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## Gender Bias in Appointment Procedures: Gender Bias in the Assessment of Academic Careers



Welcome to module 3 of the online tutorial “Gender Bias in Appointment Procedures”.  
The focus of the final section will be on “academic and professional skills”.

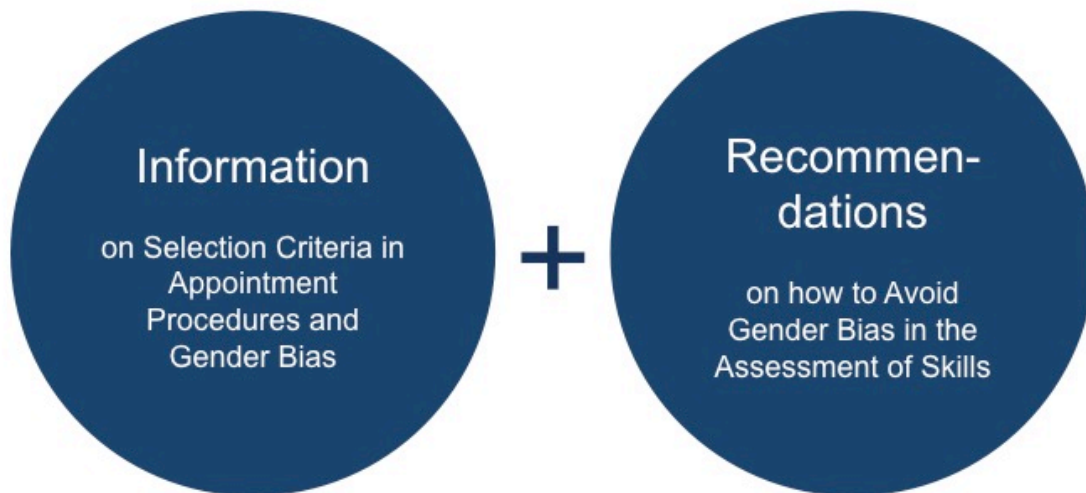
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- ③ Impact of Gender-Related Stereotypes
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## What to Expect



The Landeshochschulgesetz Baden-Württemberg (LHG BW, State University Law of Baden-Württemberg) clearly defines an applicant's academic competence as the key selection criterion in an appointment procedure.

The State University Law of Baden-Wuerttemberg (LHG) also lists essential professional skills such as leadership ability, communication skills and the ability to work in a team – these are, however, introduced in the context of job responsibilities. As such, they are considered far too little, if at all, in appointment procedures. When discussing potential candidates, these competences do not feature systematically, which makes them particularly prone to gender bias. Gender bias, which goes hand in hand with preconceptions, happens intuitively. Based on research done in this field, however, a series of recommendations can be offered with which you as a member of an appointment commission may counteract potential gender bias.

In the course of this module, we will take a look at potential gender bias as it may arise in the context of academic and professional skills. We will close with some recommendations on how to avoid this gender bias.

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## LHG BW § 47: Guideline for the Assessment of Skills



M3: Introduction

Gender Bias in Appointment Procedures: Skills

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How are academic and professional skills evaluated in appointment procedures? Here, the State University Law (LHG) provides guidelines. Article 47 of the State University Law Baden-Württemberg specifies the requirements a candidate needs to fulfil when applying for professorship. The relevant criteria fall into 3 categories:

1. Academic qualification and competence
2. Pedagogical aptitude
3. Job requirements

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## LHG BW § 46: Professional Skills Derived from Job Requirements



According to article 46 of the LHG, the job profile for an advertised post of professor includes, apart from academic aptitude, a range of professional skills as well. These are derived from the job requirements.

The wording of the Law can be translated as follows: “University professors take on responsibilities (...) in science (...), teaching, research and further training in their respective academic fields independently in accordance with their detailed employment contract. Their responsibilities include: Participation in measures of quality development in research and teaching as well as student counselling, particularly in form of further training (...) participation in university administration, taking on leadership responsibilities in university institutions of their respective subject field (...)”. As such, the LHG provides a catalogue of criteria that the appointment commission has to comply with in assessing an applicant’s skills and competences. We will now take a closer look at the range of professional skills in more detail.

