

**Imperial College London  
Physics Department Action Plan May 2009**

*Introduction*

Our recent progress has been primarily a result of actions initiated by the Juno Committee. The overriding aim of the plan is to take these initiatives and embed them throughout the Department, to pass on the responsibilities to the various staff committees/groups who will take them forward, and who will make sure that proper reports are provided for Departmental Staff Meetings and Head of Groups (HoGs) meetings. We need to ensure sustainability of improvements. To do this the tasks and responsibilities need to be taken forward by the appropriate post holders such as the Director of Undergraduate studies (DUG), Director of Post Graduate Studies (DPG), Senior Departmental Administrator, etc., so that the culture of the Department is not dependent on the good will of volunteer individuals.

Best practice will be disseminated as widely as possible, within College, to the other departments that are striving to change their culture, and elsewhere. Broadcasting to the wider community that the Imperial College Physics Department is an excellent place to study, and to work and progress a career, is seen as key to success.

Given women's percentage representation in the UK pipe-line the Juno Committee have up to now focused on retention and support of existing staff in the Department. Recruitment at all levels can surely only be helped by creating an environment that is fair, transparent and supportive and making sure that this is widely known. Within this our focus is at PG, RA and Lectureship levels.

Over the last 18 months the Juno Committee has done a huge amount and it is because of this track record of delivery that the Departmental action plan is quite extensive. The Department is confident that the plan is achievable. For each of the tasks below a leader/champion has been identified, the Department has committed to resourcing all the activities listed and the role for the Juno Committee will be to review progress and provide expert advice and guidance.

The action plan is divided into 5 areas:

1. Statistics/baseline of evidence/ taking action leadership/resources/accountability
2. Key Career Transition Points- Appointments and Promotions
3. Career Development-support and encouragement
4. Culture and Communications/Departmental Organisation
5. Flexible Working/Career Breaks

## Physics Action Plan in summary

Ref	Description	Responsibility	Time Table
1	<b>Baseline of Evidence/Leadership</b>		
1.1	UG and PG Student data Annual report to - Teaching Committee - Physics PG Committee - HOGs - UG Admissions Team - Dept Staff Meeting - Published on website - Juno Committee	UG Admissions Tutor Director of PG Studies	Autumn 2009 onwards
1.2	UG exit questionnaire	Director UG studies	To start Jan 2010
1.3	Female UG exit interviews introduced	Admission Tutor	To start June 2009
1.4	Data monitoring extended to Masters courses	Master Course Directors	Oct 2009 onwards
1.5	PRES survey M/F analysis  Local PG survey	Director of UG Studies  PG Reps Committee supported by Director PG studies	Exploration summer 09  First local survey report end 09. Otherwise annually
1.6	PGs experience  Dept Prospectus and web pages  Interview process  PhD experience	Director of PG Studies  HoGs  Chemistry dept lead	Ongoing from Summer 09  From 2010 onwards  Tbc by chemistry
1.7	PG drop out rate	Departmental PG Welfare Officer	Start 2009/10 ac yr
1.8	Departmental Web based survey for all staff groups rerun, with other College depts.	Juno Cttee with College Staff Development and ASSET HEFCE LGM Prjct Mgrs	Input to national questionnaire summer 2009 Develop summer 2010 Run 2011
1.9	RA destination statistics review and improve Annual report to HoGs Juno Committee	Departmental Administrator Supported by - RA ctte - College HR	Start Dec 09
1.10	Post docs and Academic staff - monitor and report appointments  Report to - RA Committee (for RAs) - HoGs (for all staff) - Juno Committee (for all)	Departmental Administrator supported by group administrators	Start Autumn 09

