

SBCS Athena Swan Action Plan 2018-2022

Key to Action Plan:

EDIC = Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (former Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team (SAT))

VP = Vice Principal leading College Athena Swan Initiative

HoS = Head of School

HoD = Head of Department (there are 4 departments in the School)

RSG = Research Strategy Group

SWARM = web-based workload model

S&E = Science and Engineering

SBCS = School of Biological and Chemical Sciences

DTP = Director of Taught Programmes

DPS = Director of Postgraduate Studies

PG = Postgraduate students

PGT = Postgraduate taught students

PGR= Postgraduate research students

WiSE = Women in Science and Engineering

HPLP = High Potential Leadership programme

GESAT= College Gender Equality Self-Assessment Team

RHINOS = Committee for 'Research Help for Incoming New Outstanding Scientists'

DTL = Directors of Teaching on Learning

Item	Objective	Rationale	Specific Actions and Implementation	Responsibility	Start Date	End Date	Success Criteria/ Outcome Measures
1.0 Governance							
1.1	Improve staff and student data collection	Recent difficulties experienced in obtaining data sets in a timely way frustrate analysis and improvement.	Work together with QMUL to establish a central Athena SWAN database, which continuously collects all relevant data.	EDIC Chair & Diversity and Inclusion Officer	Sept 2018	April 2020	All staff and students data (100%) available each spring for annual review to understand trends & to feed into action plan.
1.2	Facilitate smooth transition of EDIC roles	Need to ensure consistency of Athena SWAN work and procedures during hand over of roles on EDIC.	Prepare role descriptor and handover protocols for Athena SWAN Chair and protocols for data collection (Athena SWAN core and additional data)	EDIC Chair, School Manager	Sept 2018	April 2019	Athena SWAN role descriptor and data collection protocols uploaded on SBCS Athena SWAN website.
1.3	Establish an annual revision of action plan	Need to ensure that action plan is up-to-date and actions completed in timely fashion	We will establish a formal annual review of the action plan each year in spring. In the action plan review, completed actions will be signed off, ongoing actions will be updated, and, as appropriate, new actions will be added. The new edition of the action plan will be presented in the all-staff meeting and published on the SBCS Athena SWAN web pages.	EDIC Chair	April 2019	June 2019	First review held as planned and new edition of action plan on SBCS Athena SWAN web pages. Plans for subsequent reviews incorporated into EDIC schedule.
1.4	Further improve communication of Athena SWAN in SBCS	Ensure all staff benefit from the positive actions of the group.	a) Further develop induction material for new staff (academic & PS) and PG students specifically addressing EDI procedures & initiatives for the respective groups	Marketing & Communications Officer, EDIC Chair	Feb 2018	May 2018	Induction material developed and incorporated into School induction.

			b) Measure effectiveness of changed to EDI induction, i.e. awareness of EDI initiatives, and awareness of benefits from initiatives by surveying new staff and PG students		July 2019	September 2019	Over 80% of new staff and PG students report that they have good or better understanding of EDI initiatives, procedures and benefits. Staff report personal benefits of EDIC and Athena SWAN polices to improving the environment in the School.
2.0 Attracting and supporting students							
2.1	Improve male completion rates and proportion of men on foundation courses	Low proportion of men on foundation course; lower completion rate of men compared to women	a) Perform surveys of foundation course students, their academic advisors, the student support officer and the programme officers to find out what additional support is needed and if there are gender specific issues related to the course content and assessment	UG working group lead, Programme Director	Dec 2018	June 2019	Surveys complete and results analysed. Report presented to EDIC and Foundation Course Team outlining finding and presenting initial recommendations for action
			b) Actions finalised and implemented.		July 2019	July 2021	Actions implemented. Male completion rate increased by 8% (from 69% to 77%) to the same level of female completion rates; increase proportion of male students by at least 6% (from 24% to 30%)
2.2	Increase proportion of Chemistry students on MSci	Proportion of UG students recruited on the MSci programme has declined sharply	a) Survey chemistry students to explore reasons why they registered for MSci or BSc programmes. Analyse results by gender, ethnic group and socio economic class to ascertain if there are any clear correlations.	UG working group lead, Programme Director	Jan 2019	June 2019	Research completed, and report produced presenting results and proposing changes to marketing.

