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# ASSET

## Athena Survey of Science Engineering and Technology

### For Higher Education

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These statements about Data Protection and Confidentiality were displayed at the start of the survey.

#### **Data Protection**

All data collected in this survey will be held anonymously and securely.

Survey results and feedback will be reviewed within this institution and aggregate responses will be shared with other participating institutions.

#### **Confidentiality**

Organisations have the means to download and store their own survey results for further analysis. However, to ensure complete protection of anonymity for any free-text answers, these responses are presented as stand-alone lists and are not included in the download of quantitative responses that is available, thus preventing them being linked to any other data.

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## **Notes about the Athena Higher Education Survey Data**

The ASSET online survey was developed in conjunction with the University of East Anglia as part of the Athena Project and was distributed by 42 UK universities to their academic and research staff working in science, medicine, engineering, technology and related subjects. Contract Research Staff were not the main target of this survey as that group had recently participated in the Contract Research Online Surveys (CROS) run by Bristol University for HEFCE. Thus the numbers in this staff group are disproportionately smaller than would be expected.

4,282 valid responses were received.

The survey was run initially in 2003 and repeated to a different group of institutions in 2004. A few questions were amended or introduced in 2004 and these changes are annotated.

All qualitative responses have been removed in compliance with the confidentiality statement given to respondents. In some cases qualitative responses had been categorised as part of the survey analysis, and the main categories have been included with the data set.

August 2008  
University of East Anglia

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## Section 1: Your current job

*Questions are mandatory unless marked otherwise. If the 'More Info' button appears against a question this will provide further explanation.*

### 1 In which discipline are you currently working?

Agriculture and Forestry  
 Anatomy and Physiology  
 Architecture and Building  
 Biological sciences  
 Biotechnology  
 Chemical Engineering  
 Chemistry  
 Civil Engineering  
 Dentistry  
 Earth, Marine and Environmental Sciences  
 Electronic and Electrical Engineering  
 General Engineering  
 General Sciences  
 Health and Community Studies  
 Information Technology and Systems Sciences  
 Mathematics and Statistics  
 Mechanical, Aero and Production Engineering  
 Medicine  
 Mineral, Metallurgy and Materials Engineering  
 Minerals technology  
 Nursing and Paramedical Studies  
 Operational research  
 Pharmacology, Toxicology and Pharmacy  
 Physics  
 Psychology and Behavioral Sciences  
 Technologies  
 Veterinary Science  
 Other

If Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** This list contained the main JACS code headings plus a selection of what were considered to be the most common subsidiary subjects. Many respondents filled in the 'other' option enabling more detailed coding to be completed.

### 2 What is your current grade?

Professor  
 Senior Lecturer  
 Lecturer  
 Contract Researcher / Postdoc  
 Other

(check More Info Box 1 for definitions)

**Note:** Short response options were used in the interests of visual clarity. Fuller descriptions that covered the different grade definitions applicable at different universities were available by clicking on a 'More Information' box and respondents were directed to do so.

### 3 How many years have you been in this grade?

<1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,>15 years

### 4 What type of post do you have?

Teaching only  
Research only  
Teaching and Research

**5 Is your contract.....**

Full time  
Part time

**If part time, what proportion?**

Half time (50%)  
Less than 50%  
More than 50%

**6 How would you describe your contract?**

Probation  
Permanent / Indefinite  
Fixed term / temporary  
Unpaid honorary / emeritus  
Casual / hourly paid  
Academic visitor / visiting scientist  
Other

**7 Were you included in the last RAE?**

Yes  
No  
Not applicable

## Work History

### Section 2: Employers and career breaks

(check More Info Box 2 for definitions)

