

**Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties
Annual Progress Report 2016-17**

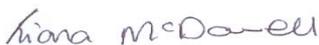
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Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:

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

Signature:



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 2016 and March 2017

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 2016-17, 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. Campus Redevelopment

Northern Regional College is embarking on an exciting new chapter in our history, as we begin the ambitious redevelopment of our estate. In 2015 the College launched a three-year Strategic Improvement Plan, and in 2016 received approval to proceed with our new campus development project. Between now and the 2021/22 academic year the College will take forward plans to move from six to four campuses, investing in new buildings in Ballymena and Coleraine, while continuing to modernise in Magherafelt and Newtownabbey.

This development project will not just produce new campuses, it will create innovative and flexible spaces for teaching, learning and engagement with business and community, whilst ensuring that the provision for students in our extensive catchment area is fit for purpose in an ever-changing environment.

After carrying out a detailed screening exercise the College embarked on a programme of proactive internal and external communication for the project in February 2017. The Project Director provided an update to College staff on plans and timelines at the staff conference on 14 February 2017. This was followed by three public information events in Coleraine, Ballymoney and Ballymena (Farm Lodge) during Open Day events, with information also provided to key stakeholders in the business and political sectors through additional meetings and correspondence. The screening report was made available and no equality related issues were raised during any of the consultations.

ii. Facilities Management Services

A management review of the quality and cost effectiveness of catering, cleaning and caretaking services since the formation of Northern Regional College identified that the services currently provided do not deliver a consistent quality standard across all of the College's campuses and are not as cost effective as they could be

The options considered were: Option 1 – Do Nothing; Option 2 - Full in-house solution; Option 3 – Fully Out-sourced Solution; or Option 4 – Enhanced In-House Solution.

After thorough scrutiny of all the factors, the preferred option is Option 3 - Fully Out-sourced Solution which, if adopted, would be managed taking account of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) Regulations and best practice including the Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Public Sector Service Contracts.

A detailed screening exercise was completed and consultation was carried out to obtain the views of those employees who currently deliver the facilities management function across the College campuses and who are directly impacted by any decision to change current arrangements. Once those directly impacted upon were met with the consultation document was then made available to all staff to comment upon. No equality related impacts were identified during consultation.

iii. New online mandatory training for staff

In December 2015 the College purchased new online training modules on 'Equality and Diversity' and 'Safeguarding and SENDO' from Legal-Island. This was rolled out to staff during 2016-17 as part of a mandatory training programme. Approximately 87% of staff have completed the training so far.

iv. JAM Card

In March 2017 the College signed up to promoting and using the JAM Card, which allows people with communication barriers such as learning disabilities/difficulties to let others know they need Just A Minute of patience when interacting with them.

Recently launched as an app by social enterprise NOW Group which supports people with learning difficulties into training and employment, it began as a credit card sized card and was the idea of service users of the organisation who said they often felt under pressure when they were out and about in everyday life and would like a discreet way of letting people know that they needed a little extra time.

Students at the College can apply for a JAM card via Student Services on each campus, or download the app to their phone.

We are delighted to be working in partnership with the NOW Group to promote and implement this innovative scheme which is designed to make daily life a little bit easier for people with learning difficulties/disabilities, autism and Asperger's.

v. World Mental Health Day

The College participated in 'Put it in Your Phone Day' on Monday 10 October 2016 to coincide with World Mental Health Day. The day was designed to encourage students to take five minutes during class to save the contact telephone numbers of organisations which can provide confidential advice, counselling and support services 24/7 such as Carecall, Lifeline and the Samaritans, should they, or a friend, need it.

With one in five people in Northern Ireland showing signs of a mental health problem* at any one time, the College wanted to put a spotlight on young people's mental health and get everyone joining in on the conversation to remind them that help is available.

The College teamed up with the Department of Health to promote the 5 Steps to Wellbeing. Students were shown a one minute, You-Tube clip directly after saving the telephone numbers to highlight the simple things that everyone can do to improve their mental health and wellbeing.

The day provided an opportunity for staff and students to talk about how to improve wellbeing and help make mental health care a reality. The hope was that by the end of 10 October, all students would have sufficient contact information for support services which may save their own or someone else's life.

vi. Mindset training

During 2016-17, 11 sessions of Mindset training were delivered to 130 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).

vii. Do you mean me?

