Athena SWAN recognises advancement of gender equality: representation, progression and success for all. [http://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/](http://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/)


Athena SWAN Champion’s Update – Wendy Wills

Over the Summer, the School Assessment Team is in the throes of data analysis and starting to write the narrative that will form the basis of our application for a Silver award. There was a fantastic response rate to the HSK staff survey from the professional and technical staff, with 78% completing it. The response rate from academic staff was also good – 50% responded, which is higher than in 2014. Many thanks to all who took part. We will be feeding back the findings to you in the autumn and letting you know what actions have already been planned as a result of the survey’s findings. You will find a taster of some of the findings below. The Athena SWAN liaisons in each of your departments have been busy, sending information for the newsletter and inviting me along to team meetings to feed back areas of good practice and areas where there is room for development in terms of personal and career opportunities. The list of department contacts can be found later in the newsletter.

Some Headlines from the Athena SWAN Staff Survey 2016:

**Caring responsibilities:**
- **38% of staff** said they have caring responsibilities for children under 18. *Parents will be interested in the new Working Parents Network in HSK and LMS – see below for details.*
- **15% of staff** declared that they have caring responsibilities for adults. The SAT is interested in hearing from individuals with adult caring responsibilities – how could the School better support you?

**Career development opportunities:**

In 2014, 21% of academic staff agreed that there are opportunities for career development for someone at their grade. In 2016, this has increased to 87%¹. 35% of all staff say the appraisal system is not useful in terms of planning their career – we are interested in hearing from you if you have thoughts about how to improve the usefulness of the appraisal system. One respondent said, about career development, “*We are very fortunate in the amount of training available to us and it is always encouraged (and valuable)*”. But others had more negative things to say, such as “*These [opportunities] are sometimes limited as they do not fall on the days that I work*” and we need to take action to ensure that all staff feel they can access development resources if and when they want to and within the remit of their current roles.

**Working Parents Network**

The first meeting of the Working Parents Network, held in May, was well attended and lots of ideas were discussed, from which the following aims were decided: To share good working parent practices; to provide information; to support other working parents. **Ideally the network will meet** every two months, over a lunch period (members can bring their own lunch - tea and coffee provided). **This is where your help is needed:** to make the Working Parents Network successful and useful to working parents, we need volunteers to co-ordinate it. **Please consider this** and if you are interested, email either Wendy Wills (w.j.wills@herts.ac.uk) or Louise Mackenzie (l.mackenzie2@herts.ac.uk).

¹ it is not possible to provide comparisons from professional or technical staff since they did not complete the 2014 survey
Support for breastfeeding mothers
Did you know that there are seven First Aid rooms across the UH campuses which can be used for breastfeeding/expressing milk? The UH Nursery is also available for nursing mothers, whether or not they have a child at Nursery. Most of the First Aid rooms contain a fridge; those that don't will have one installed by November 2016. The rooms on the College Lane campus can be found at the following locations:
- LRC ground floor just as you go into the LRC, on the left
- The Forum: in the same corridor as the Ladies’ toilets
- AA196 Creative Arts Building

Understanding the Menopause Network
Following the success of the Athena SWAN menopause workshop in May, we are creating a Menopause Network where staff can share ideas and solutions for coping with the menopause as well as providing support for women in HSK and LMS. Sue Davies, Research Fellow in CRIPACC, has offered to co-ordinate the Network - please make contact with Sue sl.davies@herts.ac.uk if you wish to be kept informed of future meetings and events.

Visitors share ideas about Athena SWAN and career development
The UH Women in STEM Network was delighted to welcome Professor Averil Macdonald on 27 April 2016, who shared her ideas for women progressing in higher education. A summary can be found here: https://www.herts.ac.uk/about-us/news/2016/may/professor-averil-macdonald-obe-talks-about-gender-equality-at-the-university-of-hertfordshire.

Averil’s tips included: Know yourself and the people you manage; Apply for jobs and promotions as practice; Be visible and think creatively; Do not recoil from networking.

At this year’s HSK Research Conference, Dr Juliette Harris from King’s College London spoke about staff and students needing to take advantage of opportunities that come their way: “Don’t ignore those emails you get sent regularly; within them are nuggets of information that might be useful to you. We are all ‘too busy’, but if you take on new things you will develop a new mindset and who knows where that will lead you?”.

Update from the Midwifery Team
In recent years, the midwifery team has rapidly increased its academic profile, taking full advantage of in-house opportunities to study at doctoral level. One senior lecturer (Annabel Jay) has recently been awarded a doctorate and a further six are currently at various stages on doctoral programmes. This amounts to over one third of the total membership of the team. All doctoral candidates in the latter stages of their study are keen to share their findings and have achieved numerous publications and conference presentations at national and international level. At the recent Allied Health Professions and Midwifery Research conference, for example, all research-active staff gave presentations, which were well received.

If you would like to provide an update on the development of your team, please send information for the next newsletter.

HSK staff profiles
Two new HSK Academic staff case studies have been uploaded to the website www.jobs.ac.uk - Paul Maloret, nurse and Professional Lead in Learning Disabilities Nursing and Laura Abbott, a member of
the Midwifery team, are both currently studying for Doctorates in Health Research. They tell us about what drew them to teaching and their academic ‘journeys’ to date http://www.jobs.ac.uk/careers-advice/academic-case-studies

**Workshop on Wednesday, 19th October 2016 – Domestic Violence as a key issue for our wellbeing agenda**

Domestic violence affects 1 in 4 women and 1 in 8 men in the UK, although women are more likely than men to experience it in severe and repeated forms; similar rates appear in Europe and beyond, too. Prof Shulamit Ramon (Health and Social Work) and Dr Michele Lloyd (Education) will look at the perspectives of people experiencing domestic violence and those of service providers, as well as media representation of this issue, in an attempt to connect the individual, professional, and social layers of this phenomenon. To book a place at this two-hour workshop, please contact Tina Saunders (t.saunders@herts.ac.uk).

**International Men’s Day – 19th November 2016**

We would like to organise a walk and/or a ‘get together’ to celebrate this, similar to the event organised for International Women’s Day back in March, when we walked, shared cake and raised money for a women’s charity. Would any male colleague like to help organise something in November? Please contact Wendy Wills if interested. See http://www.internationalmensday.com/

**Snippets**

**Whose faces are on the walls of UH?**

The physical environment in which we work and study has an impact on us, even if we are not aware of it. There is a range of fabulous posters around the School and more generally across the University, showcasing our students and staff. Have you noticed if there is a gender balance across these posters? If you notice that any particular corridor or building, whether within HSK or more widely at UH, has a predominantly male - or female - focus through the posters displayed, would you let Wendy Wills know please?

*The deadline for the Autumn newsletter is 15th October 2016 – please send information for inclusion to Wendy Wills – those who provided information that we were unable to fit into this edition of the newsletter can rest assured it will be included next time!*

**Athena SWAN contacts:**

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