Athena SWAN Bronze department award application

Name of university: UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

Department: SCHOOL OF LIFE SCIENCES

Date of application: APRIL 2014

Date of university Bronze and/or Silver SWAN award: APRIL 2013

Contact for application: PROFESSOR LOUISE SERPELL

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Athena SWAN Bronze Department awards recognise that in addition to university-wide policies the department is working to promote gender equality and to address challenges particular to the discipline.

Not all institutions use the term ‘department’ and there are many equivalent academic groupings with different names, sizes and compositions. The definition of a ‘department’ for SWAN purposes can be found on the Athena SWAN website. If in doubt, contact the Athena SWAN Officer well in advance to check eligibility.

It is essential that the contact person for the application is based in the department.

Sections to be included

At the end of each section state the number of words used. Click here for additional guidance on completing the template.

1. Letter of endorsement from the head of department: maximum 500 words

An accompanying letter of endorsement from the head of department should explain how the SWAN Action Plan and activities in the department contribute to the overall department strategy and academic mission.

The letter is an opportunity for the head of department to confirm their support for the application and to endorse and commend any women and STEMM activities that have made a significant contribution to the achievement of the departmental mission.
April 2014

The Athena SWAN Senior Policy Advisor
Equality Challenge Unit
7th Floor Queen’s House
55/56 Lincoln’s Inn Fields
LONDON
WC2A 3LJ

Dear Athena SWAN panel

I am delighted to be able to submit the first application for the University of Sussex’s School of Life Sciences. Having been involved in the Bronze application at the Institute of Cancer Research several years ago I am very pleased that the University of Sussex has now achieved the Bronze award enabling us to apply as a School. I have been closely involved in the work of our School Athena SWAN self assessment team, and have given it my strongest support during its development.

It is an indication of the level of interest in, and support for, the application that the team, led by Professor Louise Serpell, encompasses such a broad range of experience – from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University, to school managers, technical staff manager, human resources, academic staff – both male and female – at all levels of their scientific career, and undergraduate and postgraduate students. Our group has worked energetically to identify our current position in terms of active support for women in science, and to establish a series of goals for improvement, which we are already working to achieve.

The experience has provided the opportunity for self reflection allowing us to acknowledge the things we are already doing well but perhaps need to communicate better, those that need formalising and areas needing a lot of attention. As is inevitable, there were challenges to be faced; such as collecting the necessary data, achieving buy in from other departments and overcoming cynicism or apathy amongst staff. We have made it very clear that our engagement with the application is not a ‘box ticking’ exercise and that we have a genuine agenda for change and improvement and the fact that we have achieved some small but significant changes already during the process has helped to persuade people of this.

I have encouraged all staff to engage actively in the process that we have undertaken over the past six months – which has included attitude surveys of key groups of staff and students. We see our application for the Bronze award as a starting point for an active process, engaging all our students and staff in improving the position of women in the School of Life Sciences, and ensuring that their contributions to the future development of the School are not lost and we are fully utilising the skills and expertise available to us. It is important that this is not just a question of providing women with the ability to deal with a male dominated culture; rather it is a matter of changing the culture.
I see my role in the process as ensuring that Athena SWAN is kept on the agenda, changing school policies in light of information gathered by the Athena SWAN process and providing support for the Action Plan which we believe will help us continue towards our goal of excellence in all areas of our teaching, learning and research activity, and we look forward to more engagements with the Athena SWAN team as we implement this.

Yours sincerely

Laurence Pearl PhD FRS FMedSci
Professor of Structural Biology &
Head of the School of Life Sciences

[499/500 words]
2. The self-assessment process: maximum 1000 words

Describe the self-assessment process. This should include:

a) A description of the self assessment team: members’ roles (both within the department and as part of the team) and their experiences of work-life balance.

Professor Louise Serpell (LCS): Professor of Biochemistry, Chair of the SAT
- Works full time (research and teaching)
- Married with two children (9 and 11)
- Active member of the University of Sussex’s Athena SWAN SAT

Dr Trevor Askwith (TA): postdoc in Biochemistry
- Married with a baby
- Responsible for plotting data for the application

Dr Julie Aspden (JA): postdoc in Neuroscience
- Married, currently lives apart from her husband to allow both to pursue their careers
- Member: ‘Mentoring’ subcommittee

Professor Wendy Brown (WAB): Professor of Physical Chemistry
- One of two female faculty in Chemistry
- First female Professor of Chemistry at Sussex
- Equality and Diversity representative for Chemistry

Professor Tony Carr (TC): Professor of Genetics, Director of the MRC Genome Damage and Stability Centre (GDSC)
- Married with two children who study at university
- Member: ‘Symposium’ subcommittee

Professor Michael Davies (MCRD) Pro Vice Chancellor for Research and Deputy Vice Chancellor
Recently moved from New Zealand
- Married to university administrator
- Member: ‘Symposium’ subcommittee

Ms Lenzie Ford (LF): 3rd Year Neuroscience PhD student from USA
- Experience with the Women in Science and Engineering at UCSC
- Member: ‘Survey’ and ‘Mentoring’ and ‘Bullying’ subcommittees

Dr Paul Graham (PRG): Reader in Biology
- In a long term relationship with no plans to have children
- Chair: ‘Mentoring’ subcommittee

Miss Phillipa Groome (PCG): 2nd year Biomedical Science Undergraduate
- Member: ‘Survey’ and ‘Symposium’ subcommittees
Sara Hinchliffe (SH): School Manager for Life Sciences
- Provided policy information for the application
- Chair: ‘Symposium’ subcommittee.

Dr Eva Hoffmann (EH): Senior Research Fellow and EMBO Young Investigator fellow
- Works full time running a research group
- Has two young children (2 and 4)
- Chair: ‘Survey’ subcommittee
- Member of the School of Law, Politics & Sociology Gender Equality Mark assessment team
- Member: MRC working group on career paths for postdoctoral scientists

Professor Penny Jeggo (PJ): Group leader in GDSC
- Partially retired but continues to run a research group
- Son (age 30)
- Has worked full time as a single parent
- Member: Mentoring’ subcommittee

Dr Teresa Knapp (TK): School Technical Services Manager
Manages 68 members of staff
- Part time education while maintaining her career
- First in her family to go on to higher education
- Responsible for implementing changes identified by the SAT for technical staff

Dr Karen Marshall (KEM): postdoc in Biochemistry
- Member: ‘Survey’ and ‘Bullying’ subcommittees

Dr Frances Pearl (FP): Bioinformatics Academic Research Manager
- Six year career break; awarded a part-time Daphne Jackson Fellowship
- Now works full time (research and teaching)
- Married with three children (aged 11, 17 and 18)
- Equality and Diversity representative for Life Sciences

Sally Rose (SJR): Course Coordinator for Biochemistry. SAT project manager and secretary
- Member: ‘Symposium’ subcommittee

Claire Thomas (CT): School HR Advisor
- Collated data for the application
- Advising on changes to advertising for new employees
- Coordinating training courses for members of staff
b) an account of the self assessment process: details of the self assessment team meetings, including any consultation with staff or individuals outside of the university, and how these have fed into the submission.

*Action points (AP) are numbered and refer to the action points included in the action plan in Appendix 1.*

The first meeting of the newly formed self assessment team (SAT) for the School of Life Sciences was held on 23 October 2013 and was attended by 90% of the SAT, where the Head of School (HoS) approved a 0.5 FTE Project Manager. Monthly meetings (two hours) were held to discuss action points, subcommittee progress and feedback from discussions with colleagues.

Individual questions were allocated to members of the committee and members were invited to make final contributions to the draft application. Informal, weekly meetings were held between the project manager and Chair of the SAT. A ‘Study Direct’ site (the University’s online learning resource) was established after the first meeting to communicate to staff and students about Athena SWAN. We have also prepared an externally facing webpage, which provides resources (articles and related websites) and details of our Athena SWAN related plans.

