**Athena SWAN Applications**

**Guidance on UoB policies - Bronze and Silver applications**

Please find below an overview of generic processes and policies that will apply to all Schools. This is not intended to be prescriptive and can be adapted and added to for your application. The questions are based on the post-May 2015 Bronze and Silver application form.

**4.2 (ii) Academic and research staff by grade on fixed term, open-ended/permanent and zero-hour contracts by gender** Comment on the proportion of women and men on these contracts. Comment on what is being done to ensure continuity of employment and to address any other issues, including redeployment schemes.

*Note: Athena are particularly concerned with the negative consequences of the use of FTCs on the retention and progression of female staff.*

Fixed term contract staff have access to the full range of training and development opportunities offered at the University, including courses particularly relevant to staff at the start of their academic careers, such as enhancing your teaching and skills for researchers. All staff who are on a fixed-term contract for more than 4 years are transferred to open contracts, with funding end dates if applicable. The University also offers a redeployment scheme, which gives first preference on alternative posts to redeployment candidates. The University does not operate zero-hours contracts.

**5.1 (ii) Induction.** Describe the induction and support provided to all new academic staff at all levels. Comment on the uptake and how its effectiveness is reviewed.

The induction process for all staff has four stages: pre-arrival, local induction, central induction and post-induction. Pre-arrival is led by the line manager and is a letter/email of welcome that includes arrival details for the first day, lunch arrangements and a copy of the induction programme. Local induction … (describe School-level induction activities here).

All new staff are invited to a University-wide central induction session, which includes information on University services and functions, including training and development and staff support networks. All new staff are also required to complete an online equality and diversity training programme as part of their probationary period.

Post-induction (typically 3 to 4 months), all new starters receive a questionnaire or are invited to a focus group to feedback on their induction process and identify any additional support they need to feel fully integrated into University life.

**5.1 (iii) Promotion** Provide data on staff applying for promotion and comment on applications and success rates by gender, grade and full and part-time status. Comment on how staff are encouraged and supported through the process.

*Note: Athena will want to hear about how your School actively encourages and supports staff to apply for promotions and provides feedback on unsuccessful applications. They will be particularly mindful that women can be less likely to apply for promotions and/or take longer to apply than their male colleagues. In addition to this, the following support is offered centrally:*

The University has a comprehensive intranet page providing detailed information on the process and criteria for promotion to different posts, as well as guidance on completing CVs. The University’s Teaching Academy provides specific mentoring and support for teaching-focused promotions.

Promotions workshops can be delivered in your School by POD on request.

**5.2 (Silver only) Key career transition points: professional and support**

(i) Induction – see the text above for academic staff

(ii) Promotions – The University does not ‘promote’ Professional Services staff (hence no data is available), but staff are offered opportunities to develop into roles through secondments and work-shadowing.

**5.3 (i) Training (academic staff)** Describe the training available to staff at all levels in the department. Provide details of uptake by gender and how existing staff are kept up-to-date with training. How is its effectiveness monitored and developed in response to levels of uptake and evaluation?

A wide range of in-house training is available to staff at all levels, and is specific to career stages/roles, such as researcher and early career, teaching-focused, managerial and senior leadership. For example, skills for researchers (making your mark, raising research profile), becoming a research team leader, PG Certificate in Academic Practice (PCAP), the Emerging Leadership Programme and Senior Leaders’ Programme. The Aurora Leadership Programme is also available to female staff at lecturer level and equivalent. Staff also have access to mentoring and coaching support via People and Organisational Development.

The majority of courses are self-referral and are also promoted through PDR and specific activities/resources, such as the Birmingham Researcher, Birmingham Teaching Academy and PERCAT (*where relevant to your College)*.

All staff must undertake equality and diversity training. PDR and recruitment and selection training is mandatory for staff involved in those processes and includes unconscious bias training.

Satisfaction with development opportunities is monitored by the annual Staff Satisfaction Survey and by feedback on individual courses.

Staff Satisfaction Survey Q.5 ‘I feel supported with my professional development’ is relevant here.

**5.3 (ii) Appraisal/development review** **(academic staff)** Describe current appraisal/development review schemes for staff at all levels, including postdoctoral researchers and provide data on uptake by gender. Provide details of any appraisal/review training offered and the uptake of this, as well as staff feedback about the process.