- 8 How many years in total have you worked.....
- |     |   |       |
|-----|---|-------|
| (a) | <b>For your current employer?</b>                         |       |
|     | <1,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20,>20 | years |
| (b) | <b>In Higher Education?</b>                               |       |
|     | <1,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20,>20 | years |
| (c) | <b>In a Research Institute?</b>                           |       |
|     | 0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20,>20  | years |
| (d) | <b>In industry?</b>                                       |       |
|     | 0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20,>20  | years |
| (e) | <b>In SET in other public sector employment?</b>          |       |
|     | 0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20,>20  | years |
- 9 If you have previously worked in Industry or in Research Institutes (excluding any employment while studying), what contributed to your choice to work in HE? *[optional]*  
**[2004 only]**  
*(Select all that apply)*
- Academic freedom
  - Better childcare facilities
  - Better facilities / funding for research
  - Better pay
  - Better prospects for career progression
  - Better work/life balance
  - Better working conditions
  - Enjoy teaching
  - Equality of opportunity in HE
  - Experience good for CV/portfolio
  - Higher pace of work
  - Inequality of opportunity in industry
  - Inequality of opportunity in Research Institutes
  - Less travel
  - Lower pace of work
  - More flexible hours
  - More resources
  - More security
  - More travel
  - Relocation due to partner's job
  - Research area
  - Wanted permanent contract
  - Other
- 10 What was the composition of the interview / selection panel for your current post?
- All female
  - Mostly female
  - All male
  - Mostly male
  - Roughly even
  - Don't know / can't remember
  - Not interviewed
- 11 Since your first appointment in SET professional employment, have you taken any career breaks (including maternity leave)?
- Yes
  - No
- If yes,
- (a) when you took your career break(s), who were you working for? **[2004 only]**
- (Select all that apply)*
- Your current employer
  - Another employer – in HE

Another employer – in Research Institutes  
 Another employer – in industry research  
 Another employer – other public sector

**(b) how long in total were the career breaks?**

< 6 months  
 6-12 months  
 13-18 months  
 19-24 months  
 2 to 3 years  
 4 to 5 years  
 > 5 years

**12 Since your first appointment in SET professional employment, have you had any periods of part time working?**

Yes  
 No

If yes

**(a) when you were working part time who were you working for? [2004 only]**

*(Select all that apply)*

Your current employer  
 Another employer – in HE  
 Another employer – in Research Institutes  
 Another employer – in industry research  
 Another employer – other public sector

**(b) how long in total did/have you worked part time?**

< 6 months  
 6-12 months  
 13-18 months  
 19-24 months  
 2 to 3 years  
 4 to 5 years  
 > 5 years

**13 If you have had any career breaks, did you experience any difficulties in returning to work? [optional]**

Yes  
 No

**14 Do you think any of the following would help the transition back to work in HE after a career break? [optional]**

*(Select all that apply)*

Childcare  
 Contact/keeping in touch with department while away  
 Flexible working  
 Mentoring  
 Part time working initially, building up to full time  
 Peer networks  
 Shorter hours  
 Training  
 Other

## Work History – progression

The questions in this section aim to give us to a clear impression of the collective career paths of respondents.

If you are currently working as a Contract Researcher, Post Doc or in a “Other” level post, please answer Q15 and then click on CONTINUE to move to the next page of the survey.

If you are working at lecturer level or above, we would like you to answer the questions for each of the levels that you have been employed at within HE, including the current one.

### Section 3: Contract research, post doc and “Other” level posts

(check More Info Box 1 for definitions)

15 Please comment on any aspect of your working conditions where you feel you are disadvantaged in comparison with those on lecturer grades and above. *[optional]*

### Section 4: Lecturer level posts and above

- 16 How many applications did you make for your **FIRST** lecturer post? *[optional]*  
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 or more, don't remember
- 17 How many applications have you made/did you make for a senior lecturer post? (including, if relevant, the first successful one) *[optional]*  
0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 or more, don't remember
- 18 How many applications have you made for a professorial post? (including, if relevant, the first successful one) *[optional]*  
0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 or more, don't remember
- 19 How many years have you worked (or did you work) at lecturer level? *[optional]*  
0, ≤1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, >20 years
- 20 How many years have you worked (or did you work) at senior lecturer level? *[optional]*  
0, ≤1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, >20 years
- 21 How many years have you worked at professorial level? *[optional]*  
0, ≤1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, >20 years

**Note: Question 21 was only asked in 2004, and the responses are excluded from the data set. Years at professorial level can be calculated from responses to Question 3 and selecting for Professors, i.e. Q2=1**

- 22 Have you ever been invited or encouraged to apply for a post at senior lecturer level? *[optional]*  
Yes  
No
- 23 Have you ever been invited or encouraged to apply for a post at professorial level? *[optional]*  
Yes  
No
- 24 How did you obtain your first senior lecturer post? *[optional]*  
Promotion  
Internal application to advertised post  
External application to advertised post  
N/A
- 25 How did you obtain your first professorial appointment? *[optional]*  
Promotion  
Internal application to advertised post  
External application to advertised post  
N/A
- 26 Did you move employer to get your first lecturer level post? *[optional]*  
Yes  
No

