School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences, University of Reading,

Athena SWAN Action Plan

Original: November 2013   **Updated:** January 2016

◻ Implemented   ◻ Work in progress   ◻ Not yet undertaken

	Increasing number of female applicants accepting offers – building the pipeline				
	Description of action	**Start date**	**Time Scales**	**Progress Log**	**Success Measure**
1.1	Maintain the representation of female staff and students that the applicants are exposed to at a) open days and b) UCAS visit days (once they have received an offer). In particular, applicants for our 4 year MMet degree are now required to attend the department for an interview and we will ensure that the interview panel for all female applicants (2 staff) includes at least one female member of staff.	Nov 2013	3 years	Numbers of female participants monitored:	Appropriate gender balance at open days, visit days, and interview panels
1.2	Investigate increase in male applicants to Maths & Stats (M&S) and drop in female applicants to Meteorology and identify any required changes to the recruitment processes.	March 2014	June 2014	Significant changes to applicant numbers investigated compared with this year– may be a 'blip'	Identify whether there is a trend and identify and put in place actions to mitigate unwanted effects.
1.3	Ensure female applicants are in 'critical mass' numbers on UCAS visit days to reduce possibility of perception of isolation to increase 'conversion' levels.	Nov 2013	2 years	Numbers of females on any visit days above 30% (or zero)	Improved experience by female visitors on UCAS visit days resulting in greater proportions accepting offers.

	Description of action	Start date	Time scales	Progress Log	Success Measure
1.4	Focus groups to identify and embed ways to make the opportunity to study in MPS more attractive to female students to encourage greater conversion from offers to enrolments.	March 2014	24 months	Dates and feedback from focus groups of students	Changes to open days based upon feedback
1.5	Ensure students to talk about the departmental leadership and culture surrounding gender at UCAS visit days	Oct 2014	Ongoing	Dates of visits	Better awareness of department's focus on equality
1.6	Utilise the new interactive whiteboard in Meteorology Departmental library on Open and Visit days to include videos and snapshots of women from the Department and the wider subject area.	Oct 2014	1 year	Monitor number of females on videos and snapshots	Female representation on whiteboard to be above 40%
1.7	Ensure female representation on the "news" board in the Meteorology foyer around Open days	June 2014	Ongoing	Monitor numbers of females noted on newsboard	Female representation on newsboard to be 40%
1.8	Recognise Open Day and Visit Day activity as part of Workload Model	Oct 2014	2 years	Evidence of workload model incorporating Open Day work	Staff perception of workload model incorporating Open Day work

	Enabling female students' progression and success				
	Description of action	**Start date**	**Time Scales**	**Progress Log**	**Success Measure**
2.2	Add standing agenda item on Equality and Diversity to Board of Studies meetings	Jan 2014	Ongoing	Dates and minutes of meetings where discussions take place	Staff awareness of gender specific differences in learning and problem solving raised
2.4	Identify ways to make the opportunity to study in MPS more attractive to female students to encourage greater applications and conversion from offers to enrolments.	Spring term 2016		Date of focus groups of female PhDs offering ideas	Establish improved processes for encouraging female applicant and conversion – increased numbers of female students.
2.5	Ensure that the departments have visible female presence on visit days and for PhDs get students to talk about the departmental leadership and culture surrounding gender	Spring term, 2014		Monitor numbers of females involved in open days	Increased numbers of female students.

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2.6	Teaching and Learning seminar to raise awareness amongst colleagues of potential for female student confidence drop off and seek ways to retain female student confidence levels, using the data to show that females outperform males in M&S				Staff awareness of gender specific differences in confidence and performance
2.7	Specific training for personal tutors and module convenors in unconscious bias, basic coaching skills, and communication skills as they relate to all students, but to include awareness of research on importance of study styles to female scientists	Oct 2014	1 year	Dates of training	Staff awareness of gender specific differences
2..8	"Inspiration" section on Equality and Diversity part of website with quotes from graduates and staff rather than celebrities. Also to include quotes from males to show some issues do not just affect females, but females are more affected by them.	Jan 2014	2 years	Monitoring numbers of 'inspiring women' and quotes on the website over time	E&D section of website showing role models and quotes re: inspiring women

	Support at key career transition points				
	Description of action	**Start date**	**Time Scales**	**Progress Log**	**Success Measure**
3.1	Introduce mandatory gender awareness training for all interview panel members (embedded in the selection and recruitment training course)	Jan 2014	10 months	Dates of Gender Awareness training and numbers attending	All interview panel members to be trained
3.2	Organise unconscious bias training for all staff involved in recruitment	Jan 2014	1 year	Dates of unconscious bias training	Staff undertaking unconscious bias training
3.3	Trial of blind long-listing process to see if it changes the composition of long lists	March 2014	2 years	Dates and outcomes of blind long-listing events	Conclusion on whether blind long-listing makes a difference
3.5	Continue our lobbying for family-friendly university policies	Jan 2014	3 years	Monitoring of changes to university policy	Changes to university policies
3.6	Ensure that those working part time or flexibly are able to (and seen to) progress as readily as full time colleagues	Nov 2014	2 years	Monitor and advertise successes and monitor awareness through QCAT	Greater awareness of potential for promotion while working flexibly

