



University of the  
Highlands and Islands  
Oilthigh na Gàidhealtachd  
agus nan Eilean

Career pathways: the influence of habitus  
**These Women Can Conference**  
8<sup>th</sup> March 2018

# Pierre Bourdieu 1930 - 2002



## Habitus:

‘the product of the internalisation of the principles of a cultural arbitrary capable of perpetuating itself after pedagogic action has ceased and thereby perpetuating in practices the principles of an internalised arbitrary’ (2000:31).

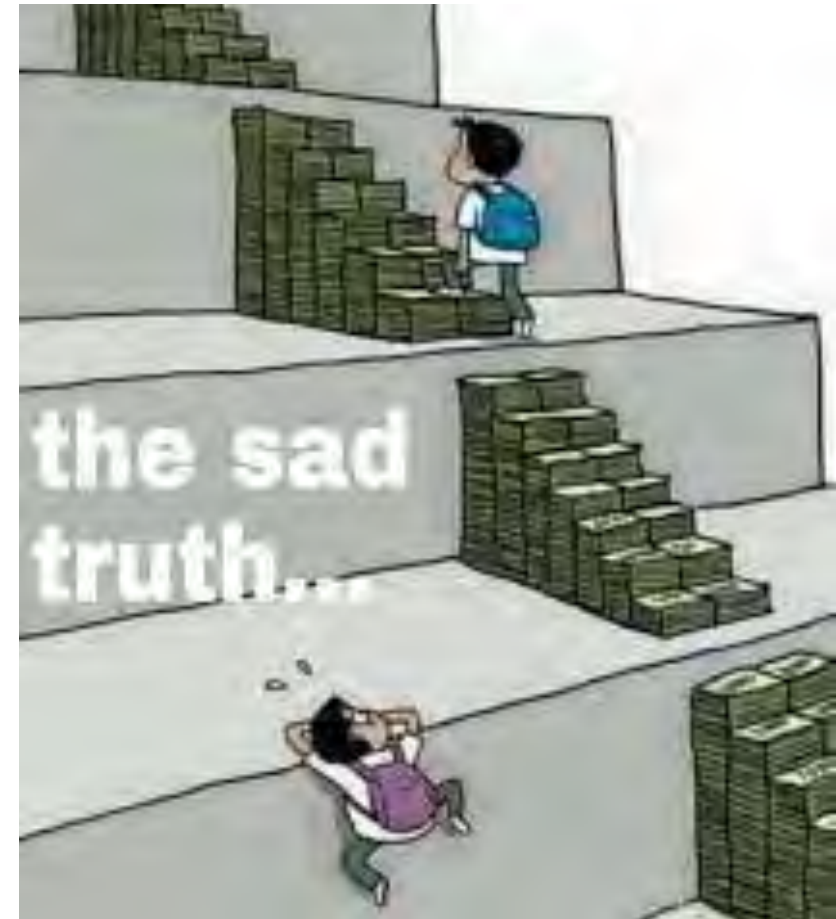
Bourdieu, P. and Passeron, J.C. (1977)  
Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture



# The class divide

As Dumais states:

One comes to determine what is possible and what is not possible for one's life and develops aspirations and practices accordingly (2002:46).



# Habitus: mediated by class, gender and race



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## Record gap between rich and poor students winning university places

The gap between rich and poor students being granted university places has reached a record high, latest UCAS figures show, prompting fresh concerns over the “shameful” lack of social mobility within education. Students who received free school meals – a long-time indicator of poverty – are less than half as likely to enter higher education than their more affluent peers.

*The Independent 14/12/2016*



### And for those who make it....

Those from higher socio-economic backgrounds are still 3.4 percentage points less likely to drop-out, 5.3 percentage points more likely to graduate and 3.7 percentage points more likely to graduate with a first or 2:1 than those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

*Crawford, C (2014) Socio-economic differences in university outcomes in the UK: drop-out, degree completion and University of Warwick and Institute for Fiscal Studies*





# Generation Gifted BBC 2

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- After an open day at Cardiff University, Anne-Marie returns and questions her mother: "How do you pay for university?"



