

**Minutes of meeting 11th November 2013 11:00-12:30 in
Fogg 3.15**

Present: Rukasana Bhajjee (RB), Matthew Evans (ME), Alan McElligott (AGM), Kelly Peaston (KP), Richard Pickersgill (RWP), Marina Resmini (MR), Ruth Rose (RR), Angelika Stollewerk (AS), Jim Sullivan (JAS), Georgia Tsagakogeorga (GT)

Part 1

1. Apologies for absence

Bertille Calinaud, Fiona Marsh, Joanna Sacharz

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 30th September 2013

Accepted

3. Matters arising

None

Part 2

1. Report from the Athena SWAN ceremony

Bertille and Angelika attended the awards ceremony on 7th November. There were speeches from Dame Julia Higgins and Tom Welton, of Imperial College. For the SBCS award, the three routes to promotion were cited as an example of good practice. Other areas for commendation in other institutions were such practices as giving priority for research pump priming for staff on maternity leave staff and having social gatherings at lunch time.

It was reported that institutions that had achieved gold status had mentoring rewards embedded in promotion activities, therefore recognising the impact of mentoring. Tom Welton would be willing to talk at SBCS and this could be part of a beacon activity.

2. Discussion of feedback on Silver application

Feedback on the application had been received (see appendix). The main comments regarding improvements were:

The attrition point was not made explicit.

Ratios – need the numbers to make it clearer

Support for grant writing – this can be included in action plan.

Events – move to holding during working hours and keep record of attendance at events. Any Christmas events will be held during the day.

The idea of submitting a team application under the Staff Bonus Scheme was raised. ME agreed to look into the feasibility of submitting a team application. **ACTION:** ME

It was noted that a new postgraduate representative will be needed as Joanna Sacharz is nearing completion.

ACTION: GT to ask Jasmin Zohren or Andrea Hatlen

3. Review of Action Plan

The following amendments were noted:

1.3 Data will be reviewed in early spring 2014

1.4 Tom Welton will be invited to give a talk at a beacon event

1.5 Photos to be added to website. AS is meeting Jon Moon to discuss making improvements to the School's Athena web pages.

ACTION: Colleagues should contact AS if they have ideas.

RWP confirmed that he had sent out a newsletter after the previous meeting and agreed to do this job in future, although no longer chairman.

ACTION: a redacted version of the application would be posted on the website.

2.1 MSc module organisers should be advised to think about the wording and design of promotional materials/adverts.

2.2 NERC DTP – partners will have Athena SWAN interest and the recruitment process can follow Athena SWAN ethos. ME is on the management board.

MR suggests designating a female panel member for postgraduate students to help address retention issues.

ACTION: the normal expectation will be to have at least one female panel member for PhD students and where this is not possible justification will be needed. The female panel member could be from outside the School.

2.4 Promotional material – updates to the web site are being planned. The marketing and communications group has been looking at producing some promotional material for the School in electronic and printable formats. Any material produced would be designed with the Athena ethos in mind, although it is not being produced specifically to

promote Athena SWAN issues. The marketing and comms team are able to produce videos and present them via the YouTube channel. It was suggested that a female member of staff is filmed talking about their experiences at QM.

ACTION: include a video on the Athena web pages via the YouTube channel of a female member of staff.

2.5 Demonstrating the impact of mentoring. There was a discussion about how successful mentoring has been. Feedback will need to be gathered about staff experiences. Careful consideration will also need to be given to the way mentors are allocated.

ACTION: KP agreed to ask staff being mentored about their experiences and to discuss the allocation of mentors with Emma Hare/Andrew Leitch to ensure the best fit where possible.

It was also agreed to include mentoring enthusiasm/success or failure in appraisals, which could make help to make cases for staff bonus scheme applications. New incoming female staff could be asked if they would like to be a mentor.

3.2 Arrange training for staff at away days

3.3 Female representatives on panels – discussed

3.4 PDRA support – discussed

3.5 Advisory panels have not yet been set up, but would include female members

3.6 Exit interviews - Rukasana clarified the policy on exit interviews after the meeting via email:

Currently when an individual is due to leave QMUL they receive a letter which has a link to an online exit survey. The take up of the survey is not good and the questions and the process does need to be reviewed. We are adding this point to the QMUL wide Athena action plan. This would mean that if as a school you want to start thinking about introducing an exit interview that would be positive and Bertille and I can assist in the new year with regards to the structure of such an interview.

4. Website

Updates are in progress.

5. Any other business

None

6. Date of the next meeting

ACTION: KP to circulate doodle poll.

Feedback on SBCS Silver Award (draft)

Letter:

Good letter. Enthusiastic. Shows awareness. Links to actions. Member of SAT since the beginning - good.

The self-assessment process:

All good points-

- Head and PhD student on SAT. Good balance overall
- Consultation outside the dept.
- Newsletter
- Plans for the future of the SAT
- Infrastructure around Athena SWAN work
- Format – boxes show what's been done and what's still to do

Description of the university or department:

Good points-

- Picture of an active, caring dept.
- Student numbers
- Awareness of influence of different demographics and strong understanding of local factors
- Data easy to interpret
- APs linked in the body of the narrative
- Comment on prizes, and which go to men and which women
- Proactive work to provide role models and networking opportunities with them for PhD students, including women from other institutions
- Recognition that there are fewer women
- Recruitment specialist used to improve adverts to encourage women
- Seems there is change happening, and that actions are showing dividends

Points for improvement-

- Ratios difficult to interpret
- Don't explicitly state the attrition point

Supporting and advancing women's careers:

Good points-

- Work around recruitment. One woman on the panel at every stage
- Actively identifying staff for promotion, sending them on courses. Can show impact through member of staff who's been recruited who went on the course
- If staff aren't ready for promotion, there's a staff bonus scheme
- Three routes to promotion
- Support for academic staff
- Communication with staff
- Looking outside the institution to find a mentor if necessary
- Reviewing current appraisal scheme. Appraisers are trained. Promotion discussed at appraisal.

- Good content in induction
- e-learning allows work from home
- Requests for timetabling flexibility usually granted
- PDRA forum
- Understanding of situation has led to actions
- Involving women (e.g. on committees), but trying to ensure they're not overloaded
- E&D responsibility in the HoD job description
- Workload model - have one and are piloting a new one
- Give notice of social gatherings
- Seminars at lunchtime
- All staff involved in outreach
- 12 months PDRA support for while women academics are on mat leave
- Staff have taken paternity leave

Points for improvement-

- Need to give more support for grant writing (unclear from description in submission – acknowledge may be in place)
- Re notice of social gatherings – would like to know if some staff still can't attend (would indicate impact of policy)
- No numbers for flexible working

Any other comments: well used

Case studies:

- Two solid cases
- Panel would have preferred in first person

Action plan:

- Thorough
- Good to see what had been done alongside what needs to be done
- Measures could be more specific and numerical

Final comments:

- Very strong silver application

Noteworthy good practice:

Three routes for promotion; based on research, teaching or 'enabling activities' (administrative, outreach and pastoral duties), or a combination of these

You look to be in great shape!

Hope you enjoyed the ceremony yesterday.

Best regards,
James