



SBCS Athena SWAN self-assessment team
Notes of meeting held
5th November 2015, 11.00-12.30, Fogg 1.02

Present: Alan McElligott, Angelika Stollewerk, Sarah Heskett, Fiona Marsh, Helen Fitton, Kimberly Warren, Georgia Tsagkogeorga

Action summary

3.1	GT to try and arrange an informal coffee meeting with postdocs to discuss equality and diversity training.	GT
3.2	Friday's newsletter to mention that Kim Warren has joined the committee as the new postgraduate representative and that the committee now has an undergraduate representative; Viviana Santos Gomes.	HF
5.1	FM to collate a list of academic administrative role titles and names of individuals responsible for them from SWARM.	FM
5.2	FM agreed to speak to David Marks about how to get data from HEIDI and report back at the December meeting	FM
7.1	HF & GT & KW to consider ways to communicate AS to PhD students and postdocs via the website and newsletter.	HF,GT, KW
7.2	Compile a list of courses/seminars offered to postdocs at college level and think of what AS can offer in addition if there is a demand.	GT
7.3	A reminder of the need to reflect gender balance in seminar speakers to be sent out with the email asking for nominations.	AS
8.1	SH to look for a feedback questionnaire sent by Kelly to all PDRAs in 2013.	SH
10.1	AS page to be updated in a way that speaks to a general audience who do not have prior knowledge of what AS is, what it does and the benefits.	HF
10.2	Change the title on the webpage to 'Gender equality in our school'.	HF
10.3	First paragraph of webpage to include mention of SBCS silver award status and give a brief explanation of what this means.	HF
10.4	Updating webpage text to reflect the broadening of the charter away from purely STEM subjects.	HF

1. Apologies:

Beth Clare, Matthew Evans, Richard Pickersgill, Janelle Jones, James Sullivan, Andrew Hirst, Giulia Mastroianni, Viviana Santos Gomes.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes were accepted.

3. Matters arising and actions from the previous meeting

- **New PhD student:** AS introduced a new member to the committee, PhD student Kimberly Warren who will serve as the Athena Swan SAT postgraduate representative.
- **April staff survey results:** Janelle Jones will look at the survey results in more detail. This will be discussed in the next meeting in December because JJ was not able to attend this meeting. [ACTION: JJ]
- GT to try and arrange another meeting with postdocs, perhaps over coffee to discuss equality and diversity training and other issues.
[ACTION: GT]
- **Athena Swan communication:** It was established that AS should not have a standing item in the SBCS newsletter. Instead it would be good to have the flexibility to add relevant items in when appropriate. It was agreed that whenever possible a brief comment on the activities of the committee should be included in the newsletter. For example, mention could be made of Fair Selection Training along with a link directing people to the CAPDs website which lists the relevant courses. HF was asked to monitor this kind of information and the committee were also asked to be proactive in flagging items. It was agreed that Fridays newsletter will mention that Kim Warren has joined the committee as the new postgraduate representative and that the committee now has an undergraduate representative; Viviana Santos Gomes. [ACTION: HF]
- **Communication of Athena Swan to undergraduates:** This was done by AS and there is now an undergraduate representative, Viviana Santos Gomes, on the Athena Swan SAT.

4. Athena Swan renewal submission

- AS informed the committee that renewal submission can be postponed until November 2016 in line with when the award was issued. This gives a year to ensure that all necessary criteria are met.
- AS reported that the AS charter has recently merged with another equality charter; Gender Charter Mark. AS is no longer limited to STEMMS but has expanded to cover; arts, humanities, social sciences, business and law. In

addition it also covers wider issues of gender inequality, and includes the progression of professional, technical and support staff.

- It was noted that from May 2015 a new application form came into effect. However AS officials have confirmed that the pre-May form can still be used for submission in November 2016 but advised that the committee should include aspects of the expanded scope in the action plan. For example, with regard to progression of professional, technical and support staff.
- AS emphasized the need to show the impact of the committees actions. This is crucial to retaining the AS Silver award. For example, in relation to mentoring; how can we show the scheme to be helpful and in what ways.
- AS also flagged that in order to get the silver award renewed the following criteria must be established; what mechanisms for career development currently exist, gender balance on key decision making boards, fair and transparent workload model. It was established in order to capture people's views on these issues that a new survey be circulated in January after AS activities have been promoted via the website and newsletter.