# Generation Gifted BBC2

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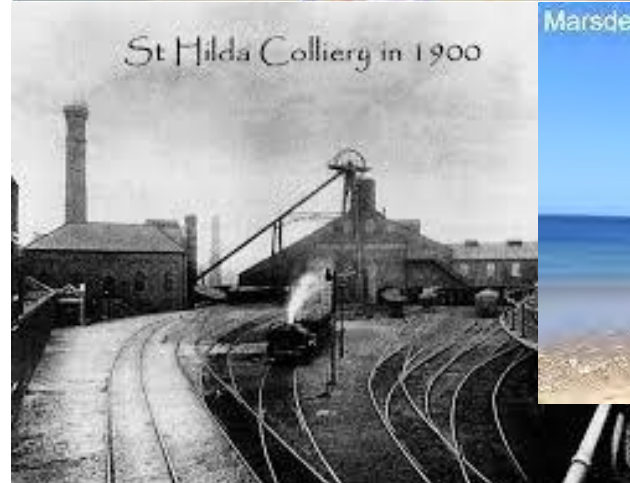
- Shakira's stepfather helpfully clarifies her horizons by responding: "How many jobs is there really for an artist, except for tattoo?"





# My Primary Habitus

- Dispositions
  - Work ethic
  - Independence
  - Gender is not a determining factor
  - Resilience and determination pay dividends
  - Education first



# My secondary habitus

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## Strikingly different experiences

- 11 +
- University of Dundee
- Re-location, re-location, re-location
- Primary Teacher
- Further Education supply lecturer

## Accrual of capital

- Wider social network
- Expectation
- Greater awareness of opportunity



# The influence of habitus

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## Dispositions

- Work ethic – hard work pays off
- Risk taking – fortune favours the brave
- Seizing opportunity – create your own future
- Gender is not an issue

## Alongside

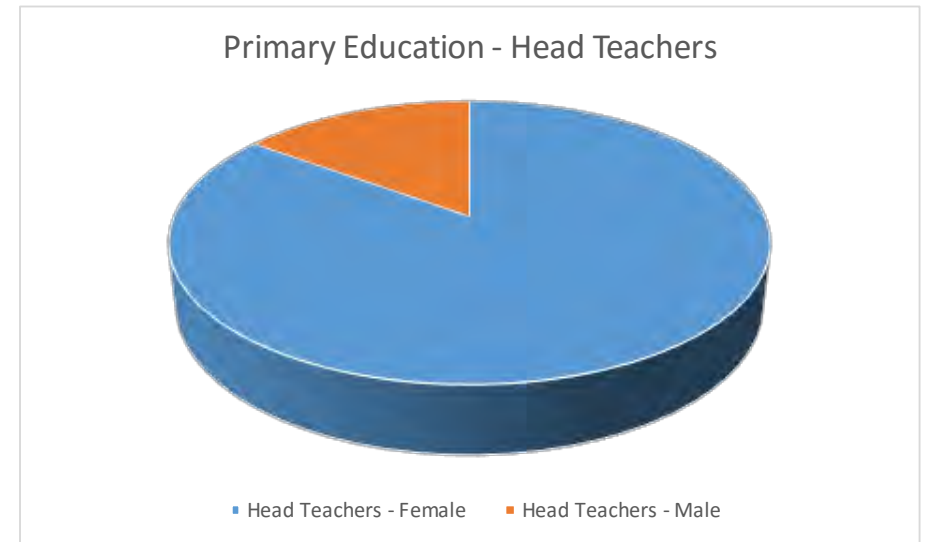
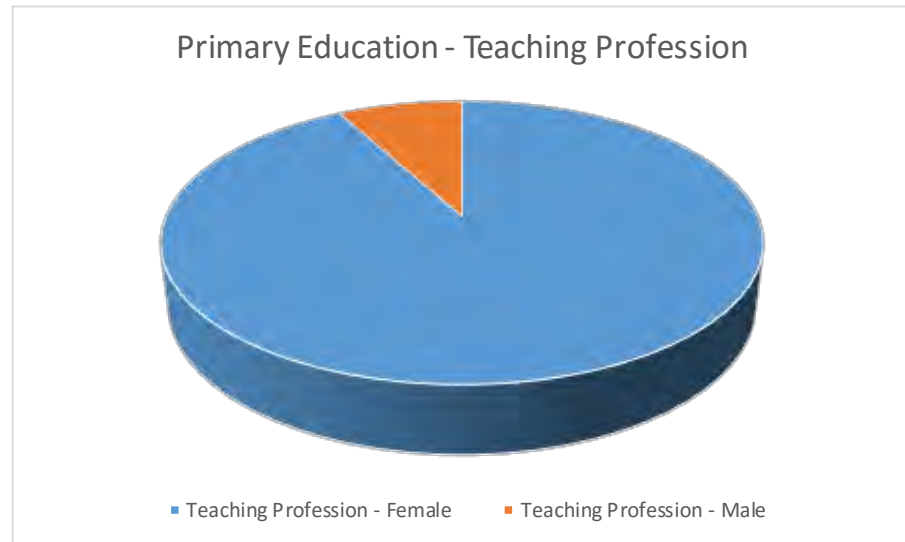
- Need for validation

