

**Northern Regional College**



**Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties  
Annual Progress Report 2017-18**

**Contact:**

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

Please insert link or details here

**Signature:**

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fiona McDowell".

**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 2017 and March 2018**

## **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 2017-18, 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.

*Please relate these to the implementation of your statutory equality and good relations duties and Equality Scheme where appropriate.*

#### **Review of Student Induction**

A new student induction presentation was developed and rolled out in September 2017. The aim of the induction programme is to welcome new students to the College, introduce them to the main points of contact, outline expectations the College has of its students and also what students should expect of us. The content covers various aspects of life in the College, including Student Voice, anti-bullying, equality and the use of social media. User friendly animated videos were produced to highlight these issues. This has been a great opportunity to introduce students to the concept of equality of opportunity and good relations at the start of their time in the College.

#### **New Workplace Health and Wellbeing Programme**

As part of the College's commitment to the ongoing health and well-being of staff we are delighted to be partnering with Northern Ireland Chest Heart & Stroke on the 'Well Team at Work' initiative. The first stage of participating in this initiative was to complete a short survey with all employees, which then enabled us to develop a targeted health and well-being action plan for 2018/19. One of the key components of the plan is to link with enthusiastic staff members on all campuses to be part of a voluntary Wellbeing Group. These groups will assist in delivering the initiatives. These key staff members are now in place and will provide a vital link between the Health and Wellbeing team and staff on each campus in order to deliver our actions in the coming year.

#### **Campus Redevelopment Consultation**

As previously reported, Northern Regional College is embarking on an exciting new chapter in our history, as we begin the ambitious redevelopment of our estate. 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 businesses and communities, 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, launched in February 2017 continuing into 2017/18. In February/March 2018 SLT staff roadshows took place across all six campuses. The presentation covered the development of the College Development Plan (CDP), campus specific investments, updates on the new campuses for Ballymena and Coleraine and decant plans.

Student consultations also took place in March 2018 where the Communications Manager briefed class representatives from all six campus Student Unions. Additionally, at the meetings in Coleraine, Ballymoney and Ballymena those attending were asked to complete a questionnaire on the impact new campus locations will have.

Consultation meetings have taken place with relevant external stakeholders including Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council, Mid & East Antrim Council, Department for Communities, Department for Finance, NI Roads Service, PSNI, Education Authority and NIHE. Furthermore, individual meetings have taken place with four MLAs.

### **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 DfE 'Access to Success Strategy'. The Policy aims to ensure that there is increased participation in higher education at NRC from groups currently under-represented. In particular, it is a key strategic goal to ensure that students from the following groups are appropriately represented among the higher education student body:

- 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

### **Preventative Curriculum Workshop Programme**

As part of the College's commitment to the care and welfare of students, a Preventative Curriculum Workshop Programme was developed for the 2017-18 academic year. This is to support the already existing pastoral tutorial programme that happens across all full time curriculum programmes. The workshops below were delivered by the Student Services team in collaboration with external stakeholders.

<b>Workshop topic</b>	<b>No. of workshops delivered</b>
ACET – Relationships and Sexuality	1
Action Deaf Youth – Basic Deaf Training	1
Action Mental Health – Mindset Training	4

AWARE – Mood Matters sessions	6
Carafriend – Sexual Orientation	4
Connections – Drugs and Alcohol Talks	36
Do you mean me? Equality Commission	18
Bullying/E-Safety/Sexual Abuse and Child Exploitation	26
Northern Area Mental Health Initiative	20
Targeted Life Skills Programme	2
Volunteer Now	4
Women's Aid – Domestic Violence Awareness	7

### **Employers for Childcare Roadshows**

Employers for Childcare visited all College campuses during September 2017. Family Benefits Advisors were on hand to advise staff of a range of services including:

- Tax Credits
- Maternity/Paternity Leave and Pay
- Childcare Vouchers
- Tax-Free Childcare
- School Uniform Allowance
- Social Security Benefits
- Flexible Working
- Free School Meals

Advisors were also be able to help staff decide which childcare scheme is right for them ahead of the changes due to take place in 2018.

