



L-Università ta' Malta  
Faculty for Social Wellbeing

# Gender Audit

## DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

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L-Università ta' Malta  
Faculty for Social Wellbeing



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## Gender audit

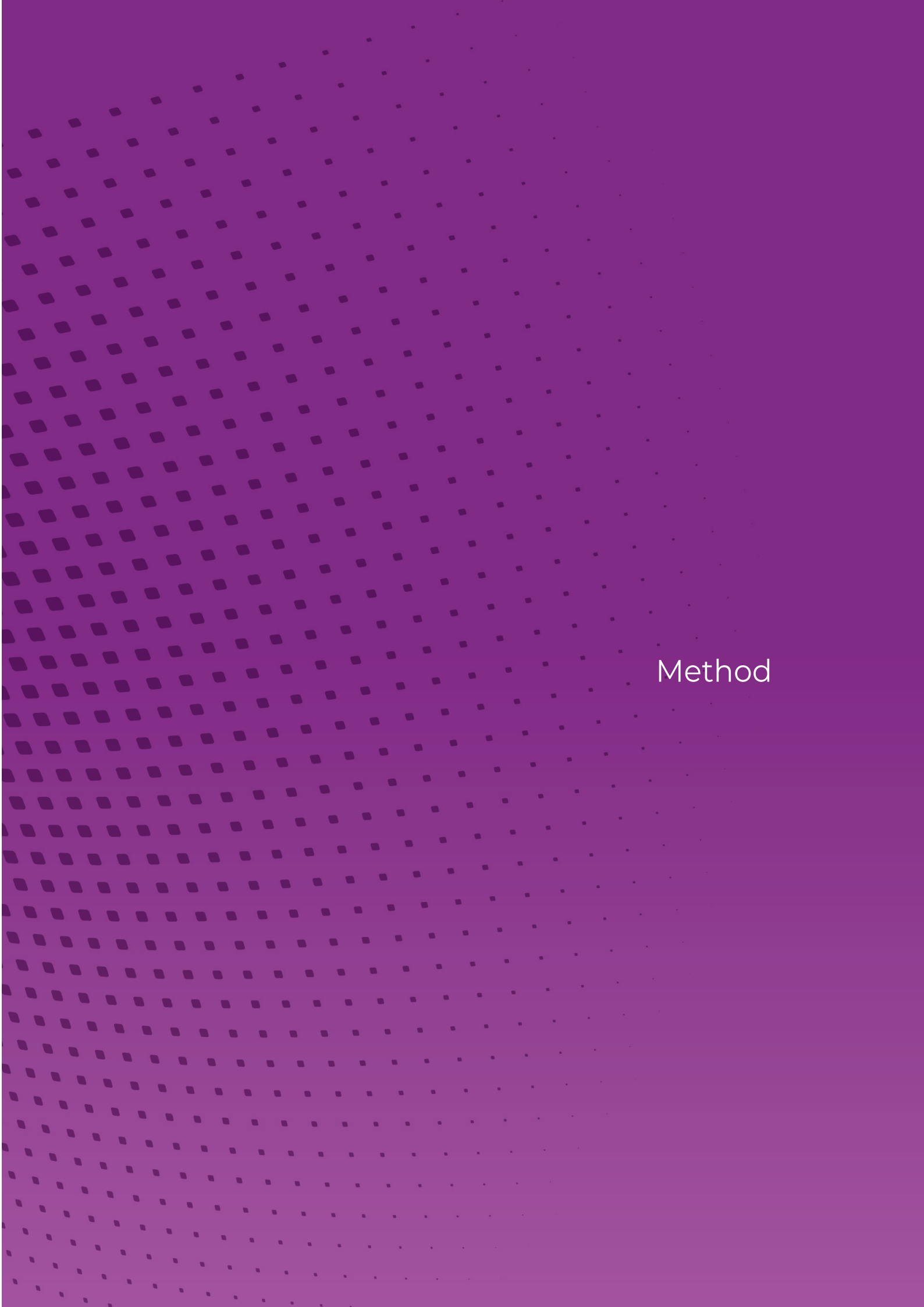
As we navigate through myriad social challenges identifying the obstacles that are being created is an important role of the Faculty. In this study, which was spearheaded by the Department of Gender and Sexualities, we have managed to identify some of the factors that are creating an obstacle to inclusion in the Faculty. This Gender Audit will most certainly create a ripple effect and instigate reflection and potential changes in other UM entities. This study has already been shared with the Rectorate, and Senate has drawn lessons from this research. This study is a catalyst in flagging inequalities created by the system. However, as academics we are dutybound to act to bring about the necessary changes.

**Prof. Andrew Azzopardi**

Dean

Faculty for Social Wellbeing





Method

Data obtained from the University of Malta website were retrieved during June-September 2018. Data collection consisted of manually reviewing lists of staff names and assigning these to a discrete category of female or male. The resulting data show varying degrees of gender balance for the respective categories.

### THE UNIVERSITY

The University of Malta is made up of fourteen faculties, as well as numerous interdisciplinary institutes, centres, schools and a junior college. The gender distribution of academic staff varies considerably across faculties at the University (see figure 1), with the majority of faculties composed of more male academic staff than female - the only exceptions being the Faculties of Health Sciences and Social Wellbeing, respectively. NB. The below chart relates only to faculties - the institutes, centres, and schools are not included here for reasons of practicality. See the table on p.7 for a summary of the gender distribution of directors of these interdisciplinary entities.

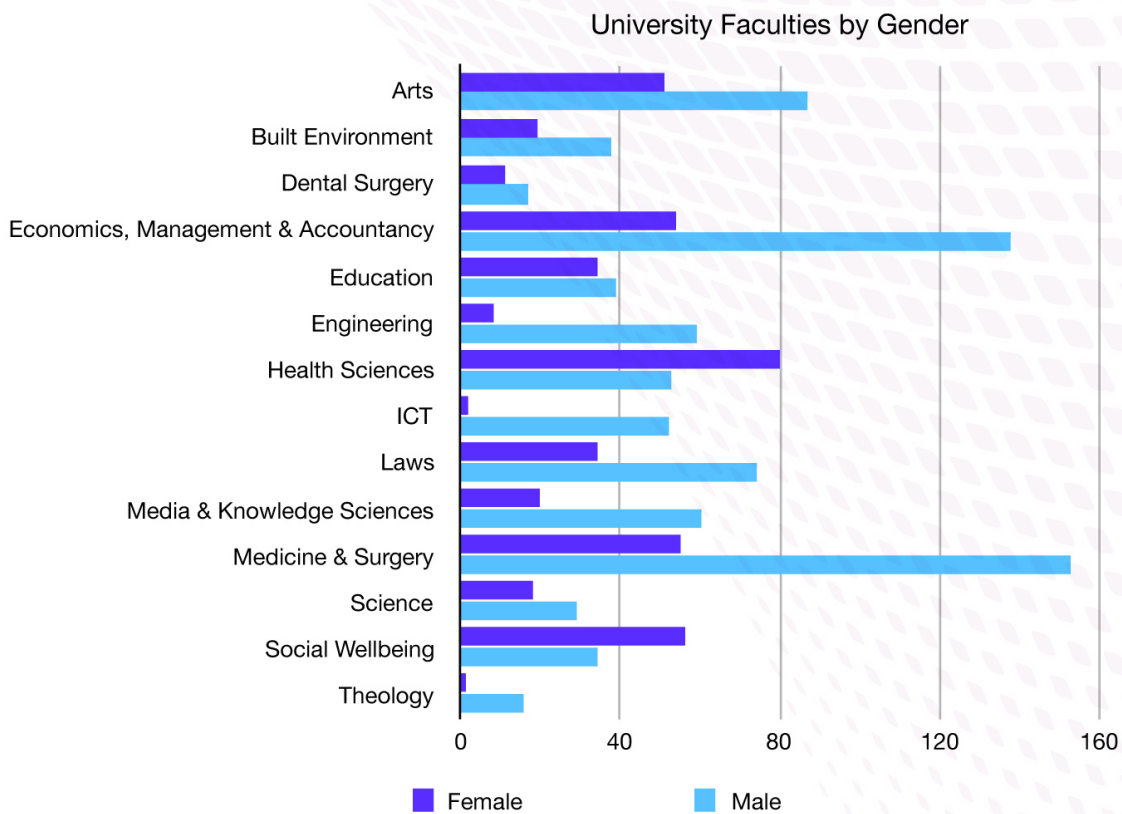


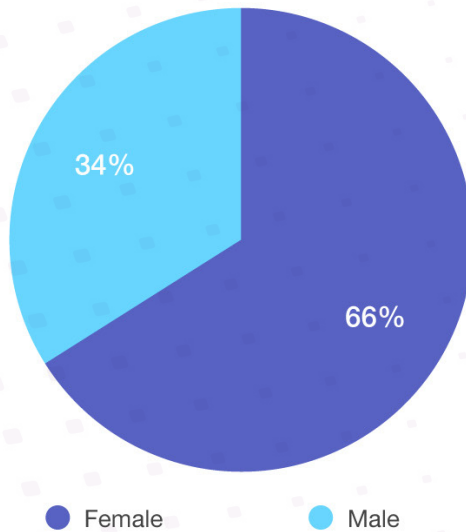
Figure 1: University Faculties - Academic Staff by Gender. Data correct as of September 2018.



