



Gender Based Violence in Outcome Agreements 2019-20

Purpose

1. This paper outlines how colleges and universities are responding to the Gender Based Violence requirements in the 2019-22 Outcome Agreement Guidance, and identifies current gaps in implementation and appropriate next steps.

Background

2. The Outcome Agreement (OA) Guidance for 2019-22 requires institutions to report on how they are responding to the Scottish Government's Equally Safe strategy. This is the first year that this requirement has been included in the guidance.
3. Institutions are expected to adopt the Equally Safe toolkit, or adapt or develop their own comparable interventions. Their Outcome Agreements should provide a progress report on their implementation of this in the period covered by the Outcome Agreement, and their progress in preventing and responding to gender based violence (GBV).
4. The guidance also outlines that institutions should:
 - Work in partnership with students, staff, associated unions and any local specialist GBV organisations, to define gender based violence, identify gaps in provision and develop strategic frameworks and implementation plans for prevention and response
 - Establish visible reporting and support systems, and outline how they will monitor and assess these.
 - Identify current GBV reporting and data sources and data capture arrangements.
 - Establish, publicise and implement policies specifically addressing gender-based violence for students and staff.
 - Implement approaches that respond to the diversity of their student and staff populations.
5. The final Outcome Agreements for 2019-20 were received by SFC in April 2019.

Outcome Agreements 2019-20

Universities

6. All but one of the universities outlined their progress towards addressing GBV in their Outcome Agreements, and a majority of universities (74%) are implementing the Equally Safe Toolkit, or have developed comparable localised interventions as required in the guidance.
7. Specialist institutions are showing less developed implementations of local interventions or toolkits overall. However, the OU and SRUC do outline how they are actively seeking out best practice to inform the development of toolkits suited to their particular institutional needs, through engagement with regional partners.
8. There is good evidence of universities working in partnership with students, staff and local organisations in the development of their responses to GBV. 14 universities (93%) have set up GBV working groups with staff, students and local partners to map current provision, develop their GBV strategies, and monitor progress going forward. For example, Robert Gordon outline that to support the development of their approach, they have worked in partnership with their Student Union, the Equally Safe in Higher Education toolkit creators, Glasgow and Clyde Rape Crisis and Rape Crisis Grampian.
9. The Outcome Agreements also show that regional approaches are being taken. For example 5 institutions outline their involvement with *Fearless Edinburgh*, a joint working group between local colleges and universities, Police Scotland, Rape Crisis NHS Lothian and Edinburgh City Council. Glasgow University have also established a joint Gender Based Violence Strategy Group, in partnership with Glasgow Caledonian, Rape Crisis and Police Scotland. This group has 3 work streams of research; survey and perception; analysis and messaging; and prevention, response and support.
10. The Glasgow regional group has also established a definition of GBV from which to work, and have adopted an explicit gendered analysis in their work, which situates gender-based violence within unequal relationships between men and women. All development of appropriate responses to gender-based violence within Glasgow and GCU will therefore be grounded within this context. No other institutions explicitly discuss their definition of GBV.
11. Less than half (47%) of universities discuss the reporting or support/referral systems that they currently have in place or their plans to develop them. Robert Gordon University, University of Glasgow, University of Aberdeen and Heriot Watt all have online reporting tools in place, and 4 further institutions state in their OA's that they will be reviewing their reporting over the period of the outcome agreement.

12. Similarly, only 32% (6) of universities discuss data capture arrangements in their OA's. Of those, only 2 currently have procedures in place, with the remainder outlining that they are still working to establish these.
13. A good example of integrated reporting and data capture arrangements can be found in Robert Gordon University's Outcome Agreement. *Report and Support*, a web based platform as part of their wider *Speak Up Speak Out* campaign, provides access to a web-based reporting system that allows users to report anonymously or seek out an advisor. A period of continual monitoring of this system is being carried out, including monitoring reporting levels, student awareness and site analytics to measure numbers using the site. They are also collecting data from staff and students as to contribute to Equally Safe's sector-wide analysis. This research includes a survey for all staff and students, focus groups and one to one interviews.
14. Only 4 universities (21%) discuss establishing and publishing specific policies addressing GBV. However, a number of universities are in the process of reviewing their existing misconduct and/or safeguarding policies and procedures to incorporate GBV and sexual misconduct specifically.
15. Overall, universities do not discuss taking intersectional approaches in their response to GBV, or responding to the diversity of their student and staff populations. A number do discuss working to develop separate approaches for university staff- for example, Dundee University advise that they are addressing the support needs of staff experiencing GBV, and how this might differ from students. Furthermore, the close work between universities and their student's associations may help to ensure that a diverse student perspective is taken into account.

Colleges

16. Overall, the college Outcome Agreements indicate that progress in the sector slightly behind that of universities. All of the college OA's have contain GBV sections in their OA's, however, 8 (57%) are still in the process of developing their strategies, and are not yet at the implementation stage. 3 of these college OA's simply note the requirements and say that they intend to develop a GBV plan, but provide no further details.
17. However, Ayrshire College, Dundee and Angus College and Lanarkshire region do have robust and well developed sections in their OA's around GBV. Fife's regional OA also includes a link to a full *Preventing and Responding to Gender Based Violence* policy.
18. Partnership working is also evident in the college OA's- although to a lesser extent than in the university sector- with 65% of college OA's (9) discussing developing their approach in consultation with students, staff and local

partnership organisations. For example, Forth Valley College outline their plans to work closely with their student's association in the development of their GBV plan to ensure a joined up approach, and the College's Diversity Coordinator has made links with Forth Valley Rape Crisis.

