Athena SWAN Silver department award application

Name of university: University of Oxford
Department: Department of Biochemistry
Date of application: April 2015
Date of university Bronze award: November 2013
Contact for application: Professor Catherine Pears
Email: Catherine.pears@bioch.ox.ac.uk
Telephone: 01865 613245
Departmental website address: www.bioch.ox.ac.uk

A copy of the email sent by the ECU confirming the Department of Biochemistry was allocated 500 extra words (to explain the career structure at Oxford) has been attached to the email submission.

Athena SWAN Silver Department awards recognise that in addition to university-wide policies the department is working to promote gender equality and to address challenges particular to the discipline.

Not all institutions use the term ‘department’ and there are many equivalent academic groupings with different names, sizes and compositions. The definition of a ‘department’ for SWAN purposes can be found on the Athena SWAN website. If in doubt, contact the Athena SWAN Officer well in advance to check eligibility.

It is essential that the contact person for the application is based in the department.

Sections to be included

At the end of each section state the number of words used. Click here for additional guidance on completing the template.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statutory Professor</td>
<td>Recruited through open advertisement and appointed on a permanent contract to retirement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Titular Professor</td>
<td>Associate Professors and Senior Researchers who have been awarded a professorial title in the annual ‘Recognition of Distinction’ exercise. Award of this title does not change the post or the duties of the post holder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>Recruited through open advertisement and appointed on a permanent contract to retirement once they have passed a 5 year probation period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Titular Associate Professor</td>
<td>Annual exercise introduced in 2014. Award of this title recognises the significant and sustained contribution to the achievement of the University’s goals by senior research staff grade in 9 or 10. Does not change the post, the duties or the salary of the holder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Research Lecturer</td>
<td>Title awarded to researchers (open to Grade 8 and 9 staff) during an annual exercise. Recognises substantial independent research achievement, along with contribution to the general academic life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSIV</td>
<td>Professorial-equivalent grade for Research Fellows.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Researcher</td>
<td>Research Fellow with a similar or higher academic standing to Associate Professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Fellow</td>
<td>Usually externally funded independent researcher. Grades 8-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postdoctoral Researcher</td>
<td>A fixed-term contract (1-5 years). Grades 7-8.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronyms used in this application</td>
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<tr>
<td>AP</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>Athena SWAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASF</td>
<td>Athena SWAN Facilitator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASWG</td>
<td>Athena SWAN Working Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAP XX</td>
<td>Bronze Action Plan / Point XX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBSRC</td>
<td>Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCF</td>
<td>Biochemistry Carers Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPhil</td>
<td>Doctor of Philosophy, Oxford equivalent to PhD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E&amp;D</td>
<td>Equality and Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECU</td>
<td>Equality Challenge Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMBO</td>
<td>European Molecular Biology Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPSRC</td>
<td>Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRS</td>
<td>Fellow of Royal Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEFCE</td>
<td>Higher Education Funding Council for England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEIDI</td>
<td>Higher Education Information Database for Institutions (run by HESA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>HESA</td>
<td>Higher Education Statistics Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HoD</td>
<td>Head of Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iGEM</td>
<td>International Genetically Engineered Machine (iGEM) Competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JACS</td>
<td>Joint Academic Coding System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRC</td>
<td>Medical Research Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSD</td>
<td>Medical Sciences Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OLI</td>
<td>Oxford Learning Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OUBS</td>
<td>Oxford University Biochemical Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OxRSS</td>
<td>Oxford Research Staff Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDR</td>
<td>Personal Development Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDRA</td>
<td>Post-Doctoral Research Associate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGR</td>
<td>Post Graduate Researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RF</td>
<td>Research Facilitator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP XX</td>
<td>Action Plan / Point XX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT</td>
<td>Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG</td>
<td>Strategy Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>Statutory Professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS12</td>
<td>Biochemistry Staff Survey 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS15</td>
<td>Biochemistry Staff Survey 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEMM</td>
<td>Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TP</td>
<td>Titular Professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCAS</td>
<td>Undergraduate Courses At University And College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VC</td>
<td>Vice-Chancellor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WT</td>
<td>Wellcome Trust</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Letter of endorsement from the head of department: maximum 500 words

An accompanying letter of endorsement from the head of department should explain how the SWAN action plan and activities in the department contribute to the overall department strategy and academic mission.

The letter is an opportunity for the head of department to confirm their support for the application and to endorse and commend any women and STEMM activities that have made a significant contribution to the achievement of the departmental mission.
2. The self-assessment process: maximum 1000 words

Describe the self-assessment process. This should include:

a) A description of the self assessment team: members’ roles (both within the department and as part of the team) and their experiences of work-life balance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name &amp; Position</th>
<th>SAT Responsibility</th>
<th>Background</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andre Furger (AF) Associate Professor</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Career Development analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catherine Pears (CP) Associate Professor</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Athena SWAN Academic Lead. Departmental Equality and Diversity Officer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte Smith (CS) Athena SWAN Facilitator</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Provides support on existing and new E&amp;D policies. Co-ordinates Silver Application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chih-Chao Liang (CL) Graduate Student</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Represents Graduate Students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christina Redfield (CR) Professor of Molecular Biophysics</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Key Transition Points. Case study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Harris (DH) Associate Professor, Associate Director of Teaching</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Undergraduate and Postgraduate analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerry Pocklington (GP) Departmental Administrator</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Representative on divisional AS Steering Group; overall policy implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane Mellor (JM) Professor of Biochemistry</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Representing APs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judy Armitage (JA) Professor of Biochemistry, FRS</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Represents senior women academics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Sansom (MS) Head of Department</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Chair of SAT: policy implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nick Lakin (NL) Associate Professor</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Academic lead for Bronze application (2012).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rita Emberton (RE) Deputy Administrator - Personnel</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Personnel data analysis. HR policy implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shilpa Bali (SB) Post-Doctoral Researcher</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Represents PDRAs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rob Klose (RK) Professor of Cell &amp; Molecular Biology &amp; WT Senior Research Fellow</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Represents Research Fellows.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) An account of the self-assessment process: details of the self-assessment team meetings, including any consultation with staff or individuals outside of the university, and how these have fed into the submission
The self-assessment team (SAT) has met regularly since its inception in January 2012 when the Head of Department (HoD) invited NL, CR, DH and AF to form a SAT. After discussion with the University Equality and Diversity Unit, the HoD invited representatives from different career stages within Biochemistry including Postdoctoral Researchers, Research Fellows and Associate Professors. In response to Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) feedback on our Bronze Application a Postgraduate Student representative has since been recruited.

Since appointment of the dedicated Athena SWAN (AS) Facilitator (BAP8.4) in 2013, meetings have been held at least four times a year with the HoD as chair. Two subgroups take forward specific areas of work: the Data Group is responsible for data analysis and meets no less than termly; the Working Group (ASWG) oversees action implementation and meets fortnightly, presenting a formal review of progress to the SAT every six months. The Strategy Group (SG), the Department’s main decision making body, meets monthly with Equality and Diversity (E&D) as a standing item on the agenda (BAP8.2).

![Teams involved in the Department of Biochemistry Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Process.](image)

The Department of Biochemistry sits within the University’s Medical Sciences Division (MSD). Members of the SAT meet regularly with the divisional AS team and the University’s E&D officers. MSD run AS workshops and lunches where departments come together to discuss relevant topics; meetings may be focussed or general to share ideas and best practice. The MSD team also organise talks, including one from Professor Paul Walton (York University) about the challenges and success in applying for a gold award. GP is a member of the divisional AS steering group, a formal forum for inter-departmental collaboration.

