

Athena SWAN Resource Guide for NUI Galway

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1. Introduction

This guide provides information for NUI Galway Schools who plan to submit an Athena SWAN departmental application. The guide should be read prior to the establishment of an Athena SWAN Self-Assessment team (SAT) to ensure the SAT is composed correctly. It can then be used as a guide to the application process and the data and resources available within the University. The first point of contact for Schools considering an Athena SWAN application is the Office of the Vice President for Equality and Diversity (OVPED).

The Athena SWAN Charter evolved from work between the Athena Project and the Scientific Women's Academic Network (SWAN), to advance the representation of women in science, technology, engineering, medicine and mathematics (STEMM). The Charter was originally established in 2005 to encourage and recognise the commitment to advancing women's careers in science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine (STEMM) in higher education and research. In May 2015 the scope of the Athena SWAN Charter was expanded to cover gender equality in arts, humanities, social sciences, business and law disciplines. It also allows for more explicit consideration of professional and support staff, and at an institutional level inclusion of trans staff and students. The Charter now recognises work undertaken to address gender equality more broadly, and not just barriers to progression that affect women.

In a major national initiative supported by the Higher Education Authority, the Athena SWAN Charter was launched in Ireland in early 2015. NUI Galway was awarded an Athena SWAN Institutional Bronze award in April 2018. The Bronze award is valid until April 2021, at which time NUI Galway will reapply to renew the award. This institutional award recognises that NUI Galway has developed 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 university, including quantitative (staff data) and qualitative (policies, practices, systems, and arrangements) evidence and identifying both challenges and opportunities
- = a three-year action 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

School level Self-Assessment Teams (SATs) preparing submissions should review the Institutional application and Gender Equality Action Plan to ensure consistency and build on existing equality initiatives at School level. The application and Gender Equality Action Plan are available on the OVPED website: <http://www.nuigalway.ie/genderequality/>.



2. What is Athena SWAN?

The Athena SWAN Equality Charter recognises the advancement of gender equality & inclusion: representation, progression and success for all.

Athena SWAN Principles

The Athena SWAN Charter process is based on ten key principles. By being part of Athena SWAN, NUI Galway is 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.



3. School Awards

Bronze School Award

It is a prerequisite that NUI Galway holds a valid institutional Bronze award in order for a school to be eligible to be conferred with an award. A school can be awarded a higher level than the institution.

What needs to be demonstrated

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

- = The establishment of a self-assessment team (SAT) to conduct **an assessment of gender equality in the school**, including quantitative (staff and student data) and qualitative (policies, practices, systems and arrangements) evidence and identifying both challenges and opportunities
- = A **four-year action 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** to carry proposed actions forward

Potential outcomes for applicants

- = Bronze department award
- = No award

Feedback

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

Silver School Award

It is a prerequisite that NUI Galway holds a valid institutional Bronze award in order for the school to be eligible to be conferred with a Silver award. The school 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.

It is a prerequisite for an *Institutional* Silver award that the majority of Schools hold Athena SWAN awards.



What needs to be demonstrated

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

Potential outcomes for applicants

- = Silver department award
- = Bronze department award
- = No award

Feedback

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

4. Why apply?

Membership of the Athena SWAN Charter has a proven impact as a catalyst for change, leading to organisational and cultural transformation that makes a real difference for women and enables all staff to achieve their maximum potential.

Key benefits of Athena SWAN

- = Provides a framework for assessing the culture and practices within your school
- = Highlights areas to allow positive change
- = Provides a focal point to identify and share good practice
- = Being part of an internationally-recognised gender equality initiative can help NUI Galway and your school meet equality legislation requirements
- = Meets the requirements and expectations of funding agencies and research councils
- = Aligns with the University's strategic plan and policy priorities
- = Promotes inclusive working practices for all which can increase retention of valued academics and professional and support staff, especially women
- = Illustrates your commitment to an equitable working environment to current and potential staff

Athena SWAN Charter members are able to:

- = submit for institutional and department level Athena SWAN awards
- = access resources, publications and benchmarking data to prepare award submissions



- = attend workshops on submitting for an award and working towards the next level
- = become part of a national and regional peer support and practice-sharing network of members
- = access advice and support from the Advance HE Equality Charter's team
- = join the Athena SWAN email forum
- = use Athena SWAN logos to highlight your commitment to gender equality on institutional websites, materials and job adverts

5. Submitting a School Application

Key considerations

Size of School

There is no hard minimum or maximum size of Faculty/School/Discipline that is allowed to submit a departmental application by Advance HE. However, within NUI Galway we are rolling out Athena SWAN at a School level as the sizes fit best with the departmental guidance. If you would like to discuss options other than School-level applications (e.g. joint Schools, or Discipline applications), please contact the OVPED.

