

**NORTH EAST
SCOTLAND
COLLEGE**



APPENDIX 7: LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

**THE EQUALITY MAINSTREAMING AND OUTCOMES
OF NORTH EAST SCOTLAND COLLEGE**

APPENDIX 7: LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Equality Report February 2021

North East Scotland College continues in its commitment to provide training and development for all College staff. Our aim is to provide a service which is accessible to all colleagues and we continue to monitor attendance and seek feedback in order to meet this aim.

This report will focus on attendance, by protected characteristic on both internal and external training courses. Our last report also isolated data in relation to staff undertaking qualifications. However, attendance at taught sessions for certificated qualifications (for example TQFE) is already embedded in the external and internal course information and therefore will not be replicated in this report.

The report will look at data from 2018/19 and 2019/20 and compare this with data produced in our last report which covered 2017/18.

Throughout the report we refer to baseline data. For Learning and Development purposes this covers the protected characteristics of all staff employed over the course of an academic year. This means that our data differs slightly from the data referred to in the People Services report which is generated at a single point in the year.

External and Internal Training Courses

External Training Courses are those events that are:

- **Designed and run by an external training provider at a location outwith the College. (Typically, this includes short courses but may also include qualifications undertaken over a period of several months - for example some Leadership Qualifications)**
- **Designed and run by an external training provider and take place online (for example distance learning courses and webinars)**
- **Courses which are taught by another department within the College such as Higher National Qualifications.**

Staff are required to apply to attend external training programmes as these incur expenditure from the Learning and Development Budget. The majority of applications received by Learning and Development are approved. However, those which are very costly (either in terms of fees or high travel / accommodation costs), may not be approved if they are not felt to be essential for someone's role within the College.

Internal Training events include:

- **All training courses which form part of the induction programme**
- **Taught sessions for certificated awards such as TQFE and assessor and verifier awards**
- **Workshops and training sessions that form part of the College Development Days**
- **Internal training courses designed to improve knowledge and or skills on a range of work-related topics - for example to improve digital literacy.**

There is no Learning and Development approval process for internal courses, although in some circumstances staff may be unable to attend, for example where managers are unable to release staff for operational reasons.

Because of the application and approval processes required for external training courses, these require particular scrutiny when considering the equality data to ensure there are no factors which might be preventing or discouraging certain groups from attending.

Data is now considered by each protected characteristic. Percentages are rounded to one decimal point.

Gender

Over the course of 2018/19 there were more female staff employed compared to male staff with the relevant percentages being 54.8% : 45.2%

Over the course of 2019/20 there continued to be more female staff than male staff employed 55.6% : 44.7%. These figures are fairly consistent with 2017/18.

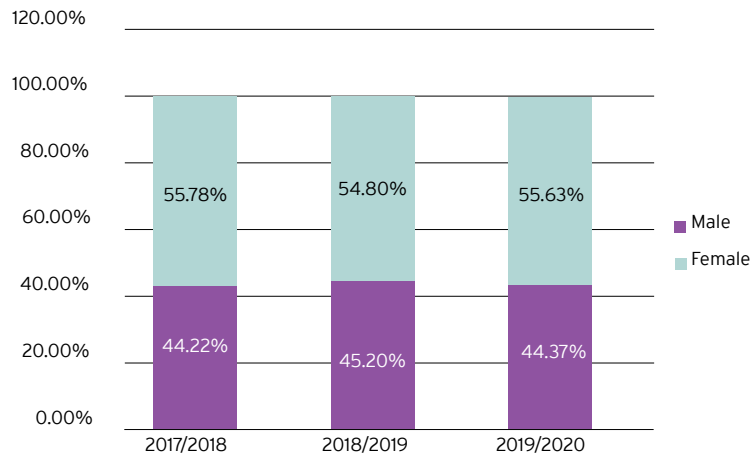
External Training Courses

In our previous report the figures indicated that female staff were proportionately more likely to attend external training courses (57.8 female : 42.2% male), these percentages were starting to become much closer to the percentages of each gender employed. In 18/19, the percentage of female staff attending external training was again proportionately higher than that of male staff (69.6% female : 30.4% male).