Three subcommittees were formed from the SAT membership:

1) the survey subcommittee: to prepare, publish and analyse the results of culture surveys
   Chair: EH with five members

2) plan for a formal mentoring scheme
   Chair: PRG with three members

3) to organise a symposium featuring female speakers only. This day-long symposium will be open to all interested participants (AP5.7)
   Chair: SH with three members

Experiences of the members of the School were assessed via two Gender equality focus groups in February and focused on (1) maternity and paternity leave and work/life balance and (2) career progression, promotions, work allocation and participation. Annual focus groups will centre on issues arising from the surveys (AP5.1). EH has an ongoing liaison with other Schools regarding gender equality – including extensive collaboration on the content and structure of the surveys; reflecting a strong commitment within the University for sharing good practice. Bespoke surveys for academic faculty, technical staff, postdocs and PhD students were designed and they were invited to take part in these confidential surveys in February using surveymonkey as a platform. The results of the surveys and focus groups have provided points for the Action plan and informed the ‘Mentoring’ subcommittee. Surveys will take place annually using surveymonkey (AP5.2).

A University networking meeting for schools intending to make award applications was held in January. Professor Averil MacDonald (South East Physics Network) spoke regarding best practice in making an Athena SWAN application. This meeting was attended by seven members of the School’s SAT along with the HoS.
LCS, SH and SJR met with the Director of Postdoctoral Development in February 2014 to discuss the implementation of a University wide policy for appraisals and mentoring for postdocs. As we have the highest number of postdocs we will continue to liaise closely with the Director with respect to the developing University level policies (AP4.3).

Dr Sarah Staniland (SAT for Physics, University of Leeds) is a critical friend for our application. We have consulted with Bertille Calinaud, (Diversity Manager, Queen Mary University of London), regarding the inclusion of Chemistry in our application (see page 8).

c) Plans for the future of the self assessment team, such as how often the team will continue to meet, any reporting mechanisms and in particular how the self assessment team intends to monitor implementation of the Action Plan.

Monthly meetings of the SAT will be held to discuss implementation of the Action Plan and further action points. Team members will continue to be allocated action points to put into practice and monitor.

The SAT will feedback updates to the School via the weekly Bulletin and the termly School Meetings (AP5.4). University level issues will be referred to, and discussed with, the University SAT via LCS. The Study Direct site and webpage will continue to be updated frequently and their content publicised (AP5.8).

[1048/1000 words]
3. A picture of the department: maximum 2000 words

a) Provide a pen-picture of the department to set the context for the application, outlining in particular any significant and relevant features.

The University of Sussex is a medium sized research intensive University based on a single campus in Falmer, just outside Brighton in East Sussex. The University has ambitious plans to develop its teaching and research; for example, to move from a taught student population of c13,000 to one of c18,000 by 2018.

The School of Life Sciences is the largest School in the University in terms of research activity with an annual research income of over £10m, and one of the largest in terms of student and staff population. The School has a teaching and research faculty of nearly 70, over 100 research fellows (more than half the total on campus) and approximately 70 technical staff, with a small professional services team. Life Sciences have played a major role in the research and teaching of the University of Sussex since 1961. The original School of Biological Sciences (BIOLS) founded by John Maynard Smith FRS trained some of the world’s leading biologists and biomedical scientists, and was a beacon of innovation and creativity in its integrated approach to research and teaching.

The current School of Life Sciences was formed in 2009 when Professor Laurence Pearl FRS was appointed as founding Head of the new School. Under his leadership the School adopted a unified administrative composition – with no formal departmental structure. Professor Pearl (HoS) is the overall line manager of all academic staff in the School. He is advised by a management committee, which meets monthly and consists of the Subject Chairs, School Directors, the School Manager and the Technical Services Manager. Directors and Subject Chairs are appointed from existing faculty by the HoS. There are five research subject groups – Neuroscience; Evolution, Behaviour and Environment; Genome Damage and Stability; Biochemistry and Molecular Biology; and Chemistry. Each research subject group is chaired by a leading scientist who is responsible for research leadership. We are applying for a Bronze award for the whole of Life Sciences because the School has an integrated administrative system and cross disciplinary teaching and research. However, we acknowledge any differences in profile, particularly with regard to gender distribution within Chemistry relative to the biological subjects. In the responses throughout the application, we have included further information where distributions within Chemistry differ from the majority of the School.

The School is based in several buildings built in the 1960s. These provide teaching and research space and include specialist facilities. This physical separation is not desirable in a modern context and the University has committed to building a new teaching and research building, which will bring life scientists from all disciplines together. Planning for this building is well under way and will provide both academic and social spaces to improve the culture and interaction in the School.

The School admits around 300 undergraduates each year. The School’s Post Graduate Taught (PGT) population is small - around 30 FTE. However, the Post Graduate Research (PGR) community is large. We have over 100 PhD students funded by overseas funding, research councils and funding from the School. Teaching programmes are firmly based on our research excellence, but administered across the School. We currently deliver BSc. degrees in Biochemistry, Biomedical Science, Biology, Neurosciences, and Ecology and Conservation, as well as BSc. and MChem degrees in Chemistry. We also validate a Foundation Year, which is delivered through our partner institution, Chichester College. New BSc. degrees in Genetics and Zoology will be introduced in 2016, along with integrated MSci. fourth years for all BScs. An MPharm. degree is also under
development, and an MSc. in Cancer Cell Biology has its first intake in 2014. Each of the School’s
degrees are led by a convenor, who is appointed by the HoS on the advice of the Director of
Teaching and Learning.

In the 2008 RAE the School of Life Sciences was rated 37/52 in the UK for Biological Sciences; 8/13
for Preclinical and Human Biology; and 24/33 for Chemistry research. The School aims to improve
its position in the REF2014.

b) Provide data for the past three years (where possible with clearly labelled graphical
illustrations) on the following with commentary on their significance and how they have
affected Action Planning.

For all graphs the numbers in the bars represent headcount as at the appropriate census point.

Student data

(i) **Numbers of males and females on access or foundation courses** – comment on the
data and describe any initiatives taken to attract women to the courses.

![Foundation Courses Graph]

The School of Life Sciences offers a one year Bioscience Foundation course for undergraduate
applicants; this course provides an opportunity for prospective students from diverse educational
backgrounds to continue their studies in the School following a successful year at Chichester
College. The cohort is traditionally small (10-15 students/year). The course is popular among
students with previous education in a non-science background or those wishing to improve
previous grades. In general, data show that the course is more popular among male compared to
female students. Over the past three years, the gap in male to female students accepted to the
Foundation Course has attenuated, although the numbers are small and so subject to variability.
The data for the Foundation courses are collected but not currently monitored for equality
purposes, this will be carried out from now on (AP1.1).
(ii) **Undergraduate male and female numbers** – full and part-time – comment on the female: male ratio compared with the national picture for the discipline. Describe any initiatives taken to address any imbalance and the impact to date. Comment upon any plans for the future.

![Bar chart showing Full-Time Undergraduates](chart.png)

Over the three year period shown, the proportion of female undergraduate students has remained relatively constant at 55%, 54% and 54% out of around 900 total students. This is consistent with the national picture where 55% of undergraduates studying Life Sciences are female. There are no part-time undergraduate degrees offered by the School.
Examination of the Life Sciences student data for UG at Subject level revealed that female Biochemistry undergraduates constitute over 50% (208F for 2012/2013) of the total in each year:
The 2012/2013 data show the proportion of female students taking Biology and Neuroscience degrees is higher at around 64%, although actual numbers are lower, at 141 and 93 female students respectively. These numbers change very little over the three years, although in 2012/2013 the difference in male and female students studying neuroscience attenuated slightly. Conversely over the same period, female students make up a lower proportion of Chemistry undergraduates (around 35% of a total of 168 students). However, the proportions of female students on each degree are similar to the national average (54% for Biochemistry, 58% for Biology, 42% for Chemistry and 64% for Neuroscience) with little change over three years. We have in place plans to attract more female Chemistry students via existing outreach initiatives such as school visits by leading female members of the School, widening participation days for Year 9s from local secondary schools and participation in local science festivals to encourage gender diversity in all disciplines. We will continue to monitor these data to maintain the broad balance within the intake and assess the impact of the initiatives aimed at encouraging more female students into Chemistry (AP1.1).

(iii) **Postgraduate male and female numbers completing taught courses** – full and part-time – comment on the female: male ratio compared with the national picture for the discipline. Describe any initiatives taken to address any imbalance and the effect to date. Comment upon any plans for the future.

The School of Life Sciences currently runs one taught postgraduate course, MSc Genetic Manipulation and Molecular Cell Biology. An additional MSc course in Cancer Cell Biology will start in 2014/15; there has been no particular action to encourage female applicants to this course as historically these biomedical courses are particularly attractive to female students and we will continue to monitor this (AP1.1). Prior to 2013, postgraduate taught courses in Developmental Cell Biology and Cell & Molecular Neuroscience were also offered. All the students are full-time.

