

NDM Athena SWAN Working Group and SAT Policy

Section 1: Background

1.1 Expansion of the Athena SWAN Charter

The Equality Challenge Unit's (ECU) [Athena SWAN Charter](#) was established in 2005 to encourage and recognise commitment to advancing the careers of women in science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine (STEMM) employment in higher education and research. In May 2015 the charter was expanded to recognise work undertaken in arts, humanities, social sciences, business and law (AHSSBL), and in professional and support roles, and for 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.

1.2 Sustainable cultural change

The Athena SWAN application process enables departments to reflect on, and celebrate, current organisational and cultural practices that promote gender equality. Athena SWAN also offers a valuable framework for introducing sustainable cultural changes that create a better working environment for both men and women.

We are committed to the principles set within the Athena SWAN charter and are very proud to hold the Athena SWAN Silver Level Award. We are continuously seeking to improve our policies and practices and embed equality in our day-to-day activities. As part of the Athena SWAN process we have developed an Action Plan which we use to drive progress and implement initiatives to enhance the department for all. We are committed to the success of our staff and students, and strive to create an environment in which they can fully engage, develop and flourish.

1.3 NDM's Athena SWAN Structure

During 2010 we established 5 Athena SWAN Self-Assessment (ASSA) teams, one in each of the 5 main administrative units within the department. Their primary purpose was to aid the Athena SWAN initiative by contributing to the action plan process and ensuring its implementation.

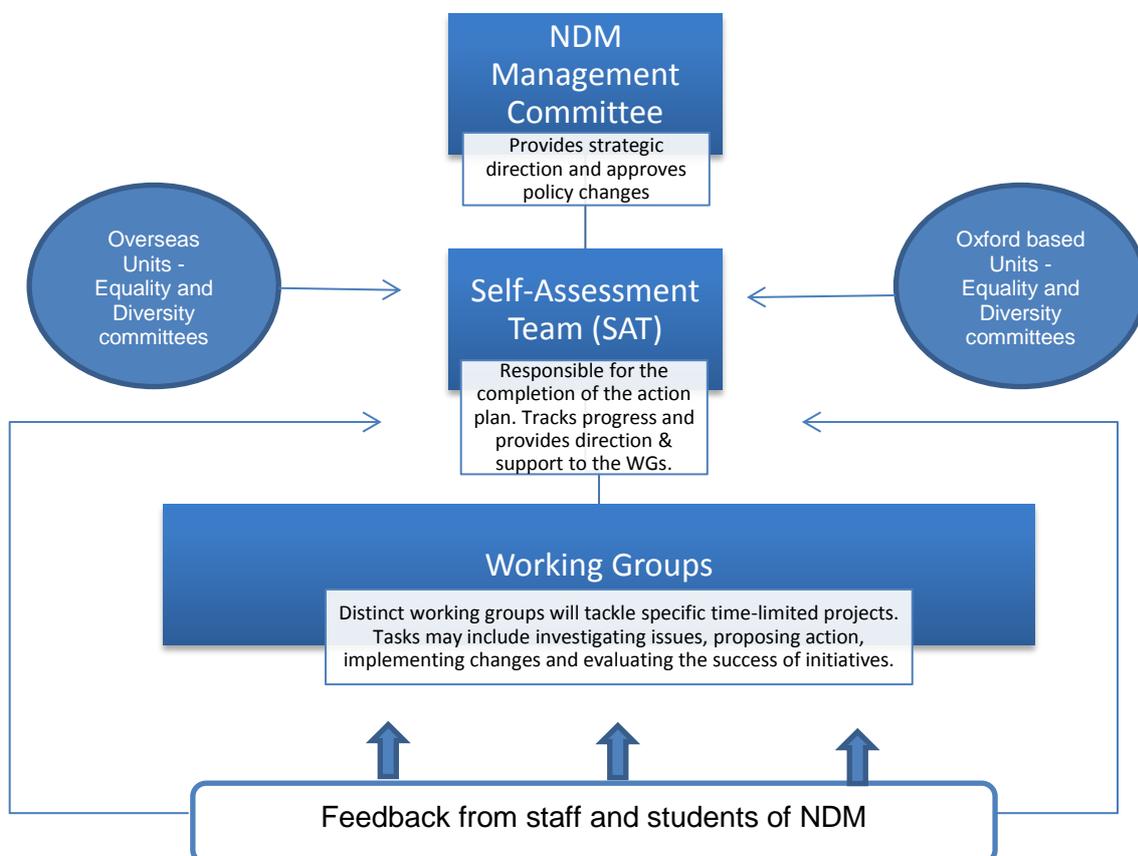
Section 2: The 2018 Athena SWAN Model

2.1 Opportunity for change

With the expansion of the Charter, the Equality Challenge Unit is advocating a gender balanced Self-Assessment Team (SAT) with representatives from a broad range of career stages and staff types. It also stipulates that the SAT should meet at least 3 times a year.

It became evident that the geographical spread of Units and ASSA members made it challenging for some Units to arrange meetings. In August 2015 the Chair of each of the 5 ASSA teams and Business Managers met to discuss our Athena SWAN model and proposals for changes. A decision was taken to retain the current structure at that time given we were part way through our Athena SWAN review period. On the basis of that consultation, and with the commencement of the new review period (2017-2021), comes the opportunity to change the existing model of 5 ASSA teams across NDM to one centralised SAT team, and improve our gender balance of representatives (47F:18M in 2017). A centralised SAT will aid with consistency of approach across NDM, whilst representation from each of the 5 key Units will ensure we maintain sensitivity to the needs of individual Units. To engage key personnel with the appropriate skills and knowledge to maintain good progress on specific time-limited projects and maintain breadth and depth of involvement of staff across NDM we will establish a formalised structure of working groups for specific projects, to report into the SAT. Units are welcome to continue their own meetings should they wish to, and report in to the newly developed SAT.