The Equality Commission for NI delivered their "Do you mean me?" talk to 43 (22 in 15/16) class groups across the College which involved approximately 342 students and staff. During these sessions students had the opportunity to discuss their and others attitudes and experiences of discrimination in Northern Ireland.

viii. Widening Access and Participation Plan (WAPP)

The Northern Regional College's vision for widening participation is that any eligible individual in its catchment area should be able to gain access to higher education and succeed within higher education, irrespective of their personal or social background. The Widening Participation Plan is consistent with the DEL 'Access to Success Strategy'. The Policy aims to ensure that there is increased participation in higher education at NRC from those groups which are currently under-represented. In particular, it is a key strategic goal to ensure that students • from MDM Quintile 1 • having a disability (physical, sensory or learning) • from low participation neighbourhoods (areas of high deprivation) • young Protestant males (from areas of high deprivation) • adult returners, particularly work-based learners from disadvantaged backgrounds, are appropriately represented among the higher education student body.

ix. Legal-Island Equality & Diversity Awards 2017

On 31 March 2017 Legal-Island hosted the Inaugural Equality & Diversity Awards. The purpose of the awards is to acknowledge and celebrate the employers in Northern Ireland who are driving the diversity agenda and helping change Northern Ireland for the better. The College was delighted to have been shortlisted for this award

x. Northern Adult Autism Service

The College continues to be 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.

xi. Empower Project – Supporting individuals with Autism, Dyslexia or Dyspraxia (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. The provision on offer supports four main client groups:

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

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.

In 2016/17 the project has provided 177 activities to 1270 participants. Examples of activities that have taken place this year are:

- Sensory skills training to Special educational needs teachers and to parents
- ADHD training
- Workshops on Dyslexia strategies which parents can implement and advice on assistive technology

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- Transition sessions with young people with Autism, Dyslexia and Dyspraxia moving from primary to secondary school
- Workshops on awareness raising to companies and groups on autism friendly strategies.

xii. Student Council

The three major campaigns which the Students' Union ran this year were 'Anti-bullying', 'Mental Health Awareness' and 'Drugs and Alcohol Awareness'. These were three main issues which were brought up by Class Reps and they were very keen that we would run campaigns raising awareness about these complex areas. Whilst a lot of the campaigns we ran were online, we also had a number of external organisations in to speak to students including Start 360, Cancer Focus, Public Health Agency and PCSP. We promoted a number of national days including, National Stress Awareness Day, Carbon Monoxide Month, Road Safety Week, Sexual Health Week and LGBT Awareness Week.

xiii. Anti-Bullying Week

The College participates in Anti-Bullying week annually each November. The theme for 2016 was 'Power for Good'. We encouraged all staff and students to think about how they can use their Power for Good to stop bullying by using social media and the hashtags #antibullyingweek and #PowerForGood.

We also requested that each lecturer would take a few minutes of their class time to show the students a PowerPoint and then ask students to consider what they could do as individuals to stop bullying by using their Power for Good.

The PowerPoint had four slides:

1. Introduction slide to the Power For Good Campaign
2. Short 4 minute video highlighting young people who were victims of bullying and have succeeded in the world
3. The Power For Good Pledge
4. Taking it further – some suggested websites which may be of interest

Hopefully this will have encourage students to think about the effects of their actions whilst encouraging them to speak up.

Also throughout 2016-17 various class talks were delivered on Anti-bullying, Cyberbullying and Respect

xiv. Dignity at Work

The College is committed to ensuring all employees are treated fairly and with "dignity and respect". In October 2016 we sought volunteers from all campuses and staff groups to become Dignity at work advisers. This service supports staff who may be experiencing harassment and bullying at work, and provides them with a non-formal means of resolving difficult issues. The advisers can be approached in confidence in order to discuss the situation and to work towards an agreed course of action. In this way matters may be resolved outside formal grievance or disciplinary procedures

xv. 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 £1980 for Cancer Focus NI.

xvi. 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 March 2017 members of the College's HR team undertook training from Onus (NI) Ltd, to become Trusted Colleagues for any staff member who is experiencing difficulties in relation to domestic violence and abuse. This training was funded by the Antrim & Newtownabbey and Mid & East Antrim Policing & Community Safety Partnerships. As part of the training, team members were provided with an understanding of the impact of domestic violence and abuse within the workplace, and introduced to various definitions, statistics and the many different forms of abuse which victims are subjected to.

