



Charter for women in science
Recognising commitment to advancing
women's careers in STEMM academia

What is Athena SWAN?

The Athena SWAN Charter is a recognition scheme for UK Universities and their science, engineering and technology departments, which aims to assist the advancement and promotion of the careers of women in STEMM in higher education and research.

History and principles

The Charter evolved from work between the Athena Project and the Scientific Women's Academic Network (SWAN), to advance the representation of women in science, engineering and technology (SET).

The following principles were agreed:

- To address gender inequalities requires commitment and action from everyone, at all levels of the organisation
- To tackle the unequal representation of women in science requires changing cultures and attitudes across the organisation
- The absence of diversity at management and policy-making levels has broad implications which the organisation will examine
- The high loss rate of women in science is an urgent concern which the organisation will address
- The system of short-term contracts has particularly negative consequences for the retention and progression of women in science, which the organisation recognises
- There are both personal and structural obstacles to women making the transition from PhD into a sustainable academic career in science, which require the active consideration of the organisation.



THESE SIX PRINCIPLES REPRESENT THE
CORNERSTONE OF ATHENA SWAN

To join the Charter, Vice-Chancellors must indicate that their institution will take action to address these areas.

The charter recognises 3 levels of achievement:

Bronze

Bronze Award holders:

- Demonstrate particular challenges and plan activities for the future.
- Use quantitative and qualitative assessment to identify challenges and opportunities.
- Have a plan that builds on this assessment, and lessons from any activities already in place.

Silver

Silver Award holders:

- Demonstrate particular challenges and plan activities for the future.
- Demonstrate that action has been taken in response to previously identified challenges.
- Demonstrate the impact of the actions implemented.

Gold

Gold Award holders:

- Demonstrate a substantial and well-established activity and achievement record in working towards equality in career progression in STEMM.
- Show initiative to increase numbers of women students.
- Demonstrate beacon activities in gender equality to the wider community.

<http://www.athenaswan.org.uk>