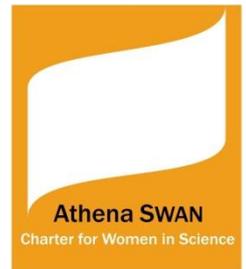


**SBCS Athena SWAN self assessment group**  
**6<sup>th</sup> September 2012 11.00-12:30**  
**FOGG 3.15**



Minutes

Present: Rachel Ashworth, Bertille Calinaud, Matthew Evans, Alan McElligott, Kelly Peaston, Richard Pickersgill, Angelika Stollewerk, Evelyn Welch

Part 1

1. Apologies for absence and welcome new members of SAG. Apologies for absence received from Anna Dulic-Sills and Barbara Tennis.

New members of the group were welcomed:

Joanna Sacharz, a PhD student funded by the Marie Curie Network (Joanna had a 8-month period of maternity leave in 2009)

Dr Tania Fitzgeorge-Balfour, a postdoctoral research assistant funded by NERC. Tania's contract is due to end in April 2013

2. Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 23-07-2012 (previously circulated).  
The minutes were approved.

3. Actions from last meeting.

BC confirmed that the *Best Practice in Recruitment* document had been circulated.

It was acknowledged at the previous meeting that it was not best practice to have a social event (dinner) as part of the recruitment process. However, RWP raised the question of whether it would be appropriate to offer dinner to candidates if the interview process spanned two days? This would be in the situation where day one was for meetings and talks and day two was for interviews. Issues noted from the discussion were:

- Decide whether the dinner would be part of the assessment of candidates and if yes, let the candidates know this.
- If the dinner was not part of the assessment, would it be an option to have the dinner hosted by staff not on the interview panels? It was agreed that this would be fair, but perhaps not easy to arrange.
- Advice from HR would be to let candidates know as soon as possible if an overnight stay would be required in order for childcare arrangements to be made well in advance.

It was decided that dinner should not be organised as part of the recruitment process.

RWP commented that there had been shortlisting meetings recently in the Chemistry/Biochemistry division. Of the 12 candidates shortlisted, two were female.

Four academic staff had been recruited into temporary posts, all of whom were female.

There would be a second wave of recruitment and the wording of the advert would be amended for this.

EW commented that she planned to talk to Ian Forristal about three month posts that could be advertised to existing PDRA's. A postdoc network had been set up at Charterhouse Square and there would be a similar network established at Mile End. Tracy Bussoli in the careers office is the person with responsibility for PDRA career advice and information.

## Part 2

### 1. What's new: EECS result and the importance of action plan; recruitment guidance.

The group discussed the outcome of the EECS submission for the Athena SWAN silver award. EW was pleased that EECS had been awarded a bronze at departmental level. This demonstrated a commitment to instigating change that would make a real difference in the department.

It was noted that there needs to be clear evidence of school-led action. SBCS is working towards this in two identifiable areas: inclusion of more women speakers for the main seminars (four out of the 12 are women in 2012-13); and the new maternity/sick leave cover scheme which is now in place which offers a PDRA to academic staff in these circumstances.

It will be important to separate data for biology and chemistry in the SBCS submission.

The BUPT initiative was seen by female students as a positive opportunity. They see QMUL as a supportive environment. There are nine female students for every male student on this programme. The Nanchang initiative may also offer good opportunities to female students in China.

It was agreed that there would a group set up comprising BT, RWP, TFB, AGMc and RA to look at the action plan and bring suggestions back to the main group. **ACTION**

There was some concern about the pathways to promotion for staff with Teaching and Scholarship roles. SBCS would need to consider how to address this.

In terms of recruitment, the applicants in the area of psychology were mostly female and three females were appointed. In the Chemistry/Biochemistry area most of the applicants were male but a female was appointed. These posts were one-year fixed-term posts and it was acknowledged that the career paths were less certain as a result. EW commented that most of the fixed term posts in the College were held by women and there was an obligation to offer career support. There are obviously wider societal problems related to this and in some cases it may suit women to work on a temporary basis, but there was a need to have support structure in place.

## 2. Mentoring

A College wide mentoring scheme is being devised and this will be piloted in Science and Engineering soon. It will be an opt-in scheme, to be launched in November 2012.

RA commented that she had had a positive experience being a mentor via Physoc. It provided good links for research and the training proved very useful.

Currently in SBCS a mentor is assigned to incoming lecturers/senior lecturers as part of probation. There is no formal mechanism for the mentoring to continue after probation. In practice the probationary mentor has been involved in target setting and peer observation of teaching. The school would like to move to having a pool of mentors per division to draw on who could also advise on future funding directions. **ACTION:** ME and RWP to discuss how to set this up.

There needs to be a distinction between a line manager and a mentor, although it is acknowledged that a line manager can offer mentor type support. Guidelines for mentoring will need to be established. Mentees and mentors will need to have information about these roles. There will need to be a briefing and framework set up for coaching.

Heads of divisions should be providing guidance through meetings with members of their divisions. This information will be passed to the HoDs either through the Executive or one to one meetings with the HoS.

For PGR students, JS explained that students normally look to their colleagues in their research groups for support. All PGR students have a panel which helps in case of problems with the supervisor.

For PDRAs, appraisal up until now has not been carried out by the line manager. The new appraisal system requires line managers to be the appraiser and therefore there is a need to set up a separate mentoring system.

**ACTION:** there will be a mentoring system set up for academic staff and PDRAs in SBCS. For this to happen there will need to be

- Briefing/training for mentors (RA recommends Jackie)
- A champion within the school

- Administrative support

It would be advisable to wait for the College system to be launched. BC would circulate current information held including a mentor questionnaire.

3. AOB. None.

4. Date of the next meeting. 12 November 2012