



Equality Challenge Unit



An Introduction to the Expanded Athena SWAN Charter

Cygnets 2, October 2016

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= Recognition scheme of excellence in women's employment in STEMM

= **2005**: 10 members

= **2016**: 137 members

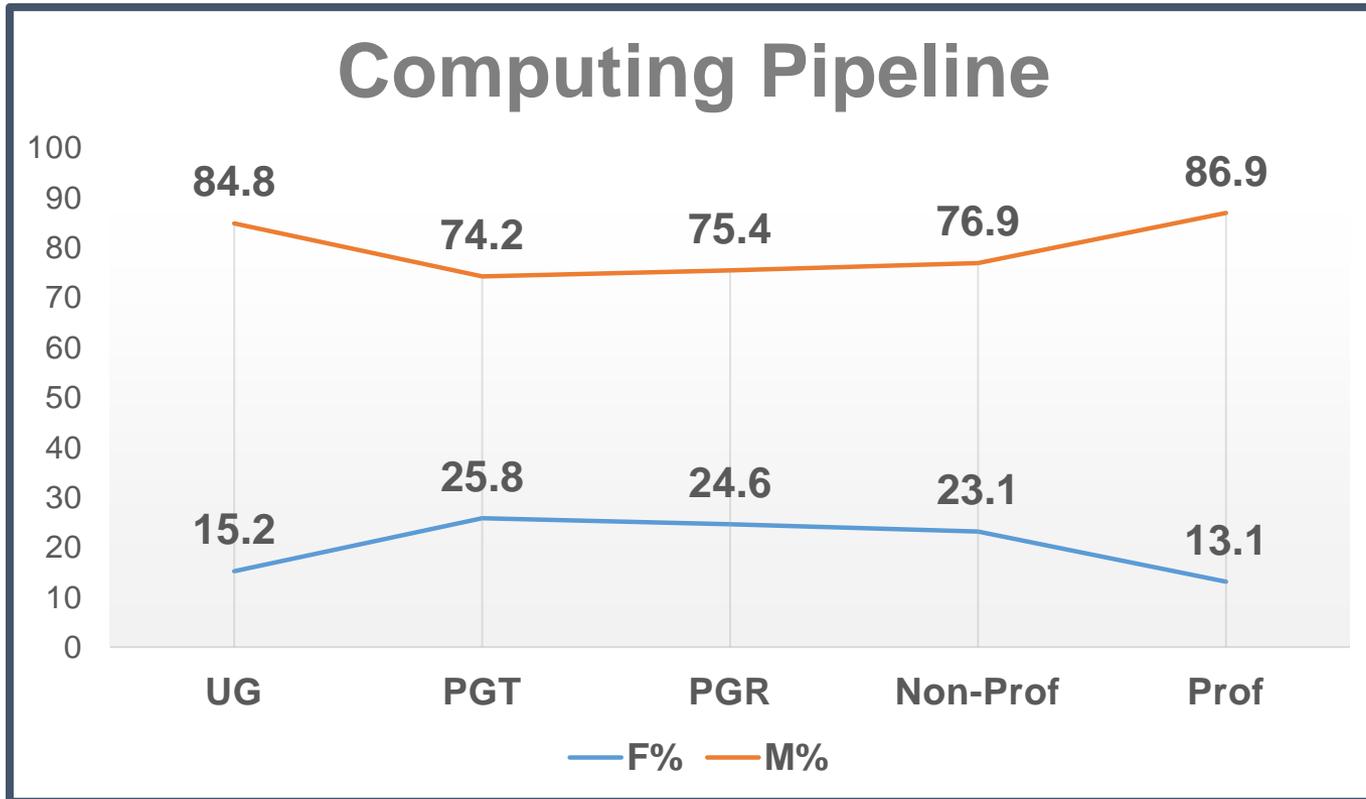
STEMM = Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths, Medicine

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Athena SWAN: challenges in STEMM



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2013/24 data: Computer science student data; IT, systems sciences & computer software engineering staff data.

