

**Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties  
Annual Progress Report 2019-20**

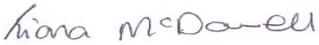
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Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:

<https://www.nrc.ac.uk/corporate/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 2019 and March 2020**

## **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 2019-20, 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.*

#### **Autism Transition Project**

This year the College have been working closely and collaboratively with the Education Authority's Autism Advisory and Intervention Service (AAIS).

The College recently produced a new booklet to help young people with their transition from post primary school into further education. This "Stepping Up" booklet provides information from the young person's perspective and that of the educational setting so that when they come to a further education college, we know better how to work with them and provide any support they require. The booklet was a co-production between our young people, the AAIS and ourselves.

The AAIS and the College were also involved in a working group set up by the Northern Health and Social Care Trust entitled 'Navigating the Teenage Years'. An event was organised for parents of young people with ASD, the College and the AAIS post primary staff along with the College were due to be joint speakers. Unfortunately, due to the coronavirus pandemic this event has had to be postponed, but the College is looking forward to having it soon. In the meantime, the College is currently working hard together on plans for rolling out autism training to all our staff.

#### **LGBTQ+ Society**

This year the Student Union class reps were keen to establish an LGBTQ+ society. To progress this, the College enlisted the help of the Rainbow Project. Following initial meetings, the Rainbow Project then delivered Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity training in Newtownabbey. This was provided as a taster session to raise awareness of terminology and other issues. There were 72 students and 10 staff who attended the SOGI training. The awareness training then allowed the College to gather interest for a personal development course which was specifically for students who identified as LGBTQ+. The hope was these students would complete the 6-week course, gain a certificate and then progress to set up an LGBTQ+ society. Unfortunately, due COVID-19 the personal development course

couldn't run, however, the College hopes to progress this further next year. In response to the COVID situation Rainbow ran these sessions online for the public and students were invited and encouraged to take part.

### **Time to talk day**

As part of the College ongoing commitment to promoting good mental health, the College supported the Time to Talk Day initiative by encouraging staff to come along to their campus staff room and have a conversation about mental health. In the staff rooms, posters and information cards packed with ideas on how to start conversations about mental health were readily available. There was also information about how to support colleagues, and where to go if you need support. Approximately 170 staff took part in the event by having conversations about mental health and sharing self-care tips over tea break.

In addition, Inspire Wellbeing Services visited all campuses to demonstrate the new Staff Support Hub. This is an innovative online platform which provides instant access to a range of bespoke wellbeing tools.

### **On Course Week – Student Wellbeing sessions**

This year the College trialled an 'On Course Week', designed to help us retain our students and ensure that at the end of their programme they achieve their qualifications. Students identified as being at risk of not completing were given time to catch up with work. During this week students were also given the opportunity to attend a series of Wellbeing Sessions as we recognised that students may need additional support beyond the classroom. Inspire delivered talks on Stress and Anxiety, Kith & Kin provided workshops on Financial Wellbeing and Student Services staff delivered Resilience Training. Drop-in sessions were also available on Inspire Student Support Hub, Careers and Student Finance.

### **Bespoke Resilience Training for Students**

During lockdown the College embarked on an initiative to promote positive mental health among students by offering them online resilience training. Resilience training was previously delivered on a face-to-face basis as part of the College's health and well-being strategy, but the COVID-19 crisis prompted us to think outside the box and do things differently. For some of our students, going to College is an important part of their routine and they rely on the support they get from lecturers and others in their class. The College wanted to reassure them that although the College's doors were closed, we were still working, and that support was there for them if they needed it.

### **Digital Accessibility**

From September 2018, the new Public Sector Web Accessibility Regulations came into force making it a legal requirement that any content published on websites, intranets and digital learning environments is fully accessible. As reported in 2018/19 the College made many advances to prepare for this new legislation.

