



**SBCS Athena SWAN self-assessment team**  
**Notes of meeting held**  
**2nd June 2016, 12.00-13.30**

**Present:**

Angelika Stollewerk [AS], Kim Warren [KW], Petra Ungerer [PU], Sandra Brown [SB], Stuart Cadby [SC], Georgia Tsagkogeorga [GT], Alan McElligott [AM], Fiona Marsh [FM]

**Notes:** Sarah Heskett

**Action summary**

3.1	HF to discuss an 'SBCS Experts' section for the website with her PR manager in relation to what is taking place centrally across the College.	HF
3.2	Sandra Brown to consult with the Westfield nursery manager to get more information on provision for staff, how places are allocated and how this is advertised and report back at the next meeting.	SB
3.1	SH and AS to discuss a time to run a postdoc mentoring training session and SH to contact Rui to arrange.	SH&AS
4.1	Increase number of postdoc reps to one per department	GT&AM
4.2	KW to think of questions for a short PhD survey and liaise with AM to see how this could be implemented.	KW&AM
5.1	SH to gather up-to-date memberships of SBCS Committees and Sunita to look up SBCS bullying, harassment and grievance policies	SH&Sunita
6.1	RWP to contact Matthew Evans and ask him if he is still happy to write the HoS letter required for the first paragraph of the application.	RWP
6.2	AM to write a paragraph on his beacon activity and RWP to write a paragraph on role models as a possible beacon activity.	RWP&AM
6.3	PU to decide which paragraph she would feel most comfortable helping to write.	PU
6.4	BC to approach her postdoc to ask if she would provide a case study around the experiences she gained as result of leading BC's research group while she was on maternity leave.	BC
7.1	AS to remind seminar series organisers of the importance of ensuring a 50:50 gender balance among speakers in line with the School's action plan.	AS

**1. Apologies:**

## **2. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes were accepted.

## **3. Matters arising and actions from the previous meeting**

- 3.1 - HF to discuss an 'SBCS Experts' section for the website with her PR manager in relation to what is taking place centrally across the College. HF was on annual leave – item to be carried over to the next meeting.

**[ACTION: HF]**

- 3.2 - Sandra Brown to consult with the Westfield nursery manager to get more information on provision for staff, how places are allocated and advertised and why the subsidy has been cut – to report back at the next meeting.

SB was awaiting a response. Item to be carried over to the next meeting.

**[ACTION: SB]**

- 5.1 - AS to meet with Beth, Nathalie and Tiina to go over their case studies. This had not yet happened but will do after marking is finished. It was established that drafts should be ready for the July meeting.

- 8.1 - SH and AS to discuss a time to run a postdoc mentoring training session and SH to contact Rui to arrange.

SH was on annual leave – item to be carried over to the next meeting.

**[ACTION: SH]**

- 9.1 - Sandra to circulate details of London networking Athena Swan event to AS. To-date there has still only been one meeting. SB to forward details of future meetings to AS as and when they are arranged.

- 10.1 - HF and GT to discuss actions for 'promoting positive role models and attracting and supporting female students'.

This was done and AM and KW were also involved in discussion.

## **4. Action plan – Committee members responsible for the various parts**

- **'Promoting positive role models and attracting and supporting female students'** – GT, AM KW AND SH
- **'Enhancing Gender Equality: Attracting and retaining female staff and offering support to female staff in their carer'** - JJ, HF and RWP
- **'Promote good work/life balance'** – MR, BC and SC

AM reported that he met with KW and HF to discuss, in particular, the mentoring of early career researchers.

### Postdocs

In terms of gender balance among postdocs the split is fairly even. However, there is a drop off in gender balance from postdoc to first faculty position, with female lecturers being under-represented. Thus, targeting postdocs was identified as being of importance. Suggestions for doing so included:

- Creation of a new post – ‘Advisor for Postdoctoral Studies’. This individual could be responsible for advising postdocs on getting their first Faculty Position. They could also liaise with Rui-Pires Martins over postdoc development.
- A postdoc day, and featuring postdocs in the School newsletter were suggested as ways of raising the profile of postdocs in the School.
- Better exchange of ideas between postdocs and recently appointed early career lecturers. Postdocs could benefit from advice on how new lecturers managed to get their first Faculty position
- While there has been an improvement in communicating funding sources to postdocs, GT suggested the newsletter could provide a forum to recognise and congratulate postdocs and PhD students who have received funding in the same way that it does for academics.
- It was agreed that collecting destination statistics for postdocs would be a useful way of establishing what people go on to do and could help with an understanding of why the gender balance tails off between postdoc and first Faculty position. As postdocs do not have formal exit interviews the Advisor for Postdoctoral Studies’ could be responsible for capturing this information.
- AM suggested increasing the number of postdoc reps to one per department as is the case with PhD reps. GT was in agreement and felt that it would be especially helpful to have a rep from Chemistry or Biochemistry so as to help bridge the distance between Fogg and JP and make organising events easier. [**ACTION: GT&AM**]

### PhDs

- KW reported that mentoring and networking opportunities could be beneficial for PhD students. Regular coffee meets, Female PhD cohort away days and liaising with the WiSE PhD representative were suggested as ways of facilitating this.
- Early career researchers could meet formally or informally with PhD students to help develop an awareness of the various progression routes available to them if

they wish to stay in academia. While advisors should also be offering this advice, early career researchers are well placed to offer advice as they have recently made the transition and understand the current academic climate.

