professional services are not represented in the data. We cannot therefore confidently talk about the experiences of “women in higher education” on the basis of our data, because those working in jobs like catering, cleaning and grounds/building maintenance do not feature.

We cannot be sure that the Aurorans, or indeed the comparison group, are typical of women working in the higher education sector in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland. It would be a reasonable hypothesis that those participating are on average more inclined to see themselves as potential leaders, and more interested in attaining leadership roles, than those who do not undertake Aurora. We also do not know whether Aurorans who have contributed data to our study are typical of all Aurorans. Response rates are good but there are plenty of Aurorans who have not taken part even though invited to. The comparison group was for the most part recruited via the contacts of local Aurora champions, and these too may be slanted towards people who have expressed an interest. It is likely that some members of the comparison group will undertake Aurora during this project, and we will be watching out for that. There is a wide age range but a high proportion of the respondents can be described as mid-career, which again may mean that our findings are different from what would be obtained from a random or representative sample.

The questionnaire data which form the bulk of this report are largely numerical and inevitably miss some of the dynamics of what is going on. Our interviews and diaries should provide some more detailed and contextualised insights, but it will be important to ensure that they achieve this. Because of the volume of data, this report has necessarily been quite descriptive (there is plenty to describe), and there is much scope for more subtle analyses in the future, especially where different aspects of the data are brought together. For example, do women who undertake a lot of leadership in their role experience more conflict between work and non-work life? Even then, we acknowledge that it will be difficult to pinpoint the root causes of some findings. For example, the relatively negative views in some respects of respondents in the Republic of Ireland may be attributable to a variety of causes, not least the different recent economic history of the country and its impact on the higher education sector, and its different science policy from that prevailing in the UK.

# 10 NEXT STEPS



The first year of the project has delivered a large amount of interesting data and a unique dataset. Subsequent years will build on this work by following participants over time: this offers a great opportunity to revisit some of the key findings from this report and develop a more nuanced understanding of how women's careers unfold in higher education contexts.

In year two of the project we will also add in some diary data collection, which will enable further insight into rich information of how women experience work on a day to day basis.

In summary, data collection activities from April 2016 to March 2017 are as follows:

- Conduct pre-Aurora survey with cohort 4 (autumn 2016 to spring 2017).
- Conduct post-Aurora survey with cohorts 2 and 3 (autumn 2016).

- Interviews with Aurorans from cohorts 2 and 3 (winter 2016-17).
- Surveys with comparison groups from cohorts 2 and 3 (winter 2016-17).
- Diaries with cohort 3 (winter 2016-17).

Further research activities for this period will include the management of multiple large data files and analysis, dissemination of year one findings, development of diary methodology and the completion of the year two report in late spring.



# 11 REFERENCES

- Acker, S. (2010). Gendered games in academic leadership. *International Studies in Sociology of Education* 20: 129-152.
- Acker, S. (2014). A foot in the revolving door? Women academics in lower-middle management. *Higher Education Research and Development* 33 (1): 73-85.
- Airini, Collings, S., Conner, L., McPherson, K., Midson, B. and Wilson, C. (2010). Learning to be leaders in Higher Education: What helps or hinders women's advancement as leaders in universities. *Journal of Educational Management Administration & Leadership* 39 (1): 44-62.
- Aiston, S. H. (2011). Equality, justice and gender: barriers to the ethical university for women. *Ethics and Education* 6 (3): 279-291.
- Aiston, S. J. (2014). Leading the academy or being led? Hong Kong women academics. *Higher Education Research and Development* 33 (1): 59-72.
- Alimo-Metcalfe, B., and Alban-Metcalfe, J. (2005). Leadership: Time for a new direction? *Leadership* 1: 51-71.
- Arnold, J., Cohen, L. and Harpley, R. (2011). Straight talking: The role of non-specialist advice and networking in the career development of researchers. <https://www.vitae.ac.uk/vitae-publications/reports/straight-talking-vitae-march-2012.pdf> [accessed 10 Oct 2016, subject to access rights].
- Arthur, M. B., Khapova, S. N. and Wilderom, C. P. (2005). Career success in a boundaryless career world. *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 26 (2): 177-202.
- Arthur, M. B. and Rousseau, D. M. (eds) (1996). *The Boundaryless Career*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bass, B. M. and Riggio, R. E. (2006). *Transformational leadership*. Abingdon: Psychology Press.
- Bem, S. L. and Lewis, S. A. (1975). Sex role adaptability: One consequence of psychological androgyny. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 31 (4): 634-643.
- Ben-Galim and Silim, A. (2013). The sandwich generation: older women balancing work and care. London: Institute for Public Policy Research. [http://www.ippr.org/files/images/media/files/publication/2013/08/sandwich-generation-August2013\\_11168\\_11168.pdf?noredirect=1](http://www.ippr.org/files/images/media/files/publication/2013/08/sandwich-generation-August2013_11168_11168.pdf?noredirect=1) [accessed 12 Jul 2016]
- Berg, E., Barry, J. and Chandler, J. (2012). Changing leadership and gender in public sector organizations. *British Journal of Management* 23: 402-414.
- Bilimoria, D. and Stewart, A. J. (2009). "Don't Ask, Don't Tell": The Academic Climate for Lesbian, Gay Bisexual and Transgender Faculty in Science and Engineering. *NWSA Journal*, 21 (2): 85-103. <http://doi.org/10.1353/nwsa.0.0077> [accessed 10 Oct 2016].
- Bolden, R., Gosling, J., O'Brien, A., Peters, K., Ryan, M., Haslam, A., Longworth, L., Davidovic, A. and Winklemann, K. (2012). *Academic Leadership: changing concepts, identities and experiences in UK Higher Education*. Summary Report. London: Leadership Foundation.
- Carers UK (2012). *Sandwich caring: Combining childcare with caring for older or disabled relatives*. London: Carers UK.
-

