



Athena SWAN Ireland: Covid-19 Deferred Submission Process

Prepared for Athena SWAN Ireland award holders

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1. Covid-19 deferred submission process

In light of the continuing impact of Covid-19 on institutions and their staff, we are offering a 12-month submission deferral to award-holders due to renew their awards in April 2021, November 2021, April 2022 and November 2022. An institution or department wishing to avail of a Covid-19 deferral should follow the steps detailed below (1.1).

Deferral is optional and award-holders on track to renew or upgrade their award are encouraged to do so.

Questions about award validity can be directed to the Athena SWAN Ireland team: athenaswanireland@advance-he.ac.uk.

1.1 Requirements

Award holders wishing to avail of a Covid-19 deferral must:

1. extend their existing action plans by one year, and;
2. submit a letter to Advance HE from the head of the institution/department confirming that the institution/department will continue to:
 - uphold the Charter principles;
 - address gender equality through the implementation of the extended action plan;
 - monitor and evaluate action plan progress via a Self-Assessment Team (or equivalent).

The letter should be addressed to the Head of Athena SWAN Ireland and submitted via email (athenaswanireland@advance-he.ac.uk). Letters should be submitted no more than twelve months before the award is due to expire. Once the letter is received and checked, Advance HE will confirm the deferral with the award-holder.

Deferrals requested by award-holders due to renew/upgrade in April 2021 will be prioritised for processing.

1.2 Deferral timeframes

On fulfilling the above requirements, institutions/departments holding awards due to expire in April 2021, November 2021, April 2022, and November 2022 will be granted a deferral for one year:

Assessment round in which renewal/upgrade is due:	Deferral granted to:
April 2021	April 2022
November 2021	November 2022
April 2022	April 2023

November 2022	November 2023
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The Covid-19 deferral process is time limited (i.e. for the next four award rounds). However, Advance HE will review the award-holders eligible to participate in this process in line with extended or further Covid-19 lockdowns.

1.3 Extended action plans

The Athena SWAN process understands action plans to be ‘live organic documents, constantly reviewed and updated’ (*AS handbook*, p.59). This is because, even in normal circumstances, it is necessary for applicants to adjust and revise actions to ensure achievability and relevance. In extending action plans by one year, award holders may wish to revise the timeframes or milestones of planned actions, modify planned actions in light of remote learning and teaching, or insert new actions to mitigate against the gendered impact of Covid-19. Self-assessment teams should continue to evaluate action implementation regularly.

Please note there is no requirement to return the modified action plan to Advance HE. However, we encourage award-holders to make their extended plans publicly available on their website.

1.4 Further information

A Covid-19 deferral is not available to award-holders that have already received an extension to their award of 12 months.



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