Small Schools will need to be able to demonstrate that they hold adequate decision-making power within their structure to allow them to make the changes that will effect cultural transformation within the School.

Large Schools will need to clearly demonstrate good practice (and impact at Silver level) across *all* disciplines, and that issues specific to different subject areas have been clearly assessed and identified. Data is required for every discipline as averages across diverse Schools may conceal problems in individual subject areas.

Management structure

The Athena SWAN assessment process begins with the creation of a Self-Assessment Team (SAT), who will lead the review and analysis of gender equality in the School. The process will culminate in the creation of an action plan which will have to be monitored and progressed.

Both of these need to have clear management structures and the authority to review and progress actions. The Head of School should have overall responsibility for resource allocation, budgets, academic strategy and policy in the submitting School, so as to be able to effect the changes set out in the action plan. The Dean of College will also need to be involved to progress changes as necessary.



Submission timeline

Timescale (+/- deadline)	Action required
2 months prior to submission (Feb/Sept)	<p>Inform Athena SWAN Equality Charter of your intention to submit an application two months in advance of the submission deadline (by the last working day of the month).</p> <p>Ensure that a representative from your SAT joins the mailing list AthenaSWAN@jiscmail.ac.uk for email reminders and key contacts.</p> <p>Generally information on the next submission round can be found on the Advance HE website.</p>
Application deadline: 5pm on last working day of April/November	<p>Submissions are accepted during April and November application rounds. Submissions are sent in pdf format via email to as-submissions@advance-he.ac.uk Late applications will not be considered unless agreed in advance with the Charter team. SATs will be informed of all application information via the jiscmail updates.</p>
+ 2 to 4 months	<p>Assessment panels take place. Supplementary information may be requested.</p>
+ 5 months*	<p>Results are sent to applicants within 5 months of the submission. Feedback is sent immediately to unsuccessful applicants. Applicants that receive awards should publish their application on their website and inform Athena SWAN of the associated web address. Personal information may be removed from the submission prior to publication.</p>
+ 6 months*	<p>Feedback is sent for applications which received a lower level of award than applied for.</p>
+ 7 months*	<p>Feedback is sent for applications which were successful at the level applied for.</p>

**Advance HE are trying to streamline the review and notification timelines, so hopefully this will be shorter than outlined from 2020 on.*



6. Establishing a Self-Assessment Team (SAT)

Having an effective Self-Assessment Team will be key to the success of an application for Athena SWAN accreditation. 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 SAT can be a committee in its own right or it can operate under the umbrella of another group, for instance an Equality Committee. This umbrella group must also follow the Athena SWAN self-assessment process.

NUI Galway advises that prior to forming a SAT, Schools should address their staff cohort via consultation or all-staff meetings to discuss Athena SWAN accreditation and achieve engagement and buy-in from staff to undertake this process. Advance HE provide a specific [SAT guidance document](#), which should be reviewed.

Membership of the SAT

One of the first steps may be to identify a senior staff member to Chair the SAT who will then lead the application process. The Chair does not have to be female, and should be a senior leader in the School.

The SAT can be created in a variety of ways, but it is best to ensure everyone is given a chance to be involved. Expressions of interest in joining the SAT work well, as well as identifying key members. School level SATs should be representative of the staff cohort in the school, and should usually include student representation. The SAT should also comprise a mixture of grades and roles representing different stages of the career ladder (particularly at the early and mid-career stages). It is important to have the various perspectives of staff represented on the SAT, not just grade and gender but caring responsibilities, part-time work, those who have undertaken promotion schemes, etc. If the School gender profile is heavily male/female – then the SAT should not overburden the underrepresented gender.

