

# Webinar: Designing SMART action plans for Athena Swan and beyond

11:00 – 13:00

Tuesday, 12 July, 2022



# Netiquette



Please mute yourselves when not speaking



Use **Vevox** function for polling (If you are on a mobile phone the app may not work within Teams. You can go to [vevox.com](https://vevox.com) and enter meeting ID 126-763-782.)



Add any questions you have in the chat



Captioning can be turned on via the 'three dots'

# Overview of session



Overview of  
the Athena  
Swan action  
planning  
process



Sharing  
experiences  
and lessons  
learned



Best practice  
in designing  
action plans

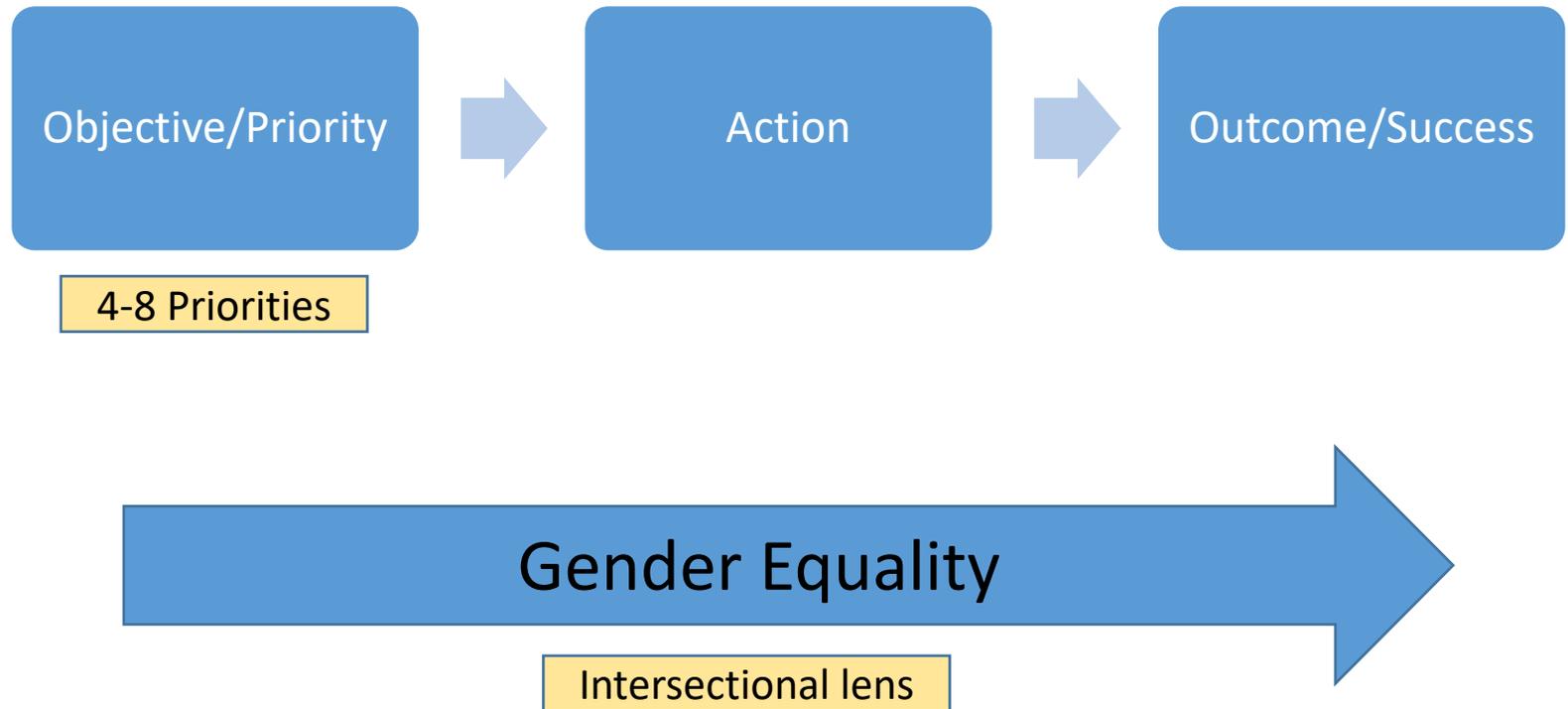


Discussion  
and Q&A



# Overview of Action Planning in the context of Athena Swan

# Overview of Action Planning



# SMART Action Plan

WHAT are you going to do?

