The School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences of the University of Reading

Athena Swan Silver Award holder
Award to School, not Department

• The School comprises

  department of maths & stats
  about 40 staff all together

  department of meteorology
  about 250 staff, many researchers
It took two attempts...

2009 – data tables and analysis, but little in terms of plan of action, excitement and determination – turned down

2010 – data tables and analysis, but also a detailed and streamlined plan of action – awarded
What do Athena SWAN award recognise?

• Bronze department
  – identified particular challenges
  – planned activities for the future

• Silver department
  – significant record of activity and achievement
  – demonstrating impact of implemented activities

• Gold department
  – significant sustained progression and achievement
  – beacons of achievement in gender equality
  – champions of Athena SWAN and good practice
Actions we took

- Management of parental leave and return to work after leave
- Flexible work arrangement
- Research/early career staff forum
- Clear promotion procedures (Research Staff Development Prompter Form for mentors)
- Monitoring of visibility opportunity at all levels
- Integrated action with University R&E and HR
Actions in progress

• Flexible working page on our website
• Maternity form – check for mentors
• Research staff workshops – examples of career progression combined with flexible working
• Highly prestigious talks by women
• Workshop on unconscious gender bias in academia
Resulting initiatives that benefit all

• School and Departmental meetings between 10-3 whenever possible
• Workshops for Grade 6-7 promotion
• More active mentoring of research staff leading up to promotion applications
• Better support for home and flexible working (IT etc) – introduction of formal KIT days
• Continually raising awareness: more training for PIs and mentors
Some more “exclusive” initiatives...

• Positive action to increase representation in seminar series to better reflect gender balance in Department

• Much much better support for those preparing for and returning from parental leave

• School’s “parents” email lists and monthly support lunches
Examples of school forms

Research Staff Development Prompter

To the Line manager: Please suggest areas your researcher might contribute to in the "Line manager" column and comment on these in the box at the bottom of the second page (suggested activities to broaden the reviewer's skills and expand their experience and provide a clear demonstration of the acquisition of further responsibility or independence).

To the staff member: You should review the possible activities which you might like to contribute to, and your line manager’s comments. During your SDR you should complete the second column and comment on these possible actions in the box below each section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff member:</th>
<th>Review:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Line Manager:</td>
<td>Date of review:</td>
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**1. Internal**

- Administration
  - Mentoring: buddy system for new staff members, supervising junior colleagues
  - Technical support for computing activities in the department (e.g., clusters in Maths)
  - Chairing and proof-reading of proposals

- Teaching
  - Assisting with problem classes, tutorials, practicals
  - Delivering complete lecture modules or contributing several lectures to a module
  - Marking or second marking of example classes, practicals, coursework
  - Co-supervising (shared with senior staff) dissertations (MSc / UG)
  - Provision of support for PhD students (e.g., advice on computer languages, software, graphics packages, access to datasets)

**Comments on possible Internal contributions (for staff member/reviewer):**

**2. External**

- Scientific Community
  - Conference and workshop organisation (eg. one day meetings)
  - External Committee Membership (professional societies, funding bodies, government agencies/programmes)
  - Refereeing research proposals or funding panels
  - Large scale projects – range from informal association (eg. EU COST / other programmes)

- Wider Community
  - Communication and media training (research councils and other funding agencies)

**Comments on possible External contributions (for staff member/reviewer):**
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>3. Research (in addition to the University SDR)</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Supervising Summer Projects: Nuffield, Department, Work experience, University funded scheme</td>
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<td>- Preparation for funding (Research Council or University Workshops, discussions with RES)</td>
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<td>- Applying for travel funds from the University RETF / Royal Society / LMS / other</td>
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<td>- Applying for a small grant for a short piece of work to build momentum</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Applying for a Personal Fellowship (e.g. Leverhulme Early Career Research Fellowship / Royal Society / EPSRC / NERC and other research councils)</td>
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Comments on possible research contribution (for staff member/reviewer):

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<th>4. Career Development (in addition to the University SDR)</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Training courses offered by the CSTD or professional societies (Research Career Management or Teaching and Learning Programmes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Technical Skill programmes and workshops</td>
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<td>- Work placements: short/long visits to other institutions</td>
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<td>- Working elsewhere, international facilities, Newton Institute and similar organizations (Industrial Fellowships are offered by a variety of funding agencies including EPSRC, RS)</td>
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Comments on Career Development (for staff member/reviewer):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LINE MANAGER’S COMMENTS</th>
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Example of school forms

School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences

Notes for maternity, parental and adoption leave arrangements

(referred to as "the leave period")

**BEFORE YOUR MATERNITY/PARENTAL LEAVE:**

For expectant mothers only: You should complete a Risk assessment form for Expectant mothers as soon as possible. The forms and guidelines for this can be obtained from the Health and Safety Website, or the School Administrator (see web link below). This form should be completed with your line manager and returned to Marguerite Gascoine as soon as possible.