![Full-Time PGT](chart)

The proportion of female students on these taught Masters degrees has varied considerably over the last three years. The largest intake was in 2010/2011 and there were significantly more female students recruited. The total number of students on these courses has decreased over the three years and there has also been a reduction in the number of courses offered. The national picture for corresponding courses shows that there are generally more female students than male
students taking Masters level courses (58% were female in 2012/2013), which reflects the figures shown for Life Sciences at Sussex. The low numbers here make it difficult to make a robust statistical analysis possible, but we will continue to monitor the intake following the recruitment to the new MSc Degrees (AP1.1).

(iv) **Postgraduate male and female numbers on research degrees** – full and part-time – comment on the female:Male ratio compared with the national picture for the discipline. Describe any initiatives taken to address any imbalance and the effect to date. Comment upon any plans for the future.

Research postgraduate students in Life Sciences are all MPhil or PhD students, there are no research masters (Mres.) courses.
For both full-time and part-time postgraduate research degrees there has been hardly any change over the three year period. While the proportion of female students doing full-time postgraduate degrees is lower than male students, the majority of students doing part-time degrees are female although the total number of part-time students is low. Overall there is a slight imbalance, with a lower proportion of female than male students over the three years. This is only slightly out of line with the general pattern across the UK, in which ~50% of postgraduate students are female over the three year period. Given Life Sciences has such a high proportion of female undergraduates achieving high class degrees it is significant that the numbers in full time research degrees is not higher. We propose to follow-up on this with regular surveys of UG attitudes to science careers. (AP2.1).

(v) **Ratio of course applications to offers and acceptances by gender for undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research degrees** – comment on the differences between male and female application and success rates and describe any initiatives taken to address any imbalance and their effect to date. Comment upon any plans for the future.

For the following three graphs, the numbers in the bar charts represent total applications for the specified gender; the numbers in brackets are the number of offers made.

**Application to offer % UG**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010/2011</td>
<td>569</td>
<td>795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(432)</td>
<td>(657)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011/2012</td>
<td>754</td>
<td>1034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(599)</td>
<td>(888)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012/2013</td>
<td>780</td>
<td>1039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(622)</td>
<td>(918)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Undergraduate**: General recruitment for applications is encouraged through Applicant Visit Days and Open Days at the University, along with a variety of outreach activities. These include school visits, national events (such as the Royal Society of Chemistry’s Meet the Universities event), and regional and local events including the Brighton Science Festival. The University and the School actively strive to have both male and female academic staff available involved in these activities; research talks are given by senior female academics where possible. Undergraduate application to offer percentage has shown a higher rate of female students for the past three years. The data for undergraduate acceptance and offer is collected, but not currently monitored for equality purposes. We will request that this is monitored from now on by the University undergraduate admissions (AP1.1).
Postgraduate taught: General recruitment for PGT applications is encouraged through advertisement and University wide PG Open Days and the other recruitment initiatives outlined above. PGT application to offer percentage has been relatively equal between male and female students until the 2012/2013 year. The large numbers (in comparison to those shown for PGTs recruited above), reflects the large number of students that apply, are provided with offers, but do not enrol on the courses.

Postgraduate research (PhDs): General recruitment for PGR applications is encouraged through print and online publications, PG Open Days and by word of mouth (e.g. from contacts in Saudi Arabia, Nigeria and Iran), locally from Sussex/Brighton and from the ‘findaphd’ website. PGR application to offer percentage has been in favour of female students until the 2012/2013 year, where the male percentage is higher. This shows some fluctuation and therefore we will continue to monitor these data to ensure that application to offer is not gender biased (AP1.1).
(vi) **Degree classification by gender** – comment on any differences in degree attainment between males and females and describe what actions are being taken to address any imbalance.

In 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 the proportions of female students obtaining first or upper second class degrees remained relatively constant with 93 (83%) and 114 (78%) respectively over the two years. Females outperformed males in this period with 69 (75%) and 74 (66%) of males receiving the first or upper second class degrees. In 2012/2013 the numbers are more balanced with only a 1% difference between male and female students receiving first class degrees, although higher numbers of females are still gaining a upper second class degree with 53 (42%) of female students compared to 26 (33%) of male students. These numbers show moves towards a gender balance in terms of performance at an undergraduate level. They also show that academic achievement is not a reason for lower numbers of female students applying for postgraduate courses (see 3b(iv)on page 13).

**Staff data**

(vii) **Female: male ratio of academic staff and research staff** – researcher, lecturer, senior lecturer, reader, professor (or equivalent). Comment on any differences in numbers between males and females and say what action is being taken to address any underrepresentation at particular grades/levels.
Our most recent data (2012/2013) shows that the School is composed of 62 members of academic faculty with 30 Professors [5F:25M], 22 Senior Lecturer/Reader [5F:17M], five Lecturers [5M] and five Teaching Fellows [4F:1M]. There are 98 Research Fellows (42F:36M) and a small number of Senior Research Fellows [2F:10M]. The numbers of Research Fellows fluctuate due to changes in funding and short term contracts.

There is a clear decline in the number of female researchers between the Research Fellow and Senior Research Fellow grades (43% dropping to 17%) and also a clear decline in the proportion of female academic faculty (Teaching Fellow, Lecturer to Professor) as compared to research positions in general (40% dropping to 23%). Given that currently 45% of our postgraduate research students are female, this shows that the major reduction in female numbers comes between Research Fellow level (postdoc) and faculty positions.

Within faculty positions there is no clear trend in the proportion of female academics occupying more senior roles (Lecturer 0%F; Senior Lecturer/Reader 23%F; Professor 17%F). However, female academics outnumber male academics only in Teaching Fellow positions (80%F), which are traditionally viewed as less prestigious roles that are less likely to lead to promotion (we have no Senior or Professorial Teaching Fellows). To counter this, the University has recently (Spring 2014) introduced a specific career progression pathway for Teaching Fellows up to Professorial level, which has opened the possibility of promotion for this group of staff.

In general, the differences in faculty numbers reflect the national picture of a “leaky pipeline”

1 http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmsctech/701/701.pdf
Turnover by grade and gender – comment on any differences between men and women in turnover and say what is being done to address this. Where the number of staff leaving is small, comment on the reasons why particular individuals left.

Turnover amongst Research Fellows is overwhelmingly driven by the end of fixed term contracts, with 74 (47%F) Research Fellows leaving in the last three years. Over the same period 19 members of faculty have left (21%F). Therefore the loss of male and female academics matches the proportion employed by the School.

4. Supporting and advancing women’s careers: maximum 5000 words

Key career transition points

a) Provide data for the past three years (where possible with clearly labelled graphical illustrations) on the following with commentary on their significance and how they have affected Action Planning.

(i) Job application and success rates by gender and grade – comment on any differences in recruitment between men and women at any level and say what action is being taken to address this.

There were 12 Professors, 10 Senior Lecturer/Readers, five Senior Research Fellows and 60 post-doctoral researchers appointed during the last three academic years. For the more senior appointments (Senior Fellow and above) the number of females appointed was 26 out of a total 86 (30%). This comprised of one female Senior Fellow out of five (20%), one female out of 10 at Senior Lecturer/Reader level (10%), and one female out of 11 (8.3%) at the Professorial level. Data for application success rate have been gathered but this has not previously been collated and monitored, and so detailed data were not available for this analysis. Upcoming University wide e-recruitment will improve this data collation and we will ensure that the data are closely monitored to ensure no unconscious bias (AP1.1). We will also provide training on unconscious bias in light of papers recently published in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS) USA.

Moss-Racusin, et al. (2012) PNAS USA 109, 16474-16479
We will endeavour to attract more female applicants via improved advertising initiatives (see 4bi, p.20) (AP6.1).

Table 2. Postdoc applications to interview and appointment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Applications</th>
<th>Interviews</th>
<th>Appointments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The picture for the recruitment of postdocs is more complicated. Table 2 shows data for 2012/2013. The average number of applicants per postdoc post was 17.8 and the number of female applicants was 407 out of a total of 1070 (38%) for 60 posts. Overall there was no gender bias between the number of applicants and the number of females appointed. Table 2 shows that 38% of applicants were female, 59% of those interviewed were female and 45% of those appointed were female. A slightly higher percentage of female applicants are invited for interview. However following interview, fewer female applicants are appointed, with a 25% success rate moving from interview to appointment compared with 45% for male applicants. At present we are unsure why so few of the women that were interviewed were appointed. This could arise from low numbers of women being made offers, or potentially that women were offered but did not accept the job. We will monitor data to see whether there is gender bias in our recruitment procedures at postdoctoral level (AP1.1).

