INSTITUTIONAL GENDER ACTION PLAN

1. INTRODUCTION

The requirement to produce an institutional gender action plan (iGAP) relates to a wider context of UK-wide legislation, Scottish Government policy and the Outcome Agreement with the SFC. The iGAP sets out actions for the period 2018/19 – 2020/21.

The plan will be monitored as part of the university's Outcome Agreement and progress will be reported to the Executive and then to the Board of Governors, prior to being shared with the SFC. Monitoring takes place at two points in the academic year; a review of progress at six months and an annual self-assessment report at the end of the year.

The iGAP was developed by a working group reporting to the Equality and Diversity Advisory Group and is jointly chaired by the Director of Student Life and the university's Gender Equality Champion and involves academic and support staff and student representation. The membership of the group is set out in annex A.

The iGAP sets out the actions that the university will take to contribute to the SFC's stated ambitions in relation to achieving gender balance in relevant subject areas. The university has committed to playing its part in meeting the SFC's sector-wide ambition, which is as follows:
- The number of subject areas with severe gender imbalance (i.e. 75% or more of one gender) is halved by 2025/26; and
- The overall gap between male and female participation in undergraduate study in Scotland is narrowed to 13.6% by 2019/20.

The SFC's focus is on Scotland-domiciled undergraduate entrants (SDUE). It is noted that the university's undergraduate population will include undergraduate students not classified as being domiciled within Scotland. The ambition and actions within this Plan will relate to all undergraduate entrants, although the monitoring of the Plan will be in terms of its impact upon the SDUE, in line with the SFC's ambition.

RGU has 5 subject areas with severe gender imbalance. The gender split of Scottish domiciled undergraduate entrants (full time and part time headcount) is 36% male and 64% female, giving a gender participation gap of 28%.

The university recognises that gender inequity goes beyond the issue of subject level imbalances and will therefore consider a wide range of measures to improve gender equality through our iGAP. This will include activities to monitor and improve:
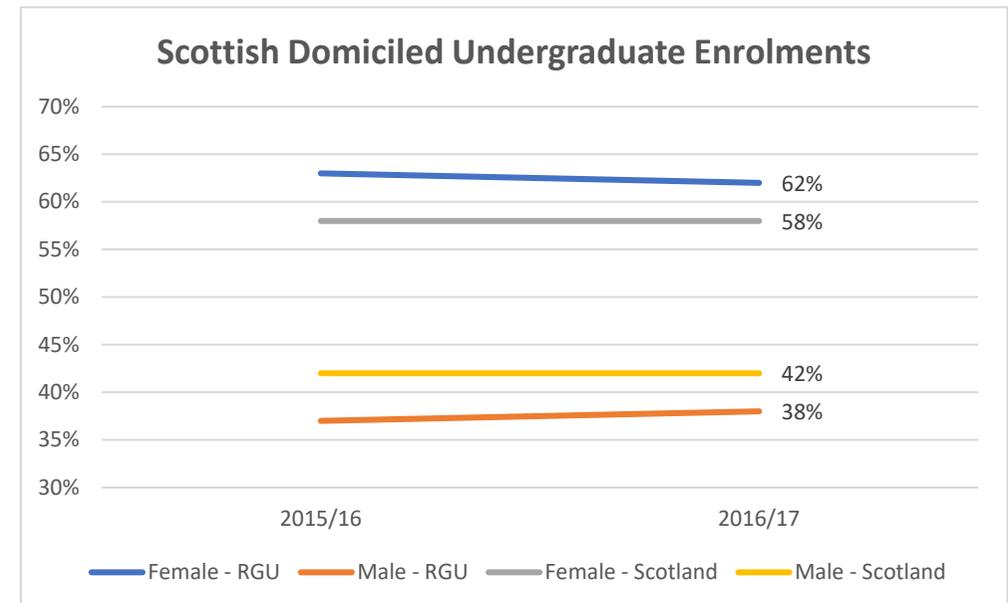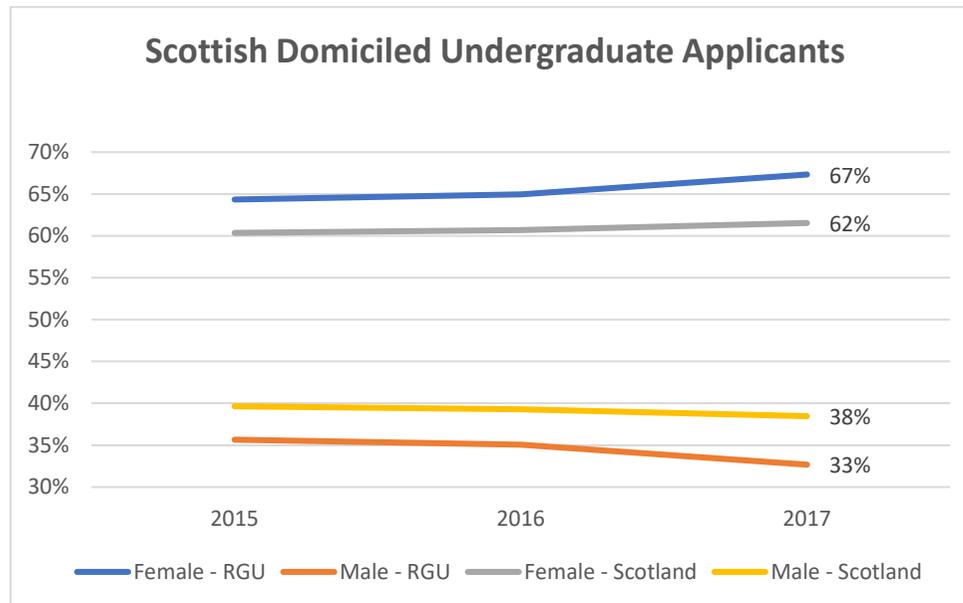- overall student gender balance including applications, enrolments and retention;
- staff gender imbalance including the gender pay gap;
- the gender balance on our Board of Governors;
- actions to improve support and enhance equality for applicants, students and staff who are trans or gender diverse;
- Finally, the university will continue work to eliminate gender based violence

