

Athena SWAN Handbook



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About this handbook

This handbook provides detailed information on submitting applications to Advance HE's Athena SWAN Charter awards under the expanded May 2015 criteria.

The expanded Charter enables arts, humanities, social science, business and law departments (AHSSBL) to apply for an award alongside science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine (STEMM) disciplines. It also allows for more explicit consideration of professional and support staff, and at an institutional level submission, trans staff and students.

You should refer to this handbook at all times during completion of your application form. Applications that are incomplete or do not comply with the criteria set out in this handbook may not be accepted.

Further information

Website: <https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/charters/athena-swan-charter>

athenaswan@advance-he.ac.uk

@ Athena_SWAN

Advance HE
1st floor, Napier House,
24 High Holburn,
London WC 1V 6AZ

Which charter should I apply for?

All institutions joining the Athena SWAN Charter from May 2015, and all AHSSBL departments should apply using the May 2015 criteria and application forms.

Existing members, institutional award holders and STEMM departments can also apply using the May 2015 criteria and application form if they wish. Alternatively, they are able to continue to use the pre-May 2015 **system until the April 2017 submission round**.

	Members joining from May 2015	Members who joined prior to May 2015		
	Institution members and their STEMM and AHSSBL departments GEM Trial (AHSSBL) award holders	AHSSBL department that are part of a member institution	Institution members (no award) STEMM departments (no award)	Institution award holders STEMM department award holders
Nov '15 Apr '16 Nov '16	Post-May 2015 criteria and application form	Post-May 2015 criteria and application form	Post-May 2015 criteria and application form or Pre-May 2015 criteria and application form	Post-May 2015 criteria and application form or Pre-May 2015 criteria and renewal / higher level application form
Apr '17	Post-May 2015 criteria and application form			

Research institutes

Research institutes should continue to apply using the pre-May 2015 Athena SWAN research institute processes and application forms until such time as these are updated to include the new areas the expanded Athena SWAN Charter covers.

Small and specialist institutions and departments

Small and specialist institutions and departments may find it difficult to meet the requirements of the Athena SWAN Charter. We will be consulting with these institutions further.

Depending on the outcome of this consultation, adapted application forms and guidance may be released in late 2015. If you wish to begin your application before this, please contact the Equality Charters team for advice.

Irish institutions and departments

A pilot of Athena SWAN Charter was launched in Ireland in early 2015. The pre-May 2015 Athena SWAN process has been adapted for the Irish sector. Irish institutions and STEMM departments should continue to use the adapted materials to apply for awards.

Following ongoing review, the remit of Athena SWAN in Ireland may be extended to AHSSBL departments, at which time updated application forms and guidance will be released.

Athena SWAN Principles

The Athena SWAN Charter process is based on ten key principles. By being part of Athena SWAN, institutions are committing to a progressive Charter; adopting these principles within their policies, practices, action plans and culture

1. We acknowledge that academia cannot reach its full potential unless it can benefit from the talents of all.
2. We commit to advancing gender equality in academia, in particular addressing the loss of women across the career pipeline and the absence of women from senior academic, professional and support roles
3. We commit to addressing unequal gender representation across academic disciplines and professional and support functions. In this we recognise disciplinary differences including:

The relative underrepresentation of women in senior roles in arts, humanities, social sciences, business and law (AHSSBL)

The particularly high loss rate of women in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine (STEMM)

4. We commit to tackling the gender pay gap.
5. We commit to removing the obstacles faced by women, in particular, at major points of career development and progression including the transition from PhD into a sustainable academic career.
6. We commit to addressing the negative consequences of using short-term contracts for the retention and progression of staff in academia, particularly women.

7. We commit to tackling the discriminatory treatment often experienced by trans people.
8. We acknowledge that advancing gender equality demands commitment and action from all levels of the organisation and in particular active leadership from those in senior roles.
9. We commit to making and mainstreaming sustainable structural and cultural changes to advance gender equality, recognising that initiatives and actions that support individuals alone will not sufficiently advance equality.
10. All individuals have identities shaped by several different factors. We commit to considering the intersection of gender and other factors wherever possible.

Committing to the Principles of the Athena SWAN Charter

New members (post-May 2015)

To join the Athena SWAN Charter, Advance HE requires a letter of endorsement from the vice-chancellor, principal, director (or equivalent) of your institution.

The letter confirms the institution's acceptance of the Athena SWAN principles, their commitment to these at the highest level, and commitment to action at institutional and/or department level.

There is a **template letter** for new members available on the website.

Existing members (pre-May 2015)

Institutions that have been members of Athena SWAN since before May 2015, or who gained their award as part of the Advance HE gender equality charter mark trial, will need to send a letter of commitment to the 2015 Athena SWAN Charter principles before they or their departments can submit an application using the post-May 2015 Athena SWAN criteria.

Institutions submitting applications for AHSSBL departments will be required to sign up to the new principles. The institution will still be able to use the pre-May 2015 criteria and application forms for institution applications and for STEMM department applications should they wish.

All institutions wishing to remain members of Athena SWAN Charter must sign up to the new principles by April 2017.

A **template** for the letter is available on the website.

Award levels

Bronze institution award

Prerequisites

The applicant institution must be an Athena SWAN Charter member that has signed up to the May 2015 Athena SWAN principles, and have no outstanding membership fees.

What needs to be demonstrated

Bronze institution awards recognise that the institution has a solid foundation for eliminating gender bias and developing an inclusive culture that values all staff.

This includes:

- an assessment of gender equality in the institution, including quantitative (staff data) and qualitative (policies, practices, systems and arrangements) evidence and identifying both challenges and opportunities
- a four-year plan that builds on this assessment, information on activities that are already in place and what has been learned from these
- the development of an organisational structure, including a self-assessment team, to carry proposed actions forward

Potential outcomes

- Bronze institution award
- No award

Feedback

The award panel provides constructive feedback on all submissions to provide encouragement and support. The feedback highlights effective practice the panel would like to commend as well as areas in which the panel considers that improvements can be made.

Renewals

Renewals for awards received under the May 2015 Athena SWAN Charter process are not yet available. Details will be provided in due course.

Pre-May 2015 award holders

If your institution award is due for renewal in or before November 2016, you can choose to:

- renew under the pre-May 2015 criteria
- apply for a new award under the May 2015 criteria

See **Which charter should I apply for?** for more information.

Silver institution award

Prerequisites

The applicant institution must be an Athena SWAN Charter member that has signed up to the May 2015 Athena SWAN principles, and have no outstanding membership fees.

The institution must hold a valid Athena SWAN Bronze award or Advance HE's gender equality charter mark award (granted in October 2014).

The institution must also hold department awards (see below). **At least one department must have a valid Silver award.**

Pre-May 2015 members

- The majority of the institution's STEMM departments must hold department awards.
- There should be a clear plan for the progression of any AHSSBL departments in applying for awards in the future.

Gender equality charter mark Bronze award holders

- The majority of the institution's AHSSBL departments must hold department awards.
- There should be a clear plan for the progression of any STEMM departments in applying for awards in the future.

Post-May 2015 members

- The majority of the institution's departments must hold department awards.

What needs to be demonstrated

Silver institution awards recognise a significant record of activity and achievement by the institution in promoting gender equality and in addressing challenges across different disciplines. Applications should focus on what has improved since the Bronze institutional award application, how the institution has built on the achievements of award-winning departments, and what the institution is doing to help individual departments to apply for Athena SWAN awards.

Institutions need to demonstrate how Athena SWAN is well embedded within the institution with strong leadership in promoting the charter principles and should evidence the impact of Athena SWAN activities.

Potential outcomes

- Silver institution award
- Bronze institution award
- No award

Feedback

The award panel provides constructive feedback on all submissions to provide encouragement and support. The feedback highlights effective practice the panel would like to commend as well as areas in which the panel considers that improvements can be made.

Renewals

Renewals for awards received under the May 2015 Athena SWAN Charter process are not yet available. Details will be provided in due course.

Pre-May 2015 award holders

If your institution award is due for renewal in or before November 2016, you can choose to:

- renew under the pre-May 2015 criteria
- apply for a new award under the May 2015 criteria

See **Which charter should I apply for?** for more information.

Gold institution award

Advance HE will be consulting on the required standards for Gold in summer 2015.

Bronze department award

Prerequisites

The institution to which the applicant department belongs must hold a valid Athena SWAN Bronze or Silver award or Advance HE's gender equality charter mark award (granted in October 2014). The institution must also have signed up to the May 2015 Athena SWAN principles, and have no outstanding membership fees.

A department may decide to apply for an award in the same submission round that the parent institution applies for its first institution award. While this is allowed, applicants must be aware that should the institution be unsuccessful in its application the department will be ineligible for an award.

What needs to be demonstrated

Bronze department awards recognise that in addition to institution-wide policies, the department is working to promote gender equality and to identify and address challenges particular to the department and discipline. The department must also plan future actions. This includes:

- an assessment of gender equality in the institution, including quantitative (staff and student data) and qualitative (policies, practices, systems and arrangements) evidence and identifying both challenges and opportunities
- a four-year plan that builds on this assessment, information on activities that are already in place and what has been learned from these
- the development of an organisational structure, including a self-assessment team, to carry proposed actions forward

Potential outcomes

- Bronze department award
- No award

Feedback

The awards panel provides constructive feedback on all submissions to provide encouragement and support. The feedback highlights effective practice the panel would like to commend as well as areas in which the panel considers that improvements can be made.

Renewals

Renewals for awards received under the May 2015 Athena SWAN Charter process are not yet available. Details will be provided in due course.

Pre-May 2015 award holders

If your department award is due for renewal in or before November 2016, you can choose to:

- renew under the pre-May 2015 criteria
- apply for a new award under the May 2015 criteria

See **Which charter should I apply for?** for more information.

Silver department award

Prerequisites

The institution to which the applicant department belongs must hold a valid Athena SWAN Bronze or Silver award or Advance HE's gender equality charter mark award (granted in October 2014). The institution must also have signed up to the May 2015 Athena SWAN principles, and have no outstanding membership fees.

The department does not have to have achieved a Bronze department award prior to applying for Silver. However, holding a Bronze award may make it easier to evidence progress and impact of initiatives on gender equality.