**FACULTY FOR SOCIAL WELLBEING**

The gender distribution of staff within the Faculty for Social Wellbeing is shown here. Staff members considered in these figures include Academic Staff as well as Administrative & Support Staff.

**Faculty for Social Wellbeing Staff by Gender**

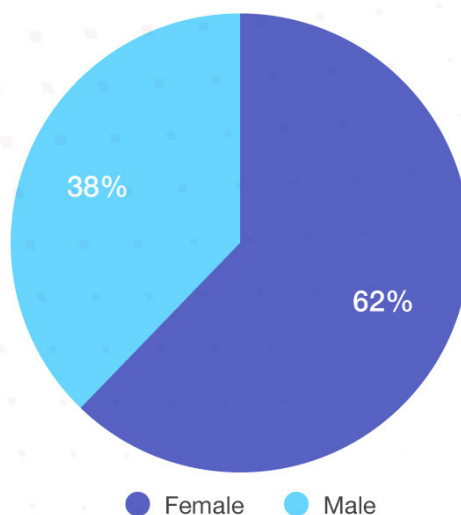


**Faculty for Social Wellbeing Staff by Gender**

GENDER	NUMBER
Female	70
Male	36

When observing the gender distribution of Academic Staff members of the Faculty for Social Wellbeing, this is very similar to the overall distribution of all staff members in the Faculty:

**Faculty for Social Wellbeing by Gender - Academic Staff**



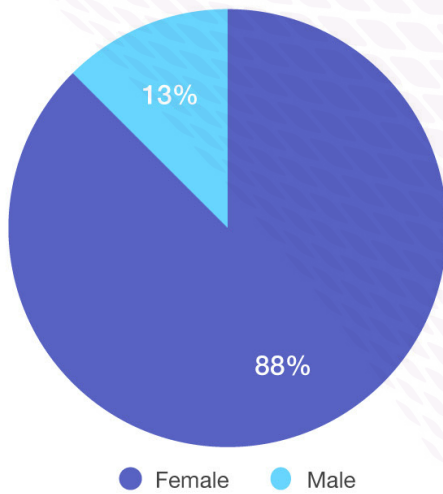


### Faculty for Social Wellbeing by Gender - Academic Staff

GENDER	NUMBER
Female	56
Male	34

Staff members employed within Administrative/Technical/Support positions, including Research Support Officers, are overwhelmingly female:

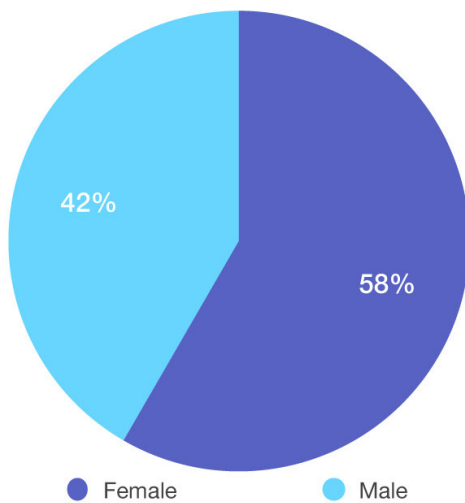
### Faculty for Social Wellbeing by Gender - Admin/Support Staff



GENDER	NUMBER
Female	14
Male	2

The Faculty Board for the FSW demonstrates a fairly equal gender distribution, with slightly more females than males:

### Faculty Board - Social Wellbeing by Gender



### Faculty Board - Social Wellbeing by Gender

GENDER	NUMBER
Female	14
Male	10

**ACADEMIC STAFF: FACULTY FOR SOCIAL WELLBEING COMPARED TO THE TOTAL UNIVERSITY**

When looking at the gender distribution of Academic Staff within the Faculty according to employment type, it is evident that an inverse relationship exists, when compared to the same data for the University of Malta as a whole:

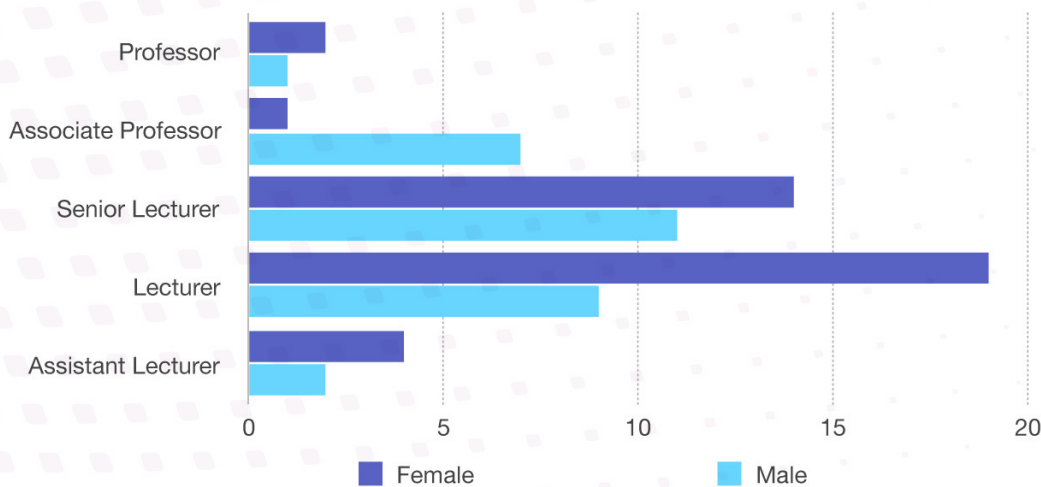
FSW Academic Staff Gender by Employment

	Female	Male
Professor	2	1
Associate Professor	1	7
Senior Lecturer	14	11
Lecturer	19	9
Assistant Lecturer	4	2
Total	40	30

Total University Academic Staff by Employment

	Male	Female
Professor	84	15
Associate Professor	90	27
Senior Lecturer	129	52
Lecturer	97	83
Assistant Lecturer	41	52
Total	441	229

FSW Male/Female Academics

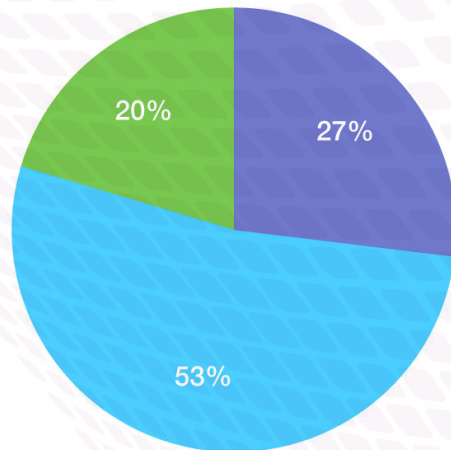


(N.B. Data for Total University Academic Staff by Employment obtained from a presentation delivered by the University of Malta Academic Staff Association (UMASA) on the Gender Pay Gap in June 2018 at the UoM.)