CS and CP attended the Going for Silver Workshop run by the ECU. The Department
supports CS in attending events such as VITAE ‘Every Researcher Counts - Progress and Challenges’ and the ECU ‘Managing good relations in higher education: train the trainer’. Feedback from workshops and seminars are disseminated to the AS teams and SG, and when relevant, directly to the Department. A variety of communication channels are used for circulation, including websites, emails (sometimes using targeted lists e.g. women@bioch.ox.ac.uk), @BiochAthenaSWAN twitter feed and presentations. Focus groups have been held to examine initiatives such as the post-doctoral mentoring scheme, parental support and graduate student issues.

In 2015 we ran a full staff survey (SS15) where 96% of SS15 respondents were aware of the Department’s Athena SWAN Bronze Award and 67% of men and 79% of women thought that AS had a positive effect on raising awareness of Equality and Diversity issues. We have also held shorter surveys regarding the Personal Development Review scheme and mentoring.

The response rate in SS15 was 223 (55%), a significant increase on the last survey run in 2012 (SS12), when 152 (34%) individuals replied. Results from SS15 are used by SAT and SG to give an overview of progress, inform the Action Plan (AP) and Biochemistry’s strategic plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Biochemistry staff and graduate students Survey 2015: 55% Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>43 Questions across 6 sections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Training and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Work, Culture and Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Athena SWAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Comments and Suggestions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Monitoring Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51% Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38% Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11% Prefer not to answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.5% Academics and Fellows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.5% Research Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.5% Graduate Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.5% Others inc. Support &amp; Technical</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Overview of 2015 staff survey.

**c) Plans for the future of the self-assessment team**, such as how often the team will continue to meet, any reporting mechanisms and in particular how the self-assessment team intends to monitor implementation of the action plan.

The SAT, Data Group and ASWG will continue their pattern of meetings. Responsibility for implementing the AP is distributed among members of the SAT who report to SG and SAT. To report progress, impart information and canvass opinions, SAT members present to staff at Theme and Group Leader meetings. In addition to reviewing staff and student data, we will continue our programme of focus groups and surveys to assess progress against qualitative and quantitative measures.

- **Action 1:** Full staff surveys will be carried out annually and the SAT will present an ‘Athena SWAN State of the Nation’ report to the SG.
We will rotate SAT membership to enable participation of a wide range of department members and to avoid overburdening of individuals. To enable colleagues to know what is involved before volunteering, we will publish formal Terms of Reference for the SAT.

- **Action 2:** The SAT will develop and publish terms of reference including guidelines on purpose, recruitment to the committee, roles, length of service and will embrace a vision of committee aims.
3. A picture of the department: maximum 2000 words

a) Provide a pen-picture of the department to set the context for the application, outlining in particular any significant and relevant features.

Biochemistry forms a collaborative research setting bringing together experts in a range of disciplines. It is housed in a modern building designed to promote interaction and collaboration with a large central meeting space and state-of-the-art facilities. All faculty contribute to teaching a cohort of ~360 undergraduates studying for an M.Biochem. (four-year integrated undergraduate and masters course).

The Department has a long-standing reputation for research excellence. In the 2014 Research Excellence Framework Biochemistry contributed to a Unit of Assessment that topped the UK in quantity and quality of research. The Department’s annual average grant income is around £12.5million.

Biochemistry currently includes 117 postdoctoral researchers (PDRAs), 103 graduate students (PGRs), 381 undergraduates and 41 technical and support staff. There are 47 group leaders (12F:35M) (including 4 FRS (1F:3M)) arranged in five Research Themes, led by Associate HoDs (2F:3M) who are members of SG. Themes are designed to foster interaction between research groups and provide academic leadership and mentoring. Themes hold weekly meetings/seminars, open to all, where group members present research. As part of the Bronze Action Plan (BAP6.4) these Theme meetings now each offer a termly discussion forum to develop communications between staff and SG, issues raised at these Theme meetings are now a standing item on the SG meeting agenda.

All Group leaders attend weekly seminars at which they take turns to present, providing a forum for scientific discussion. A sandwich lunch beforehand provides opportunity for informal discussion with colleagues and the HoD. These meetings are also used to disseminate information and one meeting per term devoted to discussions around Departmental issues. The Department also holds a retreat providing a platform for PDRAs and PGRs to present their data and fostering interaction.
b) Provide data for the past three years (where possible with clearly labelled graphical illustrations) on the following with commentary on their significance and how they have affected action planning.

**Student data**

(i) **Numbers of males and females on access or foundation courses** – comment on the data and describe any initiatives taken to attract women to the courses.

Biochemistry participates in two access programmes, UNIQ and Pathways.

The UNIQ Summer School provides Sixth Formers from UK state schools the opportunity to attend lectures from subject experts, carry out practical work and experience the Oxford environment. Selection criteria prioritise applicants who have performed well compared to their GCSE cohort, attend schools with little history of successful applications to Oxford, are from deprived areas (identified using socio-economic/demographic indicators from a variety of sources), are from areas with low progression to university (using data published by HEFCE) or who are categorised as ‘looked after children’. Applicants are ranked using a formula designed by the central University administration, independent of gender. Places are assigned according to rank. This approach has been very successful in encouraging female participation: over the past three years the proportion of females has ranged from 75% to 90%. UNIQ is highly effective at attracting students from less advantaged backgrounds to apply to Oxford. Last year out of 40 students, 14 applied to Biochemistry in Oxford (11F:3M) and 7 were offered places (5F:2M).

Members of Biochemistry are also involved in delivering academic sessions for Year 12 study days on the Pathways Programme. Pathways aims to provide information, advice and guidance to academically able students and staff members in non-selective state schools with little history of student progression to Oxford. This initiative is co-ordinated by Colleges, with support from the Sutton Trust.

Biochemistry does not run foundation courses.

(ii) **Undergraduate male and female numbers** – full and part-time – comment on the female:male ratio compared with the national picture for the discipline. Describe any initiatives taken to address any imbalance and the impact to date. Comment upon any plans for the future.
The undergraduate course offered by the Department is the full-time 4-year M.Biochem in Molecular and Cellular Biochemistry. Over the last three years on average 50% of first year undergraduates were females (Chart 1), slightly below the level of other Russell Group Universities (55%), although there is some annual variation. These data are monitored annually by our Teaching Committee.

(iii) Postgraduate male and female numbers completing taught courses – full and part-time – comment on the female:male ratio compared with the national picture for the discipline. Describe any initiatives taken to address any imbalance and the effect to date. Comment upon any plans for the future.

Biochemistry offers no postgraduate taught courses.

(iv) Postgraduate male and female numbers on research degrees – full and part-time – comment on the female:male ratio compared with the national picture for the discipline. Describe any initiatives taken to address any imbalance and the effect to date. Comment upon any plans for the future.
Research degrees offered by the Department are DPhil and MSc in Biochemistry. Over the last three years the percentage of female PGRs starting is 56% (Chart 2), which is higher than other Russell Group universities (51%).

(v) Ratio of course applications to offers and acceptances by gender for undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research degrees – comment on the differences between male and female application and success rates and describe any initiatives taken to address any imbalance and their effect to date. Comment upon any plans for the future.
In the undergraduate admissions process, managed by the Colleges but overseen by the Departmental Admissions Officer, offers are made following (i) grading of UCAS forms by three members of academic staff (1F:2M), and (ii) two College interviews, each panel having a member of each gender. Over the last three years the proportion of female applicants has been higher than male (701F:508M). However, the ratio of offers is close to 50:50 female:male (nearly every student, female and male, accepts their place when offered). This indicates that females have a lower chance of being offered a place compared to male applicants (about 80% of the male rate). Part of this difference is explained by a higher proportion of female applicants from overseas, with overseas candidates having a lower success rate overall (due to lack of appropriate qualifications). For example in 2014/15 44% of female applicants were overseas (111/255) compared to 29% (49/169) of male applicants and the success rate of overseas application was 11%, compared to 27% overall. However, this is unlikely to account for the full difference.

