

# GENDER ACTION PLAN

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## **GENDER ACTION PLAN**

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Queen Margaret University is pleased to publish this Gender

April 2013. Equally, however, we recognise that we need to continue to establish outcomes where we have evidence to suggest inequality, with such evidence providing the basis for targeted action, including enhanced policy and practice. For the purposes of this Gender Action Plan, the targeted action is focussed on gender equality.

### **3 GOVERNANCE**

Mainstreaming has significant implications for the way in which responsibility for equality and diversity is managed. It requires collective responsibility and implementation, coupled with leadership and commitment from the governance and management structures and arrangements. Embedding equality and diversity in our governance structures and in our strategic planning process is critical to mainstreaming equality and diversity, as is defining responsibilities, setting performance measures and monitoring progress against those measures. This approach is fully aligned with the requirements suggested in the SFC Gender Action Plan Guidance, ie Leadership/Policy/Action/Monitoring and Evaluation.

While responsibility for mainstreaming equality and diversity within the University rests with all staff and students, the University Court is, as a matter of law, responsible for ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and for ensuring that the University meets its public sector equality duty (PSED) and the specific duties relevant to Scotland. The University Court has a role therefore in overseeing in ensuring that appropriate mechanisms are put in place that provide the necessary assurances from the senior management team that legal requirements are being met.

The University Court exercises such oversight through the Equality and Diversity Committee (EDC). The EDC is responsible to the University Court for the development of the strategic framework for equality in service provision and in employment across the University. The Committee is a Standing Committee of the Court, to which it reports at each meeting on its discussions, on the development of specific initiatives, and to which it presents policies and procedures for approval. In so doing, it has a function that reflects the general duties.

The Committee is convened by the University Secretary, who is also Secretary to the University Court, and includes in its membership a lay member of Court, appointed by the Court. Its wider membership seeks to be reflective of the staff and student body and to benefit from a range of perspectives. To that end, it has members drawn from each academic and professional service area of the University, as well as student and trades union representation.

The Equality and Diversity Committee has a remit to eliminate discrimination, advance equal opportunities and foster good relations by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding, thereby ensuring the University avoids the potential for discrimination on grounds of the protected equality strands.

compliance to an approach that ensures the richness and diversity of society are reflected and celebrated within the institution<sup>3</sup>.

We consider that we have made significant approach to its equality duties, evidenced through policy development and through systematic review of the diversity of its membership. Progress in terms of the latter is described fully in Section 5 below.

A number of other Committees and structures within the University are concerned with eliminating discrimination, advancing equal opportunities and fostering good relations by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding. These include the Research Strategy Committee, the Student Experience Committee and the Widening Participation and Student Retention (WISeR) Board.

#### **4 MISSION, VISION AND STRATEGIC PLANNING**

(April 2015)

The Mission reflects the Vision, with a stated commitment to social justice and to being a community without borders. Underpinning the Mission and the Vision are the Values

[http://www.gmu.ac.uk/the\\_university/mission\\_statement.htm](http://www.gmu.ac.uk/the_university/mission_statement.htm)

A commitment to equality shapes the institutional Strategic Plan. All students, regardless of their background, will have equal opportunities to succeed and become graduates with a strong sense of ethical and social responsibility who can contribute to and influence the wider community.

Through supportive leadership, staff will be encouraged to think creatively and take considered risks. We will attract and retain good staff by valuing them through transparent promotion opportunities, appropriate staff development, inclusivity and equality, and through instilling in our staff a strong sense of social responsibility. The policy and practice of the University is that staff are afforded equal opportunities within employment, and that entry into employment,

employment, reflecting a range of academic, multi-disciplinary and transferable skills, as well as an enthusiasm for lifelong learning.

It places the student at the centre of the educational provision. To support that aim, programmes will incorporate curricula and learning strategies that recognise diversity in the student body. It recognises the need for flexibility in patterns of attendance and the needs of all learners and seeks to develop academic and pastoral support structures that support the learner at all stages from pre-entry, entry, progression, graduation and post-graduation.

The Student Experience Strategy also commits us to enhancing the student experience by recruiting, developing and retaining excellent staff who reflect the diversity of the student population. We are committed to ensuring that our staff population is representative of the wider community. Monitoring of that is conducted through profiling of staffing.

Our strong commitment to equality in research is promoted in a number of different ways, including through the HR Excellence Award for Researcher Career Development and further Athena SWAN recognition. Further details are set out within Section 11 below.

