Changes to the Athena SWAN Charter Mark

The Equality Challenge Unit’s Athena SWAN Charter will be expanding in April 2015 to include arts, humanities, social science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine disciplines. The charter mark will also require departments and institutions to analyse and report on professional as well as academic staff in its submissions. ECU will be releasing the new process and guidance in April 2015 where arts, humanities, social sciences, business and law departments and institutions can submit for the November 2015 deadline. STEMM departments can still use the Athena SWAN application process but all departments and institutions will align to the new Gender Equality Charter Mark from April 2016. There is no impact for those departments currently applying for Athena SWAN in April or November 2015.

The proposed charter mark will cover:

- Career development (promotions, appraisals and training)
- Flexible Working
- Contract type
- Recruitment and Turnover
- Workload Modelling
- Maternity and paternity (including cover arrangements)

ECU are expecting institutions and departments to acknowledge the difference needs of different men and women, rather than seeing them as homogenous groups, by considering the interplay of gender with other equality characteristics (for example race, age and disability).

Detailed guidance will give comprehensive information on minimum data requirements and expectations on how to use, interpret and present data. This will be released in April 2015. There will also be an increased focus on the use of qualitative data. This will be especially useful for smaller departments, where there are dangers in interpreting the small numbers involved in quantitative data.

Timetable overview:

**April 2015:** Launch of combined Athena SWAN and arts, humanities, social science, business and law departments charter mark. This will include publication of the new process guidance, criteria, application forms and clearer guidance on data presentation and analysis, plus an appeals process.

**November 2015:** Arts, humanities, social science, business and law departments, and institutes can submit award applications using the new processes. STEMM departments are able to continue using the existing Athena SWAN application processes.

**April 2016:** All submissions to use the combined application forms for the new Gender Equality Charter Mark.

Further information can be found on the [ECU website](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/equalityanddiversity/) and will be communicated by the Equality and Diversity team as it develops.
Requests for panelists for the Race Equality Charter Trial and Athena SWAN – Get Involved

Participating in an equality charter mark panel gives you an invaluable insight in the assessment process. You will come away with a detailed understanding of what panels are looking for and insight into how other institutions analyse their data and make progress on their action plans. Reading through multiple applications will also give you plenty of good practice ideas to implement in your departments.

Becoming a panel member also gives you an opportunity to share your equality and diversity knowledge and/or subject expertise with peers from other institutions. It is an opportunity to build your professional networks and knowledge of equality and diversity. ECU are currently seeking panelists with the following roles and specialisms:

- Academics
- Professional services staff
- Equality and diversity practitioners
- HR practitioners
- Representatives of research council, research institutes, learned societies and professional bodies
- Students
- Industry representatives where applicable

More information about becoming a panelist

ECU Update

Over the next few months the Equality Challenge Unit will be launching a number of important pieces of research and guidance:

- Supporting staff and students who are experiencing mental health difficulties in HE
- Academic flight – black and minority ethnic academics working overseas
- Developing academic expertise in equality and diversity

More information on these and details of other forthcoming initiatives can be found on the ECU website.

Get Involved

If your School or Faculty are marking any events, please let the Equality and Diversity team know so we can publicise and celebrate your efforts. March sees the following National dates to note:

International Women’s Day 9th March – This year’s theme is Make it Happen, encouraging effective action for advancing and recognizing women.

British Science Week 13th-22nd March – The UK’s widest grassroots celebration of all things science and engineering.

Sharing good practice

As Athena SWAN and gender equality work gains traction across the University, good practice and effective initiatives are being included in School and Faculty action plans. Here, a few are highlighted:

- Core meeting hours – where meetings should be held within “core hours” e.g. 1000-1500 to allow flexibility.
- Provide training in CV writing, grant writing and workshops on how the promotions process works.
- Annual surveys or discussion groups to collect staff feedback on equality and diversity issues.
- Publicise and celebrate successes of staff and students.
- Raise implicit bias awareness with particular attention to recruitment and promotions.

For more information on award winning action plans, go to the University E&D page. The ECU Athena SWAN members page will also direct you to good practice in other institutions.

Resources

University of Bristol Libra Lecture 2014 – How to Combat Implicit Bias and Stereotype Threat in Academia

The Department of Philosophy’s page on implicit bias and stereotype threat and the podcast of the lecture and the presentation slides used at the event are available for download via the Equality and Diversity website.

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