

Abertay University

Gender Action Plan

Abertay's commitment to equality and diversity

For Abertay equality and diversity is recognising and valuing that everyone is different, and respecting and encouraging those differences to bring about improvements for organisational and societal benefit. People with different backgrounds, experiences and attitudes bring fresh ideas and perceptions, and a diverse organisation such as that at Abertay can draw upon the widest range of experiences so it can listen to, meet, and provide for, the needs of its employees, students and the community the University serves.

The University's strategic plan 2015 -2020 further underlines our commitment to equality and diversity in the following statements:

- To offer transformational opportunities to everyone who has the ability to benefit from Abertay's approach to university education.
- To inspire and enable our students, staff and graduates to achieve their full potential.
- To use our knowledge and expertise to have a positive impact on the world around us.
- Investing in high quality infrastructure to provide an environment which will support and inspire our students and staff.
- Developing and sustaining an inclusive and supportive culture, welcoming and retaining students and staff from a diverse range of backgrounds.
- Ensure that our recruitment, admissions and assessment policies recognise potential and result in a diverse student population.

The context: internal

In line with our strategic plan ambitions, the University has a range of activities intended to help advance gender equality. We achieved the Athena SWAN bronze award in 2014 and our academic schools are working towards departmental Athena SWAN awards. We support career progression by enabling a number of female staff to participate, as delegates and role models, in the Aurora leadership programme for women in higher education. Staff also make ongoing contributions to women in STEM events, including the Dundee Women in Science Festival and our own Women in Engineering conference. The action plans arising from our Athena SWAN work will be incorporated into the refreshed Equality Action Plan and the gender action plan flowing from this.

In terms of the gender pay gap, we recognise this is a significant challenge for the University and the wider higher education sector. Our equal pay audit indicates that there are no significant differences in pay between men and women carrying out the same or comparable jobs. However, as for most universities, there are fewer women than men in more senior academic roles, so there is a difference in average pay.

39% of the members of our Senior Management Group are female and 44% of the lay members of Court are female. We continue to monitor this and to seek to improve the balance when opportunities arise. Our Mainstreaming Action Plan includes a priority and supporting actions to encourage and recognise a commitment to advancing the careers of women.

The context: external

Our plan is informed by the SFC Gender Action Plan¹ and the background analysis provided in support of this at both sector and subject level. SFC's plan describes its vision for the sector as follows:

by 2030 the proportion of male students studying at undergraduate level at university will be at least 47.5% (or to put it another way, the gap between male and female participation will be reduced to 5%); and

no college or university subject will have a gender imbalance of greater than 75% of one gender.

The SFC Gender Action Plan also highlights the following priority subject areas for universities:

Female under-representation	Male under-representation
Architecture, Building and Planning	Nursing
Engineering	Training teachers
Technologies	Psychology
Computer Sciences	

¹ <http://www.sfc.ac.uk/communications/Corporatepublications/2016/SFCCP052016.aspx>

Current position

Our mainstreaming priorities in relation to gender²:

- To endeavour that, by 2030, no academic subject area has an extreme gender imbalance (75: 25) – in line with the Scottish Funding Council Outcome.
- To engage with local schools to tackle gender imbalance earlier and to tackle gender stereotypes.
- To enhance retention and completion at a subject level where there is a statistically significant gap by gender.

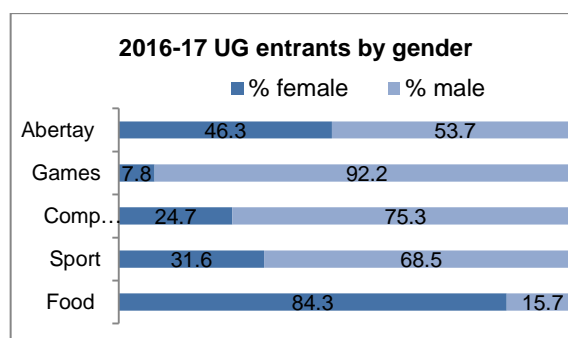
Encourage and recognise commitment to advancing the careers of women:

- Achieve Athena SWAN Bronze award for each academic school.
- Maintain the institutional Athena SWAN award.
- Deliver on institutional and school Athena SWAN action plans.
- Provide leadership development and mentoring for women through the Aurora and other programmes to lessen the gap between men and women in senior positions within the University.

