

NatureScot Equality Report 2019-2021

 nature.scot/doc/naturescot-equality-report-2019-2021

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Foreword



I am committed to ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of everything NatureScot does.

In 2019 I made a pledge to the First Ministers National Advisory Council for Women & Girls (NACWG) to continue to work towards reducing the pay gap, we have now exceeded our target of 9%. However we will not stop there, we will continue to seek opportunities to reduce the gender pay gap further, like all areas of equality we are encouraging employees to challenge gender based views and decisions.

There are other areas where we know we need to take further action: equality of access to nature is not guaranteed. The socio-political context of 2020 has been a catalyst for our work on engagement with people from Minority Ethnic (ME) backgrounds and our commitment to young people. Our work on nature based skills and work with Backbone Community Interest Company (CIC) sees us leading a sectoral response to increasing the diversity of people both enjoying and benefiting from nature and working within our sector.

Like many organisations we have had to adapt our ways of working and priorities in response to Covid-19. Our employees' wellbeing is at the heart of our continued response. We have continued to evolve how we engage with our employees and our wellbeing offer to ensure we understand both individual needs and the specific equality impacts on certain groups of people.

Our research into changing behaviours during lockdown has informed our communication and engagement strategy which can be seen in some of our recent initiatives such as Make Space for Nature. Whilst there has been an overall positive picture in terms of engagement with nature during lockdown, we also know that this engagement is unequally distributed. Our funding and partnerships continue to connect people from harder to reach communities and backgrounds with nature, helping them to care about nature and the quality of the local environments where they live, work and play.

Our emerging priorities focus on how NatureScot can support a Green Recovery that addresses the twin challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss. These need to be central components of a more sustainable and inclusive economy. I therefore warmly welcome the recommendation of the National Ministerial Taskforce Human Rights Leadership report that the human right to a healthy environment should be enshrined in our laws.

As part of the development of our next corporate plan, we will look for further opportunities to invest resources in engaging more marginalised communities and groups with nature, and involve them in the co-design and implementation of the nature-based solutions needed to tackle climate change and contribute to the green recovery.

We are proud to be leading the way in our achievements, but know we need to do much more. We look forward to working in partnership with others and, as you read this report, we would welcome any suggestions about where we can improve and how we can accelerate and strengthen our progress.



Francesca Osowska Chief Executive

Ro-ràdh le Francesca Osowska, Àrd-oifigear NatureScot

Tha mi air a chur romhainn gu bheil co-ionannachd, iomadachd agus com-pàirteachadh aig teis-meadhan a h-uile nì anns a bheil NàdarAlba an sàs.

Chuir mi an geall do Chomhairle Chomhairleachaidh a' Phrìomh Mhinistear do Bhoireannaich is Nigheannan ann an 2019 gun leanadh an obair a dh'ionnsaigh lùghdachadh mì-chothrom nan tuarastalan agus tha sinn air a dhol seachad air an targaid againn de 9%. Ach cha stad sinn an sin. Leanadh sinn oirnn a' sireadh chothroman airson a' bheàrn thuarastalan seo a dhùnadh agus, coltach ri gach taobh eile de cho-ionannachd, tha sinn ag iarraidh air luchd-obrach beachdan is co-dhùnidhean a thaobh gnè a cheasnachadh is a sgrùdadh.

Tha fios againn gu bheil an tuilleadh obrach a dhìth ge-tà; mar eisimpleir, chan eil cothromachd a thaobh cleachdadh nàdair deimhinnte fhathast. Tha saoghal sòiseo-phoilitigeach 2020 air an obair againn air com-pàirteachadh le daoine de chinnidhean mion-shluaigh is an gealladh againn do dhaoine òga a phiobrachadh. Tha sinn a' stiùireadh fuasgladh roinneil don leudachadh anns a' mheasgachadh de dhaoine a tha a' faighinn tlachd is buannachd à nàdar agus ag obair san roinn againn tro ar cuid obrach air sgilean nàdair agus cuide ri Backbone Community Interest Company (CIC).

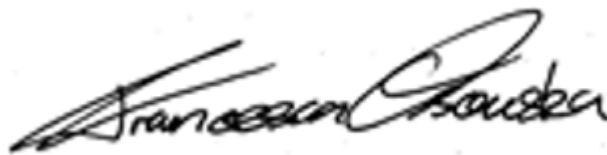
B' fheudar dhuinn, coltach ri iomadh buidheann eile, na dòighean-obrach is na prìomhachasan againn atharrachadh ri linn Covid-19. Tha slàinte is sunnd an luchd-obrach againn aig teis-meadhan freagradh leantainneach na buidhne agus, mar sin dheth, tha sinn a' sìor-atharrachadh nan dòighean conaltraidh leis an luchd-obrach againn agus na tairgse slàinte againn ach an tuig sinn an dà chuid, feuman dhaoine fa leth agus a' bhuaidh aig co-ionannachd air buidhnean sònraichte de dhaoine.

Tha ar cuid rannsachaidh air mar a tha dòighean-giùlain air atharrachadh tron ghlasadh-shluaigh air cur ris an ro-innleachd chonaltraidh is chom-pàirteachaidh againn a chithear ann an cuid de na h-iomairtean againn a leithid Make Space for Nature. Tha fios againn gu bheil an com-pàirteachadh seo air a roinn gu mì-chothromach ged a tha com-pàirteachadh le nàdar tron ghlasadh-shluaigh air a dhol am feabhas san fharsaingeachd. Tha na cothroman maoineachaidh is co-obrachaidh againn a' ceangal dhaoine à coimhearsnachdan is suidheachaidhean a tha nas dorra a ruigsinn le nàdar agus a' leigeil leotha eòlas a chur air nàdar agus air staid nan àrainnean anns a bheil iad beò.

Tha na prìomhachasan ùra againn stèidhichte air ciamar as urrainn do NàdarAlba taic a chumail ri Slànachadh Uaine a fhreagras ris na dùbhlanan an cois atharrachadh na gnàth-shìde agus call bith-iomadachd a dh'fheumar a chur aig teis-meadhan eaconamaidh nas seasamhaich is nas com-pàirtiche. Mar sin dheth, tha mi a' cur fàilte chridheil air a' mholadh an cois [aithisg an Sgioba Mhinistireil Nàiseanta air Ceannardas Chòraichean Daonna](#) gum bu chòir gum bi còir a' chinne-daonna air àrainneachd fhallainn a bhith sgrìobhte gu daingeann nar cuid laghan.

Bidh sinn a' sireadh chothroman a bharrachd airson an tuilleadh ghoireasan a chur ri coimhearsnachdan is buidhnean air an iomall is iad a' com-pàirteachadh le nàdar agus sinn ag iarraidh orra a thighinn an sàs ann an dealbhadh is stèidheachadh nam fuasglaidhean nàdarra a bhios riatanach airson dèiligeadh ri atharrachadh na gnàth-shìde agus airson cur ris an t-slànachadh uaine.

Tha sinn moiteil gu bheil na choisinn sinn gu ruige seo na shamhla do chàch ach feumaidh sinn fada a bharrachd a dhèanamh. Tha fiughair againn ri bhith co-obrachadh le daoine eile agus, bu toigh leinn, is tu a' leughadh na h-aithisg seo, gun cuireadh tu moladh sam bith thugainn a thaobh ciamar a bheireamaid ar cuid obrach am feabhas agus ciamar a b' urrainn dhuinn ar cuid adhartais a chur an sàs ann an dòigh nas luaithe agus nas treasa.



Francesca Osowska, Àrd-oifigear NatureScot

Executive Summary

This is NatureScot's fifth Equality Report and demonstrates our ongoing commitment to ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of what we do.

Progress against equality outcomes 2019-2023

1. Across the range of our activities, more people from Minority Ethnic (ME) communities, people with disabilities and disadvantaged families, individuals and communities enjoy and benefit from nature. **Progress** - On track.
2. Through changes to recruitment and attraction procedures more people from ME communities and people with disabilities apply for opportunities with NatureScot. **Progress** - On track.
3. We have an age-inclusive culture that supports and values everyone. **Progress** - On track.
4. We have reduced the gender pay gap to 9%. **Progress** - achieved.

There is a growing body of evidence demonstrating the significant negative impact Covid-19 has had on those already existing inequalities within our society. Our response to the disproportionate impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has been to focus on young people. Much of our youth engagement work takes an intersectional approach, with the aim of increasing the overall diversity of NatureScot and the environmental sector.

Through our Programme for Youth Employment we have diversified our current reach for young talent beyond graduate and student placements. Our work around future nature-based jobs and skills and research into ME diversity in the sector will help us develop a longer term strategy for both a Green Recovery and increase diversity within our sector.

We have achieved our target of reducing our gender pay gap to 9% (from 10.95%) in 2019. At the time of reporting our average (mean) gender pay gap was 8.5%. We know that there is more to do to continue to reduce this gap and we are committed to continuing to work towards reducing our pay gap further.

Internally, we have focused on looking at how we can engage and work differently, through increased opportunities for employee voice and on developing our understanding of how we more effectively engage marginalised communities around this agenda and co-

design solutions. We recognise that we need to invest in more resources and upskilling of staff to allow us to engage these communities and groups with nature.

We continue to encourage greater disclosure of equality information from our employees, however continued low disclosure rates in tandem with a move to a new HR system in 2019 has resulted in some significant data gaps which we are working to address.

There is more we can do to support minority businesses and social enterprises to support our inclusive economic growth objectives. The increased opportunities arising from our Green Recovery will help Scotland to develop a more sustainable and inclusive economy.

About NatureScot

NatureScot is Scotland's nature agency. We work to enhance our natural environment and inspire the people of Scotland to care more about it. NatureScot believes that a nature-rich future, where everyone is involved, will make us all happier, healthier, wealthier and more equal.

Our Corporate Plan Connecting People and Nature (2018 onwards) sets out our vision for Scotland's nature and landscapes and is built around four interdependent outcomes:

1. More people across Scotland are enjoying and benefiting from nature.
2. The health and resilience of Scotland's nature is improved.
3. There is more investment in Scotland's natural capital and its management to improve prosperity and wellbeing.
4. We have transformed how we work.

NatureScot strongly advocates for fairer and more equal access to nature for all. We recognise that the ability to access nature can be more limited for some older people and children, disabled people, people from black and ethnic minority backgrounds, and by disadvantaged families, individuals and communities. Priorities within our corporate plan seek to address such inequalities, but also to engage the interest of these groups in the environment so as to encourage volunteering and help them to play a role in the maintenance and improvement of their local environment.

Scottish Government's priorities are for sustainable economic growth, improving people's physical and mental health and wellbeing, and reducing inequalities. A large proportion of Scotland's people live in urban areas with limited access to natural greenspace, and experience poorer health outcomes. The evidence suggests that the picture is complicated by the experience of socio-economic disadvantage amongst some people sharing protected characteristics: for example, women and poverty, disability and poverty, mental health and poverty, etc. This makes access to nature for reasons of time, transport, money or physical access even more difficult. Our equality outcomes are therefore designed to fully incorporate and respond to both the Fairer Scotland duty and the Equality Act.

About this report

This report responds to our statutory duties to report on our mainstreaming activity and progress on delivering our Equality Outcomes. The specific duties also require us to take steps to gather employee information annually and, if not reported elsewhere, to report it within our mainstreaming report along with the progress made in using the employee information to better perform the general equality duty. We also publish our gender pay gap, our equal pay statement and occupational segregation information (covering ethnicity, disability and gender).

The report begins with a description of how we have mainstreamed equality and diversity in the delivery of our functions and provides a summary of progress against our Equality Outcomes.

Mainstreaming equality

Mainstreaming equality requires us to integrate equality into our day-to-day work, and take account of equality while undertaking our functions. A combination of our increased efforts to raise awareness of equality and inclusion, developing our use of co-design and improving the quality of our equality impact assessments is strengthening how we build equality into our business and shape and inform our policies and activities. Our focus on youth engagement takes an intersectional approach, with the aim of increasing the overall diversity of NatureScot, the environmental sector and the stakeholders who engage with nature.

Leadership & Governance

We report quarterly to our Board on our workforce profile and progress on equalities work through our People Report. Our Board, Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team attend, and are key speakers at our Women's Network events, Cultural Awareness, and the Future of Conservation discussions. Our Deputy Chair acts as our Board Equality Champion. In addition we recently appointed two Senior Leadership Equality Champions which further ensures equality, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of our work to make nature for all.

We continue to be committed to the NACWG which aims to "make gender inequality a historical curiosity in Scotland". NatureScot signed the public pledge in support of the work of NACWG; as such, we can have a real impact on progressing gender equality in Scotland.

Our Chief Executive has overall strategic responsibility for equality and diversity. Consideration of equality and diversity is built into our planning and decision-making processes. Employees are prompted to consider equality and diversity needs when bidding for project resources, when developing or reviewing policy, and when seeking

decisions from our senior leadership team. In addition to employee information, we also collate evidence relating to people's enjoyment of the outdoors, and greenspace through our research and monitoring work.

Board Diversity

We are required to report on our progress towards the Gender Representation on public boards Scotland Act (2018). We were one of the first public bodies to achieve gender parity in 2015. In 2021 we ran a competitive interview for 4 board vacancies:

- Applications received: 117 applications
- Gender split: 72 male and 43 female (2 prefer not to say)
- Invites to interview: 13 males and 3 females
- Appointed: 5 male and 2 female

Due to the depth and breadth of experience that the applicants brought an additional 3 new board members were appointed, (2 female and 5 male in total), which with the existing gender representation will ensure our Board continues to have gender parity.

We recognise the benefits of widening board diversity beyond gender and have taken a number of positive actions towards this. In partnership with Inclusion Scotland in 2019 we took part in an initiative to consider how accessible public appointments are for those with a disability by creating a shadow board member opportunity. Throughout this experience mentoring was provided by our Deputy Chair and Board Equality Champion. The opportunity enabled the shadow board member to learn what is involved in being a board member of a Public Body and provided them with the tools to apply for a public appointment, as well as demonstrating the accessibility of NatureScot's Board meetings:

"NatureScot could not have been more understanding... Right from the start they asked what support they could offer to ensure I was able to physically attend in person with Poppy my guide dog and what adjustments they could make to ensure I got as much from the shadowing experience as possible." Neil Skene, Board Shadow, Access to Public Appointments.

In May 2020, our Board confirmed their support for NatureScot to explore ways in which a more formal role for a young person on the Board could be instituted, and to promote and influence this initiative through wider public duties and engagement with Scottish ministers. As part of our recent Board recruitment exercise our Executive Office worked with our Young Employee Panel (YEP) to ensure the wording of the vacancy advertisement and the requirements put forward would not present any barriers to young people, or those from other minority groups, from applying.

Additionally, we have positively encouraged applications from young people and people with an ME background through our promotional work, as well as extending awareness of our campaign to our equality networks and partners and provided the opportunity for potential applicants to connect with a young or ME board member.

Equality Impact Assessments

A key tool for helping staff to focus on equalities is to carry out Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs). We have been reviewing how we can improve the EqIA process through creating a more dynamic and valuable process. The pandemic has been a catalyst for this, giving us the opportunity to connect with more employees across different teams and locations and of different backgrounds. It has made it easier to involve more people in the variety of work we do. This opportunity has allowed us to facilitate virtual drop-in EqIA circles, where participants review the impact on each equality strand on a virtual concept board.

We have also built our employee networks into the EqIA process and are building momentum around mechanisms for consultation with the sector and ME representatives (Outcome 1.1). In addition we implemented our EqIA e-learning in December 2020 and have begun rolling this out to key staff.

Digital Accessibility

In response to the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 we have been focusing efforts on making our external facing websites accessible. We are currently rolling out staff training to support staff with the required review of existing content to ensure that this is still relevant and that it is made accessible.

Inclusive Communications

We are working with deafscotland on developing some inclusive communication around walking outdoors, using British Sign Language (BSL), subtitles and voice overs on our website. We are also developing a project to deliver natural capital videos in BSL and exploring further opportunities around inclusive communications with partner organisations.

Outdoor Access

We continue to promote outdoor access, and work with partners to remove barriers to access wherever possible. Over the last six years we have put resources into surveying all of [Scotland's Great Trails](#) for accessibility with the final six due to be completed by March 2021. We will work with route managers and trail users to develop user friendly information to enable people to decide which routes, or sections of them, are accessible to them. The John Muir Way multi use access [story map](#) is an example of how a partner organisation – the [Green Action Trust](#) - has been able to present the survey information in a modern and informative way.

Progress towards our outcomes

Equality Outcome 1

Across the range of our activities, more people from Minority Ethnic (ME) communities, people with disabilities and disadvantaged families, individuals and communities enjoy and benefit from nature

Action 1.1:

Develop new engagement mechanisms or develop existing panels to engage with people from ME communities and/or disadvantaged families, individuals and communities on our existing or emerging work

Progress - on track

The socio-political context of 2020 has been a catalyst for our work on engagement with people from ME backgrounds and our commitment to young people, which we hope will help us increase the diversity of people both enjoying and benefiting from nature and working within our sector.

Although our equality outcomes do not specifically identify young people as a target group, young people are one of our key stakeholders in achieving a nature-rich future and are a minority group both within NatureScot and society.

We have been working to increase access and participation of young people in nature for a number of years. They are not just the leaders of the future, but the leaders of today. A strong youth voice is critical to tackling biodiversity loss and leading nature-based solutions we need to address the climate emergency. We are committed to ensuring all young people are empowered to take action, make a difference, and influence change.

For this reason much of our youth engagement work takes an intersectional approach, with the aim of increasing the overall diversity of NatureScot, the environmental sector and the stakeholders who engage with nature (e.g. [see page 38 in the 2018-19 ReRoute report](#)). This goes beyond just increasing the number of young people engaged, but also the diversity of young people engaged, and many of the improvements implemented will benefit other minority stakeholder groups. This includes increasing our knowledge of and capacity for co-design processes, and encouraging staff to identify how they can better engage with any and all minority groups.

May 2020 marked the end of our formal partnership with Young Scot, however we continue to work closely together as we carry out our future youth engagement work. Our Young Employee Panel has worked closely with YoungScot to co-produce our Youth Engagement Action Plan, which was strongly endorsed by our Board in August 2020. Considering this work, NatureScot's CEO, Francesca Osowska signed up NatureScot to the Power of Youth Charter demonstrating our commitment to empowering young people, particularly from ethnic minority backgrounds, to volunteer and take environmental and social action.

In order to take this work forward we are partnering with Backbone CIC, Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) and Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Authority (LLTNPA) to launch the [Changing Landscapes & Actioning Change project](#). This project includes research around the lack of ME diversity in the sector and will

culminate in an ME engagement event in the summer of 2021 which will include a wide range of outdoor/environmental organisations and ME representatives. Actions arising from project will support the continued development of our programme for youth employment and nature-based jobs and skills work (Outcome 2.1).

This is the start of the journey, this work will also shape the formation of a ME engagement plan aimed at increasing the diversity of people involved in the co-design and implementation of the nature-based solutions needed to tackle climate change and contribute to the green recovery. As part of the development of our next corporate strategy, we will look for further opportunities to invest resources in engaging more marginalised communities and groups with nature.

Action 1.2:

Consider how we can demonstrate the long term impact of our projects involving the people we support with a view to influencing future strategic research programmes

Progress - on track

We are working with Scottish Government on the current review of the Strategic Research Programme with the long standing inequalities in access to greenspace identified as a key issue. We are members of the Public Health Scotland Environment and Spaces Group looking at the impact of the pandemic on health inequalities and contributed data and advice for the Change in use of green and open space following Covid-19 lockdown 'stay at home' phase and initial easing of lockdown publication.

To allow us to consider impacts on people and inequalities, we are placing more emphasis on evaluation of our major projects including the GI intervention, Green Health Partnerships, and Learning in Local Greenspace. Work on a bespoke evaluation framework for assessing the impact of Nature-based solutions has also been commissioned from the Scottish Environment, Food & Agriculture Research Institute which will also add to our understanding.

NatureScot and our partners undertake regular research to understand how people in Scotland use, value and enjoy the natural environment. This work helps us identify population groups that are under-represented, enabling us to develop policies and practice to address inequalities in participation so that more people across Scotland can enjoy the benefits of engaging with and participating in nature. We also use the findings in our Equality Impact Assessments. Our research findings can be accessed on our Measuring Participation webpage.

While there has been a significant increase in participation in outdoor recreation in Scotland since 2012, some groups remain under-represented. These include older people, those living in the most deprived areas, members of the ME population, and people with a long-term illness or disability. Our research suggests that some progress has been made since 2012 in terms of increasing participation among those aged 65 plus

and those living in our most deprived areas; however, there is less evidence to suggest a significant change in participation among the ME population or those with a long-term illness or disability.

The Covid-19 crisis highlighted some of these existing inequalities. Research undertaken by NatureScot during the first six months of the pandemic showed that many people visited the outdoors and engaged with nature more regularly during this time, with most experiencing positive impacts to their health and wellbeing, particularly to their mental health. However, the research also underlined the inequality of access to gardens and good quality local greenspace which still exists, especially among younger adults, less affluent people and those with a long-term illness or disability. The research on changing behaviours during lockdown has informed our communication and engagement strategy - Make Space for Nature.

While quantitative research studies such as NatureScot's Scotland's People and Nature Survey, Scottish Nature Omnibus Survey (available on our Measuring Participation webpage), the Scottish Government's Scottish Household Survey and Scottish Health Survey enable us to monitor levels of nature engagement across the population, they don't provide a detailed understanding of what drives participation, or the relative importance of different drivers among different population groups. Qualitative research (due to be published summer 2021), commissioned in partnership with the Scottish Government, will provide additional insights and allow us to plan future interventions and communications to help achieve longer-term behavioural change. Given the move from face-to-face to online survey methods, there are also opportunities for improving the quantitative monitoring of equality groups as part of the development of the next cycle of SPANS surveys 2022-32.

Action 1.3:

Increase the number of visits to our NNRs by people from ME communities, people with disabilities and disadvantaged families, individuals and communities

Progress - on track

We employed a graduate placement for our 'Making Natural Connections' work to help develop our understanding of the barriers and resources required to develop and maintain inclusive NNRs. This was a highly successful project with barriers identified (and in some cases resolved), many groups were engaged with, and future recommendations made in a final report. An 'Engaging Under-represented Groups' handbook was written for our staff as part of the placement.

Covid-19 has prevented us undertaking some of the planned NNR outreach activity. However in 2019 and 2020 we provided events on NatureScot reserves for over 8,500 people with a number specifically for under-represented groups and 3,400 students from nursery to tertiary joined us on reserve for outdoor learning with approximately 6% attending from establishments in low centile SIMD areas. Welcome increases in the number of people going outside to benefit their mental and physical health, have required for us to adjust priorities to deal with a number of pressures arising from these immediate

issues. During the pandemic we co designed our [Scottish Outdoor Access Code \(SOAC\)](#), [resources](#) with Young Scot to reflect good practice to ensure accessibility to all and launched the [#KnowTheCode campaign](#) in October 2020.



Group of women at Tentsmuir NNR. Making Natural Connections

Action 1.4:

Demonstrate how our external funding, projects, and campaigns support greater use of the outdoors by people from ME communities, people with disabilities, and disadvantaged families, individuals and communities

Progress - on track

Working with partners such as [Backbone CIC CLP programme](#), [Paths for All](#), [TCV Scotland](#), [Volunteering Matters Action Earth](#) and the [John Muir Trust](#) we continue to fund a number of projects that involve or target minority or under-represented groups. A number of our current, external funds focus on connecting people with nature, and these prioritise marginalised communities and groups, such as our [Green Infrastructure Strategic Intervention](#) funds (GISI), [Outdoor Learning in Nature Fund](#) (OLIN), [Future Routes Fund](#), [Natural and Cultural Heritage Fund](#).