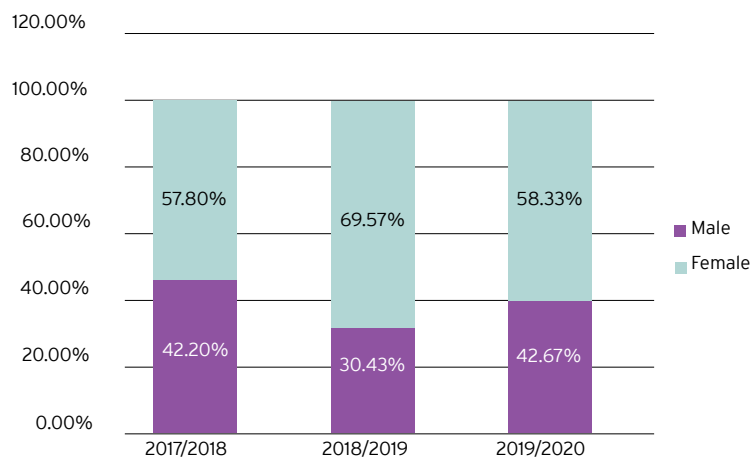
In 2019/2020 whilst the figures indicate that female staff are still proportionately more likely to attend external training courses (58.3% female : 41.7% male), the percentages of staff from each gender attending training courses has started to become much more closer to the percentages of each gender employed.

This trend is illustrated in the following graphs

Graph 1: Percentage of staff by gender 2017-2020



Graph 2: Attendance at external training courses by gender 2017 - 2020



Internal Training Courses

In both 2018/19 and 2019/20 the percentages of male and female staff attending internal training courses was roughly in line with baseline data.

Ethnicity

In 2018/19 the largest group of staff were white Scottish (68.9%). 8.9% of staff did not disclose their ethnic origin. 8.1% of staff were white Other and 9.4% of staff were white English. The numbers of staff in other categories (Asian, Black African/Caribbean/British, Other, Mixed, white Irish and white Welsh) are extremely small (total 4.6%) and figures are not included for each group as there is the potential for staff to be identified.

Figures for 2019/2020 are generally similar. 65.6% were white Scottish; 7.5% white other; 5.9% white English; 9.2% white British; 8.4% not indicated. 3.5% of staff fall into one of the other ethnic categories. White British is now included in the data as staff have the opportunity to use this classification in the Human Resources Records System. The figures would suggest that some staff who previously identified as, for example white Scottish or white English are now identifying as white British.

External Training

In 2018/19 the percentage of white Scottish staff attending external training courses was proportionately higher than the baseline data. (76.8% staff attending external courses are white Scottish compared to baseline figure of 68.9%) The percentage of staff in the white English group attending courses was also slightly higher than the baseline data. Conversely, the percentage of staff in the white other group attending courses was proportionately lower than the baseline data (5.8% of staff attending external courses are white other compared to baseline figure of 8.13%). The proportion of staff in the other categories attending external training courses was very slightly lower than baseline data (3.0%).

In 2019/20 the percentage of white British and white English staff attending external training courses was higher than baseline data. (15.6% staff attending external courses are white British compared to the baseline figure of 9.2%; 11.5% of staff attending external courses are white English compared to the baseline figure of 5.9%). Conversely, the percentage of staff in the white Scottish group attending courses was proportionately lower than the baseline data (55.2% of staff attending external courses are white Scottish compared to baseline figure of 65.6%). The percentage of all other groups attending external training events was lower than the baseline figure.

Internal Training

In both 2018/19 and 2019/20 all ethnic groups engaged in internal training with the percentage attending being roughly equivalent to the baseline data in most cases.

Disability

In 2018/2019 6.5% of staff had declared that they had a disability. In 2019/2020 this had risen to 7%.

External training

In 2018/19, 7.25% of the staff attending external training had declared a disability, this is above the baseline of 6.5%. In 2019/20, 2.1% of the staff attending external training had declared a disability. This suggests that for 2019/20 staff who have declared a disability appear to be less likely to attend external training. This requires further investigation to find out the possible reasoning behind why the percentage of staff with a disability attending external training is lower than the baseline, and also why there is such a marked difference from the previous year. It can be noted a potential recent factor which may have impacted staff with disabilities from attending external training could be Covid-19. However, as the majority of external courses were either cancelled or moved online after the end of March 2020 this seems unlikely, although there might have been some impact during the early part of 2020.

The attendance of staff with disabilities at external training events should continue to be monitored and feedback sought, where practicable to identify if there are barriers which may discourage attendance.

