SABHAL
MÒR OSTAIG

Ionad Nàiseanta Cànan is Cultar na Gàidhlig

Aithisg Adhartais Cho-ionnanachd

Equality Progress Report

2013-2015

Updated April 2015

Also available in large print and electronic formats.

Please contact our Marketing Department for details.

Contents

Background

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, which has continued as an independent educational institution since it was founded in 1973, is unique in that it is the only college of FE/HE in the United Kingdom offering advanced courses solely through the medium of Gaelic. As such, it has a critical role to play in ensuring the development and support of the Gaelic language, culture and heritage through educational, cultural, promotional and economic programmes and activities.

Though a relatively small and new institution, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig has been characterised by rapid expansion of activities over the years. Sabhal Mòr Ostaig became a founding member of the UHI project in 1994 resulting in university title being awarded in January 2011. Since its inception, the College has welcomed learners from varying backgrounds and lifestyles and it is our aim to ensure that this continues and is built upon.

Our Mission

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig is committed to being a centre of excellence for the development and enhancement of the Gaelic language, culture and heritage, by providing quality educational, training and research opportunities through the medium of Scottish Gaelic; and by interacting innovatively with individuals, communities and businesses, to contribute to social, cultural and economic development.
The College is an all-Gaelic educational institution and business, and the College's prime objective is to defend, support and develop the Gaelic language.

Our Mainstreaming Vision

Our mainstreaming vision is to be an inclusive community in which everyone, whatever their background, age, nationality or identity is able to participate without constraint.

Commitment to Equality

We at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig believe that discrimination on any grounds is unacceptable in our College. We welcome the duties introduced by the Equality Act 2010 (the Act) and will continue to work towards improving our performance as an Equalities employer and education provider within the relevant legislative framework.

We will continue to seek to make equality a central part of the way we work, by putting it at the centre of our policy-making, service delivery, and employment practice.

We will strive to improve the information which we collect about our staff and students and to become more effective at monitoring and reviewing data accordingly.

We are always conscious of the positive nature of equality duties and we wish to be proactive, and prevent discrimination before it occurs – that is, from the outset we consider our decisions and policies to make sure that they are fair for everyone – staff and students alike.

The systematic way in which we do this is by producing Equality Impact Assessments, which thoroughly analyse our practices, and establish whether the practice affects different groups of people in different ways.

The assessments involve gathering information to help identify the effect of a policy or practice and taking action to eliminate any actual or potential discrimination or disadvantage which is identified. Impact assessments also look for opportunities to promote equality.

This report highlights the progress that the College has made in mainstreaming equality against our original Equality outcomes, published in April 2013. It also refers to our revised outcomes and Action Plan which will lead us into a cycle of improvement and progress which enables us to meet and, we hope, to exceed, the general and specific duties imposed upon us by the Act.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (April 2011)

The general equality duty requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The protected characteristics are:-

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Review and Progress Report on Equality Outcomes 2013 – 2017

This section shows progress made against our original outcomes published in April 2013 and our revised outcomes for 2015-17 and related Action Plan.

Progress on our Original Equality Outcomes.
1. All staff have knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity issues and of their obligations, as employees of the College, under the Equality Act.

Progress
- All existing staff enrolled on Marshall ACM Equality and Diversity e-module.
- New staff enrolled on this module as part of their induction training.
- 50% of Staff completed training.
- College Gaelic-medium face-to-face training developed.
- College Principal and Senior Managers have actively encouraged all staff to complete e-module training by June 2015.

2.   Staff and students with all protected characteristics find that the college has a visible promotion of equality and diversity and that it celebrates its strengths and achievements in this regard.

Progress

- The College Website was awarded second place in College Development Network competition. The judges felt that the website was all-inclusive in pictures age/gender.
- The College Newsletter, issued fortnightly, includes Equalities and Diversity training updates as well as reports and pictures about events which promote and celebrate diversity.

3. All students with relevant protected characteristics have equality of opportunity to participate in college life and achieve positive outcomes.

Progress
- Statistics gathered on Student Gender, Age, Disability and Ethnicity across HE and FE students.
- Retention statistics gathered for HE students
- All Full-time, campus-based students meet individually with the Head of Student Services during Induction week and are given further opportunities to disclose any disabilities and discuss any support needs.
- The development of flexible learning under-graduate and post-graduate programmes have enabled participation from students who could not attend college full-time.

4. All staff with relevant protected characteristics are represented and treated fairly.

Progress
- Staff Application Form updated to include All Protected Characteristics
- 100% Disclosure from Applicants.

5. Staff and students with all protected characteristics, including in particular disabled students and staff, have access to buildings, facilities and resources that are free from unnecessary physical, environmental, geographic and attitudinal barriers.

Progress

- Completion of fully accessible New Building, open to staff on 20 April 2015.
- Flexible working schemes have led to retention of staff and improved work-life balance.

Revised Equality Outcomes

Background

With support from the Equality Challenge Unit, we reflected on our original outcomes and agreed that refinements were necessary to make the outcomes clearer, more measureable and more relevant to the College's Strategic aims and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The revised outcomes will help us develop evidence to inform our Equality and Diversity priorities and ensure that Equality Impact Assessment is at the centre of all the College's services.

