# Athena Committee

**Thursday 1st July 2014**  
10:00 - 12:00  
SALC 2, Level 5, Sherfield Building  
South Kensington Campus

## Minutes

**Present:**  
Professor Dot Griffiths - Chair  
Dr Ian Bastow - Earth Science & Engineering  
Mr Rob Bell - College Athena SWAN Coordinator  
Professor Alex Blakemore - Medicine  
Dr Liz Elvidge - Postdoc Development Centre  
Ms Barbara Hehir - Clinical Sciences  
Ms Lenne Lillepuu - Life Sciences  
Ms Karen Makuch - Centre for Environmental Policy; FoNS Ambassador  
Dr Panos Parpas - Computing  
Dr Steven Riley - Public Health  
Dr Victoria Salem - FoM Athena SWAN Coordinator  
Ms Zoe Townsend - Chemical Engineering  
Professor Dimitri Vvedensky - Physics  
Dr Elizabeth Want - Surgery & Cancer  
Professor Eric Yeatman - Electrical & Electronic Engineering

**Apologies:**  
Dr Dorothy Buck - Maths  
Dr Patricia Hunt - Chemistry  
Professor Clare Lloyd - National Heart and Lung Institute  
Dr Aimee Morgans - Aeronautics  
Professor Ann Muggeridge - FoE Ambassador  
Professor Mary Ryan - Materials  
Dr Jane Saffell - Medicine  
Dr Jenna Stevens-Smith - Bioengineering

## Agenda Item

### 1. Welcome, Introductions, and Apologies

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and all members present introduced themselves.

### 2. Minutes of the Last Meeting (10 April 2014) and Matters Arising

2.1 The previous minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the last meeting.
2.2 **Data** *(re minute 2.2)*
Mr Bell to investigate recruitment data issues over the summer.  

Mr Bell

2.3 **College Staff Survey** *(re minute 2.3)*
The Chair has received a part breakdown of the 2014 Staff Survey. Departments with Athena SWAN awards tend to have better results. The Chair will be receiving data in more detail.

2.4 **Faculty Family Life Events** *(re minute 2.4)*
Addressed later in the meeting – see 4.5

2.5 **Terms of Reference** *(re minute 3.1)*
The Chair reported that ToRs had been formalised with the AGSC.

2.6 **College Action Plan** *(re minute 4.1)*
Mr Bell to circulate latest version of College Action Plan.  

Mr Bell

2.7 **Unconscious Bias Training** *(re minute 4.2)*
Addressed later in the meeting – see 4.1

2.8 **College Childcare Provision Budget Transparency** *(re minute 5.2)*
The Chair reported that this was ongoing.  

Chair

2.9 **Outreach** *(re minute 5.4)*
The Chair is working with Professor Dallman and the Outreach Office on consolidating information regarding outreach activities.

2.10 **Maternity Leave Provision** *(re minute 5.5 and 5.6)*
Addressed later in the meeting – see 4.2

2.11 **Postdocs on Visas and Flexible Working** *(re minute 7.1)*
Mr Bell reported that Professor Muggeridge had contacted Pippa Chalmers in HR. Under the implementation of the ICAMS system, for workers on visas, normal work-related absences, such as working from home and travel to conferences within the UK, do not need to be recorded, providing the worker can be easily contacted. (Absences such as annual leave, maternity/paternity/adoption leave, special leave, and sickness absence, do need to be recorded.)

3. **Ambassador Reports**

3.1 Reports were circulated before the meeting (see attached document).

3.2 The Committee discussed the importance of **encouraging female applicants to apply for positions**, and how this can be accomplished (e.g. search committees in Public Health and Chemical Engineering). Committee members should ensure that their departments are directing postdocs to Imperial’s Postdoc Development Centre for support.  

All

4. **Provost’s Tier 1 AGSC Meeting 5 June Report**

4.1 The College has started a programme of **unconscious bias training**. Senior staff are a priority, and then staff on appointments and promotions panels. The Chair will explore the possibility of a second training session, building on awareness with a toolkit to tackle bias.
Dr Bastow reported that Dr Elvidge and Kani Kamara (Equality and Diversity Unit) will be delivering local unconscious bias training for ESE.

4.2 Maternity provision for PhD students was being investigated and data collected, as well as a review of maternity provision for staff, in comparison with other universities. Dr Salem requested that any decision or group working on this issue have some Athena input.

4.3 The 2014 Staff Survey results have shown that women tend to be more aware of equality initiatives, and that Athena SWAN is one of the more well-known initiatives in College.

4.4 AGSC is exploring the possibilities of building on NHLI’s successful family event, perhaps linking with the Imperial Festival.

4.5 The College will hold a Women of Imperial Week, to celebrate their achievements, centred on International Women’s Day in 2015 (week commencing 9 March). Each Faculty run its own event, in addition to the overall College event; the Chair will coordinate with Faculty Deans.

An exhibition will be staged in the College main entrance, similar to the previous WSET 100 Women 100 Visions project in 2009. Professor Blakemore suggested that a video of role models, similar to the recent one from University of Southampton, might be interesting.