Ref	Description	Responsibility	Time Table
<b>2</b>	<b>Appointments</b>		
2.1	Recruitment and Appointment of Staff Transparency of processes	Research Strategy Cttee to approve process at panel and report to HoGs HoD to champion	Start Summer 09
2.2	Appointments maximise field	Departmental Administrator to lead and report to Juno cttee and HoGs	Start autumn 09
2.3	Female representative on all appointment panels	Departmental Administrator to champion supported by HoGs & group administrators	Start autumn 09
2.4	Induction checklists	Departmental Administrator to develop with HoGs. HoGs to champion within their groups	First draft Dec 09
	<b>Promotions</b>		
2.5	Encouraging:  RAs to put themselves forward for pay awards and job regrading as well as lectureships/fellowships  Academic female staff to put themselves forward for promotion  Clarification for level C staff (senior RAs) and Fellowship holders of their staff group	HoGs to encourage under championship of senior academic member of Juno Committee  Departmental Administrator	Start June 2010 before 2010/11 promotion round begins  Complete by Oct 2009
2.6	Length of time to promotion	Departmental Administrator	Start Autumn 2009
<b>3</b>	<b>Career Development</b>		
3.1	Mentoring to explore, develop and implement a scheme for department	Juno Committee to initiate. Professoriate to champion	Work starts Summer 2009 timetable tbc
3.2	Maximising use of information from PDRPs	HoGs to summarise issues HOD to receive/act upon	From 2009/10 PDRP round onwards
3.3	Support for post grads	RA Cttees to champion Director of PG to support and to report forward to HoGs and staff meetings	Work starts Spring 2010
3.4	PDRP and RAs	Departmental Administrator to monitor training of PIs and RAs. RA Committee to support	Work starts Spring 2010 timetable tbc
3.5	RA Statement of Achievement document	PIs of all grants to lead HoGs to champion	Piloted Spring / Summer 2010
3.6	Buddy scheme for RAs	RA Committee	2010 start
3.7	Training and development for female RAs	RA Committee working with College Post doc Development Centre Female RA rep on Juno Committee to lead.	Exploratory activity has started and time table will be confirmed Autumn 2009

3.8	Training of academic staff	HR Learning and Development consultant, member of Juno Committee	To start Autumn 2009
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Ref	Description	Responsibility	Time Table
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<b>4</b>	<b>Culture and communications</b>		
4.1	Improving department communications	Department Administrator HoGs to champion	To start Autumn 2009 - ongoing
4.2	Valuing contributions	HoGs to engage and encourage recognition awards HOD to lead	Start Summer 2010
<b>5</b>	<b>Flexibility</b>		
5.1	Allocation of Teaching takes account of all caring responsibilities	Director undergraduate studies reports to Teaching Committee and HoGs and follows up with College	Start Summer 2009
5.2	Career breaks- Advice/ information on managing maternity/paternity	Female academic network to lead and new Advisory Committee supported by the Juno Committee	Currently exploring how best to do this, and time table will be confirmed Autumn 2009
5.3	Promoting Work Life Balance	HoD and HogS to take the lead	Autumn 2009

## **1. Statistics/baseline of evidence/ taking action leadership/resources/accountability**

The Juno and SWAN processes together have led to a valuable in depth analysis of the Department, its culture and how it works. What the Juno Committee and the Departmental senior management have learnt now needs to be shared with staff at all levels. The action plan will not work unless all the actions individually are understood, and are owned by the community as a whole, by those who will benefit from the changes and those who are responsible for carrying them through. The Department is large and the task is large. The buy in that Juno committee has had at management level now needs to cascade through to the professoriate in particular, and they have been identified as having a primary role in mentoring activities. The professoriate are the people who know the system and will therefore be valuable mentors to all other staff groups. The role for the Juno Committee will be to continue to review progress and provide expert advice and guidance.

*Student data*

*Student data undergraduate*

### **1.1 Reporting on UG and PG statistics annually at HoGs and Departmental Staff Meetings**

DUG and DPG will continue to monitor/analyse student progress by gender, and they will now at the end of each academic year submit an annual report to the Teaching Committee and HoGs meeting. The data will also be presented annually at the Departmental staff meeting. Key data or graphs showing variation of the statistics over a number of years will be made available on the Departmental web site.

### **1.2 Exit Questionnaire to be completed by male and female undergraduates**

The gender statistics for our UG are extremely encouraging. The Department attracts female undergraduates in significant numbers, well above the national average and has sustained growth in these figures over a number of years. Nevertheless detailed information about why students choose Imperial and whether the education experience that they received delivered what they expected is lacking.

The Director of UG studies will create additional questions that probe these issues, for the existing student-on-line (SOLE) reporting tool. The action will begin in January 2010 with final year 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year students being targeted and the DUG will report forward to the Staff-Student committee, HoGs and at a Departmental Staff Meeting. The questions will be modified over the following years to capture what emerges from the first questionnaires as the essential issues.

The results will be compared with what the Department has done in the past to attract students / what the Department thought was the reason for high female applicant numbers and their high conversion rate of offers to acceptances.

