Minutes

Present: Professor Dot Griffiths, Chair, Provost’s Envoy for Gender Equality
Mr Rob Bell, Athena SWAN Coordinator
Dr Claudia Clopath, Bioengineering
Dr Caroline Colijn, Maths, FoNS Ambassador
Professor Stephen Curry, Life Sciences
Ms Alexandra Highton, Electrical & Electronic Engineering
Professor Sian Harding, NHLI
Ms Rachel Herries, Postdoc Development Centre
Dr Edgar Meyer, Business School
Dr Aimee Morgans, Mechanical Engineering
Professor Ferdinando Rodriguez Y Baena, Mechanical Engineering
Professor Mary Ryan, Materials
Mrs Anusha Sri-Pathmanathan, Chemical Engineering
Ms Maria Tortelli, Chemistry
Professor Dimitri Vvedensky, Physics
Ms Alexandra Williams, Civil Engineering

Apologies: Professor Tom Coates, Mathematics
Professor Denis Doorly, Aeronautics
Dr Liz Elvidge, Postdoc Development Centre
Professor Sue Gibson, Chemistry
Professor Richard Jardine, Civil Engineering
Dr Cleo Kontoravdi, Chemical Engineering
Professor Clare Lloyd, FoM
Mr Sam McKenney, Design Engineering
Dr Steven Riley, Public Health
Dr Victoria Salem, Medicine
Dr Leila Sheldrick, Design Engineering
Professor Christian Speck, Clinical Sciences

Agenda Item | Action
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1 | Introductions and apologies
1.1 | Dot welcomed everyone to the meeting and members introduced themselves.
2 Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising

2.1 Re minute 3.9, Dot confirmed that she is still engaging in conversation in the College following the Hammersmith Campus NHS nursery closure. The College has investigated other local nurseries but there is limited capacity. She confirmed that a paper is going to Provost’s Board very soon regarding plans for a College nursery at White City, and that increased provision at South Kensington is being considered.

2.2 A question about College nursery hours was raised. Dot reported that a pilot breakfast club at the nursery has been running, but with limited take up. It was suggested that the extra opening time would be useful at in the evenings rather than the mornings. Dot

3 College update

3.1 Dot reported that we have gained traction on the College Action Plan this year with most actions being implemented. A new Gold section has been added to the Action Plan. Diversity in the curriculum and pedagogy is an additional criteria at Gold-level, and so Dot has started discussions with Simone Buitendijk, Vice Provost (Education) following the new College Learning and Teaching Strategy.

3.2 Dot reported that Imperial’s unconscious bias work was reported on at the most recent LERU meeting (League of European Research Universities).

3.3 The AGSC has considered a paper on a post-maternity/parental leave three month Fellowship for postdocs whose funding has run out by the time they return from leave. Committee members discussed and reported different experiences concerning postdocs and maternity leave and what options were possible. Dot reported that there will be some element of evaluation at the end of proposed Fellowship, similar to the Elsie Widdowson Fellowship. Public Health has already established a similar Career Continuity Scheme. A question was asked if the proposed College Fellowship could be used flexibly, e.g. working part-time over a period of longer than three months?

3.4 Dot reported that the Faculties had contributed to a new three year post in the Postdoc Development Centre. This post will support people to gain fellowships as well as supporting fellows in the College.

3.5 Dot reported that the project to evaluation SOLE data is starting to produce initial results. Women and BAME staff are less likely to be rated positively, with some variation between ethnicities though numbers are small. The data seems to show we have an issue with how our students are evaluating our staff, which confirms wider academic research in this area. Several Committee members reported that this matches their own experience in departments. More data analysis needs to be conducted but Dot will ensure the Committee receives a summary of the project in the new academic year. Dot reassured the Committee that initial conversations are already taking in place about the potential implications of this data, e.g. how SOLE is used in promotions.

3.6 Dot reported that unconscious bias cartoons are still under development. The idea is that cartoons may be more engaging and have more impact than a list of bullet points.
3.7 Dot reported that the 'My mother worked' project is almost complete. The idea is to produce a booklet and material for the website with a number of people give their experience of having a working mother at Imperial, including PTO as well as academic staff.

3.8 Dot reported that a new Carers Network is planned for next academic year, one of the follow up activities from Diverse@Imperial 2017. Claire O’Brien, Director of Occupational Health, has offered to host this new support network.

3.9 A small working group is working on proposals to bid for an upcoming EPSRC funding call on diversity. Mary reported that she had attended a recent event, organised by the EPSRC in partnership with a number of universities, to discover what universities are already doing and discuss issues and challenges. Other research councils also participated. Key issues included: peer review; dealing with data and data disclosure; and parental leave, especially for postdocs. Mary reported that Imperial is looked to as a leader on data and evaluation, for example the work undertaken analysing research grant applications by gender and ethnicity. It was suggested that one possible proposal for the EPSRC funding could be to support further statistical analysis of these and other complicated data sets.

