WEST COLLEGE SCOTLAND

EQUALITY REPORT

2017

Contents

INTRODUCTION

Note from Principal and Chief Executive

Welcome to West College Scotland's Equality Report for 2017. Advancing equality for all our staff and students and celebrating diversity are of essential importance to us, and we aim to exceed, not just meet, our legal obligations.

I see equality, diversity and inclusion as central to our core purpose, which is to provide excellent education, training opportunities, and services for students and customers. It is integral to everything that we do, and relevant to all of our stakeholders.

This is a chance for us to take stock and to recognise the progress we have made in the achieving our Equality Outcomes, and in partnership with our staff and students, develop new ways to promote equality and tackle unfairness.

We recognise that we have more work to do, and we are committed to doing so.

I am pleased to say that we have made substantial progress in meeting our Equality Outcomes and that we have the systems in place to ensure that our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion is demonstrated in practice.

Audrey Cumberford, Principal and Chief Executive of West College Scotland

About Us

West College Scotland delivers further and higher education across the West Region covering the main local authority areas of Renfrewshire, Inverclyde and West Dunbartonshire. In addition, we provide education to other neighbouring local authorities including East Renfrewshire, Argyll and Bute, North Ayrshire and Glasgow.

With over 28,000 students, 1,200 staff and a turnover of £67 million, ours is a large organisation and a major employer, uniquely placed to help shape the West region's educational landscape and contribute to its social and economic development. Our latest Annual Review provides more information about our reach, influence and impact.

Our job is to ensure students leave West College Scotland equipped with the skills and knowledge to compete in the jobs market; to make a full contribution to the wellbeing of their families, their communities and the economic growth of the country.

Strategic Context

Our Corporate Plan sets out our Strategic Priorities, including "We will provide education and training in inspirational and innovative ways to engage and meet the diverse needs of our students. " This is underpinned by our Strategic Objectives, specifically: "To ensure a culture of inclusiveness is embedded throughout the College, promoting equality, appreciating diversity and giving every student the chance to reach their full potential."

Our approach will contribute to our success in achieving Scottish Government's National Outcomes, in particular:

- We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation.
- Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.
- We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society.
- We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk.

Our equality focus is also aligned with our Regional Outcome Agreement, which addresses particular issues for minority students, and sets out our intentions to address gaps which may have been affected by protected characteristics. Actions which we intend to take to achieve our newly developed Equality Outcomes aim to assist us in achieving our Regional Outcomes. Additionally, our focus on gender equality in this Report complements the SFC's Gender Action Plan, and will inform the development of our own Gender Action Plan which is due to be published in June 2017.

MAINSTREAMING EQUALITY

"Mainstreaming equality" means making equality integral in all of our activities and functions. We aim to integrate equality into the day-to-day working of our organisation so that every decision is informed by the need to minimise discrimination, achieve the best possible outcome and decrease unfairness in Scottish society. Below, we outline the progress which we have made to date.

Governance

Our Board of Management and our Executive Team play an integral role in establishing our vision for equality, as well as ensuring that we legally comply with the equality duties. Our governing bodies are clear on their role of putting robust systems in place to seek assurances that the legal requirements are being met and so that we can demonstrate effectiveness and progress in mainstreaming.

In seeking assurance of good practice in equality, our Board has a comprehensive understanding of the legal framework and our approach to the Specific Duties. Our Board and subcommittees engage with staff to understand how equality work is being implemented and explore key pressing issues, for example by inviting the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager to provide updates at meetings.

There are effective links between the College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the Board and its subcommittees, which allows for effective communication of issues arising. Minutes and matters arising from equality issues are discussed at Board meetings.

In addition, whenever a paper is submitted to the College's Board, the person responsible for drafting that document is required to provide the Board with any information on potential equality and diversity implications. This is usually done through the inclusion of a completed equality impact assessment document.

The overall composition of the Board meets the recommendation contained in the Scottish Government Ministerial Guidance whereby College Boards should comprise of at least 40% women. Later in this Report we set out actions which we will take to increase the diversity of our Board, including initiatives to increase the response rate of applicants, and positive action initiatives to encourage applications from underrepresented groups.

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager works with the Board on projects which are highly relevant to equality. For example, a Short Life Working Group was set up to consider long term plans on how to work towards the Scottish Government's current proposals to introduce a gender equality objective for Board members.

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee is responsible for ensuring that our College not only complies with equality legislation but that we go beyond that to embed equality and diversity into the culture of the College. This Committee is chaired by the Director

Organisational Development and HR who is a member of the College's Senior Management Team. The Committee is comprised of representatives from across the functions of the College and includes trade union representation. The Student Association is actively involved in this group and its contribution has directly influenced our activities to embed equality in all of our processes and facilities. For example, our development of guidance for assuring ongoing support for pregnant students was formulated as a direct result of the Student Association raising this request at the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

Regional Outcomes

Scottish Funding Council's Outcome Agreement Guidance sets a number of specific equality priorities for colleges and regions, including demonstrating their fulfilment of the Equality Duties through the mainstreaming of equality and diversity within the Outcome Agreement.

Our most recent Regional Outcome Agreement contains specific equality priorities, including:

- identifying and addressing underrepresentation issues and differences in retention and attainment of protected characteristic groups
- reducing gender imbalances for students within particular subject areas
- supporting students and staff who are carers
- working with partners to improve participation and employability for disabled students in particular, and those within other protected characteristic groups, such as black and minority ethnic (BME) students
- working towards the elimination of the gender pay gap
- demonstrating measures being taken to address other areas of underrepresentation for other protected characteristic groups

An Equality Impact Assessment was developed during the drafting of the Regional Outcome Agreement to ensure any findings be included in inform the final agreement. We used a range of equality evidence to inform this assessment, and used the results of the assessment to establish equality priorities.

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager contributed to the development of our Regional Outcome Agreement, and the Equality Outcomes developed in this report should assist us in achieving our Regional Outcome Agreement and in the future development of our Gender Action Plan.

Equality in Learning and Teaching

Our view is that the quality of learning and teaching is inseparable from equality. We ensure that this is mainstreamed in our curriculum using a number of approaches. We have developed in house guidelines for mainstreaming equality in the curriculum to ensure that all learning and teaching materials are in line with good practice and that where possible our staff raise awareness of inequalities, prejudice and citizenship matters.

We have also developed an audit tool which is used to ensure that learning and teaching materials are systematically checked to review if they could advance equality or raise awareness of good practice. The tool also asks staff to check if the materials contain any reference to stereotypes which can reinforce prejudice.

In addition to mandatory Equality, Diversity and Inclusion awareness training, we regularly run training on Mainstreaming Equality at WCS, which provides practical advice on embedding good practice in equality in the curriculum.

Our Portfolio Review Process asks staff to reflect on the embedding of equality in learning and teaching, provide information about good practice and develop action plans where gaps may be evident. In February 2017, equality extracts from each Portfolio Review were collated and shared with Teaching staff to inform Equality Update workshops. These workshops gave staff a chance to share good practice from other departments as well as to consider initiatives to increase student awareness of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

The collation of equality information from the Portfolio Review process demonstrated the innovative and engaging methods our staff use to make sure that equality is high profile in learning and teaching, as demonstrated by:

Childhood Practice: targeted work with schools showcased successful male Early Years Practitioners.

Health and Social Care: feedback from a student who had undergone gender reassignment confirmed a growth in confidence due to the encouragement and support of teaching staff.

Learner Development: flexibility in timetabling allows for individual talents and interests, and specialised SPARQS training for Learner Development Representatives has been delivered. Many classes encourage themed learning throughout the year and celebrate various cultural events and festivals through cookery classes, music etc.

Sport: equality and diversity is a focus within all units and lecturers encourage discussion relating to pertinent sociocultural issues as and when they arise e.g. LGBT, religious festivals and general social issues. The student sports kit has been changed and further developed to ensure that all students have choice of fit.

ESOL: all programs promote cultural diversity and intercultural understanding by exploring other cultures and using diverse lifestyles, customs and celebrations as key aspects of course content. Teaching and learning materials promote cultural diversity by focusing on lifestyles, customs and behaviours in different countries around the world. This helps to include learners from minority backgrounds and raises awareness of the benefits of a diverse society.

Travel: cultural differences are focused on by the use of teaching materials. This helps to raise awareness to the students of different cultural beliefs and backgrounds, which also assists them in preparation for the working environment.

Business and Computing: students from this class from a diverse variety of backgrounds, including students from Saudi Arabia, America, and students in their late 50's discuss cultural differences to business which adds depth to the course.

Computing: staff in this department have been actively working within schools to encourage and engage with females and to address the male/female imbalance on computing courses. They have presented at events such as the Scottish Learning Festival and have provided an NPA Games Development course for school students. In partnership with Glasgow City Council, our lecturers in Computing ran a Scratch Mini-Game Jam throughout Glasgow schools. This department also offered a Female Only NC Women into Computer Science.

Construction: in partnership with Renfrewshire Council, we ran a one day program entitled "Women into Construction", in order to raise awareness of the careers available to females.

Building Services: significant work has taken place to encourage females to apply for this course, including school visits and targeted marketing initiatives. The Curriculum and Quality Leader in this department is a member of a project team which has been set up to increase minority gender participation. We were extremely proud in April 2017 when a female student enrolled on this course won [the Association for Public Service Excellence Building and Housing Apprentice of the Year Award.](#)

Engineering: school presentations actively target females into engineering, and students are encouraged to join the Women's Engineering Society.

Design and Media: department Facebook posts raise awareness of equality and diversity issues, such as Black History month, International Women's Day and LGBT events.

Hairdressing, Make up and Beauty: case studies have been developed covering male students studying Beauty and have been publicised to attract higher male participation.

Creative Industries: a new course on the curriculum entitled "Introduction to NC Music" has allowed students, for the first time, to study music at the college below the competency level of musicianship normally expected.

Student Applications

Our application system is straightforward and the language used is clear and plain, as indicated to us, by students, as part of their feedback on the services we provide. Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager was involved in the testing stages of the development of our online application system, and recommendations to improve accessibility were taken into account.

In particular, the review of the system noted that applicants with additional support needs may prefer to use a paper-based system, which is available on request. We are happy to provide assistance to applicants who require adjustments, or simply need a bit of direction due to the fact that they do not speak English as a first language, or they are unused to online systems. We provide training for staff in Student Services in communicating with people who do not speak English as a first language. We ask applicants to disclose equality data at application stage which is analysed by our College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

Our staff are committed to fairness and transparency in the application process, and review application criteria to ensure that it is as objective as possible. Applicants are encouraged to disclose learning differences or health conditions. In the event that such conditions are disclosed, applications are referred to our Enabling Services area. All applicants are invited to meet with staff to discuss their condition and ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to enable them to reach their potential.

Our College participated in an Equality Challenge Unit Project, "Equitable Admissions in Scotland's Colleges". The output of this project was guidance considering each stage of admissions, from marketing to post application. The guidance includes a tool for colleges to review their admissions policies and practices from an equalities perspective. This guidance was used to inform the development of our Admissions Policy.

Student Admissions

From the outset, we work hard to ensure that students understand the importance of equality and diversity and our commitment to mainstreaming. Student Induction includes a session on equality and the importance of respecting others. An overview of the College's provision for people from different equality groups is provided. For example, we draw attention to the Sanctuary Room, where students can take time out for their religious beliefs.

We also promote the support available from the Enabling Services area as we are aware that students may not feel comfortable disclosing a disability at application as they may feel that it could negatively affect their chances of success. In order to reduce any stigma, we emphasise that the service is available to anybody who needs a bit of support, and have found this approach effective.

Assessment Arrangements

We ensure that we make reasonable adjustments to our assessments process for students with a disability. We take a tailored approach to this by discussing students' particular needs, and adjusting the assessment as appropriate. For example, a student may require additional time to complete the assessment, or may require assistive technology which we

are happy to provide. We also avoid assessments on religious festivals, or at times of worship.

Accessibility of Teaching Materials

Through Continuous Professional Development and the use of College Guidelines, staff are made aware of good practice in ensuring accessibility to learning materials. Sans serif fonts are used, and font sizes are at least Point 12 in Word documents, or Point 20 in PowerPoint.

We make good use of Moodle, an online learning platform, which assists students in tailoring materials to their particular needs and preferences. Where possible, we provide lesson plans, teaching materials and other documents in advance as planning ahead can assist students. For example, if students with dyslexia have access to notes prior to a class they will be freed up from trying to write everything down, and will be more able to actively listen and participate.

Using Equality Data to Inform Action

We systematically integrate student equality data throughout our curriculum planning process. We consider the student population as a whole to investigate outcomes by protected characteristic. For example, how do the outcome and retention rates for female students compare with the rates for male students? This analysis informs the development of actions to enable us to achieve our Equality Outcomes, and gaps or anomalies are addressed in operational planning.

We then analyse the information on a Sector basis. At this level, there can be evidence of disproportionality, particularly connected with occupational segregation. Our Heads of Sector use this data to inform operational planning, for example, by planning initiatives with central functions such as Marketing and Communications.

Curriculum and Quality Leaders are responsible for considering the data for their particular courses through the Portfolio Review Process. They discuss their analysis with their staff, and investigation takes place with regards to particular issues which have been highlighted. They then plan work to address gaps, such as by engaging with schools or by providing taster courses.

Supporting Students with a Disability

Students with an identified disability or learning need can access additional support if required. This may include support for such examples as mobility needs, visual impairment, hearing impairment, dyslexia or mental health needs.