The revised Equality Outcomes are listed below.

1. **Equality and diversity are embedded in and delivered through the college's leadership, governance and management structures and processes.**

2. **Staff and students understand and act on their responsibilities to advance equality and foster good relations between all equality groups.**

3. **Male student participation across SMO learning provision is increased.**

4. **Sabhal Mòr Ostaig gathers and deploys comprehensive, robust evidence across all equality groups which informs action.**

5. **There is parity of outcome and consistency of experience for all students whatever their background, age or identity.**

6. **The physical environment at SMO takes account of the needs of disabled users in planning and delivering all activities.**

7. **SMO advances equality of opportunity for all staff irrespective of equality groups across all aspects of working life, e.g. flexible working; career development.**

Equality Action Plan 2015-2017

Our Action Plan demonstrates how we will progress and achieve our Equality Outcomes in as well as how we will fulfil our mainstreaming vision which is to be an inclusive community in which everyone, whatever their background, age nationality or identity, is able to participate without constraint.

This plan lists agreed actions against each outcome together with success indicators in the short term, 2015-2017 as well as our longer term aims in terms of our mainstreaming vision.

Our Equality outcomes will be embedded in all college functions and we will report on our progress in April 2017.

Equality Outcome	Actions	Success indicators (short-medium term)	Measures (medium-long term)
1. Equality and diversity are embedded in and delivered through the college's leadership, governance and management structures and processes. **Key themes** • **Governance and Management** • **Equality Impact Assessment** • **Communication**	Develop and promote college vision for equality and its values (see outline of mainstreaming vision above) Review qualitative and quantitative evidence base to identify current sources of evidence and any gaps Agendas and committee papers to require articulation of consideration of equality Committee level – agendas to including standing item on equality and papers / items to require articulation of consideration of equality Review of all procedures to ensure that equality is mainstreamed, for example Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) in staff annual appraisal, course annual review and self-evaluation (see EO 5)	Vision published and disseminated A robust evidence base established Equalities including Action Plan to be standing item on Committee Agendas. Equalities including Action Plan to be standing item on Committee Agendas. Staff engage with EIA training and carry out effective EIA, taking action based on this. Evidence: Number and quality of EIA undertaken; number of staff undertaking them, decisions taken as a result	Staff and students recognise vision and deliver on it EIA is mainstreamed and is used as a management and planning tool;

	Review of College's marketing, advertising as it is critical that the College's commitment to and position on equality is clear.	Review of marketing and advertising completed Mainstreaming vision is on website *Increased Visibility* of equality is achieved- easier to find EOs, mainstreaming report, vision etc.	
	Review of internal and external promotion of equality and diversity to identify how it is articulated and how its profile can be raised	Evidence: Equality related award/recognition for SMO accessibility is promoted; positive feedback gathered, number of hits on website on this item.	
	Effective implementation of Equality Impact Assessment	Increased awareness of staff and students; discussions / dialogue	
	Revised equality outcomes and vision to be disseminated, along with reports Board responsible for overseeing of the achievement of EOs:	Evidence: Feedback from staff and students on SMO's vision/ profile; more dialogue (including evidence from Education Scotland reviews /engagement visits) Greater clarity as the information about the nature of diversity of students at SMO is promoted in College Newsletter.	

	Relevant aspects of published reports /action plan updates to be tabled as a standing item at senior team meetings, and as appropriate, to the Board. More regular/systematic feedback and involvement to assist and support Equalities Committee.	Board engagement and review activity, challenges as appropriate Board engage in EIA	

Equality Outcome	Actions	Success indicators (short-medium term)	Measures (medium-long term)
2. Staff and students understand and act on their responsibilities to advance equality and foster good relations between all equality groups **Key Themes** - **Communication** - **Training** - **Induction** - **Employability**	Develop and promote a mainstreaming vision and college values. Review and develop staff development / CPD activity to develop knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity in order to increase diversity competence across the college. Examine the feasibility of developing a Gaelic online training package in conjunction with other agencies.	Vision published and disseminated Statistics from Staff Completion of Equalities e-module Gaelic in-house training completed Staff Participation in Gaelic face-to-face training. Feedback from Training gathered and collated. Gaelic online training project under development.	Staff and students recognise vision and deliver Increased diversity competence across the college Evidence of increased competence exhibited within self-evaluation, staff appraisal , activities etc. Gaelic online training package developed and fully operational.

	Develop effective induction training for students and staff.	Review of Feedback from Current Training.	
	Undertake training for effective EIA in respect of all functions / practice	Engagement with EIA.	Students conscious of their equality competences
	Work with Comann nan Oileanach (Student Association) to develop activity to build student capacity for Equality and Diversity.	Student-led Activities developed.	Equality is embedded more widely in provision at SMO
	Encourage disclosure of disability among students by providing more information on times and distances between buildings and toilet facilities being accessible to people in gender transformation as well as people with disabilities.	Higher Rates of Disclosure	