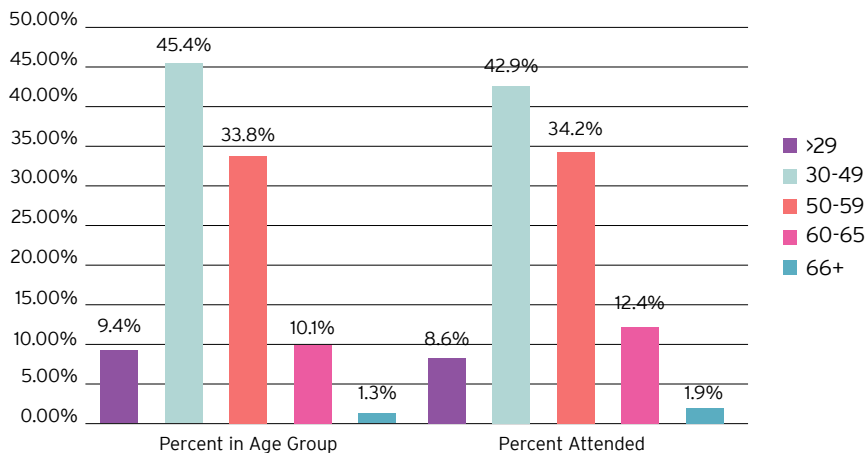
Internal Training

In both 2018/19 and 2019/20 the percentage of staff with disabilities who attended internal training was proportionately lower than the baseline data (4.3% of staff attending internal training in 2018/19 declared they had a disability compared to baseline figure of 6.5%. 4.4% of staff attending internal training in 2019/20 declared they had a disability compared to baseline figure of 7%). This was not highlighted in the 2017/18 report and requires further monitoring to ensure there are no factors preventing staff with disabilities from attending internal training.

Age

Because the age of staff changes throughout the year, we have, for simplicity, taken age at a single point in time. The highest percentage of staff for both 2018/19 and 2019/20 are in the 30-49 age group, with those in the 50 - 59 age group coming a close second. For both years in question we seem to have fewer staff in the under 29 age group than in the 60+ age group.

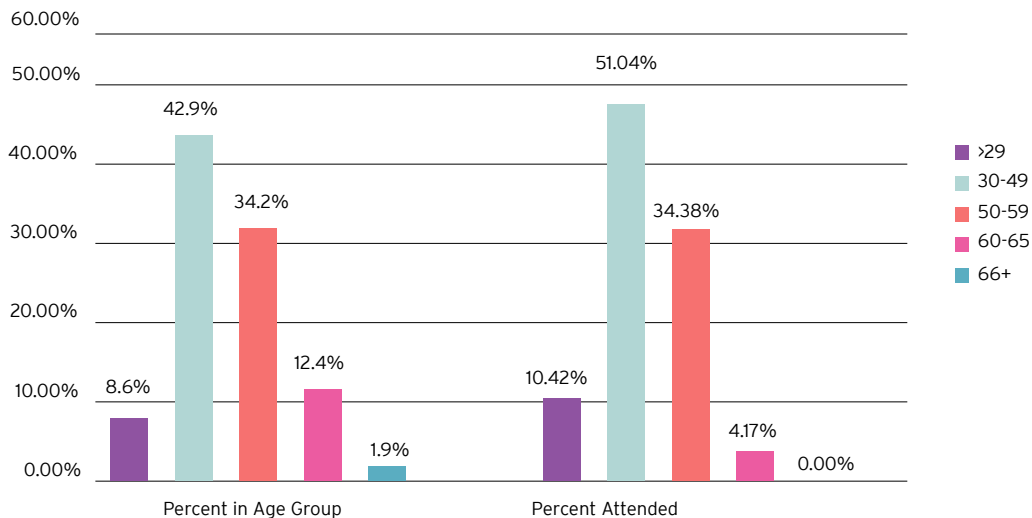
Graph 3 Percentage of staff in the different age groups 2018/19 and 2019/20



External Training

Staff in the 30-49 and 50 - 59 age groups are the most likely to engage in external training as can be seen in the table below. Staff under 50 are proportionately more likely to attend external training although this figure is very small. Staff in the 60+ age groups appear to be proportionately less likely to attend external training courses.

Graph 4 Percent of staff by age group compared with percent attending external training events. Data for 2019/20.