- Cheung, F. M. and Halpern, D. F. (2010). Women at the top. Powerful leaders define success at work and family in a culture of gender. *American Psychologist* 65 (3): 182-190.
- Christie, A., Barling, J. and Turner, N. (2011). Pseudo-transformational leadership: Model specification and outcomes. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 41: 2943-2984.
- Christman, D. and McClellan, R. (2008). "Living on Barbed Wire": Resilient women administrators in educational leadership programs. *Educational Administration Quarterly* 44 (1): 3-29.
- Coate, K. and Kandiko, C. B. (2015). Mid-career academic women: strategies, choices and motivation. <http://www.lfhe.ac.uk/en/research-resources/publications-hub/past-editions/engage-38--summer-2015/projects-research-resources/mid-career-academic-women.cfm> [accessed 27 Jul 2015].
- Czarniawska, B. and Sevon, G. (2008) The thin end of the wedge: foreign women professors as double strangers in academia. *Gender, Work & Organization* 15(3): 235-87.
- Dahlvig, J. E. and Longman, K. A. (2010). Women's leadership development: A study of defining moments. *Christian Higher Education* 9 (3): 238-258.
- Deem, R. (2003). Gender, organisational cultures and the practices of manager-academics in UK universities, *Gender, Work and Organization* 10 (2): 239-259.
- Denmark, F. L. (1993). Women, leadership and empowerment. *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 17: 343-356.
- Eagly, A. and Carli, L. (2003). The female leadership advantage: An evaluation of the evidence. *Leadership Quarterly* 14 (6): 807-834.
- Eagly, A. H. and Johnson, B. T. (1990). Gender and leadership style: a meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin* 108 (2): 233-256.
- Eagly, A. H. and Karau, S. J. (2002). Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders. *Psychological Review* 109: 573-598.
- Eagly, A. H., Karau, S. J. and Johnson, B. T. (1992). Gender and leadership among school principals: a meta-analysis. *Educational Administration Quarterly* 28 (1): 76-102.
- Eagly, A. H. and Johannesen-Schmidt, M. C. (2001). The leadership styles of women and men. *Journal of Social Issues* 57 (4): 781-797.
- Eagly, A. H., Karau, S. J. and Makhijani, M. G. (1995). Gender and the effectiveness of leaders: a meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin* 117 (1): 125-145.
- ECU (2013). Unconscious Bias and Higher Education. <http://www.ecu.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/unconscious-bias-and-higher-education.pdf> [accessed 9 Jun 15].
- ECU (2015) Equality in Higher Education: Statistical Report 2015, published by the Equality Challenge Unit. <http://www.ecu.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Equality-in-HE-statistical-report-2015-part-1-staff.pdf> [accessed 10 Oct 2016].
- Ely, R. E., Ibarra, H. and Kolb, D. M. (2011). Taking gender into account: theory and design for women's leadership development programs. *Academy of Management Learning and Education* 10 (3): 474-493.
- Fitzgerald, T. (2013). *Women Leaders in Higher Education: Shattering the myths*. London: Routledge.
-

- Ford, J., Burkinshaw, P. and Cahill, J. (2014). White Rose Women in Leadership Initiative: Absent talent in UK HEIs? <http://www.whiterose.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/White-Rose-Women-in-Leadership-Report-Sept-2014.pdf> [accessed 18 Jun 2015].
- Fritsch, N. (2015). At the leading edge - does gender still matter? A qualitative study of prevailing obstacles and successful coping strategies in academia. *Current Sociology*: 1-19.
- Gander, M. (2013). What mentoring can do for you. *Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education* 17 (2): 71-75.
- Hall, D. T. (2002). *Careers In and Out of Organizations*. London: Sage.
- Haslam, S. A. and Ryan, M. K. (2008). The road to the glass cliff: Differences in the perceived suitability of men and women for leadership positions in succeeding and failing organizations. *The Leadership Quarterly* 19: 530-546.
- Hopkins, M. M., O'Neil, D. A., Passarelli, A. and Bilimoria, D. (2008). Women's leadership development strategic practices for women and organizations. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research* 60 (4): 348-365.
- Hopkins, A., Jawitz, J., McCarty, C., Goldman, A. and Basu, N. (2013). Disparities in publication patterns by gender, race and ethnicity based on a survey of a random sample of authors. *Scientometrics* 96: 515-534.
- Inkson, K., Dries, N. and Arnold, J. (2014). *Understanding Careers*, 2nd edition. London: Sage.
- Isaac, C. A. (2011). Women leaders: the social world of health care. *Journal of Health Organization and Management* 25 (2): 159-175.
- Jo, V. H. (2008). Voluntary turnover and women administrators in higher education. *Higher Education* 56: 565-582.
- Jutrasook, A. (2014). 'You do not have to be the boss to be a leader': contested meanings of leadership in higher education. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 33 (1), 19-31.
- Kirchmeyer, C. (2006). The different effects of family on objective career success across gender: A test of alternative explanations. *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 68: 323-346.
- Lewis, S., Gambles, R. and Rapoport, R. (2007). The constraints of a 'work-life balance' approach: An international perspective. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 18 (3): 360-373.
- Lumby, J. (2012). What do we know about leadership in Higher Education? LFHE Review Paper. <http://www.lfhe.ac.uk/en/research-resources/publications/index.cfm/RP%20-%2001> [accessed 3 May 2016].
- Mackenzie Davey, K. M. and Arnold, J. (2000). A multi-method study of accounts of personal change by graduates starting work: Self-ratings, categories and women's discourses. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology* 73 (4): 461-486.
- Manfredi, S., Grisoni, L. and Handley, K. (2014). *Gender and higher education leadership: researching the careers of top management programme alumni*. London: The Leadership Foundation for Higher Education.
- Maranto, C. and Griffin, A. E. C. (2010). The antecedents of a 'chilly climate' for women faculty in higher education. *Human Relations* 20 (10): 1-21.
- Mósesdóttir, L. (2011). Gender (in) equalities in the knowledge society. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 18 (1), 30-47. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0432.2010.00533.x> [accessed 10 Oct 2016].
-