## Choices

- Lecturer
- Senior Lecturer
- Associate Head of Faculty
- Assistant Principal
- Principal – Ayr college
- Principal Inverness College
- VP FE UHI

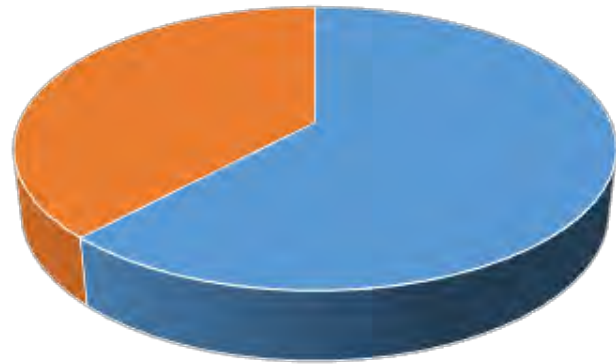


# Scottish Primary Schools 2015/16



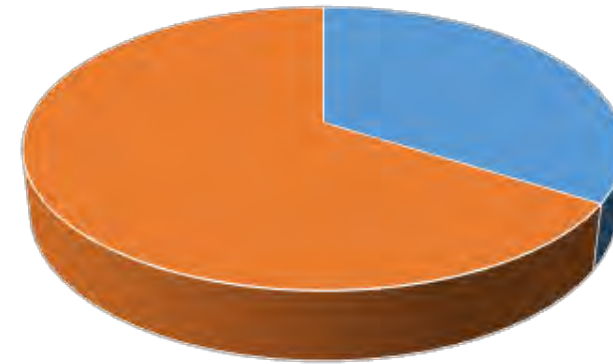
# Scottish Secondary Schools 2015/16

Secondary Education - Teaching Profession