Staff at all grades have an annual Performance Development Review (PDR) with their line manager. The purpose of the PDR is to have a structured, constructive conversation about performance against objectives, to agree future objectives, discuss career aspirations and to identify any development needs. All staff engaged in PDR reviews must attend a compulsory PDR training course.

*Note: Staff feedback about the PDR process can be obtained via your focus groups, surveys and also the Staff Satisfaction Survey results for your School:*

Q.6 I receive constructive feedback on my performance  
Q.7 I receive regular feedback on my performance

*Note: the above text will also apply in Silver applications when discussing Professional Services appraisal.*

**5.3 (iii) Support given to academic staff for career progression** Comment and reflect on support given to academic staff, especially postdoctoral researchers, to assist in career progression

*Discuss any mentoring arrangements here and any specific career progression support arrangements in your School, such as financial support to attend conferences, research allowances etc.*

Where relevant: PERCAT is an initiative that aims to provide a gateway to resources and support available at  the University of Birmingham for career  development & training for postdoctoral and  early career researchers.

**5.3 (v) Support offered to those applying for research grant applications** Comment and reflect on support given to staff who apply for funding and what support is offered to those who are unsuccessful.

*Discuss local arrangements.*

School staff have access to resources provided via the Research Concordat and ‘Birmingham Researcher’ framework to support them in identifying research funding, making grant applications and managing awards. This includes a research funding guide, a funding opportunities resource and access to the Research and Innovation Services team for support through the application process.

**5.4 (i) (Silver only) Career Development: professional and support staff**

(i) Training- A wide range of in-house training is available to staff at all levels, and is specific to career stages/roles, such as customer care, effective presentation skills, and the Emerging Leadership Programme and Senior Leaders’ Programme. The Aurora Leadership Programme is also available to female staff at lecturer level and equivalent. Staff also have access to mentoring and coaching support via People and Organisational Development.

The majority of courses are self-referral and are also promoted through PDR and specific activities/resources, such as the Birmingham Professional.

All staff must undertake equality and diversity training. PDR and recruitment and selection training is mandatory for staff involved in those processes and includes unconscious bias training.

Satisfaction with development opportunities is monitored by the annual Staff Satisfaction Survey and by feedback on individual courses.

Staff Satisfaction Survey Q.5 ‘I feel supported with my professional development’ is relevant here.

(ii) Appraisal – As for academic staff

(iii) Career progression - *Discuss any mentoring arrangements here and any specific career progression support arrangements in your School, such as s*econdments and shadowing.

**5.5 (i-iii) Flexible working and career breaks – cover and support for maternity leave**

*Note: The maternity questions focus primarily on what the department does, rather than central University policy. I’ve sketched out some suggestions below, but please expand on these and detail what your particular School does.*

Before maternity leave:   
*Note: Athena will be particularly looking for evidence that pending maternity leave is pro-actively managed in the School and that appropriate cover is provided, so staff do not feel under pressure to return to work earlier than they would wish.*

Suggestions: Line managers undertake H&S assessments as needed and staff are reallocated duties if necessary. Line managers meet with staff to confirm leave dates, discuss cover arrangements, agree any KIT days, discuss return to work arrangements including reducing workload on return. Discuss the Schools’ approach to providing maternity cover, e.g. the School can access the University’s Central Maternity Fund to meet the maternity costs of core-funded staff and provide cover for them.

During maternity leave:  
Evidence of how the School keeps in touch with staff, e.g. invitations to away days and major School events.

Return to work:  
*Note: Athena will be looking for evidence that returns are planned for and that the School proactively seeks to help manage staff’s workload on their return.*

Suggestions: Staff on 3-legged academic contracts can opt in to reduce their teaching or administrative workload for the first term on return. This is funded by the University’s Central Maternity Fund and is intended to enable staff to focus on their research.

Evidence that staff are contacted to discuss/confirm arrangements in relation to workload, flexible working etc.

**5.5 (vi) Flexible Working** Provide information on the flexible working arrangements available

All staff can formally apply for a flexible working arrangement using the University’s Flexible Working Policy. The policy is actively promoted to staff on maternity/adoption leave via the ‘returning to work’ section of the Parents and Carers intranet page. Go on to describe any specific promotion of flexible working in the School and the types of flexible working undertaken by staff in the School – this can be formal changes to working hours or examples of informal arrangements/academia lending itself to flexibility, e.g. accommodating school-run within the working day.

Q.16 The University offers opportunities for flexible working