We supply students with USB wristbands which store assistive technology tools which they can use on their personal computers, and College desktops have a pre-installed suite of assistive technology to meet individual student needs.

We encourage students to let us know of their needs as soon as possible so that an individual meeting can be arranged to work out the best levels of support needed. We recognise that some students may not want to tell us about their requirements at application, and we regularly remind students that our door is always open if they need extra support.

Our students have reported that they have been particularly pleased with software packages which we provide such as Dragon Naturally Speaking. Increasingly, we are finding that digital technology solutions such as digital recordings which can then be automatically transcribed are receiving positive feedback.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans

Students with a disability or learning difference requiring special arrangements for support in the event of an emergency evacuation have Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans. These Plans are individually tailored to students' locations and dates on which they will be in attendance. We then seek feedback from students following evacuation alarm tests, and time exits from the campus to ensure that we are providing a safe environment for all.

International Students and Visitors

We have a dedicated induction programme for International students where our staff will meet the new students when they arrive in the country and help them to settle in. We also provide an orientation program to let them have information on the campuses and the College itself. We have invited speakers to our College, including the community police, to talk to our international students about their rights to be treated with respect and what to do if they feel that they have experienced discrimination.

We provide ongoing support to international students throughout the time of the study at WCS, and we have a team to support students on a confidential basis with any information or to help resolve any problems that they may have.

We also offer a range of English for Speakers of Other Languages programs for international students. These courses are designed to prepare students for further study at College or prepare for entry into university.

Marketing and Communications

Our marketing and communications activities ensure that equality is mainstreamed in our communications and profile. We ensure that we attract applications from a diverse range of people by advertising courses on a diverse range of websites. Promotional material provides information about the services available for people who share protected characteristics, and highlights the zero tolerance approach which is taken towards any kind of harassment or discrimination. We also review the use of images in communications to ensure that the College promotes equality and is a welcoming environment to people regardless of protected characteristics.

Student Engagement

We have an active relationship with our Student Association, who are involved in equality decision making through consultation and participation within our Equality and Diversity Committee. The President of our Students' Association works hard to ensure that equality considerations are high profile. There are dedicated equality Officers, including LGBT and Mature Students Officers.

Our Stakeholder Experience team regularly arranges focus groups with students to understand more about their experiences at the College and to explore additional ways to tackle barriers for student who share protected characteristics. Our class representation process provides tailored training for international and learning support students, to ensure they are able to effectively contribute their views of the learning experience.

Equality and Diversity Training for Staff

All staff are required to undertake online equality and diversity training. We have a range of online training courses available which provide an overview of the equality legislation and outlining good practice.

In addition to the mandatory training, other equality and diversity training courses are delivered throughout the academic year. These include:

- Recruitment and Selection
- Producing Equality Impact Assessments
- Mental Health First Aid
- Understanding Autism
- Mainstreaming Equality in the Curriculum
- Equality and Good Practice in the Admissions Process

We developed a new course for managers at the College in Diversity and Unconscious Bias. This course looked at the wider aspects of diversity as opposed to solely the protected characteristics, and participants had the opportunity to reflect on how unconscious bias can affect decision-making and practical steps which can be taken to mitigate this risk. This course also included a module on the "Active Bystander", in order to encourage staff to use techniques to challenge other people's bias. Feedback from the sessions was extremely positive, and further sessions will be scheduled on a regular basis. We also have scheduled Unconscious Bias training as a priority for all Teaching staff in areas where there is a student gender imbalance.

Equality and Our Staff

We systematically mainstream equality in our relationship with our staff. We recognise the right of all employees to be treated fairly and considerately in an employment framework that demonstrates commitment to equality and fairness for all. Our recruitment processes,

terms and conditions of employment and training and development opportunities reflect our commitment to mainstreaming.

Equality and diversity is a fundamental principle in all HR policies and procedures, which are effectively promoted throughout the organisation. We assess the fairness and effectiveness of these equality policies through workforce monitoring, and annually publish an analysis of staff equality data.

Our mainstreaming equality for staff includes a focus on the following areas:

Attendance Management: Our processes aim to identify health problems at an early stage and support the individual. Employees who suffer from ill health are treated respectfully and empathetically, and reasonable adjustments are made to support staff in returning to work. We recognise that disability can be the cause or a contributing factor in absence and performance issues, and we are committed to making every effort to help employees stay in employment. Our Occupational Health Provider provides us with specialist advice on adjustments and rehabilitating employees back into the workplace.

Employee Counselling: all employees have access to a free, confidential, workplace counselling service. We regularly promote this service as we wish to support our staff with stress or mental health issues. This service is not just for work related issues – we recognise that personal issues can have a similar negative impact on well-being, and that stresses at home can preoccupy someone's thinking.

Career Breaks: We recognise that employees may benefit from a period of time away from work in order to care for children or other dependants and in order to facilitate greater work-life balance. Our Career Break Procedure offers employees the opportunity to take a planned period off work to concentrate on such alternative personal priorities. It also offers employees the opportunity to take a Career Break for full time study, travel or unpaid voluntary work. While this Scheme has particular benefits for staff who share protected characteristics, it also is available for all staff.

Recruitment and Selection: The promotion of equality is a core and visible aim of our Recruitment and Selection Procedure and supporting procedures. We welcome applications from all suitably-qualified people and aim to employ a diverse workforce that reflects the people of Scotland.

We operate a fair and objective recruitment and selection system, which places emphasis on individual skills, abilities and experience. We have been awarded Level 2 of the "Disability Confident" Scheme, whereby we guarantee interviews for candidates who meet the essential criteria. Selection criteria are reviewed regularly to ensure that it is justifiable and essential for effective performance of the role.

Staff involved in this process receives training which makes them aware of the potential for bias in recruitment and selection, and how to apply good and fair practice. We ensure that advertising of posts reaches a wide and diverse audience through placement of opportunities online. We monitor our recruitment and selection process and regularly analyse the accompanying equality data.

Disability Confident Award: In 2016, we successfully applied for Level 2 of this Scheme. This Symbol is highlighted in our recruitment documentation, and accompanied with positive action requests for people with a disability to apply to work at our College.

As a Disability Confident Employer, we work hard to build a culture where staff feel safe to disclose any disability or long term health condition, and we consult with staff about their perceptions of barriers, issues or concerns, and report back on action taken to address these. Through the provision of our Disability at Work Procedure, we make sure that employees know that, should they acquire a disability or should an existing disability or health condition worsen, every reasonable effort will be made to enable them to continue in their current job or an alternative one.

Disability at Work: We have a Procedure dedicated to ensuring that we support staff with a disability. This Procedure includes information about types of reasonable adjustments, including modifications to the manner in which the work is to be conducted, making adjustments to premises, allocating some of the minor duties of the post to another person or altering working hours. If requested, we arrange for extra training for staff with a disability, and also offer extended trial periods on transfer or promotion.

Career Progression: We recognise that staff who share protected characteristics can face barriers to progression. Our Continuous Professional Review Procedure aims to provide all staff with an opportunity to reflect on and influence his/her individual career, and consider development which will assist career progression. Continuous Professional Development is designed to suit the particular needs of the individual, who can influence how and when development activities take place. This is particularly effective for staff that have caring responsibilities or have a disability.

Flexible Working: Our approach to flexible working aims to achieve better work life balance for employees, improved health and wellbeing and reduced sickness absence. Where appropriate, we offer part-time, flexi time, compressed hours, term time, and job sharing. All staff can apply, but again there are particular benefits for staff who share protected characteristics. For example, childcare costs may be reduced, and staff with a disability who work flexibly can avoid busy travel periods.

Zero Tolerance: Our Bullying and Harassment Procedure makes it very clear that a zero tolerance approach to any form of discrimination is taken. It sets out lines of responsibility, a clear process, and this approach is explained to all staff at Staff Induction and at

mandatory staff training. This assists us in ensuring that all staff are treated with dignity and that we provide a climate where staff have confidence to raise any instance of harassment.

Behavioural Framework: We have developed a Framework setting out behavioural aspirations. Equality and diversity is central this Framework, which expresses expectations that all staff treat stakeholders with dignity and respect, and that their behaviour will assist us in maintaining a culture which embraces fairness and tolerance.

STAFF MONITORING

Composition

Gathering and Using Information

We ask all of our staff to disclose equality data regarding all of the protected characteristics in the Equality Act. We use a self-service HR online system, and all staff are regularly asked to update their equality information.

In common with other public sector organisations, we find that we have varying rates of disclosure and reliability of information depending on the particular protected characteristic. For example, the information which we gather on age, sex and race is more freely disclosed and therefore more reliable than the information we gather on protected characteristics which may be perceived as being more personal or sensitive, such as sexual orientation.

Our specific obligations in terms of the legislation are to take steps to gather information on composition, recruitment, progression and retention of staff with reference to each of the protected characteristics. This information is published below.

The legislation also requires us to state how we use this information to better perform the equality duty. We have a range of processes to ensure that the information is used for this purpose. The information is published in our Annual Human Resources Report and analysed by our Senior Management Team and Board. We investigate circumstances and take action when the information indicates evidence of disproportionality, or when WCS staff indicators are inconsistent with external indicators.

We also use this information to inform a quantitative analysis of the equality impact of our practices, processes and policies.

Where the number of staff with a protected characteristic is fewer than ten, and the information is sensitive or personal, we have not specified the number in order to avoid individuals being identified.

Age

Age

- 18 - 29
- 30 - 49
- 50 - 59
- 60+

6.23%
42.25%
36.10%
15.42%
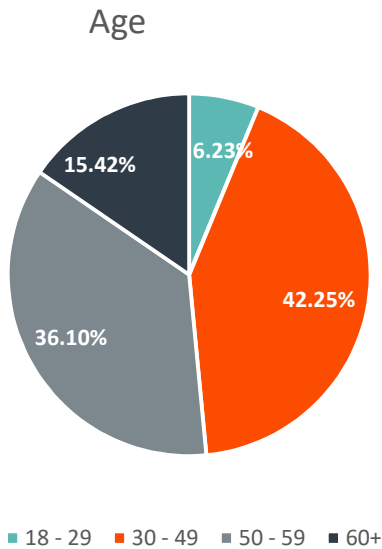
The age bracket with the highest number of staff is between 30-49 (42.25%) The second largest age group is aged between 50-59 (42.25%). These proportions reflect the national demographics. The age data shows similar patterns for Teaching and Support staff.
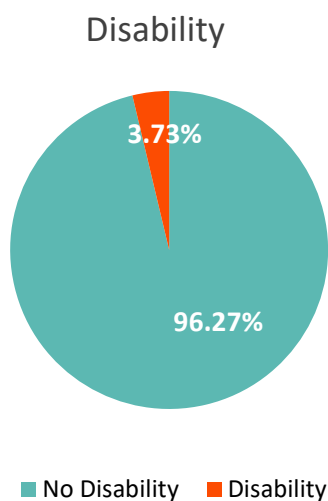
There has been an increase in the proportion of Teaching Staff who are aged between 18 – 29 (from 0.8% in 2015 to 4.10% in 2016)

The proportion of staff aged 60 and over has increased by approximately 6%. This is consistent with Regional Employment Patterns in Scotland, which notes that the employment rate for older people in Scotland has been steadily increasing for the past decade.

The College maintains a good balance between experienced staff and new staff. However, it recognises the high proportion of staff aged 55 and over, and continues to look at succession planning for key posts to anticipate the implications of this profile and to protect the College in terms of talent, experience and knowledge drain.

Disability

Disability

- No Disability
- Disability

3.73%
96.27%

There has been a 1 percentage point increase in the number of staff with a disability at West College Scotland since last reported.

The proportion of staff who have declared a disability is lower than national indicators. The Scottish Government estimate that approximately 10% of the population who are economically active have a long term activity limiting health problem. No sector comparators are available.

➔ Take action to increase staff disclosure of

disability

Gender

Gender

40.28%

59.72%

■ Male ■ Female
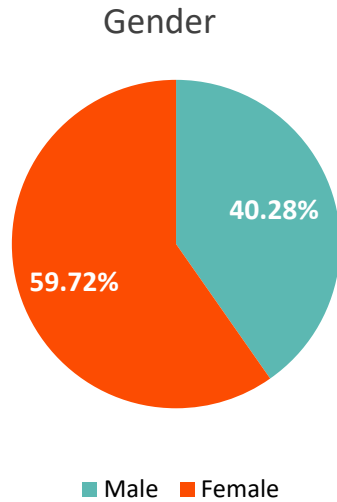
Overall, there is a 19.44 percentage point difference between male and female staff. There is a higher rate of proportionality of gender with Teaching Staff compared with Support Staff.

The percentage of female Teaching Staff has increased by 6.62% since 2015.

There has been very little change in the proportion of female Support Staff. There are twice as many female support staff than male. Nationwide, women are more likely to work in the public sector, and around 80% of administrative, secretarial and service support jobs in Scotland are performed by women.

➔ Develop initiatives to address occupational segregation

Gender Reassignment

The number of employees who have declared that they have undergone or intend to undergo the process of gender reassignment is not being specified as it is fewer than ten.

Pregnancy and Maternity

25 employees have taken maternity leave since April 2015. All staff who took maternity leave have returned to work. The number of employees who have declared that they are pregnant is not being specified as it is fewer than ten.

