WEST COLLEGE SCOTLAND

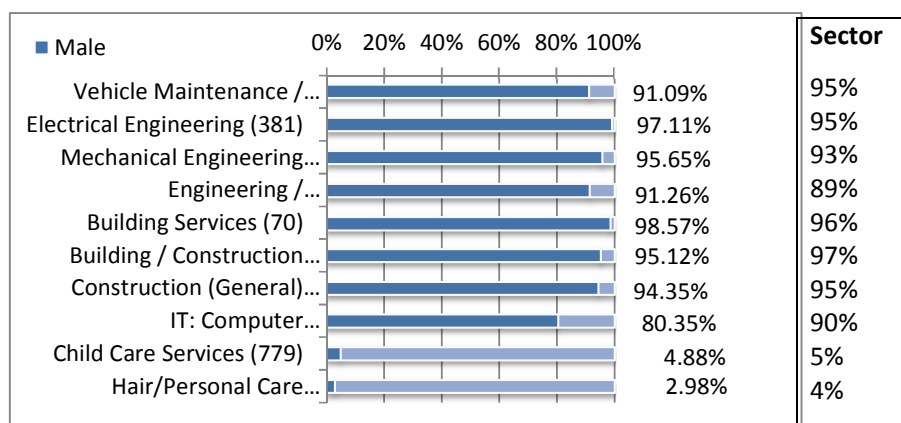**GENDER ACTION PLAN**

Academic Year 2017-18

Introduction

Our Regional Outcome Agreement states our ambition in relation to gender, namely that we will be a national leader in addressing gender imbalances in key sectors. We have aligned our Equality Outcomes to the achievement of this ambition by developing a specific Outcome which aims to tackle the gender imbalance. This Gender Action Plan looks in more detail at how practice will be developed to ensure the required step change in attracting minority gender students in the Top Ten most imbalanced subjects as identified in the Developing the Young Workforce programme.

Exploring Institutional and National Data

In the AY 15-16 the gender imbalance between male and female enrolments was 15.42 percentage points. Females accounted for 57.67% of total enrolments and males accounted for 42.25%. The College has a higher proportion of female enrolments than the national average which is partly due to a curriculum with higher proportion of traditionally female courses, in areas such as Care, Hairdressing and Beauty and lower than the national percentage of enrolments in HE Engineering, Construction and Sport.

The gender balance across subjects varied markedly. The graphs below show the extent of the gender imbalance in the "Superclass" subjects of focus and compares institutional data with national data.

	Male	0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%		Sector
Vehicle Maintenance /…			91.09%	95%
Electrical Engineering (381)			97.11%	95%
Mechanical Engineering…			95.65%	93%
Engineering /…			91.26%	89%
Building Services (70)			98.57%	96%
Building / Construction…			95.12%	97%
Construction (General)…			94.35%	95%
IT: Computer…			80.35%	90%
Child Care Services (779)			4.88%	5%
Hair/Personal Care…			2.98%	4%

WCS Gender Balance in the DYW identified gender imbalanced subjects 2015-16 and FE Sector Scotland figures 2014-15. *Note that the FE Sector data which has been published by the SFC as an appendix to their Gender Action Plan is from a different academic year.*

The College gender balance was *better* than the sector in: Vehicle Maintenance/Repair (3% more female); Building/Construction Operations (2% more female); Construction (General) (1% more female) and IT: Comp Science/Programming/Systems (10% more female).

The College gender balance was approximately *the same* as the FE sector in Childcare Services.

The College gender balance was *more marked* than the FE sector in: Electrical Engineering (2% less female); Mechanical Engineering (3% less female); Engineering/Technology (General) (2% less female); Building Services (2.5% less female) and Hair/Personal Care Services (1% less male).

There are further differences in the subject gender imbalance when broken down to Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE). For example, the following graph shows that the gender imbalance is more marked at FE level for Electrical Engineering and more marked at HE level for Mechanical Engineering, Construction (General) and IT: Computer Science/Programming/Systems.

