Sociology Athena SWAN Action Plan Summery

This document is a simplified version of the action plan submitted in April 2019 for the departmental Athena SWAN Bronze Award. Action points are ordered based on timeframes originally proposed in the application. This timeframe will be adjusted as required by availability of resources and implementation of University level action.

If you are interested in leading on or being part of the implementation of any of the actions please get in contact with Rachel Verrall or Vicky Singleton. A full version of the action plan is attached to our submission and can be accessed through Rachel.

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| **Action**  **Point reference** | **Action and *Rationale*** | **Proposed ways to complete the action\***  *NB. These are not exhaustive lists and represent only potential ways to complete the action. Some methods are explicit in the stated action so are not relisted here.*  *The majority of actions will include some element of further investigation, data gathering, analysis, discussion, implementation and review therefore these aspects have not been specifically listed.* |
| **SHORT TERM ACTIONS - already underway or to start this year** | | |
| 5.1.5  **HIGH PRIORITY** | **Establish a departmental promotion committee and evaluate its success in providing support through the entire process for all staff including systematic review of readiness and unsuccessful applicants**  *To ensure all staff experience the promotion process as fair and transparent and are supported throughout the process.* | Review all staff for readiness for promotion, encourage those who could to apply. Include as item for discussion in all PDRs.  Establish a formal support system to include mentoring, support and monitoring of potential readiness for promotion. |
| 3.5  **HIGH PRIORITY** | **Introduce new students and staff to AS Charter principles and Action Plan**  *To ensure all new staff and students are informed about AS principles and the Departmental commitment.* | Include AS in induction events, on website and social media. |
| **Action**  **Point reference** | **Action and *Rationale*** | **Proposed ways to complete the action** |
| 3.4  HIGH PRIORITY | **Ensure all staff are recognized and rewarded for their contributions to SAT**  *To ensure all SAT members receive recognition and reward.* | Review workload allocation points for academic staff.  Review ways to recognise PS, RA and student involvement. |
| 4.1.1  **HIGH PRIORITY** | **Implement and assess mechanisms to attract more applications from men to our UG programmes, especially MCS**  *To improve understanding of why men are underrepresented on our UG programmes, especially MCS and increase applications.* | Ensure marketing material and strategies are attractive to all genders (review current practices and get feedback from students and applicants). |
| 5.1.4  **HIGH PRIORITY** | **Develop and implement a comprehensive induction programme for all new staff; record completion and assess staff experience.**  *To ensure the Department has a formal, consistently applied and effective induction programme.* | Review and improve current staff induction programme incorporating specificities pertaining to varied needs of staff.  Welcome new staff through regular social events. |
| 5.6.1 | **Initiate and participate in cross-Faculty activities promoting gender equality**  *To disseminate Departmental best practice around a culture of gender equality across the Institution.* | Staff to participate in faculty EDI committee and University’s Women’s Network.  Host event per year focused on gender equality and participate in cross-faculty events on gender equality.  Record and celebrate this participation. |
| 7.1.2 | **Promote interaction between PS and academic staff and lobby the Institution to increase support for career progression of PS staff.**  *To promote a sense of equality and mutual respect between PS and Academic staff.* | Relocation of PS staff to large shared office.  Encourage shared use of social spaces and inclusive social events. |
| **Action**  **Point reference** | **Action and *Rationale*** | **Proposed ways to complete the action** |
| 4.1.6 | **Write and distribute a report on student experiences of mental distress and PGR study with recommendations for Institutional support mechanisms. Implement recommendations at Departmental level and assess.**  *To create a culture of understanding and support in relation to mental distress and PGR study.* |  |
