University of Aberdeen Business School
Athena SWAN Committee
Draft Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 August 2020, 2pm on Microsoft Teams

Present: Angela Black, Pam Cumming (Clerk), Cheryl Dowie (Chair), Shamima Haque, Nathalie Kemp, Sola Kasim, Ashley Lim, Nan Liu and Mark Whittington

Apologies: Maria Cascio Martin Meyer

		Actions
1.	**Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising.** Approved	CD, MW and Jaye Carr to meet with contact in Health Sciences re their buddy system/course. Students to be invited to future meetings and subgroups as required.
2.	**Sub committee Updates** MW mentioned how MM appreciates how we have kept momentum over the summer when usually things slow down. We are keen to keep this up and get the action plan together. Subgroups have met to discuss Sections 1-7 of action plan. This morning PC circulated a document on Teams from Keith. The action plan has been looked at previously and there was no need to communicate the changes to Athena SWAN. We are keen to build on what was there before. Cheryl confirmed that previous work on action plans made some additions/deletions, also moved items. MW reported that by Nov 20/21 we will need to tell a story about how we developed and changed over time. How we got to this point, we need to document the sequence of events. We also perhaps need to work closely with other schools in the Uni. **Action: Group to look at new spreadsheet thinking about what's been discussed at recent group meetings.** **Sub Committees** *Promoting Gender Equality (Pam and Mark)* MW reported that we met previously and again yesterday and again this morning. It is felt that anything more frequently than annually for updating is unachievable. The section talks about Websites which is also discussed elsewhere. The group were reminded that subsections are not independent of each other. Key thing is coming up with a staff survey/forum or two. We need to sort out a survey very soon. MW asked each subgroup to think about what sort of question should we have in the survey. It was felt useful for a calendar to be set up with key dates/events/reminders for actions. Website/Communicating with staff and students was discussed. Agreed	Subgroups to think about questions for the survey Think about designing a calendar Various points raised to be discussed with MM particularly with promotion, probation, director of people position, workload model and annual research meetings.

to have a section on Athena SWAN for Postgraduates. Ruth Tweedie might be useful contact as she is doing the induction.
Acton Design a calendar that we can follow.

Student recruitment, Attainment and Progression (Mark)
MW reported that there were notes circulated following on from the subcommittee meeting. They came up with several questions/reflections. Consideration needs to be given to all our off campus and online teaching, recruitment and progression needs to be discussed in all these areas as well as on campus.

Application – we need to look at who arrived, do we have a balance of gender in applications and those who arrive.
Need to consider Induction for home/international students.
Entry and exit points – need to look at year by year figures when students are here, where did they come from, what's the gender split… we need to keep eye on **all subjects** and look at degree levels at the end. We need to be looking at end of year one, year 2, year 3 etc.
Of 7 sub sections, this is currently only one to directly talk about students, we need to address this, we should include students in other sections.
Good to have something in a survey – find out about people's perceptions of flexible learning.
Also, important to look at how the students are progressing – we need data for UG/PGR and PGT.
Broadening this section out quite a bit!

Staff Recruitment and Induction (Sola)
Sola had emailed, his group met but he was waiting support from HR with figures.

Staff Career Progression (Cheryl and Angela)
CS will send out a document to the group.
Many points were raised with several questions.
E.g. - Do we have promotion champions in the Business School – this was in the action plan. Check with Martin if there is such a thing planned but including admin promotions champion.
Staff who have experience should become champions.
Action: Discuss with Martin

Mentors for business school – we have mentors for probationers, but perhaps other staff members might want to be mentored.   There is a system there on staffnet for all staff.   Discuss again when HR are present.
At school forums there has been people from HR discussing mentoring.
University information for mentoring is on Staffnet
https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/staff-development-111.php#panel9959

Promotion workshops – yearly promotion workshops were discussed. HR did run sessions. It was suggested having a workshop in the Business school one that also incorporates admin.

Career – being inclusive -supporting people on fixed term contracts.
Do we need a director of people to look into this? Speak with Martin.   Is there going to be a director of people and the role of line managers.