In order to identify further reasons for the discrepant success rate, a sub-committee of the Teaching Committee was established, chaired by Prof Lynne Cox, to examine our interview procedure in case this disadvantages female applicants. On its recommendation, a different interview protocol, with candidates given material to read prior to the interview, was trialled in 2014 and its effects will be assessed in the course of this year. Teaching Committee will continue to monitor admissions procedures.

**Action 3:** The Teaching Committee will continue to monitor the gender balance of undergraduate applications/offers to evaluate the updated interview process.

![Postgraduate Applications and Offers](chart.png)

Chart 4: Post Graduate Applications for DPhil and MSc by Application Year

The proportion of postgraduate applications from females is steady at ~50% and this matches the proportion of offers. The proportion of acceptances varies between years with no obvious recurrent gender bias. These data are monitored by the Graduate Studies Committee.

**(vi) Degree classification by gender** – comment on any differences in degree attainment between males and females and describe what actions are being taken to address any imbalance.
Table 2: Degree class for UG students on M.Biochem Molecular & Cell Biochem, shown by year of course entry.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Female Cohort</th>
<th>First</th>
<th>2.1</th>
<th>2.2 &amp; lower</th>
<th>Male Cohort</th>
<th>First</th>
<th>2.1</th>
<th>2.2 &amp; lower</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008/9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Over the last three years, the percentage of females obtaining first class degrees averages at ~50% of the total firsts (42F:41M). Chi-squared analysis shows that over the last 6 years there was no significant difference (p>0.3) between the numbers of males and females achieving a first.

Progression was investigated by following the performance of individual cohorts over the course of their degree. Of the top 25 students in first year exams, both males and females have a 64% chance of being in the top 25 in finals, showing progression is equal and further progression to a higher degree is indistinguishable (46%F:47%M undergraduates go on to study for a higher degree).

There is fluctuation between years. In the 2009 cohort, for example, an unusually high number of females (12) were awarded 2.2 degrees or lower compared to only 5 males. In other years such variation was reversed (3F:6M in 2008 and 2F:5M in 2010). Statistical analysis indicates these fluctuations do not indicate any significant trend; however the Teaching Committee will continue to monitor.

For PGRs starting between 2007-2010, 89% of women and 90% of men have submitted their theses and 79% of women and 70% of men have been awarded their degrees: the remainder are in progress (vivas, corrections etc). On average one male and one female student withdraw from each annual cohort, predominantly caused by ill-health. In the 2013 cohort two female students withdrew compared to 1 male. One female (2010 cohort) (but no male) PGRs were awarded a lower degree. Data for completion rates is reviewed by Graduate Studies Committee and this will continue.

**Staff data**

(vii) Female:Male ratio of academic staff and research staff – researcher, lecturer, senior lecturer, reader, professor (or equivalent). Comment on any differences in numbers between males and females and say what action is being taken to address any underrepresentation at particular grades/levels

There are two main categories of tenured academic post: Statutory (SP) and Associate Professor (AP). Both are recruited through open advertisement and appointed on a permanent contract to retirement, with a five-year probationary period for APs. The number of SPs (currently 6) and APs in Biochemistry is limited by financial constraints. The majority of APs also hold College appointments with associated duties of tutorial teaching, pastoral care and administration. Colleges are independent of the University.

In addition to HEFCE-funded academic staff, about one third of the academic staff are Research Fellows funded by grants awarded in open competition (e.g. Royal Society,
Wellcome Trust). These can be on professorial grades (Professorial RSIV Researchers). Although some staff progress from PDRA to Research Fellow to AP, it is more typical for PDRA to move to first academic posts at other universities.

Although there is no formal academic promotion process at Oxford, there are opportunities for academic staff to be recognised for their academic achievement via the ‘Recognition of Distinction’ exercises, run by the University and Divisions. Eligibility depends on career stage but staff can be awarded the title of Professor, Associate Professor or University Research Lecturer (for more details see ‘Titles’ table). The award of a title does not change the post or duties; it recognises academic distinction.

Currently the Department has 6 SPs (6F:6M), 14 TPs (6F:8M) equivalent to professorial grades elsewhere, giving an overall proportion of 30% females. This is higher than the average for Professorial grades in the Biosciences (18%). The percentage of female APs is currently 23% (3F:10M).
Over the last three years women make up an average of 47% of staff at Grade 9 (Senior Research Fellows or facilities managers) or above (though numbers are small). 37% of Grade 7 (PDRAs) and 28% of Grade 8 researchers (senior PDRAs and Research Fellows) are women, lower than average for Bioscience Departments (47%F). This may be a consequence of the areas of the Department’s research strengths (biophysics, imaging, computational and systems biology) being more traditionally male-dominated than other areas of Bioscience. Though measures were put in place for the Bronze Action Plan (BAP4.2, 4.3 & 4.4) to increase female applicants, these numbers have remained stable. Therefore we will continue to address this issue with actions discussed in ‘Supporting and Advancing Women’s Careers Section’ (AP5-8).

The major attrition points for women are between PGR (currently 56%) and Grade 7 (38%) and then to Grade 8 (27%). The numbers of AP and TP are more stable, so then the third attrition point is to SP (0%). These attrition points, recognized in our Bronze application, remain a major focus for our AP. In working towards a succession plan for our senior academic posts, we acknowledge that the low levels of staff turnover, especially at higher grades (e.g. one SP over the last three years), means limited opportunity to alter these data.

(viii) Turnover by grade and gender – comment on any differences between men and women in turnover and say what is being done to address this. Where the number of staff leaving is small, comment on the reasons why particular individuals left.

Turnover of professorial positions and Grade 9 senior research posts is low, usually depending upon retirement. Two TPs left, both in 2012, and were a couple who moved to professorial posts nearer their families. Two grade 9 (2M) left, the numbers too small for meaningful analysis. Nine grade 8 (4F:5M) researchers left over the three year period, showing no obvious gender bias.

Looking at the next 10 years, 4 SP (M) and 6 AP (2F) are expected to retire, which has significant implications for succession planning strategies throughout our action plan. We
continue to work towards building a Department where women can have realistic expectations of appointment to these Professorships, with our longer term aim of 30% of SP and 50% of AP appointments to be female.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 7</th>
<th>Female 2012 13 (34%)</th>
<th>Male 2012 13 (23%)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female 2013 12 (32%)</td>
<td>Male 2013 21 (34%)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female 2014 10 (30%)</td>
<td>Male 2014 11 (20%)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 3: Number of Grade 7 leavers

Research staff (Grades 7 and 8) are employed on fixed term (generally 3 or 5 year) contracts, so turnover is greater and reflects the recruitment trend 3/5 years previously. There is fluctuation (Table 3), but on average 32% of females and 26% of males leave. To determine reasons for leaving we conducted a leaver’s questionnaire (BAP4.2 & 5.8). Reasons vary, from starting senior appointments elsewhere, to entering industry. 10% of staff reported “family” as the main reason for leaving, usually as partners moved to posts elsewhere. However analysis has revealed that although the survey captures the next destination it does not allow us to determine whether leavers were approaching the end of their contracts. This is important because it will help us understand why people leave (not just where they are going).

- Action 4: We will refine the leavers survey to capture the relevant data to enable us to evaluate reasons for leaving, destination and to determine whether there is any gender bias in PDRAs offered a second contract.
4. Supporting and advancing women’s careers: maximum 5000 words

Key career transition points

a) Provide data for the past three years (where possible with clearly labelled graphical illustrations) on the following with commentary on their significance and how they have affected action planning.

(i) **Job application and success rates by gender and grade** – comment on any differences in recruitment between men and women at any level and say what action is being taken to address this.

