

EDC12D009

Title: *Athena Swan Charter*
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Update on Current Athena Swan Submissions Under Development and Central Progress

1. Overview

All 5 schools below are planning to submit applications for deadline of 30 April 2013. The Equality Office and Human Resources are supporting five schools in preparation of their bids.

All schools at Bronze level will be planning to apply for Silver Athena Swan in November 2013. This includes Norwich Medical School (MED) who put in their submission in November 2012.

- AHP – Silver or Bronze – discussion on-going
- BIO – Bronze
- ENV – Bronze
- NSC – Bronze
- PHA – Bronze

The Equality Office/Human Resource team coordinating the submissions has requested that all submissions be completely drafted by the close of business on Friday 29th March, so they can be checked, signed off and sent.

All submissions will be sent to Print Services by the submission deadline for 10 colour copies to be made for the Assessment Panel's use.

1. Review of Progress

School of Allied Health Professions: Progressing well with data, gradually working through each section and have plenty of information to work with. The School is mindful of developing the action plan as they go along and what constitutes demonstration of achievement at Silver level rather than Bronze. As School is female dominated it was noted engagement is harder as people can't see the urgent need for it however, the Chair of the Steering Group clarified the need to pursue the award and underlined top level support for those working on the initiative. The School is aiming for Silver level and has been considering a wider range of data to see what distance travelled can be demonstrated. The Athena Representative within the School, Naimh Kennedy, has made a presentation to the School board to promote the initiative and it's been discussed at the School Open House meetings.

School of Nursing Sciences: Has established central steering and sub groups. The sub groups are looking at specific aspects of the submission. A survey was carried out last week for which 24 responses were received. Additional comments have been received via the 'Cygnets' group. Lots of discussion and connections are taking place and text for each section

is being produced. One challenge for the School is weighing up whether the submission will be Bronze or Silver, overall the work they've done is fulfilling a lot of the requirements. At the moment NSC is erring towards Bronze.

As the Head of School has only been in place a relatively short time the implementation of new ideas is still quite recent. This bodes well for future Silver as they will be able to monitor 'distance travelled' as they move forward in coming months and be prepared to make a Silver submission in November.

School of Biological Sciences: several meetings have taken place and the School steering group involves a good range of staff, mix of grade and role and balance of gender. The submission is definitely set for Bronze and it's felt this allows a period of self-reflection on what the current position is and putting in well targeted mechanisms for change into place. The group is currently rationalising and checking data. One initiative has been to produce a list of 'did you know we (the School) offer.... Followed by a statement such as 'flexible working'. The School benefits from the Atrium, a coffee area with a screen against one of the walls, and a series of slides will be produced to reflect each of the points on the list. This will help catch attention and promote a range of staff benefits and support mechanisms. It could be tailored and made transferable to other Schools, be made available in different formats and used with different target groups (for example if recruiting, or advertising). The idea is based on a follow up to the NSS last year when a Powerpoint presentation was projected in the Atrium for the benefit of students using a 'You asked us for.... we did this...' approach. BIO have also gathered the views from their staff who participated in the University survey undertaken for the Bronze submission and gathered them by common theme. For each of these a focus group will be held to determine wider views on each theme and what staff would like to see happen.

It was noted as important to all submissions to make the link between the concerns expressed by staff through surveys and other mechanisms, the Action Plan proposed, and Actions finally implemented.

The School of Pharmacy: the central School group is now in place and met for the first time last Friday to look at the submission and assign tasks. Helen Murdoch will meet with Maria O'Connell on Friday Feb 15th to catch up on full position and discuss next steps (any additional information from Pharmacy will be tabled to the Committee at the meeting).

Norwich Medical School: Following Bronze submission in November work has continued on implementing the Actions in their Plan. Last Friday a questionnaire was circulated to staff asking them to consider the Plan and offer views on what staff would like to see happen around each of the Action Points. The questionnaire went out in the early afternoon and by 5.00 pm 20 responses had been received indicating a high level of engagement and interest by staff. As a result of feedback from various Athena meetings and gathering of views social space has been identified for the purposes of networking and inter-departmental liaison. This had not been considered as particularly important to staff in the face of pressure on space prior to engagement with the Athena exercise. The School Representative reported a very positive mood around actions from Athena. This is in part due to the energy and commitment of the School Athena Team and the speed with which they have made things happen following the submission.

- **All Schools have been asked to review the data received and to sense check due to the volume being produced from the central office.**
- **As long as Schools are able to keep momentum going on School submissions all five should be in a position to be put forward for the April deadline.**

3. Central Work:

1. We are still receiving data from various sources across the University (Admissions, HR, Discoverer among others). We are completing data requirements when received from various sources, reviewing the information we produce and 'sense checking' due to the volume of data required.
2. A lot of work has been undertaken to support groups in the building of the submissions, in terms of co-ordination, advice on equality issues and advice on writing successful submissions and Action Plans.
3. As the submissions are taking more shape and individual School themes are emerging we are pro-actively thinking ahead to Silver status, post Bronze submission to prepare to guide and position actions for maximum effect.
4. A regional Athena Swan meeting is taking place during May which we will attend to exchange practice and benchmark what is happening with others in the sector. This also takes place via contact on-going with the Equality Challenge Unit and via a Jisc-Mail list for Equality Practitioners. The Head of the Equality Challenge Unit will be delivering training on a range of aspects of work on equality and issues for the sector during February, March and April and this will also provide an opportunity for those Heads involved in Athena to understand direct from the driving force what is being looked for within submissions.
5. The Equality Challenge Unit is running a pilot with eight UK Universities to see how Athena can be applied successfully to non STEM subjects.

Thanks to Jessica Corby (E&D), Kate Whistlecraft (HRD) and Stuart Gascoyne (HRD) for their hard work and direction so far on data production and population of the current templates. Thanks also to all those in School teams who have engaged with the process to date.

4. Central Action Plan

Work is in hand in HR, Equality and Diversity and CSED with the central actions defined in the three year Plan which formed part of our Bronze submission. A full report on progress for our Bronze plan, covering then a full year from submission, will be submitted to the May meeting of the Equality and Diversity Committee with stages reached and work outstanding highlighted. It will be important to demonstrate we are moving forward broadly in line with the Plan in order to retain our Bronze status and move forward as a University to Silver level.

ACTION: Head of Equality and Diversity will liaise with all areas with responsibility for these actions to gather information for full update.