



An invitation to join the Women's Leadership Network

Female college principals in England only constitute 36 per cent, while women comprise 64 per cent of the workforce.

In two regions, fewer than 30 per cent of principals are women and in sixth form colleges only 29 per cent of principals are women.

Join the WLN and play an active part in promoting gender equality across the sector. Entirely dependent on member subscriptions, the WLN aims to develop a strong, dynamic and influential network of female leaders, to offer professional support and to promote equality of opportunity throughout the learning and skills sector.

A significant 'glass ceiling' still exists in senior management and governing bodies and women and black and minority ethnic managers continue to be under-represented.

If we are to deal with the current challenges in the sector, we need to use all available talent. The WLN has an important role to play in addressing issues of gender inequality in leadership roles and raising awareness across the sector.

Sally Dicketts, Chair of the WLN



"The Women's Leadership Network has a fundamental role to play in promoting equality of opportunity throughout the FE sector. Membership of the Network not only signals our support for its aims but underlines our commitment to career progression for women managers within our own organisation."

Stephen Willis
Principal of Stafford College

The activities of the Women's Leadership Network

Raising awareness about women's obstacles to career progression

The WLN plays an important role in raising awareness about gender equality and leadership.

We run sessions for governors and principals at LSIS and AoC conferences and ensure that regular articles in the national press and in sector newsletters reflect the issues we address and the work that we do.

Career development mentoring programme for women

Mentoring for career progression is a strong enabler for women. The WLN, working with the Black Leadership Initiative, offers career mentoring for a group of women at member organisations each year. A quote from the 2010 pilot group:

"I have really enjoyed the mentoring sessions which have helped me to define what I want to do with my future"

Regional networks supports women across England

For women who aspire in their careers and are striving to grow and develop as excellent managers and leaders, there is an immense benefit to be gained by networking with experienced and supportive women.

Regional activities include: local mentoring and work-shadowing opportunities, visiting speakers, bespoke leadership training, CV and interview skills development, confidence-building, buddying and many others.



"The WLN has helped to raise aspirations for female staff in the college and to gain an understanding of the opportunities and initiatives available. It has also provided strategies to overcome potential barriers. Stereotypical perceptions of female leaders have been challenged and the support network has provided female staff with opportunities to meet role models to encourage them to develop skills and plan a career path".

Sunaina Mann, Principal of NESCOL



"Membership of the group has enabled women leaders in the College to develop a network of contacts across the region and nationally allowing ideas and expertise to be shared amongst fellow colleagues. Attendance at regional and national meetings has helped to encourage women managers to develop and raise their career aspirations."

Kathryn Podmore
Principal of Birkenhead Sixth Form College



Inspiring annual conference

Our annual diversity conference, run jointly with the NBP and supported by LSIS and Protocol National, inspires women and black professionals to aim high.

In addition to practical workshops, we also raise and debate key issues of diversity and spread good practice.

Enjoy member discounts at the Wednesday 25 May 2011 conference:
Go to www.diversityconference.org.uk

Important research into gender factors and career progression

Since 2006, the WLN has been engaged in research, bidding for funding and working with LSIS and LSN to produce important findings and recommendations to the sector.

Our most recent research investigated the reasons behind the low number of female principals and what measures can be taken. These findings inform all our current and planned activities. See website for research papers www.wlnfe.org.uk

National Steering Group

The WLN steering group sets and monitors the strategic direction of the organisation and plans activities to support women in the sector.

The group is composed of principals of general further education and sixth form colleges and women from higher education, as well as organisations such as the NBP, LLUK, AMiE and LSN.

Advertising senior posts – free service

One of the benefits of joining the WLN is that your organisation will be able to advertise senior posts through the extensive WLN mailbase of over 400 keen and ambitious women.

This new service has been much appreciated by both recipients and advertising organisations.

"As a woman who's benefited from generous mentors, it seems to me that if that's all the WLN provided it would justify its existence. But it's clear from the statistics that there is something behind them to be explored and addressed. The WLN's research can shine a light on issues, and more importantly, if those of us currently working in the sector get behind the Network, we can actually make changes where necessary."

