

Open University in Scotland

Gender Action Plan 2017 - 2020

A. Introduction and Background

1. In the guidance for Outcome Agreements for the 2017-18 academic year, The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) confirmed that all colleges and universities in Scotland are to develop institutional gender action plans (GAPs) by July 2017, in order to enhance the strategic oversight of tackling imbalances at a national, regional and institutional level.
2. A major focus of GAPs will be on curriculum areas where there is an imbalance between the genders of 75% to 25% and to set out actions to address these imbalances. Specific outcomes for subject areas of concern for Universities in developing GAPs are identified as:

Female Under-Representation: Architecture, Building and Planning; Engineering; Technologies; Computer Sciences

Male Under-Representation: Social Sciences; Nursing; Training Teachers; Psychology

3. The SFC guidance asks Universities to seek to reduce the number of such gender imbalanced subjects by half by 2025 and eliminate them by 2030 and furthermore institutions must decrease the gender gap between men and women participating in undergraduate study in Scotland to 13% by 2019 and to 5% by 2030. Institutions are expected to have explored their institutional and regional data to understand where their gender imbalances lie and to set out their initial actions. Such an initial review of data has been concluded in the Open University in Scotland and will be the basis for further research and analysis as outlined in **Section B**.
4. **Section C** of The Gender Action Plan for the Open University in Scotland summarises a number of work streams and institutional processes which impact on the gender balance of the student population within Scotland and further afield. These measures include the existing subject specific plans in our submissions to Athena Swan, activities relating to younger students, a number of focussed projects and a new focus to our recruitment and marketing activities and how these can help in addressing gender imbalances.

Objectives in the GAP build on policy and practice already in place and set out further measures to address gender imbalances and take forward the gender outcomes already expressed in the Strategic Outcome Agreement, 2017-20.

5. Work streams and objectives are set out below and linked to the five broad themes, originally developed by the Higher Education Academy in *Whose Job is it Anyway*:

Infrastructure;

Influencing the Influencers

Raising awareness and aspiration

Encouraging applications

Supporting Success

6. Whilst the major focus of the GAP is on student gender imbalances, institutions are invited to consider how their actions address these imbalances and will align with broader work they are involved in, to tackle obstacles for career progression for women staff, prevent violence against women and improve Board gender balance. **Section D** of the document summarises how The Open University is addressing these issues.

B) The Open University in Scotland

Background

The OU is the largest UK University with over 174,000 undergraduate and taught postgraduate students, 15,000 in Scotland, all of whom study part time and at a distance. Most of our students are in employment and are mature, with only around 15% of undergraduate entrants aged under 21. They are based in all four UK Nations and beyond (about 7000 students are registered outside the UK). In 2015/16, 16% of undergraduate entrants studying at the OU in Scotland have declared a disability and there is a similar and growing percentage in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Open University operates an open access policy, meaning that it accepts all applicants who apply to study at undergraduate level, without any academic prerequisites. As such it cannot exercise quite the same levers as other HEIs in terms of influencing gender composition, such as through contextualised admissions processes or other positive measures. To change gender balance it must recruit more students in one or other gender, as appropriate. Furthermore in a part time student body, the turnover of students will be up to twice as long as other HEIs, and necessitates a more nuanced approach to target setting.

Students are taught via the OU's unique mode of distance learning known as "supported open learning". Course materials are delivered via a number of different media, such as on-line and printed materials. Students are allocated to a personal tutor (associate lecturer) who provides academic expertise, guidance and feedback individually and as part of a tutor group.

There has been considerable flexibility in the patterns and pathways of study, and as they are studying part-time, most students complete their degree in five or six years. Historically OU Students have registered on individual modules which they have used to build credits towards a qualification, which for many students has been the interdisciplinary BA (Open).

Since 2012, the OU curriculum has begun to move to being somewhat more qualification-based, rather than module based, with more students registering for a named qualification from the outset of their OU studies. However modular study remains popular, especially in Scotland and we report data to the SFC on a modular basis. In the context of the Gender Action Plan, it should be noted that qualifications in a given subject area may include modules from another area (for example, a science or engineering degree may include modules in mathematics). Consequently, the gender balance measured on a modular basis may differ slightly from that measured on a qualification basis.

OU in Scotland Outcome Agreement 2017/18. The outcome agreement states that “As we develop our institutional gender plan by July 2017, we will analyse the recruitment by sex within individual subjects and monitor trends at a subject level. Where we identify subjects with an imbalance of more than 75:25, we will work with colleagues in faculties and our Equality & Diversity team to outline what actions can be undertaken to achieve a greater balance. We will also work to improve gender balance at a sectoral level with organisations such as the Equality Challenge Unit and the Higher Education Academy in Scotland.”

Gender Balance Amongst OU Students in Scotland: How Our Gender Balance Reflects Our Unique Demographics

The average gender balance for Open University in Scotland undergraduates in 2015/16 is 59% female and 41% male and the same ratio is found amongst undergraduate entrants. This is comparable to the gender balance observed nationally within higher education in Scotland, which is currently 58% female and 42% male¹.

Undergraduate Gender Balance in the Open University in Scotland, FTE at Start

	% FTE	
	Female	Male
Entrants	59%	41%
Overall	59%	41%

¹ Scottish Funding Council (2016) “Gender Action Plan; technical report”

Unlike other Scottish Universities, most of OUIS's new undergraduates (85%) are aged over 21, with a median age for new undergraduates of 27.