Equality Outcome	Actions	Success indicators (short-medium term)	Measures (medium-long term)
3. Male student participation across SMO learning provision is increased **Key Themes:** • **Analysis of Current Position** • **Partnerships** • **Curriculum** • **New provision**	Involvement and Lead by Senior Management Team. Review young students participation. Review conversion rates from family weeks and similar activities. Review approach to outreach activity in schools, particularly related to boys learning the Gaelic language. Offer activities related to Gaelic provision undertaken in schools. Develop new provision based on activity which might interest men as well as women, e.g. hill walking / climbing weekends and rural activities.	Student profile changes (stats) Student experience (survey/dialogue) Review and monitoring recorded, actions taken to keep pilots, actions on track, accountability required. Awareness increase in activity and impacts. New provision developed and delivered.	Improved gender balance across SMO provision

Equality Outcome	Actions	Success indicators (short-medium term)	Measures (medium-long term)

4. SMO gathers and employs comprehensive, robust evidence across all equality groups which informs action.
 	
Key Themes:
  • **Student Data**
  • **Staff Data**
	Establish current gaps in MIS – what is currently available / what needs to be collected and analysed on a whole college basis across all provision.
	(Noted that data analysis to include retention, achievement, subject, level)
	
	Review statistics available within SMO and from UHI
	
	Student Data: develop a standardised approach to data collection across all provision from application stage onwards
	
	Staff data: review and revise method of collecting staff data at application / appointment and for existing staff
	
	Establish what support will be available via UHI - Important to look at access to expertise in
		Data collected – enhanced range and quality
		Disclosure rates up
		Evidence being used to inform action
			Evidence based practice
			
			100% Engagement with disclosure.

	providing stats, effective use of systems to establish robust data Clarify at UHI strategic level re. designing and developing appropriate MIS services, access for partners and staff requirements/needs. Staff and Student disclosure: Review application form and encourage disclosure through surveys Senior Management Team to agree action for development of robust evidence base		

Equality Outcome	Actions	Success indicators (short-medium term)	Measures (medium-long term)
5. There is parity of outcome and consistency of experience for all students whatever their background, age or identity **Key Themes:** • **Curriculum** • **Learning & Teaching Practice** • **Student experience** • **Student Outcomes**	Comprehensive curriculum mapping for equality and diversity. This should involve identifying e.g. activities which draw on the diverse backgrounds and contexts of its student body in the delivery of Gaelic language provision. Course review/self-evaluation to be used as tools as part of curriculum mapping and review exercise Equality consideration to be embedded into the self-evaluation process – questions to be reviewed in order that appropriate questions can be formulated to elicit useful and meaningful information. Develop and deliver relevant staff development to support curriculum review and	Data collected – enhanced range and quality Disclosure rates up Evidence being used to inform action. Revised Templates leading to relevant evidence and actions. Training delivered and reviewed. Increased staff awareness of the relevance of equality considerations in the curriculum.	Parity of outcome across equality groups "Participation without constraints"- visible , measureable

	implementation of equality consideration in self-evaluation.	Increased engagement from staff.	
	Staff to be engaged in the review by working with academic committees.		
	Equality impact assessment: • As part of the curriculum review • Learning and teaching practice; support for learning Assessment		
	Develop targeted training to embed and mainstream equality and EIA practice with reference to: Curriculum Learning and Teaching practice		
	Analyse student data with regard to retention, achievement and relevant qualitative factors.	Data analysed and results published. Future Actions agreed.	
	Redevelop student surveys, including module and course evaluations to include questions related to Equality and Diversity.	Feedback gathered and reviewed. Actions agreed.	

Equality Outcome	Actions	Success indicators (short-medium term)	Measures (medium-long term)
6 The physical environment at SMO takes account of the needs of disabled users in planning and delivering all activities. **Key Themes:** • **Accessibility audit** • **Consultation**	Review processes for making reasonable adjustments in the physical environment • Include an additional question at application regarding mobility. • Encourage disclosure by providing more detailed information about the time and distance to transfer between locations in order to access, for example, facilities for students Encourage disclosure by ensuring information is provided, for example, for toilet facilities being accessible to people in gender transition as well as people with disabilities. Audit accessibility of new buildings.	Completed consultation on accessibility Disability audit Involvement and consideration of users and potential users with mobility issues	"Participation without constraints"-from building accessibility perspective is visible , measureable

	Discussion on undertaking a consultation with disabled users; consider scheduling a disability audit for the estate Progress discussion on accessibility issues in original SMO site to inform actions to mitigate/ address existing constraints for users and potential users in SMO communities		

Equality Outcome	Actions	Success indicators (short-medium term)	Measures (medium-long term)
7 SMO advances equality of opportunity for all staff irrespective of equality groups across all aspects of working life, e.g. flexible working; career development **Key Themes** • **Capacity building** • **Equality Impact Assessment** • **Positive working experience** • **Progression**	Review / impact assessment of reasonable adjustment for staff – the process; what has been implemented and the difference it has made. Analysis of staff statistics to identify issues related to occupational segregation and equal pay Analysis of staff statistics in respect of gender balance in learning and teaching roles Staff development / capacity building in respect of equality and diversity Staff development / capacity building in respect of equality impact assessment	Higher rates of disclosure Revised staff training Increased equality competence Review of staff stats in relation to equality of opportunity for flexible working shows a difference; similarly for e.g. staff development; career development based on equality groups. Staff E&D capacity and competence /confidence is building Policy and processes impact assessed and monitored for impact Positive working experience is evidenced Indicators of effective staff progression **Evidence** (by full range of equality groups, over time) staff survey; self-evaluation; appraisal; staff internal and external progression	Staff profile and gender balance across the full range of provision at SMO. Equal pay issues addressed.