For Grades 7 and 8 it is encouraging that the percentage of females appointed during the last three years is higher than the existing total percentage of women (currently 38% Grade 7 and 27% Grade 8).

![Chart 7: Grade 7 Applications and Offers](image)

At Grade 7 PDRA level, where the number of appointments is largest (Chart 7) 39% of applicants, 43% of shortlisted candidates and 43% of appointments are female, indicating a higher success rate for women.

During 2012-2014 for Grade 8 (Chart 8) positions 39% of applicants, 38% of shortlisted and 33% of appointments were female. Given the small number of posts (n6), the percentage of women appointed reflects the proportion of applicants. There is a noticeable variation which may depend upon the nature of the post e.g. in 2014 there was one vacancy for an image analyst that attracted a high number of male applications compared with the posts advertised over the previous two years. Discussions around these data drew no conclusions and longer term trends will be continued to be assessed.
Three APs and one SP were appointed over the last three years (all during 2012), all male, but importantly the percentage of applications from women increased from 10% in the 2008-11 period to at least 16% (it may be much higher as 23% of applicants chose not to disclose their gender). Increasing the percentage of female applicants for AP/SP posts was a major focus of our BAP(4.3). During the Bronze award we revised the wording of job advertisements to encourage women; adverts and further particulars now reflect a commitment to E&D; our AS Bronze Award is promoted; significant website changes highlight our family friendly ethos. In addition, we improved the way that we advertise posts (discussed in the next section) to broaden the application pool and these numbers represent a significant increase.
In addition to the increase in applications noted above, Biochemistry is currently running a further AP recruitment exercise (not included in Chart 9): although the appointment is not yet determined, the applications from women show a substantial rise to 26.5% (17F:40M:7U). The short list also contains a high proportion of females (4F:2M) and we are optimistic that these data indicate a significant move in the right direction. We will build on these successes in our AP, increasing the proportion of female applicants for all positions.

- Action 5: We will collaborate with Biochemistry in Cambridge to externally assess our public face and application procedure. Staff and students from Biochemistry Departments in both Oxford and Cambridge will be asked to assess both Departments to highlight aspects that would encourage or discourage applications. We will survey new arrivals to determine what attracted them to the Department.

To further promote Biochemistry as a family-friendly work environment and to demonstrate to potential applicants that the Department is committed to encouraging women to remain in academia, we will establish a Biochemistry Carers Fund (BCF). Research and academic staff who have taken caring leave will be eligible to apply for up to £5,000 which they can use flexibly to support their return to science. The terms of the fund will be structured to widen eligibility compared to existing schemes, e.g. by enabling it to be used for childcare to facilitate conference or training course attendance. The scheme will be trialled over the period 2016-2019 to assess impact.

Whilst we are aware that numbers of eligible staff will be small, we will deliver a clear message that we are committed to providing a supportive environment in a world-class Department where every individual counts.

- Action 6: We will establish a Biochemistry Carers Fund. The terms of the fund will be structured to widen eligibility compared to existing schemes.

(ii) Applications for promotion and success rates by gender and grade – comment on whether these differ for men and women and if they do explain what action may be taken. Where the number of women is small applicants may comment on specific examples of where women have been through the promotion process. Explain how potential candidates are identified.

Although there is no formal promotion process, APs and research fellows can put themselves forward for the annual Recognition of Distinction Exercise run by the University and Division (Table 3) to be awarded the title of Professor (TP). Over the last two exercises (2012 & 2014), nine members of the Department applied (4F:5M), of whom four (2F:2M) were successful. There has been an increase in applications from female APs for the title of TP from 50% reported in the Bronze application to 66% during 2012-2014.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>Success</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Failed</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Success</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Recognition of Distinction Exercise

The Awards for Excellence scheme was introduced in 2014 to recognise achievement by
all grades of staff, following recommendation by their manager or self-nomination. Four of the seven awards made were to women. The current round is under assessment and we will continue to monitor the gender split.

When an individual’s role changes significantly, they and their manager can apply to the University for the post to be re-graded. However in our Bronze application we realised that there was low uptake and in SS12 only 17% of staff were clear about the process of re-grading. During 2011-2014 and following widespread implementation of Personal Development Reviews (PDRs) where duties and roles were discussed in detail, there was an increase in applications from all staff grades (16F:10M) (compared to 7 re-gradings in the three years from 2008-2010). There were eight successful applications from staff on grades 7-9 (4F:4M).

This increase in re-grading reflects the impact of Athena SWAN (BAP4.7 - 5.1) across the Department and is important as it reflects progression at all grades.

b) For each of the areas below, explain what the key issues are in the department, what steps have been taken to address any imbalances, what success/impact has been achieved so far and what additional steps may be needed.

(i) Recruitment of staff – comment on how the department’s recruitment processes ensure that female candidates are attracted to apply, and how the department ensures its short listing, selection processes and criteria comply with the university’s equal opportunities policies

Vacancies are advertised via Departmental and University websites, jobs.ac.uk, and NatureJobs (on-line). We advertised our most recent AP vacancy via the WISE Campaign website (Women in Science and Engineering) and our new social media channels. The AP advert was also emailed to all staff to encourage internal candidates and staff were prompted to contact potential candidates. Since submitting our AS Bronze application the Biochemistry vacancies page now contains a link to the Department’s Equal Opportunity policy statement and to the new ‘Working in the Department’ section where information on E&D, Parents and Carers, and Flexible Working are found (BAP4.3).

Though we have successfully increased female applications from 10% to 26.5% for AP positions, we continue to work towards a parity of applications. Informal discussions with another Oxford Department revealed a higher proportion of female applicants for a position not associated with a College tutorial fellowship and it may be the arrangements between Departments and Colleges discourage female applicants.

- Action 5.2: We will refine the ‘further particulars’ for AP positions. We will include case studies of ‘an average working week’ for APs, with a contact for informal questions and include an informal meeting between current APs and short-listed candidates to answer further queries as part of the interview process.

Selection panels must have at least one female and members are required to complete the University’s ‘Recruitment and Selection’ course, which includes an E&D module, and to undertake a refresher course every four years to ensure they are aware of legislation changes. Biochemistry HR staff send policy information to the panel before every interview.

In June 2014 the Department ran a pilot workshop on Unconscious Bias. The workshop
has since been refined and will be re-run in Biochemistry in 2015/6, alongside an on-line course, using blended training techniques to encourage individuals to be aware of biases.

- **Action 7**: Ensure that all interview panel members attend an Unconscious Bias workshop. We will monitor and provide reports to the SAT regarding interviewer training to ensure the required course(s) are completed.

- **Action 8**: We will record and report upon gender balance of recruitment panels. We will encourage senior PDRAs to undertake training and sit on recruitment panels. If any shortlist does not contain at least one female, the recruitment panel Chair will provide the HoD with the reason.

(ii) **Support for staff at key career transition points** – having identified key areas of attrition of female staff in the department, comment on any interventions, programmes and activities that support women at the crucial stages, such as personal development training, opportunities for networking, mentoring programmes and leadership training. Identify which have been found to work best at the different career stages.

**First attrition point: PGR (56%F) to PDRA (38%F).** To assess the aspirations of our graduate students following thesis submission, Biochemistry now conducts an online anonymized leavers questionnaire (BAP4.1) to capture their experience and career plans. During 2012–2014 there were 77 respondents (36F:44M). 95% (n42) of males and 83% (n30) of females were pleased they decided to do their DPhil.

When questioned about their short-term future (next 3–5 years), 63% (n28) of males and 58% (n21) of females envisaged that they would be working in academic scientific research. This contrasts sharply with the fact that only 39% of applicants to PDRA posts are female, suggesting that the actions introduced in the BAP(4.8), including providing more female role models and career information, are having a good impact on encouraging our female PGRs to work towards a scientific career. We will also continue to focus on attracting women from outside of the department to apply for positions and our collaboration with Cambridge (AP5) will provide important information to address this.