Once the SAT is convened, it is advised to establish Working Groups within the SAT to take responsibility for the different sections of the application form (for example Sections 1-3, Section 4, Section 5.1-5.3, Section 5.4-5.6, Communications & Consultation, Editorial, etc.). Identify a lead for each Working Group.

Meetings

The SAT should ideally meet monthly/every 6 weeks during the assessment period, and then a more focused meeting period may be needed prior to submitting the application. Advance HE recommend that the self-assessment process takes up to one year, so meetings and workload can be spread over that period.

The final submission should be the result of intensive group work and collaboration across the self-assessment team and the school, ensuring buy-in and consultation.



7. Data considerations

At the start of the assessment process the SAT will work with the OVPED to collect all necessary quantitative data, and set in place a structure for collecting qualitative data. The SAT will then decide the clearest way of presenting data in the narrative of the application to allow the awards panel the maximum insight into the issues affecting the school.

It is expected that the school will draw on the outputs from a school-level staff survey for qualitative data. Focus groups are recommended to explore issues arising from survey responses which, combined with survey responses, will give you a strong sense of how people experience your school's culture. One-to-one interviews or round table discussions may also be used when appropriate. Student qualitative data and consultation will also be needed, and SATs may choose to use one or more of the methods outlined above. Templates and guidance on qualitative data gathering are available from the OVPED.

Advance HE provide an abundance of [resources for using data and evidence](#) to advance equality, including how to benchmark. Schools can use the main HEA returns for benchmarking as well as other national figures or specific institutional data.

Data requirements for a Bronze School submission are set out below:

Student Data

Section	Student data - 3 year period	Source of Data	DANte report / Contact
2.0	Total # of students by gender	DANte	Students by Course
4.1.i	Students on access or foundation courses by gender	DANte	Students by Course – APS Filter(burger menu)
4.1.ii	Undergraduate students by gender;	DANte	Students by Course
	Full & part-time students by gender;	DANte	Students by Course
	Intake of students by gender;	DANte	Students by Course
	Completion (graduation) rates by gender;	DANte	Students by Course
	Degree attainment (marks) by gender	IRO	OVPED
4.1.iii	Postgraduate Taught students by gender;	DANte	Students by Course
	Full & part-time PGT by gender;	DANte	Students by Course
	Course applications by gender;	Admissions	OVPED
	Course offers by gender;	Admissions	OVPED
	Course acceptance rates by gender;	Admissions	OVPED
	Degree completion rates by gender	Admissions	OVPED
4.1.iv	Postgraduate Research students by gender;	DANte	Students by Course
	Full & part-time PGR by gender;	DANte	Students by Course
	Course applications by gender;	Admissions	OVPED
	Course offers by gender;	Admissions	OVPED
	Course acceptance rates by gender;	Admissions	OVPED
	Degree completion rate by gender	IRO	OVPED
4.1.v	Progression pipeline by gender from Undergraduate to Postgraduate	DANte	Students by Course
5.3.iv	Career Support given to students including uptake;	School	SAT



	Awards/scholarships provided by gender; Qualitative data from students on career progression supports	School/College Survey	SAT SAT
5.6.vii	Qualitative data from students on perception of visible role models	Survey	SAT
5.6.viii	Total # of students engaged in outreach activities by gender and degree	School	SAT
ALL 4.1	National Benchmark data - undergraduate/postgraduate by gender	HEA/Specific comparator	SAT