Race

Race

1.07%
10.50%
88.43%
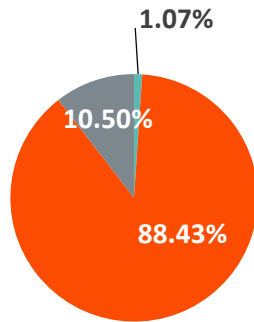
- Black/Minority/Ethnic
- White
- Not Specified

Overall, 1.07% of staff are from a Black or Minority ethnic (BME) background. This is a slight increase from last year, when 0.76% of staff were BME.

This can be compared with the demographics of the campus local council areas of West Dunbartonshire, Inverclyde and Renfrewshire, where between 1-3% of residents are BME.

It is noted that there are different employment rates for ethnic minority groups. The Annual Population Survey shows that employment rates for ethnic minorities in Scotland are on average about 13 percentage points lower than those for the white population. The difference is driven mainly by much lower employment rates for minority ethnic women who are typically below 50% (about 20 percentage points lower than white women).

➔ Develop initiatives to increase diversity of our staff

Religion or Belief

Religion or Belief

8.20%
15.33%
21.48%
22.30%
22.46%
1.96%   7.58%
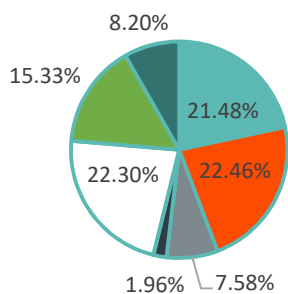
- Christian - Protestant
- Christian - Roman Catholic
- Other Christian
- Other Religion
- Agnostic or Atheist
- Prefer Not to Say
- No Declaration

There has been a significant increase in self-disclosure of Religion or Belief. In 2015, 39% of staff had not provided us with information – to date, this has decreased to 8.2%.

This increase in disclosure has allowed us to better understand the religious preferences of our staff. 22.30% of our staff are agnostic or atheist. There are very similar proportions of Protestant and Roman Catholic staff.

In 2015, 1% of staff declared "Other Religion". This has increased to 1.9%. While this is proportionately low, a diverse range of religion and beliefs is evident, including Sikhism, Judaism, and Buddhism.

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Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation

- Heterosexual: 79.38%
- No Declaration: 6.14%
- Prefer Not to Say: 12.88%
- Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual: 1.24%

Legend:
- ■ Heterosexual
- ■ Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual
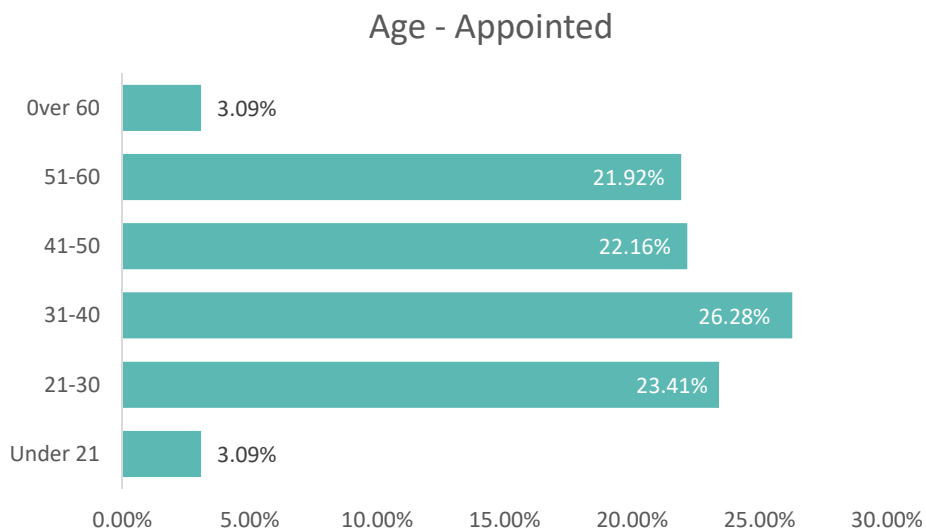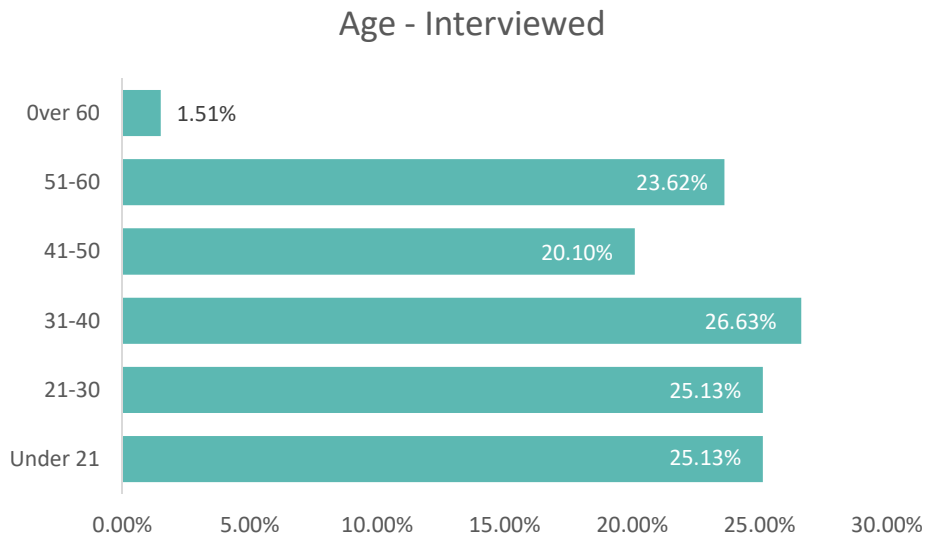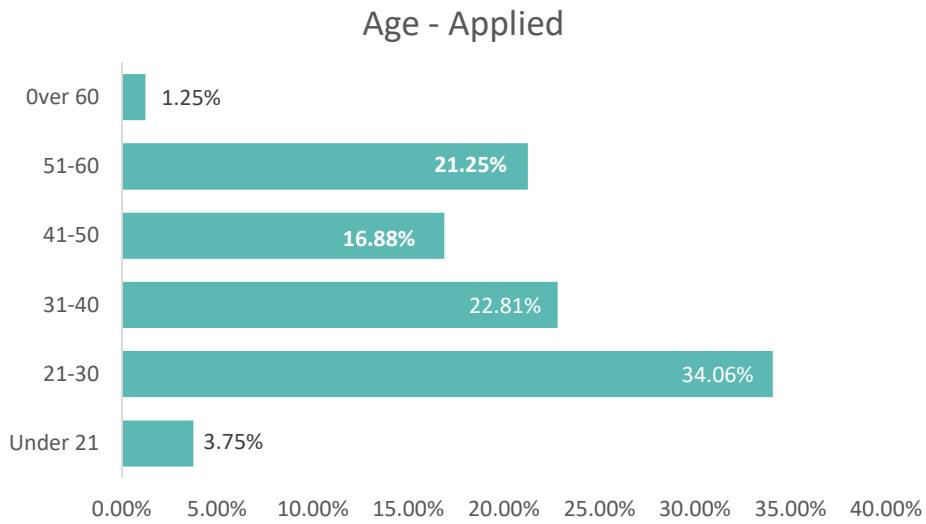- ■ Prefer Not to Say
- ■ No Declaration
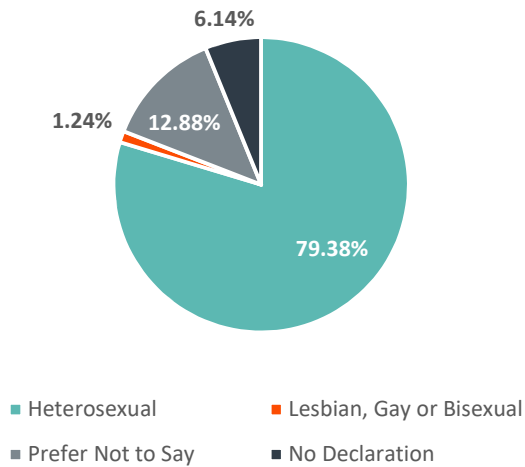
Again, we are pleased to note a significant increase in disclosure of sexual orientation. In 2015, 57% of staff had not provided us with information on their sexual orientation – in 2017, only 6.14% of staff have yet to declare this information.

Lesbian, gay and bisexual (LBG) staff have been aggregated as the numbers in each category are fewer than ten. 1.24% of staff in 2017 are LGB compared to 0.40% in 2015.

Recruitment Information

This data is based on externally and/or internally advertised appointments for permanent roles from November 2015 to February 2016. It should be noted that the data presented below was requested at two stages: firstly, applicants are asked to disclose equality information on a separate monitoring form when they submit their application. Following appointment, at Staff Induction they are asked again to provide information about their protected characteristics. It can be seen from the data below that there are higher rates of disclosure at application compared to during the Induction process, and it may be the case that as staff bed into their new jobs, they are more inclined to disclose information which is often deemed to be sensitive or personal.

Age

Age - Applied

Age	Percentage
Over 60	1.25%
51-60	21.25%
41-50	16.88%
31-40	22.81%
21-30	34.06%
Under 21	3.75%

Age - Interviewed

Age	Percentage
Over 60	1.51%
51-60	23.62%
41-50	20.10%
31-40	26.63%
21-30	25.13%
Under 21	25.13%

Age - Appointed

Age	Percentage
Over 60	3.09%
51-60	21.92%
41-50	22.16%
31-40	26.28%
21-30	23.41%
Under 21	3.09%

Comparatively few applications were received from people under 21 or over 61. Proprotionately fewer 21-30 year olds were interviewed. There is a broad correlation between the proportions of age groups interviewed and success in being appointed. 1.25% of those who applied were aged over 60 compared with 3.09% of new appointments, which could indicate a lack of barriers for older applicants.

Disability

Recruitment - Disability

Proportionately more people with a disability were interviewed compared to people who did not declare a disability, and were successful in getting the job. This could be related to the College guaranteeing interviews to those who meet the essential criteria as part of the Disability Confident Scheme.

During the recruitment process, disclosure regarding disability was high; less than 3% of applicants chose not to declare any information about this characteristic. However following induction, 31.25% of new appointees declined to provide information.

➔ Encourage disclosure at Staff Induction and promote support for staff with a disability

Gender

Recruitment - Gender
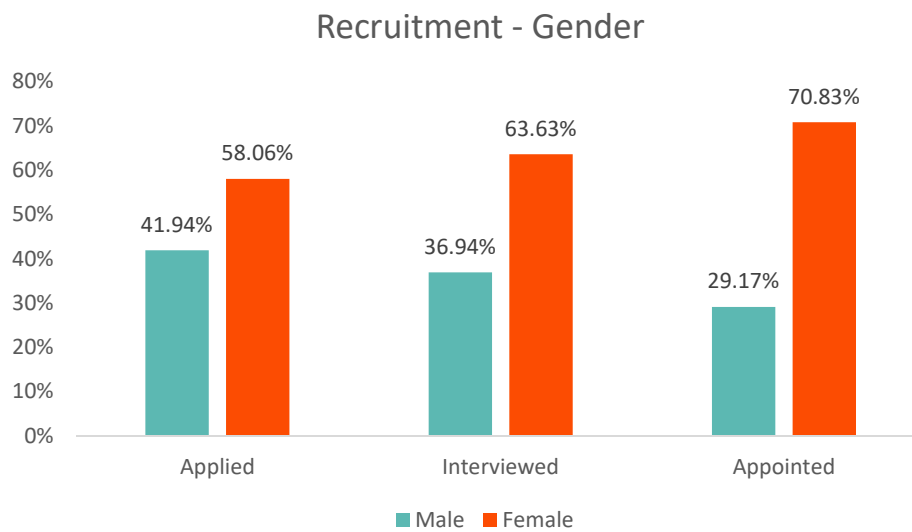
The gender balance at application is less marked than the gender balance at appointment. 41.94% of applicants were male, and 29.17% of those who were ultimately appointed are male. It is difficult to understand the reasons for this imbalance, and it is suggested that further analysis is carried out to investigate this.

➔ Investigate gender imbalance at appointment and take action to address

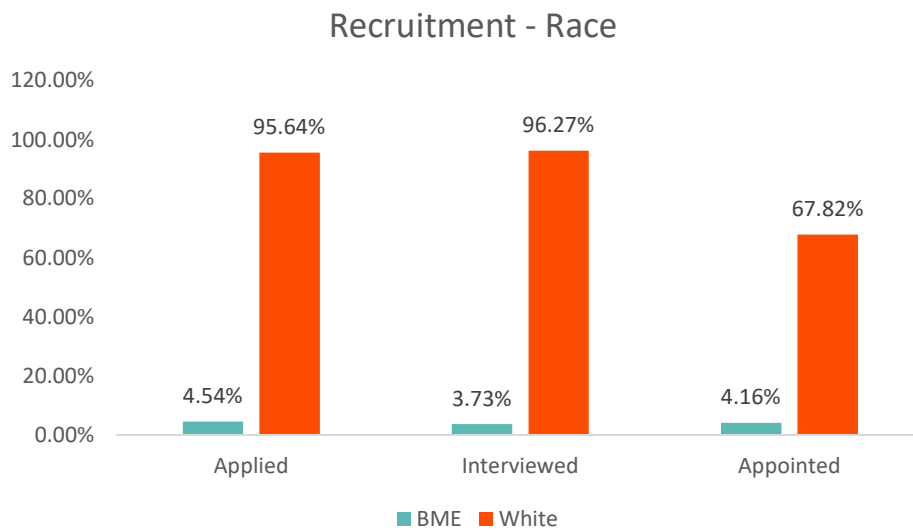**Gender Reassignment**

No applicants declared that they had undergone or intended to undergo a process of gender reassignment.

