

Institution: Anglia Ruskin University		
Unit of Assessment: UoA23		
Title of case study: Making higher education inclusive for staff and students with caring responsibilities		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2018–2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Marie-Pierre Moreau	Professor of Education	3 September 2018 – present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2018-2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)		
<p>Research carried out at Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) has improved awareness of the challenges affecting HE staff and students with caring responsibilities and of how they are compounded by university policies. Universities including University College Cork (Ireland), University of Newcastle (Australia), University of Plymouth (UK) and ARU, and UK national bodies including the UCU and UCAS, have used Moreau's research to review and change their policies and practices to take into account the needs of carers. Internationally, the EU PLOTINA project has drawn on the research to consider a broad range of caring responsibilities in their assessment and promotion of gender balance in research organisations. A UK-based film director and a US-based visual artist have created a film and a series of drawings based on the research, which have led to greater awareness and better understanding of the issues faced by carers.</p>		
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)		
<p>Students and staff with main or shared caring responsibilities for children and/or elderly, disabled or ill adults constitute a growing presence in HE. There is a dearth of data available on the number of carers within HE. However, Office for National Statistics (ONS) data (2019) indicate that one in five adults aged between 50 and 69 is a carer; and Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) data (2020) show that there are 375,000 young adults in HE who are carers. UCAS data do not include students whose sole caring responsibility is parenting, with estimates suggesting that respectively 5%–7% and 35%–38% of full-time and part-time students are parents (NUS, 2011). In academic settings, carers experience problems with finance, health and wellbeing, work-life balance, retention and career progression. Some of these challenges have become more significant in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, their lives are under-researched, with the exception of literature concentrating on the mothering of healthy, 'abled' children.</p> <p>Research started by Professor Marie-Pierre Moreau in 2010 (initially at the University of Bedfordshire, then at Roehampton University, and continued since she joined ARU in September 2018), has investigated caregivers in a number of academic settings. Her work has generated an improved understanding of the lives of carers in HE and of how societal and university cultures create care-based inequalities. Moreau was Principal Investigator on one internally and six externally funded projects (three of these since joining ARU), collaborating with two Research Assistants, a Film Director and a Visual Artist.</p> <p>Moreau's seven projects included the analysis of national and institutional HE policies and 120 in-depth interviews conducted in England with student carers, academics and managers with caring responsibilities, and HE professional staff based in student services, human resources departments and equality and diversity (EDI) units.</p>		

The findings can be summarised as follows:

- 1) Students and academic staff who are carers face a range of issues related to finance, mental and physical health and well-being, retention, and – for staff – career progression. [R1, 2, 3, 4]
- 2) Some support staff and academic staff draw on deficit discourses of care (disempowering patterns of thought, language, or practice) and hold prejudiced views of carers. [R2]
- 3) Moreau's research highlights significant inequalities *among* carers in addition to inequalities between those with and without caring responsibilities. These are based on factors such as the nature of their caring responsibilities, their family circumstances, gender, position, institution, department and line manager's perspective. Those who do not fit the narrow category of parenting healthy, 'abled' children are more likely to struggle in reconciling their carer and academic identities. In particular, this concerns those who do not fit the archetype of the academic, i.e. academics who identify as LGBT, BME, working-class, and/or women; as well as the parents of children with a disability or special needs and those caring for someone ill or elderly. These groups are less likely to receive institutional support. [R2, 4]
- 4) Institutional policies and practices compound the issues faced by carers in ways which are more complex and less 'top-down' than previously assumed. Due to the levels of misrecognition faced by some carers, sympathetic 'localised' policymaking and informal arrangements at the micro-level are favoured by them over formal support, particularly if they have complex caring responsibilities. This in turn raises equality issues in relation to the support that carers receive. [R4]

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

- [R1] Moreau, M.P. and Bernard, T. (2018) Carers and careers in academia. Film. London: Advance HE. [Film: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NcjUsqA-QcA>]
- [R2] Moreau, M.P. and Robertson, M. (2019) 'You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours'? Support to academics who are carers in higher education, *Social Sciences* (Special Issue on Family and Work: Parental Leave and Careers). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci8060164>. Submitted in REF2.
- [R3] Burke, P.J., David, M.E. and Moreau, M.P. (2019) "Policy Implications for Equity, Gender, and Widening Participation in Higher Education", in Drew, T. et al (eds) *Oxford Handbook of Higher Education Systems and University Management*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780198822905 (peer-reviewed). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198822905.013.29>
- [R4] Henderson, E. and Moreau, M.P. (2019) Carefree conferences? Academics with caring responsibilities performing mobile academic subjectivities, *Gender and Education*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2019.1685654>. Submitted in REF2.

