

Faculty Medical and Health Sciences
and the Equity Committee

Gender Equity
reasons that delay or
prevent academic women
from applying for promotion

Associate Dean Equity, Associate Professor,
Dr Nicolette Sheridan
Director Staff Equity, Equity Office,
Ms Prue Toft

Literature

- Women are **less likely to apply** for promotion, and, having applied, are **less likely to succeed**.

*University of Auckland: women who apply for promotion are **more likely to succeed** than men.*

- Men benefit from a notion of merit that values a **fulltime, uninterrupted career path** and research success. Women experience career interruptions, often for family reasons, and are over-represented in teaching positions and disciplines such as nursing and the humanities, which do not attract large research grants.

Background

- In 2010 the Equity Office reported fewer eligible women (7%) compared to men (14%) applied for academic promotion
- Between 2004 and 2008 University academic promotions showed:
 - Higher success rates for women (69%) than men (61%)
 - Lower application rates by women (11%) than men (14%)

We wanted to understand the relationship

FMHS Equity Project

Aim: explore the reasons that delay or prevent academic women from applying for promotion

Methods:

- Descriptive study using mixed methods
 - online survey of academic women in the faculty
 - face-to-face interviews

Results: Online survey

- 117 (of 200) academic women participated
 - Representative sample by age, grade
 - 60% permanent contract; 61% worked full-time
- 55% had never applied for promotion
- 66% intended to apply in the future

Reasons that delayed or prevented you from applying for promotion?

- competing demands on **time** in the workplace (54)
- **not ready** (i.e. too few publications) (54)
- **not confident** enough (31)
- competing demands on **time** by family (28)
- HOD/other senior person does **not support me** (16)
- **fear of failure** or discouraged by others failure (12)

What assisted you in applying for promotion?

- **mentorship** by head of department/senior academic (43)
- **support** from colleagues or advocates (23)
- faculty 'promotions **workshops**' (12)
- 'Women in Leadership' **programme** (12)

Interviews

29 face-to-face interviews were conducted:

- 6 professor/associate professor; 11 senior lecturer/research fellow; 12 teaching assistant/lecturer/research fellow/teaching fellow
- multi-ethnic, 50% full time permanent contract

Women most commonly talked about:

The importance of academic promotion, career aspirations, barriers, mentorship and support

What women said

- 26/29 rated promotion **very important** or **important**

Promotion is recognition of the work you do... the contribution you make, it's confirmation that you're making it (Senior Lecturer)

Promotion gives me the recognition of academic purpose, it confirms the reason as to why I'm in the research field I'm in (Professor)

- Many talked of success in their field, of relationships with external stakeholders, and getting research grants. Aspirations included developing research units, contributing to health policy, and becoming a professor

It's a natural pathway to progress up the ladder and I think we as women need to allow ourselves the sense of entitlement (Associate Professor)

- The dominance of Medicine was felt by women in non-medical roles

The Faculty is very doctor-dominated and gender biased toward men... the faculty need to recognise the largest numbers who are not medical doctors (Associate Professor)

- Those who had taken maternity leave described very little support and difficulty in maintaining family life... leading to a delay in applying for promotion. Part-time work was associated with missed research funding opportunities, less value, and a delay in applying for promotion.

Women need to be protected... their programme needs to be carefully mapped out so that they don't come back and find themselves buried in teaching or administration or something that doesn't allow them to you know get that traction again (Professor)

Being a part-timer... (competing) against others in the department... you're promotional endeavours are not taken seriously (Tutor)

- 13/26 perceived ongoing low levels of support and difficulties arising from 'clashes of personality' with Heads of Schools/Departments

I got a sense from my Head of School that no matter what I did, she wasn't going to support my promotion... (Lecturer)

It really depends who's your immediate boss. Some actively encourage and promote career progression, while others seem to concentrate on building their own (Senior Lecturer)

- Need for Heads to undertake staff development training

Many Heads are extremely busy, they're research productive, and some of them aren't particularly interested or have the skills needed to help somebody to get to the next step (Professor)

- University programmes motivated >50% to apply for promotion

The Future Heads programme confirmed others saw my leadership potential... I felt supported for the first time and that I had a future (Associate Professor)

- Access to mentorship and encouragement

My HOD helped me to set my career goals at my annual performance review and was very helpful... all the way (Senior Tutor)

My department head was excellent this time round... I got access to a mentor and this gave me confidence to apply for promotion - I felt really supported. (Associate Professor)

- Guidance, advice and mentoring from strong female academics was considered important.

Women need to have a stronger sense of worth than they do. There are very few female role models who are seen to stand their ground (Senior Lecturer)

It's important for women to develop networks across the university and be guided and mentored by women who have 'made it' (Senior Tutor)

Women understand women's issues and look through a different lens than men – we need to see more women in leadership (Research Fellow)



for Academic Women:

