1. Welcome and Apologies

The Convener welcomed members and acknowledged the apologies received.

The Convener invited introductions as new members were attending the meeting.

The Convener advised members of the departure from the University of Susan McKeown. She confirmed the University was actively considering how best to continue the support to those Schools and Research Institutes who would be submitting Athena SWAN and GEM applications from now on.

She advised the current role specification was being altered enable the role holder to have more remit for gender equality across the University.

2. Minutes from previous meeting 29 January 2014

The minutes were approved as a correct record.
3. Matters Arising from the previous meeting – Paper 1

Action Point 2 – Use of Athena SWAN Logo in STEMM job adverts
MT noted the HR Director has raised this with her Russell Group counterparts but there had been no appetite to pursue this collectively with Jobs.ac.uk. The HR Director was satisfied the current process in place was sufficient and matched that of our peers.

Action Point 5 – International Women’s Day
The Convener noted the Pecha Kucha event was enjoyable and well received and provided a good platform to build on for future annual events.

Action Point 10 – Update to Athena SWAN Action Plan with HR responsibilities
MT advised the plan had been updated with the current position however a number of new senior roles being created recently within HR. Once their roles and responsibilities had been fully embedded she would update the plan accordingly.

ACTION: EDU

Action Point 12 – Obstacles to Women Progressing Through Clinical Grades
FM advised the two papers had been taken to the MVLS CMG in April. She is still awaiting some comments in relation to it, however she noted it was felt there was existing support mechanisms within the University for some of the issues but there was a lack of awareness of these within the Schools and Research Institutes. FM advised the MVLS CMG will keep these issues under review.

Action Point 18 – Academic Promotions data
MT advised this paper would be refreshed once the data was available from the 2013-14 promotions panels was known and it would be brought back to the committee with the required changes at that point.

ACTION: EDU

Action Point 19 – Athena SWAN and GEM applications
The Convener welcomed that the applications had been made available to the group prior to the submission deadlines but noted much earlier sight of these in the process would have been useful in order for members to give constructive feedback.

Both MT and KF acknowledged this and confirmed this feedback time would be fed into future application timelines.

ACTION: EDU/KF

The Convener noted all other actions were shown as complete, relevant updates were shown on Paper 1 or items were on the agenda for further discussion.

3.1 Equality Structure – Paper 2

MT circulated an updated version of Paper 2 to members and explained the current structure.
The Convener and members agreed better ties with GESG were needed with all College Management Groups as these are the decision making groups that can effect the cultural change required and can drive through initiatives and in doing so, move towards gender equity across the University.

The Convener stated thought was needed on a systematic way to provide CMGs with the relevant information and recommended CMGs have a dedicated slot on their agenda to discuss gender related issues at least twice a year. Those GESG members who also sit on CMGs should be presenting on the issues and initiatives.

KL noted there may be a need to have more CMG representatives on GESG.

3.2 Nursery Provision – Paper 3

Members agreed the paper was very useful and dispels a number of myths about the nursery showing the University is trying to provide a good standard of provision. All agreed the need for the University to better publicise this information, along with the comparative costs information, to current and prospective staff and students. Members felt the information would be of particular interest to prospective international staff and students.

Members suggested the following possible actions:

- HR could include childcare information in contract letters
- Inclusion of link to Nursery information in HR A-Z list
- Investigate how to advertise the nursery to International staff/students

**ACTION: Corp HR/EDU**

MT advised members David Newall, Secretary of Court has seen this paper and a meeting has been set with Neil Campbell and Deborah Maddern who administers the Childcare Facilities Committee to look at what options there are for extending the nursery provision and/or moving to more suitable premises.

3.3 Positioning of Athena SWAN – Paper 4

SW presented the paper which captured the concerns raised within the College of Science and Engineering to some of the proposed actions within the Athena SWAN Action Plan, in particular the original proposal to restrict Mentoring and Leadership Developments to women only.

SW highlighted not everyone with the College shares these concerns and equally those raising concerns are still behind the ethos of Athena SWAN; they are simply concerned about some of the proposed actions.

The Convener noted the importance of the paper and recognised the concerns needed to be brought to the attention of GESG. She noted the following;
• Any Athena SWAN/gender equality activities undertaken by female academics should be recognised within their Workload Model and P&DR.
• The need to create ‘space’ to allow open discussion of the issues and possible solutions for all.
• The need to better communicate that gender equality actions, when properly implemented, will benefit both male and female staff alike,
• Recognition there are concerns regarding some of the proposed actions but that actions must be taken to address inequality.
• The action plan can be amended if required but all staff need be involved in the discussions and equally they will need to engage with the overall process.

Members also reflected the following:

• The University must be truly transparent in promotion reviews to highlight there will be no lowering of standards for female applicants.
• Project Juno and the Gender Equality Chartermark focus on all grades and job families and are not as focused on female only data as Athena SWAN is.

Members welcomed the suggestions of
• The need for unconscious bias training across the University.
• Exploring possibilities on how to support ‘women returners’ and ‘flexible working’ Fellowships.

MT noted Staff Development Services already have a short session on unconscious bias embedded within their recruitment training and advised she was already in discussion with them on the delivery of unconscious bias training as a session in its own right.

The Convener endorsed the need to support research time for women returners and requested SW, MT and KF put together information for a discussion paper which can be taken to SMG and CMGs.

**ACTION: SW/MT/KF**

### 3.4 Sponsorship and Mentoring – Paper 5

SW presented his discussion paper stating he had tried to highlight the similarities and differences between Sponsorship and Mentoring. SW will circulate the background documents which formed the basis for the paper.

**ACTION: SW/EDU**

Members voiced their concerns regarding how sponsorship might work within the University.