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## Professional Skills Contribute to Fulfilment of Job Responsibilities



Professional skills contribute to the fulfilment of the tasks of university professors in a variety of ways.



Social skills comprise counselling experience and the ability to deal with conflicts. Didactic skills include the development of teaching concepts and further training. Communication skills refer to conversation techniques and experience in presenting research results, or participation in national and international conferences. Leadership skills and personnel responsibility include managerial qualification, experience in science management, as well as experience in working with teams. Finally, there are strategic skills, which include:

- The development of research fields
- The initiation of projects
- Participation in committees and
- Participation in academic self-administration organisations.

Going forward, we will show how gender bias can distort the perception and evaluation of academic and professional skills. To that end, we will take a look at the findings of social-psychological research on stereotypes.

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## Parameters for the Assessment of Didactic Skills

 Sympathetic Emotional <sup>1</sup>	 Individualistic Tend Towards Self-Promotion <sup>3</sup>
Patient Open to Discussions <sup>2</sup>	Competitive <sup>4</sup>

- 1 Eckes, Th. 2008: Geschlechterstereotype: Von Rollen, Identitäten und Vorurteilen. In: Becker, R. (ed.): Handbuch Frauen- und Geschlechterforschung. Theorie, Methoden, Empirie. Springer, Wiesbaden. pp. 171–182. At: [http://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007%2F978-3-531-91972-0\\_20#page-1](http://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007%2F978-3-531-91972-0_20#page-1) (accessed 24.01.2017).
- 2 Newport, F. 2001: Americans see women as emotional and affectionate, men as more aggressive. Gallup Poll News Service. At: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/1978/Americans-See-Women-Emotional-Affectionate-Men-More-Aggressive.aspx> (accessed 24.01.2017).
- 3 Diekmann, A. B. et al. 2000: Stereotypes as Dynamic Constructs: Women and Men of the Past, Present, and Future. In: Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, November 2000, Vol. 26 (10). pp. 1171–1188. At: <http://psp.sagepub.com/content/26/10/1171.abstract> (accessed 24.01.2017).
- 4 Carli L. L. et al. 2016: Stereotypes About Gender and Science. Women ≠ Scientists. In: Psychology of Women Quarterly, June 2016. Vol. 40 (2). pp. 244–260. At: <http://pwq.sagepub.com/content/40/2/244.full> (accessed 24.01.2017).





As far as didactic skills are concerned, the following stereotypes can be found: Women are thought of as being sympathetic and emotional, patient and open to discussions. Men, on the other hand, supposedly tend towards individualism and self-promotion, while acting competitively.

- 1 Eckes, Th. 2008: Geschlechterstereotype: Von Rollen, Identitäten und Vorurteilen. In: Becker, R. (eds.): Handbuch Frauen- und Geschlechterforschung. Theorie, Methoden, Empirie. Springer, Wiesbaden. pp. 171–182. At: [http://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007%2F978-3-531-91972-0\\_20#page-1](http://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007%2F978-3-531-91972-0_20#page-1) (accessed 24.01.2017).
- 2 Newport, F. 2001: Americans see women as emotional and affectionate, men as more aggressive. Gallup Poll News Service. At: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/1978/Americans-See-Women-Emotional-Affectionate-Men-More-Aggressive.aspx> (accessed 24.01.2017).
- 3 Diekmann, A. B. et al. 2000: Stereotypes as Dynamic Constructs: Women and Men of the Past, Present, and Future. In: Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, November 2000, Vol. 26 (10). pp. 1171–1188. At: <http://psp.sagepub.com/content/26/10/1171.abstract> (accessed 24.01.2017).
- 4 Carli L. L. et al. 2016: Stereotypes About Gender and Science. Women ≠ Scientists. In: Psychology of Women Quarterly, June 2016. Vol. 40 (2). pp. 244–260. At: <http://pwq.sagepub.com/content/40/2/244.full> (accessed 24.01.2017).



