

STAFF CULTURE SURVEY, JUNE 2023

Department of Political Economy

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The EDI committee ran a Staff Culture Survey in June 2023. The survey maps staff perceptions about promotion, workload, and equality in DPE.

The survey had a high response rate of approx. 58%. Among staff who provided background information, 35% are women, 9% from racial and ethnic minority background (N=3) and 45% at lecturer or post-doc level (N=1). Data summary listed below.

N = 45 (77 staff listed in workload 2024-2025)

35% Women (N=37)

9% Racial and Ethnic minority (N=34)

45% Post-doc & Lecturer (N=33)

	Lecturer/post-doc	Senior Lecturer	Reader/Professor	Row Total
Women	7	2	4	25
Men	8	7	5	39
Column Total	15	9	9	33

Given that only about 9% of staff who answered the survey reported minority background (N=3), the report below provides qualitative examination of the data (i.e. no tables) to avoid revealing answers. With N=3, it was common that colleagues agreed entirely on their responses. The concern about revealing questions has also been highlighted by colleagues in the survey.

Summary of Key Results

Promotion

Most staff agree that mentoring is useful, promotions and appraisals value range of skills, and that work is allocated on a fair basis. However, the overall satisfaction among staff masks substantial differences with respect to gender and race:

- Most women do *not* agree that DPE values full range of skills for promotion and that work is allocated on a fair basis irrespective of gender and race.
- Staff from minority background is less likely to agree that mentoring is useful, that they understand promotion, full range of skills is valued and that work is allocated on a fair basis.

Work Hours

Three out of four staff report working longer hours, but only about half of staff is happy about work/life balance. Less than half of staff feel that excess hours are recognized. This overall dissatisfaction varies with respect to gender and race:

- Whilst women are equally likely to report working longer hours, they are mostly unhappy about work/life balance (compared to men being mostly happy).

- Whilst staff from minority backgrounds are more likely to report working longer hours, they are less happy about work/life balance, and to feel that excess hours are recognized.

Workload

Most staff considers their responsibility for research, teaching, and admin as 'the right amount'. However, the overall satisfaction among staff masks substantial differences with respect to gender and race:

- Women are more likely to consider responsibility for teaching too high, whilst men are more likely to consider responsibility for admin too high.
- Staff from minority background is more likely to consider responsibility for teaching and admin too high.

Decision-making

A modest majority of staff agree that they are consulted on decisions, but only about a third of staff agree that decision-making is transparent. There are differences with respect to gender and race:

- Overwhelming majorities among women and minority colleagues do *not* agree that decision-making is transparent in DPE. Only 8% of women agree.
- Minority staff is also less likely to agree that they are consulted on decisions.

Parental Leave

Whilst modest majority of staff agree that they were supported before and after parental leave, very few staff agree that the leave did not damage their career. This belief is especially pronounced among women.

EDI action and culture

A modest majority of staff agree that they understand the importance on taking actions to advance EDI in DPE and feel that DPE promotes supportive behaviour, deals effectively with complaints, would feel confident to report unfavourable treatment if witnessed and that DPE uses role models of both women and men. However, only approximately 1 in 3 colleagues agree that DPE uses role models from all racial backgrounds and that success is celebrated in DPE. There are differences with respect to gender and race:

- Staff from minority backgrounds is substantially less likely to have confidence in the effectiveness of complaints, and less likely to see DPE as making a clear stance against unsupportive behaviour.
- Overwhelming majority of women do not agree that success is celebrated in DPE

Equal pay

Only about a third of staff agree that pay is equal with respect to gender and race. This dissatisfaction is especially pronounced among women and minority staff:

Perceived disadvantage

Majority of staff agrees that DPE is a great place to work for women but disagrees that DPE is a great place to work for colleagues with a minority background. There are substantial differences based on race and gender with respect to perceived disadvantage:

- Majority of women feel that women are disadvantaged with respect to salary and a third of women believes that they are disadvantaged in promotion.
- Colleagues from minority background are more likely to agree that staff from minority backgrounds is disadvantaged with respect to office space.

SECTION I: PROMOTION & WORKLOAD

About 60% staff agree that DPE values range of skills in appraisal and promotion, understand promotions and benefit from mentoring. At least 60% of staff believes that teaching, admin and research is valued in DPE, although staff are most likely to agree that research is valued (78%) and least likely to agree that admin is valued (62%).

