Appendix 1

Imperial College
London

Academic Gender Strategy Committee

23 October 2015
12.30 - 14.30

Minutes

Present:
Professor James Stirling Chair
Professor Anand Anandalingam Dean of Imperial College Business School
Professor Maggie Dallman Associate Provost (Academic Partnerships)
Professor Dot Griffiths Provost’s Envoy for Gender Equality
Ms Kim Everitt Deputy Director, HR
Professor Jeff Magee Dean of the Faculty of Engineering
Professor Stephen Richardson Associate Provost (Institutional Affairs)
Dr Victoria Salem NIHR Clinical Lecturer and Athena SWAN Coordinator, Department of Medicine
Professor Tom Welton Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences

Secretary: Ms Hailey Smith Welcome Service Manager – Senior Recruitment

Agenda Item

Item 1 – Welcome and Apologies

1.1 Apologies were received from Professor Gavin Screaton. Dr Vicky Salem was welcomed to the committee as Professor Screaton’s nominee.

Item 2 – Minutes of the Last Meeting and Matters Arising
(Appendix 1: Minutes – 12 June 2015)

2.1 The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the previous meeting.

2.2 Professor Griffiths reported that all actions were in hand and those requiring further consideration were to be discussed as agenda items.

2.3 (minute 2.11 – Interview Panel Pool)
Ms Everitt and Professor Richardson reported that they had discussed the possibility of an incentive for those who sat on an interview panel pool but had thought that panel members should not need to be incentivised and, therefore, would advise against this.

Item 3 – Conference Support for Carers
(Appendix 2: Conference Support for Carers)

3.1 The Faculty Deans had agreed to fund the Conference Support for Carers Grants at the June 2015 meeting of the Academic Gender
Strategy Committee. Professor Griffiths explained that since the meeting the proposed remit of the grants had been expanded to include all Academic and Research staff, both male and female, who held caring responsibilities for a dependent(s).

3.2 Professor Griffiths presented the principles of the grants and the draft application form, which were accepted by the committee. Professor Griffiths would write to the Faculty Deans to ask them to implement local processes to allow for the submission of applications and the issue of the grants.

3.3 The committee agreed that once local processes were agreed and confirmed, the Grants would be formally announced. (Post meeting note: It is hoped that an announcement will be made to formally launch the Grants at Women@Imperial week in March 2016).

Item 4 – Maternity Support for PhD Students
(Appendix 3: Maternity Support for PhD Students)

4.1 The Athena Committee has asked the Academic Gender Strategy Committee to consider the provision of maternity leave and pay for PhD students. Following research, Ms Smith presented her findings regarding the support on offer, which are summarised below:

- Home/EU students in receipt of a stipend should receive 4 months paid maternity or adoption leave. If these costs are not covered by the funder then the department is asked to make suitable financial provision.
- A small central fund exists within Registry to which Home/EU students and departments may apply for assistance in making such suitable financial provision, but this fund is underused.
- International students are not eligible for maternity support and, if they hold a Tier 4 visa, would likely be obliged to leave the UK while taking an ‘interruption of studies’ for reason of maternity.
- The College provides a wide range of support for parents on their return to work, but it was noted that these supports were under marketed to students.

4.2 Ms Smith reported that RCUK and the University of Exeter demonstrated good practice by offering 26 weeks of maternity leave to students on full stipend and a further 26 weeks of unpaid leave.

4.3 The committee discussed whether the College should strengthen its policy on the provision of maternity pay for PhD students and whether the College should move to mirror the policy of RCUK, extending provision from 4 months to 6 months. The committee agreed to explore this further.

4.4 Professor Magee asked how the maternity leave for self-funded students was treated.

4.5 The Chair asked how maternity support for PhD students was affected by the recent introduction of shared parental leave, noting that this should be considered and its implications accounted for in any revision of procedure.
4.6 The committee agreed that the College’s support for parents could be better communicated to students. Ms Smith would discuss how this might be done with Registry.

4.7 The committee agreed that further research should be undertaken to better understand if and how self-funded students are supported, how shared parental leave and the College’s policy on this might interact with maternity support for PhD students and what RCUK’s approach to shared parental leave is.

4.8 Research would also be undertaken into whether there was any impact on the Elsie Widdowson Fellowships as a result of the introduction of shared parental Leave.

Item 5 – The Academic Adviser and Probation
(Appendix 4 – The Academic Adviser and Probation)

5.1 Professor Griffiths reported that she had revisited the College's guidance for Academic Advisers. Professor Griffiths noted that the Academic Adviser performed an important function in the support of new lecturers but that some did not always perform this role to its full extent. In light of this she had devised a checklist to remind Advisers of their duties, including what to discuss with their advisee and what records to keep. She had also agreed with the College Consuls a modification to the academic appointment approval form which requires an Academic Adviser to be identified at interview.