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## Parameters for the Assessment of Communication Skills

 <b>Good Listeners</b> <b>Strive Towards Consensus<sup>5</sup></b>	 <b>Forceful</b> <b>Dominant<sup>7</sup></b>
<b>Indirect Way of Speaking with Mitigated Forms of Speech<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>Status-Oriented</b> <b>Authority-Oriented<sup>8</sup></b>

- 5 Fried, A. M. et al. 2000: Wenn zwei das Gleiche tun...: Diskriminierungsfreie Personalbeurteilung. vdf Hochschulverlag AG, ETH. Zürich. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 2000, p. 32.
- 6 Carli, L. L. 2001: Assertiveness. In: J. Worell (ed.), Encyclopedia of Women and Gender: Sex Similarities and Differences and the Impact of Society on Gender. San Diego, CA: Academic Press, pp. 157–168.
- 7 Carlson, J. H. & Crawford, M. 2012. Communication stereotypes and perceptions of managers. In: SAGE Open. Vol. 2(4). pp. 1–10. At: <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/2158244012464978> (accessed 05.05.2017).
- 8 Wood, J. T. & Fixmer-Oraiz, N. 2015. Gendered Lives: Communication, Gender, and Culture. 12<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.




When it comes to communication skills, women are considered to be good listeners who rarely interrupt their conversation partners and rather strive for consensus in discussions. These characteristics are supposedly reflected in the more indirect way of speaking that women employ: Here, the use of mitigated speech forms such as “maybe” and “I would say” or tag questions at the end of sentences such as “isn’t it?” are given as examples. Male communication, on the other hand, is described as being forceful and dominant, a reflection of men’s supposed tendency to communicate according to their status and authority.

- 5 Fried, A. M. et al. 2000: Wenn zwei das Gleiche tun...: Diskriminierungsfreie Personalbeurteilung. vdf Hochschulverlag AG, ETH. Zürich. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 2000, p. 32.
- 6 Carli, L. L. 2001: Assertiveness. In: J. Worell (ed.), Encyclopedia of Women and Gender: Sex Similarities and Differences and the Impact of Society on Gender. San Diego, CA: Academic Press, pp. 157–168.
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- 8 Wood, J. T. & Fixmer-Oraiz, N. 2015. Gendered Lives: Communication, Gender, and Culture. 12<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.



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## Parameters for the Assessment of Leadership Skills

 Insecure Impulsive, Fixated on Rules <sup>9</sup>	 Natural Leaders <sup>11</sup>
Emotional Scheming <sup>10</sup>	Independent Competent <sup>12</sup>

- 9 Heilman, M. E. 1995: Sex stereotypes and their effects in the workplace: What we know and what we don't know. In: Journal of Social Behavior and Personality, Vol. 10 (4). pp. 3–26. At: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232527345\\_Sex\\_stereotypes\\_and\\_their\\_effects\\_in\\_the\\_workplace\\_What\\_we\\_know\\_and\\_what\\_we\\_don't\\_know](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232527345_Sex_stereotypes_and_their_effects_in_the_workplace_What_we_know_and_what_we_don't_know) (accessed 24.01.2017).
- 10 Goudreau, J. 2011. The ten worst stereotypes about powerful women. In: Forbes, 24 October. At: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jennagoudreau/2011/10/24/worst-stereotypes-powerful-women-christine-lagarde-hillary-clinton/#2ee61aad61ca> (accessed 04.05.2017).
- 11 Schein, V. A. 2011: A global look at psychological barriers to women's progress in management. In: Journal of Social Issues, Vol. 57 (4). pp. 675–688. At: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/0022-4537.00235/abstract> (accessed 05.05.2017).
- 12 Eagly, A. H. & Karau, S. J. 2002: Role Congruity Theory of Prejudice toward Female Leaders. In: Psychological Review, Vol. 109 (3). pp. 573–598. At: [http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~search1/pdf/Eagley\\_Role\\_Congruity\\_Theory.pdf](http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~search1/pdf/Eagley_Role_Congruity_Theory.pdf) (accessed 24.01.2017).



In the context of leadership skills, too, assessments vary according to gender. The following stereotypes can be encountered: Women in leadership positions act insecurely, impulsively and are fixated on rules. Moreover, they are thought to be emotional and scheming. At the same time, however, their leadership style is described as being geared towards transparency and participation. Men, on the other hand, are considered natural leaders, who act independently and competently.