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Athena SWAN: post-May 2015



- = Recognition scheme of commitment to gender equality across institutions
- = Expanded to take in AHSSBL and professional and support staff
- = Adapted from Athena SWAN and ECU's gender equality charter mark trial (GEM)
- = Based on consultation with the sector



AHSSBL = Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Business, Law

STEMM = Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths, Medicine

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Athena SWAN: key changes



= Inclusion of professional and support staff

= Inclusion of all staff

= Not just about one gender

= Coverage of all disciplines

= Not just about academics

= Quality of life

= Not just about the sciences

= Focus on equality

= More complete data analysis

= Aggregated, extended word count

Athena SWAN: intersectionality

“Intersectionality means recognising that people’s identities and social positions are shaped by several factors, which create unique experiences and perspectives.”

Institutional applications only

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Athena SWAN: award holders

- = 617 award holders
- = 88 university awards
 - = 78 Bronze, 10 Silver
- = 16 research institute awards
 - = 13 Bronze, 3 Silver
- = 513 departmental awards
 - = 344 Bronze, 161 Silver, 8 Gold



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- April 2016 round:
- = 158 submissions
 - = 100 awards
 - = 65% success rate
 - 68% Pre-May
 - 60% Post-May

Athena SWAN: award levels



Bronze

- 🏠 self-assessment and analysis
- 🏠 identify issues and challenges
- 🏠 plan activities on a solid foundation

Silver

- 🏠 additional to Bronze
- 🏠 evidence of progress and achievement

Gold

- 🏠 significant record of activity and impact
- 🏠 beacons for gender equality and good practice



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Athena SWAN: Computing

= 33 award holders

= 28 Bronze, 5 Silver



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Post-May award winners:

= **Silver** Sheffield, School of Computer Science

= **Bronze**

- OU- Department of Computing and Communications
- Royal Holloway- Department of Computer Science
- Aberdeen- School of Natural and Computing Sciences

Athena SWAN: what is it all about?

- = Commitment to removing barriers that contribute to underrepresentation
- = Taking a targeted approach to issues that may be of internal or external origin

- ≠ Producing reports
- ≠ Platitudes
- ≠ Planning to “suggest”
- ≠ Operating a deficit model



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Athena SWAN: how does it work?

- = Complete application; win award; repeat
- = Individualised approach; not a box-ticking exercise
- = Athena SWAN requires applicants to:
 1. **Collect** data (quantitative and qualitative)
 2. Critically **analyse** data
 3. **Identify** reasons for exclusion and under-representation
 4. Develop a 4 year **action** plan (post-May) to address these
 5. Show **progress** over time



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Athena SWAN: start afresh



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= new award

But....



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Panel task

- = Any ideas for text/approach you would use?
- = Any ideas for actions?
- = Anything else you wanted to know?
- = Something you would do differently?



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Athena SWAN: good applications

Are honest

Depend on data reporting

Link data, analysis and action

Target support

Don't make it a 'women's problem'

Always ask 'So what?'

Include a SMART action plan

SMART = Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound



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Athena SWAN: challenges



= Common reasons for being unsuccessful:



Poor action plan that is not **SMART**

Lack of senior management **buy-in**; team lacks power

Descriptive, rather than analytical narrative

Applications not **identifying** issues raised by the data

Action plan not **targeted** to issues raised

Inappropriate balance between process and **proactive** action

Expanded criteria: embedding the principles



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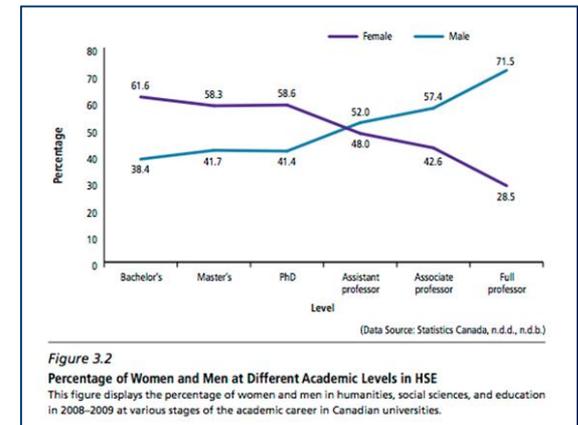
Expanded application
= expanded criteria