2. STUDENT GENDER IMBALANCE

2.1 Overall Gender Imbalance

2.1.1 Current Participation Gap

Across the sector there is a participation gap between the number of male and female students attending university. The Scottish Government have a clear target to reduce the participation gap between male and female students to 5% by 2030. The university has an overall gender imbalance among our SDUE population of 28% (female to male). This is increased when looking at the participation gap for MD20 students where the gap between male and female students is 43.8%. Further work will be undertaken to understand and address the gender imbalance in applications and enrolments.

No.	Action	Owner	Time
1.	Engage fully with relevant national groups, professional bodies and other stakeholders to tackle gender imbalance at the initial pipeline stage.	DELTA / Heads of School with severe gender imbalance	Annually
2.	Lead outreach activity to take proactive steps to address gender stereotyping amongst school pupils and engage with key influencers such as guidance teachers and parents to demonstrate the full range of career options.	DELTA	Q2 2020
3.	Work with partner colleges to continually develop our articulation arrangements, mindful of the role of articulation in delivering greater participation at university.	DELTA	Q2 2019
4.	Continue to ensure that gender balance is presented in promotional materials, at recruitment events, open days etc. to provide role models for potential applicants through staff, students and alumni.	Student Recruitment / Marketing / All Heads of School	Q2 2020
5.	Annually carry out systematic data analysis, including data available from the annual course appraisal, to monitor progress of the iGAP and recommend further actions. Progress will be reported through the Outcome Agreement process.	Planning & Policy	Q3 2019. Annually thereafter.
6.	Continue to promote the diversity and inclusivity of the university community through communications activities.	Communications / Marketing	Annually
7.	Gray's School of Art to undertake a pilot of contextualised interviews to address male under-representation in this subject area. Further roll-out of contextualised interviews and development of guidance to be considered further to the pilot.	Gray's School of Art / Admissions	Q2 2019 initially

2.2 Subject Level

2.2.1 Current Gender Imbalance

The five subject areas with severe gender imbalance within the university are engineering; subjects allied to medicine; social studies; computing and creative art and design. The most recent data available on the gender imbalance in these subject areas is outlined below, alongside a comparison against Scottish average figures in these subject areas.

