



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Statutory Report April 2021

Contents

1. FOREWORD	3
2. ABOUT US.....	4
3. MAINSTREAMING EQUALITY	5
4. STAFF MONITORING	20
5. DIVERSITY AND OUR BOARD.....	32
6. EQUAL PAY	33
7. DEVELOPING NEW EQUALITY OUTCOMES	36
8. STUDENT DATA	45
9. PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING OUR EQUALITY OUTCOMES	47

1. FOREWORD

Note from Principal and Chief Executive

Welcome to West College Scotland's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Report which reports on the end of the life cycle of our Equality Outcomes 2017-2021.

We are encouraged by the progress we have made, particularly in connection with our work to increase the participation and attainment rate for minority groups, the decrease in the gender pay gap, and an increase in staff's rating on how effective we are in achieving our EDI commitments. EDI is central to our core purpose, integral to everything that we do, and relevant to all of our stakeholders.

We have also developed new Equality Outcomes which normally last for four years. However, these are not normal times and we want to make sure that we are doing everything we can to support our staff and students who are currently working and learning remotely. We have decided that our new Equality Outcomes will last for two years instead of four, which will help us target action which will have the most impact.

I have been so impressed with the College community in how we responded to the COVID-19 global crisis. We moved rapidly to protect the interests of staff and students, and we pivoted with ingenuity and innovation. In this fluid situation, we were able to maintain quality standards and engagement with our students. Staff and students deserve recognition for their hard work and dedication.

We have been making real progress in advancing equality; however the effects of the pandemic have not been equal. Nationwide, younger people are more likely to have lost their jobs; on average, women have spent more time than men caring and home schooling. We are also facing the "shadow" pandemics of mental health and gender based violence. And we know we have so much more to do to tackle racism.

However, the pandemic has also offered opportunities. We have been able to learn more about lived experience which has shaped our future EDI focus, and we will amplify the voices of protected groups in our transition.

Importantly, we have an opportunity to explore a future which addresses the deep seated challenges which are faced by protected groups, and we will aim to maximise this opportunity.

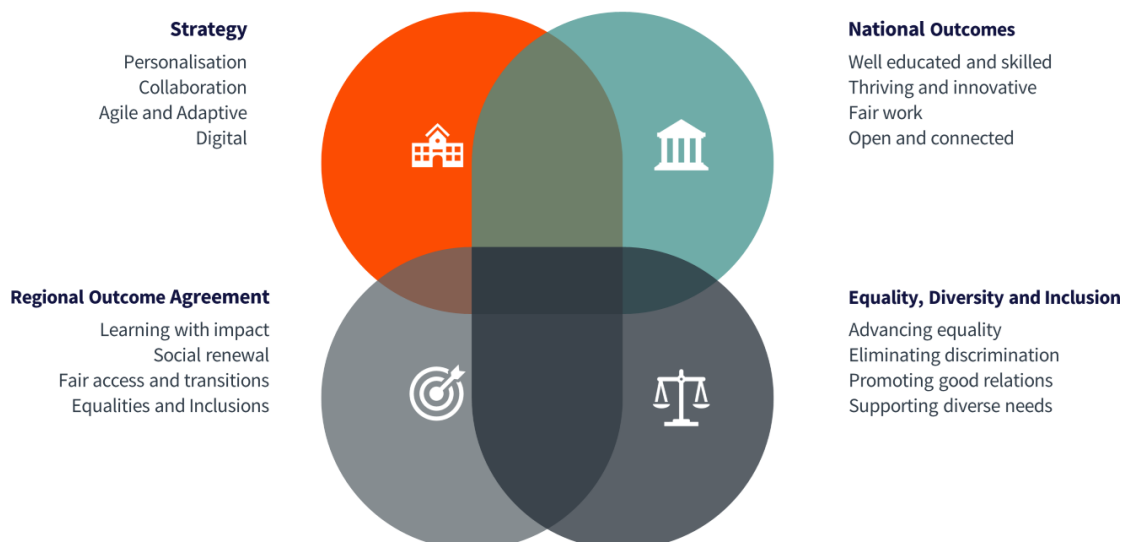
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Liz Connolly', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Liz Connolly, Principal and Chief Executive of West College Scotland.

2 ABOUT US

- 2.1 We are one of Scotland's largest regional colleges, with over 20,000 students, around 1,200 staff and a turnover of £71.9 million. As a large organisation and a major employer, we are uniquely placed to help shape the West Region's educational landscape and contribute to its social and economic development.
- 2.2 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



- 2.3 Our [Strategy](#) sets out our priorities, and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is interwoven throughout our ambitions, which include a personalised, adaptive and collaborative approach to meeting the needs of our stakeholders.
- 2.4 Our approach will assist our contribution in achieving Scottish Government's National Outcomes and sector priorities.
- 2.5 Our equality focus is also aligned with our Regional Outcome Agreement, which addresses particular issues for minority students, and set out our intentions to address gaps, advance equality and enhance fair access.

3. MAINSTREAMING EQUALITY

- 3.1 “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, promote the best possible outcomes and decrease unfairness in Scottish society. Below, we outline the progress which we have made to date.

RESPONDING TO COVID-19



- 3.2 The emergence of the catastrophic global pandemic in March 2020 changed the way we work, learn and teach. Our response to the pandemic was rapid and wide ranging, and despite the restrictions our progress and success shows our College’s capacity to adapt and respond.
- 3.3 We are conscious of the disadvantages protected groups have experienced in recent times, and throughout our response we considered the diverse needs of our staff and students, and how to mitigate disadvantage and advance equality. In particular:

Digital Access

- 3.4 Inequality in digital access is often more prevalent with particular groups. There is often a correlation with protected characteristics and socio-economic situation. In Scotland, someone from a Black, Asian or Minority ethnic (BAME) background is nearly twice as likely to experience poverty as someone from a white Scottish/British

background. Similarly, lone parents who are predominantly female, are more likely to be in poverty.

- 3.5 We distributed almost 3,000 digital devices to support students in need and address inequality of access during the pandemic. This enabled students to access and engage with new blended models of learning and assessment. We supported, and provided access and structure to students' off campus learning with online classes being part of the students' normal timetable, replicating standard classroom attendance. We also enabled student access to recorded class sessions for those who cannot attend or to replay later to reinforce learning. A Student IT Help Desk was available to support students with their digital needs, and/or to assist parents and carers in digital access.

Supporting the Wellbeing of Students

- 3.6 The National Union of Students Survey reported in November 2020 that over half of the UK's students say their mental health has deteriorated or been affected negatively by COVID-19. Mental health conditions are some of the most frequently reported conditions in our students, and we are acutely aware of the impact COVID has, and continues to have, on our student mental health this session.
- 3.7 We have a team of Counsellors working across the campuses and welcomed the additional funding of £122k to increase this team and better meet demand, with new members recruited post lockdown and immediately equipped to engage with students remotely. Further funding was announced in December 2020 and we will use this to provide additional support to students during this very difficult period.



- 3.8 The College invested in SilverCloud Online CBT Resource, an online mental health support platform covering support tools dealing with, COVID-19, anxiety, body image and resilience. We have continued to deliver more staff CPD to help with their own mental health and wellbeing and to better support our students.
- 3.9 We have invested in the training of Mental Health First Aiders across our teaching and support teams and this enables staff to better understand the mental health related issues faced by both students and staff and complements our Counsellor team.



- 3.10 We have also introduced the C.A.L.M Mindfulness tool, developed by one of our teaching team. This is a tool to help students and staff cope with the demands of online learning/teaching or any anxiety about being within the College environment. A “Mindfulness safety valve” to release pressure in a healthy, controlled manner is achievable using C.A.L.M. The technique can be used at the start, during or at the end of a lesson.

Gender Based Violence

- 3.11 The World Health Organisation has described emerging evidence of an increase of Gender Based Violence (GBV) as a “shadow pandemic”. Health service providers have been preoccupied with responding to COVID-19, which has compromised services to support providers. The requirement to socially distance has escalated isolation and reduced the opportunity for interventions.



- 3.12 We strengthened and promoted the support we offer to GBV survivors during this crisis. We signposted support, and used social media to remind survivors that the government message of “Stay at Home” doesn’t apply if you feel unsafe. We commissioned Rape Crisis to deliver specialist training for staff, and used the White Ribbon campaign to encourage men to stand up against gender-based violence. We have also allocated resources to increase wellbeing support.

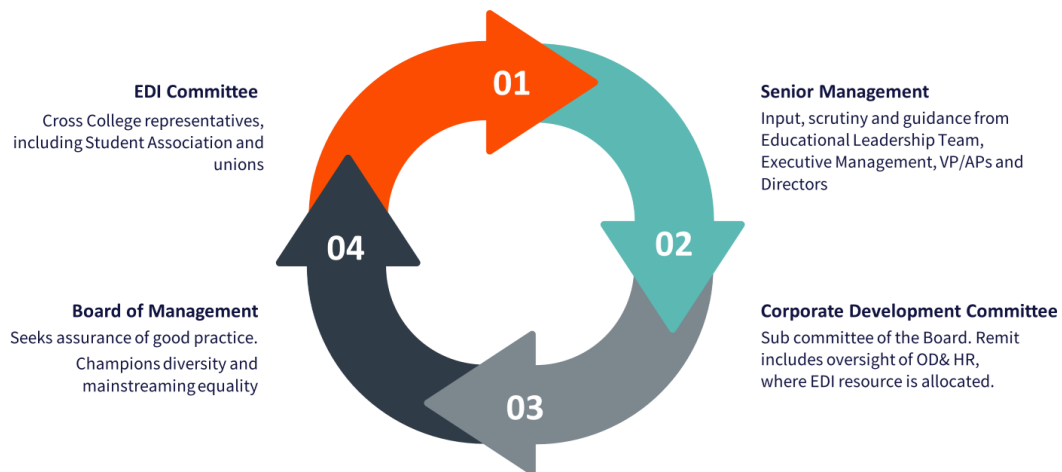
Supporting Staff during COVID-19

- 3.13 The pandemic radically transformed the way we work and we pivoted effectively to remote working. Our Organisational Development and HR focus was on health, wellbeing, safety, digital preparedness and active engagement. Compassionate leadership was demonstrated in messages from Executive Management, who acknowledged the challenges which all staff faced in balancing work with their personal lives.
- 3.14 Support for physical, mental and professional wellbeing was promoted, such as guidance on how to achieve a comfortable working environment and signposting employee counselling services. We made effective use of digital resources to enhance wellbeing, and developed an intranet hub to signpost staff to potential sources of support.
- 3.15 Our Healthy Working Lives group has been extremely active during this time, and has encouraged staff to attend informal chat groups, join Mindfulness sessions, take up a new hobby and has reminded staff of the importance of digital rest periods. Our regularly published digital newsletter “WestWorld@Home” keeps staff up to date with news and guidance has helped staff stay connected with their colleagues.



GENERAL MAINSTREAMING

Governance



- 3.15 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 body is 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.
- 3.16 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 of Management and Board committees focus on understanding 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.
- 3.17 There are effective links between the College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the Board and its committees, which allows for effective communication of issues arising. Minutes and matters arising from equality issues are discussed at Board meetings.
- 3.18 In addition, whenever a relevant 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.
- 3.19 Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager works with the Board on projects which are highly relevant to equality. The Ethical Standards Commissioner published

a [case study](#) on the Board's Short Life Working Group to encourage more diverse Board members and work with community partners to support progression onto our Board.

- 3.20 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.
- 3.21 The Student Association is actively involved in this group and its contribution has directly influenced College activities to embed equality in all of our processes and facilities. For example, our provision of gender neutral toilets at each campus was a direct result of the Student Association raising this request at the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

Equality in Learning and Teaching

- 3.22 Our view is that 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.
- 3.23 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.
- 3.24 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.
- 3.25 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. Good practice sharing and planning sessions take place regularly facilitated by the EDI Manager, and enable Curriculum and Quality Leaders to consider initiatives to increase student awareness of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Student Applications

- 3.26 Our application system is straightforward and the language used is clear and plain. 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.
- 3.27 We are happy to provide support to applicants and we make adjustments to the application process for students who have a disability. We also assist applicants who have additional requirements, such as those who do not speak English as a first language, or they are unused to online systems. We provide training for staff in Admissions 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.
- 3.28 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 Enabling Services and reasonable adjustments are made to enable them to reach their potential.

Student Admissions

- 3.29 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.
- 3.30 We also promote the support available from Enabling Services, 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

- 3.31 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

- 3.32 Through Continuous Professional Development and the use of College Guidelines, all staff are aware of good practice in accessibility. Sans serif fonts are used, and font sizes are at least Point 12 in Word documents, or Point 20 in PowerPoint.
- 3.33 We make good use of Moodle, 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

- 3.34 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.
- 3.35 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.
- 3.36 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

- 3.37 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.
- 3.38 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.
- 3.39 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.

