Athena SWAN Silver department award application

Name of university: University of Sheffield

Department: Department of Chemistry

Date of application: November 2013

Date of university Bronze and/or Silver Athena SWAN award: April 2013

Contact for application: Professor Christopher A Hunter, FRS

Email: c.hunter@sheffield.ac.uk

Telephone: [blank]

Departmental website address: http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/chemistry

Athena SWAN Silver Department awards recognise that in addition to university-wide policies the department is working to promote gender equality and to address challenges particular to the discipline.

Not all institutions use the term ‘department’ and there are many equivalent academic groupings with different names, sizes and compositions. The definition of a ‘department’ for SWAN purposes can be found on the Athena SWAN website. If in doubt, contact the Athena SWAN Officer well in advance to check eligibility.

It is essential that the contact person for the application is based in the department.

Sections to be included

At the end of each section state the number of words used. Click here for additional guidance on completing the template.
1. Letter of endorsement from the head of department: maximum 500 words

An accompanying letter of endorsement from the head of department should explain how the SWAN action plan and activities in the department contribute to the overall department strategy and academic mission.

The letter is an opportunity for the head of department to confirm their support for the application and to endorse and commend any women and STEMM activities that have made a significant contribution to the achievement of the departmental mission.

A letter from the head of department is attached.

2. The self-assessment process: maximum 1000 words

Describe the self-assessment process. This should include:

a) A description of the self assessment team: members’ roles (both within the department and as part of the team) and their experiences of work-life balance.

The self-assessment team is the department’s Equality and Diversity (E&D) Committee established by the head of department (HoD) in 2012. The team includes male and female staff and students representing different career roles and levels within the department. Their remit with respect to Athena Swan is to analyse the department’s achievements, practices and data to produce an action plan. The action plan aims to ensure that all staff and students reach their potential, with particular focus on the recruitment, retention, and career progression and development of women.
b) An account of the self assessment process: details of the self assessment team meetings, including any consultation with staff or individuals outside of the university, and how these have fed into the submission.

The self-assessment team has met five times and minutes/key actions were circulated within the department at all levels. Presentations to staff meetings and consultations with relevant departmental committees were undertaken. A gender equality questionnaire was circulated to all staff in the department, and additional data were obtained from an earlier TUoS Staff Survey. Two separate focus groups facilitated by external consultants were held with academics, support staff and students (UG and PG). The Chemistry Researchers Society and the E&D coffee group facilitated discussions within their communities. HEIDI/HESA data were provided by HR. Five academics participated in a University workshop to discuss women in the Physical Sciences, which was organised by external consultants as part of the University's "Developing Leaders: Women in Science" project. Feedback from all these activities has helped shape our submission, with key themes
arising from these consultations directly reflected in the action plan. The application and action plan where circulated to all staff for input.

c) Plans for the future of the self assessment team, such as how often the team will continue to meet, any reporting mechanisms and in particular how the self assessment team intends to monitor implementation of the action plan.

We aim to encourage all staff to engage in the execution and assessment of our Athena Swan action plan, which will become integrated into departmental policy. We will achieve this through (i) the E&D Committee, who will meet quarterly to review progress, take additional actions as required, and respond to any new opportunities within The University of Sheffield (TUoS) and nationally (minutes circulated to all staff); (ii) by having E&D, and in particular the Athena Swan action plan, as a standing item on the Management Committee agenda (minutes circulated to all staff); and (iii) by reporting our progress to the Faculty of Science E&D Committee, where we will share good practice and learn from our partners within the faculty and across TUoS. Prior to quarterly E&O meetings, we will collect information and investigate progress towards each action and invite feedback from any individual within the Department.

991 words (687+158+146 for each subsection)

3. A picture of the department: maximum 2000 words

a) Provide a pen-picture of the department to set the context for the application, outlining in particular any significant and relevant features.

Chemistry at TUoS is a thriving teaching and research community, ranked 9th in the UK for teaching (The Times Good University Guide, 2013) and 8th nationally for research (RAE 2008). Our department was one of the founding departments of TUoS, begun in 1905 with penny donations from the people of the Sheffield. Sheffield citizens donated to create a University that would benefit the economy, their health and education. Today, our teaching and research strives to meet these inspirational goals. Staff and students originate from a diverse range of backgrounds and nationalities, but with good representation from our locality. Research in the department covers the full breadth of modern chemistry. Collaborations range from local companies to international research institutes.

Reflecting the city in which we work, Chemistry at Sheffield has a friendly and collegiate culture. Our staff include 36 academics and 41 post-doctoral researchers supported by 30 technical and administrative staff. Approximately 30-40 PhD students join the department each year, and this year 203 undergraduates began their studies with us. Enhancing ethnic diversity, we have a collaborative programme with Nanjing University of Technology (NJUT) in China admitting 60 undergraduate students. After completing a curriculum delivered by our staff in Nanjing, these students will come to Sheffield for their final year. This collaboration enhances the department’s international standing and improves the diversity of our UG population.

TUoS is committed to “Excellence through Inclusion”, is a Bronze Athena Swan award holder, and has a number of positive action initiatives designed to enhance the recruitment, retention and progression of women in STEM subjects. As a department, we
are committed to enacting these values and actions and aim to embed E&D within our policies and culture. Our staff play active roles in Faculty, University and Royal Society E&D boards. Initiatives related to our Athena Swan application have discussed gender diversity at staff meetings and in student forums as well as within our departmental committees and have received robust support across the department.

b) Provide data for the past three years (where possible with clearly labelled graphical illustrations) on the following with commentary on their significance and how they have affected action planning.

Student data

(i) Numbers of males and females on access or foundation courses:

N/A

(ii) Undergraduate male and female numbers – full and part-time – comment on the female:male ratio compared with the national picture for the discipline. Describe any initiatives taken to address any imbalance and the impact to date. Comment upon any plans for the future.

We offer full-time undergraduate courses in BSc and MChem “Chemistry”, an MChem in “Chemistry with Biological and Medicinal Chemistry”, and an MPhys in “Chemical Physics”. We also have a portfolio of MChem courses that involve a year away in Industry or in Europe, America or Australasia. The MChem/Phys programmes are designed to prepare students for scientific careers and include research experience, training in professional skills, and courses at the frontiers of chemical knowledge. Transfer between BSc and Masters courses is possible up until the point of BSc graduation. The Masters programmes are selective by achievement, and students who do not meet the required grades become candidates for BSc. The department does not run any part-time UG courses.

Figure 1 shows that our undergraduate gender profile is typical for a Russell group Chemistry Department. Females make up approximately 40% of our undergraduate cohort, and this has been constant over six years. Amongst MChem courses, females are represented most highly on year away or specialised programmes. Maintaining these courses is therefore a priority to sustain and improve female UG representation.
Figure 1. % female students accepting an offer to start an undergraduate course in chemistry at Sheffield (filled circles) compared with the average for Russell group chemistry departments (open circles). Total number of students (167, 160, 132).

Figures 2 and 3 show the proportion of female BSc and MChem/Phys entrants and graduates, respectively. Although we do not underestimate the impact our BSc graduates have on science (e.g. as teachers inspiring others), our MChem/Phys degrees are focussed on equipping students with the skills required for a scientific career. Therefore, female under-representation on MChem/Phys, would be an early increment in the academic leaky pipeline. We will monitor multiple cohort progression data over entire periods of study for complete evaluation (Actions 1.1 & 1.4).

Figure 2. % female students starting undergraduate BSc (open circles) or MChem/Phys (filled circles) courses in Sheffield. Total number of students on BSc (32,24,26) and MChem/Phys (112,134,137).
Our collaborative degree with NJUT has 28% females enrolled, with the first cohort due to attend in Sheffield next year. As our relationship with NJUT colleagues develops, we will encourage further female recruitment.

The Department undertakes a number of actions designed to boost female representation at the UG level. These initiatives encourage applications from females and encourage female UCAS applicants to make TuoS their final choice. Our overall policy is to recruit the best candidates regardless of gender, taking into account our widening-participation objectives. We ensure that female staff and students are always engaged in Open Days, to provide role models for female applicants. During tours of the department, we ensure that groups contain more than one female. An academic member of staff interviews all candidates who are predicted to achieve the appropriate grades, and we try to use female staff to interview female applicants. The Department’s Publicity and Marketing Committee have recently prepared a new undergraduate brochure and web-site with increased profile of female staff and students. Our next admissions cycle will test the effectiveness of these new materials (Action 1.1). We also run an active outreach programme involving female staff and students, ensuring that female role models are available to local school pupils (Section 4).