Scottish Domiciled Undegraduate Entrants - Gender Imbalanced Subjects
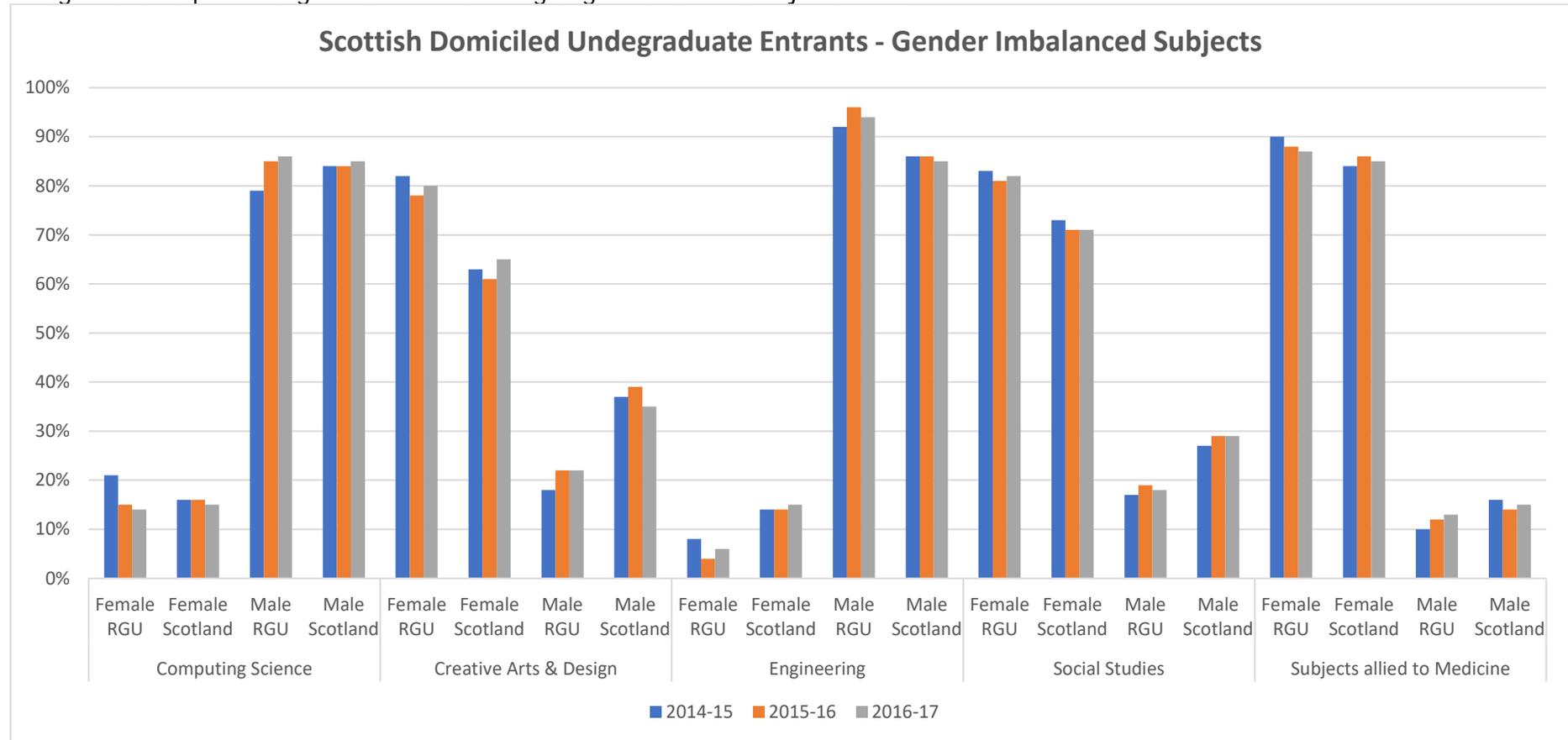
2.2.2 Activities Undertaken

The university has a number of longstanding processes and policies through which student gender balance is considered such as annual course appraisal, annual equality monitoring and the review and updating of university policies. The introduction of the gender action plan in July 2017 focused activities upon the five subject areas above and a number of activities have been undertaken to address the severe gender imbalance in these areas, recognising that this is a long term issue, often rooted in gender bias towards specific careers.