xvii. Entitlement Framework

The College has established excellent working relationships with 35 post-primary schools (including special 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.

xviii. Sector Committees

The College is a member of the FE Equality Co-ordinators 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 2016-17 the forum considered equality improvement plans, staff monitoring forms, review of equality schemes, consultee lists, transgender equality statement, disability statement, and DisabledGo.

xix. 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, staff and student intranets and social media. Several equality themed events took place over the reporting period to promote equality of opportunity and good relations which included World Mental Health Day, 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.

xx. Embedding equality and diversity into the curriculum

During 2016/17 various curriculum initiatives have taken place which help to increase student's awareness and promote equality of opportunity. Some examples are:

- An ESOL class in Magherafelt completed a project which aimed to dispel the myths about foreign workers and help to integrate the class into College life. They created a book with each student designing a page to address a question which local people may ask. They then presented the findings of their project to another class and the book is available in the library for all to read.
- 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.

The sports students in Magherfafelt have also begun to host an annual sports day for the special needs students on campus.

This year students have had the opportunity to not only play against other Colleges but also against other countries. They entered the Copa Costa Brava in Barcelona. This competition saw the team face opposition from throughout Europe.

- Level 3 Travel and Tourism students in Coleraine participated in a residential trip to Donegal in October 2016. Within the trip students attended an Irish Language course at a Galway University campus in Gweedore. Students also joined attended Letterkenny Institute of Technology to partake in a Traditional Stone Sculpting Demonstration
- Newtownabbey Child care level 3 teaching staff facilitated a Japanese culture event with traditional dress, dancing, food etc.
- During 2016-17 various external speakers were used in classrooms including Rainbow Project, Disability Action, ACET, Women's Aid, Age Concern, NSPCC and NEXUS;
- Throughout the year class groups have been involved in fundraising for various charities including NI Children's Hospice, Addiction NI, Sport Relief, Tiny life and Macmillan;
- Various international exchanges, partnerships and placements have taken place involving both staff and students with different countries including Spain, Rotterdam, Poland, Portugal and South Africa.

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2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2016-17 (or *append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

Action	Timescale	Responsible person(s)	Outcome/ Measure	Progress on Outcomes/ Impacts (5yrs)	16/17 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 2016 Departmental Self Evaluation Reviews (SERs) included analysis of retention, achievement and success data by equality category.

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Action	Timescale	Responsible person(s)	Outcome/ Measure	Progress on Outcomes/ Impacts (5yrs)	16/17 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 have been highlighted Equality Newsletters and staff ezines annually.	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 and works completed. 16/17 works included room refurbishments with new LRV colour contrasts to walls floors doors frames etc for partially sighted users to comply with building regs and DDA requirements.

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Action	Timescale	Responsible person(s)	Outcome/ Measure	Progress on Outcomes/ Impacts (5yrs)	16/17 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Equality Officer is present at all Fresher's Fairs – Equality leaflet distributed. • 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.	Completed	

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Action	Timescale	Responsible person(s)	Outcome/ Measure	Progress on Outcomes/ Impacts (5yrs)	16/17 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.	

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Action	Timescale	Responsible person(s)	Outcome/ Measure	Progress on Outcomes/ Impacts (5yrs)	16/17 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

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Action	Timescale	Responsible person(s)	Outcome/ Measure	Progress on Outcomes/ Impacts (5yrs)	16/17 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 New online programme purchased in December 2015.	690 completed Equality & Diversity training in 16/17.
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

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Action	Timescale	Responsible person(s)	Outcome/ Measure	Progress on Outcomes/ Impacts (5yrs)	16/17 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 Enrichment Officer post created in 2014 to support the Student Council	Completed and Ongoing New Student Constitution developed in 16/17. Each campus will have a team of elected Campus Officers. The available positions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further Education (FE) Officer • Higher Education (HE) Officer • Work Based Learning (WBL) Officer • Student Activities Officer • LGBT+ Officer • Disabled Student Officer • Women’s Officer
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

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Action	Timescale	Responsible person(s)	Outcome/ Measure	Progress on Outcomes/ Impacts (5yrs)	16/17 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. Nexus institute delivered a range of anti-bullying talks on all campuses in 15/16.	Completed and ongoing. 16/17 anti-bullying week – Presentation sent to all lecturers and social media campaign
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 16/17.