■ Teaching Profession - Female ■ Teaching Profession - Male

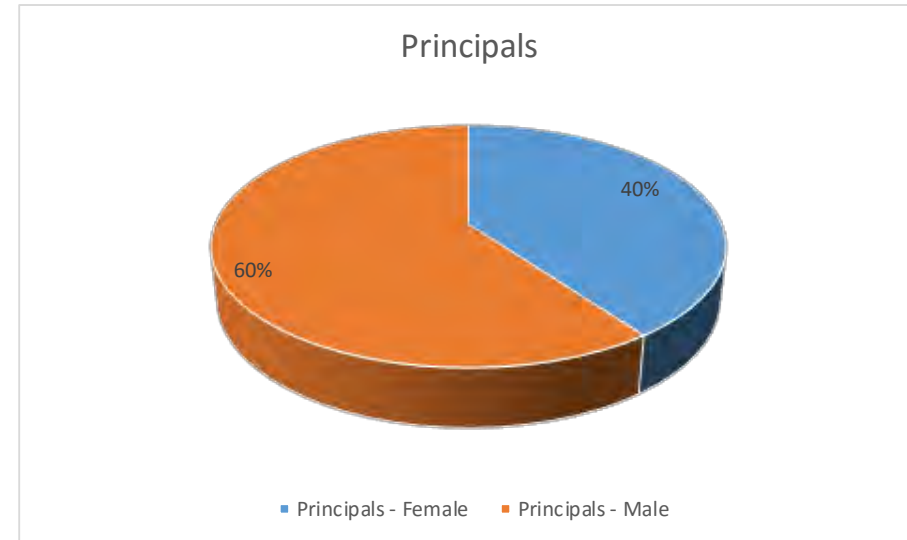
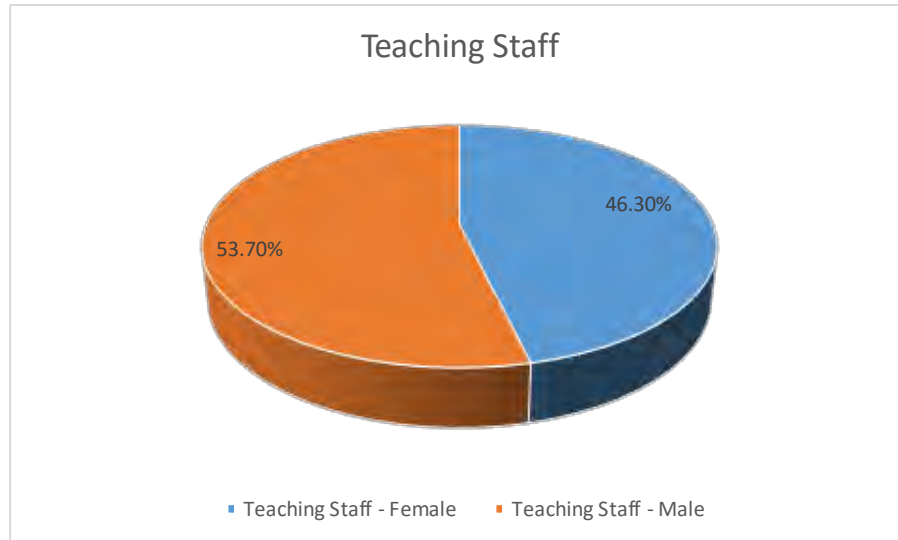
Secondary Education - Head Teachers



■ Head Teachers - Female ■ Head Teachers - Male

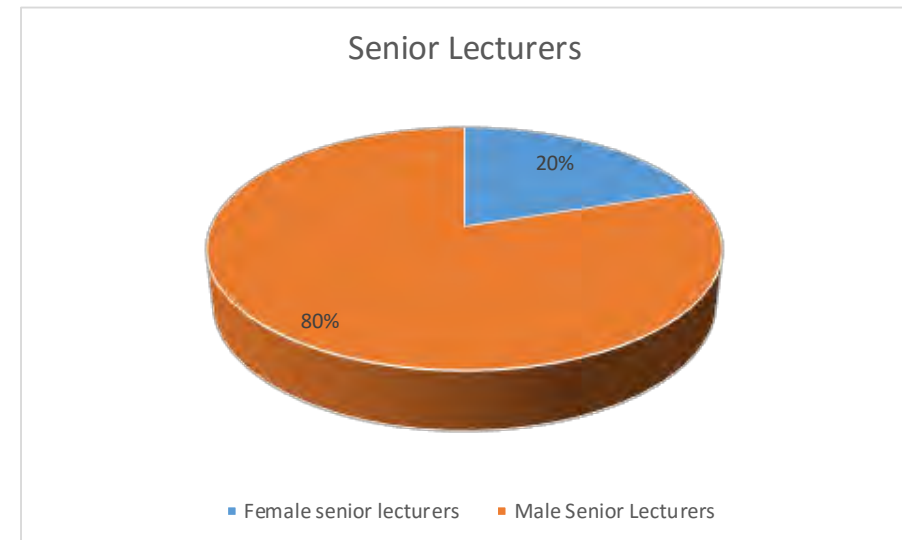
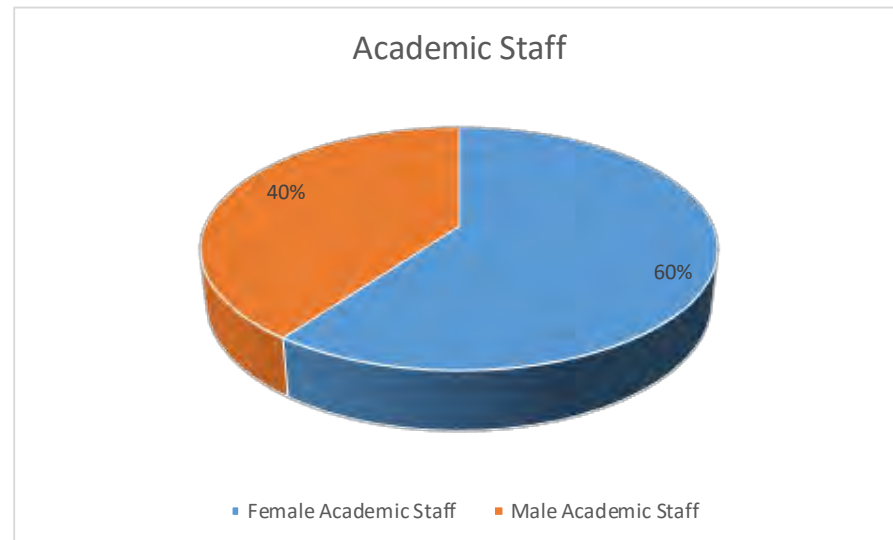