Gender balance – student recruitment

Our current (2016-17) undergraduate population is 47% female and 53% male. Our 2016-17 undergraduate intake followed a similar pattern. This is in contrast to the sector position, where 58% of Scottish-domiciled entrants to universities in 2014-15 were female³.

We are currently participating in the ECU / SFC project 'Attracting Diversity in the Curriculum' project and as part of this work we reviewed the gender profile across all subject areas. In consultation with ECU, we decided to focus on four subject areas: computing, computer games art and design, sport and food innovation where there were significant imbalances.



The decision to focus on these four areas took into account action which was already underway in other areas (e.g. nursing) and also reflected the fact that improving the gender balance of entrants in computing, games and sport, which accounted for c.40% of the University's entrants in 2016-17, could make a significant impact on the University's overall position.

Initial work has concentrated on establishing the baseline and reviewing existing evidence. Many of the tasks set out in the action plan will be undertaken in the second half of 2017 and activity in 2017-18 will evolve from this.

² From [Equality Mainstreaming Report 2017](#)

³ From [SFC Gender Action Plan Technical Report](#)

Consideration of gender balance has also fed into admissions developments and our programme design process. In reviewing the minimum entrance requirements and in particular the subject requirements, we reflected on where there was a perception that these may be a potential barrier to male or female applicants. We are also considering evidence emerging from the project in our programme design process. In particular the new BSc (Hons) Fitness, Nutrition and Health is intended to offer an alternative to the existing Sport and Exercise programme which may be more attractive to female applicants. There has also been a review of module/programme titles and consideration has been given to how these titles could be more attractive to an underrepresented gender.

We are also participating in the HEA Scotland Embedding Equality and Diversity in the Curriculum enhancement project.

Monitoring

Monitoring of gender balance in recruitment is built into our routine reporting. Progress on the gender plan, along with other plans from which it draws, is regularly reported to the University Executive and to Court, through its People Health and Equality Committee.

Abertay University
June 2017

Gender Action Plan

Theme	Why	What	When	Who	Ref
Infrastructure Systems	Maintain institutional Athena SWAN award and work towards achieving University Silver Award	Implement institutional AS action plan Annual progress reports to SMG, Senate, Court and other key committees	Annually, November/December meetings	SAT Chair / Co-ordinator Executive / Athena SAT	AS 2 & AS 5 AS 4
		Apply for renewal of Bronze award	2018		
		Monitor staff indicators for women in STEM and identify areas for action	Implement AS action plans for each academic school. Annual report to be produced. Produce and publish annual analysis of all data included in the AS University application and additional data identified for Abertay.	Annually Annually, September/October	Heads of School HR/SAT/Planning
Humans	Engage academic leaders/managers with gender equality	Launch training and events for academic leaders including seminars for senior staff on gender equality and training for all governors and managers in EIA Use the survey/workshop responses to raise awareness	Ongoing	Executive	AS 25
	Improve understanding of bias, and E&D	Develop unconscious bias training and development provision; prioritise training for those managing/supporting/teaching STEM students and staff. Re-publicise on-line E&D courses and ask all staff to re-take the course to refresh and update knowledge of E&D; Monitor completion of E&D training and work to ensure that 100% of STEM academic managers and 70% of STEM academic staff have completed E&D training	Ongoing Unconscious Bias e-learning launched October 2015. Relaunched Feb 2015 Ongoing Annual report	Director of HR Director of HR	AS 24 AS 24
	Develop STEM academic women	Offer places on the Aurora programme, or equivalent, to STEM academics, as part of a range of approaches to learning and development by the University.	Annually	Exec/SMG/HR	AS 16