### **1.3 Exit Interviews with Female Undergraduates**

The UG Admissions Tutor will conduct exit interviews with female undergraduates in small focus groups. The Admissions Tutor will explore why female UGs chose Imperial, whether it delivered what they expected, and how their career aspirations have changed since starting the degree. The results will be disseminated across the admissions team, Staff-Student

committee and HoGs. The Admissions tutor aims to begin the process in June 2009 piloting the process with one focus group and extend to more UGs over the following two years.

### *Student data post graduate*

#### **1.4 Monitor and report on Master level statistics by course directors to Physics PG Taught course committee**

From October 2009, the directors of each of the master courses will monitor the intake by gender and diversity strands (e.g. disability, race). The information will be collated by the taught course administrator and he/she will report annually on findings to the Physics Masters Committee and to HoGs and at an annual staff meeting.

#### **1.5 PG questionnaire**

The Director of Post graduate studies (DPG) is exploring with Faculty/College whether PRES student survey data can be broken down by gender and ethnic minority and made available at faculty /department level. The completion rates for the PRES survey are low however (20%).

The DPG will take responsibility for formulating a questionnaire together with the Physics PG Reps Committee to gather information on the PG experience within the Department. Each PG group rep will take responsibility for collecting responses for his/her group and the responses will be collated and analysed by the PG Reps Committee and then the results discussed with the DPG. The first questionnaire will be run during 2009 and reported in the Autumn 2009 to all supervisors, HoGs and the Departmental Staff Meeting.

Clarifying the supervisory support structure in terms of joint supervisor/academic supervisor/second supervisor/welfare office. The DPG will create a simple guide for PGs and supervisors to improve transparency which will be pasted on the web before the Oct 2009 intake. The DPG will use the local questionnaire to explore uniformity of experience.

#### **1.6 PG Experience**

##### *PG web site and prospectus*

The statistics indicate that the number of women that apply for PG research studies equals the national average statistics. However, the numbers that eventually come to the Department are significantly less. This suggests that it is their experience when they come for interview that is not ideal. More effort will be made to attract women PG applicants at interview and send a positive message. The DPG together with the PG administrators will ensure that the web sites reinforce the very positive views of the current female PG students, in terms of academic support etc. The DPG will also put together a glossy PG prospectus collating input from the PG Physics committee that will be used as a hand out at the PG interview and it will also be pasted on the PG departmental web site.

##### *PG interview process*

The HoGs have agreed to ensure that for the next round of PG admissions (January 2010), the existing female PGs and RAs in the group participate in the PG interview process, such as involvement in the lab tour or lunch break, so that prospective female PGs meet existing students and RAs within the department. The HoG will be enabled in this process by the group administrators.

### *PhD Experience*

We have been asked to engage in a joint project with Chemistry, lead by Chemistry to pilot the actions laid out in the RSC and IoP reports "The PhD process-good practice checklist". There is certainly merit in taking forward actions across several departments at the same time. Chemistry will champion this process and they will interact with the DPG in the first instance. It is anticipated that both the Physics PG Committee and the PG Reps Committee will be involved in the process.

## **1.7 PG Drop out Rates**

Overall our drop out rates are low, but the rates are higher for female PG students (see table 5). It will be the responsibility of the Departmental PG welfare officer to monitor and report to the PG Physics Committee on this statistic. If these statistics are group specific, the committee will be tasked to drill down to find out areas of best practice across groups.

### *Staff data*

## **1.8 The Departmental Survey**

The departmental survey has proved to be extremely revealing, providing information about job satisfaction and working environment for all staff groups across the Department and highlighting many positive aspects as well as areas that need to be addressed in more detail.

The survey will be rerun once the new actions that have arisen from the first survey have had time to make an impact. Consequently we will rerun the survey late 2010 / early 2011. The intention is to invite staff within the Department to participate in the national ASSET survey that will be run in January 2010, although we are aware of the danger of creating "survey fatigue" in our staff.

As before, the Juno Committee will champion this activity, benefiting from the survey expertise provided by the HR Learning and Development consultant and HR Equality and Diversity consultant panel members.

## **1.9 Monitoring and reporting on RA exit destination statistics**

Departmental Administrator in conjunction with the RA Committee will prepare a report and present it to HoGs annually. In terms of collecting information on where post docs go, a start will be made with women RAs by Dec 2009 extending to all RAs in December 2010. The information is already available via what is known as the leavers form but the forms are often incomplete and an overview report is not produced at the moment.

Departmental Administrator will champion this activity and will work with HR to see how useful information might be made available.

