



## **GENDER ACTION PLAN**

**Academic Year 2019-20**

## Introduction

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

## Review of Gender Targets

We aim to increase by 5% the minority gender share in each of the following superclasses during the period by AY 2019-20. The table below shows that progress has not been uniform. In AY18/19 the data shows that the College has met the AY 19/20 target in two superclasses, namely Mechanical Engineering and IT. The gender imbalance has become more marked in Building/Construction Operations and Construction (General). Incremental progress is shown in female majority Superclasses. We hope to see more progress in AY 19-20. The College will work to do this through the objectives and actions in our Gender Action Plan.

### Enrolment in Superclasses

| West College Scotland<br>Superclass         | 2015-16 |     | 2016-17 |     | 2017-18 |     | 2018-19 |     | TARGET 19/20 |     |
|---|---------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|--------------|-----|
|   | M       | F   | M       | F   | M       | F   | M       | F   | M            | F   |
| Vehicle Maintenance/Repair                  | 91%     | 9%  | 94%     | 6%  | 93%     | 7%  | 93%     | 7%  | 86%          | 14% |
| Electrical Engineering                      | 97%     | 3%  | 98%     | 2%  | 98%     | 2%  | 98%     | 2%  | 92%          | 8%  |
| Mechanical Engineering                      | 96%     | 4%  | 93%     | 7%  | 91%     | 9%  | 87%     | 13% | 91%          | 9%  |
| Engineering/Technology<br>(General)         | 91%     | 9%  | 92%     | 8%  | 93%     | 7%  | 90%     | 10% | 86%          | 14% |
| Building Services                           | 99%     | 1%  | 99%     | 1%  | 99%     | 1%  | 88%     | 12% | 94%          | 6%  |
| Building/Construction<br>Operations         | 95%     | 5%  | 99%     | 1%  | 97%     | 3%  | 98%     | 2%  | 90%          | 10% |
| Construction (General)                      | 94%     | 6%  | 95%     | 5%  | 91%     | 9%  | 95%     | 5%  | 89%          | 11% |
| IT: Computer<br>Science/Programming/Systems | 80%     | 20% | 87%     | 13% | 75%     | 25% | 70%     | 30% | 75%          | 25% |
| Child Care Services                         | 5%      | 95% | 4%      | 96% | 3%      | 97% | 5%      | 95% | 10%          | 90% |
| Hair/Personal Care Services                 | 3%      | 97% | 4%      | 96% | 4%      | 96% | 5%      | 95% | 8%           | 92% |

## Retention

No uniform pattern can be identified in reviewing retention of students in the most imbalanced subjects. With regards to early withdrawals, the superclasses with most parity in AY 18-19 are those traditionally dominated by female students. There is a significant imbalance in Building/Construction Operations which is due in part to the extremity of difference between the size of the male and female cohorts. In terms of further withdrawal, there has been a significant decrease in the retention of male students in Hair/Personal Care Services, and it will be necessary to carry out further investigation into this area.

## Early Withdrawal in Superclasses

| West College Scotland Superclass         | 2015-16 |     | 2016-17 |    | 2017-18 |    | 2018-19 |     |
|--|---------|-----|---------|----|---------|----|---------|-----|
|  | M       | F   | M       | F  | M       | F  | M       | F   |
| Vehicle Maintenance/Repair               | 16%     | 0%  | 7%      | 5% | 4%      | 7% | 6%      | 13% |
| Electrical Engineering                   | 4%      | 0%  | 1%      | 7% | 2%      | 9% | 2%      | 0%  |
| Mechanical Engineering                   | 2%      | 0%  | 6%      | 0% | 8%      | 0% | 6%      | 7%  |
| Engineering/Technology (General)         | 4%      | 0%  | 3%      | 7% | 0%      | 0% | 4%      | 0%  |
| Building Services                        | 5%      | 50% | 7%      | 0% | 13%     | 0% | 11%     | 0%  |
| Building/Construction Operations         | 3%      | 0%  | 1%      | 0% | 2%      | 0% | 1%      | 33% |
| Construction (General)                   | 0%      | 0%  | 4%      | 3% | 1%      | 0% | 0%      | 0%  |
| IT: Computer Science/Programming/Systems | 5%      | 0%  | 3%      | 3% | 9%      | 8% | 7%      | 13% |
| Child Care Services                      | 0%      | 2%  | 8%      | 4% | 0%      | 5% | 2%      | 3%  |
| Hair/Personal Care Services              | 8%      | 8%  | 4%      | 7% | 7%      | 6% | 7%      | 9%  |

