Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties Annual Progress Report 2015-16

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Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:

http://www.nrc.ac.uk/nrc/equality/

Signature:

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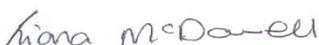
This report has been prepared using a template circulated by the Equality Commission.

It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and good relations duties, and implementing Equality Scheme commitments and Disability Action Plans.

This report reflects progress made between April 2015 and March 2016

PART A – Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Scheme

Section 1: Equality and good relations outcomes, impacts and good practice

1. **In 2015-16, please provide examples of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved.**

i. Launch of Good Relations and Cultural Diversity Policy

A new Good Relations and Cultural Diversity policy was launched in May 2015 on World Day for Cultural Diversity. The overall aim of the policy is to create a positive, inclusive ethos where issues of good relations, stereotyping and discrimination can be discussed openly. At the time of the launch we also ran Cultural Awareness Training for staff delivered by Eileen Chan-Hu and Maciek Bator from CRAIC NI (Cultivate Respect, Appreciate Inclusion in Communities, Northern Ireland). The interactive training helped participants develop an understanding of cultural differences, explored aspects of cultural diversity and culture shock, and considered myths and stereotypes.

ii. New online training for staff

In December 2015 the College purchased new online training modules on 'Equality and Diversity' and 'Safeguarding and SENDO' from Legal-Island. These will be rolled out to staff during 2016-17 as part of a mandatory training programme.

iii. Mindset training

During 2015-16, 12 sessions of Mindset training were delivered to 195 students. This training, which is funded by PHA and delivered by Action Mental Health, is a Mental & Emotional Health & Wellbeing Awareness programme For Young People aged 14 - 17 years. The programme aims to:

- raise awareness and increase knowledge and understanding of mental and emotional health and wellbeing;
- raise awareness of signs and symptoms of mental ill health;
- promote self-help/resilience techniques and how to maintain a safe level of positive
- mental and emotional health and wellbeing;
- promote self-care; and
- provide information and/or resources on mental health support organisations available (locally and regionally).

iv. Do you mean me?

The Equality Commission for NI delivered their "Do you mean me?" talk to 22 class groups across the College which involved approximately 288 students. During these sessions students had the opportunity to discuss their and others attitudes and experiences of discrimination in Northern Ireland.

v. Northern Adult Autism Service

The College has become a partner/provider of this service which is being provided for adults with autism to provide advice and support on key aspects of their daily lives including health, education, social security benefits, training and employment. The new service which is being piloted in the Ballymena area commenced in January 2014 and aims to:

- facilitate self-help and early intervention by promoting effective access to support services; and

- operate as an umbrella service to provide the widest reach, promote social inclusion, equity and high quality services across all communities.

In March 2016 two NRC students and the Education Support Co-Ordinator attended an ASD Awareness Session held at the Braid Theatre, Ballymena where they presented to potential students of the College, and their parents/carers. The Education Support Co-ordinator's presentation focused on meeting students with ASD in the college, assessing their individual needs, and putting in place appropriate support and the students then presented on having ASD in college and the impact of having support.

vi. Empower Project – Supporting individuals with Autism, Dyslexia or Dsypraxia (ADD)

In September 2015 the Northern Regional College commenced a five year lottery funded project with a range of community partners specifically focused on assisting those with Dyslexia, Dyspraxia or Autism. The project covers two council areas: Antrim & Newtownabbey and Mid Ulster. To date the project has engaged with 354 participants with a total of 49 courses having taken place. The provision on offer supports four main client groups:

- parents;
- wider family circle;
- children and young people; and
- wider stakeholders, including health & education professionals.

Examples of the types of provision that have occurred to date are:

- training sessions for parents on:
  - introduction to ADD;
  - social skills training;
  - sensory skills training; and
  - behavioural management training.
- animation workshops for young people with ADD;
- film making workshops;

- balanceability – cycling workshop for young people with ADD; and
- sessions for siblings of those with ADD.

The project is supporting a range of forums in order to identify needs of the client group and is working closely with schools, special educational needs coordinators, support groups and parents forums. This programme fits within the College's community strategy by continuing to build and maintain partnerships which enhance the ability of NRC to deliver community education activities that will have a positive impact on the communities we serve in terms of skills development and progression to further education training or employment.

vii. Student Council

The Student Council has made significant progress during 2015-16 with additional officers and further training taking place. For the first time a Deputy President from a Work Ready class was elected this year. This demonstrates that inclusion and equality of opportunity is an integral part of the Northern Regional College Student Council. The Student Council is consulted on a regular basis. During 2015-16 its input has been sought on various issues including estates and communications. The Equality Officer met with the Student Council in January 2016 to encourage it to run events from the Equality and Diversity calendar and also emphasized the importance of ensuring anything it arranges is accessible and inclusive to all students. A Student Enrichment Officer was recruited in 2014 and with the support of the Student Council she has arranged various activities which help to promote equality and diversity, including re-establishing the Christian Unions, various student focus groups and surveys, drugs and alcohol programmes, anti-bullying week talks, mental health talks, sexual health awareness, smoking cessation and student attendance at NUS-USI conferences.

viii. Anti-Bullying Week

The College participated in Anti-Bullying week which was held in November 2015. Sessions for students took place on each campus during the week. These sessions were delivered by the Nexus Institute and mainly focused on cyberbullying. Students also had the opportunity to meet the Equality Officer, Student Enrichment Officer and the Head of Student Services. The sessions were attended by approximately 520 students.