Staff Data

Section	Staff data – 3 year Period	Source of data	DANte report / Contact
2.0	Total # of academic, research and professional staff by gender	DANte	Staff
4.2.i	Headcount of all academic staff by grade, gender, and discipline if applicable;	DANte	Staff
	Headcount of all academic staff by contract function (A/B);	School	HoS
	Progression pipeline (%) of academic staff by gender;	DANte	Staff
	Headcount of research staff by grade and gender;	DANte	Staff
	Headcount of all professional staff by grade and gender;	DANte	Staff
	National Benchmark data – staff by gender and grade in relevant discipline	HEA/Specific comparator	SAT
4.2.ii	Headcount of all academic staff by grade on fixed-term, CID, zero-hour and permanent contracts by gender;	DANte	Staff
	Headcount of all research staff by grade on fixed-term, CID, zero-hour and permanent contracts by gender;	DANte	Staff
	Qualitative data from staff on these contract types	Survey	SAT
4.2.iii	Number of leavers by category, grade, gender, contract, and discipline if applicable;	DANte tbc	Staff
	Qualitative data from leavers	HR tbc	OVPED
5.1.i	Number of applications to academic posts by gender, discipline, category, and grade;	Core HR	OVPED
	Number of shortlisted candidates by gender;	Core HR	OVPED
	Number of offers by gender;	Core HR	OVPED
	Number of successful candidates by gender;	Core HR	OVPED
5.1.ii	Number of staff who attended central induction;	HR Training & Development	OVPED
	Number of staff who attended School level induction;	School	HoS
	Qualitative data from staff on induction process	Survey	SAT
5.1.iii	Number of applicants for academic promotion by gender, grade, and contract status;	Pres/Registrar	OVPED



	Number of successful applicants for academic promotion by gender, grade, and contract status; Qualitative data from staff on promotion process	Pres/Registrar Survey	OVPEd SAT
5.3.i	Training numbers for Unconscious Bias, Aurora, Managing Inclusively, etc. by gender; Other school level trainings or seminars; Qualitative data from staff on training effectiveness	HR Training & Development School Survey	OVPEd SAT SAT
5.3.ii	Number of staff who completed PMDS review; Number of staff who completed training on PMDS process; Qualitative data from staff on appraisal/development scheme	Contact OVPEd for Guidance Survey	OVPEd SAT
5.3.iii	Qualitative data from staff on career progression support; Initiatives to support Academic/ Postdoctoral career progression; Staff applications to FEP scheme by gender and success rate;	Survey School HR Training & Development	SAT SAT OVPEd
5.3.v	Qualitative data from staff on support around grant applications; Training or initiatives to support grant applications uptake by gender	Survey School	SAT SAT
5.5	Number of staff who have taken maternity or adoptive leave by category and grade	DANte	Staff
5.5.i	Qualitative data from staff on pre-leave supports; Initiatives or supports provided and uptake	Survey School	SAT SAT
5.5.ii	Qualitative data from staff on during-leave supports; Initiatives or supports provided and uptake; Replacement cover provided	Survey School School	SAT SAT HoS
5.5.iii	Qualitative data from staff on returning from leave supports; Number of staff who availed of Research grant for returning academic carers; Number of staff who availed of AS Research Capacity Building grant; Initiatives or supports provided and uptake	Survey OVPEd OVPEd School	SAT OVPEd OVPEd SAT
5.5.iv	Maternity Return rate, number of staff returning to post at the end of leave; Number of staff whose contracts were not renewed while on leave; Number of staff still in post at 6 & 12 months following leave	DANte DANte DANte	Staff Staff Staff
5.5.v	Number of staff who have taken Paternity leave by staff category; Number of staff who have taken Adoption leave by gender and staff category;	HR HR	OVPEd OVPEd



	Number of staff who have taken Parental leave by gender and staff category; Initiatives or trainings provided and uptake; Qualitative data from staff who have/have not availed of paternity leave/parental leave – particularly men	HR HR/School Survey	OVPED OVPED/SAT SAT
5.5.vi	Uptake of formal flexible working through HR, e.g. job-share, part-time, shorter working year, sabbatical, career break, unpaid leave of absence, etc. by gender; Uptake of informal flexible working at school/discipline level, e.g. working hours arrangements; Qualitative data from staff on flexible working arrangements	HR School Survey	OVPED HoS SAT
5.6.ii	Training provided on HR policy, management, etc. by gender; Qualitative data on staff perception and experience of policy vs practice	HR/School Survey	OVPED/SAT SAT
5.6.iii	Composition of School and discipline committees by gender and staff grade; Qualitative data from staff on perception of representation and workload	School Survey	HoS SAT
5.6.v	Data from School Workload model by gender; Qualitative data from staff on perception of workload model and allocation	School Survey	HoS SAT
5.6.vi	Timing of School/Discipline committee meetings; Timing of School/Discipline seminars/trainings/events; Qualitative data from staff on inclusion of all staff in meetings/events – particularly carers	School School Survey	SAT SAT SAT
5.6.vii	Numbers of men/women leading seminars, workshops, conferring, and relevant school/discipline activities; Qualitative data from staff on visibility of gender equality	School Survey	SAT SAT
5.6.viii	Number of staff engaged in outreach activities by grade and gender; Qualitative data from staff on recognition of outreach work	School Survey	SAT SAT