| 4.1.3 | **Establish reasons for UG non-completion by gender; implement, and assess, mechanisms to reduce non-completion.**  *To improve understanding of reasons why students don’t complete and reduce non-completion rate.* | Collect and analyse further data. Work with University Student Support and University College Tutors to develop processes to support students at risk of non-completion. |
| 5.1.2  **HIGH PRIORITY** | **Request all staff to complete ‘Diversity in the Workplace’ training; regularly assess completion rates.**  *To ensure all staff are trained in understanding diversity.* |  |
| 5.1.1  **MEDIUM PRIORITY** | **Request all staff to participate in ‘Recruiting the Best’ training; regularly assess completion rates.**  *To widen the pool of recruitment panel chairs and members while ensuring all are aware of the potential impact of unconscious bias.* |  |
| 4.1.4  **MEDIUM PRIORITY** | **Implement and assess mechanisms to attract more applications from men to our PGT programmes, especially MCS.**  *To improve understanding of why men are underrepresented on our PGT programmes, especially MCS, in order to increase applications from men.* | Ensure marketing material and strategies are attractive to all genders (review current practices and get feedback from students and applicants).  Organise an annual ‘Where are they now’ UG workshops, showcasing men and women alumni, focused on our PGT programmes and employability. |
| **Action**  **Point reference** | **Action and *Rationale*** | **Proposed ways to complete the action** |
| 5.6.4  **MEDIUM PRIORITY** | **Invite men to take on Departmental roles explicitly related to work on equalities (AS Lead, Equal Opportunities and Disabilities Lead, Mental Health Ambassador and Wellbeing Ambassador).** |  |
| 5.6.8  **HIGH PRIORITY** | **Implement and assess a programme of regular, inclusive social events for academic and PS staff.**  *To reduce sense of Departmental split between academics and PS staff.* |  |
| 5.6.6 | **Evaluate and revise the annual workload document and model for gender equality.**  *To ensure workload is monitored and is gender equal.* | Review the workload document at each refresh to ensure equity related to the points.  Ensure that pastoral and administrative roles are regularly rotated and that the rotation is equitable in terms of gender.  Develop fuller descriptions of service roles and handover notes to ensure that all staff know what is involved and are able to ensure continuity of service. |
| 5.6.10 | **Record, review and assess student experiences of the outreach work of the Department in relation to gender diversity.**  *To ensure outreach work is experienced by students as gender diverse and promote equality.* |  |
| 5.6.5 | **Increase number of women serving on influential committees external to the Department.**  *To support women to take on leadership roles.* | Formalise a system of rotation/role sharing of representation on external committees.  Celebrate the work of women in leadership roles and encourage female colleagues to take on such roles.  Form a Department women’s leadership group to share experiences and provide support. |
| **Action**  **Point reference** | **Action and *Rationale*** | **Proposed ways to complete the action** |
| 7.1.1  **HIGH PRIORITY** | **Ensure students and staff are aware that they can change their gender identity on their records.**  *To promote gender self-identification, diversity and fluidity as a norm.* | Work with Student Registry and HR regarding records.  Organise annual cross-Faculty event focused on gender fluidity, diversity and non-binary genders.  Extend teaching about trans and non-binary genders across all programmes. |
| 5.6.2  **MEDIUM PRIORITY** | **Invite men in the Department to participate in Departmental gender equality events and activities; record participation and assess.**  *To ensure all staff are invested in AS principles and gender equality.* |  |
| 5.6.3  **HIGH PRIORITY** | **Raise visibility of Departmental policy on staff-student and staff-staff relationships, and increase information about available support for those experiencing inappropriate behaviour. Assess impact of actions.**  *To ensure all staff can identify bullying, harassment and misconduct and there is Departmental zero-tolerance of inappropriate behaviour.* | Organise a staff event with input from the Employee Assistance Programme and HR which outlines how the Department defines ‘bullying’, ‘harassment’ and ‘sexual misconduct’ and explains how staff and students can report incidents or concerns. |
| 5.1.3 | **Identify, and share across the Institution, Department past best practice in successfully attracting and appointing excellent women applicants to academic posts and assess impact.**  *To better understand the reasons why the Department has been exceptionally good at recruiting women academic staff.* | Review all staff recruitment material. Carry out interviews with women appointed over the past 3 years. Share findings with EDI and HR staff in the Institution. |