We follow the University’s policy that all appointing committees should be gender balanced and plan to provide bespoke unconscious bias training for all academic faculty (AP6.2).

(ii) Applications for promotion and success rates by gender and grade – comment on whether these differ for men and women and if they do explain what action may be taken. Where the number of women is small applicants may comment on specific examples of where women have been through the promotion process. Explain how potential candidates are identified.

The School is composed of 62 members of academic faculty. Of these, nine men and six women have been promoted during the last three years. In fact only one unsuccessful promotion (male) has been recorded over this timeframe. The University has an annual promotions round for academic staff; as part of this process, a list of those academic faculty in a position to be promoted is sent to the HoS by HR. Alternatively, academic faculty may propose themselves for promotion or they may be identified by the Chair of their subject group during their yearly appraisal. Criteria for promotions are available on the University website and will be highlighted to all academic staff via the Life Sciences webpage (AP5.3). Staff are then mentored by the HoS through the promotion procedure which is reflected by the high success rate. Promotion of female staff is actively encouraged by the HoS and he is proactive in identifying those ready to apply for promotion.

The female: male staff ratio (shown in 3b(vii), p.16-17) has not been negatively affected by the promotions process; in the last three years, 15 academic promotions have been made in total with 40% of these being female members of staff. This has led to a welcome jump in the number of female Professors (from two to five).
b) For each of the areas below, explain what the key issues are in the department, what steps have been taken to address any imbalances, what success/impact has been achieved so far and what additional steps may be needed.

(i) Recruitment of staff – comment on how the department’s recruitment processes ensure that female candidates are attracted to apply, and how the department ensures its short listing, selection processes and criteria comply with the university’s equal opportunities policies.

Life Sciences’ job vacancies are advertised via the University’s Jobs and Vacancies website, on jobs.ac.uk and in science journals. Currently the University recruitment page highlights our family-friendly policies and childcare provision but we will ensure that it has a link to the University’s Equality and Diversity Policy, and will request that all ‘Life Science’ job advertisements include the statement: ‘Committed to equality and valuing diversity’. Advertisements for academic positions should also contain the statement: ‘Applications are particularly welcome from women, and black and minority ethnic candidates, who are under-represented in academic posts in science and engineering at Sussex’ (AP6.1). The Staff Development Unit runs a one day course on ‘Recruitment and Selection’ and we will ensure that all new members of staff who may sit on selection panels complete this course. (AP6.3)

(ii) Support for staff at key career transition points – having identified key areas of attrition of female staff in the department, comment on any interventions, programmes and activities that support women at the crucial stages, such as personal development training, opportunities for networking, mentoring programmes and leadership training. Identify which have been found to work best at the different career stages.

A key area of attrition is at the level of postdoc to first faculty position (see 3b(vii), p.16-17). The graphs show that within the School there is a significant gap in recruitment at Lecturer level. This arises from a conscious decision by the HoS following the identification of a shortage of senior academic leaders within the School when he commenced his role in 2009. This was addressed by recruiting at Reader level and above. Instead of appointing at Lecturer level, the School currently focuses on early career recruitment by attracting high quality independent Research Fellows who are able to join the School with programme level funding, and provide them with a clearly defined career development path. Holders of Senior Fellowships from UK research councils or charities are considered to be ‘tenure track’. They are thus eligible to apply for permanent appointments at the level of Reader or above, and they are interviewed by a committee chaired by an external expert before the end of their fellowship. This policy ensures that we are able to attract, nurture and retain this excellent cadre of independent Fellows, and to develop them as our future senior faculty.

Female researchers often have career breaks and/or extended periods of part-time working, and have a high likelihood of remaining on repeated fixed-term contracts, all of which are to the detriment of their careers. We have been proactive in facilitating the return of women to research by engaging with schemes such as the Daphne Jackson Fellowships and by facilitating the transfer of female researchers on part-time/fixed-term posts into full-time permanent positions. The University has recently approved funding for a new 0.5 FTE Daphne Jackson Fellowship position for Life Sciences. Active recruitment for this will take place this calendar year (AP3.1).
The Athena SWAN SAT has examined the issues affecting career progression in Life Sciences and aims to introduce initiatives to try to redress the balance described including changes to advertising (AP6.1) and continuing fair recruitment procedures (AP6.2 and 6.3).

Personal development training is provided by the University, although the uptake of these courses is rather limited. We have identified from focus groups and interviews that this is due to the fact that courses are often perceived not to be specific enough for life scientists. We are in the process of organising specific courses that are bespoke for members of life science faculty (AP6.2, 6.3 and 6.4). This will benefit members of the School and also potentially the other STEMM schools at the University. Mentoring is being developed by our subcommittee and will borrow best practice from a mentoring scheme for postdocs that has run for 15 years in one of our subject areas (GDSC) whilst adding new initiatives and support (AP4.4). This new scheme will initially be piloted for all female postdocs in the School: the position that has been identified as the source of the ‘leaky pipeline’. In addition, the newly appointed head of postdoctoral researchers, Professor O’Malley, will focus on providing support and training for all postdoctoral level researchers across the University (see above response Q2b) (AP4.2). As part of a commitment to support postdoctoral researchers in their career progression, the SAT has approached the HoS and gained approval for the appointment of a Director of Postdoctoral education (AP4.1). This individual will oversee all aspects of postdoctoral support including academic and career progression, appraisals and mentoring.

Those at more senior levels will be offered new specifically designed courses including leadership training and the University has very recently undertaken to fund a masterclass in “Public Speaking and Presenting Your Research for Women in STEMM”, which will take place in July 2014 and at least annually thereafter (AP6.5 and 6.6).

**Career development**

a) For each of the areas below, explain what the key issues are in the department, what steps have been taken to address any imbalances, what success/impact has been achieved so far and what additional steps may be needed.

(i) **Promotion and career development** – comment on the appraisal and career development process, and promotion criteria and whether these take into consideration responsibilities for teaching, research, administration, pastoral work and outreach work; is quality of work emphasised over quantity of work?

We provide a comprehensive appraisal and career management process for research staff at all career stages. A system for postdoc appraisal has recently been put in place following recommendation by the SAT and feedback from focus groups. These appraisals will be conducted by the head of the laboratory in which they work (AP4.3), while senior researchers are appraised by their Subject Group Chair, who is, in turn, appraised by the HoS. Where a senior researcher is at a transition in his or her career the HoS and Subject Chair undertake a joint appraisal. There is a perception that some female researchers are less self-promoting and are often reluctant to put themselves forward. A proper appraisal therefore plays a particularly important role in the career development of female scientists, and its success is evidenced by three of the six promotions to the rank of Professor and two of the four Reader promotions since 2009 having been women. Topics for discussion at appraisal include training needs, teaching and administrative loads and research progress (grants, publications etc.). This also provides the forum for the appraiser and appraisee to raise any concerns and also to highlight any areas of success.
Training for appraisers is provided by the University and the HoS expects all faculty who conduct appraisals to attend. It is acknowledged that proper appraisal should address promotion opportunities, what an individual needs to do in order to be in a position to be promoted and should also address any training requirements in this context. Training courses are provided in-house on a range of topics and all staff are encouraged to attend these where appropriate. The SAT are engaged in discussions with the University staff development offices to provide courses tailored to the needs of members of the School of Life Sciences (AP6.2, 6.3, 6.4). Appraisal training will particularly focus on the need to ensure that training focuses on the quality, not just quantity, of work.

All faculty are encouraged to undertake outreach and public engagement activities. These activities, which publicise the research of the University and the School of Life Sciences, are formally recognised as part of the workload model (detailed on p.26-27) and taken into account at appraisals.