- 9 Heilman, M. E. 1995: Sex stereotypes and their effects in the workplace: What we know and what we don't know. In: Journal of Social Behavior and Personality, Vol. 10 (4). pp. 3–26. At: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232527345\\_Sex\\_stereotypes\\_and\\_their\\_effects\\_in\\_the\\_workplace\\_What\\_we\\_know\\_and\\_what\\_we\\_don't\\_know](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232527345_Sex_stereotypes_and_their_effects_in_the_workplace_What_we_know_and_what_we_don't_know) (accessed 24.01.2017).
- 10 Goudreau, J. 2011. The ten worst stereotypes about powerful women. In: Forbes, 24 Oktober. At: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jennagoudreau/2011/10/24/worst-stereotypes-powerful-women-christine-lagarde-hillary-clinton/#2ee61aad61ca> (accessed 04.05.2017).
- 11 Schein, V. A. 2011: A global look at psychological barriers to women's progress in management. In: Journal of Social Issues, Vol. 57 (4). p. 675–688. At: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/0022-4537.00235/abstract> (accessed 05.05.2017).
- 12 Eagly, A. H. & Karau, S. J. 2002: Role Congruity Theory of Prejudice toward Female Leaders. In: Psychological Review, Vol. 109 (3). pp. 573–598. At: [http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~search1/pdf/Eagley\\_Role\\_Congruity\\_Theory.pdf](http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~search1/pdf/Eagley_Role_Congruity_Theory.pdf) (accessed 24.01.2017).

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## Parameters for the Assessment of Strategic Skills

 Less Hierarchical Cooperative, Team-Oriented <sup>13</sup>	 Competitive Risk-Taking <sup>15</sup>
Shaky Negotiators <sup>14</sup>	Strive for Responsibility Efficient <sup>16</sup>

- 13 Eagley, A. H., Johannesen-Schmidt, M. C. 2001: The Leadership Styles of Women and Men. In: Journal of Social Issues. Vol. 57 (4). pp. 781–797. At: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/0022-4537.00241/abstract> (accessed 24.01.2017).
- 14 Kray, L. J. & Thompson, L. 2004: Gender stereotypes and negotiation performance: an examination of theory and research. In: Staw, B. M. & Kramer, R. M. (eds.): Research in Organizational Behavior: An Annual Series of Analytical Essays and Critical Reviews, 26, pp. 103–182. At: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S019130850426004X> (accessed 26.4.2017).
- 15 Eagly, A. H., Wood, W. 1999: The origins of sex differences in human behavior: Evolved dispositions versus social roles. In: American Psychologist, Vol 54 (6), pp. 408–423. At: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232520455\\_The\\_Origins\\_of\\_Sex\\_Differences\\_in\\_Human\\_Behavior\\_Evolved\\_Dispositions\\_Versus\\_Social\\_Roles](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232520455_The_Origins_of_Sex_Differences_in_Human_Behavior_Evolved_Dispositions_Versus_Social_Roles) (accessed 24.01.2017).
- 16 Schein, V. E. 2001: A Global Look at Psychological Barriers to Women's Progress in Management. In: Journal of Social Issues, Vol. 57 (4). pp. 675–688. At: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/0022-4537.00235/epdf> (accessed 24.01.2017).



Strategic skills are also extremely valuable qualities in an academic career. Here, gender stereotypes persist as well:

In terms of their strategic competences, women are considered to be less oriented towards traditional hierarchies and much more inclined towards cooperation and teamwork. At the same time, it is assumed that they are bad at negotiating. Men, on the contrary, supposedly seek competition, are prepared to take risks and seek responsibility. What is more, they are considered good negotiators in matters of business.