Presenting your Data

The data provided should cover at least three years preceding the submission - five years for renewals & Gold submissions (e.g. for a Nov 2020 submission data would be pulled for AY 16/17, 17/18, 18/19 to allow the SAT to analyse the data for a year prior to submission).



Data should be displayed with clearly labelled graphs, charts, tables or infographics. Avoid large tables of data, or confusing data that will not be clear to evaluation panel members unfamiliar with your School or NUI Galway structures.

If data is unavailable, explain why, and include an action to collect the data in the future where possible. Graphs and tables should be embedded in the body of the document together with narrative responses; Appendices are not allowed.

Advance HE provide a number of resources on [using data and evidence](#) as well as [working with data](#) to advance equality. Critical readers are also helpful in spotting data that is misplaced or not as clear as it should be.

Analysing your Data

Data is used throughout the Athena SWAN application to inform your analysis of any issues or challenges. The data should be presented in tables or graphs as described above, and the SAT must consider what that data shows and outline the impact and issues rather than just describe the data that is already presented.

Reflect critically on the data trends in the school and why they are occurring. Highlight the issues as they emerge from the data throughout the submission, and develop a specific action to address the issue.

In certain sections you will be able to describe good practice already in place and its impact. Still your data should allow you to identify areas which require further improvement.

Describe clearly the processes and practices in your school including how university policy is implemented at school level. Link qualitative feedback to your analysis to show the panel why something is or is not a problem area.

8. Application

Style

There is no prescribed style for completing the various sections of the application form, but it is important to remember that the evaluation panel will be reading this as a stand-alone document. Advance HE provide [guidance to writing your application](#) on their website.

It is useful to review successful submissions published by current award holders. NUI Galway applications are available on the [OVPEd website](#). A list of current award holders is available on the [Advance HE website](#).

Word limits

Words limits help ensure that submissions are of a readable length for panellists who may assess up to six applications at an assessment panel. The word count includes all body text, including quotes from qualitative analysis and words in legible screenshots. Stand-alone text



or prose included in tables, footnotes or references is also included. Advance HE provide [guidance on work count, tables, and quotes](#).

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

The following are not counted towards the word limit:

- = tables and graphs providing they do not include stand-alone prose - any text included within tables and graphs should only make sense within the context of the figure (e.g. 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 HEA statistical reports
- = action plan

Section guidelines

The table below sets out the recommended word count for each section of the application. It should be noted that there are no specific word limits for the individual sections of the application, Advance HE provide the table as a guide. Word count may be distributed over each of the sections as you deem appropriate.

At the end of every section, please state the word count in that section.

School level application	Bronze	Silver
Word limit	10,500	12,000
Recommended word count:		
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 (SILVER)	n/a	1000
7. Further information	500	500

The SAT Chair or Editorial Working Group should collect and collate the various sections into a draft submission. All SAT members should review the draft and provide feedback. An Editorial group should then ensure the feedback is integrated and the application makes sense as a whole.



Action Plan

The action plan is a critical part of the application, and significant time should be given to ensuring it is completed to a high standard. The action plan should be presented in table format and should prioritise actions to address the issues identified throughout the various sections of the application. An action plan template is provided in the Appendix.

Each action outlined should have a clearly defined appropriate success/outcome measure, identified person/position(s) responsible for the action, and timescales for completion including milestones where applicable. The plan should cover current initiatives and new actions for the lifetime of the plan. The plan can be ordered in a number of ways; by priority level, chronologically, by application section, or thematically.

Actions, and their measures of success, should be Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound (SMART).