The underpinning research has been funded by seven grants allocated to Moreau, including the Leadership Foundation in Higher Education, now Advance HE (four grants), the Nuffield Foundation, the SRHE and the University of Roehampton (one grant each). Moreau's SRHE-funded grant ('*Care-free at the top? Exploring the experiences of senior academic staff who are caregivers*, 2017 SRHE Research Awards, 2018–19, £10k) was brought to ARU when she joined in September 2018 and her most recent Advance HE grant (*Fostering a sense of belonging for higher education staff and students with caring responsibilities: What works?* funded by Advance HE, Good Practice Awards, 2020–2021, £4k) is also based at ARU. Her film on carers (*Carers and careers in academia*, also funded by Advance HE, Good Practice Awards, 2018, £4k) was released in September 2018, after she joined ARU. All grant applications and outputs were subjected to a rigorous peer-review process.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

The research has led HE institutions in the UK, Ireland and Australia to change their policies on staff and students who are carers. This led to an improved quality of life for both carers and the individuals for whom they care and has raised awareness of carers across the sector.

Specifically, the three main types of impacts achieved are as follows:

1) Changing sector-wide and institutional policies on carers

1.1 At HEI level: since September 2018, Moreau has advised HR, Equality Diversity and Inclusion, and Student Services staff in the UK (including at Anglia Ruskin University [C1], Bedfordshire, East London, Cambridge, Oxford and Warwick universities), in Australia (Newcastle) and in Ireland (University College Cork [C2]) on the development of carer-friendly policies and practices.

Eighty-three per cent of survey respondents across Ireland and the UK (including pre- and post-1992 institutions) report that since September 2018 they have changed or have plans to change policies and practices in their institution, as a result of the intervention [C3], based on post-workshops surveys (September 2018 onward). The Inclusivity Network coordinator and Faculty student adviser at ARU noted that the research led to *“changes to [ARU] HR policy documents making it clearer that compassionate leave could cover relatives as well as children and to encourage staff and managers to be more aware of options around leave where a terminal illness had been diagnosed”*. She also added: *“we now record the type of compassionate leave and have also now included care as a category in our staff survey”* [C1].

A University of Cambridge academic staff member explained that as a result of Moreau’s work, *“We have scheduled seminars at lunchtime - a small but meaningful change for us.”*, and a deputy HoD, also at the University of Cambridge, mentioned that she would *“encourage [the] greater representation of carers”* and *“recognize their greater emotional load”* [C3]. The University of Plymouth used the research findings to inform their Athena Swan submission (November 2018) and to design a survey that influenced their action plan for gender equality [C4].

Internationally, at University College Cork (UCC) the research had *“significant impact on the 21,000 students and 2,800 members of staff”* [C2]. It raised awareness and led to a better understanding that existing policies are focused towards those who are care-free and created *“significant impetus”* for policy change. This led directly to the set-up of a carers’ network following a suggestion at a workshop (March 2019) led by Moreau. In a post-workshop survey 100% of respondents stated that Moreau’s work had raised their awareness of the impact of university policy and practices on carers and 80% had plans to share what they had learned. Participants said they planned to *“engage more with advocacy etc. regarding this area”*, *“ask line manager to implement Athena Swan commitments re timing of meetings and decision”* and *“[to use] the information provided to raise awareness”* [C2]. Moreau’s research informed the widening participation agenda of the University of Newcastle (Australia) as they undertook a review of their policies for carers (2019, ongoing), with a representative noting that *“Moreau’s research and briefing sheet on student carers has been drawn on in discussions about what steps to take to further support students from this group at the University of Newcastle. This research will feed into the development of policy and practice on student carers at the University of Newcastle, NSW”* [C5].

1.2. At the sector-wide level: Moreau gave evidence and provided guidance to the University and College Union (UCU) equality sub-committee of the National Executive Committee in September 2018, informing their national campaign on carers [C6]. Her work also informed the inclusion of a new series of questions capturing students’ caring responsibilities in UCAS’ Undergraduate Application Management Service 2019, leading to greater visibility for student carers.