What needs to be demonstrated

In addition to the future planning required for Bronze department recognition, Silver department awards recognise that the department has taken action in response to previously identified challenges and can demonstrate the impact of these actions.

Potential outcomes

- Silver department award
- Bronze department award
- No award

Feedback

The awards panel provides constructive feedback on all submissions to provide encouragement and support. The feedback highlights effective practice the panel would like to commend as well as areas in which the panel considers that improvements can be made.

Renewals

Renewals for awards received under the May 2015 Athena SWAN Charter process are not yet available. Details will be provided in due course.

Pre-May 2015 award holders

If your department award is due for renewal in or before November 2016, you can choose to:

- renew under the pre-May 2015 criteria
- apply for a new award under the May 2015 criteria

See **Which charter should I apply for?** for more information.

Award validity

The period of award validity will be stated in the letter announcing your results. If you are unsure of your award validity please contact Advance HE's Equality Charters team.

May 2015 awards criteria

Awards conferred under the post-May 2015 criteria are valid for four years from the award submission deadline.

Should the applicant be unsuccessful in renewal at this time they will be offered a grace period of one year in order to return with an improved submission.

Pre-may 2015 awards criteria

Awards are valid for three years from the announcement of the results (approximately six months after the submission deadline).

Should the applicant be unsuccessful in renewal at this time they will be offered a grace period of one year to return with an improved submission.

Renewals

When applying for a renewal or an award at a higher level the existing award held will be valid throughout the review process, and until the award results of that round are announce

Department applications

Submitting as a department or faculty

There are many different structures in institutions, faculties and schools and it is down to the individual institution to decide the composition of units that put forward award applications.

We use the term department to apply to a range of units that sit below institution-level awards. There are precedents for a wide range of successful submissions from very small departments to large faculties.

Advance HE's Equality Charters team is happy to advise on which organisational unit should be put forward for an award, but ultimately this is a decision that must be taken within the institution. This should be done as early as possible in the application process to assist you to prepare your application, and must be decided by the two-months notice of your intention to submit.

There are a number of considerations to be taken into account when considering your application.

Size

Size alone does not preclude a unit from submitting and there is no minimum or maximum size (however, please contact us if the unit has fewer than 15 academic staff so we can discuss your application). Departments should bear the following in mind:

- all departments need to find suitable comparators for benchmarking
- all departments are subject to the same word limits with the exception of very large departments (see page 27 on requesting extended word limits)

Small units

- Units need to be able to prove that they hold adequate decision-making power within their organisation to allow them to make changes that will effect cultural transformation.

Large units

- Communication of and commitment to the Charter principles needs to be apparent across the submitting unit; responsibility and ownership should not be driven by an individual sub-unit.
- Large departments need to clearly demonstrate good practice (and impact at Silver level) across all units, and that issues specific to different subject areas have been identified.

- Data is required for every constituent subject area as averages across diverse departments may conceal problems in individual subject areas.

Note: Applications from faculties that span a range of subject areas may find it difficult to meet the application requirements.

Faculty or department?

Whether you choose to submit as a faculty as a whole or as a separate department hinges on the make-up and autonomy of the individual sub-units. When deciding whether to submit as a faculty or individual departments, the following should be considered:

- sufficient size to pursue the self-assessment process
- autonomy and control over relevant policies (eg recruitment, induction, promotion, core hours, flexible working)
- ability to provide data for students and staff disaggregated from the rest of the faculty
- distinct structure and culture within departments

Note: A departmental award will be invalidated if the department is subsequently included in a successful faculty submission. Similarly, should departments included in a successful faculty submission wish to apply individually, the faculty award would be invalidated.

Management structure

The head of department or faculty should have overall responsibility for resource allocation, budgets, academic strategy and policy in the submitting unit, so as to be able to effect the changes set out in the action plan.

Joint department applications

Advance HE accepts joint applications from closely aligned departments.

A joint department application may be applicable where departments are small (fewer than 15 academic staff) and/or are of very closely-related subject.

Below are some areas for consideration when making a joint department application.

- The self-assessment team is likely to be best placed to decide which size unit is submitted for an award.
- The panel expects data from all the constituent units/departments within the application, not averages.
- Joint department applications need to clearly demonstrate effective practice (and impact for Silver awards) across all units.
- Issues specific to different subject areas must have been identified and addressed.
- Communication of the charter principles needs to be apparent across all the departments, it should not be driven by one single unit, and the links between the units should be evident.

Newly formed departments

Bronze and Silver level applications are required to submit three years of quantitative data. It may be difficult for new or recently formed departments to provide this data, or to provide analysis and commentary in the absence of historical data.

If this is the case, please explain in your application where and why you are not able to provide three years of data. You may wish to place more emphasis on the use of qualitative data. If the department has developed out of pre-existing departments (eg following a merger), consideration of the data pertaining to those individual units will be relevant and should be included. If you are not sure whether to submit, please contact Advance HE's Equality Charters team for advice.

Changes to structure

If the structure of the award-holding institution or department changes significantly during the period of award validity, please contact Advance HE's Equality Charters team as a new, updated submission may be required.

Examples of structure change:

- merging or the splitting of departments or institutions
- staffing restructure

Awards may be withdrawn if information is established that means the award holder no longer satisfies the requirements of the award.

Students

Where a department has its own students (undergraduate and/or postgraduate), this data should be provided. A unit may still apply if it does not provide teaching or supervision, but this should be noted in the **Picture of the department** section.

National student figures for that subject area should be considered in the application as this will impact on the pipeline in that area.

Parent institution awards

A department may decide to apply for an award in the same submission round that the parent institution applies for its first institution award. While this is allowed, applicants must be aware that should the institution be unsuccessful in its application, the department will be ineligible for an award.

If in doubt, contact Advance HE's Equality Charters team no later than two months in advance of the deadline to ascertain eligibility.

Submitting an application

Institutions and departments that are preparing submissions should notify Advance HE's Equality Charters team of their intention to apply two months in advance of the submissions deadline (by the last working day of the month). This enables panels to be scheduled in advance of the deadline.

An email reminder will be sent to the named key contact for each member institution and the Advance HE Athena SWAN contact list. Please ensure that a representative from the self-assessment team joins the mailing list.

Application forms should be submitted by email to athenaswan@advance-he.ac.uk by 5pm on either the last working day of April or November. This should be consolidated as one PDF file and should include:

- cover page including contact details
- a copy of the original letter of endorsement from the head of institution or department (we do not require this as a separate original)
- completed application form
- action plan

Renewals

There are currently no renewal forms for the May 2015 criteria. Pre-May 2015 members wishing to renew under the May 2015 criteria will be treated as new applications.

Applications do not therefore need to include the original action plan or progress log.

The receipt of applications will be acknowledged by Advance HE within five working days. Please allow this time to elapse before contacting Advance HE's Equality Charters team.

Colour copies

Advance HE will reproduce your application for consideration by the awards panel. These will be printed in black and white. If you prefer for your submission to be considered in colour you should post ten colour copies to arrive at Advance HE within five working days of the deadline. These should be printed double-sided and corner stapled, rather than bound.

Send copies to: **Advance HE, Athena SWAN awards, First Floor, Napier House, 24 High Holburn, London WC1V 6AZ**

Additional information

If a panel is not able to reach a decision based on the information in the application, in exceptional circumstances they may seek additional information from the applicant.

Applicants should be prepared for such requests, which could be made up to three months after the submission deadline. The applicant will be given ten working days to provide the additional information.

Submission timeline

Timescale (+/- deadline)	Action required
- 3/4 months (minimum)	Organisational units that are unsure about whether to submit as a department, faculty, school or similar should contact Advance HE's Equality Charters team.
- 2 months	Applicants should inform Advance HE's Equality Charters team of their intention to submit. An email reminder will be sent out to the contact list and key contacts.
Last working day April/November, 5pm (deadline)	Submissions should be sent in PDF format to: athenaswan@advance-he.ac.uk . Late submissions that are not already agreed with Advance HE will not be considered.
+ 5 working days	Institutions and departments wishing for their submissions to be assessed in colour should send ten colour copies to arrive by this date.
+ 2 months	Awards panels take place. Supplementary information may be requested.
+ 5 months	Results are sent to applicants. Feedback is sent to unsuccessful applicants. Applicants that receive awards should publish their submission on their website and inform Athena SWAN of the associated web address. Any personal or confidential information may be removed from the submission prior to publication.
+ 6 months	Feedback is sent for applications which received a lower level of award than applied for.
+ 7 months	Feedback is sent for applications which were successful at the level applied for.

The timeline given above is indicative and is subject to change.

Assessing applications

Awards panels

Advance HE's Athena SWAN Charter award applications are assessed by peer review panels convened by Advance HE. The panel recommends decisions on awards to Advance HE.

At least two members of Advance HE staff will be present on the panel to moderate and provide secretariat functions. The moderator will assist the panel by providing guidance on the application and assessment process and ensure that the panel complies with the requirements and guidance set out in the panellist role description.

To ensure consistency of panel assessment, if required, the moderator will provide guidance on whether the application meets the requirements of the award level applied for. The secretary will record the key discussion points of the award panel and request that the panel identifies what feedback should be provided to the applicant.

The panel will review up to six submissions in advance of the meeting.

Panellists will discuss each application and make a decision on whether to recommend to Advance HE that an award is conferred. The panel have a number of options when making a decision about each application.

The panel may recommend to Advance HE that they;

- confer or renew the award at the level sought;
- confer or renew the award at a lower level;
- confer or renew the award at a higher level;
- do not confer an award.

Consistency of decisions

Chair

The panel is run by a chair appointed by Advance HE. The chair is a panellist and is involved in the decision-making process.

The chair will have experience of participating in previous panels and will have normally undertaken Advance HE's panellist chair training. The training includes information on:

- the panel review process
- possible decisions
- the roles of the panellists, the Advance HE moderator and secretariat
- the role of the chair
- challenges the chair may face and advice on how they may be overcome
- biases and conflicts, including information on unconscious bias

Moderator

The moderator assists the panel by providing guidance on the application and assessment process and ensures the panel complies with the requirements and guidance set out in **Advance HE's Athena SWAN Charter: guide to processes**.

