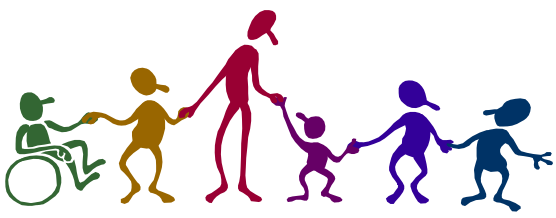
north west regional college
Derry~Londonderry • Limavady • Strabane

# SECTION 75 OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND ACT 1998

# PROGRESS REPORT

**Report on the implementation of equality and good relations duties under Section 75 of the NI Act 1998**

## APRIL 2025 – MARCH 2026



*North West Regional College*

# Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties

# Annual Progress Report 2025-2026

| **Contact:** | |
|---|---|
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| • Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Action Plan | As above ✓<br>Name:<br>Telephone:<br>Email: |
| Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at: | http://www.nwrc.ac.uk/Equality/ |
| **Signature:** Michelle Grant | |

**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 2025 and March 2026**

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

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

**In 2025-26, 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.**

Over the 2025/2026 academic year, many Equality days were promoted on the College's staff and student portals in our continued commitment to raise awareness.

Examples included:

- International Children's Day
- Men's Health Week
- World Breastfeeding Week
- World Suicide Prevention Day
- International Day of Sign Languages
- European Day of Languages
- Black History Month
- World Ostomy Day
- World Mental Health Day
- World Menopause Awareness Day
- International Men's Day
- Disability History Month
- White Ribbon Day
- 16 Days of Action Against Domestic Abuse
- Human Rights Day
- International Day of Education
- Wear Red Day for Heart disease
- Random Act of Kindness Day
- Ramadan
- International Women's Day
- Neurodiversity Celebration Week
- Stop Food Waste Day
- Deaf Awareness Week
- Dementia Action Week
- Pride Month
- Volunteers Week
- Refugee Week

Following on from a recent meeting between the Head of Client Services, EDI Officer and representatives from the Bready Ulster-Scots group, whose main purpose is to promote and preserve the culture and heritage of local people, the Student Services Manager attended their careers day held in the New Gate Arts & Culture Centre on Saturday 27 September 2025 where

there was the opportunity to share what courses the College has to offer, as well as viewing what other opportunities are available locally.

The College continued to strengthen links with the Rainbow Project to further support our students and staff. Further training sessions were held in November 2025 for students from our Health and Social Care courses. Certificates were provided by them for those who participated. Also, the College had representation again at the Foyle Pride event on 23 August 2025. Plans are being made to have training for students in our Springtown and Greystone Campuses.

A representative from the Good Relations Office in DC&SDC attended the Equality Working Group meeting on 28 May 2025 to provide an overview / presentation of the Council's good relations work, which allowed for further discussions on how the College could further support this work across the North West over the 2025/2026 academic year. In addition, further collaboration with REACH and WAPP Officer continued.

Work progressed with the Koram Centre in Strabane whereby online training was made available this academic year for staff. Koram are a registered charity, offering professional therapeutic intervention and psychosocial support.

During the reporting period, work with North West Migrants Forum continued. The College hosted their Black Heritage in NI: Hidden History Project in the Strand Road Campus from 20 October 2025 to 14 November 2025. This gave staff and students the opportunity to review various people whose contributions to Northern Ireland had not been acknowledged. There was also the opportunity for international visitors to the Network of Networks event in November 2025 to view this important heritage project. In addition, the College hosted this project in the Limavady Campus before and after Christmas. They have also worked with the International Administrator in the preparation of the International Welcome brochure and Welcome in different languages pop-up stands.




The College attended the launch of Women's Tec new premises in Rath Mor in Creggan on 26 September 2025. Women's Tec are Northern Ireland's largest quality provider of training for women in non-traditional skills. They encourage girls into construction and engineering industries and the College are partners with them which was established through the DfE Challenge Fund. There was also a taster session for local schools held in Springtown Campus. Women's Tec also plan to have sessions in Strabane and Limavady.

In addition, the College has signed up for their #NotJustforBoys campaign and is the first College in the sector to do so. There will be a range of activities held to encourage girls into this profession.

Signs outlining the College's participation with them as Champions have been placed in Springtown and Greystone, with plans for Strabane as well. In addition, there is planned activity in the next academic year for groups of students from local secondary schools to take part in additional taster sessions, encouraging women into engineering and construction industries.

The College has signed up as a Dementia Friend organisation through the Alzheimer's Society. This initiative aims to increase understanding of dementia and encourage people to support those affected in their communities. Whether through a face-to-face or virtual Dementia Friends session, or by watching a short online video, participants learn more about dementia and the small ways they can help.

A Dementia Friend learns about dementia, how it can affect people, and simple ways to make a positive difference locally. Many people living with dementia can feel isolated or excluded because the condition is still widely misunderstood. Dementia Friends help challenge this by using their awareness to take small, everyday actions that support people with dementia to live as fully and independently as possible.

Following Green17's initial audits in 2021/2022, the Marketing team plan for a further audit to be compiled and presented by the end of November 2026. In addition, the EDI Officer has prepared an Easy Read version of the Equality Scheme and is available on the Equality Section of the College's website

https://www.nwrc.ac.uk/equality

The College's International Administrator and EDI Officer continued to work together to ensure the continued commitment to the College of Sanctuary accreditation.

Actions discussed included having Welcome pop-up stands in a range of languages to support prospective students at receptions across all campuses, the establishment of the first International student group to give a space for international students to interact and have their voices heard, facilitating drop in days in the library for ESOL students in order to take them through additional support the College can provide, the provision of an International Welcome Booklet, the provision of an app on iPads at receptions to support live translations of various documents, and training provided to relevant staff on its use and linking with the range of schools who have successfully been accredited with Schools of Sanctuary.

The EDI Officer met with a representative from the EANI to discuss the plans the college has in relation to meeting with the various schools to collaborate on the range of support available.

In addition, the College was invited to attend Queens University Belfast's Sanctuary Pathways Through FE & HE event on 4 March 2026. The event was designed to support people from refugee and asylum-seeking backgrounds, bringing together FE and HE institutions to co-create sanctuary pathways and opportunities.




Staff were invited to attend the College's Culturally themed Health and Wellbeing day which took place on 22 May 2026. The event was opened by Dr Katy Radford from the Office of Identity and Cultural Expression and began with an Indian classical and Bollywood dance. There was also a cookery demonstration by Chef Paula McIntyre.

Staff and students participated with traditional Irish and Ulster-Scots music from both staff and representatives from Newgate Arts and Cultural Centre. Staff performed and participated in Bulgarian, Bollywood and Flamenco dances, with singing performances from staff and students, including renditions in Greek. Students also participated.

A range of workshops were provided by North West Migrants Forum and Sarika Shah Art which included Indian Heritage Block Printing Workshop, Chinese Lantern Making workshop, Mexican decorating sugar skull (face mask) workshop, Henna tattoos, drumming workshop, Ukrainian Montanka Workshop, yoga, scented candle workshop, and an exhibition of Bready Ulster Scots photography. Various food samples were on offer from North West Migrants Forum, African and Caribbean Community Network and Strabane Ethnic Community Association.

The brochure for the activities across the campuses is included below

https://online.fliphtml5.com/fxyij/cxfb/

The College renewed its membership with Employers for Disability NI following its successful achievement of the AAA Disability Positive Accreditation and will be able to again avail of their training opportunities as before either through the designated staff development days or on an individual basis. The College continued to receive good practice updates from them. The EDI Officer attended their Hearing Loss training during Deaf Awareness Week which commenced at the beginning of May 2026.

The EDI Officer continued to represent the College at the Sector Equality Co-ordinator's Forum this academic year. Discussions included the review of the Disability Action Plan, recent changes in miscarriage leave legislation and the need to review relevant policies, the implementation of a reasonable adjustment template to capture inputs and outcomes consistently, and the review of the Colleges' Equality Schemes. The training on policy screening was also held on 30 April 2026. Good practice was shared which included an Autism Reality Bus, the College's Cultural H&WB Day, with further colleges considering the Autism Impact Award. Work continued on the Equality Forum Collaboration Plan 2025/2026.

The College has recently signed Resilio and NW Community Network's Hope and Resilience Charter "Together in Hope, Building Resilience for a Brighter Future". This is following on from the College becoming the first Campus of Hope.



In addition, to celebrate Castlederg becoming the first Town of Hope, the College, as a stakeholder, agreed to hold a Canvas of Hope exhibition. Students from a variety of art courses and levels at the College had the opportunity to showcase their work at the Strand Road Campus. The exhibition aimed to raise awareness of Hope, inviting students to explore and express their interpretation of 'Hope in Darkness'.

A diverse array of artistic techniques was on display throughout the exhibition. Among these, two particular approaches caught the attention of the judges, standing out as exemplary interpretations of the theme.

Following the College's success in achieving RNIB's Visibly Better Employer Quality Standard that highlights the College's commitment to welcoming applications from people who are blind or partially sighted, the College continued to be one of RNIB's Alliance of organisations committed to this standard. Organisations have faced challenges in reaching blind and partially sighted job seekers, despite having vacancies. Discussions centred on how RNIB supports blind and partially sighted job seekers and what changes are taking place at RNIB.

The College remains the only educational establishment in Northern Ireland to have received Visibly Better Employer Quality Standard accreditation.

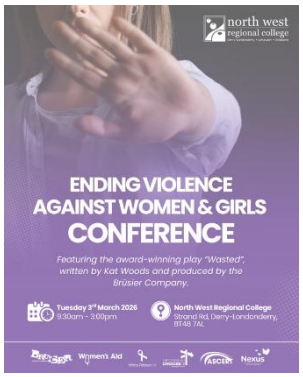
The EDI Officer attended their RNIB NI Technology Fair in February 2026 in the Foyle Arena. It was an event that showcased the latest assistive technology for blind and partially sighted people both locally and internationally.

