

School of Geography, Earth & Environmental Sciences, University of Birmingham
Athena Bronze Action Plan, January 2014-December 2016

Action #	Description of action	Action already taken and outcome at November 2013	Further actions planned from December 2013 onwards	Start date	Responsibility	Success measure and schedule
1	Improve our knowledge base and raise awareness					
1a	Identify good practice from across the sector and within University of Birmingham that can be built into our Athena activities	<p>Participating in the University's central Athena Working Group and sharing good practice with other Schools</p> <p>Visit made from Keele School of Geography (Athena Silver award holders) and notes of meeting disseminated to committee</p> <p>Successful applications from relevant departments at other Universities (Imperial College, Queen's University Belfast, and University of Southampton) reviewed.</p> <p>Attendance at College of Social Science WIN WIN event on gender equality in academia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Intelligence gathering on university level Athena Swan processes ii. Review Athena Swan submissions from other UoB school to identify good practice iii. Contact Athena Swan champions in other UoB schools to discuss initiatives and issues/barriers to implementation iv. Identification and review of Athena Swan submissions from relevant departments at other universities to identify good practice v. Identify best practice examples regarding part-time and job-share approaches, including role models vi. Identify potential areas for action from "Women in STEM careers evidence hearings" of the Commons Select Committee(Science and Technology Committee) who are reviewing the so-called "leaky pipeline" 	Feb 2014	Athena Committee (LC, JF, IL, EVJ, JP, JCR, SW)	Development and implementation of initiatives based on the sharing of good practice (annually)

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1b	Activate GEES student focus groups on student experience	Identified need for and recruited undergraduate student focus groups	i. Undertake focus groups with student engagement officer in order to identify specific issues affecting female students	Feb 2014	Hazel Monger (student engagement officer)	Implementation of activities based on findings (annually)
1c	Collect (where necessary) and analyse student and staff data by discipline or programme of study	Preliminary analysis of UG numbers in Single Honours Geology programmes shows women students constitute only ~35% of the student cohort.	<p>i. Obtain disaggregated data for students and staff in Geography, Earth Sciences, Environmental Sciences and Planning in order to identify any under-representation of women in specific disciplinary areas</p> <p>ii. Request school level data on pay comparability across different salary grades to compare with available data from University level gender pay review.</p> <p>iii. Investigate length of time held by staff at specific grades, comparing: female vs male; part-time vs full-time staff who have undertaken career break vs those who have not</p>	Summer 2014	<p>Athena Swan Committee</p> <p>Head of School</p> <p>HR</p>	<p>Any discipline-specific issues have been identified in order to target future Committee actions (June 2014 baseline, annual review)</p> <p>Sufficient data obtained and comparison of pay undertaken to judge potential need for future actions (December 2014)</p> <p>Any discrepancies in average time to promotion are identified and the action plan developed to address this (December 2014)</p>
1d	Undertake an annual review of the action plan and	n/a	i. Group undertakes an annual review of 'where we are now' (including data) that informs the development	June 2014 June 2015	Athena Swan Committee	Actions are reviewed, refreshed and new actions implemented

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	develop new activities		of the action plan and Athena agenda. This is particularly key going into year 3 (2015-16)		Head of School HR	(3 times per year) The group presents an annual report to the School committee (annually)
1e	Raise awareness of Athena across the School	Draft application and action plan presented to School meeting for comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Report to school meeting on a termly basis, integrate comments from school members ii. Report to university Athena Swan Committee 	Feb 2014	Head of School School Athena Swan representative	Reporting on the Athena process becomes a regular agenda item for school meetings and school executive committee. Feedback/comment from staff received on action plan and any actions taken (3 times per year)
2	Student recruitment and experience					
2a	Address any discipline-specific gender imbalance identified in 1c	Ensured female students are well represented in the student profiles on the school website for all degree programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Monitor student recruitment at all levels ii. Monitor marketing and recruitment processes to ensure: (a) procedures are gender sensitive; (b) positive representation of women at all stages of the process 	Nov 2014	Athena Swan Committee	Increase in % of female students for any degree programmes with identified issues (November 2016)
2b	Ensure positive student experience in terms of promoting gender	An effort has been made to ensure female speakers are well-represented in careers talks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Develop school policy statement to be published in undergraduate and postgraduate student handbooks outlining requirement of respect for 	Feb 2015	Year 1 tutor Postgraduate tutor	Students report positive experiences of gender equality in future focus groups

