



SABHAL
MÒR OSTAIG

Ionad Nàiseanta Cànan is Cultar na Gàidhlig

PROGRESS MADE IN ACHIEVING EQUALITY OUTCOMES 2015-2017

SABHAL MÒR OSTAIG - APRIL 2017

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Introduction

Under the Scottish specific duties of the Equality Act 2010, the College is required to prepare and publish equality outcomes at intervals of not more than 4 years.

We published our first set of equality outcomes in 2013, however 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 measurable and more relevant to the College's Strategic aims and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Our report showing the revised outcomes and progress achieved in mainstreaming the equality duty as at April 2015 can be found [here](#).

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

Progress made in achieving Equality outcomes 2015-2017

The following section lists progress made, since 2015, in achieving our Equality outcomes.

Equality Outcome 1 – Equality and Diversity are embedded and delivered through the college’s leadership, governance and management structures and processes.

Equality Duties

- Eliminate Discrimination
- Advance Equality of Opportunity
- Foster good relations

Protected Characteristics

- All

Agendas and Committee papers - Equalities is now a standing item on Agendas and Committee Papers including meetings of Senior management team and Board of Directors.

Question on Equalities included in Annual Staff Appraisal form. However, there is still a need to encourage engagement with the question, analyse feedback gathered and implement any recommended actions.

New staff are enrolled on to the Marshall ACM training e-module as part of their induction process.

Board of Directors

The College Board of Directors have enrolled on the Marshall ACM training e-module with the majority having completed this successfully.

It has been agreed that the College Directors will participate in Equality and Diversity training which has been specifically designed for college Board members. This is to be delivered by Equality Challenge Unit and scheduled for September 2017.

The Chair of the Equalities Committee is the staff member on the College Board, as of March 2017 and this provides opportunities for raising the profile of Equalities.

Outcome Agreement

The promotion of Equalities is key to two out of the five Priority outcomes identified in the Sabhal Mòr Ostaig Outcome Agreement 2017-2020, namely increased access to language acquisition and opportunities for usage and increased creativity for Gaelic-related culture in Scotland and internationally. This outcome agreement has been impact-assessed.

Strategic Plan

The College’s Strategic Plan (2017-22) lists the promotion of Equalities as the first of its key values and in addition, displays the College’s vision which is to be a place ‘where everybody can have the opportunity to participate in the development of Gaelic’. In addition to this, Strategic Objective 5 *Sustainability and Governance* states that ensuring Equalities is key to all college developments and procedures.

Equality Impact Assessment

All managers were enrolled on the UHI Equality Impact Assessment training module in 2016. It has also been agreed to complete Equality Impact Assessments on all new policies, procedures and practices at committee level, provided that the committee members present have sought feedback from the staff that they represent and that there is adequate representation in terms of diversity, knowledge of the subject and people likely to be affected by the procedure in question.

There has been much evidence of increased awareness among managers and staff of the need to consider the promotion of Equalities while planning events and activities.

Student Activity

While it has been challenging to encourage participation from students in College committees, the student services co-ordinator, who is a member of the Equalities committee attends meetings of the Student Association and has regular informal meetings with student office-bearers. This ensures that students are aware of the need to consider Equality Impact Assessment with regard to student activities and that they are aware of the College's commitment to Equality and Diversity.

Marketing Activities

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig's marketing department, is represented on the Equalities Committee and Senior Management team and has a key role in ensuring that the promotion of Equalities is at the forefront of marketing activities.

Our prospectus, which won the College Development Network students marketing Gold award in 2016, contains information on where our international (distance-learning) students are based as well as statistical information relating to age and gender.

College Newsletters

The fortnightly newsletter, *Sgrìobag*, regularly provides updates on Equalities events such as training and also other activities which advance Equality of Opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

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

Equality Duties Covered

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

Protected Characteristics Covered

- All

Staff partake in effective Equalities induction and Equalities Impact Assessment training including Gaelic face-to-face training sessions.

The feedback gathered has been good with no particular issues raised.

The Staff Departmental Self-evaluation pro-forma includes the Promotion of Equality as one of the six categories for evaluation.

However there is still some work to do in ensuring that this feedback is gathered and analysed and that actions are taken as a result of this evidence.

All campus-based and short-course students receive Equalities training as part of their induction and the evidence gathered from short course students has provided valuable feedback. Full-time students have every opportunity to provide feedback on equalities and other issues. However, a more systematic method is needed for gathering and analysing this feedback.

Equality Outcome 3 - Male student participation across SMO learning provision is increased.

Equality Duties Covered

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

Protected Characteristic Covered

- Gender

HE Students by Gender

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Male	36%	32%	37%
Female	64%	68%	63%

FE Students by Gender – An Cùrsa Adhartais

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Male	37%	37%	29%
Female	63%	63%	71%

(Detailed student data is shown as appendix to the Equalities Reports.)

This outcome has been noted and discussed and at various college committees including the Senior Management Team and the Board of Directors.

It has been recognised that this is not a college-specific issue but a general decrease in male school pupils selecting to study Gaelic at *National 5* and Higher level, which may also be the case with other language subjects.