The EDI Officer continued to meet HR Services during 2025/26 to bring forward positive actions relating to equality in HR.

Following the release of the Programme for Government's strategy in relation to ending violence against women and girls, the College held an EVAWG Conference organised by Student Services. This took place on 3 March 2026. Presentations of their own lived experiences were made by Leigh Collins, White Ribbon and Holly Reed, Foyle Women's Information Network.

The conference was attended by a wide range of stakeholders, including teaching staff from schools, local council representatives, health professionals and community groups. It featured influential speakers and concluded with a panel discussion.

There was also the play "Wasted", written by Kat Woods and performed by the Brusier Company, with a panel discussion afterwards giving participants the opportunity to reflect on what they had learned.






Further White Ribbon NI training took place for students in the Springtown Campus and members of the Governing Body attended training on 17 June 2026. Following the launch of the second EVAWG Delivery Plan by First Minister Michelle O'Neill and deputy First Minister Emma Little-Pengelly, the College will continue working on this campaign.

The College's Health and Wellbeing Committee met on several occasions during this academic year to raise awareness of health and wellbeing, including mental health which supports staff and students.

A range of actions progressed, for example, the review of work involved to re-achieve the Pieta Amber Flag accreditation, including awareness during International Day of Happiness, discussion on monies raised for the College's chosen charities, the Health and Wellbeing Brochure, the annual Staff Awards Day in 2026 and suggestions for Culture Health and Wellbeing day in May 2026, including collaboration with Newgate.




Gillian Moss and Michelle Grant represented the College at Belfast City Hall and presented the ongoing work within the College to support equality, diversity and inclusion. Participation in this event highlighted the College's commitment to work with the Office of Identity and Cultural Expression.

The EDI Officer and Compliance and Admissions Manager attended a meeting with Dr Katy Radford, Office of Identity and Cultural Expression and Mr Brian Dougherty, New Gate CEO and GB Member, as well as board members of OICE. Discussions centred on supporting the OICE through student interviews on culture and a training module to be developed. Music was provided by New Gate members who attended the College's Cultural Health and Wellbeing Day in May 2026.

The College's Equality Working Group met four times this academic year and continued to work on a range of various agenda items such as the College of Sanctuary actions that had been agreed, review of schools currently being targeted by Marketing and Careers with a view to encourage more applications, End Violence against Women and Girls Working Group and additional workshops for students and staff, in addition to GB Members, progression with

Canvas of Hope, the development of a Calendar of Religious Events, updates from Sector Equality Co-ordinators Forum, the organisation of the Culturally Themed Health and Wellbeing Day, the organisation of Green Dot Bystander Training from UU and the progression of the Student Induction Module through TELS.

Collaboration continued with Strabane Ethnic Community Association. The College liaised with them as part of our PEACEPLUS project 'Inspire, Enthuse, Equip' to discuss courses currently on offer that their clients could apply for in the future. They also participated in the College's Cultural Health and Wellbeing Day.

The EDI Officer continued discussions with John Darragh from Ulster University in relation to Green Dot training. As a result, staff from Safeguarding have undertaken their Train the Trainer sessions so are now equipped to further support students.

The College's chosen charities to cover our three main campuses, Foyle Women's Aid (Strand Road/Springtown), Open Heart Foundation (Limavady/Greystone) and the Koram Centre (Strabane), are to be provided with monies raised over the past year. The total (at the time of writing) is £3,656.40. This will be divided equally among the three charities.

Work will commence to establish new charities for 2026/2027 and 2027/2028.

The annual audit of College buildings by AccessAble took place week commencing 27 July 2026. It is anticipated that no issues will be identified.

In line with the Period Poverty (Free Products) Act (NI) 2022, the College has a statutory duty to provide period products free of charge on its premises and the College continued to provide products accordingly.

The College continued to promote the "Breastfeeding Welcome Here" campaign from the Public Health Agency to ensure people are aware of our commitment to breastfeeding.

The EDI Officer continued to advise staff of policy review dates and the necessity to equality screen. Over the past year 46 policies have been screened upon their review.

The College's links with See Her Thrive continued with regular updates on advice and guidance received for consideration. This resource continued to be used by HR Services within their Health and Wellbeing Programmes.

Various departments with the College, ie Equality, HR Services, Student Services and the Learning and Teaching Team continued with their sub-working group to ensure a cohesive implementation of the wide range of activities and training that take place each year across the College by staff and students. These meetings are planned to take place in 2026/2027.

The College has continued to support the Hidden Disability Sunflower Scheme by continuing to supply lanyards and cards to individuals who need them at receptions. Further products will be ordered as necessary throughout the year.

The College continued to monitor its Disability Action Plan, with actions, such as

- encourage students with a disability to participate more fully in College life (The College's Equality Working Group has the Equality and Diversity Officer as a representative from the Students' Union, the College had over 150 classroom representatives last academic year supporting the Students' Union, approximately 26% of classroom representatives had registered with Learning Link, 44 students that took part in mobility activities under Turing Scheme are from lower socio-economic backgrounds and 52 students have special educational needs, disabilities or medical conditions).

- increase awareness of specific barriers for people with a disability through National Awareness days or weeks (several awareness days relating to disability were promoted including Men's Health Week, World Suicide Prevention Day, World Ostomy Day, World Mental Health Day, Disability History Month, Wear Red Day for Heart disease, Neurodiversity Celebration Week, Deaf Awareness Week, Dementia Action Week).

- introduce training for front line staff on disability etiquette and relevant legislation dealing with disability and the provision of goods, facilities and services. (The College provided a range of training including Autism Training (various sessions), Disability Awareness Training, Listen Learn Lead Workshop (White Ribbon NI), Neurodiversity / Autism NI Training, Managing Diversity and Preventing Bullying, Koram Centre – Workshop on Understanding Anxiety and Autism, ADHD, Behaviour and Emotional Wellbeing).

The College delivered a three-day personal development and volunteering programme for Lisneal College as part of Volunteers' Week (1–7 June), engaging almost 40 pupils aged 14–16 across two cohorts.

Delivered through the DCSDC Co-Designed PEACEPLUS-supported Inspire, Enthuse, Equip project, the programme provided young people with a structured and engaging introduction to volunteering, peacebuilding and community engagement, while building confidence and key transferable skills. Each pupil completed a total of 14 hours of activity, participating in a combination of classroom-based learning, outdoor team-building and practical community volunteering.

Students from both the College and Lisneal College were subsequently recognised for their efforts when they were presented with certificates by the Mayor on 4 June 2026 at a volunteering celebration event hosted by the North West Volunteer Centre in the Guildhall. This acknowledgement highlighted the contribution of young people and student volunteers to the wider community during Volunteers' Week.

The Learning and Teaching team continued to offer various activities and training opportunities to embed Equality in all aspects of its work. The team aims to provide an inclusive learning experience for all participants, by catering to their individual needs and offering differentiated learning materials, as needed. They collect detailed feedback from the participants and follow up on any issues raised.

All new permanent staff, whether full-time or associate, go through a weekly Induction programme that emphasises equality and inclusion in all aspects of College life. The programme includes mandatory training on Equality, Sendo and Safeguarding, as well as cultural diversity training that raises awareness of all anti-discrimination practice. All part time staff complete mandatory training.

Lecturing staff are encouraged to undertake TAQA training, which helps them to promote Equality in all aspects of Training and Assessment. This training helps the staff to understand the legal and best practice implications of gender, disability, race, culture, religion and language for training and assessment processes.

Staff members continued to attend the Student Mental Health Research Network working group developed for the island of Ireland to continue to work on supporting and promoting positive mental health in colleges.

The Learning Link continued to provide support to students with a range of additional needs such as specific learning difficulties, eg, dyslexia, physical disabilities, medical conditions, sensory impairments, general learning difficulties and mental health conditions. Students with additional needs across all provisions have increased by 8.5% in 2025/2026 compared to 2024/2025.

This signifies a steady year on year increase in students with SEN and additional learning needs enrolling at the College. In addition, Transition figures have increased by enrolment for 2025/2026, in part due to the extension of SEN provision to Strabane Campus.

The Learning Link team has commenced meetings with Transition Service Colleagues in the Education Authority with approximately 60 prospective students being supported to consider mainstream options at the College.

The September 2025 update to JCQ regulations for permitting additional time in examinations has required collaborative working between the Learning Link and curriculum teams, with support departments working closely with the Director of Curriculum and Academic Standards to oversee the process. Approximately 300 new applications for access arrangements have been processed across the various awarding bodies for the current year to date, with extra time and reading support being the most common requirements.

In relation to Study Skills, there have been 288 referrals made and 65 students have availed of Study Skills support, with 276 Study Skills sessions held. In addition, 38 students were supported during the September 2025 Mentor programme, aimed to support students to settle in on campus. Also, there are 29 Support workers employed at the College providing in-class support to 180 assigned students.

The College became the first Further Education college in Northern Ireland to install the innovative Senso Cube, designed to support the emotional wellbeing of students. The Senso Cubes were placed at Limavady and Strand Road and are available to students for independent use. They create modular sensory spaces in otherwise busy and overly stimulating

environments. The cube is fully soundproof - providing a private and peaceful retreat for those in need of quiet calm or relaxation.




The College achieved the Autism Impact award on 27 October 2025 for the next 3 years. The process involved full day staff training with Autism NI, and implementation of an action plan to ensure continual improvements for Autistic and Neurodivergent students.

Over a five-week community engagement project, the College and Ulster University partnered with Derry Women's Centre to support adult learners in exploring pathways back into education. The programme was designed to break down barriers that often prevent adults from returning to learning, including concerns around confidence, accessibility, and balancing study with personal commitments.