| 5.3.1 | **Invite all staff to participate in at least one professional development event per year; record and assess participation rate.**  *To increase the number of staff undertaking professional development.* |  |
| **Action**  **Point reference** | **Action and *Rationale*** | **Proposed ways to complete the action** |
| 5.3.3 | **Ask Faculty PGR committee and University EDI committee to implement mechanisms for financial support for GTAs to complete compulsory ATP training.**  *To find out if there are ways to support GTAs financially to undertake compulsory training.* |  |
| 5.5.1  **HIGH PRIORITY** | **Initiate a new role of Departmental Wellbeing Ambassador and assess staff awareness of the role.**  *To raise visibility of, and increase value of, attention to staff wellbeing.* | This role could offer weekly ‘surgeries’ to all staff and students to respond to queries and initiate targeted wellbeing campaign (e.g. ‘Desk-less Lunch’, ‘Coffee get together’, ‘Walking Meetings’. |
| **MEDIUM – LONGER TERM ACTIONS** | | |
| 4.1.5  **HIGH PRIORITY** | **Review and change timetabling requests\* to better enable PGT students to study alongside caring and other life commitments and assess impact of changes.**  (\*All timetabling is done centrally.)  *To improve PGT timetabling to ensure our programmes are accessible to all students.* | Review departmental timetabling requests  Develop inclusive teaching formats  Ensure University is aware of the impact of timetabling policies |
| 5.6.9 | **Record, review and assess gender of speakers at our events, including recruitment events.**  *To ensure diverse range of role models are represented at Departmental events.* |  |
| 5.3.5  **HIGH PRIORITY** | **Implement and assess gendered mentoring for women staff.**  *To increase number of women accessing mentoring.* |  |
| **Action**  **Point reference** | **Action and *Rationale*** | **Proposed ways to complete the action** |
| 5.3.7 | **Record and assess (with the Research Support Office) future patterns in funding awards, success rates and average award value for gender bias; develop and assess appropriate mechanisms to prevent any bias.**  *To understand the reasons for the gender differences in staff funding success and award value and prevent bias.* |  |
| 5.3.6  **HIGH PRIORITY** | **Increase, record and assess the number of staff trained as mentees and the number of staff being mentored.**  *To ensure staff of all genders (academic and PS) can access an even, flexible, personable and effective mentoring programme.* | Develop a Departmental database of un/trained mentors and mentees by gender, by grade and by role.  Encourage staff to complete ‘Coaching at Lancaster’ training to become mentors. |
| 5.3.4  **MEDIUM PRIORITY** | **Review, develop and assess PDR practices to ensure they are experienced as supportive and useful by all staff.**  *To ensure all staff experience the PDR as useful.* | Develop new guidance for the completion of Department PDRs to promote it as a supportive process rather than evaluative.  Ensure all reviewers are trained in PDR process and mentoring. |
| 5.5.2  **MEDIUM PRIORITY** | **Develop and assess a Departmental breastfeeding policy and feed to Faculty EDI Committee.**  *To support staff (and students) preparing for, and during, breastfeeding and/or pumping when in the department* | Gather feedback from staff on breastfeeding and pumping policy and experiences, including identification of changes needed to address needs and improvement related to University policy.  Develop departmental list of breastfeeding buddies who have experience of breastfeed/pumping when returning to work/study. |
| 5.5.3  **MEDIUM PRIORITY** | **Develop and assess Departmental support for those receiving fertility treatment and share with EDI Committee.**  *To support staff preparing for, and during, fertility treatment.* |  |
| **Action**  **Point reference** | **Action and *Rationale*** | **Proposed ways to complete the action** |
| 5.5.4  **MEDIUM PRIORITY** | **Provide a statement to the EDI Committee to encourage the University to develop a policy around compassionate leave for those who experience miscarriage and stillbirth and assess impact of the statement.**  *To clarify compassionate leave provision for staff who experience miscarriage and stillbirth* | Conduct feedback sessions with relevant Departmental staff around how to improve the clarity and quality of University policy around compassionate leave following miscarriage and stillbirth and develop a departmental statement. |