- Gray's School of Art have worked in collaboration with local education providers to identify and understand the key issues that contribute to the gender imbalance in creative arts and design.
- As a result of the above, Gray's School of Art have secured funding for a mobile Arts School to provide workshops and talks in primary and secondary schools, focussing on careers information and information on male role models in the creative industries.
- School of Nursing & Midwifery have worked closely with NHS Grampian through the 'mini nurse uniform' project, focusing on pre-school and primary children by promoting contemporary nurse uniforms within the context of play.
- School of Nursing & Midwifery have participated in NES funded project with a number of other Scottish universities, to explore the influences and causes of underrepresentation in pre-registration nursing in Scotland.
- A number of Schools have undertaken a review of their marketing and recruitment materials to ensure they are promoting a gender-balanced view of the university and our courses. This includes trying to provide gender balance amongst staff at events, both internal and external.
- In 2018 the university embedded equality and diversity in to the course appraisal process, through new business intelligence software. This resulted in course leaders identifying equality and diversity issues in their course, reported at School Assessment Board. This data will be used to inform future activities to address highlighted issues, including gender imbalance.

The actions outlined above are a starting point for the university to begin to change the make-up of these severely gender imbalanced subjects. Further activities will continue to meet the Scottish Government goal of reducing gender imbalanced subjects.

2.2.3 Actions Identified

| No.	Action	Owner	Timeframe
8.	Develop specific gender based targets in severely gender imbalanced subject areas, in partnership with the relevant Head of School.	Planning & Policy	Q3 2019

9.	Develop a set of agreed improvement actions to improve gender balance in recruitment, retention and achievement through monitoring in annual course appraisal.	Heads of School with severe gender imbalance	Q3 2019
10.	Collate, report and review information from student engagement exercises to disseminate learning on challenges and barriers to application, retention and attainment.	All Heads of School/DELTA	Q2 2020
11.	Continue to review the application process to identify and address barriers in to severely gender imbalanced subjects.	Admissions	Q2 2020

2.3 Retention

2.3.1 Current Imbalance

The university is committed to developing and implementing actions to address enrolment gender imbalances but is also aware that there are issues around retention in subjects that are severely gender imbalanced that require to be addressed.

Based on the most recent data available (2016/17) the university has an imbalance between male and female students within retention by subject in the following areas.