## **1. 10 Monitoring and reporting on job application and success rates by gender and grade for RA and academic appointments and promotions.**

From the statistics (see Table 8) it seems that once in the academic system women move through it at a healthy pace although they are entering the system at a later age on lectureships. HR collects and monitors the job application statistics. The Departmental Administrator will follow up whether there are any M/F differences in length of time to promotion.

Group administrators will support this activity by making sure that complete sets of statistics are gathered for all RA and academic appointments and forwarded to the Departmental Administrator. A report will be presented to HoGs annually.

## **2. Key Career Transition Points- Appointments and promotions**

### *Recruitment of staff*

#### **2.1 Transparency in the Recruitment of Academic staff**

To ensure equality of opportunity and greater transparency in our procedures for recruiting academic staff in the future the Department will normally advertise academic posts internationally and appoint staff following an open competition. Only in exceptional circumstances will this procedure not be followed.

The procedures to be adopted in each and every academic appointment will be subject to the scrutiny and approval of the Research Strategy Committee. This committee comprises the HoD and a panel of senior members of the Department. The HoD and the Departmental Operations Manager, who oversees HR within the Department, are ex officio members. Other members will change every 3 years. It will be the responsibility of the Research Strategy Committee to monitor the recruitment statistics and report to HoGs annually.

#### **2.2 Maximising the Field of Candidates**

The Department will monitor the applications more closely for RA and academic appointments to see whether there are 'high' numbers of women coming through (having considered the size of the pool in different specialties).

The Departmental Administrator will champion this, together with the relevant HoG and report annually to the Juno committee and HoGs meeting. Also the Head of Department will encourage staff to spread the word about any specific appointment to key international groups, in order to maximise the field of candidates. The wording on adverts will be changed to include a statement on our family friendly policies.

#### **2.3 Female representation on all panels**

We will ensure that wherever possible that there is female representation on all appointment panels.

It will be monitored / championed by the Departmental Administrator and supported by the HoGs and group administrators.

#### **2.4 Induction Checklist for HoGs**

Although the Faculty are in the process of finalising a new induction pack that will include Departmental specific information (key staff, key committees, key roles in the Department), we recognise that an induction checklist would be a useful addition for the HoG to use when meeting new RA or academic staff for the first time.

Key issues to discuss such as role of HoG, promotion and bonuses, PRDP process, grant applications and staff development training, will be listed. This will ensure that new staff

receive a comprehensive personal introduction to the types of information that they need to be familiar with. It will also aid the HoG to ensure that all the key issues are raised.

The Departmental Administrator will create an initial checklist and circulate to all HoGs, and then by iterative process a final document will be produced by December 2009. It will be reviewed annually (by the same post holders) to ensure that it continues to capture all essential details.

### ***Promotion***

#### **2.5 Encouraging female academics and RAs to put themselves forward for promotion (and lectureships/fellowships)**

Clarification of which staff group Level C staff (senior RAs) and Fellowship holders belong. Guidance for HoGs will be produced by Senior Administrator and pasted onto the web by Autumn 2009.

HoGs will encourage female academics to put forward for promotion and RAs for lectureships/ fellowships and to complete the annual record of achievement summary (see 3.6). The Head of Condensed Matter Theory and current chair of the Awards and Prizes committee, who is also a senior member of the Juno Committee, will hold a workshop for academic women guiding them through completing the summary (measuring success by more women coming forward at departmental level for promotion, understanding the promotion process). The action will be supported by the Departmental administrator (who will record the number of people who sign up for the work shop and the statistics on the promotion process). The first workshop will be held in June 2010 prior to the next promotion round.

Consideration will be given at a later stage to extending the process to post docs in general. This ties in with guidance on 'informal' activities' and comes under banner of visibility.

The response to these activities will be monitored by the Juno and RA Committees, and a review of the usefulness of this activity as well as identifying new champions to lead it, will take place annually.

#### **2.6 Length of time to promotion**

To follow up whether there are any M/F differences in length of time to promotion taking into account career breaks and part time working. From Statistics Table 8 it seems that once in the system women move through it at a healthy pace although they are entering the system at a later age on lectureships.

The statistics will continue to be monitored by the Departmental Administrator who will report on them at HoGs.

### **3 Career Development-support and encouragement**

#### ***Mentoring***

##### **3.1 Mentoring of all Staff Groups**

The recent staff opinion survey has supported the need for mentoring at all staff levels. The survey showed that informal mentoring worked well for 61%/58% M/F /post docs and 72%/60% M/F academic staff. Survey indicates a high percentage of academics are willing to act as mentors as well as mentees. However, we need to find out more about where academic staff are getting good informal mentoring from. Most usually such mentoring is an ad hoc response to an individual need. The Department is concerned that the individuals who most need mentoring are the least likely to put themselves forward.