(iii) Postgraduate male and female numbers completing taught courses – full and part-time – comment on the female:male ratio compared with the national picture for the discipline. Describe any initiatives taken to address any imbalance and the effect to date. Comment upon any plans for the future.

We currently offer a single PGT MSc course in “Polymers for Advanced Technologies” for which there have been no part-time applicants. This is a specialist programme, typically attracting overseas applicants. Figure 4 shows that the proportion of female students taking this course (30-40%) is lower than the Russell group average for PGT degrees (50-60%). The Department is currently evaluating
the introduction of a more general MSc course that may increase female representation at this level.

Figure 4. % female students accepting a place to start a postgraduate taught course in chemistry at Sheffield (filled circles) compared with the average for Russell group chemistry departments (open circles). Total number of students (32, 34, 37).

(iv) Postgraduate male and female numbers on research degrees – full and part-time – comment on the female:male ratio compared with the national picture for the discipline. Describe any initiatives taken to address any imbalance and the effect to date. Comment upon any plans for the future.

Chemistry has approximately 100 PGR students, with 30-40 starting each year. Figure 5 shows that the representation of females (30%) is significantly lower than males. Our female representation is lower than the Russell group average (40%). This is a consequence of lower numbers of female applicants: the success rates of male and female applicants are similar (section 3b(v)). A more in-depth analysis of the data revealed that there are lower numbers of applications from home female students, compared to comparable institutions. To address this, we commissioned a focus group of male and female PGR as well as 3rd and 4th year UG students, run by external consultants. The focus group revealed that both male and female students wanted more information about academic careers and PhD options. They suggested that female students may seek PhD positions earlier in the cycle. They also raised concerns about their access to female role models as researchers. Based upon the conclusions from our focus group, an action plan has been formulated (Action 2.3).
Firstly, we will write to all 3rd year UGs performing at 1\textsuperscript{st} Class level, encouraging them to consider PhD study after completing their MChem. This letter will be hand delivered by academic tutors, allowing conversations about PGR opportunities to be initiated. Secondly, we will raise the possibility of academic careers throughout the UG programme during our careers training in levels 1-3 and through an employability skills course delivered in level 3. We will also trial a student-led scheme to provide information on staff research programmes through Chemical Society lectures. The Society of Chemical Industry will host an event involving a case study by an academic on career progression. We have reviewed and altered our research recruitment web pages and are in the process of producing a new brochure advertising Sheffield, with a view to attracting female PG applicants. Finally, we have revised the scheme for allocation of PhD studentships within the department allowing earlier offers to be made. Although we expect all these activities to benefit both male and female students in their career choices, we hope that the impact will be greater on females and will closely monitor progress (Action 1.2). We will raise the visibility of female role models to both UG and PG students through our seminar programme, which is part of the level 4 curriculum (Action 5.5).

There are only 1-2 applicants per year for part-time PGR study. One offer was made in the three year period (to a female student) but the place was not taken up. In the past, we have had part-time PGR students, and one of our female academics is a graduate of a part-time PhD programme in our department. We currently have one female technician studying for a part-time PhD.

(v) **Ratio of course applications to offers and acceptances by gender for undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research degrees** – comment on the differences between male and female application and success rates and describe any initiatives taken to address any imbalance and their effect to date. Comment upon any plans for the future.
Our UG courses have entry grades ABB (BSc) or AAB (MChem), or equivalent. We make offers to all candidates predicted to achieve these qualifications. Figure 6 shows that female applicants are more likely to be made an offer than males. The acceptance ratio is similar for males and females. We make 80-90% of female applicants an offer, so it would not be possible to significantly increase female UG representation by making more offers, and therefore alternative strategies are required (Section (ii), Action 1.1).

![Graph showing percentage offers and acceptances for males and females over years 2009 to 2013.]

**Figure 6.** % offers (black) and acceptances (grey) for undergraduate degrees for males as a proportion of the total number of applications from males (open circles) and for females as a proportion of the total number of applications from females (filled circles). Total number of applicants (1170, 846, 790).

The numbers of students applying for our PGT course is small. Female applicants are more likely to be made an offer than male applicants and the take up is similar for male and female students (Figure 7).
Figure 7. % offers (black) and acceptances (grey) for postgraduate taught degrees for males as a proportion of the total number of applications from males (open circles) and for females as a proportion of the total number of applications from females (filled circles). Total number of applicants (87, 94, 112).

Figure 8 shows that the proportion of applicants who are offered and accept PhD places is similar for male and female students, with the exception of offers made in 2012. In 2012, 61% of male and 44% of female applicants were made an offer. To check whether this represents a problem that needs to be addressed, we have collected the 2013 and 2009 data. In 2013, 63% of male and 67% of female applicants were made an offer. In 2009, offers were made to 44% of male and 49% of female applicants. The discrepancy for the 2012 data in Figure 8 reflects the range in the percentage of offers made. On average, half of all applicants are made an offer, and this value is similar for male (53 ± 18%) and female (50 ± 16%) applicants over the 5 year period 2009-2013. The difference in our recruitment of female and male PGR students lies in the number of applicants that we are able to attract rather than our selection procedure. Action plans for PG recruitment are described above (section 3b(iv), Action 2.3).
Figure 8. % offers (black) and acceptances (grey) for postgraduate research degrees for males as a proportion of the total number of applications from males (open circles) and for females as a proportion of the total number of applications from females (filled circles). Total number of applicants (115, 158, 164).

(vi) Degree classification by gender – comment on any differences in degree attainment between males and females and describe what actions are being taken to address any imbalance.

Although there are some year-on-year fluctuations, the attainment of male and female students is similar (Figure 9) with similar proportions of 1st, 2:1 and 2:2 degree classifications and almost no 3rd class or pass degrees. We will continue to monitor (Action 1.4).

Figure 9. Distribution of degree classifications for MChem/Phys and BSc undergraduate chemistry courses. Data for male students plotted as a proportion of the total number of male students (pale grey), and female students plotted as a proportion of the total number of female students (dark grey).
(vii) **Female:male ratio of academic staff and research staff** – researcher, lecturer, senior lecturer, reader, professor (or equivalent). Comment on any differences in numbers between males and females and say what action is being taken to address any underrepresentation at particular grades/levels.

The proportion of women academics has been constant at 19-23% over the period: 7-8 women from 34-36 staff. The distribution of female staff in Figure 10 indicates that career progression to senior levels is occurring. Although women are under-represented on the academic staff, the percentage of female academics in Sheffield (23%) is higher than the Russell group average (14% from website survey of staff pages in June 2013 and confirmed by HEIDI/HESA data). Due to changes in reporting of HEIDI/HESA data, the latest national figures are from 2006-07 (Planning for Success: Good Practice in University Science Departments, RSC, 2008). We compare favourably with these figures: 8% female professors (6% nationally), 21% female senior lectures/readers (14% nationally), 33% female lecturers/university teachers (26% nationally). Various actions that have enabled recruitment, retention and progression of female academic staff are detailed in section 4 (see also Case Studies).

From totals of 36-45 researchers in each of the census years (2010-2012), 20-22% have been female. This proportion of female researchers (20-22%) is below the national average (30%). Success rates for men and women applicants for researcher positions are similar (section 4a), suggesting that increasing the proportion of female researchers requires that we increase the number of female applicants (Actions 1.3 and 2.2).

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**Figure 10.** Numbers of academic staff in chemistry (male grey, female black). Note that the numbers of researchers have been divided by 3, so that the data fits onto the same scale. Our university teacher title is the equivalent grade to lecturer for teaching and research staff.

Department of Chemistry, University of Sheffield, Athena Swan submission page 13
(viii) Turnover by grade and gender – comment on any differences between men and women in turnover and say what is being done to address this. Where the number of staff leaving is small, comment on the reasons why particular individuals left.

The turnover of female researchers (27%, 24%, 27%) is proportionately higher than the number of female researchers in post (20%, 20%, 22%) and we will investigate this (Action 3.7). Turnover in other areas has been small: 1 academic (maternity leave cover); 2 female and 1 male technician; 1 female clerical and secretarial staff member; 1 female and 1 male management and professional staff member; 1 female and 1 male other staff member.

1952 words (327+469+75+457+302+42+208+72 for each subsection)

4. Supporting and advancing women’s careers: maximum 5000 words

Key career transition points

a) Provide data for the past three years (where possible with clearly labelled graphical illustrations) on the following with commentary on their significance and how they have affected action planning.

(i) Job application and success rates by gender and grade – comment on any differences in recruitment between men and women at any level and say what action is being taken to address this.

At the post-doctoral researcher level, 60 appointments were made over the three year period. 24-25% of the applicants were women in each year, and 18-39% of the successful applicants were women. On average, the success rates for women (8%) and men (7%) were similar. The range of annual success rates for men (6%, 9% and 5%) and women (7%, 6% and 10%) was similar.