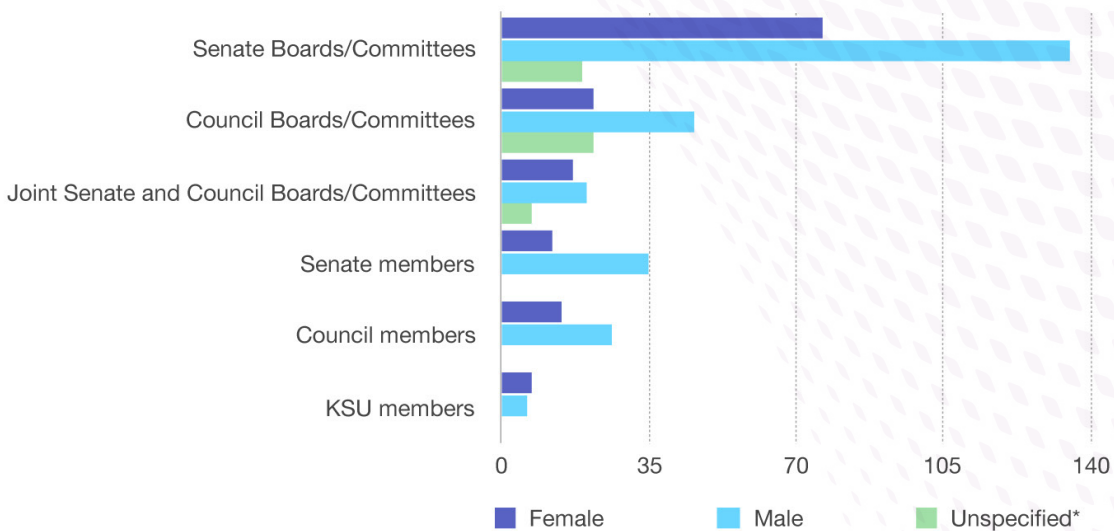
### GENDER COMPOSITION IN DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS

Individuals forming part of Senate and Council Boards and Committees are listed below. Note that the category 'Unspecified' refers to instances where gender cannot be determined due to such positions which do not refer to a particular individual - e.g. 'student representative' or 'Dean or delegate'.

UoM Boards and Committees by Gender



● Female ● Male ● Unspecified



**SUMMARY OF BOARDS & COMMITTEES**

	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Unspecified*</i>
Senate Boards/Committees	76	135	19
Council Boards/Committees	22	46	22
Joint Senate and Council Boards/Committees	17	20	7
Senate members	12	35	
Council members	14	26	
KSU members	7	6	

**Detailed statistics for the above Summary of Boards & Committees can be found below:**

<i>Joint Senate and Council Boards/Committees</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Unspecified*</i>
Academic Promotions Board	1	4	
ACCESS Disability Support Committee Committee for Safeguarding	11	4	2
the Code of Professional Conduct	1	3	1
Research Fund Committee	3	5	2
Visiting Lecturers & External Examiners Committee	1	4	2
University Honours Committee	0		
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>7</b>

<i>Council Boards/Committees</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Unspecified*</i>
Academic Resources Funds Committee	2	3	6
Board of Discipline (Administrative, Technical and Industrial Staff)	1	2	
Committee for Gender Issues	8	5	
Committee to consider extension of appointments of Academic Staff	1	5	1
Finance Committee	1	4	2
Further Training and Work Resources Fund Committee for Support Staff	1	1	4
IT Services Committee	0	6	1
Medical Board for University Safety Committee	2	2	
Staff Affairs Committee	1	7	
Staff Scholarships and Bursaries Committee	1	4	3
Student Affairs Committee (including Travel Grants, Bursaries, Scholarships)	3	4	2
University House Liaison Committee	1	3	3
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>22</b>



### Directors of Institutes, Centres, & Schools

	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>
Institutes	4	15
Centres	2	8
Schools	1	1

### FACULTY FOR SOCIAL WELLBEING - SELECTED CANDIDATES BY GENDER

During the two years prior to this study (2017 & 2018), the Faculty issued 15 calls for applicants of various positions of employment. The table below shows the number of female and male applicants for each position, as well as the gender of the selected candidates:

Faculty for Social Wellbeing - Selected candidates by gender.

Post	Female applicants	Male applicants	Selected
Research Support Officer II/III	6	1	F,F
Research Support Officer II	11	7	M
Lecturer	0	2	M
Lecturer	4	0	F
Lecturer	4	4	F
Lecturer	3	1	F
Lecturer	5	1	F
Lecturer	8	3	F
Lecturer	5	3	F
Assistant Lecturer	7	0	F
Assistant Lecturer	13	3	F
Assistant Lecturer	5	1	F
Assistant Lecturer	5	0	F
Assistant Lecturer	6	1	F

The data clearly demonstrates that female applicants were successful in being appointed for the majority of positions (13 out of 15), with the exception of two calls: one position as Lecturer for which there were no female applicants, and a position of Research Support Officer II which attracted a relatively high number of both male and female applicants. However, it is important to note that most (10 out of 15) positions had at least 50% more female applicants than male applicants. It is therefore difficult to draw any conclusions from the gender equality perspective with regards to the Faculty's hiring preferences.



## Conclusions

These figures demonstrate that the Academic Staff positions within the Faculty for Social Wellbeing are made up of double the number of females as males, although more males occupy the position of Associate Professor than females (5 compared to 2). The inverse can be seen when observing the gender distribution of Academic Staff in all Faculties/Centres/Institutes at the University of Malta. Moreover, when taking all staff members (Academic, Administrative and Support Staff) of the Faculty for Social Wellbeing into account, the gender distribution is similar to that of Academic Staff, with 68% females and 32% males.

With regards to decision-making positions (Senate and Council Boards and Committees) at the University, females are greatly under-represented (Female=140, Male=274, Unspecified=106), with the most noticeable exception of the Committee for Gender Issues and the ACCESS Disability Support Committee. It is noteworthy that in the case of decision-making positions, females would still be outnumbered by males in the event that all unspecified positions were occupied by females, as this would result in 246 females and 274 males.





## Questionnaire outcomes

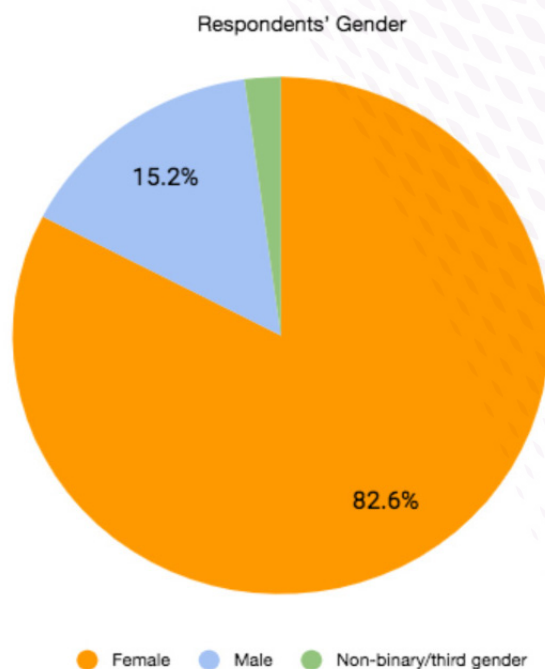
## PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

An online questionnaire was created using Google Forms in order to gather data from staff members working within the Faculty for Social Wellbeing. This questionnaire was designed with the intention of understanding more about gender equality with regards to career progression in the Faculty. After obtaining ethical clearance from the Faculty Research Ethics Committee, the questionnaire was distributed to all staff members working within the Faculty - including academic staff, administrative and support staff, and research staff. A total of 46 staff members out of a possible 116 successfully completed the questionnaire, giving a response rate of 40%. The data may therefore be biased due to a high non-response rate. One individual's responses were excluded from the final results, due to incomplete responses.

Females comprise the vast majority of respondents' identified gender (38 out of 46), with 7 identifying as male and 1 individual identifying as non-binary or third gender. This gender composition closely resembles that of the entire population of the staff members working with the Faculty for Social Wellbeing, where 72% are female and 33% are male. In comparison, the entire University of Malta is composed of 441 males (66%) and 229 females (34%), showing an inverse gender composition to that of the Faculty for Social Wellbeing (UMASA, 2018).