### **Mental Health Charter**

The College has committed to supporting those with mental ill health by signing up to the Equality Commission's Mental Health Charter. We recognise that many people experience mental ill health during their lives and that, with the right help at the right time, they can recover. Signing up to this charter signifies that as an employer and service provider, we will work to create a workplace culture that promotes equality of opportunity and respect for those with mental ill health. We have already taken various proactive steps towards supporting our staff including:

- Initiatives to increase the physical activity levels of staff including lunchtime walks, pilates classes and circuits training
- A two-day Mental Health First Aid training event, delivered by Aware, for staff members who are Dignity at Work Advisors or working in HR and Student Services. By completing Mental Health First aid, participants are now equipped to become Mental Health Champions for the College. The training has provided staff with the skills and knowledge to help those in a mental health crisis and signpost to specialist services.
- Promotion of various support organisations including Inspire Employee Assistance Programme and Occupational Health online advice pages.
- Promotion of Mental Health Awareness week - this year, the activities planned were based on the evidence based research, 'Take 5 Steps to

Wellbeing' and included distribution of leaflets to all staff, relaxation sessions, mindfulness, lunchtime walks and suicide awareness training.

- Review of the Colleges Managing Stress Policy.

### **Anti-Bullying Week**

The College participates in Anti-Bullying week annually each November. This year we engaged with the Northern Area Mental Health Initiative. This Initiative is an innovative and exciting new project led by Cookstown and Western Shores Area Network in partnership with Action Mental Health and Nexus NI. The Initiative exists to build the emotional resilience of children and young people aged 8-25, and their key contacts i.e. teachers, youth workers, parents and carers, in the Northern Zone communities. Through the Initiative's interactive mental health and resilience workshops, the project aims to enable communities to develop resilient cultures within the home, schools and communities. During anti-bullying week Action Mental Health and Nexus NI delivered 10 workshops to students across our six campuses.

### **Every Customer Counts Initiative**

As a student focused College it is essential we ensure compliance with high standards of accessibility to our premises and services. This year the College signed up to the Every Customer Counts Initiative. This initiative was designed by the Equality Commission to encourage organisations and businesses across Northern Ireland to consider if they can improve the service they offer to clients and customers with a disability. We want our campuses to be safe, welcoming and accessible environments where people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities can enjoy a wide range of services with support and encouragement from our staff, if required. Using the free self-assessment checklist tool we have audited all our campuses and have considered how open our services currently are to disabled people. Further to these audits, we have recently developed an Accessible Business Action Plan which will be taken forward in 2018/19.

### **DisabledGo**

During 2017/18 the College engaged with DisabledGo to draw up a new three year contract to provide online access guides to facilitate the needs of people with disabilities. In November 2017, all six campuses were surveyed and access guides were updated as a result. In January 2018, a representative from DisabledGo delivered an information session to key staff in the College and provided statistical data on the use of the access guides by our stakeholders.

### **Empower Project**

The Empower project is a five year initiative funded by the Big Lottery Fund to support young people under the age of 12, with Autism, Dyslexia or Dyspraxia, their parents and the wider family circle. The project works in partnership with local organisations to address identified needs to support parents and children in their local area. The project is led by Dyslexia and Dyspraxia Support (DADS) who are supported by a project steering group which incorporates, Northern Regional College, Magherafelt Learning Partnership, Mid Ulster District Council, CWSAN

(Cookstown & Western Shores Area Network), Autism NI Mid Ulster Branch Stars - Autism support group, Education Authority, Magherafelt & Cookstown Volunteer Centre and CYPSP (Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership)

The Empower project is in its third year and to date the project has provided 440 activities to 5058 participants. Examples of activities this year include:

