



# EQUAL PAY CAMPAIGNING

A toolkit for student officers

[www.closesthegap.org.uk](http://www.closesthegap.org.uk)



## CLOSE THE GAP

Close the Gap is a partnership project that works with those who can influence the gender pay gap as well as those who are affected by it.

## NUS SCOTLAND WOMEN'S CAMPAIGN

NUS Scotland Women's Campaign is an integral but autonomous part of NUS Scotland which represents over 85% of students in higher education and over 90% of students in further education in Scotland. It ensures that women's voices are heard, their views represented and the issues that affect them are acted upon in a society that is overwhelmingly balanced against them. The Women's Campaign works on campus, in students' associations and nationally to support the work of student women's groups and women's officers and through its support and advancement of women's rights, works towards equality for all women.



## WHAT IS THE GENDER PAY GAP?

Despite over thirty years of legislation aimed at ensuring equal wages for men and women, a gender pay gap still exists. Put simply, women earn less money than men for the work they do. Links have been made between the pay gap and child poverty and women pensioners are more likely to live in poverty than their male counterparts because of inequalities in pay and employment for women.

Close the Gap (and other organisations) also show that the pay gap has a negative impact on the economic productivity of individual businesses and affects Scotland's ability to compete in the global marketplace.

This means that although the Equal Pay Act came into force in 1975, to protect women workers against discrimination, women are still paid less than men, spend longer in part-time employment and therefore reduce their earning-power and are more likely to spend their retirement in poverty.

### THE GENDER PAY GAP IS A COMPLEX ISSUE. IT HAS A NUMBER OF CAUSES WHICH CAN BE IDENTIFIED

- Discrimination in pay systems. Women being paid less than men for doing the same job as a man or a job requiring the same level of skill, effort and responsibility as a job done by a man.



- Occupational segregation. Large groups of working women are concentrated in a narrow range of low paid jobs (often known as the 5 Cs: catering, cleaning, caring, clerical and cashiering jobs).
- Fewer women are employed as managers or in senior-level positions within organisations.
- Caring responsibilities. The responsibility for looking after children and others still falls on women more than men, and women are therefore more likely to take career breaks or engage in part-time employment which affects their progression at work.

Equal pay is also about more than just how much women are being paid per hour. The Equal Pay Act also covers bonuses, overtime, holiday pay, performance related pay and sick pay.

### **PAY DISCRIMINATION OCCURS WHEN:**

- a woman is denied a bonus received by other staff because she is on maternity leave
- part-time staff, (often women) have no entitlement to enhanced sick pay or holiday pay.
- staff are on individual contracts and discussing pay rates is a disciplinary offense.



## WHY DOES IT AFFECT STUDENTS?

● In 2002 EOC research showed that female graduates should expect to earn on average 15% less than their male counterparts even when they have the same qualifications, have achieved the same grades and work in the same industry.

● A gender pay gap even exists among students working part-time during college or university to fund their studies.

● Therefore, because women students are likely to earn less while working part-time, they may get into greater debt while at college or university and because they can expect to earn less upon gaining their qualifications and going into the workplace, women will take longer to pay off their debt than their male counterparts.

● The majority of employees, both male and female, expect to receive equal pay. There is little awareness of the discrimination and financial inequality women still face in employment and society simply because of their sex. Too many students will still face a sharp shock when they enter the world of work.

**This campaign pack aims to provide useful information about the gender pay gap and to give you ideas about how you can work in your students' association to raise awareness and challenge gender discrimination around pay.**



## STARTING AN EQUAL PAY CAMPAIGN IN YOUR STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

The benefits to students of knowing more about equal pay can be great. It can help students when looking for employment or making a choice about the area of work they will follow. For example, if a potential employer has not carried out an equal pay review, can they be expected to treat their staff fairly in other aspects of the job?

Tackling the pay inequalities that exist between men and women in the workplace will help challenge the wider discrimination that women still face in society.

### WHAT IS THE AIM OF YOUR CAMPAIGN?

**IS IT AWARENESS RAISING?** Do you want to improve the information students can access through the on campus job-shop or careers service?

### IS IT PRACTICAL ADVICE AND TIPS FOR THOSE LOOKING FOR WORK?

Careers services offer tips on C.V writing, job interviews etc. Could this be extended to advice on how to broach the issue of pay in the workplace or what questions to ask potential employers at recruitment fairs?

**KICK-START YOUR WOMEN'S GROUP?** Many women students do not feel feminism or women's groups are relevant to them. Knowledge about the gender pay gap can be low and a campaign on such an issue can raise awareness of inequality and highlight the need for an active women's campaign.



## RESEARCH

Find out as much information about equal pay as possible. Make use of external organisations that will be able to give you facts, statistics and campaign materials about equal pay.

Using statistics about equal pay can be the most stark and effective way of driving home the message about how women are still treated unfairly in the workplace.

Close the Gap, NUS Scotland's partners in producing this pack, is an ideal place to start and they have posters and leaflets designed for students.

Other sources of help and support, including the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Fawcett Society are listed on page 11.

## PLANNING YOUR CAMPAIGN

**Consider what would be the most effective way of getting your message across. Often a combination of different materials, resources and events are the best way of grabbing attention, rather than just producing a few leaflets.**

- Posters – These can be put up on notice boards all over your college and university and are often available from organisations such as Close the Gap or the Equal Opportunities Commission for free. Be aware of 'poster-blindness', when posters get lost in a sea of other information. Eye-catching designs and colours can counteract this.
- Is there an area where students congregate? Consider beer mats or postcards that can be left in prominent places.



