



The Athena SWAN (Scientific Women's Academic Network) Charter was established in 2005 with the aim of “Encouraging and recognising commitment to advancing gender equality” within STEM subjects, i.e., science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The Athena SWAN agenda has grown overtime to promote equality in general. Scan the QR code opposite for more background about Athena SWAN at Heriot-Watt, including guidance and resources.



## 1. December Graduation Celebration



**Mona Kaddura (left) and Layla Sultan (right) along with Professor Fairouz Kamareddine**  
**5 December Graduation, Edinburgh Campus**

**Mona Kaddura** and **Layla Sultan** are two impressive female MSc graduates. Already outstanding in professional high-profile jobs, they both embarked on and completed their MSc in Data Science journey at the Dubai Campus and graduated with Distinction. During their graduation ceremony at the Edinburgh Campus, they shined with excellence, pride and unquestionable potential for outstanding future achievements to build on their already impressive track record. After her BSc degree in Chemical Engineering from the American University in Sharjah, Mona was appointed as an intern and then as a real time engineer at Air Liquide’s ‘Remote Operations Control’ Centre in Dubai, optimising and monitoring the air separation operations of Air Liquide’s production units, leveraging predictive analytics and digital technologies. She has recently been promoted to “Efficiency Project Manager” at the same company. She joined Heriot-Watt in Dubai, and completed her studies while working and obtained her MSc with Distinction securing the highest rank in her cohort and earning three prestigious awards: the **Computer Science Prize for Best MSc Student**, the **Watt Club Postgraduate Medal for MACS**, and the **Isla Gunn Memorial Prize**.

Mona commented: “I am passionate about ideas that change the World, and my ambition is to make an everlasting impact in sustainability-focused projects and to drive innovation for a greener, sustainable future”. She also expressed her respect and appreciation for the people and opportunities in her life. Receiving one prize after the other, her words were measured and composed, and her style dignified, dressed in her beautiful national costume and wrapped in the flag of her country Palestine.

Layla is an amazing Emirati woman with a background in Electrical Engineering where she received her degree from the United Arab Emirates University. She has worked for the Dubai Electricity and Water Authority for the past 20 years and has been a senior manager of transmission power for the past 8 years. Her achievements also include:

- A Master’s degree in PMP (Lancaster international academy) From **UK with distinction**
- International licence ( **USA**) As Mental Health counsellor
- Certified SAFe 5 Advanced Scrum Master
- DEWA happiness ambassador





Layla has an impressively positive attitude to life where she proudly comments “*I believe in a work ethos where expertise, knowledge and skills take centre stage*”. She is highly qualified, skilled and independent. She is curious, ambitious and knows that education and knowledge and commitment are the key to excel and bring progress. She speaks with a remarkable intellect and warmth and walks with pride and confidence wrapped with dignity and humility that transparently reflect her strength and determination. She was an outstanding ambassador to her home country during the graduation ceremony with her impressively beautiful national costume and embroidered scarf, reflecting her independent, intelligent and determined spirit. We are very proud to have Mona and Layla as Heriot-Watt alumni and wish them all the best in their lives and careers and look forward to hearing from them about their continued success.

Words by **Fairouz Kamareddine** and picture by **Clare Porter**.

## 2. MACS Athena SWAN Summer Undergraduate Bursary Scheme – Publication Success



Laura Schauer at the spring 2023 Graduation in Edinburgh

Laura Schauer graduated last spring with a First-Class honours degree in Computer Science. Funded by a MACS Athena SWAN Summer Bursary, Laura continued the work of her dissertation project – “*Integrating Learning Management and Version Control Systems to Enhance Computer Science Education*” – which was supervised by Rob Stewart. We are delighted to report that Laura’s project work has now been accepted for publication in the *Education and Training* track at ICSE-24:

*“Integrating Canvas and GitLab to Enrich Learning Processes”*

Laura Schauer, Robert James Stewart, Manuel Maarek

<https://researchportal.hw.ac.uk/en/publications/integrating-canvas-and-gitlab-to-enrich-learning-processes>

**Well done Laura, Rob and Manuel!**



<https://conf.researchr.org/track/icse-2024/icse-2024-software-engineering-education-and-training-track>





### 3. Have you ever thought about doing a PhD in Computer Science or AI?

- Have you ever wondered what studying for a PhD involves but didn't know who to ask?
- Are you thinking about doing a PhD in Computer Science or AI and would like to find out more information?

If **YES** to either, then please come along to an informal session and hear from some of our current CS and AI PhD students:

**Date:** Wednesday 24 January

**Time:** 1pm-2pm

**Venue:** EM 1.82



This event is **open to ALL** and is supported by **MACS Athena SWAN** and the **Women@CS Network**.

### 4. Help Shape the Future via the STEM Inclusivity Network Survey

In order to create a more inclusive STEM community at HWU, the **STEM Inclusivity Network (IN)** are reaching out to collect valuable insights from staff members. Specifically, **STEM IN** have created a short survey that will take no more than 10 minutes. The survey focuses on gathering feedback about their experiences at HWU and how we can collectively work towards creating a more inclusive community. Here is the [link to the survey](#). The survey will be live for a duration of two weeks, starting from **January 15th to January 29th**.