To ensure consistency of panel assessment, if required, the moderator will provide guidance on whether the application meets the requirements of the award level applied for.

Assessment criteria

When assessing submissions the panel expect to see evidence of a rigorous and thorough evaluation process. It will consider the following themes at all levels of award.

Communication	How well are the policies and plans communicated to staff?
Senior or high-level commitment	Is there commitment from senior staff? How is it communicated?
Effective analysis of the data	What does the data show, and which actions are being taken to address the issues identified? How will impact be measured?
Self-reflection and honesty	The panel accepts that challenges may be faced and mistakes may be made, but these need to be recognised openly together with the steps taken to address them.
Engagement	Are staff at every level involved in the development, implementation and evaluation of policies?

In reaching a decision on the appropriate level of award, panels will consider:

- the clarity of the evidence provided of what has been done and what is planned
- the rationale for what has been done and what is planned and how they link to the organisation's strategic mission and goals
- how successful the actions taken have been, how that success was measured and evaluated and how the organisation and the individuals who work in it have benefited
- the link between the data and the action plans
- the understanding of the institutional context/local circumstances and key issues demonstrated
- the significance of any changes, programmes/initiatives in terms of their anticipated outcomes, their sustainability and the likely longer term impact on the organisation, its processes and its culture
- the level of input, investment, involvement, commitment and support from senior management, heads of departments, senior academics and research team leaders (men and women)
- consultation with input from all research academic staff (men and women), particularly encouraging women's participation
- the extent to which what was developed and introduced was different, innovative or particularly challenging
- the suitability and sustainability of what has been developed and the ease with which changes have been or are likely to become embedded in the organisational/departmental culture
- the extent to which activities, programmes and changes have successfully addressed perceptions and expectations that shape or constrain career choices and outcomes
- the extent to which the value of what has been done is recognised, welcomed and valued by staff generally
- Additional information

In addition to the application the panel is also in some cases provided with further information. The panel will not receive any previous applications.

Post-May 2015 criteria

Applicants for renewal, those applying for a higher-level award, or who were previously unsuccessful, will have the 'final comments' section of their most recent feedback submitted to the panel.

Pre-May 2015 criteria

Applicants for renewal, those applying for a higher-level award, or who were previously unsuccessful, will have their most recent feedback submitted to the panel in full.

Self-assessment team

Having an effective self-assessment team will be key to the success of an application to Advance HE's Athena SWAN Charter. The submission will require significant reflective analysis, which should be driven as far as possible by the full team (rather than it being reliant on a few or single individuals).

A self-assessment team can be a committee in its own right or it can operate under the umbrella of another group. This umbrella group must also follow the Athena SWAN self-assessment process.

Representation

It is likely that for an institution application the team will include at least one representative from each of the institution's faculties. You will want each of the main areas of your institution to be represented while maintaining a manageable group size.

The team should comprise a mixture of grades and roles representing different stages of the career ladder (particularly at the early and mid-career stages).

It may be appropriate to consider having a more complex structure to ensure adequate representation, such as a smaller central group and larger working group.

For departmental applications the self-assessment team should be representative of the staff in the department, and should usually include student representation.

Meetings

The self-assessment team must meet at least three times a year.

Shared responsibility

It is unlikely that any one individual will be responsible for completing or working on the whole application. Your final submission should be the result of intensive group work and collaboration across the self-assessment team and the institution or department.

Data considerations

The self-assessment team needs to decide the clearest way of presenting data in the narrative to allow the awards panel the maximum insight into the issues affecting the department or institution.

Completing the application form

It is unlikely that any one individual will be responsible for the whole application. Your final submission should be the result of intensive group work and collaboration across the self-assessment team and the institution or department.

Style

There is no prescribed style for completing the various sections of the application form.

You may find it helpful to review successful submissions published by current award holders. These should be made available online when the application is successful.

Equality Charters staff cannot read through submissions prior to the deadline and cannot provide feedback on specific content.

Word limits

Words limits help ensure that submissions are of a readable length for panellists who may assess up to six applications.

Word limits	Bronze	Silver
Institution application	10,000	12,000
Department application	10,500	12,000

The following are not counted towards the word limit:

- tables and graphs providing they do not include standalone prose. Any text included within tables and graphs should only make sense within the context of the figure (eg titles and data labels)
- details of your self-assessment team: these can be displayed as a table using a maximum of 20 words for each team member
- action points within the body of the application and references to them.
- references for example, data sources such as Advance HE statistical reports
- action plan

The word count includes:

- all body text, including quotes from qualitative analysis and words in screenshots
- any standalone text or prose included in tables, graphs, footnotes or references

Institution application	Bronze	Silver
Word limit	10,000	12,000
<i>Recommended word count</i>		
1. Letter of endorsement	500	500
2. Description of institution	500	500
3. Self-assessment process	1000	1000
4. Picture of the institution	2000	3000
5. Supporting and advancing women's careers	5000	6000
6. Supporting trans people	500	500
7. Further information	500	500

Department application	Bronze	Silver
Word limit	10,500	12,000
<i>Recommended word count</i>		
1. Letter of endorsement	500	500
2. Description of the department	500	500
3. Self-assessment process	1000	1000
4. Picture of the department	2000	2000
5. Supporting and advancing women's careers	6000	6500
6. Case studies	n/a	1000
7. Further information	500	500

Section guidelines

There are no specific word limits for the individual sections and you may distribute words over each of the sections as appropriate.

At the end of every section, please state how many words you have used in that section.

Requests for extended word limits

Applicants who wish to request extensions to word limits on the following grounds must contact Advance HE's Equality Charters team before submitting their application.

Large faculties

Requests for additional words are considered on a case-by-case basis for large faculties, colleges or other organisational units consisting of numerous departments applying for a department award. These words should be employed to demonstrate how Athena SWAN principles are embedded in each constituent unit, and, in the case of Silver show impact. These extra words can be used across the submission document, and it should be noted in the word counts at the end of each section where they have been used.

Faculties who wish to extend their word limit in this way should contact Advance HE's Equality Charters team for approval at least two months in advance of the submission deadline. Where additional words are granted, the maximum allowance will be 1000 words.

Exceptional circumstances

Requests for additional word allowances to account for exceptional circumstances are considered on a case-by-case basis. Examples of where such awards may be made include where a restructure has recently taken place, or where the submitting unit has a particularly unique or unusual structure, or is subject to particular constraints.

Additional words should always be used to explain how the special circumstances have impacted or been taken into account with respect to the Athena SWAN activities and the progression of gender equality.

Applicants who wish to extend their word limit in this way should contact Advance HE's Equality Charters team for approval at least two months in advance of the submission deadline. Where additional words are granted, the increased allowance will be at the discretion of Advance HE.

Additional information

Appendices are not permitted. Any appendices will be removed from submissions and will not be considered by the awards panel.

Do not include links to further information, as panellists will not consider anything in addition to the information included in the application form itself. Relevant information should be included in the substantive application.

Evidence of good practice

Panels are particularly keen to see examples of innovative and inventive good practice.

While it is recognised that good practice benefits both men and women, Athena SWAN awards are designed, in particular, to recognise efforts to address the absence of women in senior academic, leadership, management and policy-making roles.

Accordingly, panels expect to see some evidence of gender-specific measures if appropriate, and/or commentary and evidence on how initiatives have in particular benefited women.

There is no prescriptive list of measures that panels expect to see in place at every institution or department. However it is important to show that you recognise issues fundamental to career progression, for example, the importance of universal appraisal and equitable promotions processes.

Where good practice is cited, ensures that policies are explained in sufficient detail rather than just stated as a title. Submissions should also avoid presenting legal compliance as good practice.

Embedding actions within the application

Panellists will be looking to see that appropriate actions have been put in place to address the issues and challenges identified throughout the application.

There is no need for the narrative to describe each action in full. However, it is very helpful for a brief description to be provided of a key action which will be implemented to address the issue identified. These descriptions should be cross-referenced to the full action plan. The action plan should form a comprehensive summary of all actions at the end of the application.

Data guidance

Applicants should use data for the following:

- As an evidence base and rationale to formulate proactive actions, including activities, programmes and changes to policy to address problems identified, that can be measured and evaluated. Demonstrate both in the narrative and the action plan where the rationale/evidence of need to implement initiatives comes from, and how hypotheses will be tested through future activities in the action plan.
- To identify key trends and issues in the institution/department. Consider whether this can be used to demonstrate positive (or negative) effects of existing actions/policies on particular groups of staff.

Consultation

At all levels of award staff should be consulted for their views on a broad range of issues covered by the submission. Teams should consider what strategies can be employed to learn about and be responsive to the views and issues pertaining to the culture and processes of their institution or department. This will help the self-assessment team to identify key areas for development and to put in place actions to address these. Consultation may take a variety of forms, for example, focus groups or staff surveys.

- Where a survey is conducted, consider how any qualitative data will be presented. Where appropriate, qualitative consultation responses may be presented alongside quantitative data to provide further evidence.
- An honest appraisal is essential. Panels welcome reflection on good practice and that which requires development, attention or improvement. For example, if a staff consultation identifies a problematic culture, outline and evaluate the results and set out the actions you will implement, together with any successes in addressing the problems.

General data requirements

- Data should be presented in whichever way applicants feel most explanatory and appropriate (tables or graphs), as long as they clearly highlight trends and draw these out in the narrative.
- Data should correspond to the section heading, and present at least the three years preceding the submission.
- Where data is not available, this should be explained with reasons given (and, in most cases, a relevant action). Applications will not be penalised for only presenting the minimum number of years of data. Check each section of the relevant application form for the exact data requirements for that section.
- Percentages and raw numbers should be presented (both in tables and within the narrative).
- Graphs and tables should be clearly cross-referenced to the narrative and relevant section number and trends should be evaluated.
- Data should be compared with the national benchmark data.
- Where data is used to inform a particular action point, the rationale and the actual action point should be embedded in the narrative and cross-referenced to the full action plan. The panel will look at how effectively data, evaluation and action plans have been linked.
- If applying for Silver, it is important to demonstrate any evidence of impact to date.