			Explore issue in more detail using focus groups. Report on findings and make recommendation for changes to marketing of MSci courses to attract a greater proportion of student to register.				
			b) Introduce changes to marketing of MSci programme in line with research findings or introduce alternative courses as needed (e.g. more MSc).		July 2019	October 2021	Change course offered or marketing of course as necessary to provide students with the education they need to progress their careers.
2.3	Increase number of applications from men on all UG programmes	There are high proportions of student who are women on all UG programmes – we don't want to disadvantage women, but do intend to increase the proportion of men, particularly on psychology, modestly.	a) Establish the practice that there should be equal numbers of male and female staff members and student ambassadors to attend open days		Sept 2019	December 2019	It is normal practice for there to be a gender-balance of student ambassadors at open days.
			b) Admissions to specifically target visit to local boys' schools and promote our programmes. Visits to include evaluation of the effect of visit on boys' attitudes to reading (in particular) biology and/or psychology at university. Use evaluation to fine tune presentations.		Sept 2018	Aug 2020	At least 2 visits to local boys' schools carried out each year. Records made of participant numbers. By final event in cycle, at least 75% of attendees report that they are more likely to read biology and/or psychology.
			c) Review marketing and promotion material to ensure that men and women are equally represented, including equal representation of BAME students		Sept 2018	Dec 2018	Promotion and marketing material amended, and an annual review of material scheduled.
			d) Review the effectiveness of initiative by examining the representation of men on first years of UG programmes.		Oct 2021	Nov 2021	Increase in proportion of entrants who are men from 15% to 20% in the psychology programme,

							from 35% to 40% in the biology programmes. There is approximate parity in Chemistry.
2.4	Evaluate the criteria for offers in Psychology UG programme	Men are less likely to get offers for psychology courses than women	a) Review the applications for psychology from women and men covering (at least) the last 3 years to ascertain why men are less likely to receive offers than women and compare to biology and chemistry programmes. Make comparisons by ethnic group, school type, etc.	UG working group lead, admissions officer	Dec 2019	June 2020	Review completed and report on findings produced which includes recommendation for changes to entry criteria
			b) Revise entry criteria in line with findings and assess effect of changes		July 2020	October 2022	Implementation of changes to entry criteria. Increase in proportion of men applicants receiving offers to the same proportion as offers to women
2.5	Analyse basis for gender difference in gaining first class degree in biology and first and upper second in psychology	Women are more likely to gain first class degree in biology and psychology.	a) Carry out a comparison of entry tariffs and performance of men and women throughout the courses, compare to chemistry programme. Based on results carry out focus group discussion with students to explore ways of improving support for students, and men in particular.	UG working group lead, programme directors	June 2018	April 2019	Research completed, and data report produced. Changes for students' support formulated to address findings.
			b) Make modifications to courses and support to ensure more even performance of women and men.		May 2019	June 2022	Changes to courses and support for student introduced. The proportion of men and women gaining first class degree in biology and first and upper second degree in