Retention by Subject and Gender 16/17
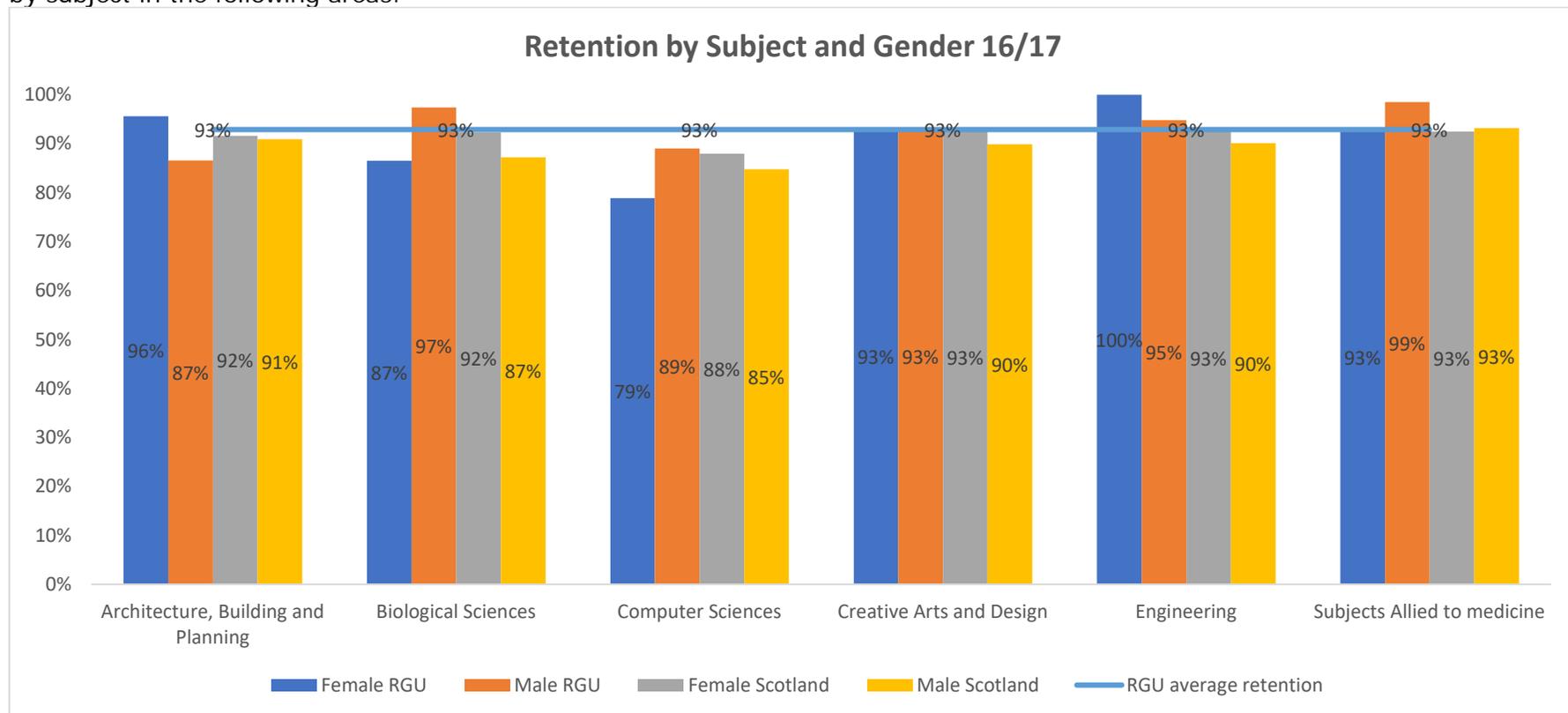
The above data demonstrates that in both Engineering and Subjects allied to Medicine the gender that is in the minority has a higher retention rate, above the university average and Scottish subject specific average. Creative arts and design is above the Scottish average for male students. However, the data illustrates that the retention rate for female students in Computing is below the Scottish average and therefore a key action of the iGAP will be to undertake and address this issue.

1.2.3 Activities Undertaken

- The School of Engineering have undertaken a review of course materials to deliver gender neutral classrooms to encourage retention of female students.

1.2.4 Actions Identified

No.	Action	Owner	Timeframe
12.	Schools to achieve gender neutral classrooms and teaching materials including highlighting gender diversity.	All Heads of School	Q1 2020
13.	Ensure that support mechanisms are available for students who are in a gender imbalanced subject to address issues of retention.	Heads of School with severe gender imbalance / Student Life	Q4 2019

3. SUPPORT TO TRANS STUDENTS AND STAFF

The university is committed to providing a learning and working environment that is inclusive and accessible to all. This includes continuing to improve our services and facilities in order that Trans and gender diverse staff and students feel welcome in our community.

3.1 Activities Undertaken

The university has taken a number of steps to improve our provision for Trans members of our community. This includes designating gender neutral toilets on campus, holding an event to mark transgender day of remembrance and raise awareness on campus, and the

implementation of a new policy to support our Trans staff. The university will seek to fully implement the recommendations of TransEDU project to ensure that we offer an inclusive, welcoming and safe community for all of our staff and students.

3.2 Actions Identified

| No.	Action	Owner	Timeframe
14.	Deliver a policy to support trans and gender diverse students and campaign to highlight the relevant policies and support available for trans students.	Student Life	Q4 2019
15.	Review the application process to identify and address barriers that trans students may face in the application process.	Admissions / Student Life	Q3 2019

4. STAFF GENDER BALANCE

4.1 University Commitment
The university is committed to providing a working environment where all employees, regardless of their gender, personal views or other characteristics are valued and given the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

We are conscious that not all areas of our activity are gender balanced and it is something that we are doing all that is within our sphere of influence to improve on.