5.2 Professor Welton noted that the Department of Chemistry appointed Academic Advisers who were close to their advisee in terms of experience, so that they shared relevant and recent experience of probation and the challenges of being an early-career academic. He said that this approach had proven successful.

5.3 Professor Griffiths said that she and Ms Smith would run a briefing for Academic Advisers at the start of each academic year to discuss their role, explain their responsibilities and share good practice.

5.4 Professor Anandalingam and Professor Griffiths agreed that the support of new lecturers in the Business School was a little different due to the nature of the 6 year tenure track. Professor Anandalingam noted that the Academic Adviser checklist was very helpful.

5.5 The Chair asked that the committee consider the Academic Adviser role again in a year’s time to review progress.

Item 6 – Proposal to Modify Academic Recruitment Processes
(Appendix 5 – Modifications to the Recruitment Process)

6.1 Professor Griffiths noted that while the College monitored the number, gender and success rate of applicants to academic roles, recruitment monitoring did not consider the gender diversity of the ‘pool’ of potential applicants. She recommended that search committees be encouraged to consider the pool when recruiting to an academic position and ask themselves whether they were attracting a proportional number of female applicants.
6.2 Professor Griffiths said that the College Consuls had agreed that the Consul’s sign-off form would be revised to note the percentage of female applicants who apply as a percentage of the pool. Professor Griffiths noted that establishing the pool was more of an art than a science, so while the figure may not be exact it was an important endeavour in order to know if we were attracting a proportionate number of applicants and, if not, how departments intend to address this.

6.3 To assist in the identification of the pool, Professor Griffiths suggested the creation of guidance that would act as a steer in finding useful and reliable information on the number of potential female applicants to different academic roles, such as Research Council data, Athena SWAN, LERU and data from other universities both national and international.

6.4 Speaking on panel diversity, Professor Welton noted that there was no requirement for panel members to be from the recruiting department or subject area. He added that casting a wider net when agreeing panel members could increase diversity.

Item 7 – Academic Promotions 2016
(Appendix 6 – Academic Promotions 2016)

7.1 Professor Griffiths proposed additional wording (appendix 6) which she asked to be included in the Academic Promotions guidance ahead of the 2016/17 round.

7.2 Professor Griffiths had recommended that the departmental review panel for professorial promotions should consist of five professors and the Faculty Dean should agree the composition of this panel with the Head of Department. Professor Magee said that it was too prescriptive to specify the number of professors on the panel. He said that he was happy to approve the composition of the panel as Dean, although he noted the Dean should not be relied upon too heavily to negate bias. Ms Everitt would agree appropriate wording.

Item 8 – Workload Allocation Model

8.1 Professor Griffiths reminded the committee of the importance Athena SWAN places on effective workload allocation models. The committee agreed that it was not appropriate for there to be a College-level workload allocation model; given that departments already have robust workload allocation models at a local level.

Item 9 – Athena SWAN

9.1 The College’s Institutional Silver Award renewal application was reported to be underway. The Self-Assessment Team was meeting regularly and Professor Griffiths and Mr Rob Bell (Athena SWAN Coordinator) had prepared a first draft of the application. Professor Welton congratulated Professor Griffiths on what had been achieved so far.
9.2 **Awards Update**
Life Sciences renewed their Bronze Award in April 2015, although had not been successful in achieving a Silver Award.

9.3 Physics had renewed their Silver Award in April 2015, having not been successful in their application for a Gold Award.

9.4 Earth Science and Engineering had been allowed a year’s grace period for their Silver Award, following an unsuccessful renewal application. Professor Griffiths noted it had been suggested in the feedback on the ESE application that a Physics A-level be removed as an entry requirement for the Geophysics degree. The committee agreed that such a comment was inappropriate and not within the remit of the panel.

9.5 Bioengineering were successful in its application for a Bronze Award in April 2015.

9.6 Mechanical Engineering would apply and CEP would reapply for awards in November 2015. Civil Engineering, and Electronic and Electrical Engineering would both apply for bronze awards in April 2016. The Business School was also on track to apply for the gender equality charter mark.

**Item 10 – Provost’s Envoy’s Update**

10.1 Professor Griffiths reported that Mr Rob Bell’s presentation to the HoDs about Athena SWAN had been well received.

10.2 In connection to the institutional renewal, focus groups regarding the College’s support for women were being held from October – December 2015, with all members of staff being invited to either attend a session or complete the online survey. The first focus group, for professional, technical and operational staff (PTO) levels 1-4 had taken place on 22 October 2015. Two clear themes had been expressed by participants, an appetite for increased job sharing and a greater sense of community between academic, research and PTO staff.