## Further Withdrawal in Superclasses

| West College Scotland Superclass         | 2015-16 |     | 2016-17 |     | 2017-18 |     | 2018-19 |      |
|--|---------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|---------|------|
|  | M       | F   | M       | F   | M       | F   | M       | F    |
| Vehicle Maintenance/Repair               | 10%     | 0%  | 13%     | 8%  | 11%     | 14% | 8%      | 0%   |
| Electrical Engineering                   | 10%     | 0%  | 1%      | 0%  | 3%      | 0%  | 4%      | 0%   |
| Mechanical Engineering                   | 7%      | 0%  | 11%     | 0%  | 15%     | 0%  | 14%     | 0%   |
| Engineering/Technology (General)         | 5%      | 8%  | 6%      | 7%  | 5%      | 0%  | 5%      | 20%  |
| Building Services                        | 4%      | 25% | 0%      | 0%  | 11%     | 0%  | 7%      | 17%  |
| Building/Construction Operations         | 9%      | 25% | 7%      | 0%  | 7%      | 0%  | 4%      | 0%   |
| Construction (General)                   | 6%      | 0%  | 8%      | 13% | 5%      | 4%  | 4%      | 7.5% |
| IT: Computer Science/Programming/Systems | 9%      | 3%  | 11%     | 8%  | 13%     | 12% | 6%      | 5%   |
| Child Care Services                      | 0%      | 3%  | 4%      | 10% | 4%      | 11% | 18%     | 8%   |
| Hair/Personal Care Services              | 15%     | 14% | 11%     | 17% | 20%     | 17% | 7%      | 15%  |

## Working in Partnership to Address Gender Imbalance

We currently work with a wide range of partners to encourage applications and to raise awareness and aspiration.

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

We regularly work with schools to help change perceptions of particular industries and subject areas with high gender imbalances, for example by providing taster experiences for nursery and primary pupils, through to secondary. We engage in visits to local schools

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

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

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

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

**West College Scotland**  
**Gender Action Plan (GAP) 2019-2020**

| <b>1. Infrastructure</b>   |  |                             |                       |  |
|--|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Purpose: To ensure best use of systems, staff, resources and relationships to address gender imbalance |  |                             |                       |  |
| <b>Objectives</b>  | <b>Actions</b>   | <b>Actions by what date</b> | <b>Responsibility</b> | <b>Outcomes</b>  |
| Leadership commitment to gender equality and addressing the imbalance                                  | Executive Team and Board of Management to formally communicate and endorse WCS's commitment to gender equality to all staff, students and stakeholders | Dec 2019                    | Executive Team        | An increased awareness of top level commitment to address the imbalance<br><br>The realisation that this is everyone's responsibility is facilitated |
| Portfolio Review and Curriculum Portfolio process is aligned with GAP                                  | Review processes to include gender action planning   | Sep 2019                    | ELT CQLs              | Better alignment of Portfolio Review and Curriculum Portfolio Review with GAP  |
| Gender equality key performance indicators and targets are embedded in operational planning            | Operational Plans for Top Ten most imbalanced subjects to include steps toward addressing imbalance  | March 2020                  | Heads of Sector       | A more systematic approach to alignment of GAP with operational planning   |
| Increase gender intersectionality awareness  | Conduct data analysis of gender and other factors such as disability, age  | June 2020                   | EDI Manager           | A better understanding of minority gender students   |
| Enable students to have a wider role in working in partnership to address gender imbalance             | Gender Equality Workshops and action planning with Student Association   | March 2020                  | EDI Manager           | A more effective working partnership and increased gender competence   |
| Increase capacity of staff to address gender imbalance   | Unconscious Bias Training for Teaching Staff   | March 2020                  | EDI Manager           | Increased gender competence  |
| A systematic approach to monitoring GAP progress   | Annual Progress Report to be presented to ELT  | June 2020                   | EDI Manager           | Better awareness of impact of GAP  |