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Action	Timescale	Responsible person(s)	Outcome/ Measure	Progress on Outcomes/ Impacts (5yrs)	16/17 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 met once a week. Both groups were supported by students from all the major Christian communities. The following year a Chaplaincy in the Ballymena area with clergy from the four main churches was initiated.	Pilot Completed

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3 Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2016-17 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

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

3a With regard to the change(s) made to policies, practices or procedures and/or service delivery areas, what **difference was made, or will be made, for individuals**, i.e. the impact on those according to Section 75 category?

Please provide any details and examples:

Staff equality monitoring form and recording systems reviewed and updated

3b What aspect of the Equality Scheme prompted or led to the change(s)? *(tick all that apply)*

As a result of the organisation's screening of a policy *(please give details):*

As a result of what was identified through the EQIA and consultation exercise *(please give details):*

As a result of analysis from monitoring the impact *(please give details):*

As a result of changes to access to information and services *(please specify and give details):*

Other *(please specify and give details):*

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

Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)

4 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2016-17 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. All new job descriptions for internal and external posts include the reference "All staff have an obligation to comply with the statutory duties relating to section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and will be required to contribute to the implementation of the College's Equality Scheme drawn up in accordance with this legislation."

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2016-17 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.

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6 In the 2016-17 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 2016-17 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 &CPD operational plan.

Equality action plans/measures

7 Within the 2016-17 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed: Actions ongoing: 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 2016-17 reporting period *(points not identified in an appended plan)*:

A review of the Colleges equality scheme was carried out in January 2017 this included the development of a new Equality Action Plan (Equality Improvement Plan). Actions which were completed during the 5 years were removed. Nine of the previous actions remain in the plan and will continue to progress over the next 5 years. Four new actions have been added – Widening Access to Participation Plan, Mental Health Charter, Every Customer Counts Charter and Implementation of a Transgender Policy and Procedure.

9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2016-17 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 2016-17 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:

- Campus Redevelopment - Northern Regional College is embarking on an exciting new chapter in our history, as we begin the ambitious redevelopment of our estate. In 2015 the College launched a three-year Strategic Improvement Plan, and in 2016 received approval to proceed with our new campus development project. Between now and the 2021/22 academic year the College will take forward plans to move from six to four campuses, investing in new buildings in Ballymena and Coleraine, while continuing to modernise in Magherafelt and Newtownabbey.

This development project will not just produce new campuses, it will create innovative and flexible spaces for teaching, learning and engagement with business and community, whilst ensuring that the provision for students in our extensive catchment area is fit for purpose in an ever-changing environment.

After carrying out a detailed screening exercise the College embarked on a programme of proactive internal and external communication for the project in February 2017. The Project Director provided an update to College staff on plans and timelines at the staff conference on 14 February 2017. This was followed by three public information events in Coleraine, Ballymoney and Ballymena (Farm Lodge) during Open Day events, with information also provided to key stakeholders in the business and political sectors through additional meetings and correspondence. The screening report was made available and no equality related issues were raised during any of the consultations.

- Facilities Management Services - A management review of the quality and cost effectiveness of catering, cleaning and caretaking services since the formation of Northern Regional College identified that the services currently provided do not deliver a consistent

quality standard across all of the College's campuses and are not as cost effective as they could be

The options considered were: Option 1 – Do Nothing; Option 2 - Full in-house solution; Option 3 – Fully Out-sourced Solution; or Option 4 – Enhanced In-House Solution.

After thorough scrutiny of all the factors, the preferred option is Option 3 - Fully Out-sourced Solution which, if adopted, would be managed taking account of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) Regulations and best practice including the Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Public Sector Service Contracts.

A detailed screening exercise was completed and consultation was carried out to obtain the views of those employees who currently deliver the facilities management function across the College campuses and who are directly impacted by any decision to change current arrangements. Once those directly impacted upon were met with the consultation document was then made available to all staff to comment upon. No equality related impacts were identified during consultation.

- During 2015/2016 some curriculum areas developed and progressed a model of Staff/ Student Consultative meetings. These meetings offer a platform for the student voice and promote an ethos of mutual respect. These continued during 2016/17
- Various new and reviewed policies were consulted upon internally with staff and trade unions.
- 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 joint Lecturing Support Staff Consultative Forum. These groups are made up of Union and Management representatives and meet as and when required. The forum meet twice during this period to discuss issues such as facilities management, restructure, budget, college planner, redundancies, policies, staff development and new builds.
- 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. Last year we made the move to localised campus Class Rep meetings following on from feedback from Class Reps and this continued this year. The purpose of this was to enable Class Reps the opportunity to discuss/air their campus specific issues. Again this

year it was agreed from the onset that meetings would be held consistently during the second week of each month and this has proved effective. The Students' Union has linked enthusiastically and effectively with the Estates team this year and has brought a number of campus based issues to their attention. In return the Estates team have efficiently fed back to the localised Campus meetings on the resolution of these issues.