## **5 BOARD PARTICIPATION BY GENDER**

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2016 have introduced a new duty.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2016/159/regulation/4/made>

Specifically, the regulations provide for the to gather information on the relevant protected characteristics of board members of listed bodies, to be aggregated into Scotland wide statistics on board participation. The Scottish Ministers are to provide that information back to listed bodies, for such bodies to publish in their mainstreaming reports:

information on the gender composition of boards  
how they will increase the diversity of boards through succession planning, including use of data on protected characteristics

To date, no such monitoring has been undertaken by the Scottish Government, and we are therefore unable to comply fully with the reporting requirements. Nevertheless, we are able to report on gender balance in the composition of the University Court.

We have moved to collecting equality data in relation to Court members in support of our commitment to ensuring that there is an appropriate balance of independent members on the University Court in terms of equality and diversity. The data will provide the Court with the info therr9 2 /T0 4 (e) 1BT 11.04 n It

At its meeting in December 2014, the University Court approved goals and policies in regard to the balance of its independent members in terms of equality and diversity as follows:

Queen Margaret University is committed to ensuring that the University Court (Court), Senate and all committees and decision making bodies of the University are representative of



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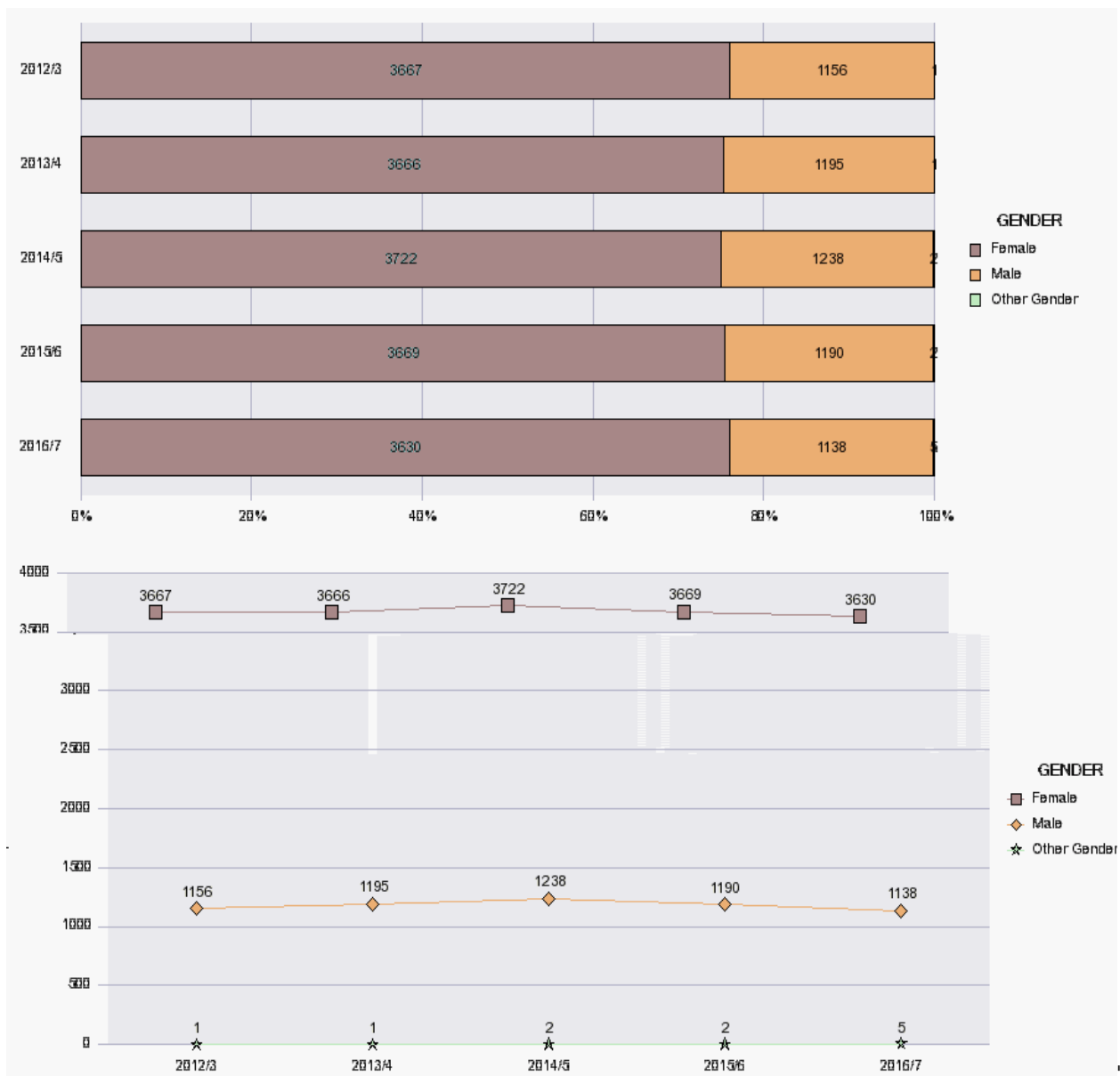
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We will continue to work to improve the percentage of unknowns, but we consider that the information available to us does allow us to produce management reports that are significant in statistical terms. We are able to staff, either through direct access to the reports, or by request.