Deputy First Minister, John Swinney and Francesca Osowska, NatureScot with a group of children - NatureScot Botanics copyright Backbone CIC.

It is difficult to see how we can apply equalities into some of our programmes like Peatland Action and the Biodiversity Challenge Fund for example, which are very much geared towards habitat conservation and restoration with a very small people element. However we will review how we can embed equalities better in all our funds, through strengthening staff skills and capacity around co design and outreach work and reviewing opportunities to develop a more inclusive approach to the scoping and implementation of our funding streams. In June 2021 an Associate Apprenticeship through the 2027 Associate Programme will be placed with us for a year, with the aim of helping us develop this approach.



Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/Sbd8M9dJaEs>

Duration

00:54

Exploring Fernbrae Meadows, one of our urban greenspace funded projects led by South Lanarkshire Council.

Action 1.5:

Ensure that all of our external funding programmes are promoted effectively to help priority groups to access nature

Progress - on track

Our external funding programmes are widely promoted via a range of channels including social media and our website. We are currently looking at how we can increase opportunities to co-design funding solutions with more minority groups. Current resource restrictions, the rapid nature in which funds are created, and the additional restrictions that came with partnership funds make co-design very challenging, therefore we are currently considering options for developing capacity to support further work in this area.

As part of our youth engagement work, the Scotland's youth biodiversity panel, ReRoute looked at how we could better make our funding accessible to a wider audience. They developed a young people's fund called the Future Routes Fund. The lessons learnt from this co-design exercise have been captured and form the basis of the following objective in the Young Engagement Action Plan; 'Review and develop the use of our funding to encourage greater engagement from young people.'





To ensure that the fund was promoted effectively to help priority groups to access the first two rounds of funding, Young Scot led on promotion and engagement as their services reach a wider population of young people. Lessons regarding awareness raising can also be transferred, highlighting the benefits of using partner platforms to help is to improve our methods of promotion and reach new audiences.

Work has started on encouraging the use of co-design approaches in the formation of our funds, between the Equalities team and the Funding team. While starting with a youth focus, it is hoped that this will expand further to ensure there are no barriers to any minority groups applying for funding.

Action 1.6:

Develop new opportunities to support minority businesses, supported businesses, and social enterprises to support our inclusive economic growth objectives

Progress - on track

A number of the GSI projects have involved supporting aspects of work by social enterprises, including Broomhouse Market Garden which will be a small community home farm run on a social enterprise model based in Broomhouse, an area of multiple deprivation in Edinburgh. Other social enterprises supported are Gathering Ground in Glasgow and the Merkinch Partnership in Inverness.

Scotland's Natural Capital Pilot Programme (NCAPP) is a suite of projects that NatureScot is working on to test natural capital and outcomes-based approaches to inform Scottish Government's future rural policy. The Equality Impact Assessment highlighted that the majority of land managers are male, and the law insists on one person's name on a croft lease, even if it is jointly managed by two (the lease name is usually a man) therefore payment under rural policy may principally benefit men. Therefore the need was identified to take an active approach to addressing inequalities in the land management sector, by specifically looking for participation from female and young land managers, both characteristics that are not dominant.

Despite following the Scottish Government procurement guidelines and promoting the availability of the Supported Businesses searchable on Public Contracts Portal we have not progressed any contracts with supported business. Feedback from Project Managers is that they are reluctant to 'narrow down' the field and possibly do not have confidence in delivery. Plans to conduct a survey have been hampered by Covid-19. However UK and Scottish Governments are in discussion around the transformation of public procurement work therefore we await the outcome of these discussions

There is more we can do to support minority businesses and social enterprises to support our inclusive and sustainable economic growth objectives. Longer term we are focusing on how NatureScot can support a Green Recovery that addresses the twin challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss as central components of a more resilient and inclusive economy. As projects are identified we will ensure equalities are embedded.

New Actions arising

Following this review of progress against Outcome 1 we have identified a number of new equality actions (April 2021- March 2023):

- Develop a ME engagement plan for the next corporate plan period
- Employ an associate apprenticeship to develop a more inclusive approach to the scoping and implementation of our funding streams
- Develop additional skills and capacity within relevant teams to provide greater focus for engagement and co-design work
- Consider opportunities for the better monitoring of equality groups as part of the development of the next cycle of SPANs surveys 2022-32

Equality Outcome 2

Through changes to recruitment and attraction procedures more people from Minority Ethnic (ME) communities and people with disabilities apply for opportunities with NatureScot

Action 2.1:

Recruitment & Attraction strategy

Progress - on track

The impact of Covid-19 on young people has been significant in all areas of life and has provided a catalyst for reviewing our youth employment offer. As part of our Green Recovery from Covid-19, NatureScot is committed to the [Young Persons Guarantee](#). Much of our youth engagement work takes an intersectional approach, with the aim of increasing the overall diversity of NatureScot and the environmental sector.

We have increased our commitment to young people through our Programme for Youth Employment which aims to diversify our current reach for young talent beyond graduate and student placements and committing to invest in foundation, modern and graduate apprenticeships. We are also exploring alternative routes into NatureScot, such as through our Community Leadership project with Backbone CIC and the [2027 Associate programme](#).

In 2020 we commissioned a [report to explore the gaps and opportunities for increasing nature-based jobs](#) which strengthens our understanding of the skills and jobs required for ensuring a nature rich future, where opportunities lie and where barriers need to be overcome to ensure a more diverse pool of talent. The report showed that jobs in the nature-based sector make a significant contribution to the Scottish economy while also highlighting the lack of diversity in the sector. Together with our ME engagement work with Backbone CIC this work is a vital step to increasing the diversity within our sector (Outcome 1, Action 1.1) and will inform the ongoing development of our Programme for Youth Employment, Science Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM) Strategy and Recruitment and Attraction Strategy going forward.

It is too early to see any direct impact, however hopefully over the next 2 years we will begin to see increases to the diversity of applications for nature based jobs and other jobs within NatureScot.



Action 2.2:

Monitoring diversity through recruitment cycle

Progress - on track

Currently diversity monitoring is still done outside our recruitment system however we have a new system and are developing the recruitment functionality. This will include an exploration of how we can use the new system to monitor the applicants through the full recruitment cycle to appointment and the option for implementing blind recruitment.

Action 2.3:

Unconscious bias training

Progress - achieved

Research suggest that whilst unconscious bias training teaches awareness it does not change behaviour. That is why it is just one component of the personal leadership programme that we have been developing over 2020. All our employees were encouraged to undertake personality type assessments, attend a session to discuss and understand their differences, and take these conversations into their everyday interactions. Offering employees unconscious bias training builds upon the insights they have developed through a greater understanding of themselves. We are offering staff a suite of equality e-learning which includes unconscious bias and virtual workshops to explore the topic in more detail. We piloted the first workshop in January 2021 and plan to

roll these out over the course of the next year. As part of the developing their awareness employees will also be encouraged to take the implicit bias test and a make a commitment to a personal action /pledge towards positive action

Equality Outcome 3

We have an age-inclusive culture that supports and values everyone

Covid-19 has proven to be a catalyst for putting the wellbeing of our employees at the forefront of all we do. This has resulted in a variety of tools and improvements aimed at encouraging an inclusive virtual workplace. We have made good progress on this outcome, in terms of our work with Age Scotland and in widening out our employee networks to include race, LGBTQ+ and Disability

Action 3.1:

Recognition for good practice

Progress - on track

We have been working in partnership with our Young Employee Panel, our Change Partner Network and Age Scotland to achieve the Age Scotland Age Inclusive Matrix. Using Action Learning Sets and the Age Inclusive Matrix we were able to identify an action plan.

A need to raise the profile of the Young Employee Panel and Network, a general need to raise awareness of age in the workplace and to acknowledge our changing needs throughout our career life cycle were high highlighted. The outputs from these sessions fed into the development of our coaching offer, wellbeing package and Personal Leadership work and two new actions have been incorporated under this equality outcome (See table 6).

Progress against other awards has been hampered by Covid-19, as a result of the fluid nature of the pandemic we have had to constantly refocus priorities. Likewise the awarding bodies have had limitations on the support they can provide. Our response to Covid-19 has focused very much on the wellbeing of our employees, we therefore expect to be able to have upgraded our awards as planned, in due course.



The Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion (enei)
The Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion (enei) is the UK's leading employer network covering all aspects of equality and inclusion in the workplace, focused on delivering high quality practical advice, products and services to our members. We seek to encourage best practice to enable organisations and people to prosper by valuing difference in the workplace.



Action 3.2:

Equality assessing our Organisational Development and Organisational Change policies and proposals

Progress - on track

As we all struggled to cope with the threat the pandemic posed to ourselves and our loved ones, the mental toll meant that we also had to adapt to new ways of working. As every touchpoint in our employee journey has gone virtual, we had to seek new means of engaging with our employees and targeting support for their individual needs. Our Covid-19 & beyond EqIA examined the differential impact of the pandemic on equality groups and initial actions to consider whilst our regular Wellbeing in times of Uncertainty surveys provided the means to gather data and take action quickly.

Our transformation programme had already provided employees with the equipment to work remotely. We reviewed the impact on staff and quickly responded to their individual needs, such as the introduction of equipment allowances to allow staff to quickly purchase additional equipment to allow them to work at home safely and unlimited paid special leave for parents and carers juggling home working and home schooling and/or caring responsibilities.

The insights generated from our EqIAs are demonstrating the value of the process, the Programme for Youth Employment EqIA enabled us to start thinking about the actions required to increase diversity in NatureScot and across the sector specifically for young people from ME backgrounds. In addition a recent project to move to an online Licensing application highlighted a higher percentage of dyslexic farmers, gamekeepers and stalkers than the national average. Therefore actions to mitigate this were built in to the user testing.

Action 3.3:

Increase the number of employees considering partial retirement options

Progress - on track

Although we have not seen an increase in those seeking partial retirement we have begun increasing awareness. We have decreased the age requirement for attendance at our Planning for Retirement workshops and we held a series of pension workshops in 2020. Our work with Age Scotland around age bias and integrating Career MOTs (see additional actions below) into our performance development conversations will encourage more conversations around career aspirations throughout employee life cycle.

Action 3.4:

Review our approach to Employee Networks

Progress - on track

Our Change Partner Network plays a key role in supporting successful and efficient organisational change, ensuring that change initiatives are communicated to the teams they represent, and that feedback from the team flows back to the decision-makers. There is representation on the Change Partner Network from our Young Employee Network (YEN) and our Women's Network and this representation will be extended to other employee networks as these are mature.

In the Young Employee Network and associated Panel's second year, there have been a number of progressions and achievements. The YEP authored a board paper detailing the challenges faced for youth employment in NatureScot. The associated recommendations were agreed to and have been included in the newly established Youth Engagement Action Plan.

We have also seen an increase of engagement from wider staff with the panel, and the increase of young people involved in decision-making and governance process. There are now YEN representatives on three of the organisations programme board including the Climate Change Programme, Programme for Youth Employment and the Intranet Improvement Project. Beyond this, the panel have also consulted on a number of EqlAs and strategies.

Work led by the YEN and its panel has been heavily directed by intersectionality: diversity, equality and inclusivity of all and has been instrumental in the generation of interest and formation of our other LGBTQ+ and Disability equality networks. Due to the lack of ME representation within NatureScot and across the sector we are currently exploring options to collaborate with Environment & Economy Leaders Group partners to launch a shared Employee Race Network.

Action 3.5:

Implement the actions identified by the Dignity at Work group

Progress - achieved

We have reviewed our Dignity at work Policy, strengthened the informal process and promoted our existing support and tools, such as our Employee Assistance Programme and Mental Health Champions. In addition our Personal Leadership Programme provided all employees with greater insights into theirs and their colleague's personalities to help them better understand the impact their behaviour can have on different people and how to have difficult conversations when required. The roll out of our Unconscious bias training and development of unconscious bias toolkit will further strengthen our personal leadership competencies.

Action 3.6:

Develop a Mental Health at Work Plan

Progress - achieved

Our vision of developing a Mental Health at Work plan has been overtaken by our Covid-19 response and the creation of a wellbeing package to support staff working from home. We are making wellbeing a central theme of all conversations that we have within teams, with employees and colleagues across the organisation.

The package was based upon our Covid-19 & Beyond EqIA and responses to our ongoing Wellbeing in Times of Uncertainty surveys. Our wellbeing 'package' includes the introduction of new services to complement our Employee Assistance Programme and employee engagement, widening of our employee networks, an online learning hub and a variety of wellbeing drop in sessions which aim to cater from all. Our new online coaching tool also provides employees with an opportunity to diagnose work issues that are negatively impacting their wellbeing, empowering them to take control in a constructive and informal manner.

Action 3.7:

Disclosure Campaign & Awareness Raising

Progress - achieved

Covid-19 saw increased engagement in the outdoors however also saw headlines which reinforced the idea that nature is not for all, only for the few that know how to treat it properly, which fails to see the inequalities that exist in the environmental sector and access to our natural spaces. In addition the Black Lives Matter movement has made the environmental sector reflect on the lack of diversity in terms of employment and nature-based activities. People from ME backgrounds are rarely presented as knowledge-holders or leaders in natural spaces. It is a self-perpetuating circle that requires a sectoral response.

Within this context, NatureScot has focused on raising and questioning our organisational understanding of notions of power, prejudice and privilege and how this can inform our decisions subconsciously. These are challenging conversations however without them we will not address the underlying reasons for inequalities in our sector.

Throughout Black History month 2020 we shared resources with our employees and encouraged time for peer learning and reflection on some of the different viewpoints highlighted at team meetings. In response to the continued need to work from home, and to support our organisational resilience through the winter months we launched our Winter Carnival in December. There were a number of sessions which reinforced the relevance of equalities to our emerging work; through discussions around bias and privilege in the conservation sector; through upskilling staff in the use of equality impact assessments and a co-design approach. In addition we provided sessions focusing on our intergenerational workforce and support for carers.

Launch of disclosure campaign

We continue to encourage greater disclosure of equality information from our employees however continued low disclosure rates in tandem with a move to a new HR system in 2019 has resulted in some significant data gaps which we are working to address. Age, sex, and marital status are mandatory to answer (though for marital status “prefer not to say” can be selected). Despite our campaign, declaration levels have not changed significantly, with roughly one third of the organisation declaring their protected characteristics and two thirds not (Figure 1).

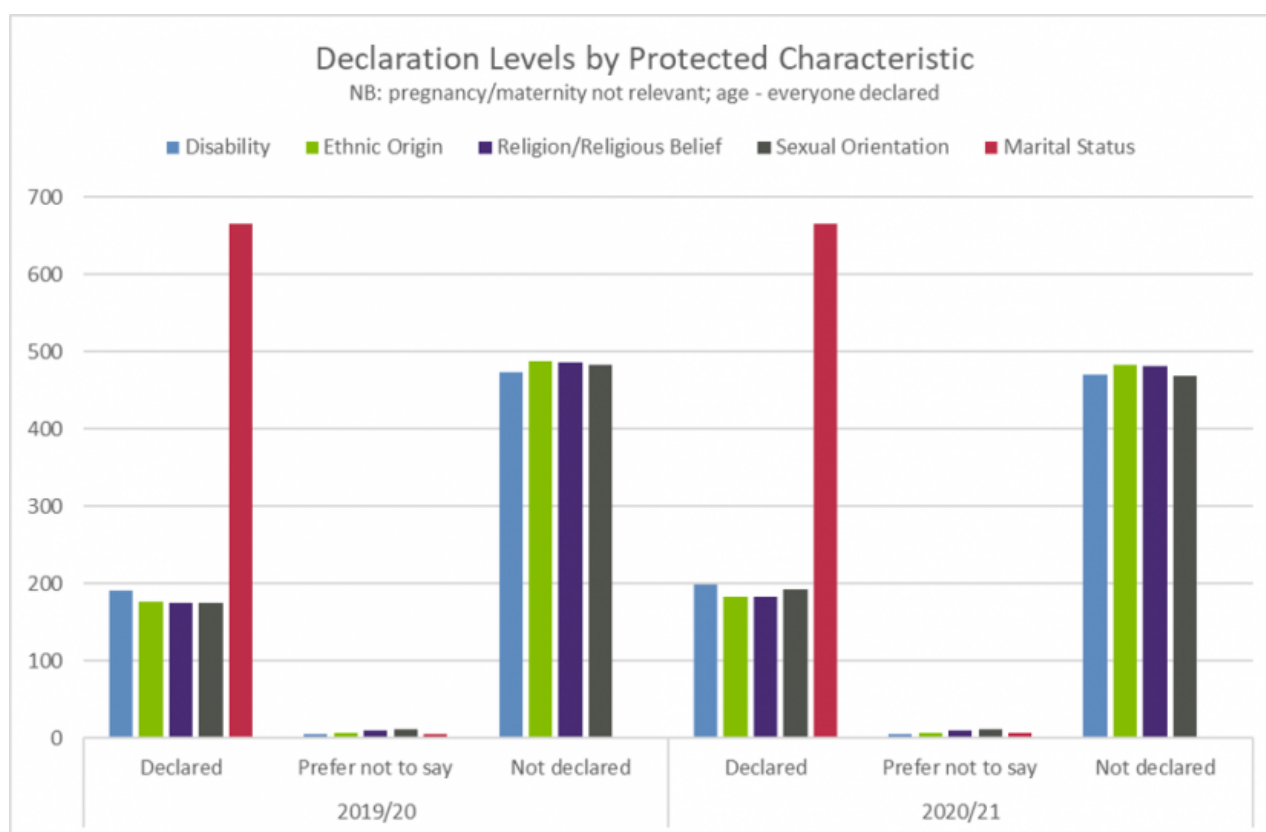


Figure 1 - Employee declaration rates of various protected characteristics in 2019/20 and 2020/21

[Click for a full description](#)

New Actions arising

Following this review of progress against Outcome 3 we have identified a number of new equality actions (April 2021 – March 2023):

- Building career MOTs into our performance management process to support employees through life transition stages
- Review our mentoring offer to include reverse and reciprocal mentoring

Equality Outcome 4

We have reduced the gender pay gap to 9%

We have achieved our target of reducing our gender pay gap to 9% from 10.95% in 2019. As at time of reporting our average (mean) gender pay gap was 8.5% and our medium gender pay gap was 0% (See Gender pay gap section).

Action 4.1:

Explore further opportunities to reduce the gap between the lowest and highest earners

Progress - achieved

In 2019 we explored opportunities to reduce the gap between the lowest and our highest earners. Significantly more women than men work in our administrative job families, these roles provide wide ranging and valuable support across a number of key areas of our work. The review was included in our 2019/20 pay remit resulting a in a consolidation of most of our A grade staff into B grade.

Action 4.2:

Review our recruitment policies and processes

Progress - on track

We are in the process of reviewing and consulting on our suite of resourcing policies, working in partnership with our trade union colleagues to improve the transparency and accessibility of our resourcing policies and processes. This will result in increased transparency of all opportunities and improved accessibility of the internal applications process. We responded to feedback from our employee networks in terms of our new format to ensure we overcame any perceived barriers concerning transparency and equality in career development held within the organisation.

The ad hoc development of role profiles can be a barrier to new and creative ways of doing a job. Often roles develop around the post holder rather than the actual needs of the job, which can result in recruitment bias and prevent the evolution of roles. We are therefore working on generic role profiles and job roles and we will seek to ensure that bias continues to be removed from the entire resourcing cycle.

Action 4.3:

Development of STEM Ambassadors in areas where there is significantly lower female representation

Progress - not achieved

We have made slower progress in terms of coordination of our approach around STEM Ambassadors to date. However we have been raising the profile of women in the sector. We published 19 blog posts for International Women's Day in 2020, highlighting our NatureScot Women. While not all of these women work in STEM roles, they highlight the variety of jobs that our organisation has and the diversity of backgrounds that have led our female employees to where they are now.

As highlighted in Outcome 1.1 the need for a more strategic and sectoral approach to diversity is required. This will be explored further through the Changing Landscapes Actioning Change Symposium and nature based skills work which will inform our Youth Employment Programme, STEM strategy and Recruitment and Attraction strategy going forward (see Outcome 2.1).

Action 4.4:

Improve workplace flexibility for men and women

Progress - on track

In the past two years we have completed our roll-out of laptops to our employees. Pre Covid-19 this enabled our staff to have more flexibility about where they worked and we saw many taking advantage of spaces most suitable to them and/or the tasks they were doing. When lockdown began in March 2020 we seamlessly moved into working from home. We doubled the number of remote working licences (for accessing our internal systems) within days, and provided staff with a budget to make their home working setup safe and comfortable.

Survey responses indicated that many staff appreciated the ability to work more flexibly during the pandemic, with positive impacts on their physical and mental health, a better balance with family/community life, and less time spent commuting or travelling for work. 16% of staff have opted for full-time home working in the future (post-pandemic), 19% opted for working at home more than 60% of the time and 57% opted for occasional homeworking.

A review of flexible working by gender has shown that in 2020/21:

- 43% of our overall female workforce were on a flexible working pattern and 16% of our overall male workforce (a 3% and 4% drop from the previous year)
- There are significant differences between the grades, with only 17% of our male A-D grades working flexibly (16% of E grades and above).
- 37% of our female A-D grades and 45% of our female E grades and above work flexibly.

Traditional is 37 hours, Monday to Friday, 9-5; flexible working patterns include all part time staff, and full time staff who work a different pattern (compressed hours, often 37 hours over four days).

Action 4.5:

Parental leave

Progress - on track

Shared Parental leave continues to have a low take-up and there have been no increases in uptake over the last two years. We are reviewing our policy, while also adding other resources to help colleagues make sense of it and consider their options.

Having increased our fully paid paternity leave from four to eight weeks in April 2019, all of the 10 men taking paternity leave have taken the full length. A further three are due to start their paternity leave in March 2021.

We have had 17 women take maternity leave (9 in 2019/20 and 8 in 2020/21). Of those, ten returned to the same hours they worked before (six full time, four part time), six lowered their hours, and one lowered her hours initially before returning to full time a year after return.

Paid Special Leave due to Covid-19 impact

At the start of the pandemic NatureScot adapted our policy on paid special leave, temporarily removing the previous limit of ten days (pro rata). 212 of our 718 staff took paid special leave during 2020/21. The staff taking this leave covered those with caring responsibilities, those most impacted were staff home-schooling primary-age children, taking care of infants/pre-school age children, or parents with children who have additional needs. The remainder accounts for those whose jobs rely on offices being open (office administration and cleaning staff) where the workload had either disappeared or was minimal (and other work wasn't able to be redistributed). Although two thirds of our staff work a flexible working pattern, more women than men are part time. Our data shows that female staff taking special leave found their working hours more affected than the male staff who took special leave, despite the average days taken not being that different:

- Number of Staff - Women 133 (63%)/Men 79 (27%)
- Average Days taken – Women 31/Men 27.9

These figures exclude those who took paid special leave for other reasons, or to volunteer in relation to Covid- 19.

Sickness absence Leave

Throughout the period of the pandemic sickness absence rates have decreased significantly with the number for days lost per person falling for both men and women (Figure 2).

