

**College of Science  
School of Life Sciences Athena SWAN Committee**

Notes of the School of Life Sciences Athena SWAN Committee meeting held Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015 at 3.00pm in JBL0W05, Ground Floor, Joseph Banks Laboratories

Attendees: Lisa Collins (Chair), Sheena Cotter, Michael Christie, Neil Holden, Stuart Humphries, Oscar Guadayol Roig, Leonie Elie, Timea Palmai-Pallag, Paul Eady, Andre Moura

Officer: Suzannah Rollitt

<b>Item</b>	<b>To Action</b>
<p><b>1 Brief introduction to Athena SWAN process</b></p> <p>LC welcomed members and noted that membership of the Committee is reviewed on an annual basis.</p> <p>Athena SWAN is a gender equality charter, and is not just about promoting women. For example, one of the School's aims is to work towards an equal number of male and female students on undergraduate programmes. At present the School has relatively few male undergraduate students.</p>	
<p><b>2 Overview of timings and key tasks</b></p> <p>An application was submitted for a Bronze/Silver award in April 2015, on the basis that the School had made sufficient progress since its creation to warrant consideration at Silver award level. The University was awarded a Bronze award last autumn, so the School can only apply at Bronze and/or Silver level. The decision in response to this application was to make no award, and it is the Committee's role to consider feedback given and what actions to put in place prior to the next submission.</p> <p>At present, two STEM Schools within the University have achieved Bronze awards (School of Computer Science and School of Sport and Exercise Science). In theory it is no riskier to apply for Bronze/Silver than just Bronze. In the next application the School must give evidence to show progression, for example in evidence of changes to workload balance (if appropriate).</p> <p>Part of the report is based on a staff culture survey, which is a School-specific survey that is separate to the University's staff survey. This needs to be run regularly to look for shifts in attitudes and cultures within the School.</p> <p>The Committee aims to submit a new application in April 2016. Each review panel is subject-specific and will be made up of different members than in previous rounds, who may respond differently to the April 2015 panel. From 2016, for the first time, the names of reviewers will be made public. The new panel will review the previous application and comments alongside the new</p>	

submission, so the Committee must demonstrate that comments have been addressed.

New Committee members need to be familiar with successful applications submitted by other Universities. These are currently available on the College's Athena Swan Blackboard page. New members cannot yet access this, but Nicole Fielding, Athena SWAN Project Officer, will enrol new members soon.

The self-assessment action plan is a key element of the application. If any problems have been identified, for example timings of seminar series, these must feed into the action plan.

*Different team members will focus on different elements of the report, and the Committee will then meet as a whole to discuss actions.* Comments on the report will be sought from the whole School, not just Committee members.

Focus groups will be set up to ensure an understanding of the main issues staff face, such as caring responsibilities and work/life balance.

A data analysis group will update the data set in December 2015.

The application should be sent for internal and external peer review in early March.

### **3 Discussion about April 2015 application**

The School needs to show that it has reflected on feedback from the previous submission. Some comments should be relatively easy to address. Reviewers noted that they would prefer in-line actions in the report, rather than a set of actions at the end of each section. Actions also need to be clearly linked to issues highlighted. The mechanisms by which actions will be achieved should be made explicit.

The School should try to keep meetings within core hours of 10am – 4pm. This should be easy to achieve.

It was noted that staff recruitment since the previous submission has been mostly male HR will release data on the gender balance of applicants to positions advertised in that period, however, staff ratios will see a heavier skew towards male staff. The School may seek to address this by, for example, considering appointing female visiting professors. There was some discussion regarding mentoring within the School, and the possible need for a stronger mentoring culture.

The School needs to encourage more male applicants to undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes. This was not particularly clearly addressed in the previous action plan. The Committee needs to identify where Lincoln's Life Sciences programmes stand in relation to national benchmarks.

The previous submission focused on teaching and research staff and students only, whereas the 2016 submission will also include technical and administrative staff.

Workload data will be collated and consideration given to whether it is possible to redistribute workloads more evenly.

Melanie Bullock will be providing a report regarding REF submissions. This is heavily gender skewed so will need consideration.

**4 Actions**

LC to create a list of task areas and circulate suggestions by email.

PE and team to circulate staff culture survey in December, for review in January.

SR to update workload model details.

SR to look at moving management team meetings within core hours, and liaise with Alan Goddard and Anna Wilkinson regarding moving PGR seminars.

LC to request data on approval rate of April 2015 panel.

**Lisa Collins**

**Paul Eady**

**Suzannah Rollitt**

**Suzannah Rollitt**

**Lisa Collins**

**5 Any other business**

No items.

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> January.