In relation to student retention and progression, reports are provided on a monthly basis to all programme leaders and senior academic managers so that any i



In our Mainstreaming Report progress report in April 2015, we removed an outcome relating to the retention of male students in health sciences and in performing arts on the basis that retention of males in these subject areas was no longer an issue. A new outcome relating to the representation of males in Health Sciences was added to the suite of outcomes.

In April 2017, a revised outcome re-focused our commitment on the enrolment of mature and younger male applicants to Nursing and to Psychology. Both of these subject areas have



Agreement with the SFC (2017-20). That focus is therefore replicated in this Gender Action plan.

We were delighted to have been successful in a bid for support from the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) to assist us in developing an approach to this outcome. Specifically, we are working with the ECU as part of its Attracting Diversity project to identify positive steps to mitigate against any barriers to access for these groups. Our aim is to increase application, offer and enrolment numbers from mature male app

open to all, the QMCU aims particularly to reach children and young people facing socio-economic and educational disadvantage through the targeting of grants to, and the promotion of activities in, areas of deprivation.

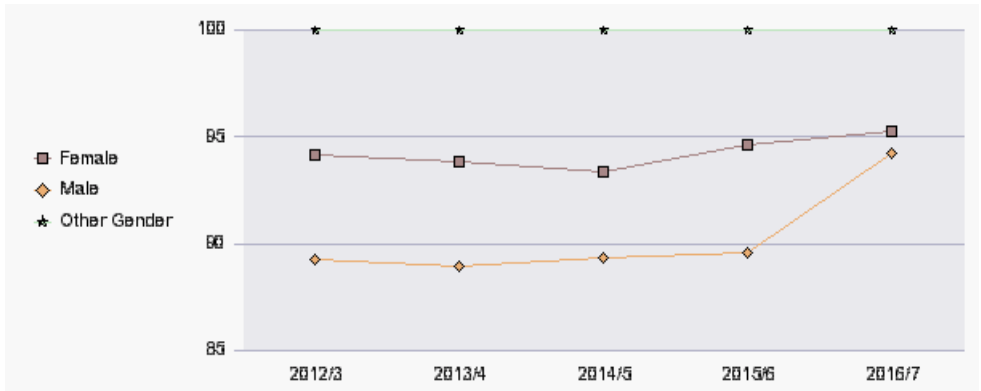
over 400 accredited learning destinations across Midlothian and East Lothian. We believe that our efforts in this area contribute unquestionably to raising aspiration and attainment amongst those who participate, but we recognise too that the impact will not be realised for a number of years.

are held on campus on identified Fridays throughout the year. As well as offering paid opportunities for our own students to engage with the CU, a number of our CU Friday initiatives are programmed to feature subjects where there has traditionally been a gender imbalance. Activities organised to date include:

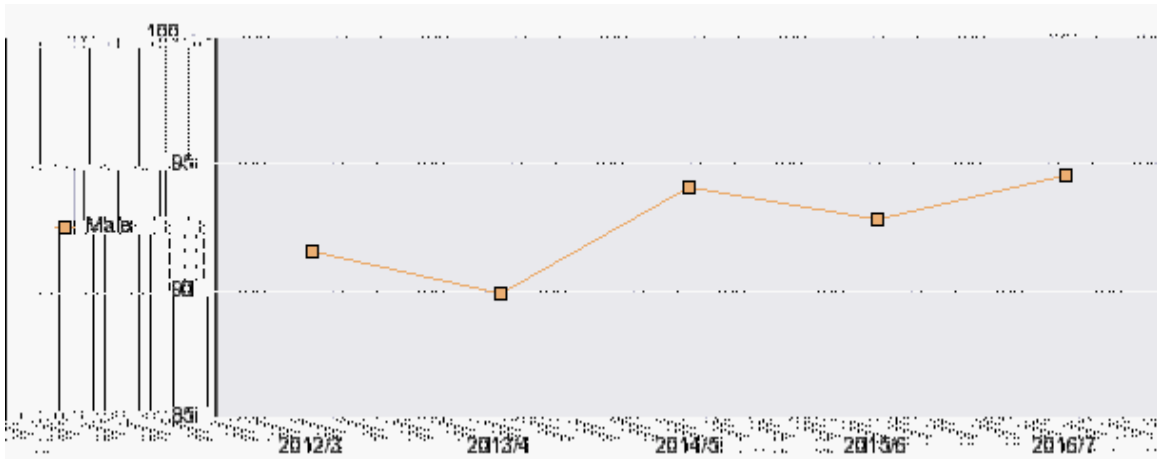
which saw some 30 P4-S1 QMCU male pupils attending a 4 week

