



Scottish Funding Council
Comhairle Maoineachaidh na h-Alba

SFC GUIDANCE

Institutional Gender Action Plan Guidance 2020-23
Issue Date: 24 January 2020
Reference: SFC/GD/01/2020

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Summary: Guidance for developing updated Institutional Gender Action Plans

FAO: Principals/Directors of Scotland's colleges and universities and Directors of Regional Strategic Bodies

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Institutional Gender Action Plan Guidance 2020-23

Purpose

1. To ask institutions to publish on their website by the end of July 2020 an updated institutional Gender Action Plan covering the outcome agreement (OA) period AY2020-23. It should articulate how institutions will meet the gender equality outcomes published in their 2020-23 outcome agreements and should be included as a web link in the outcome agreement from 2021 onward.

Context

2. In 2016 SFC published its Gender Action Plan (GAP) requiring all institutions to publish their own GAPs covering the outcome agreement period 2017-2020.
3. SFC's outcome agreement guidance requires clear outcomes focused on gender equality¹, covering the timeline of the OA period and a web link to an Institutional Gender Action Plan (iGAP).
4. The Institutional Gender Action Plan should be the plan for how the institution will achieve those outcomes. Our two key priorities for iGAPs remain addressing subject imbalances (within all institutions) and addressing the under-representation of men at undergraduate level (at universities).
5. We recognise that institutions are still determining what works to tackle inequality and some institutions have made more progress than others. However, we are keen to work with the sectors to intensify our efforts to meet the aims of the national GAP.
6. To reduce duplication in the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) reporting institutions will be able to include a link to the updated iGAP report in their 2021 PSED Report to demonstrate the specific actions and progress made with regard to gender.

What should the updated Institutional Gender Action Plans include?

7. This guidance outlines SFC's expectations for updating institutional action plans. It should be read in conjunction with the advice published in 2017 to support the first iteration of institutional gender action plans.

¹ Outcome Agreements require commitments to gender equality in relation to implementing the equally safe toolkit, trans or gender diverse students and staff and achieving and sustaining gender equality at Senior levels and on Boards/Courts. Detail on activity to support these four areas should be outlined in an institutional Gender Action Plan (iGAP).

8. In particular it should:
 - Outline progress to date and set out the SMART objectives required to achieve the ambitions outlined in the outcome agreement.
 - Identify priority actions.
 - Specify how the activities identified in the iGAP will be evaluated and the governance arrangements that are in place.
 - Outline who is responsible at a Senior Management level for implementing the actions within the iGAP and who is the gender lead at the institution.
9. Please note that SFC is specifically looking to see how institutions will intensify their efforts to achieve the outcomes for gender equality set out in their outcome agreements. The Institutional Gender Action Plan should clearly outline your progress since the first plan and demonstrate how you intend to step up that progress to achieve the overall ambitions outlined.
10. Unlike the first round, SFC now expects the iGAP to be a standalone document that is published on the institution's website and is included as a web link in outcome agreements. The only exception is where institutions may have included the required information within their PSED report.

Additional considerations

11. SFC commits to doing the following:
 - Encourage institutions to take part in the TransEdu Community of practice.
 - Support institutions who may want to produce joint plans. Where this is the case they should discuss this with the SFC executive.
 - Ask institutions to outline actions to tackle gender imbalances that consider intersectionality with other protected characteristics.
 - Recognise that institutions may have provided the required information in their 2019 PSED report. If this is the case it is acceptable to provide a link to the PSED report making clear which sections relate to gender and the requirements of the iGAP.
12. Skills Development Scotland (SDS) has a team of Equality Executives who have a specific role to support institutions in addressing the gender imbalance (or any other under-representation of equality groups) on their apprenticeship programmes (Foundation, Modern and Graduate). This team can be contacted

for advice and support in developing activity to attract and retain traditionally under-represented groups on apprenticeship programmes. This activity could link with other actions in your iGAP to provide a more holistic approach to addressing gender imbalance within particular subject areas. To speak with one of the team, please contact MAequality@sds.co.uk.