Dot

3.10 Dot summarised the upcoming structural changes regarding gender and EDI more broadly. Interviews for the new Assistant Provost for EDI role will take place soon. This is a half time post, with some support, succeeding Dot’s role as Provost’s Envoy for Gender Equality. The Athena Committee will continue to act as a link between departments. Each Faculty will have an EDI Committee, of which Athena will be a part. FoE has already re-shaped its committee, with standard terms of references for department committees as well. These Faculty committees will report to a new College EDI Committee, which will take over from the AGSC and the current Equality & Diversity Committee. The Race Equality Charter is likely to be a focus in the future after the changes have taken place.

4 Department updates on Athena applications and Action Plans

4.1 Materials – Gold application submitted in April 2017

Mary reported that the Department is restructuring committees and subgroups so that they and the Action Plan works more efficiently. Peter Haynes, HoD, is taking over from May as EDI Chair. Currently the Department is trying to evaluate the impact of 1st year UG unconscious bias training through SOLE data and conversations with UG Tutors and support staff.

4.2 FoE

Mary reported that the National Women in Engineering Day networking lunch had been well attended by postdocs and PhD students, with Alice Gast speaking and attending the event. The Faculty has been invited to host a women in tech conference, Ada’s List, in October. The Faculty is considering establishing a women in industry network. FoE and FoNS are discussing holding a joint event later this year.
4.3 **Business School** – Bronze renewal due April 2020

Edgar reported that the School is developing a range of beacon activity alongside its Action Plan. As one of the first Business Schools to achieve an Athena award they have been contacted by a number of other departments requesting their successful application. They are working to establish a network of business schools involved in Athena. The School is considering how it presents itself to potential female students. Many competitors, especially American business schools, have a specific women landing-page on their website, drawing together details in one place, e.g. information on networks, support, career options, scholarships, etc. The School is also reviewing use of language.

4.4 **Mechanical Engineering** – aiming to apply for Bronze in November 2017 / April 2018

Aimee and Ferdinando are co-chairing a new SAT after the previous unsuccessful application, with the focus being on Athena as a long-term process. They will be running focus groups and interviews with staff.

4.5 **Physics** – Silver renewal due November 2018

Dimitri reported that the Department renewed its Institute of Physics' Juno Champion status in February. They are currently looking into the under-achievement of female students. The Department has recently appointed six Lecturers and is re-considering its recruitment practices. The HoD has implemented a policy that there should be at least one woman on every shortlist. Majority of applications came from the EU, with only a few from the UK.

Dot reinforced the importance of proactively going out and approaching potential female candidates and encouraging them to apply for academic positions.

4.6 **Chemistry** – Gold renewal due November 2017

Maria reported that the Department’s SAT is meeting monthly, in addition to their E&D Committee which meets once a term. Three focus groups were held for professional and technical staff which generated recommendations for future actions. Focus groups for academic women and postdocs are being planned. The move to White City is a particular focus. The Department has commissioned a consultant, Sean McWhinnie, to run a PhD student survey to explore career information and development. Recruitment good practice (unsuccessful female candidates offered feedback and mentoring) has led to one woman supported with a mock interview for a 5-year EPSRC Fellowship (successful, will be hosted in the Department) and another woman getting a position in Materials.

Recent events organised by the Department include a WikiChem event (to develop Wikipedia articles on female scientists), and a lunch-time session in partnership with PDC is planned for academics on ‘How to support your postdocs’. A Seminar Committee has been established, with remit to ensure diversity of speakers. Alan Armstrong, HoD, has been invited to service on the Royal Society of Chemistry’s Inclusion and Diversity Committee. Tom Welton received an OBE for his services to diversity in education.
A question was asked about how Chemistry organise and divide the workload in their SAT? Maria agreed that workload can be an issue and reported that different individuals are responsible for different areas. Others are also occasionally invited to attend SAT meetings, e.g. outreach. Dimitri commented that Physics also have SAT subgroups for different areas. Dot highlighted the importance of a SAT to have a reporting line into a department’s management committee. Rachel also commented that the PDC team members are happy to sit on departments SATs.

4.7 **NHLI** – Silver renewal application submitted April 2017

Sian reported that the 2017 Staff Survey results showed the impact of their PRDP efforts, with scores higher than the Faculty average. Further analysis had shown that for 25 questions women more likely to be positive than men, compared to only three questions where men more positive than women. Dot commented that the overall College results showed that academic women had consistently lower scores than academic men.

4.8 **Life Sciences** – Bronze renewal due November 2018

Stephen reported that he was now formally in post and that Rebecca Stiffell had been appointed to succeed Lenne Lillepuu (now moved to PDC). They have reviewed the Action Plan to be understand it and identify gaps. A new Friday afternoon social event has proven popular in the Department. A family-friendly bugs day is being organised at Silwood Park. A more pro-active search process has helped achieved a 50% female shortlist in current recruitment round. The Department is implementing an online suggestion box for meeting EDI needs, open to all staff and students. Staff Survey results had found women less satisfied than men on a range of questions. Professional accreditation for Technical Services staff is being investigated. Seminar programme has been modified to give opportunity for PhDs and postdocs to present their work.

The Department has invited Angela Saini, author of *Inferior: How Science Got Women Wrong*, to give a lunch-time lecture on 21st November.