ix. Wear it Pink Day

Once again this year the College participated in the 'Wear it Pink Day' event in support of the promotion to raise awareness and fundraise for Cancer Focus NI. We recognised that many of our staff and students have either a direct or indirect knowledge of someone who has been affected by breast cancer and we wanted to play our part in being part of the cure. This event provided us with the opportunity to do this by fundraising, but to do so in a fun and engaging way which would help educate our workforce and our students at the same time. This event raised £1225 for Cancer Focus NI.

x. Domestic Violence Workplace Charter

As reported previously in December 2011 the College launched its Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy and was awarded the Gold Workplace Charter on

Domestic Violence by Onus NI Ltd. In 2015-16 we have continued to display awareness raising posters, safe place contact cards and trained trusted colleagues have been available to speak with concerned staff.

xi. Employers for Childcare Family Friendly Awards

At the 2015 Employers for Childcare Family Friendly Awards, NRC was awarded Highly Commended Education Sector Organisation of the Year. This award is in recognition of the excellent family-friendly initiatives available at NRC. These initiatives include:

- work life balance policies and practices;
- promotion of salary sacrifice schemes like childcare vouchers;
- a health and wellbeing programme; and
- money saving staff discount initiatives.

Through these initiatives our aim is to not only motivate staff and help with retention but allow many parents to remain in employment after having children. We will continue to build upon our family-friendly initiatives to ensure that we retain our talented staff and are an employer of choice.

xii. STEM Charter

In June 2014, NRC was the first FE college to sign the STEM Charter for Business in Northern Ireland. We are committed to ensuring that men and women have equality of opportunity in terms of accessing our jobs in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. In particular we recognise the particular need to address the current under-representation of women in STEM jobs. We are committed to ensuring that we provide equality of opportunity in relation to recruitment, training, development, promotion, and appraisal and with regard to all of our employment policies.

xiii. Community Access to Lifelong Learning (CALL)

DSD funding was extended for CALL, a project to provide accredited and non-accredited learning opportunities free at the point of delivery in the neighbourhood renewal areas of Grange (Ballyclare), Ballee, Harryville and Ballykeel (all Ballymena). This project is aimed at youth as well as the wider community. The Youth are engaged by NEELB Youth Service, with NRC providing the learning activities with a value of £98k. The project is also run in partnership with Newtownabbey Borough Council and Ballymena Borough Council.

xiv. Entitlement Framework

The College has established excellent working relationships with 52 post-primary schools across ten area Learning Communities. The provision in the College is comprehensive and includes a good range of academic, applied and practical courses. Much progress has been made by the College in making an important contribution to social cohesion in the community, through the integrated approach taken to the delivery of the Entitlement Framework provision. Most Entitlement Framework classes are truly integrated. Some classes have students from up to 11 different schools forming one class. The students normally work in these groups for two years with a possible progression to post-16 encompassing a further two years. Many of the post 16 classes are made up from students who

attend grammar schools, high schools and all ability schools.

xv. Sector Committees

The College is a member of the FE Equality Co-Coordinators Forum which consists of Belfast Metropolitan College, South Eastern Regional College, Southern Regional College, South West College and North West Regional College. This best practice forum meets four times per year and helps promote a consistent approach to the implementation of Section 75 within FE in Northern Ireland. During 2015-16 the forum considered online training, FEMR, review of equality schemes, transgender equality statement, disability statement, ECNI consultations and DisabledGo. In addition the Head of Student Services is a member of the FE six College SLDD (Students with a Learning Difficulty or Disability) Committee. This Committee has been set up to share best practice between Learning Support and Discrete provision for those students with learning difficulties and disabilities.

xvi. Other promotion and awareness raising

The College continued to raise awareness of equality through freshers week, staff training, class talks and cascading information via email and intranets. Several equality themed events took place over the reporting period to promote equality of opportunity and good relations which included Breast Cancer Awareness Day, National Stress Day, Anti-Bullying Week, Good Relations and Cultural Diversity Week, International Women's Day and Mental Health Awareness Week.

xvii. Embedding equality and diversity into the curriculum

In previous years all academic staff have been sent a document containing top tips on how to embed Equality into their daily lessons such as; diverse imagery, use of case studies, mixing learners, using the diversity calendar of dates etc. During 2015/16 various curriculum initiatives have taken place which help to increase student's awareness and promote equality of opportunity:

- female Students from a Travel & Tourism class attended a Women in Business event organised by Bank of Ireland during Global entrepreneurship week;
- the Aspire2work class visited the Braid Arts museum where they researched cultural identity in Northern Ireland through the years and the different traditions we have;
- special needs students have completed a Level 1 Award in Diversity and good relations. They have covered topics such as prejudice and discrimination, cultural identity and the advantages this can bring such as food and drink, literature and language. They have also learnt about stereotyping. This has helped the groups become more aware of diverse groups and the importance of respect within them;
- a child care lecturer organised two cultural events for the level 2 and level 3 classes in Newtownabbey. They had a visit from a Japanese academic who told them about her culture and brought them sushi to try and an academic from Costa Rica who did the same. The child care lecturer also talked to them about her culture in Zambia, about child care practices and brought traditional food;

- HND Health & Social Care first year students attended a Service User day at NRC Newtownabbey campus where several different service users with disabilities raised awareness of the needs and services used through several workshop sessions;