	Supporting career progression				
	Description of action	**Start date**	**Time Scales**	**Progress Log**	**Success Measure**
4.1	Further confidence building workshops and promotion support	Jan 2014	Ongoing	Number of attendees and feedback	Continued uptake of training and positive feedback from attendees
4.3	20% of MPS female staff to attend Springboard course	Jan 2014	1 year	Monitor numbers attending	20% to have attended
4.4	Improved mentoring availability and visibility	Jan 2014	Ongoing	Monitor mentoring uptake	20% increase in mentoring uptake
4.6	Increase information for PDRAs on career development opportunities	March 2014	2 years	Monitoring information available e.g. on website and elsewhere	Improved feedback from PDRAs on information on careers.
4.7	Focus Groups to suggest improvements to career development	Jan 2014	2 months	Dates and feedback from focus groups	Improvement to PDRAs feedback on quality of careers development
4.8	Ensure all appraisers are fully trained in the new appraisal process	Jan 2014	1 year	Monitoring numbers of appraisers trained	All appraisers fully trained
4.9	Ensure all staff are appraised (PDR)	June 2014	6 months	Monitoring appraisal numbers	~100% appraisal
4.10	Include a prompt for discussion at the appraisal (PDR) asking staff members to comment on how well they are being mentored	May 2014	1 month	Date when prompt included in appraisal documents	Prompt included in documentation

	Description of action	Start date	Time scales	Progress Log	Success Measure
4.11	Encourage appraisees to give feedback on how helpful they found the process after each staff development review	Sept 2014	Ongoing	Appraisees providing feedback	Appraisees feedback included in documentation
4.12	Feedback and user provided ratings for training courses to be made available to view to all staff in the school, via a dedicated webpage	Sept 2014	Ongoing	Monitoring feedback and ratings on training courses	Staff using feedback to inform training choices
4.13	Formal monitoring of data (e.g. gender) regarding nominations /recommendations made by the School for professional, representative, management roles and for prizes, awards and marks of esteem, and regularly reviewing of this data	Jan 2014	Ongoing	Regular monitoring of gender data for nominations	Females making up 40% of nominations
4.14	Networking/mentoring/reviewing activities to be counted towards workload allocation models	Sept 2014	1 year	Date when these activities become part of the workload model	These activities become part of the model
4.15	Greater sharing of administrative roles that enable networking, e.g. Isaac Newton Institute representative	Sept 2014	3 years	Identifying these roles and monitoring of how these roles are shared	A range of such roles actively shared.
4.16	Yearly Day for PhD students with talks on careers and funding etc.	June 2014	Annually	Event happening annually	Increased engagement with female students to encourage research careers

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4.17	Further effort to ensure that promotions criteria are clearly explained and understood by all to improve confidence in the process.	Spring 2014	Ongoing	Dates of workshops to ensure promotions criteria are understood	Staff perception of understanding of promotions increases as measured by QCAT
4.18	Ensure women are encouraged to apply for promotion in a timely fashion	Spring 2014	Ongoing	Number of women applying for promotion	Proportion of women applying for promotion increases by 50%
4.19	Raise visibility of those working part time or flexibly who are promoted	Jan 2014	Ongoing	Monitoring numbers being promoted who work part time	Numbers working part time applying for promotion and being successful to increase

	Ensuring students are aware of department's focus on equality and diversity				
	Description of action	**Start date**	**Time Scales**	**Progress Log**	**Success Measure**
5.1	Clearer information to be included in course handbooks to ensure clarity on expectations on equality and diversity	June 2014	3 months	Dates on which course handbooks are updated	Information included
5.2	Make use of Refreshers Week to reiterate the Department's commitment to equality, explain the various mechanisms and policies for promoting and enforcing equality and to re-advertise the various services around the institution	Jan 2016	Ongoing	Dates on which E&D information reiterated to students	Refreshers week used to reinforce E&D messages
5.3	Undertake a review of visual image on web-pages to ensure no gender bias; and changes if required	April 2014	1 month	Dates when changes are made and monitoring of numbers of images	Images are totally gender balanced

	Culture, visibility, and workload				
	Description of action	**Start date**	**Time Scales**	**Progress Log**	**Success Measure**
6.1	Remind all PIs to discuss the role of staff on committees etc in the appraisal (PDR) process (already on the RSDP form)	April 2014	1 month	Appraisers asked if they are discussing committee membership	Appraisers report asking about committee membership
6.2	Make public the Terms of Reference and membership of each committee on school website	Feb 2014	3 months	Date when ToR and membership on website	ToR and committee membership on website
6.3	Advertise committee membership opportunities for applications from staff	Oct 2014	Ongoing	Dates when committee membership advertised	Committee membership advertised
6.4	Target to have 30% female minimum on all committees	Oct 2015	2 years	Monitor gender balance on committees	30% female/male on every committee
6.5	Focus group to identify ways of formal succession planning – bench warming – including through mentoring	June 2014	2 months	Meetings to brainstorm ideas for bench-warming	Ideas identified and enacted
6.6	Monitor roll out of revised workload model recognising teaching, research, administration and outreach/other external activities	Summer 2013	Ongoing	Date when workload model changes made	Workload model perceived as including all activities as measured through QCAT
6.7	Make all academic admin roles fixed term posts, though with the possibility of renewal, and advertise their availability	Oct 2014	Ongoing	Dates when posts advertised	All posts made fixed term and advertised

