

# UCL QUEEN SQUARE INSTITUTE OF NEUROLOGY EDI Committee

## Terms of Reference (Reviewed in February 2022)

### 1. Background

#### 1.1. Mission statement

The UCL Queen Square Institute of Neurology (IoN) is committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in the workplace and recognises the need to do better for all our students and colleagues

The IoN EDI Committee (formally referred to as Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team) members are united in:

- Our **belief** that Academia can only reach its full potential when it is inclusive of all talents and voices.
- Our **commitment** to promote fairness, equality, diversity and inclusion within the Institute of Neurology and across UCL at large.
- Our **guiding values** – Equality, Fairness, Diversity, Inclusion – which are central to all the work we do.

The main aim of the IoN EDI Committee is to promote and advance Equality, Diversity and Inclusion across the IoN and UCL at large. We are committed to identifying and tackling any unfair practices that might disproportionately disadvantage members of our workforce and of our student population.

Our work is in line with the Athena Swan key principles (see **Appendix A**) and aims to embed EDI practices into the everyday aspects of our Institute's policies and culture.

The IoN EDI Committee will work towards:

- Identifying and removing systemic and cultural barriers for career progression at the IoN.
- Implementing change and increasing representation at all levels of the IoN, particularly at the most senior levels where women, ethnic minorities and disabled staff are considerably underrepresented.
- Being a voice for all and champions for the underrepresented.
- Being an active voice of dissent against bullying and harassment of students and staff.
- Raising awareness and lobbying to achieve fairness and equity of opportunities for all.

- Ensuring all of our initiatives cover academic and professional & technical support staff employed at the IoN.
- Ensuring we amplify all voices and concerns.

## 1.2. Vision

It is our belief that the ideal workplace is:

- A friendly and inclusive environment, free of prejudice, where employees and students feel comfortable, respected, listened to, supported and valued.
- An environment where colleagues are valued in word and action.
- An environment where policies, procedures and processes are accessible, clear, transparent and fair.

We want to ensure that **staff and students in our Institute can expect to:**

Feel safe.

Be respected.

Feel worthy.

Be treated fairly.

Be listened to.

Be treated as an individual.

Be supported to learn, develop and progress.

Be supported to balance work, life out-of-work and other responsibilities (e.g. caring roles).

Have a clear understanding of what is expected in their role, and how 'success' is assessed.

Have clarity on who is available for advice and help and when they can be consulted.

Work in a safe space where individuals of any background can reach their full potential.

## 2. Objectives

The IoN EDI Committee has been established to:

- a) Lead the EDI work within UCL Queen Square Institute of Neurology;
- b) Design, deliver and monitor the IoN EDI/Athena Swan Action Plan. Our current Silver Award Action Plan comprehends the period between 2019-2024;
- c) Oversee and prepare the UCL Queen Square Institute of Neurology Athena Swan Award submission. The next submission will be in November 2024;
- d) Link with the Faculty of Brain Sciences and the University EDI initiatives.

To achieve this, the IoN EDI Committee will:

- Drive the implementation of the EDI initiatives at IoN.
- Coordinate data gathering (quantitative and qualitative) across the Institute.
- Scrutinise and comment on data and other quantitative and qualitative information in order to identify key findings, gaps and areas for action planning and further research.

- Identify and recommend suitable priorities, actions and objectives to be included in the current Action Plan;
- Establish robust measures to monitor progress against the Action Plan;
- Report on progress made against the Action Plan within the organisation and to Advance HE.

### 3. The committee

The IoN EDI Committee is subdivided into two tiers of action:

#### 1) EDI Steering Group: Executive Level

Responsible for:

Providing strategic leadership of our EDI work and evaluating the impact of implementing the Athena Swan 5-year Action Plan.

Leading the development of the Institute plans to achieve Athena Swan Silver or Gold award level.

Leading the preparation of Athena Swan award submission and preparation of 5-year Action Plan.

The steering group is comprised of:

- IoN Institute Director
- IoN Institute Manager
- IoN Deputy Director for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- IoN Athena Swan Leads
- IoN EDI Project Manager
- IoN EDI Representative for Professional Services
- IoN EDI Representative for Students
- IoN EDI Representative for Early Career Researchers
- IoN Action Groups Leads (see below)

#### 2) EDI Action Groups: Operational Level

Responsible for driving and monitoring the implementation of the EDI/Athena Swan 5-year Action Plan. This includes progressing actions, monitoring, reviewing, and assessing for further action.