However, only about half of staff believe that work allocation is fair with respect to gender and race and report good work/life balance. About 75% of staff work longer hours and only 40% of staff feel that excess hours are recognized.

Between 60 and 70% of staff evaluate their responsibility for teaching, admin and research as 'the right amount'.

Figure 1: % Agree on Questions Regarding Promotion and Workload

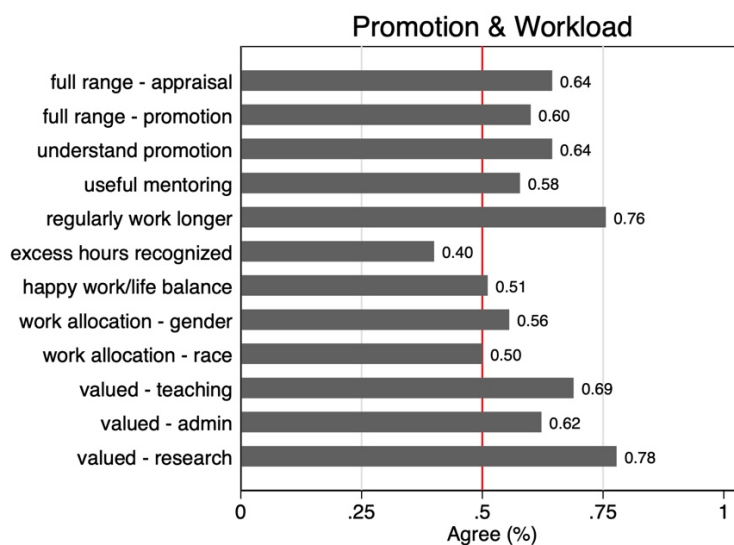
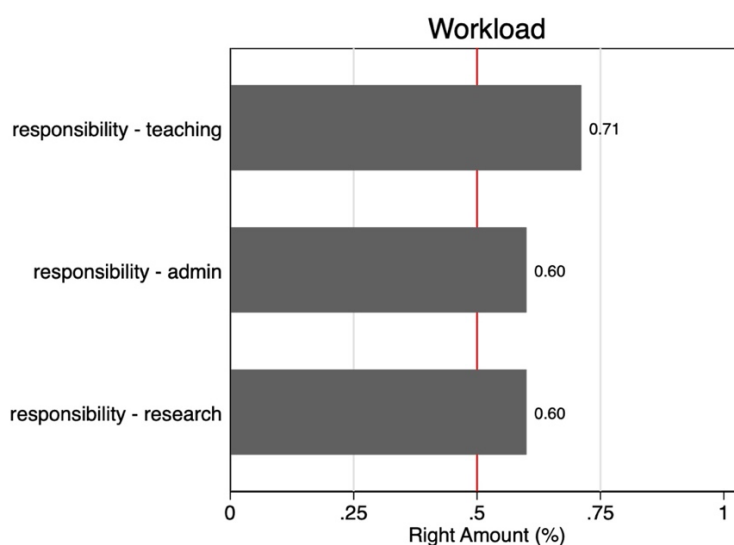


Figure 2: % Evaluate Responsibility as 'the Right Amount'



There are sizeable differences between women and men with regards to promotion.

- Whilst 71% of men agree that DPE values full range of skills for promotion, only about 46% of women agree.

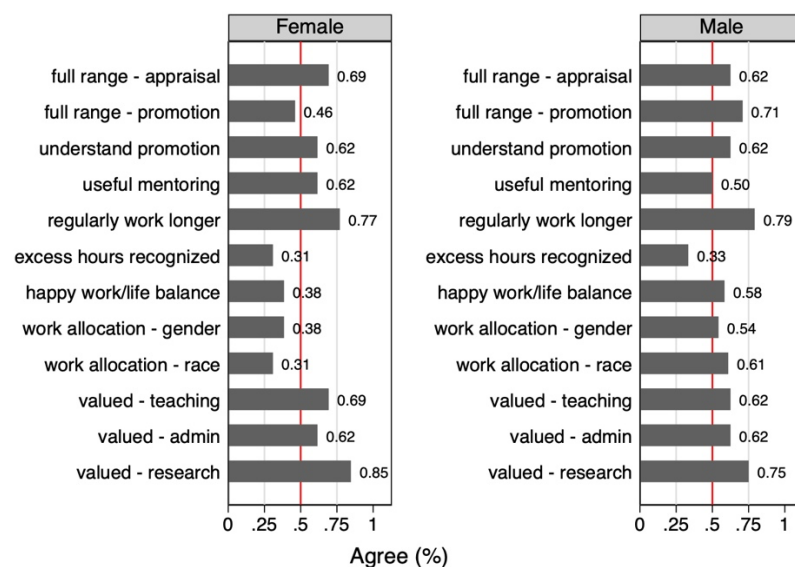
There are also sizeable differences between women and men with regards to work allocation.