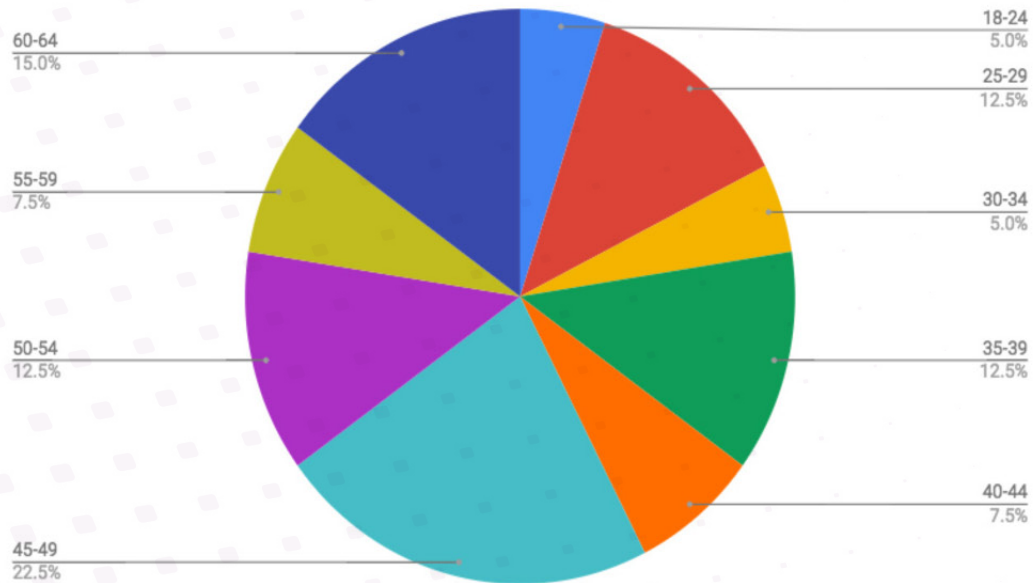
Most respondents fell between the age ranges of 45-49 years (22.5%), 60-64 years (15%), 25-29 years (12.5%), 35-39 years (12.5%), and 50-54 years (12.5%). The less common age ranges include those aged 18-24 years old (5%) and 30-34 years (5%), followed by 40-44 years (7.5%) and 55-59 years (7.5%).

Respondents currently employed as academic members of staff consisted of 33 individuals, with 11 administrative/technical/support staff members participating in the questionnaire and a further two respondents employed in both categories.



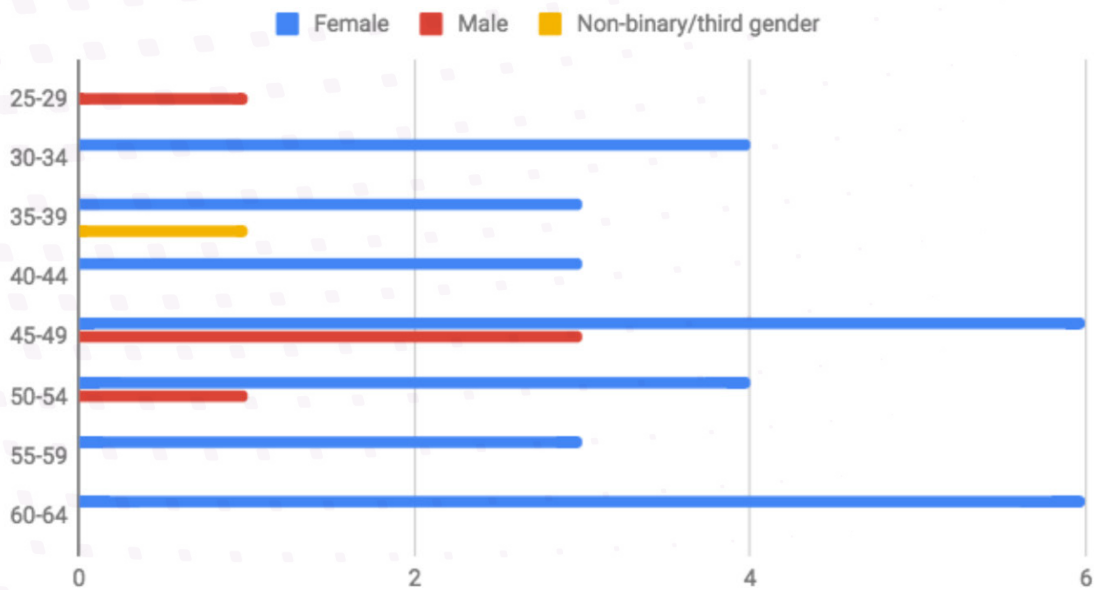
The age

Age ranges of respondents



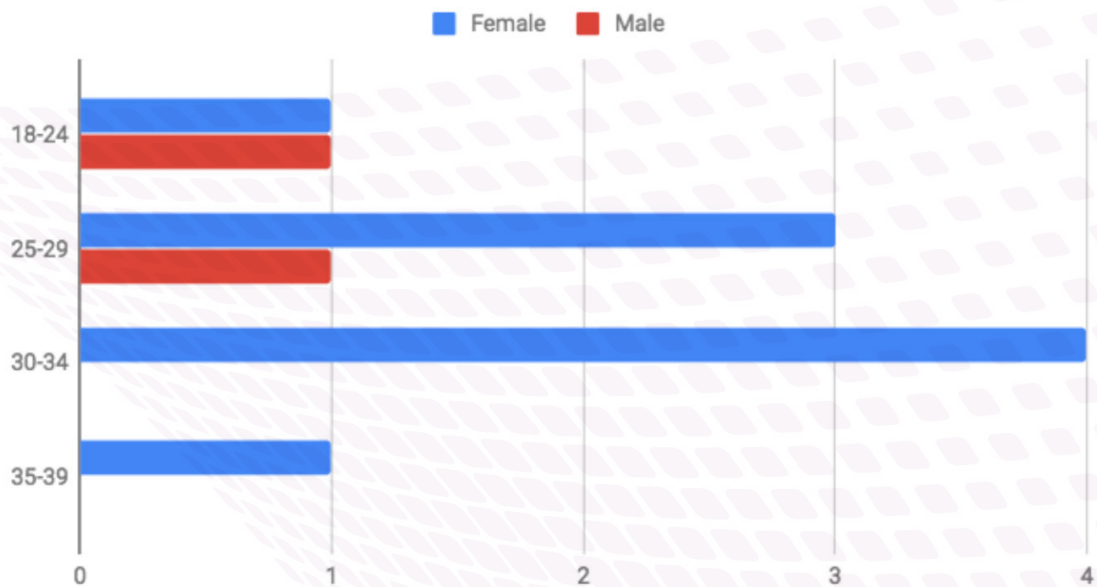
The age distribution of academic staff and administrative/technical/support staff (including research support officers) are shown separately in the charts below. N.B. Individuals currently employed in both categories are included in the category of 'academic staff' to avoid being counted as duplicates.

Age distribution of academic staff





## Age distribution of administrative/technical/support staff



The above charts demonstrate that, out of 38 female respondents, the youngest age range of female academic staff is 30-35 years. Whilst only one male academic staff member is aged between 25-29, it would be interesting for future research to investigate whether any discrepancy exists for other Faculties with regards to the gender distribution of early career academics.