Further progress has been made during 2019/20:

- Integrated Blackboard Ally with Canvas which allows us to check the accessibility of all our online resources. The software identifies content that may not be accessible and then makes suggestions on how it can be improved. Students can also use this software to download an accessible version of a file, e.g. a tagged PDF, electronic Braille or an audio file.
- Introduced a rating system for Canvas course sites which includes increasing the accessibility score of the course to encourage staff to continue improving resources.
- Developed a Digital Accessibility online course for staff and have delivered several webinars throughout the year on this.
- Provided accessibility training during Going for Gold Workshops covering how to create accessible Word & PowerPoint documents.
- Following on from the redevelopment of our website our Marketing and IT departments have been working to resolve any accessibility issues outlined through the Web Accessibility Evaluation tool (WAVE). This is still work-in-progress, but we have made substantial improvements in addressing some contrast issues and have updated our accessibility statement to reflect this.

### **Women in STEM Project**

Women in STEM (W-STEM), a £1 million international project aimed at promoting STEM subjects to women in higher education, was conceived to encourage more women to do STEM subjects, primarily in South American universities. The College College is a lead partner in the project and the only FE College among the fifteen international partners.

In March the project marked International Women's Day 2020 by hosting a series of events to celebrate the College's involvement in the Women in STEM project. The events included an informal gathering of female STEM staff (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) on the Newtownabbey campus, a talk to engineering students by Sensata Technologies and lastly Year 10 pupils from local post primary schools went head to head at the annual Schools' Technology Challenge. These events were designed to highlight the importance of STEM subjects to a wider audience and are part of the College's overall strategy to equip students with the skills needed to compete successfully in the global workplace and meet the needs of local employers.

### **Student Union**

In May 2019 the appointment took place of the Students' Union President and Student Governor, taking up office in September. The student has worked hard this year to raise awareness of the Students' Union amongst his peers and has had great involvement in the Governing Body. The student completed his Governor training with NUSUSI in October 2019 which enabled him to take his place on the Governing Body.

The elections for the 2020/21 Students' Union President have recently taken place and a successor has been identified. During the 2019/20 academic year the new president was been the LGBTQ+ Officer for the Newtownabbey

Campus and she attended NUSUSI events which the Students' Union participated in. The individual has endeavoured to raise awareness of LGBTQ+ issues and has been campaigning to raise awareness of the issue of consent with the Students' Union. In addition, the new president co-presented an on-line video to make students aware on the measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19 on campus.

The Students' Union has carried out several campaigns and promoted various awareness raising days including,

- Consent Workshops – in partnership with PSNI, PHA, and NHSCT
- Elephant in the Room
- LGBTQ+ campaign
- World Mental Health Day
- Five Ways to Wellbeing
- Wear It Pink Day
- Anti-Bullying Week
- National Talk Money Day
- Sexual Health Week
- Time to Talk Day
- Alternatives to Alcohol – Dry January
- National Student Money Week
- Sexting and the Law
- Mental Health Awareness Week
- Autism Awareness Week
- Your Mind Matters
- Towards Zero Suicide
- Homelessness Week
- Blue Monday

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

During 2019-20, the College have continued to partner with the Chest, Heart and Stroke 'Well Team at Work' initiative by implementing a targeted health and well-being action plan.

In December the College received a Well Team Participation Award, at NI Chest Heart & Stroke (NICHS) Celebration, Recognition & Networking Event. Well Team is funded by the Public Health Agency (PHA) and aims to engage with workplaces to seek ongoing commitment to improve the health and wellbeing of employees by identifying need, increasing capacity and supporting implementation and delivery of a three-year workplace health and wellbeing action plan.

Various activities, campaigns and awareness raising initiatives have taken place during 2019/20, such as:

- Mental Health Awareness Week
- Flu Vaccines
- Wear it Pink Day
- Free Health Checks
- Mindful Manager and Mindful Colleague training

- Time to Talk Day.
- Wellbeing during lockdown (weekly emails)

### **Widening Access and Participation Plan (WAPP)**

The College's vision for widening participation is that any eligible individual in its catchment area should be able to gain access 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 there is increased participation in higher education at the College 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.