Training and development activities should be included in workload to encourage staff to do this. Not convinced this has happened. Raise this with MM.

Annual review form – we have questions about promotions

Collect points and discuss with Martin.

Research (Shamima and Cheryl)
Had meeting last week have 6 objectives as detailed in the previously circulated document.
There is a need to look further at the data, preliminary data has been received, but need to look at grant applications/acceptances, PGR supervision and ref submission etc, male/female proportions.
What has been done and still needs to be addressed is outline in the previously circulated document but includes Support and training in the Business school for staff for grant writing/promotion and networking/ethics/data security etc. Maternity/paternity/shared leave, support for mothers, sabbatical leave, encourage development of PGR topic through Elphinstone Scholarships.
The Group will look at what we have been doing in these areas. In terms of gathering info, Catia, Audrey and Bill will be consulted.

There is one annual research review, not sure what this is. Get clarification there – what is this.
The group also are keen to discuss the impact of COVID 19 on research intensive staff, research academics what opportunities there are.
From her research SH is aware that other unis are doing something for staff on probation who are perhaps impacted by COVID 19. There were meetings many years ago about this. Used to have meetings which were supportive. Bring this up with Martin. Start doing them again. Think about how we do things given the circumstances we are in just now and add to the plan.

Flexible Working (Nan/Nathalie and Ashley)
Nan previously circulated a note from their sub-group meeting.
Wording in the plan is geared towards academic staff, admin staff are not really considered in some plans, scope needs to be wider, students/research students as well as admin.
The Next questionnaire would need to be structured well in a way that is suitable for all the different groups to complete.
Increase awareness of flexible working
Increase support for flexible working. Working from home – doesn't allow flexibility e.g. parents with children in nursery. Impact of COVID on flexible working could be long-term and we should think about this perhaps in the survey e.g. work patterns/balance.

5 action points – they mainly require annual assessment via survey or through school forums or coaching sessions – not sure what we are with these.
MW reminded NL to feel free to add 6.3. and 6.4 to the plan use the document as a starting point. We will need to think about how many changes do we put in the revised for the next year and ones for the action plan Nov 20 21. We must be realistic and prioritise.

	Communication and Governance **(Mark, Cheryl)** Met last week a note has been circulated. The group had a good chat about range of things, trying to get hold of information, 7.3.1 – external…. We need separate theme for schools, one for outside businesses and perhaps one for community. Talked about developing website we have landing page that doesn't go far. May add things to add to website, Transparency of minutes, membership of committee should be there, and we could develop a blog. Link to resources and material in newsletters. Postgraduate campaigning – the University is about to redo pg. branding material and would like us to input into equality and diversity side of things.	
3.	**Survey/Focus Groups** We need to look at survey – each focus group should think questions perhaps also including an element of COVID related issues. **Aim to get Survey out end of October so to have outline plan by end of September**	Groups to think about surveys
4.	**Events** Sola is taking this forward. MW encouraged the group to read the document Sola circulated (and on Teams). It is a very interesting document. Cheryl and Ashley had also sent out some useful material. Sending staff to work in other Commonwealth countries is a great educational tool. Many staff learn from international student recruitment visits. Internationalisation courses about cultures e.g. meetings. Being in another country is how you experience things and see them in different perspectives, understand different cultures, why things are done the way they are and being respectful. Educating people and learning from each other is key, accept and embrace differences. **Suggested reading - Globalisation of Fragmentation** We could perhaps have a discussion with the University international society. It's a great society with wonderful events. We should chat with them. **Action: Group to read Sola's document. SK to start taking his ideas forward.**	Committee to read SK document. SK to take his ideas forward
5.	**Newsletter/Website** Newsletter will be key item on agenda on the 8 September meeting and from that the website. May need to have 2 sub committees for this.	
6.	**Schools** Now schools are back PC feels it might be more suitable for us to send a short video clip to schools about EDI and ask the schools to make up their own video about EDI in their school.	
7	**AOCB** **EDI – PC will edit name of meetings on outlook Requests.**	PC to alter invites on Outlook.
8	**Date of Next Meeting: 8 September 2pm, Teams**	