- Sensory skills training to teachers and parents
- Workshops identified by parents, which include Pathological Demand Avoidance, ADHD, Nutrition training, ASD and Anger, ASD and Anxiety, Bullying
- Workshops on Dyslexia strategies, including three conferences on Developmental Coordination Delay
- Awareness raising workshops to local companies and help with developing autism friendly strategies
- Summer scheme activities for young people to develop social skills and reduce stress in families outside the school term
- Support for parents at coffee mornings, pamper sessions and mindfulness training
- Developing activities to promote positive emotional wellbeing of families
- Supporting schools on challenging behaviour training, play therapy training, primary movement, support with home school partnerships, sensory overload and building confidence resilience

### **Student Union**

The three major campaigns which the Students' Union ran this year were 'Anti-bullying', 'Mental Health Awareness' and 'Drugs and Alcohol Awareness'. These three issues were brought up by Class Reps and they were keen for the College to run campaigns raising awareness about these complex areas. Whilst some of the campaigns delivered were delivered online, a number of external organisations were invited to speak to students including Start 360, Cancer Focus, Northern Area Mental Health Initiative and PCSP. The LSN project were also invited to all campuses to raise awareness of mental health issues and to encourage students to become listening ambassadors. The PSNI Community Road Safety Team hosted a car crash cut out demonstration for students in Newtownabbey and in Coleraine the COOL FM / PSNI Road Safety Roadshow was held to help promote staying safe on the roads. A number of national equality days were promoted, including, Blue Monday, National No Smoking Day, Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing, #stopthetrend, Mental Health Awareness Week, Road Safety Week, Sexual Health Week and LGBT Awareness Week.

### **Wear it Pink Day**

The College participated in the 'Wear it Pink Day' event to raise awareness and fundraise for Cancer Focus NI. We recognised that many of our staff and students have either direct or indirect knowledge of someone who has been affected by breast cancer. This event provided us with the opportunity to help by fundraising, but in a fun and engaging way which would help educate our workforce and our students. This event raised £3732.76 for Cancer Focus NI.

### **Strengthening International Links**

In October 2017 the College agreed a new international partnership with a college of further and higher education in South Africa. The partnership with Northlink College in Cape Town came about as a result of two reciprocal visits between the organisations earlier in 2017. On the strength of these visits, which clearly identified potential benefits for both colleges, Professor Terri Scott and Leon Beech, Principal/CEO Northlink College signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) committing both colleges to build a sustainable relationship over the next five years. The aim of the MoA is to create a common understanding between both colleges and to provide a framework and mechanism for co-operative activities of mutual interest. It will encourage sharing best practice, building capacity and pursuing areas of common interest such as,

- Digital Learning and Information Technology (Academic and Support) through the develop of curriculum materials and online assessments
- Artisan Skills Development and Apprenticeships models (Industry engagement/ Dual system)
- inter-college competitions for students
- Entrepreneurship and Self-employment
- Business Process Transformation Administration model
- Management Operating Model development.

### **Entitlement Framework**

The College has established excellent working relationships with 35 post-primary schools (including special schools) included in the ten Learning Communities. The provision in the College is comprehensive and includes an excellent 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 age classes are made up from students who attend from different ability schools.

### **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 forum meets four times per year and helps promote a best practice and consistent approach to the implementation of Section 75 within FE in Northern Ireland.

During 2017/18 the forum considered equality schemes, staff monitoring forms, consultee lists, a transgender equality statement, a disability equality statement, mental health initiatives, DDA, student equality monitoring, policy screening and DisabledGo.

### **Embedding equality and diversity into the curriculum**

During 2017/18, various curriculum initiatives have taken place to help increase student's awareness and promote equality of opportunity.

Some examples are:

- Art and Design students who completed a project based on cultures which involved carrying out research and producing a piece of artwork.
- While studying the Cultural Difference Model, Business Management students used the opportunity to discuss cultural backgrounds amongst their class.
- Health and Social Care students held a workshop with RNIB where they benefited from learning how to guide and interact with individuals who were blind. This opportunity provided a transformative learning experience which broke down barriers and stigma.
- Newtownabbey Care and Access students took part in a cultural and wellbeing day on campus.
- The Care and Access department ran a host of events to mark World Mental Health day in October in collaborations with Aware
- Students from the School of Engineering and Built Environment have had a variety of opportunities to integrate with students from different backgrounds at events across Ireland and UK such as Techno Tournaments, the Career Ready programme, Skills competitions UK finals and an Inter Campus competitions
- Several external speakers were used in classrooms including the Rainbow Project, Wave Tauma Centre, NICCY, Extern, Alzhiemers Society, NISCC, Carafriend, Disability Action, ACET, Women's Aid, Age Concern, NSPCC and NEXUS
- Various international exchanges, partnerships and placements have taken place involving both staff and students from different countries across Europe.