51% are in full time employment, 24% work part time, 8% care for others at home, 6% are unemployed and 4% are unable to work.

5% of new undergraduates are from a BME background and 16% declare a disability. 23% of new undergraduates live in remote or rural areas and students are able to study without relocating.

66% of new undergraduates receive a part time fee grant or SFC fee waiver and part of the rationale of the Scottish Government for establishing the part time fee grant was to encourage women returners into higher education.

Our student body may be analysed in different ways, such as measures of social deprivation (the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation); those who have articulated from college with higher national certificates and diplomas; by study intensity and level; and by other protected characteristics such as sexual orientation, religious belief and care leaver status.

An initial review of the Open University in Scotland student body has been carried out looking at gender and intersectionalities with a number of other demographic characteristics, which indicate that further research could inform future Gender Action Plans and Outcome Agreements.

Our objective in the Gender Action Plan is to conduct further research in 2017/18 and map a range of student characteristics against gender. Wider issues amongst the changing Scottish population will be considered and the review will factor in other issues arising from the first tranche of Gender Action Plans

Our proposed research question:

We have also noted a number of other demographic breakdowns where our gender imbalance may be more extreme than across the overall student population and, during the coming period, we will begin to scope what further analysis and research could help us to better understand intersectionality between various protected characteristics and demographics, investigate underlying structural reasons and to inform our future approach.

Gender Balance at the Open University in Scotland in those Subject Areas Highlighted by the Scottish Funding Council as being of Concern

The SFC Gender Action Plan highlighted subject areas of concern for tackling imbalances across Scotland and has asked Scottish Universities to enhance their strategic oversight of the manner in which imbalances are being addressed. These subject areas are grouped into two; those with female under-representation and those with male under-representation.

It is noted that no gender imbalances of more than 75% are encountered in the Open University in Scotland in any subject areas other than those highlighted as "Subjects of Concern", although Subjects Allied to Medicine and Education are kindred subjects and are included here.

Female Under Representation	Current proportion of female all undergraduate entrants (FTE). 2015/16	Is this subject Gender Imbalanced as Defined by SFC	Target
Architecture, Building and Planning Not offered by the OU.	n/a		n/a
Engineering In 2015/16, 75% of OU undergraduate entrants undertaking engineering modules are male. The national average of undergraduates undertaking engineering qualifications is 86% male. ² Overall undergraduate numbers have grown over the past five years for both genders. The OU notes that this subject, while close to the gender imbalance definition, has consistently had a female proportion at or in excess of 25% since 2013/14.	25%	No	Maintain and improve the proportion of female students
Technologies In 2015/16, 29% of undergraduate entrants registered have been female and this has consistently been the case in recent years (29% of all undergraduate students female).	29%	No	Maintain and improve the proportion of female students
Computer Sciences In 2015/16, 21% of undergraduate entrants registered have been female (21% of all undergraduate students female). Overall student numbers have declined but by slightly more for females.	21%	Yes	Reduce the number of subject areas with a 75:25% gender imbalance by half by 2025

² Scottish Funding Council (2016) "Gender Action Plan: technical report"

Male Under Representation	Current proportion of female undergraduate entrants (FTE). 2015/16	Is this subject Gender Imbalanced as defined by SFC	Target
<p>Social Studies In 2015/16, 24% of undergraduate entrants registered have been male (26% of all undergraduate students male).</p>	76%	Yes	Reduce the number of subject areas with a 75:25% gender imbalance by half by 2025
<p>Nursing In nursing, female undergraduates predominate with 87% for undergraduate entrants (91% of all undergraduate students). However the overall FTE is 36 making it a small subject area where a small shift in numbers can bring about a major change in proportions from year to year.</p>	87%	Yes	Reduce the number of subject areas with a 75:25% gender imbalance by half by 2025.
<p>Subjects Allied to Medicine In 2015/16, 87% of undergraduate entrants registered on “Subjects Allied to Medicine” were female (82% of all undergraduate students female). In the OU this subject area largely comprises students studying counselling, health sciences and human biology and health practice</p>	87%	Yes	Reduce the number of subject areas with a 75:25% gender imbalance by half by 2025
<p>Training Teachers Since Teacher Training and Education modules are closely aligned in cognate terms, it made sense to include the Education modules in the analysis. It is further noted that although the OU offers courses which are coded the Training Teachers JACS code, the OU no longer offers Initial Teacher Education Programmes. Most modules are for in-service professional learning and development and the gender balance of our student cohorts will reflect that of the current profession in Scotland. In 2015/16, 87% of undergraduate entrants were female (90% of all undergraduate students female).</p>	87%	Yes	Reduce the number of subject areas with a 75:25% gender imbalance by half 2025

<p>Education In 2015/16, 87% of undergraduate entrants were female (89% of all undergraduate students female).</p>	87%	Yes	Reduce the number of subject areas with a 75:25% gender imbalance by half by 2025
<p>Psychology Psychology has been consistently gender imbalanced, at 78% female for both entrant and all undergraduates in 2015/16, which, is typical of recent years.</p>	78%	Yes	Reduce the number of subject areas with a 75:25% gender imbalance by half by 2025

Gender imbalances in completion rates in different subject areas in Scotland are to be considered as part of the Single Outcome Agreement Process during the winter of 2017/18 according to the latest SFC guidance and will not be addressed explicitly as part of the initial GAP.