Tips on presenting data

- A mix of graphs and tables should be used to present the data.
- Do not feel the need to present all the data that has been collected: carefully consider which data is relevant to the application.
- Make sure that graphs and tables are clearly labelled so that it is clear to the panellists what data is being presented.
- If using greyscale rather than colour for applications, consider how clearly the data in the graphs is represented.
- Refer to national benchmark data throughout the application.

- Consider the size of the graphs and text in tables, it should be easy and clear to read and understand.

Benchmarking data

Throughout the self-assessment and subsequent action plan, the applicant should be benchmarked against comparators, both to measure progress and to ascertain where there may be good practice to learn from and strive towards.

Appropriate benchmarking provides assessment panels with an indication of applicants' understanding of the scale of the issues they are facing as well as an indication of their ambitions and awareness of gender equality initiatives.

Purpose of benchmarking

Benchmarking is for the benefit of the applicant; while panels are interested in the benchmarking data used, and it can help to inform their decision to award the charter mark, the main focus should be in using the data to drive the applicant's aspirations.

Benchmarking initiatives and actions

Benchmarking can be used not only to compare the demographics of your workforce or student population, but to measure the success of the initiatives you implement. For example, you might choose to introduce a programme of work to improve the rate of promotions for women staff. Part of the evaluation of that programme could be to compare its success with different programmes undertaken in other organisations (that need not be related to higher education) tackling similar issues.

Which benchmarks should we use?

The Athena SWAN process is not prescriptive in what data is used or how it is benchmarked, as it will depend upon the institutional context.

Be ambitious in the benchmark chosen and use the benchmark to challenge your institution to make significant improvements as well as to measure progress and celebrate successes.

Make sure that it is clear throughout the application which benchmarking data source has been used, for example, the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), and the timeframe the data refers to.

Some organisations may find it particularly challenging to identify appropriate external benchmarking data. For example, departments may focus on a particular specialism for which there are very few research centres. In these cases, benchmarking should still be attempted, and it should be explained in the submission why particular benchmarks (as opposed to, for example, the national averages) have been used.

Internal benchmarking is also a particularly important element of the action plan. For example, where a success measure is an increase on an initial proportion, an indication of both the current and targeted outcome should be presented.

Including professional and support staff

Advance HE now requires information on professional and support staff to be included within the application. Different information will be required for each of the award levels of the Charter.

Data should correspond to the section heading and should cover the three years preceding the submission. Reasons should be provided where data is unavailable, and, in most cases, a relevant action included to address this in the action plan.

Institution applications

Section 4: picture of the institution

Bronze award

In this section data for professional and support staff is not required for Bronze institution applications.

Silver award

Present data on your professional and support staff broken down by:

- Gender;
- Faculty;
- grade/job type;
- contract type (permanent/open-ended contract or fixed-term contract);
- full-time/part-time;
- turnover rates.

You may wish to provide further analysis with more than one of these variables (eg contract type and faculty) where numbers allow.

Ensure you include details of whether the data is based on full-person equivalent (FPE) or full-time equivalent (FTE), and explanations for where the data has not been provided.

Section 5: supporting and advancing women's careers

Bronze award

Information on professional and support staff is required in **5.5 Flexible working and managing career breaks** and **5.6 Organisation and culture**. Data for professional and support staff in this section should be evaluated and disaggregated from academic staff.

Additionally, please outline future priorities for professional and support staff, for example, implementing induction for new professional and support staff.

Silver award

Data for professional and support staff should be presented as above for a Bronze institution award. In addition professional and support staff should be included throughout Section 5, which asks about how professional and support staff are included within the department. Data for professional and support staff in this section should be evaluated and disaggregated from academic staff.

Additionally information should be included within the application on the inclusion of professional and support staff; for example, are they invited to departmental staff meetings, what training/learning and development opportunities are available and are there flexible working policies in place? There should be staff consultation to provide evidence and support of the initiatives/policies in place.

Applicants should also, if possible demonstrate the impact of initiatives that are in place relating to professional and support staff. For example this might include a positive increase in the number of staff taking learning and development courses as a result of an initiative to try to increase awareness of courses.

Additionally, please outline the future priorities for professional and support staff.

Department applications

Section 2: description of the department

Please present the total number of professional and support staff. Further analysis of the breakdown of this data is not required in the **Picture of the department** section of the application.

Section 5: supporting and advancing women's careers

Bronze application

Information on professional and support staff is required in **5.5 Flexible working and managing career breaks** and **5.6 Organisation and culture**. Within these sections identify trends and issues in the professional and support staff data and where appropriate actions have been put in place.

Silver application

Professional and support staff should be included throughout **Section 5**.

Present information on the inclusion of professional and support staff within the application. For example, are they invited to departmental staff meetings, what training/learning and development opportunities are available and are there flexible working policies in place?

Staff consultation should be used to provide evidence and support of the initiatives/policies in place. Additionally, please outline future priorities for professional and support staff.

Identify trends and issues in the professional and support staff data and where appropriate actions have been put in place.

Intersectionality

People's identities are shaped by several factors at the same time, creating unique experiences and perspectives. These factors include among others age, disability, gender identity, race, religion and belief, and sexuality.

Institutions should be mindful of this intersectionality when exploring issues and developing solutions. For example, the experience within higher education may vary greatly for a black woman compared with a white woman. While everything within the Athena SWAN application should be considered through the primary lens of gender, the other factors that shape people's identity and therefore their experience within the institution should not be ignored.

Institution application

At Bronze and Silver level institutions are expected to consider the role of the intersection of gender with ethnicity for both academic and professional and support staff. Self-assessment teams are expected to consider intersectionality in increased detail the higher the level of award.

At Bronze level, if it is not possible for the institution to cover this within the application (eg because of lack of data), the panel will expect to see that appropriate actions have been put in place (eg. actions to improve collection of data).

At Silver level, an explanation of any actions implemented and their impact should be provided.

Guidance to the application questions

1. Letter of endorsement

The letter of endorsement from the head of the institution or department sets the tone for the submission. It is vital that it demonstrates support, commitment and investment.

The letter should explain why the department or institution values the Athena SWAN Charter, and how the action plan will help meet their strategic aims.

Wherever possible the letter should outline specific activities/actions undertaken by the head of the institution (and/or senior leadership team) or the head of department to promote gender equality.

If the applicant holds an Athena SWAN award and is applying for an award under the post-May 2015 criteria, reference should be made to the impact of the previous award.

For higher levels of recognition, the panel will expect to hear how the department or institution has championed gender equality.

Although the head of the institution or department may well wish to refer to an institution's history and achievements, this should not be the focus of the letter. Panels are keen to get a sense of individual commitment to gender equality at the top of the organisation or department.

The letter should include a statement that the information presented in the application (including qualitative and quantitative data) is an honest, accurate and true representation of the department.

If the head of department is soon to be/has been recently succeeded, applicants should include an additional short statement from the incoming head. An additional 200 words is permitted for use in this statement.

Letters should be addressed to:

Advance HE,

First floor, Napier House

24 High Holburn,

London WC1V 6AZ

Institutions

Recommended word count: Bronze: 500 words | Silver: 500 words

For institution applications the letter should endorse and commend any initiatives for women and STEMM and/or AHSSBL initiatives that have made a significant contribution to the achievement of the institution mission. It should highlight key challenges and explain how the Athena SWAN action plan and activities in the institution contribute to the overall institution strategy and academic mission.

Departments

Recommended word count: Bronze: 500 words | Silver: 500 words

The letter should highlight key challenges for the department and explain how the Athena SWAN action plan and activities in the department will address the challenges and contribute to the overall department and/or institution strategy. Comment on how staff at all levels are, and will continue to be, engaged with the process at present and during the lifetime of the award. Include any evidence of actions taken by the head of department to support/promote the Charter.

2. Description of the institution/department

Describe the institution or department so that panellists can readily understand this without specific prior knowledge. Clearly outline the structure including reporting structures and anything that may be particularly different to sector norms. Remember that panellists assess the application as a standalone document.

Institutions

Recommended word count: Bronze: 500 words | Silver: 500 words

Present information on where the institution has reached in the Athena SWAN process. For example, when the institution became a member of the Charter, when it received any currently held award (if applicable) and, if relevant, how many departments also hold awards and at what levels.

Information on the institution's teaching and research focus should be provided. For example, whether the focus is mainly on arts and humanities, to what extent is it a research-intensive institution?

Present information on the numbers of staff, with academic and professional and support staff disaggregated. Information on the number of departments and the total number of students should be given. Further breakdown of student data is not required for institution applications. Present the numbers of staff and students in AHSSBL and STEMM departments in a table.

Departments

Recommended word count: Bronze: 500 words | Silver: 500 words

Present information on the numbers of staff (with academic and professional and support staff disaggregated) and students, along with information on any other relevant features, for example, any recent changes in structure or management, quasi-autonomous groups or split-site arrangements.

A quasi-autonomous group may include:

- a research institute/group within a department that receives specific external funding
- staff managed/contracted by a different organisation/management structure, for example, a shared research institute
- a teaching-only group embedded within the department that may be subject to a different management structure

If the structure is particularly complex, it may help to include a diagram of the departmental structure to illustrate the reporting mechanisms within the department.

3. The self-assessment process

Institution

Recommended word count: Bronze: 1000 words | Silver: 1000 words

Department

Recommended word count: Bronze: 1000 words | Silver: 1000 words

Having an effective self-assessment team will be key to the success of an application to the Athena SWAN Charter. The submission will require significant reflective analysis, which should be driven as far as possible by the full team (rather than it being reliant on a few or single individuals).

(i) Description of the self-assessment team

The description of the self-assessment team should include:

- members' roles (both within the institution or department and as part of the team) including identifying the chair
- how people were nominated or volunteered to the role and how any time involved in being a member of the team is included in any workload allocation or equivalent
- how the team represents the staff working in the institution or department (eg. a range of grades and job roles, professional and support staff as well as academics and any consideration of gender balance, work-life balance arrangements or caring responsibilities)

Note: This description can be displayed as a table (maximum 20 words about each team member) and is not included in the word count.

(ii) An account of the self-assessment process

Outline the process the self-assessment team has gone through preparing for the application. This should include information on when the team was formed, how often it has met, and what was the focus of the meetings.