- **Action 9**: We will review our graduate surveys with emphasis on destinations of PGRs and monitor for any long-term gender imbalance.

**Second attrition point: PDRA (38%F) and / to Research Fellow (27%F).** Biochemistry hosts a number of research fellows who hold externally-funded awards. Decisions to award fellowships are made by funding bodies but the Department selects who is supported and it is important that our selection procedures are robust and transparent. Encouragingly, three out of the last six junior research fellows joining the Department were female. Two of the three APs appointed during 2012-14 were holders of fellowships within the Department so these researchers provide a pool for succession to APs. To increase the number of applications by females for fellowship support, we will appraise our process of selection that currently relies on individuals approaching SG.

- **Action 10**: We will establish clear and open procedures for Fellowship support. Advertisements inviting potential fellows will be circulated twice a year and a short-list invited for interview by a selection panel (50% female). Further particulars will include information about family friendly policies and details about professional development courses that support career progression skills.

The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers is an agreement,
between funders and employers of researchers in the UK is and has been implemented within Oxford as ‘the Code of Practice for the Employment and Career Development of Research Staff’. Within Biochemistry the Code was used to develop new PDR guides which are available to all. We have highlighted links from the Biochemistry website to the Oxford University Support for Researchers site and external resources such as the Vitae Researcher Booklet Series.

Biochemistry promotes, via emails, tweets and links from the website, central University resources such as the Oxford Research Staff Society (OxRSS) who provide research staff with a voice and, social and professional networking opportunities. OxRSS provide training and workshops on topics varying from “Select Committee Training” to “Managing stress in the workplace”.

The third attrition point: SPs (0%F). SP recruitment is a University-led process and to increase the number of female SPs, recent University initiatives include a policy whereby every SP shortlist must contain at least one women or justify the shortlist to the Vice-Chancellor.

Although most SP appointments are external, to support women in Biochemistry to be competitive at this level, senior women have initiated BWISER (Biochemistry Women In Science Education and Research), a forum to provide a platform to discuss issues related to career progression of women in science and support for female career fellows. As a result of this, suggestions have been made regarding the format of weekly lunches for group leaders and networking for new research fellows.

As part of the Bronze action plan (BAP5.6) training and development opportunities for Senior Women, are highlighted on the website including the OLI “Academic leadership development programme” and the Ad Feminam mentoring scheme (designed for senior women throughout the university). We will continue our programme of highlighting training and development schemes, and supporting BWISER.

To support Academic staff and PDRA staff, and help reverse attrition points Biochemistry has implemented the following (discussed in detail in the career development section):

Personal Development Review: A major outcome of our Bronze application was the recognition that an effective PDR system was missing and implementation of a new PDR scheme featured as a major priority (BAP4.7 & 5.1). PDRs are now implemented across Biochemistry.

Mentoring: As part of the BAP, Biochemistry implemented mentoring systems for academic staff in the early years of their careers (BAP5.4) and PDRAs (BAP5.7). These schemes aim to provide individuals with maximum support from an experienced, established mentor.

Careers Seminars: In conjunction with the Oxford Careers Service, Biochemistry now organises a series of Careers Seminars, open to all and publicised across MSD.

Though PDRAs have opportunities for presenting their work and networking in Theme meetings, the Departmental retreat and social events, and the senior women instituted BWISER, a more general women’s networking day will be introduced to facilitate interaction between female staff of different levels and allow discussion of career progression.
Action 11: The HoD will invite all women in the Department to an annual networking forum hosted by the Departmental Research Facilitator, including a workshop on gender-specific awards and opportunities. During the networking meeting we will facilitate discussions about the various recognition and reward schemes available within the University. This forum will complement the networking opportunities provided by the Women in Science Seminars (BAP4.8).

Career development

(a) For each of the areas below, explain what the key issues are in the department, what steps have been taken to address any imbalances, what success/impact has been achieved so far and what additional steps may be needed.

(i) Promotion and career development – comment on the appraisal and career development process, and promotion criteria and whether these take into consideration responsibilities for teaching, research, administration, pastoral work and outreach work; is quality of work emphasised over quantity of work?

The Recognition of Distinction award covers the quality and impact of research, teaching, and good citizenship, including administration, pastoral work and outreach. As stated Oxford does not have internal promotions or appraisals however the annual PDR scheme provides a regular opportunity to discuss career development.

Initially, PDR uptake was low (24% 2012/13). In 2014 a targeted survey and analysis led to a complete overhaul and the creation of new PDR forms (including an additional section on development opportunities and training needs), bespoke guides for reviewers and reviewees, and an effective prompting system. Subsequently, Departmental PDR uptake in 2013/14 rose to 93%. When surveyed in 2014, only 7.5% of reviewees found no value in having a PDR.

"Information on training and development information is much more readily available on the website and PDRs provide a valuable opportunity to discuss this" Female, Academic, SS15

PDR forms are reviewed by HR enabling evaluation of common requests/themes. Outcomes from these reviews include an increase in staff re-gradings and in training uptake and the Department now hosts a member of Research Services providing Biochemistry staff with weekly drop-in clinics to give specialised advice on material transfer agreements and funding queries.

"The department is very good for training and communication. I noticed this year that the PDR forms have been updated to include an option to discuss training opportunities - this is very helpful for staff to discuss these options with their line manager". Male, PDRA, SS15

Action 12: Continued monitoring and assessment of PDR for impact, uptake and satisfaction.

As a complementary mechanism to discuss career development we introduced a
mentoring scheme for PDRAs (BAP4.7 & 5.7), following a focus group and short survey to assess interest and expectations, adapting it from a pilot conducted by MSD. Mentors work with small mentoring circles (max 4 individuals) enabling individuals to benefit from their peers as well mentors.

PDRAs were invited to participate by completing a form where a gender preference for mentor could be registered. Mentors were selected from senior staff volunteers. Information was sent to Mentors and Mentees, including suggested aims, procedures and discussion topics. Participants are asked to complete a short survey at the end of the year.

Uptake for the first round was ~20% (9F+11M), reflecting results from a short survey in which 28% of respondents were interested in participating as a mentee. These numbers may be considered low, however they reflect a high level of support from group leaders as evidenced by SS15, where the majority of PDRAs (85%F:95%M) felt that their line manager ‘valued their contribution’ and ‘gives constructive feedback’ (82%F:83%M). As the anecdotal feedback from mentoring participants has been very positive we will continue to develop and run the scheme.

- Action 13: Highlight availability and encourage participation in the mentoring scheme. Arrange for current mentors and mentees to discuss the experiences with other PDRAs. Develop the scheme to include other staff groups. For Research Fellows we will introduce a “Fellows’ Research Day” for interaction with mentors.

The Department supports success for women at all career stages. Within the period of the Bronze Award the newly appointed Research Facilitator (RF) has supported Fellowship applications by women both for Departmental PDRAs moving to other Oxford Departments and for external applicants seeking to hold Fellowships within Biochemistry. She has also supported successful applications for female Marie Curie, EMBO and Henry Dale Fellowships within the Department. Just in the last 12 months there have been 8 successful major grants applications involving 7 of the 12 female group leaders.

Biochemistry has a strong record of female staff progressing to group leader positions. During the last three years, one TP took up an external Professorship, one Research Fellow was appointed AP in another Oxford Department and one PDRA achieved a prestigious Career Development Award at a central London University.

To encourage individuals at every level to reflect upon their own career development we regularly have >50 people attend recently introduced careers seminars (in SS15 70% of PDRAs found these seminars (very) interesting), so they will be continued. Seminars have included a talk from an Alumna working for a Research Council and “How to Progress in Academia”. The seminars can be followed by in-house one-to-one sessions with a member of the Careers Service to offer specialised advice over a range of career topics.