The University publishes promotions criteria for all groups of staff and has recently (Spring 2014) introduced a career pathway for Teaching Fellows. As the majority of Teaching Fellows are female, this is a welcome change that will provide added progression possibilities for those staff. There is an annual ‘promotion round’ with formally published deadlines and the HoS is required to review all academic staff and encourage those who are considered to be ready for promotion to apply. There is a termly opportunity for promotion for Reader and Professorial levels. The criteria and deadlines are published as news items on the University website at the relevant times. Mechanisms are in place to ensure that quality is emphasised over quantity of work. For example, the criteria for academic faculty promotions have a particular emphasis on publication record and teaching quality (curriculum design) and the quality of outputs is highlighted. Promotion Boards recognise links with and contributions to business, industry, governmental organisations and the community as important activities that underline impact and contribute to the reputation of the School and University.

(ii) **Induction and training** – describe the support provided to new staff at all levels, as well as details of any gender equality training. To what extent are good employment practices in the institution, such as opportunities for networking, the flexible working policy, and professional and personal development opportunities promoted to staff from the outset?

All new faculty have an induction with the HoS and the School Manager and are allocated an appropriate ‘buddy’ for the duration of their probation period. They are also provided with a handbook, which contains information about University policies and procedures, ongoing training opportunities, appraisals and staff development as well as relevant contact details. We will make this handbook available online with links to all the information provided (AP5.3). Equality and Diversity training is compulsory as part of the successful completion of probation, however, it has been difficult to enforce this as there is a general resistance to attending training sessions organised by the University as courses usually require at least a half day commitment. LCS has arranged for the SAT and the School Management Committee to attend a bespoke training session in Summer 2014 in order to try to encourage awareness of the issues and an understanding of the need for training via positive feedback.
It is generally felt by the SAT that an online training resource would produce much better uptake; this has been fed back to the University management and University Athena SWAN SAT. MCRD (Deputy vice chancellor for the University) has confirmed that the University is keen to adopt online Equality and Diversity training and to explore how to make it mandatory (School SAT meeting on 12 March, 2014).

Induction for new academic staff in the School is arranged by the School Manager. She sets up a series of meetings with all relevant people who are responsible for research administration, safety, teaching, human resources and postgraduate recruitment within the School. The University also arranges a half day Welcome for New Staff programme three times a year, at which senior managers disseminate useful information about the University, the national/international context and the future direction of the University. This event also provides the opportunity for all new staff to meet each other and to network. We will expand this process to a School based termly networking meeting where new and current staff will be able to meet the HoS and School manager to discuss and gather information (AP5.5).

Currently there is no formal induction for postdoctoral researchers beyond mandatory safety training; induction for postdocs is currently under review (AP4.5). The Research Development office provides advice regarding grant applications for postdocs and other staff. They also hold monthly coffee mornings to disseminate information regarding available funding opportunities and send out a monthly information sheet.

Approximately 12 months ago the School introduced a monthly coffee morning for all members of staff including PhD students, academic faculty, postdocs, technical and professional services staff. This is a good opportunity for everyone to interact in an informal environment.

(iii) **Support for female students** – describe the support (formal and informal) provided for female students to enable them to make the transition to a sustainable academic career, particularly from postgraduate to researcher, such as mentoring, seminars and pastoral support and the right to request a female personal tutor. Comment on whether these activities are run by female staff and how this work is formally recognised by the department.

Undergraduate students are allocated an academic advisor on arrival who will be an academic support throughout the duration of their degree. The academic advisor role is to provide academic support, tutorials, informal careers advice and references. Pastoral support for students is provided by the Student Life Centre run centrally by the University.

Currently, mentoring for undergraduate students is focused on support for their studies via a scheme which is run under the aegis of the University’s Student Support Unit and the Student Life Centre. We do not currently provide formal scientific or career mentoring for students (beyond the academic advisor role), although specific careers advice for science students is available centrally within the University via the Careers and Employability Centre.

PGR students have a principal supervisor plus a second supervisor who is expected to provide academic support for their studies and provide advice on career progression. Supervisors are generally able to provide excellent advice regarding interview technique, work experience, references and information regarding fellowship applications.
Each subject has a dedicated Postgraduate convenor who provides careers, interview and academic advice. Further resources are provided centrally by the University’s Doctoral School. Within the School of Life Sciences, we operate a supportive PhD progression and monitoring system, with a set of ‘milestone’ events (progress reports, posters, oral presentations, etc.) distributed throughout the students’ time at Sussex and these contribute to a portfolio that the students produce. These enable the students, the supervisors and the wider faculty to follow students’ progress and to intervene early on in those rare occasions when a student is failing to thrive. As part of this, we hold a two-day PhD symposium every autumn in which all final year students give oral presentations and face detailed questioning from staff and other students, with poster presentations from those at earlier stages of their research. The Research Development Office in the University’s Doctoral School provides useful support and advice regarding grant applications that can be accessed by final year PGR students. The Careers and Employability Centre provides guidance to research students.

All support is provided for both male and female students and there are currently no specific female only initiatives as the data currently shows equality at this level and at present we are prioritising the key transition from postdoc to faculty, (3b(vii), p.16-17). We will continue to monitor this carefully however, taking information from the PG and upcoming UG surveys, and consider introducing networking schemes and female support groups if necessary (AP2.2).

**Organisation and culture**

a) Provide data for the past three years (where possible with clearly labelled graphical illustrations) on the following with commentary on their significance and how they have affected Action Planning.

(i) **Male and female representation on committees** – provide a breakdown by committee and explain any differences between male and female representation. Explain how potential members are identified.

The School runs a number of centrally prescribed committees that carry out a range of functions and report to the relevant University committees for the conduct of formal business. Membership includes Directors of Student Experience, Teaching and Learning, Doctoral Studies and Research and Knowledge Exchange (Table 3).
Table 3. Representation of male and female faculty on School committees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>Frequency of meetings</th>
<th>2010/2011</th>
<th></th>
<th>2011/2012</th>
<th></th>
<th>2012/2013</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management Committee</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Experience Committee</td>
<td>Twice Termly</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Degree Committee</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Committee</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; Learning Committee</td>
<td>Termly</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree Convenors Committee</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Safety Committee</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athena SWAN SAT</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Meeting</td>
<td>Termly</td>
<td></td>
<td>All faculty</td>
<td>All faculty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boards of Study</td>
<td>Termly</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Women are represented on all decision making committees in the School (Table 3) and the percentage of women on School committees broadly reflects (and in some cases exceeds) the percentage of female staff within the School. In the last three years, the numbers of women on each committee has either remained constant or increased.

(ii) **Female: male ratio of academic and research staff on fixed-term contracts and open-ended (permanent) contracts** – comment on any differences between male and female staff representation on fixed-term contracts and say what is being done to address them.
The bar charts represent all levels of academic faculty and show that the number of men and women on fixed term (non-permanent) contracts is approximately equal and has remained so over the last three years [58M:45F] (43% female). In contrast, there were considerably more men on permanent contracts than women [77M:23F] in 2013, i.e. only 23% of permanent staff are female. This reflects the overall data that show that there are more men than women employed within the School across the board in both permanent and fixed term contracts. Fixed term contracts tend to be for junior research staff whilst permanent positions are more often academic faculty. This is supported by the data shown in 3b(vii) on pages 16-17. The data imply that the School is not more likely to appoint women on to fixed term contracts when compared to men.

b) For each of the areas below, explain what the key issues are in the department, what steps have been taken to address any imbalances, what success/impact has been achieved so far and what additional steps may be needed.

(i) **Representation on decision-making committees** – comment on evidence of gender equality in the mechanism for selecting representatives. What evidence is there that women are encouraged to sit on a range of influential committees inside and outside the department? How is the issue of ‘committee overload’ addressed where there are small numbers of female staff?

The representation on committees within the School is described in Table 3. Committee members are largely drawn from the faculty, with the majority allocated according to their roles. For example, the School Management committee is comprised of subject heads and other senior managers within the School; the student experience committee is comprised of people involved in various student-centred roles. Committee members are not identified on the basis of their gender, but rather by their role and how it relates to the needs/requirements of the relevant committee. All senior academic faculty are expected to serve on School and University committees as part of their normal workload.

Some committees have a relative over-representation of female faculty, for example, the Athena SWAN SAT. The aim to have a female representation on committees and the relatively low numbers of female staff means that committee overload is something that we will carefully monitor. This will be best addressed by increasing the numbers of senior female staff in the roles that make up the committee membership in the School (APS).

All members of academic faculty are strongly encouraged to sit on influential external committees such as grant funding panels. Participation is left up to the individual member of staff to arrange if they would like to commit time to these important issues. Many male and female academic staff sit on research council and charity grant panels; currently two of our female Professors sit on BBSRC grant panels and a female Reader is Chair of a Biochemical Society Committee.