Pregnancy or Maternity

No applicants declared that they were pregnant or were taking maternity leave at application.

Race

Recruitment - Race

The percentage of applicants from a BME background is slightly higher than the local demographics, and the application rates is higher than previous years.

Religion or Belief

Recruitment - Religion or Belief
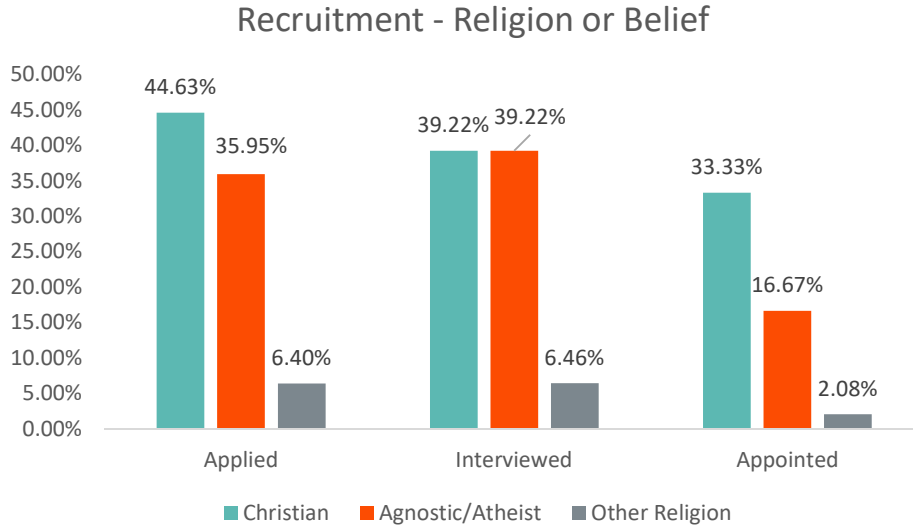
Relatively few applications were received from "Other" minority religions – 6.4%. A wide variety of religious beliefs were declared at including applications received from Buddhists, Muslims, Jewish people and Hindus.

87% of applicants provided information about their religion or belief at application. This disclosure rate decreased to 52% at induction.

➔ Encourage disclosure at Staff Induction

Sexual Orientation

Recruitment - Sexual Orientation

We are attracting a higher rate of LGBT applicants than we have previously. 7.64% of applicants declared that they were LGBT.The appointment data again shows a 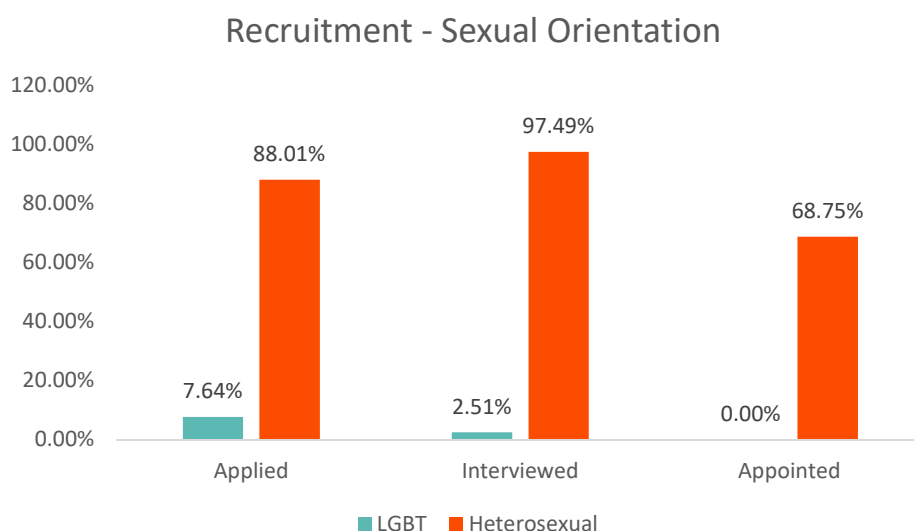higher rate of non disclosure, whereby 31.25% of newly appointed staff declined to provide informatiom about their sexual orientation.

➔ Encourage disclosure at Staff Induction

Staff Development

The Statutory Duties state that we must take steps to gather information about staff development or career progression. We are currently developing a base line of evidence to monitor staff progression. West College Scotland was formed following the merger of three individual colleges which used different pay and grading systems. This posed particular challenges in capturing staff equality data related to development or career progression post-merger, and the implementation of a job evaluation process which will allow us to monitor career progression happened relatively recently.

A project group has been set up to develop a system which will enable us to analyse career progression with equality data. We will be working on this with the Equality Challenge Unit as part of their "Attracting Diversity" theme of work.

We would note that we have taken steps to gather this information, and as soon as a reliable baseline has been developed, we will cross reference career progression with equality information.

Staff Retention

Since November 2015, 61.76% of those who left WCS did so voluntarily (many of whom chose to take voluntary severance or take up a new position elsewhere). 29.41% of leavers retired.

We are not providing equality information about the number of staff whose employment was terminated for "Other" reasons as the number of individuals is less than ten and personal data could be identified. We can confirm that there was no evidence of discrimination in these cases.

DIVERSITY AND OUR BOARD

Gender Breakdown

Gender - Non Executive Board

A bar chart showing gender breakdown of the Non Executive Board. Male: 58.33%, Female: 41.67%. The vertical axis ranges from 0.00% to 70.00% in 10.00% increments.
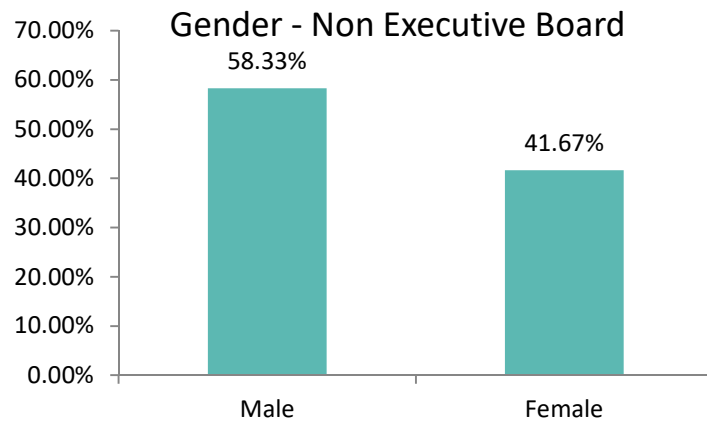
41.67% of our Non-Executive Board members are female. We note the Scottish Government's current proposal to require listed authorities to work towards an objective of a 50:50 gender balance, and we plan to take action to increase not just the gender diversity, but the overall diversity of the WCS Board.

We have experienced challenges in attracting diverse Board candidates. Time commitments, lack of remuneration and the perceived culture of governing bodies can dissuade some from applying. Traditional criteria can sometimes limit the pool of women, e.g. previous board level experience.

We are committed to increasing the diversity of our Board and will take the following actions:

➔ Ask our existing members to update their equality data to better understand their profile in terms of diversity
➔ Communicate the intention of the WCS Board to increase its diversity to all stakeholders
➔ Take positive action in recruitment of Board members to encourage underrepresented groups to apply, e.g. through targeted advertising and search firms
➔ use existing networks to advertise opportunities, e.g. LinkedIn, including specifically encouraging known individuals of an underrepresented group to apply
➔ Raise awareness of the role of Board members and the benefits it offers to the individual and the community.
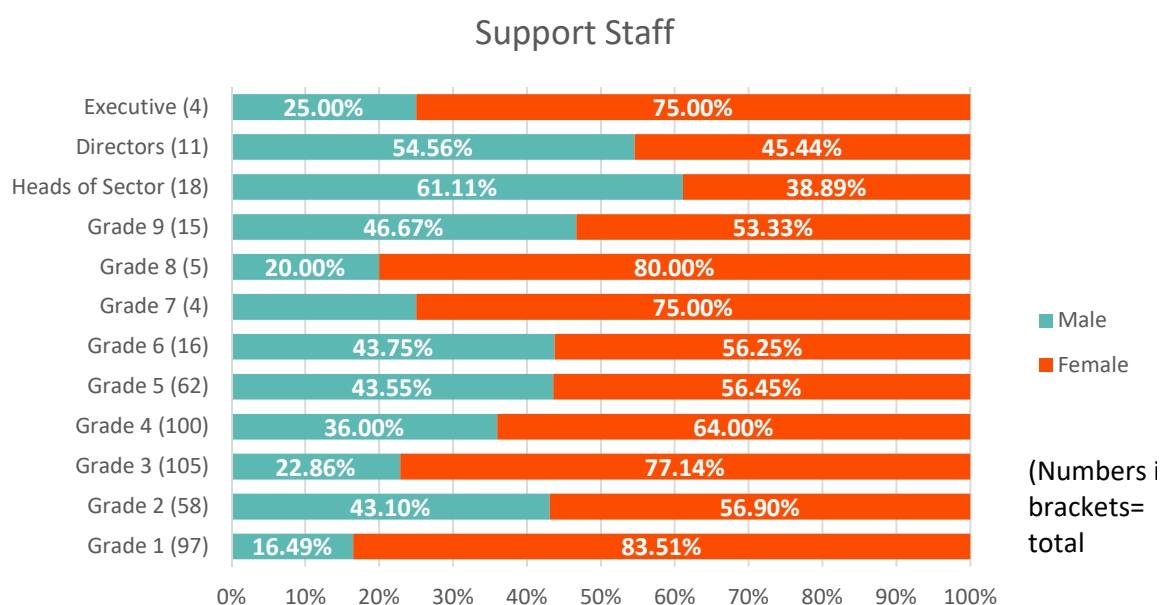
EQUAL PAY

Gender Pay Gap

The gender pay gap at West College Scotland is 6.98% in favour of men. This is based on the percentage difference between men's average hourly basic pay on a full time equivalent basis and women's. Overtime and other allowances have been excluded from this calculation. This gap was calculated in February 2017 on the basis of 60% female staff and 40% male. Our gender pay gap of 6.98% can be compared with Scotland's pay gap of 16.8%.
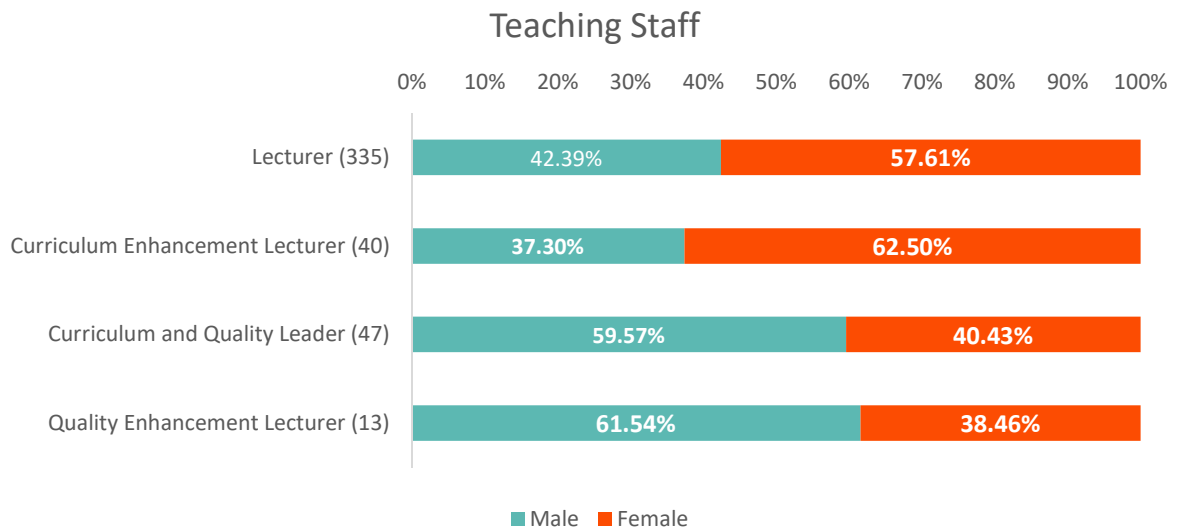
While the WCS pay gap is less than half the national pay gap, it is still deemed significant as it is greater than 5%. We understand that the reasons for gender pay gaps are complex and interrelated. Women can experience greater difficulties than men when it comes to balancing work and private life. Family, care and domestic responsibilities are still not equally shared. The task of looking after dependent family members is largely borne by women, and far more women than men choose to take parental leave. Consequently, women have more career interruptions or work shorter hours than men. This has a negative impact on their career development and promotion prospects. It can also mean less financially rewarding careers.

Occupational segregation is also a contributing factor in equal pay gaps. Women and men still tend to work in different jobs. On the one hand, women and men often predominate in different sectors. On the other hand, within the same sector or organisations women predominate in lower valued and lower paid occupations.

Occupational segregation is evident from an analysis of different grades and roles at WCS as seen below.

Proportion of Male and Female Support Staff by Grade/Job Title

Support Staff

Grade/Job Title	Male	Female
Executive (4)	25.00%	75.00%
Directors (11)	54.56%	45.44%
Heads of Sector (18)	61.11%	38.89%
Grade 9 (15)	46.67%	53.33%
Grade 8 (5)	20.00%	80.00%
Grade 7 (4)	25.00%	75.00%
Grade 6 (16)	43.75%	56.25%
Grade 5 (62)	43.55%	56.45%
Grade 4 (100)	36.00%	64.00%
Grade 3 (105)	22.86%	77.14%
Grade 2 (58)	43.10%	56.90%
Grade 1 (97)	16.49%	83.51%

(Numbers in brackets= total

Teaching Staff

	Male	Female
Lecturer (335)	42.39%	57.61%
Curriculum Enhancement Lecturer (40)	37.30%	62.50%
Curriculum and Quality Leader (47)	59.57%	40.43%
Quality Enhancement Lecturer (13)	61.54%	38.46%

■ Male ■ Female

This data shows that there is a higher rate of gender proportionality with Teaching staff compared to Support Staff. It can also be seen that the overall pay gap may have been affected by a higher proportion of female Support staff in lower grades.