The College has introduced a WAP Coordinator role which is a key development for progressing the WAP agenda within the College. It is envisaged that this role will mature and develop over the next three years and act as a focal point for WAP activity within the College and will be key to the delivery of the College's WAPP. The College will seek to further develop stakeholder engagement through outreach programmes and projects. The College views this engagement to better reach the groups and individuals targeted within WAP. The College will continue to target stakeholders including community groups, councils, and schools.

### **Empower Project**

The focus of the project is to support families with children under 12 who have Autism, Dyslexia and Dyspraxia. It is available to their parents and the wider family circle to enhance confidence and to enable them to learn together to develop skills to support their children.

Outcome 1- Improved understanding of children's learning and increased support skills

Outcome 2- Decreased levels of Social isolation in families

Outcome 3 - Increased integration and enhanced sense of community belonging

Outcome 4 - Increased awareness among parents, wider family circle and other key stakeholders in the child's life of how to identify earlier and mitigate the effects of learning related disorders

Empower offers a range of training courses to support parents and develop skills to support their children, these range from ASD and anger/Anxiety, Dyslexia, navigating an autistic sensory system, thinking visually, behavioural

strategies etc. Courses are determined by feedback from parents, and are held in Antrim and Magherafelt on weekdays, evenings and Saturdays. In 2020 we have ran 130 face to face courses supporting 968 participants. From April 2020 we adapted delivery to online and have offered short sessions online identified as needed by parents, they have ranged from: Autism & Anxiety, Looking at Future, Feelings & Emotions, Keeping Safe, Cutting hair in Lockdown, Understanding & Supporting Emotions, Feeling Calm, Social Distancing, Emotions/Mindfulness, Supporting Parents and Understanding & Supporting Behaviours.

### **Wear it Pink Day**

Once again, the College participated in the 'Wear it Pink Day' event to raise awareness and fundraise for Cancer Focus NI. 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 £3122 for Cancer Focus NI.

### **Sector Committees**

The College is a member of the FE Equality Coordinators' 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 five times per year to develop and promote a best practice and consistent approach to the implementation of Section 75 within FE in Northern Ireland.

During 2019/20 the forum considered student and staff equality monitoring forms, AccessAble, online recruitment, Accessibility Regulations, policy screening, Health Declaration forms, Disability action plans, new Learner Management system, EU Charter on Irish and Ulster Scots, Breastfeeding guidance and a Menopause guidance.

**2** Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2019-20 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsible person/ Department</b>	<b>Equality Category</b>	<b>Progress as at March 2020</b>
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 annually.
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. Online E&D tutorial module for students.
Adopt ECNI Every Customer Counts recommendations including carrying out accessible business checklist/audits on all campuses	From June 2018	Equality, Student Services and Estates	Disability	Completed audits of all campuses. New accessible action plan developed and progressed including repainting accessible parking spaces, upgrading accessible toilets and reviewing hearing loop systems.
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 raising days/weeks. Wellbeing sessions during 'on course' week and LGBTQ+ sessions in 19/20
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.

## PART A

Representative Officers on Student Unions with clear roles and responsibilities i.e. LGBT+ Officer, Disabled Student Officer and Women's Officer	Annually	Student Services	Sexual Orientation Disability Gender	Established officers in Student Union elected annually. New constitution implemented in 2017/18. Improved communication/consultation with student body. Initial development of a LGBTQ+ society in Newtownabbey campus during 19/20.
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 2019/20 80 staff completed the Equality and Diversity module. 109 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 - MH Awareness Week, Becoming a Mindful Manager & Becoming a Mindful Colleague training, Time to Talk day, Mindfulness sessions and Finding the balance talks.
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 and new plan submitted for 2020/21.
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 2020.