Five academic staff appointments were made, including two female and one male university teachers. 27% of applicants were women, but the success rate for women (11%) was considerably higher than for men (2%). Two lecturers were appointed, one male and one female. Only 9% of applicants were women, but the success rate for women (10%) was higher than for men (1%).

Six management and professional appointments were made, one male and five female. 60% of applicants were women, and the success rate for women (9%) was significantly higher than for men (3%). One clerical and secretarial and one technician appointment were also made, both women.

We will continue to monitor appointments and further develop our talent attraction strategy (Actions 1.3 & 2.2). Over time, we have noted an increasing age of appointment to lectureships (latest appointments ~ 35 yrs). Prolonged periods of temporary positions are not compatible with family life for either gender, and may disproportionately impact female retention in the profession. As a solution to this, we will explore the use of research fellowships, and in particular the TUoS VC
fellowship scheme, to nurture younger academics. Our 5 year VC fellowship scheme transfers to a permanent academic staff position upon completion.

(ii) Applications for promotion and success rates by gender and grade – comment on whether these differ for men and women and if they do explain what action may be taken. Where the number of women is small applicants may comment on specific examples of where women have been through the promotion process. Explain how potential candidates are identified.

Six women have applied for promotion in the three year period, and all were successful. Twelve men applied for promotion and 10 were successful. The promotion of female staff includes 1 professor, 1 reader, 2 technicians and 2 clerical and secretarial staff members. The promotion of male staff includes 2 professors, 3 readers, 1 university teacher, 1 researcher, and 3 technicians.

Once a year all academic staff are requested to submit a cv, since it is recognized that females (and some males) may be more reluctant to put themselves forward for promotion. This is not normal policy in TUoS, and we lead on these efforts. Thus every eligible member of the department is considered for promotion each year without them specifically having to seek consideration. Staff who want advice/feedback on cvs and promotion are invited to discuss this with the HoD each year. The department places emphasis on well-rounded promotion cases that include all aspects of the “Sheffield Academic” i.e. contributions in research (or scholarly activity for teaching staff), teaching, administration, and impact activities such as knowledge transfer and outreach. Moreover, the department supports staff to develop these cases (e.g. with cv preparation advice, targeted teaching/administration relief, nominations for awards such as TUoS Senate Teaching and Learning Awards and RSC Prizes and Awards).

b) For each of the areas below, explain what the key issues are in the department, what steps have been taken to address any imbalances, what success/impact has been achieved so far and what additional steps may be needed.

(i) Recruitment of staff – comment on how the department’s recruitment processes ensure that female candidates are attracted to apply, and how the department ensures its short listing, selection processes and criteria comply with the university’s equal opportunities policies.

All academic posts are advertised widely, e.g. via the TUoS web site, jobs.ac.uk and, for some academic staff positions, relevant journals. Recruitment materials for academic staff currently contain a positive action statement. This is aimed at particularly encouraging female applicants and gives details of our E&D and family friendly policies. For academic posts applicants are shortlisted independently by selection panel members. They subsequently meet to agree the final shortlist. All shortlisted candidates are invited for interview. Where possible interview dates are arranged around the availability of the applicants. However, alternative arrangements are made (e.g. Skype, video conferencing), if a candidate is unable to travel to Sheffield. The schedule for the interviews includes an informal dinner with the HoD and selected staff, a tour of the Department, a research talk, informal meetings with the Director of Studies and staff with related research interests, an
informal lunch with staff not on the interview panel and the formal interview. Candidates are informed of the schedule well before they attend. Moreover, inability to attend the dinner (e.g. because of childcare issues) would not affect their prospects of appointment.

Interviews for academic staff are chaired by the Faculty PVC, who is a member of the Chemistry Department and Chair of the University E&D Board. The panel is formed of the HoD, 3-5 additional academics (at least one from a different department), and a representative from HR. Panels in Chemistry typically contain at least two females. Chairs of all selection panels must have previously attended equal opportunities and diversity training. Additionally, the faculty PVC, HoD in Chemistry and some departmental members have been trained in how to avoid unconscious bias. We intend to continue working with HR to ensure our recruitment and selection materials and procedures and to further develop our talent attraction strategy (Actions 2.1 & 2.2).

In chemistry as a discipline, the number of female senior academic staff is low nationally and internationally. Thus, our earlier RAE-driven strategy, where we recruited extensively at senior levels, resulted in exclusively male appointments. To increase the likelihood of appointing women, we have revised our recruitment strategy to appointing earlier-career staff. This has proved successful, and in our last recruitment round for teaching and research staff, we appointed 50% females.

At the researcher level, applicants are shortlisted and interviewed by the lead PI (who must be trained to chair panels) and at least one other staff member. Typically, an interview day would additionally include a tour of the department, a meeting with the research group and a research seminar. We plan to add our positive action statement to researcher recruitment materials (Action 2.2).

(ii) **Support for staff at key career transition points** – having identified key areas of attrition of female staff in the department, comment on any interventions, programmes and activities that support women at the crucial stages, such as personal development training, opportunities for networking, mentoring programmes and leadership training. Identify which have been found to work best at the different career stages.

The key staff transition point in Chemistry nationally is from post-doctoral researcher (PD) to permanent academic staff. This transition is often facilitated by an independent research fellowship (IRF). In response to this, the department recently encouraged the establishment of a Chemistry Researchers Society (CRS). The CRS aims are to facilitate social interactions and mutual support for PDs (and PG students), promote professional development, and act as a voice for researchers within the department. The society is self-run, with support from the department and the faculty researcher developer, and is marketed by regular email circulars. As part of our action plan we will invite CRS representation on the department’s Research and E&D Committees, ensuring any issues can be raised. We also propose to increase staff interaction with the society to ensure support is increased for female PDs (see Actions 3.6 & 3.7).
Researchers are encouraged to participate in a wide range of career development opportunities available university-wide and through the Faculty of Science Research Development programme (FoSRDP). This was confirmed in our gender survey, where 81% of PDs indicated they were encouraged to take up career development opportunities. The FoSRDP provision includes an induction event “Getting the most out of your PD,” and a wide range of courses including training in writing (for manuscripts and fellowships), research management, management of others, and media training.

The faculty also runs a mentoring programme for PDs and IRFs, in which several of our PDs have participated and where our male and female academic staff act as cross-departmental mentors. 75% of PD staff reported that they were provided with useful mentoring opportunities in our gender survey, with 25% of responders choosing the ‘don’t know’ option, implying that increasing the profile of this relatively new provision is required. In addition, Springboard, a women-only personal and professional development programme, is run for women in TUoS at PG level and above. Female Chemistry staff participate in delivering Springboard, sharing their career experiences. The department also strongly supports and encourages IRF applications and provides mentoring for application writing through to interview preparation. 93% of PD staff either ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ in our gender survey that the department is a great place for women to work.

An area in which we have been working to improve is the provision and usefulness of SRDS (Staff Review and Development Scheme) for PDs. In 2013, 53% of PDRAs participated in SRDS, a good improvement on previous years. We will continue with these efforts (see Action 3.5).

Female PD researchers and IRFs are members of Women@TUoS NET, the University of Sheffield’s Women’s Staff Network. Chaired last year by Prof Grasby, Women@TUoS NET offers a monthly programme of events and women-only development courses. Recent events have included a programme of workshops, including resilience strategies and one-to-one career coaching; visiting and internal speakers; discussion groups on talent attraction; and consultations on maternity leave that feed into TUoS HR policy. Of particular note are the very popular ‘Speed Networking’ events aimed at female PDs, where female academic staff, HR and career advisors give advice on a range of topics related to progression of research careers, job interviews and the challenge of work-life balance. A similar PG targeted event is also run.

Historically, in the 1990s and early 2000s, we had another form of female academic staff attrition in the department. We lost 3 female academic staff involved in dual career partnerships, who moved to be closer to their partner. We are now committed to working with staff to resolve these issues creatively. We have successfully achieved this for several staff members and have subsequently not had female academic staff turnover for this reason since 2004.
Career development

a) For each of the areas below, explain what the key issues are in the department, what steps have been taken to address any imbalances, what success/impact has been achieved so far and what additional steps may be needed.

(i) Promotion and career development – comment on the appraisal and career development process, and promotion criteria and whether these take into consideration responsibilities for teaching, research, administration, pastoral work and outreach work; is quality of work emphasised over quantity of work?