We have 8 different Action Groups, each aimed at addressing a specific area of our EDI work:

- Career Development
- Mentoring Programme
- Students and Education
- Culture and Wellbeing
- Parents and Carers
- Leadership and Policy
- Communication

- Equity Awareness

Members of the EDI Committee are asked to join one or more Action Groups. Each Action Group nominates a Lead, who will be responsible for overseeing the work carried out by the team, focusing on the remit of their Action Group. Their role will also include representation of the teams' work progression and challenges faced at the Executive level.

#### 4. Membership

- Reasonable attempts should be made to ensure committee membership reflects the make-up of staff within the IoN: 56% F, 44% M; 17% BAME; 5% Disabled.
- An open invitation to all staff and students will be made annually (to include new starters or others moving into categories below)
- Members include those:
  - with personal experience of balancing home/caring responsibilities and work/part time/flexible working/career breaks
  - from a dual career family
  - with recent experience of the institution/department's recruitment and/or promotion processes
  - at different stages on the career ladder and particularly from those in early and mid-career
  - with departmental/management/university responsibilities for e.g. staff development/ equal opportunities
  - with experience of similar exercises (e.g., Athena Swan work at another institution)
- Members are expected to participate in at least 60% of the meetings
- Term of membership is 3 years, with the possibility of renewal.
- Team members will champion Athena Swan work throughout their department, college, and university through their contacts.
- All members make a shared commitment to participate actively in equality and diversity and inclusion work, and to contribute to an open and respectful culture.
- All members make a shared commitment to implement the EDI / Athena Swan action plan and for monitoring its impact, supporting the Athena Swan Co-Leads to achieve the Athena Swan aims.
- Each member will be allocated to a specific Action Group, according to their skills/expertise/preferences and the needs of the committee.
- Each Action Group will have a lead, whose role is to coordinate the work carried by the Action Group and to report progress and challenges faced by the Action Group at the Steering Committee Meetings.
- Action Group members are expected to contribute to advancing the objectives and work that falls under the remit of the Action Group.
- Athena Swan Leads rotate after each application cycle, but previous chairs stay on for a year to provide continuity.

## 5. Meetings

- Action Group Meetings will take place monthly or bi-monthly and will last for 1 hour.
- Steering Group Meetings will take place every 2 months and will last 1 hour.
- Meetings will commence no earlier than 10am and conclude no later than 4pm.
- Meetings will take place in rotating day/time to ensure committee members who work flexibly may attend.
- A quorum of members must be present before a meeting can proceed (40% of members)
- Internal or external persons can be invited to meetings at the request of the chairperson on behalf of the committee to provide advice and assistance where necessary.

## 6. Minutes and communication

- All meetings will be minuted and minutes posted on the shared Teams channel.
- EDI forms a standing item on the Institute's Executive Committee meetings and Departmental meetings
- All EDI initiatives are advertised in the Institutional newsletter, IoN EDI website, IoN Athena Swan website and IoN EDI twitter account.

## Appendix A: Athena Swan principles

The Athena Swan Charter is based on ten key principles. By being part of Athena Swan, institutions are committing to a progressive Charter; adopting these principles within their policies, practice, action plans and culture.

- We acknowledge that academia cannot reach its full potential unless it can benefit from the talents of all.
- We commit to advancing gender equality in academia, in particular, addressing the loss of women across the career pipeline and the absence of women from senior academic, professional and support roles.
- We commit to addressing unequal gender representation across academic disciplines and professional and support functions. In this we recognise disciplinary differences including:
  - the relative underrepresentation of women in senior roles in arts, humanities, social sciences, business and law (AHSSBL)
  - the particularly high loss rate of women in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine (STEMM)
- We commit to tackling the gender pay gap.
- We commit to removing the obstacles faced by women, in particular, at major points of career development and progression including the transition from PhD into a sustainable academic career.
- We commit to addressing the negative consequences of using short-term contracts for the retention and progression of staff in academia, particularly women.
- We commit to tackling the discriminatory treatment often experienced by trans people.
- We acknowledge that advancing gender equality demands commitment and action from all levels of the organisation and in particular active leadership from those in senior roles.
- We commit to making and mainstreaming sustainable structural and cultural changes to advance gender equality, recognising that initiatives and actions that support individuals alone will not sufficiently advance equality.
- All individuals have identities shaped by several different factors. We commit to considering the intersection of gender and other factors wherever possible.