(ii) **Workload model** – describe the systems in place to ensure that workload allocations, including pastoral and administrative responsibilities (including the responsibility for work on women and science) are taken into account at appraisal and in promotion criteria. Comment on the rotation of responsibilities e.g. responsibilities with a heavy workload and those that are seen as good for an individual’s career.
The School’s workload model is one of management rather than allocation. Members of faculty have a great deal of autonomy in how they allocate their work and manage the balance between teaching, administration and research. Each summer, all academic staff are asked to complete a faculty information form which outlines their commitments to teaching and administration for the forthcoming year. This information is entered into a modelling spreadsheet which checks that no one is significantly over or under convened against the School’s target workload for teaching and administration. The overall information is checked by the School Manager and HoS, and any significant issues are raised as part of the management process. An individual’s workload is discussed during appraisal and taken into account at promotion (see pages 21-22 on career development). The postdoc workload is managed by the individual principal investigator (PI).

The School’s planning model for academic staff is that everyone is expected to do teaching (42.5%), administration (17.5%) and research (40%) as part of their annual hours. There are 1650 hours p.a. available to a full time member of staff. There are standard tariffs used to calculate the amount of time dedicated to teaching activities (e.g. five hours for a one hour lecture; two hours for a one hour tutorial). All academic faculty are allocated academic advisees and final year project students and there is a standard allocation of hours for these activities. In addition, the University has allocations of time for formally appointed officers (e.g. HoS; Director), and our workload model allocates hours to these (e.g. 80 hours for acting as Subject Group Chair; 40 hours for convening a module). Administrative responsibilities are rotated at the discretion of the HoS as a result of the annual appraisal round. Work on “women and science” is considered a core workload factor, counted in the workload modelling system, and taken into account at all stages of career development, progression and promotion.

The survey and focus groups revealed that workload allocation is not sufficiently transparent and this is something that we are addressing. We plan to clearly publish the annual hourly workload model, and the hourly allocations for types of task, so that individuals can see how their workload fits with the School plan (AP5.3).

(iii) **Timing of departmental meetings and social gatherings** – provide evidence of consideration for those with family responsibilities, for example what the department considers to be core hours and whether there is a more flexible system in place.

Where possible a policy of core hours within the School has been implemented and enforced by the HoS and meetings are held between 9 am and 4 pm. The majority of seminars are generally held within lunch time hours with the exception of the Neuroscience seminars. The timing of these seminars has been reviewed and will be rescheduled within the core hours in September 2014. Teaching core hours are 9-6 pm University wide. However, there is an external review of the timetabling system planned for later in 2014 by the Pro-Vice Chancellor with responsibility for Teaching and Learning, Professor Clare Mackie.

Social arrangements include monthly coffee mornings for all staff, the annual finalist party and a staff Christmas party. These are all held within core hours and provide opportunities for mixing and networking between staff at all levels. A social gathering (known as “beer hour”) is run every Friday evening in the GDSC and provides a social environment particularly aimed at both female and male students and postdocs.
(iv) **Culture** – demonstrate how the department is female-friendly and inclusive. ‘Culture’ refers to the language, behaviours and other informal interactions that characterise the atmosphere of the department, and includes all staff and students.

To understand how women and men perceive the School culture, we conducted four separate culture surveys for PhD students, postdocs, technical staff, and academic staff. Colleagues were asked 60 questions in four key areas of Participation and Promotion Practice; Workplace Culture; Leadership and Management Commitment; and Reputation and Social Responsibility. Participation rates were high for academic staff (68%) and lower for technical, postdoc, and PhDs (40-50%). Encouragingly, more than 90% of respondents (over 200) agreed or strongly agreed with statements that their line managers or PIs showed strong leadership if gender issues were brought to their attention. A similar proportion also thought that social events such as beer hours, sports activities (often mixed gender), annual family BBQ were equally welcoming to women and men. There was less agreement with more subtle aspects of cultural sensitivity towards gender equality (e.g. inappropriate images or comments) and the vast majority of respondents had no training in gender equality or unconscious gender bias. This will be addressed via specific action points (AP6.2 and 6.4). The majority of respondents did not know where to find information on gender issues (e.g. maternity regulation etc.). This led to the establishment of the bespoke resources webpage, where all relevant information will be collated (AP5.3). Finally, 10% and 25% of female respondents from the PhD and postdoc surveys, respectively, reported having experienced harassment/discrimination or situations where they felt uncomfortable because of their gender. None of the male respondents had experienced such situations. However, 25% of male postdocs and PhD students reported having witnessed others (presumably females) in such situations. These findings are similar to those reported from larger culture studies (e.g. by EMBO) and will be addressed as part of our Action Plan. A subcommittee has been established specifically to investigate these issues (AP4.6).

(v) **Outreach activities** – comment on the level of participation by female and male staff in outreach activities with schools and colleges and other centres. Describe who the programmes are aimed at, and how this activity is formally recognised as part of the workload model and in appraisal and promotion processes.

The School has a female academic lead for widening participation, Dr Hazel Cox. She is also the University STEM ambassador and leads the team involved in schools liaison and outreach including invited talks at local schools. One of the regular events is a widening participation taster day for approximately fifty 13-14 year olds and the gender split of attendees is around 50/50. This involves presentations from faculty given at a level suitable for young people. This year, presentations were given by one male and two female members of faculty. We also run Chemistry and Biology experience days for 16-17 year olds, which involve interactive workshops from faculty members.

Brighton holds an annual science festival and this year its programme included events presented by faculty members including Professors Alison Sinclair, Louise Serpell and Jonathan Bacon and Dr Paul Graham who represented the School of Life Sciences and presented research to the public. We try to ensure a good representation of female scientists at all these events to encourage female students to apply for science degrees and provide excellent female role models. Several
members of the School (PhD, postdoc and faculty) attend annual MRC, Royal Society and charity (e.g. Alzheimer’s research) public engagement days to publicise the research work of the School.

The contribution to publicising the work of the University and the School of Life Sciences is formally recognised as part of the workload model and is taken into account at appraisals. Promotion Boards recognise public engagement as an important activity that underlines impact and contributes to the reputation of the School and University.

**Flexibility and managing career breaks**

a) Provide data for the past three years (where possible with clearly labelled graphical illustrations) on the following with commentary on their significance and how they have affected Action Planning.

(i) **Maternity return rate** – comment on whether maternity return rate in the department has improved or deteriorated and any plans for further improvement. If the department is unable to provide a maternity return rate, please explain why.

Maternity return rate data have not been previously collated and we only hold data for the last two years. However, this short time frame reveals a marked proportional increase in return rate. Three of six women on maternity leave returned in 2011/2012, this increased to four of four in 2012/2013. However, this is a very small sample size.

As part of the University’s Bronze Athena SWAN Action Plan, the University is developing a Returners Scheme to support staff returning from maternity/paternity/adoption leave. Members of the School have contributed to the development of this scheme. We will closely monitor the return rates over the coming years to evaluate the impact of this scheme (AP7.1).

(ii) **Paternity, adoption and parental leave uptake** – comment on the uptake of paternity leave by grade and parental and adoption leave by gender and grade. Has this improved or deteriorated and what plans are there to improve further.

We do not collate parental leave data but will aim to do so from now on. Anecdotally, paternity leave tends to be taken informally and has not been monitored. However, we will endeavour to collect this data from 2014 (AP1.1). The numbers taking formal paternity leave may be affected by the change in law on additional Paternity Leave and Pay. Additionally, a new HR system is being introduced this year that should provide data to enable better monitoring of this information.

(iii) **Numbers of applications and success rates for flexible working by gender and grade** – comment on any disparities. Where the number of women in the department is small applicants may wish to comment on specific examples.

We have not previously collated this data and only hold data for the last two years. In 11/12 one female Teaching Fellow and one male Professor applied for flexible working and both were successful. In 12/13 two female Teaching Fellows and one female Professor applied and all were successful.
b) For each of the areas below, explain what the key issues are in the department, what steps have been taken to address any imbalances, what success/impact has been achieved so far and what additional steps may be needed.

(ii) **Flexible working** – comment on the numbers of staff working flexibly and their grades and gender, whether there is a formal or informal system, the support and training provided for managers in promoting and managing flexible working arrangements, and how the department raises awareness of the options available.