- Whilst majority of men agree that work is allocated on a fair basis irrespective of gender and race, only about a third of women agree.
- Whilst 58% of men agree that they are happy with work/life balance, only about 38% of women agree.

However, there are no differences between women and men staff with respect to regularly working excess hours and recognition of doing so.

In turn, *slightly* fewer men than women agree that DPE values range of skills for annual appraisal (62% among men vs 69% among women), that they benefit from mentoring (50% vs 62%) and that research is valued at DPE (75% vs 85%).

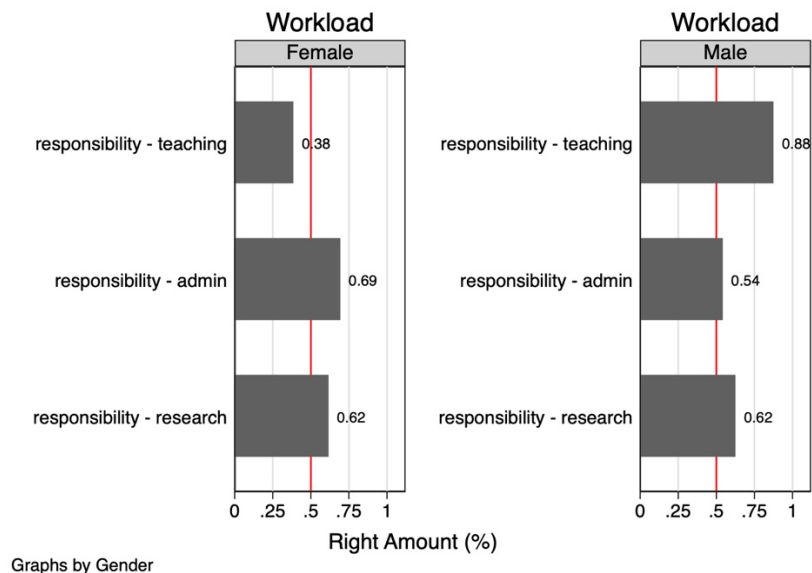
Figure 3: % Agree on Questions Regarding Promotion and Workload by Gender



Graphs by Gender

Whilst there are no differences between women and men with respect to responsibility for research, men are more likely to consider their responsibilities for admin too high (38% vs 15% among women) and women are more likely to consider their responsibilities for teaching too high (54% vs 13% among men)

Figure 4: Figure 2: % Evaluate Responsibility as 'the Right Amount' by Gender



There are substantial differences among staff based on race and ethnicity. Colleagues from minority backgrounds are *less likely to agree* that

- range of skills is valued for appraisal and promotion
- understand promotion
- find mentoring useful
- work is allocated fairly with respect to gender and race
- teaching and admin is valued

Minority colleagues are more likely to report working for longer hours, but less likely to agree that excess hours are recognized and that they are happy with work/life balance.

Minority colleagues are also less likely to agree that their responsibilities are 'of the right amount', considering teaching and admin responsibilities too high.