5. Student/staff data

Staff data

- In terms of gender balance staff data is looking positive with an increase of female academics from 17 in 2011 to 31 percent in 2015.
- It has been difficult to get hold of staff data and the data itself is problematic due to missing data, lack of consistency and a high staff turnover.
Information requested from HR included the following:
 - Staff on fixed/temporary contract by gender
 - Average salary of role by gender
 - Job application success rate by gender
- AS feels it would be beneficial to also have a list of all academic administrative roles to see the distribution by gender and grade. FM advised that titles of the roles and names of the people responsible for them can likely be gathered from SWARM. **[ACTION: FM]**
- In the future the relevant people could be contacted and asked to give a brief description of what the various roles entail.

Student data

- Student data that AS requested from HR included the following:
 - Full and part time students
 - Students with children/dependents
 - Nationality and ethnic background
- It would be desirable to have comparative data from other QMUL STEM departments/schools and other Russell group and London universities. This would allow for an overview of the difference between bronze, silver and gold departments/schools. AS has received student data for the whole of QMUL STEMs and will receive staff data (hopefully) before the December meeting but data for other Russell Group Universities, London Universities and eventually nationally to show a comparative perspective of where SBCS stands have to be collected from national data bases. FM agreed to speak to David Marks about how to get data from HEIDI and report back at the December meeting. **[ACTION: FM]**
- It was noted that the student 2015/16 data will not be available in time for the November 2016 submission. So as soon as we have collected the comparative student data, we can analyse and complete the relevant section in the AS application.

6. Focus groups and surveys – task allocation file

- AS ran through the task allocations and emphasized that people responsible for specific actions are also responsible for collecting evidence for impact.

7. Communication of Athena Swan undergraduates/postgraduates

- There is currently a problem communicating AS to PhD students and postdocs. HF was asked to consider ways to address this using the website and newsletter. **[ACTION: HF]**
- It was suggested that information could be compiled on what courses/seminars are offered at college level. If people are happy with what's on offer then fine but if not it may be worth considering what AS could offer. **[ACTION: GT]**
- AGM raised concerns over the fact that the action 'gender balance in seminar series' is being ignored in some parts of the school. While biology and psychology have addressed this, the remaining departments do not reflect

gender balance in their choice of speakers, with seminar speakers remaining very much male dominated. AGM stressed the need to address this and it was suggested that the committee encourage staff to nominate female colleagues. In addition it was agreed that a reminder of the need to reflect gender balance in seminar speakers be sent out with the email asking for nominations. **[ACTION: AS]**.

8. Mentoring

- The committee was in agreement over the need to formalise the mentoring process and it was established that it would be desirable for postdocs to meet with their mentors twice annually. SH should maintain a record of this. However, it was also recognised that the process should be markedly different to an appraisal and GT stressed the need to keep the process informal and friendly.
- The difficulty of measuring the impact of mentoring on such things as career progression was discussed. It was recognised that it is difficult to ascertain whether promotions for example were directly affected by mentoring or were influenced by other factors.
- In order to attempt to measure the impact of mentoring it was agreed that a short questionnaire could be circulated to all mentees. The information gathered would be qualitative rather than quantitative. SH to look for a questionnaire sent by Kelly to all PDRAs in 2013. **[ACTION: SH]**
- GT suggested that PDRAs who have been through the process and progressed could be contacted to share their views on mentoring. This would generate some impressions and quotes that could provide an indication of the impact of mentoring and could be used in the AS application.
- Exit interview/questionnaires were also mentioned as a possibility.

9. Flexible working

- AS reiterated the importance of having School meetings within core hours. This is an ongoing issue as this policy is often ignored. Committee to be vigilant in pushing for the implementation of this initiative.

10. Athena Swan Website

- HF explained that at present the AS page speaks to people who already have knowledge of what AS is, what it does and the benefits it offers. However, it

does not necessarily speak to a general audience who do not have prior knowledge of AS. HF to address this. **[ACTION: HF]**

- HF suggested changing the title to make it more personal and inclusive – ‘Gender equality in our school’ rather than ‘Gender equality in higher education’. This change was approved by the committee. **[ACTION HF]**
- HF recommended that the 1st paragraph include mention of the fact that SBCS has silver award status and give a brief explanation of what this means. **[ACTION HF]**
- Other suggestions for the website included; featuring Janelle’s analysis of the survey results, uploading videos/slide shows of female researchers and open days, updating the text to reflect the broadening of the charter away from purely STEM subjects, **[ACTION HF]** and it was generally agreed that the page be built and updated based on what the committee’s activities are.

11. Any other business

- There was no other business but HF took a photo of the committee to use in the School newsletter and for twitter.

12. Date of the next meeting [ACTION: SH]