(i) Induction and training – describe the support provided to new staff at all levels, as well as details of any gender equality training. To what extent are good employment practices in the institution, such as opportunities for networking, the flexible working policy, and professional and personal development opportunities promoted to staff from the outset?
It was recognised in the Bronze application that our induction procedures were outdated. Induction materials for new staff were updated in 2014 (BAP5.6). We created a factsheet with organisational charts, links to training/courses, PDR and mentoring opportunities, and general support. The ‘ABC Biochemistry Handbook’ was updated and put online. New webpages provide additional information about working in the Department.

In addition to inductions by line managers, HR and the Safety Officer, Departmental Induction Days are held each term, giving new starters a networking opportunity and covering general aspects of Health and Safety, facilities, flexible working policy, harassment, and E&D. Training and development form a large section of these inductions and individuals are made aware of, and encouraged to attend, various courses.

These changes have gone some way to providing a comprehensive introduction to the Department, and we will continue our assessment to see what further support is needed.

**Action 14: Explore the impact of the new induction processes and refine.**

In 2014 Biochemistry developed a new section of the website bringing together all the University training providers. In SS15 43% of all respondents reported seeing an improvement in training information and specifically, 71% of female PDRAs saw an improvement on information about career development.

One of the University’s many training providers, OLI, runs courses including ‘Principal Investigators Programme’, ‘Springboard’ and ‘Thinking about Management’. OLI is the only University training department providing information about attendees. In 2011-12 16(7F:9M) members of Biochemistry attended 23 courses; in 2012-13 26(14F:11M:1U) attended 40; in 2013-14 31(22F:9M) attended 60 courses. This is an increase of 94% in the number of individuals attending OLI courses over the last three years, with three-fold increase in the number of women attending. This goes towards demonstrating the success of BAP5.6 that aims to increase course attendance.

University and external training courses are appropriate for different career stages, addressing different attrition points. To ensure that training and development remains a focus at all career stages we will develop our training information.

"training and development information is much more readily available on the website and PDRs provide a valuable opportunity to discuss this". **Female, Academic, SS15**

**Action 15: We will create lists of recommended training courses tailored for different career stages and provide to all relevant staff and their managers. We will clarify and publish Departmental procedures for applying for funding for training. We will work with individuals and line managers to continue to encourage individuals to participate in training and development courses.**
(iii) **Support for female students** – describe the support (formal and informal) provided for female students to enable them to make the transition to a sustainable academic career, particularly from postgraduate to researcher, such as mentoring, seminars and pastoral support and the right to request a female personal tutor. Comment on whether these activities are run by female staff and how this work is formally recognised by the department.

Undergraduate students have a College tutor, often a Departmental AP. Students can select which College to apply to and are aware of the tutor’s gender.

PGRs have two supervisors and a thesis committee of two academics and two advisors who are senior PDRAs or research fellows and are guaranteed access to a female adviser. PGRs complete self-assessments and receive termly supervisor feedback via the on-line Graduate Supervision System. Biochemistry supports and encourages participation of PGRs in seminars, national and international conferences. PGRs present their work in poster sessions, in Theme seminars and at the Retreat.

The Department sponsors student-led activities such as the Oxford University Biochemical Society (OUBS), which organises seminars and social events, Oxbridge Biotech Roundtable, and provides administrative support for the PGR-led society to promote women in science ‘OxFEST’, whose committee includes a PGR from Biochemistry. We expanded support in 2014 by providing laboratory space, and supervisors for the University iGEM team (an undergraduate-led synthetic biology competition).

Biochemistry has frequent high-profile female visitors and we arrange *ad-hoc* informal discussions between small groups of female PDRAs/PGRs, and visitors such as Judith Howard FRS, Katy Gearing, Director of Biological Sciences at GSK and Ann McDermott, member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

In addition, to inspire women to choose a science career, Biochemistry organises an interdepartmental seminar series entitled ‘Women in Science’, featuring high profile Oxford women (e.g. Prof Alison Woollard, Prof Dame Kay Davies) who have spoken about career paths and strategies in balancing work and personal life (BAP4.8). At the end of each event refreshments are provided to encourage networking. These are well attended by members of many (6-9) departments, receive excellent feedback (after each seminar) and will be continued.

**Organisation and culture**

a) Provide data for the past three years (where possible with clearly labelled graphical illustrations) on the following with commentary on their significance and how they have affected action planning.

(i) **Male and female representation on committees** – provide a breakdown by committee and explain any differences between male and female representation. Explain how potential members are identified.
The female representation on committees varies (Chart 10). For most committees (Teaching, Building, IT, Safety) membership is *ex officio* (e.g. facilities managers) and posts have low turnover. Strategic decision-making bodies (Graduate Studies, SAT and SG) have a higher proportion of females. Members are identified by SG in consultation with the workload model. The Scientific Advisory Board is a new initiative instituted as part of the BAP(6.2). It consists of external senior scientists (2F:3M) invited by the HoD, to advise on scientific and strategic issues.

Chart 10: Biochemistry Committees 2012-2014
(ii) Female:male ratio of academic and research staff on fixed-term contracts and open-ended (permanent) contracts – comment on any differences between male and female staff representation on fixed-term contracts and say what is being done to address them.

Chart 11: Academic Contract Types

All Professors (SP/AP/TPs) are on permanent contracts.

Chart 12: Research Contract Types

b) For each of the areas below, explain what the key issues are in the department, what steps have been taken to address any imbalances, what success/impact has been achieved so far and what additional steps may be needed.
(i) Representation on decision-making committees – comment on evidence of gender equality in the mechanism for selecting representatives. What evidence is there that women are encouraged to sit on a range of influential committees inside and outside the department? How is the issue of ‘committee overload’ addressed where there are small numbers of female staff?

Committee membership is monitored annually when assessing workload of academic staff to ensure balance is maintained without overloading female staff (BAP6.1). Women make up 43% of SG, a higher percentage than in the academic staff as it is the main decision making body, SG also includes representatives of Research Fellows and APs (BAP6.3) to ensure their views are represented. Membership of committees not defined by job or specific expertise is rotated on a 2-year basis to ensure all staff have the opportunity to participate.

Women are encouraged to sit on external Committees such as Funding Body Panels and Societies by advertising vacancies by email, discussion within PDR and inclusion in the workload model. For example, women from Biochemistry are journal editors (e.g. Journal of Bacteriology), sit on Fellowship panels (e.g. Royal Society), are member of scientific advisory boards for external institutions (e.g. Durham University Biosciences Institute), and on committees for scientific bodies (e.g. Society for General Microbiology).

(ii) Workload model – describe the systems in place to ensure that workload allocations, including pastoral and administrative responsibilities (including the responsibility for work on women and science) are taken into account at appraisal and in promotion criteria. Comment on the rotation of responsibilities e.g. responsibilities with a heavy workload and those that are seen as good for an individual’s career.

A focus of the BAP(6.6) was to implement a workload model to ensure female AP/TPs are not overburdened with teaching and administration. All academic staff contribute to teaching, administration and research. Administrative loads are allocated by SG, teaching by the Director of Teaching. In SS12 100% of female academic staff indicated dissatisfaction with their burden of teaching and administrative duties.

Having researched a number of workload models, a flag system to assess workload was introduced (BAP6.6). Academic staff annually provide data on activities in three areas (teaching, research and citizenship) as these form the criteria for Recognition of Distinction. Citizenship is broad and, for example, includes committee membership, mentoring, safety officers, outreach.

