



## GENOVATE

Transforming Organisational Culture for Gender Equality in Research and Innovation

### NO. 5. ESTABLISH A CROSS UNIVERSITY WORKING GROUP ON MANAGING MATERNITY/FAMILY LEAVE.

1/9 OF GENOVATE'S GENDER EQUALITY ACTIONS FOR UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK, IRELAND

#### RATIONALE

GENOVATE conducted a survey in July and September 2014 to investigate maternity leave culture and practice across the University (*see* [Research Note](#) and [Working Paper](#) by N. Maxwell and L. Connolly). The survey identified some strengths, for example, positive experiences regarding support with administrative aspects of taking maternity leave were widely evident — and also challenges. Some were specific, for example, the lack of clarity regarding leave entitlements for research staff on funded contracts and shortfalls in maternity leave cover. Others were more diffuse, for example, maternity leave practice and culture (in terms of support, workload and attitudes) was found to differ between departments (leaving women dependent on the informal benevolence and sympathy of line managers and colleagues). Yet managing maternity more fairly is in all our interests — existing maternity leave culture and practice may be limiting (i) the career progression of individual women and (ii) the creative potential of the University more broadly (*see* [Action 7](#)).

#### CONTENT OF ACTION

Establish a cross University working group on maternity/family leave to develop a *Code of Practice on Managing Maternity & Family Leave* (for review by the reporting and monitoring mechanism proposed to be established within Annual Strategic Plan 2015/16 (*see* [Action 1](#)) including the following:

- (i) Measures to address gaps in staffing due to maternity leave;
- (ii) A standardised and comprehensive approach to the organisation and management of maternity leave within UCC and its research institutes;
- (iii) An enhanced holistic approach to maternity leave including planning for maternity leave, agreed contact arrangements during leave and provisions for return to work post-leave;
- (iv) Information and direction on how maternity leave should be taken into account in promotion and progression processes;
- (v) Training for line managers and Heads of Departments/School regarding how maternity leave is managed and discussed at

local level;

(vi) A triangulated procedure for managing leave that involves all three parties — staff member, HR and line manager — to facilitate coherence between institutional and local policy and practice.

#### WHAT YOU CAN DO...

**LEARN** more about this action *see* GENOVATE's [Guiding Principles](#) on Managing Maternity Leave.

**SHARE** this (and other [briefing notes](#)) with your colleagues.

**INFLUENCE:** raise the actions in decision-making and mobilise support for their implementation.

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