| 5.5.5  **MEDIUM PRIORITY** | **Carry out a focus group with parents about reasons for low up-take of KIT Days; (if necessary) develop and assess mechanisms to encourage take-up.**  *To understand reasons for low take-up of KIT Days and determine need for further action.* |  |
| 5.5.8  **MEDIUM PRIORITY** | **Implement mechanisms to inform and support staff about flexible working; how to make requests, various options and the possible implications. Assess their impact.**  *To ensure staff feel informed and able to request changes to their working hours.* |  |
| 5.5.7 | **Carry out a focus group with PGR students to explore ways to alleviate their costs for pre-school childcare. Share findings with Faculty PG and EDI Committee and assess impact.**  *To support PGR parents of pre-school children to progress their careers.* |  |
| **Action**  **Point reference** | **Action and *Rationale*** | **Proposed ways to complete the action** |
| 3.1  **HIGH PRIORITY** | **Implement and assess digital mechanisms to raise the profile of AS in the Department**  *To increase staff and student awareness of AS principles and Departmental Action Plan.* | Add public-facing version of application to Departmental AS webpage, regularly updating with progress on Action Plan. Social Media posts related to charter  Develop regular student interaction with departmental social media with posts specifically aimed at students who identify as; men; women; non-binary or Trans. |
| 5.6.7  **HIGH PRIORITY** | **Train all Chairs of meetings to keep to scheduled planned meeting hours; monitor and assess when the meetings run over.**  *To maintain core working hours.* |  |
| 3.3  **MEDIUM PRIORITY** | **Review, refresh and revitalise SAT membership annually and ensure it is representative.**  *To ensure SAT membership is representative of the Department and that all SAT members are AS trained.* | Review membership annually and monitor representativeness  Develop, implement and assess an annual (re)induction about SAT principles, data locations, practices of analysis, the Action Plan and Departmental progress in implementation for all SAT members to undergo. |
| 4.2.2  **HIGH PRIORITY** | **Initiate and evaluate a formal ‘exit interview’ process; record data, review annually and implement and assess actions to combat reasons related to inequalities.**  *To gather meaningful data about academic leavers and identify and act on any gender issues.* | Introduce a systematic formal ‘exit interview’ departmental process, including an interview with all staff who leave. |
| 4.2.1  **HIGH PRIORITY** | **Implement and evaluate additional mechanisms to support those on FTCs to progress their careers.**  *To support those on FTCs and facilitate their career ambitions.* | Carry out a focus group with those on FTCs.  Invite all Principle Investigators (PIs) to undergo mentoring training. Encourage all staff on FTCs to have an annual PDR.  Work with HR to develop ‘pathway to permanency’ plans with staff on FTCs. |
| **Action**  **Point reference** | **Action and *Rationale*** | **Proposed ways to complete the action** |
| 4.1.8  **MEDIUM PRIORITY** | **Implement and evaluate additional targeted support mechanisms for PGR students with caring responsibilities.**  *To improve the experiences of support for PGR students completing their PhD who have caring and other commitments.* | Remind supervisors of the need to offer flexible supervision times for all PGR students.  Pair PGR mentors who have experienced balancing caring and PGR study with a new PGR student with caring responsibilities. |
| 5.5.6  **HIGH PRIORITY** | **Develop, implement and evaluate a re-Induction process for staff returning from leave (eg. Maternity, parental, long-term sick)**  *To ensure staff are supported in returning following leave.* | Design and implement a re-induction process for all returning staff to undergo within 2 weeks of returning. |
| 5.3.2  **MEDIUM PRIORITY** | **Include CPD activities in the Department workload model and assess participation rate.**  *To encourage and facilitate staff undertaking training.* |  |
| 4.1.7 | **Formally request Faculty to re-introduce centrally funded completion bursaries for PGR students without external funding; assess impact of request and, if successful, of implementation of bursaries.**  *To increase financial support for students without funding to enable them to complete their PhD.* |  |
| 4.1.2  **MEDIUM PRIORITY** | **Establish reasons for gender differences in the achievements of students on the SW and Sociology UG programmes and implement and assess mechanisms to ensure support is appropriate.**  *To ensure women and men are not disadvantaged in any of our UG programmes.* |  |