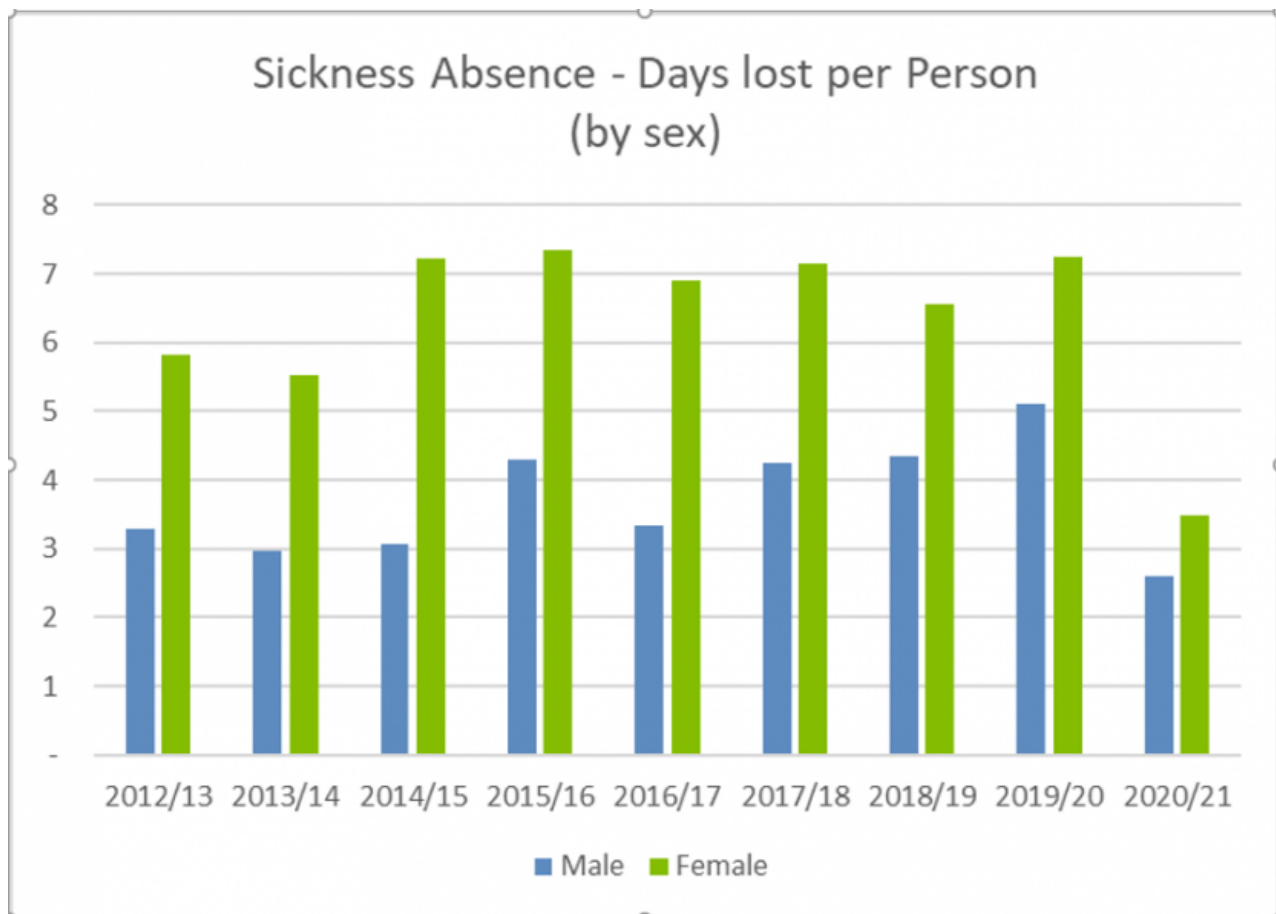


Figure 2 - Number of days lost to sick absence by sex 2019/20 and 2020/21

[Click for a full description](#)

There may be a number of reasons for the decrease in sick absences including:

- The likelihood that working from home allows staff with minor ailments greater ability to work than previously
- The ability to take paid special leave for caring responsibilities when previously staff may have been more inclined to take sick leave
- Possible non recording of sick leave

Female employees continue to have consistently higher levels of days lost to sick absences than male employees and a higher proportion of days lost to sickness absence than males (Annex 1, Figure23) however there appears to be a trend towards this balancing out. We will explore further and adapt our wellbeing offer for both men's and women's needs thus ensuring greater gender equality.

Gender Pay Gap & Occupational Segregation

Occupational Segregation by Gender

The gender balance in NatureScot has remained steady in the past four years, as shown in figure 3. Our overall workforce is split 59% women and 41% men.

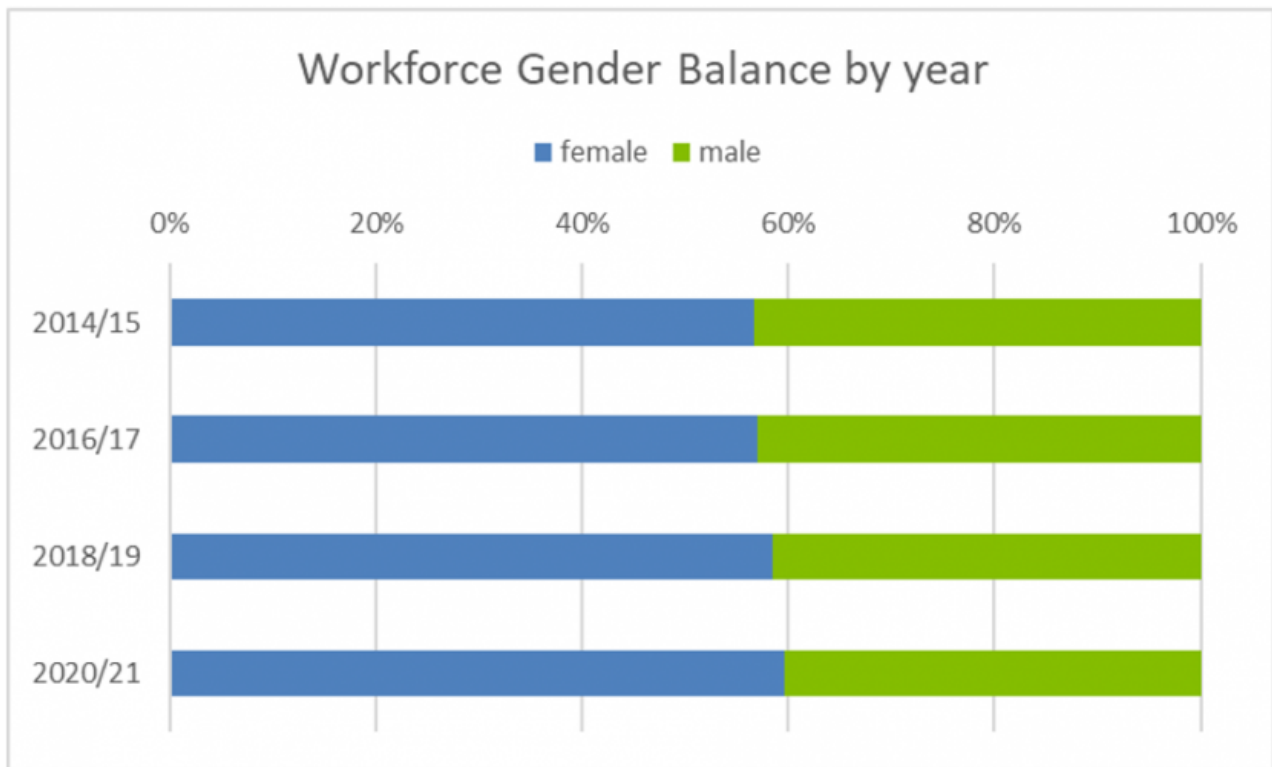


Figure 3 - Gender balance by year, 2014/15 to 2020/21

[Click for a full description](#)

Occupational Segregation is one of the main causes of the gender pay gap: research shows this to be a historical issue within society and how employers and societal norms have defined the world of women in work. Vertical segregation clusters women and men in different levels of jobs or grades and horizontal segregation occurs when men and women are clustered in certain types of jobs. Our occupational segregation analysis looks at both vertical (Figure 4) and horizontal occupational segregation (Table 9).

Figure 4 (vertical occupational segregation) shows there has been little change in the gender balance of A-D grade staff, and an increase in the number of female staff at grade E or above:

- We have five F grade Principal Advisers and Outcome Managers (in addition to departmental managers): all but two are male
- There are more women than men in grades A to D
- More men than women in grades E and F, but gender balanced in our senior leadership team (G, H, CEO)

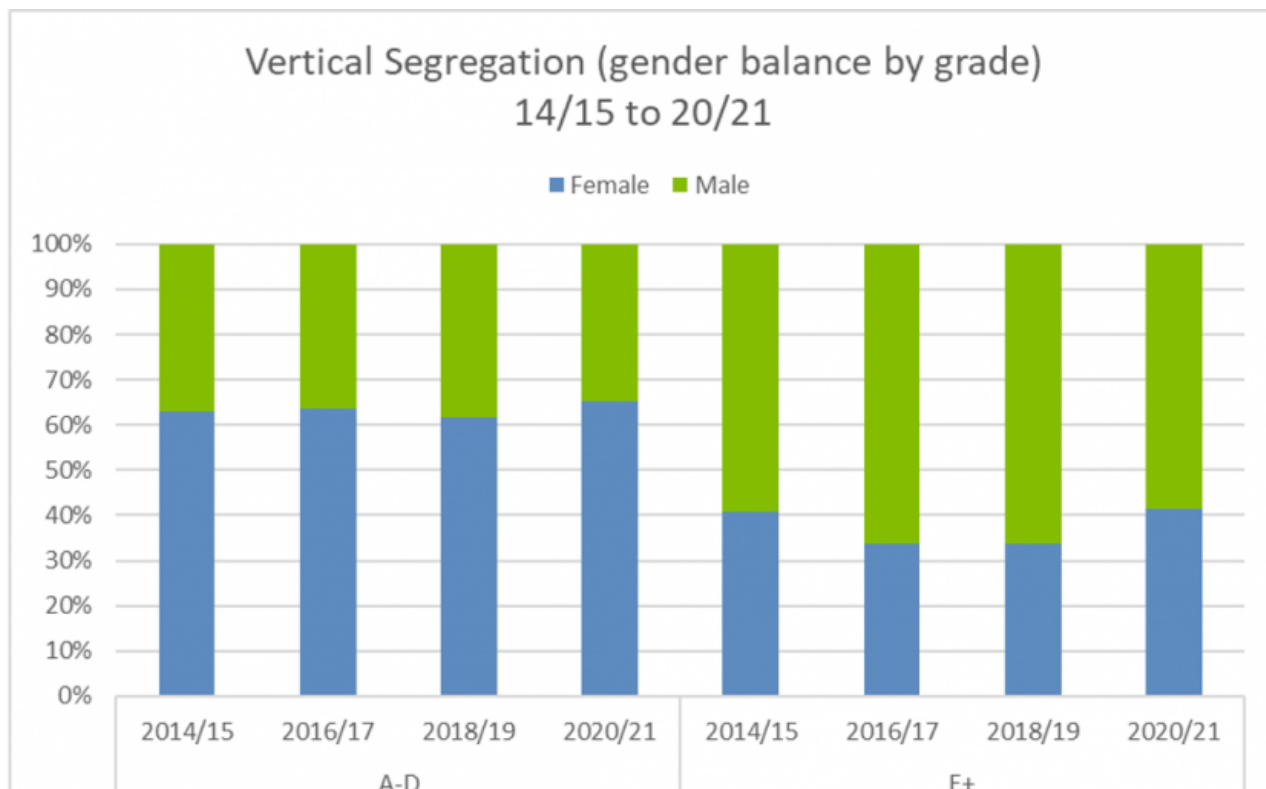


Figure 4 - Vertical segregation (Gender grade balance (A-D and E+) across each of the last four reports

[Click for a full description](#)

Figure 5 demonstrates that in 2020/21:

- The majority of promotions were to females, this is similar to the last reporting period
- A high proportion of B, C and D grade promotions were to women
- Very few E grade promotions were to women
- The majority of F, G, H grade promotions have been to men

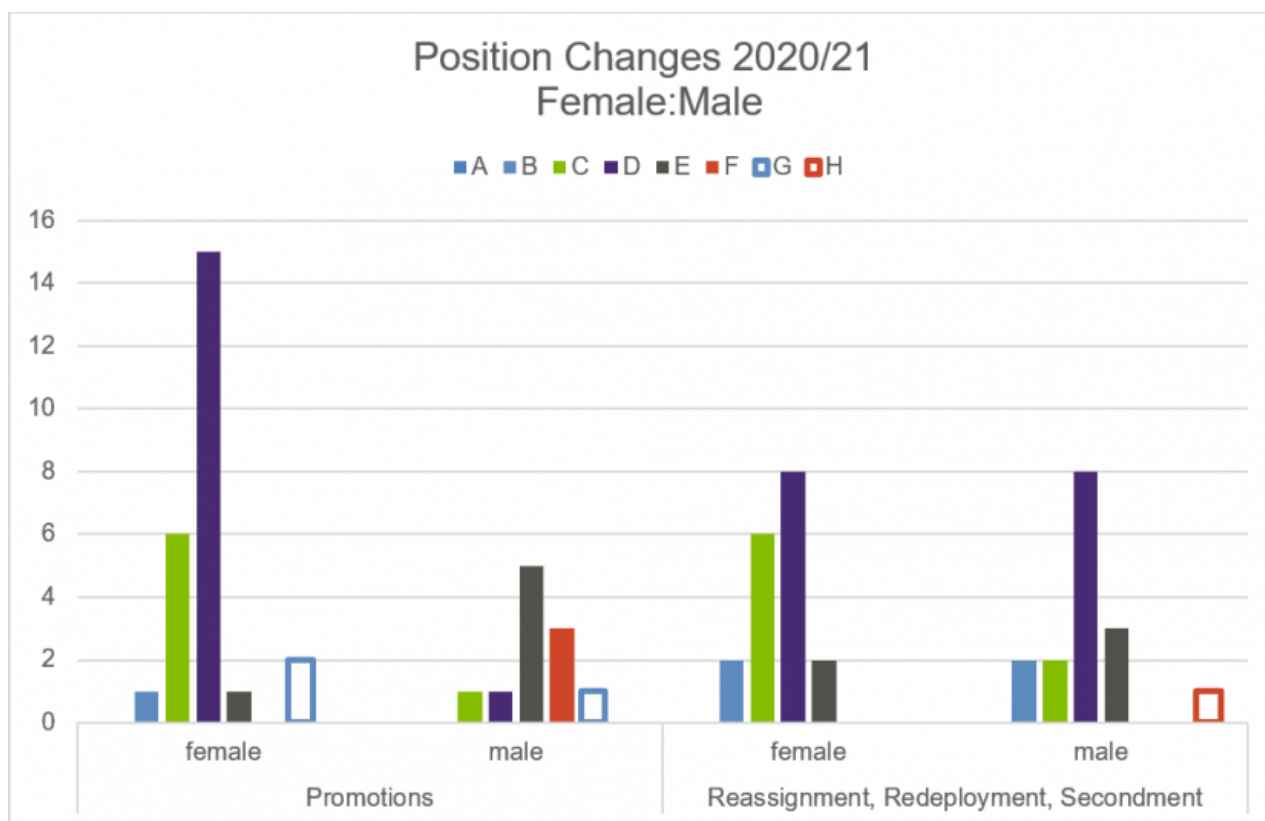


Figure 5 - Promotions, reassignment, redeployment and secondments by gender across grades over 2020/21.

[Click for a full description](#)

There have been some changes in team structures since the last reporting period that has shifted some gender composition within teams. Table 1 highlights:

- Five teams have more men than women; all others have more women than men
- Corporate Services teams continue to have the largest proportion of female to males
- People & Organisational Development (previously the HR Services team) experienced a shift towards gender parity (shift from 18% to 26% males)
- Other teams with a high proportion of female to males (80%+) are Communications, Executive Office, and Marine Ecosystems
- There are significantly more male F grade departmental managers than females
- Of those teams with a high female to male ratio (70% +) only two out of the six had female departmental managers
- Information Technology and Digital Services continues to have a significantly higher proportion of males to females
- Those staff without grades are bat workers, deer counters, and cleaners

Team Name	Females	Males
Argyll and Outer Hebrides	34	20

Team Name	Females	Males
Biodiversity and Geodiversity	20	25
Communications	24	6
Executive Office	9	2
Finance, Planning and Performance	23	9
Forth	22	13
Information and Cyber Security	17	6
Marine Ecosystems	19	4
Natural Resource Management	15	9
Northern Isles and North Highland	16	12
People and Organisational Development	22	8
People and Places	24	12
Protected Areas and Nature Reserves	14	16
South Highland	22	25
Southern Scotland	21	18
Strathclyde and Ayrshire	15	9
Supporting Good Development	13	8
Sustainable Coasts and Seas	11	5
Tayside and Grampian	26	15

Team Name	Females	Males
Technology and Digital Services	13	24
Wildlife Management	31	37
Workplace Facilities and Services	15	8
Grand Total	426	291

Table 1: Occupational Segregation (Horizontal) by Gender, Grade and Team

Gender Pay Gap

In calculating our gender pay gap we have used both the mean and the median. Presenting both provides more scope for comparison with other bodies and national statistics (e.g. ONS and Scottish Government). The mean gender pay gap for NatureScot is 8.5% and our median is 0%.

Although the pay gap increased between the first and second equality reports, it has since dropped well below our first reported figure (from 13.7% to 8.5%). This is likely a combination of a number of positive actions:

- Consolidation of lower grades in 2019
- Increase in male new starts at lower grades (graduates, other placements)
- Increased number of female promotions and the reduced grade journey times implemented in the last reporting period (2014-2019)
- A guaranteed increase of £750 for our A&B grades was paid in 2020/21
- Appointment of a number of females to senior roles
- Increase of 3 females in Grades B to D
- Increase of 4 females in Grades E+

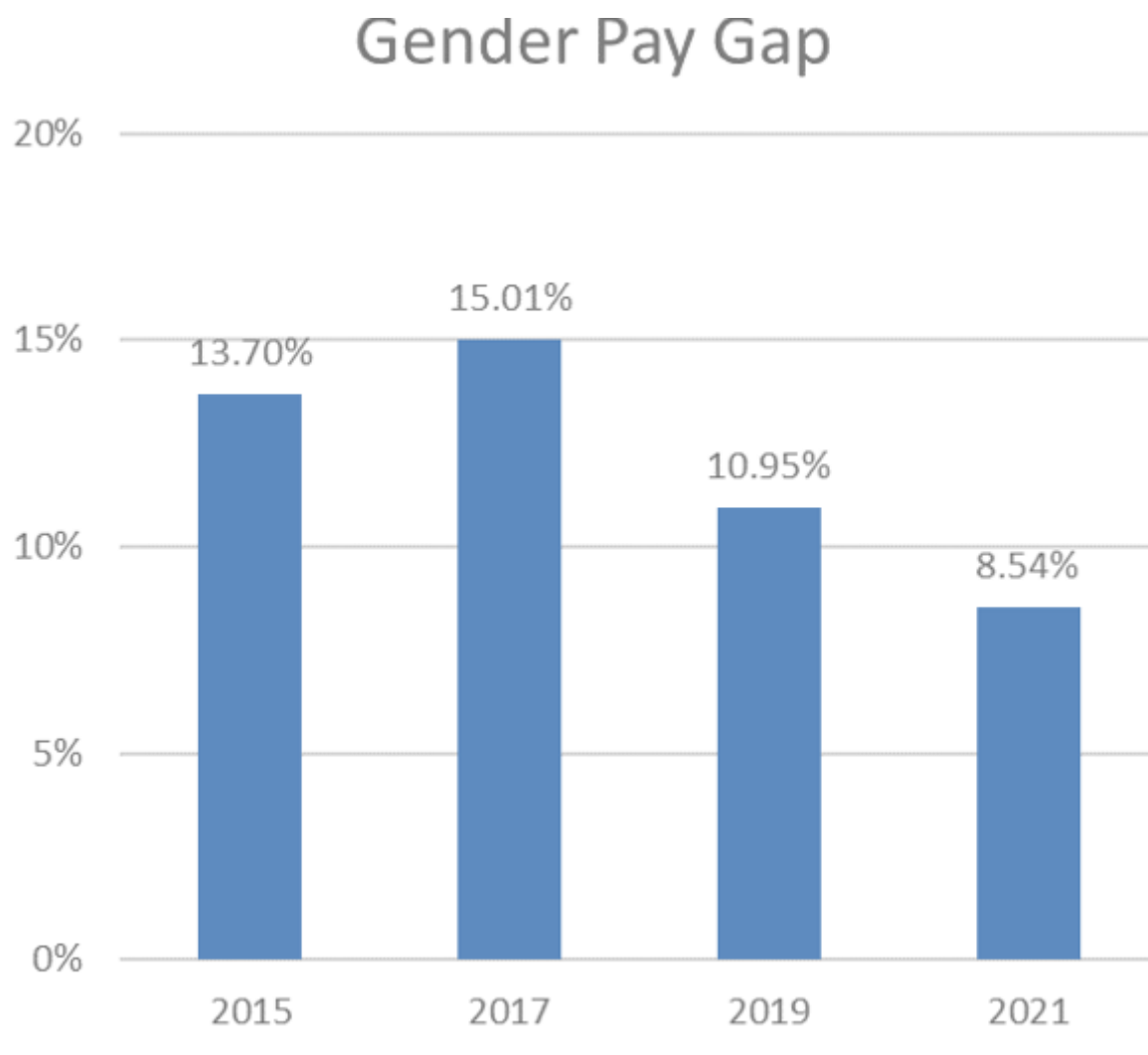


Figure 6 - Gender Pay Gap 2015-2021
[Click for a full description](#)

Figure 7 & 8 demonstrates pay gap by grade showing whether men or women earn more at each grade. Women earn more in the grades A-C and F, whereas men earn more at D, E G and H. It should be noted that the H grade hourly pay gap is attributed to a secondment to another organisation as the secondee continues to be employed by NatureScot and is included in the pay gap calculations.

