

**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 reviewee's skills and expand their experience and or 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.

Staff member:	Line Manager	Staff member
Reviewer:		
Line Manager:		
Date of review:		
<i>Please tick (using either \ or X to mean affirmative) actions you might like to be involved in</i>		
<b>1. Internal</b>		
<b>1.1 Administration</b>		
• Mentoring / Buddy system for new staff members / supervising junior colleagues		
• Technical support for computing activities in the department (eg. Clusters in Maths)		
• Commenting and proof-reading of proposals		
<b>1.2 Teaching</b>		
• 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)		
• Occasional slots in Current Weather Discussion (Met)		
• Provision of support for PhD students (eg. advice on computer languages, software, graphic packages, access to datasets)		
<b>Comments on possible Internal contributions (for staff member/reviewer):</b>		
<b>2. External</b>		
<b>2.1 Scientific Community</b>		
• 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)		
<b>2.2 Wider Community</b>		
• Communication and media training (research councils and other funding agencies)		

<b>Comments on possible External contributions (for staff member/reviewer):</b>		
<b>3. Research (in addition to the University SDR)</b>		
• Supervising Summer Projects – Nuffield, Department, Work experience, University funded scheme	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Preparation for funding (Research Council or University Workshops, discussions with RES)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Applying for travel funds from the University REIT/ Royal Society / LMS/ other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Applying for funding to support visitors, summer projects and other limited time scale programmes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Applying for a small grant for a short piece of work to build research momentum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Applying for a Personal Fellowship (e.g. a Leverhulme Early Career Research Fellowship / Royal Society / EPSRC / NERC and other research councils)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Comments on possible Research contribution (for staff member/reviewer):</b>		
<b>4. Career Development (in addition to the University SDR)</b>		
• Training courses offered by the CSTD or professional societies (Research Career Management or Teaching and Learning Programmes)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Technical Skill programmes and workshops	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Work placements – short/long visits to other institutions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Working elsewhere, international facilities, Newton Institute and similar organizations (Industrial Fellowships are offered by a variety of funding agencies including EPSRC, RS)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Comments on Career Development (for staff member/reviewer):</b>		
<b>LINE MANAGER'S COMMENTS:</b>		

# 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.

# Example: checklist

CHECKLIST FOR STAFF AND THEIR LINE MANAGERS

Task / Responsibility	Staff taking leave	Line Manager / PI / HoD
<u>Communicating your leave:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notification of HR and Line Manager</li> <li>• 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).</li> <li>• Discuss with other senior members of your group arrangements for group leadership while away (staff/line manager)</li> <li>• Make arrangements with colleagues in Reading or elsewhere for responding to proposal or paper reviews that arrive in your absence (staff)</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>  <input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of Expectant mothers' risk assessment form at the start and on return (for mothers only)</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<u>Make arrangements for cover during absence:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student supervision (UG / MSc projects / PhD student)</li> <li>• Staff supervision (post-docs, admin staff and others)</li> <li>• Discuss with Line Manager and Finance Administrator the possibility of getting an extension to the research grant funding your position</li> <li>• Arrange cover for any teaching responsibilities during the absence</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Email / phone Management:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get a new address from IT to give to immediate colleagues</li> <li>• Ask an administrator to check your emails during your absence</li> <li>• Set an out of office email message for your absence</li> <li>• Change your telephone answering message</li> <li>• Transfer your calls to an administrator</li> <li>• Arrange administrative cover for your absence</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p><b>Email / phone Management:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get a new address from ITSto give to immediate colleagues <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• Ask an administrator to check your emails during your absence <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• Set an out of office email message for your absence <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• Change your telephone answering message <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• Transfer your calls to an administrator <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• Arrange administrative cover for your absence <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• Get someone to open your post during your absence, and action if necessary <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>		
<p><b>For those who act as signatories / authorizers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure that these responsibilities are transferred to others: <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• Expense claim forms <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• OPMs and annual reports <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• Purchase order signatories <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>		
<p><b>KIT days:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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 <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• Complete a KIT day diary during your leave and submit to the School Administrator on your return <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>		
<p><b>Support during absence:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrange for a buddy during your absence <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• Arrange for Parents lunches emails to be sent to a personal email <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>		
<p><b>Making plans for your return:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify the department if there are any changes to the return date (according to HR guidelines on their website) <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• Discuss and agree with your line manager how you would like to return (full time or part time, using holidays/ sabbaticals/ flexible working) <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• Discuss and agree on duties and responsibilities on your return <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• Ensure that cover for absence continues on the staff member's <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>		

# 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