# Scotland's Colleges 2015/16

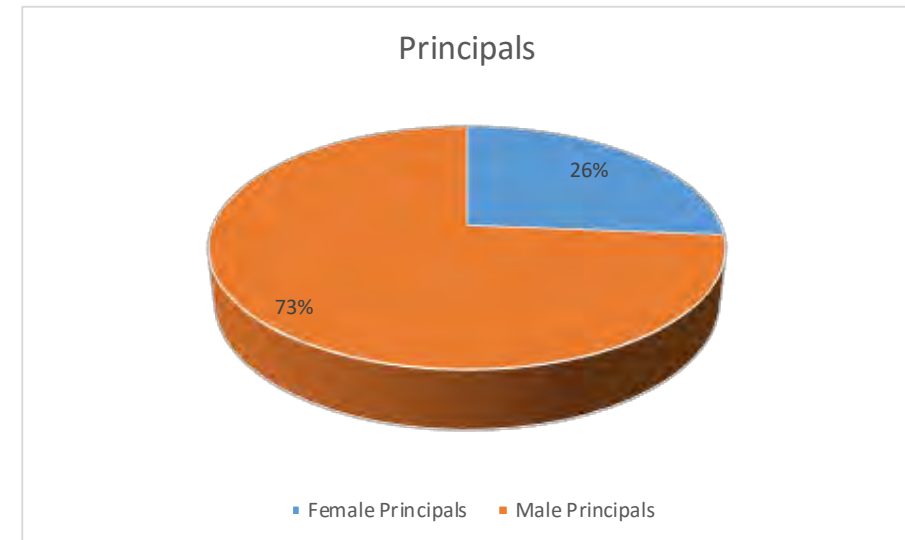
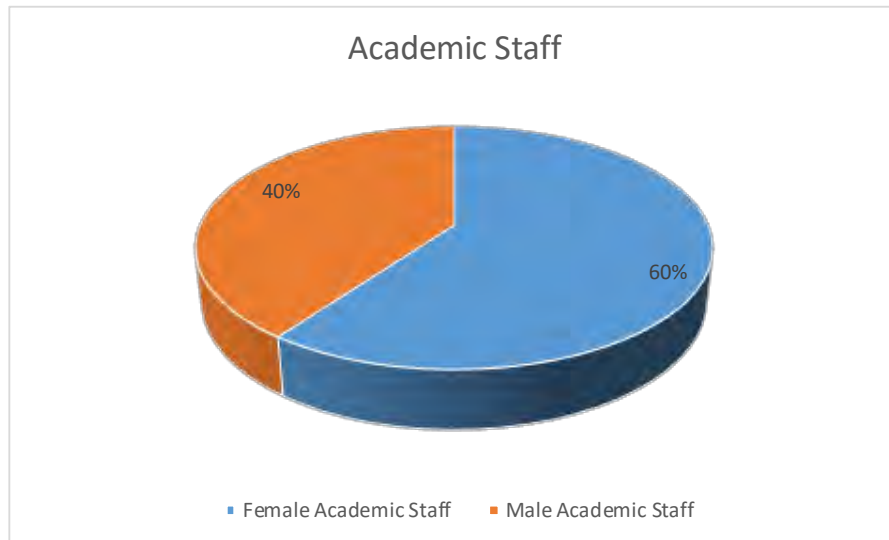