72% of all Support staff (male and female) are in Grades 1-4. 70% of all Female support staff are in these grades compared with 62% of all Male support staff. There is a higher proportion of male staff in higher paid grades which has affected the average pay.

Our Progress on Equal Pay

We use an analytical, factor based job evaluation process for our support staff in ensure that we offer equal pay for work of equal value. Our Recruitment and Selection process has been designed to be as transparent and fair as possible. We are objective in the criteria which we use, and personal information is withheld during the recruitment process. We monitor recruitment equality data and assess the equality impact of the process to check for potential bias. We offer a wide range of flexible working policies which should assist our staff in maintaining a good work-life balance.

Equal Pay Statement

We support the principle of equal opportunities in employment and believe that staff should receive equal pay for work of equal value regardless of their sex, race or disability.

We understand that equal pay is a legal right under both domestic and European Law.

We recognise that in order to achieve equal pay we must have a pay, grading and benefits structure that is transparent, flexible, based on objective criteria and free from bias.

We understand that to deliver equal pay for our employees it is also necessary to consider all of the causes of the pay gap and that these go beyond discrimination within pay systems.

We recognise that our training and employment practices can impact on people as a result of their sex, race or disability in different ways. In particular we are committed to tackling gender-segregation both horizontally and vertically in occupations across West College Scotland, by removing incidents of stereotyping about skill and capabilities, by changing the culture associated with different jobs, removing barriers to accessing training courses and apprenticeships and promoting a healthy work-life balance.

Our overall aim is to achieve equal pay in employment for men and women, people who are disabled and people who are not, and people who fall into a minority racial group and people who do not. In support of this aim and our commitment to equality, we will:

➔ Work in partnership with trade union representatives;

➔ Monitor the pay system to ensure it is open, transparent, fair and equitable;

➔ Communicate our policy on equal pay effectively to managers and all members of staff;

➔ Respond promptly to any complaints in relation to equal pay; and

➔ Regularly assess and monitor the impact of our pay practices, taking remedial action as appropriate.

We will continue to actively consult with Trade Unions on all employment matters including equalities, will report annually on our progress and review our Equal Pay Statement every four years.

Our Senior Management Team is responsible for implementing, monitoring and reviewing the operation of this Equal Pay Statement and ensuring that due consideration is given to the resources required to achieve equal pay.

DEVELOPING OUR EQUALITY OUTCOMES

Our Equality Outcomes for 2017-2021 have been informed by three processes: consultation with staff and students; staff and student equality data; and guidance from the EHRC.

Consultation with Staff

All staff were asked to complete a survey which looked at barriers for each of the protected groups and asked staff to rate progress on our Equality Outcomes. Over 200 members of staff responded, and a summary of evidence is reproduced below.

Do you think that men and women have equal opportunities at WCS?
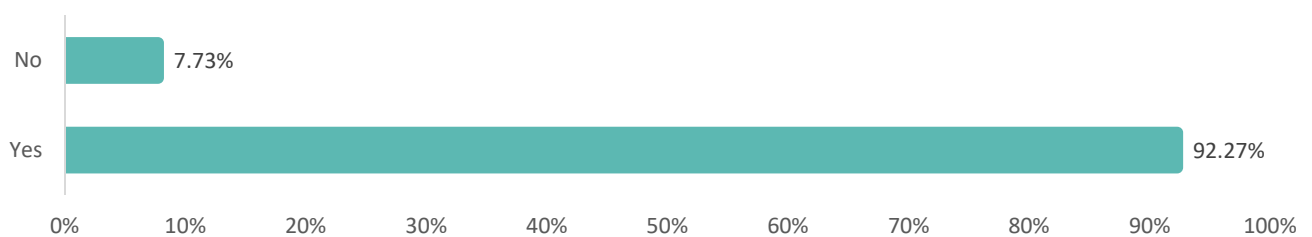
92.27% of respondents said that they felt that men and women had equal opportunities at WCS. A number of staff noted strong female leadership, a flexible working environment which catered for female staff who had caring responsibilities and very strong support for women.

In terms of potential barriers, comments were received that older men may be at a compound disadvantage to younger women, and several respondents noted areas of occupational segregation, whereby certain Teaching departments have more male than female staff.

➔ Investigate compound disadvantages for protected groups with reference to career progression
➔ Develop initiatives to address occupational segregation

Do you think that LGBT staff at WCS feel comfortable being open about their sexuality?

Yes	82.76%
No	17.24%

0.00% 10.00% 20.00% 30.00% 40.00% 50.00% 60.00% 70.00% 80.00% 90.00%
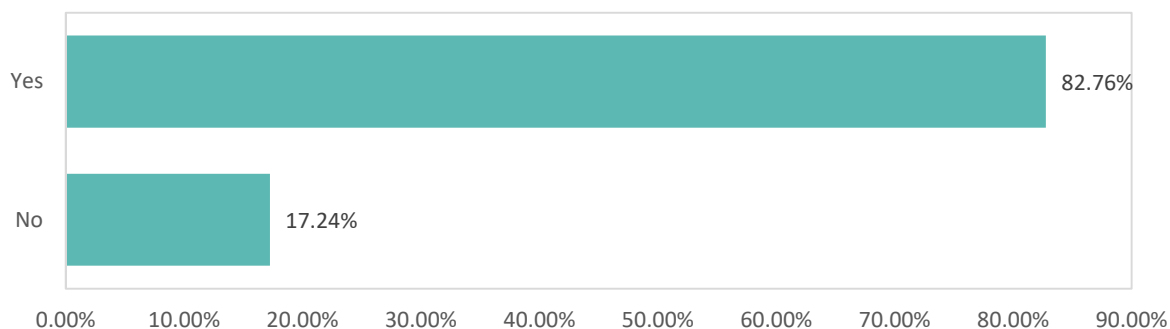
The majority of staff who provided additional comments to this question said that usually, sexual orientation is a matter which isn't often discussed. Some staff said that their gay colleagues were absolutely happy to be open about their sexuality, and were confident that there are no barriers to being open about one's sexual orientation.

A number of comments provide us with information about the experience of LGBT staff at WCS. Some said that they had always felt comfortable being open and that it absolutely wasn't an issue. However, the comments also indicate a perception that heterosexuality is seen as being the "norm", and outdated attitudes and comments were reported.

➔ Engage further with our LGBT staff to learn more about their experience and develop initiatives to address any bias.

Do you think that staff in this organisation are disadvantaged because of their age?

Yes	86.67%
No	13.33%

0.00% 10.00% 20.00% 30.00% 40.00% 50.00% 60.00% 70.00% 80.00% 90.00% 100.00%
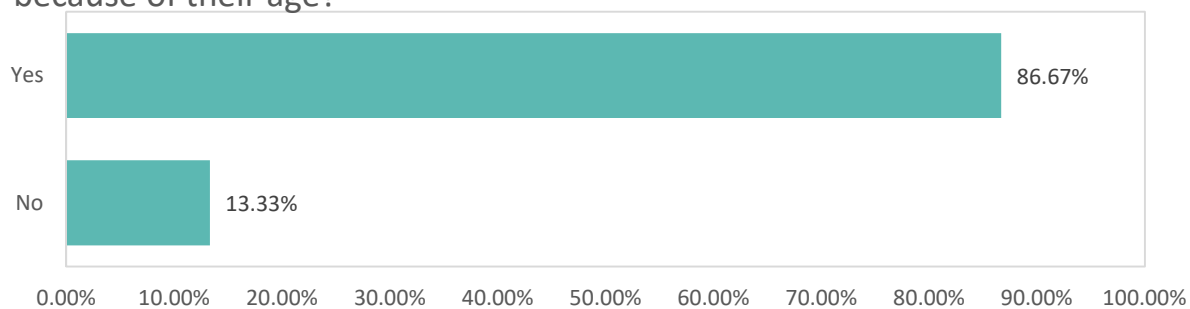
A wide range of views was provided. Some younger staff who had progressed stated that they felt supported and as fairly treated as other members of staff; some commented on how a good balance of ages could be found within many departments, and that this benefited the working environment

Others commented that there was potentially an element of unconscious bias which impacts on how people are treated as a result of the age.

➔ Roll out Unconscious Bias training to all managers in Support and Teaching.

Have you ever been treated less favourably because of your race or your religion or beliefs?

Yes - Both	0.50%
Yes - Religion	1.00%
Yes - Race	0.00%
No	98.50%
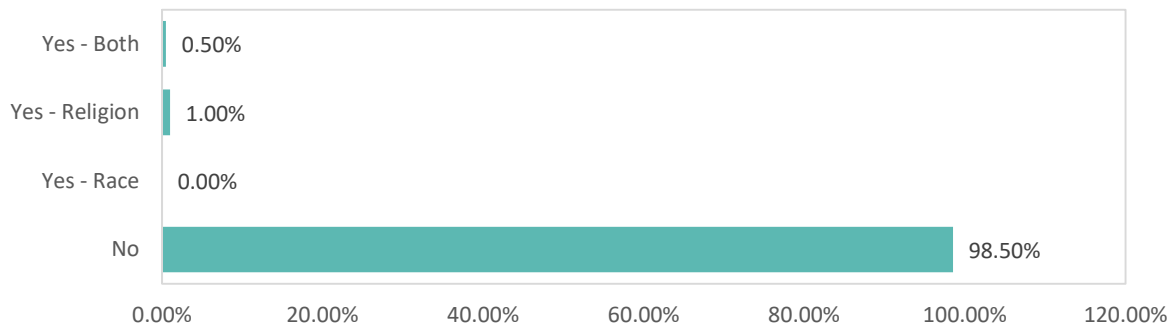
Very few respondents added further information in connection with these protected characteristics. Those who did perceived a culture of tolerance where staff can talk about their beliefs and cultural background openly. One member of staff suggested that the College needs to highlight religious festivals in order to raise awareness. This could assist students, for example, as it would increase awareness about the impact of Ramadan fasting.

➔ Develop a religious festival calendar and communicate festivals in advance.

Overall, how would you rate WCS as an employer of people with a disability?

Very Poor	2.11%
Poor	5.79%
Average	25.26%
Good	37.37%
Very Good	29.47%
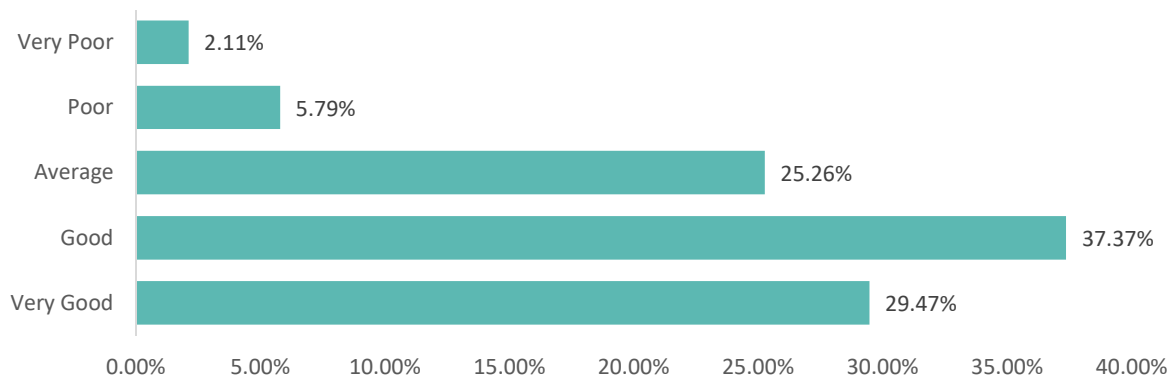
Again, we received a range of positive comments, such as confirmation that the College is very supportive and takes a personal approach, and that the College also supports staff that care for someone with a disability.

In terms of ways to improve our support, a number of staff felt that there is a perception that disability is almost always physical, whereas we really need to focus more on unseen disabilities, particularly mental health. The comments received also noted the limitations of some of our buildings in Paisley and Greenock, where there are issues with accessibility.

➔ Provide training from managers in supporting colleagues with mental health issues

➔ Ensure that good practice in equality and accessibility is embedded within future Estates development processes.