Equality Mainstreaming Report

The following section highlights progress made and good practice achieved in terms of meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty. This is listed against our original outcomes which were published in April 2013.

1. All staff have knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity issues and of their obligations, as employees of the college, under the Equality Act.

Key Themes: Communication, Training, Induction

E-module Training Package
In 2014 the College purchased an e-module Diversity training package from Marshall ACM. All staff including new staff have been enrolled and to date the completion rate is over 50%. Line Managers and other senior staff including the College Principal have encouraged staff to complete this training.

Equalities training in Gaelic
A Gaelic training package has been developed in-house, for staff who indicated that they wished to have Equalities training in Gaelic. This is to be delivered in May 2015.

Evidence of Effectiveness

Extract from UHI Staff Survey 2014.

On the whole, there were high levels of agreement with the statements regarding equality and diversity, and the scores for SMO were greater than or equal to the survey averages. The statements that received particularly high levels of agreement were, *'I believe that SMO actively promotes equality of opportunity for all staff'* (41% strongly agreed and 43% agreed) and *'I understand my personal responsibilities for ensuring and promoting equality at work'* (39% strongly agreed and 46% agreed). Respondents were least likely to agree with the statement *'I have received effective equality training'* – while 64% strongly agreed/agreed, 25% neither agreed nor disagreed and 9% disagreed/strongly disagreed.

SMO Comment – At the all-staff event to launch the online training module, a number of staff expressed a strong preference for the training to be delivered through the medium of Gaelic. While it is not possible to survey the 9% who expressed dissatisfaction, we believe that this may have been an underlying factor and as a result, the College has developed Gaelic-medium training which has been offered for face-to-face delivery.

Further Action:

Gather and evaluate feedback on e-module training package.

Deliver and review Gaelic face-to-face training.

Ensure 100% staff training in Equalities.

The Gaelic Language Act 2005 requires the public bodies named in the Act to develop Gaelic Language Plans. These bodies are also required to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty. There are obvious synergies to be gained by co-operation and it is therefore intended to examine the feasibility of developing a Gaelic online training package in conjunction with other agencies.

2. Staff and students with all protected characteristics find that the college has a visible promotion of equality and diversity and that it celebrates its strengths and achievements in this regard.

Key Themes: Governance and Management, Communication

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig Annual Lecture 2014
This was delivered by Rita Izsák, the UN Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues. She spoke in detail on what defines a minority, whether it be on the basis of religion, ethnicity or language, and on the work that has been done and the legislation that has been implemented to protect minorities and their rights across the globe.

College Website Award 2015
The Sabhal Mòr Ostaig website was awarded second place in a website competition run by College Development Network.
The judges felt that this website was all-inclusive in pictures (age/gender) and had great graphics. "There was a great vibe from the website about the college."

'Healthy Body Health Mind' week including University Mental Health day   February 2015
Activities include promotion of healthy foods and snacks and Student-led obstacle race which attracted large participation from staff and students.

'Is tusa an Còcaire'   International Cookery workshop activity
This event, open to all staff and students on campus, is held monthly during the student term and is particularly well attended by international students who are able to showcase their culinary talents by preparing dishes from countries throughout the world.

'Sgrìobag' College Newsletter
Issued fortnightly and emailed to all staff and students, regularly features Health and Equality promotions and events.

Jon Schueler, Visual Artist in Residence, Scholarship
The Jon Schueler residency is offered each year to a different artist and began in 2013 with Japanese artist Takeshi Shikama, followed by German sound-artist Helmut Lemke in 2014.
The scholarship is a unique international partnership between Sabhal Mòr Ostaig and the Jon Schueler Charitable Trust, with support from the Royal Scottish Academy.
Oliver Mezger, the first Scottish-based recipient of the scholarship, has been chosen as the visual artist in residence for 2015.

Further Action:
Review and Improve Internal and External Promotion of Equality and Diversity.
Revised Equality outcomes and vision to be disseminated at a promotional event, including the Board of Directors and senior staff and at a student event during Induction week.

3. All students with relevant protected characteristics have equality of opportunity to participate in college life and achieve positive outcomes.

Key Themes: Curriculum, Learning and Teaching Practice, Student Experience

Distance Learning Courses
Provision of access courses, certificate, diploma, degree and Masters level courses by distance learning enabling participation by students who cannot attend college full-time. This includes course delivery by Video-conference, Telephone-conference and Virtual Learning Environment with some classes being scheduled during late afternoons and evenings to enable greater participation.

Adaptations to Distance Learning Courses to support Visually Impaired Students
SMO, from their experience in adapting materials for a small number of visually impaired students, learned they would have to be adapt written materials specific to each student's technical resources and abilities in the use of these to make written files accessible. Adaptations were agreed on almost all issues before students started the Course and others were dealt with as they came up. Original files were sent to the student with notes on their formatting and through feedback were adapted and an adapted file sent as a test. This was done on all occasions and sometimes it took a few trials to come to a decision on an adaptation. (Further information is available in Appendix 1)

Flexible Assessment Arrangements
Students whose first language is not English have been permitted to use dictionaries in other languages for examinations where Gaelic-English dictionaries would normally be permitted.

