

**EDC17D010**

**Title:** Athena SWAN – Report on Progress and Next Steps  
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**Issue:** To inform the Committee of progress within the Athena SWAN initiative pursuing gender equality in all subjects at UEA

**Recommendation:** The Committee is asked to note content for information

**Resource Implications:** None for the Committee to agree at this stage.

**Risk Implications :**

Achievement within this framework to Silver standard is linked to a range of funding. Athena SWAN awards are viewed as robust evidence by a number of funding bodies, as demonstrating activity which supports equality. Additionally, REF 2020 is likely to require evidence that all Schools are involved in Athena SWAN to a minimum of Bronze standard.

**Equality and Diversity:**

The focus of this initiative is the pursuit of gender equality within all subjects following the widening of this initiative to Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Business and Law subjects in May 2015.

**Timing of decisions:** n/a

**Further Information:** The first paper to the Committee about Athena SWAN was in November 2011 addressing the question of membership (EDC11D001)

**Background:**

Athena SWAN is a framework, very widely adopted within the Higher Education Sector originally within STEMM subjects only, as a means of progressing equality for women. Following the widening of this initiative to all subjects from May 2015, gender equality across the University is now the focus. Achievement within this framework has recently been linked to funding streams, principally from the NIHR, with HEFCE and RCUK also making clear statements about the need to evidence progress in equality as part of funding applications/awards. Most recently it has been clarified that REF 2020 will link evidence of Athena SWAN to Units of Assessment.

## 1. Current Position

The table below shows progress on Athena SWAN Awards since 2012, when UEA first joined the framework:

### UEA Athena Swan Awards 2012-2017

Year	Uni/Dept	Level
2012	UEA	Bronze
2015	UEA renewal	Bronze
2012	NMS	Bronze
2013	PHA	Bronze
2013	BIO	Bronze
2014	ENV	Bronze
2014	NSC	Bronze
2014	RSC	Bronze
2014	PSY	Bronze
2015	CMP	Bronze
2015	MTH	Bronze
2016	PPL	Bronze
2016	PHA	Bronze (renewal)
2016	CHE	Bronze
2016	HSC	Bronze
2017	ECO	Bronze
2014	BIO	Silver
2014	NMS	Silver
2017	ENV	Silver

Year on year, the awards have accumulated as follows:

- 2012: UEA Bronze; 1 Dept Bronze
- 2013: UEA Bronze; 3 Dept Bronze
- 2014: UEA Bronze; 7 Dept Bronze; 2 Dept Silver
- 2015: UEA Bronze renewal; 9 Dept Bronze; 2 Dept Silver

- 2016: UEA Bronze renewal; 12 Dept Bronze; 1 dept Bronze renewal; 2 Dept Silver (the first year that submissions were made under the new, more detailed and broader framework)
- 2017: UEA Bronze renewal; 15 Dept Bronze; 3 Dept Silver

We have also experienced four 'fails' over this period: NMS (2012), ENV (2013), CHE (2014), ECO (2016). Also, PHA, BIO and HSC all tried for Silver in 2016, PHA and BIO were awarded Bronze renewal and HSC received Bronze (they were then a comparatively new School as a result of NSC and RSC merging). Although the Schools had been active since their original submissions they had not done enough to show evidence of positive impact from the work, which is a requirement of Silver. BIO has subsequently achieved Silver.

The awards originally lasted for three years before expiring and since the new framework was introduced in May 2015, the awards last for four years.

## **2. Future Plans**

3 further submissions will go forward in April 2018: MED (Silver renewal), NBS (Bronze), PSY (Bronze or Silver – not yet decided).

5 further submissions in November 2018: AMA (Bronze), CMP (Bronze renewal), LAW (Bronze), LDC (Bronze), MTH (Bronze renewal)

The University plans to put forward its first University Silver submission in April 2019 and the Central Steering Group (ASCSG) is focussing on activity to support this bid. The following School submissions are also scheduled in but these may shift in time depending on the readiness of the respective Schools: CHE (Bronze renewal), EDU (Bronze), SWK (Bronze), HIS (Bronze)

2 submissions are planned for November 2019: ECO (Silver), DEV (Bronze)

In April 2020 renewals will be due for BIO, PHA, HSC and PPL.

If results from all the work above are positive, all Schools will by this point be award holders, in readiness for REF 2020.