19. Regional approaches are also evidenced in 2 college OA's. Ayrshire College explain that the college plays an active role in local Violence against Women (VAW) partnerships and the pan-Ayrshire Equally Safe in Ayrshire partnership, and Edinburgh College outline their involvement with Fearless Edinburgh.
20. Only 1 college provides details of existing support/referral systems. North East Scotland College (NESCol) provide a good response to this requirement, outlining that the college have acted to strengthen its processes and procedures for dealing with incidents of gender based violence through a newly created Academic Tutoring role and the Student Advice & Support Team. This enables trust to be built between staff and students, and allows for signposting to online resources available through the student portal and, where required, to relevant external support agencies. The College has also implemented an effective Student Support Referral System and has firmly embedded safeguarding procedures in the new structure introduced for AY2018-19. The Glasgow regional OA also refers to the safeguarding policies that they already have in place and how these have been adapted to incorporate GBV.
21. Colleges have also made limited progress in terms of their data capture arrangements, with only 3 college OA's (21%) referring to this. Ayrshire College outline that the College aims to improve current processes used to capture student data, and Fife College notes in their linked policy that any incidents are recorded on the College's Health and Safety Management Software for monitoring and review purposes. Similarly, NESCol states that details of any disclosures relating to GBV are captured through the Student Support Referral System and data obtained is held by the College's Safeguarding Team.
22. 2 college OA's (14%) have established specific GBV policies as outlined in the guidance. Dundee and Angus College discuss developing and publishing GBV policies, including the introduction of clear policy guidelines for staff on the identification, management and responses to issues of gender based violence. Similarly, Fife College have a full policy in place as discussed in item 17. However, 3 further colleges say that they intend to develop GBV policies through their Working Groups.

Current Gaps in Provision

23. Overall, the OA's show positive progress and enthusiasm from the sector, with a focus on awareness raising and training. However, it is clear that more work is needed to build on this, and momentum must be maintained. It must be

noted that this is the first year that the OA Guidance has included such comprehensive GBV requirements, and it may be the case that more time is needed for the systems to become fully developed and embedded.

Data Capture and Reporting

24. Institutions need to work towards developing more robust reporting systems and data capture arrangements, as the OA's indicate that few currently have well developed systems in place.
25. Most institutions have implemented support cards or similar support signposting from the Equally Safe Toolkit; however without corresponding formal reporting and referral systems, it is not possible to assess the impact of these, or establish a baseline from which progress can be measured.
26. It may be the case that the data capture requirement is closely linked to the reporting requirement; if few universities have robust reporting systems in place, data for incidences of GBV will be more difficult to collect. Therefore, progress towards one of these areas of guidance may well lead to progress in the other.
27. However, it is important that institutions have robust support provision in place before data is collected, to prevent students from self-disclosing incidences of GBV without adequate follow up support in place.
28. A number of institutions have indicated that they are working towards or are currently scoping options for establishing consistent reporting methodologies and improving their data collection. Therefore, this may be an area that is benefitted from best practice sharing, or providing institutions with examples of reporting and data capture systems that can be integrated into their existing processes. This would have the benefit both of supporting institutions to get these systems in place, as well as ensuring a level of consistency across the sector.

Integration with the GAP

29. The OA's suggest that work around GBV is also currently not fully integrated into institution's wider gender equality work and policies. The guidance outlines that the GBV progress reports into their institutional GAPs, but not all institutions have done this for the 2019-20 OA period. Similarly, the GBV sections in the OA's do not make reference to their wider GAP work overall, and often sit quite separately within the actual OA document.
30. The OA's also suggest that the governance that has been put in place to oversee this work sits separately from that for the GAP, and strategic frameworks and policies are not necessarily being considered within the context of wider gender

work. In some cases, the GBV work sits alongside Mental Health and Wellbeing, or wider Equality and Diversity policies.

31. It is important that institutions take a holistic approach to gender and gender-based violence, and demonstrate an understanding of how systemic gender imbalances and inequality within institutions contributes to GBV.
32. Certain institutions are already demonstrating this well- for example Ayrshire College have incorporated GBV into their GAP, stating that a whole-college approach being taken to tackle gender imbalances in subject choices and careers, including a focus on violence against women and girls. This is an approach which must be embedded throughout the sector.

Recommendations

33. There is a need for the college sector to develop a more robust response to GBV, although there is evidence of excellent work taking place in certain institutions.
34. Institutions should be encouraged to develop their reporting and data capture arrangements, potentially through best-practice sharing or the promotion of standardised approaches.
35. GBV policy and provision must be integrated more fully into the wider work of the Gender Action Plan, with institutions recognising that gender inequality is an underlying cause of GBV.

Further Information

36. Contact: Emma Roberts, Policy/Analysis Officer or Rachel Adamson, Senior Policy/Analysis Officer, eroberts@sfc.ac.uk or radamson@sfc.ac.uk.