Theme	Why	What	When	Who	Ref
		Continue to contribute to Aurora through senior female staff offering to participate as 'role models'.			
Resources	Understand regional student recruitment trends	Explore ways in which shared analysis of applications and admissions to Dundee universities and colleges can be undertaken to identify and subsequently address regional issues	By December 2017	Director of Strategic Planning	
	Understand and address the fall in the proportion of women from undergraduate to postgraduate	Undertake in-depth analysis of PG applications and admissions by subject area, domicile, PG research/taught, to identify priority areas for action to improve gender balance.	By November 2017	Registrar, Director of Student Recruitment, Director of Strategic Planning	AS 7
Relationships	Improve understanding of recruitment issues	Embed the Equality in Student Recruitment project across the University's equality and diversity activities and involve academic staff in discussions.	January – July 2017	Director of Student Recruitment	EqSR 8
	Improve networking opportunities for women	Extend the 'STEM Women's Networking Event' concept to include more participants across STEM-related subjects and within the Graduate School, and run informal networking events for women across the University	January – December 2017	Head of Graduate School	AS19
Raising awareness and aspirations	Public engagement	Ensure appropriate female representation on University outreach activities, specifically increase areas where women are under-represented	Ongoing	Heads of Research Themes	AS 20
	Increase collaboration with local stakeholders to identify and address gender issues in recruitment	Increase collaboration with local stakeholders including Dundee and Angus College to identify opportunities to work together. 6.1 Liaise with Dundee and Angus College to identify opportunities for collaboration with their gender projects 6.2 Look at ACT and engage with local authority/ Dundee & Angus Education plc.	January – December 2017	Director of Student Recruitment	EqSR 6
		Engage with Childrens' University to consider how we can include opportunities to address gender imbalances within existing work and identify any potential gaps.	By end of July 2017	Director of Student Recruitment	EqSR 7

Theme	Why	What	When	Who	Ref
		Dundee Academy of Sport 9.1 Measure the impact of existing Dundee Academy of Sport activities on student recruitment. 9.2 Identify suitable case studies on 'changed perceptions' from under represented genders.	January – December 2017	Director of Student Recruitment	EqSR 9
Influencing the influencers	Embed gender equality in the curriculum	Identify and share good practice on gender equality features in the STEM curriculum/content of STEM programmes Consider gender equality and the promotion of women's careers in STEM in relation to both content and inclusive delivery through equality impact assessment of all new programmes and programme reviews.	Ongoing	Director Teaching and Learning Enhancement / Schools	AS 21
Encouraging applications	Monitor impact on changes to our approach to entry requirements for 2017-18	Evaluation of new entry requirements Evaluate and track all new entrant students for September 2017, specifically those that enter Abertay using the adjusted entry requirements. Consider if the adjusted entry requirements have made any difference to contextual or gender-related admissions. Consider a real-time way to engage/track the progress of these students.	By end December 2017	Director of Strategic Planning	EqSR 2
	Programme entry requirements: Review Qualification Attainment	3.1 Review patterns of attainment by gender for SQA National 4 & 5 qualifications in Maths and English. 3.2 Review patterns of participation and attainment by gender for pre-requisite SQA Higher subjects. 3.3 Identify alternative SQA Higher subjects or combinations for relevant programmes.	January - March 2017	Director of Student Recruitment	EqSR 3
	Student Applications and Access	Monitor and analyse applications and intake across all schools and report on an annual basis		Director of Student Recruitment, Director of Strategic	Eq 2.1.3

Theme	Why	What	When	Who	Ref
Supporting success	Monitor student achievement	Monitor and analyse student progression rates by protected characteristic	Annually	Planning Registrar	Eq 2.2.3

KEY: AS = Athena SWAN action plan

Eq= Equality Action Plan

EqSR = Attracting Diversity: Equality in Student Recruitment action plan