## 2. Influencing the Influencers

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

| Objectives   | Actions   | Actions by what date | Responsibility                   | Outcomes   |
|--|---|----------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Influence school pupils' perceptions of industries and subject areas with high gender imbalances | <p>Visits to local schools promoting subject areas to minority genders</p> <p>Provide taster experiences for nurseries and schools</p> <p>Use student testimonials and case studies to change perceptions</p> | June 2020            | Heads of Sector                  | <p>School pupils are less influenced by stereotypical perceptions.</p> <p>Career aspirations are widened and enhanced</p> <p>An increase in applications from minority gender students</p> |
| Extend the work of STEM ambassadors into primary schools   | Arrange STEM ambassador primary schools initiatives   | June 2020            | Heads of Sector                  | An increased STEM engagement for primary school pupils   |
| Engage parents in gender atypical career choices   | Arrange parents information evenings and school careers events  | June 2020            | Head of Learning and Communities | Parents encourage children to choose gender atypical careers   |
| Exploration of gender within the curriculum  | Teaching staff embed gender equality and the exploring of gender stereotyping within their curriculum content   | June 2020            | CQLs                             | Positive societal change is encouraged and the gender competence of students is increased  |
| The use of extra-curricular activities to address gender stereotypes                             | Develop initiatives to encourage students to question assumptions and popularly held stereotypes  | March 2020           | EDI Manager                      | The impact of gender stereotypes on career choice is reduced   |

### 3. Raising Awareness and Aspirations

Purpose: Outreach activities inspire gender nontraditional subject choices

| Objectives   | Actions  | Actions by what date | Responsibility  | Outcomes   |
|--|--|----------------------|-----------------|--|
| To address gender imbalance through single sex focus   | Engage with local councils on initiatives such as Women into Construction event and taster programmes.   | June 2020            | Heads of Sector | An increase in the balance of gender participation   |
| To influence the educational and career choice process   | Engage with national bodies including CITB and Energy Skills Partnership to participate in relevant promotional programmes such as 'Women into Construction', 'Go Construct' and 'Bloodhound Challenge'. | June 2020            | Heads of Sector | A wider awareness of career paths<br><br>An increase in aspiration<br><br>An increase in the balance of gender participation |
| To address the presence of counter stereotypical role models                                   | Work in partnership with FOCUS West and other colleges to look at further ways in which we might tackle the gender imbalance.  | June 2020            | Heads of Sector | An increase in aspirations towards certain careers and career opportunities  |
| To raise awareness of the whole range of subjects and career choices available to both genders | Develop bespoke outreach programmes specifically designed to improve the gender balance in the Top Ten most imbalanced subjects.   | June 2020            | Heads of Sector | An increase in the balance of gender participation   |

#### 4. Encouraging Applications

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

| Objectives   | Actions   | Actions by what date  | Responsibility                | Outcomes  |
|--|---|---|-------------------------------|---|
| Our Marketing processes address the gender imbalance   | <p>Ensure publications use counter stereotypical imagery</p> <p>Develop and promote minority gender case studies</p> <p>Use website to promote the success of minority gender students</p> <p>Develop a Gender Empowerment web page</p> | <p>Dec 2019</p> <p>Feb 2020</p> <p>Feb 2020</p> <p>Feb 2020</p> | EDI Manager                   | <p>We tackle gender stereotypes</p> <p>We increase stakeholders awareness of our commitment to gender equality</p> <p>We explicitly convey a culture of gender inclusion, which will hopefully attract further applications</p> |
| Our course packaging attracts underrepresented genders | <p>Review course packaging for most imbalanced subjects and consider if repackaging could better attract minority gender students</p> <p>Consult with minority gender students about course packaging</p>                               | <p>Dec 2019</p> <p>Dec 2019</p>                                 | <p>ELT</p> <p>EDI Manager</p> | <p>Better engagement with underrepresented genders</p> <p>An increase in the balance of gender participation</p> <p>A greater rate of attraction of underrepresented genders</p>  |
| Our Admissions process is non biased                   | Provide training and guidance for staff involved in the Admissions process  | March 2020  | EDI Manager                   | A fair and objective Admissions process   |



## 5. Supporting Success

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

| Objectives   | Actions   | Actions by what date                                | Responsibility  | Outcomes   |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| We are confident that our College meets the needs of minority gender, trans and gender diverse students              | Investigate the minority gender, trans and gender diverse student experience in consultation with the Student Association   | June 2020   | EDI Manager   | <p>A more gender inclusive environment</p> <p>A more effective working relationship with students</p>  |
| We take action to ensure that minority gender, trans and gender diverse students at WCS are supported and encouraged | <p>Consult with students about how best to meet their needs</p> <p>Cross analyse student satisfaction information with gender</p> <p>Work in partnership with employers to support and encourage transition of minority gender, trans and gender diverse students</p> | <p>June 2020</p> <p>March 2020</p> <p>June 2020</p> | <p>EDI Manager</p> <p>Director of Quality</p> <p>Director of Student Services and Communities</p> | <p>The minority, trans and gender diverse student experience is enhanced</p> <p>Attainment and retention of underrepresented, trans and gender diverse students is increased</p> <p>A reduction in barriers to gaining, and progression within, employment</p> |