For all staff intending to go on maternity / parental / adoption leave: You should meet up with your line manager to carry out an SDR at least two months before the start of your leave period to discuss arrangements for the duration of your absence. The following topics may help to steer this conversation:

1. **Arranging additional support during the leave period**

   For the supervision of students: you may wish to appoint a co-supervisor to take on supervision for the period of absence or completely. You can also arrange “Keeping in touch” days to supervise your student. If a senior post-doc is associated with the student project, it may be acceptable to appoint these as co-supervisor on a day-by-day basis, but an academic staff member must also be nominated as a point of first contact.

   This needs to be arranged in advance so that parallel sessions can be arranged with the presence of the staff member and the co-supervisor, during the last weeks prior to the maternity leave.

   For the supervision of post-docs: the supervision arrangements will depend on the seniority of the post-doc and the degree to which they are capable of looking after themselves in their PI’s absence. This will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis. At the very least, a “point of contact” should be appointed, should the PI not be available for some period. In some cases, it may be necessary to arrange more regular supervision.

   **Note to the Line Manager/HoD:** The additional workload for the staff member taking on these duties needs to be recognized and noted in the workload model, depending on which model is used. The covering staff member may feel they get sufficient reward by being involved in an additional project. In cases where post-doc supervision is taken on by a staff member, it may be appropriate to consider that they should receive some component of the overhead incentive to recognize this support.
## CHECKLIST FOR STAFF AND THEIR LINEMANAGERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task / Responsibility</th>
<th>Staff Taking Leave</th>
<th>Line Manager / PI / HoD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communicating your leave:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Notification of HR and Line Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Line Manager or HoD to announce this to others in the group / department; explaining cover arrangements and email absence (discuss timing with the staff member)</td>
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<td>Discuss with other senior members of your group arrangements for group leadership while away (staff/line manager)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make arrangements with colleagues in Reading or elsewhere for responding to proposal or paper reviews that arrive in your absence (staff)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Completion of expectant mothers’ risk assessment form at the start and on return (for mothers only)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Make arrangements for cover during absence:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Student supervision (UG / MSc projects / PhD student)</td>
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<td>Staff supervision (post-docs, admin staff and others)</td>
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<td>Discuss with Line Manager and Finance Administrator the possibility of getting an extension to the research grant funding your position</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arrange cover for any teaching responsibilities during the absence</td>
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<td><strong>Email / Phone Management:</strong></td>
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<td>Change your telephone answering message</td>
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<td>Transfer your calls to an administrator</td>
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**Email / phone Management:**
- Get a new address from ITS to give to immediate colleagues
- Ask an administrator to check your emails during your absence
- Set an out of office email message for your absence
- Change your telephone answering message
- Transfer your calls to an administrator
- Arrange administrative cover for your absence
- Get someone to open your post during your absence, and action if necessary

**For those acting as signatories / authorizers:**
- Make sure that these responsibilities are transferred to others:
  - Expense claim forms
  - OPMs and annual reports
  - Purchase order signatories

**KIT days:**
- Agree with your line manager what you will be willing to do during your absence and that this will be dealt with as KIT days
- Complete a KIT day diary during your leave and submit to the School Administrator on your return

**Support during absence:**
- Arrange for a buddy during your absence
- Arrange for Parent’s lunches email to be sent to a personal email

**Making plans for your return:**
- Notify the department if there are any changes to the return date (according to HR guidelines on their website)
- Discuss and agree with your line manager how you would like to return (full time or part time, using holidays/ sabbaticals/ flexible working)
- Discuss and agree on duties and responsibilities on your return
- Ensure that cover for absence continues on the staff member’s
Silver Award renewal in 2013

NEED TO TAKE EVERYBODY ON BOARD!

Nov 2012: Culture analysis – survey for all

Dec 2012/Jan 2013: Analysis of data from survey and monitoring statistics, development of narratives, identification of key issues for discussion by focus groups

Feb 2013: Focus groups, drafting of narratives and action plan

May 2013: feedback from focus groups on action plan