							psychology are not significantly different.
2.6	Increase proportion of female PGR students in biology and chemistry	In chemistry action is needed to increase the proportion of female students to improve gender balance; in biology, we need to counteract the downward trend	a) Establish practice of including at least one woman on each PGR recruitment panel; additional PDRAs to attend fair selection training to relieve burden from female academic staff	PG working group lead, Staff Services Officer	Nov 2018	June 2019	There is at least one woman on each PGR recruitment panel. At least 5 additional PDRAs trained and available to participate in PGR recruitment panels.
			b) Review recruitment criteria to ensure that they are not gender biased. Adjust criteria if any gender bias is discovered.	PG working group lead, DPS, Director of Doctoral College	Nov 2018	June 2019	Review completed, and changes made to criteria of required. All those involved in PGR recruitment briefed on (revised) criteria for shortlisting and interviews.
			c) Review effectiveness of changes by examining entry figures for PGR courses.	PG working group lead	Nov 2021	Dec 2021	Increase of proportion of female chemistry PGRs by 7% to 30% (with the aim to further increase the proportion in the following action plan), increase the proportion biology PGRs who are female by 2% from 48% to 50%)
2.7	Improving support for female PGR students	Female PGR students' completion rate lower than that of men	a) Analyse panel reports for gender differences in performance, supervision and project support	PG working group lead, DPS, Director of Doctoral College	October 2018	June 2019	Report produced presenting analysis of data and assessing if there are any reported gender differences.
			b) Establish PGR survey to uncover any gender specific issues related to project support and research environment.		October 2018	June 2019	No gender difference in PGR progression and completion as shown by PGR panel reports;

			c) Based on the findings of the research, formulate changes to the support provided to PGR students with a view to improving completion rates.		July 2019	Sept 2021	Changes to support for PGR students implemented resulting in an increased completion rate of female PGRs at least to the same level as men (from 86% to 93%)
3.0 Facilitating gender balance at all academic levels							
3.1	Increase number of female applications	We attract fewer applications from women than from men	a) We will advertise academic jobs through WISE and review the content of our adverts to ensure they explain the support and collaborative environment that we offer.	Academic staff working group lead, Staff Service Officer	June 2018	Dec2018	Adverts amended; procedures in place; Gender-balanced applications for all academic posts advertised
			b) Establish the procedure that recruitment panels will monitor the gender balance in the pool of potential applicants while roles are still open and take action to attract more candidates from the underrepresented gender.		Oct 2018	Oct 2020	All panels aware of the gender balance of their respective potential applicant pools. Checks show that panels routinely take action to increase application from groups who are underrepresented relative to their applicant pools.
			c) We will encourage a more proactive approach whereby staff will use their research activities and networks to talent spot early career researchers (ECRs) and invite them to give seminars, and to identify potential candidates from underrepresented groups, who for the most part will be women. When posts are on offer we will encourage those candidates to apply.		Oct 2018	Oct 2021	A review of recruitment processes demonstrates a step change in the approach to encouraging representative of underrepresented groups to apply for posts. <u>All panels</u> in the previous 12 months report that proactive steps have been taken to attract candidates from underrepresented groups.

			d) We will introduce a requirement that single sex shortlists will need to be justified and, having considered the justification, signed off by the Head of School.		Oct 2018	Aug 2019	New procedures in place. Checks show that where there have been single gender shortlists, they have been justified and signed off by the HoS.
			e) Review applications data and compare to data for academic year 2016/17.		Nov 2021	Dec 2021	Review demonstrates that for like for like posts, there is an increase in the proportion of applicant who are female of at least 5%.
3.2	Analyse effectiveness of SBCS induction and support of new staff. Analyse reasons for low participation of QMUL induction	No feedback available on SBCS induction, low participation in QMUL induction	a) Collect feedback from all recent starters and collate reasons for non-attendance at QMUL induction. Introduce a feedback survey, which new starters are invited to complete.		Aug 2018	Jan 2019	New starter feedback survey in place, sent to all new starters within first 6 months. Feedback reviewed and used to improve induction. Conclusions drawn why staff do not attend QMUL induction event and action taken to increase attendance at QMUL induction.
			b) Collect feedback from new starters.		July 2022	Aug 2022	At least 70% of all new starters in the past three years attended QMUL induction. At least 80% report that School induction was useful.
3.3	Analyse gender difference in training course uptake	Female academic staff are more likely to undertake training courses than men	a) Analyse training course data by grade to find out if higher female participation in training courses is related to the different grade distribution of female and male staff; work together with Academic Development to establish SBCS feedback survey of training course	Academic staff working group lead, Academic Development Department	Sept 2019	Sept 2020	Present conclusions regarding the different training take up of women and men. If difference is real then formulate actions to address any training course uptake issues.