The Staff Review and Development scheme (SRDS) is an annual review where all staff (academic, support and PD) are encouraged to reflect on the highs and lows of the previous year. SRDS reviewers are senior academic colleagues, or in the case of PD and support staff, typically their line manager. Targets are set for the next year, training/development needs are identified, and an assessment of contribution is made. For academic staff, this assessment is based on the full remit of the Sheffield Academic i.e., teaching, research (or scholarly activity for teaching staff), leadership and administration and impact activities (e.g. outreach, knowledge transfer). Staff may request an alternative SRDS reviewer, if they are not happy with their allocation. New academic staff have a regular meetings (initially monthly) with their probationary advisor during their probation period (generally three years) in place of SRDS.

Career aspirations can be discussed during SRDS and information on promotion is given. In our gender survey, 80% of academic staff strongly agreed/agreed that they had been provided with a helpful SRDS. However, 35% of staff were not sure that these discussions reflected the full remit of the academic job, and this appears to be dependent on the SRDS reviewer. We have an action to ensure that all SRDS reviewers are suitably informed, pro-actively prepare staff, in particular female staff, for promotion and that discussions reflect mixed contribution portfolios (see Action 3.4). Additionally, despite recent progress, greater participation of PD staff in SRDS will be addressed (see Action 3.5).

As with SRDS, the department places emphasis on well-rounded promotion cases that include all aspects of the “Sheffield Academic”. CVs are invited from all staff for consideration by the Departmental Review Panel, which is the Executive Committee. In assessment of research publications, the emphasis is on both quality and quantity, with the differing publication practices of the sub-disciplines of chemistry taken into account. The department recommends cases to the Faculty panel for further consideration. Throughout the promotion procedure, those involved in recommending, assessing and confirming promotions take particular note of the special circumstances of those members of staff who are on part-time contracts.

Specific promotion criteria exist for research-only, teaching-only and combined teaching/research cases. In all cases, these can lead to professorial recognition. The Science Teaching Network led by Dr. Burnham from our department has recently matched specific teaching-based activities to the relevant promotion criteria for teaching staff. This document has been agreed by the Faculty Executive, is about to
be made publicly available, and will assist with preparing and developing promotion cases for teaching and for teaching and research staff.

Staff are supported to develop promotion cases through (i) advice from the HoD on request prior to application, and feedback to candidates in unsuccessful cases; (ii) through SRDS; (iii) through research interviews that take place with the HoD and research cluster heads annually. Research interviews are supportive discussions with senior colleagues, during which research plans for the following year are discussed.

A comprehensive series of staff development activities are available within TUoS. These include development courses provided by HR (e.g. networking, project management, work-life balance) including e-learning versions, training related to preparation of funding applications from RIS (Research and Innovation Services) and specific women-only development options through Women@TUoS NET. Staff can develop their teaching through participation in the Faculty of Science Teaching Network and through staff development provision led by Learning and Teaching Services. Each year the department nominates staff to participate in the “Sheffield Leader” training programme, available at four different levels to develop junior and senior staff. Three female staff from Chemistry have completed Sheffield Leader.

Two cross-university mentoring schemes cover (i) female lecturers paired with senior male and female mentors (“Impact”) and (ii) senior female academics paired with PVCs (“Futures”). Members of the department have participated in both of these schemes as mentors (males) and mentees (females). Both schemes exist with the objective of increasing the University’s key performance indicator of the proportion of women in professorial posts and in leadership and governance. Our gender survey revealed that 30% of academic staff did not feel encouraged to take up development opportunities, and we plan to address this (Actions 3.1-3.3).

(ii) **Induction and training** – describe the support provided to new staff at all levels, as well as details of any gender equality training. To what extent are good employment practices in the institution, such as opportunities for networking, the flexible working policy, and professional and personal development opportunities promoted to staff from the outset?

All new academic staff start with low teaching and administration loads which are increased gradually to a full load over a minimum of three years. For teaching and research staff this allows them to establish their research, while concentrating on a limited range of teaching. New teaching and research staff are also provided with start-up funds to allow them to continue their research prior to obtaining their first research grant. Moreover, they are allocated a departmental PhD studentship in their first year. Teaching development is supported by CILT (Certificate in Teaching and Learning), while preparation of funding applications is developed by RIS. New academic staff have a three year probationary period and are allocated a probationary advisor, who will be a senior member of staff. A yearly plan is produced and regular (initially monthly) meetings are held. Moreover, an annual report on the previous year’s activities and achievements is discussed at a meeting with the advisor and the HoD.
A TUoS on-line induction package and an induction event are available to all staff and a faculty induction programme is available to PDs. There is good PD uptake of the latter scheme within the department. All new starters are introduced to key staff in the department, by the HoD in the case of academic staff, and by line managers for other staff. We plan to improve our induction processes and will carry this out by exploiting good practice elsewhere in the faculty involving on line materials (Action 5.1). We will ensure this includes E&D information.

(iii) **Support for female students** – describe the support (formal and informal) provided for female students to enable them to make the transition to a sustainable academic career, particularly from postgraduate to researcher, such as mentoring, seminars and pastoral support and the right to request a female personal tutor. Comment on whether these activities are run by female staff and how this work is formally recognised by the department.

All UG students have a personal tutor assigned. Currently, female students that wish to discuss problems can do so with female academics and/or a member of our administrative staff who has many years experience of counselling and supporting students with problems. However, this provision is informal. In a recent teaching review our relationships and provision for pastoral support for our UG students was "highly commended". However, we would like to develop this provision further by assigning one male and one female “enhanced pastoral tutor”, who will be suitably trained to work with our administrative staff member. This will make an informal system explicit for female students, together with assisting the needs of male students that we have identified (see Action 3.8). Students are informed that they can seek out such support during the department’s intro week talks.

Each department within the faculty has a SALT (Student Ambassador for Learning and Teaching). This year Science SALTS are exploring career aspirations of both female and male students across the faculty, including, stereotypes, perceptions and differences between life sciences and physical sciences. Their remit includes making recommendations about how, if perceptions are different, they can be challenged. We look forward to building on these outputs.

All PhD students have a well-structured support network including an independent advisor in addition to their supervisor. The independent advisor can be consulted at any point during their PG studies. All PG students undertake an annual personal training needs analysis with input from supervisor and advisor as part of the Doctoral Development Programme. Scheduled meetings at 6 and 18 months provide an opportunity to review progress and future plans with advisor, alongside yearly formal (and many informal) feedback/planning meetings with their supervisor. Funds are available for PG participation in conferences. Alongside advanced Chemistry provision, postgraduates are encouraged to attend suitable TuoS/Faculty career management skills courses. These range from Communication and Presentation Skills, Group Working and Negotiations Skills, Assertiveness Training, Writing Skills, Critical Review Skills as well as one-to-one Career Consultations. The 'Springboard' programme is available and several of our female PhDs are graduates of this. The women's network also runs PG student targeted events (e.g. the popular Speed Networking), which are well attended by female
chemists. Within the department, the new Researcher’s Society caters for both PDs and PGs. PG students will also be able to access our enhanced pastoral tutors.

**Organisation and culture**

a) Provide data for the past three years (where possible with clearly labelled graphical illustrations) on the following with commentary on their significance and how they have affected action planning.

(i) **Male and female representation on committees** – provide a breakdown by committee and explain any differences between male and female representation. Explain how potential members are identified.

Figure 9 shows male and female representation on departmental committees. The E&D Committee was formed in 2012 to build on other activities at departmental, university and national level and therefore does not appear in previous years. In 2012, the E&D Committee reviewed the older data and noticed that women were under-represented. We suggested that the HoD consider this issue, and as a consequence representation of women on departmental committees has increased from 9% to 19% over the three-year period. We note that inevitably part of this increased representation involves the formation of the E&D committee. However, we also note that three of our female staff have leadership roles at faculty level and that this must be allowed for in workload allocation. The current proportion of female committee members (19%) is now in line with the proportion of female staff (21%).

![Figure 9. Numbers of staff on departmental committees in Chemistry (male grey, female black).](image)

(ii) **Female:male ratio of academic and research staff on fixed-term contracts and open-ended (permanent) contracts** – comment on any differences between male and female staff representation on fixed-term contracts and say what is being done to address them.

Currently almost all academic staff, and all of our female members of academic staff are on open-ended contracts. During the three year period one female university teacher had a one-year contract as maternity leave cover for another staff member.

Department of Chemistry, University of Sheffield, Athena Swan submission page 21
At the end of this, she used this experience to gain a teaching post elsewhere. Almost all researchers are on fixed-term contracts. Thus 22% of the fixed term contracts and 20-21% of the open-ended contracts are held by females. This reflects the proportion of total female academic and research staff that has been constant at 21-22% over the three year period.

b) For each of the areas below, explain what the key issues are in the department, what steps have been taken to address any imbalances, what success/impact has been achieved so far and what additional steps may be needed.