SECTION II: DECISION-MAKING & EQUALITY

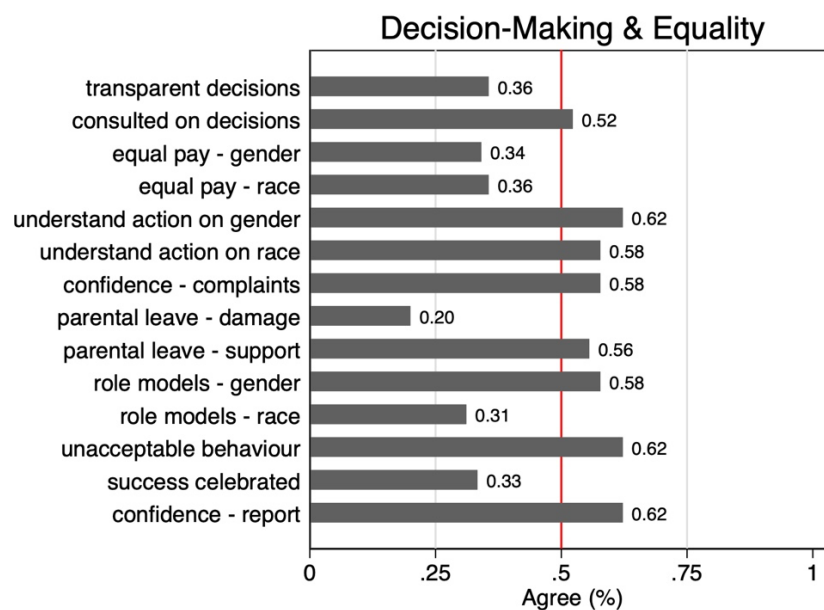
A majority (about 50-60%) of staff agree that they are consulted on decisions, understand the importance on taking action with respect to gender and race, are confident that complaints are dealt with effectively, that unsupportive language and behaviour is considered unacceptable and would feel confident to report unfavourable treatment if witnessed.

However, only about a third of staff agree that decision-making is transparent, pay is equal with respect to gender and race, and success is celebrated.

Whilst 56% of staff agree that they were supported before and after parental leave, only one in five staff agree that the leave did not damage their career.

Whilst 58% of staff agree that DPE uses both women and men as role models, only about a third of staff agree that staff from all racial backgrounds are used as role models.

Figure 5: % Agree on Questions Regarding Decision-Making & Equality



Note: Confidence – report refers to % of staff that answered ‘Yes’

There are sizeable differences between women and men with regards to decision-making

- Whilst 46% of men agree that decisions are transparent, only 8% of women agree.

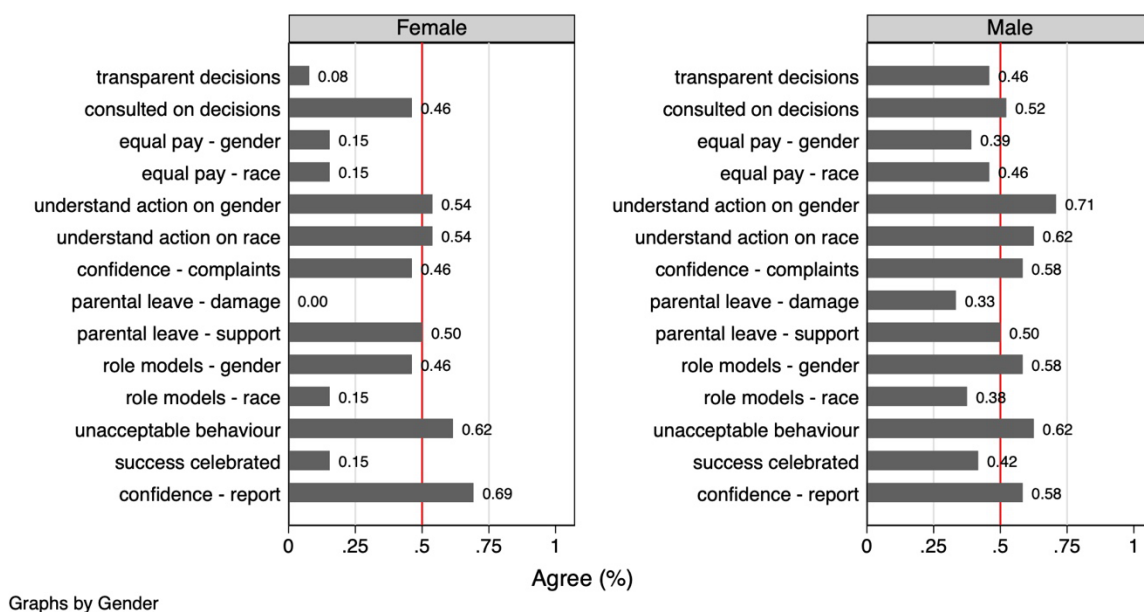
There are sizeable differences between women and men with regards to equality

- Whilst 40% or more of men agree that pay is equal with respect to gender and race, only 15% of women agree
- Whilst 38% of men agree that DPE uses staff from all racial backgrounds as role models, only 15% of women agree
- Whilst only 42% of men agree that success is celebrated, only about 15% of women agree.