- Morley, L. (2013a). *Women and Higher Education Leadership: Absences and Aspirations*. Stimulus Paper. London: Leadership Foundation for Higher Education.
- Morley, L. (2013b). The rules of the game: women and the leaderist turn in higher education: *Gender and Education* 25 (1): 116-131.
- Morley, L. (2014). Lost leaders: women in the global academy. *Higher Education Research and Development* 33 (1): 114-128.
- Northouse, P. G. (2015). *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 7th edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Ohlott, P. J., Ruderman, M. N. and McCauley, C. D. (1994). Gender differences in managers' developmental job experiences. *Academy of Management Journal* 37 (1): 46-67.
- O'Neil, D. A. and Bilimoria, D. (2005). Women's career development phases: Idealism, endurance and reinvention. *Career Development International* 10: 168-189.
- Paustian-Underdahl, S. C., Walker, L. S. and Woehr, D. J. (2014). Gender and perceptions of leadership effectiveness: A meta-analysis of contextual moderators. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 99 (6): 1129-1143.
- Perrewé, P. L. and Nelson, D. L. (2004). Gender and career success: The facilitative role of political skill. *Organizational Dynamics* 33: 366-378.
- Peters, K. and Ryan, M. K. (2015). *Leadership and work-life balance*. London: Leadership Foundation for Higher Education.
- Plowman, P. J. (2010) The diary project: revealing the gendered organisation. *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management* 5 (1): 28-46.
- Plowman, P. J. (2016). Participatory methodologies for intersectional research in organisations. *Journal of Organizational Ethnography* 5 (1): 28 – 43.
- Ragins, B. R. and Cotton, J. L. (1999). Mentor functions and outcomes: a comparison of men and women in formal and informal mentoring relationships. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 84(4): 529-550.
- Sang, K., Al-Dajani, H. and Özbilgin, M. (2013). Frayed careers of migrant female professors in british academia: An intersectional perspective. *Gender, Work and Organization* 20 (2): 158–171.  
**<http://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12014>** [accessed 10 Oct 2016].
- Schuh, S. C., Bark, A. S. H., Van Quaquebeke, N., Hossiep, R., Frieg, P. and Van Dick, R. (2014). Gender differences in leadership role occupancy: the mediating role of power motivation. *Journal of Business Ethics* 120: 363-379.
- Shine, J. (2010). *Professional Careers in Higher Education: Institutional Perspectives*. London: Leadership Foundation for Higher Education
- Skachkova, P. (2007). Academic careers of immigrant women professors in the US. *Higher Education* 53: 697–738.
- Smith, M. (2012). Social regulation of the gender pay gap in the EU. *European Journal of Industrial Relations* 18 (4): 365–380. **<http://doi.org/10.1177/0959680112465931>** [accessed 10 Oct 2016].
- Stratigaki, M. (2005). Gender Mainstreaming vs Positive Action: An Ongoing Conflict in EU Gender Equality Policy. *European Journal of Women's Studies* 12 (2): 165–186. **<http://doi.org/10.1177/1350506805051236>** [accessed 10 Oct 2016].
-

Sturm, R. E., Taylor, S. N., Atwater, L. E. and Braddy, P. W. (2014). Leadership self awareness: An examination and implications of women's under-prediction. *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 35: 657-677.

THE (2016a). THE University Workplace Survey 2016: results and analysis. *Times Higher Education*, 4 February 2016. <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/features/university-workplace-survey-2016-results-and-analysis> [accessed 11 Jul 2016].

THE (2016b). University of Essex hikes salaries for female professors to eliminate pay gap. *Times Higher Education*, 2 June 2016. <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/university-of-essex-hikes-salaries-for-female-professors-to-eliminate-pay-gap> [accessed 21 Jul 2016].

Tourish, D. (2013). *The Dark Side of Transformational Leadership*. London: Routledge.

Uhly, K. M., Visser, L. M. and Zippler, K. S. (2015). Gendered patterns in international research collaborations in academia. *Studies in Higher Education*. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03075079.2015.1072151> [accessed 27 Oct 2015].

Wang, A. C., Chiang, J. T. J., Tsai, C. Y., Lin, T. T. and Cheng, B. S. (2013). Gender makes the difference: The moderating role of leader gender on the relationship between leadership styles and subordinate performance. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 122: 101-113.

Whitchurch, C. (2008). *Professional Managers in UK Higher Education: Preparing for Complex Futures*. Final Report. Research and Development Series. London: Leadership Foundation for Higher Education.

White, K., Carvalho, T. and Rordan, S. (2011). Gender, power and managerialism in universities. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management* 33 (2): 179-186.