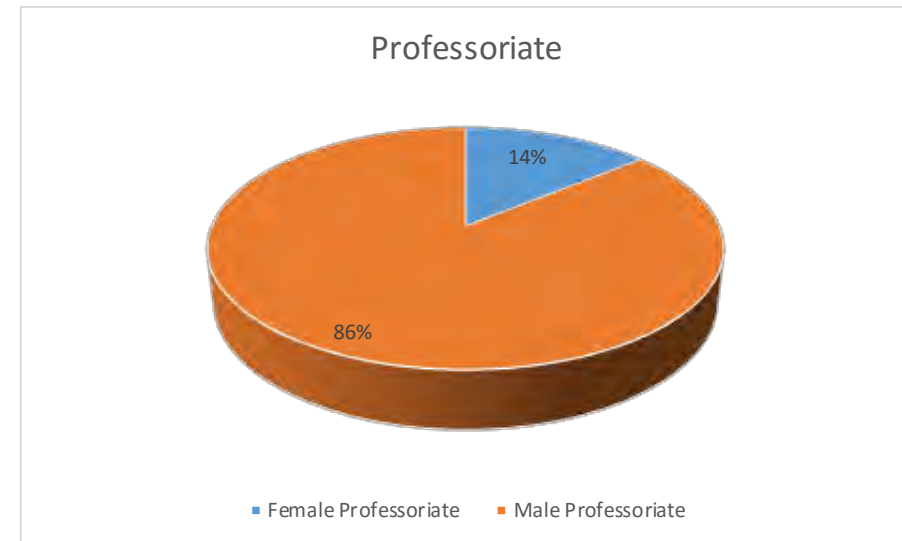
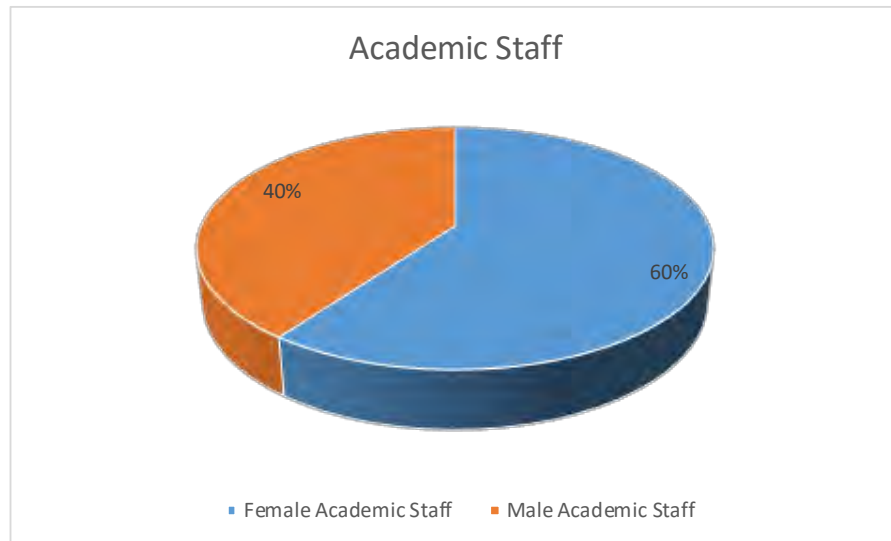
# Scottish Universities and HEIs 2015/16



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# Scottish Universities and HEIs 2015/16



# Ambition

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- Second tier female managers were less likely (57 per cent) than their male counterparts (70 per cent) to show an interest in becoming a principal;
- Women were more likely than men to cite age as a reason for not being interested;
- More men than women had wanted to be a principal from an early age;



# Ambition

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- Women were far more likely to have concerns about not being up to the job than men;
- Second tier female postholders were far more likely to say that they had serious or some gaps in skills match for principalship;
- Men were far more likely to state that they had an excellent skills match and none said they had serious gaps;
- No women said they were an excellent match.

LSIS (2010) The voices of women: leadership and gender in the further education sector, Lancaster University

