**The Athena SWAN Charter**

The Advance HE Athena SWAN Charter, introduced in 2005, encourages and recognises commitment to advancing women's careers in science, technology, engineering, math's and medicine (STEMM) employment in higher education and research. It expanded in 2015 to include arts, humanities, social sciences, business, law (AHSSBL), professional and support roles, and for trans staff and students.

The charter now recognises work undertaken to address gender equality more broadly, and not just barriers to progression that affect women.

**Recognising advancement of gender equality: representation, progression and success for all.**

Advance HE’s Athena SWAN Charter covers women (and men where appropriate) in:

* academic roles in STEMM and AHSSBL
* professional and support staff
* trans staff and students

In relation to their:

* representation
* progression of students into academia
* journey through career milestones
* working environment for all staff

Through their Self-Assessment Team, universities work to develop initiatives and solutions and can apply for a Bronze or Silver Athena SWAN award, according to the level of their progress.

For more information, please visit [AdvanceHE.](https://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/)

**Athena SWAN Charter at Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU)**

LJMU was awarded the Athena Swan: Bronze in both 2014 and 2017 and since then has been working towards institutional silver.

And in Jan 2024 was recognised with the Athena Swan Silver Award for the university's commitment to promoting gender equality. Now one of just 30 universities within the UK to achieve silver, with only one university being recognised by Advance HE as gold.

To view LJMU’s previous Athena SWAN Bronze submissions please select the following: -

* 2017 - [LJMU Athena SWAN Bronze Submission](https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/-/media/staff-intranet/edi/documents/2017-athena-swan-institutional-bronze-application-liverpool-john-moores.pdf)
* 2014 - [LJMU Athena SWAN Bronze Submission](https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/-/media/staff-intranet/edi/documents/2014-athena-swan-bronze-submission-liverpool-john-moores-university.pdf)

As part of the submission, LJMU shared a five-year action plan which reflected the university’s unwavering commitment and ambition to continually progress in gender equality. The Athena SWAN proposal and action plan provide comprehensive information on the outlined key priorities and additional specifics of this commitment.

Call to action button to download Full Athena SWAN Action Plan - <https://ljmu-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/pbsrlync_ljmu_ac_uk/Efbn1TsIq_tAsEeDI5i0XzgBHHGIhOaIYGo-rGMIS05aZg?e=k6TJts>

Similar to REC charter page - Each of the 6 points below be drop down sections

**As we move forward, our key priorities, which align with our commitment to fostering an inclusive university environment, are:**

1. **Developing a transparent Workload Allocation Model (WAM) that considers the specific needs and challenges faced by academic staff, especially addressing gender impacts on workload allocation.**

Actions to ensure the required progress include (but are not limited to):

* Assess the current workload distribution among academic staff and PS, including gender disparities in workload allocations, considering how and where improvements can be made, including creating/increasing dedicated Diversity and Inclusion (DI) allocation.
* Ensure that all departments have in place a comprehensive and transparent workload system covering all major administrative, teaching and research tasks.
* Discussion of workload will be included as a regular part of the appraisal process such that staff can openly discuss workload concerns, and related challenges, particularly those related to gender, without any fear.
* Implementation and assessment of revised workload allocation system to identify effectiveness and make further amendments.

1. **Strengthening the institutional approach to tackling bullying and harassment through robust support for comprehensive anti-bullying programmes to enhance our existing measures.**

Actions to ensure the required progress include:

* Establish comprehensive anti-bullying programmes that include workshops, seminars to educate both students and staff on the impacts of bullying, and awareness campaigns that foster a culture of respect.
* Ensure that all staff and student participate in the programmes and embed University values and commitment to Respect in induction programmes: to ensure that university values and commitment to respect are included in induction at departmental and university levels.
* Provide specialised training for academic and professional services staff on how to identify and address bullying and harassment effectively and equip managers and staff with the necessary skills to intervene.
* The strategy involves creating a comprehensive communication strategy to educate university stakeholders about the consequences of bullying and harassment. This includes creating clear, easily understandable materials such as brochures, online resources, presentations, and workshops. The reach of these materials is measured, and the change in awareness among the university community is assessed.
* Evaluate the effects of the work on reducing the incidents of bullying and harassment.

1. **Improving wellbeing support by ensuring comprehensive measures are in place for the wellbeing of our staff and students.**

Planned actions to develop an institutional approach include (but are not limited to):

* Campaign to further publicise the Report + Support tool to ensure that students and staff are aware of the channels through which they can report incidents either anonymously or naming individuals.
* Monitor Report and Support tool. Use this information to take necessary actions and interventions
* Ensure process for tracking staff participation and engagement in support programs, conducting surveys to assess their effectiveness, and using this data to propose improvements to the menopause support program.
* Proceed with varying events based on staff feedback, regularly collecting feedback, and conducting a review of the revised support program to propose further improvements.
* Assess flexible working policies by collecting data on staff satisfaction and identifying areas for improvement. The study evaluates the impact of flexible working on productivity and work-life balance.
* Produce a report detailing findings and recommendations for changes is produced, followed by the introduction of the changes and staff survey to assess their views.