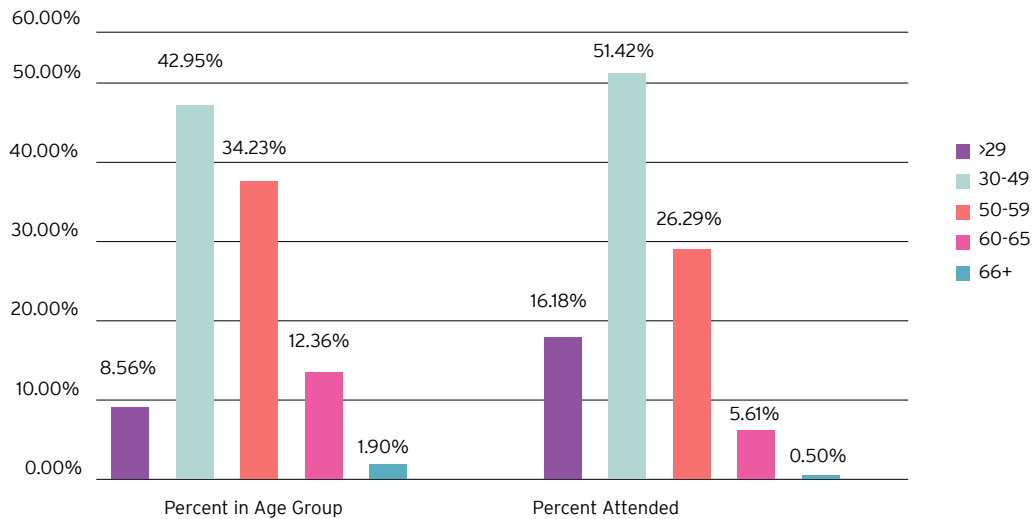


Figures for 2018/19 show a similar pattern.

Internal Training

Figures for internal training courses indicate that it is staff in the 30 - 49 age group who are most likely to attend. Again, staff under 50 are proportionately more likely to attend.

Graph 5 Percent of staff by age group compared with percent attending internal training events. Data for 2019/2020



Again, figures for 2018/19 show a similar pattern.

A possible explanation for these patterns is that young staff are earlier in their careers and therefore are more likely to engage with training as they develop their knowledge and skill set. Staff in the 50 - 59 age group are generally (although not exclusively) longer serving and therefore more likely to ask to attend external conferences than internal training sessions.

All age groups appear to be engaging in both internal and external training. Our previous data suggested that staff in the 60+ age groups are slightly less likely to engage in training. This still appears to be the case.

Marital Status

In 2018/19, 30.9% staff were single, 57.2% were married, 5.4% had not disclosed their marital status and 5.0% staff were divorced. In 2019/20 the percentage of staff who had not disclosed their marital status rose to 7.3%. The percentage of single staff had decreased by nearly 3% and married staff by 3%. The percentage of staff living with a partner/common law was 2.5%. The percentage of divorced and widowed staff remained roughly the same across both years.

External Training Courses

In 2018/19 married staff were the most likely to attend external training courses. In 2019/20, staff in the not disclosed category were the most likely to attend external training courses, 66.7%. This is proportionately much higher than the baseline figure, 7.3%. The reasons for this are unclear.

Internal Training Courses

In 2018/19 attendance at internal training courses for most groups was broadly comparable with baseline figures. By 2019/20 the percentage of staff not disclosing their marital status attending internal training events is proportionately higher than baseline figures and the percentage of married staff attending internal training courses is proportionately lower. Again the reasons for this are unclear. Otherwise, the data indicates that single staff are more likely to be younger, and at an earlier stage in their career. Therefore, they will be more engaged in training. The longer serving, married staff will have already completed much of the mandatory internal training.

Religion / Belief

In 2018/19, 38.7% of staff had no religion/belief. 36.8% of staff were Christian and 21.0% of staff had not disclosed their religion. We have a small number (3.6%) of staff from other religious categories. (Figures include Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, Jewish and "Other" groups.) These are not shown by individual group due to the small numbers represented.

In 2019/20 the proportion of staff who had no religion/belief increased to 39.5%. 34.9% of staff were Christian (a slight decrease), 20.1% of staff had not disclosed their religion and 5.5% are from another religious category (a small increase).

External Training

In 2018/19 the proportion of staff in the Christian category attending external training courses is higher than baseline figure (43.5% of staff who are Christian attended external training compared to baseline figure of 36.8%). The proportion of staff who had not declared their religion / belief and staff with no religion/belief were proportionately lower.

In 2019/20 the proportion of staff with no religion / belief attending external training courses was higher than baseline figures (42.7% of staff with no religion / belief attended external training compared to baseline figure of 39.5%). The proportion of Christian staff and staff who had not disclosed their religion / belief attending training courses was proportionately lower.