Have you ever experienced or witnessed discrimination with regards to:

Category	Yes	No
Religion or Belief	3.14%	96.86%
Gender Reassignment	2.63%	97.37%
Sexual Orientation	8.81%	91.19%
Race	2.58%	97.42%
Pregnancy or Maternity	6.32%	97.92%
Gender	8.67%	91.33%
Disability	8.72%	91.28%
Age	9.09%	90.91%

■ Yes ■ No
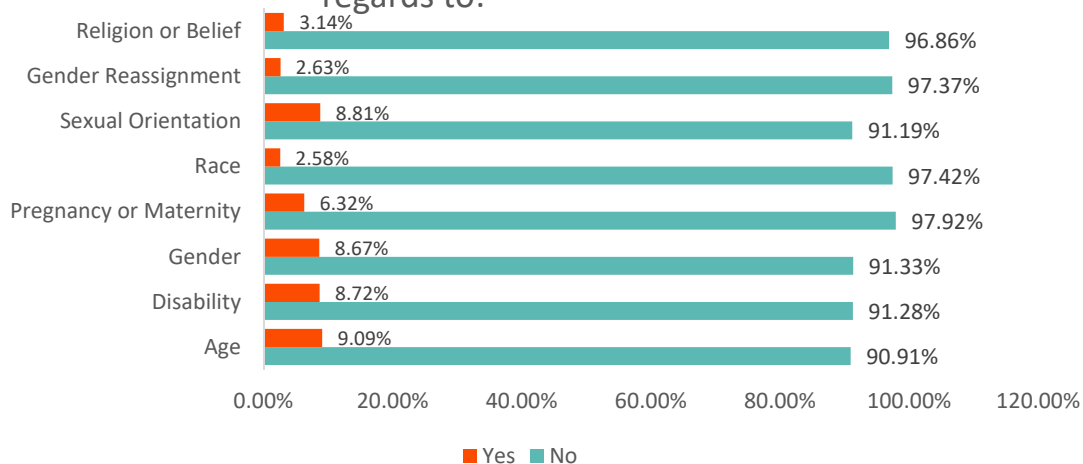
A number of staff had witnessed students unfairly treating other students, perhaps by teasing or using inappropriate language. Some staff noted that there had been a change for the better since times past, whereby staff and students feel much more confident about tackling and identifying discrimination. Again, accessibility issues were raised, and in particular staff noted that there was misuse of disabled parking spaces. While there was a wide range of comments, it is notable that a number of respondents commented on barriers for transgender students in terms of facilities and information systems.

➔ Review facilities for transgender students and consider how to address barriers
➔ Ensure that good practice in equality and accessibility is embedded within future Estates development processes.

Staff were also asked to consider additional ways to embed equality and tackle discrimination and unfairness.

The majority of suggestions involved further raising of awareness, particularly in connection with disability and mental health issues. Staff felt that regular training should be organised to better understand the needs of the colleagues and students, and that students do not know very much about equality unless it is part of their curriculum.

A number of staff commented on the need to change in grained habits, and felt that more could be done to enable staff to speak confidently about equality and diversity. Other suggestions for improvement included the provision of advanced ESOL courses and the importance of reflecting on all elements of diversity and not just the protected characteristics.

➔ develop an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion suite of training which is highlighted on the Intranet

➔ Focus on supporting staff and students with mental health issues

Consultation with Students

Three focus groups were facilitated with students to ensure that our Equality Outcomes reflect their priorities and experiences. The following themes emerged:

Tolerance: students were confident that there is a culture of tolerance at WCS. They gave examples of how they were comfortable talking about their preferences, values and beliefs, and felt that differences were respected.

Working together: students noted diversity as a whole in the classroom, and provided evidence that people of different ages, gender and beliefs worked well together. A number of students said that when they first met people from different backgrounds at the College, they felt slightly separate to them, but as they got to know them better, they realised how much they had in common. Many of them noted that students gravitate to similar students once they arrive at the college but soon after, they engage with more diverse groups. Students were able to articulate the benefits that this can bring.

Respect: the students in the focus groups said that while teasing and "banter" occurs relatively often, it is rarely serious and that staff immediately take action if they think that there is a risk of discrimination, unfairness or harassment.

Acceptance: the students suggested that Scotland as a whole (as opposed to just WCS) accepts and values differences in relation to issues such as sexual orientation, ethnicity and religion or beliefs. Many of the older students who attended the focus groups observed how there has been a change in societal attitudes, and welcomed this.

Improving the way we do things: limitations of some of the WCS Estates were highlighted by number of students. They said that it was particularly challenging in the Paisley campus to move from one core service to another if you had a physical mobility. They also mentioned misuse of disabled car parking spaces.

Some students said that there needed to be more information available about equality and diversity. For example, students in Social Sciences have a strong understanding of this area as they often refer to it as part of the curriculum, but students in other areas may not have the same amount of knowledge. The focus group participants agreed that an understanding of equality and diversity was important in all careers, and that more should be done to increase students understanding.

➔ Ensure that good practice in equality and accessibility is embedded within future Estates development processes.

➔ Increase student awareness through training, engagement with the Students Association and class reps.

Consultation with the Students Association

We have developed our Equality Outcomes in consultation with our Students Association. They were asked to provide us with their views on potential barriers for each of the protected characteristics.

Age – the Student Association stated that students from different age groups worked well together. In particular, they spoke about instances where older students had assisted younger students in the classroom. They noted that people tend to socialise within their age groups, but this may be due to personal preferences as generally, social invites are open to all.

Disability – the Student Association felt that there was a wide range of resources available to assist and support students with a disability. In particular, the USB wristbands are an effective way of providing assistive technology support, and there is no stigma because the wristbands are useful as a storage device for all students. Accessibility and misuse of disabled car parking was identified as a pressing issue.

Gender – the Student Association shares the national focus on addressing the gender imbalance for students, and wishes to work alongside staff at WCS in doing so. They pointed out that an increase in the minority gender students may have an impact on the need for dedicated facilities, such as changing rooms for females in Painting.

Race – a discussion took place about the overall student demographics, and how they broadly reflect the regional area. The Student Association were interested in how students choose which college to apply to, and proposed finding out more about student choices to inform action to increase diversity.

Religion and Belief – the Student Association indicated that more could be done to raise awareness of a diverse range of religions and beliefs, and religious festivals.
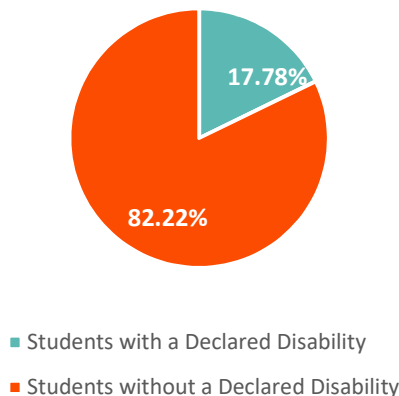
Pregnancy and Maternity – the Student Association welcomed recently published Student Journey guidelines which answer frequently asked questions for students who are pregnant or who are due to take maternity leave.

LGBT – the Student Association described how the previously "fixed" categories of sexual orientation are changing, with more students identifying as gender neutral, gender non-binary or asexual. A number of transgender students have approached the SA and have requested toilets for transgender use. While they are aware that the College's policy is that transgender students should use the toilets of their choice, on occasions they feel uncomfortable doing so, and wish to have a dedicated facility available.
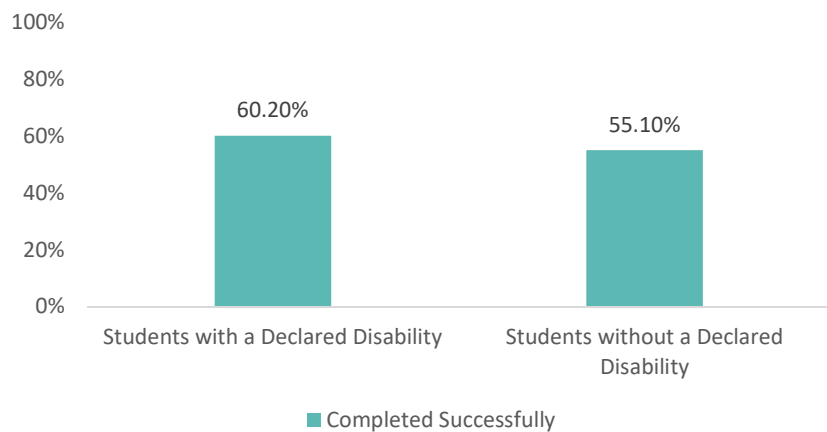
➔ ensure estate development includes consultation with the Student Association
➔ Provide dedicated toilet facilities for transgender students at each campus.
➔ Review facilities in areas of gender imbalance.
➔ Raise awareness of a diverse range of religious festivals.

Student Data

Disability- Enrolment

- Students with a Declared Disability
- Students without a Declared Disability

17.78%
82.22%

Disability - Success Rates

60.20% Students with a Declared Disability
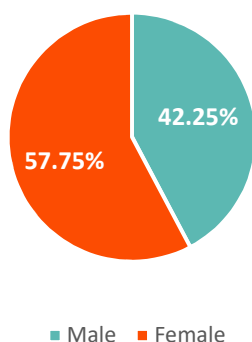55.10% Students without a Declared Disability

■ Completed Successfully

17.78% of students have declared a disability. This is higher than the current available sector PIs which show that 13.1% of all students in Scotland have declared a disability. This could indicate that we have created a climate whereby our students are comfortable disclosing their needs and asking for our support.

Our students with a disability have a success rate (60.20% compared to students without a disability whose success rates is 55.10%). This is a positive reflection of the support we provide for our students with a disability.

18.41% of students with a disability at WCS have mental health issues. This proportion is higher than the sector, where 14.2% of students with a disability have a mental health condition. Their success rate is 7% lower than students who have not declared a disability.

➔ Target support for students with mental health issues.

Gender - Enrolments

42.25%
57.75%

■ Male ■ Female

Gender - Success Rates

FE Males 60.80%
FE Females 51.20%
HE Males 63.70%
HE Females 68.20%

■ Completed Successfully
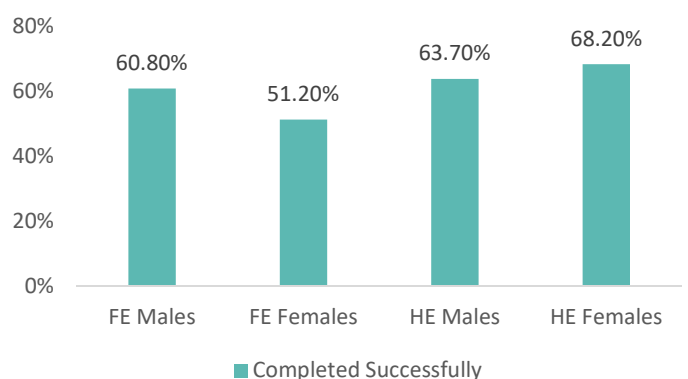
Female FE students have a lower success rate than male FE students, and female HE students have a higher success rate than male. Later, we look into our gender data in more detail as we wish to harmonise our Equality Outcomes with the Gender Action Plan which we are due to publish in June 2017.

Age - Enrolment

- Under 16: 10.15%
- 16-19: 22.36%
- 19-24: 16.89%
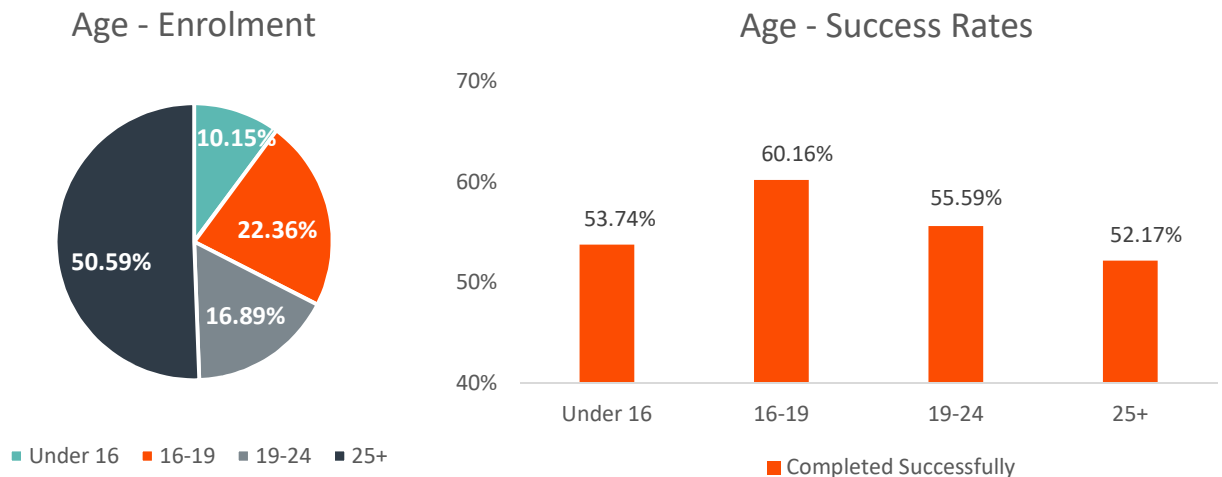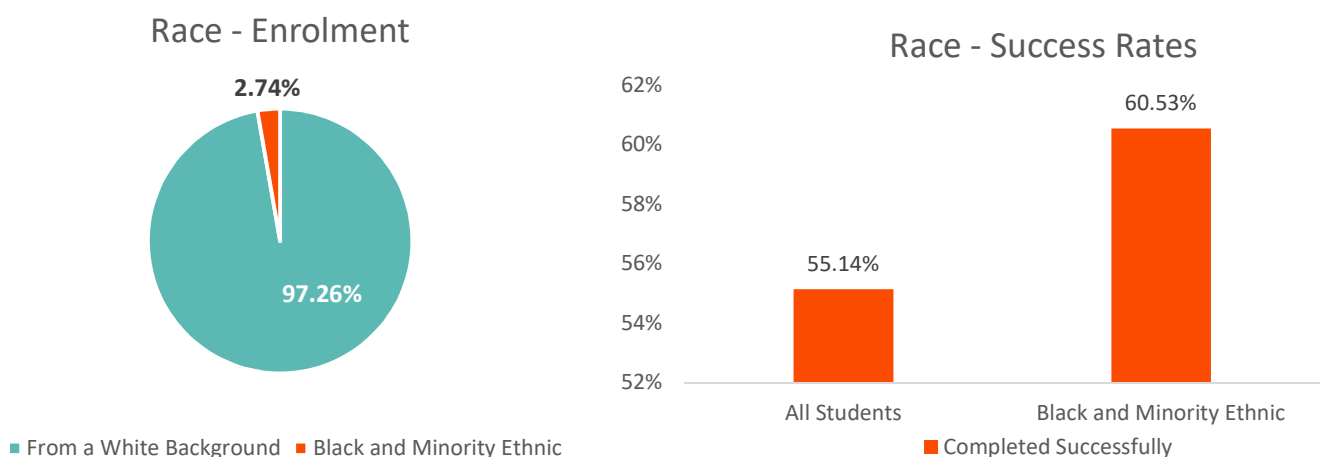- 25+: 50.59%

Age - Success Rates

- Under 16: 53.74%
- 16-19: 60.16%
- 19-24: 55.59%
- 25+: 52.17%

Completed Successfully

50.59% of our students are aged over 25. The second highest proportion in terms of age is those aged between 16-19 (22.36% of students).

