

6. Athena Silver Action Plan

School of Chemistry, University of Birmingham

We will continue all data collection and monitoring which we commenced during our Bronze plan. In the Silver plan we report only monitoring of data which we will correlate with other actions (e.g outreach/admissions).

A. Data and Supporting Evidence, Outreach						
Objective	Description	Responsibility	Timescale	Success Measure	Current Status April 2016	Ref.
<i>Reporting</i>						
UG						
Enhance recruitment of female UG to achieve gender balance	A1. Update the School's recruitment publicity material (website with podcasts, paper-based material including prospectus, brochures, fliers, Admissions-related presentations) to highlight female role models, with examples of career progression, alumni case studies , career-based case studies from members of staff. Highlight <i>Access to Birmingham</i> (A2B) scheme with case studies.	UG Admissions Team, School's Communications Officer, Outreach Officer	Starting September 2016, review annually. Objective to be achieved by 2019.	Increase the number of female UGs by 5 % to achieve gender balance .	Annual revision is in place as part of the Bronze Award, the new approaches will be implemented.	3A(i) 3A(ii)
	A2. Continue to approach diverse schools for outreach events; ensure a gender balance in terms of pupils who have attended these events.	Outreach Officer and UG Admissions Team	September 2016 and review annually thereafter.	Achieve gender balance in attendance, assess impact of activities by annual analysis of UCAS applications from schools who have taken part in outreach activities.	Increased activity established over the reported period (42 girls' schools, 34 boys' schools, 271 mixed).	3A(ii) 4Db(v)

<i>Annual reports to E&D, EC and APPS</i>	A3. Monitor student admissions data based on school outreach visits , open days and participation in outreach events.	UG Admissions Team and Outreach Officer		Gain an understanding of trends to influence further actions and priorities.	Preliminary analysis in 2016.	3A(ii) 4Db(v)
	A4. Introduce gender-monitoring feedback questionnaire in Applicant Visit Days (AVDs), outreach events and open days.	UG Admissions Team and Outreach officer	Introduce September 2016 and review annually thereafter.	Positive feedback from female attendees in feedback forms. Increased number of applications from participants in outreach events.	Only ad-hoc monitoring by gender takes place currently (e.g verbal feedback, UCAS applications)	3A(ii)
Achieve gender balance in both BSc and MSci cohorts <i>Annual reports to QA, EC</i>	A5. Better support students with directed career advice in Years 1&2 to make informed BSc vs MSci degree choices .	Year Director/ Career Network Advisors	Starting September 2016. Objective to be achieved by 2019.	Increase the number of female MSci students by 5 % to achieve gender balance.	Data are collected and a general introduction talk to MSci is in place.	3A(ii)
Sustain gender balance in BSc and MSci degree classifications <i>Annual reports to QA, EC</i>	A6. Analyse module performance by gender to identify any areas of the course which show gender imbalance.	Module reviewers, Year Directors	Starting June 2016 and annually thereafter	Gender balance across all areas of the degree programmes.	Exams Officer currently assesses performance by gender at degree level.	3A(ii)

PG						
Improve the female population of the Chemistry Graduate School <i>Annual reports to E&D, RC and APPS</i>	A7. Improve publicity of Chemistry PhD opportunities by (i) introducing student podcasts “What’s it like to do a PhD?” on website, (ii) revising content and location of adverts . (iii) advertise the School-event more widely and revise presentations to include research themes and highlight female role models .	PG marketing, PG admissions, Head of PGT	November 2016 and annually thereafter	Identify tangible outcomes in new procedures; increase numbers of applications from female students; retain current conversion rate to achieve a 10% increase of female population of Graduate School.	Data gathering is in place but further analysis is needed.	3A(iii)
	A8. Analyse PhD research area preference by gender and revise recruitment activities if appropriate.			Gender balance across all research areas.		

B. Key career transition points, Appointments and Promotions						
Objective	Description	Responsibility	Timescale	Success Measure	Current Status	Ref
Staff						
Increase number of applications from females to improve staff gender balance	B1. We will modify the detailed particulars in our adverts to improve the presentation of the School's environment and change the contact for position to include more options.	APPS Operations Manager	Start June 2016 Objective achieved by 2018	Increased numbers of applications from female candidates by 10%.	Text about Athena SWAN was inserted in our adverts as part of the Bronze plan.	4Ba(i) 4Bb(i)
	B2. Liaise with College and University HR to improve information on website about working at UoB, environment, well-being, investment in Equality and Diversity issues.	Website Manager	September 2016		Discussions through University Athena SWAN committee are in place to initiate this.	4Ba(i) 4Bb(i)
	B3. Establish an internal process of termly discussion amongst all staff to identify and proactively approach potential female staff candidates for appointments at <i>all</i> levels.	APPS	January 2017 and termly afterwards	Female candidates are proactively approached for appointments.	Research theme leads have collected lists for forthcoming Professorial appointments.	
	B4. Establish a feedback questionnaire for applicants to find out what factors attracted the applicants to apply.	Operations Manager, HoS	January 2017	Obtain an understanding in any trends to inform our publicity material	To be established.	4Ba(i) 4Bb(i)

