



SFC allocates about £1.6bn in public funds to Scotland's 19 universities and 25 colleges each year for:



Scottish Funding Council

Promoting further and higher education



Fiona Burns
Assistant Director, Access
0131 313 6517
fburns@sfc.ac.uk

What lies ahead for Essential Skills and for Equality, Diversity and Inclusive practice in colleges?



Scottish Funding Council
Promoting further and higher education



Today's presentation

- Discuss how we achieve change?
- Consider how well we are doing in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion
- Reflect on the meaning of essential skills and the SFC's role within that
- Consider other approaches to enhancing essential skills
- Reflect on essential skills in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion



Scottish Funding Council

Promoting further and higher education

SFC policy work: How do we promote and secure positive change?

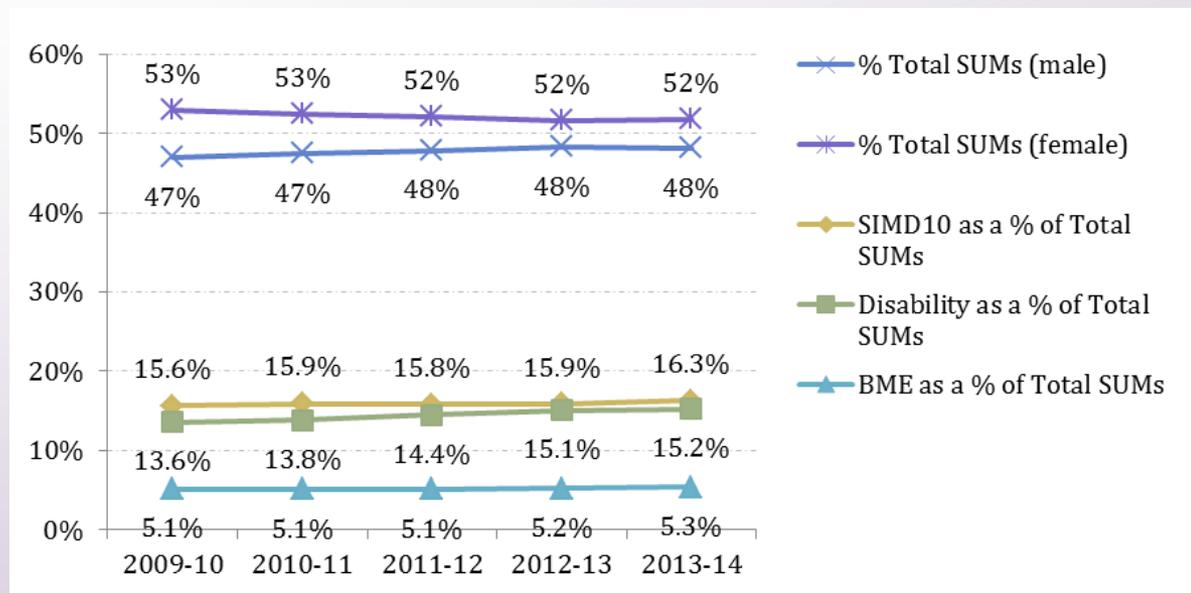
- Outcome Agreements – regions, deprivation, articulation, SHEP and equality
- Gender Action Plans
- Promoting scale and scope of the articulation offering
- Contextualised Admissions
- SWAP / SHEP / AHDP / Articulation hubs
- External equality support – CDN, HEA and ECU
- Care leavers and vulnerable young learners
- Impact for Access Fund - £4m PA
- Learning and teaching
- Additional Education needs
- Profound and Complex needs (college)
- Regional Coherence Projects
- Post Graduate Review
- Joining up to support and drive access excellence



Scottish Funding Council

Promoting further and higher education

Equalities – what is changing?



Success rates continue to improve for all groups including SIMD10

Male success rates continue to improve but they are continually below that of females

Some subjects remain stubbornly unchanged in terms of gender balance



Scottish Funding Council

Promoting further and higher education

SFC external equalities work – What can we do better?

- Equality outcomes and Access and Inclusion Outcomes – the join up and the difference
- Committing to ambition and declaring under-representation
- Promoting what works
- Being smarter – understanding complexity and watching the labels
- Equality is about people and it impacts on everything, we should always strive for improvements.