This section should include:

- when the team was established, including how the team communicated, for example, face to face, email, etc
- how often the team has met
- the focus of the meetings
- how the team has consulted with members of the institution or department (and students)
- consultation with individuals outside the institution: external consultation refers to consultation outside the institution or department, for example, a critical friend reviewing the application, consultation with other successful Athena SWAN departments/institutions
- how the self-assessment team fits in with other committees and structures of the institution. It is important to include information on the reporting structure. For example, is there a direct route for the team to report to, is Athena SWAN a standing item on the department/institution's key decision-making board?

(iii) Plans for the future of the self-assessment team

Outline:

- how often the team will continue to meet
- how the team intends to monitor implementation of the action plan, including how it will interact with other relevant committees and structures within the institution
- how the team intends to keep staff (and students) updated on ongoing work
- succession planning for where membership of the team will change, including any transfer of responsibility for the work, role rotation and how the workload of members of the team will be accounted for in workload allocation

- at institution level, how the team will engage with departments to encourage them to apply for awards

4. A picture of the institution/department

Contracts

Sections 4.1. and 4.2 of the application form include questions on contract type (zero-hours, fixed-term and open-ended/permanent) and contract function (research-only, teaching-only, research and teaching). Further definition of contract-related terms can be found in the **Terminology** section of this guidance.

Both sections require the use of available data to examine contractual issues by grade and gender, for example, if there are there any issues related to the retention and progression of staff.

Institutions

Recommended word count: Bronze: 2000 words | Silver: 3000 words

- For institution applications Advance HE recommends the use of the University and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA)/Expert HR coding. Institutions are required to return data to HESA using this framework and Advance HE also uses this framework to report equality data in annual statistical staff and student reports. Using UCEA/Expert HR will enable institutions to benchmark their performance quickly to the national equality statistics. Details of the relevant coding categories can be found on the HESA website: www.hesa.ac.uk
- Where institutions use UCEA/Expert HR coding, Advance HE recommends that self-assessment teams ask their central data team to undertake a mapping exercise to show how the coding maps to internal definitions. Any map produced can also be included as a table in the submission and will not be included in the word count.
- State whether data on staff is presented by FTE, FPE or headcount. Please refer to the **Terminology** section for full definitions of these terms.
- Data on professional and support services staff should be presented and evaluated separately.

4.1 Academic and research staff data

In addition to the requirements above the following also need to be considered for the questions relating to academic staff data.

- Comment on the key issues in the institution, what steps have been taken and what support has been given to address any gender disparity.

- Comment and reflect on the proportions/percentages of women and men compared with the national picture for the discipline(s). Where benchmarking data does not provide meaningful comparison, a clear explanation must be provided.
- Comment and reflect on any differences in data for men and women across the institution and any differences between AHSSBL and STEMM within the institution.
- **Note:** Present data for departments grouped as AHSSBL and STEMM. Where institutions have departments that have a predominance of one gender, applications should disaggregate this data from the other departments to prevent any skewing of data.
- Comment and reflect on any differences in data for full- and part-time staff
- Include postdoctoral researchers (or equivalent) when presenting data and information on academic staff.
- Data should be presented by contract function: research-only, research and teaching, teaching-only (or equivalent).
- Include visiting academics and honorary contract staff.
- Comment and reflect on the role of the intersection of gender with ethnicity. At Silver level provide an explanation of actions and any impact in this area.
- Describe any initiatives implemented to address any possible imbalance and biases.
- include any plans for the future, including how any gaps in the data will be addressed, linking these to the action plan.
- For Silver provide any evidence of impact to date.

(i) Academic and research staff by grade and gender

This section is an opportunity to present the numbers of academic staff by gender across the whole university. Data should also be grouped to demonstrate any difference between AHSSBL and STEMM subject areas. It is not necessary to break down the data by department.

Look at the career pipeline across the whole university and between AHSSBL and STEMM. Comment on and explain any differences between men and women, and any differences between AHSSBL and STEMM. Any issues in the pipeline at particular grades/levels should be identified.

The 'leaky pipeline' refers to the loss of women or men at consecutive career stages within academia. The data presented should be compared with the national picture.

Comment and reflect on the proportions/percentages of women and men compared with the national picture for the discipline(s). If it is felt that benchmarking data may not be appropriate, a clear explanation must be provided.

(ii) Academic and research staff on fixed-term, open-ended/permanent and zero-hour contracts by gender

Comment on the proportions of men and women on these types of contracts. Comment on what is being done to ensure continuity of employment and address any other issues, including redeployment schemes.

The use of fixed-term and zero-hour contracts can have particularly detrimental effects to women's career development, retention and progression. The use of fixed-term contracts is more widespread in some parts of the sector than others. Institutions adopting the most inclusive approach appoint the majority of staff on open-ended contracts and limit the use of fixed-term contracts to, for example, maternity cover or for one-off appointments lasting less than a year.

This section should provide analysis and commentary on the proportions of men and women on these contracts. Information on the actions being taken to address issues around contract type should be highlighted, with some focus on what is being done to ensure continuity of employment.

Does the data show any issues which are damaging to particular groups of staff? What support has the institution put in place to mitigate for any negative impact for particular groups of staff?

(iii) Academic staff by contract function and gender: research-only, research and teaching, and teaching-only

Comment on the proportions of men and women on these contracts and by job grade. Where institutions appoint academic staff specifying teaching-only contracts, this can be particularly detrimental for the career progression of early career staff. In your application you will need to evaluate contract type by grade and gender and any differences in the support available for staff appointed on these contracts.

Does the data show any issues which are damaging to particular groups of staff? What support has the institution put in place to mitigate for any negative impact on particular groups of staff?

(iv) Academic leavers by grade and gender

Identify the main reasons that academic staff are leaving the university. The proportions of men and women across different grades should also be considered to help to identify if there is a particular point at which people leave the university. Where possible refer to exit interviews or other appropriate mechanisms. This may help to identify actions to address leavers.

(v) Equal pay audits/reviews

It is important to identify any significant pay gaps. Comment on the findings from the most recent equal pay audit and identify the institution's top three priorities to address any disparities and to enable equality in pay.

As a general guide, any differences in pay of five per cent or more, or patterns of three per cent or more, will require exploration and explanation. Significant differences do not prove that there is pay discrimination, but they may indicate features of the pay system that are indirectly discriminatory and will need to be resolved.

Silver level

The panel are likely to want to see evidence that the pay gap at the professorial levels has been investigated. Women reaching professor level often do not reach the higher pay levels within these grades.

Silver application

4.2 professional and support staff data

For a definition of professional and support staff, please refer to the Terminology section of the handbook.

In addition to the requirements described at the beginning of the data section, the following need to be considered for questions relating to professional and support staff data.

- Comment on the key issues in the institution, what steps have been taken and what support has been given to address any gender disparity.
- Comment and reflect on any differences in data for men and women across the whole institution and any differences between AHSSBL and STEMM within the institution.

Note: Present data for departments grouped as AHSSBL and STEMM.

- Data for all professional and support staff should be presented, including those in non-academic departments. Staff who are contracted out should not be included.
- Comment and reflect on any differences in data for full- and part-time staff.
- Comment and reflect on the role of the intersection of gender with ethnicity. At Silver level provide an explanation of actions and any impact in this area.
- Describe any initiatives implemented to address any possible imbalance and biases.
- Outline any plans for the future, including how any gaps in the data will be addressed, linking these to the action plan.
- Provide evidence of any impact to date.

(i) Professional and support staff by grade and gender

This section is an opportunity to present the numbers of professional and support staff by gender across the whole university. Data should also be grouped to demonstrate any difference between AHSSBL and STEMM subject areas. It is not necessary to break down the data by department, and data should be grouped together by AHSSBL and STEMM departments.

Look at the career pipeline across the whole institution and between AHSSBL and STEMM subjects. Comment on and explain any difference between men and women and any differences between AHSSBL and STEMM subjects.

Any issues in the pipeline at particular grades/levels should be identified. The data presented should be compared with the national picture.

(ii) Professional and support staff on fixed-term, open-ended/permanent and zero-hour contracts by gender

The use of fixed-term and zero-hour contracts can have particularly detrimental effects on women's career development, retention and progression. The use of fixed-term contracts is more widespread in some parts of the sector than others. Institutions adopting the most inclusive approach appoint the majority of staff on open-ended contracts and limit the use of fixed-term contracts to, for example, maternity cover or for one-off appointments lasting less than a year.

Does the data show any issues which are damaging to particular groups of staff? What support has the institution put in place to mitigate for any negative impact for particular groups of staff?

This section should provide analysis and commentary on the proportions of men and women on these contracts. Information on the actions being taken to address issues around contract type should be highlighted, with some focus on what is being done to ensure continuity of employment.

(iii) Professional and support staff leavers by grade and gender

Identify the main reasons that staff are leaving the university. The proportions of men and women across different grades should also be considered to help to identify if there is a particular point at which people leave the university. Where possible refer to exit interviews or other appropriate mechanisms. This may help to identify actions to address leavers.

Departments

Recommended word count: Bronze: 2000 words | Silver: 2000 words

General data requirements include the following.

- For departmental applications, self-assessment teams may also choose to use the UCEA/Expert HR codes. It will be important, however, for the team and panellists to be able to identify types of staff using the department's own terminology (and again central data teams may be useful here, see above). The UCEA/Expert HR codes can be aggregated and presented in the most efficient way to demonstrate the requirements of each section.
- Where a department is large enough (more than 20 staff), data should also be broken down by contract type, that is full- or part-time, zero-hours, open-ended or permanent, and research-only, teaching-only or research and teaching.
- Where STEMM departments contain clinical and non-clinical staff, their data should be presented separately.
- State whether data on staff is presented by FTE, FPE or headcount. Please refer to the **Terminology** section for full definitions of these terms.

4.3 Student data

At least three years of student data should be presented, as this will help to identify trends. Applications will not be penalised for only presenting three years of data.

Throughout this section present data and provide analysis. Applications should try to identify key trends in the data, and put actions in place to address and improve the data. For Silver applications, demonstrate impact of any previous initiatives/actions where possible.

In addition to the data requirements above, the following points should also be considered.