However, there are no differences between women and men staff with respect to being consulted on decisions, clarity that offensive language and behaviour are unacceptable and only slight differences with respect to confidence in complaints being dealt with effectively, using both women and men as role models and confidence in reporting unfavourable treatment.

In turn, more men than women understand the importance of taking action on gender and race.

Figure 6: % Agree on Questions Regarding Decision-Making & Equality by Gender



Note: Confidence – report refers to % of staff that answered ‘Yes’

There are substantial differences among staff based on race and ethnicity. Colleagues from minority backgrounds are *less likely to agree* that

- decisions are transparent
- they are consulted on decisions
- complaints would be dealt with effectively
- unsupportive language and behaviour are unacceptable in DPE

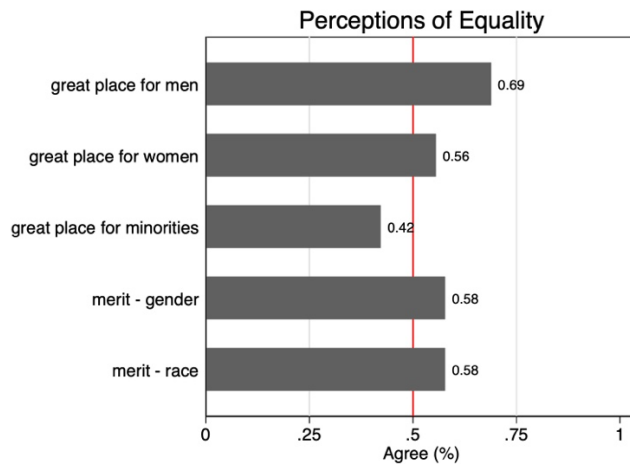
However, there are no differences with respect to equal pay, success being celebrated and only slight differences in diversity of role models and confidence in reporting unfavourable treatment of others

In turn, staff from minority backgrounds are less likely to understand importance of action on gender and race.

SECTION III: PERCEPTIONS OF EQUALITY AND DISADVANTAGE

Most staff agree that DPE is a great place to work for women and men that staff are treated on merit irrespective of gender and race. In turn, most staff do *not* agree that DPE is a great place to work for staff from minority backgrounds.

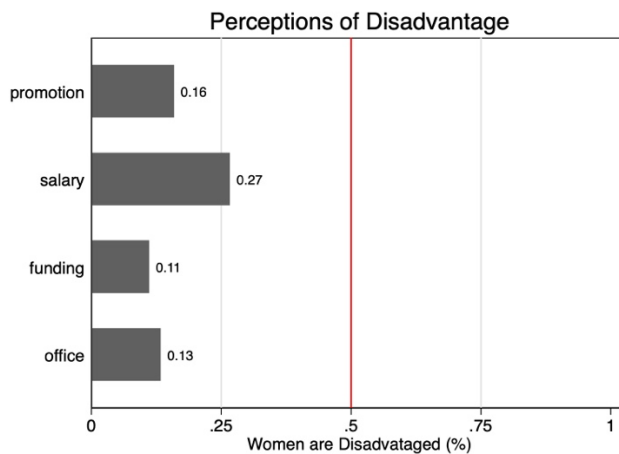
Figure 7: % Agree on Questions Regarding Perceptions of Equality

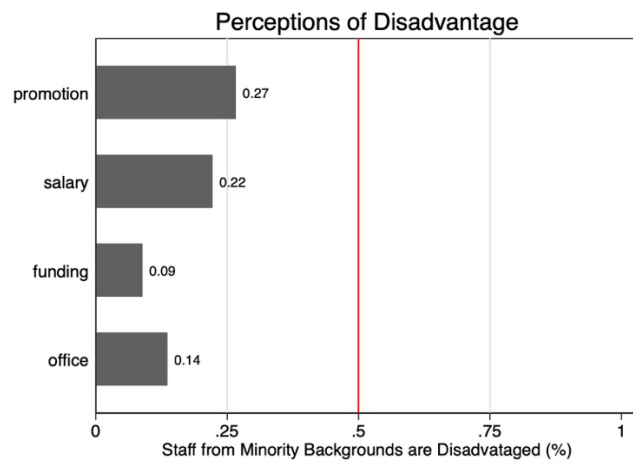


Whilst most staff do not agree that women and minority colleagues are disadvantaged with respect to promotion, salary, funding and office space, it is worrisome that about a third of colleagues agree that