- the Lighthouse delivered a workshop on mental health awareness to first year Health & Social Care HND students;

- as part of their course, media students are required to research topics and produce a documentary. This year students researched areas including politics, sexual orientation, Alzheimer's, Latvian folk music and domestic violence;

- childcare and early years students visited the Indian Community Centre in Belfast;

- early year students have completed The Media Initiative for Children 'Respecting Difference Programme' training developed by Early Years and the Peace Initiatives Institute (USA). The Respecting Difference training aims to increase understanding of difference by combining a series of cartoon messages with a curriculum. It includes awareness of diversity, including cultural, ethnicity and sectarian difference issues, and encourages young children to respect others who are different;

- the College's Sports Department have been working on a variety of initiatives this year to promote Good Relations. Last year they introduced playing a game of '3 Halves'. This involves integrating GAA, rugby and soccer. The project has been introduced with local schools also. They have also introduced a number of traditional games into the curriculum from both sectors of the community;

- during 2015-16 various external speakers were used in classrooms including Rainbow Project, Disability Action and ACET;

- throughout the year class groups have been involved in fundraising for various charities including NI Children's Hospice, Addiction NI and Sport Relief;

- various international exchanges have taken place involving both staff and students.

2. **Please provide examples of outcomes and/or the impact of equality action plans/measures in 2015-16 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).**

Action	Timescale	Responsible person(s)	Outcome/ Measure	Progress on Outcomes/ Impacts (5yrs)	15/16 progress
More effective use of monitoring data for planning, meeting needs, policy development, market intelligence etc.	Review annually in Feb	Equality Working Group	Trends in data. Action Plan	Meetings held with Curriculum Management Team, lead campus managers and Management Information Systems regarding increased use of student equality data. A question on student retention, achievement and success by equality category was added to Departmental Self Evaluation Reviews (SERs) in October 2013. Student Monitoring Data by campus for 12/13, 13/14 and 14/15 was discussed at Equality Working Group and Campus Management Teams.	In Oct 2015 Departmental Self Evaluation Reviews (SERs) included analysis of retention, achievement and success data by equality category.

Action	Timescale	Responsible person(s)	Outcome/ Measure	Progress on Outcomes/ Impacts (5yrs)	15/16 progress
Embedding of equality into the curriculum	Annually	Teaching & Learning/Equality	Equality section completed in SERs	Question added to Curriculum and Support SERs to ascertain how teams have promoted equality of opportunity, these were then analysed and examples included in Annual Progress Report. Curriculum projects which promote Equality of Opportunity are highlighted in the Equality Newsletter annually to encourage other staff to take forward similar initiatives.	Good examples of embedding equality given in annual SERs. Curriculum examples highlighted in Equality Newsletter – Nov 15.
Carry out disability access audits on all campuses	June 2012	Equality/ Student Support / Estates	Completed audits and action plans	Internal and Disabledgo audits completed on every campus in 2012. Disability works plan developed and being progressed by the Estates department. Minor works carried out in 13/14, 14/15 and 15/16.	Audits completed. Works plan reviewed and works progressed in 15/16 including upgrading of lifts, upgrading of accessible toilets and repair of loop systems.

Action	Timescale	Responsible person(s)	Outcome/ Measure	Progress on Outcomes/ Impacts (5yrs)	15/16 progress
Increased promotion, education and awareness raising i.e. Fresher's, Student talks, Guest speakers, Awareness events	Ongoing	Equality Working Group	Increased awareness. Reduction in issues/ complaints	On an annual basis • The Equality Officer is present at all Fresher's Fairs – Equality leaflet and 'Hands Off My Friend' wristband given out. • The Equality Officer delivers various class talks throughout the year. • The Equality Commission deliver various class talks. • Anti-Bullying week sessions carried out on each campus every November. • Awareness raising days from Equality Calendar highlighted. • Various relevant staff development is delivered	Ongoing
Engagement with socially excluded groups through Living and Learning Big Lottery project	Ongoing	Teaching & Learning	Increased contact with marginalised groups	Increased contact with marginalised groups throughout the Magherafelt and Antrim areas.	Ongoing

Action	Timescale	Responsible person(s)	Outcome/ Measure	Progress on Outcomes/ Impacts (5yrs)	15/16 progress
Staff Equality Survey	2012	Equality	Baseline Survey results to feed into action plans for teams	Staff Equality Survey carried out in October 2012. Action plan developed and progressed in 13/14 including awareness raising of harassment, grievance and equal opportunities policy, further implementation of Equality Online Training, promotion of role of Dignity at Work Advisers and Directorate action plans regarding respect and communication issues. Survey results presented to SMT and Lead campus managers.	Completed Ensure equality input into future whole college staff surveys.
Inclusion of positive publicity images in College documentation	Annually	Marketing/ Equality	Evidence of positive publicity images	Two meetings held with College's Marketing Team and external design company. Increased diversity in images used. Equality Officer regularly checks new publications.	Completed. Ongoing checks.