- 13 Eagley, A. H., Johannesen-Schmidt, M. C. 2001: The Leadership Styles of Women and Men. In: Journal of Social Issues. Vol. 57 (4). pp. 781–797. At: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/0022-4537.00241/abstract> (accessed 24.01.2017).
- 14 Kray, L. J. & Thompson, L. 2004: Gender stereotypes and negotiation performance: an examination of theory and research. In: Staw, B. M. & Kramer, R. M. (eds.): Research in Organizational Behavior: An Annual Series of Analytical Essays and Critical Reviews, 26, pp. 103–182. At: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S019130850426004X> (accessed 26.4.2017).
- 15 Eagly, A. H., Wood, W. 1999: The origins of sex differences in human behavior: Evolved dispositions versus social roles. In: American Psychologist, Vol 54 (6). pp. 408–423. At: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232520455\\_The\\_Origins\\_of\\_Sex\\_Differences\\_in\\_Human\\_Behavior\\_Evolved\\_Dispositions\\_Versus\\_Social\\_Roles](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232520455_The_Origins_of_Sex_Differences_in_Human_Behavior_Evolved_Dispositions_Versus_Social_Roles) (accessed 24.01.2017).
- 16 Schein, V. E. 2001: A Global Look at Psychological Barriers to Women's Progress in Management. In: Journal of Social Issues, Vol. 57 (4). pp. 675–688. At: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/0022-4537.00235/epdf> (accessed 24.01.2017).

## Statistics and Empirical Research Debunk Stereotypes



Common Explanations do not hold:

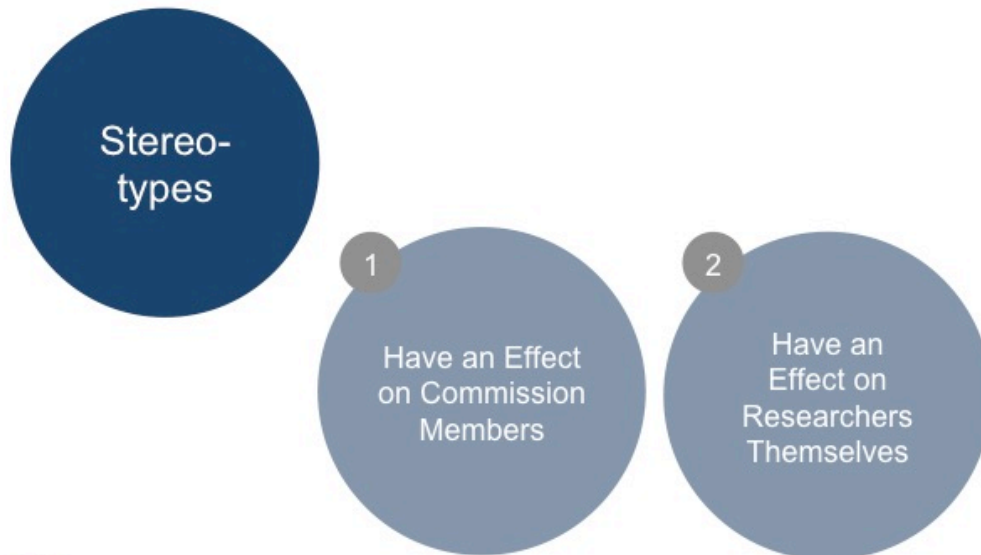
- Lacking in Assertiveness and Perseverance
- Lower Career Motivation
- Disadvantaged due to Maternity



<http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/genderequity/> (accessed 24.01.2017)

Lacking in assertiveness and perseverance, lower career motivation in comparison to men, disadvantaged due to maternity: While these are common attempts to explain the relative scarcity of women in leadership positions in academia, the social psychologist Virginia Valian shows that they effectively do **not** hold. In her studies she debunks and disproves these explanations with statistical evidence as well as empirical research.