Sue Daley, Principal of Boston College



Join now and help promote gender equality

WLN members:

Abingdon & Witney College

ACER

ACM/AMiE

AoC

AOSEC

Ashton Sixth Form College

Aylesbury College

Barking College

Barnsley College

Basingstoke College of Technology

BCA

BECTA

Birkenhead 6th Form College

Bishop Auckland College

Blackburn College

Blackpool Sixth Form College

Bolton College

Boston College Seevic College

Burton College

City and Islington College

City College Norwich

City Literary Institute

Click Management Solutions

College of North West London

Ealing, Hammersmith & West London College

East Berkshire College

East Surrey College

Gloucestershire College

Grantham College

Hackney Community College

Havant College

Highbury College, Portsmouth

Hopwood Hall College

Institute for Learning

Kingston College

Leeds City College

Lewisham College

Lifelong Learning UK

Liverpool Community College

LSIS

Mary Ward Centre

Merton Adult Education

MidKent College

Nelson & Colne College

Newham College of Further Education

NESCOT

Network for Black Professionals

Oaklands College

Oldham College

Oxford & Cherwell Valley College

Rapporta Limited

Royal London Society for the Blind

South Leicestershire College

South Thames College

SEEVIC College

Stafford College

Stanmore College

Stockport College

Strode's College

Suffolk New College

Sussex Downs College

Telford College of Arts & Technology

The College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London

The College of West Anglia

Uxbridge College

Warrington Collegiate

West Suffolk College

West Thames College

Worcester College of Technology

Nine good reasons for joining today

Your contribution will enable the WLN to represent and promote the interests of women in FE and to encourage aspiring senior managers and principals.

By joining the WLN, you and your organisation will help to achieve diversity in the sector by:

- committing to the promotion of equality in the sector
- showing your solidarity with our aims and supporting our campaign
- assisting us to bid for funds to continue our research
- helping us to provide support for women and aspiring leaders.

Benefits

And you, your colleagues and your organisation can:

- participate in regional networks supported through the WLN
- access mentoring and have the opportunity to become a mentor or mentee
- attend/send participants to the annual conference at a substantial discount
- help steer the WLN activities throughout the year
- receive our newsletter and advertise your posts through our mailbase.

Who's who at the WLN

| Role | Name | Email | Telephone |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Chair | Sally Dicketts | SDicketts@ocvc.ac.uk | 01865 551001 |
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Vicki Fagg recommends WLN membership

As a college with a strong reputation in the traditionally white male dominated construction and engineering industries, CNWL considers it is extra important that our commitment to equal opportunities is highlighted and celebrated for the benefit of all those whose lives we touch. Membership of the WLN is one key and visible way that we can do this and offer affordable access to good quality mentoring and conferences which might otherwise be beyond our reach in these times of financial constraint.

Whilst the position of women in senior positions in London is better than some parts of the country, I think the changing face of the sector - especially the emerging business emphasis for services for 19+ learners - means that we should guard against complacency about equality issues in the period ahead.

With some fellow London principals and others, I'm also strongly committed to helping drive forward WLN's regional networking activities. These offer an exceptionally good value way of helping aspiring and indeed successful female managers to expand their horizons and opportunities.

Often CNWL staff consider this is the single most valuable benefit of WLN and I know that staff at this College are themselves encouraged by my personal involvement in WLN regional initiatives.

It would be great to see all London colleges in the Network and we will continue to target 100 per cent active college membership.

Vicki Fagg is principal of the College of North West London.

To join visit www.wlnfe.org.uk/membership.php or complete the enclosed form.

WLN Fees:

Corporate membership A: £450 for colleges, universities, learning and skills sector organisations.

Corporate membership B: £250 for ACL institutions and small training providers.

Individual membership: £45 (available to individuals not employed by an organisation).

Aware of the need for financial belt-tightening, the WLN is offering 10 per cent off for any organisation that meets at least one of the following conditions, and a further discount if two are met:

- Membership of the Network for Black Professionals
- Fees paid by standing order
- Sign up for membership at the WLN conference stand

Once your organisation has joined, if you sign up two new colleges as members of the WLN, you go to the annual conference for free!



Vicki Fagg

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