**2** Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2017-18 *(or append the plan with progress/examples identified)*.

Action	Timescale	Responsible person/ Department	Equality Category	Progress as at March 2018
Keep staff equality monitoring data up to date.	From November 2015	HR and Equality	All	Staff regularly using HR portal to update personal details.
Increase exploitation of student equality data for planning, policy development and market intelligence.	Reviewed annually	Curriculum, Student Experience, MIS and Marketing	All	Curriculum teams report on the promotion of equality in Self Evaluation Reviews (SERS). Head of Sections are presented with retention and achievement data by equality category.
Further embedding of Equality & Diversity into the curriculum.	Reviewed annually	Curriculum, Quality, Equality and Student Experience	All	Clear examples given in SERS. Identified in the new Preventative Curriculum Programme
Adopt ECNI Every Customer Counts recommendations including carrying out accessible business checklist/audits on all campuses.	June 2018	Equality, Student Services and Estates	Disability	Completed audits of all campuses. New accessible action plan developed.
Increased promotion, education and awareness raising of Equality & Diversity groups/issues i.e. Fresher's, Student talks, Guest speakers, Awareness days/weeks.	Ongoing	Equality and Student Services	All	Equality and Diversity promoted during Fresher's fairs, Class talks, Anti-Bullying week, Guest speakers, staff development and awareness days/weeks
Inclusion of positive publicity images in College documentation.	Annually	Marketing and communications	All	The College has developed a bank of images to be used in printed and online communications. These include learners of all ages, nationalities and those with disabilities.
Representative Officers on Student Unions with clear roles and responsibilities i.e. LGBT+ Officer, Disabled	Annually	Student Services	Sexual Orientation Disability Gender	Established officers in Student Union elected annually. New constitution implemented in 2017/18. Improved

PART A

Student Officer and Women's Officer.				communication/consultation with student body.
Continue roll out of Mandatory Equality & Diversity and Safeguarding and SENDO online training modules.	Ongoing as part of induction programme for new staff.	Learning & Development	All	During 2017/18 106 staff completed the Equality and Diversity module. 100 staff completed the Safeguarding and SENDO module.
Fulfil commitments of ECNI Mental Health Charter	June 2018 and ongoing	HR and Equality	Disability	H&WB action plan. 14 Mental Health First Aiders trained. Various activities during Mental Health Awareness Week. Managing Stress Policy reviewed.
Implementation of Transgender equality statement and procedure	September 2018	HR, Equality and Student Services	Gender	Sector Transgender Equality Statement developed and approved. Internal procedure for staff developed. Leaflet for transgender students developed.
Widening Access and Participation Plan (WAPP)	Annually	Head of Science & Service Industries	Groups under-represented in higher education	WAPP being progressed.
Ensure Equality and Diversity features in College Development Plan and Operational Plans	Annually	SLT	All	Included in College Development Plan, Annual Report, SERs and HR/CPD Operational plan
Monitor, Evaluate and Review Equality Improvement Plan	Annually in June	Equality Officer	All	Plan reviewed in June 2018

PART A

- 3** Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2017-18 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

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

Please provide any details and examples:

Change to the Political Opinion question in the equal opportunities monitoring form for applicants.

- 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:

More user friendly question when obtaining sensitive data

- 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):*

Feedback from political representatives

**Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)**

- 4** Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2017-18 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 2017-18 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:

A question regarding equality duties was included in the Self Evaluation Reviews during year 1 of the Equality Scheme.