Include all staff groups



Address all gender underrepresentation



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Expanded criteria: approaching the form



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Present the data or an explanation
(programme level, most recent year)

Action plans are SMART and = ACTION

Action	Rationale	Milestone	Person responsible	Success measure
Investigate promotion for professional staff	Options are not known	Ongoing	SAT	Data collected

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Action example



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Planned action/objective	Rationale (i.e what evidence is there that prompted this action/ objective?)	Key outputs and milestones	Person responsible (include job title)	Success criteria and outcome
<p>1. An annual workshop on promotion, for all staff, to be run in the department.</p>	<p>53% of all staff and 32% of female staff report “poor” understanding of criteria, believed to be contributing to low application rates.</p> <p>The workshop is for all staff, so attending won’t mean identifying you are planning to apply. Staff will learn about criteria in an informal and accessible forum.</p>	<p>Held 4 months prior to promotion round-annually</p> <p>Evaluations undertaken after each workshop, and on completion of each promotion round.</p> <p>Outcomes reported in next submission.</p>	<p>Responsibility: Head of School</p> <p>Implementing: Session to be developed and delivered by HR, SAT & Promotion Panel</p>	<p>80% of staff attend the first workshop.</p> <p>15% of women apply for promotion before 2019 (baseline- 4% over past three years).</p> <p>90% of female staff report a “good”/“v good” understanding of criteria in 2017 survey (baseline - 32% in 2015).</p>

Athena SWAN: silver awards



*In addition to the future planning required for Bronze recognition, Silver awards recognise that the applicant has **taken action** in response to previously identified challenges and **can demonstrate the impact of these actions***

Athena SWAN: definition of impact



A marked effect or influence (OED)

'Impact is, in essence, provable real-world benefit based on research' (J. Bayley)

Show it has improved for women, quantify improvement, demonstrate that it can be attributed to your actions

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Silver application: degrees of impact



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Silver application: measuring impact



- = Raw numbers
- = Roles and voice
- = Take-up
- = Qualitative data
- = Applications

“Our 2013 survey showed that only 29% of women and 47% of men considered criteria to be clear. After implementing actions x, y and z, our 2015 survey reported that 69% of women and 77% of men considered them clear.”

What’s changed? How is it benefitting (female) staff?
Any new concerns? How will you improve things further?

Silver application: route map



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Measuring impact and hitting targets

Issue

Our data indicate **one crucial point** at which women leave an academic career – the transition between postdoc (68% women) and independent research group leader (36% women)



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Measuring impact and hitting targets

Initial action

To address this, around 2012, we made the language in advertisements more neutral, for example, avoiding phrases like ‘world leader in the field’, which we thought may discourage female applicants

However, the proportion of women applying did not increase and remained at <30%



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Measuring impact and hitting targets

New actions

We therefore chose to implement positive action to identify and personally invite talented female candidates to apply to group leader positions

Four women were invited who may not have applied otherwise.



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Measuring impact and hitting targets: Evidence

All were subsequently offered positions, of whom 3 accepted.

“When I saw the job advert, my initial response was I’m not ready for this job yet. If I hadn’t been encouraged to, I don’t think I would have applied.”

In last 3 years, 6 new group leader positions appointed at 3F:3M



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Good practice: award winning examples?



revised our academic promotion guidelines to:

- = *remove requirements detrimental to part-time staff*
- = *recognise disciplines, such as statistics, where traditional metrics such as first authorship may not fully reflect the individual's contribution*

These changes directly resulted in the promotion of two female academics, one part-time, one a statistician, both of whom had been previously unsuccessful.

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Cygnets: next steps

- = Become panellists
- = Review examples online
- = Peer review
- = Build on benchmarking
- = Share good practice
- = Engage with expanded principles



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Further information available



Website

www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charter-marks/athena-swan/



Athena SWAN handbook

<http://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/athena-swan-resources/>

Email

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