Athena SWAN
Charter for Women in Science

Athena Questionnaires 2009

What is the Athena project?
The Athena Project was set up in 1999 with the aim of promoting the careers of women in science, engineering and technology in higher education, which includes achieving a significant increase in the number of women recruited to top posts.

Part of this is the Athena SWAN charter, a recognition scheme for UK universities and their science, engineering and technology (SET) departments, launched in June 2005. It aims to assist the recruitment, retention and progression of women in SET and to promote good practice. UCL has been awarded BRONZE status. This was in recognition of UCL's achievement in the collection and analysis of key data and the development of action plans on gender equality in SET. These include providing positive support for women at key career transition points and working towards changing the culture and gender balance in decision making.

UCL is now encouraging individual Depts to charter for the next level of award – the SILVER award, and the LMCB has taken up this challenge. This is because chartering for an Athena award is not just about favouring women – it is about making the LMCB an excellent place for research, so that everyone benefits.

Athena @ LMCB
Every member of academic staff or student in the LMCB has been given a questionnaire appropriate to their position about their time in the LMCB (eg. Postgraduate student, postdoctoral researcher – contract; early career fellow- contract, group leader; core research staff). Please complete this ASAP, and no later than 1 week from receipt.

Your responses will help the LMCB Athena Self-Assessment Team get a feel for what it is like to work at the LMCB, and can be used to gauge whether there is a mismatch between what is really happening and what we think should / would like to be happening. Please be honest and as full as you wish in your responses. The questionnaires are anonymous. Each returned questionnaire will be given an ID number to allow us to talk about specific comments, but there will be no attempt to match up responses with people.

Responses can be left at Reception, with any member of the SAT Team, or left in their P/Hs:
Dr Sara Mole s.mole@ucl.ac.uk X37257
Dr Rob de Bruin r.debruin@ucl.ac.uk
Dr Sasha Chittka a.chittka@ucl.ac.uk
Dr Karine Pozo k.pozo@ucl.ac.uk
Ms Jennifer Winter jennifer.winter@ucl.ac.uk
Claire Hebblethwaite c.hebblethwaite@ucl.ac.uk

There will be planned opportunities for discussion.
Should anyone wish to discuss any aspect that relates to this Athena project individually, contact Dr Sara Mole.

Definitions:
A career break is defined as a gap in the ability to work, usually due to caring responsibilities for children or adults. It does not include a ‘gap year’ or similar.
Athena Questionnaire – POSTDOCTORAL 2009

Please circle your response, or provide the relevant information:

Are you male or female?  M  F
Do you have a mentor? (may be different from your supervisor) Yes  No
Would you find it helpful to have one? Yes  No
Do you undergo regular (annual) career review? Yes  No
Is this helpful? Yes  No
When were you last reviewed?

Would you describe the advice you have received in the LMCB on career development as:
Good  Satisfactory  Poor  Non-existent
Would you describe the advice you received prior to the LMCB on career development as:
Good  Satisfactory  Poor  Non-existent
Would/do you find it helpful to receive such advice? Yes  No

Transferable skills
Do you have the opportunity to network easily with peers and senior scientists:
  a) within the LMCB? Yes  No
  b) within UCL? Yes  No
  c) at conferences? Yes  No

Do you feel supported by your supervisor in this networking? (example - do they introduce you to other (important) people in the field?) Yes  No

While working at the LMCB, have you ever had the opportunity to supervise:
  a) undergraduate/MSc students? Yes  No
  b) PhD students? Yes  No

Have you ever had the opportunity to do some teaching? Yes  No
Would you be interested in doing some teaching? Yes  No
If yes, would you know whom to ask about such possibilities? Yes  No

Career breaks and part-time work
Have you ever taken a career break? Yes  No
If yes, what would have helped to make your return easier?

What is your opinion of career breaks?  Positive  Neutral  Negative
What is your opinion of those who take career breaks?  Positive  Neutral  Negative
If you took a career break, what do you think other people’s opinions would be?  Positive  Neutral  Negative

Have you ever wanted to work unconventional hours? Yes  No
Have you ever wanted to work part-time, or thought about working part-time? Yes  No
Were you encouraged or discouraged in this/these? Encouraged  Discouraged
If taken up, what were the advantages / disadvantages?
What is your opinion of part-time researchers?  Positive  Neutral  Negative
What is your opinion of people who work part-time?  Positive  Neutral  Negative
If you worked part-time, what do you think other people’s opinion would be?  Positive  Neutral  Negative

Have you ever undertaken any form of equality and diversity training?  Yes  No
Have you ever participated in personal development training such as Springboard (for women) or Navigator (for men)?  Yes  No
Are you aware that this training exists?  Yes  No

Balancing children or dependents with your career
Are you a carer or have dependents?  Yes  No
Do you have other adults who support you in these responsibilities?  Yes  No
How has the LMCB enabled you to best fulfill these and your work responsibilities?

At what stage in a research career do you think it is best to have children?
e.g. PhD, post-doc or group leader

How many grants are you aware of that give funding to return to research after a career break?
How many grants are you aware of that provide money for childcare while working in research?
Do you know how much maternity/paternity leave you are entitled to?  Yes  No
Do you know what facilities UCL provides for childcare?  Yes  No
Do you think the LMCB should provide information on childcare and career re-entry grants?  Yes  No

What would help you most in your career at this stage?

Career after post-doc
Are you considering job opportunities after your postdoc?  Yes  No

Are these within:  Academic-Group leader  Academic-Other research
Academic-Other (e.g. Publishing, scientific writing)  Industry  Business/IT
Public Administration  Teaching  Health care
If you are thinking about more than one please give an indication of preference
If you are thinking of starting up your own group do you think you are given sufficient advice on how to best go about it?  Yes  No
Would you like more?  Yes  No

The LMCB prides itself on training people to be group leaders
Has your research experience at the LMCB encouraged you to be a group leader, or take another path?  
- Encouraged
- Discouraged

Has your opinion changed since you have joined the LMCB?  
- Yes
- No

Was this for a positive or negative reasons? (positive being finding out how much you might enjoy another job, negative would be not wanting to be a group leader based on experiences here)  
- Positive
- Negative

Might you consider a change in career direction in the future?  
- Yes
- No

Have you ever been told that you shouldn’t pursue a career in academic research?  
- Yes
- No
If yes, by whom (relation to you, not a name)?

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements by circling your response:

- I feel that I am encouraged to take part in career or personal development training.
  - Agree
  - Neither Agree nor Disagree
  - Disagree
  - Don't know

- Contributions to activities other than research and teaching are valued by my department.
  - Agree
  - Neither Agree nor Disagree
  - Disagree
  - Don't know

- The representation of women on LMCB committees is fair.
  - Agree
  - Neither Agree nor Disagree
  - Disagree
  - Don't know

- The representation of women as seminar speakers is fair.
  - Agree
  - Neither Agree nor Disagree
  - Disagree
  - Don't know

- People who cannot work long hours are perceived to be at a disadvantage.
  - Agree
  - Neither Agree nor Disagree
  - Disagree
  - Don’t know

- Women are encouraged to network with other women both within and outside the department.
  - Agree
  - Neither Agree nor Disagree
  - Disagree
  - Don't know

- I would equally encourage a boy or girl to consider a career in science
  - Agree
  - Neither Agree nor Disagree
  - Disagree
  - Don’t know

Please enter any comments you may have about the above questions, or if there are any issues or concerns that have not been dealt with please add them here:

If you have any issues that you would like to raise confidentially, please contact Dr Sara Mole
Please return this form to Dr Sara Mole, or any member of the SAT Team, or Reception.