The School follows the University Flexible Working Procedure, available on the HR website, which applies to parents of children under 17 (or 18 if the child is disabled) and carers of certain adults. It gives examples of the types of flexible working patterns that can be considered, and guides staff through the process of making a request. The procedure is currently being updated to take account of the statutory change which will extend the right to request flexible working to all staff with 26 weeks’ service from 30 June 2014. The updated procedure will ensure that staff with caring responsibilities, and those protected by the Equality Act 2010, are not adversely affected by the extension of the right to request flexible working. Managers are supported in dealing with formal flexible working requests by HR Advisors (all of whom are CIPD qualified). At the School level, there is acknowledged informal flexibility particularly within individual labs. For example, a postdoc can informally arrange with their lab head to work flexible hours and from home and we will improve facilities to support this (AP7.5). Details of the formal policy need to be communicated better and will be publicised on the new School webpage resource (AP5.3).

As noted in (aiii) on page 29, there is not very high uptake for formal flexible working and this may be due to lack of knowledge of the procedure regarding flexible working arrangements. This was highlighted in focus groups and surveys. The procedures on flexible working application have now been circulated to all staff in the School and we will continue to monitor whether this increases the number of applications (AP7.2). Lack of formal requests may also be due to the informal arrangements in place.

(ii) **Cover for maternity and adoption leave and support on return** – explain what the department does, beyond the university maternity policy package, to support female staff before they go on maternity leave, arrangements for covering work during absence, and to help them achieve a suitable work-life balance on their return.

Maternity leave provided by the University is enhanced above the statutory provision and provides two options with either 18 weeks on full salary or eight weeks on full salary and 16 weeks on half salary, with the remaining weeks on basic statutory maternity pay. Concerns have been raised from the survey regarding the employment of postdocs who may have children during their employment since this can affect continuity of research and, when the cost of the postdoc is provided by charity, loss of funding. These are significant issues that affect the level of employment of women in STEMM subjects and must be addressed at National level. Maternity costs are very likely to act as a disincentive to PIs to appoint women and we are considering at University level how we might best manage this.

The SAT has included in its Action Plan initiatives that will provide clear guidance and provision for women at each stage of the maternity process, i.e. prior to going on maternity leave, during maternity leave and upon their return. The Action Plan sets out these initiatives and includes:
1) we will ensure that each individual who is planning leave will have a formal meeting to plan their work, their cover (teaching or research cover etc.) whilst away and their return to the work place. This may include graduated return and reduced teaching where applicable (AP7.3)

2) we will ensure that returners have a formal meeting on return to plan how to best manage flexible work and changes in their requirement to conduct their research, admin or teaching (AP7.4)

3) We will also put in place initiatives for working from home, including conference facilities (AP7.5) and provide a room for lactating mothers or those requiring rest (AP7.6).

[5104/5000 words]
5. Any other comments: maximum 500 words

Please comment here on any other elements which are relevant to the application, e.g. other SET-specific initiatives of special interest that have not been covered in the previous sections. Include any other relevant data (e.g. results from staff surveys), provide a commentary on it and indicate how it is planned to address any gender disparities identified.

The School of Life Sciences has benefitted enormously already from the process of the Athena SWAN application. Regular reporting of the team’s progress to the School via the weekly Bulletin and the termly School Meetings has ensured that the issues being addressed are kept in the forefront of everyone’s minds. In practical terms, the process has already formalised the appraisal system for the School’s postdocs, resulted in the rescheduling of weekly Neuroscience seminars and received commitment from HR to implement a mechanism to ensure there is always a female representative on all appointing committees.

In response to some of the results of the survey, we have set up a specific new subcommittee to address any issues of bullying and sexual harassment (AP4.6). A survey for undergraduates is currently being designed and will be launched in the autumn term of 2014 (AP2.1). The results of the completed surveys will be published on the internal Study Direct site available to all members of the School (AP5.6). We believe that this will result in an improved response level next year and continue to demonstrate the School’s commitment to change.

The Action Plan includes a number of priorities that will be addressed initially including:

1) a webpage containing important information for members of the School - from how to report bullying to maternity leave policies (AP5.3),

2) implementation of the pilot mentoring scheme (AP4.4),

3) preparation of an undergraduate survey (AP2.1)

4) organisation of the Dorothy Hodgkin symposium (AP5.7).

The application will be shared with the School via ‘Study Direct’ and be published externally on the Life Sciences Athena SWAN webpage.

We have taken inspiration from the Royal Society for Chemistry funded ‘Mothers in Science: 64 ways to have it all’ book and are in the process of gathering work/life balance ‘timelines’. We have these for all the appropriate members of the SAT and are now rolling this out to all relevant members of the School. We will compile a booklet to celebrate the diversity of career and life paths and have included both male and female faculty, non-academic members of staff, postgraduate students and postdoctoral researchers. We are delighted to celebrate the variety of “voices” within our School and hope that the enthusiasm reflected in these stories helps to balance the negative message that so many female scientists receive regarding their career prospects in academia.

We have organised a celebration upon submission of the application for all those who have contributed to the process.

[412/500 words]
Action Plan

Provide an Action Plan as an appendix. An Action Plan template is available on the Athena SWAN website.

The Action Plan should be a table or a spreadsheet comprising actions to address the priorities identified by the analysis of relevant data presented in this application, success/outcome measures, the post holder responsible for each action and a timeline for completion. The plan should cover current initiatives and your aspirations for the next three years.