- 3.40 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.
- 3.41 Our College complaints handling procedure actively monitors complaints raised by students with a disability and the outcome of their complaint. Trend information is contained in our [Complaints Annual Report 2019-20](#).

Supporting Students with Mental Health Issues

- 3.42 A free counselling service is available to all students at West College Scotland, and can help students who have mental health issues and feel anxious or depressed. This service, entitled “TIME 4 U” is promoted throughout the College and provides the space to talk on a one to one basis with a Student Counsellor. We also provide “Gie’s a Break” Wellbeing cafés at each campus, which provides a space for students to discuss any challenges with a Student Wellbeing Advisor. Staff are increasingly sharing their training in aspects such as mindfulness with students and focusing on good mental health within student learning. Additionally, the College’s team of Mental Health First Aiders complements our team of physical First Aiders, reflecting the increasing levels of mental health disclosures and incidents being reported.

Tackling Hate Crime

- 3.43 We are a third party reporting centre for Hate Crime which enables staff and students to report potential crimes directly to us, as we understand that not all victims are comfortable with reporting their experiences directly to the police. This provision is particularly relevant for protected groups, who may find visiting police stations intimidating or daunting, or may perceive a comparative lack of support.

Equally Safe - Preventing Gender Based Violence

- 3.44 We benchmark practice with the Equally Safe tool, and work with partners such as Fearless Glasgow and Rape Crisis to ensure we respond effectively. Training has been provided to staff in key services, and we have recently invested in training for First Responders.
- 3.45 We work closely with #Emily’s Test, and the founder delivered talks at each campus which enhanced our contextual understanding and energized our work in preventing GBV. We hope to work with #Emily’s Test in the launch of a pilot charter.
- 3.46 We are working collaboratively with public and third sector partners including Women’s Aid and Victims Support to maximise the safety and wellbeing of women

and girls in Scotland. Our aim is to promote positive gender roles, and assist our students in enjoying safe, healthy and positive relationships.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans

- 3.47 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.

British Sign Language Plan

- 3.48 Following extensive consultation with d/Deaf and d/Deafblind British Sign Language (BSL) users and those who work with them, we published our [BSL Plan](#). Our Plan details how we will improve our services for students and prospective students who use BSL, and how we will promote the use of the Scottish Government's nationally funded BSL online interpreting video relay services. We also plan to facilitate more d/Deaf Aware sessions given the positive impact previous training has had on our staff who work with and support BSL users. The consultation process for our BSL Plan highlighted the value of our ARC Centre at Greenock Campus which provides an integrated space for BSL students and staff to learn, be supported, socialise, interact and network with each other in a manner which they prefer. We are committed to supporting those whose first language or preferred language is BSL and are pleased to say that our decision making occurs in conjunction with them and is often driven by them.

International Students and Visitors

- 3.49 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.
- 3.50 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.
- 3.51 We also offer a range of English for Speakers of Other Languages programmes for international students. These courses are designed to prepare students for further study at College or prepare for entry into university.

Marketing and Communications

- 3.52 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 tackles stereotypes.

Student Engagement

- 3.53 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.
- 3.54 Our Student 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 students who share protected characteristics.

Care Leavers and Looked After Students

- 3.55 We have enhanced support arrangements in place for Care Experienced Young People. Our Care Experienced Student Support Team will offer help and advice about courses, funding and support services to make the transition to college as smooth as possible. This includes help with filling in forms, and showing prospective students around the campus. The team work in partnership with other staff (e.g. Guidance Tutors) and fellow Corporate Parents to help ensure that Care Leavers and Looked After Students are supported, included, respected, achieving, and able to access the fullest range of services and opportunities.

Mainstreaming Equality in Organisational Development and Human Resources

- 3.56 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.
- 3.57 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 all HR policies and procedures through workforce monitoring, and annually publish an analysis of staff equality data.

EDI Staff Training

- 3.58 All staff are required to undertake online equality and diversity training as part of the suite of mandatory learning. We have a range of online training courses available which provide an overview of the equality legislation and outline good practice.
- 3.59 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
- 3.60 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.

Attendance Management

- 3.61 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 service provides managers and HR with specialist advice on adjustments and rehabilitating employees back into the workplace.

Employee Counselling

- 3.62 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

- 3.63 We recognise that employees may benefit from a period of time away from work in order to care for children or other dependants or in order to facilitate greater work-life balance. Our Career Break Scheme 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 is available for all staff.

Recruitment and Selection

- 3.64 The promotion of equality is a core and visible aim of our Recruitment and Selection Policy and supporting procedures. We welcome applications from all suitably-qualified people and aim to employ a diverse workforce that reflects the people of Scotland.
- 3.65 We operate a fair and objective recruitment and selection system, which places emphasis on individual skills, abilities and experience. Selection criteria are reviewed regularly to ensure that it is justifiable and essential for effective performance of the role.
- 3.66 Staff involved in this process receive 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

- 3.67 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.
- 3.68 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 Policy, 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

- 3.69 We have a policy dedicated to ensuring that we support staff with a disability. This Policy 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.

Supporting Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing

- 3.70 Our Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy sets out the provision of assistance and support to any member of staff with mental health issues. We promote mental health and wellbeing by providing information to employees in various forms, such as awareness-raising events, and we take active steps to identify and address any workplace issues thought to have a negative effect on mental health. We also encourage staff to make use of the free counselling service which we offer, and promote the use of this service on the Intranet, lanyards and email auto-signatures.
- 3.71 Our Healthy Working Lives Group meets regularly to develop actions to improve the wellbeing of our staff. The Group has been particularly active during the pandemic, and developed innovative initiatives to reach out to staff and engage them in understanding more about health and wellbeing. We were delighted when our Healthy Working Lives Group was identified as sector leading when it won the College Development Network Award in 2020.

Carer Positive Employer

- 3.72 We have been awarded Level 1 “Engaged” Carer Positive status, where we have made a commitment to support carers through workplace policies and working practices. We encourage staff to identify themselves as carers and provide support to help them manage their work and caring responsibilities.

Career Progression

- 3.73 We recognise that staff who share protected characteristics can face barriers to progression. Our Continuous Professional Development 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

- 3.74 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

- 3.75 Our Bullying and Harassment Policy 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 bullying or harassment.

Behavioural Framework

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

4. STAFF MONITORING

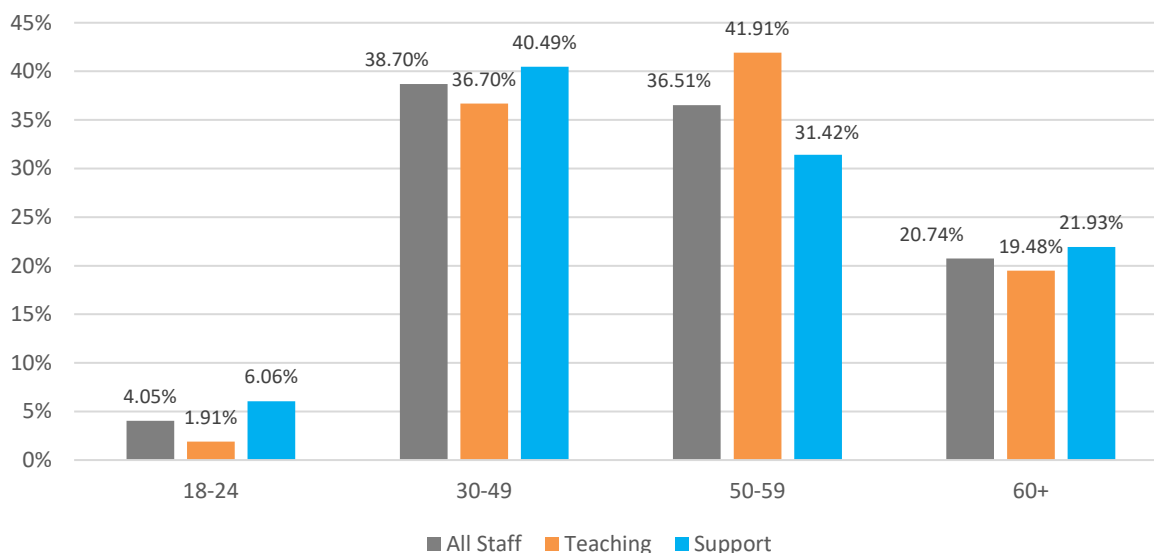
Gathering and Using Information

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 In common with other public sector organisations, we find that we have varying rates of disclosure and reliability of information depending on particular protected characteristic. For example, the information which we gather on age, sex and race is more reliable than the information we gather on protected characteristics which are perceived as being sensitive or confidential, such as sexual orientation.
- 4.3 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.
- 4.4 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 Organisational Development and HR Report and reviewed 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.
- 4.6 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.

Staff Composition

4.7 This analysis is based on headcount at the end of December 2020.

Age



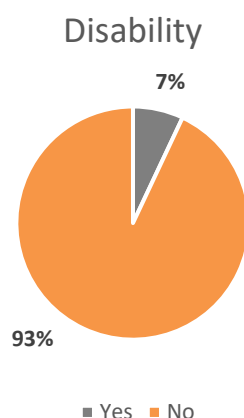
4.8 The age data shows similar patterns for Teaching and Support staff. The age bracket with the highest number of staff in both areas is between 30-49 (38.70%) The second largest age group is aged between 50-59 (36.51%). These demographics are very similar to sector benchmarks.

4.9 The higher proportion of Support Staff aged 18-24 is related to the different levels of qualifications and experience which are needed in Teaching roles.

4.10 There have been increases in staff aged 50 and over, which is consistent with the College's retention rates.

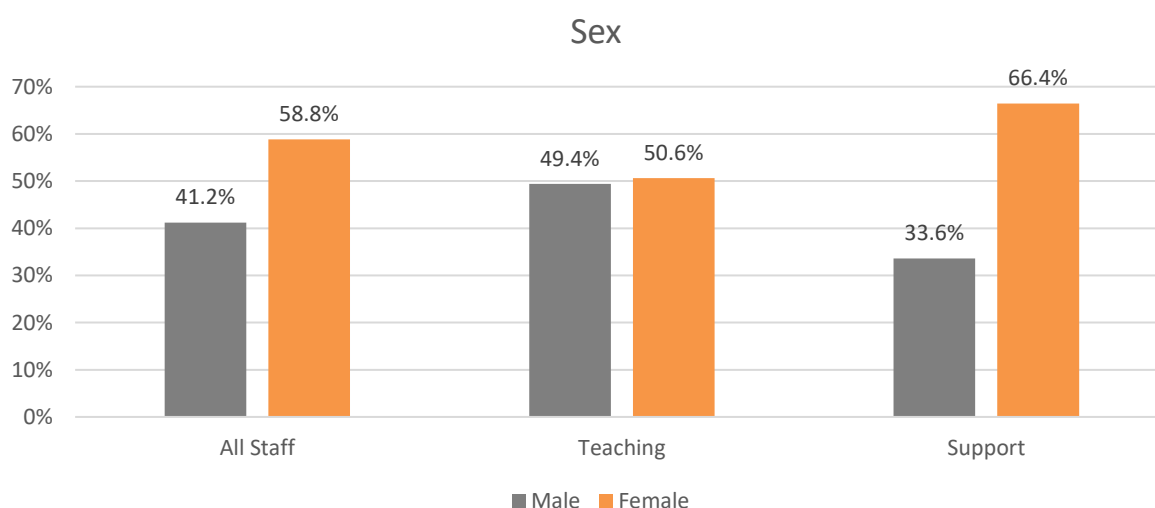
4.11 The percentage of staff aged 60 and over has increased slightly. We will use strategic planning to further support an intergenerational workforce and use succession planning to anticipate and address the impact of our age profile.

Disability



- 4.12 We are pleased to note a significant increase in the percentage of staff who have declared a disability since the development of our Equality Outcomes in 2017, when the rate was 3.73%. In 2019, it was 6%, and has increased to 7%. This is higher than the sector benchmark of 6%.
- 4.13 Looking at the Scottish Government estimates where approximately 10% of the population who are economically active have a long term activity limiting health problem, we anticipate that the disability disclosure rate may be underreported. We will continue to encourage staff to disclose, and will promote the support available, including the Disability at Work Procedure and Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy.

Sex



- 4.14 Overall, there is a 17.6 percentage point (*pp*) difference between male and female staff. This represents a slightly higher rate of proportionality since last reported.
- 4.15 There is a higher rate of proportionality with Teaching Staff compared with Support Staff. This is consistent with the sector benchmark.

