

DISABILITY ACTION PLAN

2013 – 2018

DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT 1995
[AS AMENDED BY THE
DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION (NI) ORDER 2006]



Alternative Formats

If you require this plan in an alternative format (such as easy read, Braille, audio formats (CD, MP3 or DAISY), large print or minority languages to meet the needs of those for whom English is not their first language), please contact the named person below with your requirements:-

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Foreword

This Disability Action Plan confirms the NI Further Education Colleges commitment to and proposals for fulfilling the statutory obligations in compliance with Sections 49A and 49B of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 [as amended by the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006].

This Act places duties on public authorities, when carrying out their functions to have due regard to the need to:

- promote positive attitudes towards with a disability people; and
- encourage participation by people with a disability in public life.

This plan outlines how the College can more effectively mainstream disability issues within policy decision-making. The College has already consulted with a number of key stakeholders at sector and local level in the development of this plan and looks forward to achieving the necessary change for people with disabilities.

Chair _____

Director _____

Date _____

Date _____

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1 Introduction

1.1 Under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006), the College as a public authority will, when carrying out its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability; and will
- encourage participation by people with a disability in public life ('the disability duties').

1.2 Under Section 49B of the DDA 1995 (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006), the College is also required to submit to the Equality Commission a Disability Action Plan showing how it proposes to fulfil these duties in relation to its functions. This action plan will also encompass College efforts in relation to the Special Educational Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005 (SEND0).

1.3 Commitments:

The Governing Body and Senior Management Team of the College are committed to implementing effectively the disability duties and the Disability Action Plan.

1.3.1 Promotion of Disability Duties

We are committed to the promotion of the disability duties throughout the College.

1.3.2 Resources

The College is committed to allocating the necessary resources (in terms of people, time and money) in order to implement effectively this plan and continue to develop objectives and targets relating to the disability duties. The budget allocation will be determined on an annual basis based on the action plan.

1.3.3 Communication to Staff

The College will ensure the effective communication of the plan to staff. Staff will be provided with information on the plan via the Colleges internal communication mechanisms.

1.3.4 Internal Arrangements

The College is committed to ensuring that internal arrangements are in place in order to ensure that the disability duties are complied with and this Disability Action Plan is effectively implemented.

1.3.5 Training

The College is committed to providing ongoing training for staff on disability equality legislation.

1.4 Point of Contact

Responsibility for implementing, reviewing and evaluating this Disability Action Plan will be:

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1.5 Reporting Arrangements

The College is committed to reviewing and updating annually the implementation of our Disability Action Plan to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

The College is committed to carrying out a five year review of the Disability Action Plan.

A copy of this plan and the annual progress reports will be made available for all staff to access on the College website.

1.6 Functions

The College Development Plan provides the overarching framework within which the College will take forward the best interests of the staff and students, sets out the College's vision, values and corporate goals and takes cognisance of its operating environment.

1.7 Policies

To support and implement the functions/services the College operates within policy guidelines laid down by the Department for Employment and Learning, and according to policies as agreed through sectoral negotiation or through the Colleges Management/ Governance structures.

1.8 The College is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and good relations in accordance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. This policy should be interpreted in a manner consistent with the aforementioned legislation.

2 Public Life Positions

2.1 Participation in Public Life is difficult for Colleges to achieve within the FE Sector in relation to public appointments as it is a Department for Employment and Learning responsibility to appoint Governing Body members. Although the Colleges Governing Body is the only public life appointments made, the College will encourage the involvement of people with a disability in internal working groups, partnerships and focus groups.

- 2.2 The range of public life positions over which the College has responsibility includes user forums and partnerships with the voluntary and community sectors which inform the design and delivery of services and policy development.
- 2.3 A number of College staff are also members of a wide range of partnerships. They will use their influence to raise issues in relation to the participation of people with a disability where under-representation is apparent.

3. Previous Measures

The College has undertaken a number of previous measures to promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability and to encourage their participation in public life. Already there are many examples of good practice in existence. Some of which are outlined below:-

- training for staff
- use of positive imagery in documents/promotion literature
- engagement with groups representing people with a disability.

4 Consultation

- 4.1 The College is committed to ensuring meaningful and effective public involvement and participation to inform the development of the Disability Action Plan. The College will continue to engage with a

wide range of key stakeholders including consulting with people with a disability on the implementation of the plan.

5 Timescales

- 5.1 The measures will be allocated across various departments in the College and run concurrently throughout the life of the plan. As such they are considered to carry equal weight.

6 Monitoring

- 6.1 The College will monitor and review outcomes arising from the Disability Action Plan on an annual basis.

7 ACTION PLAN

A detailed Action Plan is set out below

7.1 Public Life Measures

ACTION MEASURES	Timescales	Performance indicators / intended outcome
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.
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.
3. Encourage students with a disability to participate more fully in College life.	Annually as part of induction and on-going throughout the year.	Increased participation in student focus groups, student surveys,

ACTION MEASURES	Timescales	Performance indicators / intended outcome
	Year 1 – Year 5.	Student Union Membership and where applicable non-curricular activities such as students union and sporting activities etc.
4. Continue to implement reasonable adjustments for students and staff with a disability.	Ongoing.	Increased retention of students and staff with disabilities.
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.
6. Review appropriate allocation and usage of designated car parking for people with disabilities on all College campuses.	Annually Year 1 – Year 5.	Appropriate allocation and usage of car parking spaces for use by students and staff.

7.2 Positive Attitudes

ACTION MEASURES	Timescales	Performance indicators / intended outcome
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.
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.
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.
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

ACTION MEASURES	Timescales	Performance indicators / intended outcome
		with a disability.
11. Further development of partnerships with the disability sector.	Annually Year 1 – Year 5	Increased engagement with representative groups from disability sector.
12. Monitor and review the progress of the Disability Action Plan.	Annually August Year 1 – Year 5	Provision of update contained within Progress Report.