			attendees.				
			b) Assess training uptake by women and men		Sept 2022	Oct 2022	Reassessing training uptake. Uptake for women and men by grade is the same.
3.4	Further improving gender balance in all committees	Women are underrepresented in management and research committee, men are underrepresented in teaching related committees	Establish and annual review of committee memberships; introduce 3-year-rotation of membership; introduce additional membership on committees not linked to specific roles to facilitate participation of underrepresented groups	HoS, HoDs, Chairs of committees	Jan 2019	April 2021	Annual review in place; 3-year term of office of non- <i>ex officio</i> members in place; additional members added to committees. Increase of women on all 4 management and research committees to between 45% and 55%; increase of men to between 45% and 55% on the two teaching related committees and the EDIC.
3.5	Facilitate improved, more proactive promotion procedures	Low level of female applications for promotion at senior levels; low promotion success rate for senior positions (Reader/Professor) for men and women	a) Ensure that the School senior staff proactively identify women and men ready or almost ready for promotion and encourages them to attend promotion workshops and formulate ambitious career development plans. Also offer support to prepare promotion applications. Particular focus on mid-career academics (Senior Lecturers/ Readers) planning promotion to professor.	HoS, HoDs	Sept 2018	Jan 2019	Checks show that a proactive system of identifying promotion candidates is in place with senior staff approaching identified candidates and encouraging them and offering them additional support and encouragement.
			b) Review promotion data and staff profile to ascertain effective of revised approach to identification of promotion candidates.		Oct 2022	Nov 2022	Review shows an increase in the proportion of professors who are female from 7% to 20% (1 to 4), an increase in the proportion of Senior

							Lecturers who are female from 30% to 50% (9 to 16); an increase in the proportion of Readers who are female from 25% to 40%.
3.6	Improving research support for mid-career female academics	Women are underrepresented in senior levels and need support to meet the promotion criteria for the next level	a) Work together with faculty to support mid-career female academics with research funds and PhD studentships	HoS, VP, RSG Chair, SAT Chair	Jan 2019	Jan 2020	Funding scheme for mid-career female academics established.
			b) Improve support for staff to increase their grant application success rates by establishing biannual grant writing sessions & high impact paper writing workshops. Also establish funding for help writing large grant applications.		July 2018	Sept 2018	Biannual grant writing sessions & high impact paper writing workshops established, and funding put in place to support writing large grants.
					Sept 2022	Oct 2022	Review of grant success rates show increase of 5% for both women and men.
3.7	Improving fair teaching evaluation of female academics	Research shows bias against women, as teaching quality is a promotion criterion; we want to ensure fair teaching evaluation.	a) Establish unconscious bias training mandatory for all staff and first year UG students involved in teaching evaluation, analysis of student and staff (peer review) feedback on teaching and module evaluations	EDIC Chair, Teaching Service Manager, Diversity and Inclusion Manager	May 2017	Sept 2018	All staff & students (100%) involved in teaching evaluation have taken unconscious bias training;
			b) Assess teaching evaluation to check whether there are any gender biases. If there are then formulate actions to reduce the biases and repeat the assessment in a year's time.		Oct 2018	Sept 2019	Assessment completed. Actions implement if teaching evaluation shows gender bias and action plan modified to include a second assessment scheduled in a year's time.
3.8	Improving fair role and teaching allocation	Engage staff more actively in workload allocation (SWARM) and	a) Task force to review time allocations in workload model to ensure transparency and communication.	HoS, HoDs, workload model task	Jan 2019	Jan 2020	Time allocations for tasks checked, discussed, communicated and revised as needed.