Action	Timescale	Responsible person(s)	Outcome/ Measure	Progress on Outcomes/ Impacts (5yrs)	15/16 progress
Student Equality Survey	2013	Equality/HR	Baseline Survey results to feed into action plans for teams	Student Equality Survey was carried out in May 13. Action plans developed and progressed in 13/14 including safety in car parks, mandatory staff ID, increased use of Equality and Diversity tutorial session, awareness raising of NRCs Equality Statement, Awareness raising of Equality Officer and staff development on dealing with bullying in the classroom.	Completed

Ensure equality input into future college student surveys. |
| Build on existing links with community through Community Education Dept, Sexual Health Clinic, Inter Agency Groups etc | Dec 2012 | Equality Working Group | Better identification of needs of local community | List of all NRC representation on external committees compiled and again reviewed in March 2013. Various new links have been made particularly in relation to local Councils, Neighbourhood renewal partnerships, AEL and NHSCT Autism Forum. | Completed and Ongoing |

Action	Timescale	Responsible person(s)	Outcome/ Measure	Progress on Outcomes/ Impacts (5yrs)	15/16 progress
Continue Equality Awareness Training for staff	Ongoing	Equality	No. of staff trained and evaluations	Equality online training rolled out in November 2012 –866 staff have completed the training	101 staff completed online equality training during 15/16. New starts received face to face Equality training during induction.
Further embedding of student tutorial programme (including equality session)	Oct 2012	Curriculum	Increased no. of students receiving tutorial programme	Further awareness raising of tutorial programme to tutors during Anti-Bullying Week each November. In 13/14 Student Services developed a suite of talks to enhance the tutorial programme including a range of talks on Health and Well Being and Be Safe, Be Happy.	Completed Equality and Diversity online tutorial module developed and launch in Nov 15.
Signposting and providing financial benefit to potential students	Sept 2012	Student Services/ Curriculum	Increased knowledge of financial support for students	Increased knowledge of financial support for students. Appointment of Learning Mentors to assist students from Neighbourhood Renewal Areas.	Completed

Action	Timescale	Responsible person(s)	Outcome/ Measure	Progress on Outcomes/ Impacts (5yrs)	15/16 progress
Representative Officers on student council with clear roles and responsibilities e.g. disability, ethnic minority, LGBT and equality	Jan 2012	Student Services	Established officers in SC. Supportive student environment	Established officers in Student Council including Disability and Equality officers. Supportive student environment demonstrated in student surveys. Equality Officer meets with Student Council annually. In 14/15 NRCs Deputy President was elected as LGBT officer on the regional executive of NUS-USI. Student Enhancement Officer post created in 2014 to support the Student Council	Completed and Ongoing
Ensure Equality and Diversity features in College Development Plan and Operational Plans	Annually	EMT	Embedding Equality and Diversity into the ethos of the organisations	Each year a section on equality is included in the College Development Plan. Equality questions are now embedded in the SER process. The NRC Equality statement is included in various college publications.	Completed

Action	Timescale	Responsible person(s)	Outcome/ Measure	Progress on Outcomes/ Impacts (5yrs)	15/16 progress
Provide awareness event to highlight Hate Crime, Discrimination and Harassment to students	Nov 2012	Equality Student Services Marketing	Increased understanding and awareness of students. Greater respect of others.	After the successful Anti-Bullying week sessions in 12/13 the same approach was taken in 13/14 and 14/15, with talks on every campus during the week. These have been found to increase students understanding, awareness and respect. During Community Relations week in May 2013 Beyond Skin carried out a 'Music from around the world' workshop with performing arts students. Various relevant staff development opportunities.	Completed and ongoing. Nexus institute delivered a range of anti-bullying talks on all campuses in 15/16.
Monitor, Evaluate and Review Equality Improvement Plan	Annually in June	Equality Working Group	Delivery of Plan	The Equality Working Group meet 3 times per academic year to review the delivery of the Equality Improvement Plan.	Due to College Strategic Improvement Plan work streams the EWG did not meet during 15/16.

Action	Timescale	Responsible person(s)	Outcome/ Measure	Progress on Outcomes/ Impacts (5yrs)	15/16 progress
Pilot the multi-faith chaplaincy (provision of quiet rooms with local clergy available)	June 2012	Student Services	Spiritual support available to students	In association with local churches, a Christian Union was set up in the Ballymena campus. Students meet once a week to share insights on faith, to pray and provide practical support in the community. In Ballymoney, students set up their own Christian Union with the support of a member of staff. This group also meets once a week. Both groups are supported by students from all the major Christian communities. Following on from this initiative it has been decided to pilot a Chaplaincy in the Ballymena area with clergy from the four main churches. If this is successful, the Chaplaincy initiative will be extended across the NRC.	Completed

Section 2: Progress on Equality Scheme commitments <u>and</u> action plans/measures

3. Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2015-16 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes ☒ No (go to Q.4) ☐ Not applicable (go to Q.4)

Please provide any details and examples:

Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)

4. Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2015-16 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes, organisation wide

☐ Yes, some departments/jobs

☐ No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment

☒ No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done

☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

This requirement was fulfilled in year 1 of the Equality Scheme.

5. Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2015-16 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes, organisation wide

☐ Yes, some departments/jobs

☐ No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment

☒ No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done

☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Duties were integrated in Self Evaluation Reviews during year 1 of the Equality Scheme.

6. In the 2015-16 reporting period were **objectives/ targets/ performance measures** relating to the Section 75 statutory duties **integrated** into corporate plans, strategic planning and/or operational business plans? *(tick all that apply)*

☐ Yes, through the work to prepare or develop the new corporate plan

☐ Yes, through organisation wide annual business planning

☐ Yes, in some departments/jobs

☒ No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisation's ongoing corporate plan

☐ No, the organisation's planning cycle does not coincide with this 2015-16 report

☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Equality is referenced in the College Development Plan and is embedded throughout the College's strategic aims, vision and values. Specific targets in relation to Section 75 are integrated into the annual HR & Equality operational plan.