	B5. We will target advertising to female mailing lists and website associations such as RSC Women Member Network.	Operations Manager, HoS	From July 2016	Increased numbers of applications from female candidates by 10%.	To be actioned.	4Bb(i)
Promote gender balance in all appointment panels	B6. Record female involvement to interview panels to all posts .	Operation Manager, HoS	Start July 2016 Review per post, Objective	Maintain and increase a ratio of 1F:2M with the aim of gender balance when female staff numbers are increased in the School.	Established process for interview panels, extend to all panels.	4Ba(i)
Encourage research fellowships applications <i>Annual report to E&D</i>	B7. Formalise an internal process to identify promising female candidates and proactively approach candidates for fellowships.	RC APPS	Start September 2016 and annually	Increased number of candidates applying for fellowships. Each Research Unit identifies and approaches a potential candidate.	Website is updated with fellowship information as part of the Bronze action plan.	4Bb(i)
Improve support for promotion process	B8. Encourage staff to discuss their application with a senior chemistry academic , before the College submission; organise preparation sessions for the interview for Reader and Professor; organize promotion workshop for staff in two-legged contracts and/or invite a teaching focused Professor for a consultation session	HoS	October 2016 and annually	All staff applying discuss application with a colleague. Workshops take place. Improve success rate of promotion applications going forward to University Committee.	No formal preparation routes apart from discussions with HoS.	4Ba(ii)

<i>Report to APPS</i>	B9. Establish a working group to identify changes in PDR process that can support career development and promotion.	E&D	March 2017 and annually	Improve staff feedback on PDR.	To be established. Feedback from staff questionnaire received.	4Ba(ii)
	B10. Introduce a set of available mentors for staff for matters of career progression.	HoS	November 2017 and annually	Receive staff feedback on mentoring programme. Staff receive training and involved in mentoring.	To be established Feedback from staff questionnaire received.	4Bb(ii)
Examine factors that contribute to promotion	B11. Analyse information on research grant for gender: applications, success rate and funding requested.	RC, HoS	January 2017 and annually	Provide support to staff on grant applications based on the data analysis.	To be established	
	B12. Examine that the agreed academic credit between investigators is applied in successful grants					
	B13. Monitor leadership and citizenship in activities of the teaching-focused staff.	HoS	January 2017 and annually	Provide support to staff on taking on new activities.	Examined in PDR per individual but no gender trend analysis.	

C. Career Advice and Student/Researcher Support						
Objective	Description	Responsibility	Timescale	Success Measure	Current Status April 2016	Ref
<i>Reporting</i>						
Promote academic career paths to UGs	C1. Review the careers guidance and support that we provide to our undergraduate cohort and include academic career examples from female members of staff .	Career Officer	October 2017	Identify a positive trend from current UGs applications to PG degrees.	Only industrial career events are established.	3A(ii) 4Ca(i)
PG and postdoctoral researchers						
Improve training of PG and Postdoctoral Researchers	C2. We will encourage researchers to attend the leadership courses offered for PG and postdoctoral researchers.	HoS, PG Tutor	Start July 2016 and annually	Researchers attending the courses. Evidence of impact on their career choices.	Few PG a year attend the leadership course.	4Cb(ii)
	C3. Introduce new teaching courses and briefing sessions for PGs and postdoctoral researchers.	Education Enhancement Officer	Start October 2016 and review annually Objective achieved by 2017	All researchers involved in teaching to receive the training. Identify satisfaction of PGs in approaches to teaching to promote approachability of academic career.	Confirmed new courses to take place in September 2016	4Cb(ii)
	C4. Encourage participation in journal article - writing and grant-writing workshops.	DepHoS, PG Tutor, E&D	Start October 2016	A high proportion of researchers attending the workshops.	To be monitored and better promoted.	4Cb(ii)
Promote academic career paths	C5. Encourage participation and monitor uptake to the annual conference the conference <i>"Postdoctoral researcher to</i>	E&D	September 2016	Increase participation numbers from Chemistry postdoctoral researchers.	The conference run in 2016 and was well received.	4Cb(ii)

	<i>Professor". Investigate extension of invitation to PGs.</i>				Support has been agreed.	
Improve Networking and Mentoring	C6. We will improve the networking between PG students and postdoctoral researchers by organisation of events between RSLC and the Chemistry postdoc focus group.	E&D, DepHoS, PG Tutor	Start June 2016 Objective achieved by July 2017	A network is established which takes part in Induction of new members. Organisation of School events.	RSLC organizes monthly coffee mornings for PG.	4Cb(ii)
	C7. Introduce careers talks from alumni as half-day Chemistry careers events.	PG tutor	May 2017	Establish this as an annual event. Monitor career	To be established.	4Cb(ii) 4Cb(iii)
	C8. Introduce a pool of mentors for PG and postdoctoral researchers.	HoS with PG tutor	October 2017	Receive feedback about the voluntary mentoring programme.	To be established.	4Cb(ii)
Support through hardship	C9. Introduce a " hardship " fund within the School for PGs. Continue to lobby University for a PG hardship fund.	E&D	January 2017	A hardship fund is established and influences University policy in Graduate School.	To be established.	4Bb(ii)
Support in career choice	C10. Change the PDR for postdoctoral researchers to include a member of staff other than supervisor.	HoS	June 2016	Receive satisfactory feedback from researchers.	Established PDR in the School.	4Cb(ii)