Grade	2017 Pay Gap	2019 Pay Gap	2021 Pay Gap	Women earn:
A	0.66%	0.10%	2.07%	above 5% more than men
B	0.29%	0.00%	1.49%	above 1% more than men
C	0.29%	0.07%	0.83%	less than 1% more than men
D	0.70%	1.27%	0.25%	
E	0.38%	1.47%	0.72%	men and women earn equal
F	2.17%	0.53%	2.64%	
G	5.53%	2.58%	5.26%	Men earn:
H	100%	5%	5.66%	above 5% more than women
CEO	100%	100.00%	100.00%	above 1% more than women
				less than 1% more than women

Figure 7 - Pay Gap by grade, 2017, 2019, 2021
[Click for a full description](#)

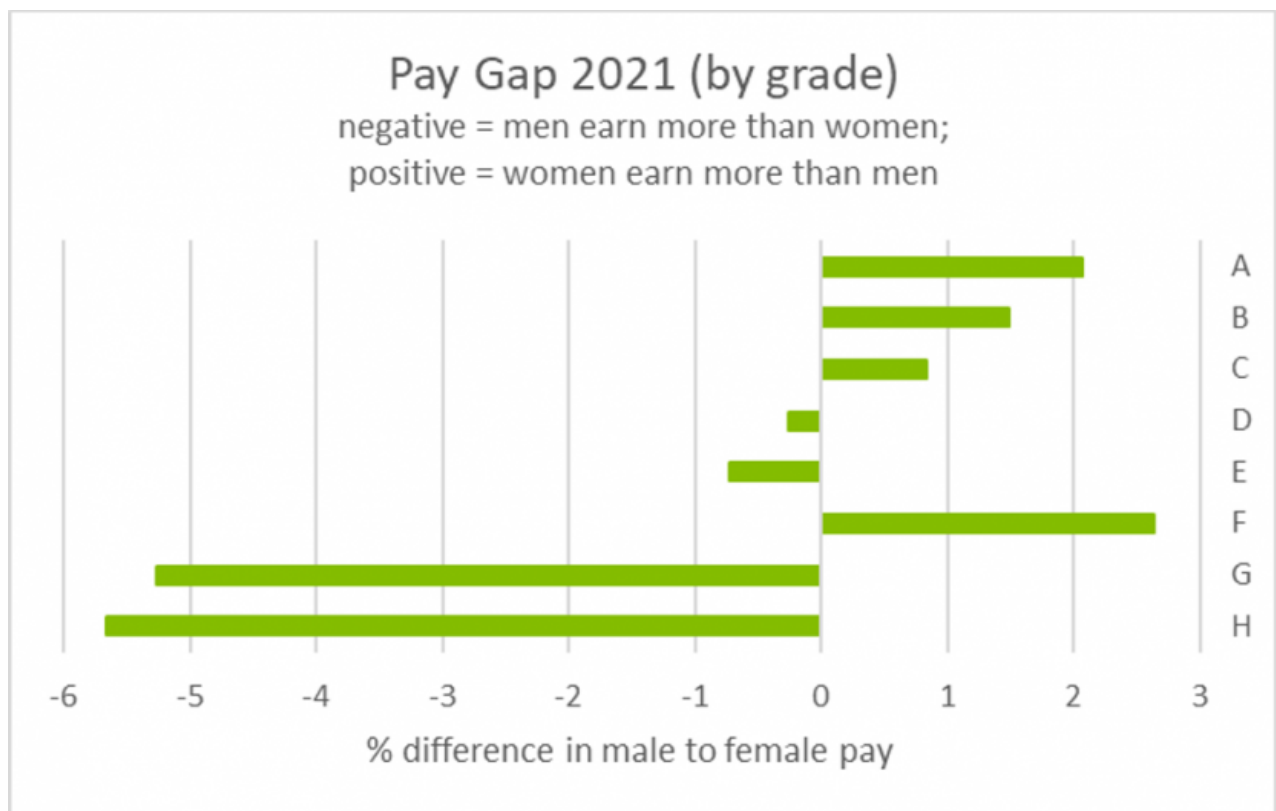


Figure 8 - Pay Gap by grade for 2021
[Click for a full description](#)

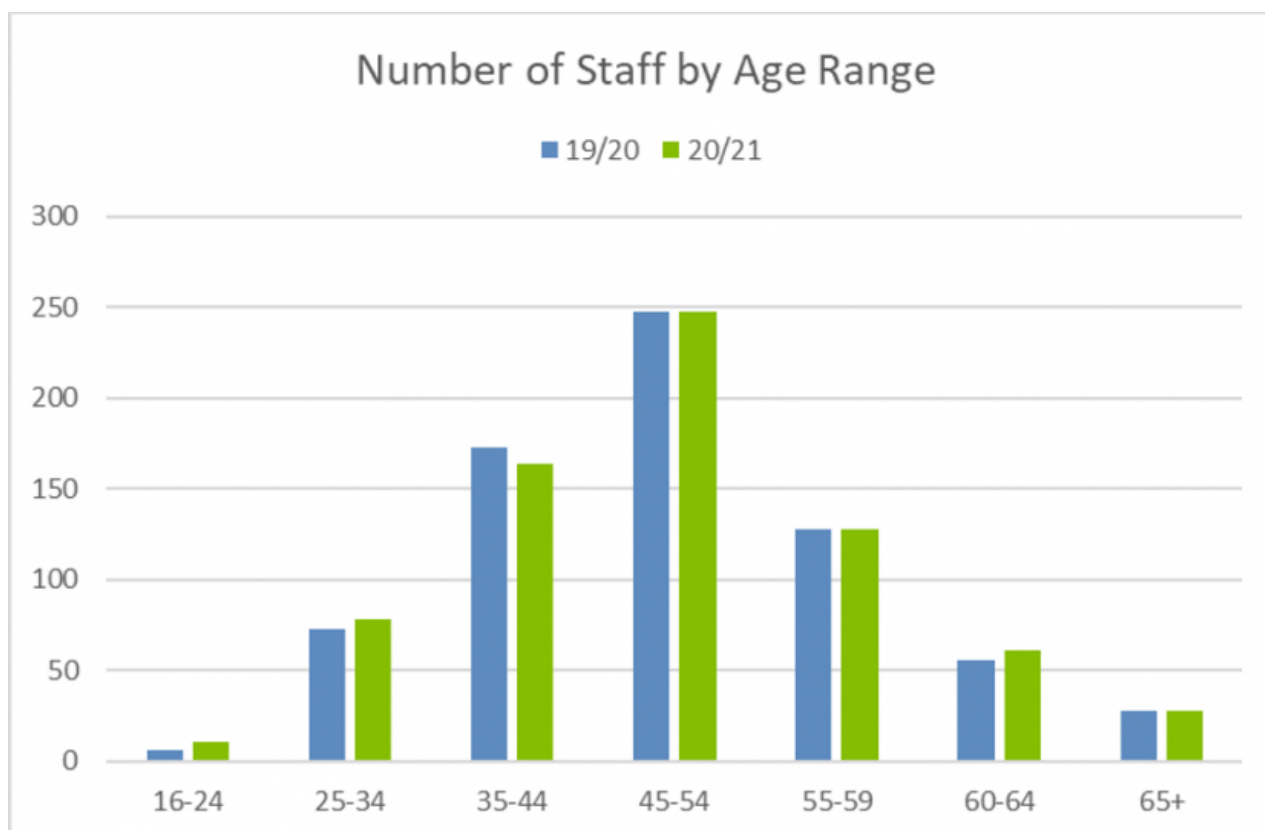


Figure 9 - majority of staff age 45-54

[Click for a full description](#)

Implications

It is predominantly still women that continue to work in our lowest paid grades therefore we will take action as set out in our Equal Pay Statement in 2019. Our 2021 pay remit will focus on how we can further reduce the gap between the lowest and the highest paid staff. We will also explore actions to address the areas of work highlighted in our horizontal occupation segregation analysis as having low gender parity.

Our Women's Network has been instrumental in highlighting barriers to progression and career development within NatureScot. The main barriers are around confidence, recruitment processes, undervaluing of lower grade roles, inflexibility of how we work and where we work, bias and lack of visible role models. Actions to reduce some of these barriers forms the basis of our Outcomes.

Employee Data Gaps

We carried out a review of employee characteristics during 2019/20 and 2020/21. Details of this are contained in employee monitoring tables in Appendix 1. However it should be noted that there are some significant data gaps, this is for a number of reasons:

- We introduced a new HR database in 2019, we are still developing equality reporting functionality and have had to recommence gathering data on protected characteristics. We no longer hold information on job families (occupational segregation)

- We do not currently have any reports that will allow us to represent ethnic origin or disability across the organisation's teams (occupational segregation).
- We are unable to match up information on promotions with protected characteristics other than gender.
- Our training data only covers formal classroom or eLearning courses – we have no data on the increased near-the-job or on-the-job learning (study groups, webinars, peer learning, professional reading, coaching, mentoring). We no longer match up HR casework data (grievance, disciplinary) with protected characteristics.
- We made a change to our performance management process in 2018 and as such no longer complete annual performance appraisals, so cannot match them with protected characteristics. Instead individuals have monthly performance development conversations with their managers, with no requirement to document them unless they wish to.
- We have no data for the gender reassignment characteristic. This could be because any individuals have not declared, or because we do not have any.

We have prioritised the development of equality reports on the new HR system and will review how we can address the gaps identified above.

Work Profile Appendices

Age

This is one of three mandatory fields (the others being marital status and sex), hence the high declaration numbers. Young people are underrepresented in our workforce (Figure 9) therefore we continue to offer opportunities for young people through our programme for youth employment, which can be seen in the high number of applications (Figure 10) and numbers of those recruited (Figure 11) from those under 30. Traditional youth employment opportunities such as student and graduate placement are often fixed term in nature hence why there is a high number of leavers in this age group (Figure 12). Courses attended tend to be higher for young employees this is due to a number of mandatory courses required for new starts (Figure 13).

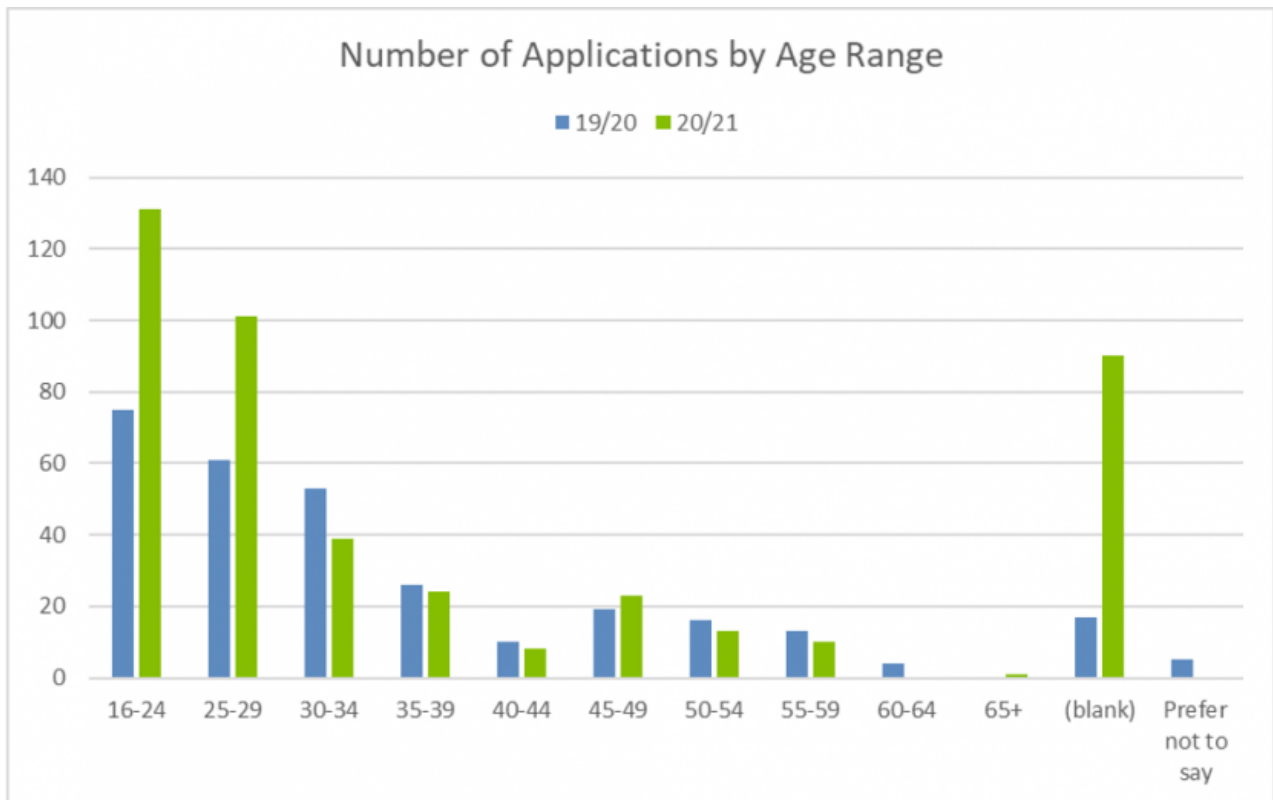


Figure 10 - majority of job applications
[Click for a full description](#)

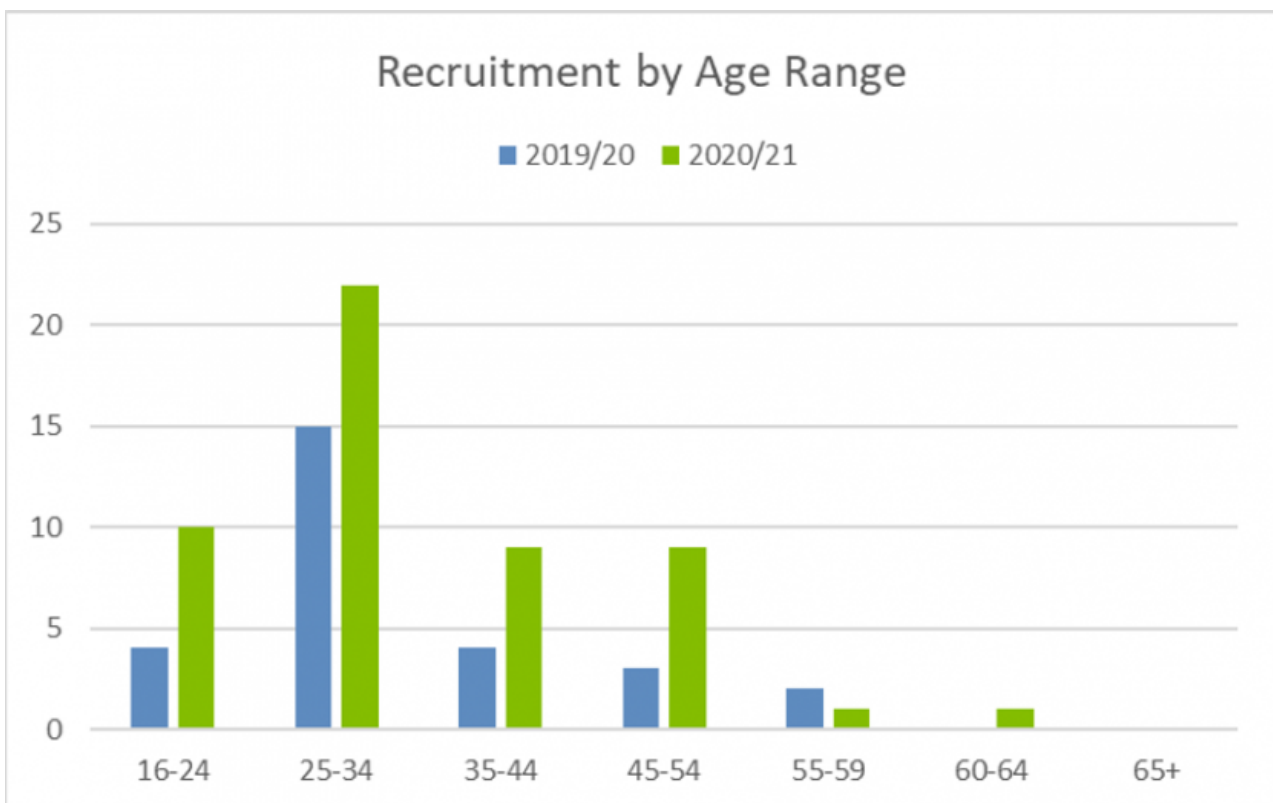


Figure 11 - age of new starts
[Click for a full description](#)

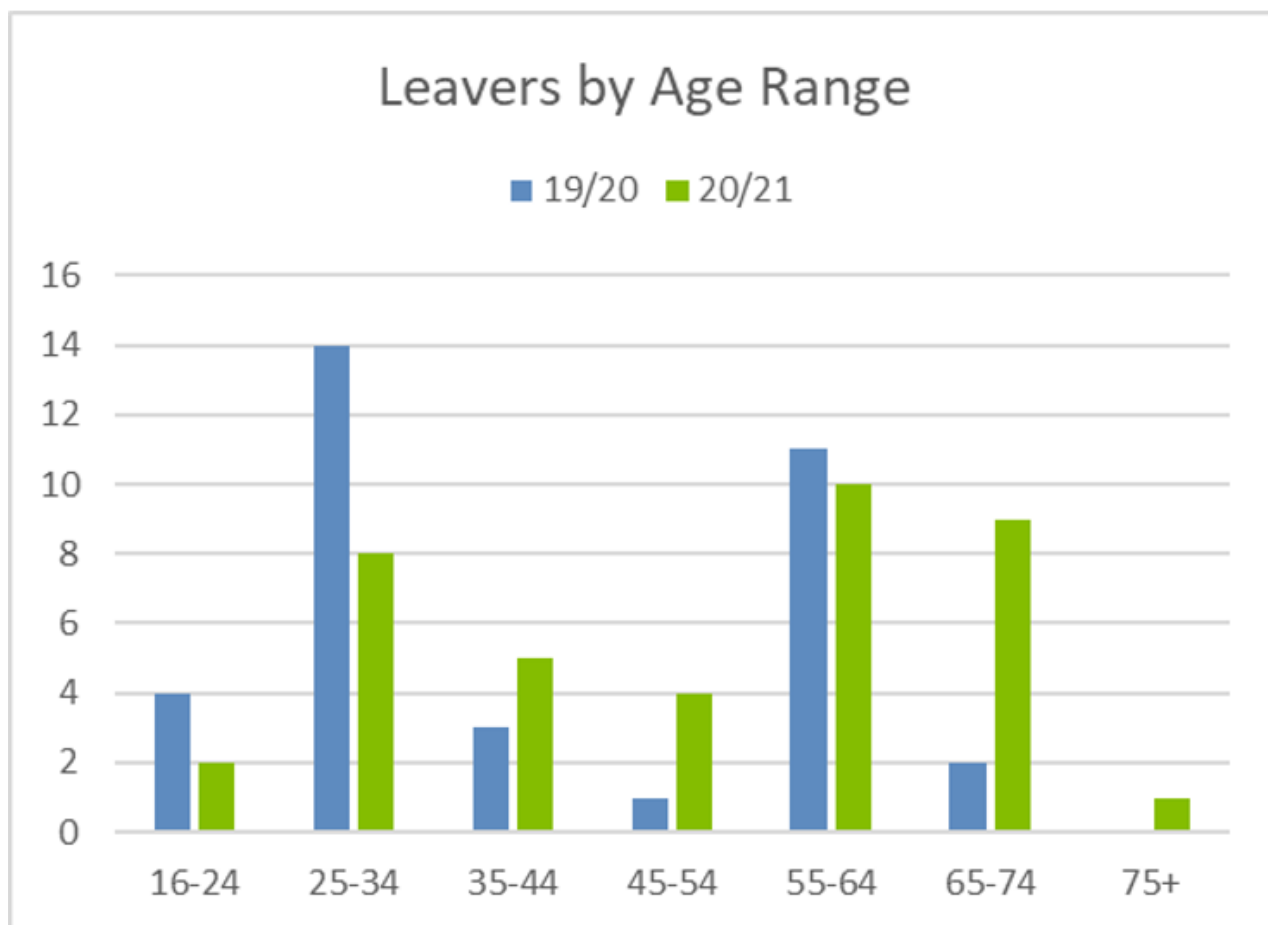


Figure 12 - number of leavers 19/20 and 20/21

[Click for a full description](#)

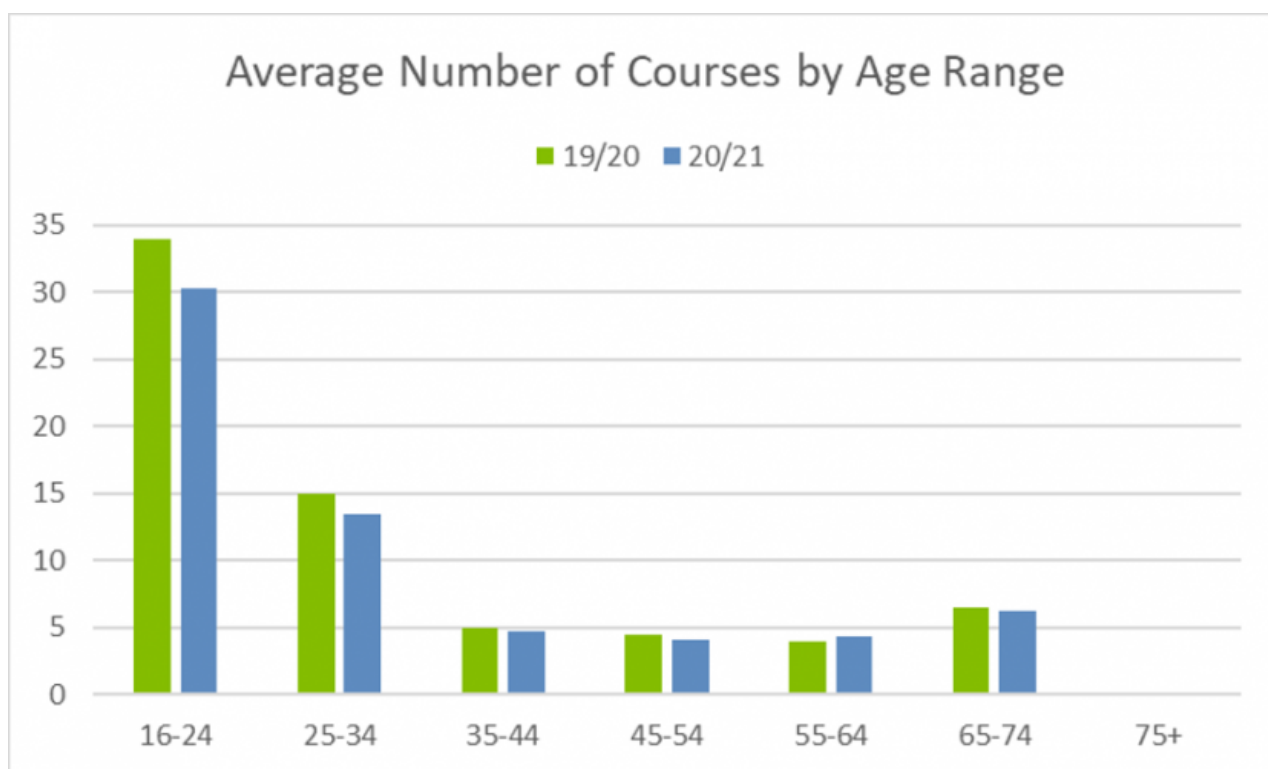


Figure 13 - shows training courses attended in 19/20 and 20/21

[Click for a full description](#)

Disability

We continue to have low disclosure of disability, we are aware there are more people with disabilities than Figure 14 would suggest, therefore the data does not tell the full storey. We are unable to see if there has been any increases in applications from people with disabilities from previous years as we have discovered some inaccuracies in the previous data (Figure 15). However we have recruited a staff in 2020 with disabilities (Figure 17). Figure 18 shows that there is a higher number of courses taken by staff with disabilities, this could be attributed to these staff also being new starts who are more likely to be undertaking mandatory training courses than established staff.