Scottish Funding Council

Promoting further and higher education



Achieving and promoting equalities - a shared endeavour

Nationally

- Should we seek to achieve equality or should we promote equality?
- Do you know our equality outcomes? How does that interplay with yours?
- We say we take equality seriously, what do we mean by that? How do we know? How do you know?
- Equality and quality – how can we maximise choice, access and positive experiences for all?
- Role of Colleges Scotland, CDN, Education Scotland, ECU, EHRC and other agencies to provide support?
- How do we promote and support data sharing and disclosure eg students with care experience?

Institutionally

- How does the college as a whole communicate its vision? Where does the challenge come from?
- How does the high-level vision become a reality, for all?
- What does senior buy-in *really* look like? Is further support needed? What can we do to help?
- Tested at a simple level, how many staff know what the EOs are or what is written in the OA?
- What is the consultation process and feedback loop within colleges?
- What else is happening in institutions to identify the needs of all and drive transformative change?



Scottish Funding Council

Promoting further and higher education



SFC's role in essential skills

- Our focus on employability and employment outcomes in the ROAs
- Our national ambitions for access – deprivation, articulation and protected characteristics
- Our role with partners in DYW – Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy
- Working with the Scottish Government on Invest in Young People Groups
- The DYW ask of colleges in the ROAs including CPD
- Our joint approach to Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy with SDS – A Framework for Action
- Our role in equality and diversity in relation to essential skills
- Our role in skills – Young people are entering a much more demanding labour market, we need to understand it – RSAs and SIPs
- A menu of options and approaches is needed for diversity to be embedded



Scottish Funding Council

Promoting further and higher education



OECD Adult skills International Survey

International Evidence Review of Basic Skills

Many high-performing countries are more likely than the average of participating OECD countries to have higher proportions of adults who:

- have at least one parent with tertiary education (although there are some exceptions, such as the Netherlands);
- have attained tertiary education themselves;
- have participated in formal or non-formal education in the past 12 months; and
- are employed (tending towards more in managerial and professional jobs).

Across all high-performing and improving countries, the common characteristic associated with **high literacy proficiency was educational attainment**. For **high proficiency in numeracy, occupation** was also significant; and for **problem-solving in technology rich environments - education, occupation, age, and computer experience**.

England

- one of the highest rates of self-reported over-qualification, but low rates of both over- and under-skilling.
- Young age of school leavers/completers and we start educating younger – the issues in relation to essential skills became more apparent at 16
- Low-skilled adults need more second-chance opportunities to learn.
- Inequity of education – young learners with a family history of post 16 education fair better
- Only country where the literacy and numeracy levels of the oldest outweigh that of the youngest
- Ageing improvement effect comparative to a ceiling impact in other countries – the truth might be it is just insufficient!

Wales focuses on the employer – The Employer Pledge
Northern Ireland focuses on the student, getting qualified



Scottish Funding Council

Promoting further and higher education



Reflections on essential skills and equality, diversity and inclusion

Employers

- Proactive involvement of employers
- The importance of work experience and placements – what is a “good” and “bad” experience? Is gender a factor?
- The ability and needs of students – the journey to success is not a plunge pool unless you are ready
- The employer engagement spectrum – awareness of employment up to work experience
- Promoting CPD for careers and lecturing staff
- Supporting realistic work environments and simulations
- Focusing on positive destinations and outcomes – essential skills for what comes next
- Improving our ROAs and defining what we want

Students

- Age – the need is greatest and disengagement is highest
- BME – What additional support do BME students require?
- Care experienced – At risk of the worst outcomes
- Deprived – Financial issues and cultural barriers
- Gender – What do placements promote? What is the student’s experience of employer engagement? How does this fit with a Gender Action Plan for both sectors?
- Disability – How is our work supporting students who declare a disability e.g. Enable. Do we have different strategies for visible and hidden disabilities? What are we doing about the increases in mental health declarations?
- Young Offenders – understanding the issues and managing convictions, what is our role in rehabilitation, children’s panel etc
- Do we ask students enough for feedback? Are we reaching everyone?
- Do we need to focus on those at risk of the worst outcomes?





Thanks for listening, any questions?



Scottish Funding Council

Promoting further and higher education