

Letter of Endorsement

KR/mmb

29 May 2008

Athena SWAN Charter
Equality Challenge Unit
7th Floor, Queens House
55-56 Lincolns Inn Fields
London WC2A 3LJ

Dear Sir/Madam

I am happy to confirm the University's support and endorsement of the application for the Athena SWAN Bronze Award. The application is well timed, as the University has identified the expansion of subject areas within SET disciplines, as a key development over the next 5 years. The preparation of this application has provided the University with a most useful point of reference against which it can benchmark future developments in SET discipline areas.

The University is committed to an equal opportunities programme that recognise and seek to overcome any gender inequalities, including staff training in 'Interviewing for Equality', annual career review for all academic staff, career development and progression initiatives, and the expectation of equality in representation on University committees. In addition to the SET teaching departments that provide UG and PG courses, there are also three research institutes with strong SET links. The importance of effective equal opportunity policies in the University that helps maximise research capability, has been well recognised by our Human Resources Department working alongside Professor Zhang and Prof Andrew Slade (PVC Research).

The proportion of staff in SET disciplines within the institution is currently less than 20%, not including Nursing departments. Whilst there is a strong male orientation within this cohort of staff, there is growing evidence that the balance is being corrected, with recent appointment profiles in the areas of LIRANS Research Institute, the Division of Science and the Post-Graduate Medical School resulting in 40+% female representation. The challenge in the future will be to improve the profiles in currently male dominated disciplines.

The Athena Swan project has been instrumental in 'awareness raising' across the University, and the engagement of staff at all levels within the institution in considering current and future practice. Central to future developments in this area will be the newly appointment Equality and Diversity Officer within Human Resources, who has worked closely with Professor Zhang on this application.

Yours faithfully

Professor Kate Robinson
Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)

Self-Assessment Panel

Dr Mark Atlay, Director of Teaching and Learning and Director of the University's Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (Bridges). QAA Auditor and has also led a Hefce Good Management Practice project (GMP201) on effecting change in Higher Education.

Ms Shirani Gunawardena, Equality and Diversity Officer, Human Resources. Previously worked for the Commission for Racial Equality as a Senior Policy Officer within the Private Sector Directorate.

Dr Avril IJsselmuiden, Principal Lecturer in Computing (part time). She has previously worked in Universities in UK and Germany. She was a long-term BT Research Fellow, and a visiting researcher at Rutherford Appleton Laboratories. She holds several patents jointly with British Telecom. She has very recently changed her employment status to a 0.6 fractional appointment.

Dr Emma Spiking, Post-Doctoral Research Fellow - Molecular Biochemistry (completed PhD in April 2007), Specialist areas: *in vitro* culture of gametes and embryos, cell biology, molecular biology. Representative for young married females in the early stages of their careers.

Prof David Rawson, Prof David Rawson, Chair of the self-assessment panel, Director of LIRANS Institute of Research in the Applied Natural Sciences (Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research until Dec 2006). Professor of Applied Cell Biology. Member of the editorial board for the journal Cryobiology.

Prof Kate Robinson, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic). Chairman of University Equality and Diversity Committee. Professor of Nursing.

Prof Alexis Weedon, Director of the Research Institute for Media Art & Design, Professor of Publishing Studies. She has child care responsibilities.

Dr Catherine Van Blerk, **Dr Catherine Van Blerk**, Reader in Physical Activity and Well-Being. Specialist research areas: obesity and cardiovascular health, obesity and diabetes management and the influence of exercise and nutrition, and physical activity promotion in schoolchildren. She has child care responsibilities.

Prof Tiantian Zhang, University Coordinator for Athena Project and SWAN Charter. Leader of Cell and Cryobiology Research Group, LIRANS, Professor of Cryobiology. Chairman of Society for Low Temperature Biology. Member of the editorial board for journals Animal Reproduction Science and CryoLetters.