- All staff who leave the College are requested to complete a Staff exit questionnaires
- 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. 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 and Agencies Supporting Ethnic Communities. In June 2016 Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council established an Equality Forum which the College is now a member of. This groups includes representatives from various statutory, community and voluntary organisations representing the 9 equality groups.
- 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 2016-17 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently used 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)*:

PART A

13 Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2016-17 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

14 Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2016-17 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)

Insert link to any web pages where screening templates and/or other reports associated with Equality Scheme commitments are published - <http://www.nrc.ac.uk/nrc/equality/>

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

6

16 Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2016-17:

2	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 2016/17 were screened out and listed on our website quarterly. Screening reports for the facilities management review and estates redevelopment were made available as part of the overall consultation.

PART A

22 Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2016-17 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 and Curriculum 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 April 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 provide information to help the College 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.
- The College carries out the following annual 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. The 2016 End of Year Survey found that 92% of students felt they were treated equally and fairly and 92% also stated they were treated with respect.
- Various data has also been gathered during 2016/17 such as infofest survey, training exit interviews, staff development surveys, sexual health clinic survey, employer feedback cards, general staff survey, community education feedback, digital learning survey, class rep feedback, 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Completion of annual 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 2016-17, 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. Training ensures that staff are equipped with the necessary knowledge and expertise to work effectively with each other and all those who need services.

In December 2015 the College purchased new online training modules on 'Equality and Diversity' and 'Safeguarding and SENDO' from legal-island. This was rolled out to staff during 2016-17 as part of a mandatory training programme, 690 staff have completed the training so far.

A review of induction process and training is planned for 2017/18.

Throughout the year awareness raising of various equality related issues is raised through the staff and student intranets, emails, staff e-zines and social media.

Information on the College's equality scheme and annual progress reports are made available on the Colleges website and the staff intranet.

PART A

- 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 2016/2017:

Title	Number of Participants
Domestic Violence in the workplace	7
Conducting workplace investigations	30
Evacuation chair	9
ADHD awareness	30
Cultural awareness	25
Stress awareness	30
Autism awareness	30
Supporting students with dyslexia	20
Supporting students with mental health difficulties	30
Transgender awareness	29
Customer care and disability awareness	63
Recruitment and selection	13
Personal resilience	36

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

- Child acquired brain injury awareness
- Building resilience in young people
- Data and Disadvantaged students webinar
- QUB centre for Behaviour Analysis conference

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 16/17 were:

- Mental Health Café – ECNI

- Family Friendly Employer Workshop – Employers for Childcare
- Intimidation Toolkit Training – Building Communities Resource Centre
- 5 ways to wellbeing training – North Antrim community network
- Equality and Diversity Awards – Legal-Island
- Wellbeing and Employee Engagement – CIPD
- Annual Employment Law Review – Legal-Island
- Promoting Transgender Equality seminar – ECNI
- Every Customer Counts seminar – ECNI
- Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties – ECNI
- Recruiting Fairly - ECNI

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

26 Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2016-17, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

- 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 16/17 were phased return to work after absence, restricted/ lighter duties and limited travel.
- 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 576 (an increase of 7% from 2015/16) students were supported by the Education Support Department. 159 of these were referred to an educational psychologist for assessment. The following is a breakdown of the students main disability/need:
 - 3% had mobility problems;
 - 8% medical conditions;
 - 8% sensory impairments;
 - 40% specific learning difficulty (dyslexia/dyscalculia/dyspraxia);
 - 14% moderate learning difficulty;
 - 11% mental health problems;
 - 13% on the autistic spectrum; and
 - 3% ADHD.

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

- Learning Support Equipment - During 2016/17 70 laptops were purchased to help students with additional needs. Various other 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.
- Examination Support - The College has provided examination support to 285 students over the period 2016/17. This support includes extra time, separate rooms, comfort breaks, use of laptops, coloured overlay/glasses, word processing facility, special chair and use of scribes, enlarged papers, electronic papers and readers.