Trends in overall College age group outcomes have not been consistent. There was a significant reduction in student success for students over 41 years of age in 2015-16, where previously these students had had good success outcomes. Qualitative evidence from the College's Portfolio Reviews indicates that students in this age group are more likely to withdraw having been offered, or wishing to pursue, employment.

➔ Investigate further the attainment gap for older students and take action to reduce this gap.

Race - Enrolment

- From a White Background: 97.26%
- Black and Minority Ethnic: 2.74%

Race - Success Rates

- All Students: 55.14%
- Black and Minority Ethnic: 60.53%

Completed Successfully

The proportion of Black or Ethnic Minority (BME) students at WCS broadly matches the local regional demographics, where approximately 3% of people living in the area are BME. Their attainment rate is almost 5% higher than the average attainment rate for all students, which is a positive indication of the learning environment.

It should be noted that we use the Scottish Funding Council's categories for aggregating BME data. This approach does not include Polish students, who are our largest non UK group. Their attainment rate is 12% higher than the average attainment rate at WCS.

LGBT- Enrolments

- Heterosexual - LGBT+ - Prefer Not to Say

16.46%
5.29%
78.25%

LGBT - Success Rates

57.00%
56.00%
55.00%
54.00%
53.00%
52.00%
51.00%
50.00%

56.06%
52.28%

- Completed Successfully
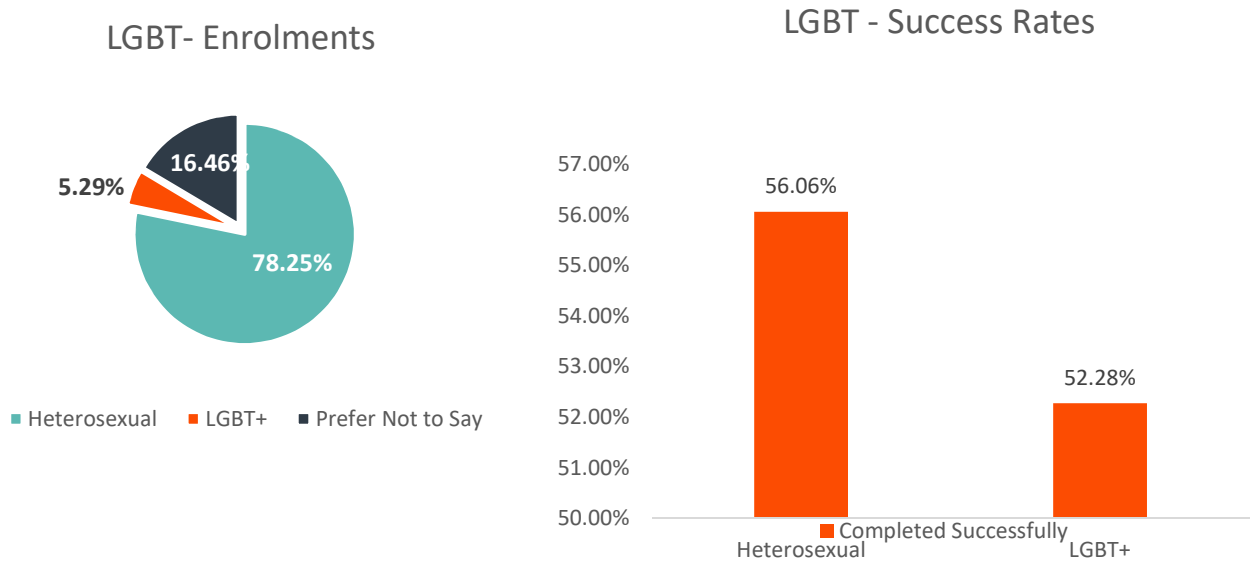
Heterosexual   LGBT+

We are pleased to provide our first analysis of our LGBT students. 83.54% of our students have provided us with information about their sexual orientation.

The attainment rate for LGBT students is 3.78% lower than heterosexual students. Looking at the data in more detail, we can see variations in the attainment of different groups of LGBT students. The largest cohort within these groups is students who have declared "Other" as a sexual orientation (i.e. not heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual). This cohort is not broken down further, but it is assumed it includes pangender, transgender and asexual. This group's attainment rate is 4.04% higher than heterosexual students. This can be compared with the attainment rates for gay and lesbian students, which is 7% lower than the attainment rate for heterosexual students.

→ Investigate further the attainment gap for gay and lesbian students, and take action to address this gap.
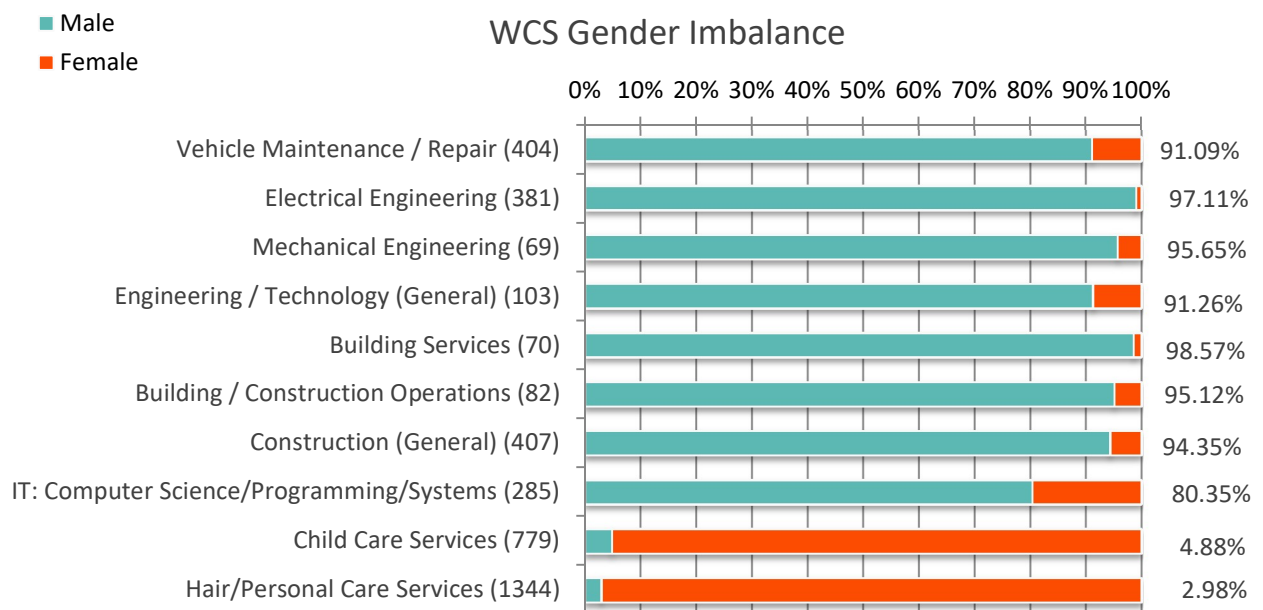
ADDRESSING GENDER IMBALANCES

Background

Scottish Government's Developing the Young Workforce – Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy programme aims to develop the talents of all young people. Within this Strategy is a commitment to address gender imbalances at a subject level in FE Colleges. In response to this program, the SFC's Gender Action Plan outlines actions which will be taken in collaboration with colleges, universities and other partners to address gender imbalances.

We will be publishing our Gender Action Plan in June 2017. This Plan will complement our Regional Outcome Agreement and our newly developed Equality Outcomes. We have developed a specific Equality Outcome to address gender imbalances based on analysis of equality data and our current "Attracting Diversity" project with the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) as detailed below.

Gender Data Analysis

Scottish Government has identified the Top Ten most gender imbalanced "Superclass" subjects of focus. The tables below show the WCS gender balance in these subjects.

WCS Gender Imbalance

Subject	Male %
Vehicle Maintenance / Repair (404)	91.09%
Electrical Engineering (381)	97.11%
Mechanical Engineering (69)	95.65%
Engineering / Technology (General) (103)	91.26%
Building Services (70)	98.57%
Building / Construction Operations (82)	95.12%
Construction (General) (407)	94.35%
IT: Computer Science/Programming/Systems (285)	80.35%
Child Care Services (779)	4.88%
Hair/Personal Care Services (1344)	2.98%

The WCS gender balance is *better* than the sector in:

- Vehicle Maintenance/Repair (WCS Male- 91.09%; FE Sector – 95%)
- Building/Construction Operations (WCS Male – 95.12%; FE Sector- 97%)
- Construction (General) (WCS Male - 94.35%; FE Sector – 95%)
- IT: Comp Science/Programming/Systems (WCS Male – 80.35%; FE Sector – 90%)

The WCS gender balance is approximately *the same* as the FE sector in Childcare Services.

The WCS gender balance is *more marked* than the FE sector in:

- Electrical Engineering (WCS Male – 97.11%; FE Sector 95%)
- Mechanical Engineering (WCS Male – 95.65%; FE Sector 93%)
- Engineering/Technology (General) (WCS Male – 91.26%; FE Sector – 89%)
- Building Services (WCS Male - 98.57%; FE Sector 96%)
- Hair/Personal Care Services (WCS Male- 2.98%; FE Sector 4%)

Attracting Diversity Project

In partnership with the ECU, we have been participating in the cross sector Attracting Diversity project. ECU has advised that WCS adopts a Theory of Change approach to addressing gender imbalance, and a project team was set up in January 2016.

The team identified Sport as an area in which a positive change in gender participation has occurred – not just with reference to WCS, but in terms of societal perceptions, cultural attitudes and where national policy has positively affected gender equality.

Research was conducted to analyse why change has happened, and how the College could adopt similar approaches with areas which have a more marked gender imbalance. The research considered 5 areas:

1. Internal data
2. Sector data
3. Employment statistics
4. Qualitative internal evidence about the experience of minority gender students
5. Qualitative external national evidence about the change in sports participation and employment patterns.

Quantitative Data

The quantitative data showed a steady, long term increase in the participation of females in studying and working in sport. It is noted that the most recent data shows a gender balance which is very similar to Scottish Government's long term aim of a 75:25 gender ratio.

The labour force data indicates a decrease in men working in sport and an increase in females. Occupational segregation is evident from the types of employment – there are very few professional female Sports Players, and approximately 30% more female fitness instructors than male. The most pronounced change is with Sports Coaches, Instructors and Officials, where male employment has decreased by 8.5% and female employment has increased by 44%.

Qualitative Data

We arranged focus groups to learn more about the experience of our minority gender students. Three sessions took place, and the following themes emerged:

Support from WCS Staff: Students noted that they felt that they were treated equally as females. They were asked if they thought staff took a different approach with them, or spoke to them differently, and they disagreed. They felt that a similar teaching and engagement approach was taken with both sexes. They also felt that they had similar choices in types of sport to specialise in, and did not feel that they were doing "female" type sports (e.g. Zumba) unless they wanted to.

Studying with male students: Many female students felt that initially, other male students held back slightly to begin with, and stayed in their "male group". One participant noted that in group work male students took a "gentle" approach which made her feel different/not an equal contributor. However all students felt that once they got to know the male students they got on very well and felt that they were treated equally regardless of sex. Participants were asked to comment on whether they had experienced any sexist behaviour or harassment. No instances were reported by any participants.

Societal Attitudes: The students were asked if their family and friends were supportive of their choice of course. Many of the students were in sports clubs from an early age and had excelled in their field and felt that studying sport was the next logical step. Their subject choice did not come as a surprise to their family and friends, and they felt that they were encouraged to pursue sport as a potential career. It is noted that this was not the case for all students – a small minority had been discouraged by older members of their family who felt that sport wasn't really a "job for girls". This was the case for two ethnic minority participants.

Inclusion at School: The majority of participants had enjoyed sport at primary school, where sport and games were played by both sexes together. (This was not the case at break/lunch time, where the girls didn't play football with the boys). Many noted that segregation happened at secondary level, where classes were split and the girls played hockey, for example. Secondary school clubs were dominated by one sex, e.g. netball for girls, football for boys. A number of participants noted that they had wanted to play football at secondary school but were not allowed to play in the boys groups in case it was too "rough".

Assertiveness: From a general point, the participants were assertive, confident and good at getting their point across. They gave examples of why they felt that occupational stereotypes should be challenged, and were aspirational about their future at WCS and in the sports industry.

Our Approach to Addressing Gender Imbalances

Our Gender Imbalance Equality Outcome details our ambition, which is to increase by five percentage points the minority gender share in each of the 10 largest and most imbalanced superclasses among the 16 to 24-year-olds by 2021.