- women are disadvantaged with regards to salary
- colleagues from minority backgrounds are disadvantaged with regards to promotion

Figure 8: % Agree on Questions Regarding Perceptions of Disadvantage



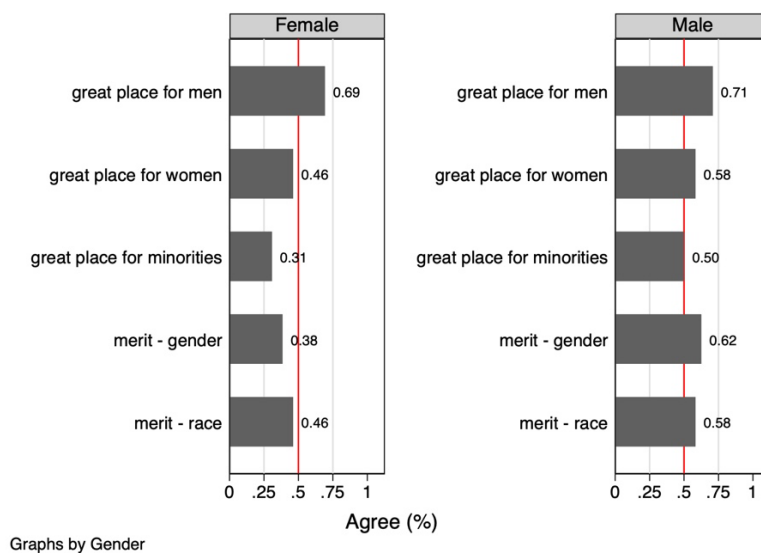


There are notable differences between women and men with regards to perceptions of equality

- Whilst 58% of men agree that DPE is a great place to work for women, only about 46% of women agree.
- Whilst 50% of men agree that DPE is a great place to work for staff from minority backgrounds, only 31% of women agree.
- Whilst 62% of men agree that staff are treated on merit irrespective of gender, only 38% of women agree.
- Whilst 58% of men agree that staff are treated on merit irrespective of race, only 46% of women agree.

However, there are no differences between women and men with regards to DPE being a great place for men.

Figure 9: % Agree on Questions Regarding Perceptions of Equality by Gender

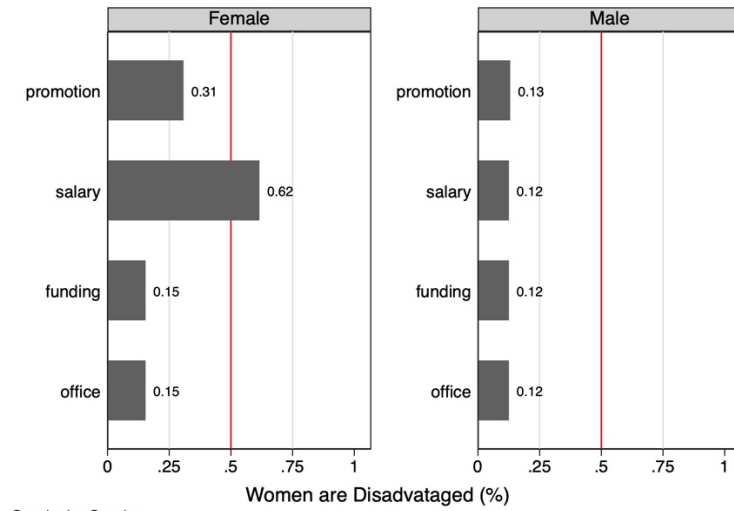


There are substantial differences between women and men with respect to perceptions of disadvantage.

- Whilst 12% of men agree that women are disadvantaged with respect to salary, 62% of women agree.
- Whilst 13% of men agree that women are disadvantaged with respect to promotion, 31% of women agree.

However, there are no differences with respect to funding and office space.