10.3 The College had entered five nominations to the WISE awards. While all five had been longlisted only one had been shortlisted. The committee agreed that this was disappointing and asked that WISE be asked about the decision making process.

10.4 A Knowledge Sharing Event would be held at the College on 20\(^{th}\) January 2016 in conjunction with WISE, the topic of which would be ‘How Gender Diversity Drives Innovation’. The event would be chaired by Professor Griffiths.

10.5 The annual lunch for promoted academic women had been expanded this year to include ‘women of achievement’ more widely, and it had been held on 14\(^{th}\) October 2015. Professor Griffiths noted that the event had been very well attended and had been a great occasion. Professor Magee added that while the achievers had been noted by name at the event, not all those who had been promoted had been mentioned. He suggested that all attendees be named at next year’s
event.

10.6 Professor Griffiths had attended the opening of Woodward Hall, the College’s new halls of residence in North Acton, named for Professor Joan Woodward, the second woman to receive a chair at the College.

10.7 The College’s supercomputer, previously known as CX2, had been named Helen following a College wide competition. The supercomputer was named in recognition of Professor Helen Kemp Porter, the first women to receive a chair at the College.

**Item 11 – ECU Annual Subscription**

11.1 Following the discontinuation of HEFCE funding for the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU), the College had agreed to meet the ECU’s newly proposed subscription fee. To help encourage other HEIs to become subscribers the ECU had written to both the Chair and Professor Griffiths to ask the College to make a statement in support of ECU and its work. Professor Magee suggested that if the College was to become a subscribing member of ECU then it should have some say in the way the Unit was run, citing the feedback provided to ESE (minute 9.4) as an example of unprofessionalism. The committee agreed that the Chair and Professor Griffiths would write to ECU offering the College’s support but stressing the need for the ECU to professionalise.

**Item 12 – Gender and Institutional Culture Study – Update**

12.1 Ms Everitt briefed the committee on the Gender and Institutional Culture study that was currently underway following the complaints arising about this year’s Varsity event.

12.2 Ms Everitt reported that the first meeting of the steering group had taken place and reported to the Equality and Diversity Committee as a standing item on the Committee’s agenda.

12.3 Research was being undertaken by Dr Alison Phipps and Dr Liz McDonnell at the University of Sussex. The researchers were drawing on a number of methods to get an insight into the culture of the College, including the review of College and Student Union documents, procedures, social events, publicity, and interviews with staff and students. An interim report would be published in March to align with the Institutional Silver renewal application and College’s Women@Imperial week activities. The final report would be published in time for the commencement of the 2016/17 academic year.

**Item 13 - A.O.B**

13.1 **Provost’s Board Paper**

The Chair asked the Academic Gender Strategy Committee to submit a paper reporting on recent activity to the November 2015 meeting of Provost's Board.

Professor Griffiths
13.2 **Core Hours**

The committee agreed to the establishment of core working hours, which would be important for the Institutional Silver Award renewal application. The agreement would require key meetings to be held within the hours of 9.30am and 5.00pm. If a meeting outside of these hours was unavoidable then assistance should be offered to those with caring responsibilities, such as the meeting the cost of childcare arrangements. The establishment of core hours for key meetings would be included in the report to Provost’s Board.

13.3 **Women@Imperial**

Women@Imperial would be celebrated again during the week of 7th March 2016. This year’s event would be centred on a Gender Summit, which would discuss the recommendations that arose from the Athena SWAN focus groups and survey that were currently underway. President Alice Gast had also agreed to give a lecture on her research as part of Women@Imperial. *(Post Meeting Note: It has since been agreed that President Gast will give the 2016 Athena Lecture on 1 June 2016.)*

Friday 11th March would also see a fringe-style event take place at the College aimed at engaging female primary and secondary school students in science. Dr Salem suggested that the Division of Surgery be asked to participate as this was an area of medicine in which women were underrepresented.

13.4 **Royal Society and Unconscious Bias**

Professor Griffiths reported that the Royal Society had produced a document about unconscious bias to be given out to interview panels. Professor Griffiths would circulate a copy to committee members and suggested that Imperial might consider producing its own version to raise awareness amongst panel members of their own unconscious biases and their impact.

**Professor Griffiths**

**Date of the Next Meeting**

24 February 2016
13.30 – 15.30
Boardroom, Faculty Building