Internal Training

In 2018/19 staff from all religious categories represented in the College engaged with internal training. The percentage of staff who had not disclosed their religion attending internal training was low compared to the non-religious and Christian groups.

In 2019/20 more staff had disclosed their religious category and attendance at internal training was roughly proportionate across all categories.

The numbers of staff from categories other than no religion / belief and Christian attending external training courses is low. However, attendance on internal courses is proportionate with baseline figures. The number of staff in these religious categories is very low across College so it is difficult to draw any real conclusions from this. However, the situation will continue to be monitored to ensure that there is nothing discouraging staff from the different religious categories from attending external training events.

Sexual Orientation

In 2018/19 77.7% staff across the year had identified themselves as heterosexual. 19.5% of staff had not disclosed their sexual orientation and 2.8% were either gay, bisexual or lesbian. By 2019/20 the number of staff who identified themselves as heterosexual had risen to 80.7%. The number of staff who did not disclose their sexual orientation had fallen to 17.1% and 2.2% were either gay, bisexual or lesbian.

External Training

In 2018/19 heterosexual staff were far more likely to attend external training events than those who had not disclosed their sexual orientation.

In 2019/20 the staff who had not disclosed their sexual orientation were still proportionately less likely to attend external training courses.

Internal Training

In both 2018/19 and 2019/20 heterosexual staff are proportionately more likely to attend internal training courses. However, all groups are actively engaging in training.

Pregnancy & Maternity

Figures on pregnancy and maternity have not been collated in relation to attendance at training events. Although a small number of staff on maternity leave will come in to attend training sessions as part of their "keeping in touch" days, this isn't a mandatory requirement. Completion of certificated qualifications require considerable commitment over the course of a year and also a certain degree of attendance at work during that period. Therefore, staff, when pregnant, generally elect to defer these qualifications until after they have returned from maternity leave.

In conclusion, any data produced in relation to pregnancy and maternity would inevitably be skewed.

Gender Reassignment

This was not monitored as data suggests that the number of staff who have undergone gender reassignment is extremely low and any figures produced would not be meaningful.

Conclusions and recommendations

In some cases, staff who have not provided information on their protected characteristics appear to engage in training to a lesser extent than those who have provided their data. This would be a concern if staff are not providing information because of concerns about discrimination and are not engaging in training because there are barriers preventing them from doing so. Anecdotal evidence, together with the comparison of data from 2016/17 and 2017/18 (during which period more staff have disclosed their protected characteristics) would suggest that this is not the case.

In terms of the data, it should be noted that the College is still in the process of fully implementing its new HR/Payroll system. There are some issues around equalities data which the College will be addressing with its HR/payroll system

provider. In addition we will continue to encourage staff to share data and the information that we have is improving all the time. This will allow us to monitor the situation more effectively in the future.

At the present moment there are three areas that require some attention. Whilst staff in all groups are actively engaging in internal training, some groups appear to be less well represented at external training events. These include staff from some ethnic groups, staff in certain religious categories, and staff with disabilities.

It is important that we encourage all staff to engage in training that will help them fully develop their skillset and which will help them in both their current and future careers. We also need to identify why some groups / individuals may be discouraged from taking advantage of external training opportunities. No information has come to light through staff surveys or anecdotally that would suggest why these groups may be under represented at external training events.

One option we could pursue would be to undertake a survey specifically exploring reasons for staff not engaging in external training. Alternatively, further information might be obtained through the College Performance Management system, iCon2, where managers and staff reporting to them have the opportunity to discuss training needs. This latter would also enable managers to identify and remove barriers to training, although we must recognise that not all staff would be willing to discuss such issues with their line manager. A combined approach is therefore recommended.

One area to take into consideration for the 2019/2020 data is the potential impact Covid-19 may have had on some groups in particular for external training. Whilst the majority of courses running after the national lockdown were either cancelled or run online, in the very early stages of the pandemic there may have been some staff who chose not to attend external events due to the potential risks. Since the start of 2020/21 the College has been conducting risk assessments for staff prior to attendance at both internal face to face and external events. We aim to ensure staff are comfortable attending face to face training and recognise that some staff may prefer not to attend at this present time. Since the start of the pandemic, much of the training has moved online. The impact of this on any particular protected characteristics will need to be monitored and will be reported on in future.