Equality action plans/measures

7. Within the 2015-16 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed:		Actions ongoing:	13	Actions to commence:	

Please provide any details and examples (*in addition to question 2*):

Please see Equality Improvement Plan at question 2.

8. Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2015-16 reporting period *(points not identified in an appended plan)*:

None

9. In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2015-16 reporting period, the following have been identified: *(tick all that apply)*

☒ Continuing action(s), to progress the next stage addressing the known inequality

☐ Action(s) to address the known inequality in a different way

☐ Action(s) to address newly identified inequalities/recently prioritised inequalities

☐ Measures to address a prioritised inequality have been completed

Arrangements for consulting (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 3)

10. Following the initial notification of consultations, a targeted approach was taken – and consultation with those for whom the issue was of particular relevance: *(tick one box only)*

☒ All the time   ☐ Sometimes   ☐ Never

11. **Please provide any details and examples of good practice in consultation during the 2015-16 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:**

- During 2015/2016 some curriculum areas developed and progressed a model of Staff/ Student Consultative meetings. These meetings offer a platform fo the student voice and promote an ethos of mutual respect.
- Much of the consultation which took place during 2015/16 was on policy development/review and was internal with staff and trade unions.
- The College's Strategic Improvement Plan was consulted upon with various staff meetings held.
- The College maintains an up-to-date and relevant database of consultees to ensure appropriate consultation and engagement.
- A consultation guidance document is available to all managers, it aims to provide clear assistance to those who are consulting about new policies, strategies, plans or codes of practice.
- The College continues to ensure that all policies which may have an impact on equality of opportunity are subject to relevant consultation and that consultations are timely, open, inclusive and meaningful.
- Various surveys have taken place with students and staff as detailed in Q23 of this report.
- The College has a Lecturing Consultative Forum and a Support Staff Consultative Forum. These groups are made up of Union and Management representatives and as and when required.
- Previously the FE sector commissioned a review of Industrial Relations in the sector and received and accepted Si Robert Salisbury's report. The report has seventeen recommendations for Industrial Relations which are being explored by a task force comprising college management, recognised trade unions and a representative from DEL.
- The College's Student Council continues to develop and is consulted upon on a regular basis.

- Over the past few years the number of external committees that the College is represented on has increased. The College has good engagement with a variety of statutory, private, community and voluntary groups. The College updated its list of representation on external committees in 14/15. This showed in total College staff are members of 116 external groups. Examples of groups that the College engage with are DEL, ECNI, local schools, other schools, local councils, businesses/employers, neighbourhood renewal partnerships, community organisations, NHSCT, PSNI, Age Concern and Autism NI.

- The College's Equality Officer continues to be a member of the following groups – FE Sector Equality Forum, Ballymena Inter Agency Ethnic Support Group, Ballymoney Community Resource Centre and Hands off my friend steering group. The Equality Unit has also developed strong links with the local councils and health trust.

- The College's Business Development team continues to be a member of various external committees including local council, economic development and funding groups, local business education partnerships, Health Trust groups, workforce development forum and various other business and community networks and forums.

12. In the 2015-16 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently <u>used</u> by consultees**: *(tick all that apply)*

    ☒ Face to face meetings

    ☒ Focus groups

    ☒ Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing

    ☒ Questionnaires

    ☒ Information/notification by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation

    ☐ Internet discussions

    ☐ Telephone consultations

    ☐ Other *(please specify)*:

Please provide any details or examples of the uptake of these methods of consultation in relation to the consultees' membership of particular Section 75 categories:

13. Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the

commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2015-16 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes   ☒ No   ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

14. Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2015-16 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☒ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Not applicable – no commitment to review

Arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

http://www.nrc.ac.uk/nrc/equality/

15. Please provide the **number** of policies screened during the year (*as recorded in screening reports*):

11

16. Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2015-16:

0	Policy consultations conducted with **screening** assessment presented.
0	Policy consultations conducted **with an equality impact assessment** (EQIA) presented.
0	Consultations for an **EQIA** alone.

17. Please provide details of the **main consultations** conducted on an assessment (as described above) or other matters relevant to the Section 75 duties:

All policies screened during 2015/16 were screened out and listed on our website quarterly.

18. Were any screening decisions (or equivalent initial assessments of relevance) reviewed following concerns raised by consultees? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes ☐ No concerns were raised ☒ No ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

NA

Arrangements for publishing the results of assessments (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

19. Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published during the 2015-16 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Arrangements for monitoring and publishing the results of monitoring (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

20. From the Equality Scheme monitoring arrangements, was there an audit of existing information systems during the 2015-16 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes ☒ No, already taken place

☐ No, scheduled to take place at a later date ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details:

An audit of information systems was carried out in year 1 of the Equality Scheme however the 6 NI Colleges along with DEL and an ECNI representative carried out a further mapping exercise in 2014/15 which resulted in a guidance circular on Data Collection. College monitoring forms and recording systems were updated to reflect the guidance.