valid. we will strive to use admission assessment methods that are reliable and





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### Gender Based Violence

We are at the early stages of working collaboratively with Edinburgh universities and relevant partners to address gender based violence as part of a wider, regional approach to tackling violence, harassment and hate crime against university students. We will work to review policies, provide guidance for staff and students, and secure senior level support in line with best practice guidance set out in the <sup>5</sup> publication. An early example of such an approach is the leadership training being delivered by Police Scotland to all universities in August and September 2017. A regional Strategic Group is in the process of being established, priorities for which will be the issuing of joint communications and sharing of best practice guidance.

### 10 UNIVERSITY STAFF - GENDER PROFILE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The majority of staff at QMU are female - our data shows female staff represent 66% of our overall staffing population. This was the case in both 2014/15 and 2015/16. On average, female staff also form the majority of staff within the Scottish HEI sector, with 54% of all staff being female in the reporting period 2014/15. The overall sector trend indicates that the proportion of female academics is increasing steadily, and this trend is also evident at QMU, with the percentage of female academic staff increasing from 67% (2014/15) to 69% (2015/16).

Sexual orientation was introduced into the staff HESA return in 2012/13, and in the 2014/15 HESA return, <sup>ta</sup>. At QMU, LGBT staff represented 3.3% (2014/15) and 3.7% (2015/16) of all staff compared to a UK HEI benchmark of 1.4%. It should be noted that those declining to say represented 60% (2014/15) and 53.2% (2015/16) at QMU, and 70% in the UK HEI benchmark data.

In support of our commitment to embedding transparent and fair practices in the recruitment and selection of our staff, all HR policies including those concerned with the recruitment and selection of staff are subject to robust equality impact assessment.

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Board are excluded, there is a positive mean pay gap in favour of female employees of 1.02%. This has been the position over the last 4 years of such data being collected

If salaries of the Executive Board are excluded from the calculation, the mean pay gap is 1.02% in favour of female employees. A review of the mean pay gap over the last four years demonstrates that it has remained steady at 1%.

The median pay gap for employees is 6.13% in favour of women for employees on Grades 1-10 (including the Executive Board). This has remained constant over the last two years. When excluding the Executive Board salaries, the median pay gap in favour of women increases further to 9.30%, which again has remained constant with the previous year.

The Living Wage commitment will see everyone working at QMU, regardless of whether they are permanent employees or third-party contractors, receive a real Living Wage, which is significantly higher than the government minimum wage of £6.70 and the new minimum wage premium for over 25s of £7.20 per hour introduced in April 2016 party contractors will adopt the Living Wage as and when existing contractual arrangements are renewed.

The University has developed policies for Special Leave arrangements which offer a degree of work flexibility for those staff with caring responsibilities. The University provides for flexible working requests from all staff. Managers work with staff members to establish working patterns and arrangements that meet the needs of the individual and of the University. The University accommodates a high volume of flexible working requests, both formal and informal to support employees in managing their caring responsibilities.

training and development arrangements include Management Fundamentals training offered to all managers and those aspiring to obtain a management role at the university. Human Resources staff are also in the early stages of designing a bespoke in house management training programme, within which HR policies will feature heavily.

## **11 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IN THE CURRICULUM AND IN RESEARCH.**

We believe that the represent an area of good practice in mainstreaming. This includes the validation and review of new and established programmes, and the annual monitoring of all programmes.

During the validation and review process, the checklist for approval panels explicitly invites panel members to consider whether there is:

sufficient evidence that the Programme will contribute to widening access and engaging students from non-traditional backgrounds and under-represented groups  
sufficient evidence of curriculum innovation and development to enhance equality and diversity, as well as to address potential exclusionary aspects of the programme and to encourage students to think globally and locally  
evidence of inclusive teaching practices.