The Convener concurred with a number of the concerns raised, in particular the need for clear boundaries, but noted there was some merit in the concept of
sponsorship and how this might assist in career development. She asked SW to discuss the paper with Eddie O’Grady, the new Head of Employee and Organisational Development.

**ACTION: SW**

Members reiterated that those staff who have experience of mentoring do value the relationship and benefits this brings.

SW drew members attention to the recommendation on the last page of the paper entitled ‘Mentoring Plus’ which sets out one possible version of how sponsorship could be woven into the existing mentoring schemes.

The Convener thanked SW for this interesting paper and asked him to update GESG on his discussions with the new Head of Employee and Organisational Development at the next meeting.

**ACTION: SW**

**4. Updated University Athena SWAN Action Plan – Paper 6**

The updated plan was noted by members.

**5. Specific Action Plan Updates**

The Convener welcomed Ann Hastings (AH), HR Operations Manager to the meeting and stated the agenda would be rearranged to discuss items 5.5 and 5.6 next.

**5.5 – Maternity, Paternity Leave and Flexible Working – Paper 11**

**Maternity & Paternity Leave**

AH advised the University had been collecting this information over a number of years and whilst there may have previously been some underreporting this has now been rectified. AH noted there were currently no national data sets to benchmark against. She advised the next year of data would soon be available.

Members stated the main issue in relation to maternity existed for researchers whose grant funding or contract period did not cover their maternity leave, in particular Fellowships therefore it would be useful to see if there were any differences in the uptake of the different leave types between academics and non-academic staff.

MT noted this issue was currently being discussed by HR and advised the Russell Group Equality Forum have also been lobbying RCUK about this.

LF noted the University must ensure its own Fellowships provide maternity funding.

The Convener agreed to make enquiries regarding this.

**ACTION: Convener**
Flexible Working Requests
AH noted that whilst the number of applicants is very small, women made up 87% of all applicants over the 3 year period and academics made up just 30% of applicants for Flexible Working.

The Convener stated there was a need to both better publicise that the opportunity exists for academics to take up flexible working patterns and to dispel the myth that flexible working would be detrimental to their careers. She asked HR to consider producing case studies to assist with this.

ACTION: Corp HR/EDU

CG stated this would allow people to relate the possible different solutions to their own situations.

5.6 – Fixed Term Contract Analysis – Paper 12
AH presented the paper and provide a verbal update stating the number of staff on Fixed Term Contract in 2014 was 422 in total and 250 of these are women.

Members requested an updated paper, including the 2014 figures, showing the data broken down by job family.

ACTION: Corp HR

5.1 – Council of Senate Gender Representation – Paper 7
MT noted this paper would also be presented at the next Equality and Diversity Strategy Committee.

Members noted the contents of the paper and agreed to keep this under review.

5.2 – R&T Exit Survey Further Information – Paper 8
MT noted this new analysis of information was based on the questions relating to the ‘Reasons for Leaving’ and ‘Prospects for Advancement’.

Members expressed concern that 51% of women respondents rated their prospects for advancement at the University as ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’.

MT stated the University must ensure transparency around the promotions criteria and processes.

She noted discussions were already underway with HR to look at what information from future survey responses are most relevant to collate.

5.3 – P&DR Assessment Review – Paper 9
MT pointed out the figures within the paper related to the overall University and not just the R&T job families and highlighted a number of key points:
• Men and women do equally well in P&DR ratings.
• Senior staff are generally graded higher than lower grades
• Main difference in ratings is seen between College and University Services staff.

Members welcomed the outcome of the analysis and noted the University needs to ensure those rated as ‘outstanding’ and ‘high quality’ are encouraged to consider promotion.

5.4 – Promotion Panel Gender Representation and amendments to Academic Appointment and Promotions Policy – Paper 10

Members noted the better gender parity shown for the College of Social Science panel and welcomed the increased female representation on the three other College panels seen in 2014.

MT noted the Academic Appointment and Promotions Policy is reviewed annually and the latest revision incorporated the changes required within the Action Plan.

Members suggested the wording relating to the gender balance of the promotion panels should try to reflect the current gender balance within particular Colleges and suggested the wording could be amended to

“every effort will be made to achieve an appropriate gender balance in its composition”.

ACTION: EDU/HR

6. Items for Information

6.1 – Schools/Research Institute level Athena SWAN awards update

MT reported the School of Geography and Earth Sciences and the Institute of Biodiversity Animal Health and Comparative Medicine were successful with their Bronze ‘departmental’ Athena SWAN applications. She noted the areas are expected to receive feedback on their applications in July.

She noted the Institute of Cardiovascular and Medical Sciences had been unsuccessful with their application. The Self Assessment Team have already received detailed feedback from the Athena SWAN assessment panel and will reflect on this and share it with their own CMG.

It will be important for GESG to reflect on the feedback from both successful and unsuccessful applications to identify the lessons to be learned.

MT advised four further areas submitted applications for Bronze awards at the end of April 2014. These were:

• School of Chemistry
• School of Veterinary Medicine
6.2 – GEM update

KF advised the School of Law submitted their application to the pilot of the Gender Equality Charter mark (GEM) and feedback is expecting in the next few months as the Equality Challenge Unit expect to fully roll out GEM around October 2014.

KF advised she continues to work with the School of Law to move forward with the action plan developed for GEM. She noted the College of Social Sciences CMG are due to discuss the GEM process at their meeting in June and will also look at which other Schools may proceed with future applications.

ER noted she would be sitting on a GEM assessment panel.

7. Any Other Business

7.1 – School of Physics and Astronomy Juno Champion Status

LF advised the School of Physics and Astronomy is due to renew their Institute of Physics Juno Champion status in November. She noted it would be appreciated if GESG members could assist by providing feedback on the application prior to submission.

8. Date of Next Meeting

To be confirmed