WHY are you undertaking the action?

WHEN will the action start and finish?

WHO will ensure the action is achieved?

HOW will you know the action has been successful?

# SMART Action Plan Template

Priority/Objective	Rationale	Planned action	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end dates)	Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
	<p>RELEVANT</p> <p>WHY is this action necessary?</p>	<p>SPECIFIC</p> <p>WHAT are you going to do?</p>		<p>TIME-BOUND</p> <p>WHEN will the action start and finish?</p>	<p>ACHIEVEABLE</p> <p>WHO will ensure the action is achieved?</p>	<p>MEASURABLE</p> <p>HOW will you measure the success of your action?</p>

# Advance HE Guidance

## Criteria C: Action plan to address identified key issues

### Guidance

Based on the department's evidence base and self-assessment, an action plan should be presented which addresses the department's key issues and priorities. The plan should cover ongoing and planned actions for the next five years, and clearly cross-reference the key priorities as identified in the previous section.

For each action define an appropriate success/outcome measure, identify the person/ position(s) responsible for the action, and timescales for beginning and completion (and milestones where relevant).

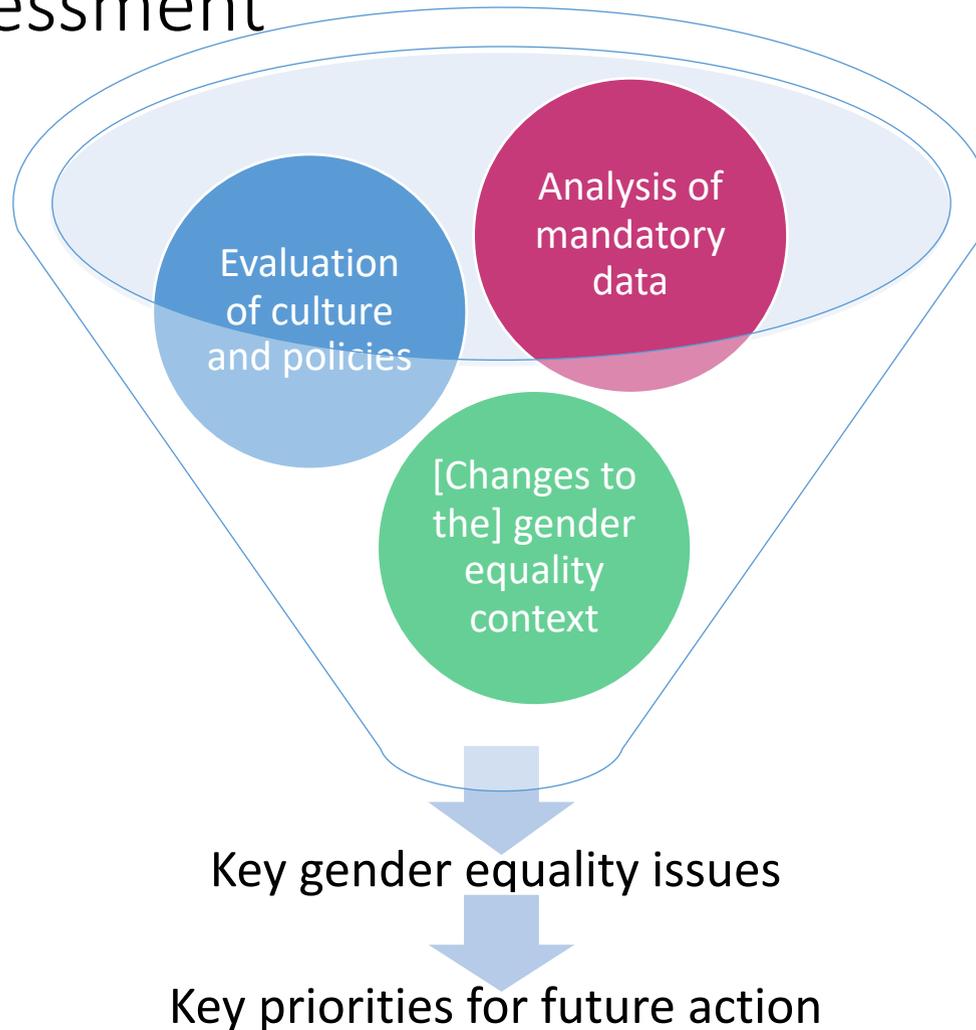
Applicants should provide specific detail to indicate what intervention is planned to address identified issues. While ongoing self-assessment and data collection actions are likely to be necessary throughout the award period, the action plan should balance these actions with proactive intervention which will effect change.