- Reflect upon the key issues in the department, the steps have been taken and the support given to address any gender disparity.
- Comment and reflect on the proportions/percentages of women and men compared with the national picture for the discipline(s). If it is felt that benchmarking data may not be appropriate, a clear explanation must be provided.
- Comment and reflect on any differences in data for men and women.
- Comment and reflect on any differences in data for full- and part-time students.
- Describe any initiatives implemented to address any possible imbalance and biases, and for Silver level any impact to date.
- Action any plans for the future, including how any gaps in the data will be addressed, linking these to the action plan.

(i) Numbers of men and women on access or foundation courses

(ii) Numbers of undergraduate students by gender

(iii) Numbers of men and women on postgraduate taught degrees

(iv) Numbers of men and women on postgraduate research degrees

For questions (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv), the following guidance applies.

Where possible and relevant, provide data on the numbers of students by gender for the courses run by the department. Data on the numbers of full- and part-time students should be provided. Information on applications to the courses and data on number of offers, acceptance rates and degree attainment/completion rate should be presented.

Note: acceptance rate refers to the number of students that accept their offer and commence the course.

Any trends in the data should be highlighted and actions put in place to try to address the issues identified.

(v) Progression pipeline between undergraduate and postgraduate student levels

This section should identify any issues that are identified in the pipeline between undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. Actions should be put in place that aim to address the issues identified

4.4 Academic and research staff data

In addition to the data requirements above, the following points should also be considered.

- Comment on the key issues in the department, the steps that have been taken and the support given to address any gender disparity.
- Comment and reflect on the proportions/percentages of women and men compared with the national picture for the discipline(s). Where benchmarking data does not provide meaningful comparison, a clear explanation must be provided.
- Comment and reflect on any differences in data for men and women across the department.
- Comment and reflect on any differences in data for full- and part-time staff.
- When presenting data and information on academic staff, postdoctoral researchers (or equivalent) should be included.
- Data should be presented by contract function, for example, research-only, research and teaching, and teaching-only (or equivalent).
- . Comment and reflect on the role of the intersection of gender with ethnicity. At Silver level provide an explanation of actions and any impact in this area.
- Describe any initiatives implemented to address any possible imbalance and biases.
- Include any plans for the future, including how any gaps in the data will be addressed, linking these to the action plan.
- For Silver provide any evidence of impact to date.
- Where a STEMM department comprises clinical and non-clinical staff, data should be disaggregated and presented separately.
- Where a department is large enough (more than 20 staff), data should be also broken down by contract type, for example, full- or part-time, zero-hours, fixed-term, open-ended or permanent.

Silver applications

Where relevant, comment on the transition of technical staff to academic roles.

(i) Academic and research staff by grade, contract function and gender: research-only, teaching and research or teaching-only

This section is an opportunity to present the numbers of academic staff by gender across the department. Look at the career pipeline and comment on and explain any differences between men and women. Identify any issues in the pipeline at particular grades/job type/academic contract type.

The 'leaky pipeline' refers to the loss of women or men at consecutive career stages within academia. The data presented should be compared with the national picture.

(ii) Academic and research staff by grade on fixed-term, open-ended/permanent and zero-hour contracts by gender

The use of fixed-term and zero-hour contracts can have particularly detrimental effects on women's career development, retention and progression. The use of fixed-term contracts is more widespread in some parts of the sector than others. Institutions adopting the most inclusive approach appoint the majority of staff on open-ended contracts and limit the use of fixed-term contracts to, for example, maternity cover or for one-off appointments lasting less than a year.

Provide analysis and commentary on the proportions of men and women on these contracts. Highlight information on the actions being taken to address issues around contract type with some focus on what is being done to ensure continuity of employment, including redeployment schemes.

Does the data show any issues which are damaging to particular groups of staff? What support has the institution put in place to mitigate for any negative impact for particular groups of staff?

(iii) Academic leavers by grade and gender and full/part-time status

Identify the main reasons that academic staff are leaving the department, highlighting any mechanisms for collecting this data. The proportions of men and women across different grades should also be considered to help to identify if there is a particular point at which people leave the university. Where possible refer to exit interviews or other appropriate mechanisms. This may help to identify actions to address leavers.

5. Supporting and advancing women's careers

Institution

Recommended word count: Bronze: 5000 words | Silver: 6000 words

Department

Recommended word count: Bronze: 6000 words | Silver: 6500 words

Throughout the following sections:

- provide data (numbers and percentages) for at least the past three years, with commentary on their significance: where possible and relevant, use clearly labelled graphical illustrations
- reflect upon the key issues in the institution, the steps taken and the support given to address any gender disparity
- describe the initiatives implemented to address any issues and any impact to date
- provide data and evidence obtained via consultation
- action any plans for the future, including how any gaps in the data will be addressed, linking these to the action plan
- comment and reflect on any differences in data for men and women across the institution and any differences between AHSSBL and STEMM

Note: Present data for departments grouped as AHSSBL and STEMM.

- comment and reflect on the role of the intersection of gender with ethnicity: at Silver level provide an explanation of actions and any impact in this area
- for Silver level provide any evidence of impact to date
- postdoctoral researchers should be included as academic staff

Departments

In addition to the above, for each of the following sections:

- reflect upon the key issues in the department, the steps taken and support that has been given to address any gender disparity
- describe the initiatives implemented to address any issues and for Silver, any impact to date
- where the number of women in the department is small, applicants may wish to comment on specific examples
- provide information on different career pathways and training for both academic and professional and support staff

5.1 Key career transition points: Academic staff

When providing information about academic staff please remember that this should include information about postdoctoral researchers.

This section requires consideration of what your data tells you about the effectiveness of arrangements for key transition points. It provides an opportunity to assess and reflect on policies and practices in place and to identify any areas for improvement. Reflect upon data gathered through staff consultation as well as the data specific to each section.

(i) Recruitment

Break down application data by gender and grade. The data should also include the long- and shortlisted candidates, and offer and acceptance rates.

Information on the institution's and/or department's recruitment processes should be provided, with particular emphasis on how women (and men where underrepresented) are encouraged to apply. For example, are there policies in place to ensure gender representation on recruitment panels, is there any training provided and what is done to try to address unconscious bias?

Departments

- Comment on how the department's processes and criteria for shortlisting and selection comply with, and build upon, the institution's policies for equality and diversity, and recruitment and selection.
- If the dataset is large, please break it down into the different disciplines or units.

(ii) Induction (institution or department)

What are the induction processes for new staff? For example, what training is provided, what resources are available and how are they introduced to other staff and welcomed into their new workplace? Comment on uptake and how its effectiveness is reviewed.

(iii) Promotion (institution or department)

Information on promotions should include data on staff applying for promotion and numbers of applications and success rate. This should be broken down by gender, grade (the grade being applied for) and full- and part-time status.

This section should also include:

- details on the promotions process, including how candidates are identified, and how the process and criteria are communicated to staff;
- commentary on the criteria for promotion, including how university policy and practice considers the impact of career breaks on promotions: comment on how the full range of work-related activities (including administrative, pastoral and outreach work) are taken into consideration;
- provide details of any training or mentoring offered around promotion;
- comment on staff's perception of the promotions process, including whether it is transparent and fair.

Data should be presented as proportions of the eligible cohorts. Where numbers are small consider commenting on individual cases and whether particularly onerous tasks an individual may have undertaken are valued. Also consider including information on the decision-making process, how career breaks are accounted for, whether pay is negotiable or standardised and what is done to support those that were unsuccessful in applying for promotion.

(iv) Research Excellence Framework (REF) (institution or department)

Data on the number of staff submitted to REF should be presented. The data should include the numbers that were eligible and the numbers submitted and should be broken down by gender. A comparison of the REF data should be made with the data from the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) 2008, with commentary on any gender imbalances.

Silver applications

5.2 Key career transition points: professional and support staff

Please refer to the **Terminology** section for a full definition of professional and support staff. This section is only applicable at Silver level.

This section requires consideration of what your data tells you about the effectiveness of arrangements for key transition points. It provides an opportunity to assess and reflect on policies and practices in place and to identify any areas for improvement. Reflect upon data gathered through staff consultation as well as the data specific to each section.

(i) Induction

What are the induction processes for new staff? For example, what training is provided, what resources are available and how are they introduced to other staff and welcomed into their new workplace?

(ii) Promotion

Where possible include data on staff applying for promotion and numbers of applications and success rate. As there may not be a clear pathway for promotion, comment on how career development is supported for different types of professional and support staff, and how opportunities may be increased.

This section should also include:

- details on the promotions process, including how candidates are identified, and how the process and criteria are communicated to staff
- commentary on the criteria for promotion, including how university policy and practice considers the impact of career breaks on promotions: comment on how the full range of work-related activities are taken into consideration
- provide details of any support offered around promotions: comment on staff's perception of the promotions process

Explain the promotions process itself, for example, how and whether staff are selected and how they apply, and comment on what responsibilities are taken into consideration in promotion. Where possible include information on the judging process and what is done to support those that were unsuccessful in applying for promotion.

5.3 Career development: academic staff

When providing information about academic staff please remember that this should include information about postdoctoral researchers.

(i) Training

This section should outline the training available to academic staff at all levels of the institution or department. In particular, the application should present information on training that is related to equality and diversity, management, leadership, and/or other opportunities linked to career progression.

Provide information on the uptake of these courses, and break down the information by gender if possible. Also explain how staff are kept informed of training opportunities.

Describe how the institution monitors the effectiveness of training, and provide details of how training is developed in response to levels of uptake and evaluation.

(ii) Appraisal/development review

Use this section to describe the current appraisal/development review process for academic staff at all levels across the institution or department. Explain whether promotion and work-life balance are discussed and taken into consideration as part of the appraisal/development review process.

Provide information about any training the institution/department offers to prepare for the appraisal/development review process. This could be training for those conducting the review, and/or for those being appraised.

Provide information on the uptake of these training opportunities, including any differences by gender. Also include narrative detailing any feedback that staff have provided about this training.

(iii) Support given to academic staff for career progression

This question is an opportunity to provide information about the support you offer to staff to assist in their career progression. The support currently provided should be commented and reflected upon. For example, are mentoring, coaching schemes or shadowing opportunities offered? For academic staff it is particularly important to provide detail about the support given to postdoctoral researchers.

