

**SCHOOL OF PHARMACY**

**Minutes**

A meeting of the

SWAN SAT Team

Thursday 7th January 2016

Present: Dr Deirdre Gilpin (Chair)

Dr Jonathon Coulter (Vice-Chair)

Professor David Woolfson

Dr Heather Anderson

Dr Janine Cooper

Professor Ryan Donnelly

Dr Maurice Hall

Dr Lezley-Anne Hanna

Dr Cian McCrudden

Dr Maeliosa McCrudden

Professor Tracy Robson

Dr Mei Zhou

Apologies: Professor Karl Malcolm

Professor Marie Migaud

In attendance: Mr Gervase McGivern

1. Dr D Gilpin welcomed and thanked everybody for attending.

**2 SWAN SAT Team Role And Terms And Reference**

2.1 Dr Gilpin opened the meeting by informing the Team that the new SWAN SAT Team was assembled in consultation with Professor D Woolfson and Dr H Anderson with the aim being to get a true representation in the School and a buy in from staff throughout the School at all stages of their careers.

2.2 While confirming that the Gender Equality to Enable Scientific Excellence Group (GEESE) will no longer function Dr Gilpin made clear that it is vital that Postdoctoral and Postgraduate members of the Group still have a voice.

2.3 Dr Gilpin opened a debate with regards to the School maintaining their Silver award status.

2.4 Professor Woolfson informed the team that feedback from assessors indicated a degree of confusion with regards to the last SWAN application for the Silver Award .

2.5 While emphasising that the primary objective of the new SWAN SAT Team was to maintain the School’s Silver Award status Professor Woolfson did acknowledge that it was difficult to draft a SWAN Application with a team this size and that it was important to have a core group.

2.6 Professor T Robson emphasised the importance of having PhD students represented.

2.7 The importance of acknowledging Equality and Diversity and assigning this to someone was highlighted by Dr Gilpin as well as the fact that some people in the School don’t feel represented at all.

2.8 Dr Gilpin informed the team that The Department of Chemistry at the University of York under the leadership of Professor Paul Walton has achieved and maintained Gold SWAN Award status and that they are a good example with regards to successfully achieving and renewing their Gold Award status and that the focus should be towards the University of York.

2.9 Dr Jonathon Coulter communicated to the team that the University of York have a number of part time employees that sit on their Equality and Diversity Group.

2.10 The School of Pharmacy’s policies on appraisal, LGBT and disability need to be highlighted emphasised Dr Coulter. Professor Woolfson responded to this point by stating that such policies should be allocated to a particular person and uploaded on the SWAN website. The group was urged by Professor Woolfson to think about the SWAN website and that in the past a lot of effort was put in to setting up such websites but not enough effort towards maintaining and sustaining and that you cannot assume these things will happen because they won’t. Professor Robson responded by stating that in the past gender related and equality policy documentation were uploaded on the SWAN website but recognised that this had fallen by the wayside. Dr Anderson confirmed that someone will be coming out to the School of Pharmacy with regards to revamping the School website. Professor Woolfson said the Team should wait and see what this new format will be.

**3. POST-DOC AND POST-GRAD FORUM**

3.1 Dr Coulter confirmed to the Team that in December a meeting to restore the Post-Doc forum took place in which there was an attendance of 9-10 representing about 25% of the Post-Doc community in the School. This small attendance Dr Coulter stated showed that there was a problem in getting buy in and data from Post-Docs.

3.2 Issues that became apparent from the meeting were that that Post-Docs felt that their role is to just write and publish papers and that Post-Docs were not receiving School of Pharmacy emails. In response Dr Anderson emphasised that all email addresses were up to date and found it hard to believe that this was happening however will email clerical officers with an up to date list of Post-Doc contact details.

**Action: Dr H Anderson to email an up to date contact list for Post-Doc staff to clerical officers in the School**

3.3 Professor Woolfson suggested that it would be a good idea to obtain mobile phone numbers from Post-Doc staff.

3.4 Dr C McCrudden and Dr M McCrudden are standing as Chair and Deputy Chair of the forum confirmed Dr Coulter.

3.5 It was put forward to the Team by Dr Gilpin that having a Senior Management member of staff on the Post-Doc forum would encourage greater engagement. In response Professor Woolfson said that it would be an idea to get somebody from the School Management Board on the forum. Professor T Robson volunteered for this role. Dr Coulter welcomed this commitment stating that this will open up an avenue between Post-Docs and the School Management Board.

3.6 Professor Woolfson did make clear that there was currently a Post-Doctoral representative on the School Management Board but that Post-Doctoral issues were not being communicated to the School Board and thus the channel was not being used. It was Professor Woolfson said important that issues raised are real and within the School’s control and aspirational and something that the School can respond to sensibly and reasonably and emphasised that it was really up to the Post-Doc community to raise concerns.

3.7 The School Management Board meeting was not always the easiest environment to bring up issues of concern emphasised Dr J Coulter.

3.8 Real issues of concern currently were around appraisal and mentoring.

3.9 Dr M McCrudden informed the Team that she, Dr John McBride and Dr Eva Vicente – Perez were currently sitting on the Health Sciences Post-Doctoral Society which takes in the Schools of Biological Sciences, Medicine, Nursing and Midwifery and Pharmacy.