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6.8	Change when information collected so data on staff activities from past and current year used in PDRs (appraisals). Feed PDR discussion on career development into plans for workload allocation.	Jan 2015	Ongoing	Monitoring dates when this change is made	Planning for teaching, admin and other activities takes into account PDR data.
6.9	Ensure that training opportunities are accessible to those on part time contracts	March 2014	6 months	Monitoring accessibility of training to those on part time contracts	All training available to all part time colleagues
6.10	Ensure that improvements due to Athena SWAN (AS) are recognised as due to this scheme	Jan 2014	Ongoing	Monitor how AS is acknowledged as the source of changes	Greater visibility of AS as source of culture change
6.11	Encourage change in language in all meeting documents and train all meeting chairs etc to refer to "parental leave" and "caring responsibilities", "colleagues", "chair", rather than more gender specific terms of reference	May 2014	2 years	Monitor all documents for language	All MPS documents use gender neutral language
6.12	Investigate differences in male and female perception of acceptable behaviour and increase awareness of MPS's stance on this.	Feb 2014	June 2014	Outcomes of investigations of attitudes	Information used to increase awareness of MPS stance on acceptable behaviour
6.13	Celebrate female success alongside other success	Ongoing	Ongoing	Monitor examples of female success celebrated	Examples of female success visible
6.14	Provide profiles of diverse range of academics and other staff on website	Feb 2014	1 year	Monitor numbers of profiles on websites	Diversity of profiles matches that of general population

	Description of action	Start date	Time Scales	Progress Log	Success Measure
6.15	Review and monitor seminar speakers and make further efforts to hit the 30% female speaker target	Ongoing	Ongoing	Monitor seminar speakers	30% female seminar speakers
6.16	Collect outreach participants' gender on feedback forms to discern which sessions are more effective at inspiring women into STEMM	Nov 2014	Ongoing	Dates when data collected	Data reviewed and changes made based upon outcomes

	Flexible working				
	Description of action	**Start date**	**Time Scales**	**Progress Log**	**Success Measure**
7.1	Promote Keeping in Touch Days (KITD) further by adding examples to the parental leave document on what KITD can be used for and how these have helped staff on parental leave in the past, including Case Studies on the website	May 2014	Ongoing	Monitor KITD uptake and PI understanding of KITD	Uptake of KITD by all those taking leave
7.2	Develop parental leave form to support staff and line managers to carry out required actions to manage the break	May 2014	6 months	Monitor visibility of information on parental and flexible working	Greater perception of how parental leave and flexible working works, measured by QCAT
7.3	The guarantee of a return to full-time working after a period working part-time – if people want to!	Jan 2015	Ongoing	Monitor uptake of part time working	Greater uptake of part time working
7.4	Mentoring staff who return from parental leave	Jan 2015	Ongoing	Monitoring mentoring of returners	All those who return have mentors
7.5	Put 'flexible working' document onto web as profiles to make flexible working more visible	Feb 2014	1 month	Date when flexible working document in on web	Document on website
7.6	Encourage people to add "availability statements" to emails	Jan 2014	Ongoing	Monitor availability statements on e-mail signatures	All staff put availability statements

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7.7	Make public an expectation that it is ok not to read emails in evenings and weekends.	Jan 2014	Ongoing	Monitor whether people feel happy not responding to email out of hours	All staff are happy not to respond to e-mails out of hours
7.8	Advertise when academics are on leave to make this more acceptable. Lots of people don't take their holiday entitlement increasing the tendency to the 'long hours culture'	Jan 2014	Ongoing	Monitor academics on leave	Advertise those who are on leave – especially those in management roles
7.9	Establish a survey to research perception of working hours followed by discussion at Women in Academia network, and a report for School and university	Jan 2016	3 months	Date of survey	Research outcomes based upon survey
7.10	Establish means for paying for automatic sabbatical for term after parental leave with teaching cover paid for	Jan 2015	Ongoing	Monitor sabbaticals following leave and cover for teaching paid centrally	All returners to have sabbaticals with paid teaching cover
7.11	Explore funding options to provide PDRA cover during and for year after return from leave	Jan 2014	Ongoing	Monitor availability of PDRAs	All returners have PDRA during and after leave
7.12	Ensure members of the Institute of Physics are aware of the 'Carers' Fund' which offers grants to cover additional child care for those attending conferences (male and female) and investigate options for providing similar support for others.	Jan 2014	Ongoing	Monitor information availability and awareness of parents of this fund	Parents take up this opportunity