Departments

(iv) Support given to students (at any level) for academic career progression

This question is an opportunity to provide information about the support offered to students to assist in their academic career progression. The support currently provided should be commented and reflected upon. For example, are mentoring, coaching schemes or shadowing opportunities offered? How are students wishing to stay on for a PhD supported, and for those finishing a PhD and looking to start as a postdoctoral researcher?

(v) Support offered to those applying for research grant applications

Comment and reflect on the guidance given to staff when applying for research funding and what support is offered to those who are unsuccessful. For example, consider whether there are internal peer-review systems, or processes that enable early career researchers to be named on grants. Consider whether there are any gender gaps in application or success rates, and whether there are any patterns in the amount of research funding granted per award.

Silver applications

5.4 career development: professional and support staff

(i) Training

This section should outline the training available to professional and support staff at all levels of the institution or department. In particular, the application should present information on training that is related to equality and diversity, management, leadership, and/or other opportunities linked to career progression.

Provide information on the uptake of these courses, and break down the information by gender if possible. Also explain how staff are kept informed of training opportunities.

Describe how the institution monitors the effectiveness of training, and provide details of how training is developed in response to levels of uptake and evaluation.

(ii) Appraisal/development review

Use this section to describe the current appraisal/development review process for professional and support staff at all levels across the institution or department. Explain whether promotion and work-life balance are discussed and taken into consideration as part of the appraisal/development review process.

Provide information about any training the institution/department offers to prepare for the appraisal/development review process. This could be training for those conducting the review, and/or for those being appraised.

Provide information on the uptake of these training opportunities, including any differences by gender. Also include narrative detailing any feedback that staff have provided about this training.

(iii) Support given to professional and support staff for career progression

This question is an opportunity to provide information about the support you offer to staff to assist in their career progression. The support currently provided should be commented and reflected upon. For example, are mentoring, coaching schemes or shadowing opportunities offered?

5.5 Flexible working and managing career breaks

Present data for professional and support staff and academic staff separately.

This section requires consideration of the efficacy of arrangements for supporting staff who may, given a range of circumstances, need to change their working patterns. This may be because they have, for example, started a family, taken on caring responsibilities for another family member or had to change their working pattern to accommodate other personal or physical difficulties.

Also consider what the data shows about the institutional or departmental approach to cover absences of staff who take extended absence for example for adoption, maternity, parental or paternity leave.

(i), (ii) and (iii) Cover and support for maternity and adoption leave

For sections (i) (ii) and (iii) outline the proactive arrangements (including central policy) for covering academic and professional and support staff work during maternity and adoption leave, arrangements to enable staff to keep in touch during leave, and how staff are supported before and upon their return to work. Comment on any difference in maternity leave provision for staff on fixed-term contracts.

(iv) Maternity return rate

Provide data and comment on the maternity return rate for the institution or department. Provide commentary on any differences of provision for staff on fixed-term contracts, including any information on staff whose contracts are not renewed.

Silver applications

For Silver include the proportion of staff remaining in post six, 12 and 18 months after return or where this data is not available, discuss actions to address this.

(iv) Paternity, shared parental, adoption and parental leave uptake

Provide data and comment on the uptake of paternity leave, adoption leave and parental leave by gender and grade for the institution or department. Comment on the uptake of statutory additional paternity leave and shared parental leave. Provide details on the institution's or department's paternity package and arrangements.

(vi) Flexible working

Comment on whether there is a formal or informal system in place for flexible working. Provide data on application and success rates by gender and grade, commenting on any disparities. Give details of the support provided for managers in promoting and managing flexible working arrangements, and how the institution or department raises awareness of the options available.

Provide information on how aware staff are of flexible working arrangements. Consider using results of staff consultation to evidence staff awareness.

(vii) Transition from part-time work back to full-time work

Evaluate and consider the support given to staff wishing to transition from part-time to full-time work, for example, after childcare or caring responsibilities reduce or stop. Things that may be useful to consider include:

- mentoring or coaching support
- phased increase in workload or working pattern

Institutions

(viii) Childcare

Describe the institution's childcare provision. Is there a nursery for staff and students to use, if so, what are the opening times and how many places are available for staff and students? Use staff consultation to evidence whether staff feel the provisions are adequate. Are initiatives in place to support and assist those who have childcare responsibilities, for example, reserved parking?

(ix) Caring responsibilities

Describe the policies and practices in place to support staff with caring responsibilities, for example those with child or adult dependants. If possible, evidence on uptake of these policies should be presented by gender.

5.6 Organisation and culture

Institutions

(i) Culture

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

Illustrate how the institution actively considers gender equality and inclusivity. If the institution has any staff networks or dignity at work or health and wellbeing initiatives they should be highlighted here.

Provide detail of staff and (if applicable) student consultation relating to the culture of the institution. Analyse any data and evidence gathered around the culture, highlight any gender differences, differences between AHSSBL and STEMM departments, and link actions to address any issues the data highlights.

Provide details of how the Athena SWAN May 2015 principles have been, and will continue to be, embedded into the culture and working of the institution.

(ii) Human resources (HR) policies

Provide an honest assessment of how the institution monitors the consistency of HR policies about equality, dignity at work, bullying, harassment, grievance and disciplinary processes. Describe actions taken to address any identified differences between policy and practice. Applicants will not be penalised for identifying issues.

Comment on any issues that have been identified and what the department has done or is planning on doing to address them.

Note: If this question results in an answer that the institution does not wish to be made public, please remove the answer to this question before publishing the application publically. Advance HE does not publish applications.

What is being done to ensure that staff with management responsibilities are up to date in their HR knowledge, for example, training or workshops? How frequently are these updated, how does the department monitor the uptake, what is the uptake and is there any gender discrepancy?

(iii) Proportion of heads of school/faculty/department by gender

Provide data across the whole institution. What are the main concerns and achievements, what are the differences, is there anything that is being done in AHSSBL that is not being done in STEMM or vice versa? How are heads of school/faculty/department roles decided, are the roles rotated and if so over what time period? What is being done to address any specific gender underrepresentation? Is there any targeted support or leadership training provided?

(iv) Representation of men and women on senior management committees

Provide data by gender, staff type (academic/professional and support staff) and grade. Comment on how membership of senior management committees is decided, for example, is it role-specific? Comment on any gender imbalance and what the institution is doing to address this, for example, through support and training for potential future senior managers or extending the membership of these committees to get a broader or more balanced perspective.

(v) Representation of men and women on influential institution committees

Identify the influential committees, and provide data about their membership by gender, staff type (academic/professional and support staff) and grade. Outline how committee members are identified. For example, do they nominate themselves, or are they approached to join and if so, by whom and through what process? What initiatives are in place to improve any gender imbalance on committees, for example, role rotation, deputising, shadowing? Is there a gender imbalance on any committees, for example, senior management, equality and diversity, finance committees? What action is going to be taken to address this?

(vi) Committee workload

How is committee overload considered and addressed? Is committee work included in any workload allocation model? Are committee roles rotated, and if so, what is the duration?

(vii) Institutional policies, practices and procedures

How is gender equality considered in the development, implementation and review of institutional policies, practices and procedures? Include any staff consultation around the fairness and transparency of institutional policies. Describe how any positive and/or negative impact of existing and future policies is determined and acted upon, for example, carrying out impact assessments before policies are implemented.

(viii) Workload model

Describe any workload allocation model in place and what it includes, for example, teaching, pastoral, administrative and outreach responsibilities. Who is responsible for setting the workload model? Is it fair and transparent? How often is the model reviewed and who reviews it? Is the model linked to the promotion criteria and discussed at appraisals? Use any staff consultation to evidence this and comment on any gender discrepancies.

(ix) Timing of institutional meetings and social gatherings

Describe the consideration given to those with caring responsibilities and part-time staff around the timing of meetings and social gatherings. Does the institution have formal core hours and if so what are they? Use staff consultation to comment on whether staff feel core hours are adhered to. Is there a difference in opinion between staff who work part-time versus those who work full-time?

Are key staff meetings and staff away days planned far enough in advance for those with caring responsibilities to attend? What formal social gatherings are there at the institution? When are they held and how many people attend? Do staff feel they are inclusive and are held at appropriate times? What systems are in place to prevent staff being excluded from activities?

(x) Visibility of role models

Is diversity considered in publicity materials, including the institution's website and images?

Comment on how the institution builds gender equality into its organisation of events. Provide data and comment on the gender balance of speakers and chairs in seminars, workshops and other relevant activities.

If the data reveals that there is a gender imbalance of speakers and chairs in talks, seminars and workshops, comment on what is being done to combat this. Consider the visibility of men in underrepresented disciplines, for example, nursing, primary teaching, social work etc.

(xi) Outreach activities

Provide data on staff from the institution involved in outreach and engagement activities, by gender and grade. Comment on how gender is considered in outreach. While it is important to have underrepresented groups involved in outreach, often people from these groups end up doing a lot of outreach which can impact on other parts of their job, for example, research. Comment on how outreach is formally recognised and whether it is included in workload modelling. Use staff consultation to evidence whether there is any gender imbalance around the participation in outreach.

Comment on the participant uptake of outreach activities by school type (eg private, comprehensive, grammar, single sex) and gender.

(xii) Leadership

Comment on how the institution will support departments to apply for Athena SWAN awards. This could be through, for example, providing data support, mock panels, staff or financial resource. What role will the institutional self-assessment team play?

Departments

(i) Culture

Culture refers to the language, behaviours and other informal interactions that characterise the atmosphere of the department and includes all staff and (if applicable) students.

Demonstrate how the department actively considers gender equality and inclusivity. Provide detail of staff and student consultation relating to the culture of the department. Analyse any data and evidence gathered around the culture, highlight any gender differences and link actions to address any issues the data highlights.

Provide details of how the Athena SWAN May 2015 principles have been, and will continue to be, embedded into the culture and working of the department.

Submissions need to consider the ways different staff contribute to culture in a variety of ways. For example, where significant proportions of staff are visiting lecturers or particular grades of staff employed on one type of contract, have the effects of this on culture been explored?

(ii) HR policies

Provide an honest assessment of how the department monitors the consistency of HR policies on equality, dignity at work, bullying, harassment, grievance and disciplinary processes. Describe actions taken to address any identified differences between policy and practice. Applicants will not be penalised for identifying issues. Comment on any issues that have been identified and what the department has done or is planning on doing to address them.