Amendments to Curriculum
Amendments have been made to ensure that examples and assessments used in language and other classes reflect world events rather than solely focussing on the Highlands and Islands. This was due to feedback from international students.

Comparisons with Minority Cultures
 Level 8 modules such *Cànan, Culture is Cinnidheachd* (Language, Culture and Ethnicity) and *Leasachadh air a' Ghàidhealtachd agus Roinnean Iomallach* (Development Issues in the Highlands and other remote areas) examine historical experience and recent trends and patterns of development in minoritised language communities and minority cultures in Europe.
Level 9 modules such as *Nàiseantachd agus Fèin-Aithneachadh Nàiseanta* (Nationalism and National Identity) which introduces students to the history of nationalism in Scotland and compares Scotland's experience with that of a selection of Scandinavian/other countries, including Iceland, Norway, the Faroes, Sweden, and Canada while *Dlùth-chruinneas agus*

Coimhearsnachdan Iomallach (Globalisation and remote communities) gives them a firm basis for the analysis of the historical and especially the contemporary economic and political situation of peripheral European societies.

Statistics

Appendix 2 shows the statistical information available via UHI Records on the Equality characteristics of our students at HE and FE level.

It has been identified that there is a significant majority of female students across these courses and that the statistics on ethnicity characteristics do not reflect the true diversity of Sabhal Mòr Ostaig students, both full-time on campus and part-time distance learning.

Appendix 3 shows the statistical information available on student retention and achievement in terms of Equality characteristics.

In terms of retention it has been noted that students disclosing a disability are less likely to withdraw or suspend their studies.

Further Action

Mapping exercise across all aspects of the curriculum to identify how equality is being delivered and the approaches being used to place Gaelic language, heritage and culture alongside other cultures in order to raise awareness, increase understanding and share good practice.

Since our statistics show that almost all courses attract a greater number of female students than male students actions will be taken with the aim of attracting more male students to the college.

Encourage more students, particularly FE students to disclose information relating to disability and other Equality characteristics.

Gather Equality Data across all the Protected Characteristics.

Improve data collection and analysis across all provision and identify other areas for action.

4. All staff with relevant protected characteristics are represented and treated fairly.

Key Themes: Staff Data

Gathering Staff Protected Characteristics Data on application

The college application form has been updated and now gathers data, across all the protected characteristics, which is recorded in Access database.

To date, there has been 100% disclosure and no challenges.

Staff Information

The following tables show summary information on the gender composition of our current staff and Board of Directors.

	2013		**2015**	
Department	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**
Education	21	12	23	11
ICT	3	0	3	0
Corporate Services	6	9	5	9
Facilities	8	25	8	18
Lifelong Learning	5	7	4	4
Research	4	2	4	4
Tobar an Dualchais	4	4	2	3
Totals	**51**	**59**	**49**	**49**
Percentage	**46.36%**	**53.64%**	**50%**	**50%**

Gender Composition of Board of Directors

	2013		2015	
Gender	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**
Members	4	6	6	6
Percentage	40%	60%	50%	50%

Gender Pay Gap Information

April 2013   **April 2015**

Hourly rate by Gender	Male	Female		Hourly rate by Gender	Male	Female
£	20.38	14.50		£	20.31	16.53

The Gender Pay Gap is 28.85%   The Gender Pay Gap is 18.61%

Comment

The gender disparity in the Education Department has been noted and will be kept under review.

There are no concerns regarding the Gender composition of the Board of Directors.

The Gender Pay Gap has improved significantly.

Further Action

Gather and review statistics across all the protected characteristics for existing staff in terms of recruitment, retention and advancement.

Reduce the Gender Pay Gap further.

5. Staff and students with all protected characteristics, including in particular disabled students and staff have access to buildings, facilities and resources that are free from unnecessary physical, environmental, geographic and attitudinal barriers.

Key Themes - Accessibility, Positive Working Experience

Ionad Iain Noble
Fully accessible new building providing classroom and office space to be opened in May 2015.

Childcare Facility
The college hosts a community-run childcare company, Fàs Mòr which offers wraparound care and this has enabled more staff and students to participate in college life.

Health and Safety Assessments
Display screen assessments for all relevant staff leading to provision of ergonomic accessories e.g. foot rests, wrist supports.

Work Schemes
Occupational Health Scheme in place.
Phased Return to Work Schemes agreed and implemented successfully.

National Campaigns
The college continues to promote and participate in campaigns such as *Healthy Working Lives*, *Positive about Disabled People* and *See Me*.

Flexible Working Hours
This includes part-time work and working from home and has led to retention of staff and improved work-life balance among those who opt to participate in the scheme.

Further Action

Audit of fully-accessible new building

Feedback on Accessibility to be gathered on all Evaluation Forms

Development of Gym Facilities available to students and staff on campus

Appendix 1 – Case Study

This report was sent to Colleges Scotland and included in response to an Education and Culture Committee inquiry which considered how the attainment levels of learners with a hearing and/or visual impairment can be improved.