### DURATION OF EMPLOYMENT

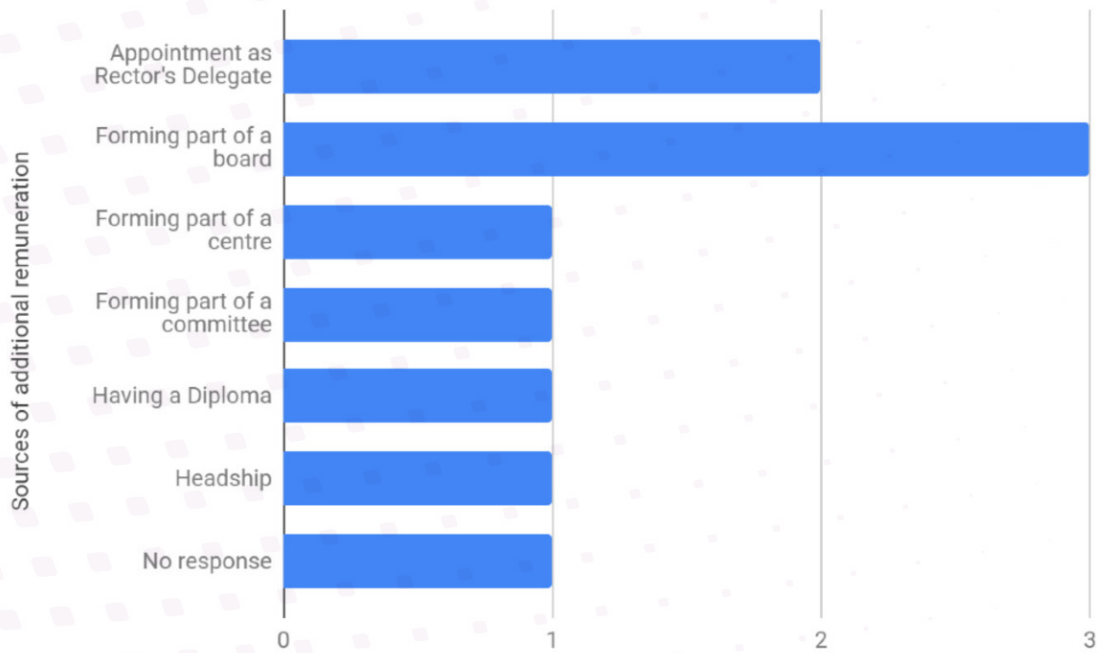
The duration of employment for individuals currently employed as academic staff dates back to the earliest year of 1988, with two academics having been employed with the University for the past 31 years. Duration of employment of all academic staff is shown in the table below:

**Table 1: Academic staff duration of employment at the University of Malta**

	Female	Male
<1 year	2	
1-3 years	6	2
4-6 years	3	
7-9 years	2	1
10-12 years	4	
13-15 years	2	
16-19 years	1	
>20 years	8	1

**ADDITIONAL REMUNERATION**

Participants were also asked to disclose whether they receive additional remuneration from the University, apart from their main salary. Nine participants (20% of total respondents) receive additional remuneration; 8 of whom are currently employed as academic staff, and 1 administrative/technical/support staff member. One male academic staff member stated that they receive additional remuneration due to forming part of a board; the remainder of participants receiving additional remuneration were female. The reasons for participants receiving additional remuneration are displayed in the chart below:



N.B. One respondent stated that they receive additional remuneration for both forming part of a board and for forming part of a committee. The respondent who receives additional remuneration for having a diploma is employed in the administrative/technical/support category.

It may be worth noting that none of those employees who currently receive additional remuneration thought that the University is not gender equal in terms of career progression - six believe the University to be a gender equal employer, whilst three provided answers that were categorised as 'other/no answer/unsure'.



## QUALITATIVE RESULTS

Staff members were asked to provide their opinion about whether the University of Malta is an equal opportunity employer with respect to career progression (“Overall, do you consider the University of Malta as an equal opportunity employer with respect to career progression?”). The response was open-ended, and results show that the majority (27 individuals, 59%) of respondents wrote ‘yes’, indicating that they consider the University to be an equal opportunity employer with respect to career progression. Some respondents further qualified their responses by providing a reason;

*“I would think so. I have not had experiences which would make me think the opposite.”*

*“Yes. I have never had any problems in this area.”*

*“Yes, but this is just a perception. I have no data at hand or personal experience so far that would lead me to think otherwise.”*

A total of ten respondents (22%) answered ‘no’ to indicate that they do not believe that the University is an equal opportunity employer with respect to career progression, with some elaborating to provide a brief explanation for their opinion;

*“No, all you have to do is see how many women or persons who do not identify as binary there are in higher up and higher paid positions as compared to men.”*

*“No empirical evidence - But my impression in ‘No’.”*

Two respondents chose not to answer this question, whilst the remainder of participants’ responses (7 individuals, 15%) were categorised as ‘other’ due to not taking any definite stance on the topic;

*“Not always.”*

*“I think more can be done to support women in their career progression. Furthermore, criteria for promotion need to be broader recognising the diversity of contributions of different academics.”*

*“The UOM does not take into account that women have to carry a backpack when compared to males in terms of caring for their children and their parents during midlife.”*

The above responses indicate that participants might believe that women are at a disadvantage compared to men when it comes to career progression at the University. Other responses point towards a dissatisfaction with the criteria for career progression in general, regardless of gender-related issues;

*“I can’t tell however I don’t feel that career progression is prioritised.”*

*“To apply for a promotion, you need to have a number of years’ experience. It should also be based on the type of work you do and the number of students you deal with.”*

*“Unsure - in terms of gender, at any rate.”*

*"No and not with respect to gender but with respect to the fact that it's who you are and know that counts."*

In addition to their views on the University as an equal opportunity employer, staff members were also asked to share their perceptions of career progression in general at the University of Malta ("Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your perceptions or experiences of career progression at the University of Malta?"). The majority of respondents (28 individuals, 61%) did not have anything further to add, whilst seven respondents (19%) expressed concerns with regards to gender related issues, and another 11 respondents (24%) described other difficulties with regards to career progression.

Participants who noted gender related issues pointed to the ways in which career progression is dependent on factors that may put female staff members at a disadvantage due to family commitments, as well as the perception that female academics devote more effort to community engagement than men;

*"Promotions are based on 1. getting your doctorate - if has to be done abroad women have more difficulty leaving family than men - especially if doing it f/t - men therefore tend to get their phd before the women; 2. publications - whilst this would appear to be gender neutral I suspect that more women are involved in community engagement than men - this is important academic work but is not given its due weight in promotion criteria - it also takes time away from writing for publication."*

*"There are still institutional structures that benefit men as seen by the gender ratio in higher positions."*

*"Women care more for their students and their colleagues than men and are more dedicated for the common good than men are. The latter seem to be more focused on their own career progression."*

However, it is important to note that these responses are the subjective views of the study's participants; the perception that female staff members are more caring towards students or colleagues is not grounded in empirical evidence.

The fact that females' career progression might suffer due to working on a reduced-hours basis (presumably in order to devote more time to caring for children or family members) was also indicated as an issue;

*"Perhaps women who are on reduced hours might find it difficult to progress."*

*"Women especially those working reduced hours end up being left out of promotions since they do not work on full time basis."*

It is worth noting that, out of the 15 participants who began their employment with the University on a part-time basis, five had applied for a promotion at some point during their employment; all but one of these were successful in obtaining a promotion, with two out of the four successfully promoted participants securing an advancement to a full-time position.



Finally, some of the participants noted their concerns regarding career progression in general - regardless of gender;

*"It has nothing to do with gender but all to do with the difficulties in having resident posts."*

*"It is not equal for everyone"*

*"It is very unfair"*

*"Recruitment and promotions should be more transparent"*

*"It is exclusively dependent on how many publications you have. Service to the University - like being a Head of Department or Board members, coordinating Master courses is not given as much weight."*

*"I don't feel that the possibility of career progression was ever an option"*

*"I think that the UM should give more value to professional contributions of lecturers other than their academic contribution. I refer to professional contributions both before entering the employ of the UM and ones made during ones employment at UM."*

*"Promotion criteria to Associate Professor require rethinking taking more into account headship, curriculum development and lecturing track record."*

*"I think university is very unfair towards people who have T-posts...but this irrespective of their gender."*

One respondent also mentioned that they felt discriminated against due to the changing of job titles of certain administrative/support/technical positions, since this change effectively resulted in a demotion for them.

## **DATA ANALYSIS BY RESPONDENT TYPE**

The below provides a descriptive analysis of participants' responses to the question "Overall, do you consider the University of Malta as an equal opportunity employer with respect to career progression?" according to other demographic variables. Responses were assigned to one of three possible categories: 'yes' denoting that participants consider the University to be an equal opportunity employer with respect to career progression, 'no' indicating that respondents do not believe that the University provides equal opportunities for career progression, and 'other/no answer/unsure' indicating that participants had other issues with career progression, were not sure, or did not give a response.