C. Actions for 2017/18 and Beyond

HEA Themes		1. Subject Specific Interventions	Actions
Infrastructure/All		<p>The Athena Swan Programme The Open University holds an Institutional Bronze Athena Swan Award, a silver award for Physical Sciences and bronze awards for Computing and Communications and for Engineering and Innovations from 2016. These can be found at: http://www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity/content/ou-athena-swan-awards The submissions contain objectives relating to achieving gender balance in various aspects of the University’s activities, including undergraduate and post graduate teaching, research and staffing. Objectives relating to undergraduate recruitment, retention and progression are summarised below:</p> <p>Athena Swan submissions are currently only in STEM subjects and, as such relate to the OU STEM Faculty. In future years the programme will widen to other subject areas and submissions can be anticipated in other subject areas of concern in our Faculty of Education, Wellbeing and Languages and Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, which can be included in future Gender Action Plans.</p>	<p>OUIs will work to ensure that all future Athena Swan Plans specifically address targets set out by SFC on gender imbalance in subjects of concern and across the OU</p> <p>OUIs will engage in discussion with each Faculty where there subject areas of concern (STEM, Arts and Social Sciences and Wellbeing, Education & Languages). Actions arising will be included in business plans and reflected in future Strategic Outcome Agreements</p>
		<p>i) Computing and Communications. a) A more systematic approach to collecting gender data on recruitment, progress and attainment for undergraduate and post graduate students. This will be reviewed by the Faculty on an annual basis in order that the impact of measures in the submission may be accessed (objectives 1.2 and 2.3)</p>	<p>OUIs will engage fully in the delivery of the Athena Swan action plan.</p> <p>The Athena Swan submissions detail</p>

		<p>b) A review and investigation into the motivation of level 1 undergraduate students, by a combination of survey and interview, will be conducted in 2016/17. The objective is to achieve a 25% increase in women enrolling on the BSc in Computing and IT by 2019 (objective 2.1).</p> <p>c) The procurement and roll out in the Student Support Team dealing with the recruitment of STEM students in England (based in Manchester) of gender bias awareness training during 2017/18. This such training will also be rolled out to recruitment related and student-facing staff in Scotland during 2017/18 (objective 2.2).</p> <p>d) The plan proposes programme of networking, events and campaigns on social media and elsewhere during 2017/18 to promote interest in Computing and Communications, including in Scotland (objective 2.5).</p>	<p>objectives to provide unconscious bias training to student facing staff in the STEM Faculty and a suitable product will be identified to offer training to students facing staff in Scotland in 2017/18</p>
		<p>ii) Engineering and Innovation</p> <p>a) The School will conduct a statistically significant investigation of pass rates by gender and identify reasons for major disparities by October 2018 (Objective 4.1)</p> <p>b) A survey into female withdrawal rates, which are higher than male rates, will be conducted and is to report in October 2018 (objective 4.2).</p> <p>c) A further survey will be carried out into decreasing levels of female registrations at level 1 since 2012. Qualification leads are to conduct a review of reasons emerging from the research, review and revise curriculum where indicated and report in October 2018.</p> <p>d) A survey of female study intentions at level 1 will be undertaken and will report by October 2018. The project is to be resourced by eSTeAM, the group in the STEM Faculty that oversees STEM pedagogical scholarship and will provide a significant evidence base on which future action plans can draw. (objective 4.4)</p>	<p>OUIs will engage fully in the delivery of the Athena Swan action plan</p>

		<p>e) Scripts and background information for staff offering information, advice and guidance and other student facing staff, including marketing, will be reviewed for potential gender bias and reviewed materials will be in place by December 2017. The learning from the exercise will be rolled out to student facing services in Scotland (objective 4.6).</p>	
		<p>The Department of Engineering and Innovation ran a second annual “Celebrating Women in Engineering” Conference in June 2017, to coincide with National Women in Engineering Day. The conference aims to inspire women to become involved in engineering, to hear from leading female academics and professionals and to meet others and hear about those who have made successful careers in that field. The UK will need 180,000 engineers by 2022, but only 9% of current engineers are female; the opportunities are clear.</p> <p>Our STEM faculty is currently developing the Gateway to Coding project - an initiative to develop pathway for women into programming.</p> 	Ongoing annual programme
Influencing the Influencers/ Raising Awareness and aspiration		<p>2. Younger Students – The Young Applicants in School Scheme</p> <p>The Open University’s Young Applicants in Schools Scheme (YASS) represents a core strand of work, raising awareness and aspiration through outreach activities in schools. It has been running in Scotland since 2007. The Scheme offers students in the final year of secondary school the opportunity to access HE level study in school and alongside their other subjects. The programme has national reach in providing students with experience of: HE level study; a breadth of subject areas beyond the school curriculum; and the experience of independent learning, all of which support the development of valuable knowledge and skills, and prepares students for the transition from school to future HE level study if desired.</p>	<p>Future ambitions:</p> <p>Going forward a core ambition of the scheme work closely with schools to encourage and support the registration of male students. This will be done by updating our information materials to</p>