Throughout the project, participants were provided with information, guidance, and practical advice on the wide range of courses and learning opportunities available through both the College and Ulster University. Interactive sessions encouraged discussion around personal goals, career aspirations, and the benefits of lifelong learning, helping participants gain a clearer understanding of the educational pathways open to them.

The initiative successfully raised awareness of further and higher education opportunities, empowered participants to consider their next steps, and reinforced the message that education is accessible at every stage of life.

The College, again in partnership with Ulster University, delivered Discovery Days designed to showcase the diverse pathways available into higher education and healthcare professions, Law and Criminology and also Gaming and Animation.

Participants had the opportunity to engage with academic staff, learn about course requirements and progression routes, and gain a deeper understanding of the skills, knowledge, and experiences needed to pursue careers within these highly rewarding fields. The Discovery Days highlighted the various educational pathways available through further and higher education, helping attendees make informed decisions about their future studies and career aspirations.

The events successfully raised awareness of progression opportunities, inspired learners to explore different careers, and reinforced the strong collaborative partnership between the

College and Ulster University in supporting student success and widening access to higher education

The College's Careers Academy team continued to support students throughout the academic year to make informed choices about their progression options. This is through methods such as workshops, tailored progression presentations and resources, use of progress coaches, support for essential skills, etc. The WAP Officer continued to foster strong relationships with relevant external stakeholders who provide guidance to allow staff to understand and meet the needs of learners from widening access backgrounds.

The WAP Officer worked alongside colleagues from the Careers Team to deliver North West Regional College's school engagement programme across the North West region. Through a combination of in-school presentations, careers fairs, and targeted group sessions, they engaged with over 2,400 secondary school students from schools primarily located in Derry, Limavady, Strabane, and Donegal. This collaborative approach ensured that students received up-to-date information on further education opportunities, career pathways, and the support available at North West Regional College. By working closely with schools and key stakeholders, awareness was raised in relation to progression routes, inspired future aspirations, and strengthened the College's relationships with local communities across the region.

In October/November 2025 UCAS Registration and Personal Statement workshops were offered to all BTEC Level 3 Year 2 students and access full-time and Access Year 2 students. Tailored progression presentations were delivered during a dedicated Progression Week to all Level 3 Year 2 students focusing on internal HE progression for those who want to consider Foundation Degrees, HND, etc, as a backup plan or indeed as their primary progression route.

Progress coaches monitored issues with students initially highlighted by attendance problems but could be through referral from their lecturer or self-referral. When Progress coaches successfully work with students to retain them on their course, referrals to Careers advisers allow students to identify valid progression routes.

The Careers team also met L3 course groups within the first six weeks to identify their English and Maths GCSE requirements.

The King's Trust Programme continued to provide young people with opportunities to develop confidence, teamwork, communication and employability skills through mentoring, community projects and personal development activities. During the 2025/26 academic year, 48 young people successfully participated in the King's Trust Programme, achieving positive outcomes and progressing towards further education, training and employment.

EDIT/EOTAS - Partnership working continued throughout 2025/26 with the EDIT Programme, funded by the Education Authority, which supports young people for whom mainstream education is not the most appropriate setting. The WAP Officer worked collaboratively with the College's Careers Advisers and Learning Link team to provide progression guidance, promote further education opportunities, and support participants in identifying appropriate pathways into education, training and employment.

INSPIRE - During the 2025/26 academic year, the WAP Officer continued to deliver the INSPIRE Employability Programme across a range of external organisations within the Derry City and Strabane District Council area. The programme supports individuals to overcome barriers to employment, education and training by building confidence, developing employability skills and providing practical guidance. During the year, 60 participants successfully engaged with the INSPIRE Employability Programme, demonstrating continued demand for community-based employability support. These groups included The Women's Centre, Women's Aid, REACH, Greater Shantallow Area Partnership, On Street Community Youth, Dove House Community Trust & Glen Development Initiative.

During the 2025/26 academic year, the WAP Officer was invited to serve as a judge at the Northern Ireland Maths Fest alongside the Mayor of Derry and Strabane. The event brought together schools and community organisations from across the region to celebrate the role of mathematics in different cultures throughout history through a series of creative and interactive projects. Participation in the judging panel highlighted the College's commitment to widening participation, community engagement and promoting inclusive learning, while strengthening relationships with local schools and partner organisations.

As previously reported, the DIAL Centre is a health innovation hub with a focus to promote greater collaboration, learning and innovation so that improved practice models and solutions are developed that will support independence and a quality of life for greater numbers of people to live well.

The Centre continued to make a significant contribution to the College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion objectives by providing an accessible and inclusive environment that promoted participation, independence and social inclusion for a wide range of individuals and communities. Through partnerships with education providers, health and social care organisations, professional bodies and community groups, the Centre supported equitable access to learning, innovation and assistive technologies.

Throughout the year, DIAL hosted activities aimed at supporting underrepresented and vulnerable groups. Transition students participated in Makaton sessions, helping to develop communication skills, confidence and social engagement. The Centre also welcomed participants from Depaul and collaborated with NISCC and other stakeholders to support learning, professional development and awareness of inclusive practice. Design for Dementia tours were attended by other educational establishments such at ATU Nursing students and social care students from Donegal ETB.

A particular highlight was the partnership with RNIB, which utilised the DIAL Centre to host the regional World Sight Day event. The event attracted members of the blind and visually impaired community, local opticians and members of the public, helping to raise awareness of visual impairment and promote greater understanding and inclusion. In addition, RNIB delivered Visual Awareness Training for staff from DCSDC, further enhancing awareness of accessibility needs and reducing barriers faced by people with sight loss.

Occupational Therapists from the Western Health and Social Care Trust continued to use the simulated homecare environment to assess technology, equipment and furniture solutions that

support independence for individuals living with disabilities, dementia and long-term health conditions. Open sessions, community engagement activities and visits from local, national and international stakeholders further promoted equality of opportunity by increasing awareness of assistive technologies and technology-enabled care solutions.

Collectively, these activities demonstrated DIAL's commitment to creating an inclusive environment that promotes accessibility, independence, participation and improved quality of life for all members of the community.

The Safeguarding Team received 480 referrals from September 2025 to April 2026, an increase of 55 referrals from September 2024 to April 2025. Anxiety remains the most common issue presented by students. The number of Operation Encompass referrals this year is a positive development, enabling prompt and sensitive support for students affected by domestic violence incidents following referral from the PSNI.

The Team also liaised with mental health organisations and other relevant groups such as Aware NI, Nexus, ZEST, CAMS, GP's and mental health practitioners from local health centres, Adult Mental Health Services, Health Improvement Western Health Social Care Trust, PSNI, NSPCC, Housing Executive, Apex, Parenting NI, Social Services, Action Mental Health, Men's Shed, Men's Action Network, Praxis, Common Youth, and Ascert.

The Safeguarding Team continued to support students who are Looked After Young People, liaising with their social workers and personal advisors, attending LAC reviews, care planning meetings throughout the academic year.

The support available for Young Adult Carers continued to be promoted throughout the college on the plasma screens to remind students that they can register at any point of the year. The Safeguarding Team achieved the Carers Federation Quality Standard in Carer Support Accreditation in November 2025. The Safeguarding Team continued to support 8 Young Adult Carers and each have been issued with a Young Adult Carers pass and their support plan has been shared with their course team.

The Safeguarding Team arranged a Carers Crafting Coffee morning on 28 November 2025 to bring carers together for time away from their caring responsibilities. Craft materials were provided to make Christmas decorations, offering carers a chance to meet others with similar responsibilities, relax, and experience the therapeutic benefits of crafting.

The Safeguarding Team supported a Mental Health Awareness week programme in May 2026 which allowed students to engage in ways that suited their interests and comfort levels by combining education, support, community, and practical wellbeing tools in an accessible and engaging way. Beyond raising awareness, it created lasting cultural change within the College by helping students feel more connected, informed, and supported throughout their academic journey.

The Safeguarding Team partnered with Pneuma Healthcare to deliver a 'Building Psychologist Strength' programme focusing on managing thoughts, managing emotions, managing behaviours and managing life challenges by working with a CBT framework.

The workshops focused on helping students understand the connection between thoughts, feelings, and behaviours. Students learned practical techniques to manage stress and anxiety, challenge negative thinking patterns, improve emotional regulation, reduce stress during exams or deadlines, build healthier responses to setbacks, and provide actionable strategies students can apply immediately in daily life. The students had the opportunity to complete a creative activity at the end of each workshop to enjoy some down time and share experiences with the other students taking part.

Common Youth delivered a consent workshop in November 2025 in the Strand Road Campus to 120 students, and in May 2026 in the Limavady campus to 100 students. In addition, bystander training with White Ribbon training was delivered in Strabane Campus on Friday 13 March 2026 for local school principals and senior management. This focused programme empowers individuals, particularly men and boys, to recognise and safely intervene in situations involving potential sexual harassment, abuse or violence against women. It also challenges harmful attitudes, promotes allyship and supports safe, respectful workplace and community cultures.

The PSNI and Derry and Strabane City Council provided the Safeguarding Team with 250 safety alarms for students. Students were made aware of the safety alarms on social media and were available for students to take at the College's Christmas Festivities event alongside the promotion of the PSNI 'Ask for Angela' campaign.

The Lead Safeguarding Officer within Student Services and the Student Union Officer accompanied 10 students to Vancouver through the Turing Scheme, providing safety, wellbeing and pastoral support throughout their international placement. The Turing Scheme is a UK Government-funded programme that enables students to study, work and gain life experience abroad, supporting the development of global awareness, independence and employability skills.

The students took part in a visit to O'Neill's flagship store in Vancouver to learn about the company's journey, their growth and what led them to establishing a presence in Vancouver. The students attended BCIT and Vancouver Community College to experience the day as a Canadian student and learned about the local cultures.