Introduction: At the time of writing a Scottish Gaelic computer voice is being developed and there is no formal code for Scottish Gaelic Braille. Students with visual impairment therefore cannot access files written in Scottish Gaelic unless they do so through another language. The student must use technology coded for one language to "read" Scottish Gaelic letter by letter or word by word if they have the ability to understand what could be very confusing, i.e. the electronic pronunciation of the new language in another language. This report refers to adapting language learning teaching materials for tuition by Distance Learning, from the aspects of teaching and of technology. The course required the student to participate in tutor-led group tele-conferences which follow two workbooks at the same time.

History: SMO, from their experience in adapting materials for a small number of visually impaired students, learned they would have to be adapt written materials specific to each student's technical resources and abilities in the use of these to make written files accessible. Adaptations were agreed on almost all issues before students started the course and others were dealt with as they came up. Original files were sent to the student with notes on their formatting and through feedback were adapted and an adapted file sent as a test. This was done on all occasions and sometimes it took a few trials to come to a decision on an adaptation.

Learning and teaching: Staff adapting course materials should be aware of language teaching and learning techniques to successfully adapt language lessons which use visual techniques to consolidate and draw attention to content. This would include, for example, ensuring different fonts and effects used as highlighters in a piece of text will translate to the student and that the student understands their purpose. Another example would be the translation to the student of an exercise that is fully visual, for example, a wordfinder puzzle whose aim is to help in recognition of spelling patterns. Because wordfinders can include words that can read in any direction and because it is unlikely technology will be able to do that for a visually impaired student this lesson would have to be re-presented and the student and tutor made aware of that. Tables showing, for example, grammar patterns might not be navigable in a way that enables the visually impaired student to absorb the whole pattern, comparing similarities and differences in the topic so the information in these Tables must be re-presented for the student. It must also be made possible for the student to read a word, previously in the Table, and know the column or row it belonged to.

Technology: It is important the student is told about the types and versions of files and computer programs used by the Course. Staff should ensure they can identify all formatting already existing in files, visible in a Final Version or not, and ensure that it is necessary and doesn't create a barrier to accessing content or cause unnecessary navigation for the visually impaired student. For example, a full-stop on a page with no other content on it could cause concern that some content is missing. A correctly formatted Table, for example, might be readable in some programs. Staff should ensure the student is aware of all formatting, for example, if Word Headers and Footers are used some programs have to be set to read these, and using a Table of Contents means the student might have to assign a keyboard shortcut for clicking on a link.

Where a student is required to read a file while listening to the tutor or other students it would be helpful if the tutor knows what the file sounds like to the student so they attempt to understand the process the student experiences.

List of adaptations specific to a Distance learning Course: Below is a list of some of the adaptations required by visually impaired students. It is not a complete list.

- use Word files, not PDFs
- remove Text Boxes
- remove Tables and re-present information to show patterns
- Replace Symbols and pictures and replace with clear wording
- use Insert Page Break not Returns or Tabs to start on next page
- do not use Word Form format
- use …….. to symbolise where a word should be inserted not _____
- use an * on either side of a letter or word that is being highlighted (by italics, bold, colour)
- to ensure an apostrophe is facing the correct way (-to switch off "smart quotes" : Word Options > Proofing > Autocorrect > "Autoformat as you type" tab > take the tick out of the box "Replace straight quotes with smart quotes" on this tab and on the tab "autoformat". The apostrophe will then be the simple downward stroke instead of the 66/99 type regardless of the font used.)
- Use Word Table of Contents to help student navigate a file
- files attached to an e-mail or in a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) must be exactly named in the e-mail to ensure student knows to download them and can find them using the Search or Find Function

Student feedback: Students were happy with what was presented although they were not always able to access all exercises.

Tutor feedback: Tutors did not have to adapt teaching methods for the student but it should be noted that the Course was written for Distance Learning self-taught study with tutor supervision. Tutors had to ensure adequate time was given to students to go between files

before they had to answer a question or read aloud as the "reading" technologies slow down going between files and accessing content.

Conclusions:

- Every detail of Course files and programmes must be discussed with each student before they start their Course.
- All staff must be aware of adjustments and adaptations made for each student and ensure that they follow them.
- A file correctly formatted and labelled initially might be more accessible to a visually impaired student and take less time to adapt than a file created with poor formatting.
- Staff are developing their knowledge about technology uses through the student.
- It is likely that adaptations should be customised for each student.

Distance Learning Courses, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Isle of Skye.

13/04/15

Appendix 2 - Sabhal Mòr Ostaig Equality Statistics

Table 1: Sabhal Mòr Ostaig Higher Education Equality statistics

Information extracted from Core Reports, UHI Records.