	<p>YASS is uniquely placed as a bridging activity that has full geographical reach, open to every secondary school and participation is not limited by minimum numbers in schools. As such, YASS is a particularly attractive initiative for rural schools in providing all YASS students with the same choice of modules regardless of geography or gender. To date the Scottish Funding Council has provided strategic funding to the Open University in Scotland to enable school pupils to receive fee waivers for their OU modules.</p> <p>YASS Background YASS offers students a choice of 30 modules at SCQF Level 7 from a range of subject areas including Languages, STEM and Law, with modules carrying 10, 15 or 30 points. YASS is also included on Insight (the Scottish Government benchmarking tool for the senior phase).</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>2015/16</th> <th>Headcount</th> <th>FTE</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>1065</td> <td>155</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>As OU students, our YASS students have access to a range of high quality learning materials, study advisors and/or a dedicated tutor, student and IT support, as well as guidance about course choice and careers. The YASS scheme is offered across Scotland: each education authority in Scotland has had schools participating in YASS with over 5,000 students taking a YASS module since the scheme started. The project has extended its reach through working with 31 local authorities in 2016/17.</p> <p>Gender characteristics of YASS students Overall breakdown for YASS students:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">2015-16</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>% Male</td> <td>36%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>% Female</td> <td>64%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	2015/16	Headcount	FTE		1065	155	2015-16		% Male	36%	% Female	64%	<p>include more male student case studies and delivering a series of information sessions for parents, carers and teachers.</p>
2015/16	Headcount	FTE												
	1065	155												
2015-16														
% Male	36%													
% Female	64%													

	<p>STEM Subjects</p> <p>A wide range of subject areas are offered under the programmes, including a broad array of 12 STEM modules. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Introduction to computing and IT -Technologies in practice -Engineering: Origins, methods, context <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>YASS, 2015-16</th> <th>STEM</th> <th>Non STEM</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>% FTE (all student)</td> <td>43%</td> <td>57%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Female %</td> <td>53%</td> <td>72%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Male %</td> <td>47%</td> <td>28%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	YASS, 2015-16	STEM	Non STEM	% FTE (all student)	43%	57%	Female %	53%	72%	Male %	47%	28%	<p>Delivery of YASS programme and targets as agreed with SFC</p>
YASS, 2015-16	STEM	Non STEM												
% FTE (all student)	43%	57%												
Female %	53%	72%												
Male %	47%	28%												
	<p><u>YASS success</u></p> <p>The success of YASS is further evident in the qualitative feedback from School Co-ordinators as well as the testimonies of individual learners. For example:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>The pupils and staff at Doon Academy are grateful for the opportunities the YASS scheme provides. For me, YASS ticks just about all of the boxes of a good widening access initiative: it fills a curricular gap; it provides opportunities to deepen and broaden learning; it provides routes into higher education; it encourages our young people to take responsibility for</i></p>													

		<p><i>and be positive about their futures; and it limits the disadvantage faced by pupils from one of the most deprived parts of the country. Norman Paton (2015) UCAS Adviser / Widening Access Coordinator Doon Academy</i></p> <p><i>I think [YASS] makes me more motivated to take control of my learning because you don't have someone watching over you and pushing you to do it. It's all coming from yourself and you really have to motivate yourself. So I think [YASS] makes you more confident in your learning. YASS student, Lochaber Higher School</i></p> <p><i>[YASS] was a fantastic introduction to law. I feel like it will have really helped to bridge the gap between school and university as there is no provision to study law anywhere else in school like this. YASS student comment, 2017 YASS survey</i></p>	
Raising Awareness and Aspiration		<p>3. DEVELOPMENT OF EARLY YEARS PROVISION</p> <p>The Scottish Funding Council (SFC), the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and the Scottish Government (SG) are encouraging the Open University to participate in the provision of training for the additional staff that will be required to meet the SG's 1140 hours Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) commitment by 2020.</p> <p>The Open University is exploring how it can adapt its existing curriculum to meet the requirements of the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). To meet SSSC requirements the OU needs to; re-introduce observed assessed practice and</p>	<p>OUI's Staff Tutor within the School of Education, Childhood, Youth and Sport (ECYS), supported by central academics, to continue to engage with the SSSC to ensure that the proposed revisions,</p>

		<p>extend the age range that its curriculum covers. Within this work we will consider how we can address the clear gender imbalance within the sector, as 97% of the workforce are female. (Source: Skills Investment Plan: Prospectus For Scotland's early learning and childcare sector, 2017).</p>	<p>including addressing the gender imbalance, to its curriculum meet SSSC requirements.</p> <p>After SSSC acceptance a business case will be developed for a new model of qualification to address the current gaps. This will be submitted to the School of Education, Childhood, Youth and Sport to request investment to fund the required curriculum changes.</p> <p>The OUiS' Staff Tutor within the School of Education, Childhood, Youth and Sport will also engage with colleagues within the OU in Wales in order to support the development of the business case.</p>
Raising awareness and aspiration/ Encouraging applications		<p>4. GRADUATE LEVEL APPRENTICESHIPS</p> <p>The OU operates an open entry arrangement whereby there are no entry requirements for the majority of our undergraduate awards.</p>	<p>If the OU in Scotland and the Business Development Unit is successful in its</p>

		<p>The OUIS is planning to provide a ‘managed open entry’ route for Graduate Level Apprenticeships (GLA) which will allow applicants to register as an apprentice on GLAs.</p> <p>The OUIS plans to offer the following frameworks: Software Development (SCQF level 10); Cyber Security (SCQF level 10) and Cyber Security (SCQF level 11).</p> <p>As women are under-represented within the ICT and digital technologies sector across Scotland, (female participation rates in the sector have declined to 17% in 2012 – source Technology Insights Scotland 2012, e-Skills UK, 2012), through our open entry policy we will actively encourage businesses to consider recruiting female apprentices.</p>	<p>tender³ to delivery Graduate Level Apprenticeships we shall:</p> <p>Use targeted marketing to promote these new qualifications to employers and employer support agencies across Scotland, such as SDS, Business Gateway, Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and the Federation of Small Businesses.</p> <p>Building on the strong relationship with Equate Scotland, work with them to promote GLA opportunities for women to their existing business partners.</p>
Raising awareness and aspiration.		<p>5. EQUATE WOMEN RETURNERS PROGRAMME</p> <p>As a partner to Equate Scotland’s ‘Women Returners’ Programme,’ provide curriculum and ongoing support to female learners on the programme, to enable</p>	Existing OU partnership project.