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	equality		<p>gender equality in behaviour towards other students and staff, and in submitted work</p> <p>ii. Establish an Athena gender equality representative in the school who the students can approach to discuss any issues</p>		Athena Swan Committee	led by student engagement team (November 2016)
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3	Staff recruitment					
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3a	Increase the number of women applying for academic vacancies from Lecturer to Professor level (including Birmingham Fellows), focusing on areas (e.g. Earth Sciences, physical geography) that have particularly low numbers of female staff	<p>A statement has been added to recent GEES job adverts welcoming applicants from underrepresented groups (specifically female and BME applicants), and contact details given of senior female professor for informal discussion about the posts</p> <p>Of 4 recently advertised posts in Human Geography/Planning, 11 staff shortlisted (5f/6m); 4 job offers made (3f/1m)</p> <p>Several potential female applicants were approached and invited to apply for posts</p>	<p>i. Monitor all disciplinary areas for under-representation of female staff and develop future action plan as appropriate</p> <p>ii. Review how we advertise and identify ways to target more female applicants</p> <p>iii. Advertise full time positions in line with best equality practice with the opportunity for applicants who need to apply as part time / job share applicants</p>	Feb 2014	Head of School And HR	<p>Increase in female applicants (November 2016)</p> <p>Increase in overall female staff population and, in turn, proportion of women 'in the pipeline' for promotions (November 2016)</p> <p>Improvement in number of female appointments across all grades (November 2016)</p>
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3b	Ensure gender sensitivity and	We have a gender balance on short-listing and	i. Given the small number of female academics we will seek additional	Feb 2014	Head of School And HR	Improvement in number of female
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	neutrality throughout recruitment process	selection panels Diversity training is now a part of the induction process for new staff	female representation from outside of the School on interview panels to avoid burdening the few female staff with additional duties ii. Raising awareness of training requirements for staff who sit on recruitment panels and monitor levels of training			appointments across all grades Increase in overall female staff population and, in turn, proportion of women 'in the pipeline' for promotions (November 2016)
3c	School recruitment materials (e.g. website) reflect our commitment to Athena SWAN agenda		i. Review our website and ensure female staff recruitment and success is celebrated, our commitment to Athena is clear (e.g. access to this action plan online) and our support of work-life balance is communicated (e.g. part time working)	Nov 2014	College web team Athena Swan Committee	Clear links available from GEES homepage to profiles & news stories of female academic staff and details of the School's commitment to Athena SWAN (December 2014)
4	Supporting and advancing women's careers					
4a	Improve our induction process	Induction process has been formalised A copy of the post-doctoral	i. Include information in induction pack on: flexible working; career development opportunities; Athena SWAN	Feb 2014	Head of School	Positive feedback from staff on their experiences of the new induction

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		concordat for all new post-docs and staff line-managing a post-doc is now provided	ii. Improve the process of introducing new staff to colleagues, by appointing a mentor in time for their arrival, who will undertake to do so			process measured through a review after 6 months in post (March 2015)
4b	Female progression is actively supported	<p>In the past several years, an annual Personal Development Review (PDR) for all academic staff has been introduced</p> <p>1 female senior lecturer has been identified and offered University leadership training, 2 female lectures have taken up Aurora leadership training opportunity advertised internally by the University</p> <p>PDR meetings now include role-specific senior staff (e.g. Head of Education and Head of School) for teaching focused staff</p> <p>Staff are offered the opportunity to meet with the HoS to discuss promotion prospects and application process</p>	<p>i. Managing and mentoring of female staff particularly takes into account points in their career when they might need additional or tailored support to increase female staff retention, e.g. following maternity leave or when moving from full-time to part-time working.</p> <p>ii. Mentors offered at all stages of career (from early career to professor) and mentoring duties included in workload model</p> <p>iii. College level promotions workshops are promoted to all staff and female staff actively encouraged to attend</p> <p>iv. Review promotions procedure for issues regarding gender sensitivity, including timing of promotions applications and the requirements of the case for support. Report findings/recommendations to college and university</p> <p>v. Identify paths for promotion to</p>	June 2014	<p>Athena Swan Committee</p> <p>Head of School</p> <p>School Athena Swan representative</p>	<p>Increase in numbers of female staff going forward for promotion and achieving promotion (November 2016)</p> <p>Open and supportive review of promotion outcome (irrespective of positive or negative result) with clear guidance for future actions for staff and support from School in achieving those actions (December 2014)</p> <p>Transparent workload model implemented with mentoring duties and other "good citizen" duties included (March 2014)</p>