The mentoring scheme will be overseen by the Juno Committee but the action plan will aim to engage the professoriate in the mentoring process, to act as mentors for more junior staff groups. The Juno Committee will hold meetings with the professoriate from the Autumn 2009 to explore these issues and engage them more fully with the Swan action plan.

##### **3.2 Maximising use the PRDP Information**

HoGs have agreed to produce a summary of staff and RA issues as a result of reading and signing off on all PRDP documents. The summaries will be forwarded to the Departmental Administrator who will collate them for the HoD's attention. This is currently best practice for administrative and technical staff performed within the HoD office and the Department as a whole wants to adopt the procedure more widely. The RA Committee has expressed strong support for this action.

#### ***Post grads***

##### **3.3 Communication between staff groups PG, RA and Lectureship staff**

Physics surveyed female PGs (following the IoP visit) in 2005 and again in March 2009. One of the key PG requests is better linkage to/communication with female RAs, fellowship holders and junior academic staff so that they could be more informed about career / family issues.

The RA Committee departmental representatives will champion this activity to oversee better linkage between RA and PG committees and they plan to have one Departmental event per year to network these groups together i.e. female PG, RA and academic staff. First event to be held Spring 2010. The Director of PG studies will monitor progress.

#### ***Post Doctoral Research Associates***

##### **3.4 Better Engagement with the PRDP**

The Departmental Administrator will monitor the uptake of dedicated training within Physics provided by College Staff Development for line managers and RAs on how to make the most of the PRDP process. All line managers and RAs should attend the PRDP workshop. The process will start from Spring 2010.

The Departmental Administrator will interact directly with the RA Committee from Autumn 2009 to produce a document, that provides transparent information about what the PRDP is for and what happens to the forms once they are completed. The documents will be produced by Summer 2010. Links to appropriate sites from the RA Committee web site will be put in place by Autumn 2010 by the Departmental Administrator.

### **3.5 RA Achievement Document**

The Wakeham review has identified Physics departments to be particularly RA labour intensive and the career structure for RAs in Physics as particularly difficult. One problem is access to feedback from a senior and experienced academic who is independent from the milestones and deliverables associated with the specific project the RA is employed to deliver, who is able to give feedback on where individuals stand in terms of fellowships and academic career prospects. This is an action that the RA Committee welcome.

The action plan is that individual RAs are invited to produce a one page achievement summary, alongside their PRDP. Both documents will be submitted forward to the line manager, but both will also be reviewed by the HoG. If the HoG is the PI on the grant supporting the RA, then the deputy HoG will take his/her place.

The HoGs will champion this activity, reporting on progress at HoGs meetings. The RA Committee have to monitor uptake by RAs of the opportunity for independent feedback based on the achievement summary. This activity will be piloted in 2010 by one or two groups (HoG volunteers) and rolled out across the Department in 2011 if there is a positive response from RAs.

### **3.6 Buddy Scheme for RAs**

The RA Committee will run a buddy scheme to pair up new RAs with a more experienced RA in the Department. This will be set up and rolled out in 2010.

### **3.7 Training For Female RAs**

An identified problem, is the fact that RAs are not willing (and perhaps do not have strong line manager support), to attend professional skills training. Better communication with PIs who employ RAs that sending RAs on a number of one day workshops per year is constructive. The action will be for the HoD to disseminate this message at staff meetings, starting from Autumn 2009.

A preliminary meet has been held with the HR Staff Development Advisor (Research Staff) and RAs. An early action item (September 2009) will be to use the College facilities to put on an afternoon "taster training package session" to engage female RAs and create a community across the Department. Liaison will be between the Staff Development Advisor and the Departmental Administrator.

The RA Committee is coordinating activities across the Department so that all RAs in Physics have an opportunity to meet senior personnel in the post-doc development centre. The RA committee is also collating feedback from post-docs who have used the centre's facilities already. The feedback from these activities will be pasted onto the RA Committee website and also presented by the chair of the RA Committee to HoGs – annually. Starting June 2010.

*Academic staff*

### **3.8 Training**

Training in (people, project, finance management) and mentoring (academic coaching) are areas that emerge from the survey as areas where academic staff want training, and this is even higher for female academics.