³ Will be notified of the outcome of our bid in week commencing 14/08.

		<p>them to move back into employment in STEM industries after a career break. This will help to increase women's representation in these major industries.</p> <p>The OU's involvement in this programme could also help to develop a new pipeline of female learners for the OU's STEM related courses.</p>	<p>If Equate Scotland's 'Women Returners Programme' continues to be funded by the Scottish Government the OUIS will introduce women returners to the OU's 'Returning to STEM' badged online course during 2017/18, through the provision of a one day workshop for learners.</p> <p>OU will also provide online support to women delegates throughout the lifecycle of the programme (6 months).</p> <p>Input to be carried out by an OUIS Associate Lecturer.</p>
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		6. Encouraging Applications	
		Review of online content	Objectives
Encouraging Applications	Review and redesign of online content and imagery.	<p>Changes have already been made to content relating to some of our gender imbalance subject areas</p> <p>Example – Changes to STEM careers section on OU website</p>	All (gender imbalance subject) course and career descriptions to be reviewed and 'optimised' from a gender perspective.

		<p>A number of STEM careers are profiled - showing how working in STEM can change lives and be a force for good, messaging which has been identified as resonating with a female audience.</p> <p>Science http://www.open.ac.uk/courses/choose/sciencejobs</p> <p>Engineering http://www.open.ac.uk/courses/choose/engineeringjobs</p> <p>Maths http://www.open.ac.uk/courses/choose/mathsjobs</p> <p>Technology http://www.open.ac.uk/courses/choose/technologyjobs?</p> <p><u>Course descriptions</u> Equate have offered to undertake a review of course content to ensure that the descriptions used are written in a format and style that will appeal to the under-represented gender.</p>	(By Dec 2017)
Encouraging Applications	Increased use of case studies (content and imagery) which feature Scottish 'gender ambassadors' for online content including the OU website, and social media	<p>Increased use of 'gender ambassadors' across all channels We are currently creating a new suite of testimonials and social content to showcase men in healthcare and women in STEM.</p> <p>Example: Name; David Title; Senior Practitioner, Social Work Employer; Scottish Local Authority OU qualification studied; BA Hons Social Work</p>	At least one 'gender ambassador' case study for each gender imbalance subject area.

(including Facebook and Instagram. This gives us an opportunity to increase the impact of unique and inspiring OU stories.



“The job is fast paced, and you never get bored. Social work is exciting and fulfilling, but by no means easy. It’s hard work and you’re constantly making decisions about complex situations. But there’s always the knowledge that you’re doing something worthwhile, and the support you get from colleagues is fantastic. It’s a really collaborative working environment, right up to the senior management team and head of services.

“The OU degree in Social Work is a great way to progress your career as it opens lots of opportunities to go on to work in different fields, everything from adult social work to mental health, to community education and even strategy, where you’re actually involved in developing the services. The OU degree really does open more doors to you, and because the OU is designed for people with busy lives, and busy jobs, I found it worked really well, and it was great having the tutor support there when you needed it.

“The one piece of advice I would give to anyone considering social work is think very carefully about your placement. You need to be prepared emotionally for the work you have to do, so it’s really important to do a placement in a practice team rather than the voluntary sector. It lets you see what a critical role a social

		<p>worker plays, carrying a huge amount of power, and with that comes a need to be really aware of your own role and responsibilities.</p> <p>“So what’s next for me? I always like to challenge myself so I’ll be looking for new opportunities to develop professionally, and build on the skills I’ve developed so far.”</p> <p>David, Senior Practitioner in Social Work, Scottish Local Authority</p>	
Encouraging Applications		<p>Targeted gender-specific marketing campaigns via social media</p> <p>Example – campaign aimed at increasing women in science</p> <p>Using Facebook and Outbrain (where promoted links appear in premium online sites) we drive people to the content hosted on OU landing pages. Using social media in this way allows us to specifically target each gender with specific messaging & relevant imagery.</p> <p>Using tracking links we can then track new enquiries back to specific campaigns and measure the total number of new enquiries generated.</p>	<p>Target new enquiries (Scotland) generated by Dec 2017, through targeted GI campaigns</p> <p>Health – 133 STEM – 333</p> <p>Target – 466 new enquiries</p>

		 <p>The Open University Sponsored · 🌐</p> <p>From forensic science to toxicology, there are so many science careers that can help make a difference to the lives of millions of people, and we have the courses to help you get started.</p> <p>Take the first step and download a prospectus today.</p>  <p>Download a Prospectus Now open.ac.uk</p> <p>Download</p>	
Encouraging Applications	Communications Team	<p><u>Blog</u> The monthly blog will launch at the end of June at www.open.ac.uk/scotland and we will publish a minimum of one article every quarter on a gender-action theme. The Public Affairs Team can also provide data on how many people engaged with the blogs.</p> <p><u>Newsletter</u> We will publish 1 gender action-focused article in every Open Outlook e-newsletter (published quarterly) and we can provide data on how many people read the article based on click rate.</p> <p><u>Social media</u> We will promote the marketing team’s gender campaigns through Facebook and Twitter and provide data on engagement with these posts (Twitter – link clicks, retweets, likes, Facebook – post engagements, video views and reach)</p>	

