Athena SWAN and Research institutes

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Athena SWAN Charter
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Advancing equality and diversity in universities and colleges
Athena SWAN
Pre-May 2015

= Recognition scheme of excellence in women’s employment in STEMM

= 2005: 10 founder members
= 2016: 137 members

= Managed and owned by ECU

STEMM = Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths, Medicine

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Athena SWAN: post-May 2015

= Recognition scheme of commitment to gender equality across institutions

= Adapted from Athena SWAN and ECU’s gender equality charter mark (GEM), based on consultation

**STEMM** = Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths, Medicine

**AHSSBL** = Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Business, Law
Athena SWAN: Key changes

= Inclusion of professional and support staff
= Inclusion of trans staff and students
= Questions rationalised
= Questions added
= Four year award (and action plan)
= Aggregated, extended word count
= Consideration of intersectionality

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Women are not a homogenous group

- LGB women
- Disabled women
- Single women
- Black women
- Younger women
- Professional services women
- Older women
- Pregnant women
- Asian women
- Academic women
- Women carers
- Religious women
- Married women
- Trans women

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Intersectionality

“Intersectionality means recognising that people’s identities and social positions are shaped by several factors, which create unique experiences and perspectives.”
Intersectionality

22.4% professors are women?
7.3% professors are BME?
1.8% professors are BME women?

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Athena SWAN: post-May 2015

Specific consideration required:

Intersectionality

= Increasing consideration the higher the level of award

= At bronze, silver and gold: ethnicity and gender in pipeline data (Question 4.2.i)

= At silver and gold: an explanation of actions and any impact in this area is requested

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How applicants are presenting the data

Figure 39: College academic-research pipeline, 2015 (%s for Unknown not presented on Figure)

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‘Black and minority ethnic’ is not a homogenous group

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The lived experience
‘There is only one other black academic in my area and I sometimes get mistaken for her even though we look nothing alike.’

White and Black Caribbean, female, Russell Group university (interview)
‘The difficulty is when you go higher up the ladder. I think they are quite happy to have you as a casual lecturer, you don’t have a proper contract, a pension, you find a lot of casual lecturers. And also they are happy to have you right at the bottom.’

Asian, female, overseas (interview)
‘I was teaching on the masters course in [subject]. And the faculty, including the dean, all knew that I was seeking employment because I was in the process of completing my PhD... I saw one of my students in the department, in one of the offices. And I remember going up to another faculty member and I said to her, “oh, that’s my student, from my masters class.” And she turned round to me and said, “oh yes, she’s just been employed” [note: it was a white student]. She’s just got a job. She’s just got a job – she hasn’t even got a masters degree. I’m completing my PhD.’

White and Black Caribbean, female, overseas (interview)
'There were a couple of other candidates. So, I was waiting, all fine. A man came up from where the interviews were taking place, to collect me. So he came up, turned his back to me, and said my name, obviously a female name. I had to tap him on the shoulder and say, “that’s me.” He said, “are you sure?” And I am telling you, I am not exaggerating anything. So I said “yes, I am [name].” He said, “come down and do your presentation.”…

We had to go down two flights of stairs. In that time he asked me two more times: “are you sure you are [name]?”...By now I was really pissed off. And I had to go in and give my presentation and I was thinking: I don’t think I want to work here...

I thought ok, I am here now, I can’t just walk out. My blood pressure is now, you know, rushing to your head. I walked into this room, full of white academics, literally there was a sharp intake of breath... ‘

Black Caribbean, female, overseas (interview)
What other applicants are doing

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What are applicants doing at bronze?

Because of very low numbers in much of the data, our main approach for gathering gender/race intersectionality is expected to be through the new AS survey (which we anticipate becoming an equality charters’ survey), with numerical data being used to help identify key areas for investigation. As such, we are not yet in a position to present gender/race intersectionality information, but are committed to ensuring that we can do so in future applications.
What are applicants doing at silver?

Supported by statisticians in the Maths dept, the SAT analysed Research Council data, our own award data and Charitable Foundation data using matched-pairs approach. Taking into account confounding factors (seniority, grant value, etc), our analysis showed that gender is not a statistically significant issue in the success of grant applications overall......However, significant differences were found between the success of BME vs white ethnic groups. This reflects the findings of published RCUK data.

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Difficulties with intersectionality in applications

- No data collection
- Small numbers of BME staff
- Staff don’t declare their ethnicity
- Leaky pipeline for ethnicity
- BME staff not progressing
Further information

= Website
   www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/

= Email
   athenaswan@ecu.ac.uk

= Questions?