HE/FE Split for male dominated subjects in AY 15/16
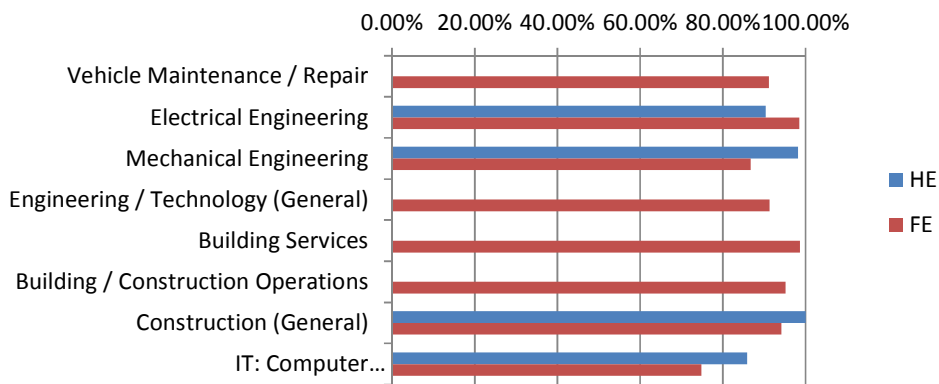
HE/FE Split for female dominated subjects in AY 15/16
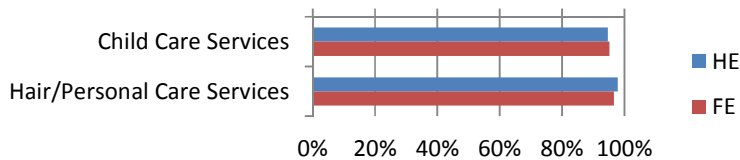
There was less of a difference in the HE/FE gender imbalance in female dominated subjects, i.e. the gender imbalance in Child Care Services and Hair/Personal Care Services is very similar at HE/FE levels.

Whilst there has been little change in the overall gender imbalance since academic year 14-15, the data shows that there has been a slight increase in the gender balance in the majority of these particular subjects. There has been an increase in the proportion of female students in Electrical Engineering (2.25% increase), Mechanical Engineering (1.07% increase), Engineering/Technology (General) (2.55% increase), Building/Construction Operations (1.57% increase) and IT Computer Science/Programming/Systems (7.45% increase). Similarly, there has been a 4.78% increase in the number of male students in Child

Care Services. Whilst the percentages increases are small, there are a few areas with noticeable change including 39% female students in HNC Construction Management for 2016-17, 50% females in Fitness, Health and Exercise and male students undertaking Beauty Therapy.

Variances in performance rates for male and female students are evident in the table below.

Completed Successfully Rates for Male and Female Students in Imbalanced Subjects AY15/16

	Female	Male
Childcare Services	58.40%	57.90%
Hair/Personal Care	62.20%	50%
Vehicle Maintenance/Repair	75%	67.10%
Electrical Engineering	72.70%	83.20%
Mechanical Engineering	33.30%	69.70%
Engineering/Technology	81.80%	77.70%
Building Services	100%	73.90%
Building/Construction	75%	53.90%
Construction (General)	82.60%	63.50%
IT: Computer Science	48.20%	62.50%

Analysis of this data is challenging given the difference in the size of cohorts, but there are indications that underrepresented groups are achieving well in Vehicle Maintenance, Engineering/Technology, Building Services, Building/Construction and Construction (General). The lower success rates for minority gender students in Mechanical Engineering, Hair/Personal Care and IT:Computer Science has been identified by the College as a priority for operational planning, self-evaluation, Portfolio Review, and Curriculum Planning and Review.

Working in Partnership to Address Gender Imbalance
We currently work with a wide range of partners to encourage applications and to raise awareness and aspiration.

Our work with employers aims to promote gender equality in their industries. This is currently being undertaken in many subject areas including work with Hair and Beauty Salon owners, local motor vehicle garages, childcare nurseries, larger employers including BAE and Babcock Marine, Swissport and employer bodies including HubWest, Clark Contracts and CITB.

We regularly work with schools to help change perceptions of particular industries and subject areas with high gender imbalances, for example by providing taster experiences for

nursery and primary pupils, through to secondary. We engage in visits to local schools promoting subject areas and including student testimonials, and have been working on the extension of STEM Ambassadors into primary schools. We actively support initiatives to promote STEM, vocational learning and gender equalities to school pupils, and our School College vocational programme prioritises the development of STEM and employability skills for young people. We are also involved with FOCUS West in supporting SHEP schools to increase progression to HE. All SHEP schools in our area are engaged in the School College programme through vocational learning and tasters.