HE statistics			
	2012/13	**2013/14**	**2014/15**
Size of cohort:	**213**	**272**	**241**
Gender: Female	120 **56%**	170 **62.5%**	154 **64%**
Gender: Male	93 **44%**	102 **37.5%**	87 **36%**
Ethnicity: White Scottish	129 **61%**	191 **70%**	177 73%
Ethnicity: White other	71 **33.5%**	64 **24%**	56 24%
Ethnicity: Other	4 **1.5%**	3 **1%**	1 **0.5%**
Ethnicity: Refused	9 **4%**	14 **5%**	7 **2.5%**
Declared disability	19 **9%**	32 **12%**	33 **14%**
No Disability	194 **91%**	240 **88%**	208 **86%**
Age: 16-24	72 **34%**	84 **31%**	96 **40%**
Age: 25-39	45 **21%**	56 **21%**	39 **16%**
Age: 40+	95 **45%**	131 **48%**	107 **44%**

Comments on HE Statistics
- Significant Gender Gap which has increased over the last 3 years.
- Slight increase in the number of students declaring a disability.
- Ethnicity statistics do not reflect the true diversity of Sabhal Mòr Ostaig Students.
- Higher Education courses continue to attract students of all ages.

Table 2: Sabhal Mòr Ostaig FE Equality Statistics

Information extracted from Core Reports, UHI Records.

FE statistics			
	2012/13	**2013/14**	**2014/15**
Size of cohort:	**258**	**249**	**188**
Gender: Male	60 **23%**	82 **33%**	57 **30%**
Gender: Female	168 **65%**	146 **58.5%**	92 **49%**
Gender: Information Refused	30 **11%**	21 **8.5%**	39 **21%**
Ethnicity: Majority (Scottish White + White)	107 41.5%	83 **33.5%**	32 **17.5%**
Ethnicity: Minority (any other)	17 **6.5%**	9 **3.5%**	1 **0.5%**
Ethnicity: Refused	134 **52%**	157 **63%**	155 **82%**
Declared disability	17 **9.5%**	7 **3%**	1 **0.5%**
No Disability	108 **42%**	86 **34.5%**	30 **16%**
Disability not declared	133 **51.5%**	156 **62.5%**	157 **83.5%**
Age: 16-25	28 **11%**	23 **9.5%**	16 **8.5%**
Age: 26-40	96 **37%**	88 **35.5%**	63 **33.5%**
Age: 40+	134 **52%**	138 **55%**	109 **58%**

These results are based on the FE part-time Distance Learning course *An Cùrsa Inntrigidh* (Introduction to Gaelic). Many successful students tend to advance on to the Degree programmes.

Comments

- Gender Gap which has decreased slightly over the last 3 years.
- Significant number of students do not disclose information, including disability information.
- Although there are less younger students enrolled, this is thought to be consistent with distance-learning courses elsewhere.

Table 3: Sabhal Mòr Ostaig Short Course Equality Statistics

Information from Sabhal Mòr Ostaig records. Ethnicity information is not available for 2014/15.

Short Course Statistics	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Total Students	**846**	**764**	**662**
Gender			
Female	546 **65%**	456 **60%**	412 **62%**
Male	300 **35%**	308 **40%**	250 **38%**
Ethnicity			
White Scottish	510 **60%**	465 **61%**	
White UK	194 **23%**	133 **17.5%**	
White Irish	28 **3%**	29 **4%**	
White other	78 **9%**	98 **13%**	
Mixed Background	12 **1.5%**	19 **2.5%**	
Other	3 **0.5%**	2 **0.25%**	
African Scottish/ African British	1	0	
Chinese Scottish/ Chinese British	0	1	
Asian Scottish/ Asian British	3 **0.5%**	6 **0.75%**	
White Polish	3 **0.5%**	0	
Info. Refused	13 **1.5%**	11 **1.5%**	
Disability Declared	72 **8.5%**	65 **9%**	47 **7%**
No Disability	774 **91.5%**	699 **91%**	615 **93%**
Age			
19 and under	85 **10%**	76 **10%**	67 **10%**
20-24	72 **8.5%**	60 **8%**	47 **7%**
25 and over	689 **81.5%**	628 **82%**	548 **83%**

Comments on Sabhal Mòr Ostaig Short Course statistics.

- In common with other courses, there is a gender imbalance in favour of female students and this has been identified as an area for action.
- It has been noted previously that some short course students do not disclose disabilities despite being given every opportunity.
- While the statistics available do not reflect the true age diversity of the short course students, these courses generally do attract an older demographic.

Appendix 3   Information on Student Retention

The following information was extracted from Core Reports, UHI Records.

Table 4, Student Retention by Gender

Year	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14	
Total Students	**188**		195		211	
Gender	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**
Students by gender	113 (60%)	75 (40%)	112 (57.5%)	83 (42.5%)	132 (62.5%)	79 (37.5%)
Withdrawn (% of withdrawn students)	3 (75%)	1 (25%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	7 (58.3%)	5 (41.7%)
Suspended Studies (% of suspended students)	6 (50%)	6 (50%)	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	6 (60%)	4 (40%)
Award (% of students gaining awards)	23 (66%)	12 (34%)	24 (53%)	21 (47%)	28 (70%)	12 (30%)
Retained (% of retained students)	86 (61%)	55 (39%)	106 (58%)	78 (42%)	89 (63.5%)	51 (36.5%)
Non-continuing (% of non-continuing students)	21 (60%)	14 (40%)	4 (44%)	5 (56%)	37 (61%)	24 (39%)