- 27     **Did you move employer to gain your first senior lecturer post?** *[optional]*  
      Yes  
      No  
      N/A
- 28     **Did you move employer to gain your first professorial post?** *[optional]*  
      Yes  
      No  
      N/A

## Current appointment – what do you do?

### Section 5: What you do within your department, your HEI and external professional activities

**29 Which of the following positions and responsibilities do you hold (or have you held) in HE?**

- (a) At institution level?**  
*(Select all that apply)*  
 Vice Chancellor / Principal / Pro Vice Chancellor or equivalent  
 Dean of Faculty  
 Deputy Dean of faculty  
 Head of Research Centre  
 Other senior management post  
 None of the above
- (b) At departmental/faculty level**  
*(Select all that apply)*  
 Head of Department  
 Deputy Head of Department  
 Director of research or undergraduate/postgraduate studies  
 Head of research group/section  
 Admissions  
 Student support/welfare  
 Other admin posts  
 None of the above

**30 Which of the following committees are you (or have you been) a member of?**

- (a) Institution committees**  
*(Select all that apply)*  
 University senior management or executive committee/team  
 Senate/Council  
 University finance/planning/resources committee  
 Academic board/committee  
 University promotion committee  
 University research committee  
 University teaching committee  
 None of the above
- (b) Departmental/faculty committees**  
*(Select all that apply)*  
 School/faculty academic board/committee  
 Departmental research committee  
 Departmental teaching committee  
 Departmental promotion committee  
 None of the above

**31 Are you, or have you been, chair of ....**

- |  |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| <b>(a) Departmental promotion committee?</b> | Yes | No |
| <b>(b) Departmental research committee?</b>  | Yes | No |
| <b>(c) Departmental teaching committee?</b>  | Yes | No |

**32 In the last three years, have you taken part in any appointments committees for academic staff?**

- |  |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| <b>(a) for your own department</b>                   | Yes | No |
| <b>(b) for other departments at your institution</b> | Yes | No |
| <b>(c) externally</b>                                | Yes | No |

**33 Are you a member/fellow of a relevant professional organisation?**

Yes



No

- 34 What is the highest level of membership that you have held within this/these organisation(s)?** *[optional]*  
 Associate/affiliate  
 Member  
 Fellow
- 35 And what participation do you have?** *[optional]*  
*(Select all that apply)*  
 President/Chair or Vice President/Vice Chair/Treasurer/Other Senior Officer  
 Council/Board Member  
 Special interest group/committee  
 Member of conference programme committee  
 Member of editorial board  
 Attending meetings **[2004 only]**  
 Presenting papers **[2004 only]**  
 Other
- 36 Is chartered status available through any of the professional organisations to which you belong?** *[optional]*  
 Yes  
 No  
 Not applicable
- (a) If yes, do you have chartered status?** *[optional]*  
 Yes  
 No
- 37 In the last 3 years, have you been invited to contribute at a national or international conference as** *[optional]*  
*(Select all that apply)*  
 Keynote-plenary speaker  
 Specialist/break out session speaker  
 Sessional chair  
 None of these
- 38 Are you Editor of an academic journal?** *[optional]*  
 Yes  
 Have been in the past  
 No
- 39 Are you on the editorial board of an academic journal?** *[optional]*  
 Yes  
 Have been in the past  
 No
- 40 Are you, or have you been** *[optional]*
- |  |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| <b>(a) A Research Council Member?</b>                    | Yes | No |
| <b>(b) A member of a Research Council Committee?</b>     | Yes | No |
| <b>(c) A member of a grant giving panel?</b>             | Yes | No |
| <b>(d) An assessor for a Research Council?</b>           | Yes | No |
| <b>(e) An EU evaluator?</b>                              | Yes | No |
| <b>(f) A non-executive director of a public company?</b> | Yes | No |
| <b>(g) A trustee/governor/member of a public body?</b>   | Yes | No |
- 41 Do you undertake professional consultancy work?** *[optional]*  
 Yes  
 Have done in the past  
 No

**42 Do you undertake professional “representative” duties, e.g. as a member of a national/government committee? *[optional]***

Yes

Have done in the past

No

**43 Are you a member of *[optional]***

<b>(a) A departmental research group?</b>	Yes	No
<b>(b) An interdisciplinary research group?</b>	Yes	No
<b>(c) An international research group?</b>	Yes	No

