

Diversity of HE governors in Scotland

A summary of the diversity amongst HE Governors at
Scottish institutions

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1. Overview

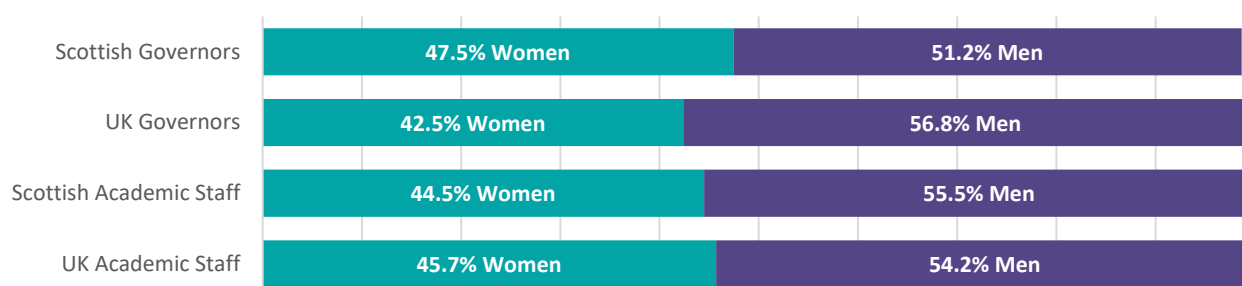
In the 2020/21 HESA return there were data from 18 Scottish institutions that detailed the demographic characteristics for Governors. This is the widest coverage to date and allows a picture to be drawn of governance in Scottish institutions, alongside a comparison to the UK profile. There were not sufficient responses for an intersectional analysis. For a more detailed view of UK wide board diversity, including comparison with the academic staff body and intersectional analysis, please see the full Diversity of Governors report.

2. Comparisons

The profile of governance at Scottish institutions was broadly similar to that for UK institutions as a whole aside from sex and ethnicity (see Figure 3). These characteristics are potentially distinctive from the UK and will be explored further here.

The proportion of governors who were men was 51.2% at Scottish institutions, 5.6 percentage points less than for the UK; 47.5% were women, 5.0 percentage points more than for the UK (see Figure 1). There is therefore a more equitable balance by sex within governing bodies at Scottish institutions than for the UK as a whole. This profile of governors in Scotland by sex has remained fairly stable over the last three years, indicating this is a consistent difference. The profile of academic staff at Scottish institutions was similar to that of UK institutions; therefore, it was not the case that Scottish governing bodies were more equitable simply because of a more equitable academic staff body.

Figure 1: Governors and academic staff by sex, in Scotland and for the UK as a whole



The proportion of governors who were White was 95.6% at Scottish institutions, 7.8 percentage points higher than the UK as a whole (see Figure 2). As with the UK, the largest ethnic minority group were governors from an Asian ethnic group, making up 2.8% of governors, half the proportion of that in the UK (5.7%). For Academic staff, 95.5% in Scotland were White, compared to 87.9% for the UK. The difference between the ethnic profile of governors in Scotland and the UK here reflects the difference in the profile of academic staff.

Figure 2: Governors and academic staff by ethnicity (UK Domiciled only), in Scotland and for the UK as a whole

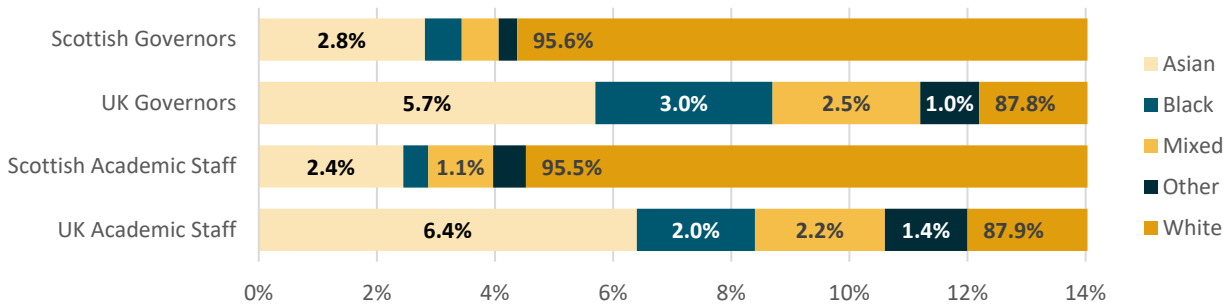


Figure 3: Demographic analysis of governors in Scotland

	Scotland						UK	
	2020/21		2019/20		2018/19		2020/21	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
All	450	100.0%	435	100.0%	415	100.0%	3915	100.0%
Sex								
Men	230	51.2%	220	50.7%	215	52.2%	2225	56.8%
Women	215	47.5%	210	48.2%	195	46.4%	1660	42.4%
Other	5	1.3%	5	1.2%	5	1.4%	30	0.8%
Nationality								
UK	355	90.7%	355	93.5%	330	93.2%	3225	91.9%
EU	20	5.7%	15	4.2%	15	4.3%	125	3.6%
Non-EU	15	3.6%	10	2.4%	10	2.6%	160	4.5%
Ethnicity (UK domiciled)								
Asian	10	2.8%	10	2.5%	10	2.8%	175	5.7%
Black	0	0.6%	0	0.3%	0	0.7%	90	3.0%
Mixed	0	0.6%	5	0.9%	5	1.4%	75	2.5%
White	305	95.6%	305	95.9%	270	94.7%	2655	87.8%
Other	0	0.3%	0	0.3%	0	0.4%	30	1.0%
Age								
25 and under	30	6.4%	30	7.4%	30	7.2%	255	6.5%
26 to 35	10	2.7%	10	2.3%	10	2.6%	150	3.9%
36 to 45	45	9.5%	40	9.0%	40	10.1%	390	9.9%
46 to 55	110	24.2%	100	22.6%	80	19.7%	1010	25.7%
56 to 65	165	36.4%	145	33.4%	145	34.9%	1345	34.4%
66 and over	95	20.8%	110	25.3%	105	25.5%	770	19.6%
Disability								
No known disability	425	94.7%	415	95.2%	400	95.7%	3685	94.2%
Known disability	25	5.3%	20	4.8%	20	4.3%	230	5.8%
Impairment type								
Specific learning difficulty	5	0.7%	0	*	0	*	35	0.9%
General learning disability	0	0.0%	0	*	0	*	0	0.1%
Social/communication impairment	0	0.0%	0	*	0	*	5	0.1%
Long standing illness	5	1.3%	5	*	5	*	55	1.4%
Mental health condition	5	1.1%	5	*	5	*	30	0.7%
Physical impairment	5	0.7%	0	*	0	*	25	0.7%
Hearing impairment	5	0.7%	5	*	5	*	20	0.5%
Visual impairment	0	0.0%	0	*	0	*	10	0.2%
Impairment not listed above	0	0.4%	0	*	0	*	30	0.7%
Two or more impairments	0	0.4%	0	*	0	*	20	0.6%

* percentages are not reported for any population fewer than 22.5



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