Figure 10: % Agree on Questions Regarding Perceptions of Disadvantage by Gender



Graphs by Gender

There are notable differences among staff based on race and ethnicity. Colleagues from minority backgrounds are *less likely to agree* that staff is treated on merit regardless of gender and race.

However, there are no differences with respect to DPE being a great place for men and only slight differences in DPE being a great place for women and minorities.

Colleagues from minority background are more likely to agree that staff from minority backgrounds is disadvantaged with respect to office space.

However, there are no differences with respect to promotion, and only slight differences with respect to salary and funding.

Comments on staff culture in DPE

When it comes to office space, a key marker of discrimination is age/seniority: young colleagues are disadvantaged

My general impression is that matters of gender and racial and ethnic equality are fairly good in DPE. In hiring, there is a clear (and sometimes explicit) bias towards appointing ethnic minorities and especially women (e.g. in one job presentation, a professor in DPE publicly stated that we "really must" appoint a women to the position), which stretches what it permitted by the 2010 Equality Act, but that does not seem to be reflected in other areas of DPE life, as far as I can tell.

Sometimes there are difficult trade-offs. For example, it makes sense that women and ethnic minorities are included more on appointment committees, but this justifiably leads some of the people in question to think that they have an unfair burden in this respect (although I understand this now receives WAM credit), and justifiably leads other colleagues to think it is unfair that the people in question have a lot more influence on hiring decisions than other members of DPE. There is no easy solution here that can avoid all justifiable complaints and the balance struck is probably fine.

My view, however, is that by far the biggest 'culture' problem in DPE has little to do with standard EDI issues. I think there is a poor work ethic in DPE when it comes to teaching and admin, at least amongst a significant minority of staff. Some staff regularly fail to perform basic admin and teaching duties (and even have the audacity to boast about this) with seemingly no repercussions. The same applies with gaming (and, on at least one occasion, falsifying) the WAM. The promotion system incentivises this with a tick-box approach to admin (unlike research), such that it is in someone's individual interest to be given a big admin job where they then do no more than the basic minimum (if even that). To be sure, there are lots of dedicated and hard-working colleagues in DPE who would happily go out of their way to help others and the department, but the promotions system, in particular, places minimum value on this compared with research outputs and funding. It is thus no surprise that we find ourselves in a position where none of the eligible professoriate are either willing or competent to serve as Head of Department, when other colleagues who have served DPE far more but (e.g.) published less have been left behind by the promotions system. A few notable exceptions aside, the professoriate in the department do not pull their weight, and there appears to be a more general sense that the fastest route to promotion is to prioritise research above all else.

More generally, we need a DPE (not SPE) handbook, in a straightforward Word/PDF format (not a complex KEATS page), with more information on things like how admin jobs are allocated (and how people should apply for them) and what they involve. In such a large department, this is crucial for transparency.

Academic staff are undervalued at KCL and our staff student ratio is absurd.

The question about visible role models is not really answerable because the dept does not create visible role models in anyway

The promotion process was not very transparent or fair this year. The department strongly supported many applications that were then knocked back (often by being told to delay one or two years) at the Faculty level. The reasons given were mostly about not meeting some small part of the SSPP promotion criteria, although in previous years a more holistic approach has been taken and applicants could make up for small deficiencies in some areas by being stronger in other areas. Typically no one met all the criteria, but promotions would still mostly go

through. This year some colleagues were also given the green light by the Faculty despite not meeting all the criteria. This makes it very difficult to know what those who were knocked back need to do to improve their chances of being the green light in future promotion rounds. Ultimately, we got the sense that the Faculty simply wanted to promote less people each year (maybe to cut costs or for some other reason) and they were looking for excuses to delay some applications. Overall, I think the Faculty need to be more transparent in future promotion rounds. I was left very discouraged and frustrated by this year's process. I am very committed to DPE and really enjoy working here, but this experience has slightly soured my feelings towards the Faculty/College.

The recent round of promotions has seen an unprecedented number of academic staff told to not put themselves forward, yet there has been no discussion of what happened in the departmental meetings. It appears that the promotion criteria have changed and in ways that are unclear.

women end up serving on way more hiring panels. this discrepancy is not acknowledged or compensated.

