

Promoting Gender Equality

Attracting and retaining learners by ability, not gender.
(STEM focus)

An FE Providers Equality network Event

Facilitated by Fay Best



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Fay Best STEM

Outline

This workshop considers how organisations can address the balance of their educational and training provision in terms of gender. The focus is on Women's participation in STEM, supporting the present UK economic concerns as well as the equality and diversity agenda. Participation and achievement of boys/men in both traditional and non-traditional vocations is also considered.

The argument for ensuring that both Genders have equal access to education, training and employment in all sectors will be clearly set out.

Methods to support organisations to benchmark the gender balance in their own provision and identify potential barriers to inclusion will be provided, and potential targets/actions to address issues identified.

Good practice strategies will be provided and case studies detailing both actions and outcomes.

The Social case for Gender Equality

Unequal society

Despite our society being made up almost equally of men and women,

- Women are more likely to live in poverty
- Women are more likely to be unemployed or in low paid part time work
- Women are more likely to be primary carers, particularly in single parent families, leading to child poverty



Gender pay gap

Women still earn 14.9% less on average than men for the same job

Occupational segregation

Women's employment is predominantly in the traditional 5 c's (cleaning, clerical, catering, caring, cashiering), these occupational areas attract the lowest pay.

The UK was ranked 18th out of 27 OECD countries in 2011 on five key indicators of female empowerment

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-21549378>

Gender Equality and the Law

- Public sector organisations are legally required to provide equality of opportunity to all. To ensure access to training, education and employment opportunities is equal regardless of Gender (or other protected characteristic).
- Under the PSED they are required to **prevent** discrimination, **promote** equality of opportunity and **foster** good relationships.
- To comply with this they must **anticipate** practices that may reduce access or opportunity and **take action** to reduce this.
- Ofsted require to see evidence of this analysis, and positive actions, to ensure men and women have equal access to, and opportunity in, education, training and career progression.

Statistics on women's participation in STEM

- Girls achieved better or equal A*-C grades to boys in GCSE STEM subjects in 2012
- Lower %ages of females, compared to males, entering A level STEM subjects, except biology. Only 21% of physics A levels female.
- Girls achieved better or equal A*-C grades than boys in all STEM subjects at A level.
- Only 1.4% of construction, 4.3% of engineering and 18.1% of IT apprenticeship completions were female in 2010/11.
- Undergraduate degrees in 2010/11 - 85% males in Engineering, 82% in Computer Science, 72% architecture and planning .
- Only 13% of STEM occupations are taken by women.
- Despite being equally, and more, capable at GCSE and AS level, women are not entering STEM education, training and employment.

<http://www.wisecampaign.org.uk/about-us/wise-resources/uk-statistics-2012>

A whole organisational approach to gender equity -

Reputation and social responsibility

- Provide a fair and equal society – enable choice
- Tackle the gender pay gap
- Maximise women's potential and reduce the loss of talent
- Address the UK skills shortage and support the economy
- Comply with the Law

Measuring the Gender Balance of Your Provision

Organisations need to develop a baseline audit of evidence, identifying present participation levels and barriers to participation.

From this they can develop a joined up action plan to identify and address barriers, determine strategies and set targets to work towards the 30% female participation 2020 target

- *What do you know?*
- *What do you want to find out?*
- *How will you do this?*
- *How will you use this information?*

Measuring tools can include statistical and data analysis, cultural audit tools (WISE CAT), feedback from individuals, questionnaires, focus and networking groups.

Barriers to women's participation in STEM

Girls discouraged from STEM subjects from a young age

Perception of sexism in the workplace

Outdated views of STEM occupations

Lack of positive role models



Lack of good careers advice

Case Studies

Kendall College : Using equalities data to monitor learners' performance and narrow the achievement gap.

Ofsted case Study March 2012

UKRC Diversity in Apprenticeships in the Energy Sector

National Apprenticeship Service 2011

An extensive range of WISE case studies can be found using this link

<http://www.wisecampaign.org.uk/business/success-stories>

Good Practice

- **Directed marketing**
Database of positive images, student ambassadors, women only initiatives.....
- **Developing a positive learning environment for women**
All staff trained in gender awareness, female focus groups, lead staff.....
- **Supporting Existing students**
Practical action –childcare, timetables . Networks and social support. Mentors....
- **Lead by example**
Visible role models, strong policies, regular monitoring.....
- **Developing networks and progression routes**
Local and national links.....

<http://www.wisecampaign.org.uk> for training, advice and support.

<http://www.theukrc.org/for-organisations/good-practice-guides> for publications on good practice

Stereotyping



Outdated perceptions of STEM occupations persist and continue to act as a barrier to full participation.

Girls and boys still hold stereotypical views of 'girls jobs' and 'boys' jobs and fail to aspire to STEM careers.

Marketing images are our window to the community, if we persist in showing outdated stereotypes we will reinforce the barriers to inclusion.

Positive role models, mentors, 'girls only' events, positive images, good careers guidance and positive experiences all contribute to changing this perception.



Positive action and the Law

Positive action is a tool available in law to help achieve greater diversity, allowing employers to target training and encouragement at under-represented groups.

Positive action is currently limited to **training and encouragement** for disadvantaged and under-represented groups.

The law permits training and encouragement because they provide access to job opportunities, but disallows selection for a job or promotion on grounds of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief. This would be **positive discrimination** which is illegal.

The aim of positive action is to enable these organisations to work towards a representative workforce, while continuing to select candidates on the basis of their individual merits.

Tiping Factor- employers choosing between two **equally-qualified** candidates for a job or promotion would be able to select the successful candidate on the grounds that they are from an under-represented or disadvantaged group.



How WISE can help

Campaign for change

- Compelling evidence
- Media comment
- Policy influence

*Attract, retain
and develop female
talent in STEM
"30% by 2020"*

Build the pipeline

- Education campaign
- Information for parents
- Promote apprenticeships
- Targeted recruitment

Sustain the pipeline

- Expert consultancy
- Training
- Share knowledge
- Role models & champions

www.wisecampaign.org.uk

Where next? – An organisational strategy

1 - Commitment to Gender Equality

- Formal commitment to Gender Equality
- Corporate partner with WISE, signed to CEO Charter, working towards SETfair standard www.wisecampaign.org.uk

2 - Analyse the current situation

- Gather a baseline audit of evidence,
- Data analysis, cultural audit tool, focus groups, full review.

3 - Identify positive actions and set targets – Gender Equality Action Plan

- Gender diversity training, unconscious bias training,
- Marketing reviews and initiatives,
- Working with schools, careers advisors and employers to promote STEM
- Working with employers, and Universities to develop mentoring and networking opportunities
- Working with employers to provide supportive environments and positive progression opportunities.

4 - Monitor and review.

Positive Outcomes.



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Fay Best STEM

Fay Best

Developer, trainer, facilitator for STEM and Gender Equality
Projects
WISE Associate

faybest@live.com

Ph: 07887984144

www.wisecampaign.org.uk