Wild, A. and Wooldridge, E. (2009). *The development of professional careers in UK Higher Education*. London: Leadership Foundation.

Winslow, S. and Davis, S. N. (2016). Gender inequality across the academic life course. *Sociology Compass* 5 (10): 404-416.

Wolfram, H. and Gratton, L. (2014). Gender role self-concept, categorical gender, and transactional-transformational leadership: implications for perceived workgroup performance. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies* 21 (4): 338-353.

Wroblewski, A. (2014). Female participation in management and cultural change: precondition or high expectations?. Paper presented at Gender, Work and Organisation Conference, Keele University June 2014.

---

## 12 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Throughout the project so far we have appreciated the great support of, and inputs from, staff at the Leadership Foundation. Particular thanks are due to Professor Fiona Ross, Helen Goreham and Louise Clifton. We are also grateful for the diligent and constructive work of members of the project advisory group, who are listed in Appendix H. Most of all we thank the many women who have given, and continue to give, their time to participate in this project. The development of this research has been made possible by the investment of the four UK higher education funding councils.



# 13 APPENDICES

## Appendix A: participant information sheet (Aurorans)

### Onwards and Upwards? Participant Information Sheet

#### *What is the research about?*

The interviews are being conducted as part of a project funded by the Leadership Foundation, which aims to investigate leadership, career development and the work experiences of successive cohorts of Aurora participants.

#### *Why is it being done?*

Despite increases in women's access to, and high achievement in, higher education as students, there are far fewer women in senior positions in higher education institutions in both professional services and academia. The empirical part of the research will attempt to uncover the experiences of staff and enable a better understanding of how leadership and careers develop in different higher education contexts.

#### *Why have I been selected to be interviewed?*

When you completed our initial questionnaire, you expressed an interest in being interviewed for this project. We have selected those who volunteered using criteria designed to ensure that we included a diverse range of interviewees.

#### *If I take part, what do I have to do?*

Once you have confirmed that you are happy to be interviewed, a member of the research team will send you an informed consent form, which you will be asked to read, sign and return to the researcher prior to the interview taking place. Interviews will be conducted by telephone and take no more than 60 minutes. So that the interviewer can concentrate on your answers, the interview will be recorded electronically and transcribed for analysis.

As this is a longitudinal study, we will contact you again twice over the next four years in order to interview you about changes in your leadership roles and career, and the opportunities and challenges you have encountered.

#### *What if I change my mind later?*

If you decide to take part, but later change your mind, you can withdraw at any time by contacting the team at [onwardsandupwards@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:onwardsandupwards@lboro.ac.uk)

#### *What about keeping my answers confidential?*

At no point will participants be identifiable in research reports or publications about the research. We will use the reference number that you created when you completed the first questionnaire and this will be used in internal storage and any publications. No responses that allow a person to be identified will be made public and the interviewer will maintain your anonymity at all times.

For further information, please contact the research team at [\*\*onwardsandupwards@lboro.ac.uk\*\*](mailto:onwardsandupwards@lboro.ac.uk)

#### *What if I am not happy with how the research was conducted?*

If you are not happy with how the research was conducted, please contact Ms Jackie Green, the Secretary for the University's Ethics Approvals (Human Participants) Sub-Committee:

Ms J Green, Research Office, Hazlerigg Building, Loughborough University, Epinal Way, Loughborough, LE11 3TU. Tel: 01509 222423. Email: [\*\*J.A.Green@lboro.ac.uk\*\*](mailto:J.A.Green@lboro.ac.uk)

The university also has a policy relating to research misconduct and whistleblowing, which is available online at [\*\*http://www.lboro.ac.uk/committees/ethics-approvals-human-participants/additionalinformation/codesofpractice/\*\*](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/committees/ethics-approvals-human-participants/additionalinformation/codesofpractice/)

---

## Appendix B: interview topic guide (Aurorans)

### Topic Guide (Aurorans)

1. Please can you give me a brief overview of your current job?
  2. Which aspects of your work would you describe as leadership activities?
  3. How would you describe your leadership skills?
  4. What (who) has enabled you to
    - Gain leadership experience
    - Gain leadership positions
    - Succeed in leadership roles and positions
    - Progress your career in other ways
  5. How have you made the most of these opportunities?
  6. What (who) has hindered you in
    - Gaining leadership experience
    - Gaining leadership positions
    - Succeeding in leadership roles and positions
    - Progressing your career in other ways
  7. How have you addressed these challenges?
  8. I would be interested to know why you volunteered to be involved in the interview part of our research.
  9. Is there anything else you would like to add?
-

## Appendix C: consent form (Aurorans)

### Onwards and Upwards: Informed Consent Form (Aurorans)

Please read all of the following information. Then print or sign your name, date the form and return it to the research team at: **onwardsandupwards@lboro.ac.uk**

The interview will be recorded electronically to aid analysis.

The electronic files and interviewer notes related to your interview will be stored securely at Loughborough University for a maximum of 10 years. Only Aurora project team members will have access to these files and notes.

You will be referred to only by your reference number in any reporting of the research findings. Individuals will not be identifiable in publications arising from this project.

The data will be used for project reports and academic publications.

The data will be owned by the Aurora project team, commissioned by the Leadership Foundation.

The final results of the research will be owned by the Aurora project team and the Leadership Foundation.

I have read the Participant Information Sheet, Informed Consent Form and I have had an opportunity to ask questions about the research.

I agree to be interviewed on the basis of the information provided here and in the Participant Information Sheet.