The Safeguarding Team promoted Brew Monday on 19 January 2026 in Strand Road, Limavady, Strabane, Springtown and Greystone campuses. Originally referred to as Blue Monday, Brew Monday is traditionally recognised as the most depressing day of the year. Brew Monday takes a more positive spin on Blue Monday, encouraging students to reach out to others. It is an opportunity to raise awareness about mental health, highlight how important a good support system and listening ear can be in prevention as well as in someone's journey to recovery.

The Safeguarding Team held '16 Days of Action' in support of Ending Violence Against Women and Girls on 25 November 2025 with a Pizza and Paint event in the College's student zone. There were 75 students in attendance at the event to support the theme of 'Create, Connect and Stand Together'.

The College's funded international projects continued to create life-changing opportunities for students, providing them with the chance to develop new skills, gain valuable international experience and enhance their employability. Through participation in overseas work placements, training activities and collaborative projects funded by the Turing Scheme, Erasmus+ and DFHERIS Euro Exchange programmes, students developed a wide range of technical, personal and professional skills, improved their language abilities and gained a deeper understanding of different cultures and perspectives.

The International Department remained committed to ensuring that selection processes are fair, transparent and accessible to all eligible students. They actively promoted opportunities to disadvantaged learners, learners from groups traditionally under-represented in international mobility and learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Where appropriate, they sought additional funding to cover exceptional costs, provide specialist support and remove barriers that may prevent participation.

During 2025/26, the department continued to demonstrate its commitment to widening participation through the delivery of international mobility opportunities. Forty-four students participated in mobility activities funded through the Turing Scheme. As mentioned previously, of these participants, 24 students were from low-income backgrounds and 12 students declared a Special Educational Need or Disability. This demonstrates the continued success of the programme in engaging students who may otherwise face barriers to participating in international opportunities.

Through the DFHERIS Euro Exchange Project, 13 students undertook or are currently undertaking international mobility activities. One student declared a Special Educational Need. Appropriate support was provided to ensure the student could participate fully in all aspects of the mobility experience.

The Erasmus+ More Than Music project also reflected the department's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. Three students participated in workshops in Riga and Munich. This demonstrated the department's ongoing efforts to ensure that international opportunities are accessible to students from a broad range of backgrounds and S75 equality categories.

The department also continued to support students with additional educational needs. Across the international student population, 52 students have declared a Special Educational Need or Disability. The International Department works closely with Student Services, Learning Link and curriculum teams to ensure appropriate support mechanisms are available and that students can fully participate in college life and international opportunities.

As well as working on international opportunities for our local students, they continued to provide support and make appropriate adaptations for visiting students with additional needs. Visiting students receive a full welcome induction and are introduced to Student Services so they can access support throughout their training experience at the College.

The College's Governing Body and Leadership and Management Team continue to be committed to ensuring the Section 75 statutory duties are effectively implemented. All

statutory returns to the Equality Commission are reported to, and approved by, the Governing Body.

The College continued to be committed to making lives better for students, businesses, the community and staff and aims to create a great place to work and in doing so, positively impact on the health and wellbeing of staff and students. Please see the College's Development Plan for more information.

The College continued to provide training opportunities to a wide range of community groups and centres within the Derry~Londonderry, Limavady and Strabane areas. A total of 50 various community groups and centres offered courses during the reporting period.

During 2025/2026, the Business Support Centre (BSC) continued to provide support to over 60% of the students enrolled in their inclusive, accessible and employment-focused skills provision. Programmes included Skill Up, Inclusive Futures, Childcare Micro Courses, and Early Years SEN Assistant Training, Assured Skills Academies and Labour Market Partnership employability programmes were promoted to a wide range of learners, including economically inactive individuals, unemployed graduates, women returners, neurodiverse learners, men considering healthcare pathways, and adults seeking to upskill or retrain.

The Graduate Employment Academy had a strong widening participation focus, targeting graduates aged 21+ who were unemployed or economically inactive, had limited work experience, and resided in or came from areas of high deprivation. The programme included employability training, work placement, wrap-around support, mentoring, guaranteed interview opportunities and post-programme employment support.

Employer-led academies continued to demonstrate positive outcomes. During the academic year, two Vertiv Electrical Switchgear Assured Skills Academies were delivered, with 27 students successfully completing and 24 of these being offered full-time employment.

The Business Support Centre also linked with the International department and wider College support services because BSC courses and employability programmes attracted a diverse student enrolment. This ensured that learners from a range of backgrounds could be referred to the most appropriate internal support, advice and guidance routes where required. These links helped strengthen the College’s wider inclusive practice by ensuring that learners were supported not only to enrol, but also to remain engaged, complete their programme and progress to employment, further learning or other positive outcomes.

Overall, the 2025/26 activity demonstrates a clear contribution to the College’s Section 75 responsibilities through targeted course promotion, inclusive programme design, employer-led academies, supported work placements, wrap-around learner support and stronger evaluation practice. The work also contributed to the College’s wider strategic commitments to widening access, supporting those furthest from the labour market, developing progression pathways, and improving employability outcomes across the North West.

Within the College's Digital Learning Strategy, accessibility of teaching and learning resources, support for learners with disabilities and support for learners for whom English is a second language (ESOL / EAL) allows the TELS team to support staff and students.

TEL has overseen a significant system transition in accessibility monitoring and has supported staff through a change in accessibility practice. The Strategy committed TEL to deliver 6 accessibility workshops by March 2026 which has been achieved.

In addition, TEL has gone beyond live training by producing online video demonstrations and focused on Microsoft accessibility tools, including the accessibility checker, immersive reader and built-in translation and captioning tools.

Furthermore, TEL has introduced Microsoft Translator on iPads used by front-facing reception staff. This directly supports prospective students, applicants and enquirers for whom English is not their first language, removing a key access barrier at first contact.

Examination support for relevant students continued this academic year. Arrangements included 25% extra time, 50% extra time, scribe, typist, reader, rest breaks, movement breaks, prompter, coloured overlay, coloured exam paper, smaller venue, separate Room, various requests for position placed during exams, keyboard input, reading pen, Read & Write Software, Bi-lingual dictionary, Access to Mobile for Medical Reasons, awareness of hearing impairments (Roger System), and noise cancelling headphones. Over 556 instances of support were provided.

Atlantic Technological University (ATU) and the College signed a landmark Memorandum of Understanding marking a significant step forward in cross-border educational collaboration. The agreement, which builds upon existing ties and the work of the North West Tertiary Education Cluster (NWTEC), sets out a framework to enhance academic, research, and innovation cooperation across the North West City Region. It seeks to benefit students, staff, employers, and communities through greater integration, shared resources, and new learning opportunities. By deepening collaboration with ATU, the College has created real opportunities for learners, staff, and industry across the North West which will unlock the full potential of cross-border partnership to build a more inclusive, innovative, and future-ready region.

The Green Accelerator Skills Programme (GRASP) - a €9.8 million cross-border initiative designed to address the significant green skills deficit currently present in the cross-border construction sector was launched in June 2025. GRASP is supported by PEACEPLUS, a programme managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB). The project brings together a diverse network of partners across nine counties, operating from CREST (Centre for Renewable Energy and Sustainable Technology) Enniskillen. Key highlights of the GRASP project include:

- Offering approximately 50 funded Green Skills programmes aligned to the specific needs of the Construction Sector.
- Engaging and supporting women interested in the sector, through the development of a Women into Construction Green Skills Academy
- Introducing a Labour Activation Green Skills Academy which aims to meet the demand for labour in the construction industry by reducing some of the barriers to participation amongst key marginalised groups.

Tourism Northern Ireland celebrated the success of six newly trained tour guides for the deaf community in July 2025. The Tour Guiding for the Deaf course was funded by Tourism NI, and delivered by the College in partnership with Foyle Deaf Association and Derry City & Strabane District Council. The Level 2 Award in Tour Guiding is designed to ensure deaf visitors to Northern Ireland enjoy an inclusive experience.

Over 160 pupils attended the College's Foyle Theatre for the TechTides Youth Conference on 18 November 2025. This was an event to showcase the technological and entrepreneurial opportunities available to young people. Students heard from a selection of inspiring guest speakers who explained their journey into tech and business and motivated those who attended to take their next steps.

The College sought applicants for an innovative employability programme aimed at neurodiverse individuals looking to gain employability skills. This Neuro Future programme provided participants with an accredited Level 2 Award in Employability Skills qualification. It had tailored employability workshops, soft skills for teamwork and confidence building. The College also held further employability programme empowering women to re-enter the labour market into aspiring supervisory or management roles. This HerFuture Programme provided women with an OCN NI Level 3 Award Business Administration qualification. A total of 13 individuals were successful.

At Magilligan Prison, Inspectors praised the Governor and the collective efforts of the leadership and staff team for the rehabilitative environment they have developed, and the positive outcomes delivered for prisoners in their care. The inspection carried out by Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJI), His Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons in England and Wales (HMI Prisons), the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) and the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI), found evidence of excellent staff-prisoner relationships and lower levels of violence and use of force than in similar prisons in England and Wales.

ETI Inspectors found the College's education provision for prisoners to be generally of good quality and the level of attainment had improved with 43% of qualifications achieved at Level 2. Inspectors also found evidence of good support and the use of mentors to assist prisoners with literacy skills.

The relaunch of the North West Learning City Region, a major milestone in cross-border collaboration and lifelong learning, took place in March 2026. The move built on the existing Derry City and Strabane Learning City designation, part of UNESCO's Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC), and reflects the strong educational, cultural and economic links across the North West.

The initiative was led by the North West Tertiary Education Cluster – Ulster University, Atlantic Technological University, North West Regional College and Donegal Education and Training Board – in partnership with Derry City and Strabane District Council and Donegal County Council.