		communication.	b) Assess staff views at least annually.	force group, all staff	Jan 2022	April 2022	Over 70% of women and men satisfied with workload model and report that they believe work is distributed fairly and in a transparent manner.
3.9	Improve participation in mentoring scheme	We want to encourage more women to benefit from the QMUL mentoring scheme	Encourage participation in the mentoring scheme by promoting the benefits to mentors / mentees and work together with QMUL to pair mentor/mentees.	EDIC Chair, HoS	Sept 2018	Sept 2020	Over 70% of women have been paired with a mentor.
3.10	Facilitate PDRA career progression	Low training uptake by research staff; take up by men less than women	a) Design research staff survey to assess why they do not take training courses and to find out the kind of training that they want. Based on findings, make recommendations for changes to current training on offer and for new training courses.	Director of PDRAs	Jan 2019	Dec 2019	Over 70% of PDRA participation in survey; formulation of actions resulting in changes to the training offer to PDRAs.
			b) Reassess training uptake by PDRAs		Oct 2022	Nov 2022	Data show that there is equal training uptake by men and women PDRAs and that overall at least 70% of PDRAs take two or more training courses each year.
		According to PDRA survey, PDRAs want to be involved in research seminar series and wish to have an industry and innovation led seminar series	c) Include PDRAs in inviting and hosting speakers in SBCS research seminar series; establish industry and innovation led seminar	Director of PDRAs, Director of Industry and Innovation,	Sept 2018	Sept 2019	Industry and innovation led seminar series established
			d) Assess the satisfaction of support for career progression provided to PDRAs using biennial Athena SWAN survey	Director of PDRAs	Jan 2022	April 2022	Over 70% of PDRAs satisfied with the support measures as shown by survey
3.11	Improve quality of appraisal	According to SBCS Athena SWAN survey, less than	a) Establish an annual workshop for appraisers held prior to the start of the appraisal round, in which the procedures in place for supporting	EDIC Chair, HoS	July 2019	Sept 2019	Workshop established and attend by all appraisers.

		half of our staff agreed that they were provided with useful work goals and personal development goals	career development of our staff are discussed. b) Assess the satisfaction of staff with the appraisal system using biennial Athena SWAN survey		Jan 2022	April 2022	Over 80% of appraises satisfied or very satisfied by appraisal.
4.0 Building an inclusive working and studying environment							
4.1	Comprehensive support before, during and after parental leave as well as long-term sickness	Despite support already in place, 64% of staff believe that taking maternal/paternal/adoption leave would damage their career	a) Work together with HR to ensure that all stages of the parental leave process are straightforward to navigate and transparent. Ensure that information on the HR website is up to date with a link embedded in SBCS website, and include clear contact details. Ensure that flexible working options on return are discussed on case-by-case basis. Produce a checklist for line managers to ensure that everything necessary (e.g. communication while on leave; KIT days; possible arrangements on return) is discussed before the leave period begins'	SAT Chair, HR partner, Marketing & Communications Officer	May 2018	April 2019	Processes information and communication regarding parental leave are reviewed and action taken to improve all aspects. Parental leave checklist produced and line managers briefed on its use. Line managers also briefed on the approach to flexible working for returners.
			b) Staff who have returned from parental leave in the previous 3 years are interviewed to collect feedback.		June 2022	July 2022	Feedback from staff who have returned from parental leave indicates they all believe that the process was clear and administrated smoothly. All staff agree that flexible working options were discussed with them and that they had/have the flexibility they need.
4.2	Extend our informal emergency network for	System already in place whereby parents at QMUL helping each other with	a) Extend the parent emergency network to all staff in SBCS. Extend the mailing user list; track number of times the network was used for emergency childcare	Staff Services Officer	Oct 2018	Jan 2019	Checks show that the network is available to all parents in the school. System set up to track usage.

