

## West Suffolk College Gender Pay Gap Supporting Statement

At WSC we are committed to all aspects of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion being at the core of our business ethos and this is demonstrated not only through our robust policies and working practices but in how we and all our employees live and breathe their day to day duties.

We are proud to buck the national trend of women in senior roles. The 2017 data from the Office of National Statistics show that just 28.9% of women hold Director or Senior Management roles. Our Senior Management Team is 61% female.

Like many Colleges, we have a predominantly female workforce across all of the salary quartiles and women therefore also dominate the lower two salary quartiles. We offer a range of part-time and job share roles, which have historically always attracted more female candidates. These roles tend to be in the lower salary quartiles. Moving forward we will aim to proactively attract men to these support roles as well as to have an increasingly proactive approach to ensuring that part-time, job share and flexible working options are readily available for roles at all levels.

At WSC, women dominate the top half of our highest paid employees. Our salaries are not based on gender; we have a job evaluation tool in place which ensures a consistent internal benchmark focused on duties, accountability and seniority. This tool assigns roles to set ranges in our open and transparent pay bandings. Having this job evaluation process and structured pay bands in place has been integral to ensuring equity in our pay.

We have robust Equal Opportunities and Recruitment Policies in place and a centralised Recruitment Function within HR to ensure consistency and fairness of approach during all recruitment across the College. As an equal opportunities employer we believe that the best candidate for the role should be successful, regardless of their gender, ethnicity etc. but we are taking steps to ensure unconscious bias does not become a factor in recruitment.

All employees have equal access to request and discuss training and progression through our regular 121 employee feedback and performance tools.

We have a well-established reporting process for our equality statistics, including gender, which analyses trends and puts actions in place where necessary to ensure that equality remains as a priority. We also have a cross-College Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee who meet three times a year with Governor attendance, to monitor all aspect of equality, including gender in the College operation, to report regularly to the overall Governing body.

We have recently signed up to the Think, Act, Report framework which supports our commitment to identifying and addressing gender equality. This framework will help us to build upon our current comprehensive focus on equality and support us in our drive to eliminate our pay gap.

Character Strengths are at the heart of our culture for both staff and students and the thread of Equality and Diversity runs through these. Our Character Strengths are:

- Resilience
- Ownership
- Optimism
- Ambition
- Respect
- Self-control
- Confidence

## WSC Action Plan to Eliminate Our Gender Pay Gap

Whilst we are proud of our established working practices and the focus on equality for all our employees, we do have a gender pay gap. We are committed to reducing this and eliminating any disparity of pay which may have inadvertently come about over time. We have created an action plan which includes the following steps and progress against this will be reported to our Governors and provided in our future Gender Pay Gap reports.

We commit to:

- While we have no reason to believe that we have Equal Pay issues, we are undertaking an Equal Pay Audit to ensure that this is the case. We will take any appropriate remedial action following this.
- Review our recruitment process to see how we can attract more women into male dominated trade roles and more men into female dominated roles.
- Focus on support tools for working parents. HR are looking at how roles can work highly effectively with added flexibility on a case by case basis.
- Through communication and proactive initiatives to promote flexible working rights, ensure men understand that they can also work flexibly and break down the perception that only women work part-time.
- Review our job evaluation tool and ensure this is performed prior to recruiting to any roles.
- To work with other Colleges, who will have a similar gender demographic in their workforce, to share best practice to tackle our gender pay gap over the coming months and years.

We acknowledge that addressing gender pay through the above action plan will take time and is constrained further by funding restrictions in our sector however we have a heartfelt commitment to achieving this for our fantastic teams of employees who give so much to our students and communities every single day.

**Signed for and on behalf of West Suffolk College:**



**Dr Nikos Savvas**  
Principal and CEO



**Ken Golding**  
Chair of Governors



**Ruth Sadler**  
**HR Director**