		We will also proactively look for opportunities ourselves to promote this theme on social and share these with the Marketing team and other Nations to cross-promote. This will include using national days and building up assets such as images and video.	
Encouraging Applications		<p>7. Launch of Jenny Lee Bursary Fund</p> <p>A major fundraising initiative was launched in spring of 2017 and will seek to raise funds from 16,000 OU in Scotland alumni and is named in honour of the Minister of Arts who founded the OU in the 1960s and who herself had to fight to overcome ideas about what women “should” do with their lives. It is hoped that the campaign will enable bursaries for male students with a vocation for providing care and female students with a passion for STEM subjects and that these can assist them to overcome barriers to study. Bursaries will be particularly targeted to those from disadvantaged backgrounds, care leavers, those with a disability and those who face some form of personal risk in pursuing their studies.</p>	First bursaries available from autumn 2018

HELP MEN AND WOMEN IN SCOTLAND FULFIL THEIR DREAMS AND CREATE **A BETTER FUTURE FOR US ALL**

Dear NAME

Scotland needs skills. We need more nurses to care for our loved ones, and more engineers to tackle climate change and deliver clean energy.

Part of the problem is that we are primarily recruiting women as nurses, and mostly only men as engineers. It is not only a waste of individual talent, it is **leaving vital roles unfilled**.

Today we urgently need your help to use this untapped potential to help solve some of the big challenges we face. I hope you will support our Jennie Lee Bursary Fund with a gift of £XX. This new fund will enable people from disadvantaged backgrounds to overcome stereotypes about “men’s work” and “women’s work”, to make their best contribution to Scotland.

We need a workforce fit for the 21st century

In the next three years, we urgently need to find 140,000 more engineers in Scotland. Yet we hardly train and employ any female engineers. The answer is right in front of us – if we can help women overcome the barriers they face.

In addition, only one in ten Scottish nurses are male, yet half our patients are, of course, men. The Royal College of Nursing warned last year that rising demand for healthcare means recruitment of nurses is not keeping pace with society’s needs.



Only 1 in 20 Scottish engineers are female



Only 1 in 10 Scottish nurses are male

		<p>£XX can help GET A STUDENT TO ESSENTIAL TUTORIALS</p> <p>Your gift can help a student bond with the tutor and study buddies who will help them through self-doubt.</p> <p>£XX can help GIVE A STUDENT VITAL STUDY EQUIPMENT</p> <p>You can provide a first laptop for students in poverty, helping them study online to fulfil their dreams.</p> <p>£XX can help CARE FOR RELATIVES DURING EXAMS</p> <p>Your gift can provide the care for a child or an older relative that enables a student to sit their exam.</p>	
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D. Other Institutional Measures Relevant to Gender to be addressed in Gender Action Plans

i. Violence Against Women

Institutions are asked to address the issues of violence against women as part of their Gender Action Plans. As a distance learning institution with students dispersed across the entire country, the issue is confronted in different ways. OU students have the opportunity to attend face to face teaching events, including tutorials and to a diminishing extent, residential schools. Rigorous venue audit procedures are in place to ensure that the health and safety of all students are considered and explicit within these is the security of individuals coming to premises and campuses in evenings and weekends.

The University is also only too aware of the risk of on-line bullying and has Computing codes of conduct for staff and students, covering all areas of on-line work including on-line tutorials, discussion forums and “cyber cafés”, which are monitored.

ii. Career Progression for Staff

Career progression issues for staff in the OU are addressed in our Institutional Strategic Plan for 2017-20, Students First, under the objective of Adaptive Organisation and Culture and is of major concern in the current OU Redesign process.

The Open Equality Scheme for 2016-20, includes organisational objectives pertinent to the Gender Action Plan for Scotland.

Objective 2a seeks to increase the representation of women, ethnic minorities and disabled staff in senior roles, with a target to increase the proportion of women in senior professorial roles from 27.6% to 40% by 2020. The proportion of women at senior academic and professorial services levels is still substantially lower than the proportion of men in equivalent roles, indicating barriers to women’s progression. 11.8% of male staff were in senior contract levels, nearly three times the proportion of female staff (4.3%).

Whilst the proportion of OU women professors has increased to 35.6% across all professorial bands, in the two most senior bands (2 & 3) they accounted for only 22.5%. It was this under-representation, rather than disparity between men and women in like-for-like work, which contributed to the gap in gender pay. At this point in time, the OU is considering specific interventions and Positive Action Programmes to address the imbalance and seeking to develop our “talent pipeline”, but this is against a background of major restructuring.

There are areas of strong performance, such as the proportion of female professors in comparison to the sector and achievement of external recognition through awards. We can raise our public profile relating to these successes.

Objective 2b seeks to increase the leadership potential of women, ethnic minority and disabled staff. With regard to women, a key performance indicator is that at least 25% of participants from the Aurora Programme⁴ will have achieved career related moves within two years of completing the programme, and we wish to improve the tracking of progress for those coming through the programme.