We engage with local councils on initiatives such as the Renfrewshire Council Women into Construction event and national bodies including CITB and Energy Skills Partnership to participate in relevant promotional programmes such as 'Women into Construction', 'Go Construct' and 'Bloodhound Challenge'.

We are currently working in partnership with the Equality Challenge Unit on a project to attract diversity and increase participation. This project focuses on increasing the percentage of female students in Construction and Computing. This work has also included holding focus groups with minority students to learn more from their experience, and developing an action plan with the Student Association to address barriers for minority students. The outputs of this project have informed our work at encouraging participation in other areas of the curriculum where occupational segregation is notable.

We have also worked with the SQA in the development of qualifications with awarding bodies to use its involvement to effect change to encourage gender equalities. (for example, the College was influential in introducing Barbering into the Hairdressing qualifications to encourage more males into the courses)

Our partnership with our Student Association has informed the development of our Gender Action Plan. They have assisted us with our gender data analysis, and their priorities for issues for us to address together include a review of our estate and facilities for under represented gender students.

Gender Targets 2017 - 2021

In line with the SFC Gender Action Plan, the College will work to increase by 5% the minority gender share in each of the following superclasses:

West College Scotland	2015-26		Target 2019-20	
Superclass	Male	Female	**Male**	**Female**
Vehicle Maintenance/Repair	91%	9%	86%	14%
Electrical Engineering	97%	3%	92%	8%
Mechanical Engineering	96%	4%	91%	9%
Engineering/Technology (General)	91%	9%	86%	14%
Building Services	99%	1%	94%	6%
Building/Construction Operations	95%	5%	90%	10%
Construction (General)	94%	6%	89%	11%
IT: Computer Science/Programming/Systems	80%	20%	75%	25%
Child Care Services	5%	95%	10%	90%
Hair/Personal Care Services	3%	97%	8%	92%

West College Scotland
Gender Action Plan (GAP) 2017-2018

1. Infrastructure

Purpose: To ensure best use of systems, staff, resources and relationships to address gender imbalance

Objectives	Actions	Actions by what date	Responsibility	Outcomes
Leadership commitment to gender equality and addressing the imbalance	Executive Team and Board of Management to formally communicate and endorse WCS's commitment to gender equality to all staff, students and stakeholders	Dec 2017	Executive Team	An increased awareness of top level commitment to address the imbalance The realisation that this is everyone's responsibility is facilitated
Portfolio Review and Curriculum Planning and Review processes are aligned with GAP	Review processes to include gender action planning	Sep 2017	ELT Heads of Sector	Better alignment of processes
Gender equality key performance indicators and targets are embedded in operational planning	Operational Plans for Top Ten most imbalanced subjects to include steps toward addressing imbalance	March 2017	Heads of Sector	A more systematic approach to alignment of GAP with operational planning
Increase gender intersectionality awareness	Conduct data analysis of gender and other factors	June 2018	EDI Manager	A better understanding of minority gender students
Enable students to have a wider role in working in partnership to address gender imbalance	Gender Equality Workshops and action planning with Student Association	March 2018	EDI Manager	A more effective working partnership and increased gender competence
Increase capacity of staff to address gender imbalance	Unconscious Bias Training for Teaching Staff	March 2018	EDI Manager	Increased gender competence
A systematic approach to monitoring GAP progress	Annual Progress Report to be presented to ELT	June 2018	EDI Manager	Better awareness of impact of GAP