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

- 27 How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2016-17?

Insert number here:

0

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

NA

Section 3: Looking Forward

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

The Equality Scheme was reviewed in January 2017 therefore a review will be due again in 2022.

- 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*)

- **Equality scheme implementation** – Annual progress report, policy screening, consultation on policies/decisions, updating and maintaining consultee database, awareness raising of reviewed scheme and action plan, implementation of the new 5 year Equality Improvement Plan

- **Policy development** – Implementation of sector transgender and disability policy statements.
- **Training** – New Induction programme for new staff, Disability awareness, bespoke disability training, dealing with bullying in the classroom, Cultural Awareness training, and recruitment and selection refresher training. Establish process for reviewing effectiveness of the online training programmes
- **Ongoing Awareness Raising** – review of student tutorial programme information to be added to intranets/website, class talks programme, fresher’s week, calendar of awareness days/weeks, staff ezines and anti-bullying week
- **Disability Action Plan** – Implementation of Every Customer Counts Charter. Development of new Disability Action Plan for 2013-2018
- **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. Launch of Mental Health Champions.
- **Consultation/Engagement** – further work to enhance relations with community and voluntary sector. Progress employee engagement plans.
- **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. New equality video to be used at Induction. Promote further use of ECNI Do you mean me? Teacher’s website.
- **Health and Wellbeing** – carryout a Health and Wellbeing survey with staff and develop an action plan. Explore a Health and Wellbeing strategy for students. Implementation of Mental Health Charter
- **Student Council/Student Enrichment Officer** – Increase collaboration between Equality Officer and Student Council. Explore quiet rooms, Christian unions, LGBT forum and disability forum.
- **Estates Redevelopment** – Consultation with staff, students and voluntary sector on design of new builds

30 In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next (2016-17) 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):

PART B - Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) and Disability Action Plans

Disability Action Plan 2013-2018 as at March 2017

1. Public Life Measures

ACTION MEASURES	Timescales	Performance indicators / intended outcome	Progress as at March 2017
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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality newsletter called for staff with a disability to volunteer to be a member of the Equality Working Group. • Students with a disability have been represented on Student Council and disability officers elected. • Student Disability Forum was attempted in 13/14 and 15/16 however no take up. Further efforts to be made again in 17/18.
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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

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ACTION MEASURES	Timescales	Performance indicators / intended outcome	Progress as at March 2017
4. Continue to implement reasonable adjustments for students and staff with a disability.	Ongoing.	Increased retention of students and staff with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link to Disabled Go on front page of College's website. • Promoted to both staff and students. • Training and support to be offered by DisabledGo in 17/18
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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed as part of access audits on all campuses. • Additional spaces have been added to 3 campuses and lines have been repainted where required. • To be reviewed again in 17/18 as part of Every Customer Counts Audits.

2. Positive Attitudes

ACTION MEASURES	Timescales	Performance indicators / intended outcome	Progress as at March 2017
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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SENDO and Equality part of the Induction programme. • Extensive SENDO training carried out in 12/13 and further training delivered in 14/15. 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. • 690 staff completed new Legal-island E&D training in 16/17.
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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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, ADHD and Autism awareness. • Library staff received bespoke training from student support. • Individual teaching staff given specific training depending on student needs. • Frontline staff received Disability and Customer Care training in 16/17
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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

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ACTION MEASURES	Timescales	Performance indicators / intended outcome	Progress as at March 2017
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equality Officer delivers Equality and Good Relations talks to classes as and when required. ECNI, Disability Action & AMH deliver workshops with student groups.
<p>10. Provision of disability awareness training to staff.</p>	<p>Annual provision in Staff Development Plan</p> <p>Year 1 – Year 5.</p>	<p>Evaluation of training to include evidence of impact training had on attitude towards people with a disability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mandatory Equality online training for staff includes Disability Awareness. SEND0 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.
<p>11. Further development of partnerships with the disability sector.</p>	<p>Annually</p> <p>Year 1 – Year 5</p>	<p>Increased engagement with representative groups from disability sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 disability 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.
<p>12. Monitor and review the progress of the Disability Action Plan.</p>	<p>Annually</p> <p>August Year 1 – Year 5</p>	<p>Provision of update contained within Progress Report.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This action plan is reviewed annually. New plan will be developed in 17/18 to commence in 18/19.