Proposals for a new Leadership Blueprint are being developed for our Vice Chancellor's Executive and the outcome will be reported in our next GAP. This is likely to feature equality and diversity metrics to enable staff to establish a baseline against which to monitor career progression and introduce interventions where progress is not being made. We will investigate and evaluate barriers faced by the target groups and develop interventions to assist in overcoming them. Career related moves constitute lateral moves or secondments of six months or more for development purposes, as well as promotions or "Acting up" positions. Coaching for women returners and a comprehensive Employee Assistance Programme are other interventions which can offer support for staff in overcoming barriers to career progression.

Currently in Scotland a new partnership is being developed with Scottish Women's Aid. The basis of the collaboration is using OU resources to build confidence and to assist in supporting women into the workplace, and training is focussed on employability skills.

The Open University will ensure that the Gender Action Plan for Scotland is taken fully into account with future reviews of the University's Equality Objectives, notably with regard to gender for both staff and students as appropriate.

For more information about the University's Equality Scheme and Objectives, please go to:

<http://www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity/content/equality-scheme-objectives>

iii. Board Membership

The OU Equality Scheme objective 2c includes the key performance indicator that all University Committees will always comprise at least 40% women and 40% men. The Council is already 30% female, but this is not reflected on other committees. We are seeking a more diverse composition of governing committees with more ethnic minority, disabled, religious minority and LGBT representation by 2020.

This is partly based on Equality Challenge Unit and Leadership Foundation for Higher Education research across the sector, which found only 30% female membership of women and only 17% of chairs being female. The OU joined the "30% Club" in August 2015, and is working towards this target

⁴ AURORA is the Leadership Foundation's women-only leadership development programme, now entering its fifth year, available for women in both academic and non-academic roles in order to prepare them for senior roles.

and one or two vacancies can lead to a significant change in gender balance. As of June 2017, the Vice Chancellor's Executive now comprises 41.6% women and is considerably ahead of our commitment under the 30% Club.

A new Leadership Blueprint at VCE is being developed at VCE level in the coming year, against a background of major organisational change and will be reported on in future GAPS. It is likely to feature equality and diversity metrics to enable staff to establish a baseline and monitor career progression and introduce interventions where progress is not being made. We shall investigate and evaluate barriers faced by the target groups and develop interventions to assist in overcoming them achieve Career related moves. These may include lateral moves or secondments of six months or more for development purposes, as well as promotions or "Acting up" positions.

iv) The Athena SWAN Charter

The Athena SWAN Charter is a scheme which recognises and celebrates good employment practice for women working in science, engineering, technology and subjects allied to medicine (STEMM) in higher education and research.

As a member of Athena SWAN the OU is strongly committed to the advancement and promotion of the careers of women in STEM areas. It is proud to have gained its first Athena SWAN Bronze Institutional Award in April 2013. The Award recognises the good practice in place to support women academics, and celebrates our inclusive culture. Our Action Plan, developed for the submission and approved by the University Research Committee, commits the OU to further development and progress over the next three year.

By 2016, four of our six STEM Schools had gained Athena SWAN awards, and our Institutional Bronze was successfully renewed. The Institution is proud of its features of good practice, such as:

- Equality & Diversity training
- Consideration of part-time staff in promotion
- Mixed recruitment and selection panels
- Range of support for students
- Agile working opportunities for all staff
- Flexibility upon return of maternity leave

As detailed in our Action Plan, we are currently working on developing and improving in the following areas:

- Increasing efforts to ensure best practice in recruitment to increase the number of female applicants for senior posts
- Extending specialist career advice to early/mid researchers on fixed term contracts

- Developing specific support for re-starting research activity following maternity leave
- Providing networking activities that specifically support women's career development in Science and Maths, Computing and Technology

The expansion of Athena SWAN to non-STEM areas opens an exciting, new realm of opportunities for gender equality at the OU, and we look forward to supporting and celebrating similar accomplishments across the other disciplines.

For us, the Athena SWAN charter is not only about gender equality, but, provides us with a valuable framework that supports us in our drive to create an environment where each individual has an equal opportunity to realise their full potential.

<http://www.open.ac.uk/equality-diversity/content/ou-athena-swan-awards>

E. Conclusion and Summary of Action Plan

This is the first Gender Action Plan for The Open University in Scotland. The University always seeks to push forward participation from any group in society that wishes to engage in higher education and recent experience has demonstrated how successful targeted activity can be. For instance the University had a target of 6% for participation from students with a disability in its 2012 Equality Scheme and this was rapidly achieved, with 19.7% participation reached in Scotland by 2015/16.

The coming year will be an opportunity to engage with all four Faculties in the Open University, to ensure that the targets arising from the GAP are embedded in work to develop curriculum, in business plans, in the current OU Redesign process and in all future Athena Swan submissions, especially now these are being widened to non-STEM subjects.

In future plans we look to engage with the recommendations from the Commission on Widening Access, with the new Expert Groups for particular subject areas, especially with regard to completion rates and with other policy initiatives currently being taken forward.

We look forward to working with our partners across Scotland, with the SFC in particular, in taking forward the initial Gender Action Plan, and working towards a more equitable balance of gender in all subject areas and heightening participation from under-represented genders in the subject areas of concern.