4.9 **Civil Engineering** – Bronze application planned for November 2017

Alexandra reported that the SAT has different task groups working on different sections on the forum. The PhD-postdoc transition is key for the Department and they have held a specific focus group for PhD students. The Action Plan is already up to 15 pages and the SAT has a meeting soon to start confirming Action Plan and application content. The Department ran their own survey shortly after the College Survey, with a higher response rate, to get key information for the application. Key issues found were: PRDPs, especially for technicians; promotions process and transparency in workload; and approach to maternity/paternity leave.

Dot noted that all postdocs should agree a Return to Work Plan with their PI before going on maternity leave, following change to College policy (College Action Plan 2016 6.4). Rob will re-send the form that Physics originally developed.

Rob
4.10 **Chemical Engineering** – Silver renewal due November 2017

Anusha reported all actions from previous Action Plan have been implemented with the following still ongoing: LDC will deliver a workshop on stress awareness in October; postdoc focus groups will take place in July; review of pre- and post-maternity/paternity/parental leave arrangements is being planned. Su Nandy was recommended by the Committee as a good person for the Department to contact about this. The Department has seen a 4% increase in UG female applications, offers and student numbers for second year in a row. A staff away day with sessions run by a facilitator has generated further actions, e.g. 1st Friday of the month themed staff mixer and HoD lunch de-briefing session every two months.

4.11 **EEE** – Bronze application planned for November 2017

Alexandra reported that more work is needed on their Action Plan. They have followed up unconscious bias training with lab behaviour. A UG group called Sparky Ladies are working on outreach and mentoring current students. PRDP completion rates have increased significantly in recent years. Increased awareness of gender equality in recruitment and language used. A question was raised about the College signing the Technicians Commitment and what this means. Rob reported that LDC has a specific webpage for technicians; [www.imperial.ac.uk/staff-development/development-options/od-courses/technicians](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/staff-development/development-options/od-courses/technicians)

4.12 **Mathematics** – Bronze renewal due April 2020

Caroline reported that Department is working on its Maternity Returners Policy. UGs have been inviting female academics to give talks. The Department has hired three more women recently.

4.13 **FoNS**

Caroline reported that termly meetings of departments in FoNS continue. She is trying to ensure that Action Plan activity is recorded and impact monitored. Bullying and harassment is a priority for the Faculty.

4.14 **Bioengineering** – Bronze renewal due November 2018

Claudia reported that they are running more focus groups and a postdoc survey. Complaint boxes have been used, especially by support staff. More work is needed on relationship between academic and support staff. Recent recruitment round was very focused on increasing female applicant pool.

_The following Departments were unable to attend this meeting but provide written updates to be included in the minutes._

4.15 **School of Public Health**, Steven Riley, Joanna Tzoulaki – Silver renewal submitted April 2017

We have decided to modify our structure going forwards a little. We will refresh the committee now for the Autumn term but the current co-chairs will
stay in place. We aim to **split of a self assessment team** mid-way through the next cycle when we appoint a new chair(s). The current co-chairs plan to head the self-assessment team.

As we wrote the new application we enjoyed describing the **SPH Career Continuity Scheme** that provides a guaranteed period of funding for staff on fixed term contract returning from parental leave. We guarantee 4 months from return when no other funding is available.

We have worked through the **staff survey** and compared our results to college and to the faculty. We have comments on specific sections - but we want to compare to historical results before we say too much more. We have requested breakdowns of responses by gender and found a very large difference in the first 4 questions (perhaps the most important) with women much less satisfied than men. College cannot provide raw data and can only provide groups that are greater than 6 - so it is not possible to see if the gender difference is truly down to gender or is being driven by other factors such as job family in which women and men are not equally distributed.

We would strongly suggest the college runs some very straightforward multivariate logistic regression on the binary outcome of “feels positive” “doesn’t feel positive” for the first four questions. College should include gender, job family and age (as a continuous variable) in this model. If you have a stats package open with the data loaded this analysis takes about a minute to code and interpret! It would be incredibly useful to estimate the true gender effect for the key questions and then make it an objective to improve that if it turns out that gender really does drive these differences in key feelings of satisfaction.

**4.16 Medicine**, Victoria Salem – Silver renewal due April 2018

Monthly SAT meetings. Excellent engagement now with HoD and section leaders. Plans include:

- open coffee mornings with HoDs
- HoD and Athena lead to visit all Section meeting (all about improving leadership visibility)
- Section Heads to have explicit job descriptions incorporating career development responsibilities
- two big upcoming recruitment rounds (we are overseeing search committees, aiming for gender parity at shortlisting, representative panels etc)
- invited Athena lecture (to be announced – plans for a female academic from LSE to talk about institutional culture change!)
- actively contacting all leavers in the last year (on the phone) to get more textures leavers’ data.

**4.17 Post-meeting note. Departments should be updating their Action Plans as good practice. Updated Action Plans can be sent to Rob so they can be uploaded to the College Athena SharePoint.**

**5 Any other business**

5.1 Sian led the Committee in thanking Dot for all her work on this and other committees in leading the College’s efforts on gender equality.