4.2 Current Gender Imbalance

The current gender profile of all staff at the university is outlined in the table below:

Staff Gender Profile
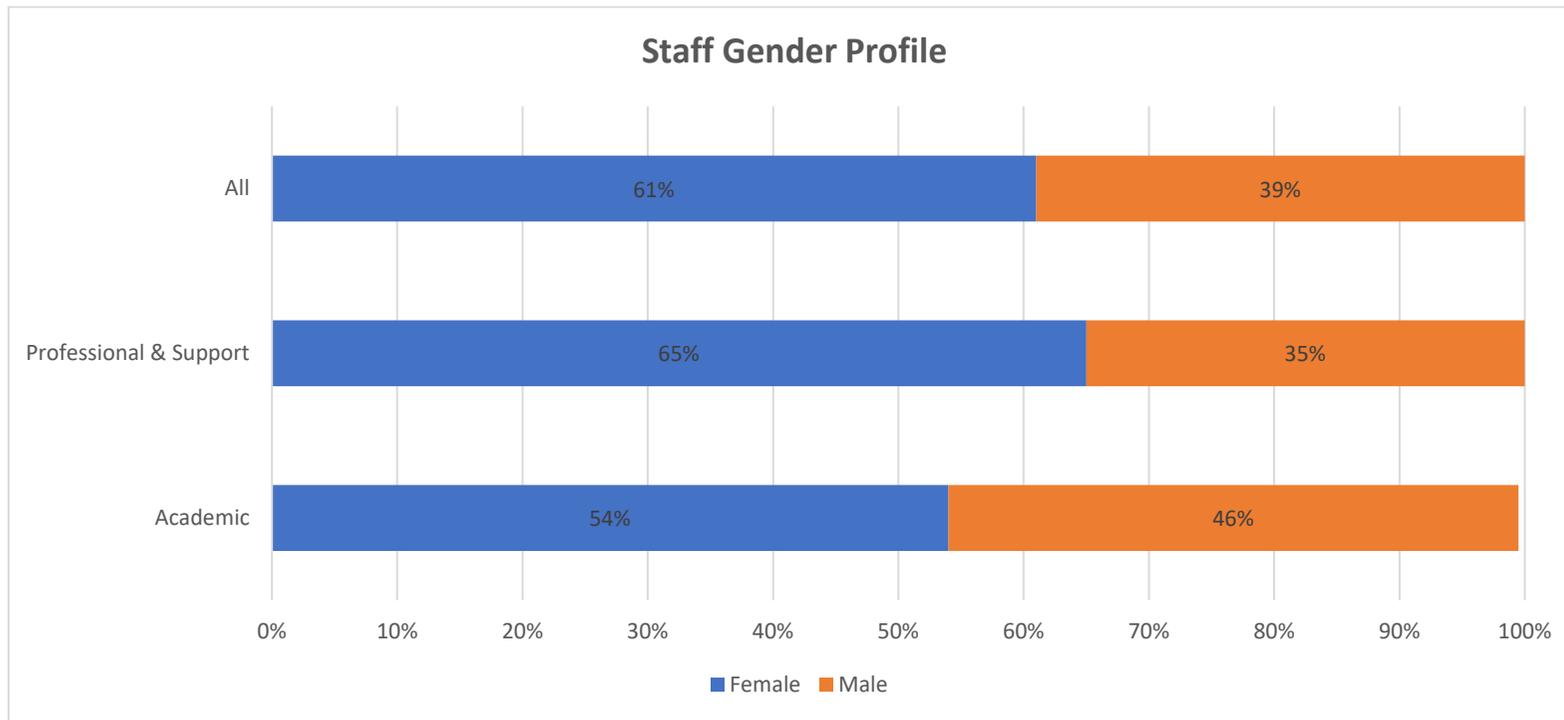
If we consider academic staff for example the majority of the Heads of School (66%) are male and yet the gender split between male and female Lecturers is 46% - 54% in favour of females.

As demonstrated above, there overall gender imbalance of the university is female dominated.

The headline gender imbalance however is not within a specific group of staff, department or grade but rather the pay gap resulting from the lower grade roles, i.e. cleaners and security receptionists, being held predominantly by female staff, significantly lowering female average pay. There are pockets of gender imbalance elsewhere in the university which mainly arise through retention payments for male dominated groups of staff (and is something we are working to address) however recruiting males to roles which, for reasons largely out

with our control, are considered by society as traditional female roles, is a significant challenge. At last date of publication the mean gender pay gap was 15.98% and the median gender pay gap was 23%.