13. Education Scotland has a team of Improving Gender Balance and Equalities (IGBE) officers who are working with early learning and childcare settings (ELCs), primary and secondary schools to explore and assess interventions to address gender imbalances in participation, curricular preferences and learner pathways at every stage (3 – 18 years). The approach is a whole-establishment one, tackling the root causes of gender imbalances, including addressing gender stereotyping and unconscious bias, in a sustained and embedded way. The team will be working regionally and are keen to make links locally. To find out more about the programme, or to see opportunities for joint working, please contact IGBE@educationscotland.gov.scot.

Report national progress and sharing practice

14. SFC has provided two progress reports since the publication of the national Gender Action Plan; [one in 2017](#) and one [in early 2019](#). We have enhanced the information on our website to help raise awareness of the [resources](#) in place and have held a conference each year to facilitate sharing of practice.
15. SFC started visiting institutions in 2018 to hear about the progress and challenges institutions are facing. We plan to continue with these visits. We have also set up an iGAP Gender Leads Network. For more details on this network or to check who is representing your institution please contact GAP@sfc.ac.uk. To assist institutions in developing their iGAP, Annex A of this guidance provides a list of all published institutional Gender Action Plans.
16. Given the need to achieve a step change in progress over the next outcome agreement period (up to July 2023) we will review iGAPs and report on progress to our [Gender Governance Group](#) which is chaired by a member of SFC's Board.

Action required

17. SFC asks each institution to update their iGAP and publish it on their website by the end of July 2020. Please send the link to GAP@sfc.ac.uk.
18. As outlined in the SFC Outcome Agreement Guidance, institutions should include a link to their existing iGAP in their 2020-21 outcome agreement, or the region's outcome agreement if a multi-college region. Institutions should ensure that from 2021 onwards this link should be to the updated iGAP referred to in this guidance.

Further information

19. Should you require any further information, please contact one of the following:

- Rachel Adamson, Senior Policy Officer, radamson@sfc.ac.uk.
- Emma Roberts, Policy Officer, eroberts@sfc.ac.uk.
- Fiona Burns, Assistant Director - Access and Outcomes, fburns@sfc.ac.uk.
- Your institution's/region's [SFC Outcome Agreement Manager](#).



Linda McLeod

Deputy Director of Access, Learning and Outcomes

Annex A: Institutional Gender Action Plans

Colleges

[Ayrshire College](#)

[Borders College](#)

[City of Glasgow College](#)

[Dundee and Angus College](#)

[Dumfries and Galloway College](#)

[Edinburgh College](#)

[Fife College](#)

[Forth Valley College](#)

[Glasgow Clyde College](#)

[Glasgow Kelvin College](#)

[North East Scotland College](#)

[Newbattle Abbey College](#)

[New College Lanarkshire](#)

[South Lanarkshire College](#)

[West College Scotland](#)

[West Lothian College](#)

UHI

[Moray College](#)

[West Highland College](#)

[Executive Office](#)

[Sabhal Mòr Ostaig](#)

[North Highland College](#)

[Perth College](#)

[Shetland College](#)

[Argyll College](#)

[Lews Castle College](#)

[Orkney College](#)

[Scottish Association for Marine Science](#)

[Inverness College](#)

Universities

[Abertay University](#)

[Edinburgh Napier University](#)

[Glasgow Caledonian University](#)

[Glasgow School of Art](#)

[Heriot-Watt University](#)

[Open University in Scotland](#)
[Queen Margaret University](#)
[Robert Gordon University](#)
[Royal Conservatoire](#)
[SRUC](#)
[University of Aberdeen](#)
[University of Dundee](#)
[University of Edinburgh](#)
[University of Glasgow](#)
[University of St Andrews](#)
[University of Stirling](#)
[University of Strathclyde](#)
[University of the West of Scotland](#)