## **RESPONSES BY GENDER**

When observing participants' views of how gender equal the University of Malta is with regards to career progression, it is evident that all of the seven males who completed the questionnaire consider the University to be an equal opportunities employer, since they all answered 'yes' to this open-ended question. Furthermore, none of these participants provided any further feedback of their perceptions or experiences of career progression at the University, with the

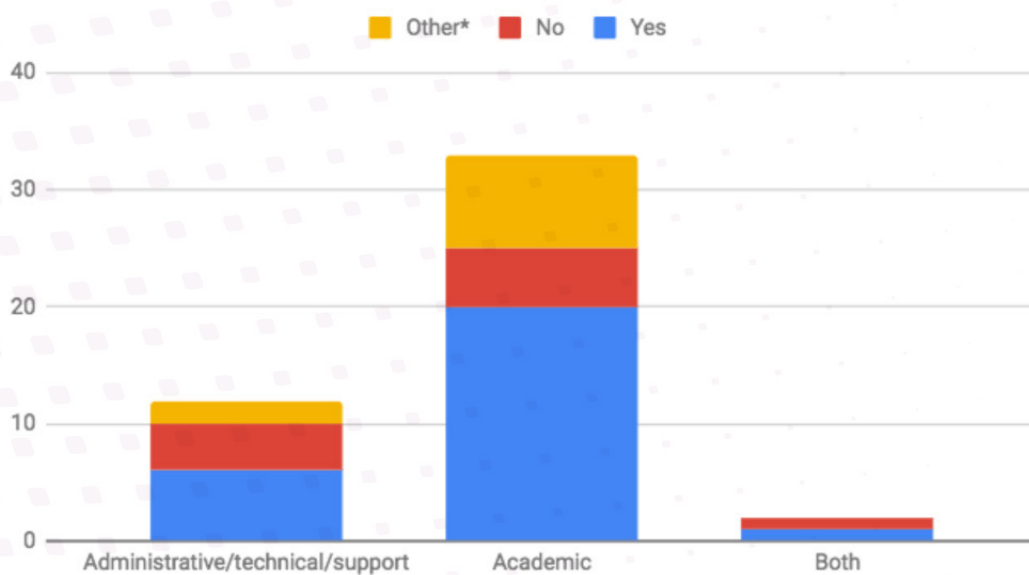


exception of one individual who felt that the promotion criteria required a re-evaluation - however, this was unrelated to gender equality. This is in contrast with responses from female and non-binary staff members, potentially indicating that male staff are unaware of the difficulties perceived by other gendered staff members - although further research is needed to confirm the exact reasons behind this finding.

**RESPONSES BY EMPLOYMENT CATEGORY**

Staff members completing the questionnaire were asked to indicate whether they are currently employed as academic staff or as administrative/technical/support staff (including Research Officers). Respondents consisted of 33 academic staff members, 11 administrative/technical/support staff members, and two staff members employed in both categories. The graph below illustrates how a greater proportion of academic staff consider the University to be an equal opportunity employer ('yes' response), compared to the proportion of administrative/technical/support staff. However, it must be noted that the relatively small sample size is insufficient to conclude that a significant difference exists between the two employment categories; further research is therefore needed to determine whether perceptions of equal opportunity employment differ depending on which category an individual is employed with.

**Equal Employment Perceptions by Employment Category**

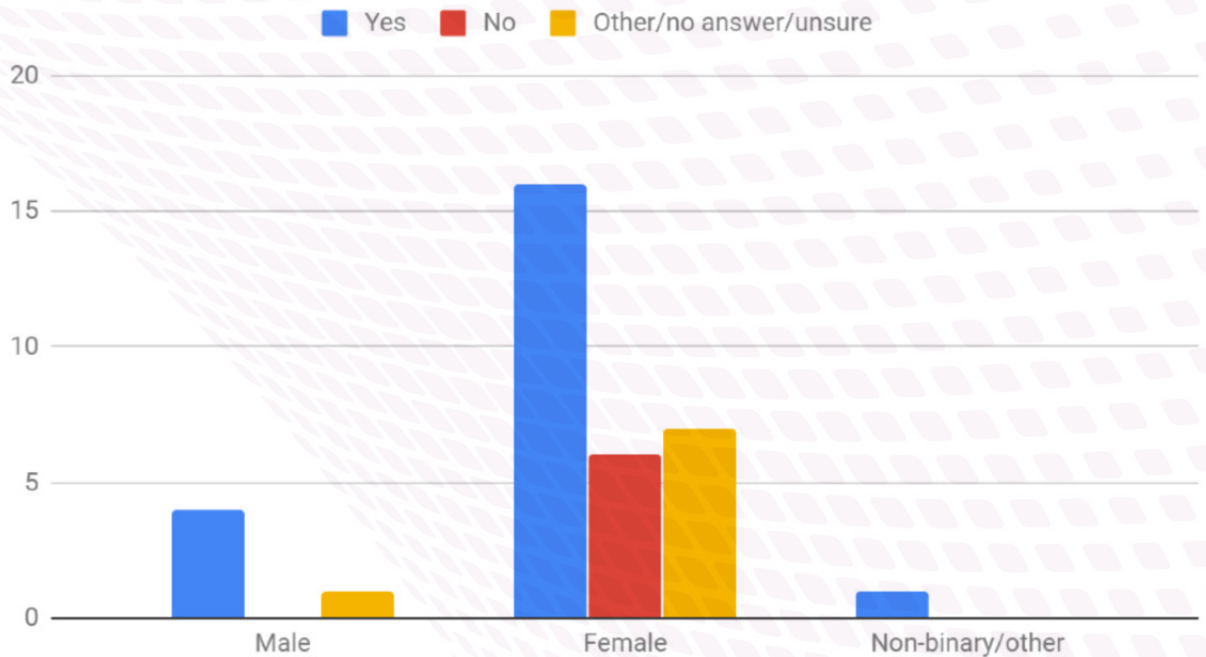


**ACADEMIC STAFF PERCEPTIONS OF EQUAL EMPLOYMENT**

When observing whether gender has an impact on academic staff members' perceptions of the University as an equal opportunities employer, four out of the five male academics consider the University to be an equal opportunity employer with respect to career progression, with one male academic failing to provide any response to the question. The below chart, 'Academic perceptions by gender' summarises the responses provided. The single non-binary gendered academic considered the University to be an equal opportunity employer. Perceptions of female academic staff were mixed - possibly due to the large proportion of female staff members in the Faculty, being reflected in the results. 16 out of the 29 female academic

participants held favourable views of the University as an equal opportunity employer with respect to career progression; Six female academics did not consider career progression to be equal, and a further seven female academics were uncertain or did not provide a response.

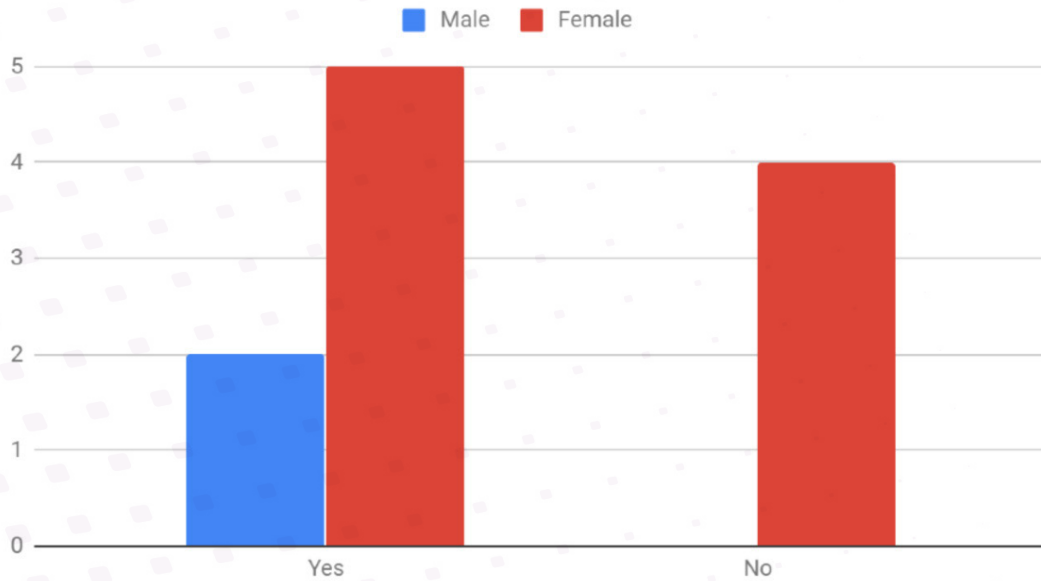
### Academic staff perceptions by gender



### ADMINISTRATIVE/TECHNICAL/SUPPORT STAFF PERCEPTIONS OF EQUAL EMPLOYMENT

Of the administrative/technical/support staff, we see an identical reflection of male academics' perceptions of the University as an equal opportunity employer. Both male participants in this employment category consider the University positively in terms of equal opportunities for employment. Female administrative staff perceptions were less mixed than those of female academic staff, with five holding favourable perceptions and 4 holding unfavourable perceptions of the University as an equal opportunity employer - there were no female administrative staff members who were unsure or sceptical of the University as an equal opportunity employer. See the below chart for a summary of these responses:

### Administrative staff perceptions by gender



#### RESPONSES BY NATIONALITY

The vast majority of staff members who participated in the questionnaire were Maltese nationals, with only two individuals who were EU nationals. Neither of the EU national participants expressed favourable perceptions of the University of Malta as an equal opportunity employer; One participant responded that they do not perceive the University to be an equal opportunity employer, with the other participant declining to answer the question.