Actions should be referred to throughout the application and linked directly to the content:
data → analysis → action

When developing the action plan, consider the following:

- = Is the Action Plan informative?
- = Does it detail what will be done, by whom and when?
- = Are the actions SMART?
- = Would you be able to action the points and report back that they had been completed?
- = If an external person reviewed this plan would they be able to understand the action?
- = Could these actions be improved?

Consider **impact** to ensure the action plan is measurable – it's not just about completing actions! Impact can be demonstrated by a discernible improvement in the gender balance of staff numbers, increased representation of women (and men where applicable), an increase in applications from women (and men where applicable) for recruitment and promotional opportunities, an increase in the uptake of leave schemes and career development support initiatives, and increased satisfaction or agreement reported in qualitative data.

The action plan should:

- = Ensure that good practice is championed by senior staff (men and women), not just HR or Equality practitioners
- = Include targeted support – not all initiatives will suit everyone
- = Move beyond monitoring – actions should be proactive



- = Ensure actions are spread across the 4 year action plan
- = Appear achievable *and* aspirational

If SATs are struggling to find appropriate actions to address issues that have been identified, Advance HE have a [good practice initiatives resource bank](#) where you can search by theme.

Critical Reading and University Approval

It is important that once the SAT has finalized a draft application, that a few critical readers are identified to review and comment on the application. NUI Galway will provide an internal critical reader from the Institutional SAT to provide feedback. The SAT can contact an external reader themselves, or contact the OVPED to connect with an external reader. The SAT may also wish to distribute the application to the School for feedback, if they feel there is enough time to engage with the feedback constructively.

At the same time as critical readers are reviewing the School application, the School should submit their application to the Institutional SAT who will review and approve the submission on behalf of NUI Galway. The OVPED will liaise with School SATs to complete this process.

Once the School SAT is satisfied that all feedback and updates have been completed, they will need to submit their application to Athena SWAN prior to the call deadlines on **the last working day of April or November** and send a copy of their final application to the OVPED.

9. Appendices

Appendix 1: Example template of a SMART Action Plan

RATIONALE	ACTION	TIMESCALE	RESPONSIBLE	SUCCESS MEASURE
What did you uncover in the self-assessment process that has led you to considering this action? The rationale should be relevant and clearly linked to issues in the qualitative and quantitative data.	Include a specific description of the action that will take place. Consider who the action is aimed at and how it will be implemented.	The action must be time-bound. Include clear start and end dates. Avoid too many “ongoing” actions, and consider using milestones to mark progress.	A range of specific roles and people. Ensure action is within the department’s power, making it achievable.	Use of targets are encouraged. Is it clear how achievement of actions are measurable? Completing the action is not a success measure, what the action is aiming to affect is where measurable targets should come from.

Issue identified	Action no.	Action	Timescales	Responsibilities	Success measures
Cross-cutting success measures for actions 1-12:					
i. Number of women promoted is xxx, with application and success rates representative of the pool					
ii. Feedback to next institutional survey shows reduced negative reports of x and y by <specific percentages>					
Breadth of academic promotion criteria and possible bias in academic promotion process	1	Investigate promotion success rates by protected characteristics. Correlate against staff’s performance against current criteria. Identify groups that face particular bias	Start – date Review presented to xxx – date	VP Academic Affairs, assisted by Head of HR	Review completed by date, and will inform action 2
	2	Form permanent Promotions Advisory Committee with representation from each Faculty and no less than 40% of either gender. Committee to meet on a	Staff invited to form committee – date Call for interest to join committee – date First meeting – date	VP Academic Affairs to lead and chair committee	A diverse committee is formed, in line with the description of the action Consultation reaches xxx staff



		<p>bimonthly basis and report to SMT. First agenda will focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outcomes of action 1 • audit of promotions criteria against activity that academics undertake • identification of whether quantitative measures used are biased, e.g. against part-time staff, staff who take career breaks, staff in certain disciplines, in favour of particular ‘metric-chasing’ behaviours that shape academic practice in unbeneficial ways 	<p>Proposals for updated promotion criteria – date Consultation with all staff on criteria – date Final criteria and step-by-step detail of process to be published on institutional website – date Future meetings held in even number months</p>		
	3	<p>Conduct focus groups to explore ‘old boys club’ phenomenon, such as the extent of a culture of exclusion. Use an external facilitator and call for staff from diverse backgrounds to take part. Undertake mixed and single-sex discussions</p>	<p>Call for participants – date Focus groups held by – date Facilitator reports to SAT by – date</p>	SAT member x	<p>Outcomes to be discussed by SAT and report published on Athena SWAN section of institutional website. Report to make public commitment to addressing outcomes, with actions included in next Athena SWAN action plan (20xx)</p>