21. In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

22. Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2015-16 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts

previously assessed:

NA

23. **Please provide any details or examples of monitoring that has contributed to the availability of equality and good relations information/data for service delivery planning or policy development:**

The use of the student data and market intelligence to inform policy development and planning, and to determine the needs of the students has been identified as an action in the Equality Improvement Plan.

The College integrates the use and reporting of Student Equality Data into the Self Evaluation Review (SER) process, an integral element of the College planning process. To progress further use of student monitoring data for planning purposes various meetings have been held with the College's Management Information System department, Curriculum Management Team and Campus Management Teams.

The promotion of equality is monitored through the College's Self-Evaluation Review (SER) process. Curriculum teams are asked to report on how well the course team promote equality, diversity and good relations with their learners. Support teams are also required to explain and evaluate how well they promoted equality, diversity and good relationships with each other, with other staff, with learners and with external stakeholders. These responses are monitored by the Equality Officer on an annual basis.

The College again undertook a staff satisfaction survey in March 2016 to gain both qualitative and quantitative feedback on employees' attitudes to the College. Overall there has been a good response to this survey. Respondents' answers will provide information to help NRC develop and improve.

As a result of monitoring sickness absence statistics and carrying out staff surveys the College has Health and Well Being targets to raise awareness of stress, anxiety, depression and mental health difficulties with employees.

In addition to the above the College monitors information from a variety of other sources including the following:

- The College carries out the following surveys with students: Induction evaluation, Mid-term feedback and end of year evaluation. These surveys capture information about learning support, access to information, policies, student services, respect in the College, quality of teaching, facilities, accessibility and much more. Results from student surveys in 15/16 showed:
  - o Student End of Year Survey June 2015 – 80% of students gave a positive reposnse that NRC promoted diversity, different views and cultures, 92% stated they were treated equally anf fairly and 91% stated they were treated with respect.
  - o Student Induction survey 2015 - 98% of respondents said that the NRC had made them feel welcome and 94% of respondents said that they felt that staff and students within NRC respected one another. Students rated the information provided during induction about learning support (e.g. if

learners had a learning need or disability); student policies (e.g. disciplinary, complaints, equal opportunities, dress code etc.) and student support (e.g. counselling, finance, EMA, careers etc) as either Good or Very Good. 79% said they were made aware of the College's Equality Statement at induction.

- Various data has also been gathered during 2015/16 such as infofest survey, catering service survey, training exit interviews, staff development surveys, sexual health clinic survey, employer feedback cards, general staff survey, cross campus student focus groups and staff meetings with students.

- The College regularly reviews its complaints procedure to ensure it is user friendly. This procedure is for anyone who is unhappy about the service or facilities provided by the NRC. This could be a learner/trainee, potential learner/trainee, service provider, supplier, employer, member of the public or other external stakeholder.

- The College continues to implement its customer comments/ suggestions/ questions form to allow us to make improvements and therefore reduce complaints. This form has also been made available electronically on the staff and student intranets.

- The College continuously monitors the uptake of all its courses and monitors retention, achievement and success of all students.

- Student and Staff monitoring data is reported on yearly. The information is then analysed for screening policies etc.

- Information from external sources such as Census data, research carried out by OFMDFM and research completed by the voluntary and community sector.

- Staff exit questionnaires are monitored. These include an assessment of equality, leaver's experiences and seek to establish the reasons why staff have decided to leave. When 2015/16 leavers were asked 'To what extent do you feel the College is seriously committed to the equal opportunities policy?' they stated:
  - very much   34%
  - to a large degree   39%
  - to some degree   20%
  - to a slight degree 0%
  - not at all   2%
  - don't know   5%

- Applicants for jobs continue to be monitored and reported on.

- Grievance and harassment complaints made by staff are processed through the appropriate policy and monitoring data collected.

- Monitoring of any complaints received through the Section 75 non compliance policy.

- Fair Employment Monitoring Return.

Staff Training (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 5)

24. Please report on the activities from the training plan/programme (section 5.4 of the Model Equality Scheme) undertaken during 2015-16, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

One of the key elements of the work of the College's Equality Unit is to make sure that we are an organisation that recognises and respects diversity. Training has been developed to provide information on the College's legal duties and what this means in practice, for example, dispelling various myths and challenging stereotypes. Training ensures that staff are equipped with the necessary knowledge and expertise to work effectively with each other and all those who need services.

The roll out of the online Equality and Diversity training continued into 2015-16. This mandatory training was launched in November 2012 as part of the Anti-Bullying week campaign.

In December 2015 the College purchased new online training modules on 'Equality and Diversity' and 'Safeguarding and SENDO' from legal-island. These will be rolled out to staff during 2016-17 as part of a mandatory training programme.

In Autumn 2015 an Equality Newsletter was distributed to all staff which highlighted key information from the 2014-15 Annual progress report to the Equality Commission.

25. Please provide any examples of relevant training shown to have worked well, in that participants have achieved the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the stated objectives:

The College successfully delivered the following equality related training to staff during 2015/2016:

Title	Number of Participants
Alzheimer's Awareness	7
Evacuation Chair Training	8
Mental Health (Action mental health)	11
Mindfulness workshop	2
ADHD Awareness	4
Supporting students with Autism	11
Equality Induction for new staff	44
ECNI - Best practice in investigations	9
Autism awareness	2
Domestic Violence	3

Equality and Diversity online training	101
Cultural Awareness	9

Education support staff have attended various bespoke external training courses throughout the year such as:

- effective needs assessments;
- motivational interviewing in a needs assessment context; and
- using solution focused tools in needs assessment.

