Appendix A

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| Guided interview schedule |
| Participant Name |  |
| Date |  |
| Job Grade  |  |
| Job Title |  |
| Faculty |  |
| Department |  |
| STEMM expertise: science, technology, engineering, maths or medicine? |  |
| Age |  |
| Highest level of education and date attained? |  |
| Most recent qualification and date? |  |
| How long worked as an academic? |   |
| How long worked at this university? |  |
| Previous career history*Prompt: other universities/industry* |  |
| Who lives in your household?*Prompt: not names, but relationships, e.g. partner, dependent children* |  |
| Proportion of household income accounted for by your salary? |  |
|  |
| *Adapt following questions according to above profile. From this point rely on recording rather than notes.**Open up conversation to hearing about issues which might impact on progression at the University, starting with learning and skills development:* |
| Do you have a PhD – if so dates, *Prompt: if not, is it an aspiration? Why?* |
| Would having a PhD advance your career? |
| What learning opportunities have you taken at the university in the last three years? Outside?  |
| Have these been focussed on achieving a particular career ambition? *Seek rationale for these* |
| Were there barriers to these or other opportunities? |
| Have you been able to use learning to progress your career?*Academic or professional, e.g. management training* |
| Is there any job relevant learning or training you would like but which is not available to you? |
| Are you aware of what the requirements are for the next job up the scale for you? |
| How do they match your skills?*Prompt: Are there gaps and can you fill them?* |
| *The next section looks at how people manage to incorporate work and major life events which cause periods of upheaval* |
| Have you stopped working or worked reduced hours at any point in your career, such as for home, care or learning breaks? *Prompt: What was reason? If not skip to final question in this section* |
| Did you career ambitions change during/afterwards and, if so, how; |
| What was your experience on returning to work? *Prompt: Barriers to re-entry? Support?*  |
| Did colleagues perceive you differently after taking a break/reducing your hours? |
| How did you stay in touch while you were out of the workplace? *Prompt: With colleagues/with subject area?* |
| How significant to you was this phase of your life? *Prompt: Was taking a break essential or a bonus? (was it important to you that it was possible)*  |
| What support did you get – both from the university, from friends and family? |
| What support would you have liked to receive? |
| Did anything fundamentally change as a result of this change in your work record?  |
| What strategies or approaches would you would recommend to another person in a similar situation?  |
| *If no career break* – can you foresee yourself taking a break? What career issues might you face? What could make it easier to accommodate you? |
| *I’d now like to pick up on any other factors which influence your career…* |
| Aside from money, job satisfaction, career ambition, what other factors influence your choice of work? *Prompt: passion for the subject/need to do something useful* |
| What features of work are important to you?  |
| What would it be like if you didn’t work? *Prompt: How would you see yourself?* |
| How would you feel if you changed careers, left academia? |
| If you weren’t an academic, what would you be? |
| *I now want to talk in more detail about the experience of being at work and your relationship with work..* |
| How manageable is your workload? *Prompt: Compared with other people you know?*  |
| How able are you to maintain a work/life balance?  |
| On a scale of 1-10, how much does your line manager worry about how many hours you work and how you balance work/life commitments? *Prompt: How accommodating is your management about your personal needs?* |
| Similarly how much do you have to work hard to keep a work/life balance? |
| If you were to think about the top five things you want in life, how many of them would be about work?  |
| Where do you see yourself in five years’ time? *Prompt: Could you see yourself continuing to want to work at Coventry University? Same role as now? Higher level?*  |
| If you had to turn down a potential career enhancement opportunity at the university, do you think that might hinder your progress at a later point?  |
| How comfortable do you feel coming into work each day? Are there any aspects of your working day which make you feel uncomfortable, or out of sync with the culture of your colleagues or managers? |
| Can you recall any time when you have felt excluded? |
| What has been your experience of the senior positions open to you seek promotion to? Do they look like positions you might aspire to?  |
| *Now I want to ask a few questions about money – which can be an influence on career choice. Remember you are under no obligation to give me any information you consider too personal or private.* |
| How important is it that you maintain your current level of salary?  |
| Could you afford to go for a more attractive job on less money?  |
| How important would more money be? |
| Have you ever thought about a career outside the university and what that might mean to your finances? |
| *We talked earlier about coping with upheaval in practical terms. I now want to return to the way we juggle work and other commitments emotionally…*  |
| The attitudes of women towards work have changed rapidly over the last 20 or 30 years. Did you grow up expecting to have a career or a job?  |
| What did your parents do? What did they see you doing?  |
| When you left school or university, how did you see your future? Has that aspiration changed course at all? Do you feel you have got a reasonable work/life balance? |
| How do you manage balancing work and other responsibilities? *Prompt: Who would be first to take a day off if a child was unwell? What about fitting in voluntary roles like governor?* |
| Is it important that you have flexibility, such as start and finish times, that help you fit in other commitments?  |
| *If relevant:* What does your partner do? How do you handle ‘dual career’ issues?  |
| Which is more likely to be true: family interferes with work/work interferes with family*Prompt: How often in a week do you not get work finished because of family issues, vice versa?* |
| *These final questions ask for your evaluations/knowledge of Coventry University initiatives:*  |
| Coventry offers Individualised career support at early career/mid-career/ and return from maternity – experience? Rating? |
| Can you recall any other career development training you have benefitted from? E.g. researcher development, mentoring, networking, leadership? |
| If mentor/mentee, what has been your experience of this process? Helpful?  |
| Experience of DPR meeting – do you discuss ‘career aspirations’ – helpful? Results?  |
| Do you know what the progression criteria would be for the next role up? *If not, is that because you are not interested or just don’t know where to find it/think it is unattainable?**If yes, do you meet it? Will you act on this?* |
| What are the barriers to your progression? |
| What would help?  |
| Have you participated in any event/activity at the university specifically to support women in academic positions? |
| Are you aware of flexible working policy? *Prompt: Experience of? Issues?*  |
| Would you consider job share/ career break/ special leave? *Prompt: What impact, if any, would you expect this to have on your career?* |
| Are there sufficient female role models in your work area? |
| Is there anything else you would like to say? |

*Thank participant and remind of option to withdraw.*