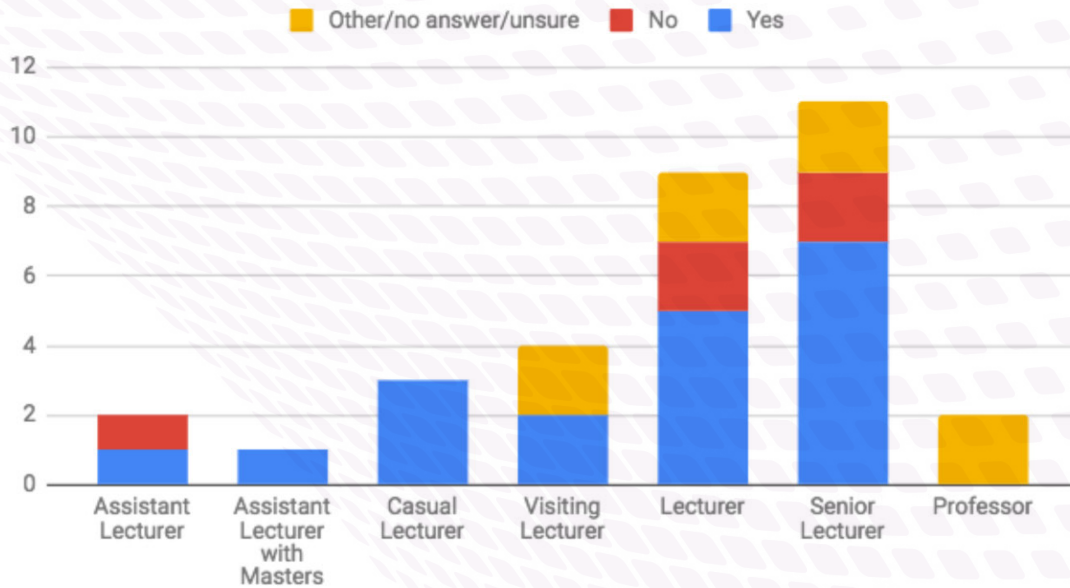
#### RESPONSES BY CURRENT EMPLOYMENT POSITION

The below graph demonstrates that academic staff members' current employment position, and whether they are employed in a higher-ranking position, does not appear to have any obvious positive influence on their perceptions of the University as an equal opportunities employer. If that were the case, then one would expect that individuals employed in lower-ranking positions might hold more negative opinions of the University in terms of equal opportunities for career advancement. Further studies with a larger sample size are needed to confirm whether an individual's current employment position might have any effect on their perceptions of equal opportunities for career advancement.



Sex disaggregated data for the above is also displayed in the table below:

### Responses by current employment position



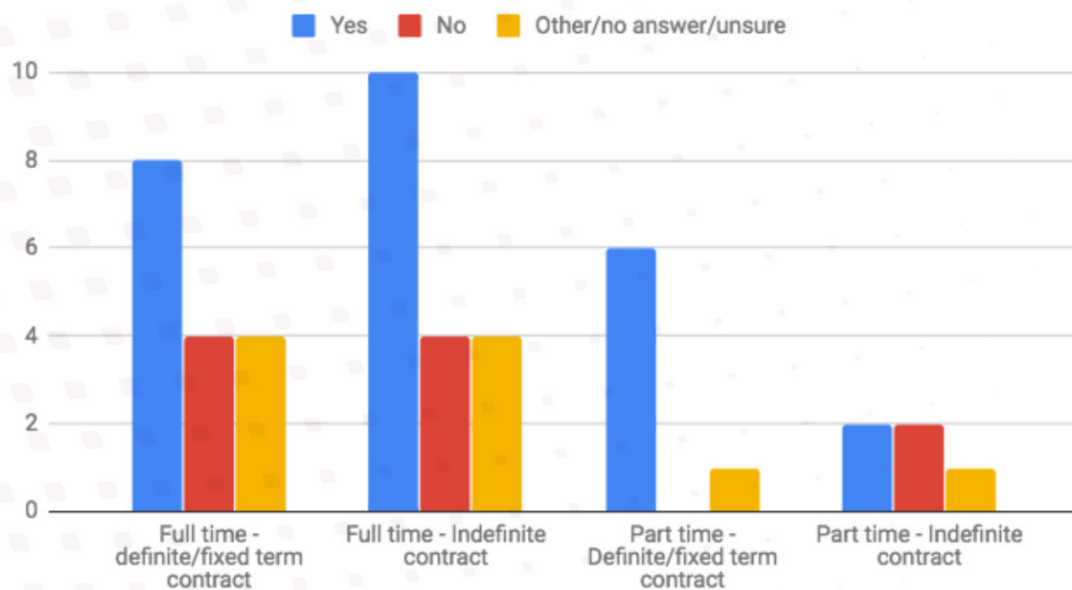
	Yes	No	Other/no answer/unsure
<b>Assistant Lecturer</b>			
- Female	1	1	
- Male			
<b>Assistant Lecturer with Masters</b>			
- Female			
- Male	1		
<b>Casual Lecturer</b>			
- Female	3		
- Male			
<b>Visiting Lecturer</b>			
- Female			2
- Male	1		
- Non-binary/third gender	1		
<b>Lecturer</b>			
- Female	5	2	2
- Male			
<b>Senior Lecturer</b>			
- Female	6	2	2
- Male	2		
<b>Professor</b>			
- Female			1
- Male			1

**RESPONSES BY CURRENT CONTRACT TYPE**

When comparing staff members' perceptions of gender equality in terms of career progression at the University of Malta according to their respective type of employment, an evident difference emerges between those employed on a part-time versus full-time basis (see chart below). Specifically, fewer of those employed on a part time basis (2 out of 12; 1% of total participants) felt that the University is not an equal opportunity employer, compared to their colleagues employed on a full-time basis (8 out of 34; 17% of total participants). This difference appears to contrast with the perceptions of some respondents stated previously, who felt that individuals working on a reduced hours basis were at a disadvantage in terms of career progression.

Another comparison can be made between staff members employed on an indefinite contract and those on a definite/fixed term contract. Twelve individuals (out of 23) employed on an indefinite contract felt that the University offers equal opportunities for career advancement, compared to 14 (out of 23) of those employed on a definite or fixed term contract. The reasons for this slight difference may warrant further investigation to uncover motivations behind participants' responses.