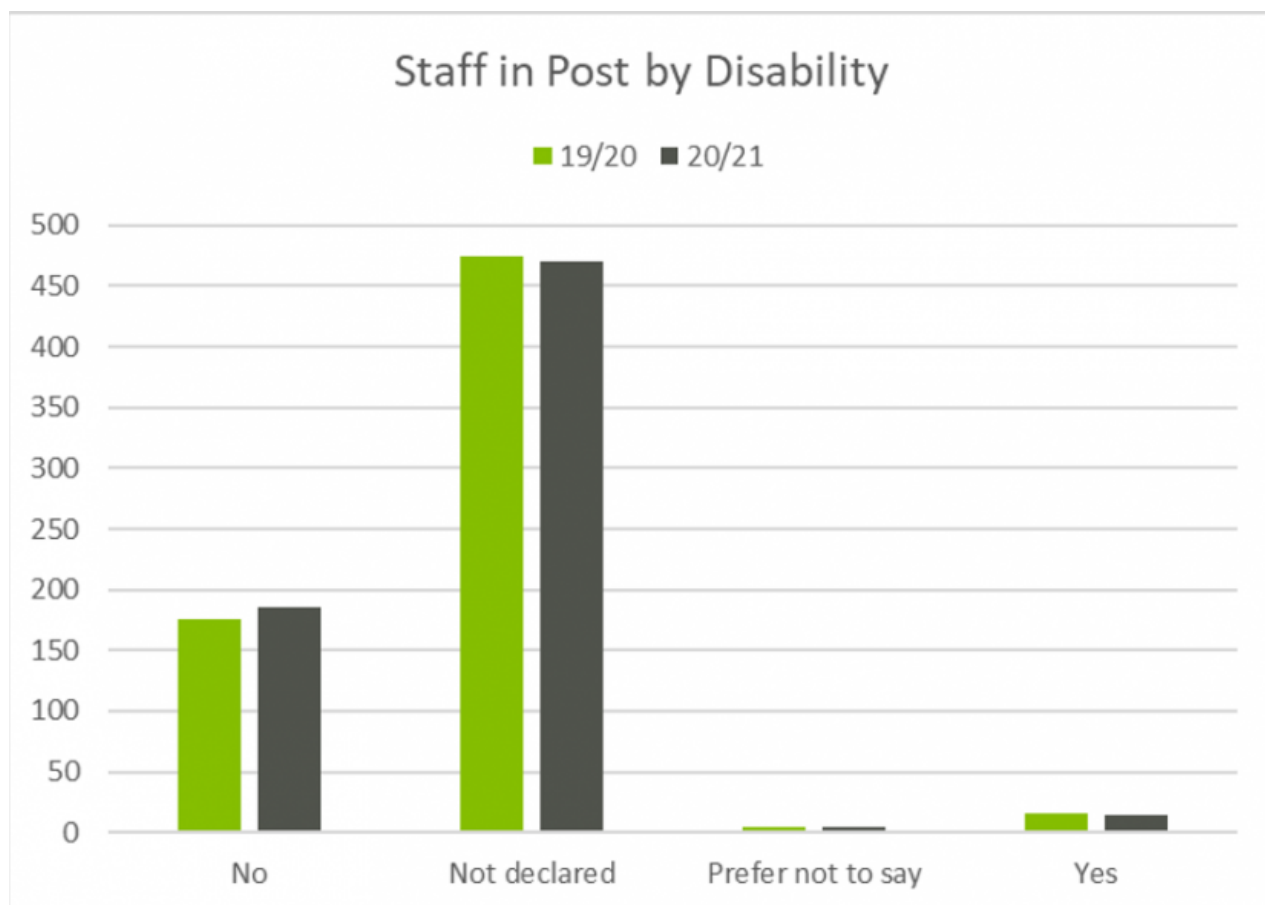


Figure 14 above: Staff in post by disability status, 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

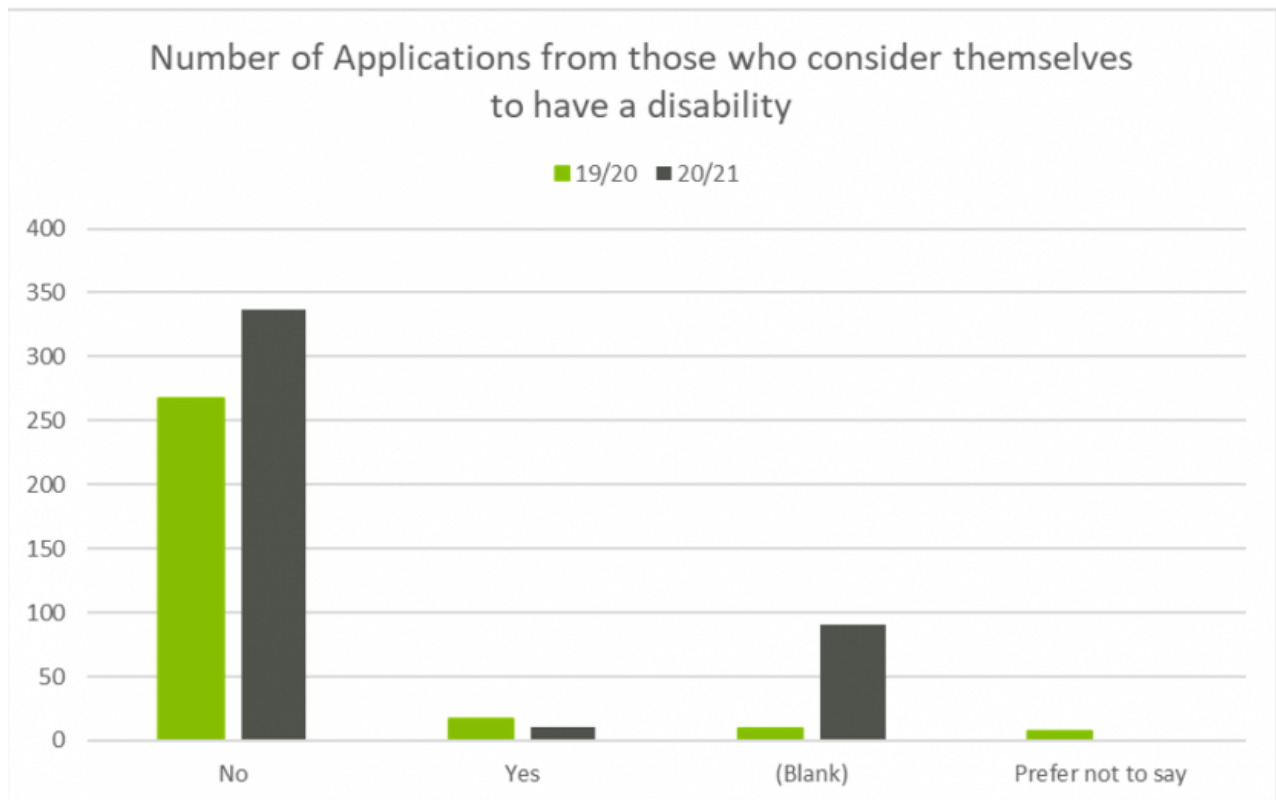


Figure 15 above: Number of applications from those who consider themselves to have a disability 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

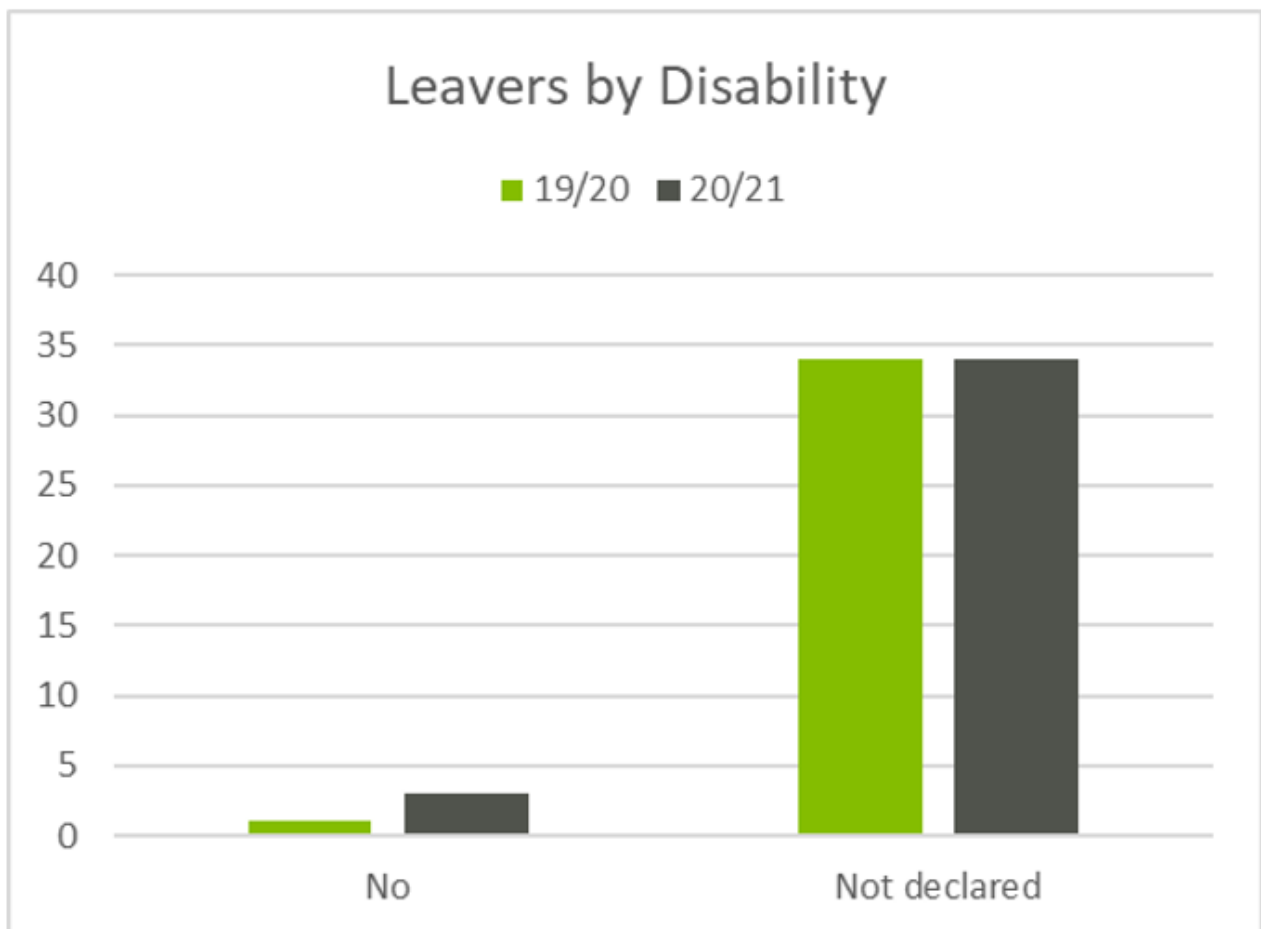


Figure 16 above: Number of leavers with a disability 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

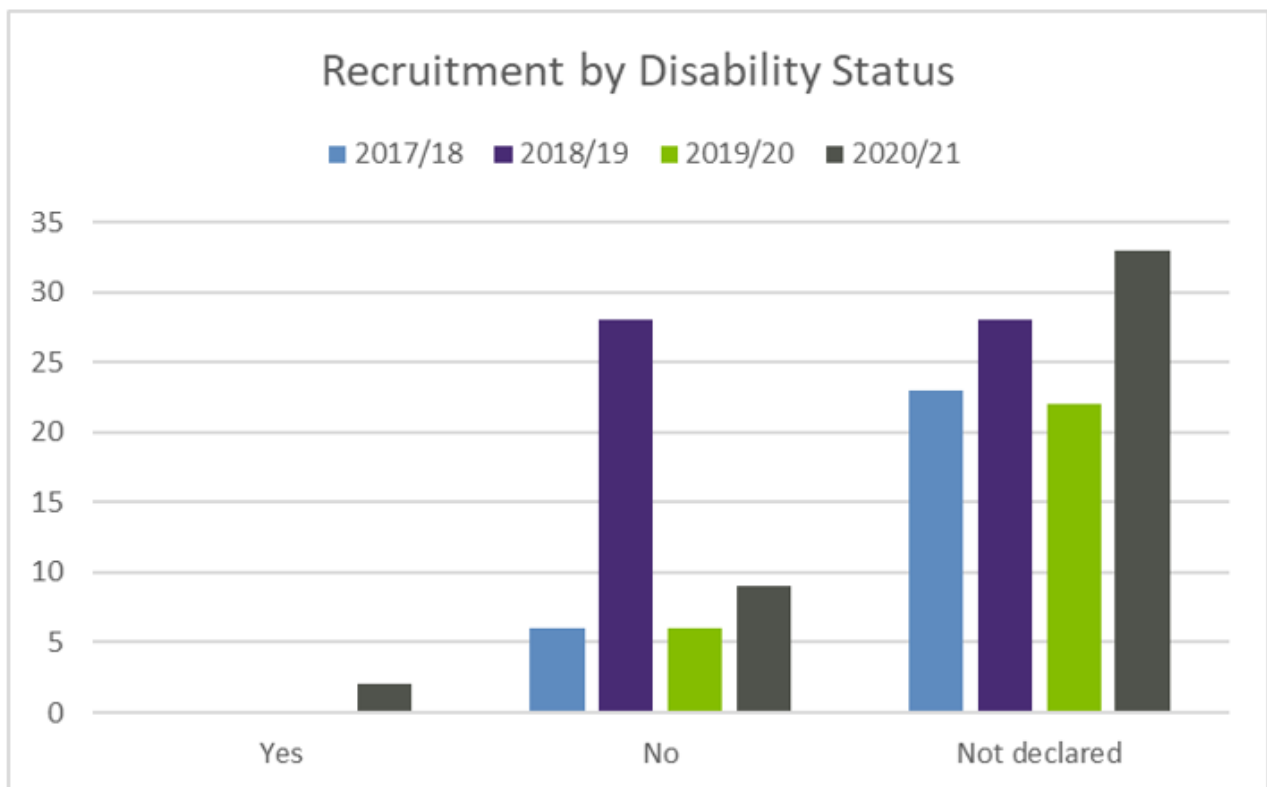


Figure 17 above: Number of staff recruited with a disability 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

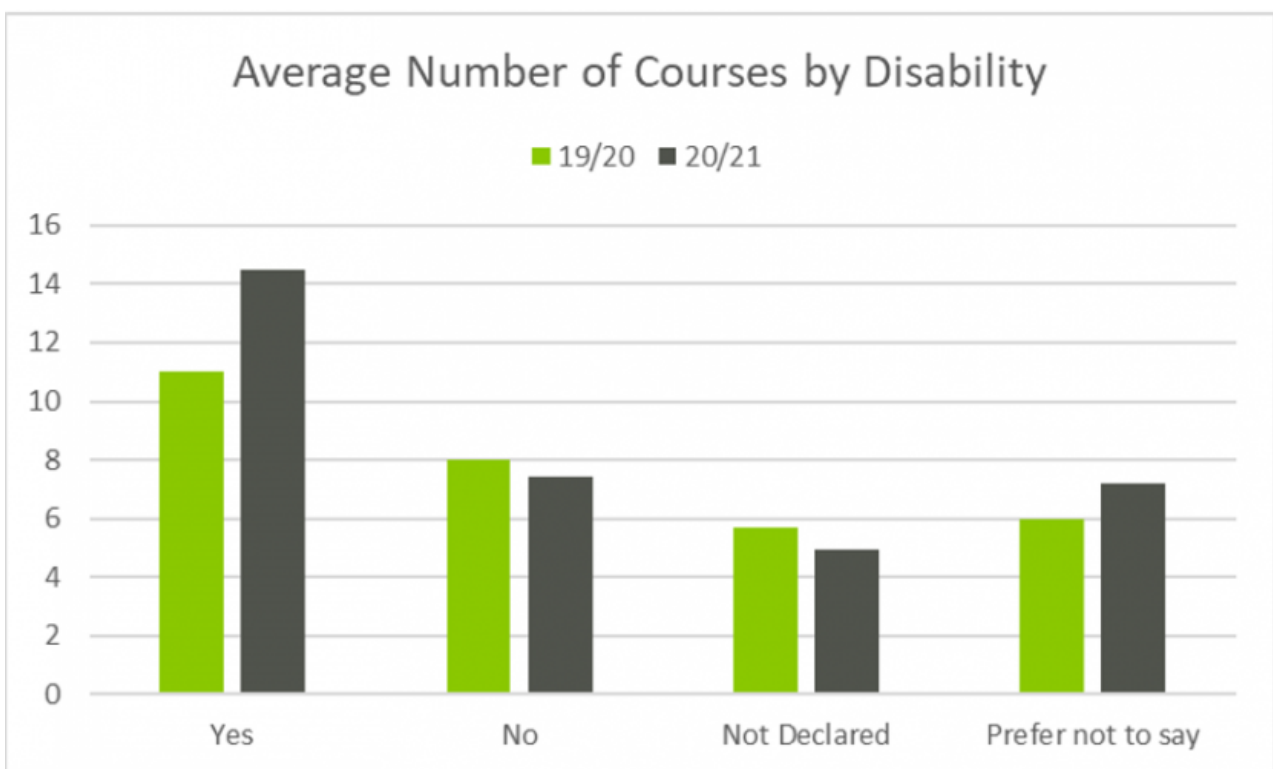


Figure 18 above: Average number of courses undertaken 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

Sex (biological sex, not gender identity)

We have no data for average number of courses undertaken for this characteristic.

We continue to have a higher proportion of female to male employees (Figure 19) and more applications from females and recruitment of females (Fig 20). Women continue to have a higher proportion of days lost to sickness absence than males (Figure23) however there appears to be a trend towards this evening out.

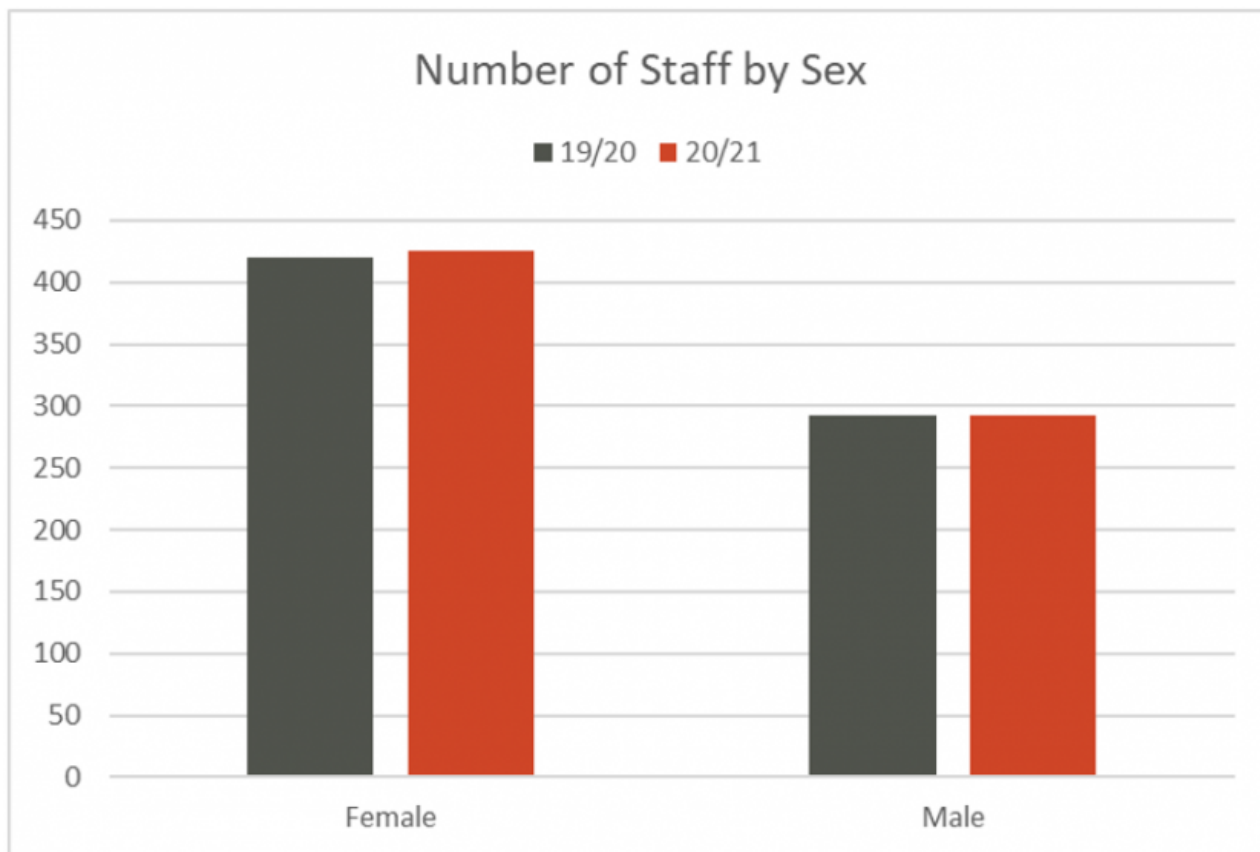


Figure 19 above: Number of staff by sex 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

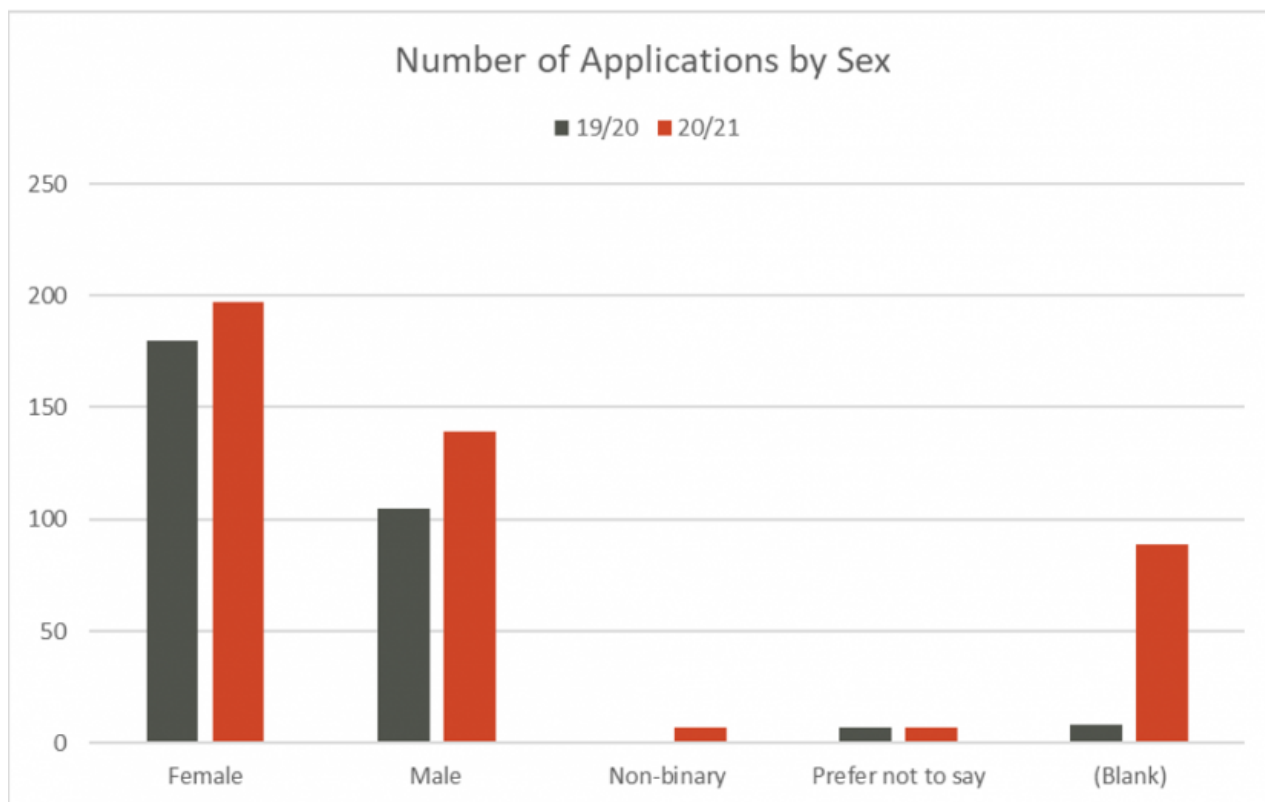


Figure 20 above: Number of applications by sex 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)