To mark this milestone, the North West Learning City Region presented a Lifelong Learning Festival that took place across Derry~Londonderry, Strabane and Donegal on 4–5 March 2026. It featured more than 40 free events and celebrated the region's vibrant learning culture, with opportunities spanning arts and culture, digital skills, business innovation, health and wellbeing, heritage and language, sustainability, and family learning. The EDI Officer attended The Power and Science of Hope Unlocking Potential: Hope Matters, facilitated by Resilio.

The College launched the Amelia Earhart STEM Challenge 2026 in May and welcomed local primary school pupils to the Strand Road Campus. This was delivered in partnership with the Amelia Earhart Legacy Association, Ulster University, and St Mary's College, and aimed to inspire a new generation of young learners through engaging and interactive STEM experiences.

Organised by the College's dedicated Careers Academy team, the event offered a hands-on programme designed to spark curiosity and creativity in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths.

2 **Please provide <u>examples</u> of outcomes and/or the impact of <u>equality</u> <u>action</u> <u>plans</u>/ measures in 2025-26 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).**

Please see Equality Improvement Plan attached

**3 Has the <u>application of the Equality Scheme</u> commitments resulted in any <u>changes</u> to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2025-26 reporting period? *(tick one box only)***

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

**Please provide any details and examples:**

- The College has signed up as a Dementia Friend organisation through the Alzheimer's Society. This initiative aims to increase understanding of dementia and encourage people to support those affected in their communities. Whether through a face-to-face or virtual Dementia Friends session, or by watching a short online video, participants learn more about dementia and the small ways they can help.

- The College has signed up for Women's Tec #NotJustforBoys campaign and is the first College in the sector to do so. Women's Tec are Northern Ireland's largest quality provider of training for women in non-traditional skills. They encourage girls into construction and engineering industries and the College are partners with them which was established through the DfE Challenge Fund.

- The College attended an event organised by the Office of Identity and Cultural Expression at Belfast City Hall and presented the ongoing work within the College to support equality, diversity and inclusion. Furthermore Katy Radford attended the College's Culturally themed Health and Wellbeing Day in May 2026.

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

**Please provide any details and examples:**

- By the College becoming a Dementia Friend organisation, staff and students will be able to become aware of how dementia can affect everyone and be able to support their families and friends affected.

- As a result of the College signing up for Women's Tec #NotJustforBoys campaign it shows its commitment to encouraging female participation in training in non-traditional skills.

- Participation in this Office of Identity and Cultural Expression highlighted the College's commitment to promoting equal opportunities and good relations.

**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)*:

As a result of monitoring the College's Equality Scheme and the ongoing commitment from the College's Management Team to ensure Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is embedded across the curriculum and support areas.

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

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

**4 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2025-26 reporting period? *(tick one box only)***

☐ Yes, organisation wide

☐ Yes, some departments/jobs

☐ No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment

✓ No, this has been actioned previously

☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

All job descriptions for College members of staff 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 2025-26 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:**

- Continued commitment to fully implementing the Widening Access and Participation Plan remained central to the College's work.

- Equality continued to be reviewed annually within Self Evaluation Reports and Quality Improvement Plans.

- Equality training remained mandatory for all staff and must be completed every three years, ensuring it is included in staff development plans.

- Through its Development Plan, the College remained committed to improving outcomes for students, businesses, the community and staff, while creating a positive workplace and supporting the health and wellbeing of staff and students.

- The Governing Body and Leadership and Management Team received regular updates throughout the year.

**In the 2025-26 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 2025-26 report

☐ Not applicable

**Please provide any details and examples:**

Please see Paragraph 5 above

**Equality action plans / measures**

**7 Within the 2025-26 reporting period, please indicate the number of:**

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Actions completed: | 9 | Actions ongoing: | 20 | Actions to commence: | 0 |

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

Not applicable

**8 Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2025-26 reporting period *(points not identified in an appended plan)*:**

Not applicable – included in plan.

**9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2025-26 reporting period, the following have been identified: *(tick all that apply)***

☒ Continuing action(s), to progress the next stage addressing the promotion of equality

☒ Action(s) to address the promotion of equality in a different way

☒ Action(s) to address newly identified /recently prioritised actions to promote equality

☒ Measures to address the promotion of equality 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 <u>details and examples of good practice</u> in consultation during the 2025-26 reporting period, on matters relevant (eg, 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 continued to consult with:

- ✓ external organisations and staff through the College's consultation list as part of policy reviews;
- ✓ specific community groups on promoting good relations and race equality;
- ✓ students through the Induction Survey, Quality of Teaching and Learning Survey, and Student Voice via Student Services;
- ✓ staff through exit questionnaires to identify any equality of opportunity concerns;
- ✓ newly appointed staff about the recruitment service they received, including any equality of opportunity issues;
- ✓ the Sector Equality Co-ordinators Forum on promoting equality across the six FE Colleges;
- ✓ the Equality Commission on all consultations.

**12 In the 2025-26 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were <u>most frequently used by consultees</u>: *(tick all that apply)***

- ☒ Face to face meetings (via Teams/Zoom)
- ☒ Focus groups
- ☐ Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing
- ☐ Questionnaires
- ☐ Information/notification by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation
- ☐ Internet discussions
- ☐ Telephone consultations
- ☐ Other *(please specify)*:

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

Not applicable

**13 Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2025-26 reporting period? *(tick one box only)***

☐ Yes ✓ No ☐ Not applicable

**Please provide any details and examples:**

Not applicable

**14 Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2025-26 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)**

https://www.nwrc.ac.uk/equality

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

46

**16 Please provide the number of assessments that were consulted upon during 2025-26:**

| | |
|---|---|
| 46 | Policy consultations conducted with **screening** assessment presented. |
| 0 | Policy consultations conducted **with an equality impact assessment** (EQIA) presented. |
| 0* | Consultations for an **EQIA** alone. |

*Please note that due to the decision to relocate the Strabane Campus being put on hold, the EQIA is incomplete. Once the decision to move forward with the relocation, the EQIA will be finalised.

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

All policies screened during the reporting period were screened out and listed on the College's website as part of the College's commitment to publish its Quarterly Return.

**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:**

Not applicable

**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 2025-26 reporting period? *(tick one box only)***

☐ Yes ☐ No ✓ Not applicable

**Please provide any details and examples:**

Not applicable

**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 2025-26 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:**

Not applicable

**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:**

Not applicable

**22 Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2025-26 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:**

Not applicable

**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:**

- During the reporting period, the College continued its annual monitoring of equality-screened policies, with 46 policies reviewed.

- Student surveys continued to identify any concerns experienced during students' educational journey at the College.

- Student equality data was reviewed to support the Widening Access and Participation Plan agenda.

- The College continued to monitor staff experiences as an equal opportunities employer through exit interviews, an annual recruitment customer satisfaction survey, and the new staff Equal Opportunities Employer survey. The annual Fair Employment Monitoring Return was also completed and reported to the College's Governing Body.

- Safeguarding and SENDO reports are provided to the Governing Body, outlining the support available to students. These reports inform annual resource planning and support the Governing Body's commitment to implementing the College's Equality Scheme actions.

- The College continued to monitor its Complaints and Compliments Policy to support fair participation and promote equality of opportunity for those accessing its services.

- Success and retention rates continued to be monitored to address concerns and improve services where needed.

**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 2025-26, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.**

Each year the College offers a range of equality-related staff development sessions for staff to attend. Below is an outline of the training attended by members of staff and where applicable, an indication how each staff member evaluated the overall training.

| Course | No of Staff who attended /participated | Evaluation | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| Absence Management Facilitation Workshop | 19 | 100% of respondents rated the workshop | *"Good ideas generated which will be beneficial for managers and staff."* |

| Course | No of Staff who attended /participated | Evaluation | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | constructive and beneficial | *"Very useful workshop, lots of engagement and ideas that can be taken forward to support line managers manage absence."* |
| Autism Training (various sessions) | 43 | Excellent – 80%<br>Very Good – 20% | *"(Trainer) was great and very passionate."* |
| Disability Awareness Training | 9 | Very Good – 25%<br>Good – 75% | *"Informative training."*<br><br>*"Additional VR experience was exceptional"* |
| Listen Learn Lead Workshop (White Ribbon NI) | 16 | Excellent – 80%<br>Very Good – 20% | *"Excellent training, very informative and engaging."*<br><br>*"Informative, Engaging and enjoyable."* |
| Neurodiversity / Autism Training | 10 | Excellent – 80%<br>Very Good – 20% | *"Very informative training with real job scenarios that will be useful."*<br><br>*"Excellent course very informative and relevant to my job giving me a greater understanding of Autism."* |
| Managing Diversity & Preventing Bullying | 17 | Excellent – 100% | *"Excellent session; interactive and engaging. The model that all CPD should learn from"* |

Furthermore, the percentage breakdown of staff (not part-time lecturers) who have completed mandatory equality and diversity training is 93%.

**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:**

Not applicable

Other equality related staff development opportunities

- Domestic Abuse Tier 3
- Green Dot Bystander Training
- Koram Centre – Workshop on Understanding Anxiety
- Neurodiversity Training
- Autism NI Training
- Autism, ADHD, Behaviour & Emotional Wellbeing
- Communicate-ed
- Ending Violence Against Girls & Women Conference
- Digital Awareness
- Disability & Diversity Conference

- Mental Health Training
- NSPCC Training
- Suicide Awareness
- Trauma Informed Practice Training
- Welcoming Refugees to an FE College

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

**26 Please list <u>any examples</u> of where monitoring during 2025-26, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation <u>to access to information and services</u>:**

- As a result of monitoring student equality data for 2024/2025, it was agreed to establish actions to encourage further enrolments from the nine equality categories. For example, linking with groups provided by the Community team and promotion of support on offer that could encourage people with dependants to enrol.

**Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)**

**27 How many complaints <u>in relation to the Equality Scheme</u> have been received during 2025-26?**

Insert number here: 0

**Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:**

- Not applicable

## Section 3: Looking Forward

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

The Scheme was reviewed in 2022 will be reviewed again in 2027.

**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)***

- Please see Appendix 1.

**30 In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what <u>equality and good</u> <u>relations priorities</u> are anticipated over the next (2026-27) 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

## Please see Disability Action Plan attached.

| No | Action | Timescale | Responsible Person(s) | Outcome / Measure | Updates |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| DAP1 | The College will endeavour to influence the Department for the Economy to ensure participation of disabled people on the Governing Body of the Colleges. [DAP] | When vacancies exist and on an ongoing basis | Principal & Chief Executive / Governing Body | Governing Body will include members with disabilities. | The College continued to promote this action with the Department for the Economy recruitment campaigns encouraging individuals with a disability to apply to become board members. Currently the Department (DfE) have no current plans to run a recruitment competition for the Board vacancies within North West Regional College. |
| DAP2 | Continue to encourage the participation of disabled people on committees, student representatives on the Governing Body and groups across the Colleges. [DAP] | Reviewed annually<br><br>Year 1 – Year 5 | LMT / Committee Chairs | Membership of committees / groups to demonstrate participation of those with disabilities. | One staff member with a disability continued to attend their internal committee meetings and have continued to contribute to the College decision making processes.<br><br>The College's Equality Working Group has had the Student Council Equality Representative attend a meeting. |
| DAP3 | Encourage students with a disability to participate more fully in College life. [DAP] | Annually as part of induction and ongoing throughout the year. | Head of Client Services | Increased participation in student focus groups, student surveys and sporting activities, Student Union Membership and where applicable, non-curricular activities such as | The College's Equality Working Group has the Equality and Diversity Officer as a representative from the Students' Union.<br><br>The College had over 150 classroom representatives last academic year supporting the Students' Union, approximately 26% had registered with Learning Link.<br><br>44 students that took part in mobility activities under Turing Scheme were from lower socio-economic backgrounds and |

| No | Action | Timescale | Responsible Person(s) | Outcome / Measure | Updates |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | students' union and sporting activities. | 52 students have special educational needs, disabilities or medical conditions<br><br>The International Team sought additional funding to cover exceptional costs, provided specialist support and removed barriers that may have prevented participation in the funded international projects.<br><br>The International Team continued to provide support and make appropriate adaptations for visiting students with additional needs. Visiting students received a full welcome induction and were introduced to Student Services so they could access support throughout their training experience at the College.<br><br>The Erasmus+ More Than Music project also reflected the College's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. Three students participated in workshops in Riga and Munich. |
| DAP4 | Increase awareness of specific barriers faced by people with a disability with National Awareness days or weeks. [DAP] | Ongoing | Compliance and Admissions Manager | Increased awareness and understanding of barriers faced by people with a disability | There were a number of awareness days specific to disability promoted in 2025/2026, including<br><br>- Men's Health Week<br>- World Suicide Prevention Day<br>- World Ostomy Day<br>- World Mental Health Day<br>- International Men's Day<br>- Disability History Month<br>- White Ribbon Day<br>- 16 Days of Action Against Domestic Abuse |

<table>
<tr><th>No</th><th>Action</th><th>Timescale</th><th>Responsible Person(s)</th><th>Outcome / Measure</th><th>Updates</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>
<ul>
<li>Wear Red Day for Heart disease</li>
<li>International Women’s Day</li>
<li>Neurodiversity Celebration Week</li>
<li>Deaf Awareness Week</li>
<li>Dementia Action Week</li>
</ul>
</td></tr>
<tr><td>DAP5</td><td>Promote the use of AccessAble website to encourage participation of prospective students. [DAP]</td><td>Annually and ongoing<br>Year 1 – Year 5</td><td>Director of Finance<br><br>Compliance and Admissions Manager</td><td>Benchmark usage of AccessAble webpage.</td><td>The annual audit of College buildings by AccessAble is scheduled to take place week commencing 27 July 2026. It is anticipated that no issues will be identified.
<table>
<tr><th>Guide Name</th><th>Views</th></tr>
<tr><td>Strand Road Campus Northland Building</td><td>277</td></tr>
<tr><td>Strand Road Campus Tower Building</td><td>237</td></tr>
<tr><td>Strand Road Campus Strand Building</td><td>192</td></tr>
<tr><td>Strand Road Campus Foyle Building</td><td>174</td></tr>
<tr><td>Strand Road Campus Lawrence Building</td><td>115</td></tr>
<tr><td>Strabane Campus Main Building</td><td>64</td></tr>
<tr><td>Strand Road Campus Dial Building</td><td>55</td></tr>
<tr><td>Limavady Campus Benevenagh Building</td><td>46</td></tr>
<tr><td>Limavady Campus Main Building</td><td>43</td></tr>
<tr><td>Strabane Campus Old School House</td><td>35</td></tr>
<tr><td>Springtown Training Centre</td><td>24</td></tr>
<tr><td>Limavady Campus West Wing</td><td>17</td></tr>
<tr><td>Strand Road Campus</td><td>13</td></tr>
<tr><td>Greystone Centre</td><td>13</td></tr>
<tr><td>Strabane Campus Temporary Classrooms</td><td>13</td></tr>
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| No | Action | Timescale | Responsible Person(s) | Outcome / Measure | Updates |
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| | | | | | The usage numbers from May 2025 – April 2026 are 1,087 Users and 1,138 guide views. These have decreased since the last reporting period. |
| DAP6 | Create an open an inclusive workplace culture which displays respect for those with mental ill health. [DAP] | Ongoing | HR Manager | Positive engagement, increasing provision of information and monitoring. | NWRC remains committed to supporting staff health and wellbeing through a proactive, structured and continuously evolving programme.<br><br>During the 2025/26 academic year, Health & Wellbeing activity has continued to move beyond standalone initiatives towards a more embedded, preventative and whole-person approach, addressing physical, mental, financial and social wellbeing.<br><br>The programme contributes to:<br>• Improved health outcomes for staff<br>• Enhanced staff morale and engagement<br>• Stronger communication and working relationships<br>• A more inclusive workplace culture<br>• Improved organisational effectiveness<br><br>**Physical and Mental Health**<br>• Weekly fitness provision including Body Tone, Pilates, Yoga and walking initiatives<br>• Staff MOT Health Checks and health screening (Chest, Heart & Stroke NI and Action Cancer)<br>• Promotion and continued development of Mental Health First Aiders<br>• Suicide awareness, resilience and stress management initiatives |

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| | | | | | ✚ Inspire (Lena) webinars including *Time to Talk*, *Sleep Well, Work Well* and *Mindful Living*<br><br>**Workshops, Awareness and Education**<br>✚ 'Lunch & Learn' sessions covering mindfulness, nutrition, financial wellbeing and stress management<br>✚ Menopause awareness and nutrition workshops<br>✚ Financial wellbeing support and promotion of salary sacrifice schemes<br>✚ Mental health awareness campaigns including World Mental Health Day and Time to Talk<br><br>**Creative, Social and Engagement Activities**<br>✚ Creative workshops including flower arranging, stress-busting art and craft sessions<br>✚ Staff choir and group wellbeing activities promoting connection and inclusion<br>✚ 'Be Kind' Challenge and wider kindness initiatives<br>✚ Culturally themed Health & Wellbeing Day (May 2026)<br>✚ Sustainability workshops such as Grow Your Own and textile upcycling<br><br>**Specialist Support and Targeted Interventions**<br>✚ Access to the Employee Assistance Programme (Lena by Inspire)<br>✚ Occupational Health referrals and ongoing case management support<br>✚ Bereavement, domestic abuse and resilience resources<br>✚ CPR and Defibrillator awareness training<br>✚ Specialist awareness training including Domestic Abuse and Gambling Awareness |

| No | Action | Timescale | Responsible Person(s) | Outcome / Measure | Updates |
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| | | | | | **Embedding Health & Wellbeing in Practice**<br>• The College continues to strengthen the integration of wellbeing into everyday working practices through:<br>• Promotion of flexible and hybrid working arrangements<br>• Ongoing communication through staff briefings, the staff portal and targeted campaigns<br>• Alignment with the Equality Commission Mental Health Charter and maintenance of Pieta Amber Flag accreditation<br>• Ongoing development of leadership capability, including mental health awareness training for managers, and coaching.<br>• Implementation of stress management toolkits and practical guidance for line managers<br><br>This approach supports a consistent, inclusive and supportive working environment across all campuses. The College remains committed to developing a preventative, proactive and inclusive wellbeing culture where staff are supported to thrive at work. |
| DAP7 | Explore the scope of offering meaningful placements and work shadowing and volunteering for people with a disability. [DAP] | Ongoing | Compliance and Admissions Manager | Develop capacity of people with a disability to find employment | The College reached out to one organisation but unfortunately progress was not made on this occasion. However, it is hoped this will be successful in 2026/2027. |
| DAP8 | Introduce training for front line staff on disability etiquette and relevant | Ongoing | HR Manager | Increased use of services and facilities of those | The Staff Development Programme continued to include training opportunities for staff to undertake a range of disability related training. These included |

| No | Action | Timescale | Responsible Person(s) | Outcome / Measure | Updates |
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| | legislation dealing with disability and the provision of goods, facilities and services. [DAP] | | | people with a disability. | <ul><li>Absence Management Facilitation Workshop</li><li>Autism Training (various sessions)</li><li>Disability Awareness Training</li><li>Listen Learn Lead Workshop (White Ribbon NI)</li><li>Neurodiversity / Autism NI Training</li><li>Managing Diversity & Preventing Bullying</li><li>Koram Centre – Workshop on Understanding Anxiety</li><li>Autism, ADHD, Behaviour & Emotional Wellbeing</li><li>Communicate-ed</li><li>Disability & Diversity Conference</li><li>Mental Health Training</li><li>NSPCC Training</li><li>Suicide Awareness</li><li>Trauma Informed Practice Training</li></ul> |
| DAP9 | Consider development of a (Sectoral) Disability Advisory Group that could involve staff and students. [DAP] | Three meetings per year | Equality Co-ordinators Forum | Contribute to the development of communications, consultation, screening of relevant policies, monitoring etc. | The Sectoral Disability group agreed to have a standing item in its agenda to share best practice and initiatives in relation to Disability. This continued during this reporting period.<br><br>Discussions included the review of the Disability Action Plan, recent changes in miscarriage leave legislation and the need to review relevant policies, the implementation of a reasonable adjustment template to capture inputs and outcomes consistently, and the review of the Colleges' Equality Schemes. The training on policy screening was also held on 30 April 2026. Good practice was shared which included an Autism Reality Bus, the College's Cultural H&WB Day, with further colleges considering the Autism Impact |

