

Case Study

Ireland - Athena SWAN

The Irish Higher Education Authority launched the Athena SWAN Charter in early 2015. Gender inequality had been identified as an issue for the sector. Across Irish universities, only 19% of professors are women. In institutes of technology, women make up 45% of academic staff but just 29% of senior academic staff.

Advance HE's Athena SWAN Charter was established in 2005 to encourage and recognise commitment to advancing the careers of women in science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine (STEMM) employment in higher education and research. The charter has since expanded to recognise work undertaken in arts, humanities, social sciences, business and law (AHSSBL), and in professional and support roles, and for trans staff and students. The charter now recognises work undertaken to address gender equality more broadly, and not just barriers to progression that affect women.

Following a successful pilot it was decreed:

- + all HEIs should achieve an Athena SWAN award within 3 years
- + Athena SWAN should be established in Ireland on a permanent basis
- + research-funding agencies should require HEIs to have attained a bronze Athena SWAN award within 3 years and a silver award within 7 years in order to be eligible for funding.

Current Athena SWAN awards holders in Ireland (April 2018)

All awards currently held:

- 19 Total awards
- 12 Department awards
- 7 University awards



About Advance HE

Advance HE was formed in March 2018, following the merger of the Equality Challenge Unit, the Higher Education Academy and the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education.

Our purpose is to support and enable higher education (HE) providers to put institutional strategy into practice for the benefit of students, staff and society.

We bring together HE-focused expertise in teaching and learning; equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI); leadership; and governance, to help you to deliver world-leading teaching, research and scholarship, your civic mission and student outcomes at your institution.

We do this through the provision of specialist knowledge and resource, externally recognised benchmarking and recognition schemes and a member-focused, collaborative approach.

We are driven by the strategic needs of HE. Through our passion for excellence we aim to create an inclusive culture that champions the continuous development of teaching, EDI, leadership and research. We use an evidence-based approach to identify what works, and develop practice-based solutions.

Our vision is that the world-class reputation and standing of HE is enhanced and recognised for transforming lives, enriching society and developing the economy for the better.