## Impact of Gender-Related Stereotypes

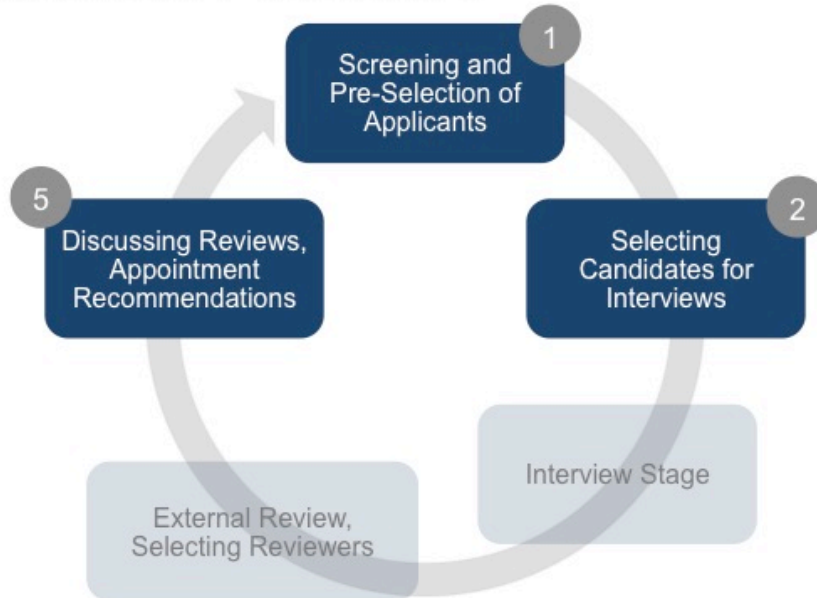


Evers, A., & Sieverding, M. 2015. Academic career intention beyond the PhD: Can the theory of planned behavior explain gender differences? *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 45, pp. 158–172.

These gender-specific stereotypes are present not only in those who evaluate and assess academic careers, but also in those who are pursuing such careers. Stereotypes significantly influence women's and men's self-assessments on whether or not they measure up to the requirements of an academic career. These, in turn, affect important decisions when it comes to planning a career.

Researchers therefore consider many different options, and when they weigh their own life situations with the demands of a standardised academic career, more women than men decide to opt for a career outside the university. As mothers, women are also confronted with established stereotypes more strongly.

## Effects in Individual Stages of the Appointment Procedure



Which stages of the appointment procedure are particularly prone to gender bias?

**Stage 1:** Screening and pre-selection of applicants – When specifying selection criteria, it is important not to focus exclusively on academic qualifications. Assessing academic qualifications alone could lead to job requirements and professional skills being overlooked. This in turn, opens the path towards gender bias, for it has been proven that women fare much better when the “complete picture” is taken into consideration.

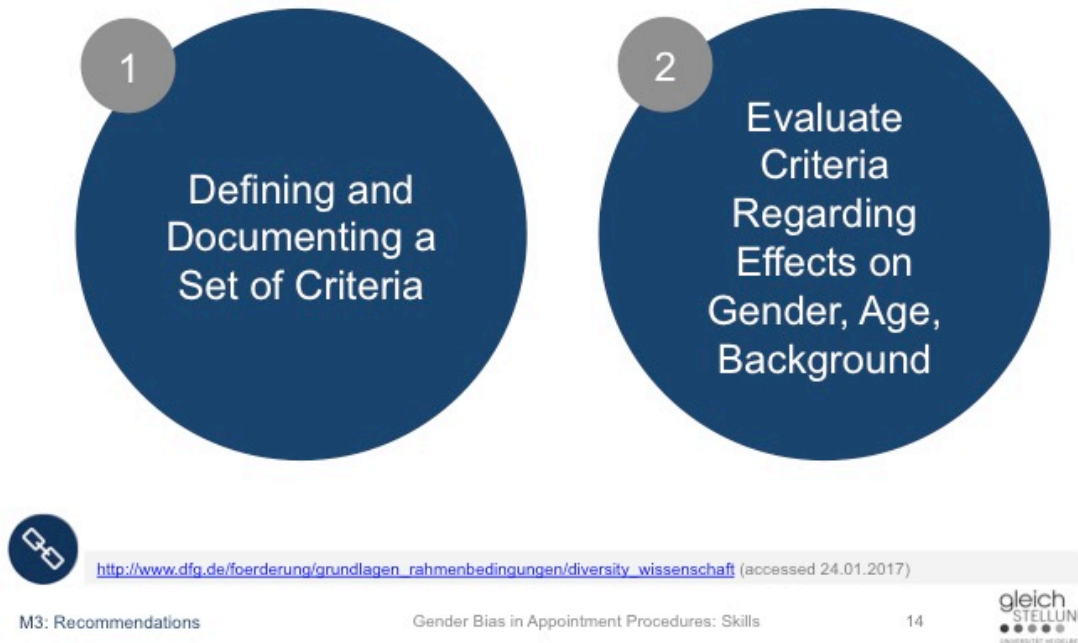
**Stage 2:** Selecting candidates for interviews – When shortlisting applicants for interviews, gender bias can be a factor as well if, for instance, the candidate’s professional skills are included in the evaluation process only selectively and in an unsystematic fashion.