2. Influencing the Influencers

Purpose: To influence those involved in the student educational choice process

Objectives	Actions	Actions by what date	Responsibility	Outcomes
Influence school pupils' perceptions of industries and subject areas with high gender imbalances	Visits to local schools promoting subject areas to minority genders Provide taster experiences for nurseries and schools Use student testimonials and case studies to change perceptions	June 2018	Heads of Sector	School pupils are less influenced by stereotypical perceptions. Career aspirations are widened and enhanced An increase in applications from minority gender students
Extend the work of STEM ambassadors into primary schools	Arrange STEM ambassador primary schools initiatives	June 2018	Heads of Sector	An increased STEM engagement for primary school pupils
Engage parents in gender atypical career choices	Arrange parents information evenings and school careers events	June 2018	Head of Learning and Communities	Parents encourage children to choose gender atypical careers
Exploration of gender within the curriculum	Teaching staff embed gender equality and the exploring of gender stereotyping within their curriculum content	June 2018	CQLs	Positive societal change is encouraged and the gender competence of students is increased
The use of extra-curricular activities to address gender stereotypes	Develop initiatives to encourage students to question assumptions and popularly held stereotypes	March 2018	EDI Manager	The impact of gender stereotypes on career choice is reduced

3. Raising Awareness and Aspirations
Purpose: Outreach activities inspire gender nontraditional subject choices

Objectives	Actions	Actions by what date	Responsibility	Outcomes
To address gender imbalance through single sex focus	Engage with local councils on initiatives such as Women into Construction event and taster programmes.	June 2018	Heads of Sector	An increase in the balance of gender participation
To influence the educational and career choice process	Engage with national bodies including CITB and Energy Skills Partnership to participate in relevant promotional programmes such as 'Women into Construction', 'Go Construct' and 'Bloodhound Challenge'.	June 2018	Heads of Sector	A wider awareness of career paths An increase in aspiration An increase in the balance of gender participation
To address the presence of counter stereotypical role models	Work in partnership with FOCUS West and other colleges to look at further ways in which we might tackle the gender imbalance.	June 2018	Heads of Sector	An increase in aspirations towards certain careers and career opportunities
To raise awareness of the whole range of subjects and career choices available to both genders	Develop bespoke outreach programmes specifically designed to improve the gender balance in the Top Ten most imbalanced subjects.	June 2018	Heads of Sector	An increase in the balance of gender participation
To generate ideas for action to address imbalances	Heads of Sector to share good practice to inform planning	Dec 2017	EDI Manager	An increase in the development of techniques to tackle imbalance

4. Encouraging Applications

Purpose: To ensure recruitment, marketing and course packaging encourage applications from minority genders.

Objectives	Actions	Actions by what date	Responsibility	Outcomes
Our Marketing processes address the gender imbalance	Ensure publications use counter stereotypical imagery	Dec 2017	EDI Manager	We tackle gender stereotypes We increase stakeholders awareness of our commitment to gender equality We explicitly convey a culture of gender inclusion, which will hopefully attract further applications
	Develop and promote minority gender case studies	Feb 2018		
	Use website to promote the success of minority gender students	Feb 2018		
	Develop a Gender Empowerment web page	Feb 2018		
Our course packaging attracts underrepresented genders	Review course packaging for most imbalanced subjects and consider if repackaging could better attract minority gender students	Dec 2017	ELT	Better engagement with underrepresented genders An increase in the balance of gender participation A greater rate of attraction of underrepresented genders
	Consult with minority gender students about course packaging	Dec 2017	EDI Manager	
Our Admissions process is non biased	Provide training and guidance for staff involved in the Admissions process	March 2018	EDI Manager	A fair and objective Admissions process

5. Supporting Success

Purpose: to ensure a gender inclusive environment and an enhanced student experience

Objectives	Actions	Actions by what date	Responsibility	Outcomes
We are confident that our environment is gender inclusive	Audit the physical and social environment for the most imbalanced courses to tackle barriers Consult with Student Association on finding of audit and collaboratively action plan to tackle any barriers	June 2018	EDI Manager	A reduction in barriers for gender minority students A more gender inclusive environment A more effective working relationship with students to address the gender imbalance
We take action to ensure that minority gender students at WCS are supported and encouraged	Consult with minority gender students about how best to meet their needs Cross analyse student satisfaction information with gender Provide resilience training for minority gender students Work in partnership with employers to support and encourage transition of minority gender students	June 2018 March 2018 June 2018 June 2018	EDI Manager Director of Quality Director of Student Services Director of Student Services and Communities	The minority student experience is enhanced Attainment and retention of underrepresented students is increased A reduction in barriers to gaining, and progression within, employment