Our forthcoming Gender Action Plan will refer to the following themes which are taken from the research of the Higher Education Academy 'Whose Job is it Anyway?' commissioned by SFC:

Infrastructure	Influencing the influencers	Raising awareness and aspirations	Encouraging applications	Supporting success
•**Systems:** incorporating into policies, processes, strategies, leadership and current reporting mechanisms •**Humans:** embedding in staff CPD, and reward and recognition processes •**Resources:** research and understanding, time, finance and physical support •**Relationships:** internal and external networks for collaboration	•**Educators and careers advisors:** training, CPD and resource creation •**Parents:** awareness raising and support •**Current students:** embedding in the curriculum and co-curricular activities; awareness raising and training	•**Outreach:** workshops, taster programmes, clubs, talks, bespoke programmes, competitions, school visits et al aiming to raise awareness and understanding of and interest in subjects and careers so as to influence the educational and career choice process. Use of role models, single-sex activities, thematic foci and media campaigns.	•**Recruitment:** ensuring equitable admissions, supporting the recruitment process and tackling attainment disparities •**Marketing:** embedding gender equality and counter-stereotyping within prospectuses, websites and open day activities •**Course packaging:** designing courses to attract non-traditional students and utilising access programmes	•**Creating gender inclusive environments:** auditing for and tackling environmental and structural barriers and developing gender inclusive environments •**Enhancing the student experience:** student mentoring, student networks, awareness raising and support for progression into counter-stereotypical careers

Our Gender Action plan will detail the specific actions which will contribute to tackling gender imbalances across all five themes (outlined above) and lead to improved outcomes in the subjects of focus. Where relevant these actions will be developed in collaboration with regional partners, in particular schools and Local Authorities, and will consider the needs of different groups of students by gender from recruitment and enrolment through to successful completion and employment.

EQUALITY OUTCOMES 2017 – 2021

The legislation obliges us to publish and deliver a set of Equality Outcomes that cover all protected characteristics, or explain why all protected characteristics are not covered. For clarity, we would note that Equality Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 cover all protected characteristics, and Equality Outcomes 4 and 5 are targeted at particular groups (disability and gender respectively)

1. Our services are effective, responsive and sensitive to the needs of all students and staff

Why this is important to us:

Evidence from our consultation showed how important it is for us to actively consider the needs of different groups, particularly with reference to LGBT issues.

What we will do:

- Ensure that good practice in accessibility is embedded within future Estates Development processes, including engagement with protected groups
- Provide dedicated toilet facilities on each campus for transgender students
- Review facilities in areas of gender imbalance
- Benchmark workplace practices against the [Stonewall Workplace Equality Index](#)
- Build processes to cross refer Student Surveys with equality data
- Systematically implement the Access and Inclusion policy
- Engage further with staff to understand their needs and how we can tailor our services for them
- Use the forthcoming results of the ECU Staff Survey to inform practice
- Promote and encourage more use of staff and student support services

Anticipated Impact:

Improved feedback from staff in EDI Survey

Facilities will better meet the needs of staff and students

Increased assessment of how we meet the needs of protected groups

2. Our staff and students are more confident in and better informed about Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Why this is important to us:

Our consultation with staff and students identified inconsistencies in awareness of EDI and a wish to upscale knowledge in order to provide targeted support.

What we will do:

- Ensure that all students have access to EDI training
- Provide regular briefing sessions and equality updates to the Students Association
- Widely disseminate good practice
- Promote religious festivals and celebrate diversity events, such as Black History week
- Conduct a training needs analysis to identify priorities
- Develop an EDI CPD area on the intranet providing information about the range of courses available
- Procure online training for staff that is tailored to WCS policies and approach
- EDI Manager to provide regular briefing sessions and updates to the Board of Management and other Committees
- Develop and publish case studies to engage staff and students in how to advance equality
- Make good use of our digital reach to raise awareness with stakeholders

Anticipated Impact:

Increase in number of students who have participated in EDI training.

Improved feedback from staff who have participated in online EDI training.

The provision of a wider range of CPD to increase staff awareness.

3. Staff and students achieve their potential regardless of protected characteristics

Why this is important to us:

Our student and staff data indicates differentials which may be related to protected characteristics.

What we will do:

- Conduct further investigation into the comparatively lower attainment rate for gay and lesbian students, older students and female students.
- Conduct further investigation into the lower appointment rate for male applicants
- Carry out further analysis to identify compound disadvantage
- Use results of investigation and analysis to inform actions to tackle barriers
- Roll out Unconscious Bias training to all managers and those involved in Applications and Admissions
- Engage with the Student Association to co create initiatives to ensure that students who share protected characteristics are effectively supported
- Ensure implementation of good practice in embedding equality in the curriculum
- Map career progression with equality data and engage with staff to learn more about barriers to progression
- Use marketing and promotion material to promote equality and improve understanding of careers and pathways for all protected groups

Anticipated Impact:

A decrease in attainment gaps

An increase in the diversity of staff

A reduction of the pay gap

4. We are confident that staff and students with mental health conditions are supported.

Why this is important to us:

Students with mental health conditions have a lower retention and attainment rate.

Our Staff Survey shows that our staff want to know more about supporting colleagues and students with mental health conditions.

[One in three people are estimated to be affected by mental illness in any one year](#).

What we will do:

- Effectively implement Access and Inclusion Policy
- Promote healthy lifestyle choices
- Provide a range of services which improve the physical and emotional health and wellbeing of our students and staff
- Empower individuals to develop the knowledge and understanding to make informed choices about their health, well-being and safety, and reducing risk-taking behaviour
- Engage the whole college community in developing and implementing a health and wellbeing strategy
- Developing effective partnerships with specialist local, regional and national organisations
- Encourage staff and students to provide us with information about their mental health conditions
- Raise awareness of the Disability Support for Staff Policy
- Establish a team of Mental Health First Aiders

Anticipated Impact:

An increase in retention and attainment of students with mental health conditions

A decrease in absence related to mental health conditions

An increase in disclosure of mental health conditions

5.   We address student gender imbalances at subject level

Why this is important to us:

Scottish Government's [Developing the Young Workforce Programme](#)

Scottish Funding Council's [Gender Action Plan](#)

WCS Student data shows gender imbalances in certain subjects

What we will do:

- Develop institutional commitment to the tackling of student gender participation imbalances.
- Develop the capacity and motivation of all staff to tackle student gender participation imbalances.
- Adopt a theory of change methodology for the development of approaches.
- Develop holistic and longitudinal approaches that support young people throughout their educational choice process.
- Adopt an approach that combines the Themes of: Influencing the Influencers, Raising Awareness and Impacting on Aspirations, Encouraging Applications and Supporting Success.
- Support student involvement in approaches through the development of student and staff co-created initiatives.
- Work institutionally, in collaboration with other institutions and in partnership with other sectors.
- In consultation with staff and students, develop a Gender Action Plan

Anticipated Impact

A five percentage point increase in the minority gender share in each of the 10 largest and most imbalanced superclasses among the 16 to 24-year-olds by 2021.

PROGESS IN ACHIEVING OUR EQUALITY OUTCOMES

We are an inclusive organisation which respects and encourages diversity in all of our activities

Evidence of Progress

Implementation of wide range of policies to ensure respect in the work place and learning environment

Mandatory training for all staff in EDI

Specialist and advanced training on Mental Health Training, Making Adjustments, Recruitment and Selection

Key processes and policies highlight WCS commitment to EDI, including Student and Staff Induction, Admissions and Recruitment and Selection

Events arranged to promote and celebrate equality, including Black History Day and International Women's Day

Use of marketing and promotion materials to promote EDI and tackle stereotypes

Internal communications are used effectively to promote good practice in EDI.

Development of in-house Guidelines to mainstream equality in the curriculum accompanied by tailored training sharing good practice

Student Induction includes a session on equality and the importance of respecting others

Tailored approach to students' needs in assessment arrangements

Dedicated induction and orientation programme for International Students

All students have access to Student Service resources and materials that are available in accessible formats

ESOL and International Students are encouraged and supported to participate in student engagements activities.

Religious dietary requirements are considered across catering facilities

Effective integration of EDI in the curriculum through audit tool, training and sharing good practice

Engagement with community partners to work together to advance equality

Highlights

Specific Strategic Priority

Evidence of systematic mainstreaming of equality

Outputs from Student Focus Groups

Portfolio Review Evidence

Dedicated equality priorities in Regional Outcome Agreement

Disability Confident Level 2 Award

Our staff and students participate in and actively contribute to the advancement of equality

Evidence of Progress

Cross College representation on EDI Committee

SA has dedicated roles to advance equality including LGBT and Mature Student Officers

Staff Survey conducted to identify their priorities and plan action thereafter

Student Focus Groups consider barriers for protected groups and how best to address these

Staff effectively integrates EDI topics in the curriculum, creating opportunities to discuss contemporary issues in a vocationally relevant way

Good practice in advancing equality in the curriculum is developed and shared through the College

On-going dialogue between Student Association and EDI Manager to consider initiatives to increase awareness and tackle barriers

Consultation with staff and students in policy development

Operational action planning following evaluation of staff and student data

Support is provided to staff to assist them in evaluating student equality data, and subsequent action planning

Student centred approach to meeting their needs with regards to making adjustments

Consultation with Student Association to inform Equality Outcomes and to evaluate equality participation and attainment data.

Events promoting diversity co ordinated by Students Association

Student Experience Stakeholders engagement with class representatives to increase awareness and seek feedback

Student involvement in testing and development of Smart Phone training

Highlights

Contributing to, and learning from, ECU Admissions and Attracting Diversity Projects

Student Association contribution to address gender imbalance through consultation and evaluation of data

We are proactive in removing barriers for our students and staff to enable them to achieve their potential

Evidence of Progress

Progress regularly reported to EDI Committee, OD and HR Committee and Board

Regular meetings with Student Association to plan action to address issues

Student Surveys regularly conducted, findings analysed and action planned

Timely, comprehensive support available for students with a disability

Collaborative action plan with Skills Development Scotland to provide additional specialist support for all students

Work carried out with employers to promote gender equality including HubWest, Clark Contracts and CITB

Engagement with local councils on initiatives such as the Renfrewshire Council Women into Construction Event.

Assistive technology is available for use on own devices and IT equipment is available for loan to support those who do not have access to devices.

Engagement in the development of qualifications with awarding bodies to effect change to encourage gender equality.

Close and effective working relationships between curriculum and Learner Development Sector at strategic and operational levels in order to reduce barriers to learning.

Review of application data categories to encompass all protected characteristics

Development of internal system and processes to systematically evaluate equality data

Online HR system allows staff to update own equality information

Highlights

STEM Assured Centre

Directly influenced the introduction of Barbering into Hairdressing qualifications to encourage more males into courses

5% higher attainment rate for students with a disability and BME students

Apprentice of the Year Award for minority gender student

Investment in Unconscious Bias training

We systematically review and monitor the mainstreaming of equality, diversity and inclusion in our processes.

Evidence of Progress

Effective analysis of EDI data at course level

Targets to increase diversity and address attainment gaps in Regional Outcome Agreement

All policies impact assessed before being agreed at Board

Monitoring of Student and Staff data including complaints, conduct, grievance and disciplinary, and recruitment.

Analysis of student and staff data by EDI Committee

Staff and Student equality data analysed with reference to population data, sector PIs and labour force data.

Self Service HR platform to allow staff to update equality information

CQL workshops designed and delivered to share good practice in action planning

Comparison with external indicators inform operational planning

Increase in staff self-disclosure

Comprehensive analysis of Top Ten gender imbalanced subjects used to inform pilot project in Computing and Construction

All policies have preliminary equality statement to ensure advancement of equality and paying due regard to the General Equality Duty

Mainstreaming of equality articulated in relevant College processes and practices

Student Association involved in analysis of data and subsequent action planning

Student Surveys regularly conducted, findings analysed and action planned

Effective system to ensure Board scrutiny of EDI analysis and progress in achieving Equality Outcomes

Provision of support for staff in contextual analysis of equality data and setting objectives

Highlights

Increase in staff disclosure of equality data with reference to sexual orientation and religion or belief

Analysis of student participation and attainment by sexual orientation

Comprehensive and accessible information system to allow cross analysis

Effective governance structure enables regular scrutiny

We effectively respond to the diverse needs of our students and staff

Evidence of Progress

Range of assistive technology available through Learner Development Sector

Staff training in administering first aid and treatment of student conditions

Adjustments made to the curriculum to tailor for individual needs

Admissions process reviewed to address barriers

Assistance available for applicants in using online applications system or for those who prefer to use a paper based method

Promotion and provision of counselling services for student and staff

Awareness raised of College policies and practices with work placement employers and employers with whom College works

Range of flexible and family friendly policies

Self-service staff disclosure enables a better understanding of the needs of staff

Outputs from Student Focus groups assist us in developing action to address diverse needs

EDI Staff Survey highlights areas where we can improve how we meet the needs of our staff

Responsive and accountable EDI Committee

Student Journey publications developed to assist and support students from equality groups

Specialist training for staff in meeting the diverse needs of students including Mental Health First Aid, Epilepsy, and Using Assistive Technology

Student Surveys regularly conducted, findings analysed and action planned

Close and effective working relationship between Teaching and Support staff at operational and strategic level to ensure tailored support

Highlights

Provision of USB wristbands pre-loaded with accessibility software

Range of flexible working policies and practices

Positive response from EDI Staff Survey

Development of guidance to support pregnant students