It is useful to include the baseline for actions (for example, in a "rationale" column) which will support the creation of measurable targets and the ongoing evaluation of progress. Measurable, quantifiable targets are strongly preferred, where possible.

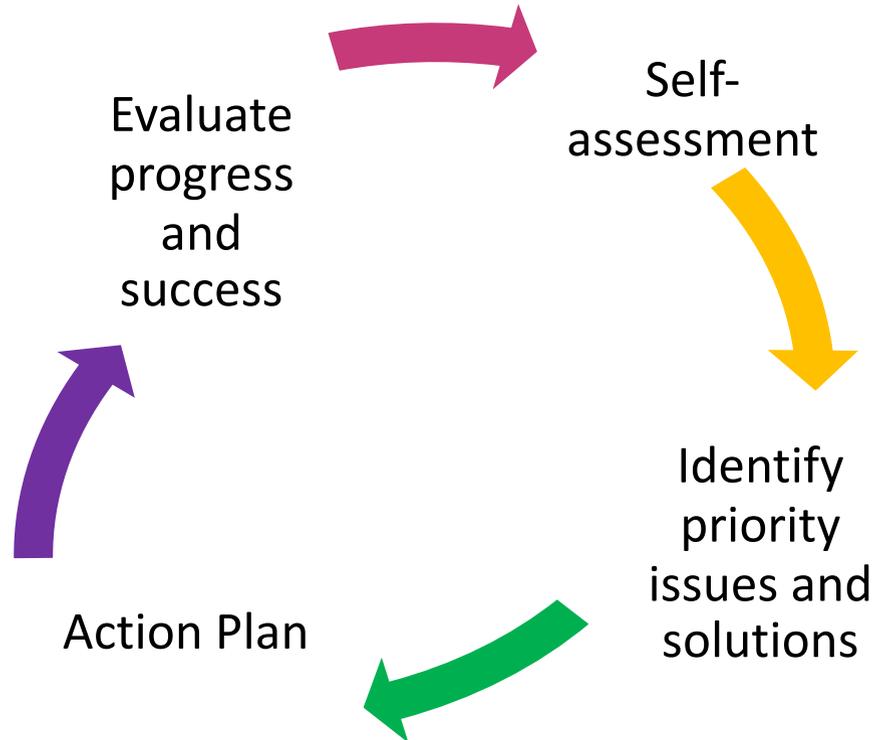
Actions, and their measures of success, should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART).

[Transformed UK Athena Swan Charter: Information pack for departments](#) – bronze, silver, gold and renewal