Top Tips for Equity in Promotion

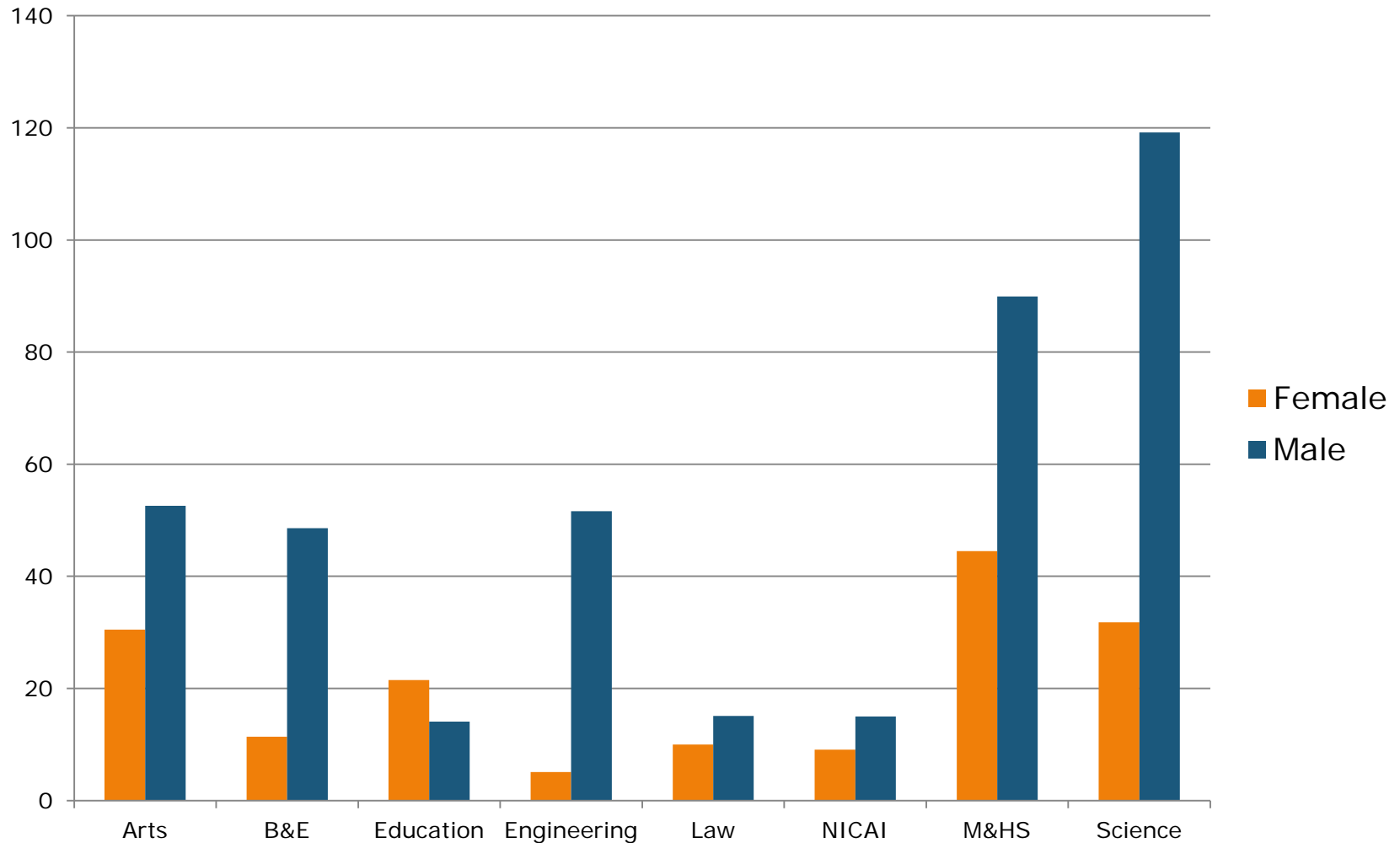
- Use the Annual Performance Review to gain feedback on your readiness for promotion so that you can plan for future applications
- Ensure you participate in faculty training on promotion earlier than the year you intend to apply
- Ensure you have appropriate teaching evidence (lecturer evaluations and peer reviews) and get HOD advice on managing teaching evidence when you have teaching buy-out
- For academic women, apply for Women in Leadership or similar programmes and access mentorship from a senior academic (woman)
- If the opportunity presents, participate on the FSC (this provides in-depth experience of the process)
- If you are a research fellow discuss with your HOD the type of support you need (e.g. how to describe supervision responsibilities or status of patents)
- If there are any circumstances such as parental leave/sick leave that you wish to have recognised as 'Merit Relative to Opportunity' discuss with your HOD to ensure this is included in the promotion report.

for Academic Heads:

Top Tips for Equity in Promotion

- Use the **Annual Performance Review** to provide feedback on readiness for promotion and plan for future applications
- **Support staff attend training** to understand promotion criteria **earlier** than the year they intend to apply for promotion
- Encourage staff to have appropriate **teaching evidence** (lecturer evaluations and peer reviews) and to provide advice on managing teaching evidence when staff have teaching buy-out
- Support women academics to **apply for Women in Leadership** and to access senior academic women as **mentors**
- Where appropriate encourage staff to participate on the FSC (this provides in-depth experience of the process)
- Research fellows may require particular support (e.g. how to describe supervision responsibilities, and the status of patents)
- When writing a HoD Report check if there are **any circumstances** such as parental leave/sick leave that the applicant may wish to have recognised as 'Merit Relative to Opportunity'

Senior academics (associate professors and professors) in faculties by gender 2014



Senior academics (associate professors and professors) in faculties by gender 2014

	Female		Male		Total
Faculty	FTE	%	FTE	%	FTE
Arts	30.5	36.7	52.6	63.3	83.1
B&E	11.4	19.0	48.6	81.0	60
Education	21.5	60.6	14.1	39.7	35.5
Engineering	5.1	9.0	51.6	91.0	56.7
Law	10	39.7	15.1	59.9	25.2
NICAI	9.1	37.8	15	62.2	24.1
M&HS	44.5	33.1	89.9	66.9	134.4
Science	31.8	21.1	119.2	78.9	151