Note: If this question results in an answer that the department does not wish to be made public, please remove the answer to this question before publishing the application publically. Advance HE does not publish applications.

What is being done to ensure that staff with management responsibilities are up to date in their HR knowledge, for example, through training or workshops? How frequently are these updated, how does the department monitor the uptake, what is the uptake and is there any gender discrepancy?

(iii) Representation of men and women on committees

Provide data by committee, gender, staff type (academic/professional and support staff student) and grade. Outline how committee members are identified. For example, do they nominate themselves, or are they approached to join and if so, by whom and through what process. What initiatives are in place to improve any gender imbalance on committees, for example, role rotation, deputising, shadowing? Is there a gender imbalance on any committees, for example, senior management, equality and diversity, research, student experience committees? What action is going to be taken to address this?

(iv) Participation on influential external committees

Provide data by gender, staff type and grade. How are staff encouraged to participate in external committees? Describe any procedures that are in place to encourage participation in external committees.

(v) Workload model

Describe any workload allocation model in place and what it includes, for example teaching, pastoral, administrative and outreach responsibilities. Who is responsible for setting the workload model? Is there consideration for role rotation, for example, those with a particularly heavy workload (such as leading on an Athena SWAN submission, or undergraduate admissions tutor)? Is it fair and transparent? Is the model linked to the promotion criteria and discussed at appraisals? How often is the model reviewed and who reviews it? Use any staff consultation to evidence this and comment on any gender discrepancies.

(vi) Timing of departmental meetings and social gatherings

Describe the consideration given to those with caring responsibilities and part-time staff around the timing of departmental meetings and social gatherings. Does the department have formal core hours and if so what are they? Use staff consultation to comment on whether staff feel core hours are adhered to. Is there a difference in opinion between staff who work part-time versus those who work full-time?

Are key staff meetings and staff away days planned far enough in advance for those with caring responsibilities to attend? What formal and informal social gatherings are there in the department? When are they held and how many people attend? Do staff feel they are inclusive and are held at appropriate times? What systems are in place to prevent staff being excluded from activities?

(vii) Visibility of role models

Is diversity considered in publicity materials, including the departments' website and images used? Comment on how the department builds gender equality into its organisation of events. Provide data and comment on the gender balance of speakers and chairs in seminars, workshops and other relevant activities.

If the data reveals that there is a gender imbalance of speakers and chairs for talks, seminars and workshops, comment on what is being done to combat this. Where one gender is in a minority, applicants should aim for a gender balance that supports the agenda to redress this, while remaining realistic.

(viii) Outreach activities

Provide data on staff from the department involved in outreach and engagement activities, by gender and grade. Comment on how gender is considered in outreach. While it is important to have underrepresented groups involved in outreach, often people from these groups end up doing a lot of outreach which can impact on other parts of their job, for example, research. Comment on how outreach is formally recognised and whether it is included in workload modelling. Use staff consultation to evidence whether there is any gender imbalance around the participation in outreach.

Comment on the participant uptake of outreach activities by school type (eg private, comprehensive, grammar, single sex) and gender.

6. Institutions: supporting trans people

Recommended word count: Bronze: 500 words | Silver: 500 words

Advance HE does not require quantitative data on trans staff to be presented in this section.

Any decision to collect data on gender identity should be taken in consultation with trans staff and student groups. If, following consultation, the institution agrees to collect data on gender identity, consideration must be given to anonymity, confidentiality and secure storage of this data.

Where you decide to present data for this section, please robustly consider confidentiality, anonymity and data protection.

Where possible, it would be useful for this section to evaluate any available evidence (qualitative information may be useful if you have it) to illustrate what steps you have taken or will be taking to ensure your working and/or studying environment is inclusive of trans people.

Advance HE has been receiving an increasing number of enquires about supporting trans people and we are in the process of revising and updating our trans guidance. In the meantime, please refer to the existing resources on Advance HE's website, which remain relevant.

Silver application

Departments: case studies (silver department application)

Recommended word count: Silver: 1000 words

Case studies provide an opportunity to focus on the career progression of two individuals working in the department, and to show how the inclusive culture and working practices of the department have enabled them to pursue an academic career.

One of these case studies should be a member of the self-assessment team, and the other should be someone else in the department. No more than two case studies should be put forward, even if within the word limit.

The case studies should be written by the individuals and can be from women or men. They should describe how the department's activities have benefited them and demonstrate the support they have received.

7. Further information

Recommended word count: Bronze: 500 words | Silver: 500 words

This section is an opportunity to provide additional relevant information that has not already been discussed. It is not compulsory to use this section. Examples of content could include:

- other gender equality-related initiatives not already discussed
- commitment/involvement with other equality work
- work being undertaken with external partners (not covered by the outreach section)
- future changes to the submitting unit that will provide an opportunity to extend gender equality work

8. Action plan

The action plan is a crucial part of a submission and its importance should not be overlooked.

- Actions that are identified in the submission document should be clearly highlighted and cross-referenced so that when a panellist reads the action plan it is clear what the rationale for the action is.
- Actions should be scheduled across the four-year duration of the award.
- Actions (and action plans) should be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound).
- The panel will expect to see evidence of prioritisation. Action plans may be ordered by priority level rather than chronologically or thematically.
- Responsibility for completing actions should be distributed across a range of staff. Action plans where HR and equality and diversity practitioners are responsible for everything will not be well received by panels.
- Descriptions of measures already in place should not be included in the action plan without detail on their monitoring or development.
- It is important to indicate how the success of an action will be measured. This should take the form of a column in the table.
- There is no right or wrong number of actions. However, it is important to balance conciseness with a good level of detail.
- Action plans should be aspirational and innovative, particularly at higher levels of award.
- Action plans should be organic documents, constantly reviewed and updated (not just prepared as part of an award submission).

An example action plan template is available below which you may choose to use, or you are welcome to present your actions in your own template. The example below is not an exemplar, and many applicants have successfully used a variety of alternative formats of their choosing. It is possible that internally your actions are embedded into existing action plans, but for the purposes of this application we do ask that you collate all of the actions and present them in one combined, consistent document.

Reference	Planned action/objective	Rationale (i.e what evidence is there that prompted this action/objective?)	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end date)		Person responsible (include job title)	Success criteria and outcome

Terminology

Within individual institutions terminology may be applied in different ways. The definitions below are for the purposes of clarification in the Athena SWAN application.

Academic contract types/functions: The academic employment function of a member of staff relates to the academic contract of employment and not the actual work undertaken.

Academic staff: Academic staff includes postdoctoral researchers, teaching-only, research-only or teaching and research staff including lecturers, fellows and professors.

AHSSBL: Arts, humanities, social sciences, business and law. The HESA JACS Subject Codes L–X are all recognised as AHSSBL for the purposes of Athena SWAN.

Career break: A career break is a period of time out from employment or career. Career breaks are often taken by parents and carers, and also are used to take time for personal or professional development.

Department: A unit within an institution that is eligible to make an application. This can include departments, faculties or schools. Please refer to **Department applications** for further details.

Faculty: A faculty is a group of sub-units or departments that come together under an overarching decision-making body, for example, a medical school, which is likely to contain sub-units, or departments such as a department of nursing or institute of neuroscience. An additional example could be a faculty of science, under which there are separate departments of mathematics, physics, biology and chemistry. Please refer to **Submitting as a department or faculty** for further guidance.

Fixed-term contract: A contract of employment that ends on a particular date, or on completion of a specific task, for example a specific research project or covering a period of maternity leave. This includes staff on rolling fixed-term contracts.

Full person equivalent (FPE): Looks at how much of the (whole) person's time is engaged in a particular activity. FPE is measured on 1 December. All of Advance HE's staff data in the statistical reports and benchmarking data are calculated in FPE. For data on students, it is in student instance (different from headcount) unless the data is broken down by subject area in which case it is apportioned by FPE.

Full time equivalent (FTE): A unit which indicates a person's intensity of study/ work comparable to a standard full-time, full-year contract. FTE describes the reporting year 1 August – 31 July.

Headcount: Looks at the number of people.

Institution: An institution of higher education and research which grants academic degrees in a variety of subjects. An institution may consist of a mixture of colleges, faculties, schools and departments.

Open-ended (permanent) contract: A contract without a fixed term. Open-ended/permanent staff are those who are employed on a contract of employment that states the member of staff as permanent or on an open-ended contract. This includes term-time-only staff who are employed on an open-ended contract.

Postdoctoral researcher: Postdoctoral researchers are staff that undertake independent research, leading or acting as principal investigator or equivalent on a research grant or significant piece of research work.

Professional and support staff: For institution applications this includes any staff not included in the above definition of academic staff who are employed by the institution. Staff who are contracted out should not be included. For departmental submissions this includes non-academic staff working in the department. This may include administrators and technical support staff.

Research-only staff: Those staff whose contracts of employment state that the primary academic employment function is research only, even though the contract may include a limited number of hours teaching (up to six hours per week or pro-rata for part-time staff).

STEMM: Science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine. Athena SWAN uses the BIS definition of STEMM as set out in their *Science, engineering and technology skills in the UK* report (2nd Report of Session 2012–13). For a more detailed breakdown of STEMM subjects the HESA JACS Subject Codes A–K are all recognised as STEMM for the purposes of Athena SWAN.

Teaching and research staff: Those staff whose contracts of employment state that they are employed to undertake both teaching and research.

Teaching-only staff: Those staff whose contracts of employment state that they are employed only to undertake teaching.

Trans: An inclusive umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from the sex they were assigned (male or female) at birth. The term may include, but is not limited to, transsexual people, cross dressers, intersex people and those who see themselves as not clearly fitting into a binary male or female identity. Trans people may or may not alter their bodies hormonally and/or surgically. The term trans should only be used as an adjective, for example, ‘trans people’.

Zero-hours contract: There is no legal definition of a zero-hours contract in UK domestic law. In general terms, a zero-hours contract is an employment contract in which the employer does not guarantee the individual any work, and the individual is not obliged to accept any work offered. Staff on these contracts are entitled at minimum to national minimum wage and statutory holiday pay.