1.3 At transnational level: Moreau’s research, including her input as an EU expert-monitor for the

PLOTINA project (which promotes gender balance and inclusion in research), has “*enabled discussion around care among the Plotina [sic] consortium and led to wider considerations around caring responsibilities*” in the Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) developed by members of the consortium to measure and tackle gender inequalities [C7]. The GEPs have been implemented in six institutions across six countries, 48 research organisations across six countries, seven research funding organisations across two countries, and were made available to other institutions as an open-access resource, including a ‘library of actions’ comprising various initiatives related to care that are available for all organisations to use [C7].

2) Improving the lives of carers who work and study in academia

The development of specific policies and practices at the institutional level has contributed to improving the lives of carers in the institutions where they have been implemented.

Carers have gained confidence in requesting support, with a staff network coordinator noting that the research has “*raised awareness amongst staff and managers that caring can be defined in a variety of ways which will have a positive impact of staff who are experiencing a period of caring in their lives*” [C1]. In a blog post, an academic (University of the Arts) commented, “*It has been personally empowering to discover the work of Prof Moreau, to accept that I’m not a super-human robotic like ‘care-free’ academic, and to network with her and others as they seek to raise awareness of ‘care-full’ academia and to change practices and policies in High Education to improve the lives of staff with caring responsibilities*” [C8].

3) Raising awareness among HE policymakers and practitioners

Awareness has been increased through the development and roll-out of non-academic engagement tools, including 1) the production of the film *Carers and Careers in Academia* [R1]; 2) a range of articles and blog posts including since 2018, for high-profile policymaking organisations and national media [C9]; 3) the production of drawings inspired by Moreau’s research.

On 31/12/2020, the film had attracted just under 1,500 views on YouTube and Vimeo. It has also been shown at various events in the UK and Australia and is hosted on institutional and policymakers’ websites. A viewer from Keele University Medical School tweeted “*Caring is at the heart of medicine, but do we provide the support needed to help those carers within KeeleMedSchool? The EDI team is looking to talk to our carers in 2019 – so get in touch*”. The Wellcome Trust tweeted about the film to their 155k followers. Feedback included an Australian university administrator who argued that the film “*Should be compulsory viewing for University policymakers and managers*” and another claiming that “*All #HigherEducation managers should watch this video about carers in academia*” (Twitter).

Moreau’s work has also inspired the US-based cartoonist and academic Prof. Sally Campbell Galman to produce a series of illustrated ‘vignettes’. Shared online and to be exhibited at ARU and at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst (US) in 2021 (see Covid-19 note), they raise awareness of the challenges faced by many HE carers. Campbell Galman commented: “*As a single mother in academia who is also a working artist, the experience of working closely with the findings from Professor Moreau’s research has been deeply illuminating. Not only did I gain greater insight into my own experience, but also into the experiences of my colleagues who are carers and my own possible negative or positive impacts upon their work life experiences*” [C10]. After attending a seminar where the material was shared, the Director of WIASN (Women in Academia Support Network, an international online community of over 10,000 women working in academia) mentioned that it had changed her understanding of care and commented: “*[I will] bring caring into the workshops I deliver as part of staff training and development*” and that she would share what she had learned through the WIASN network and her University Researcher Development committee, for discussion and awareness raising [C3].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- [C1] Testimonial provided by Co-Chair of ARU's Part-time and Flexible Working staff forum and Faculty Student Adviser, Anglia Ruskin University.
- [C2] Testimonial provided by Head of Department, University College Cork, Ireland.
- [C3] Summary of the evidence collected at events since 09/2018, when Moreau joined ARU, through the administration of a questionnaire.
- [C4] Athena Swan application, University of Plymouth, stating use of Moreau's research to inform their institutional survey of carers (p. 74).
- [C5] Quote provided by a representative of University of Newcastle, Australia (Director of the Centre for Equity and Excellence in Higher Education).
- [C6] Testimonial provided by UCU Equality Support Official, London.
- [C7] Testimonial provided by Plotina UK partner.
- [C8] Blog post from academic at University of the Arts:
- [C9] Consolidated list of dissemination activities.
- [C10] Testimonial from independent Visual Artist and Professor, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, US.