I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time during the research and I will inform the research team if I decide to do so.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

---

## Appendix D: participant information sheet (Mentors)

### Onwards and Upwards: Information Sheet (Mentors)

#### *What is the research about?*

The interviews are being conducted as part of a project funded by the Leadership Foundation, which aims to investigate leadership, career development and the work experiences of successive cohorts of Aurora participants.

#### *Why is it being done?*

Despite increases in women's access to, and high achievement in, higher education as students, there are far fewer women in senior positions in higher education institutions in both professional services and academia. The empirical part of the research will attempt to uncover the experiences of staff and enable a better understanding of how leadership and careers develop in different higher education contexts.

#### *Why have I been selected to be interviewed?*

You are the Aurora mentor of one of the women we have interviewed as part of this project. We would like to hear your perspective on your mentee's development in leadership and career, and your role in that. Your mentee has given us permission to contact you.

#### *If I take part, what do I have to do?*

Once you have confirmed that you are happy to be interviewed (this is entirely at your discretion, you can of course decline to take part), a member of the research team will send you an Informed Consent Form, which you will be asked to read, sign and return to the researcher prior to the interview taking place. Interviews will be conducted by telephone and take no more than 30 minutes, and probably only 15-20. So that the interviewer can concentrate on your answers, the interview will be recorded electronically and transcribed for analysis.

As this is a longitudinal study, we may contact you again once in the next two years in order to interview you about changes in your mentee's leadership roles and career, and the opportunities and challenges you have encountered.

#### *What if I change my mind later?*

If you decide to take part, but later change your mind, you can withdraw at any time by contacting the team at [onwardsandupwards@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:onwardsandupwards@lboro.ac.uk)

#### *What about keeping my answers confidential?*

At no point will participants be identifiable in research reports or publications about the research. No responses that allow a person to be identified will be made public and the interviewer will maintain your anonymity at all times.

For further information, please contact the research team at **[onwardsandupwards@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:onwardsandupwards@lboro.ac.uk)**

#### *What if I am not happy with how the research was conducted?*

If you are not happy with how the research was conducted, please contact Ms Jackie Green, the Secretary for the University's Ethics Approvals (Human Participants) Sub-Committee:

Ms J Green, Research Office, Hazlerigg Building, Loughborough University, Epinal Way, Loughborough, LE11 3TU. Tel: 01509 222423. Email: **[J.A.Green@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:J.A.Green@lboro.ac.uk)**

The university also has a policy relating to research misconduct and whistleblowing which is available online at **<http://www.lboro.ac.uk/committees/ethics-approvals-human-participants/additionalinformation/codesofpractice/>**

## **Appendix E: interview topic guide (mentors)**

### **Onwards and Upwards: Topic Guide (Mentors)**

#### *The context*

What is your current role?

How long have you been mentoring?

How long have you mentored x? (mentee's name)

Are you still mentoring her?

How often do you/did you meet with her?

#### *Mentee's development*

What topics did X bring to the mentoring meetings?

What developmental activities has she engaged in since you have been mentoring her? (Has she taken on any new activities? Has she reported change in her performance at existing ones?)

What do you think has enabled her to develop?

What do you think has limited her development?

Overall, how would you describe your experience of mentoring her?

Is there anything else you would like to add?

---

## Appendix F: consent form (Mentors)

### Onwards and Upwards: Informed Consent Form (Mentors)

Please read all of the following information. Then print or sign your name, date the form and return it to the research team at: **onwardsandupwards@lboro.ac.uk**

The interview will be recorded electronically to aid analysis.

The electronic files and interviewer notes related to your interview will be stored securely at Loughborough University for a maximum of 10 years. Only Aurora project team members will have access to these files and notes.

You will be referred to only by a reference number in any reporting of the research findings. Individuals will not be identifiable in publications arising from this project.

The data will be used for project reports and academic publications.

The data will be owned by the Aurora project team, commissioned by the Leadership Foundation.

The final results of the research will be owned by the Aurora project team and the Leadership Foundation.

I have read the Mentor Information Sheet and this Informed Consent Form and I have had an opportunity to ask questions about the research.

I agree to be interviewed on the basis of the information provided here and in the Participant Information Sheet.

I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time during the research and I will inform the research team if I decide to do so.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

---

## Appendix G: Aurora survey

### Aurora Pre-Programme Survey 1 2015-16

Dear Aurora participant,

Many thanks for showing an interest in 'Onwards and Upwards? Tracking the Leadership Careers of Women in Higher Education'

As part of its commitment to better understand women's career development and leadership experiences in higher education, the Leadership Foundation is funding this longitudinal research study to track the aspirations and career changes of the women who undertake the Aurora development programme. The study is being conducted by a team at Loughborough University.

We hope you will be interested in taking part in this study. In doing so, you will be joining nearly 600 women who have already completed Aurora, and also shared their experiences and challenges of leadership in higher education as part of this ongoing project.

Taking part will involve completing the (15 minute) questionnaire on the following pages before you start on your Aurora journey. As this is a longitudinal study, we will invite you to complete follow-up questionnaires in the few years after your participation in Aurora. However, we won't inundate you. Nobody will be asked to complete more than three more questionnaires between now and 2019, and none will be longer than this one. We hope that coming back to the survey will be an opportunity for you to reflect on your career and aspirations as well as helping us to track developments over time.

The study will also involve a comparison group of women who do not experience Aurora; and some further (completely optional) follow-up with a small number of participants through interviews or online diaries. Please note, all responses will be confidential. Only the Loughborough team will see them. You will not be identified by name or by implication in the published reports and papers arising from this project.