- 4.16 There has been very little change in the proportion of female Support Staff, with twice as many female support staff than male. Nationwide, women are more likely to work in the public sector, and around 75% of administrative, secretarial and service support jobs in Scotland are performed by women. We have delivered Unconscious Bias training for staff involved in recruitment and selection to assist in tackling occupational segregation, and we encourage professional development to enable career progression for female staff. Our range of flexible working policies should also support career progression, and we anticipate that post pandemic there will be further opportunities for agile work.

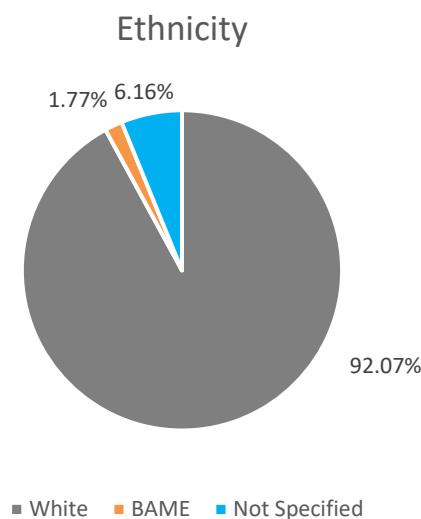
Gender Reassignment

- 4.17 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

- 4.18 23 employees have either taken maternity leave or have notified College that they are pregnant between January 2019 and December 2021.

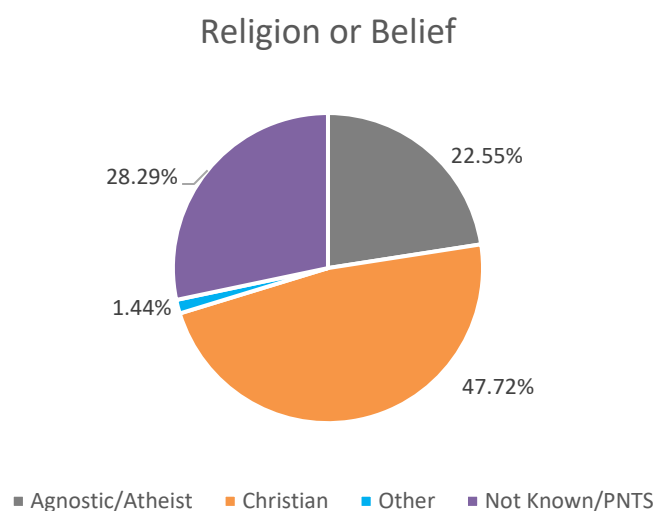
Race



- 4.19 There has been an increase in the percentage of staff from Black, Asian or Ethnic Minority (BAME) background throughout the duration of our Equality Outcomes. Presently, 1.7% of staff are BAME compared with 1.33% in 2019 and 1.07% in 2017.
- 4.20 There has also been an increase in disclosures – at the beginning of the life cycle of our Equality Outcomes, 10.5% of staff had not provided information about their ethnicity. This has decreased to 6.15%.

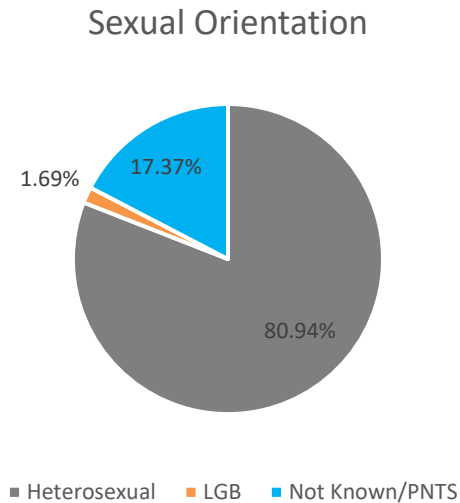
- 4.21 Our rate of BAME staff is slightly lower than the sector benchmark (2%) and can also be compared with the campus local council areas of West Dunbartonshire, Inverclyde and Renfrewshire, where between 1-3% of residents are BAME.
- 4.22 Scottish Government's [Race Equality, Employment and Skills – Making Progress](#) report (2020) highlights the fact that race equality has stalled and the ethnicity employment gap has gone backwards. We recognise our opportunity to tackle institutional racism and that we have more to do to make race equality a reality. Accordingly, race equality will be an area of focus in our Equality Outcomes 2021-2025.

Religion or Belief



- 4.23 There has been an increase in Agnostics/Atheists and a decrease in Christianity. There are very similar proportions of Protestant and Roman Catholic staff.
- 4.24 There has been a slight increase in "Other Religion" (from 1.01% in 2019 to 1.44% in 2021). While this is proportionately low, a diverse range of religion and beliefs is evident, including Sikhism, Judaism, and Buddhism.
- 4.25 This category has a comparatively high rate of "Not Specified". We will encourage staff to disclose their religion or belief, and let them know why we would like this information, and how we plan to use it.

Sexual Orientation

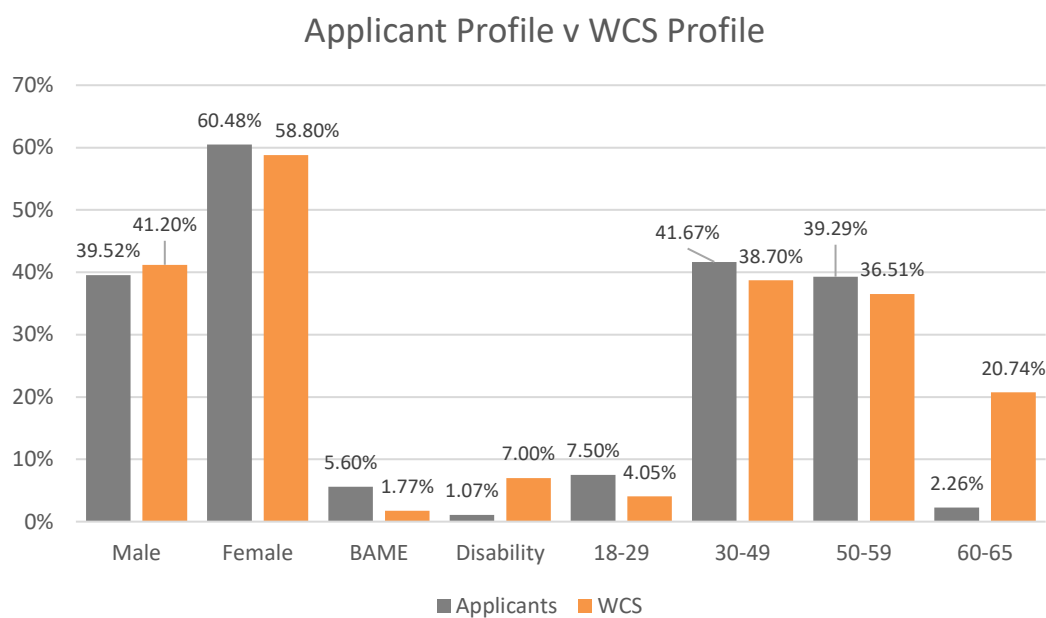


- 4.26 In the duration of our Equality Outcomes, the percentage of LGB staff as increased from 1.24% to 1.69%. There has been a no significant change in the percentage of lesbian, gay and bisexual staff (LGB) since 2019.
- 4.27 Currently, there are no external benchmarks published by the SFC or Scottish Government. Stonewall estimate that 1 in 10 people are gay, lesbian and/or bisexual. We note Scottish Government's intention to include questions about sexual orientation in the 2022 Census, and will consider this data once available.
- 4.28 There has been a slight decrease (2.4 *pp*) in the number of staff who provide us with information about their sexual orientation. We will encourage staff to disclose sexual orientation, and let them know why we would like this information, and how we plan to use it.

Recruitment Information

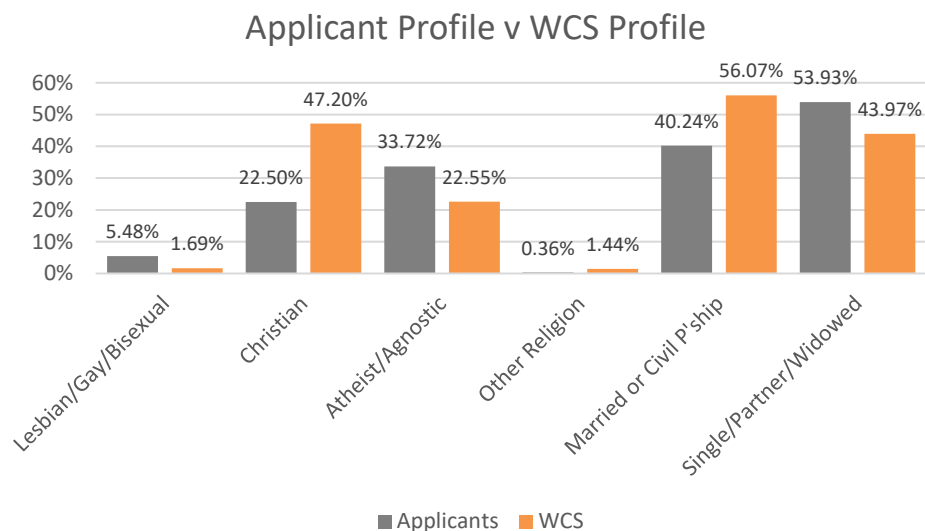
This data is based on 73 externally advertised appointments for permanent roles. Recruitment data for Pregnancy and Maternity and Gender Re-assignment is not being published as the numbers are less than 10.

Applicant Profile: Sex, Race, Disability and Age



- 4.29 The proportion of male and female applicants broadly matches the current staff gender profile.
- 4.30 We are attracting more racially diverse applicants compared with the current staff profile, local demographics and the sector benchmark. There has been a 3.7 *pp* increase in the percentage of BAME applicants during the life cycle of the Equality Outcomes.
- 4.31 While there has been a slight increase since last reported, the proportion of applicants who have declared a disability is comparatively low. We offer a guaranteed interview and promote our Disability Confident status but we will do more to encourage disclosure by reviewing recruitment documentation to ensure it encourages applicants to disclose any disabilities.
- 4.32 There has been no significant change in the age demographics of applicants throughout the life cycle of the Equality Outcomes.

Applicant Profile: Sexual Orientation, Religion or Belief and Marriage or Civil Partnership



- 4.33 We are attracting a higher rate of LGB applicants. There has been a significant increase in the percentage of applicants providing information about their sexual orientation.
- 4.34 Applicants are less likely than staff to hold a religion or belief. There has been a slight decrease in applicants in the “Other Religion” group, which includes Judaism, Muslim and Hindu.
- 4.35 Applicants are less likely than staff to be married or in a civil partnership.

Recruitment – Conversion Rates

- 4.36 The table below shows a competitive environment with an overall success rate of approximately 1:10.

	Conversion: Applied – Interviewed	Conversion: Interviewed – Appointed
Male	47.89%	22.64%
Female	47.44%	15.77%
BAME	6.38%	66.67%
Disability	66.67%	33.33%
18-29	50.00%	14.29%
30-49	52.05%	42.11%
50-59	58.54%	70.83%
60-65	42.11%	50.00%

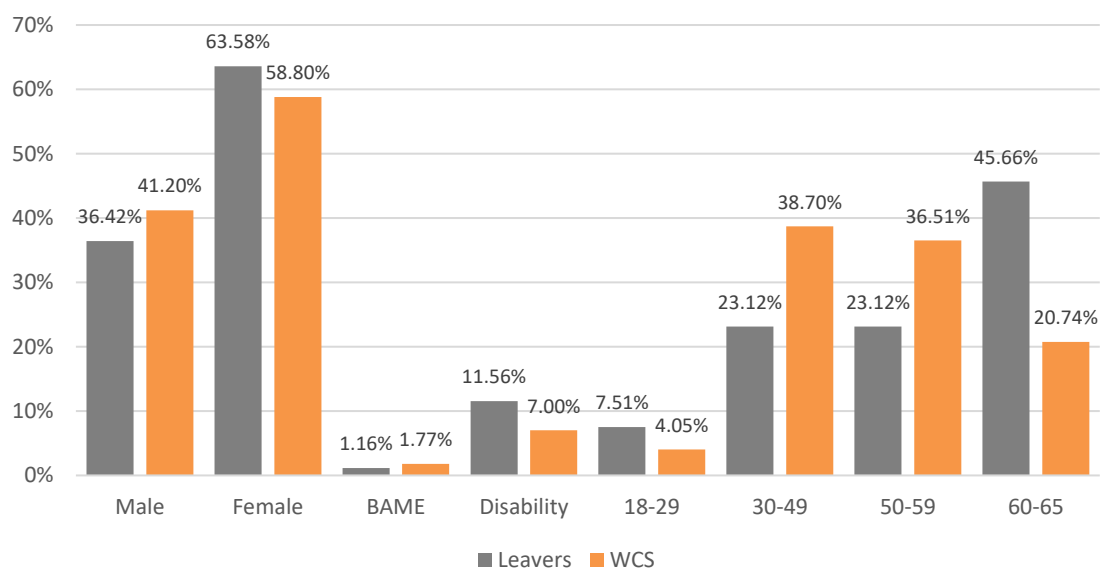
65+	25.00%	0.00%
LGB	60.87%	25.00%
Christian	71.43%	60.00%
Atheist/Agnostic	48.15%	65.38%
Other Religion	33.33%	100.00%
Married or Civil Partnership	35.50%	26.67%
Single/Partner/Widowed	44.81%	20.69%

- 4.37 Applicants with a disability are more likely to be invited to interview and have a higher appointment rate. This indicates the efficacy of the Disability Confident Scheme.
- 4.38 BAME applicants have a lower interview rate and a significantly higher appointment rate. We will investigate this further in our future aims to address race inequality.
- 4.39 The age group with the highest appointment rate is aged 50-59.
- 4.40 While men and women have an equal occurrence of interviews, men have a slightly higher appointment rate.
- 4.41 Lesbian, gay and bisexual applicants were more likely to be interviewed and appointed.
- 4.42 Applicants who had disclosed “Other Religion” had the highest comparative appointment rate.