2.2 Reporting Structure of the new 2018 Athena SWAN Model



2.3 Staff and student consultation

Consultation with the members of the Department will continue to be conducted through surveys, focus groups, target-orientated interviews, committees, student open information sessions, and working groups. We will continue to adapt our current initiatives and develop new ones on the basis of the feedback received, and our surveys will be targeted to inform our understanding of the issues under review during each year.

To ensure accessibility of those involved with Athena SWAN, the SAT and Working Group memberships will be published on our Athena SWAN website pages. We also have a dedicated [e-mail](#) for staff and students to share their views and ideas. Circulars and notices will continue to be used to communicate Athena SWAN activity with staff and students throughout the process; in the form of a termly newsletter, e-mails, posters, leaflets, and table-top signs in each communal or canteen areas.

We will continue to provide updates, guidance, links to resources, information and seek feedback on our dedicated [Athena SWAN](#) and [Working for NDM](#) website pages, which were further developed and relaunched during 2017.

Section 3: The Self-Assessment Team (SAT)

Role of the SAT

3.1 The SAT will be responsible for ensuring progress is made on the Athena SWAN action plan, and that changes are applied consistently across NDM whilst maintaining sensitivity to the individual needs of each Unit.

Composition of the SAT

3.2 The SAT will have representation from all 5 key administrative units of NDM. We will invite current ASSA team chairs to join, chosen for their ability to affect change. We will also ask for volunteers from each Unit.

3.3 The SAT will be gender balanced.

3.4 The SAT will have representation from a breadth of career stages and staff types; including professional & support staff, research & academic staff and students.

3.5 The HHR or ASC will attend all meetings.

Meetings

3.6 The SAT will meet on a termly basis (3 times a year).

3.7 A Chair will be established.

3.8 All meetings will require an agenda to be set and minutes to be recorded.

Reporting

3.9 The Working Groups will report to the SAT.

3.10 The SAT will be responsible for tracking progress across Working Groups, and ensure consistency of approach where needed.

3.11 The SAT will report to the NDM Management Committee, who will provide strategic direction and support.

3.12 A summary of the discussion will be published after each meeting.

Annual Review

3.13 A review of membership will be conducted every December to ensure that workload burden on current members is assed, that opportunities for new/promoted staff are created and to get a fresh perspective on our approach.

Section 4: Working Groups

Role of the Working Groups

4.1 Each Working Group (WG) will have a specific time-sensitive target from the Athena SWAN action plan to meet.

Composition of the WG

4.2 Where possible, each WG will have 1 representative from each of the 5 key administrative units of NDM.

4.3 Where possible, each WG will have both male and female members.

4.4 Where possible, each WG will have a mix of staff types and career levels.

Meetings

4.5 The WG will meet on a needs basis throughout the length of the time-limited project, but it is anticipated that 3 meetings will be required. The initial meeting will be the planning meeting, the second to monitor progress and the third to draw conclusions and make recommendations.

4.6 A Chair will be established for each WG.

4.7 All meetings will require an agenda and minutes to be recorded.

Reporting

4.8 Each WG will report to the SAT.

4.9 The SAT will be responsible for tracking progress across Working Groups, and ensure consistency of approach where needed. The SAT will provide the WG with direction and support.

Section 5: Timeframe for Change

5.1 The new SAT will need to be established within Hilary Term 2018.

5.2 The first meeting of the SAT will need to be scheduled for Hilary or early Trinity Term 2018.

5.3 The Working Groups will need to be established by Trinity Term 2018.

Section 6: Action Plan Targets

For reference purposes, a section from our Athena SWAN action plan which pertains to the new structure, has been provided below.

Action Plan Ref.	Target	Rationale	Measurable target
1.1	To develop a centralised SAT with representatives from all key Units across NDM	To ensure consistency of approach across NDM and drive progress. Currently there is disparity between units on the regularity of meetings and progress on action plans.	At least 3 meetings every year. Improved consistency of approach across NDM, evidenced by the implementation of standardised initiatives whilst being sensitive to unit differences.
1.2	We will take the opportunity in developing a new SAT team to ensure a greater gender balance of members and ensure we maintain a mix of representatives from A&E and P&S staff groups, as well as a student representative.	At Nov 2017 we had 65 members across the 5 ASSA teams, with more females than males involved in the process (47F:18M)	Improved gender balance to 50%F:50%M Ensure representation from both A&E and P&S staff groups. Ensure at least one student representative.
1.3	To establish a formalised structure of working groups for specific projects, to report into the SAT. Working groups will be gender representative, with involvement from both P&S and A&E staff groups, and a student representative where appropriate.	To use key personnel with the appropriate skills and knowledge to ensure progress on specific time-limited projects and maintain breadth of involvement of staff across NDM.	Establishment of working groups. Evidence of target directed action (eg. minutes of meetings). Ensure 100% compliance with the requirements of the NDM Working Group Policy with regards to representation of staff and student groups.
1.4	A review of SAT membership will be conducted annually.	To ensure that workload burden on current members is assessed, that opportunities for new/promoted staff are created and to get a fresh perspective on our approach a regular membership review needs to be conducted.	Annual review conducted (Q4 2018, Q4 2019, Q4 2020) Evidence of workload burden considered. Evidence of new membership.

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