- 6** In the 2017-18 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

PART A

- ☐ No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisation's ongoing corporate plan
- ☒ No, the organisation's planning cycle does not coincide with this 2017-18 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 2017-18 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed:

2

Actions ongoing:

11

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 2017-18 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

NA

**9** In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2017-18 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 2017-18 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:

- 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. During 2017/18 there was regular internal consultation with staff and trade unions with regard to the review of policies and procedures.
- As part of the College's commitment at putting students at the heart of all we do, during October 2017 a new initiative focused on improving the student experience and ensuring retention rates reach targets was launched. This took the form of College Welcome and Progress Evenings, where parents and guardians were invited to events run across all campuses. Attendees had the opportunity to hear about the College generally, as well as the campus they were attending and the subjects offered there. Importantly they also were able to meet the teaching staff and discuss the initial progress of their family member(s). In total, over 220 parents/guardians attended the events and feedback is being used to inform future events with the aim of further developing how the College formally engages with this audience group.
- As reported in section one, the College continues to progress the implementation of its Estates Strategy and is working with internal and external stakeholders to achieve this aim.
- Curriculum teams have 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.
- 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.
- Various surveys have taken place with students and staff as detailed in Q.23 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 Academic Planner, Redundancies, Course Co-Ordinator and Course Tutor Roles, Friday Afternoon Meetings, Occupational Health Appointments, Incremental Pay Award, Harassment and Bullying investigations, Placement of Lecturers on Salary Scale and Awarding Body compulsory CPD.

PART A

- 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. The Students' Union has linked enthusiastically with the Estates team this year and has brought a number of campus based issues to their attention.
- All staff who leave the College are requested to complete a Staff exit questionnaire.
- Over the past few years the number of external committees that the College is represented 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 DfE, 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 Agencies Supporting Ethnic Communities and Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council Equality Forum. These groups include 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 2017-18 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 2017-18 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

- 14** Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2017-18 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)**

Quarterly screening reports are published on our website as can be viewed at <http://www.nrc.ac.uk/nrc/equality/>

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

8
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- 16** Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2017-18:

0	Policy consultations conducted with <b>screening</b> assessment presented.
0	Policy consultations conducted <b>with an equality impact assessment</b> (EQIA) presented.
0	Consultations for an <b>EQIA</b> 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 2017/18 were screened out and listed on our website as part of the College's commitment to publish a quarterly screening report.

**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 2017-18 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

☐ Yes                      ☐ No                      ☒ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

NA

## 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 2017-18 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 Student Data Collection. College monitoring forms and recording systems were updated to reflect the guidance. In 16/17 staff monitoring forms and recording systems were reviewed.

**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:

NA

- 22** Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2017-18 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 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.
- 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 May/June 2017 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 the H&WB staff survey the College has developed a Health and Well Being action plan.
- 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 2017 End of Year Survey found that 88% of students felt they were treated equally and fairly and 90% also stated they were treated with respect.
- Various data has also been gathered during 2017/18 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 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 College. This could be a learner/trainee, potential learner/trainee,

service provider, supplier, employer, member of the public or other external stakeholders.

- 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
- 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 through completion of annual Fair Employment Monitoring Return.
- 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.

### **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 2017-18, 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 with 690 staff completing the training. In 2017/18, there were 106 new staff who completed the online module.

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

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

- 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:

Staff across the College have been offered the opportunity to engage in a range of training and development activities to enhance and develop their knowledge and skills in respect of supporting an inclusive College environment. Staff have attended the following equality related training during 2017/2018:

<b>Title</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
Accessibility Awareness	8
ADHD, Dyslexia and Autism	37
Autism and Anxiety Management	1
Autism and Sports Coaching	1
Austim and the Promotion of Positive Behaviour	1
Autism and the Transition to Adulthood	1
Autism, Relationships and Sexuality Education	1
Child Acquired Brain Injury Awareness	5
Chrons awareness	9
Eating Disorders	1
Epilepsy and Buccal Midazolam Awareness	28
Equality and Diversity Online Module	106
Evac Chair Training	5
Examination Access Arrangements	1
Games for All	1
Autism and Sports Coaching	1
Infant Mental Health Strategy	2
LGBTQ: Education the Educators	14
Makaton Training	1
Maternal Mental Health	2