The Equality Officer takes part in a broad range of events organised by the Equality Commission, Labour Relations Agency, Section 75 groups, or organisations working on their behalf. Some of the events/training attended during 15/16 were:

- Ulster University – Employment Law and Practice.
- ECNI - Promoting Equality as a service provider – A guide for the public sector.
- Education Authority – Designated Safeguarding Officer training.
- Mediation NI – OCN Level 3 Mediation Theory and Practice.
- Employers for Childcare Awards.

Public Access to Information and Services (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 6)

26. Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2015-16, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

i. Reasonable adjustments for staff

The College continues to monitor and implement reasonable adjustments for staff, requirements for these are highlighted through recruitment/induction processes, Occupational health or welfare meetings. Examples of adjustments made in 15/16 were phased return to work after absence, restricted/ lighter duties, driving restrictions and frequent breaks from repetitive work.

ii. Learning support

The College continues to monitor students with disabilities, these students have opportunities to advise the College of their support needs at interview, enrolment and throughout their course. The College offers support, advice and information for students with disabilities and/or Specific Learning Difficulties such as dyslexia or dyspraxia, in order to ensure that students are enabled to participate as fully as possible in the academic and social life of the College. The student intranet has been updated to make students aware of the support and services available to them.

During this period 538 (an increase of 12% from 2014-15) students were supported by the Education Support Department:

- 3% had mobility problems;
- 17% medical conditions;
- 4% sensory impairments;
- 39% specific learning difficulty (dyslexia/dyscalculia/dyspraxia);
- 8% moderate learning difficulty;
- 9% mental health problems;
- 15% on the autistic spectrum; and
- 5% ADHD.

These students received extra support either 1 to 1, as part of a small group or classroom support.

iii.   Learning Support Equipment

During 2015-16 various pieces of equipment and software were provided to improve students accessibility such as: dragon software, JAWS software update, Dolphon SaySo software, livescribe pens, desk clamps, laptops, coloured reading rulers, coloured overlays, specialist chair, footrest, supernova software, ace software, adjustable tables, large keyboards, earphones, rollerball mice, scribe pens, portable magnifiers, laptop stand, PC headsets, FM hearing systems, reading slopes and writing slopes.

iv. Examination Support

The College has provided examination support to 164 (an increase of 38% from 2014-15) students over the period 2015-16. This support includes extra time, separate rooms, comfort breaks, larger font, use of laptops, coloured overlay/glasses, wordprocessing facility, special chair and use of scribes and readers.

v. Communication Support

Sign Language Interpreters (BSL) continue to be used on various occasions throughout the year – in class, during interviews and on public occasions. The College now has the services of three communication support workers on the Inclusive Learning register for the incoming academic year to provide students with consistent high quality service. While this is invaluable, we still have to rely on the services of freelance Sign Language providers to meet the increasing demand.

vi. Alternative formats

All College documents have a statement that the document can be made available in alternative formats upon request. An accessible information policy has been developed and distributed to all staff.

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

27. How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2015-16?

Insert number here:
0

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

Section 3: Looking Forward

28. Please indicate when the Equality Scheme is due for review:

January 2017

29. Are there areas of the Equality Scheme arrangements (screening/consultation/training) your organisation anticipates will be focused upon in the next reporting period? *(please provide details)*

- **S75 Compliance –** Annual progress report, policy screening, consultation on policies/decisions, updating and maintaining consultee database, 5 year review of the equality scheme and development of a new 5 year Equality Improvement Plan. Re-establish Equality Working Group.
- **Policy development –** Development and implementation of sector transgender and disability policy statements.
- **Training –** Equality induction training for new staff, Disability awareness/bespoke disability training, dealing with bullying in the classroom, Cultural Awareness training, Dignity at work refresher training and new adviser training, recruitment and selection refresher training and investigations training. Roll out of new online Equality and Diversity training and Safeguarding and SENDO training. Establish process for reviewing effectiveness of the online training programmes
- **Awareness Raising –** information to be added to intranets/website, class talks programme, fresher's week, calendar of awareness days/weeks, equality newsletter, anti-bullying week and integration of ESOL students.
- **Disability Action Plan –** further implementation of 5 year plan. Progress ECNI Every customer counts charter.
- **Student Monitoring Data –** further use of data during the Self Evaluation and Review (SER) process.
- **Further development of forums -** for Dignity at Work Advisers and Trusted Colleagues and further promotion of these roles. Explore Wellbeing advisers/champions.
- **Consultation/Engagement –** further work to enhance relations with community and voluntary sector.
- **Exit questionnaire –** Analysis and reporting of results.

- **Promotion with Students –** Review of student tutorial programme to include various relevant external speakers. Further roll out of the new online Equality and Diversity Tutorial programme module. Review of information given to students at Induction/ creation of induction app for students. Promote further use of ECNI Do you mean me? teachers website.
- **Student Council/Student Enrichment Officer** – Increase collaboration between Equality Officer and Student Council. Explore quiet rooms, Christian unions, LGBT forum and disability forum.