A committee of the HoD, Director of Teaching, Administrator and the E&D Officer assess the data and award one (low) to three (high activity) flags in each area, taking into account career stage, appointment, parental leave. In the first round in 2014 the average flag score for all assessed staff (n=43) was 6.19, the average for females (n=11) was 6.55 and males (n=32) 6.06. The data will be annually evaluated by the workload committee to ensure that the workload of females is brought in line with males.

Workload information is available before annual PDRs to allow for discussion. The scheme also informs the Director of Teaching and SG when allocating future duties (BAP6.5). As a direct result of workload assessment, academics have had teaching load reduced (reallocation of both lectures and practical demonstrating) and administrative duties reallocated including a safety officer, running the next generation sequencing facility and committee membership. The impact of executing this system has already been shown in SS15 where 100% of female academic respondents felt the implementation of our
workload model was, or may be, a positive move.

- **Action 16:** The workload model analysis will be continued on an annual basis to work towards parity between male and female group leaders. We will publicise our workload model within the University by arranging a workshop with other Departments in MSD and other Divisions to discuss best practice. This will also feed into refining our model.

Further analysis of the model revealed that time spent on tutorial organisation contributes significantly to AP workload.

- **Action 5.1:** We will streamline teaching organisation duties of APs by creation of on-line databases of tutorial and teaching programmes.

Workloads of PDRAs and support staff are managed by group leaders and in SS15 only 16% of staff disagreed with the statement that their workload was reasonable. PDRs and mentoring provide an opportunity to discuss workloads.

(iii) **Timing of departmental meetings and social gatherings** – provide evidence of consideration for those with family responsibilities, for example what the department considers to be core hours and whether there is a more flexible system in place.

To demonstrate consideration for those with childcare commitments, Departmental seminars have been rescheduled from 4pm to lunch-time (BAP6.7). SS15 showed that for 90% of staff most meetings/seminars were held between 10am-4pm. This is an improvement from SS12 when only 58% of staff felt that the timing of these took account of family/caring responsibilities.

The majority of social events (e.g. the Children’s Christmas party, celebrations to mark the 50th anniversary of OUBS) take place during principal working hours.

A number of associated societies choose to organise events outside these hours such as the ‘Fridays at Five’ social gathering in the Department’s Café (organised by OUBS).

(iv) **Culture** – demonstrate how the department is female-friendly and inclusive. ‘Culture’ refers to the language, behaviours and other informal interactions that characterise the atmosphere of the department, and includes all staff and students.

We have an equitable gender balance in our group leaders and these outstanding women are excellent role models for the younger women aspiring to a career in academia.

Across the Department we have worked with seminar organisers to increase the number of female speakers; to keep this momentum, we will report on gender balance of all seminar speakers annually (AP1). Importantly women have given a number of high profile lectures organised by the Department including the inaugural Louise Johnson Memorial Lecture and the Rodney Porter Memorial Lecture.

Biochemistry strives to ensure it is a friendly and inclusive place to work.
- Five years ago we moved to a new building designed to promote staff interaction including atrium areas with comfortable seating and kitchens.
- The Biochemistry Café welcomes children and visitors. Nappy-changing facilities are available.
- News and achievements relating to female staff are highlighted on the front page of the
Biochemistry website, a dedicated AS section of the website, Facebook pages and publicised via our Twitter feed (which is linked to the Oxford University social media hub) (BAP6.8 & 6.9). When Professor Judy Armitage was awarded the prestigious Fellow of the Royal Society (FRS) in 2013, the department was very proud to honour her achievement with a special function organised by the Head of Department.

- Themes are organised on a topic basis, promoting interaction and networking.

  “I like the major themes organization and the fact that the theme that I am in has high participation at our weekly seminar series. It feels good to get to know the work and people from labs on different floors”. Male, PDRA, SS15

- To recognise the importance of teaching the Department puts forward members of staff for the annual MSD teaching awards. In 2014 three of the five ‘Most Acclaimed Lecturers’ were from Biochemistry (1F:2M).

- OUBS is run by PDRAs and PGRs. As well as organising seminars, it runs social events such as ‘Friday at Five’ and an annual black tie ball. It also publishes ‘Phenotype’, a termly magazine highlighting Biochemistry news and research.

  “It is important to keep the socials at the Department… The Oxford University Biochemical Society does a great job and should be supported”. Female, Graduate Student, SS15

- On the website we have created ‘Inspire Me’ (BAP4.6), a growing collection of podcasts, playlists and papers, selected to provide motivation, information and enthusiasm about being a woman in science.

- SS15 showed 84% of females (83%M) would recommend working in the Department to a friend. In SS12 only 69% of females would have made this recommendation, demonstrating a significant increase.

Within SS12 54%M and 47%F agreed that the “Department’s management processes were transparent” and actions were put in place to address this, such as publishing SG minutes on the website (BAP6.4), updating the Staff ABC Handbook (BAP5.2) and increasing participation in committees (BAP6.3). However these actions have not been enough as 27% of respondents in SS15 disagreed with the same statement.

  “there has been a noticeable effort from strategy group to get people involved and encourage them to raise any issues they might have - this is a very positive development and greatly appreciated. I feel it helped to change the mindset from thinking ‘this is how it is’ to ‘this could be improved’ and created a more proactive environment”. Female, PDRA, SS15

- Action 17: Transparency, particularly regarding management structures and decision-making, will be further improved using a variety of communication strategies. These will include members of SAT and SG reporting directly to the Theme Meetings and inductions, increased use of new media and website
The Departmental Retreat provides an opportunity for PDRAs and PGRs to present their work as well as fostering social interaction. The SAT monitored the F:M ratio of speakers and for the two retreats held during our Bronze award, the average percentage of female speakers was 49%, higher than the percentage of research staff. Female session chairs ensure senior women staff have a high profile (46% over this period). We do not have older data, but discussions with staff indicate that the number of females speakers and chairs has risen as a direct impact of Athena SWAN being implemented in the Department. The retreat involves an evening meal to which all staff and PGRs are invited. In Theme meetings this was commented upon as an excellent way to facilitate socialising between groups.

(v) Outreach activities – comment on the level of participation by female and male staff in outreach activities with schools and colleges and other centres. Describe who the programmes are aimed at, and how this activity is formally recognised as part of the workload model and in appraisal and promotion processes.

Biochemistry has a strong commitment to outreach with involvement from males and females. The website now contains a section to publicise ways to get involved in these activities, aimed at every Department member. Information on activities by academic staff is collected as part of the workload analysis, forming a major contribution to citizenship activities and in future can be assessed separately. Examples from women include:

Prof Alison Woollard gave the prestigious and widely viewed Royal Institution Christmas lectures in 2013, broadcast by BBC, aimed at schoolchildren. She has spoken at festivals (including Green Man Festival) and along with Research Fellow, Dr Sylvia McLain, starred in a scientific stand-up comedy show. Sylvia regularly writes for the Guardian. Prof Elspeth Garman featured on ‘Life Scientific’ broadcast on Radio 4 and talked at ‘A Pint of Science’ at a local pub. Both genders play an active role in many events such as ‘I am a Scientist get me out of here’, an online forum for children to ask scientific questions and vote scientists off-line.

Prof Garman has recently taken on a new Departmental role of Outreach Officer. Her responsibilities include encouraging women of all ages to consider Biochemistry and this Department as a route to a fulfilling and successful career. In January 2015 she hosted a visit from over 20 girls following our involvement in a ‘Lesser Spotted Science Day’, an event to highlight less well-known science subjects.

Other important areas of Departmental outreach are Open Days (Departmental, University and College) and the aforementioned access courses (UNIQ and Pathways). Further activities include school visits, participation in Oxford Roadshows and the education group of the Biochemical Society. Many academics host work experience students in laboratories each summer.