1. **Reviewing the implementation of parental support/leave policies**

Actions to ensure the required progress include:

* Evaluate maternity support strategies for female academic researchers who have had maternity leave over the past three years. Feedback will be used to develop more effective support for returning to work after maternity leave.
* Implementation of procedures to monitor retention rates, promotion rates, and research productivity among maternity leave researchers. A process will be developed to ensure consistent approaches to return to work for researchers returning from long-term leave.
* Revision and implementation of procedures for assessing staff on maternity leave who are eligible of the REF to ensure that they do not have to go through an appeals process.
* Campus maps showing the location of breastfeeding facilities produced for the web and as hard copy.
* Identifying areas for improvement of parental leave policies, implement recommendations and agreed changes from reviewed employee perspectives.
* Ensure that policies, guidelines, and training in place are clear and well-communicated to support managers in handling parental leave requests fairly and consistently.

1. **Supporting academic and research staff progression to Grades 9-10, and professor levels and improving female representation at these levels by building upon our progress to date. In particular, we plan to develop a targeted career progression programme, particularly focusing on improving female representation at senior level positions.**

Implemented and planned actions to address this include (but are not limited to):

* Creation of DI training for recruitment and promotion panels, aiming to increase female representation in academic positions. Also, review and improvement of line managers' training to support career development conversations and address gender disparities, ensuring proactive support for staff.
* In partnership with Women Academic and Women Professors network to develop mentors for women in academic and research positions, paired with women academics and research staff.
* Support to be provided to women applying for leadership roles, including courses targeting intersectional groups (e.g. Aurora, Advance HE Diversifying Leadership Course).
* Line managers will be briefed on training and workshops to enhance women's skills for senior roles. The support provided to women's careers will be evaluated to ensure continued success.
* Formulate questions to be included in Actus that will aid conversation on preparation and readiness for promotion.
* Ensure senior staff in each department to meet to discuss all staff members’ readiness for promotion and proactively approach staff felt ready to encourage and offer support.
* Conduction of needs assessment to identify specific job application challenges for grade 9 and above. Development of structured programme, including workshops, seminars, online resources, and one-on-one coaching sessions with an online platform is created for accessing resources and facilitating communication between participants and trainers.
* Focus group sessions with women academic and professional service staff networks and men's carer groups will be conducted to improve advertisements promoting inclusivity and flexibility.
* Implementation of recommendations including gender-neutral language, emphasis on diversity, and flexible working options. The university job website should also feature female and other carers as role models.
* A working group will be established to evaluate the effectiveness of anonymised job application processes in promoting gender equality. The review will also assess the suitability of these methods for all roles, including academic positions where publication lists may be included in CVs.
* Proposal of anonymous application forms for specific roles, with recommendations produced for the HR Resourcing and Operations Manager from September 2025 to September 2027.
* Ensuring recruitment panels providing updates on gender balance of applicants, allowing panel chairs to compare data with the applicant pool and potentially initiating proactive initiatives to encourage more underrepresented groups.
* Establish mentoring programme for academic women in LJMU that focuses on providing guidance, resources, and highlighting opportunities for career advancement and leadership development. While producing guidelines and materials for mentor and mentees there will be regular assessment and adjustment of the program.
* Assessment of steps taken by investigating whether there is an improvement in the representation of women at grades 9 and above.

1. **Reducing in the use of fixed-term contracts by creating pathway towards more permanent roles.**

Actions to ensure the required progress include (but are not limited to):

* Examining the use of fixed-term contracts among PS staff, identifying areas for urgent action to reduce their usage. While reviewing departmental budgets and resource allocations to identify areas where permanent positions can replace fixed-term contracts.
* Policies are implemented to ensure fixed-term contracts are only used when necessary for PS staff roles.
* Ensure that all research only staff employed for two years or more at the university are moved to permanent contracts.
* Implementation a support programme for research staff who wish to apply for fellowships.
* Assess the impact of policies to reduce the use of fixed-term contracts by assessing the proportions of research staff on fixed term contracts

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**LJMU Gender Equality Plan** -

Liverpool John Moores University has a strong commitment to enacting a range of sustainable structural and cultural changes in order to advance gender equality, recognising that initiatives and actions that support individuals alone will not sufficiently advance equality. To achieve these aims, the University has developed a Gender Equality Plan as part of our continued commitment to the Athena SWAN charter.

[**EU Horizon Europe: Gender Equality Plan Statement**](https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/-/media/files/ljmu/about-us/edi/ljmu-signed-gep.pdf) **- Call to action button**

**Departments with Bronze Accreditation**

In addition to the institutional silver award, the university holds five departmental awards, with many other departments working towards their respective awards.

* Astrophysics Research Institute (ARI)
* Sports and Exercise Sciences (SPS)
* Liverpool Business School (LBS)
* Biological and Environmental Science
* Pharmacy and Biomolecular Sciences (PBS)

**LJMU ATHENA SWAN SELF-ASSESSMENT TEAM**

**University Wide Athena SWAN Terms of Reference (Word, 63.5KB) - Call to action button**