

# SWAN membership and award conditions



## Communication with SWAN staff

- Institutions intending to make award applications are asked to inform Athena SWAN staff [athenaswan@ecu.ac.uk](mailto:athenaswan@ecu.ac.uk) at Equality Challenge Unit before the end of April each year, and to confirm the name and contact details of the person coordinating each application.

## Bronze awards

- Institutions can only apply for a Bronze award if they are already charter members.
- Institutions must apply for a Bronze award within 3 awards rounds from the time of joining the charter i.e. if they join the charter in April 2009, the latest they could apply for a Bronze award would be the awards round in May 2011.
- Only institutions as a whole can apply for Bronze awards.
- Universities must achieve a Bronze award before individual departments can apply for Silver and Gold awards. The logic behind this is that it would be difficult, if not impossible, for a department to sustain the level of a Silver or Gold award without university support and underpinning university policies and procedures.
- Bronze awards are valid for 3 years, after which they must be renewed every 3 years by completing a Bronze renewal form.

## Silver and Gold awards

- Only departments (or equivalent) can apply for Silver and Gold awards in the first instance.
- Institutions can apply for university-wide Silver/Gold awards by completing a Silver or Gold institutional award form demonstrating, among other things, that a substantial proportion of their SET departments have achieved Silver/Gold awards.
- Physics departments with Project Juno Champion status are automatically fast tracked for an Athena SWAN Silver award if their institution holds a valid Bronze award. The department should send a copy of the letter confirming the Juno Champion status to the Athena SWAN office. The Silver award will be made in the following SWAN awards round.

- Departments can apply for Silver/Gold awards at the same time as their university applies for Bronze renewal. If a department achieves the standard for a Gold or Silver award, but the university fails to renew Bronze, the departmental award can be held over until the Bronze award is successfully renewed.
- If a university withdraws from membership, or has their membership withdrawn, any awards will also be withdrawn.
- If a university loses its Bronze award, but remains a charter member, any departments which already hold awards will retain them, but will not be able to apply for renewal unless by that time the university has regained its Bronze awards, or successfully renews its Bronze award that year.
- Departments must achieve a Silver award before applying for a Gold award
- It is not necessary for a department to renew its Silver award if it attains a Gold award.
- Silver and Gold awards are valid for 3 years. Silver and Gold awards can be renewed by completing a Silver/Gold renewal form.

### **The recognition panel**

- If the panel decides that an application does not meet the standard for the award applied for, but does meet the standard for the level below, then the university will be informed of this and can decide whether to accept the award or reapply the following year.
- The panel's decision is final; there is no appeals process. We will encourage any universities or departments that do not meet the standard to apply for an award the following year. Additional support may be offered, depending on resources, to institutions and departments keen to reapply.

### **Transparency**

- Successful award applications must be made public. They should be displayed on the institution's or department's website. If this is not possible they can be uploaded to the SWAN website.