Figure 21 above: Number of new staff by sex 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)



Figure 22 above: Number of leavers by sex 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

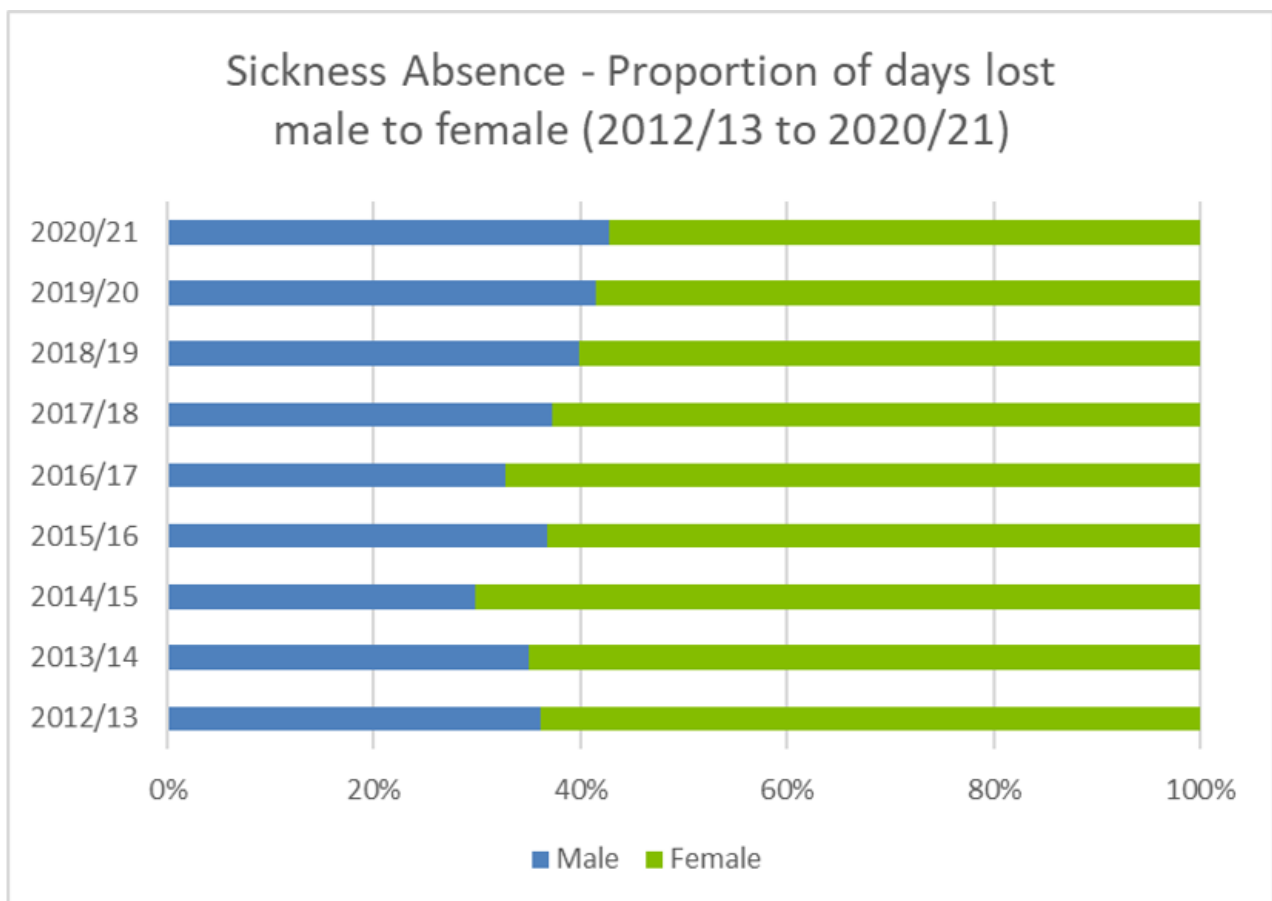


Figure 23 above: Proportion of days lost to sickness absence, male to female, 2012/13 to 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

Ethnic Origin

We continue to have low disclosure of ethnic origin, however an analysis of the environmental sector and recent qualitative data suggests that Figure 24 is probably accurate. We are unable to see if there has been any increases in applications from people from ME backgrounds from previous years. However we have had a small number of applications in 2020 from people from ME backgrounds (Figure 25), it does not look like any of these applicants have been recruited (Figure 26).

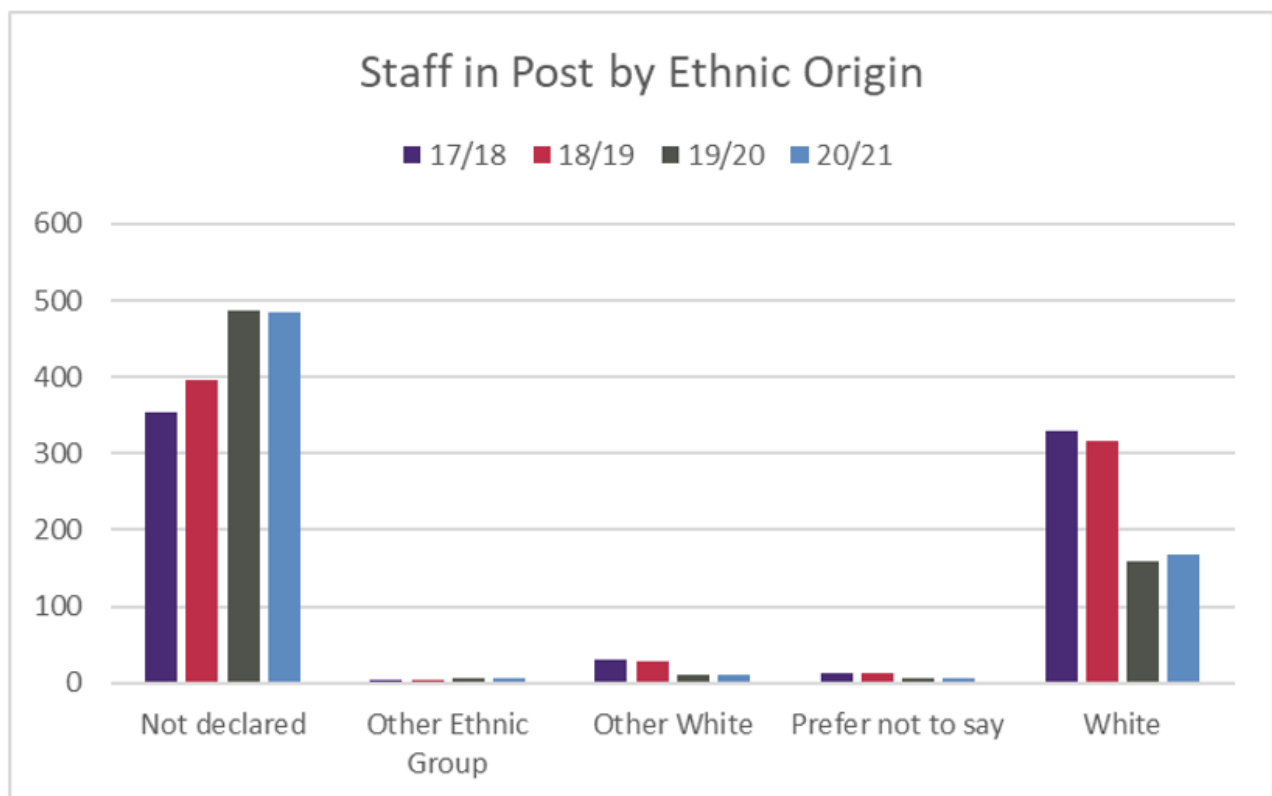


Figure 24 above: Number of staff by ethnic origin 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

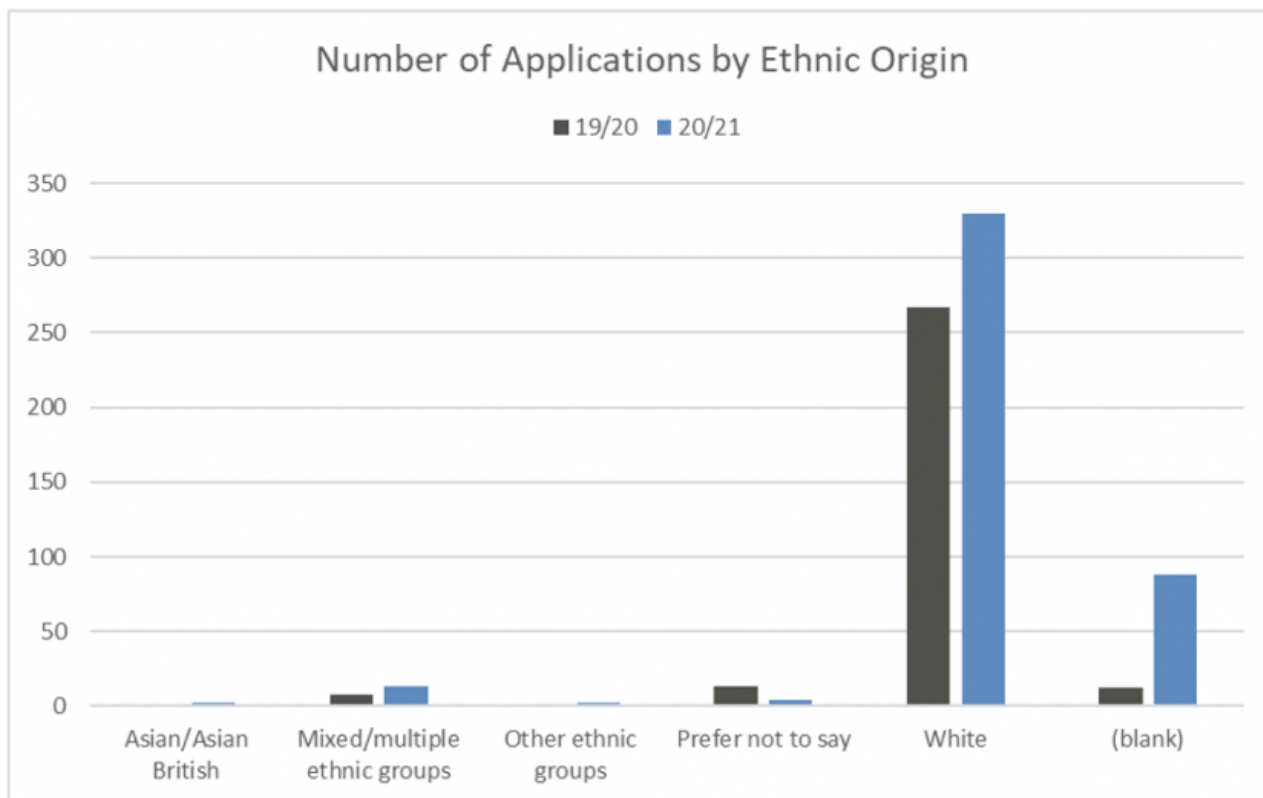


Figure 25 above: Number of applications by ethnic origin, 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

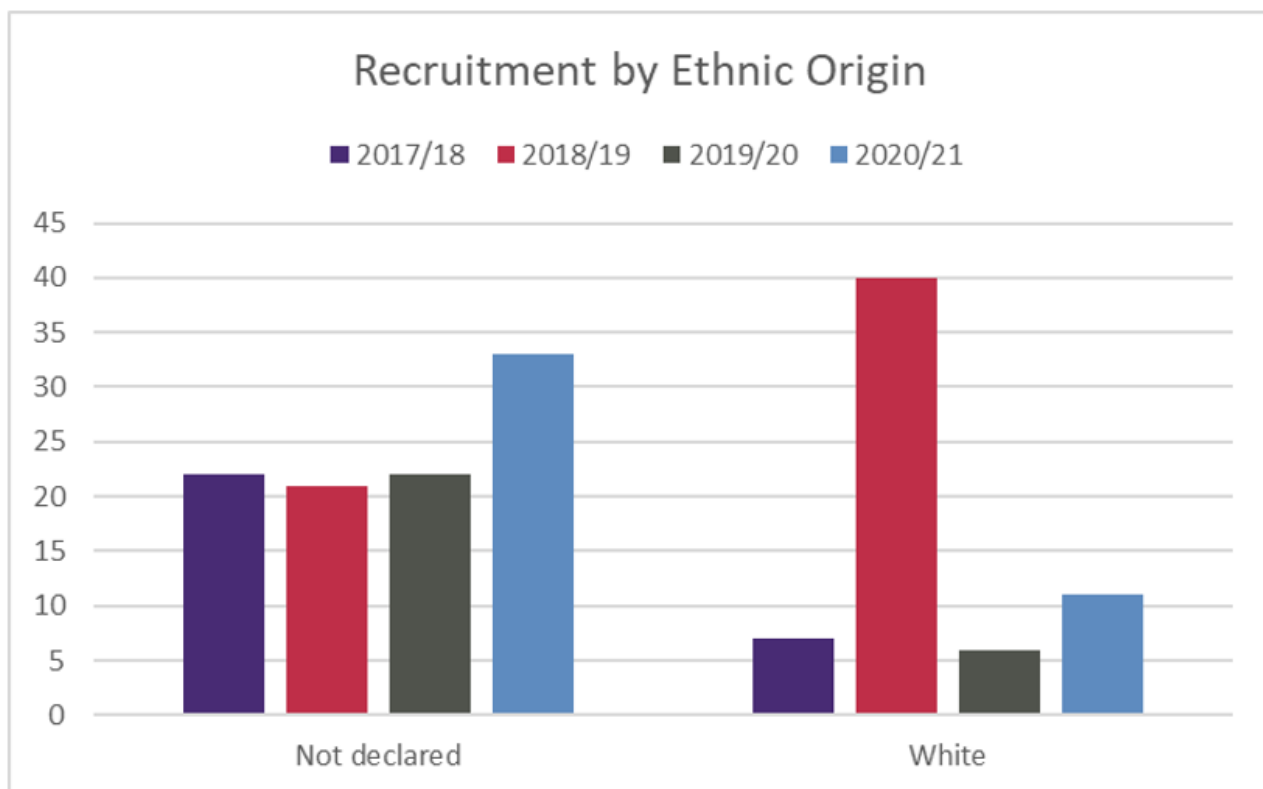


Figure 26 above: number of new staff by ethnic origin 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

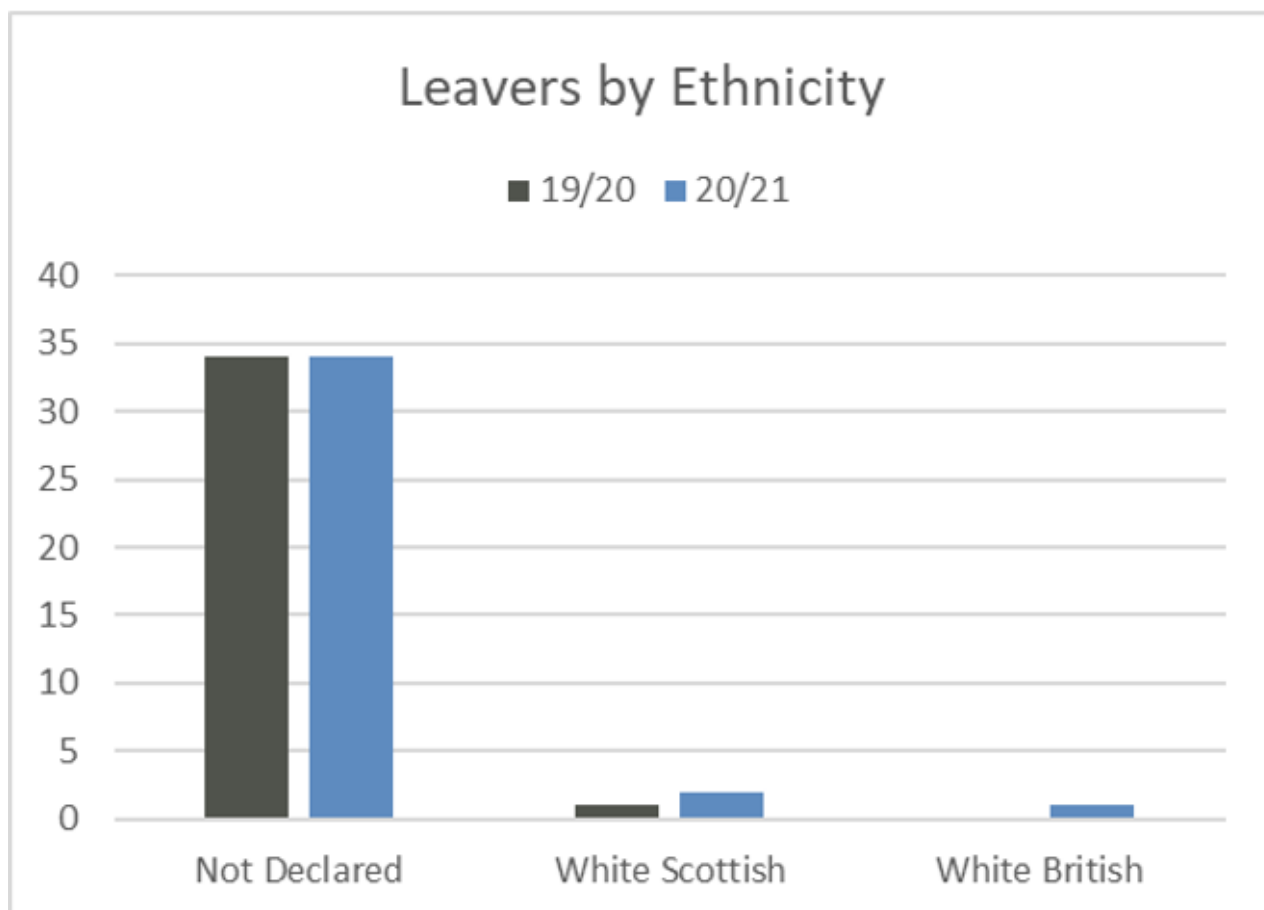


Figure 27 above: Number of leavers by ethnic origin 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

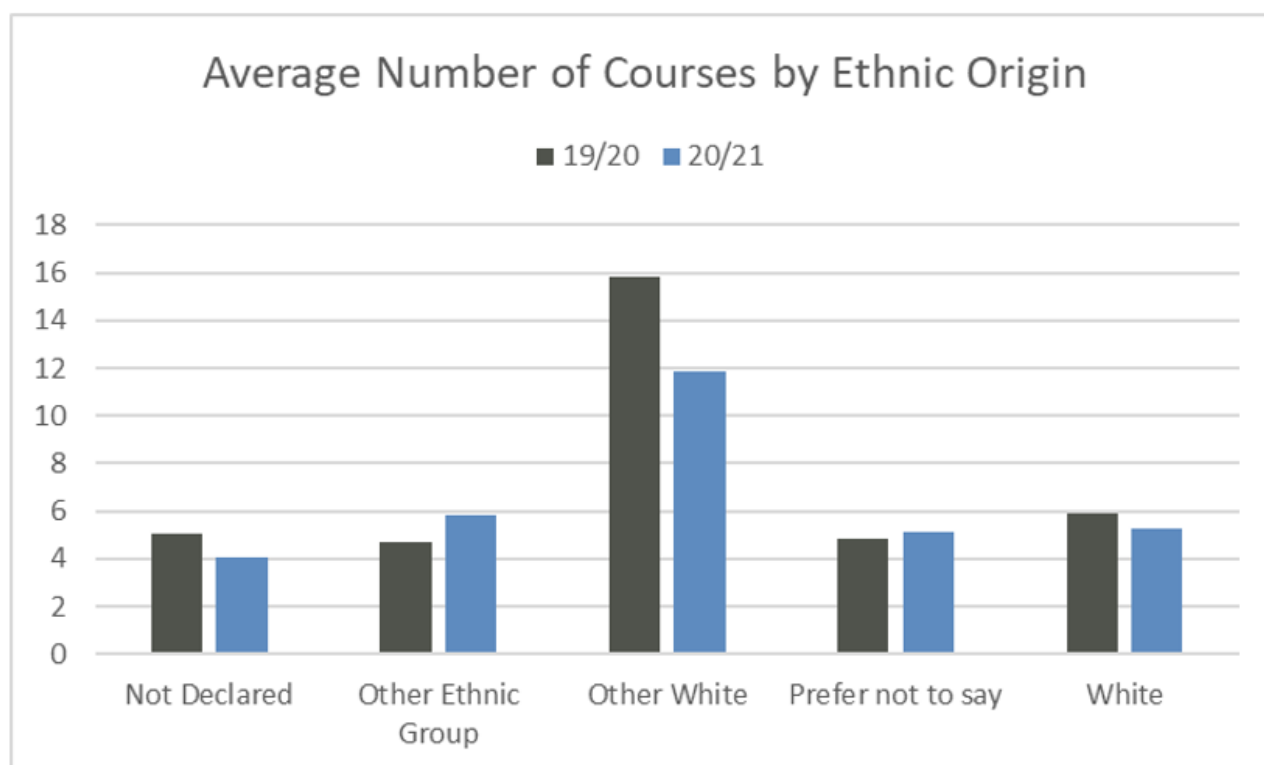


Figure 28 above: average number of courses undertaken by ethnic origin 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

Sexual Orientation

We continue to have low disclosure of sexual orientation (Figure 29). We are seeing a number of application and recent recruitments of LGBT+ people (Figures 30 and 31). There is a higher number of courses taken by LGBT+ (Figure 33) this could again be attributed to these staff also being new starts who are more likely to be undertaking mandatory training courses than more established staff.