This study aims to make evidence-based recommendations about how institutions and individuals can take action to change things, where change is needed. Interim reports will be produced once per year, and will be shared first with those who have participated in the study. Findings will also be shared across the sector and beyond.

We hope you will want to take part in what we think is a very exciting project! If you are willing to proceed please complete the consent form on the next page and continue to the questionnaire.

Thank you for your attention.

Dr Fehmidah Munir, Dr Sarah Barnard, Dr Sara Bosley and Professor John Arnold, Loughborough University

---

## Page 2: Consent

I understand that this study is designed to further knowledge of leadership and career development, and that all procedures have been approved by the Loughborough University Ethical Advisory Committee. I understand that I am under no obligation to take part in the study. I understand that I have the right to withdraw from this study by emailing the research team my unique code at any stage for any reason, and that I will not be required to explain my reasons for withdrawing. I understand that all the information I provide will be treated in strict confidence and will be kept anonymous and confidential to the researchers.

- I agree to participate in this study
- I do not agree to participate in this study

To show our appreciation for your help, for every completed questionnaire we are donating £1 to a charity of your choice. Please tick the charity you prefer from the selection below.

- Cancer Research UK
  - CARA (Council for At-Risk Academics)
  - Shelter
  - Womankind
-

### Page 3: You and Your Current Employment

When did you (or will you) participate in the Aurora programme of events?

- Academic year 2013-14
- Academic year 2014-15
- Academic year 2015-16
- Academic year 2016-17
- Academic year 2017-18
- Academic year 2018-19 Other

Which of these statements describe your current work situation? Please tick a ll that apply.

- Employed by a UK Russell Group university
- Employed by another UK pre-1992 university
- Employed by a UK post-1992 university
- Employed by a university in the Republic of Ireland
- Employed by a further education or other college
- Employed by another higher education-related organisation
- Employed by an organisation outside higher education
- Self-employed
- Not currently in paid work Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

In what country do you work at the moment?

- England
  - Northern Ireland
  - Republic of Ireland
  - Scotland
  - Wales
  - Other
-

**Important note about the rest of this questionnaire:**

Many of the questions refer to or imply an employing organisation.

If you are not currently in paid work, please answer the questions as if you were still in your most recent job. If you are employed by multiple organisations, please choose the one you know best. If you are self-employed, please respond on the basis of the context(s) in which your work typically takes place.

**Which one of the following broad areas describes your current work?**

If Managerial, Professional or Technical, please indicate which one of the following best describes the function you work in:

If you selected Other, please specify:

If you are in Academic Research and Teaching, which of the following best describes your role?

If you selected Other, please specify:

If you are in Research only, Teaching only or in Academic Research and Teaching, which of the following broad subject areas best fits the School or Department you work in?

If you selected Other, please specify:

Irrespective of the School or Department you are in, which broad subject area best describes your work?

If you selected Other, please specify:

Please tick all of the following that apply to your current work:

- Full-time working
- Part-time working: 21 hours per week or more Part-time working: 20 hours per week or less Term time working only
- Job-sharing
- Formal flexitime scheme
- Compressed hours (allocation of work into fewer or longer blocks than the norm) Annual hours (working hours defined over a year rather than a week) Zero contracted hours (called in when required)
- Working away from the employer's premises on a regular basis

Is your job:

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

If you selected Other, please specify:

Regardless of your contracted hours, how many hours per week on average do you typically work?

- Zero hour contract
- 7.5 hours or less 15 hours or less
- 22.5 hours or less 30 hours or less
- 37.5 hours or less 45 hours or less
- 52.5 hours or less Over 52.5 hours
- I don't know

Taking all your paid work into account, approximately what are your current annual gross earnings from work?

**Page 4: Your Career So Far**

For how many complete years have you worked *outside* higher education?

- I have never worked outside higher education
- Up to 5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16 -20 years
- 21-25 years
- 26-30 years
- More than 30 years

For how many complete years have you worked in higher education?

- Less than 1 year
  - 1-5 years
  - 6-10 years
  - 11-15 years
  - 16-20 years
  - 21-25 years
  - 26-30 years
  - More than 30 years
-

For how many complete years have you worked for your current employer? (if you have worked for this employer more than once, please count the total time)

- Less than 1 year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- 21-25 years
- 26-30 years
- More than 30 years

How much leave have you taken for maternity/adoption or other caring roles whilst working in higher education institutions?

- None
  - Less than one month
  - 1- 3 months
  - 4-6 months
  - 7-9 months
  - 10-12 months
  - 13-15 months
  - 16-18 months
  - 19-21 months
  - 22-24 months
  - 25-27 months
  - 28-30 months
  - 31-33 months
  - 34-36 months
  - More than 36 months
-

If you have taken maternity/adoption or other caring leave, how many separate spells of leave is this?

How much time in total have you been on a career break since your first job in a higher education institution?

- None
- Less than a year
- 1-3 years
- More than 3 years

How many times have you moved between higher education institutions for a promotion?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- More than 6

How many times have you made a sideways or downward job move **within the same** higher education institution?

- 0
  - 1
  - 2
  - 3
  - 4
  - 5
  - 6
  - More than 6
-

How many times have you made a sideways or downward job move **between** higher education institutions?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- More than 6

How many of your job moves would you say were made **primarily** for family or relationship reasons?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- More than 6

How many times have you **unsuccessfully** applied for a job move of any kind in higher education?

- 0
  - 1
  - 2
  - 3
  - 4
  - 5
  - 6
  - More than 6
-

How many of these unsuccessful applications were for a promotion?