**3** Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2019-20 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

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

Please provide any details and examples:

NA

**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:

NA

**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 2019-20 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 2019-20 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 2019-20 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 2019-20 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 2019-20 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed:

2

Actions ongoing:

11

Actions to commence:

0

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 2019-20 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

NA

9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2019-20 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 2019-20 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 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 2019/20 there was regular internal consultation with staff and trade unions with regards the review of policies and procedures
- The College continues to progress the implementation of its Estates Strategy and is working with internal and external stakeholders to achieve this aim. Including survey of staff and students on opinions of existing campus buildings prior to decanting to alternative buildings, in advance of new buildings progressing.
- 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 managers who are consulting on 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 met once until the commencement of lockdown and thereafter a further eight meetings took place through MS Teams on a fortnightly basis. Topics discussed included, academic planner, implementation agreement, curriculum rebalancing, recruitment, working from home, return to campus and calculated grades.
- The College's Student Union continues to develop and is consulted on a regular basis. During 2017/18 the College moved to localised campus Class Rep meetings following student feedback and this has continued into 2019/20. The purpose of this was to enable Class Reps the opportunity to discuss issues specific to their campus.
- All staff who leave the College are requested to complete a Staff Exit Questionnaire.
- Over the past few years, the number of external committees 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, DfE, ECNI, local schools, local

councils, businesses/employers, neighbourhood renewal partnerships, community organisations, NHSCT, PSNI, and Autism NI

- The College's Equality Manager continues to be a member of Agencies Supporting Ethnic Communities and sits on the Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council Equality Forum. These groups include representatives from various statutory, community and voluntary organisations representing the nine equality groups.
- The College's Business Development function and Senior Management 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 business and community networks and forums.

12 In the 2019-20 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*):

13 Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2019-20 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- Yes       No       Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

14 Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2019-20 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*):

4
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**16** Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2019-20:

0	Policy consultations conducted with <b>screening</b> assessment presented.
0	Policy consultations conducted <b>with an equality impact assessment (EQIA)</b> 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 2019/20 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



**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 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.
- 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. In the 2019/20 Induction Survey 94% of respondents agreed that '*All students are treated fairly and with respect*'.
- Various data has also been gathered during 2019/20 such as Infocast survey, training exit interviews, carers guidance feedback, workshop feedback, staff development surveys, graduation surveys, employer open days, digital insights survey, business development feedback, 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 or 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 2019-20, 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 ensure the College is 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 2019/20, there were 80 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 2019/2020:

<b>Title</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
Autism (various courses)	21
Adverse Childhood experiences/ Trauma	10
Becoming a Mindful Colleague (Mental Health Awareness)	23

Emotional de-escalations and conflict management (for Special Educational Needs)	34
Adult Safeguarding Champion Training	13
Designated Safeguarding Officer Training	12
Digital Accessibility	5
Epilepsy Awareness	23
Equality & Diversity online module	80
Dignity at Work Awareness	2
Mental Health and Young People	207
Makaton	2
Mental Health First Aid	4
Students & You (Safeguarding and SENDO)	109
Safeguarding & Mental Health	15
Safeguarding for Senior Managers	24

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

- Drug & Alcohol responder training
- LGBTQ+
- Girls with Autism
- Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA) Awareness
- Psychometric testing, assessment and exams arrangements
- Inspire Student Wellbeing conference

The Equality Manager 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 2019/20 were:

- Workplace Wellbeing Celebration Event – Chest, Heart and Stroke
- Family Friendly Employment Workshop – Employers for Childcare
- Stress Control Classes – NHSCT
- Just Us Good Relations Train the Trainer programme – PSCP and Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council
- Autism and Employment – Mid & East Antrim Council
- Developing a Trauma Informed Education Sector – Safeguarding Board NI
- Dignity at Work – Sector collaboration with FE Colleges

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

- 26** Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2019-20, 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 18/19 were phased return to work after absence, specialist IT equipment, 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 743 (an increase of 2% from 2018/19) students were supported by the Education Support Department. 142 of these were referred to an educational psychologist for assessment.