Professor Blakemore suggested that ScienceGrrl may be a good potential partner for an event. Professor Yeatman suggested working with Outreach and holding events for potential students. Recognition could also be given to inspirational school teachers.

4.6 The Chair reported she is continuing with her interviews of female professors.

4.7 The call for nominations for the Julia Higgins Awards 2015 will go out in the autumn, but all Committee members are asked to think about potential nominees. All

4.8 The Chair stated there will be a presentation at the HoD meeting in autumn on promotion and research on gender differences.

4.9 The dates of the College’s annual event for academic women and next year’s Athena Lecture will be confirmed as soon as possible. Following feedback from this year’s Athena Lecture, more consideration will be given to family-friendly times for such events.

5. Department Athena SWAN Updates

5.1 Dr Bastow reported that ESE’s Silver award is due for renewal in April 2015 and that the Department was thinking about applying for Gold.

5.2 Ms Townsend reported that Chemical Engineering is waiting for the result of its Silver renewal application from the April 2014 round. The Department is also holding its inaugural Postdoc Symposium today.

5.3 Professor Vvedensky reported that Physics will be applying for Gold in November 2014.

5.4 Ms Hehir reported that Clinical Sciences is waiting for the result of its
Bronze application from the April 2014 round. The Centre is currently recruiting more members to workgroups to take forward its Action Plan.

5.5 Dr Parpas reported that Computing had received the results and feedback for its Silver November 2013 application. Athena SWAN had not awarded Silver, but had renewed the Department’s Bronze award. The Department intends to apply for Silver again in the near future.

5.6 Dr Riley reported that Public Health had been successful in renewing its Silver award in the November 2013 round, but was still waiting to receive its feedback.

5.7 Ms Lillepuu reported that Life Sciences was preparing to apply for Silver in November 2014. The Department’s surveys are coming to a close today and the qualitative data would be analysed soon.

5.8 Dr Want reported that Surgery & Cancer is waiting for the results of its Bronze application from the April 2014 round. The Department’s SAT continues to meet once a month, but with additional working groups at each campus. Champions in surgery are now in place.

5.9 Professor Yeatman reported that EEE are currently recruiting their SAT and are aiming to apply for Bronze in 2015.

5.10 Mr Bell will follow up with Bioengineering, Civil & Environmental Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering, on their intentions and preparations for Athena SWAN applications.

6. Athena Workshop Report

Mr Bell reported that he had organised and delivered an Athena workshop on 26th June. The workshop detailed the process of judging an application, and Mr Bell advised from his personal experience what panellists may look out for in applications. Mr Bell will circulate materials used in the workshop.

7. Regional Network Meeting Report

7.1 Mr Bell reported that he had represented Imperial at the recent London and the East Regional Network meeting, held on 18 June at the Open University, Milton Keynes.

7.2 Mr Harri Weeks, Athena SWAN Adviser, ECU, had attended the regional network meeting and gave a brief summary of the results from the November 2013 round (please see attached document).

7.3 Mr Weeks also updated the network on the status of Athena SWAN (please see attached document for full details):
- A new comprehensive guidance document is being developed
- New application forms are in development, but current forms will be accepted until at least November 2014
- Panellist training is under discussion

7.4 Mr Weeks requested that awarding-holding departments and institutions in the regional network ensure that their submissions are
The network discussed **various issues and best practice**, including:

- Recruitment, and how to attract more women (important of wording of adverts; family-friendly polices included in adverts; tracking careers of talented postdocs and inviting them to apply for positions; clear guides for head-hunters and search agents; justification of all-male shortlists to HoDs)
- Mentoring (importance of training and guidelines)
- Core hours and timing of special events; family-friendly vs availability. Mr Weeks reported that Athena SWAN are seeing examples of good practice where drinks/networking receptions are held immediately *before* the event, rather than afterwards.

Dr Bastow commented that in a recent survey in ESE, the **timing of meetings and seminars** had been one of the most difficult issues in terms of childcare. Chair will raise the idea of core hours in the College.

**Athena SWAN Medical Advisory Board Report**

8.1 Professor Blakemore reported that Athena SWAN are:

- Continuing development of a new electronic submission system, which will scan text for any missing data/information and for any potential issues with an application
- Considering adding auditing of HR procedures to the new institutional application form

8.2 Professor Blakemore reported that the Board had discussed equal pay and remuneration as a sector-wide issue, and in particular the importance of considering *all* forms of remuneration. The Chair will raise this at the next AGSC Tier 1 meeting.

**AOB**

9. Ms Lenne Lillepuu raised the idea of a **returner’s scheme** following a career break to help women back into research. The Committee discussed the length of time that would be needed and existing schemes, such as the Daphne Jackson Fellowships. Dr Elvidge will feedback details of Daphne Jackson and other schemes at the next meeting.

9.2 Ms Makuch raised the issue of no women speakers at events. It was suggest that unconscious bias training may help, if it can be cascaded down to all staff. Professor Blakemore also suggested talking to the Student Union about training their reps.