- 0
  - 1
  - 2
  - 3
  - 4
  - 5
  - 6
  - More than 6
-

### Leadership and Working Practices in your School/Department

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Men have a better chance than women of attaining leadership roles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Women and men leaders receive equal respect	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Women are appropriately represented on the major decision-making bodies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Women tend to get the least prestigious leadership roles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Women and men have equal opportunities in recruitment processes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Women and men have equal opportunities in promotion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Aggressive leadership styles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Aggressive leadership styles are the norm	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teamwork and co-operation are encouraged	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is extensive consultation before important decisions are made	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Flexible working opportunities are readily available	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Family-friendly policies are in place	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Using family- friendly or flexible working is taken as a sign that you are not serious about your career	<input type="radio"/>				
Promotion criteria and processes are clear	<input type="radio"/>				
Staff review and development processes work well	<input type="radio"/>				

### Your Experiences of Support

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
My line manager supports my development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are supportive people I can confide in at work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My job requires me to influence people over whom I have no formal power or authority	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My line manager backs me up when I need him/her to do so	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have been placed in leadership situations where success has been almost impossible to achieve	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My organisation actively supports Aurora	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have had considerable leadership training outside Aurora	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Your Approach to Leadership

There is no universally accepted definition of leadership. However, in this questionnaire we have in mind something like 'influencing a group of people to achieve common goals'. This does not necessarily imply seniority. In this section we are asking about your leadership activities and skills, whether or not the post you occupy is formally considered a part of your organisation's 'leadership'.

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Leadership is a major part of my official job duties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I engage in leadership at work that isn't part of my official job duties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I seek out leadership opportunities in my day to day work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I work constructively with leaders higher than me in this organisation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think through the consequences of alternative courses of action	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I use my intuition to see the best way ahead	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I make time to relate to my colleagues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I structure tasks carefully so that everyone knows what they are supposed to be doing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I have power, I am comfortable using it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can usually see innovative solutions to problems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I know a lot about how my employing organisation runs	<input type="radio"/>				
I am able to anticipate how my co leagues will react to most situations	<input type="radio"/>				
I am able to incorporate others' ideas into my thinking	<input type="radio"/>				
I am good at bringing team members around to my way of thinking without forcing them	<input type="radio"/>				
I am able to inspire others with my ideas for the future	<input type="radio"/>				
I try to be a good role model for others to follow	<input type="radio"/>				
I encourage a team attitude and spirit	<input type="radio"/>				
I play a mentor role (formal or informal) for at least one co league	<input type="radio"/>				
I behave in a manner that is thoughtful of other people's needs	<input type="radio"/>				
I challenge others to think about old problems in new ways	<input type="radio"/>				
I tell others what I think they need to do in order to be rewarded for their efforts	<input type="radio"/>				
I try to involve people in important decisions, even when time is tight	<input type="radio"/>				

---

### Work in the Context of Life as a Whole

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
My work keeps me from other activities more than I would like	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The time I need to spend on my commitments outside work often interferes with my work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I get home from work, I am often too tired to participate fully in home activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My home responsibilities mean I often have a hard time keeping my mind on my work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The support I receive at work helps me in my personal life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The support I receive outside work helps me in my work life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My current circumstances are compatible with taking on substantial leadership roles at work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My current circumstances make it difficult for me to relocate geographically for my work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My commute to work is difficult to manage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am currently doing long- distance commuting, often staying overnight close to my workplace	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

My earnings are crucial to keep my household going	<input type="radio"/>				
In five years' time, I expect my circumstances to be compatible with taking on leadership roles	<input type="radio"/>				

Which of the following out-of-work commitments do you currently have during all or most weeks? (please tick all that apply)

- Primary responsibility for managing a household of two or more people
  - Care for pre-school age children
  - Care for primary school age children
  - Care for secondary school age children
  - Care for adults, including elderly
  - Major time-consuming leisure activities
  - Major community or societal roles
-

### Your Career Strategies at Work

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I make myself visible to people who could help me in my career	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I seek opportunities to be mentored or coached	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I seek opportunities to mentor or coach others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I set myself goals for career progression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I seek opportunities to develop skills I need for my career	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I proactively seek out job opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I take the time to maintain my existing work contacts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I seek out new work contacts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I use social media to build and maintain my profile	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I keep my CV up to date	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I ask people for feedback about me and my career prospects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I volunteer for tasks that will get me better known	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I make a point of behaving in ways that challenge the organisational culture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I conform to the organisational culture more than I'd really like to	<input type="radio"/>				
I enjoy the cut and thrust of organisational politics	<input type="radio"/>				
I know what I want from my career	<input type="radio"/>				

### Your Career Attitudes

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Overall I am satisfied with the way my career is going	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want to rise to a very senior position	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want to be a leading expert in my work domain	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want to be of service to my organisation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My work is more important to me than my life outside work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want to ensure I have job security	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I intend to seek a new job in the next year or so	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel confident to put myself forward for positions of responsibility at work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel confident to put myself forward for career advancement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

---

I feel confident to put myself forward for a salary increase	<input type="radio"/>				
I need to behave in ways that don't come naturally to me if I want to get on in this organisation	<input type="radio"/>				

### What you would like from Aurora

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I would like Aurora to equip me to be a better leader	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like Aurora to enhance my confidence in leadership roles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like Aurora to help me clarify my career aspirations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like Aurora to enable me to meet women in a similar position to me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like Aurora to enable me to make contacts who can help me in my career	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Information about you

In this final section we ask for some personal information. We appreciate that you may prefer not to respond to some of these questions. We have included them to examine whether different groups of women have systematically different experiences working and being leaders in the Higher Education sector

How old are you?