Actions

- This outcome is included in the College's Outcome Agreement and will be highlighted further in our Gender Action Plan, to be published in July 2017.
- The Marketing department is active in ensuring that the College's publicity materials show positive image of both male and female students.
- The schools recruitment officer is accompanied by male staff or students when visiting schools or other Gaelic events.
- The widely acclaimed short film competition 'Film G', which has been organised by the Sabhal Mòr Ostaig company 'Cànan' for the last ten years, introduced the new category of 'Best Sports Commentary' in an effort to appeal to male pupils as well as female pupils.
- This gender disparity has been raised with Bòrd na Gàidhlig, the principal public body in Scotland responsible for promoting Gaelic development and it has been recommended that

it gathers gender-specific statistical information on school pupils selecting Gaelic at secondary school level.

- There has been much outreach activity in schools including school groups enrolling on drama, sports or practical media courses hosted and delivered by Sabhal Mòr Ostaig.

Impact and Further Actions.

While there is no obvious gender disparity in those attending events for primary and lower secondary school pupils, there is an obvious decline in the number of male school pupils attending events aimed at senior pupils which corresponds to the decline in male pupils selecting Gaelic as a subject.

We will continue to prioritise this outcome and agree on actions and events which could help in attracting male students. We will gather and analyse feedback, on this issue, from current full-time and short course students and will continue to implement appropriate actions.

Equality Outcome 4 - Sabhal Mòr Ostaig gathers and employs comprehensive, robust evidence across all equality groups which informs action.

Equality Duties Covered

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

Protected Characteristics Covered

- All

HE Student data is collected by UHI at application and enrolment and is available to view through UHI Records. Data regarding gender, age, disability and ethnicity is available for SMO HE courses as a whole overview and this is shown in comparison to UHI-wide statistics.

More specific data regarding applications, offers and enrolments is available on a course by course basis. This will provide essential information for the Gender Action Plan to be completed by July 2017.

This data is still to be fully analysed for trends other than gender which continues to show an overall gender split of 65/35 in favour of female students.

Student data is shown as an appendix to the Equalities Reports.

Data is now gathered at application, interview and appointment stage, across all the Protected Characteristics. While it has yet to be fully analysed there have been no apparent issues noted.

Data relating to existing staff has been gathered in 2016 and again in 2017 across all the protected characteristics.

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

Equality Duties Covered

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

Protected Characteristics Covered

- All

Actions have been taken to gather evidence necessary for curriculum mapping with regard to Equality and Diversity. However, this has still to be completed and will remain as an action.

Course provision at FE level has been analysed with regard to reflecting the diverse student group and any actions noted have been completed.

Equality and Diversity is now included in the Self-evaluation document for College departments while statistics on Age and Gender are now included in the module SED pro-forma and module leaders are required to report on any trends.

There is still a need to implement Equality considerations as part of the self-evaluation at HE course level and to implement Equality Impact Assessment with regard to teaching practice.

There is also a need to implement an effective student survey which elicits information on Equality and Diversity which can be used to inform practice and identify necessary actions.

Equality Outcome 6 - The physical environment at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig takes account of the needs of disabled users in planning and delivering all activities.

Equality Duties Covered

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

Protected Characteristics Covered

- Disability
- Age

Students are given information on the layout of the campus and building locations. All students, are encouraged to disclose disabilities and the information supplied will inform decision-making on where classes and other activities are situated. This is particularly relevant with regard to short courses which tend to attract students of a wider age-range. College staff have developed expertise in ensuring that students' classrooms, residential accommodation and venues for social events are as accessible and convenient as reasonably possible.

Examples of the above include the addition of two accessible parking spaces outside the residential building closest to the main college building and the provision of a ramp leading up to the front door of the old hall, in addition to the wheelchair access at the back door.

The new building *Ionad Iain Nobail*, opened in 2015 houses classrooms, offices , a public café and rental spaces and is fully wheelchair accessible and provides additional classrooms and meeting spaces for the college community and the local community.

We still have to gather evidence regarding the accessibility and suitability of the building from community groups, including those with disabilities, which will inform future action.

Equality Outcome 7 - Sabhal Mòr Ostaig advances equality of opportunity for all staff irrespective of protected characteristics across all aspects of working life, e.g. flexible working; career development.

Equality Duties Covered

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

Protected Characteristics Covered

- All

Staff Statistics have been gathered in 2016 and the findings have been discussed. However, it was noted that a significant number of staff (40%) were not willing to engage with some of the questions.

It was agreed to survey staff again in 2017 and they were provided with additional information in the form of the *Stonewall* booklet to encourage engagement with more of the questions. We still had a lower than hoped level of engagement and work is being undertaken to develop a Staff Intranet which will allow staff to update their own HR records periodically. We are aware that further reassurance is required that data is useful for enabling us to understand our workforce better and to provide support where appropriate.

The Gender Pay Gap continues to fall and the College has introduced the Living Wage. Departments which traditionally had more female staff such as Catering and Housekeeping, now have a more balanced gender split.

The continued operation of the College's Childcare Facility 'Fàs Mòr' and of flexible working arrangements have led to retention of staff and reduced barriers to employment for staff members with parental and other caring responsibilities.