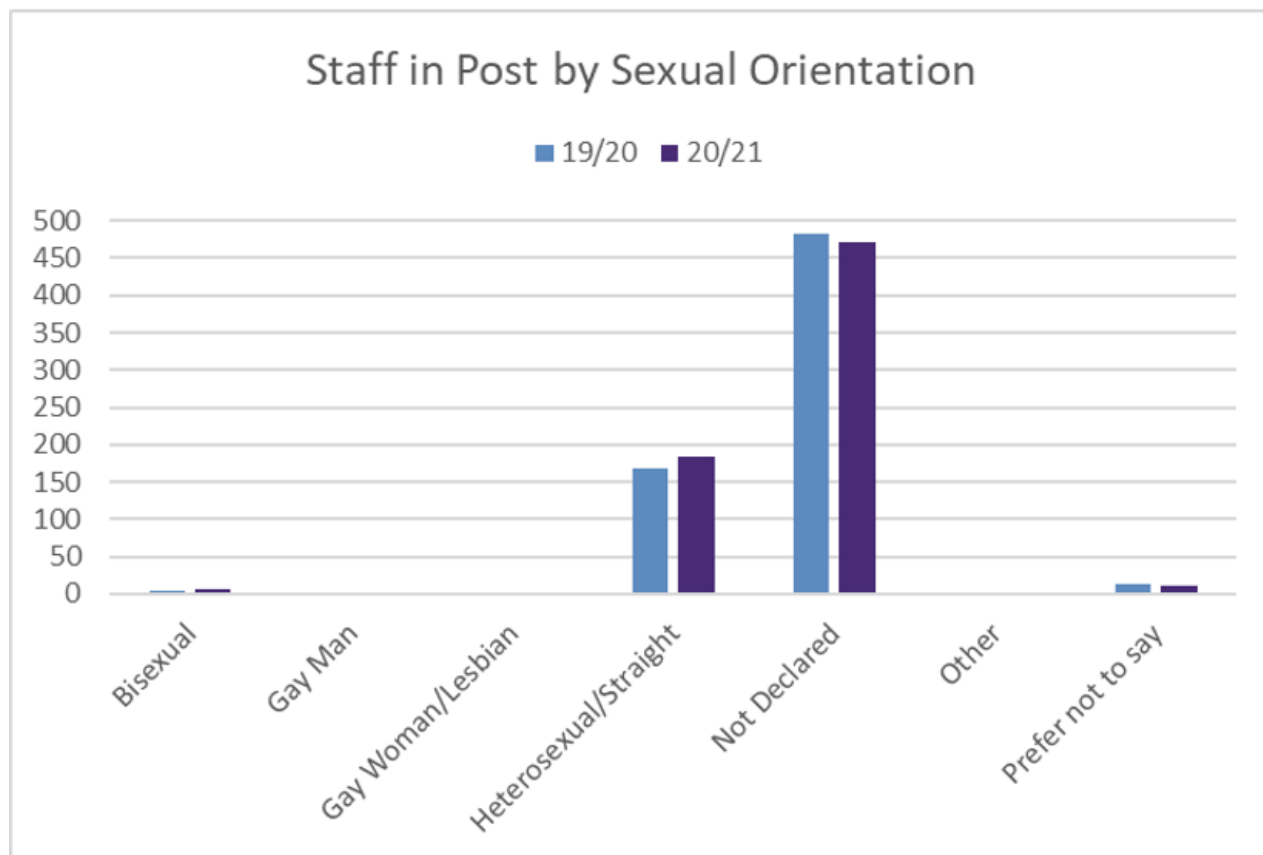


Figure 29 above: staff in post by sexual orientation, 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

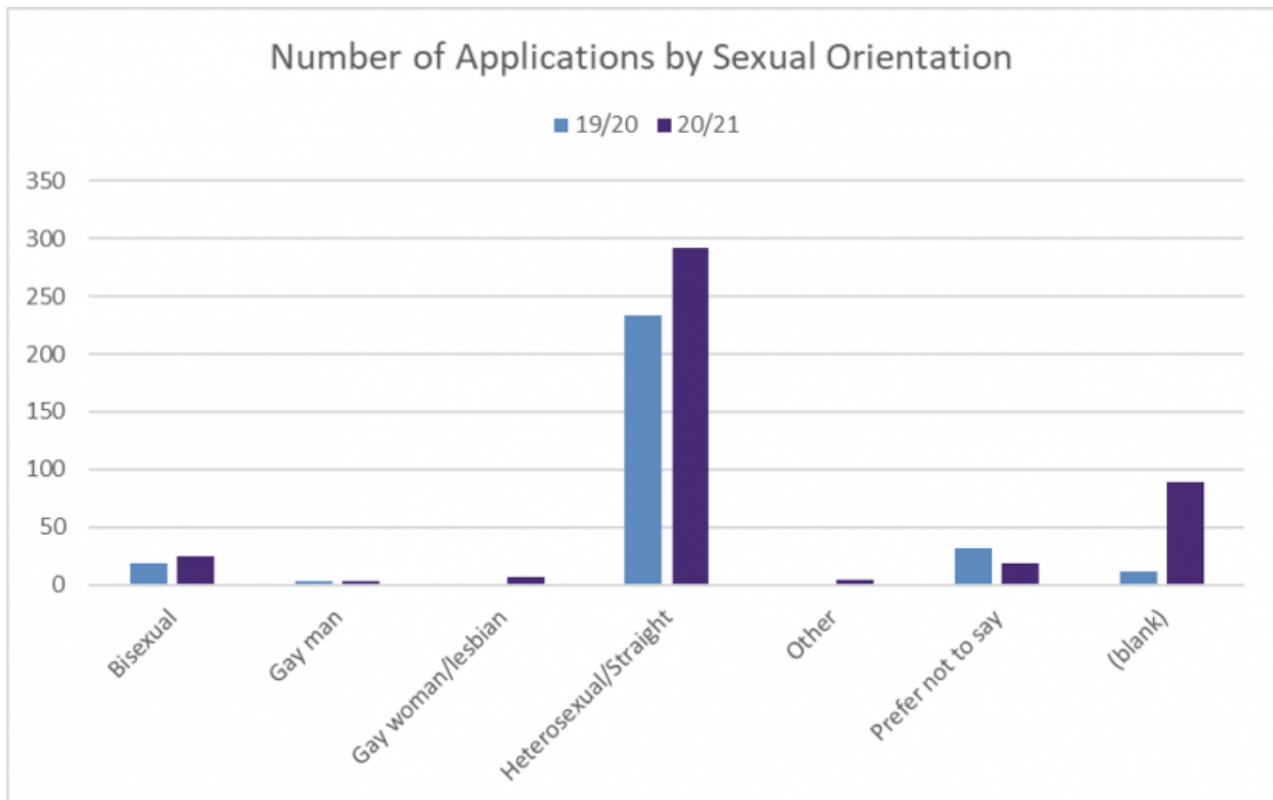


Figure 30 above: number of applications by sexual orientation 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

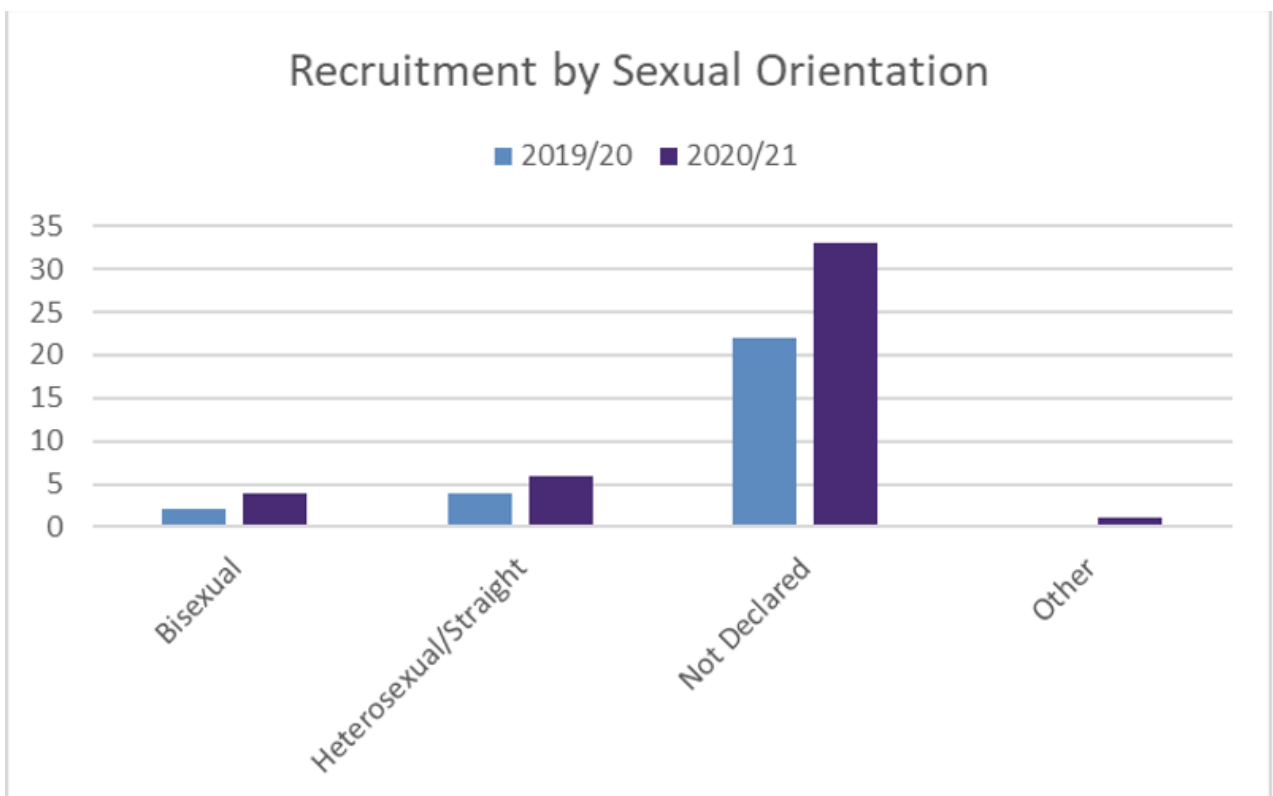


Figure 31 above: number of new staff by sexual orientation 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

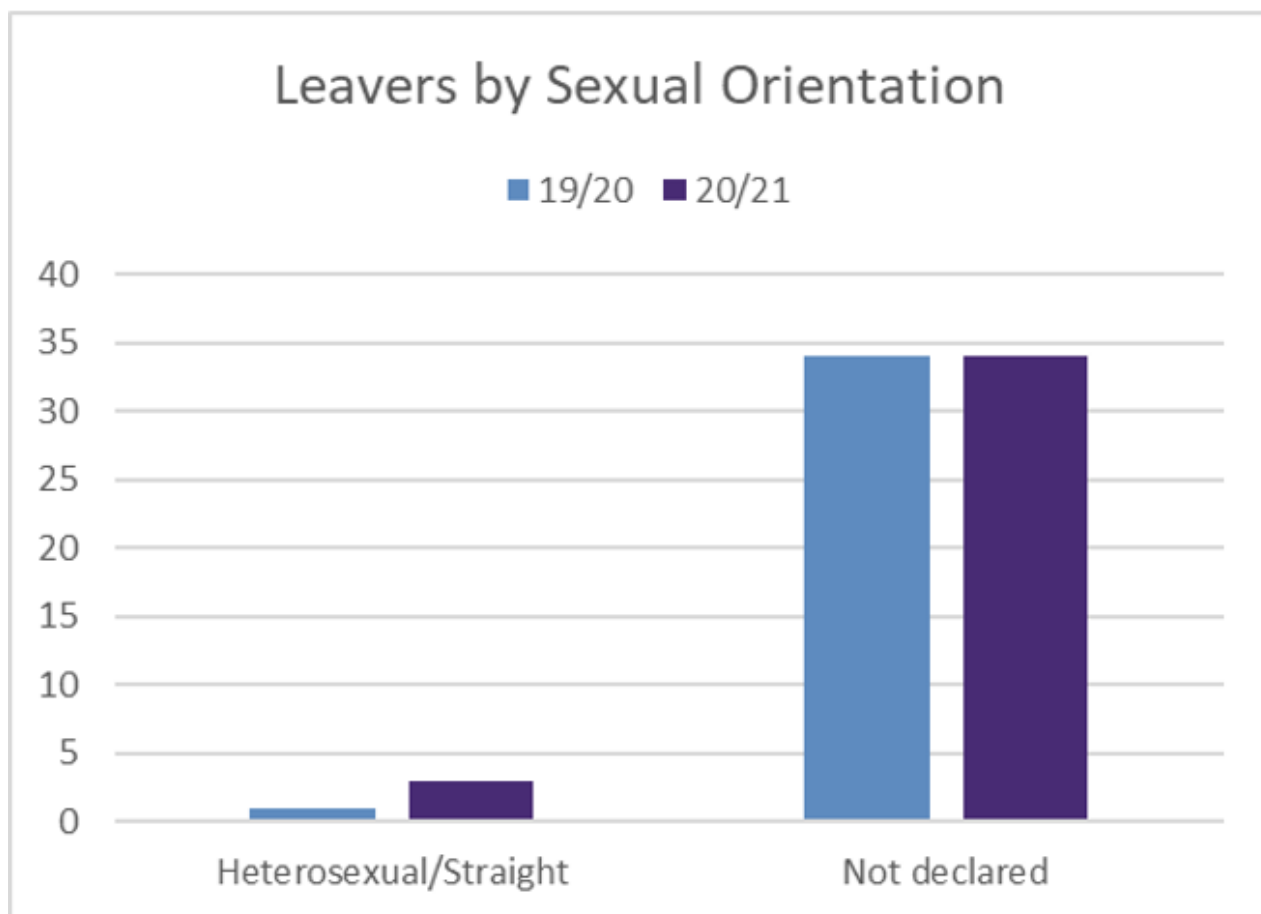


Figure 32 above: number of leavers by sexual orientation 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

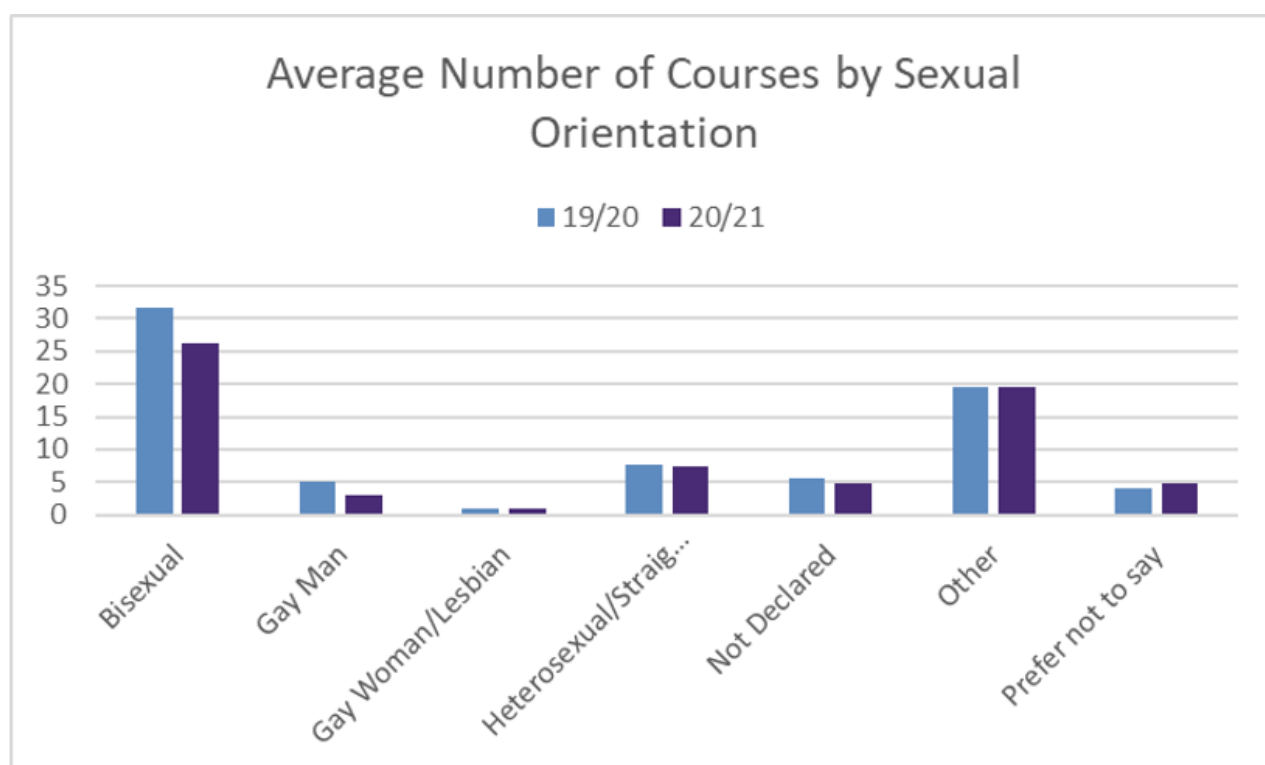


Figure 33 above: average number of courses undertaken by sexual orientation 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

Religion/Religious Belief

We continue to have low disclosure of religion/religious belief (Figure 34). The majority of applications are from people with no religious belief, where religion is disclosed it is predominantly Christian however there are also application from applicants with Hindu and Jewish religious beliefs (Figure 35). The applicants with Hindu and Jewish religious beliefs did not translate into recruitments (Fig 36).

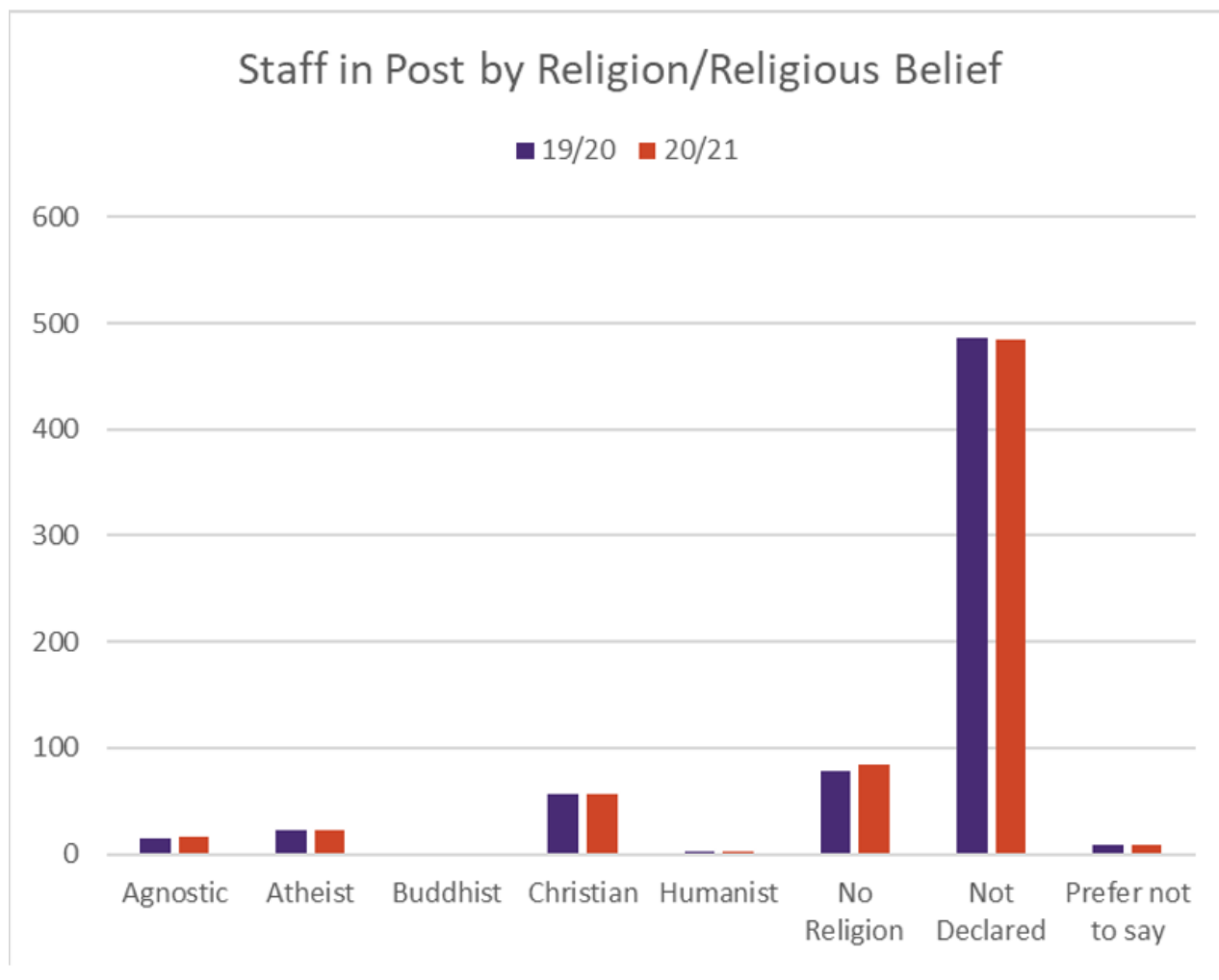


Figure 34 above: staff in post by religion/religious belief, 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

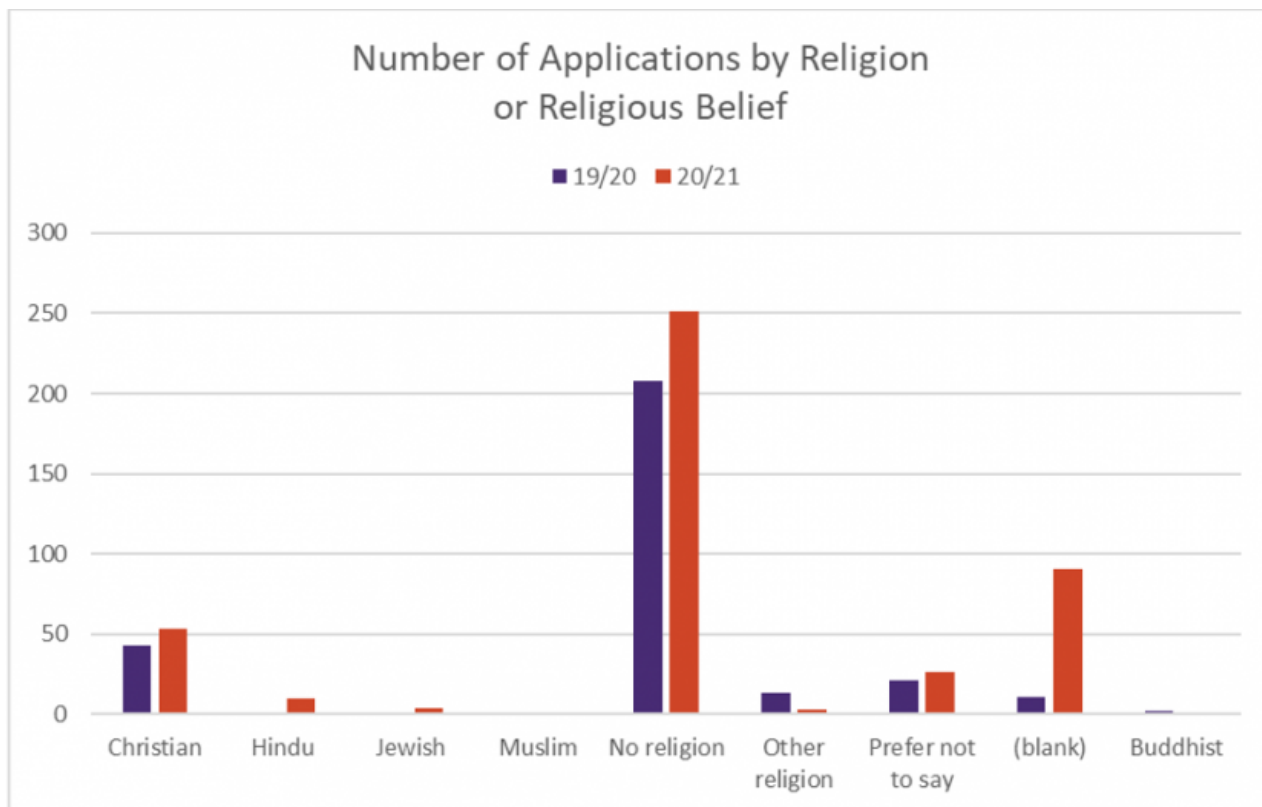


Figure 35 above: number of applications by religion/religious belief part 2 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)



Figure 36 above: number of new staff by religion/religious belief 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

