



**SBCS Athena SWAN self-assessment team  
Notes of meeting held  
7<sup>th</sup> December 2015, 11.00-12.30**

**Present: Angelika Stollewerk, Fiona Marsh, Georgia Tsagkogeorga, Janelle Jones, Monique Arthur, Matthew Evans, Richard Pickersgill, Viviana Santos Gomes**

**Notes: Sarah Heskett**

**Action summary**

3.1	SH to circulate a Doodle poll and confirm date of next meeting	SH
4.1	RWP to find out if BBSRC are going to sign up to the DORA	RWP
8.1	GT to inform Postdocs that contractually they are entitled to spend 6hrs a week on career development	GT
8.2	FM to speak with Research Services Manager re communication of funding opportunities to postdocs	FM
8.3	GT to arrange coffee for Postdocs in the New Year	GT
9.1	VSG and AS to discuss a possible undergraduate presentation	VSG & AS
10.1	SH to send out a questionnaire on mentoring to postdocs at the beginning of semester B	SH
11.1	Updating of Athena Sawn committee membership and meeting notes on the website	SH & HF
12.1	AS to send around action plans and applications from other Gold and Silver Schools in the New Year	AS

**1. Apologies:**

Alan McElligott, James Sullivan, Sunita Devi-Paul, Kim Warren, Sarah Heskett, Helen Fitton

**2. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes were accepted.

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

- AS informed the committee that due to a clash with another meeting Margaret Ayers was unable to attend this meeting. However, Margaret will be at the next meeting. **[ACTION: SH to circulate a doodle poll and confirm date of next meeting]**

#### **4. Short report on Royal Society meeting 'Pride and Prejudice' [AS]**

AS reported on the Royal Society's Annual Diversity Conference 'Pride and Prejudice' which she attended last month. The conference examined barriers to entry and progression in STEMs with a particular focus on bias. AS informed the committee that the problems associated with metrics were discussed and Wellcome Trust representatives who were in attendance reported that they have signed the San Francisco Declaration of Research Assessments [DORA] and ask panellists to assess applications on the merits of research rather than on metrics. AS believes that BBSRC are the only research council not to sign up and RWP agreed to find out if they have plans to do so. **[ACTION: RWP to find out if BBSRC are going to sign up to the DORA]**

#### **5. Student Data Collection [FM and MA]**

Monique Arthur reported that she had retrieved data on full and part time students. However, the data on whether students have children or other caring responsibilities is not captured and therefore cannot be used. Monique also extracted student data on nationality and ethnic background. Roughly speaking the data shows low numbers of non-British students studying at SBCS. The data on ethnic background indicates some diversity and can possibly be used in our application. Monique advised that later next year it will be possible to compare SBCS data with data from other institutions. AS would like data covering the last 3-5 years – ideally from 2011-2015 to demonstrate a trend rather than a snapshot.

Monique reported that she has looked at the data broken down by department and this was circulated to the committee. JJ commented on female progression rates. The data shows that female students are well represented among undergraduates but that the numbers drop at postgraduate study. It would be useful to determine if this is due to specific career choices or rather, caused by structural barriers. It was suggested that a survey could be carried out but it was agreed that a survey would need to be tracked over time.

It was established that the committee are in a position to write the student data part of the application but are waiting on staff data. AS advised that we would need staff data ideally by February.

#### **6. Staff data – list of academic administrative roles [FM]**

FM informed the committee that this information is on the website under resources for staff – workload model. However, the data will be updated in the

New Year so it was agreed to wait until this is complete before exploring this further.

#### **7. Other data [AS]**

Gender pay gap: AS reported that the salary breakdown by academic position and gender is not available. However, the data is available by grade and gender. There is a slight nuance surrounding senior lecturer and reader posts but otherwise roles and pay grades correspond. Thus, it was established that SBCS could complete the breakdown of academic positions by gender internally. AS has asked for comparative data from all the different Schools and hopes to have this by the next meeting.

#### **8. Postdocs – early career support and meetings [GT]**

GT reported that postdocs feel that there are sufficient training courses offered by CAPD. However, there is uncertainty over how many courses they are allowed to undertake and over how much time they are entitled to spend on career development in general. FM informed the committee that according to HR postdoc contracts allocate 6hrs per week that can be spent on career development. **[ACTION: GT to pass this information to Postdocs]**

In addition GT found that postdocs are often unclear as to which courses are most beneficial for them. They also expressed the view that there is room for improvement with regard to funding opportunities. Some suggested that an email notifying them of smaller grants and providing clarity over who is eligible to apply for them would be very useful. FM said that she would speak with the new Research Services Manager when they start in January and get something implemented. **[ACTION: FM to speak with Research Services Manager re communicating funding opportunities to postdocs].**

GT reported that people expressed some interest in a monthly coffee meet when asked in person but did not respond to the initial email. It was agreed that if the School provided the coffee people might be more inclined to participate.

**[ACTION: GT to arrange coffee for Postdocs in the New Year]**

#### **9. Undergraduates – ideas for improving AS communication [VSG]**

VSG reported that she had spoken in person to fellow undergraduates and found that there were two types of attitudes towards Athena Swan. On the one hand, some UGs perceived Athena Swan to be staunchly feminist; supportive only of women, while others expressed a general lack of interest. VSG reported that the latter group do not consider Athena Swan important to them at this stage in

their development and are more concerned with immediate pressures surrounding their studies. It was agreed that this perception would be difficult to address. However, for the first group of UGs it may be beneficial to give a presentation at an undergraduate event in semester B. The presentation would be similar to that given at the beginning of semester A but VGS suggested splitting the focus to address female under representation in subjects like biomed and male under representation in psychology. This would help to clarify the message that Athena Swan is about diversity and equality rather than championing of one gender over another. VGS suggested that the presentation be led by an undergraduate with the support of Angelika. **[ACTION: VSG and AS to discuss further]**.

#### **10. Mentoring – questionnaires [SH]**

GT feedback that she had forwarded the postdoc questionnaire to SH. **[ACTION: SH to send out a similar questionnaire to postdocs at the beginning of next semester]**. RWP suggested that the committee could draw upon examples of the mentoring process for academics and roll out something similar for postdocs. AS agreed this should be done but reiterated the committee's previous discussion that the process should remain informal and markedly different to that of the appraisal process.

#### **11. AS website [HF]**

GT informed the committee that HF has made great progress with the Athena Swan web page. GF has compared the SBCS Athena Swan page with that of other UK institutions and concluded that there is not much more to do on the website in terms of how it looks and what it explains. However, GT suggested that Athena Swan committee meeting notes and membership list need to be updated and should be kept up to-date. The website is also slightly lacking in data but this will be addressed once we have received the staff data in the New Year. **[Action: Committee membership and meeting notes to be updated – SH to send HF the relevant information to complete this]**

#### **12. New action plan – discussion of ideas**

AS mentioned the task allocations and stressed that the committee need to be actively engaged with the various different sections of the application. AS feels it would be beneficial to look over other institutions applications and action plans from other Gold and Silver Schools in the New Year. By this time we should also have more data and will be in a better position to work on the action plan in the

New Year. **[Action: AS to send around action plans and applications from other Gold and Silver Schools in the New Year]**

**13.Any other business:** there was none.

**14.Date of next meeting: [Action: SH]**