Workload is increasing on a yearly basis, whereas our salaries' purchasing power is decreasing on a yearly basis (this has been going on for 5 years now). On top of this, promotion criteria this year have not been implemented fairly and have not been communicated transparently to us (which I found really disappointing and disrespectful). I am 100% committed to King's, but I wish King's treated their own employees more respectfully and more generously.

Questions

#	short	question
1	full range - appraisal	My Department values the full range of an individual's skills and experience: When carrying out performance appraisals.
2	full range - promotions	My Department values the full range of an individual's skills and experience: when considering promotions.
3	understand promotion	I understand the promotion process and criteria in my Department.
4	useful mentoring	My Department provides me with useful mentoring that enhances my career progress.
5	regularly work longer	I regularly work longer than my contracted hours.
6	excess hours recognized	Any work I do in excess of my contracted hours is recognized and appreciated.
7	happy work/life balance	I am happy with my work/life balance.
8	work allocation - gender	In my Department, work is allocated on a clear and fair basis irrespective of gender.
9	work allocation - race	In my Department, work is allocated on a clear and fair basis irrespective of race and ethnicity.
10	responsibility - teaching	Evaluate the responsibility that you are given for teaching:
11	responsibility - research	Evaluate the responsibility that you are given for research:
12	responsibility - administration	Evaluate the responsibility that you are given for administration:
13	valued - teaching	Teaching is valued in my Department.
14	valued - administration	Administrative and non-academic tasks are valued in my Department.
15	valued - research	Research is valued in my Department.
16	transparent decisions	Decision-making in my Department is transparent.
17	consulted on decisions	I am consulted on key decisions in my Department.
18	equal pay - gender	I do believe that in my Department, men and women are paid an equal amount for doing the same work or work for equal value.
19	equal pay - race	I do believe that in my Department, staff are paid an equal amount for doing the same work or work for equal value, regardless of race and ethnicity.
20	understand action on gender	I understand my Department's reasons for taking action to improve equality with respect to gender.
21	understand action on race	I understand my Department's reasons for taking action to improve equality with respect to race and ethnicity.
22	confidence - complaints	I am confident that my line manager/superior would deal effectively with any complaints about harassment, bullying or offensive behaviour.
23	parental leave - damage	Taking maternity/adoption/shared parental leave has damaged my career whilst working in my Department.
24	parental leave - support	I was supported by my Department before, during and on return from maternity/adoption/shared parental leave.
25	role models - gender	DPE uses women as well as men as visible role models.

26	role models - race	DPE uses staff from all racial and ethnic backgrounds as visible role models.
27	success celebrated	Successes and achievements are celebrated in DPE.
28	confidence - report	Would you feel confident in reporting instances where you have witnessed others treat unfavourably?
29	unacceptable behaviour	My Department makes it clear that unsupportive language and behaviour are not acceptable (e.g. condescending or intimidating language, ridicule, overly familiar behaviour, jokes/banter that stereotype).
30	great place for men	I feel that my Department is a great place to work for men.
31	great place for women	I feel that my Department is a great place to work for women.
32	great place for minorities	I feel that my Department is a great place to work for racial and ethnic minorities.
33	gender disadvantage - promotion	What is your perception of gender equality of treatment in my Department with respect to promotion?
34	race disadvantage - promotion	What is your perception of racial and ethnic equality of treatment in my Department with respect to promotion?
35	gender disadvantage - salary	What is your perception of gender equality of treatment in my Department with respect to salary?
36	race disadvantage - salary	What is your perception of racial and ethnic equality of treatment in my Department with respect to salary?
37	gender disadvantage - funding	What is your perception of gender equality of treatment in my Department with respect to access to funding?
38	race disadvantage - funding	What is your perception of racial and ethnic equality of treatment in my Department with respect to access to funding?
39	gender disadvantage - office	What is your perception of gender equality of treatment in my Department with respect to office space?
40	race disadvantage - office	What is your perception of racial and ethnic equality of treatment in my Department with respect to office space?
41	merit - gender	In general, staff are treated on their merits irrespective of their gender.
42	merit - race	In general, staff are treated on their merits irrespective of their race or ethnicity.
43		Please include any additional comments with respect to equality in DPE(e.g. promotion, workload, transparency, workplace culture, maternity/paternity, perceptions of equality)
44	sex	I identify as:
45	race	I identify as:
46	contract	How would you describe your type of contract?
47	position	How would you describe your position?
48	years	How long have you been at DPE?