Staff Retention

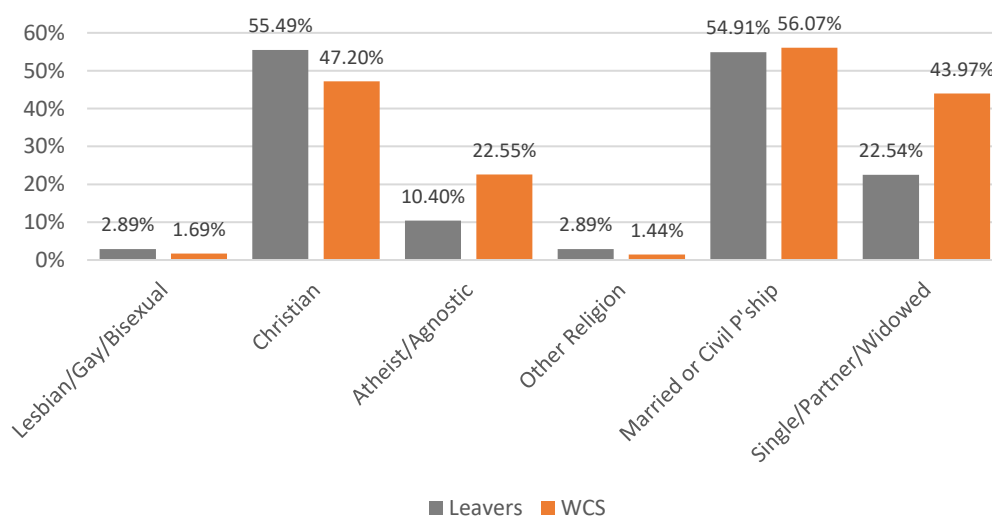
- 4.43 Data is presented below about the characteristics of leavers compared with the existing staff demographics. The most frequently occurring reasons for leaving were resignations, voluntary severance and retirement.

Retention: Sex, Age, Disability and Race



- 4.44 The retention rates for men, women and BAME staff broadly correlates with staff demographics.
- 4.45 The higher proportion of leavers with a disability may be related to numbers of staff taking ill health retirement, and the fact that older age groups are more likely than younger to have long term health conditions or disabilities.
- 4.46 Younger staff (age 18-29) were more likely to resign to pursue other opportunities. The age group with the highest proportion of leavers was aged 60+, who were eligible for retirement.

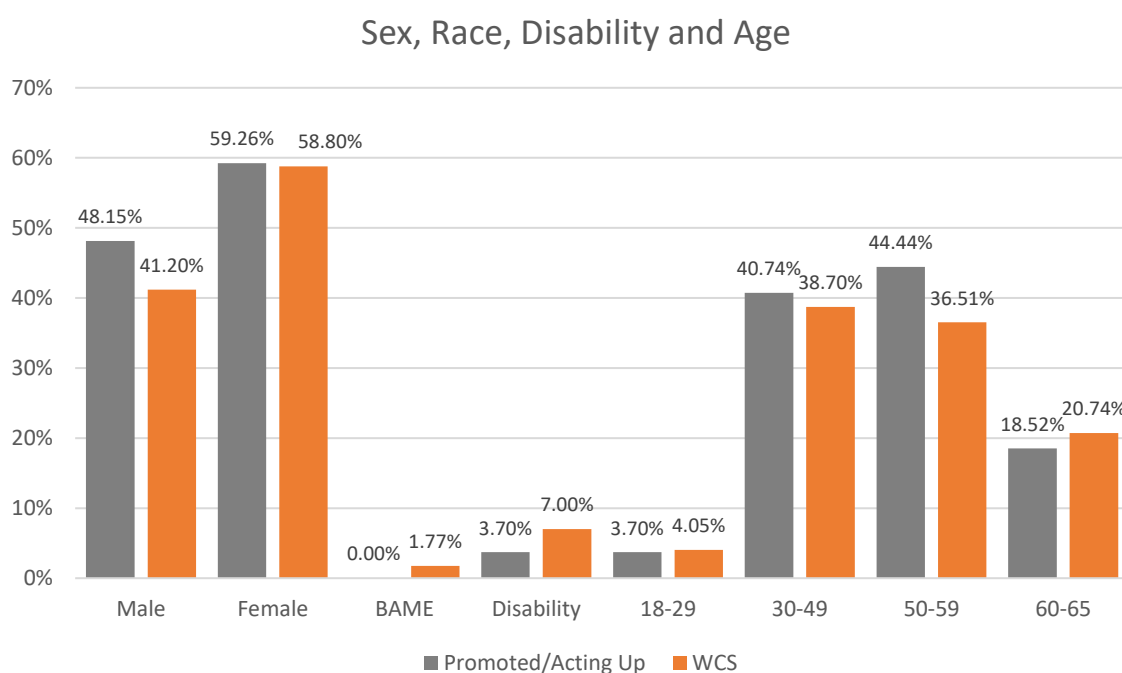
Retention: Sexual Orientation, Religion and Marriage/Civil Partnership



- 4.47 There is broad correlation with leaver data and sexual orientation.
- 4.48 There was a higher rate of attrition for Christian staff and staff who are married or in a civil partnership. This is also related to age, as our older staff are more likely to hold a religion/belief or be married/in a civil partnership.

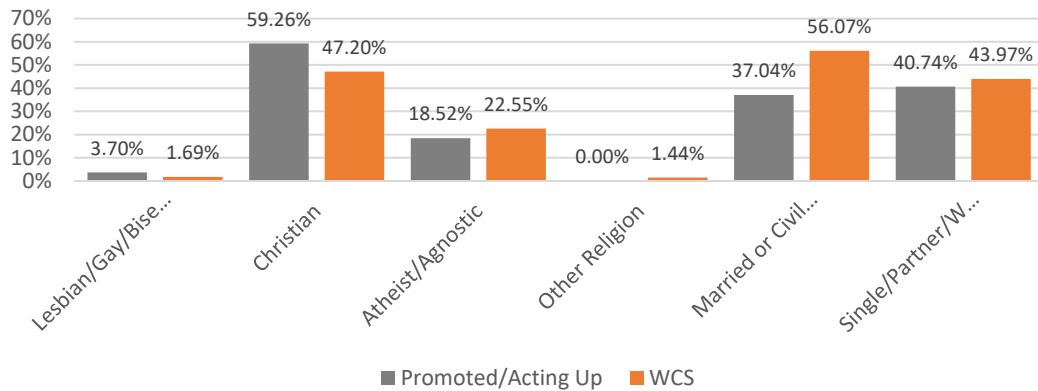
Staff Progression

- 4.49 There were 27 instances of staff who received an acting up allowance and/or progressed to a promoted post.



- 4.50 There is broad correlation for progression for men, women and different age groups.
- 4.51 Further investigations will be carried out into BAME and Disability gap and actions will be developed in our revised Equality Outcomes.

Sexual Orientation, Religion and Marriage/Civil Partnership



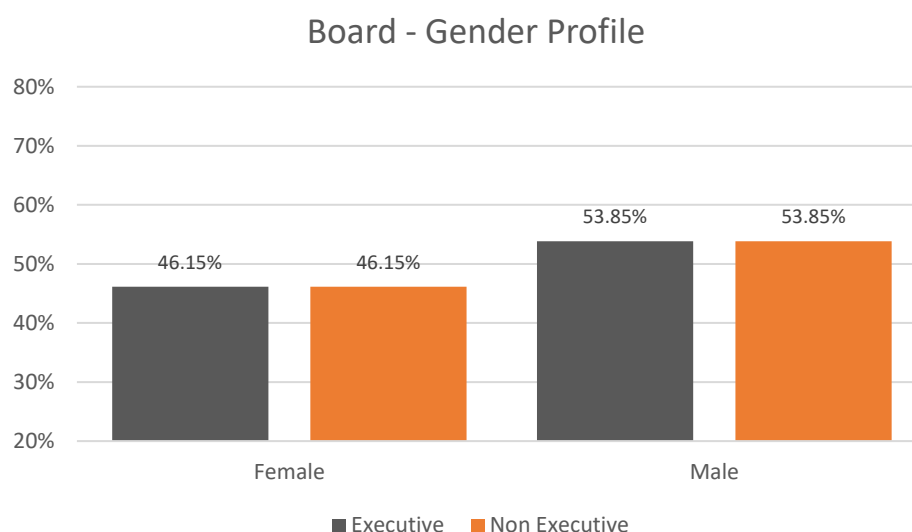
- 4.52 Lesbian, gay and bisexual staff have a slightly higher rate of progression.
- 4.53 There is a gap with regards to “Other Religion”. There can be a correlation with “Other Religion” and race, and we will take action to investigate this further in our revised Equality Outcomes.

Staff Disciplinary

- 4.54 There were 16 disciplinary instances, and men were more frequently involved than women. While the numbers are low, there is no indication of bias towards protected characteristics in outcomes. No other information is being provided due to the low numbers.

5. DIVERSITY AND OUR BOARD

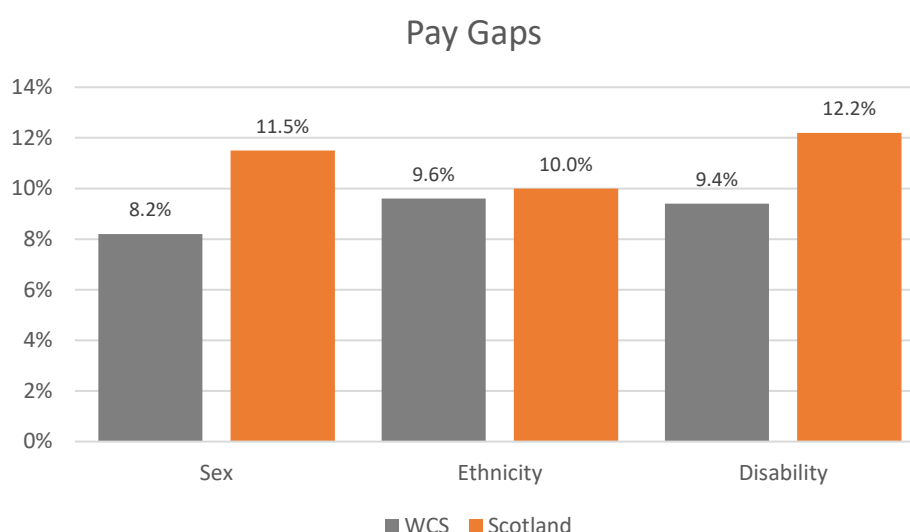
Gender Breakdown



- 5.1 We have exceeded the Scottish Government's 30% minimum, and made good progress towards the objective of a 50:50 gender balance. We plan to take action to increase not just the gender diversity, but the overall diversity of the WCS Board, including attracting BAME members.
- 5.2 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.
- 5.3 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 them 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.

