

Athena Swan NEWSLETTER

Athena Swan in the Maths department

The Athena Swan (Scientific Women's Academic Network) Charter encompasses equality for all genders across higher education and research institutions. In 2020, we gained a Bronze Award in recognition of our work to support and transform gender equality within the Maths department.

Keep up to date with our Athena Swan equality commitment and the steps we are taking to achieve this at our new [gender equality web page](#). You can also find the department's submission that achieved the Bronze Award and meet the team who are leading on implementing our action plan.

Spotlight on: Dr. Carina Dunlop



This space will be used now and in future newsletters to highlight exceptional faculty, staff, and students at Surrey. This month we've had the pleasure of gaining insight into Dr. Carina Dunlop's career and thoughts on academia.

What inspired you to model biological systems?

During my doctoral studies in Oxford, I was lucky to attend seminars at the Centre for Mathematical Biology and made several friends in the group. It seemed like fun to work in this area and I am a big believer in following the fun!

What takeaway lesson(s) would you like to leave readers with about your research and about your research experience?

I think that it's exciting that mathematics can deliver key and real insights into biological processes such that you can change how a biological system is understood. However, there is a need for respect in collaborating across discipline boundaries and to trust in other field's expertise.

What advice do you wish you'd heard as an undergraduate, PhD, and postdoc?

I think a big thing is to not beat yourself up for what you don't know – no one knows everything and if you need to you **can** learn it.

What do you think are the main challenges for women in science and what has your experience taught you that would aid the next generation in tackling these challenges?

I don't know where to start on this – certainly not in the space of a newsletter! However, a key theme is to be supportive of others and to be alert to opportunities to make other people's voices heard. Working together does make us stronger (and have friends!).

What do you see is the importance of more women entering a career in science?

Well if they aren't then science is missing out on brilliant minds and new ideas. More women will also increase the diversity of role models of available and hopefully contribute to opening up of academia.

"Studying mathematics is great fun"



Professor Gianne Derks, our first female head of the Maths department, champions the interplay between developing new mathematics and solving real-world problems, and wants to encourage "a more diverse community with more women and people from different backgrounds". Find out more about Gianne's research interests and aims for the department in Surrey News [here](#).

Culture survey to launch 7 February

As part its Athena Swan work, the department seeks your views on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. To have your say, please take part in the online survey launching on 7 February. Details of how to access the survey will be emailed out.

Stop press - Congratulations to Dr Audrey Kueh

Audrey has achieved [joint 3rd place](#) in the British Women's Chess Championships. Well done!