Mental Health First Aid	12
Midfulness	8
Principles of Customer Service	11
Relaxation Boost	7
Safety, Prevention of Abuse and Violence Awareness	1
SENDO and Accessibility Tools	12
Sign Language	1
Students and You – Safeguarding and SENDO online	100
Toe by Toe – Dyslexia technique	19
Virtual Dementia	1
Well Talk: Emotional Wellbeing	40

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

- Supporting students with Dyspraxia
- Crohn's and Colitis Awareness
- Using Read and Write for research – webinar
- Designated Safeguarding Officer
- Supporting children with developmental coordination disorder
- AccessAbility event
- ASD and girls
- Employment of people with disabilities
- Inspire Student Wellbeing 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 2017/18 were:

- NI Wellbeing and Resilience Conference – CIPD
- Resilience Event – SERC/Aware
- Family Friendly Employment Law and HR Initiatives – Arthur Cox
- Helping Public Authorities Provide Accessible Services – ECNI
- Mindful Manager – AMH
- Family Friendly Employment – Employers for Childcare
- Public Sector Section 75 Duties – ECNI
- World Mental Health Day event – Inspire wellbeing services
- Annual Review of Employment Law – Legal-Island

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

- 26** Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2017-18, 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 and various leaflets have been produced to make students aware of the support and services available to them. During this period 665 (an increase of 15.5% from 2016/17) students were supported by the Education Support Department. 167 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
- 5% medical conditions
- 4% sensory impairments
- 59% learning difficulty (dyslexia/dyscalculia/dyspraxia/MLD,GLD)
- 8% mental health problems
- 17% on the autistic spectrum
- 3% ADHD
- 1% acquired brain injury.

These students received extra support either on a one-to-one basis, as part of a small group or classroom support or with a variety of adjustments in the classroom.

### **Learning Support Equipment**

During 2017/19, there were 40 laptops 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, Read and Write Gold, Video Spark, Trello, Dolphin SaySo software, livescribe pens, fidget toys, 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 426 students during 2017/18 (an increase of 49.5% from 2016/17). This support includes extra time, separate rooms, rest breaks, use of laptops, coloured overlay/glasses, word processing facility, use of scribes, readers and prompters, enlarged papers and electronic papers.

### Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

- 27** How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2017-18?

Insert number here:

0
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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*)

- Policy screening – further emphasis will be placed on the importance equality screening with policy authors, this will include increased and more effective use of data.
- Policy development and review - accessible information policy, special leave policy, parental/carers/dependants leave, breastfeeding policy and employee standards.
- Training – further training on supporting staff and students with mental ill health. Training on supporting those with disabilities. DDA and reasonable adjustments training for HR staff.
- Marketing – increased collaboration with the Marketing department to promote the Colleges commitment to equality of opportunity.
- Awareness raising with students – development and implementation of an online Equality and Diversity module to raise awareness amongst the student population.
- Student poster campaign - a suite of posters will be developed to help improve student conduct around the areas of respect and bullying.

- Disability – implementation of the Every Customer Counts Accessible Business Action Plan. Development of a new 5 year Disability Action Plan. Further promotion of DisabledGo access guides.
- Student Monitoring Data – further use of data during the Self Evaluation and Review (SER) process.
- Transgender statement – communication of transgender equality statement and student leaflet. Implementation of transgender guidance for staff.
- Further development and promotion of Dignity at Work Advisers, Trusted Colleagues and Mental Health Champions.
- Health and Wellbeing – implementation of the new Health and Wellbeing programme for staff
- Student Enrichment – increase in collaboration between the Equality Officer and Student Council in relation to Health and Wellbeing and student forums e.g. LGBT and disability forums.
- Estates Redevelopment – consultation with staff, students and external stakeholders 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 (2017-18) 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 2018