30   In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next (2015-16) reporting period? *(please tick any that apply)*

    ☒ Employment

    ☒ Goods, facilities and services

    ☒ Legislative changes

    ☒ Organisational changes/ new functions

    ☐ Nothing specific, more of the same

    ☐ Other (please state):

Disability Action Plan 2013-2018 as at March 2016

1. Public Life Measures

ACTION MEASURES	Timescales	Performance indicators / intended outcome	Progress as at March 2016
1. The Colleges will endeavour to influence DEL to ensure participation of disabled people on the Governing Body of the Colleges.	When vacancies exist and on an on-going basis.	Governing Body will include members with disabilities.	• Affirmative action statement included in advertisement in Jan 15. • 14/15 Student Governor had a registered disability.
2. Continue to encourage and support the participation of disabled people on committees and groups across the College.	Reviewed annually Year 1 – Year 5.	Membership of committees / groups to demonstrate increased participation of those with disabilities.	• Equality newsletter called for staff with a disability to volunteer to be a member of the Equality Working Group. • Students with a disability are represented on Student Council and 2 disability officers have been elected. • Student Disability Forum was attempted in 13/14 however no take up. Further efforts to be made again in 16/17.
3. Encourage students with a disability to participate more fully in College life.	Annually as part of induction and on-going throughout the year. Year 1 – Year 5.	Increased participation in student focus groups, student surveys, Student Union Membership and where applicable non-curricular activities such as students union and sporting activities etc.	• Various student focus groups have taken place over the year. Students with disabilities are encouraged to attend these. • Students with disabilities have been elected onto Student Council. • Equality Officer meets with Student Council to help ensure any activities planned are accessible to all.

ACTION MEASURES	Timescales	Performance indicators / intended outcome	Progress as at March 2016
4. Continue to implement reasonable adjustments for students and staff with a disability.	Ongoing.	Increased retention of students and staff with disabilities.	• Education Support Coordinators continue to make various adjustments according to student's needs. • A variety of reasonable adjustments have been implemented for staff. • Disability Audits of all campuses completed in internally in 2012 and further surveys carried out by DisabledGo in 2012 - disability works plan developed and being progressed across all NRC campus sites. • Student Services have met annually with Action on Hearing Loss, proactive approach to be progressed during the academic year as required.
5. Promote the use of Disabled Go website to encourage participation of prospective students.	Annually and on-going Year 1 – Year 5.	Benchmark usage of Disabled Go webpage.	• Link to Disabled Go on front page of College's website. • Promoted to both staff and students.
6. Review appropriate allocation and usage of designated car parking for people with disabilities on all College campuses.	Year 1 – Year 5.	Appropriate allocation and usage of car parking spaces for use by students and staff.	• Reviewed as part of access audits on all campuses. • Additional spaces have been added to 3 campuses and lines have been repainted where required.

2. Positive Attitudes

	ACTION MEASURES	Timescales	Performance indicators / intended outcome	Progress as at March 2016
7.	Ensure staff receive anti-discrimination and SENDO training as part of induction	Ongoing	Monitoring and review of records annually to demonstrate all new staff have received this training.	• SENDO and Equality part of the Induction programme. • Extensive SENDO training carried out in 12/13 and further training delivered in14/15. Plans for Safeguarding and SENDO online training in 15/16. • Equality and Diversity training is mandatory for all staff. • 101 staff completed equality online training in 15/16.
8.	Provision of bespoke training to staff to address specific needs of students with a disability	Ongoing	Based on identified need reviewing the provision of training to relevant staff.	• Various disability related training delivered on staff development days including: SENDO, Action on Hearing Loss, Mental Health First Aid, Evacuation Chairs, Epilepsy, Disability Customer Care, Dyslexia and Autism awareness. • Library staff received bespoke training from student support. • Individual teaching staff given specific training depending on student needs.
9.	Disability awareness is provided to all full time students.	Annually September Year 2 – Year 5.	Disability awareness information is incorporated into induction and tutorial materials.	• Disability awareness is part of the Equality and Diversity tutorial session. A new online programme was developed and launched 15/16. • Induction signposts students to Education support services and relevant policies. • Equality and Diversity (inc disability) is highlighted to students at Induction and Fresher's week. • Equality Officer delivers Equality and Good Relations talks to classes as and when required. • ECNI, Disability Action & AMH deliver workshops with student groups.

ACTION MEASURES	Timescales	Performance indicators / intended outcome	Progress as at March 2016
10. Provision of disability awareness training to staff.	Annual provision in Staff Development Plan Year 1 – Year 5.	Evaluation of training to include evidence of impact training had on attitude towards people with a disability.	• Mandatory Equality online training for staff includes Disability Awareness. • SENDO is delivered to staff on a needs basis and as part of Induction. • Disability Customer Care training to be delivered in 16/17. • Disability specific training delivered i.e. ADHD, ASD and mental health.
11. Further development of partnerships with the disability sector.	Annually Year 1 – Year 5	Increased engagement with representative groups from disability sector.	• College chairs the FE Sector SLDD Forum. • College is a member of the Northern Area Adult Autism Service Forum, and a member of the Regional ASD Forum with NHSCT. • Strong links with various groups e.g. RNIB, action on hearing loss, MENCAP, Cedar Foundation and Audiology Departments. • Further development of The Clinic facilities to gay men (MSM). HIV diagnosis and treatment delivered. • NRC staff exhibited at 2 Disability Fairs in Ballymoney and Antrim.
12. Monitor and review the progress of the Disability Action Plan.	Annually August Year 1 – Year 5	Provision of update contained within Progress Report.	• This action plan is reviewed annually by the Equality Working Group