It is recognised that the learning from the answers to these questions could be more widely shared to promote further inclusivity good practice across the University.

In terms of embedding equality in research and research practices, the University has:

Continued to enhance gender equality initiatives beyond the traditional STEM domain of Athena SWAN to promote initiatives such as the Stonewall Equality Index and to participate in the Aurora programme.

Publicised and implemented the QMU REF Equality Code of Practice.

Committed to act on the feedback and comments from the HEFCE Equality and Diversity Panel.

Secured an institutional Athena SWAN Bronze award, and is now working towards maintaining that award.

Secured an Athena SWAN Bronze award for the Division of Nursing.

Implemented the Vitae Researcher Development Framework and Planner with a section on Equality and Diversity in Research Careers.

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Introduced Maternity coaching to support researchers in their careers pre and post maternity leave.

female role models across a range of positions within the workplace.

In terms of research, the University received very positive feedback on the staff profile of its REF submission and the wide integration of staff with complex and special circumstances. The number of staff eligible for submission in these categories was significantly above sector averages. QMU has committed to act on the feedback and comments from the HEFCE

Outcome	Evidence Base	Possible activities/Outputs	Institutional Plan/Policy Reference/Monitoring Arrangements	Responsibility
<p><b>GAP Outcome 1</b></p> <p>Recruitment, admission, progression, retention and attainment of students drawn from a wide range of backgrounds is maximised.</p> <p>Increased %age of males applying to study Nursing and applying to studying Psychology to address student gender imbalance.</p> <p>Increased %age of males enrolled to study Nursing and to study Psychology to address student gender imbalance.</p> <p>Increased percentage of full-time first year Scottish domiciled undergraduate entrants returning to study in year two from a baseline of 90% in 2015/16 to 93% in 2019-20:</p> <p>91% in 2017-18 92% in 2018-19 93%in 2019-20</p> <p>To achieve at least 92%</p>	<p>HESA Student Return; Outcome Agreement Data Group monthly analysis; Annual Report data analysis; NSS data analysis; Outcome Agreement Annual Evaluation Report; ELIR 4 judgement 2018.</p>	<p>Actions set out in the University Outcome Agreement 2017-20 will be implemented fully.</p> <p>In terms of recruitment and admission, these include: Intensified outreach work; further review of contextual admissions policy, to include consideration of differential offers; enhanced conversion activity including bursary support to target students; monitoring of data on applications, offers and conversion rates for candidates from those groups identified as having targeted intake in our Outcome Agreement; collaboration with communities to de-mystify higher education and to empower individuals seeking to access higher education.</p> <p>quality in Student Undertake a range of early intervention measures through different stages of the learner journey. Ensure clear pathways and support for male applicants into Nursing and Psychology programmes in which they are under-represented under the SFC definition.</p> <p>Focus activity on outreach to schools on the basis</p>		

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<p>returning to year two rate by 2020 for identified OA groups of full-time Scottish domiciled entrants, including Male Entrants:</p> <p>90% in 2017-2018 91% in 2018-2019 92% in 2019-2020</p>		<p>activities. Understand trends in gender balance within subject areas for QMU to compare with national trends.</p> <p>In terms of retention, develop, promote and review strategies to maximise student retention and progression</p>		
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**GAP Outcome 2**

Ensure that the workforce of the University represents the community it serves

Broad definition of



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		<p>Raise awareness of issues relating to occupational segregation and gender pay gaps.  Promote E-learning Unconscious Bias training to all managers and recruitment and selection panellists.  Actively seek opportunities for increasing staff diversity through recruitment and selection, for example, by highlighting flexible working at the point of recruitment, reviewing job titles and advert wording to address potential occupational stereotyping.</p> <p>We will continue to work with the Equality Challenge Unit on the development of effective policies and interventions to achieve this outcome. We will complete our audit of all formal University policy statements/regulations, with a view to producing a definitive register which sets out: policy owner, date of approval/last review and date of EIA.</p>	<p>Athena Swan Steering Group reporting.</p>	
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**GAP Outcome 5**

Equality and diversity is embedded fully in the curriculum and in research.

Maintain Athena SWAN Bronze award, and achieve Silver award.

Continue to implement Vitae Researcher Development Framework and actively

Project.

Provide maternity coaching to support researchers in their careers pre and post maternity leave.

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		An increase in the number and level of Athena Swan Awards. An increase in the number of REF submittable female staff from 19% of eligible staff to 25% of eligible staff.		
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