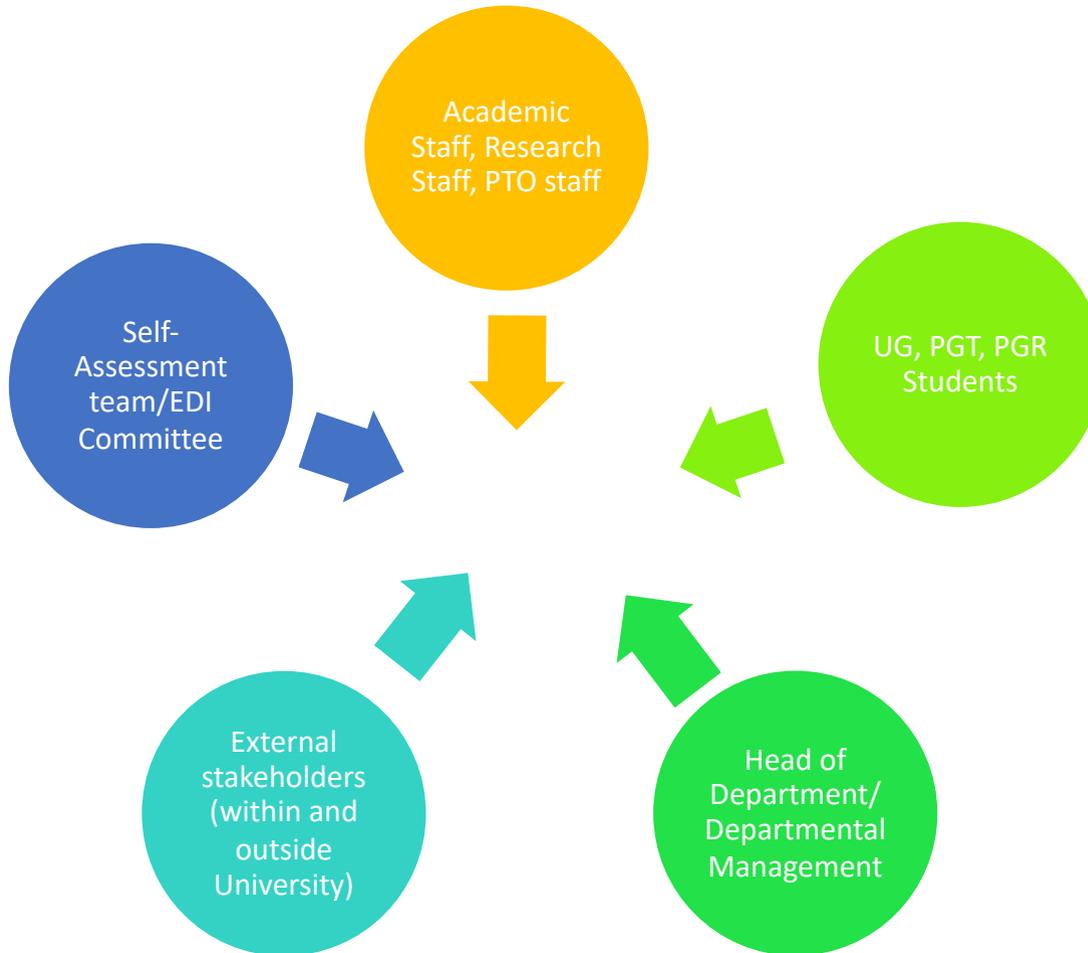
# Self-assessment



# Athena Swan as an ongoing process



# Involving stakeholders



# Stakeholders in self-assessment: example

PTO Lead

- Project manages process
- Prepares reports and data for self-assessment

Academic lead

- Academic leadership of self-assessment
- Drafting narrative/signif. input to drafting narrative

Self-assessment team (SAT)

- Representative of department
- To have oversight of/responsibility for self-assessment

Sub/Working Group(s)

- To review data, feedback, etc. and pre-digest for SAT? Maybe different WGs in different areas?

Head of Department/Senior Management Team

- To ensure proposed actions and priorities have leadership buy-in; are compatible with dept. strategy, and resourced.
- Commit to Athena Swan principles.

# Stakeholders in self-assessment: example

Other departmental committees

- Will need to consider specific proposed actions within their areas of remit.

Officeholders responsible for actions

- Need their 'buy-in' and commitment to act.

All staff

- Feedback via surveys, targeted focus groups,..
- Support buy-in/awareness via open meetings

All students

- Feedback via surveys, targeted focus groups,..
- Support buy-in/awareness via open meetings

External contacts/  
stakeholders

- Liaise to learn from best practice elsewhere
- Invite cognate dept. to review application



Do NOT leave your Action Plan until the END!

Allow sufficient time for CONSULTATION.

See the Action Plan as a TOOL to support the self-evaluation.

Going forward, the Action Plan should be capable of being a STAND-ALONE LIVING DOCUMENT, guiding activity, and supporting you in monitoring and evaluating your work towards gender equality.

## Other common pitfalls

Action does not  
address/  
insufficient to  
address the  
priority identified

Action  
unclear/vague

Generic  
action/action  
does not have a  
gender focus

Action focussed on  
short term

Action focussed on  
further self-  
assessment

Success measures  
relate to outputs  
rather than  
outcomes

# Panel feedback – features of a good action plan

Identify  
priorities

Gendered  
focus

Clear rationale

Proactive  
actions

Baseline data

Success  
measures/  
targets

Full award  
period

Specific  
timescales/  
milestones

Standalone  
document

# Feedback on Oxford applications – example 1

(Timeline and Person responsible omitted here, other sections paraphrased and edited for anonymity.)