Flexibility and managing career breaks

a) Provide data for the past three years (where possible with clearly labelled graphical illustrations) on the following with commentary on their significance and how they have affected action planning.

(i) Maternity return rate – comment on whether maternity return rate in the department has improved or deteriorated and any plans for further improvement. If the department is
unable to provide a maternity return rate, please explain why.

Between 2011-2014, 11 members of staff (Grades 5-8) took maternity leave and 100% returned, an improvement on the 86% return rate reported in our Bronze application, reflecting a number of actions (BAP7.1-7.6).

We will continue to monitor numbers and ensure that staff are supported before and during their leave, and upon return. We will continue to ensure policy information from the University, Funders, and Statutory bodies is available and accessible to all.

(ii) Paternity, adoption and parental leave uptake – comment on the uptake of paternity leave by grade and parental and adoption leave by gender and grade. Has this improved or deteriorated and what plans are there to improve further.

During 2011-14 9 members of staff (Grades 4–8) took paternity leave, compared to 11 reported in the Bronze application. These numbers indicate stability but we will continue to monitor.

One individual (F, grade 8) successfully requested 2 periods of parental leave (3 and 4 weeks) over 2 years.

There were no requests for adoption leave.

The Departmental policies for paternity, adoption and the new shared parental leave (starting April 2015) are available on the website. Changes to policies are communicated by email and the website and factsheet updated.

The Departmental Parents and Carers factsheet can be downloaded from the website and printed copies are available, summarizing policies with links to detailed information. In SS15, only 8% of respondents did not know where to find relevant leave information compared to 25% in SS12, a good improvement.

(iii) Numbers of applications and success rates for flexible working by gender and grade – comment on any disparities. Where the number of women in the department is small applicants may wish to comment on specific examples.

Biochemistry is fully supportive of, and operates a flexible working policy which is accessible from the Departmental website (BAP5.5). Over the last three years we have had 6 formal requests for flexible working (F, Grades 5-9), all approved.

5 women (4 PDRAs) successfully submitted requests for flexible working patterns upon their return from maternity leave.

b) For each of the areas below, explain what the key issues are in the department, what steps have been taken to address any imbalances, what success/impact has been achieved so far and what additional steps may be needed.

(i) Flexible working – comment on the numbers of staff working flexibly and their grades and gender, whether there is a formal or informal system, the support and training
provided for managers in promoting and managing flexible working arrangements, and how the department raises awareness of the options available.

Biochemistry’s strategy recognises that both formal and informal flexible working practices have an essential place.

For formal requests a section on the Departmental website links to the flexible working policy and any changes are emailed to all staff. We currently have 6 individuals on formal flexible working patterns.

Regarding informal working patterns, in SS15 over 76% of respondents stated their job allowed them to arrange their working day flexibly most of the time and 95% some of the time. This contrasts sharply with SS12 where only 31% of respondents stated they made use of flexible working hours. Staff surveys will continue to monitor the situation to ensure that formal and informal flexible working policies are understood and valued by managers and staff.

(ii) Cover for maternity and adoption leave and support on return – explain what the department does, beyond the university maternity policy package, to support female staff before they go on maternity leave, arrangements for covering work during absence, and to help them achieve a suitable work-life balance on their return.

The University, therefore Biochemistry, offers a generous maternity leave scheme. All staff are entitled to 26 weeks leave on full pay, 13 weeks statutory maternity pay and 13 weeks unpaid leave, following continuous employment for 26 weeks or more at the 15th week before expected birth. The Department meets maternity pay costs in cases where grant funders do not.

Pregnant women complete a maternity leave plan and meet with the Department’s HR Administrator, for a discussion. They are encouraged to contact HR at any point with queries, plan changes, or to discuss alterations to work pattern.

For PDRAs arrangements for covering work during absence are made in discussion with their supervisor. Some grantors allow for recruitment of replacement staff. As part of the Bronze action plan we introduced a scheme of teaching remission for APs upon their return to work (BAP7.5) and also to fund a 0.5FTE PDRA for 6 months to help group leaders with continuity of research management (BAP7.4). The BCF we will introduce (see AP6) is a more flexible approach as it will open up the scheme to more women (all researchers) and allow money to be used for a broad range of appropriate purposes.

As discussed during a Departmental parents focus group, a key concern is the availability of affordable childcare. The Department created new webpages with signposts to University (and private) childcare provision (BAP7.6). There are 390 nursery places across 15 nurseries available for University staff and students, providing a ratio of 1 nursery space per 29 staff (sector average is 1:71). Biochemistry sponsors three places at University nurseries. However due to the size of the waiting lists and despite the cost to the Department (£3000 p.a.) this sponsorship does not guarantee a place. As childcare continues to be a serious matter of concern, we will continue to lobby the University to increase nursery provision.

- **Action 18:** In discussion with adjacent departments, we will lobby Divisional and University policy-makers for increased nursery provision within the University and specifically within South Parks Science area.
5. Any other comments: maximum 500 words

Please comment here on any other elements which are relevant to the application, e.g. other STEMM-specific initiatives of special interest that have not been covered in the previous sections. Include any other relevant data (e.g. results from staff surveys), provide a commentary on it and indicate how it is planned to address any gender disparities identified.

Early in the Athena SWAN Bronze application process it was recognised that Biochemistry would benefit from extra resources to fulfil its commitment to upgrade and embed HR, E&D and Athena SWAN processes (BAP8.4). A dedicated Athena SWAN Facilitator (ASF) was appointed to work with the SAT on implementation of the AS action plan, and integrate with the HR and administrative team to update existing, and design and implement new, processes and policies. A major role for the ASF is to work with staff to establish AS principles in their everyday working practices so they become second nature.

The ASF has worked closely with the AS Academic Lead to; communicate AS aims and actions, and new Biochemistry E&D policies to a wide range of participants; design and run focus groups and surveys; launch numerous communication channels. The impact of the ASF has been to accelerate the number of substantial new schemes (e.g. PDR, Workload Model, Mentoring Scheme, Women in Science Seminars, Careers seminars) that the Department has been able to instigate without overburdening (female) academics and existing administrative staff. These schemes are now all part of the culture of the Department and embedded in the working lives of all staff.

Whilst it is natural to expect a lag in the effect of these changes in quantitative recruitment data, the impact can already be shown in the qualitative and anecdotal evidence of the surveys, focus groups, seminar responses and ad-hoc feedback. Examples include;

- over the last year, through our seminars, mentoring and PDRs we have focussed on increasing the quality and quantity of information about career development. The impact is seen in the results of SS15, where 71% of targeted respondents (female PDRAs) said they have seen an improvement in “information on career development and opportunities”
- through initiatives such as Unconscious Bias workshops, presentations at Theme meetings, and improving information on the website and adverts, the Department has highlighted it actions to improve E&D. In SS15 79% of female respondents thought that Athena SWAN has had a positive impact in “raising awareness of equality and diversity issues in the department”.
- feedback from females who have attended the various ‘Women in Science’ and Careers seminars and events includes quotes such as “Really inspiring!” and “It was great to come and attend and share experiences from others”. Ad-hoc emails have included comments such as “Thank you… for these WONDERFUL pieces of news!... Keep up the good work!” and in response to one of the informal small group meetings “Thank you for organising it, it's been really interesting and the speaker was very clear and approachable :)

The ASF has supported the Department in ensuring the Athena SWAN ideals are circulated throughout the Department, underpinning its aims of increasing diversity and encouraging women to stay in science.
6. Action plan

Provide an action plan as an appendix. An action plan template is available on the Athena SWAN website.

The Action Plan should be a table or a spreadsheet comprising actions to address the priorities identified by the analysis of relevant data presented in this application, success/outcome measures, the post holder responsible for each action and a timeline for completion. The plan should cover current initiatives and your aspirations for the next three years.