Summary of OU in Scotland Gender Action Plan Measures:

	Objective	HEA Theme	Timescale	Responsibility
1	We will conduct further research in 2017/18 and map a range of student characteristics against gender, in the context of the changing Scottish population. Further analysis and research could help us to better understand intersectionality between various protected characteristics and demographics, investigate underlying structural reasons and to inform our future approach.	Infrastructure	July 2018	OUIs: Student Numbers Group
2	Maintain and improve the proportion of female students studying Engineering and Technology. Maintain and improve proportion of male students studying Social Studies. Reduce the number of subjects with a gender imbalance of 75%:25% by at least half by 2025 and eliminate by 2020 (Computer Sciences, Nursing, Training Teachers & Psychology) Demonstrate an increased proportion of male enrolments by 2019	Infrastructure/Encouraging Applications	2025/2030 2019	OUIs, Faculties, Equality & Diversity
4	Roll out Unconscious Bias training amongst front line staff involved in student recruitment and support, as well as elsewhere in OUIs	Infrastructure/Encouraging Applications	July 2018	OUIs Academic Services
4	Actions to improve male student retention rates in the most deprived SIND quintile will be brought forward to the SFC by winter December 2017	Support Success	December	OUIs: Student Numbers Group
5	Individual subject area and institutional action plans submitted to Athena Swan are to be considered in tandem with the GAP. Specific measures have been identified for Engineering and Computer Sciences. Future submissions will embrace other non-STEM subjects which can have gender imbalances. We will work with our Faculties to develop approaches to eliminate gender imbalances in subject areas of concern and will embed these in future business plans.	ALL	Ongoing	OUIs, Faculties, Equality & Diversity
6	Our renewed Young Applicants in Schools programme has resulted in high proportions of female students on STEM courses from this cohort and future programmes will seek to encourage more male applications, and deliver more information sessions parents/teachers etc.	Influencing the Influencers/Raising Awareness and Aspiration	Ongoing	OUIs, YASS Team

7	OUIs is seeking Scottish Social Services Council approval for its Early Years curriculum so that it can contribute to Scotland's need for additional trained staff. Only 3% of the workforce in this sector is currently male.	Raising Awareness and Aspiration	ASAP	OUIs and OU Academic Staff, Associate Lecturers and Learning Development Team
8	OUIs to develop managed open entry routes to Graduate Level Apprenticeships in Software Development and Cyber Security. Employers will be supported to encourage female applicants through our work with Equate Scotland and other agencies.	Raising Awareness/Encouraging Applications	2017/18	OUIs and OU Academic Staff, BDU, Learning Development Team, Student Numbers Group
9	We will work in partnership with Equate Scotland's 'Women Returners Programme' supporting women to gain employment in STEM industries after a career break through the use of the OU's 'Returning to STEM' badged online course.	Raising Awareness and Aspiration	2017/18	OUIs Academic Staff and Learning Development Team
10	Our Marketing are undertaking a review and redesign of online content and imagery, with a focus on STEM and how it can change lives and careers. Course descriptions are being reviewed to make them more attractive to under-represented genders, utilising testimonials from "gender ambassadors", such as men in Social Work, women in STEM. The OUIs Communications Team will underpin the marketing activities with social media campaigns blogs and newsletters.	Encouraging Applications	December 2017/Ongoing	OUIs, Marketing, Communications
11	Fund raising will continue for the new Jenny Lee Bursary Fund, launched in spring 2017. It is hoped that the first bursaries of up to £2000 will be available in the 2018/19 academic years to support women with a passion for science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) and men with a vocation for providing care.	Raising Awareness/Encouraging Applications	First bursaries available in autumn 2018	OUIs, Development Office, Marketing, Communications
12	OU Equality Objectives will in future be reviewed and updated to reflect GAP objectives in Scotland, to augment current processes.	Infrastructure	Ongoing	Equality & Diversity

Appendix

2015/16 baseline summary data

Last updated 19/07/2017

Overall gender balance

Year: 2015/16

Geography: Scottish price area

Denominator: Undergraduates

Numerator: Female and male undergraduates

Basis: FTE registrations at start

	FTE		% FTE	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Entrants	1331	927	59%	41%
Overall	4,073	2861	59%	41%

Gender balance by subject: All Undergraduates

Year: 2015/16

Geography: Scottish price area

Denominator: All undergraduates studying

Numerator: Female and male undergraduates studying each module subject area

Basis: FTE registrations at start

Subject	FTE		% FTE	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Computer sciences	64	241	21%	79%
Education, excl. teacher training	206	27	89%	11%
Engineering	94	277	25%	75%
Nursing	33	3	91%	9%
Psychology	506	146	78%	22%
Social studies	1,080	382	74%	26%
Subjects allied to medicine, excl. nursing	78	17	82%	18%
Teacher training	63	7	90%	10%
Technologies	68	169	29%	71%

Gender balance by subject: Entrants

Year: 2015/16
Geography: Scottish price area
Denominator: Undergraduates new to the Open University studying in each module subject area
Numerator: Female and male undergraduates new to the Open University studying each module subject area
Basis: FTE registrations at start

Subject	FTE		% FTE	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Computer sciences	31	113	21%	79%
Education, excl. teacher training	85	13	87%	13%
Engineering	30	91	25%	75%
Nursing	10	2	87%	13%
Physical sciences	79	80	50%	50%
Psychology	62	18	78%	22%
Social studies	403	125	76%	24%
Subjects allied to medicine, excl. nursing	22	3	87%	13%
Teacher training	26	4	87%	13%
Technologies	20	49	29%	71%

Gender characteristics of YASS students

Overall breakdown for YASS students:

FTE Registrations at Start	FTE		% FTE	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
YASS students	99	56	64%	36%

FTE Registrations at Start	FTE		% FTE	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
STEM	36	32	53%	47%
Non stem	64	24	73%	27%