Feb 2018 Forward Planning					pre- REF deadline	REF		
		30/04/2018	30/11/2018	30/04/2019	30/11/2019	30/04/2020	30/11/2020	30/04/2021
FACULTY								
UEA				S ®				
SCI	BIO					®		
SCI	PHA					®		
SCI	ENV						®	
SCI	MTH		®BR					
SCI	CMP		®BR					
SCI	CHE			BB??	®			
FMH	MED	® S						
FMH	HSC					®		
SSF	PSY	® S						
SSF	ECO				SS??		®	
SSF	LAW		BB??					
SSF	DEV				BB??			
SSF	EDU			BB??				
SSF	NBS	BB??						
SSF	SWK			BB??				
HUM	PPL					®		
HUM	AMA		BB??					
HUM	HIS			BB??				
HUM	LDC		BB??					
Number of rounds:		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B =Bronze								
S =Silver								
® =Renewal								

### 3. Sector 'League Table' – Estimated position

* = all awards gained including renewals								
Overall Rank	Silver Rank	University	University Award	Bronze Dept Level*	Silver Dept*	Gold Dept*	Russell Group	Date Joined
<b>SILVER UNIVERSITY AWARD HOLDERS</b>								
1	1	Queens University Belfast	S	5	11	4	R	2007
2	2	UCL	S	23	23	2	R	2005
3	3	Edinburgh	S	18	11	1	R	2008
4	4	Imperial College	S	12	8	1	R	2005
5	5	Liverpool	S	11	8	1	R	2010
6	6	Cambridge	S	26	5	1	R	2005
7	7	Sheffield	S	21	12		R	2009
8	8	Nottingham	S	10	10		R	2006
9	9	Newcastle	S	15	7		R	2005
10	10	Warwick	S	16	5		R	2009
		<b>UEA**</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>			<b>2012</b>
11	11	Queen Mary	S	10	3		R	2005
12	12	Southampton	S	16	2		R	2009
13	13	Swansea	S	5	2		R	2007
** Indicates our position if we had Silver now.								
<b>BRONZE UNIVERSITY AWARD HOLDERS</b>								
Overall Rank	Bronze Rank	University	University Award	Bronze Dept Level*	Silver Dept*	Gold Dept*	Russell Group	Date Joined
14	1	York	B	10	3	2	R	2005
15	2	Oxford	B	32	20		R	2013
16	3	Kings College London	B	14	13		R	2007
17	4	Manchester	B	18	9		R	2008
18	5	Glasgow	B	15	6		R	2011
19	6	Leicester	B	14	6			2008
20	7	Exeter	B	9	6		R	2011
21	<b>8</b>	<b>UEA</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>			<b>2012</b>
22	9	Bristol	B	14	3		R	2005
23	10	Cardiff	B	12	3		R	2011
24	11	Leeds	B	11	3		R	2008
25	12	Durham	B	8	3		R	2011

The table above (compiled internally by the Equality and Diversity Office) shows the ‘top twenty five’ of those Universities with Silver institutional awards and the top of those with Bronze institutional awards, based on the number of School awards achieved at gold, silver and bronze levels. Overall, 65 Universities have both institutional and School level awards. A further 29 have signed up and hold a Bronze institutional award. Of those with Bronze University awards and School awards, UEA ranks 8<sup>th</sup>. A further thirteen Universities are ahead of us with Silver University awards and a range of gold/silver and bronze awards. It should be noted that if we achieved Silver as things stand currently, we would rank 11<sup>th</sup> overall. Additionally, with the exception of Leicester and UEA, all the other Universities in the ‘Top Twenty Five’ are Russell Group. Most of the other Universities in the top twenty five have been involved in Athena SWAN for a longer period of time than UEA.

The positioning will of course change with each submission round and there are a further two of these rounds before we submit for Silver in 2019, so the picture may change radically, however the current picture looks healthy for UEA.

#### 4. Changes to the Equality Challenge Unit

In 2017 it was announced that the Equality Challenge Unit (the body running the Athena SWAN Charter, among other services to HE), the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education and the Higher Education Authority would be merging. In January 2018 it was announced that the new name for the combined body would be Advance HE. The structures for Advance HE are expected to be in place for 1 August 2018.

## **5. Review of Athena SWAN Charter**

Concurrent with the merger, the ECU have also announced a review of Athena SWAN will take place. A consultation will be run (no details announced so far) with the stated ambition of 'reducing the burden of Athena SWAN, whilst retaining its rigour and efficacy.

Work is already reported to be underway on

- Revision of the Athena SWAN handbook to provide clearer guidance for applicants
- Revision of training for panellists
- Introduction of a less burdensome award renewal process
- Development of an electronic submission and review platform.

Further details of both the progress of Advance HE and the review of Athena SWAN will be shared with the Equality and Diversity Committee as they become available.

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***February 2018***