# Aspirations, Expectations, Progression and Perceptions

## Section 6: Aspirations

- 44 Which of the following within HE do you hope to achieve during your career? *[optional]*  
(Select all that apply) [\(check More Info Box 1 for definitions\)](#)

Satisfied with current grade  
Lecturer level post  
Senior lecturer level post  
Professorial level post

- 45 Do you have ambitions to be *[optional]*

(a)	Head of department?	Yes	No
(b)	Head of research group	Yes	No
(c)	Dean?	Yes	No
(d)	Member of senior management?	Yes	No
(e)	Pro VC?	Yes	No
(f)	VC?	Yes	No

- 46 Where do your current aspirations lie? *[optional]*

(a)	In Higher Education	Yes	Possibly	No	Don't know
(b)	In Research Institutes	Yes	Possibly	No	Don't know
(c)	In research in industry	Yes	Possibly	No	Don't know
(d)	In SET policy/management	Yes	Possibly	No	Don't know
(e)	Running own business	Yes	Possibly	No	Don't know
(f)	Doing something completely different	Yes	Possibly	No	Don't know

[\[Note: Response options \(a\), \(b\) and \(c\) were included in 2004 only\]](#)

- 47 Would you like to continue your career at your current institution? *[optional]*

Yes  
No  
Undecided

Please write in any particular reasons why or why not\_\_\_\_\_

## Section 7: Expectations and Progression

- 48 What will help you progress to your 'ideal level'? *[optional]*  
(Select all that apply)

Appraisal / staff review / performance review  
Communication skills (e.g. negotiation)  
Financial management experience  
Management/supervisory skills  
Mentoring  
Personal development  
Research performance  
Subject discipline related specialist skills  
Other, please specify\_\_\_\_\_

- 49 Have your aspirations and expectations changed since you first started work in Higher Education?

Yes, changed a lot  
Yes, some change  
No change

If Yes, please explain\_\_\_\_\_

- 50 Do you know what the criteria are for promotion in your institution?

Yes  
Fairly good knowledge of the criteria

Some knowledge of the criteria  
No knowledge of the criteria

**51 Do you know the procedure for promotion within your institution?**

Yes  
Fairly good knowledge of the procedure  
Some knowledge of the procedure  
No knowledge of the procedure

**52 Which of the following are the MOST IMPORTANT in contributing to successful career progression within your subject area in HE?**

*(Select all that apply)*

Assessor for grant giving bodies  
Attracting new PhD students  
Chair of departmental/faculty committees  
Conference attendance  
Conference keynote-plenary speaker  
Course director/leader/coordinator  
Editor of academic journal  
External examiner  
Innovative teaching  
Launching new course  
Member of editorial board of academic journal  
Member of Senate/Council  
Membership of a national/government committee  
Membership of appointments committees  
Membership of departmental/faculty committees  
Membership of university finance/planning/resource committee  
Membership of other institution-wide committees  
Module/unit director/ leader/coordinator  
Networking within department  
Obtaining external research funding  
Professional consultancy work  
QAA subject reviewer  
Raising Admissions  
Raising profile of department in media  
Research publications  
Teaching related publications  
Other, please specify\_\_\_\_\_

## **Section 8: Perceptions**

**53 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements? [optional]**

- (a) **Senior colleagues are supportive**
- (b) **My teaching contribution to the department is valued**
- (c) **My research contribution to the department is valued**
- (d) **My administrative contribution to the department is valued**
- (e) **I feel socially integrated within my department**
- (f) **I have the opportunity to serve on important departmental committees**
- (g) **I am encouraged to undertake activities which will contribute to a stronger CV**
- (h) **Successes in my working life are celebrated by my department**
- (i) **My department places value on professional activities outside my HEI**

Response options for 53(a) to 53(i)

Agree strongly  
Agree  
Neither agree or disagree  
Disagree  
Disagree strongly  
Not applicable

**54 What is your perception of the equality of treatment in your department with respect to the following:** [please skip this question if working in a single sex department]  
[optional]

- (a) Promotion
- (b) Salary
- (c) Access to career development opportunities
- (d) Access to resources for teaching
- (e) Access to departmental funds
- (f) Office space
- (g) Laboratory space
- (h) Administrative/office support
- (i) Sabbatical leave
- (j) Other leave

Response options for 54(a) to 54(j)