D. Culture, Communication and Organisation						
Objective	Description	Responsibility	Timescale	Success Measure	Current Status	Ref
<i>Reporting</i>					April 2016	
Disseminate information of operations	D.1 Improve the PG induction package with information of School's organization and special leaves (parental, sick).	PG tutor	Start October 2016 Review annually	Satisfactory feedback is received about availability of information.	To be established.	4Ca(iii)
	D.2 Publicise better the choice for UG tutor and update student information on webplatform with additional support for parents/carers, student welfare	UG Teaching Centre, EC				
	D.3 We will establish a main calendar for staff absences held by HoS office, to facilitate <i>back up supervision</i> of research group when a member of staff cannot be at School at short notice.	HoS office	Start July 2016 Review annually	Satisfactory feedback from staff about communication lines by 1 year of operation.	Partially established but improvements have been suggested from staff feedback.	4Ca(iii)
	D.4 Improve timetabling of all operations e.g to link assignments with PDR	HoS office, Teaching Administration				
	D.5 We will establish a <i>monthly newsletter</i> by the HoS office	HoS, Communications Officer	Start November 2016 Review annually			
Increase awareness promote E&D values	D.6 Introduce staff "themed" coffee mornings to disseminate and discuss issues.	E&D champion	January 2017	Participation of staff and satisfactory feedback is received for dissemination of information.	To be established.	4Db(iv))

	D.7 Introduce E&D online training to all PGs and postdoctoral researchers as part of induction.	EandD champion	October 2016	Record of training achieved.	On-line training for students established in 2016. Staff training is established and monitored.	4Db(iv)
	D.8 Seek College support to continue “culture awareness in classroom” course for all PGs and Postdoctoral researchers who are involved in teaching.	EandD champion	October 2017	Establish the course as part of induction.	A pilot course ran in 2015. A request for continued support is submitted.	4Db(iv)
	D.9 Establish an EandD representative in Staff-Student Liaison Committee and in College E&D Committee.	Lead of SSLC	October 2016	A representative to be elected annually with the role of disseminating EandD issues and activities.	Established in 2016	4Db(iv)
Promote female role models	D.10 Introduce named PG prizes for demonstrating and outreach.	DoE and APPS	April 2017	A change in culture with more prominent female presence in the School.	To be established.	4Db(iv)
Deepen the involvement and engagement of PG and postdoctoral researchers with visitors and alumni	D.11 Organise meetings with dedicated time slots only for PG and postdoctoral researchers.	Dep HoS	October 2016	Receive positive feedback from researchers.	Some meetings take place but a more organised approach will be established.	4Db(iv)

Review workload model with all staff commitment s	D.12 Introduce data collection of research activities not currently given “unit” contribution to the model.	DepHoS	October 2016	Receive positive feedback from staff.	Workload model is established but improvements have been suggested	4Db(ii)
Social gatherings	D.13 Continue to vary our social events and introduce more social events on premises external to University.	HoS Office/Operations Manager	June 2017	High participation of staff.	Events where families are welcome have been organised as part of the Bronze Action Plan.	4Db(iv)

E. Flexibility and Managing career breaks						
Objective	Description	Responsibility	Timescale	Success Measure	Current Status	Ref
<i>Reporting</i>					April 2016	
Ensure fairness in flexible working arrangements	E.1 Invite HR to provide sessions to raise awareness of flexible working and work-life balance	E&D	September 2016	Positive feedback in 2017 staff questionnaire	Website information is circulated by E&D.	4Eb(i)
	E.2 Monitor flexible working amongst all staff and review arrangements.	APPS	October 2016	Have a clear understanding of staff needs and receive satisfactory staff feedback on clarity of application for flexible working.	Flexible working arrangements are discussed with HoS.	4Eb(i)
Support for parental and maternity leave	E.3 Lobby for enhanced shared parental leave; provide case studies to University Athena committee.	E&D	Start May 2016	Introduction of enhanced shared parental leave in UoB by 2017.	A case is submitted.	4Eb(ii)
	E.4 Continue to lobby for further nursery provision and for better discounts for students			Increase of nursery provision agreed by 2018; increased discount for students.	An analysis was provided to University committee. Discussions have commenced.	4Eb(ii)

Abbreviations

APPS	Academic Policy, Procedures and Strategy Committee
AVD	Applicant Visit Day
Dep HoS	Deputy Heads of School
DoE	Director of Education
DTC	Doctoral Training Centre
E&D	Equality and Diversity
EPS College	College of Engineering and Physical Sciences
HoS	Head of School
PDR	Performance and Development Review
PG	Postgraduate
PGR	Postgraduate Research
PGT	Postgraduate Taught
POD	People and Organisational Development
QA	Quality Assurance group
RSLC	Research School Liaison Committee
SSLC	Undergraduate Student-Staff Liaison Committee
UG	Undergraduate
UoB	University of Birmingham