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| | | | | | Award. Work continued on the Equality Forum Collaboration Plan 2025/2026. |
| DAP10 | Through Widening Participation scheme increase number of students with a disability entering the College. [DAP] | Annually | Head of Client Services | Raise educational awareness, aspirations and educational attainment amongst the target group | The College continued with the delivery of the Inspire Project within Urfuture Careers Academy. The aspirational and inclusive support of the Widening Access and Participation Plan and Access to Success. The College continued to support students to embrace FE as they progress.<br><br>The College's aim is to continue to improve wellbeing for everyone by providing academic pathways which are economically viable and lead to employment. The continued collaboration with the Universities allows access to Higher Education for adults who were previously made redundant, or change career direction, those who are disabled or unemployed or those who had not considered progressing in education to access both Full-time and Part-time education allowing them to rethink their educational pathway. |
| DAP11 | Monitor and review the progress of the Disability Action Plan. [DAP] | Annually August Year 1 – Year 5 | EDI Officer | Provision of update contained within Progress Report | Ongoing, however the Sector EC Forum Co-ordinators Group have reviewed it for approval for 2027 to 2031. |

# Appendix 1 – Equality Improvement Plan

| No | Action | Timescale | Responsible Person(s) | Outcome/Measure | Updates |
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| EIP1 | Assess effectiveness of communication with students regarding equality [EIP] | Annually | Head of Client Services | Address any concerns identified | The Student Services Facebook and Instagram sites for students continued to increase the College's Social Media presence allowing students to access equality information/resources, specifically those with poor mental health.<br><br>Students take part in focus groups, student surveys and surveys relating to disability services within the College to ensure that their voices are heard.<br><br>The annual online student survey and Student Voice Event were carried out in May 2026 with suggestions received from students on how to improve student experience at the College. 92% of participants felt they belonged in the student community. |
| EIP2 | Continue to ensure that equality is embedded into the College curriculum [EIP] | To be assessed annually | Director of Curriculum and Academic Standards | To be approved by Director of Curriculum and Academic Standards | Ongoing. On an annual basis, the College reviews curriculum areas to determine how effective equality is embedded into the curriculum.<br><br>In addition, equality is now integrated into periodic review meetings to ensure discussions on equality related outcomes are included. |
| EIP3 | Provision of Equality awareness training to all staff and students [EIP] + [ES] | Annually | Principal and Chief Executive<br><br>HR Manager | Range of training provided and evaluations received | Ongoing – there continued to be several equality-related training opportunities on the staff development programme available throughout the academic year. Please see Section 24 of the Progress Report. |

| No | Action | Timescale | Responsible Person(s) | Outcome/Measure | Updates |
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| | | | Head of Client Services | Increase in awareness of equality and diversity | Other training provided to staff via Equality training provided by White Ribbon NI on EVAWG and UU Green Dot training, as well as student training from the Koram Centre in Strabane. |
| EIP4 | Provision of specific training to those with key roles [EIP] | Annually | HR Manager | Outcome of evaluations | As roles vary within the College, certain opportunities continued to be made available to staff, specific to these roles. |
| EIP5 | Continue to review student surveys to ensure equality is adequately covered [EIP] | Annually | Head of Quality Enhancement | Action Plans | The Quality of Teaching and Learning Survey 2026 provided a robust and reliable insight into the learner experience at North West Regional College, evidencing very high levels of satisfaction across teaching, assessment, support, facilities, and overall provision.<br><br>The two Sector agreed equality questions and the additional question added previously remained.<br>(1) "*I believe I have been treated fairly and with respect*"<br>(2) "*I believe the College is committed to promoting an inclusive learning environment*" and (3) "*I believe that the College is inclusive and welcoming and that staff and students have a mutual respect.*"<br><br>The responses were<br>1 – No 4 / Yes 306 – (No – 1.29%)<br>2 – No 3 / Yes 307 – (No – 0.97%)<br>3 – No 5 / Yes 305 – (No – 1.91%)<br>(No complaints were received by the College)<br><br>As mentioned above, the annual online student survey |

| No | Action | Timescale | Responsible Person(s) | Outcome/Measure | Updates |
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| | | | | | and Student Voice event were carried out in May 2026. Please see above comments at EIP 1. |
| EIP6 | Develop a programme of awareness raising for the year – Calendar of Events to address all categories of equality over the year [EIP] + [ES] | September to August | Compliance and Admissions Manager<br><br>Equality Working Group<br><br>HR Services | Evaluation of Each Event<br><br>Increased Awareness of Equality Categories | A number of awareness days were raised during the reporting period as follows<br><br>International Children's Day, Men's Health Week, World Breastfeeding Week, World Suicide Prevention Day, International Day of Sign Languages, European Day of Languages, Black History Month, World Ostomy Day, World Mental Health Day, World Menopause Awareness Day, International Men's Day, Disability History Month, White Ribbon Day, 16 Days of Action Against Domestic Abuse, Human Rights Day, International Day of Education, Wear Red Day for Heart disease, Random Act of Kindness Day, Ramadan, International Women's Day, Neurodiversity Celebration Week, Stop Food Waste Day, Deaf Awareness Week, Dementia Action Week, Pride Month, Volunteers Week and Refugee Week. |
| EIP7 | Continue to work with external stakeholders to seek new opportunities to promote equality [EIP] | Academic year 2025/2026 | LMT Members | New initiatives identified | The EDI met with a number of organisations throughout the reporting period. These included RNIB, Ulster University, North West Migrants Forum, Strabane Ethnic Community Association, African and Caribbean Community Network, Sarika Shah Art, New Gate Arts and Culture Centre, Resilio, North West Community Network, Model Primary School, Chapel Road Primary School, St Joseph's Secondary School, Education Authority, etc. |

| No | Action | Timescale | Responsible Person(s) | Outcome/Measure | Updates |
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| EIP8 | Continue the provision of support for people with a disability to improve employability [EIP] | Academic year 2025/2026 | Student Services Manager | Delivery of WAPP<br><br>Number of students attending Inspire Programme<br><br>Number of students enrolled through College's Connect Programme<br><br>Number of students enrolled on The King's Trust Programme | The WAP Officer worked alongside colleagues from the Careers Team to deliver the College's school engagement programme across the North West region. Through a combination of in-school presentations, careers fairs, and targeted group sessions, they engaged with over 2,400 secondary school students from schools primarily located in Derry, Limavady, Strabane, and Donegal.<br><br>The Careers team also met L3 course groups within the first six weeks to identify their English and Maths GCSE requirements.<br><br>The King's Trust Programme continued to provide young people with opportunities to develop confidence, teamwork, communication and employability skills through mentoring, community projects and personal development activities. During the 2025/26 academic year, 48 young people successfully participated in the King's Trust Programme, achieving positive outcomes and progressing towards further education, training and employment.<br><br>EDIT/EOTAS - Partnership working continued throughout 2025/26 with the EDIT Programme, funded by the Education Authority, which supports young people for whom mainstream education is not the most appropriate setting. The WAP Officer worked collaboratively with the College's Careers Advisers and Learning Link team to provide progression guidance, promote further education opportunities, and support |

| No | Action | Timescale | Responsible Person(s) | Outcome/Measure | Updates |
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| | | | | | participants in identifying appropriate pathways into education, training and employment.<br><br>INSPIRE - During the 2025/26 academic year, the WAP Officer continued to deliver the INSPIRE Employability Programme across a range of external organisations within the Derry City and Strabane District Council area. The programme supports individuals to overcome barriers to employment, education and training by building confidence, developing employability skills and providing practical guidance. During the year, 60 participants successfully engaged with the Programme, demonstrating continued demand for community-based employability support. These groups included The Women's Centre, Women's Aid, REACH, Greater Shantallow Area Partnership, On Street Community Youth, Dove House Community Trust & Glen Development Initiative.<br><br>During the 2025/26 academic year, the WAP Officer was invited to serve as a judge at the Northern Ireland Maths Fest alongside the Mayor of Derry and Strabane. The event brought together schools and community organisations from across the region to celebrate the role of mathematics in different cultures throughout history through a series of creative and interactive projects. Participation in the judging panel highlighted the College's commitment to widening participation, community engagement and promoting inclusive learning, while strengthening relationships with local schools and partner organisations. |