The following is a breakdown of the student's main disability/need:

- 52% learning difficulty (dyslexia/dyscalculia/dyspraxia/MLD, GLD)
- 13% Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- 11% mental ill health
- 9% medical conditions
- 6% ADHD /ADD
- 4% sensory impairments
- 3% mobility problems/physical conditions
- 2% Other

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 2019/20, there were significant laptops purchased to help students with additional needs. Various other pieces of equipment and software were provided to improve students accessibility such as: a braille printer, roger pens, audio shoes, digital voice recorders, 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, PHONAK sound system, reading slopes and writing slopes.

### **Examination Support**

The College has provided examination support to 344 students during 2019/20. 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 2019-20?

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. An online module will be developed for managers explaining Section 75 with an emphasis on equality screening.
- Policy development and review –Policies on special leave, parental, carers and dependants leave, new and expectant mothers, working from home and menopause have all been developed/reviewed during 2019/20. These will be approved and communicated to staff in 2020/21.
- Training – procurement of refresher Equality & Diversity training for all staff. Explore further training opportunities for staff such as LGBTQ+, mental health, resilience, suicide prevention and disability awareness.
- Embedding equality in the curriculum – further guidance/resources for lecturing staff on promotion of equality and diversity in the classroom

PART A

- Awareness raising with students – explore further Peace IV opportunities and make new links with councils and voluntary agencies.
- Promotion of Equality and Diversity via our social media channels.
- Disability Action Plan – Explore further opportunities for work placements
- Health and Wellbeing – implementation of the 2020/21 Health and Wellbeing Action plan for staff.
- Student Enrichment – increase in collaboration between the Equality Manager and Student Council in relation to Equality awareness, Health and Wellbeing and student forums e.g. LGBT and disability forums.

**30** In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next (2019-20) 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 2019 - 2024 as at March 2020**

**1. Public Life Measures**

<b>ACTION MEASURES</b>	<b>Timescales</b>	<b>Performance indicators / intended outcome</b>	<b>Progress as at March 2020</b>
The Colleges will endeavour to influence the Department for the Economy 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.	Difficulty with achievement of this measure due to appointments being made externally. Sector Equality group have written to Department for Economy.
Continue to encourage the participation of disabled people on committees, student representatives on the Governing Body and groups across the Colleges.	Reviewed annually Year 1 – Year 5.	Membership of committees / groups to demonstrate participation of those with disabilities.	There has been an increase of Level 1 students represented on the Student Union.  Student Union Disability officers elected annually across College campus sites.  Efforts have been made to establish a student disability forum however there was no uptake.

<b>ACTION MEASURES</b>	<b>Timescales</b>	<b>Performance indicators / intended outcome</b>	<b>Progress as at March 2020</b>
Encourage students with a disability to participate more fully in College life.	Annually as part of induction and ongoing 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 student's union and sporting activities etc.	<p>Various student focus groups have taken place over the year. Students with disabilities are encouraged to attend these.</p> <p>Students with disabilities have been elected onto Student Union.</p> <p>Equality Manager meets with Student Union to help ensure any activities planned are accessible to all.</p> <p>Student Services provide differentiated information across the College ensuring accessibility.</p>
Increase awareness of specific barriers faced by people with a disability including through linking in with National Awareness days or weeks.	Ongoing.	Increased awareness and understanding of barriers faced by people with a disability.	<p>We have participated in various awareness raising campaigns throughout the year including Autism Awareness Day, Down Syndrome Socks Day, World Mental Health Day and HIV awareness day.</p> <p>The activities have been both physical and social media</p>