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			<p>senior level positions for those who are part time or have flexible working patterns (including from 1a(v) above), or who are teaching-focussed, and ensure mentors have experience of these pathways</p> <p>vi. Promote uptake of sabbaticals through discussion at PDR to help staff with significant administrative/teaching loads, to reward “good citizenship” and help staff returning from career breaks</p> <p>vii. Lobby College to develop promotions criteria which reward collegiality and good citizenship rather than current focus on leadership</p> <p>viii. Lobby College to ensure a balanced promotions panel to include women, staff with experience of career breaks and/or part-time working, staff from all Schools in the College</p> <p>ix. Greater transparency around promotional routes, and gender-sensitive approach to the application of promotional criteria</p> <p>x. Use workload model to ensure that</p>			<p>Action points relating to college level procedures are successfully communicated through university level Athena SWAN Committee (annually)</p>
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			<p>collegiate staff are not overloaded with duties which may impede their career development</p> <p>xi. Implementation of post-doctoral concordat and provide post-docs with the opportunity to meet with HoS/Line manager when specific internal job opportunities arise (as is currently the case with promotions)</p>			
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5	Organisation and culture					
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5a	Gender balance (School seminar series and committees)	Anecdotally, some efforts are made to ensure gender balance, but this is not monitored.	<p>i. Formalise having a gender balance as a key factor in identifying participants for seminars and communicate this to seminar organisers</p> <p>ii. Formally task the Head of School with ensuring gender balance on committees – to be monitored by School Executive Committee</p>	June 2014	Head of School Seminar organisers	Seminars are regularly presented by women (reviewed termly) and Executive Group approves gender balance on committees in the School
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5b	School activities are within 'family friendly' hours	All School meetings are held within primary school hours	i. Investigate timetabling of teaching (i.e. daily schedule and term schedule) to accommodate caring responsibilities where possible (i.e. staff can raise this issue and it will be seriously considered)	June 2014	Administrative staff in liaison with timetabling dept	Staff responsible for timetabling formally consider requests and accommodate them where possible (per semester)
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5c	University and School family friendly activities	University Intranet page and induction pack sets out arrangements and support	ii. Promote and implement family-friendly environment within the School through induction process	Feb 2014	Athena Swan Committee	Staff with caring responsibilities are aware of and make
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	are actively promoted to staff	for staff with caring responsibilities (e.g. leave entitlements including new parental leave arrangements, nurseries, childcare vouchers, holiday clubs etc.)	and PDR			use of the support available (annually) Increase in uptake of family-friendly initiatives (e.g. flexible working hours) by staff (November 2016)
5d	Hold social events to encourage a sense of School community	Regular monthly coffee meetings now established for female academics to share advice / information / knowledge to support others Staff meet monthly on Friday evenings Geography and Earth Sciences Christmas social Ball for students and staff held annually GEES Picnic (shared lunch) held termly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Events are regularly held to celebrate success and mark key events in the University calendar ii. Include events that encourage staff to bring their families along, e.g. a summer barbecue 	Feb 2014	Athena Swan Committee All staff	Every staff member is aware of social activity that they can participate in at GEES (3 times per year) Ensure social activities remain regular (3 times per year)