6. EQUAL PAY

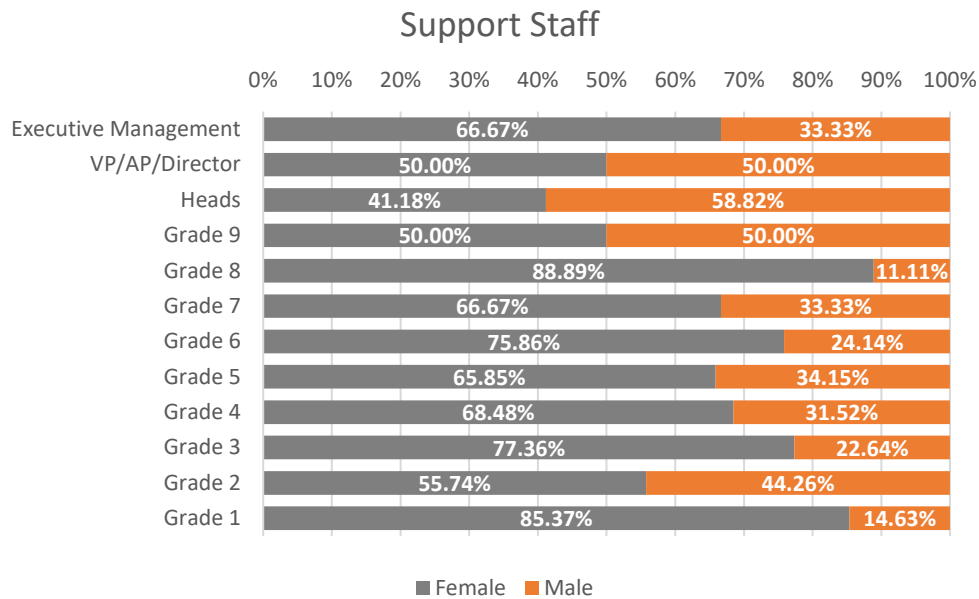
Gender, Race and Disability Pay Gaps



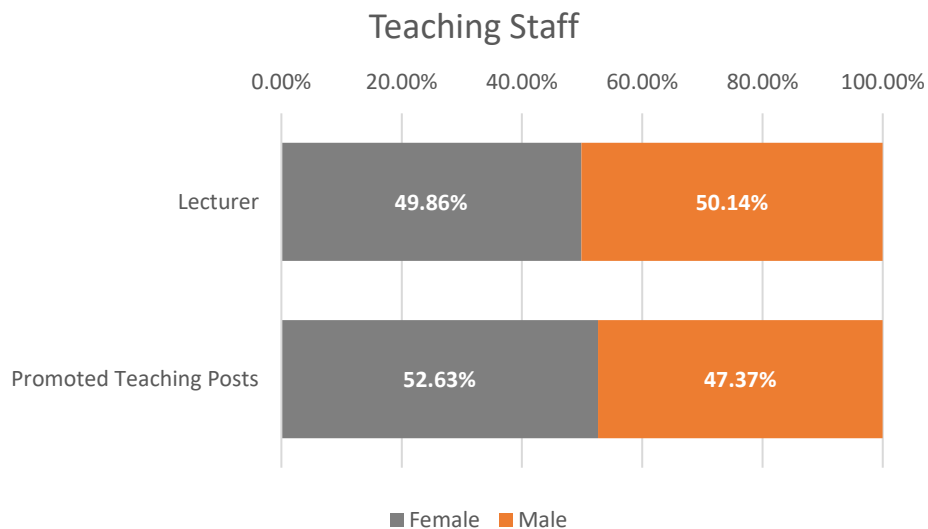
- 6.1 This is the first time we have published our Ethnicity and Disability pay gaps, and we note that all pay gaps are less than the national benchmarks.
- 6.2 However all of our pay gaps are deemed significant as they exceed 5%. The reasons for pay gaps are complex and interrelated. Women can experience greater difficulties than men when it comes to balancing work and private life, and it has been reported that this burden has increased during the pandemic, when care and domestic responsibilities have not been 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.
- 6.3 While cultural and societal change often happens slowly, the COVID crisis has accelerated the flexible working agenda, and we hope to explore the positive impacts of this on all our employees.

Occupational Segregation

- 6.4 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.
- 6.5 Occupational segregation is evident from an analysis of different grades and roles at WCS as seen below.



- 6.6 A broadly proportionate gender balance can be seen in our most senior roles (Executive Management and Assistant/Vice Principals and Directors). The gender balance with VP/AP/Directors has improved since last reported in 2019, when 33% were female (now 50%).
- 6.7 There is greater disproportionality in the lower grades, which contain the highest number of incumbents, and reduces the mean pay rate.



- 6.8 There is a higher rate of gender proportionality with Teaching Staff compared to Support Staff.
- 6.9 We have not produced occupational segregation charts for disability and race given the low numbers of staff. However we are conscious of the lack of BAME representation at management and senior levels, and we will work to improve this.

Our Progress on Equal Pay

- 6.10 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

- 6.11 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; 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.

7. DEVELOPING NEW EQUALITY OUTCOMES

Process

- 7.1 We engaged with the Student Association and Class Representatives to work together to develop Outcomes that reflect their priorities. We also held interviews with staff in Student Services, Enabling Services and our Wellbeing Advisor to find out more about the experience of students during the pandemic.
- 7.2 We distributed a staff survey to gather their views on priorities in order to take appropriate action to advance equality and prevent discrimination. This survey has informed the new Outcomes and has enabled us to measure progress on our existing Outcomes.

Student Engagement

Student Focus: Theme 1 – Digital Inclusion

- 7.3 Students praised the College's response to online and blended learning, and noted many benefits, including flexibility, responsiveness of staff and support with digital skills. However students noted challenges with a feeling of "belonging", and issues of engagement while juggling learning with personal responsibilities at home.
- 7.4 Students had experienced issues with broadband, and some had to toggle their phone to their PC as there were other users at home.
- 7.5 Students reported a variation in digital skills, and ability to make effective use of platforms such as Microsoft Teams and Moodle.

Student Focus: Theme 2 – Wellbeing

- 7.6 There has been a significant increase in referrals to student counselling and safeguarding issues. The NHS focus on the pandemic has reduced the capability of other health services, and it is currently forecast that there will be three drivers of additional demand for mental health services;
 - (1) demand from people who would have been referred to services had the pandemic not struck;
 - (2) people requiring more support due to a deterioration of their mental health during the pandemic; and
 - (3) new demand driven by people needing support due to the wider impacts of the pandemic, such as self-isolation and increases in substance abuse and domestic violence.

Staff Engagement

- 7.7 An EDI survey was published on the Staff Intranet and promoted as a news item. The survey was anonymous, and staff were encouraged to contact the EDI Manager with any queries about the survey, or any additional comments. 175 responses were received, which represents a decrease in the response rate of approximately 10%. There were broadly equal numbers of responses from Teaching Staff and Support Staff.

Headline Analysis of EDI Survey

- 7.8 The outputs of the Survey are attached as Appendix 1. It shows:
- 80.12% of staff agree or strongly agree that WCS is committed to ensuring all staff, students and visitors are treated with equal dignity and respect
 - Staff were asked how well processes, activities or facilities meet their equality, diversity and inclusion needs. Processes with the most favourable ratings were Induction and Making Reasonable Adjustments.
 - Staff were asked “How easy or difficult is it for you to work effectively these days?” 37.42% of staff said it was “Somewhat difficult”; 8.39% of staff said that it was “Very difficult”.
 - The most frequent challenges quoted by staff in remote working were physical workspace and communication with colleagues and students. We know that there is a variation in home space, particularly with dense populations in urban areas. We provided guidance to staff on home workspaces and issued digital devices to staff, and will promote this further.
 - The most frequently stated benefit of working remotely was No Commute; the least frequent was Caring Responsibilities. The Survey was issued during lockdown when all schools were closed to anyone except key workers’ children. We understand how difficult these circumstances are, and we hope our newly developed Equality Outcomes will support our staff in the return to the new normal.
 - The Survey asked staff to rate our progress on our Equality Outcomes 17-21. We are pleased to note an increase in rating of each Outcome since we last measured this in 2019.

Qualitative Analysis

- 7.9 Staff were given the opportunity to provide comments on their responses and to provide us with their priorities moving forward. The following themes emerged:

Digital Challenges

"A lot of our students are living in poverty and can't afford what they need to facilitate online learning, especially broadband."

- 7.10 Staff expressed concern about students' access to digital devices and broadband. A number of comments referred to poverty levels and the need for the College to support students most in need. This will be a focus of our work moving forward.

Productivity

"A quieter environment enabling better focus, being able to prepare quick healthy lunches, being able to incorporate exercise into the day instead of spending the time being stuck in traffic."

- 7.11 Staff noted that they had more focus working from home, and less interruptions. They described Teams meetings as more productive, and felt that they were able to respond more quickly to students.

Wellbeing

"Social contact with colleagues both professional and informal is harder and missed"

- 7.12 A number of respondents referred to digital fatigue, and felt that it is harder to switch off from work when you are at home. Teaching staff mentioned longer preparation times for online teaching. Staff are pitching in, and helping colleagues who have younger children, but this can take its toll on workload. The prolonged episode of social distancing has been a challenge for many of our staff, who are missing social contact. Some respondents expressed concern about the current and future wellbeing of our staff and students – this will be a focus of our future work.

Flexible Working

"It will improve work-life balance, will deal with the constant car parking problem, reduce transmission of colds/flu and boost morale."

- 7.13 There were frequent references to using the current experience as an opportunity to consider a more flexible working environment. Notably, staff with health conditions mentioned how it was easier for them to work effectively.

Race Equality

"There isn't enough diversity... we need to tackle casual racism"

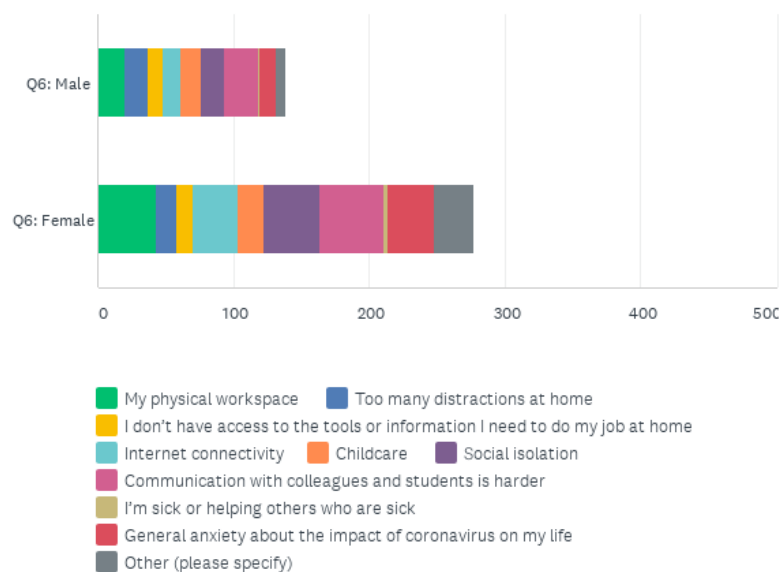
- 7.14 Staff referred to a lack of visibility of BAME staff and felt that more could be done to attract a more diverse workforce. They referred to the Black Lives matter movement, and the issue of casual racism. This will be a focus of our future work.

Intersectional Analysis

7.15 The Survey asked staff to provide equality data which can now be used for an intersectional analysis. The following analyses stood out:

7.16 Female staff report more challenges than male

Q15 Are you facing any challenges while working remotely?

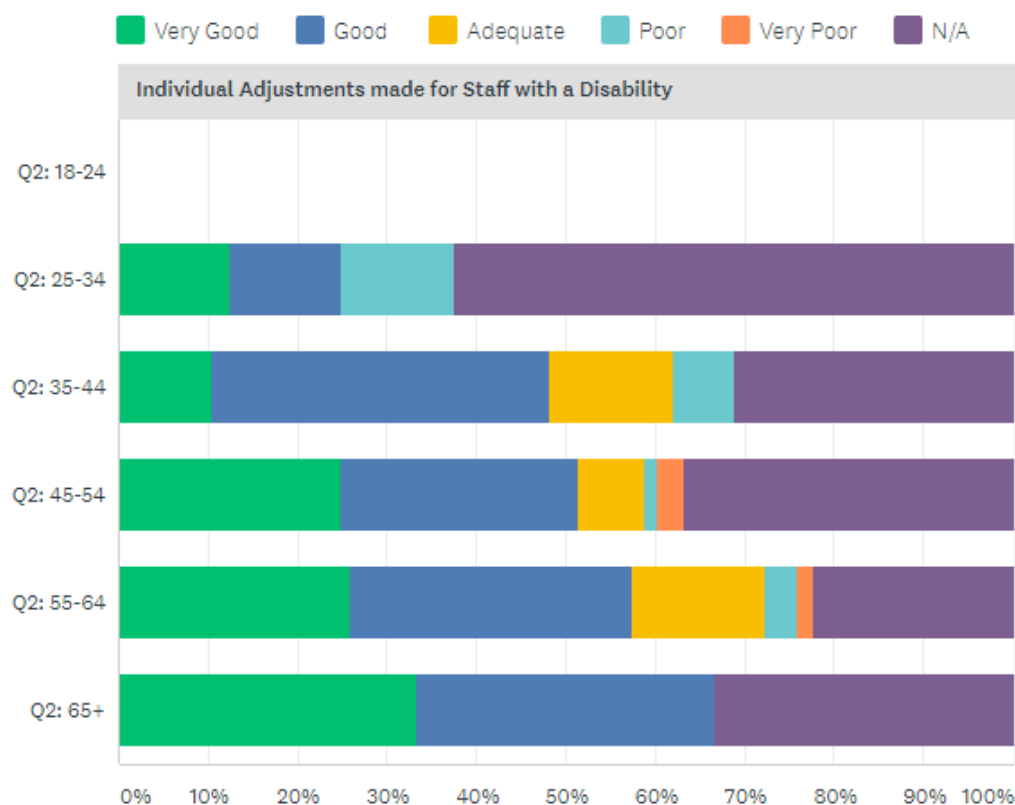


7.17 Female staff are more likely to report benefits of home working

Q16 What, if any, are the benefits of working remotely?