Objective & rationale	Action	Success criteria and outcome
Introduce exit interviews where they were not already in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Monitor the destinations and reasons for leaving of all academic leavers</li> <li>b) Introduce exit interviews to monitor issues arising from staff turnover.</li> </ul>	100% of resignations in advance of contract end date to be due to career progression choices or other external influences

“Some success measures cannot be achieved through the actions detailed in the plan. For example, the target related to this action cannot be achieved by introducing exit interviews as these will not affect the reasons that people are leaving.”

Objective	Rationale	Action	Success criteria and outcome
Identify and address barriers to continued employment	X% of female staff and Y% of male staff leave for reasons other than end of fixed-term contract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Introduce exit interviews to better understand reasons for staff leaving.</li> <li>b) Monitor trends and introduce actions to address any issues identified.</li> </ul>	At least A% of resignations, and at least A% of resignations of female staff, in advance of contract end date to be due to career progression.

# Feedback on Oxford applications – example 2

(Timeline and Person responsible omitted here, other sections paraphrased and edited for anonymity.)

Objective & rationale	Action	Success criteria and outcome
Develop a mentoring scheme for all staff.	Develop a mentoring system that offers: Clear guidance for mentors and reviewers upon appointment about the objectives and frequency of meetings Training for mentors and reviewers who are new to the role	100% of staff to have an identified, experienced or trained mentor by 2021/22

“Some success measures are focused on outputs delivered, rather than outcomes so will not enable the SAT to evaluate whether the action has achieved the desired effect on gender equality. For example, the success measure for this action tests whether mentors are in place but not the effectiveness of the mentoring relationships or whether the mentoring scheme is achieving its aims.”

Objective/Priority	Rationale	Action	Success criteria and outcome
Provide more effective support for the career development of staff, in particular female staff.	X% of female staff and Y% of male staff in 2021 staff survey don't agree that their career development is well supported	Develop a mentoring system open to all staff that offers: Clear guidance for mentors and reviewers upon appointment about the objectives and frequency of meetings Training for mentors and reviewers who are new to the role <i>[This is one of several actions which might be associated with this Objective/Priority.]</i>	At least A% of all staff, and at least A% of female staff in 20xx staff survey to agree with the statement that their career development is well supported.

# Advance HE example ‘SMART’ action

Priority/ Objective	Rationale	Planned action	Key outputs and milestones	Timeframe (start/end dates)	Person responsible	Success criteria and outcome
Increase proportion of women promoted from Senior Lecturer to Professor.	<p>Women are significantly underrepresented at Professor grades (16%) despite 53% at Senior Lecturer grades (2021).</p> <p>In promotions rounds between 2019 and 2021, men were more likely to apply and be successful than women in achieving professorial status.</p> <p>Existing promotion criteria do not give weighting to teaching and learning. Staff also perceive teaching is undervalued.</p>	<p>1.Introduce a new pathway for promotion to Professor based on Teaching and Learning Leadership.</p> <p>1.1 Complete approval process for new pathway.</p> <p>1.2 Communicate changes to all staff via line managers and staff bulletin.</p> <p>1.3 Run information workshops annually to introduce the new pathway and criteria.</p> <p>2.Remove requirement to have reached top of Senior Lecturer scale to apply for promotion to Professor.</p>	<p>1.New pathway approved.</p> <p>2.Pathway communicated to staff.</p> <p>3.Workshops take place and participant feedback is obtained.</p>	<p>Development of pathway to commence Jan 2022.</p> <p>1.Pathway approved July 2022.</p> <p>2.Communication with staff completed by end Aug 2022.</p> <p>3.Workshops to take place every Sep-Oct from 2022.</p> <p>4.Promotion requirements updated Sept 2022.</p>	<p>Head of Centre for Learning and Teaching</p> <p>Director of HR</p>	<p>70% of eligible staff to attend information workshops each year</p> <p>80% of eligible women to attend information workshops each year</p> <p>90% of participants report satisfaction with information workshops via participant feedback forms</p> <p>Share of women applying successfully for promotion from SL to P grade increases from 25% (average of 2019-21) to 45% by 2024</p> <p>Increase in women’s representation at P grades from 16% to 25% by 2024</p>



# Case Studies



# Comfort Break

Back in five minutes!