**Stage 5:** Discussing reviews, appointment recommendations – When discussing external reviews, a potential gender bias that might be present within the reviews has to be taken into consideration as well.

To conclude this module, we would like to provide you with effective solutions and good practice examples for dealing with academic and professional skills in appointment procedures.



## Recommendations



Here are four practical recommendations on how to assess a candidate's professional skills free from prejudice:

### **Recommendation 1: Defining and documenting a set of criteria**

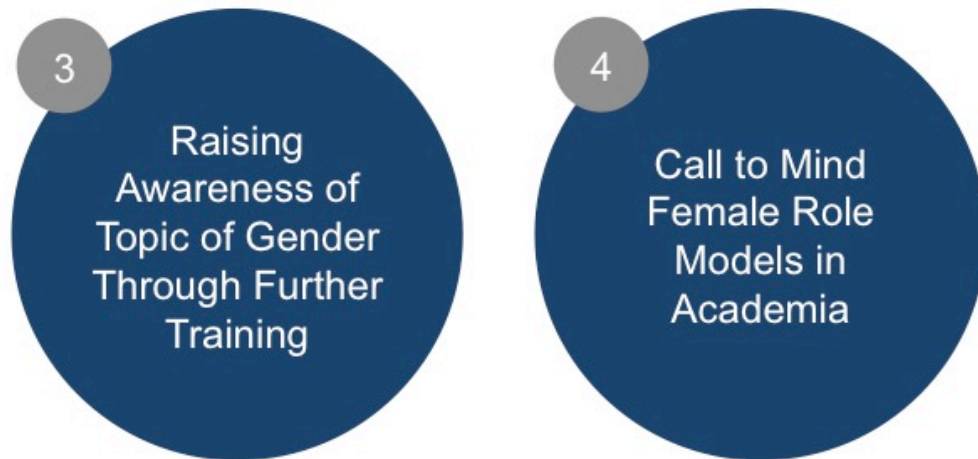
To counteract a potential gender bias it is a good idea to establish and document a set of criteria prior to reviewing the applications.

### **Recommendation 2: Review criteria with regards to their effects on gender, age and background**

In order to conduct fair assessments it is important that members of appointment commissions reflect on stereotypes about women and men in academia. Knowing which characteristics are typically considered male or typically considered female and how these become attached to the image of female and male researchers significantly reduces the risk of forming decisions on the basis of prejudice. Such awareness, moreover, helps us understand how much talent is effectively obscured by prejudice.

[http://www.dfg.de/foerderung/grundlagen\\_rahmenbedingungen/diversity\\_wissenschaft](http://www.dfg.de/foerderung/grundlagen_rahmenbedingungen/diversity_wissenschaft) (accessed 24.01.2017)

## Recommendations



### **Recommendation 3: Raising awareness of the topic of gender in appointment commissions through further training**

Emancipation from gender bias in thought and action is not possible without commitment and practice. That members of appointment commissions participate in trainings is therefore all the more important. This raises awareness of our own selective and gender-specific perception.

### **Recommendation 4: Call to mind female role models in academia**

“If others have made it, so can I”: Being guided by female role models in academic settings can be helpful for female researchers. Calling them to mind can be inspiring when pursuing one’s own goals, but it can also strengthen the self-image of female researchers.



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**Imprint**

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Ute Heeger

June 2017

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We appreciate your taking the time to consider the issue of gender bias in the appointment procedure. Hopefully, we have broadened your knowledge about this important topic and were able to provide you with tools to counteract gender bias and its effects in appointment procedures. Do not hesitate to address any of the above topics in your commission work whenever relevant.