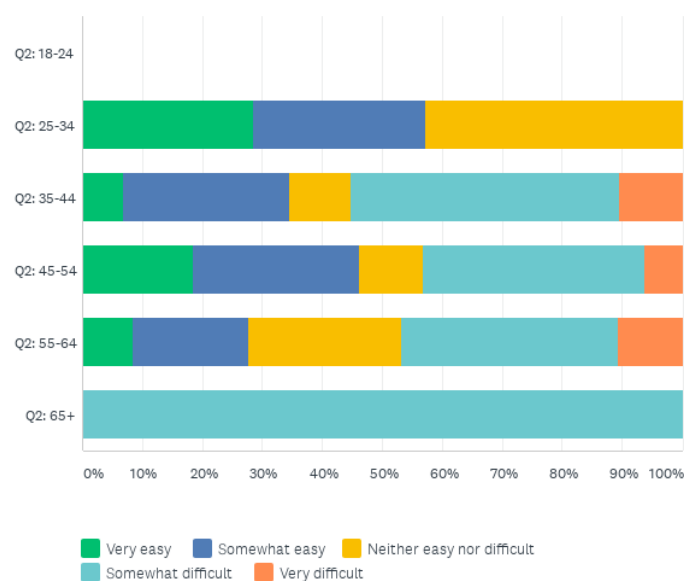


7.18 The rating of adjustments for disability increases with age. Older people are more likely to have a health condition and would more frequently experience the need for reasonable adjustments.



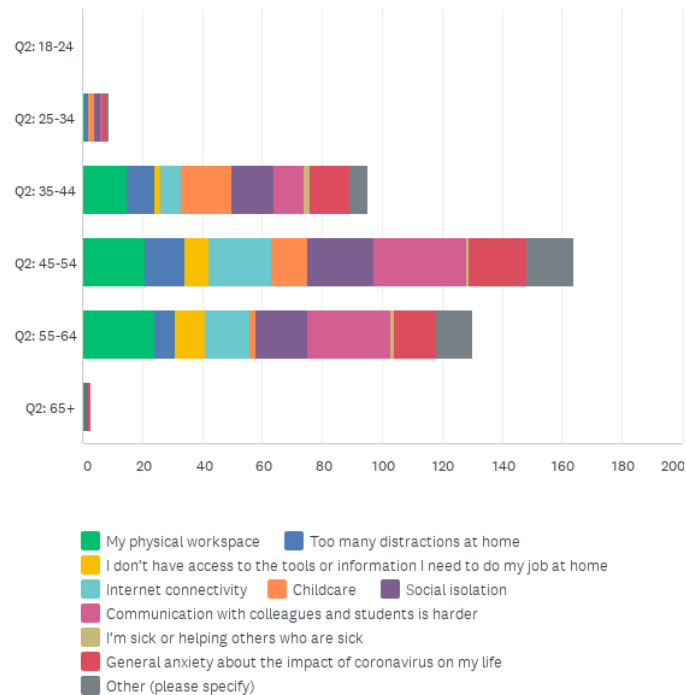
7.19 Younger staff are finding remote working easier than older staff.

Q14 How easy or difficult is it for you to work effectively these days?



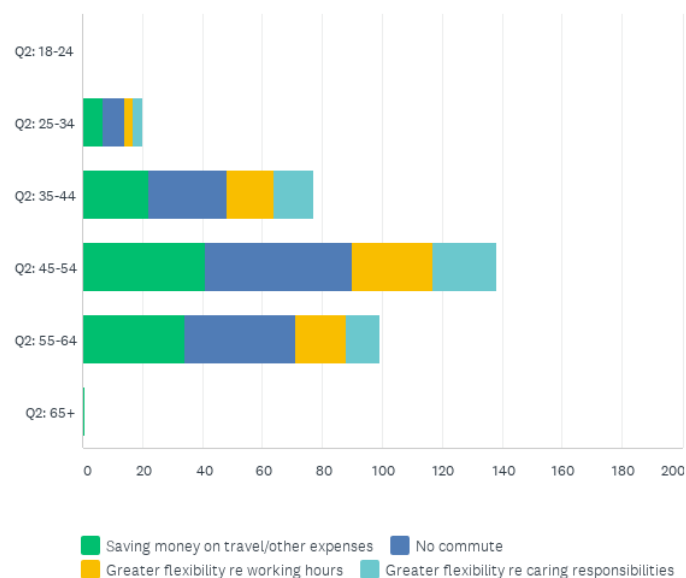
- 7.20 There is variation in challenges reported working remotely by age group, with those aged 45-54 reporting challenges most frequently.

Q15 Are you facing any challenges while working remotely?

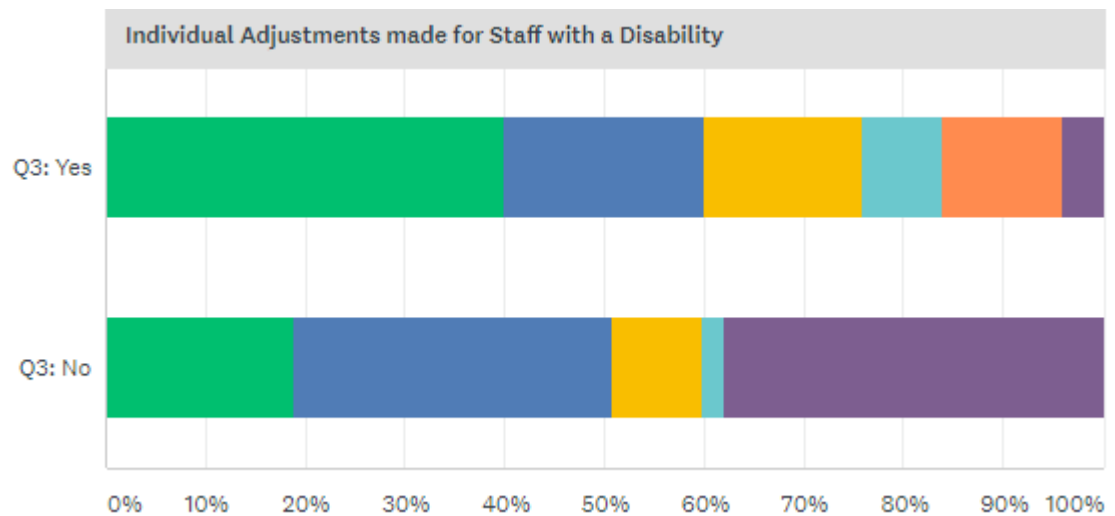


- 7.21 Younger staff report experiencing fewer benefits than older staff in working remotely.

Q16 What, if any, are the benefits of working remotely?

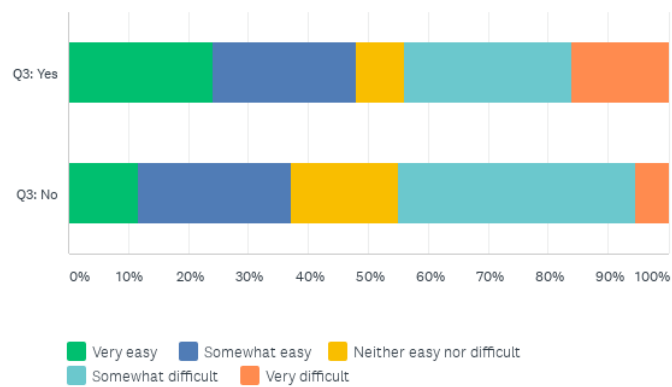


- 7.22 Staff with a disability are more likely to describe adjustments as “Very Good” compared to staff who do not have a disability.



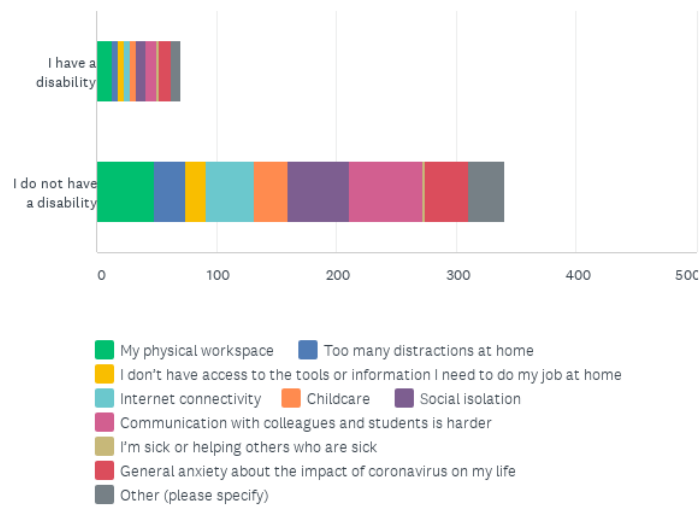
- 7.23 Staff with a disability are finding it somewhat easier to effectively work remotely than staff who do not have a disability.

Q14 How easy or difficult is it for you to work effectively these days?



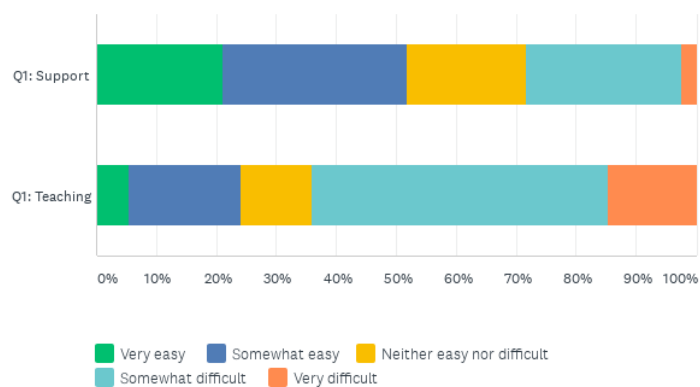
7.24 Staff with a disability report significantly fewer challenges working remotely.

Q15 Are you facing any challenges while working remotely?



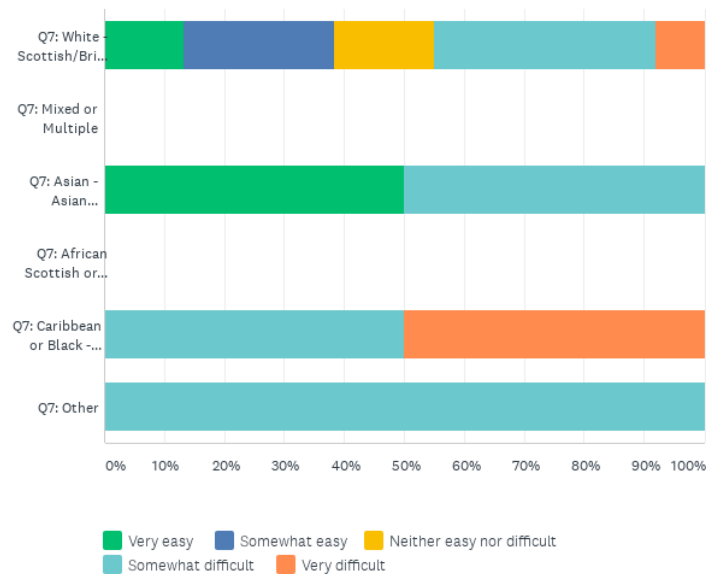
7.26 While Teaching and Support Staff report the same frequency of challenges in working from home, Teaching Staff are finding it more difficult to work effectively.

Q14 How easy or difficult is it for you to work effectively these days?