	parents to all of the School.	short-term childcare but we want to extend this to all parents in the School.	b) Review the effectiveness and use of the parent emergency network by interviewing parents in the school. Use feedback to adjust operation of the network to improve utility.		Jan 2021	Mar 2021	Review carried out and feedback used to make changes to the operation of the network.
4.3	Create opportunities for networking & socialising	We want to maintain, and possibly and increase, the satisfaction with social activities by increasing their frequency	Set up a social committee that organises an annual event involving all staff and their families (e.g. sports match followed by BBQ). Committee to ensure that available resources identified, venue booked and information transmitted to staff.	Social committee, Organisation and Culture working group lead	June 2019	Aug 2019	Summer events 2019 take place with good attendance (over 80% of staff) and good feedback (over 80% of staff satisfied).
4.4	Improve the celebration of success in the School.	Taken together these numbers suggest a need for more – and more consistent – celebrations of staff successes and achievements	Set up award committee that organises prizes and an annual award evening celebrating the whole range of achievements from teaching to research to outreach. Committee to ensure that available resources are identified, prizes named and established, venue booked and information transmitted to staff.	HoS, Awards committee	Sept 2018	Aug 2019	Award Committee set up and first prize event takes place in Autumn 2018 with good attendance (over 80% of staff) and good feedback (over 80% of staff satisfied). Event established as an annual event.

5.0 Supporting and advancing professional and support staff career development

5.1	Analyse reasons for imbalances of bonus scheme application	Administrative/clerical staff more likely to apply for bonuses than technical staff; women more likely to apply than men	a) Compare administrative/clerical and technical roles & investigate if there are equal opportunities for demonstrating performance excellence in all roles and if there are differences between men and women; design and run survey for PS staff survey to find out about factors affecting the likelihood of them applying for bonuses. Run focus groups to follow up survey findings.	PS staff working group lead	April 2019	Oct 2019	Research carried out: comparisons between roles made; over 80% participation in PS survey; and focus groups held. Result written up and recommendations made for improving application and success rates for bonuses among technical staff and men.
			b) Reviewing of bonus awards carried out to assess success of measures introduced.		Oct 2022	Nov 2022	Data show that there are no significant difference in the bonus award rates for administrative/clerical staff and technical staff; and for women and men.
5.2	Analyse gender difference in training uptake	More women take up training than men	a) Analyse training uptake by role, grade and gender; and include questions in PS staff survey (see Action 5.1) to explore factors affecting training uptake. Also use the appraisal system to identify training needs better and also to ensure that PS staff are thinking about their longer-term career development and what training might help fulfil their ambitions.	PS staff working group lead	April 2019	Oct 2019	Use data to improve training on offer to PS staff. Checks show that the training needs of PS staff are being discussed during appraisal.
			B) Review the training uptake of PS staff to assess success of measures introduced.		Oct 2022	Nov 2022	Data show that there are no significant difference in training rates for administrative/clerical staff and technical staff; and for women and men.
5.3	Analyse if PS staff are satisfied with appraisal and career development	No information available on staff satisfaction with current procedures and opportunities	a) Include relevant questions in PS staff survey (see Action 5.1) to assess satisfaction with appraisal and more general career development. Follow up survey with focus groups.	PS staff working group lead	April 2019	Oct 2019	Questions included in PS survey and focus groups held. Data used to make changes to appraisal for PS staff to improve experience, and more opportunities identified for career development of staff.

			b) Survey PS staff to assess changes in assessment of appraisal and career development.		Oct 2021	Nov 2021	Survey carried out. At least 80% of PS staff report that the appraisal is useful and is help in allowing them to focus on their career development. At least 80% of PS staff report that opportunities for career development are good or better.
5.4	Promote mentoring for PS staff	To further support the career development of PS staff, the Professional Development team has recently launched a pilot mentoring scheme and we will encourage PS staff to participate in the scheme	a) Work together with the Professional Development team to engage our staff in the mentoring scheme and to pair mentors and mentees. Ensure that all line managers are briefed and that mentoring is discussed as part of the appraisal process.	PS staff working group lead	June 2018	Dec 2019	All PS staff contacted about the mentoring scheme. At least 8 mentor/mentee pairs established. All mentors to have been trained.
			b) Assess operation of the PS mentor scheme by interviewing participants – both mentors and mentees - and use the findings to improve the training of mentors.		June 2019	Aug 2019	At least 75% of mentees and mentors report that they believe the mentoring scheme is helpful to the development of PS staff. Feedback used to improve training of mentors.