ACTION MEASURES	Timescales	Performance indicators / intended outcome	Progress as at March 2020
			<p>campaigns supported by the College and the Student Union.</p> <p>Use of bespoke Induction video animations to encourage inclusion of those with disabilities across the College.</p> <p>The College continues to be an active member of the Northern Adult Autism Advice Service where multidisciplinary advice is offered to those either seeking employment or attending course at the College.</p> <p>Head of Student Services is a member of the NHSCT Autism Forum which navigates the Trusts activities to those on the Autistic Spectrum.</p>
Promote the use of AccessAble website to encourage participation of prospective students.	Annually and on-going Year 1 – Year 5.	Benchmark usage of AccessAble webpage.	<p>The guides are promoted to both staff and students via a link to the AccessAble website on the front page of College's website.</p> <p>Literature has been placed at campus receptions.</p>

ACTION MEASURES	Timescales	Performance indicators / intended outcome	Progress as at March 2020
			<p>AccessAble were invited to meet with key College staff to discuss further promotion of the guides.</p> <p>College student has become Northern Ireland's AccessAble champion, a social media campaign has been produced to promote this.</p>

## 1.2 Positive Attitudes

ACTION MEASURES	Timescales	Performance indicators / intended outcome	Progress as at March 2020
<p>Create an open an inclusive workplace culture which displays respect for those with mental ill health</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Positive engagement, increased provision of information and monitoring.</p>	<p>The College have trained a cohort of staff in Mental Health First Aid to support both staff and students in crisis.</p> <p>We have developed 'Mindful Manager' and 'Mindful Colleague' training designed to practically support staff in positive mental wellbeing.</p>

ACTION MEASURES	Timescales	Performance indicators / intended outcome	Progress as at March 2020
			<p>A number of staff have refreshed their ASSIST (suicide prevention) training.</p> <p>The College has committed to the promotion of mental wellbeing by signing the ECNI Mental Health Charter.</p> <p>The College is registered as a Safe Place for those experiencing domestic violence and the trauma that follows.</p> <p>Safeguarding staff have completed Drug and Alcohol Responders Training allowing for brief intervention with those struggling with addiction and the negative impact on their wellbeing.</p>
Explore the scope of offering meaningful placements, work shadowing and volunteering for people with a disability	Ongoing	Develop capacity of people with a disability to find employment.	<p>We have investigated avenues of partnership working with external organisations to provide work shadowing opportunities.</p> <p>Students with a disability are supported by the Education Support</p>

ACTION MEASURES	Timescales	Performance indicators / intended outcome	Progress as at March 2020
			team, curriculum staff and Training Support Officers into meaningful work placements and monitored to ensure safety and positive learning experiences.
Introduce training for front line staff on disability etiquette and relevant legislation dealing with disability and the provision of goods, facilities and services.	Ongoing	Increased use of services and facilities of those people with a disability.	<p>SENDO and Equality are part of the staff Induction programme.</p> <p>Various disability related training is delivered to staff throughout the year including Mental Health Awareness, Evacuation Chairs, Epilepsy, Dyslexia, ASSIST, Domestic Violence, Drug &amp; Alcohol, ADHD and Autism awareness.</p> <p>Individual teaching staff are given specific training depending on student needs.</p> <p>We plan to refresh staff on Disability and Customer Care in 2020/21.</p>
Consider development of a (Sectoral) Disability	Three meetings per year	Contribute to the development of communications, consultation, screening of	Preparations are underway to undertake a specific piece of work to be defined by the group.

<b>ACTION MEASURES</b>	<b>Timescales</b>	<b>Performance indicators / intended outcome</b>	<b>Progress as at March 2020</b>
Advisory Group that could involve staff and students.		relevant policies, monitoring etc.	
Through Widening Access and Participation scheme increase number of students with a disability entering the College	Annually	Raise educational awareness, aspirations and educational attainment amongst the target group.	<p>The College continues to support a variety of students, including those with disabilities from lower socioeconomic backgrounds to participate in College life via Higher Education study.</p> <p>The Gallaghers Trust is working in partnership with the College to provide a bursary for a designated student and this will cover their HE fees.</p>
Monitor and review the progress of the Disability Action Plan.	Annually August Year 1 – Year 5	Provision of update contained within Progress Report.	This plan is reviewed on an annual basis in March and amended accordingly.