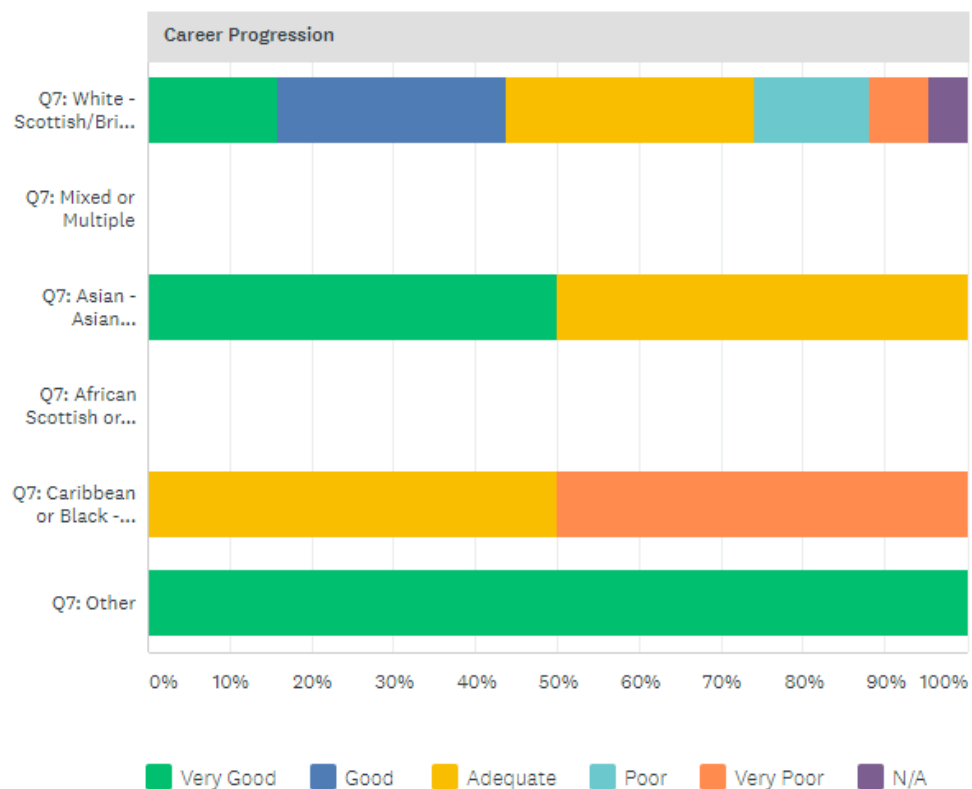


- 7.27 While caution must be used in interpretation given the size of the cohorts, there are indications that BAME staff are finding remote working more difficult.

Q14 How easy or difficult is it for you to work effectively these days?



- 7.28 There was also variation in perspectives of career progression by ethnic group. Caution must be used in interpretation given the different size of the cohorts.

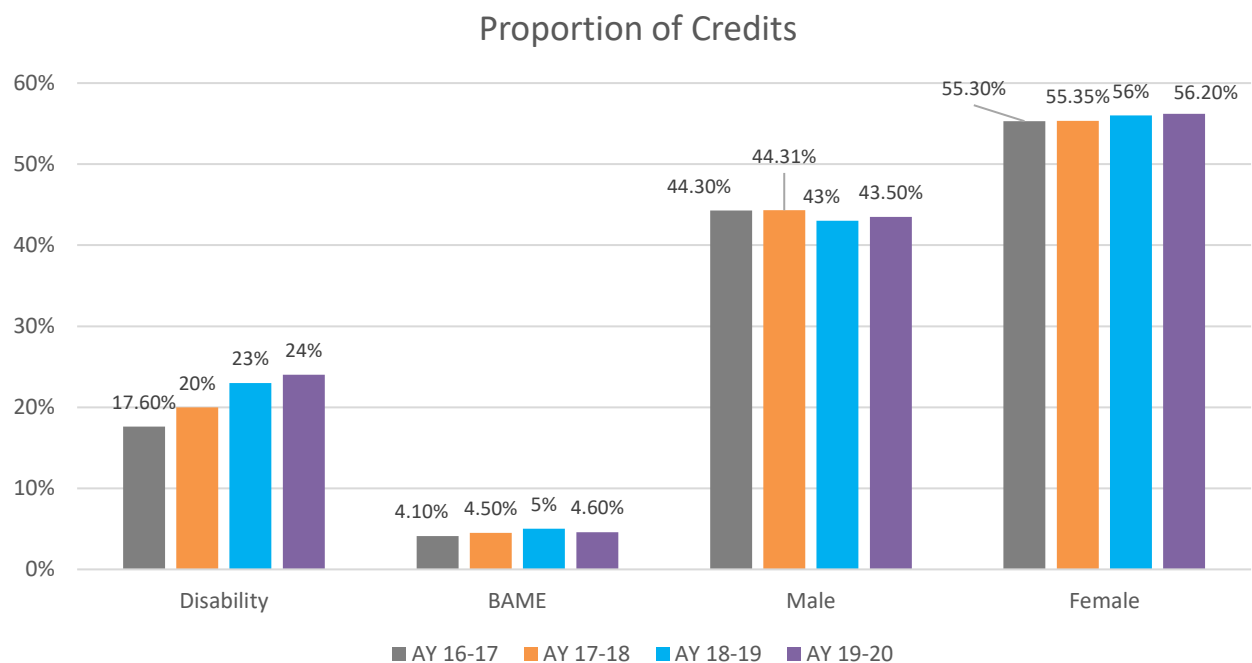


8. STUDENT DATA

Technical Note

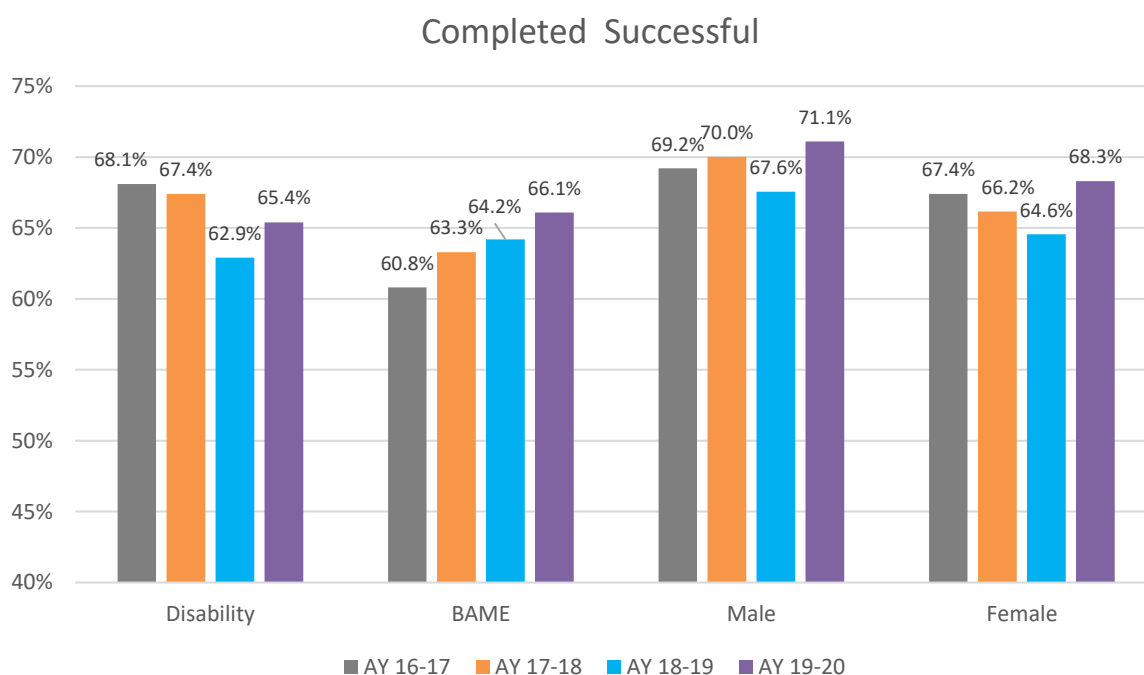
- 8.1 The data which is presented below refers to courses which last 160 hours or more. The volume of activity is measured by credits, which is the sector measurement used for funding. This data has been reproduced using an information system which has been designed to collect data which is required and verified by the Scottish Funding Council. The current sector data returns do not include all protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010, and in this section we report on the verified categories of disability, sex, and race.

Participation



- 8.2 We are pleased to note a gradual annual increase in the proportion of credits delivered to students who have declared a disability. We anticipate this increase reflects the work we have done in reducing the stigma of disclosure and in encouraging students to seek support.
- 8.3 The proportion delivered to BAME students has remained fairly static. While the percentage compares well with local demographics, we know that there is more that we can do to address the national BAME employment gap, and the inequality which has been exacerbated by COVID-19 and events in 2020.
- 8.4 Similarly, there has been little change in the gender profile, which is similar to the sector.

Attainment



- 8.5 We are pleased to note that the attainment level of all groups increased around *3pp* in AY 19-20. This reflects the efforts of our staff in pivoting to blended/distance learning and assessments during the pandemic.
- 8.6 The increase in proportion of credits delivered to students with a disability is accompanied by a slight (less than 5%) decrease in attainment. We will take action to address this gap in our forthcoming Equality Outcomes.
- 8.7 There has been a steady and gradual increase in attainment for BAME students during the life cycle of our 17-21 Equality Outcomes.
- 8.8 The attainment rate for male students is consistently higher than the rate for female students. This trend is similar to sector performance indicators.

9. PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING OUR EQUALITY OUTCOMES

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

Evidence of Progress

EDI Survey – 71.98% of staff agree/strongly agree that we are effective in our achievement of this Outcome

Since 2017, the percentage of staff who have disclosed a disability has increased from 3.73% to 7%.

Increase of 3.91% in proportion of staff who feel that they can be open about their sexuality

Increase in volume of activity by protected groups

Benchmarked practice against Equally Safe

Delivery of British Sign Language training

Implementation of Support for Survivors of Domestic Abuse Policy

Toilet facilities on each campus for transgender staff and students

Development of British Sign Language Plan and provision of ARC Centre

Policies and practice benchmarked against Stonewall Index

Increased awareness of preventing gender-based violence and supporting survivors

Carer Positive and Disability Confident Status

Student Experience Stakeholders engagement with Class Representatives to ensure we respond to needs and preferences

Since 2017, the percentage of BAME staff has increased from 1.07% to 1.7%. There has been a 4% increase in staff providing information about their ethnicity.

Appointments of Student Counsellors and Wellbeing Advisor

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

Invested in resources to upskill staff in responding to Gender Based Violence

Self-service HR platform allows staff to update equality information

Implementation of Trans Equality Policy

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

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

Highly commended for EDI “In with the Bricks” campaign at Scotland’s Colleges Awards

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

Access All Areas Student resources

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

Evidence of Progress

Staff Survey – 69.42% of respondents agree/strongly agree that we are effective in our achievement of this Outcome.	Regular awareness and practice update sessions delivered to Student Association
Newly tailored staff online training launched	EDI Resource area launched on Staff Intranet
Advanced EDI training for managers	“Challenging Times” workshops delivered to explore impact of the pandemic on protected groups
Diversity Briefing sessions delivered to Board members	Good practice updates delivered to Curriculum Quality Leaders, Heads of Sector and Managers
Increased use of communications and digital reach to raise awareness with students and other stakeholders	Specialist and advanced EDI CPD activities available including Mental Health, Understanding Autism and Introduction to BSL
In house audit tool and Guidelines used to mainstream equality in the curriculum	Promotion of events to engage staff and students in the EDI agenda, including the White Ribbon campaign and Purple Friday
Use of marketing and promotion materials to promote EDI and tackle stereotypes	Student and Staff Induction includes EDI and the importance of respect
English for Speakers of other Languages and International students are encouraged and supported to participate in student engagement activities	Dissemination of good practice and training outcomes into classroom activities
Unconscious Bias workshops facilitated evaluation of processes and action plans to mitigate risk of bias	Teaching Staff discussing occupational stereotypes with students in order to enhance awareness of career choices

Staff and students achieve their potential regardless of protected characteristics.