- Join forces with other students' associations in your local area. This could increase the impact of your campaign and gather some press coverage in local media.
- Websites and emails. If you have a students' association website or can send out emails to students, make use of it and get your campaign's key points across.
- Do you have a student newspaper or newsletter? A ready made article on equal pay, perhaps with graphics illustrating the problem would be welcome. Do you know any students you could use as case studies to give the story some human interest.
- Local press are often on the look out for interesting stories. Organising an interesting event or arranging a local speaker (e.g. an MSP, MP or trade union rep) to talk about equal pay at your women's group could gather publicity.
- Students' association policy. Does your SA have policy on equal pay? A discussion on the topic at an SRC meeting or a motion on the issue to your AGM could help raise awareness.
- Ask your careers service to run workshops on preparing for job interviews, or assertiveness or negotiation skills if you have to raise it with a future employer.
- Give out information at careers fairs. Do a survey finding out how much people know about equal pay and use your findings in your campaign.
- Speak to trade union representatives at your college or university about the issue. You may be able to work together on campaigning for equal pay in your own institution.





## KEEP IT FOCUSED

Make sure your campaign will achieve what it set out to. Use SMART objectives to keep on track and focussed.

## A SMART CAMPAIGN IS ONE THAT IS SPECIFIC

Work out the focus of your campaign.

**MEASURABLE** Make sure you will be able to evaluate how well your campaign has gone and whether you have met your targets. E.g. you organised an evening event that people attended or distributed all your campaign materials.

**ACHIEVABLE** Be realistic! Despite your good intentions, you will have to be able to juggle study, work and other commitments with running your campaign.

**RESOURCED** Try and source as many free campaign materials as possible. Be realistic about how much time and money you have to spend. Set up a budget and stick to it.

**TIMETABLED** Setting yourself an end date and knowing when you want to achieve certain stages of your campaign will help you keep on track.

When your campaign has been successful, publicise it. Write another article for the local media/student newspaper.

Highlight the findings of your research if you have conducted a survey and write to your principal or local MP about what you have done and how you would like them to take the issue further.



## STUNTS AND CAMPAIGN IDEAS

- Hold an equal pay event featuring information, speakers, workshops. Give out stickers highlighting your key messages eg. "12%\* off - Why are women workers still going cheap?"
- Tie in your event with a night in your union bar or a local pub and give women 12% off entry or give women the 'pay gap discount' on coffees or food bought on campus.
- Find out which companies are coming to your campus careers fair and whether or not they carry out pay reviews. Work with your careers services and ask if you can publicise the companies that do prior to or during the event.
- Organise members of your women's group to attend local careers fairs asking companies questions about equal pay.
- Hand out information to students entering the careers fair.
- Publicise events by doing lecture announcements or ask your lecturer to put an OHP with information on it at the start of every lecture.
- Show films by women directors or that have a positive pro-woman storyline and distribute your campaign materials before the film.
- Organise assertiveness training for women, including interview techniques, negotiating salary, confidence building etc.
- Hold a debate on equal pay and women's equality in the workplace.
- Organise a petition on equal pay and present it to your local MP asking them to take action on the issue. Invite the local press.

\*Dec 2005  
*Annual Survey of  
Hours and Earnings*

## USEFUL CONTACTS

### **NUS Scotland**

[www.nusonline.co.uk](http://www.nusonline.co.uk)

### **NUS Scotland Women's Campaign**

29 Forth Street,  
Edinburgh,  
EH1 3LE  
t. 0131 556 6598  
[mail@nus-scotland.org.uk](mailto:mail@nus-scotland.org.uk)

### **Close the Gap**

333 Woodlands Road  
Glasgow G3 6NG  
t. 0141 337 8100  
[info@closethegap.org.uk](mailto:info@closethegap.org.uk)  
[www.closethegap.org.uk](http://www.closethegap.org.uk)

### **Equal Opportunities Commission**

St Stephens House  
279 Bath Street,  
Glasgow G2 4JL  
[scotland@eoc.org.uk](mailto:scotland@eoc.org.uk)  
t. 0845 601 5901  
[www.eoc.org.uk](http://www.eoc.org.uk)

### **STUC Women's Committee**

Scottish Trades Union Congress  
333 Woodlands Road  
Glasgow G3 6NG  
t. 0141 337 8100  
[info@stuc.org.uk](mailto:info@stuc.org.uk)  
[www.stuc.org.uk](http://www.stuc.org.uk)

### **Engender**

26 Albany Street  
Edinburgh EH1 3QH  
t. 0131 558 9596  
[info@engender.org.uk](mailto:info@engender.org.uk)  
[www.engender.org.uk](http://www.engender.org.uk)

### **Fawcett Society**

1-3 Berry Street  
London EC1V 0AA  
t. 020 7253 2598  
[www.fawcettsociety.org.uk](http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk)

### **Scottish Women's Convention**

Basement  
26 Albany Street  
Edinburgh EH1 3QH  
t. 0131 557 8950  
[www.scottishwomensconvention.org](http://www.scottishwomensconvention.org)

### **Scottish Executive**

[www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Equality](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Equality)

### **Women and Equality Unit**

1 Victoria Street  
London SW1H 0ET  
t. 0207 215 5000  
[www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk](http://www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk)



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