Meetings with female staff since the survey have supported these views and part of the action plan will be to put these tasks in place.

The first action will be to run a mini Development Centre (run through the HR staff development unit) on all aspects of training and coaching as a short course to explore the issues and cover the basics. To be delivered by summer 2010. This action will be championed by the HR Learning and Development consultant, who is a member of the Juno Committee and also has been involved with the two hugely successful College run residential staff development workshops for non professorial academic women. A more comprehensive training plan for academic staff based on survey results and the experience from the College residential courses, will also be put in place for 2010/11 by the HR Learning and Development consultant.

## **4 Culture**

### **4.1 Departmental Communications**

A communications problem was identified through the survey. People do not use the College or Departmental websites although they do use email, and attend Departmental functions which are put on regularly (several a term) and are well attended. New email "Departmental news" bulletins will keep the Department informed regularly of all new items, actions and community oriented news.

The Departmental Administrator will be responsible for the Departmental News bulletin – which will be started Autumn 2009.

New web sites have been created by Departmental Administrator (on Flexible working, Juno committee, promotions, Staff JDs, etc. These sites all need to be populated, kept up to date and promoted to the Department and elsewhere. Departmental Administrator will be responsible for this.

The HoD will aim to create an inclusive environment by encouraging people to report these activities to the Department on these sites. The HoD also will also continue to flag up new news at Departmental Staff Meetings.

Also the Department web site will promote the Imperial College nursery (and paternity leave, Ellie Widdowson fellowships, part and flexi time work) on web sites and in documentation about the Department. Departmental Administrator will be responsible for this ongoing activity.

Future departmental surveys will examine whether these activity have improved the communications situation and then on the basis of these results the strategy will be re-evaluate. Juno Committee to take responsibility and actions will be ongoing. Next survey will be in January 2011.

### **4.2 Valuing Contributions**

There already exists at College level, a process whereby acknowledgements for teaching, pastoral care, academic achievement etc are made by the awarding of prizes. The action plan is to introduce Departmental level prizes to reward e.g. outreach, good citizenship, administrative roles, and equal opportunities activities.

The HoGs have agreed to participate and encourage nominations for these awards across their groups.

HoD to champion the process, supported by the Departmental Administrator and HoGs. This process will be started in the summer 2010.

## **5 Flexibility**

### **5.1 Teaching Allocation for all with caring responsibilities**

Director of UG studies allocates the teaching in the Department and they will make sure where possible, that those with caring responsibilities (children and elderly) do not have teaching duties at the beginning and end of the working day.

Director of UG studies to report on this action to the Teaching Committee and HoGs.

Formal arrangements for those with caring roles other than young children:

The first action will be to find out how many people in the Department this affects. HoD will communicate by email in the summer 2009 to all staff and ask them to inform the Departmental Administrator. It will also be flagged up at the Autumn Term 2009 Departmental Staff Meeting. Once the statistics are better established it will be discussed at HoGs. The information will be made available to College HR by June 2010, together with any suggestions on how College guidance could be modified.

### **5.2 Career Breaks**

The provision of advice / information prior to leave is mainly provided by College HR. The Departmental female academic network has only recently been formed (2 meetings) – but an action on them will be to provide much more local informal support and advice on how to manage the maternity leave process. Action plan would be to engage female academic network and also male colleagues with young children to set up an advisory group to guide male and female staff through this process. The Juno Committee will oversee this process by setting up a meeting with all staff in the Department with young children to find volunteers willing to form an advisory group.

Our current cover arrangements during leave are not as good as they could be. The formal teaching aspects are dealt with efficiently at Departmental level by the Director of Undergraduate Studies. The proper provision of staff cover in order to deal with overseeing of research activities, supervision of students etc., is currently much less well monitored centrally. The action plan here would be to modify the maternity / paternity leave form to add these items and that the Departmental Administrator and the HoGs monitor the uptake of these roles by the named individuals who have agreed to cover specific tasks. The Departmental Administrator will champion this process supported by group administrators.

### **5.3 Promoting work life balance within the Department**

The survey showed that the Department provides a supportive and responsive environment for academic work and that the majority of staff are stimulated by their work and well integrated into the departmental community.

We have a number of success stories where people have progressed through the academic career structure whilst formally working part time or more usually taking advantage of the departmental approach to flexitime. Given that the departmental culture is so positive, it will make more of this on its web sites and through the Institute of Physics Juno connections. HoD and HoGs will take the lead on this beginning from the Autumn 2009.