4.3 Activities Undertaken

Activities that the university has undertaken to work towards gender equality for all of our staff include:

- Developed and enhanced policies which support working parents to help foster an environment where parents and women in particular do not feel they have to make a choice between their career and caring for their family. By enhancing our family friendly provision we are providing options and increasing the likelihood of female staff electing to work over taking a career break, which may impact on their promotion potential.
- Reducing the gender pay gap, which continues to fall year on year as a result of promotion of equality and diversity information to staff; the use of gender neutral language when advertising posts; the bi-annual review of payments over and above basic pay; and the identification and resolution of anomalies within historic pay arrangements. The university recognises there remains work to be done.
- Academic role re-definition which tightened the criteria and process for pay and career progression. We established that there had been significant grade drift since arrangements had last been reviewed in 2006 and we are confident that we now have a structure where all academic staff are being treated equitably and consistently.
- Introduced performance related pay progression so that academic staff are able to increase their earnings on the back of their own contribution as opposed to having to wait for a senior post to become vacant. We ran the process in the summer of 2018 and encouragingly the split of male/female staff who were successful in year 1 (and therefore awarded the title of Senior Lecturer or SLA) was 50/50 and therefore reflected the academic staff gender demographic. It is envisaged that many of these SLAs will go on to management roles and that it will contribute to having greater gender balance at Head of School level in the years to come.
- Actively participated in the Advance HE 'Aurora' programme which is designed specifically for advancing the careers of women working in higher education and has supported a number of staff through this, earning recognition in the Scottish Parliament for this commitment.
- Taken steps to introduce gender balance across institutional committees. This has commenced with a requirement for Schools to put forward two representatives to Academic Council, one male and one female. Academic Council are responsible for the overall planning, co-ordination, development and supervision of the academic work of the university and as such have a senior role at the organisation.

While there are no quick fixes to the issues described, we will continue to be proactive in this regard and seek to appoint an increasingly gender balanced senior management team.

No.	Action	Owner	Time
16.	Review the staff recruitment cycle including a review of gender neutral language.	HR	Q1 2020
17.	Support the development of a gender balanced pipeline of internal applicants to promoted posts through the provision of organisational development and leadership programmes.	HR	Q3 2020
18.	Implement unconscious bias training across all staff.	HR	Q2 2020
19.	Continue to address the gender pay gap by undertaking biennial reviews.	HR	Q2 2019
20.	Report annually on steps taken to promote gender equality in the senior management, senior academic and executive level.	Governance & Academic Quality	Q3 2019

5. BOARD OF GOVERNORS

5.1 Board of Governors Commitment
The Board of Governors is committed to achieving a broad gender-balance and recent appointments will further increase the number of female members on the Board. The Board composition includes both appointed and elected membership and will also include trade union nominated members, in due course. As of January 2019, the number of female members of the overall Board has increased to 44%, whilst the lay membership of the Board currently sits at 6 male and 6 female Governors.

5.2 Activities Undertaken
To support the aim to achieve gender balance the following activities have been undertaken:

- Adverts for Board members have been worded to specifically encourage candidates from the widest range of backgrounds.

- The criteria for Board membership explicitly refers to the diversity of the Board as a consideration in the appointments process.
- Members of the Board, along with members of the Executive, have undertaken training in unconscious bias.
- Annual anonymous equality and diversity monitoring which is reported as part of the university's annual report on equality and diversity.

5.3 Actions Identified

No.	Action	Owner	Time
21.	Undertake anonymous equality monitoring of the Board of Governors.	Governance & Academic Quality	Q4 2019. Annually thereafter.

6. GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

The university is committed to eradicating gender based violence (GBV) and has developed a framework and implementation plan to tackle and respond to gender based violence across our institution. To support the development of our approach we have worked in partnership with our Student Union, the Equally Safe in Higher Education toolkit creators, Glasgow and Clyde Rape Crisis and Rape Crisis Grampian.