The Action Plan does not need to cover all areas at Bronze; however the expectation is that the department will have the organisational structure to move forward, including collecting the necessary data.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION POINT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Data</td>
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1.1 Continue to monitor data at all levels for gender equality
1. Foundation student intake
2. UG Chemistry student intake
3. PGT intake to new MSc courses
4. UG and PGR application to offer
5. Staff recruitment data (application-interview-offer-appointment)
6. Staff promotions data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Data collected at University level but not currently monitored.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION TO BE UNDERTAKEN</th>
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<tr>
<td>Continue to monitor data by gender and identify further actions to address any imbalances.</td>
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<th>RESPONSIBILITY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Provision of data</td>
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1. University admissions office
2. Chemistry admissions tutor
3. PGT admissions
4. Student progress office
5. & 6. Human Resources (HR e-recruitment)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>START DATE &amp; TIMESCALE</th>
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<tr>
<td>2014/2015 academic year, onward</td>
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<tr>
<th>SUCCESS MEASURE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Data supplied for analysis. Initiatives identified and implemented to address any imbalances.</td>
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<td>ACTION POINT</td>
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<td>2 Students (UG &amp; PG)</td>
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</table>
| 2.1 Preparation of UG survey | UG survey subcommittee established | UG survey to be prepared, based on PG survey with specific questions relating to UG experience | Survey subcommittee | March 2014.  
- Data collection: Autumn term 2014.  
- Analysis: by December 2014 | Survey distributed to all UGs. Data collected and analysed. High response rate achieved. Results disseminated and actions identified |
| 2.2 Provide opportunities for networking and a support group for female UG and PG students | Assessed requirement and need for support groups (survey and focus groups) | Identify leaders to run group | SAT | Jan 2015  
2015-2016 pilot  
2016-2017 established groups | Established networking groups at UG and PG level. Support groups running successfully and independently |
<p>| 3 Key transition points | | | | | |
| 3.1 Recruit Daphne Jackson Fellow | Funding for a 3 year, 0.5 FTE Fellow agreed by University for the School of Life Sciences | Advertise and recruit | HoS/School Manager | Jan 2015 | In post, 2016 |</p>
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<th>ACTION POINT</th>
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<th>SUCCESS MEASURE</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong> Recruitment, career advice and support</td>
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<td><strong>4.1</strong> Appoint a School Director of Postdoctoral Education</td>
<td>Approval obtained for post from HoS</td>
<td>Identify and appoint from existing school staff</td>
<td>HoS</td>
<td>Jan 2015</td>
<td>Improved postdoctoral community; sense of identity and support systems as reflected in future surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.2</strong> Liaise with Doctoral School on career development for postdocs</td>
<td>Met with new Director of Postdoctoral development.</td>
<td>Planning for support for Postdocs and mentoring circles</td>
<td>SAT, School Manager /Director of Postdoctoral Education and Doctoral school</td>
<td>Jan 2015 onward</td>
<td>Established doctoral school support for postdocs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.3</strong> Appraisal system for postdocs</td>
<td>System of appraisals for postdoc proposed and form circulated to Appraisees</td>
<td>All principal investigators (PIs) to conduct appraisals with their Research staff. Benefits to be examined via Survey in 2015</td>
<td>PIs, HoS; School Manager to monitor progress</td>
<td>March 2014 onward</td>
<td>Survey March 2015 Established system of appraisals for postdocs. Appraisal rates for postdocs, as reported annually to Council, to be at equivalent level to all other staff (i.e. c 90%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.4 Mentoring schemes</td>
<td>Mentoring subcommittee convened and planning initiated</td>
<td>Pilot mentoring scheme to be established for female postdocs. Benefits to be examined via survey in 2015 Plan expansion to other staff groups</td>
<td>Mentoring subcommittee of the SAT</td>
<td>Mentoring subcommittee convened Jan 2014 Survey outcomes March 2015</td>
<td>Mentoring system established for female postdocs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 Induction for postdocs</td>
<td>Planning of induction scheme for postdocs to include equality training, careers advice, interview practice, leadership skills and presentation training</td>
<td></td>
<td>Director of Postdoctoral Education/School Manager</td>
<td>Jan 2015 onwards</td>
<td>Induction system for postdocs in place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6 Address survey results regarding harassment and bullying</td>
<td>Subcommittee to look at harassment and bullying convened</td>
<td>Report on procedures, circulation of Life Sciences policies and procedures</td>
<td>Harassment and bullying subcommittee to report to HoS, School Manager and School HR Advisor</td>
<td>Subcommittee convened March 2014 Report July 2014 Procedures and policies for autumn 2014</td>
<td>Clear documentation on reporting procedures and policies (where to get help) to be included in Life Sciences webpage (AP5.3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Culture, communications and School organisation</strong></td>
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| 5.1 | Annual focus groups | Initial focus groups on:  
1. maternity and paternity leave and work/life balance  
2. career progression, promotions, work allocation and participation | Annual focus groups on specific gender related issues to be informed by survey results. | SAT | February 2014  
To be run annually in February-March | Identification of issues to be fed into action planning |
| 5.2 | Annual surveys | Surveys collected for PG, technical staff, research staff (postdocs) and academic faculty.  
Data analysed | Analysis of 2014 surveys to be published (AP5.3)  
Annual surveys updated and collected January. | Survey subcommittee | February 2014  
To be run annually in Jan-Feb. | Benefits of introduced initiatives (e.g. AP4.4 etc.)  
Collect information regarding issues to be fed into action planning |
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| 5.3 Webpage with resources  
This will collect links to information (some of which is already available on the University website) together in one place for easy access | Webpage established | Information to be provided e.g.:  
1. Maternity and paternity leave policy  
2. Flexible working policy and application forms  
3. Promotions criteria  
4. Harassment and bullying procedures  
5. Staff development and training opportunities  
6. Induction Handbook for new staff  
7. Work load allocation policy | SAT, SAT Project Manager and School Manager | Over the Summer 2014 | Webpage kept updated with information |
<p>| 5.4 The status of the SAT will be formalised as part of the School's committee structure; reporting to the Management Committee as it continues its work | | Formalisation of the status of SAT; ongoing resourcing of support for SAT meetings etc. | School Manager | April 2014 | SAT to report to Management committee |</p>
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<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>Networking/induction for new and current staff</td>
<td>Induction for new staff in place</td>
<td>Introduce new termly networking meetings to provide up to date information for new and current staff</td>
<td>School Manager, HoS</td>
<td>From next academic year (starting Sept 2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>Share results of the surveys with the School</td>
<td>Results of surveys analysed</td>
<td>Make survey results available</td>
<td>Survey subcommittee SAT Project Manager</td>
<td>May 2014 and then yearly following survey collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>Dorothy Hodgkin Symposium</td>
<td>Subcommittee convened</td>
<td>Date to be selected and invited speakers to be finalised. Partial sponsorship by the School plus additional raising of external sponsorship</td>
<td>Symposium subcommittee</td>
<td>2015</td>
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<td>RESPONSIBILITY</td>
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</table>
| 5.8          | Update School internal Athena SWAN site (in Study Direct portal) and external webpage | Internal “study direct” webpages available with links and resources for students and staff  
External Athena SWAN webpage with relevant resources and links | Keep resources and links updated.  
Include timelines to show career pathways of staff | SAT, Chair of SAT and Project Manager to SAT | Established Jan 2014 Onwards | Useful webpages giving information and Women and Science resources.  
Inspire junior staff and students |
<p>| 5.9          | Ensure that both men and women are considered when appointing to officerships in the School | Consideration of women for roles in management | HoS | April 2014 onward | An improved gender balance in senior management roles, whilst keeping in mind potential overload |</p>
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<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Improving advertising to encourage female applicants</td>
<td>Information provided for all those writing advertisements to include encouragement of women to apply and statement on family-friendly policies</td>
<td>Ensure adverts contain 1. ‘Committed to equality and valuing diversity’. 2. ‘Applications are particularly welcome from women, and black and minority ethnic candidates, who are under-represented in academic posts in science and engineering at Sussex’</td>
<td>School HR Advisor/School Manager</td>
<td>April 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>Bespoke training for interview committees on unconscious bias</td>
<td>Provide bespoke ½ day unconscious bias training for Life Sciences staff</td>
<td>School HR Advisor, School Manager, Staff Development Office</td>
<td>Jan 2015</td>
<td>Course provided and implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>Recruitment and selection training</td>
<td>Provide bespoke ½ day recruitment and selection training for Life Sciences staff</td>
<td>School HR Advisor, School Manager, Staff Development Office</td>
<td>Jan 2015</td>
<td>Course provided and implemented</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>Bespoke equality and diversity training with emphasis on gender equality</td>
<td>Arranged for SAT and School management team for June 2014</td>
<td>Provide bespoke ½ day diversity and equality training for Life Sciences staff</td>
<td>School HR Advisor, School Manager, Staff Development office</td>
<td>June 2014 To be provided for all staff Jan 2015 onwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>Introducing a Masterclass in communication and Public Speaking for female academics.</td>
<td>Arranged at University level for senior female University staff in STEMM subjects for July 2014</td>
<td>To be extended to all female academic staff in Life Sciences if thought to be beneficial</td>
<td>Human Resources Director School Manager for Life Sciences staff</td>
<td>Initial course July 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>Leadership training</td>
<td>Arranged at University level for senior female University staff for May 2014</td>
<td>To be arranged for Senior female Life Sciences staff if thought to be beneficial</td>
<td>Human Resources Director and VCEG School Manager for Life Sciences staff</td>
<td>Initial course for May 2014 Annual</td>
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<td>ACTION POINT</td>
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<td>RESPONSIBILITY</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Career breaks/flexible working</td>
<td>7.1 Maternity Returners scheme (University-wide)</td>
<td>University scheme currently being developed</td>
<td>Monitor maternity return rates following the introduction of the University’s Returners scheme</td>
<td>School HR Advisor, University HR</td>
<td>Autumn 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2 Continue to monitor flexible working uptake</td>
<td>HR currently monitor formal flexible working applications</td>
<td>Collect data on informal flexible working arrangements</td>
<td>Disseminate updated University flexible working procedure to staff once introduced (30 June 2014)</td>
<td>School HR Advisor, School Manager</td>
<td>April 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3 School implementation of formal meetings prior to maternity leave to plan teaching cover and graduated return</td>
<td></td>
<td>Planning of specific meetings between staff taking maternity leave and line managers.</td>
<td>Agree arrangements for maintaining research (if appropriate)</td>
<td>School manager and HoS</td>
<td>Jan 2015 onward</td>
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<td>ACTION POINT</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>School implementation of formal meetings following return; to review research commitments and teaching and admin load</td>
<td>Specific meetings between leavers and line managers</td>
<td>School manager and HoS</td>
<td>Jan 2015 onward</td>
<td>System in place for planning return following maternity leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>Resources to be provided for working from home including web conference facilities, provision of laptops</td>
<td>Room with web conference facilities identified</td>
<td>Resources to be provided Room with web conference facilities to be established</td>
<td>HoS, School manager, technical services manager</td>
<td>Jan 2015 onward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>Provision of a room for expressing milk for mothers and those requiring rest</td>
<td>Room to be identified</td>
<td>School manager</td>
<td>Jan 2015 onward</td>
<td>Room provided with facilities for rest, easy chair and refrigerator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>