Transparency of academic promotion process	4	Personal email from Head of School to all staff to outline findings of Athena SWAN self-assessment and institution's activities through Actions X, Y, Z... Email to mention forthcoming Promotions Advisory Committee formation as response to this and encourage women to respond to the call for membership	Email to be sent – date	Head of School	Proportion of women that respond to call for Promotions Advisory Committee members is at least representative of academic staff body (xx%)
	5	Head of School to highlight priority for fairness in promotion in next "Head of School's address" at...	Next address will be held at...	Head of School	Event feedback forms show >80% approval of promotion process reforms
	6	Step-by-step details of process to be publicised to all staff via personal email from Head of School	Immediately after completion of action 1	Head of School	Email is sent
	7	Re-train all staff involved in promotion (including all line managers), including in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • criteria • equity and diversity • unconscious bias Staff who fail to undertake training or renew will be ineligible for xxx	All staff to be trained by – date Training to be renewed every three years, monitored via HR Impact of training to be assessed by xxx at – date	Person x	100% training coverage Review shows positive impact of training
	8	All unsuccessful promotion cases will be reviewed by the new Promotions Advisory Committee. Applicants will be	After each promotions round, starting – date	Promotions Advisory Committee, led by member y	Promotions Advisory Committee agrees with 100% outcomes



		invited to provide feedback to the committee directly			All applicants provide feedback to committee
	9	Any unsuccessful applicants for promotion will receive personal feedback from VP Academic Affairs	After each promotions round, starting – date Anonymous survey (to include request for feedback on promotions workshops if applicable) of unsuccessful applicants – date	VP Academic Affairs	100% satisfaction with justification as reported by survey
	10	Hold regular promotions workshops, to be held on various days at different times, within core hours, to support ease of attendance. Half of workshops to be advertised as for women only. Facilitators to be at least 33% women	First workshop to be held – date X workshops to be held in x term, at least one month before deadline for promotions round Feedback forms distributed at end of session for review	Chair of SAT and Chair of Promotions Advisory Committee	Speaker diversity is in line with the description of the action Attendance is xxx Feedback shows improving satisfaction with sessions
	11	Publicise promotion success stories of a diverse group of staff and possible routes to promotion on Athena SWAN section of institutional website	Three stories to be published by – date, including at least two women and one staff member of indigenous Australian heritage. Two new case studies to be sought per round, of which one will be a woman. Routes published by – date	SAT member x with website editing rights	xx hits on website per term
Staff – particularly women – do not	12	Next staff away day for each School to include morning session exploring how appraisal and career development	Away days to be held between xx and xy dates.	All Heads of School, with	Actions to address identified issues are



rate appraisal process as supportive of career development		opportunities could be improved. Specific agenda points to be included on strategies that have been shown to be successful in academic literature. Facilitator to report back from each event to SMT	SMT to discuss at meeting – date Actions to be communicated and enacted from – date	oversight by SMT member x	generated and approved by the SAT
	13	Specific discussion about promotion ambitions to be added to appraisal prompts. Issues raised through paperwork to be monitored by line managers, reporting to Head of School.	Starting at next round of appraisals, year xx/xy	Heads of School, with oversight by Promotions Advisory Committee member x	Feedback on usefulness of academic appraisals with regards to career advancement shows increased approval by women from xx% to yy% by date, and to zz% by date



Appendix 2: Further information from Advance HE

[Athena SWAN in Ireland](#)

[How to Apply for an Athena SWAN award](#)

[Self-assessment team Guidance](#)

[Writing your application Guidance](#)

[Word count Guidance](#)

[Good Practice Initiative Bank](#)

[Athena SWAN Resources](#)

[Athena SWAN FAQs](#)