Table 5 – Student Retention Information by Ethnicity

Year	2011/12				2012/13				2013/14			
Total Students	**180**				**195**				**211**			
Ethnicity	**Other**	**White Other**	**White Scottish**	**Info Refused**	**Other**	**White Other**	**White Scottish**	**Info Refused**	**Other**	**White Other**	**White Scottish**	**Info Refused**
Students ethnicity (% of total students)	1 (1%)	57 (32%)	114 (63%)	8 (4%)	3 (1.5%)	65 (33%)	117 (60%)	10 (5.5)	4 (2%)	47 (22%)	150 (71%)	10 (5%)
Withdrawn (% of withdrawn students)	0	1 (25%)	3 (75%)	0	1 (100%)		1 (100%)		0	2 17%	10 83%	0
Suspended Studies (% of suspended students)	0	6 (50%)	5 (34%)	1 (8%)	0	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	0	0	0	10 (100%)	0
Award (% of students gaining awards)	0	12 (34%)	23 (66%)	0	0	22 (49%)	21 (47%)	2 (4%)	0	12 (30%)	24 (60%)	4 (10%)
Retained (% of retained students)	1 (1%)	46 (35%)	80 (60%)	6 (4%)	3 (1.5%)	58 (31.5%)	113 (61.5%)	10 (5.5)	2 (1.5%)	35 (25%)	97 (69%)	6 (6.5%)
Non-continuing (% of non-continuing students)	0	5 (14%)	29 (83%)	1 (3%)	0	6 67%	3 33%	0	2 3%	12 20%	43 70.5%	4 6.5

Table 6 – Student Retention by Age

Year	2011/12					2012/13					2013/14				
Total Students	**180**					**197**					**211**				
Age	**16-21**	**21-24**	**25-29**	**30-49**	**50+**	**16-21**	**21-24**	**25-29**	**30-49**	**50+**	**16-21**	**21-24**	**25-29**	**30-49**	**50+**
Student by Age (% of total students)	40 (22%)	10 (6%)	11 (6%)	63 (35%)	56 (31%)	46 (24%)	15 (7.5%)	11 (5.5%)	66 (33%)	59 (30%)	50 (24%)	16 (8%)	13 (6%)	62 (29%)	70 (33%)
Withdrawn (% of withdrawn students)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (50%)	2 (50%)	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	5 (42%)	6 (50%)
Suspended Studies (% of suspended students)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	10 (83%)	2 (17%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	1 (10%)	2 (20%)	0 (0%)	3 (30%)	4 (40%)
Award (% of students gaining awards)	10 (28.5%)	2 (5.5%)	3 (9%)	8 (23%)	12 (34%)	14 (30%)	4 (9%)	2 (4%)	15 (33%)	11 (24%)	11 (27.5%)	8 (20%)	2 (5%)	10 (25%)	9 (22.5%)
Retained (% of retained students)	33 (25%)	9 (7%)	8 (6%)	37 (28%)	16 (46%)	43 (23%)	13 (7%)	11 (6%)	64 (34%)	55 (30%)	39 (28%)	10 (7%)	8 (6%)	40 (29%)	43 (30%)
Non-continue (% of non-continuing students)	7 (20%)	1 (3%)	3 (9%)	16 (46%)	8 (23%)	3 (33%)	2 (22%)	0 (0%)	1 (12%)	3 (33%)	10 (16%)	4 (6.5%)	5 (8%)	19 (31%)	23 (37.5%)

Table 7 – Student Retention by Disability status.

Year	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14	
Total Students	**188**		**195**		**202**	
Disability Status	**Disability Disclosed**	**No Disability**	**Disability Disclosed**	**No Disability**	**Disability Disclosed**	**No Disability**
Student by Disability Status	14 7.5%	174 92.5%	18 9%	177 91%	24 12%	178 88%
Withdrawn	2 50%	2 50%	0	1 100%	2 18%	9 82%
Suspend	0	12 100%	0	2 100%	1 11%	8 89%
Award	2 6%	33 94%	3 7%	42 93%	3 7.5%	37 92.5%
Retained	11 8%	130 92%	16 11.5%	122 88.5%	16 11.5%	122 88.5%
Non-continue	1 3%	32 97%	7 13%	48 87%	13 13%	48 87%

Comment on Student Retention Statistics

The statistical information was extracted from Core Reports UHI Records and is based on data which applies to the Higher Education Statistical Agency (HESA) and therefore includes only HE students.

Although we have yet to undertake an analysis of this data we have identified the following factors:-

Table 4 – Analysis by gender

There appears to be no significant difference between the retention and achievement of male and female students.

Table 5 – Analysis by ethnicity

There appears to be no significant difference between the retention and achievement of students in terms of ethnicity listed, however as previously noted, these statistics do not reflect the true diversity of our students.

Table 6 – Analysis by age

These statistics indicate a higher tendency to withdraw or suspend among the students over the age of 30. There are no significant differences in achievement across the age categories.

Table 7 – Analysis by disability status

These statistics tend to indicate that students declaring a disability tend to be less likely to withdraw or suspend their studies and are therefore more likely to progress.   This is indicative of the level of support available to students declaring a disability and of the students' levels of motivation. It was also suggested, during discussion, that students who decide not to declare a disability may miss out on some of the support which would have been available.