#### 1. Public Life Measures

ACTION MEASURES	Timescales	Performance indicators / intended outcome	Progress as at March 2018
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"> <li>• Affirmative action statement included in advertisement in Jan 15.</li> <li>• Difficulty with achievement of this measure due to appointments being made externally.</li> </ul>
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"> <li>• During 2017/18 there has been an increase of level 1 students represented on the Student Union.</li> <li>• Student Union Disability officers elected.</li> <li>• Efforts have been made to establish a student disability forum however there was no uptake.</li> </ul>
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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Various student focus groups have taken place over the year. Students with disabilities are encouraged to attend these.</li> <li>• Students with disabilities have been elected onto Student Union.</li> <li>• Equality Officer meets with Student Union to help ensure any activities planned are accessible to all.</li> </ul>

PART B

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"> <li>• Education Support Coordinators continue to make various adjustments according to student's needs both in the classroom and at exam time.</li> <li>• A variety of reasonable adjustments have been implemented for staff.</li> <li>• Disability Audits of all campuses completed internally in 2017/18 and further review surveys carried out by DisabledGo in November 2017 - disability works plan developed and being progressed across all NRC campus sites.</li> </ul>
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"> <li>• Link to Disabled Go on front page of College's website.</li> <li>• Promoted to both staff and students.</li> <li>• Training provided by DisabledGo in January 2018</li> <li>• Literature placed at campus receptions</li> </ul>
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"> <li>• Reviewed as part of access audits on all campuses.</li> <li>• Close monitoring of use of accessible parking spaces continues with any breaches dealt with promptly.</li> </ul>

## 2. Positive Attitudes

ACTION MEASURES	Timescales	Performance indicators / intended outcome	Progress as at March 2018
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"> <li>• SENDO and Equality part of the Induction programme.</li> <li>• Extensive SENDO training carried out in 12/13 and further training delivered in 14/15. Safeguarding and SENDO online training rolled out in 15/16.</li> <li>• Equality and Diversity training is mandatory for all staff.</li> <li>• 106 staff completed the Legal-island E&amp;D training and 100 completed Safeguarding and SENDO in 17/18.</li> </ul>
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"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Library staff received bespoke training from student support.</li> <li>• Individual teaching staff given specific training depending on student needs.</li> <li>• Frontline staff received Disability and Customer Care training in 2016/17</li> </ul>
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"> <li>• New equality animated video produced for student induction in September 2017.</li> <li>• Disability awareness is part of the Equality and Diversity tutorial session. A new online programme was developed and launched 15/16.</li> <li>• Induction signposts students to Education support services and relevant policies.</li> </ul>

PART B

ACTION MEASURES	Timescales	Performance indicators / intended outcome	Progress as at March 2018
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Various community and voluntary groups who represent those with disabilities attend Fresher's week.</li> <li>• Equality Officer delivers Equality and Good Relations talks to classes as and when required.</li> <li>• ECNI, Disability Action and AMH deliver workshops with student groups.</li> </ul>
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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandatory Equality online training for staff includes Disability Awareness.</li> <li>• SENDO is delivered to staff on a needs basis and as part of Induction.</li> <li>• Disability Customer Care training delivered in 16/17.</li> <li>• Disability specific training delivered i.e. ADHD, ASD and mental health.</li> </ul>
11. Further development of partnerships with the disability sector.	Annually  Year 1 – Year 5	Increased engagement with representative groups from disability sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good relationships built with Action Mental Health and Aware in 2017/18</li> <li>• College member of the FE Sector SLDD Forum.</li> <li>• College is a member of the Northern Area Adult Autism Service Forum, and a member of the Regional ASD Forum with NHSCT.</li> <li>• Strong links with various other disability groups e.g. RNIB, action on hearing loss, MENCAP, Cedar Foundation and Audiology Departments.</li> <li>• NRC staff exhibited at two Disability Fairs in Ballymoney and Antrim.</li> </ul>
12. Monitor and review the progress of the Disability Action Plan.	Annually  August Year 1 – Year 5	Provision of update contained within Progress Report.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This action plan is reviewed annually.</li> <li>• New plan will be developed in 18/19.</li> </ul>