3.10 At the Post-Doc forum in December it was brought up that for example researchers in the CCRB were advised that in order to develop their careers they would need to get experience in the USA. The question was asked what are the alternatives? In response Professor Woolfson emphasised the importance of seeking competitive funded fellowships and thus when completed transferring to a lectureship.

3.11 Professor Robson suggested that at the forum it would be good to have someone speak from for example the Welcome Trust and also made the point that there was funding available for proposals from the forum.

**4. ACTION POINTS FOR SWAN GOING FORWARD**

4.1 **Unconscious Bias**

Dr Gilpin informed the Team that in order to successfully maintain the School’s Silver SWAN status the subject of Unconscious Bias needs to be addressed and that it is important to show on the Silver SWAN Application that some form of training took place.

4.2 Dr Gilpin and Professor Robson recently attended a talk on Unconscious Bias given by Professor Teresa McCormack the current acting Head of School of Psychology at Queen’s University Belfast. Dr Gilpin informed the group that the literature review was substantial and that one of the many key points arising was for example ‘’do we need to see a person’s name on a job application or abstract’ ?’’ Possibly should be anonymous.

4.3 Professor Woolfson made clear that a ½ day training/update session dedicated to SWAN was required and that agreed that the subject of Unconscious Bias needs to be addressed with regards to the SWAN Action Plan.

4.4 **Mentoring**

Dr Gilpin informed the group that the area of mentoring is progressing and that Professor Karl Malcolm has confirmed that the Post-Doctoral community within the School are aware that mentoring is available.

4.5 Dr Gilpin asked Dr Anderson if there is an induction pack that includes information on mentoring. Dr Anderson responded by saying that there is no consistency and no common School induction in the University and for example ‘’who tells new staff how to write exam questions?’’ Professor Woolfson responded by stating that the module coordinator should be doing this. Dr Anderson questioned if the module coordinators know how to do this.

4.6 Professor Woolfson asked the group if a written policy on mentoring throughout the School was needed as he was not aware of one existing.

**Action: Professor D Woolfson to draft a School of Pharmacy policy on mentoring**

4.7 The Staff Charter may need to be updated regarding for example the area of mentoring informed Professor D Woolfson.

**TRANSPARENCY**

4.8 Dr Gilpin communicated to the Team that there were a lot of School committees and working groups and suggested the members of such committees and groups be made public.

4.9 Dr Anderson says she can compile this and upload it on to the share point.

4.10 Dr M Hall informed the group that the University is currently preparing a Digital Transformation Project and that when up and running this will make information more visible than it currently is on the shared point.

**APPRASIAL**

4.11 Dr Gilpin emphasised that with regards to SWAN there are outstanding issues that need to be addressed with regards to appraisal.

4.12 Professor Woolfson responded by informing the Team that appraisal was being dictated centrally by the University and that there was little the School could currently do.

**5 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

5.1 Dr Hall asked when is the Institutional SWAN Award being reviewed? Professor Woolfson confirmed that a decision in April will be taken regarding the Institutional Gold Award. Professor Woolfson also informed the Team that you have to have a beacon activity –‘’a piller of excellence team’’. Arts and Humanities for example would at least need two Bronze Awards.

5.2 Dr Gilpin put to the Team the idea of the Key Skills training for Academic Staff changing from the current two week block at the start of the first semester to the alternative of being spilt to one week at the start of first semester and then one week over half term. Such a family friendly policy would look good on the School’s SWAN application. Professor Woolfson agreed that such a policy would free up Academic staff from teaching for a few days. Dr Gilpin and Dr Coulter are currently in communication with the School of Pharmacy Director of Education Dr Sharon Haughey regarding the possibility of this alternative.

5.3 Other Schools within the University are very good at communicating what is happening not only professionally but also socially to staff. This Dr Gilpin suggested is something the School of Pharmacy could explore.

5.4 Some Schools for example Dr Gilpin informed have a day dedicated to staff and their families such as a barbeque in the summer time leading to a pub quiz for staff in the evening. Such an event Dr Gilpin said would be really positive and nice occasion not only for staff but also their children as well as giving staff the opportunity to meet with other staff members from different areas. Professor Woolfson responded by saying that the School of Pharmacy used to have an away day but challenges in the past were size of numbers and the important issue of funding. Staff would have to pay for such an event themselves.

5.5 Dr Anderson acknowledged that the School does fall down on such matters compared to other Schools but asked the Team would all staff members buy into such an event and who would take ownership.

5.6 Professor Woolfson emphasised that the School of Pharmacy does pride itself on being a friendly School but recognised that there was not a lot of evidence to back this up.

5.7 Dr C McCrudden asked if Academics and Post-Docs know that there is a School of Pharmacy blog in existence as he was not aware until approached by the School’s Student Recruitment Officer Dr D Corbett to write a piece for the blog.

5.8 Dr Robson asked what was the current status of the SWAN Action Plan.? Dr L A Hanna responded by informing the Team that more data is being currently collected. Dr Gilpin added to this by informing that progress is being made.

5.9 The suggestion was put to the team by Professor Robson that it may be worthwhile to invite somebody who has received the Gold Award to our seminars.

5.10 The meeting concluded by Professor Woolfson requesting that the SWAN minutes be forwarded to the School Management Board and highlighting the importance that the team keeps the primary focus on what is needed to keep the Silver Award.

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