(i) **Representation on decision-making committees** – comment on evidence of gender equality in the mechanism for selecting representatives. What evidence is there that women are encouraged to sit on a range of influential committees inside and outside the department? How is the issue of ‘committee overload’ addressed where there are small numbers of female staff?

Department committee membership is decided by the HoD, based on the competencies, interests, skills and current workload of prospective members to allow committees to function as efficiently as possible. The department recognises the benefits of diversity; female staff are deployed strategically to maximise the impact of their contribution. Administrative jobs and committee memberships are divided across all staff in the department. Membership of committees is reviewed on an annual basis; we will formalise gender analyses (Action 5.3). Information about opportunities on University committees is distributed via central email through the department, but our gender survey revealed that 20% of staff did not feel that they were encouraged to apply for such posts; we plan to address this (Action 5.4).

(ii) **Workload model** – describe the systems in place to ensure that workload allocations, including pastoral and administrative responsibilities (including the responsibility for work on women and science) are taken into account at appraisal and in promotion criteria. Comment on the rotation of responsibilities e.g. responsibilities with a heavy workload and those that are seen as good for an individual’s career.

The department balances teaching, pastoral, research, and administrative duties. Administrative loads differ per academic member of staff, with the roles of HoD, the Director of Studies (DoS), and the undergraduate admissions tutor (currently all posts held by male staff) carrying the heaviest workload. These three specific administrative duties in the department have dedicated administrative support. The HoD role rotates on a four-yearly basis. The post of DoS also rotates on a four-yearly basis. The administrative duties of the undergraduate admissions tutor have been shared between four different members of staff to avoid overloading a single individual. Junior non-probationary members of staff are given significant administrative duties, such as undergraduate year directors who sit on the teaching committee. The four UG year tutors currently include one female member of staff in this category. Such roles, if performed satisfactorily, form part of the well-rounded case for an individual’s promotion that the department likes to put forward in keeping with the tenets of the “Sheffield Academic”. We have prototype
software for work allocation, but we need to improve this software, make it reflect our values and allow transparency (Action 5.2).

(iii) **Timing of departmental meetings and social gatherings** – provide evidence of consideration for those with family responsibilities, for example what the department considers to be core hours and whether there is a more flexible system in place.

As a Faculty we have agreed that core hours are 9.30 am to 4.00 pm and that departmental meetings will take place between these hours. In addition, teaching responsibilities are scheduled to accommodate flexible working patterns, absences, and responsibilities for childcare and other family care. Informal swaps and covering for colleagues is a common feature of our collegiate culture. Social gatherings are timed to encourage families to attend. For example, the retirement party for our departmental manager, who had worked in the department for his entire career, was organised to start at 3.00 pm.

(iv) **Culture**—demonstrate how the department is female-friendly and inclusive.

‘Culture’ refers to the language, behaviours and other informal interactions that characterise the atmosphere of the department, and includes all staff and students.

We aim to be a place of choice for women (and men) to work and study. We make sure our environment is friendly, collegiate and supportive for all staff and students. Therefore, we do not tolerate any type of harassment. This policy is unambiguous to staff as evidenced the fact that 97% of our staff were confident that harassment would be dealt with effectively. Thus (i) unsupportive language and behaviour are not acceptable, (ii) inappropriate images that stereotype women and men are not acceptable, and (iii) work related activities are welcoming to both women and men. Social events held by the department are inclusive and children are welcome. Even so, our staff focus group revealed that more departmental social activities would be welcome (Action 5.6). In short, we cooperate to get things done, covering for colleagues, if required.

An important feature of our culture involves maintaining good communication channels. The E&D committee organises a monthly coffee morning to discuss E&D issues for all staff and PG students. Recent discussions have included: “Why I like working here”, “Female Leaders”, “The value of networking”, and “Career steps”. Researchers are invited to attend staff meetings and minutes of departmental committees are widely circulated.

It is interesting to note that in our gender survey, 30% of male academic staff replied “don’t know” to a question about whether the department is a great place to work for women. Although the reluctance of male staff to speak for women can be regarded as commendable, it also highlights an area in which there is work to be done. As many male staff act as line managers for female staff and supervisors for female students, they need assurance that the department is female friendly and supports the careers of female staff and researchers. This includes, in some cases, knowledge of the support available (see Actions 4.1&4.2).
(v) **Outreach activities** – comment on the level of participation by female and male staff in outreach activities with schools and colleges and other centres. Describe who the programmes are aimed at, and how this activity is formally recognised as part of the workload model and in appraisal and promotion processes.

The Department offers a range of outreach events in a dedicated schools laboratory. Schools from within and around Sheffield book the schools laboratory free of charge. Teachers then bring up to 15 students to carry out experiments, which would be impossible to carry out at school. The students also get the opportunity to see the chemistry department and experience a day at University. Ages of visiting groups range from Y6 (primary) to Y13 (final year A level). During the academic year, we also offer schools competitions, such as the Salters Festival, Reactiv8, Soams, and the Kroto events, using the main undergraduate chemistry laboratories, where we can accommodate up to 45 students at a time. Currently, the three academics leading schools activities are all female, but a mix of female and male undergraduates and post-graduate students help to deliver these events. Many staff are involved in schools lectures, and two of our staff members have delivered the Royal Institution Christmas lectures. We share our university and our research with our city twice-yearly on “Researchers Night”, with the involvement of chemistry staff and students. We will add outreach to the workload allocation model (Action 5.2), and it is already used in appraisal and promotion.

Flexibility and managing career breaks

a) Provide data for the past three years (where possible with clearly labelled graphical illustrations) on the following with commentary on their significance and how they have affected action planning.

(i) **Maternity return rate** – comment on whether maternity return rate in the department has improved or deteriorated and any plans for further improvement. If the department is unable to provide a maternity return rate, please explain why.

Over the three year period, five women have taken maternity leave (2 researchers, a technician, an academic, and a clerical and secretarial staff member), and all have returned to work.

(ii) **Paternity, adoption and parental leave uptake** – comment on the uptake of paternity leave by grade and parental and adoption leave by gender and grade. Has this improved or deteriorated and what plans are there to improve further.

Over the three year period, four men have taken paternity leave (a researcher, a technician, and 2 management & professionals staff members). Two males have taken adoption leave.

(iii) **Numbers of applications and success rates for flexible working by gender and grade** – comment on any disparities. Where the number of women in the department is small applicants may wish to comment on specific examples.

All applications for flexible working have been successful over the three year period. This has involved both men (2 in 2010 and 3 in 2011) and women (1 in 2010, 6 in
2011 and 8 in 2012). Notably, this involves staff in a range of different roles including 6 researchers, 3 academics, 3 technicians, 3 clerical and secretarial and 4 management and professional staff members.

b) For each of the areas below, explain what the key issues are in the department, what steps have been taken to address any imbalances, what success/impact has been achieved so far and what additional steps may be needed.

(i) **Flexible working** – comment on the numbers of staff working flexibly and their grades and gender, whether there is a formal or informal system, the support and training provided for managers in promoting and managing flexible working arrangements, and how the department raises awareness of the options available.

Flexible working is an integral part of our culture. In our staff survey, 96% of staff agreed they could work flexibly if they needed to (+ 13% compared with the rest of TUoS). Both male and female staff use this flexibility to balance the demands of work and family, so effectively 100% of academic staff are flexible workers. In addition to the support we give to informal flexible working, including where possible scheduling teaching duties around school drop-off/pick-up times, TUoS has specific policies that allow altered working patterns and part-time working to be formally agreed. The department responds to requests under these schemes constructively and these opportunities are used by all staff groups, as can be seen from the data above. Three female academics have taken advantage of part-time contracts on return from maternity leave with a guarantee of return to 100% FTE in the future (see Case Studies). Again this is an area where Chemistry has led in TUoS, ensuring that our female academics have the right to return to 100% FTE when they wish. Female researchers are also currently using these provisions.

(ii) **Cover for maternity and adoption leave and support on return** – explain what the department does, beyond the university maternity policy package, to support female staff before they go on maternity leave, arrangements for covering work during absence, and to help them achieve a suitable work-life balance on their return.