For more background on **STEM IN**, checkout:

<https://www.hw.ac.uk/uk/services/equality-diversity/athena-swan/women-in-stem.htm>

### 5. MACS Athena SWAN Summer Undergraduate Bursary Scheme

The aim of the **MACS Athena-SWAN Summer Undergraduate Bursary Scheme** is to improve gender equality across our three disciplines. The School will provide up to four £1000 bursaries to MACS students over the summer of 2024. Project ideas can come from students and/or academic staff from across the School. A project proposal, however, must be submitted by an academic member of staff that is willing to act as the project supervisor. Note that the bursaries are not large. By way of guidance, £1000 is roughly equivalent to what the university would pay a *Student Ambassador* for 100-hours of their time. The duration of a project is therefore relatively flexible, e.g., it could be condensed into a few weeks or spread out across the summer months. You will find guidance and the application form below. Applications should be sent to **athena-macs@hw.ac.uk** by **NOON on Friday 5 April 2024**.

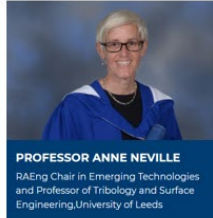




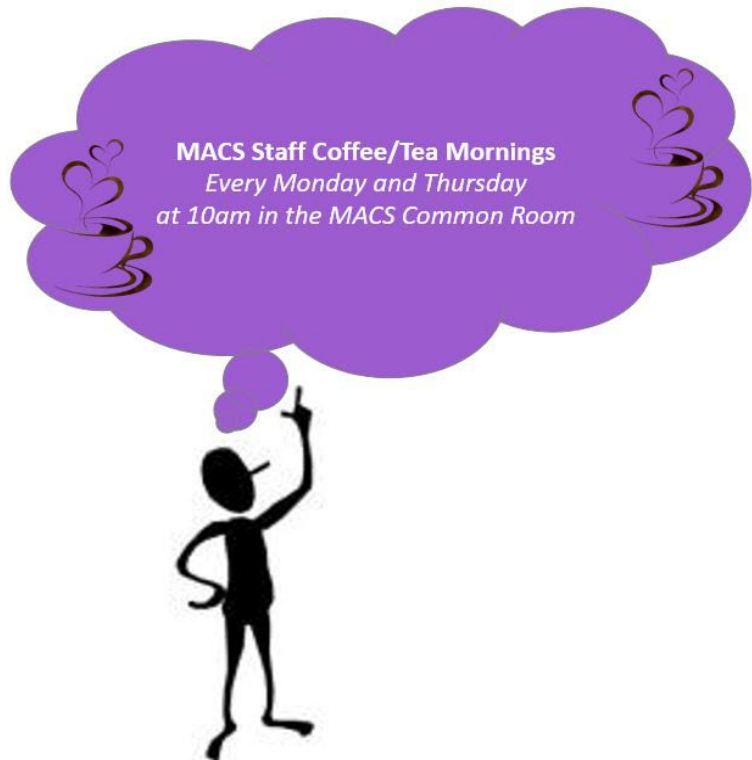


## 6. The award of an honorary degree celebrates outstanding contributions of individuals

The award recognizes academic as well as wider societal contributions. Part of our MACS Athena SWAN Action Plan is to increase the number of MACS female honorary graduates. Anyone can propose an individual for an honorary degree; simply complete the nomination form on the University web page – see QR Code below.



## 7. And Finally ....



If you have suggestions or questions related to Athena SWAN, or an event that you would like to advertise, then please send them to us via [athena-macs@hw.ac.uk](mailto:athena-macs@hw.ac.uk). In addition, if you would like to be part of the MACS Athena SWAN Team (a.k.a. the Self-Assessment Team (SAT)) then please do get in touch.



*Audrey Repetti and Andrew Ireland  
(MACS Athena Swan Coordinators)*





## MACS Athena-SWAN Summer Undergraduate Bursaries 2024

The School will provide up to four undergraduate bursaries to MACS students over the summer months in support of our aim to improve gender equality across our three disciplines. Each bursary will be worth £1000 and paid directly to the student.

### 1. Project proposals and submission

Project ideas can come from students and/or academic staff from across the School. A project proposal must, however, be submitted by an academic member of staff that is willing to act as the project supervisor. A maximum of one proposal per supervisor can be submitted in this call.

Note that the bursaries are not large. By way of guidance, £1000 is roughly equivalent to what the university would pay a *Student Ambassador* for 100-hours of their time. The duration of a project is therefore relatively flexible, e.g., it could be condensed into a few weeks or spread out across the summer months.

The application form is given on the next pages. Submissions should be sent to [athena-macs@hw.ac.uk](mailto:athena-macs@hw.ac.uk) by **NOON on Friday 5 April 2024**.

### 2. Project deliverables

A condition on receiving a bursary is that a short report (i.e., 300 words max) on the project outcome(s) will be produced. This report should include a summary by the student on what they have gained from their experience. The report should be submitted to [athena-macs@hw.ac.uk](mailto:athena-macs@hw.ac.uk) before the start of first semester (2024-25).

### 3. Project selection

The allocation of these bursaries will be based upon:

- the potential of the student and their motivations
- the potential for improving gender balance
- the expected project outcomes
- ensuring a balance across disciplines and research groups

**Awards will be announced by the end of April.**





## MACS Athena-SWAN Summer Undergraduate Bursaries 2024

**Project academic supervisor(s):**

**Email address for the principal supervisor:**

**Project Summary** (100 words max)

**Expected Outputs** (100 words max)

*[ Guidance note: please include details of the skills and experience you believe that the student will gain through their bursary-funded project. ]*

**Candidate's details:**

Name of candidate:

Email address:

Their current degree programme:

Year of study:

**Please provide a short statement from the candidate summarising their career plans and what they expect to gain through the bursary funded project** (100 words max)

Please email your completed form to [athena-macs@hw.ac.uk](mailto:athena-macs@hw.ac.uk) by NOON on Friday 5 April 2024.