We have in place a robust, visible and accessible online reporting and support platform for any students or staff who have experienced or are experiencing GBV. We are carrying out a period of continual monitoring of this system, including monitoring reporting levels, student awareness and site analytics to measure numbers using the site. Through this ongoing analysis we have developed further actions, including revisions to our awareness campaign and communications strategies. We are also carrying out regular lessons learnt processes following disclosures to ensure our processes and procedures are robust, clear and comprehensive.

We have recently been invited to participate in the 'Report and Support Knowledge Forum' alongside other HEI's utilising a similar Reporting system to share best practices and processes in this area. A number of our staff have been trained on Level 1 and 2 of the Toolkit training and are working together with Strathclyde University and Glasgow and Clyde Rape Crisis to develop the Level 3 training. We have implemented, trained and provided detailed guidance to our network of First Responders equipping them to deal with face to face disclosures. We have now instigated a 'First Responder Network' where First Responders can share experiences and increase their awareness of GBV issues.

To promote our zero tolerance policy and approach to GBV, the university has undertaken an awareness raising campaign entitled 'Speak Up Speak Out', which reflects the diversity of our University population. This campaign has now been shortlisted for the NUS Awards 'Campaign of the Year 2019'.

We are participating in 'The Equally Safe in Higher Education Project' led by the University of Strathclyde which involves collecting data from staff and students at Robert Gordon University to contribute to the sector-wide analysis. The data collected will help to develop our understanding of the issue and to create more effective responses and reporting mechanisms where concerns for staff or student safety arise. The research includes a survey for all staff and students, focus groups and one to one interviews. The university will continue to develop further in this area and implement best practice to eradicate gender based violence.

Annex 1 – Action Plan

No.	Action	Owner	Time
1.	Engage fully with relevant national groups, professional bodies and other stakeholders to tackle gender imbalance at the initial pipeline stage.	DELTA / Heads of School with severe gender imbalance	Annually
2.	Lead outreach activity to take proactive steps to address gender stereotyping amongst school pupils and engage with key influencers such as guidance teachers and parents to demonstrate the full range of career options.	DELTA	Q2 2020
3.	Work with partner colleges to continually develop our articulation arrangements, mindful of the role of articulation in delivering greater participation at university.	DELTA	Q2 2019
4.	Continue to ensure that gender balance is presented in promotional materials, at recruitment events, open days etc. to provide role models for potential applicants through staff, students and alumni.	Student Recruitment / Marketing / All Heads of School	Q2 2020
5.	Annually carry out systematic data analysis, including data available from the annual course appraisal, to monitor progress of the iGAP and recommend further actions. Progress will be reported through the Outcome Agreement process.	Planning & Policy	Q3 2019. Annually thereafter.
6.	Continue to promote the diversity and inclusivity of the university community through communications activities.	Communications / Marketing	Annually
7.	Gray's School of Art to undertake a pilot of contextualised interviews to address male under-representation in this subject area. Further roll-out of contextualised interviews and development of guidance to be considered further to the pilot.	Gray's School of Art / Admissions	Q2 2019 initially

8.	Develop specific gender based targets in severely gender imbalanced subject areas, in partnership with the relevant Head of School.	Planning & Policy	Q3 2019
9.	Develop a set of agreed improvement actions to improve gender balance in recruitment, retention and achievement through monitoring in annual course appraisal.	Heads of School with severe gender imbalance	Q3 2019
10.	Collate, report and review information from student engagement exercises to disseminate learning on challenges and barriers to application, retention and attainment.	All Heads of School/DELTA	Q2 2020
11.	Continue to review the application process to identify and address barriers in to severely gender imbalanced subjects.	Admissions	Q2 2020
12.	Schools to achieve gender neutral classrooms and teaching materials including highlighting gender diversity.	All Heads of School	Q1 2020
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14.	Deliver a policy to support trans and gender diverse students and campaign to highlight the relevant policies and support available for trans students.	Student Life	Q4 2019
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20.	Report annually on steps taken to promote gender equality in the senior management, senior academic and executive level.	Governance & Academic Quality	Q3 2019
21.	Undertaken anonymous equality monitoring of the Board of Governors.	Governance & Academic Quality	Q4 2019. Annually thereafter.