- 20-24
- 25-29
- 30-34
- 35-39
- 40-44
- 45-49
- 50-54
- 55-59
- 60-64
- 65-69
- 70-74

What is your highest qualification?

- Bachelor degree
- Masters degree
- Doctorate
- Higher Doctorate
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Are you registered as disabled?

- Yes
- No

Do you consider yourself to have a disability or health impairment?

- Yes
- No

Which one of these options best describes your ethnic background?

Do you identify as LGBT?

- Yes
  - No
-

### Contacting you

It is important that we are able to contact you again in the future in order to follow how your career develops. The following information will be kept separate from other responses you give.

Name you would like us to use when contacting you:

Most suitable email address(es) to contact you on:

To enable us to match up your responses this time with your responses next time, we would like to ask you to follow these instructions to create your **own unique code**.

Please indicate the first and last letter of your **first name** (for example, if your name is Joan Smith, your first letter is J and your last letter is N).

The first letter of your first name:

The last letter of your first name:

Please indicate the first and last letter of your **surname** (for example, if your name is Joan Smith, then your first letter is S and your last letter is H).

The first letter of your surname:

The last letter of your surname:

---

Please indicate the **last 3 characters** of your **postcode** (for example, if your postcode is EG1 23EG, then the last three characters of your postcode are 3EG)

Please indicate the last three characters of your postcode here:

If you are in principle interested in being interviewed or completing a short-term electronic diary as part of this project (you can change your mind later!) please indicate here:

- Yes - interview
- Yes - electronic diary
- No thanks

We realise this questionnaire has not yet given you an opportunity to comment in your own words. If there is anything you would like to say about your career, leadership experiences, the role of Aurora in your career, or anything else, please use this box:

### Page 13: End of Survey

Thank you for taking the time and trouble to complete this questionnaire.

---

## Appendix H: the Onwards and Upwards advisory panel

### External members:

- Barbara Davey, Senior Research Officer, Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas)
- Professor Jackie Ford, Professor of Leadership, University of Bradford
- Gary Loke, Head of Policy, Equality Challenge Unit
- Professor Jacky Lumby, Emeritus Professor of Education, University of Southampton
- Professor Lorna McKee, Delivery of Care Programme Director, University of Aberdeen

### Leadership Foundation:

- Professor Fiona Ross CBE, Research Director, Leadership Foundation
- Alison Johns, Chief Executive, Leadership Foundation
- Helen Goreham, Research Manager, Leadership Foundation
- Will Wade, Research Manager and Policy Analyst, Leadership Foundation
- Louise Clifton, Senior Marketing Coordinator, Leadership Foundation
- Ginnie Willis, Senior Associate, Leadership Foundation
- Vijaya Nath, Director of Leadership Development, Leadership Foundation

### Research team (Loughborough University):

- Professor John Arnold, Professor of Organisational Behaviour, Director of Research Impact, School of Business and Economics
  - Dr Fehmidah Munir, Reader in Health Psychology and Athena SWAN School Champion, School of Sport, Exercise & Health Sciences
  - Dr Sarah Barnard, Lecturer in Sociology of Contemporary Work
  - Dr Sara Bosley, Researcher and University Teacher, School of Business and Economics
-





First published December 2016  
Leadership Foundation for Higher Education

Published by the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education

Registered and operational address:  
Leadership Foundation for Higher Education  
Peer House  
8-14 Verulam Street  
London  
WC1X 8LZ

**info@lfhe.ac.uk**  
**www.lfhe.ac.uk**

© Leadership Foundation for Higher Education

Extracts from this publication may be reproduced for non-commercial or training purposes on condition that the publisher and author[s] are acknowledged and the content is not misrepresented. As the publisher of this work, the Leadership Foundation would like to encourage its circulation as widely as possible while retaining the copyright. We have supported the creation of this work as part of our programme of research and innovation and hope that it will be of value to senior leaders, managers, development practitioners and policy makers throughout higher education and beyond.

We are a membership organisation and prioritise our members' access to our reports. However, short summaries of each report are also available online to all.

Permission is granted to reproduce for personal and educational use only. Commercial copying, hiring, lending are prohibited.

If you would like to use this work for your own non-commercial personal or educational purposes – for example download, save, perform or distribute it in any format, including translation - you may do so without written permission. Please note that the following will be required:

- The Leadership Foundation and the author(s) are credited
- Our website address [www.lfhe.ac.uk](http://www.lfhe.ac.uk) is prominently displayed
- The text is not altered and is used in full
- The work is not resold
- A copy of the work or link to its use online is sent to the Leadership Foundation.

You are welcome to ask for permission to use this work for purposes other than those covered above.

Designed & produced by Smith Creative  
[www.smith-creative.co.uk](http://www.smith-creative.co.uk)

Inspiring  
Leadership

**Leadership  
Foundation**  
for Higher Education

Peer House  
8-14 Verulam Street  
London  
WC1X 8LZ

**T** +44 (0) 20 3468 4810  
**F** +44 (0) 20 3468 4811  
**E** [info@lfhe.ac.uk](mailto:info@lfhe.ac.uk)  
**www.lfhe.ac.uk**



Printed on environmentally friendly ECF paper. Please remember to recycle this report when you no longer need it.

Contact us at

**info@lfhe.ac.uk**

or connect with us



@LF4HE



/LF4HE



/LFHELinkedIn



[www.lfhe.ac.uk](http://www.lfhe.ac.uk)