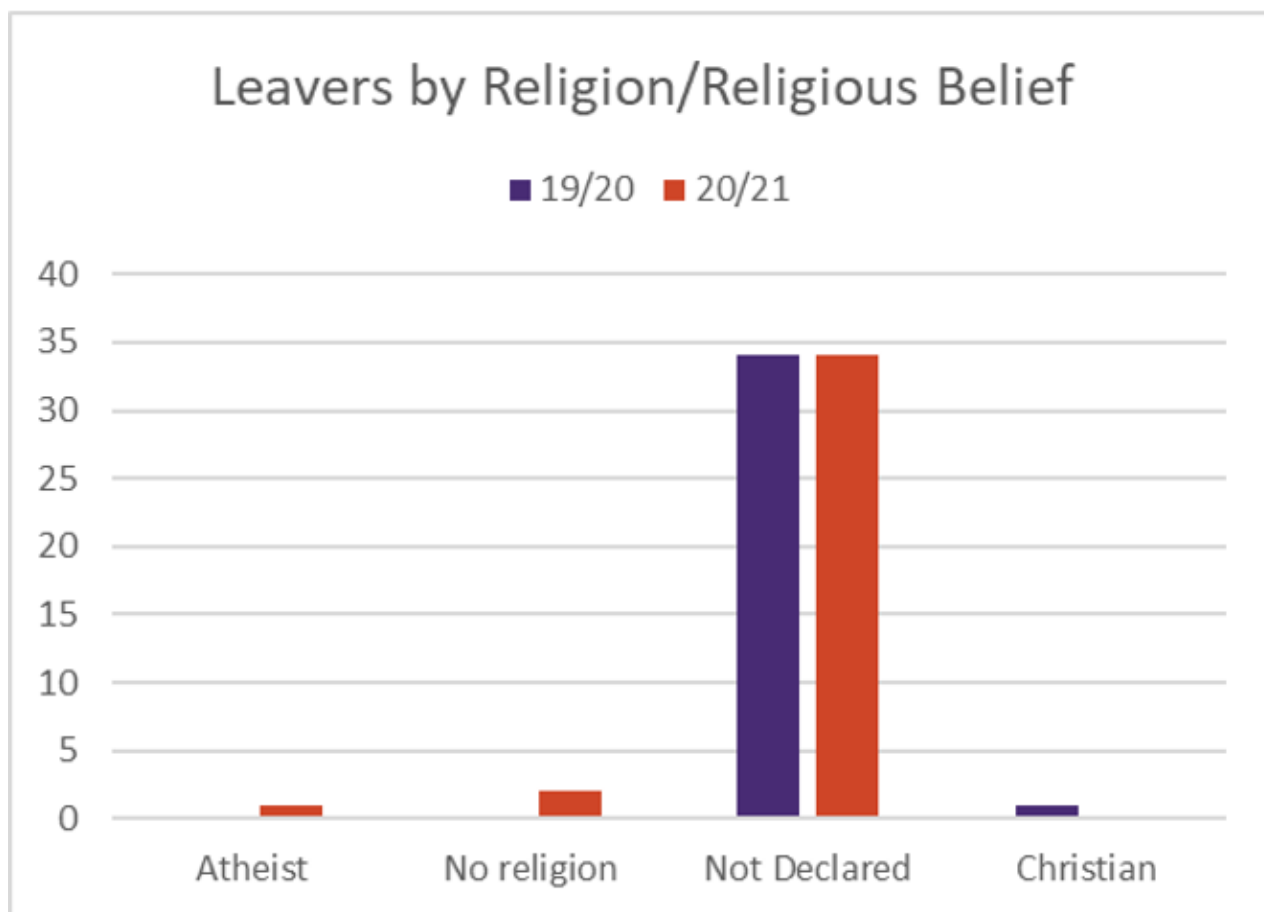


Figure 37 above: number of leavers by religion/religious belief 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

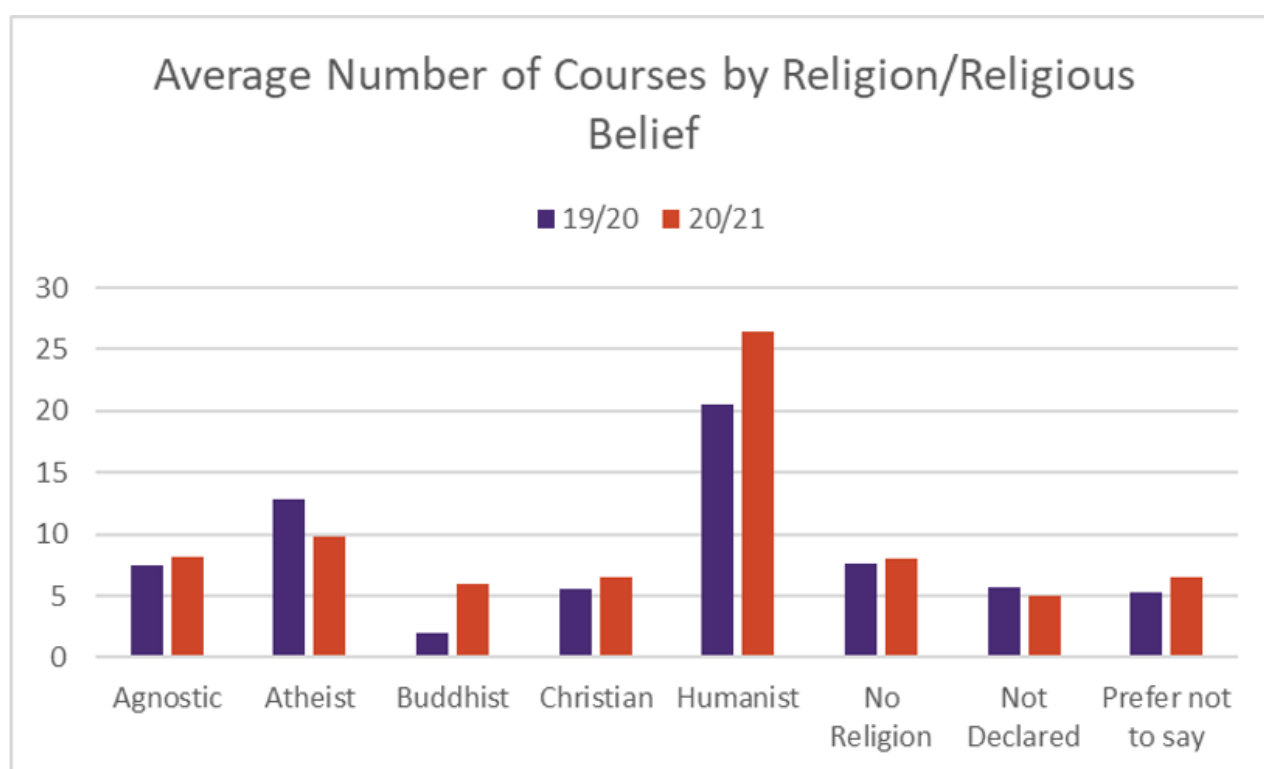


Figure 38 above: average number of courses undertaken by religion/religious belief 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

Pregnancy/Maternity

- We have had 9 staff pregnant or on maternity leave in 19/20 and 8 in 20/21.
- None of our job applicants answered yes to the question on this protected characteristic, therefore none of those recruited either.
- None of our leavers left because of pregnancy or maternity, nor any left upon finishing their maternity leave.
- We have no data for average number of courses undertaken.

Marital Status

This is one of three mandatory fields (the others being age and sex), hence the high declaration numbers.

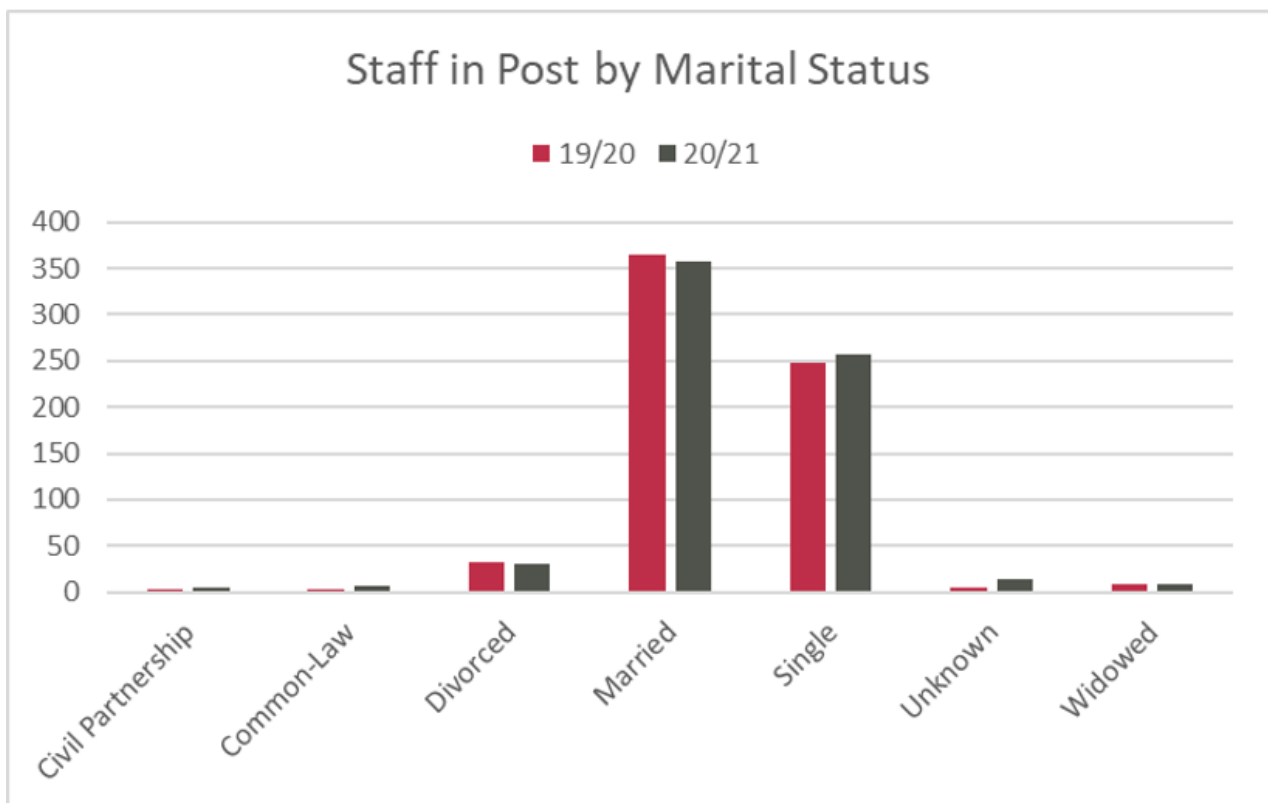


Figure 39 above: staff in post by marital status, 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

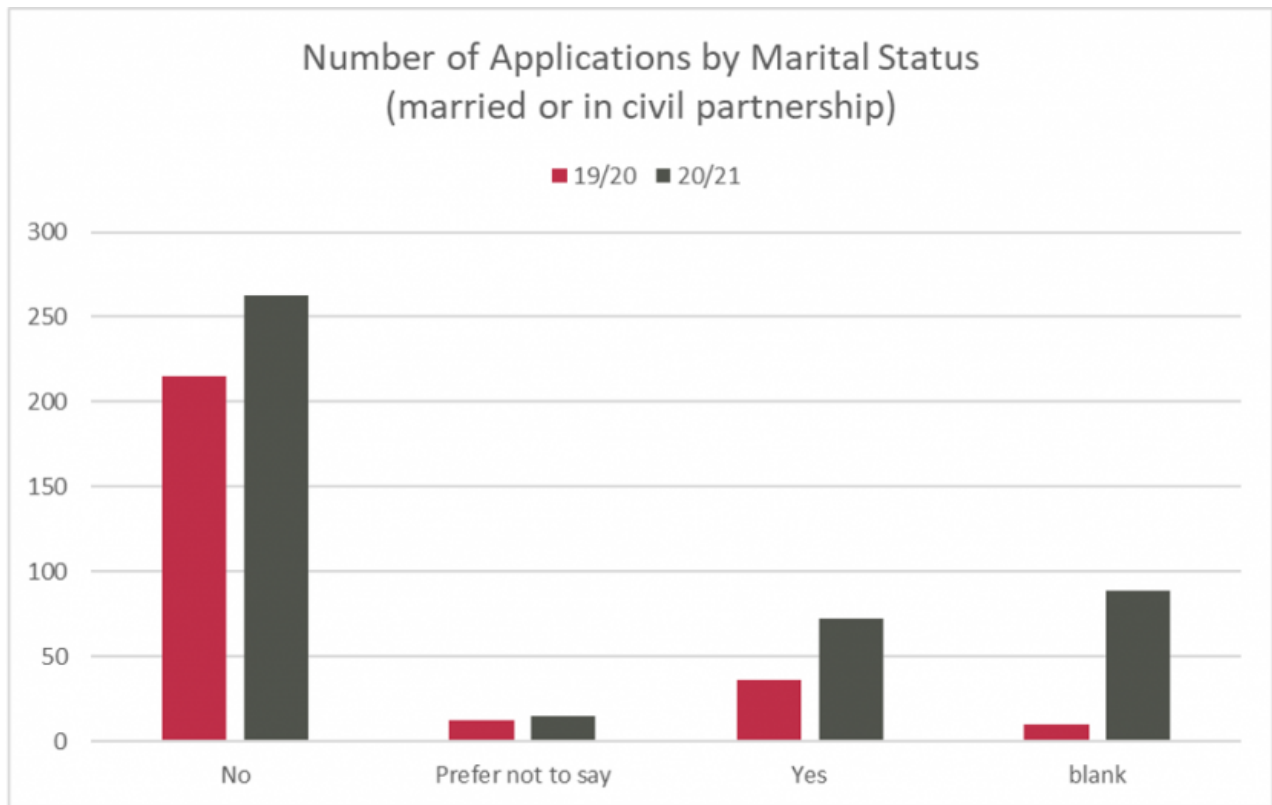


Figure 40 above: number of applications by marital status 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

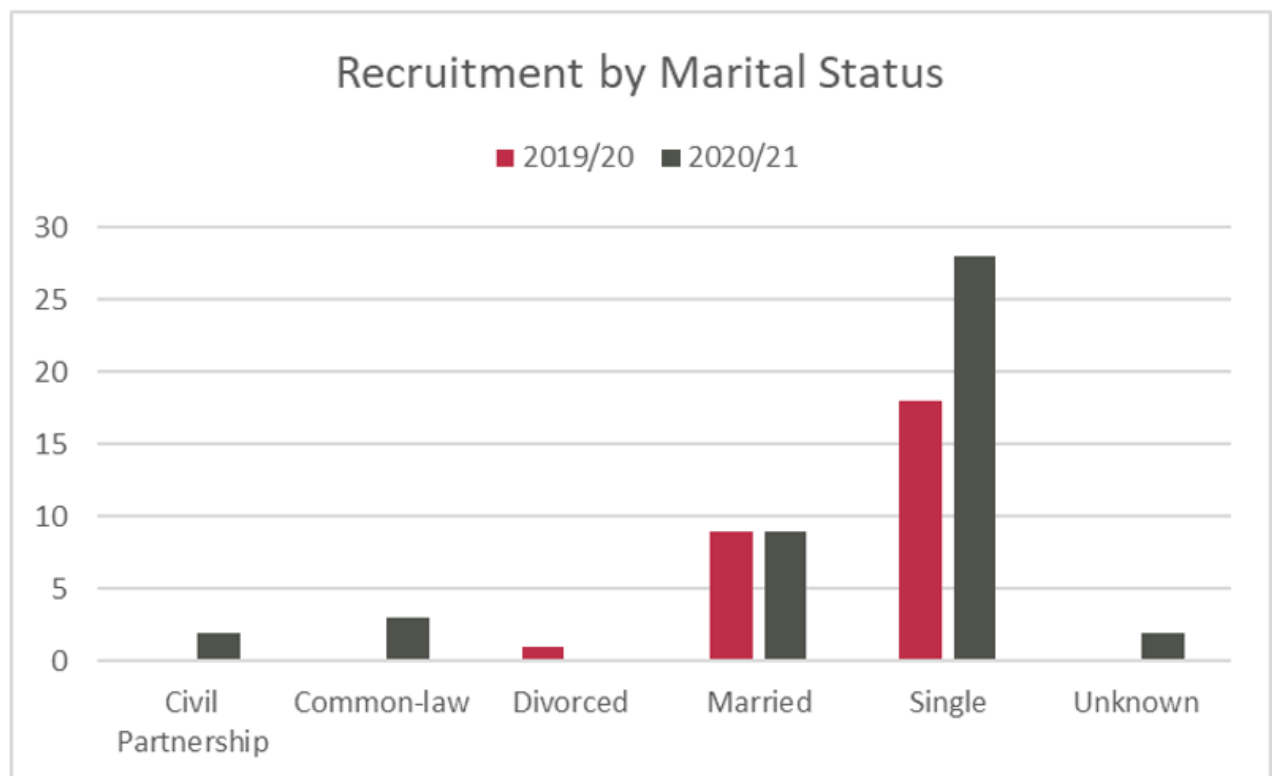


Figure 41 above: number of new staff by marital status 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

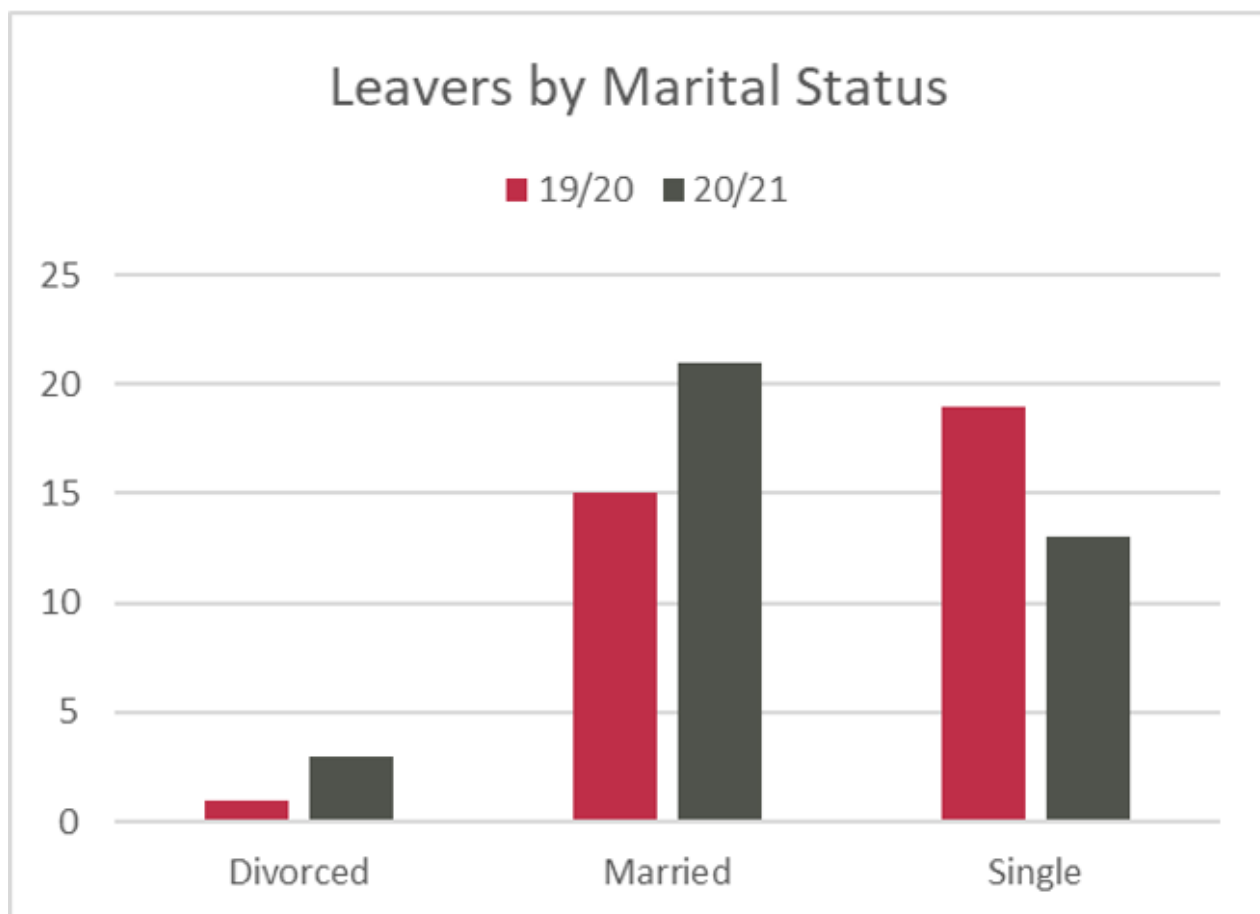


Figure 42 above: number of leavers by marital status 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

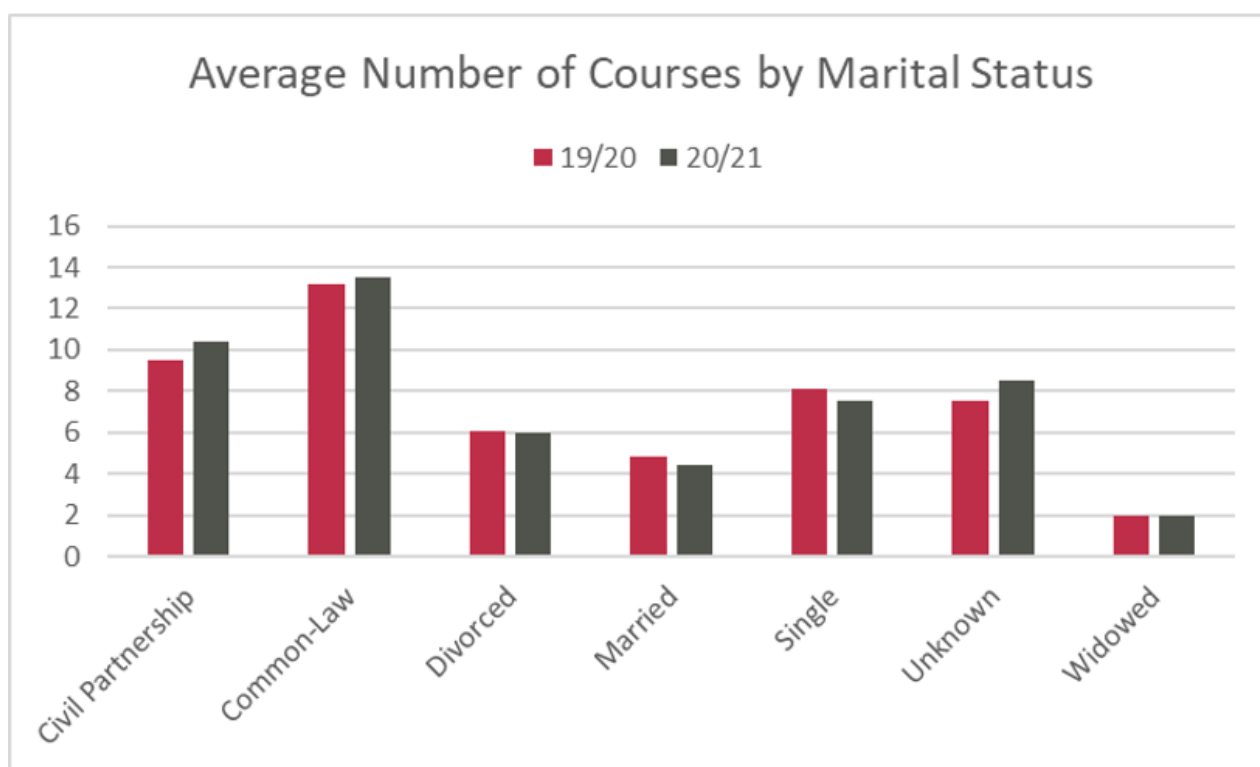


Figure 43 above: average number of courses undertaken by marital status 2019/20 and 2020/21. [Link to full description of graph.](#)