Female academic staff preparing to take maternity leave are strongly encouraged and supported to apply for WARP (Women Academic Returners Programme). This is a TUoS scheme that provides funding to maintain research during maternity leave, by providing cover for research staff costs while the female academic is away from work, or to kick-start research on return to work, by providing reduced teaching loads or conference attendance costs. Two staff members have benefitted from this scheme. In addition, all pregnant workers carry out a risk assessment, where necessary with assistance of our safety staff, and reallocation of duties is carried out if the working environment presents a risk to the pregnancy. TUoS recently revised its procedures surrounding maternity after consultation with Women@TUoS NET to include more formal pre- and post-maternity planning and Keeping in Touch days and the department welcomes these new arrangements. We have facilities for breastfeeding/expression within our department. More widely, the Parents in Academia Network, open to both female and male staff, holds quarterly events and runs a Parent to Parent (P2P) buddying system for staff pre- and post-maternity leave. Three of our female staff are involved in the buddy

Department of Chemistry, University of Sheffield, Athena Swan submission page 25
network. Applications for formal flexible working arrangements are dealt with positively in the department, with careful balance of duties and workload.

4538 words
(267+213+435+609+697+254+393+140+100+119+187+94+308+202+30+28+65+184+213 for each subsection)

5. Any other comments: maximum 500 words

Please comment here on any other elements which are relevant to the application, e.g. other STEMM-specific initiatives of special interest that have not been covered in the previous sections. Include any other relevant data (e.g. results from staff surveys), provide a commentary on it and indicate how it is planned to address any gender disparities identified.

Highlights:

- Proportion of female academic staff higher than most comparable departments.
- 100% return rate from maternity leave
- Strong support for flexible working
- Female staff progression to senior levels
- Recognition of teaching in promotions and with Senate Teaching and Learning Awards
- All eligible staff considered for promotion each year
- Value placed in well-rounded “Sheffield Academics”
- Newly formed Researchers Society and excellent support for career development of researchers and PhD students
- WARP programme allows female researchers to keep their research groups supervised whilst they are on maternity leave and/or to re-invigorate research when they return

Things we need to work on:

- More females applying for PhD positions
- More females applying for researcher positions
- More females applying for academic positions
- Raising awareness of development and mentoring opportunities to staff and students
- Improved coverage of researchers by SRDS
- Supporting our Researchers Society
- Increasing the visibility of female role models
- Transparent workload allocation model

The process of analysing our data and surveys has been insightful, at times sobering, and at others a cause for celebration. Much effort has been devoted over the last decade to boosting female representation at undergraduate level and to the development of our staff. With strong leadership we have aimed to ensure that Chemistry at Sheffield is a collegiate environment where all staff can thrive and reach their potential, and we are now realising the impact of this. Even so, there are still some areas where more work is needed. Sustaining and improving on our support for staff and our undergraduate female representation, we also need to turn our attention to our pipeline staff and students. In
particular, we need to improve applications from females at post-graduate and researcher levels and invest in supporting these groups. We have already begun this process. Recently our colleague Dr. Rhonda Snook (Chair of Women@TUoS NET) gave a Chemistry departmental seminar entitled “Women in Science, the Invisible Fraction” to staff and students. Both female and male students engaged with this, and it has spawned several student-led activities including an article from the student run Chemistry Media Team. We look forward to continuing this process with our action plan.

353 words

6. Action plan

Provide an action plan as an appendix. An action plan template is available on the Athena SWAN website.

The Action Plan should be a table or a spreadsheet comprising actions to address the priorities identified by the analysis of relevant data presented in this application, success/outcome measures, the post holder responsible for each action and a timeline for completion. The plan should cover current initiatives and your aspirations for the next three years.

The Action Plan is attached.

7. Case study: impacting on individuals: maximum 1000 words

Describe how the department’s SWAN activities have benefitted two individuals working in the department. One of these case studies should be a member of the self assessment team, the other someone else in the department. More information on case studies is available in the guidance.

Jane Grasby (Professor)

I joined the Chemistry Department in Sheffield in 1994 as a lecturer. At the time I was the only female member of academic staff. Although somewhat late to begin appointing female staff, the department was aware of its deficiencies and made every effort to make me feel welcome. Resources were provided for setting up my lab, for studentships and for travel. My (male) colleagues helped me with making my early grant applications, my first years of teaching, student supervision and introduction to administrative duties. I had much support from female technical and administrative staff. The department also helped find a creative solution to a dual-career partnership. With this support I progressed to Senior Lecturer in 1999. By this time, to my delight, I had gained a number of female academic colleagues. In 2002 I was promoted to Reader, a case that the department decided to put forward without me making a formal promotion application.

In 2003 our twin daughters were born and I took 42 weeks maternity leave. In 2004, I returned to work part-time, but with the option of returning to a full-time contract. I continued this arrangement until 2011 (first 75%, later 85% FTE). Balancing two young children with an academic career was demanding, but it was made much easier by the department’s flexibility in scheduling my teaching/administrative activities and working
from home options. As part of a University initiative “Women’s week”, I led discussions focused on removing the barriers to progression of women in STEM subjects. Out of this HR produced the flagship scheme WARP. I am delighted that this has now supported two of my female colleagues, alongside many other women within TUoS, during/after their maternity leave. Although my maternity leave was too early to benefit from WARP, the department supported me to get back up to speed with my research with sabbatical leave in 2007-08 as our twin daughters started school.

In 2010 I took part in the University’s female mentoring scheme “Futures.” This provided me with many insights into the University’s governance mechanisms and a new focus. In 2011-12 the Department encouraged my partial secondment to lead an EPSRC funded Developing Women Research Leaders project on behalf of the Faculty of Science. Encompassing early-career researchers to senior members of the University, this project raised awareness of the barriers to recruitment, retention and progression of women in STEM, alongside supporting career development of women. The project launched Women@TUoS NET (our women’s network), which I chaired in its first year and from which I have personally derived much support. Other outputs included the Faculty E&D Committee, which I now chair and which contains representatives from across the faculty. Our strategy is to realise the faculty’s aspirational goals for gender equality through preparation of an Athena Swan action plan in each department, sharing good practice and contributing to a faculty-wide E&D plan and activities. I was nominated to participate in the excellent Sheffield Leader 4 programme last year by the faculty PVC and HoD and in 2013 I became the Department’s first female Professor.

**Julia Weinstein (Senior Lecturer)**

I joined the Chemistry Department in Sheffield as a lecturer in 2005. From the very beginning, the Department provided a friendly and inclusive environment, which was very important when my husband and I decided to start a family. When maternity leave was planned in 2007, the HoD told me about a program named WARP (Women Academics Returners Program). WARP offered £16,000 to help women returning to work after maternity leave. There was complete flexibility in spending, so the money could be used to hire a teaching replacement, a postdoc, a technician, or any other support. Although modest, this funding sends a strong positive message, and makes one feel genuinely supported. I used this support for a postdoc, which helped me to keep a highly skilled researcher to help run my group, and then allowed him to stay in Sheffield for the next few years, once funding from the next grant came through. Without his presence, my research would have been affected, and I would have had to start many aspects of it from scratch after returning from maternity leave. Having a skilled postdoc in place allowed me to spend more time with my family and carry on research almost as it would have been without a break.

The Department also provides an opportunity to work part-time and flexible hours. In a dual-career family with a young child such freedom is a tremendous help for both parents. I worked part-time for several years after returning from maternity leave, whereby my reduced hours were taken into account in allocating a proportional teaching load, a reduced number of project students, and even in arranging the timetable. The nicest part of the workload allocation was that I did not have to ask, but rather I was asked what I
would consider a suitable arrangement. On several occasions, teaching meetings were rearranged to accommodate my working arrangements, and I was never asked to perform any duties outside of my formal working hours.

Thanks to this flexibility and support, my research has progressed well. I was also provided with supportive and encouraging mentoring on various career-related issues. Senior colleagues in the Department encouraged me to apply for promotion to senior lecturer in 2010, whilst I was still working part-time, which was successful. I have also been encouraged to engage in the running of the department. For example, I have been on interview panels for new appointments.

In a broader context, there are many activities in Sheffield relating to Women in Science, and to diversity and equality in general. These events are widely publicised in the Department. I recently had the opportunity to discuss Sheffield’s diversity-supporting activities at a diversity workshop at the American Chemical Society meeting in New Orleans in 2013.

969 words
Sarah Dickinson  
Athena SWAN Charter  
Equality Challenge Unit  
7th Floor, Queen's House  
55-56 Lincoln's Inn Fields  
London WC2A 3LJ

Professor R. F. W. Jackson  
Head of Department  
Department of Chemistry  
Dainton Building  
Sheffield S3 7HF  
United Kingdom

20 November 2013

Telephone: +44 (0) 114 222 9464  
Fax: +44 (0) 114 222 9303  
Email: r.f.w.jackson@sheffield.ac.uk

Dear Sarah,

I arrived in the Department in 2001, having moved from the University of Newcastle. I am now serving my second term of office as Head of the Department (2011 onwards), having also served from 2003-2007. It struck me before I became Head that one of the main responsibilities of the Head was to encourage all staff in the Department to reach their potential, something that I have tried to do on an individual basis. However, there is an equally important issue concerning the general culture and practices within a Department, and this is something that takes longer to address.