Evidence of Progress

Staff Survey – 71.87% of respondents agree/strongly agree that we are effective in our achievement of this Outcome	Higher interview rate (66.7%) and appointment rate (33.32%) for staff with a disability; similarly, higher rate for LGB applicants
Higher rate of progression for LGB staff	3.2% decrease in gender pay gap. Gender, race and disability pay gap all lower than national benchmarks
Increased gender balance in VP/AP/Director roles	Increase in volume of activity by BAME students and students who have declared a disability
80.12% of staff agree or strongly agree that WCS is committed to treating everyone with equal dignity and respect	Proportion of credits delivered to students with a disability has increased from 17.6% in 2017 to 24% in 2019
Proportion of credits delivered to BAME students – slight increase from 4.1 in 2017 to 4.6% in 2019	Unconscious Bias training delivered to managers and CQLs
Attainment rate for BAME students has consistently increased to 66.1% (was 60.8% in 2017).	Digital devices available for students in need
Gender balance in Lecturers role	Wide range of flexible working policies and procedures
Behavioural Framework emphasises the need for tolerance and respect	Quantitative analysis of student equality data informs action to address potential barriers
Ongoing dialogue between Student Association and EDI Manager to consider initiatives to advance equality	Consultation with staff and students in policy development
Enhancement of staff and student mental health support services	Close and effective working relationship between Teaching staff and Learner Development Sector at strategic and operational levels
Estate adjustments following feedback from students	Promotion of events to engage staff and students in tackling barriers, including the White Ribbon campaign and Purple Friday

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

Evidence of Progress

Staff Survey – 71.8% of respondents agree/strongly agree that we are effective in our achievement of this Outcome	Gies a Break Drop in cafes regularly scheduled at each campus
COVID-19 Wellbeing Hub resources	“Have a Blether” remote working social sessions
Appointment of Student Wellbeing Advisor to proactively address the mental health agenda. Additional Advisor being recruited in March 2021	Staff and student mindfulness sessions
Team of Mental Health First Aiders to complement physical First Aiders	Training from external specialists to ensure staff are equipped to support students with mental health issues
Increase in number of student counsellors from 5 to 8	Silvercloud CBT investment
Student Association actively involved in “Healthy Body, Health Mind” campaign	Promotion of physical and mental fitness including Pass the Badge event, Time to Talk Day and Time to Walk Day
“Time 4 U” counselling service for students	PAM Assist counselling service for staff
Promotion of World Mental Health Day	Development and implementation of Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
Initiatives to prevent gender-based violence and support survivors	Introduction of Equally Safe toolkit
Development of effective partnerships with specialist local, regional and national organisations	Information and advice for students is readily available on the Intranet

We address student gender imbalances at subject level

Evidence of Progress

Progress has not been uniform – 5% increase achieved in 2/10 Superclasses; decrease in male students enrolled in female dominated Superclasses

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

STEM Assured Centre

Engagement with local authorities in initiatives such as the Renfrewshire Council Women into Construction event

Contributed to national sector “Attracting Diversity” project

Advance HE and Higher Education Academy workshop on positive action disseminated to Teaching Staff

The Portfolio Review process demonstrates Teaching Staff explore gender stereotypes within their curriculum content, and encourage students to question assumptions

Heads of Sector good practice sharing session facilitated

Minority gender case studies developed and published

EDI Manager invited to address SFC conference on collaboration with students in addressing gender inequality

Increased involvement with parents and carers in careers advice

Gender Action Plan developed in partnership with the Student Association. Progress report published

Collaborative action plan with Skills Development Scotland to address gender imbalance in apprenticeships

STEM ambassador primary schools initiatives

Working with school pupils to change perception of gender imbalanced industries

School College vocational programme prioritises the development of STEM and employability skills for young people

Gender equality key performance indicators and targets are embedded in operational planning

Increased capacity of staff to address gender imbalance through Unconscious Bias training and evaluation

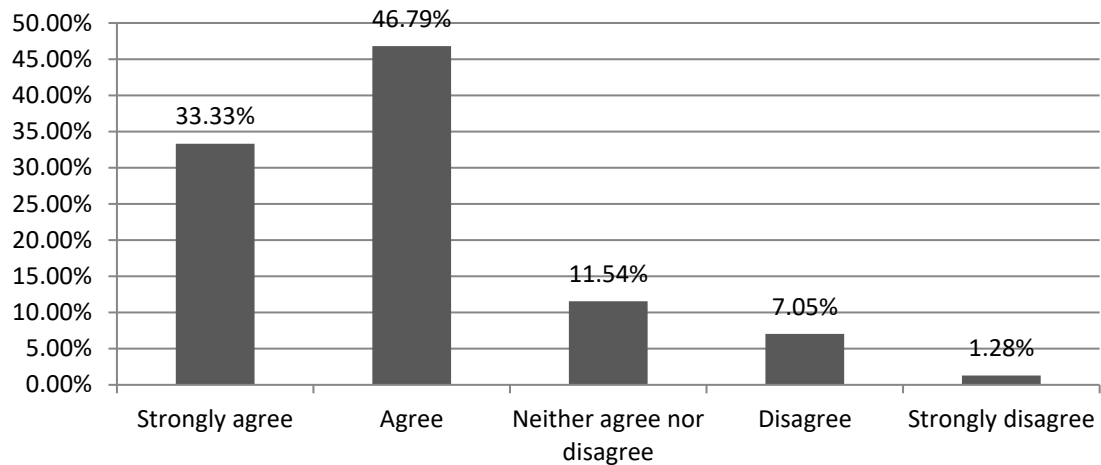
Website used to promote the success of minority gender students

Focus groups conducted with minority gender students

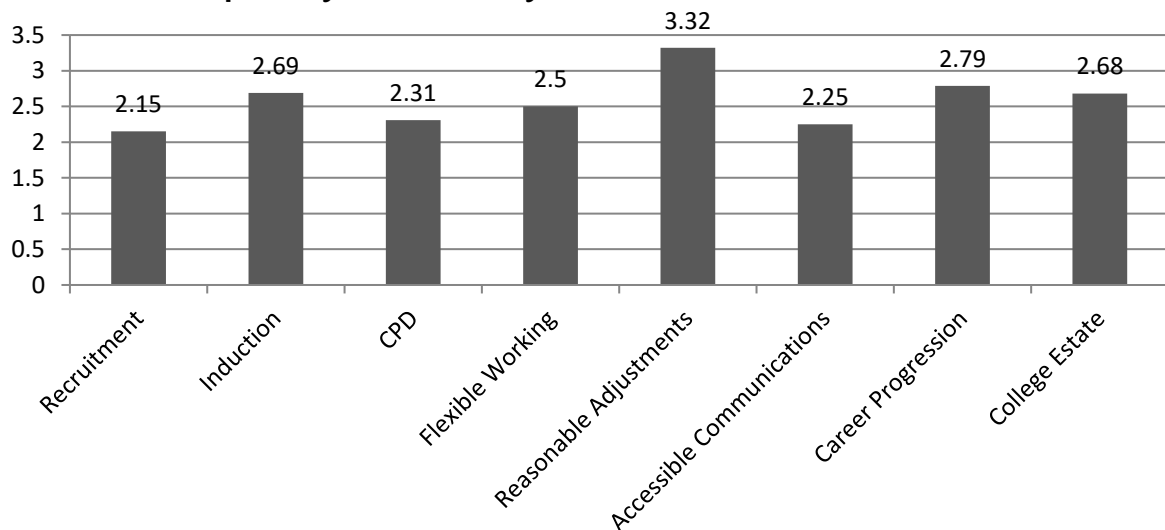
Course packaging reviewed to better attract minority gender students

Curriculum statistical data regularly reviewed

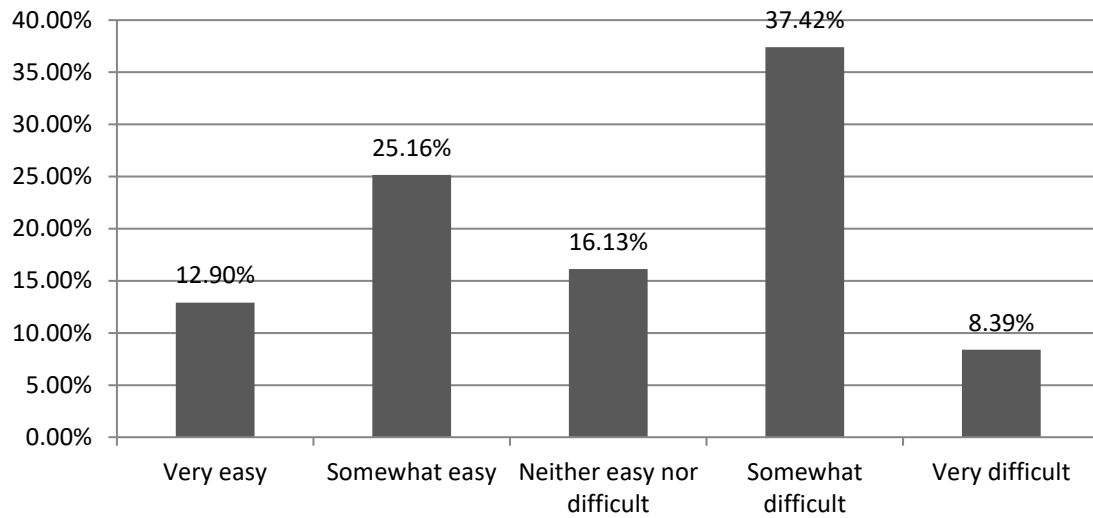
I believe that WCS is committed to ensuring all staff, students and visitors are treated with equal dignity and respect



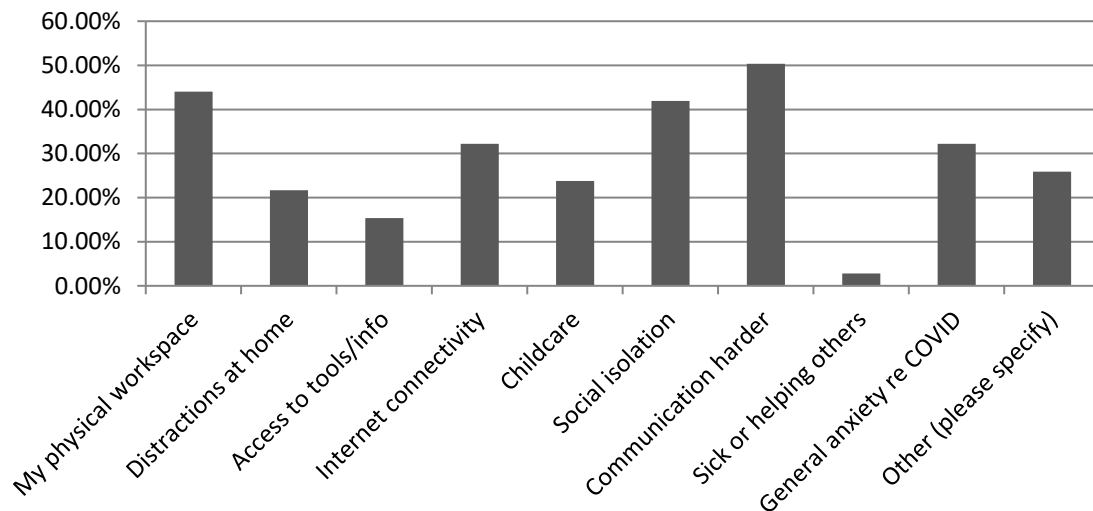
How well do you feel that the following processes, activities or facilities meet your equality, diversity and inclusion needs?



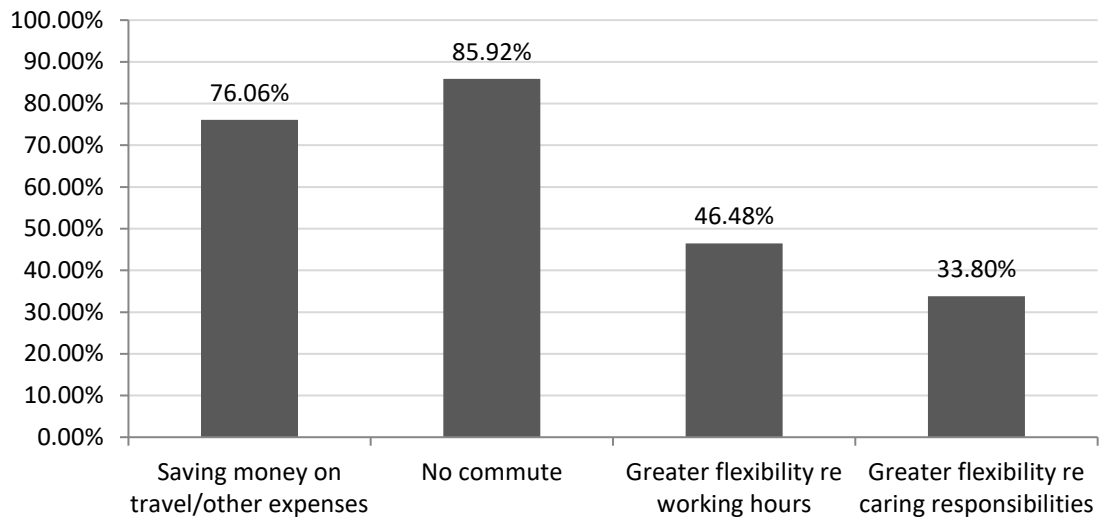
How easy or difficult is it for you to work effectively these days?



Are you facing any challenges while working remotely?



What, if any, are the benefits of working remotely?



Please provide us with your views on how effective we are at achieving our current Equality Outcomes as stated below.

