



We strive to promote a culture of respect and inclusion of people from all backgrounds that nurtures excellence, leadership and innovation

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CONTENTS

[1 Silver application – Thank You!](#)

[2 Caring for carers](#)

[3 Shared Parental Leave](#)

[4 Unconscious bias training](#)

[5 Mentoring](#)

[6 Welcome news from the MRC](#)

[7 CMVM buildings access for children](#)

[8 Did Tim Hunt do us a favour?](#)



Silver application – Thank You!

We are aiming to submit our application for a Silver Athena SWAN award in November. This is a substantial task and writing is well underway. The survey completed by many of you in December 2014/January 2015 has been invaluable; we had nearly 700 responses. A summary of the results will appear on the website in a few months' time but meanwhile please be assured that we have taken all the comments and figures on board. Thank you all! – The Athena SWAN self-assessment team

Caring for carers

One topic that has been brought up by a member of staff is the emphasis in Athena SWAN on support for people caring for small children and the lack of equivalent support for those caring for parents or other family members. In response to this, we are working on a section for the website with useful links, and have organised meetings to enable groups of people at the different locations to come together informally to discuss the challenges they face. Various initiatives have come out of these events including a buddying system for visiting care homes, an email list for carers, and a dedicated section of the Athena SWAN website being developed. In addition, a "Caring for Carers" package is being organised by Elspeth Wedgwood. Email the list carers-athena-swan@mlist.is.ed.ac.uk or Cathy Abbott if you would like to be included in future mailings or events.

Shared Parental Leave

Shared Parental Leave (SPL) is a new entitlement available to parents who have a child born on or after 5 April 2015*. If they wish, it allows a mother to curtail her maternity leave and she and her partner can then share up to 50 weeks of leave following the baby's birth. Shared Parental Leave can also apply in cases of adoption.

To find out more visit: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/human-resources/news/spl-interim> or contact your local HR Advisor. (*certain employment eligibility criteria will apply).

Unconscious bias training

Unconscious bias refers to the biases we have of which we are not in conscious control. These biases occur automatically, triggered by our brain making quick judgments and assessments of people and situations based on our background, cultural environment and our experiences. This can affect decisions we make in the work place, and usually not in a positive way. It is therefore important to become more aware what your own unconscious biases may be.

Many people have now done the [university's online unconscious bias training module](#), and taken some of [the implicit bias tests](#). This is a real step forward. If anyone would be prepared to write a few lines on their own experiences of undergoing the training and/or tests, and what they learned, we'd be delighted to hear from them!

Mentoring

We have now matched 44 mentees with 27 mentors via the Mentoring Connections program, and most people report very positive experiences of the program. However, the survey shows that many staff at lower grades feel they don't have opportunities to be mentored. We plan to address this in our Silver application, but meanwhile don't hesitate to [sign up when the next Mentoring Connections round is announced in September](#), and we'll do our best to find matches for you. Also, we are always looking for new mentors, so please [sign up](#) as mentor or mentee.

Welcome news from the MRC

As a consequence of the MRC broad consultation of employees and their careers, the MRC have announced that they are **"taking a fresh approach to supporting careers by removing eligibility criteria based on years of post-doctoral experience. This will allow for variations in career paths, recognising that the speed of career progression can be affected by factors unrelated to a person's scientific potential."** In addition they have launched a new online research career framework which provides an interactive tool that highlights a range of career options available at any stage of a biomedical research career.

This seems like very good news for all researchers who may want to take a career break for whatever reason and of course particularly women who are most likely to have family responsibilities at an early stage in their career.

More information can be found at <http://www.mrc.ac.uk/news-events/news/signposting-medical-research-career-options/>

CMVM buildings access for children

It's a familiar scenario to working parents - an unexpected childcare problem when you have a critical commitment at work. It has been unclear when and where it is acceptable to bring children into College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (CMVM) buildings. The Athena SWAN team have worked with the Buildings team and Health and Safety team to draw up a policy on Children in CMVM buildings that makes it clear where and when children are permitted at work. Read the policy at [Children in CMVM buildings](#)

Did Tim Hunt do us a favour?

The recent comments made by Tim Hunt were received with much outrage and rightly so. A silver lining to the dark cloud of his infamous "trouble with girls" speech is the fact that it has triggered a lot of discussion, which can never be a bad thing. Let us hope that some positive changes will come from this in the end.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE

<http://athena-swan.igmm.ed.ac.uk>