- Women significantly disadvantaged
- Women slightly disadvantaged
- No difference
- Men slightly disadvantaged
- Men significantly disadvantaged
- No opinion/Don't know

**55 What have been the significant factors that have most helped your career?** [optional]

## Section 9: About you

- 56     **What is your gender?**  
          Male  
          Female
- 57     **What is your age? *[optional]***  
          <26, 26-30, 31-35, 36-40, 41-45, 46-50, 51-55, 56-60, 61-65, 66+
- 58     **What age were you when you obtained your PhD *[optional]*** [2004 only]  
          Do not have a PhD  
          <26 yrs  
          26 -30 yrs  
          31-35 yrs  
          36-40 yrs  
          41-45 yrs  
          46-50 yrs  
          51-55 yrs  
          56-60 yrs  
          61-65 yrs  
          66+ yrs
- 59     **What is your annual gross salary? *[optional]*** [2004 only]  
          [If you work part time, please enter the full time equivalent]  
          £20,000 or less  
          £21-£24,000  
          £25-£30,000  
          £31-£35,000  
          £36-£40,000  
          £41-£45,000  
          £46-£50,000  
          £51-£55,000  
          £56-£60,000  
          £61-£65,000  
          £66-£70,000  
          £71-£75,000  
          £76-£80,000  
          £81-£85,000  
          £86-£90,000  
          £91-£95,000  
          £96-£100,000  
          £101-£120,000  
          £121-£140,000  
          £141-£160,000  
          >£160,000
- 60     **Do you have children under the age of 6? *[optional]***  
          Yes  
          No
- 61     **Do you have children aged between 6 and 16? *[optional]***  
          Yes  
          No
- 62     **Do you have children aged over 16? *[optional]*** [2004 only]  
          Yes  
          No
- 63     **How would you classify your ethnicity? *[optional]***  
          *standard list used*
- 64     **Please select a country to describe your nationality *[optional]***

*standard list used*

**Grouped**

UK

EU

North American

Australia or New Zealand

Rest of World

**65 Do you have any form of disability [optional]**

No disability

*standard list*

undisclosed

**66 Do you have any care responsibilities for: [optional]**

- |     |                          |  |
|-----|--------------------------|--|
| (a) | <b>A dependent child</b> | Yes, I am the main carer<br>Yes, I share the caring responsibilities<br>No |
| (b) | <b>A parent</b>          | Yes, I am the main carer<br>Yes, I share the caring responsibilities<br>No |
| (c) | <b>A partner</b>         | Yes, I am the main carer<br>Yes, I share the caring responsibilities<br>No |

**67 [2003] How likely is it that you will want or need to work flexible hours due to care responsibilities before you retire or leave academic SET employment? [optional]**

Very likely

Possible

Unlikely

Don't Know

**67 [2004] Do you anticipate becoming a carer before you 'retire'/leave academic SET employment? [optional]**

Yes

No

**Thank you for completing this survey**

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## **Additional Variables Included in the HE Data Set**

- Individual identifier
- Survey Year
- Category of Institution (Russell Group, Pre 92, Post 92)
- Worked in sectors other than HE - created from responses to question 8
- Number of participating university
- Region of participating institution
- RAE class [2004 only] - created using responses to question 1, name of university and matching with published RAE score.

#### **MORE INFO BOX 1**

**To avoid confusion between the grade definitions in use at different HEIs, the following definitions are used throughout this survey:**

**Professor** - includes

*Head of department (new uni), Professor (old uni), Research grade IV (old uni), Clinical professor, Professor/HoD (Scottish), Locally determined scale – professor*

**Senior Lecturer** - includes

*Reader (old uni), Principal lecturer (new uni), Senior lecturer (old uni), Research grade III (old uni), Clinical senior lecturer, Locally determined scale – senior lecturer, principal lecturer*

**Lecturer** - includes

*Lecturer (new uni), Senior lecturer (new uni), Lecturer A or B (old uni), Lecturer (Scottish), Locally determined scale – lecturer, Clinical lecturer*

**Contract Researcher/Postdoc** – includes all contract research staff below research grade III

**Other** - includes

*All academic related, other related and local scale grades not mentioned above*

#### **MORE INFO BOX 2**

For the purposes of this survey 'SET' includes Science, Engineering, Technology and Medicine and associated disciplines.

'In Higher Education' = all periods of teaching and/or research at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), excluding that undertaken while studying.