I was very much aware of the Athena/Royal Society of Chemistry Good Practice report, published in 2004, and was therefore very happy to be involved in the review of progress in the 2008 RSC publication Planning for Success: Good Practice in University Science Departments. After submission of the checklist in April 2007 (which I completed personally), I took part in a telephone interview, and it was arranged that the panel (Sean McWhinnie, Caroline Fox and you) would visit Sheffield in August 2007 (the very first visit) to speak to a range of staff at different levels within the Department. Following the visit, Sean got in touch and was gracious “We certainly enjoyed talking with you and I am encouraged by your personal commitment to the diversity agenda.” My overriding resolution from this experience was that there was a significant issue with regard to supporting post-doctoral research staff with career development, something I resolved to try to address when I had an opportunity. We have recently seen a significant improvement in engagement of postdoctoral staff with the University Staff Review and Development Scheme as a result of my initiative.

This year, we have recruited four new members of academic staff, two female and two male, and I am pleased to say that we now have the first female Professor in Chemistry in the Department, included in one of the two case studies. I have directly supported two female members of staff in successful applications to the Women Academic Returners Programme, one of which is mentioned in the other case study. I have also established a principle that female members of staff who elect to go part-time after returning from maternity leave should have an option to return to full-time work, at their discretion, at an agreed point in the future (typically when the child has reached school age). This required a new clause to be introduced into the HR letter when the original reduction in working hours was agreed.

Last year, I established an Equality and Diversity Committee, which has undertaken the work that is described in the accompanying submission for Athena Swan Silver status. Their valuable work has highlighted a number of issues that need attention, and the one that I think is the most crucial relates to ensuring an equitable and transparent workload allocation process. I think we have made some progress, but there is much more to do.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Professor R. F. W. Jackson
Department of Chemistry, University of Sheffield, Athena Swan Action Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Description of action</th>
<th>Action taken already and outcome Oct 2013</th>
<th>Further action planned from Nov 2013</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
<th>Success Measure</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>To continue to monitor UG student application/acceptance data by gender Annual report to • Admissions Team • Teaching Committee • Equality and Diversity (E&amp;D) Committee • Management Committee • All Staff</td>
<td>Data collected for last 6 years and reported to all staff annually; although known to be in line with national trends, compared for the first time with Russell group data in 2012. UG admissions materials redesigned for 2014 admission.</td>
<td>To continue to collect UG admissions data, compare with Russell group, and report on an annual basis. To use as a measure of UG admissions strategies/ success of redesigned publicity materials (for details see application 3b (ii))</td>
<td>Admissions support staff and Admissions Team Director of Studies</td>
<td>1/09/14 onwards</td>
<td>Collected data shows Russell group averages maintained or exceeded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>To continue to monitor PG student application/acceptance data by gender Annual report to • Research Committee • E&amp;D Committee Management Committee</td>
<td>Data collected for last 4 years and reported to relevant Committees; compared for the first time with Russell group data in 2012.</td>
<td>To continue to collect PG admissions data, compare with Russell group, and report on an annual basis. To use as a measure of performance of PG admissions strategy (see action 2.3).</td>
<td>Post-graduate tutor Director of Studies/ Teaching Committee</td>
<td>1/09/14 onwards</td>
<td>Collected data shows we have improved PG numbers to equal or exceed Russell group averages.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Staff</td>
<td>Introduction of new taught MSc course.</td>
<td>HR/HoD office/ Chair of E &amp; D Committee</td>
<td>1/11/13 onwards</td>
<td>Collected data shows improvement in number of female staff in dept.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Monitor staff (PD, IRFs and permanent academic) applications and appointments by gender. Annual report to: Research Committee, E &amp; D Committee, Management Committee, All Staff</td>
<td>Data available for the last 4 years; does not demonstrate discrimination.</td>
<td>Continue to monitor the effects of positive actions and recruitment strategies (see actions 2.1 &amp; 2.2).</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>Continue to monitor degree classifications and MChem/BSc graduation statistics by gender. Annual report to: Teaching Committee, Equality and Diversity (E&amp;D) Committee, Management Committee, All Staff</td>
<td>Monitoring carried out for last 4 years. Our analyses indicate no gender bias.</td>
<td>Continue monitoring, investigating and taking action if required.</td>
<td>Director of studies/ Teaching Committee</td>
<td>1/09/14 onwards</td>
<td>Collected data shows UG performance/ degree preferences continue to be free of gender bias.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2. Gender Representation

| 2.1 | Maintain or increase the number of female staff at lecturer grade All permanent R&S (recruitment and selection) materials already contain | Aim that shortlists for permanent academic positions contain 20% | HoD | 1/11/13 onwards | Number of female staff maintained or |

Department of Chemistry, University of Sheffield, Athena Swan submission page 32
| and above. | the AS logo (University Bronze Award), indicate TUoS E&D policies and contain a positive action statement specifically encouraging applications from females. Our female academic staff representation at lecturer/university teacher and above is better than most Russell group Chemistry depts. | females (or equal to the proportion of female applicants, whichever is larger), providing that candidates are available that meet the job requirements. Where this is not possible appropriate feedback will be made to HR talent attraction team. Ensure recruitment information reflects all aspects of the Sheffield academic e.g. includes developmental language as well as the language of that of excellence, and requires candidates to demonstrate a commitment to collegiality and continued professional development. | increased-monitored in action 1.3. |

| 2.2 Increasing the number of female applicants for staff positions (PD, IRF, VC fellowships, permanent academic). | All permanent staff R&S materials already contain the AS logo (University Bronze Award) and indicate TUoS E&D policies. | To further develop talent attraction strategies and procedures to publicise our department as a place of choice for employment of females and make sure qualified | HOD/ Executive committee/ HR talent attraction team 04/14 onwards Increased numbers of applications from females for staff positions—measured in |
| 2.3 | Increase the number of females applying for post-graduate study. | Our analyses indicate that under-representation of females in our PG cohort is the consequence of lower numbers of home female applicants.  
Web based PG recruitment materials have been redesigned with a view to attracting female applicants.  
Focus group held with PG and final year UG students concluded that earlier offers of PhD places may prevent losing females to other institutions.  
Focus group requested more information on academic careers. | Ensure suitably qualified UG students are aware of PG opportunities through letter from Director of Studies.  
Raise awareness of academic careers in our UG cohort, through careers presentations and student-led investigations in our employability skills teaching [e.g. students produce role model profiles, research summaries, news on (female) researchers etc.].  
Complete new departmental brochure with a view to attracting | Director of studies  
Employability skills and Careers course leaders  
HoD | 03/14 onwards | Number of female PG applications increased (see action 1.2). |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Career Development and Progression</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Raise awareness of departmental academic staff development policies and monitor effectiveness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dept. provides probationary advisors for new academic staff.</td>
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<tr>
<td>All staff have supportive research planning meetings with HOD and cluster head every Jan.</td>
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<td>All staff have SRDS reviews in Summer.</td>
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<td>Make sure that all staff are aware of the departmental staff development strategy, through staff briefings and SRDS.</td>
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<td>Allow for staff involvement in career development of self or others in WAM (e.g. acting as mentor, advisor or SRDS reviewer).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ensure, in particular, that all SRDS reviewers are briefed on staff development schemes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ensure all probationary advisors are fully briefed on their role.</td>
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<td>Monitor the effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female PG applicants by 1/2/14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assign PhD studentships earlier in the year to academic staff, allowing early offers to be made in the recruitment cycle.</td>
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<tr>
<td>HoD, SRDS reviewers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complete by 05/14 (time of next SRDS review)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff have allocated time for career development.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increased awareness of and satisfaction with career development and progression opportunities revealed in Staff Survey.</td>
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| 3.3 | Raise awareness of personal development opportunities tailored specifically to women | The ‘Springboard’ scheme is available to early career female academics (PhD, PD, IRF, lecturers). Cross faculty/university mentoring schemes available for all PDs and for female academics at all levels. Women only career development opportunities are available through Women@TUoS NET. | Raise awareness of these schemes, through SRDS and providing a single web access point with all relevant links. Ensure that all SRDS reviewers / dept. mentors are familiar with these schemes and encourage appropriate staff to use them. | HoD, SRDS reviewers, women@TUoS NET | Complete by 05/14 (time of next SRDS review) | Staff have allocated time for career development. Increased awareness of and satisfaction with development opportunities for women revealed in Staff Survey. |
| 3.4 | Raise awareness of academic staff promotion criteria and their interpretation, recognising mixed contribution portfolios | All staff have an annual SRDS, where career and promotion aspirations can be raised. | Be pro-active in identifying, encouraging and preparing all staff, and in particular female academic staff, for promotion as part of SRDS discussions. Ensure all staff acting as SRDS reviewers are suitably trained/informed to give this advice. For T&R staff this will include giving clear guidelines on the value of contributions in teaching, administration, impact activities (including outreach) and research. | HOD, SRDS reviewers | Promotion applications and awards reflect gender balance of eligible staff. |
| 3.5 | Continue to improve SRDS uptake by PD staff | Department provides SRDS pairings for all PDs and this is an excellent opportunity to discuss career aspirations. Uptake is variable. Faculty Researcher Developer has initiated a workshop entitled “Getting the most of your SRDS for researchers”. | Encourage uptake of SRDS by PDs by raising awareness of the value through Researcher Society (see action 3.5) and encouraging faculty workshop attendance. Ensure all staff acting as SRDS reviewers for PDs are aware of staff development provision for PDs. Monitor the number of PDs who receive SRDS | Faculty Researcher Developer/ HoD/ Researchers Society/ SRDS Reviewers/ E & D Committee | Completed for next SRDS round 05/14 | Increased uptake of SRDS by PDs in subsequent years. |
| 3.6 | **Ensure that Researchers Society continues to deliver career orientated informal support to PGs and PDs and acts as a voice for researchers in the dept.** | A Chemistry researchers society was formed earlier this year with departmental support. |  **Increase visibility and academic staff engagement with Researchers Society to broaden the base of advice and support to female researchers.**  
Recruit a member of the Researchers Society to the Department's Research Committee to represent this group. |  **Research Committee/ HoD/ Researchers Society** |  **Next meeting of research committee** |  **Improved retention of Sheffield trained female chemists in STEM measured by exit/alumni surveys.** |
| 3.7 | **Investigate the reason for the slightly raised turnover of female PDRAs** | The turnover of female researchers (27%, 24%, 27%) is proportionately higher than the number of female researchers in post (20%, 20%, 22%). |  **Investigate the reasons for this working with PIs (Principal Investigators) and Researchers Society and produce actions to alleviate.**  
Continue to monitor turnover data.  
Work with RIS to develop PDRA exit information. |  **Chair of E&D Committee** |  **Complete consultation by June 2014** |  **Turnover of female researchers becomes representative of proportion of female researchers in post.** |
| 3.8 | **Introduce one male and one female “enhanced” pastoral tutor.** | Currently students who are not comfortable talking over difficult issues with their own personal tutor approach other staff on an |  **Appoint and arrange suitable training for “enhanced” tutors to work with our administrative**  
HoD/ Director of studies |  **To begin in post 2014/15 session** |  **Female students can easily access a female pastoral tutor** |
4. Parental Leave and Flexible Working