- KW suggested surveying the PhD cohort to establish where their concerns lie/what they would like support with and tailoring the action plan to the responses. In order to combat the typically low response rate to surveys among students it was agreed that surveys should be short; 2/3 questions at most. It was also suggested that surveys could be completed at PhD panel meetings – if this is done on a yearly basis then it would allow for the tracking of attitudes over the course of a PhD. **[ACTION: KW]**

## **5. Data**

AS reported that the staff data still is incomplete. AS to speak to SB after the meeting to find out where the gaps in data lie and arrange for the rest to be made available for the next meeting.

In addition to what HR can provide AS explained that the application requires additional internal data. Such as gender balance on committees, policies regarding bullying, harassment and grievance and this needs to be integrated into the application.

**[ACTION: SH and Sunita Devi-Paul]**

## **6. Subdivision of paragraphs – who writes which part**

- Letter written by HoS – RWP informed the Committee that Matthew Evans, former HoS had offered to write this part and offered to contact him to see if this is still the case. **[ACTION: RWP]**
- Account of SA Process and plan for future of SAT – AS to write
- A paragraph giving a picture of the department. FM to write this part and AS suggested using the paragraph from the last application to provide an example.
- Student data – this section should provide a description/explanation of the data along with a discussion of the problems identified and linked to the action plan – all to be responsible for this section.
- Staff data – This section will be done together once the data is available.
- Supporting and advancing women's careers – AM, GT, KW and SH
- Organisational culture – JJ, AH, ROC, HF, RWP
- Workload model – AS asked RWP for help with this section. This part should include a description of the workload model. The Athena SWAN handbook

explains exactly what is required. RWP suggested including a screen shot of the workload model in the application. This has been done in some of the Gold applications.

RWP raised the lack of beacon activities in the application and suggested that these could be better exploited. For example, the idea that role models are important for students could be worked in to the application, particularly as SBCS has a number of female students whose expectation is that they will likely stay at home to raise a family on completion of their degree rather than continuing in academia or gaining employment. Positive interactions with successful female staff could help change perceptions. While beacon activities are not required for silver awards, a beacon activity consisting of strong policies aimed at improving the prospects of these students could be a good thing to include in the application. It is not something that other Schools seem to be doing and so would make SBCS' application stand out.

AS asked if it would be possible to have a prize or fellowship available so that one postdoc each year could stay on as part of a prize/fellowship. This individual could engage with Athena SWAN issues. It was agreed that this would be a good thing to implement but recognised that funding it could be difficult.

AM –reported on a beacon activity that he was involved with in Brazil at an animal behaviour meeting. AM spoke on his research but also about gender equality in science and was subsequently contacted by two female scientists who wanted to carry out an analysis of Brazilian academia in terms of gender, the resultant paper was recently published. This provides a clear and tangible example of the impact beacon activities could have.

BC reported that Cambridge University has a website where they post pictures of women in science BC was featured giving a lecture with her child present. It was agreed that seeking out images of women who are active in science is important. Such images could feature in the application and on the Athena SWAN website.

It was agreed that a discussion of beacon activities should take place at the August meetings. AM agreed to write a paragraph on his beacon activity and RWP agreed to write a paragraph on role models. **[ACTION: RWP and AM]**

- The final paragraph will be about flexibility and managing career breaks and will be written by BC and MR.

AS to send out ECU Athena SWAN hand book which explains what is needed for each paragraph and also the list of data that will be provided by HR. Any additional data required would need to be generated by the SAT. Sunita should be able to help with this. **[ACTION: AS]**

PU was asked to consider which paragraph she would be most comfortable writing. **[ACTION: PU]**

### Case studies

Case studies were recapped. Currently there are two case studies centred on promotion and one around maternity leave. BC suggested that her postdoc could write on the experiences gained when she took over the research group while BC was on maternity leave. This would offer an additional case which differs from the rest and it was agreed that this would be a good one to include.

**[ACTION: BC]**

AS to circulate a doodle poll for the next meeting and it was agreed that the end of June would suit most people. **[ACTION: AS]**

There was agreement that it would be good to get draft completed by late summer.

### **7. Any other business**

Seminars for the coming academic year are organised over the summer and AM reminded the SAT of the importance of ensuring that all departments make sure they have 50:50 gender balance in speakers. It was suggested that if recommendations for female speakers are not numerous, male places are filled first, organisers can then go back to their departments and ask people to specifically think of female speakers they can recommend. AS agreed to send an email to remind all staff to remember to nominate female as well as male speakers. **[ACTION: AS]**