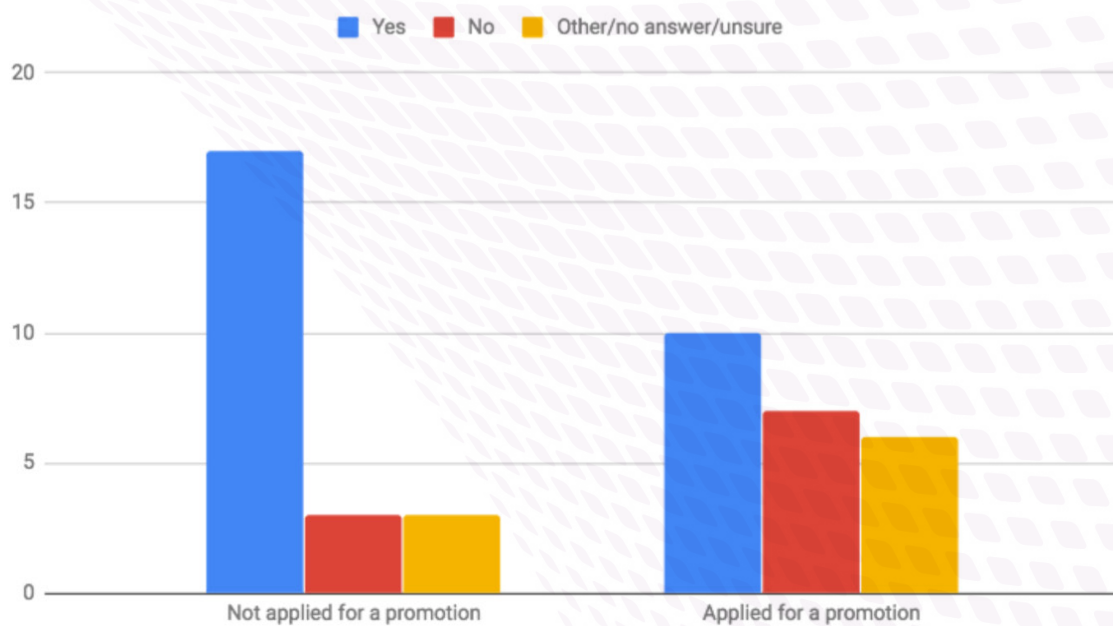
Responses by current contract type



### RESPONSES BY PROMOTION ATTEMPT & APPLICATION OUTCOME

Out of the 23 participants who have never applied for a promotion at the University, the vast majority (17) believe that career progression is equal, regardless of one's gender (see below chart). In contrast, beliefs about gender equality were more mixed and less positive overall in the opinions of participants who have applied for a promotion. This suggests that individuals working at the University's Faculty for Social Wellbeing who have not yet attempted to obtain a promotion may have a more favourable view of gender equal career advancement, possibly due to a lack of unsuccessful attempts at obtaining a promotion. It would be worthwhile to follow these results up with a longitudinal research study, to find out whether such perceptions change once an individual has applied for a promotion.

Responses by promotion attempt



It is useful to note that it is generally accepted as standard practice that an individual who is employed as an assistant lecturer will be successfully promoted to the position of lecturer upon obtaining their PhD. With regards to applying for a promotion to higher positions beyond that of lecturer, the evaluation criteria for such outcomes are subject to a greater deal of discretion by the decision-makers.

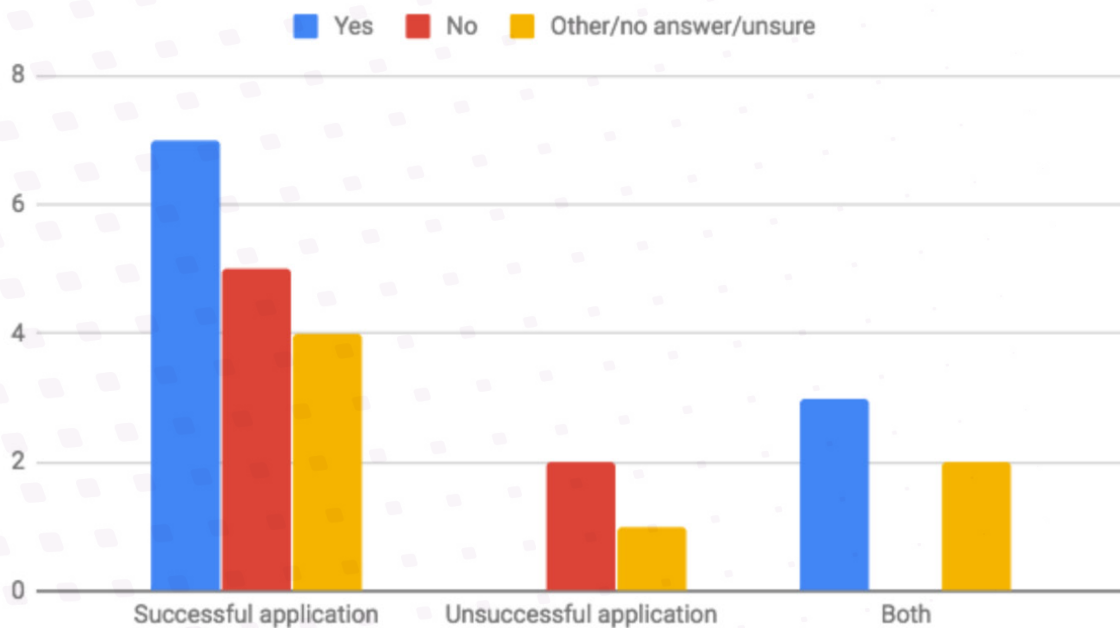
With regards to academic and administrative staff members who had applied for a promotion during their time employed with the University, the majority (16) were successful in their initial attempt, whereas three were unsuccessful and five had experienced both successful and unsuccessful outcomes. Of the five administrative staff members who have applied for a promotion, all of whom were female, all but one of these participants were successful in their promotion attempt.

When looking at the data for academic staff members who have applied for a promotion, one notes that all three males were successful in their first attempt. Four academic staff members were unsuccessful in their latest attempts at obtaining a promotion, all of whom were female

- however this information should be considered in the context of the over-representation of female participants in the present sample. The remaining 12 female staff members successfully obtained their desired promotions, although for three of these this required more than one attempt.

Gender differences in perceptions of the University as an equal opportunity employer may be indicated, given that none of the three male participants who had applied for a promotion expressed any negative perceptions of equal opportunity at the University. Two of the males responded to the question positively, with one male declining to respond.

### Perceptions by promotion outcome



The above chart ('Perceptions by promotion outcome') illustrates perceptions of gender equality with regards to career progression according to the outcome of staff members' attempts to obtain a promotion (NB. This includes both academic and administrative staff members). It is evident that a large proportion of those whose application was successful on their first attempt (31%) do not believe the University to be an equal opportunity employer with regards to career progression. However, many of those whose promotion attempt was successful also hold the view that the University is an equal opportunity employer (44%). It should also be noted that, of those participants who experienced both successful and unsuccessful promotion attempts, none held unfavourable views of the University as an equal opportunity employer - although two individuals had other concerns regarding opportunities for career progression.



## Conclusions

The present study has demonstrated that the majority (59%) of staff members employed within the Faculty for Social Wellbeing at the University of Malta consider the University to be an equal opportunities employer with respect to career progression. Amongst those staff members who do not consider career progression at the University to be equal, 13% reported that factors not related to gender - such as the criteria for promotions - were the main cause of unequal opportunities for career progression.

Whether or not participants had applied for a promotion appears to potentially have an influence on their perceptions of gender equality in terms of career progression, with a larger proportion of staff members who had applied for a promotion expressing dissatisfaction with gender equal practices when compared to those who had never applied for a promotion. However, the result of attempts to obtain a promotion does not appear to have a strong influence on perceptions of gender equality; with a greater proportion of successful participants (compared to unsuccessful participants) maintaining that they do not consider the University to be gender equal in terms of career progression.

Interestingly, favourable perceptions of gender equality were more common amongst participants currently employed on a part-time basis, as compared to those employed on a full-time basis. This might be due to full-time staff members being more concerned with career progression, given their increased commitment to their position - however, further research is needed to uncover the motivations behind such perceptions.

Another observation can also be seen when comparing perceptions of gender equality among academic staff members, depending on their current position. It was expected that those in lower-ranking positions might hold more pessimistic views of gender equality in terms of career progression, however the opposite was exhibited in participants' responses. This could suggest that staff members' perceptions of gender equality change over time and possibly become less positive due to increased personal experiences - directly or indirectly - with career progression.

Male staff members, albeit comprising a small percentage of the current sample, did not hold any negative perceptions of gender equality with respect to career progression. The critique of gender-equal career progression therefore derived solely from participants identifying as female or non-binary/third gender. It is possible that male staff members do not consider gender equality to be an issue due to a lack of awareness, given that any issues faced by female staff might not affect males in the same way. Further research with a more representative sample size should be carried out in order to further explore such observations.

The findings of the present study should be followed up with further research amongst the entire population of staff members in all Faculties at the University of Malta; this would allow for a sufficient sample size in order to use statistical analysis to uncover any significant differences or effects between categories. Nonetheless, this study has found rich qualitative data that allows for a deeper understanding of how staff members working at the University perceive gender equality in terms of career progression.