| 4.1 | Raise awareness of all types of parental leave arrangements. | TUoS has a comprehensive range of parental/adoption leave policies and a number of sector leading positive actions (e.g. WARP) focused on managing female career breaks. Line managers are supported to implement policies when necessary. | Ensure all staff members are aware of the support provided for parents including Parents in Academia, P2P buddy system, maternity planning, WARP and the policies relating to parental leave by briefing at staff meeting and at the Researchers Society and providing information in on-line induction materials (see Action 5.1). Ensure all staff members are aware of the procedures for reallocation of work during maternity/ paternity /adoption leave. | HoD/ Dept Manager/ Parents in Academia | By 10/14 | All staff agree that the dept. has made clear its policies in relation to gender equality surrounding parental leave in gender survey. All staff can advocate for Department/ University in relation to its policies surrounding parental leave. |

or advisor if needed.
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<th>by briefing at staff meeting and at the Researchers Society (see Action 5.1). Ensure all PIs/line managers arrange return to work discussions before return date to discuss appropriate support in line with new TUoS policies.</th>
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<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Raise awareness of arrangements for flexible working.</td>
<td>Staff work flexibly on an informal basis and some use part-time contracts. Line managers are supported to implement policies when necessary.</td>
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<td>Ensure all staff members are aware of all types of flexible working by briefing at staff meeting and at the Researchers Society and providing information in on-line induction materials (see Action 5.1).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>HOD, SRDS reviewers, PIs, Parents in Academia</td>
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### 5. Culture

| 5.1 | Prepare induction materials. | Dept. has induction procedures for PG students. Faculty induction is available to PDs. However, for staff, departmental induction is currently carried out on an informal basis. | Prepare an induction checklist for staff, including appointing a named probation advisor/buddy as appropriate. Prepare on-line induction materials including E&D information, exploiting good practice from across the faculty. | HOD office/Department manager | Check list by 3/14. On-line materials by 10/14. Revise annually. | All new staff are welcomed, understand their roles, and can quickly become productive. |
| 5.2 | Implement an electronic workload allocation model (WAM) that is in-line with our values | All departments in the Faculty of Science currently have a prototype-WAM. Some software issues e.g. on carry over of information year on year etc. | Test model in Chemistry to ensure that departmental values (i.e. investment in the well-rounded academic) contribute appropriately to WAM calculations and work with programmers to resolve outstanding problems. Include outreach and other external representation of the dept./university in WAM. | HOD | Second iteration of Chemistry WAM completed 10/14. Full implementat ion by 10/15. | Transparent WAM in operation. |
| 5.3 | Monitor the representation of female staff on departmental | Review of male and female departmental committee representation undertaken in summer 2012. | Continue to deploy female staff strategically on decision-making committees, being | HOD | ongoing | Strategic deployment ensures females are |
| 5.4 | Undertake a review of staff involvement in University Governance and Committees by gender. | Adjustments were made to the membership of key committees. | mindfully of committee overload and career development, to maximize the benefits of gender diversity. Continue to monitor gender balance, including in succession planning. | HOD/ executive committee | Complete review by 10/14 Then ongoing. | Staff are deployed strategically in University governance structures benefitting Dept. and individual staff development. Increased numbers of female staff become involved in leadership/ governance roles. |
| 5.5 | Increase the visibility of female role models in our seminar programme. | Seminar programme includes 27% female speakers (previous year 19%). Seminars attended by all research staff and students and level 4 UGs. | Ensure that we challenge unconscious bias in the selection of seminar speakers. Aim for a seminar programme that includes | Dept. Seminar Organiser and Heads of Clusters | 1/07/14 then ongoing | Increase the proportion and visibility of females in departmental and cluster seminars. |
| 5.6 | Run a departmental social event on an annual basis | Department currently hosts social events to recognize certain events (e.g. retirement of staff members). These are welcoming to families and all staff. Dept. used to run an annual social event to enhance collegiality. This has fallen by the wayside in recent years. | Reinstate family friendly social event for all staff annually. | HoD/ Dept Manager | 1/10/14 ongoing | Annual inclusive social event takes place. |

**6. Equality and Diversity Committee**

| 6.1 | Recruit a PDRA member of the E&D committee | Email sent to all PDRAs asking for a volunteer failed to identify a PDRA representative. | Consult with the Researchers Society and ask that they nominate individuals who could be approached to serve on the department's E&D committee | Chair of Dept. E&D | | Increased representation of the PDRA community within the dept. |

<p>| 6.2 | Sharing of best Athena Swan practice. | Members of the dept. participate in the Faculty E&amp;D Committee [Chair (Grasby) and Department representative (Hunter)] and on the University E&amp;D Board [PVC Science (Ryan) and member of | Report to Faculty of Science E &amp; D Committee (in turn reporting to Science Faculty Executive Board and University E&amp;D Board) | Dept. representative on Faculty E&amp;D HoD | ongoing | Contributions to successful Athena Swan awards in other Depts. Increase in female |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Chem department chairs.</th>
<th>Full E&amp;D Committee has met bimonthly since formation in 2012 with more frequent meetings leading up to application. Supported by external consultants and HR.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Athena Swan activities.</td>
<td>Ensure that action plans are implemented. Self-assessment process and monitoring of gender statistics embedded in Chemistry culture.</td>
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<td>Renewal of Athena SWAN award.</td>
<td>Launch celebratory event upon award.</td>
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<td>Renewal of award in 2017.</td>
<td>Continue to meet quarterly.</td>
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<tr>
<td>HoD/E&amp;D Committee</td>
<td>Athena SWAN champion/HOD disseminates information at other opportunities organized by TUCoS, e.g., Women's Network, Sheffield Leader events, HR consultations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>HOD often involved in HR task and finish groups.</td>
<td>Athena SWAN activities.</td>
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</tbody>
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