



Equality Challenge Unit



Athena SWAN:

Promoting sustainable research careers

Dr Ruth E Gilligan, Athena SWAN Manager

Manchester Policy Week, November 2015

Advancing equality and diversity in universities and colleges

Athena SWAN Charter

- = Recognition scheme of commitment to gender equality across institutions
- = Originally established to recognise excellence in women's employment in STEMM (2005 – May 2015)
- = 2005: 10 founder members
- = 2015: 134 members



STEMM =
Science
Technology
Engineering
Maths
Medicine

Advancing equality and diversity in universities and colleges

Athena SWAN: post-May 2015

Principles

- = Recognise talents of all
- = Advance gender equality
- = Recognise disciplinary differences
- = Tackle the gender pay gap
- = **Remove obstacles to a sustainable academic career**
- = **Address short-term contracts**
- = Tackle discrimination against trans people
- = Demonstrate senior commitment
- = Make structural and cultural changes
- = Consider intersectionality



Advancing equality and diversity in universities and colleges

Athena SWAN awards

Bronze

- identified challenges
- planned activities for the future

- 🏆 73 Bronze universities
- 🏆 11 Bronze research institutes
- 🏆 306 Bronze departments

Silver

- ongoing activity
- evidence of impact
- 🏆 7 Silver universities
- 🏆 2 Silver research institutes
- 🏆 127 Silver departments

Gold

- significant record of activity & impact
- beacons for gender equality, Athena SWAN and good practice
- 🏆 7 Gold departments



Equality Challenge Unit



Advancing equality and diversity in universities and colleges

How does Athena SWAN work?



- = An individualised approach; not a box-ticking exercise
- = Athena SWAN requires members to:
 - = Collect data on women's progression within organisation
 - = Critically analyse their data
 - = Identify reasons for exclusion and under-representation
 - = Develop an action plan to address these
 - = Show progress over time

Advancing equality and diversity in universities and colleges

The benefits of Athena SWAN



- = Highlights areas to make positive changes
- = Provides a focal point for existing informal good practices
- = Increases awareness of career progression issues
- = Encourages increased transparency
- = Demonstrates good working environment to job applicants
- = Flexible to context

Advancing equality and diversity in universities and colleges

Athena SWAN Evaluation Report 2014



Equality Challenge Unit



- = Evidence of sustainable change
- = Women – improved visibility, increased self-confidence, enhanced leadership skills
- = All staff – positive differences in career satisfaction, development opportunities
- = Admin & technical staff report greater sense of belonging

“[Athena SWAN is] the most effective lever for change
I have come across in 12 years of equality work.”

– Institutional champion

Advancing equality and diversity in universities and colleges

Further information available



Website

www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charter-marks/athena-swan/



Athena SWAN handbook

<http://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/athena-swan-resources/>

Email

athenaswan@ecu.ac.uk

Advancing equality and diversity in universities and colleges