PART B

| No | Action | Timescale | Responsible Person(s) | Outcome/Measure | Updates |
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| EIP9 | Review the Mental Health Charter (Equality Commission) to assess actions necessary to promote and raise awareness [EIP] | Academic year 2025/2026 | HR Manager<br><br>Teaching & Learning Excellence Champion | Awareness of College as Trauma informed College | Trauma Informed Practice Training took place during the reporting period. This training equips professionals with frameworks to understand the impacts of psychological trauma, avoid re-traumatization, and foster safe, empowering environments. There are plans to roll the training to other staff in the next academic year.<br><br>The College continued working through the Equality Commission Mental Health Charter.<br><br>The College's Health and Wellbeing Committee met on several occasions during this academic year to raise awareness of health and wellbeing, including mental health which supports staff and students.<br><br>A range of actions progressed, for example, the review of work involved to re-achieve the Pieta Amber Flag accreditation, including awareness during International Day of Happiness, discussion on monies raised for the College's chosen charities, the Health and Wellbeing Brochure, the annual Staff Awards Day in 2026 and suggestions for Culture Health and Wellbeing day in May 2026, including collaboration with Newgate.<br><br>The College remains a member of a Student Mental Health Research Network working group who share best practice on the availability of small grants, information/resources and shared learning. |

PART B

| No | Action | Timescale | Responsible Person(s) | Outcome/Measure | Updates |
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| EIP10 | Further develop student support mechanisms to reduce barriers to education and learning, to include people with mental ill health [EIP] + [ES] | Academic year 20252026 | Head of Client Services<br><br>Director of Curriculum and Academic Standards | Increase in student numbers<br><br>Barriers identified and an increase in applications from individuals with a mental health illness | The College continued to liaise with a number of mental health organisations in relation to employment, however the Safeguarding/Student Services team continued to closely work alongside a range of mental health groups and organisations.<br><br>The Team liaised with mental health organisations and other relevant groups such as Aware NI, Nexus, ZEST, CAMS, GP's and mental health practitioners from local health centres, Adult Mental Health Services, Health Improvement Western Health Social Care Trust, PSNI, NSPCC, Housing Executive, Apex, Parenting NI, Social Services, Action Mental Health, Men's Shed, Men's Action Network, Praxis, Common Youth, and Ascert. |
| EIP11 | Health and Wellbeing Programme to continue to address concerns regarding poor mental health among staff and students [EIP] | Annually | HR Manager<br><br>Head of Client Services | Programme of events and evaluations | Please see DAP6 above |
| EIP12 | Continue partnership working with Lena Wellbeing Hub to maximise benefits to staff and students [EIP] | Academic year 2025/2026 | HR Services<br><br>Head of Client Services | Raised Awareness | The College continued their working partnership with Lena Wellbeing Hub to integrate and develop workshops for staff and students during the academic year with the aim of helping staff and students tap into the facilitators' personal resilience and resourcefulness; become experts in their own self-care and improve work towards achieving their goals and ambitions. |

PART B

| No | Action | Timescale | Responsible Person(s) | Outcome/Measure | Updates |
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| EIP13 | Student Services to continue to strengthen the development of effective mechanisms to support students with poor mental health [EIP] | Annually | Head of Client Services | Increased participation on social media<br><br>Increased number of students attending College with mental health issues | The Student Services Facebook and Instagram sites for students continued to increase the College's Social Media presence allowing students to access equality information/resources, specifically those with poor mental health. |
| EIP14 | Become a trauma informed College [EIP] | June 2026 | Teaching & Learning Excellence Champion | Raised Awareness | Building a trauma-informed environment across the College is one of the key priorities for the Learning and Teaching Development team. To this aim, Trauma Informed Practice Training took place during this academic year. |
| EIP15 | Encourage all faculties / departments to promote equality throughout the year and report in Progress Report in 2025/2026 [EIP] | Academic year 2025/2026 | EDI Officer | Awareness raising and number of activities | Staff were continually encouraged to provide updates on progress in relation to raising awareness in equality throughout the year and reporting more regularly. This continued to ensure that equality remained high on agendas.<br><br>In addition, members of the Equality Working Group were encouraged to disseminate information from the meetings through to their peers.<br><br>Many faculties / departments promoted equality from undertaking equality related training. |
| EIP16 | Continue to increase participation of relevant staff in the screening / monitoring of policies | Academic year 2025/2026 | EDI Officer | Increased awareness of the importance of screening / monitoring by each faculty / | The EDI Officer continued to advise staff of policy review dates and the necessity to equality screen. Over the past year 46 policies from a range of departments have been screened upon their review. Also, over 33 |

| No | Action | Timescale | Responsible Person(s) | Outcome/Measure | Updates |
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| | relevant to their respective areas [EIP] | | | department thereby influencing policy decisions | policies have been monitored based on their screening commitments. |
| EIP17 | Consider staff network groups, eg, disability, LGBTQIA+ community, etc [EIP] | Academic Year 2025/2026 | EDI Officer | Increased support and awareness | Discussions are ongoing in relation to setting up an LGBTQIA+ staff network. |
| EIP18 | Continue the work involved to support LGBTQIA+ staff and students [EIP] | Academic Year 2025/2026 | Head of Client Services<br><br>Compliance and Admissions Manager<br><br>EDI Officer | Increase in numbers of applicants from the LGBTQIA+ communities | The College continued to strengthen links with the Rainbow Project to further support our students and staff. Further training sessions were held in November 2025 for students from our Health and Social Care courses. Certificates were provided by them for those who participated.<br><br>Also, the College had representation at the Foyle Pride event on 23 August 2025.<br><br>Plans are being made to have training for students in our Springtown and Greystone Campuses |
| EIP19 | In addition to a calendar of events for equality related themes, College to organise 5 to 6 high level equality awareness campaigns [EIP] | Academic Year 2025/2026 | EDI Officer<br><br>Equality Working Group | Increased awareness and support for various equality themes | The College raised awareness of many equality related days including<br><br>**Black History Month** – North West Migrants Forum exhibition was hosted in the Strand Road Campus, and then in Limavady before Christmas 2025.<br><br>**Wear Red for Heart disease** - staff came together to raise awareness |

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| | | | | | **Disability Month** – staff were provided with a range of information and training from AccessAble, AbilityNet, Business Disability Forum, Equality Commission, VeryWellMind and RNIB.<br><br>**Neurodiversity Celebration Week** – staff were provided details on events and useful information.<br><br>**Culturally themed Health and Wellbeing Day** – staff and students participated in a range of activities such as music, food, craft workshops and dance from many different countries<br><br> |
| EIP20 | Continue to support ethnic minority organisations [EIP] | Academic Year 2025/2026 | EDI Officer | Increase in number of applications from ethnic minority groups for both employment and courses | During the reporting period, work with North West Migrants Forum continued. The College hosted their Black Heritage in NI: Hidden History Project in the Strand Road Campus from 20 October 2025 to 14 November 2025. This gave staff and students the |

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| | | | | | opportunity to review various people whose contributions to Northern Ireland had not been acknowledged. There was also the opportunity for international visitors to the Network of Networks event in November 2025 to view this important heritage project. In addition, the College hosted this project in the Limavady Campus before and after Christmas. They have also worked with the International Administrator in the preparation of the International Welcome brochure and Welcome in different languages pop-up stands.<br><br><br><br><br>Collaboration continued with Strabane Ethnic Community Association.<br><br>Collaboration continued with Strabane Ethnic Community Association. The College liaised with them as part of our PEACEPLUS project 'Inspire, Enthuse, Equip' to discuss courses currently on offer that their clients could apply for in the future. They also participated in the College's Cultural Health and Wellbeing Day. |

PART B

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| EIP21 | Monitor, Review and utilise annual workforce and student data to inform policy development and marketing [ES] | Annually | HR Manager<br><br>Head of Client Services<br><br>EDI Officer | Improved equality data used for screening College policies and decisions made by the College<br><br>Improved equality data to inform marketing objectives | As a result of the College's Equality Scheme commitments, screened policies with monitoring requirements were annually reviewed and during the reporting period, 33 policies were monitored and 46 policies screened.<br><br>Annually, the FE Sector equality group gather staff data to inform FE College's policy reviews.<br><br>Staff data is reviewed as part of the annual Fair Employment Monitoring return to the Equality Commission and Article 55 review, where necessary.<br><br>Student data is reviewed annually and this year, the data was reviewed further and actions identified to try to encourage further applicants from across the 9 equality categories by the Equality Working Group. |
| EIP22 | Recruit a Diverse student population [ES] | Annually | Head of Client Services | Increase in number of applications from all Section 75 categories | Equality / Student Services / HR Services continued to promote a range of awareness days. See EIP6 above for the awareness dates.<br><br>Also the College continued to liaise with a number of organisations and groups to promote diversity in the College, eg, Young Carers, Autism NI, LGBTQIA+ organisations, disability groups, Ethnic minority groups, etc, to encourage further enrolments. |

PART B

| No | Action | Timescale | Responsible Person(s) | Outcome/Measure | Updates |
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| EIP23 | Grow and enhance relations with local community [ES] | Annually | Head of Client Services<br><br>Compliance and Admissions Manager | Increased participation by community groups to inform College decisions<br><br>Identification of new initiatives undertaken by the College to promote equality<br><br>Increase in numbers attending community education courses<br><br>Increase in community education provision | Please see EIP20 and EIP22 above<br><br>In addition, the College continued to provide course opportunities to a wide range of community groups and centres within the Derry~Londonderry, Limavady and Strabane areas. A total of 50 various community groups and centres offered courses during the reporting period.<br><br>The EDI met with a number of organisations throughout the reporting period. These included RNIB, Ulster University, North West Migrants Forum, Strabane Ethnic Community Association, African and Caribbean Community Network, Sarika Shah Art, New Gate Arts and Culture Centre, Resilio, North West Community Network, Model Primary School, Chapel Road Primary School, St Joseph's Secondary School, Education Authority, etc.<br><br>On an annual basis the Equality Working Group reviews the College's Consultee list with a view to increasing participation among the Section 75 equality categories. |
| EIP24 | Review Student Induction to ensure Equality and Diversity is promoted widely [ES] | Academic Year 2025/2026 | Head of Client Services<br><br>EDI Officer | Increased awareness of Equality categories | The FE Sector Equality Group student induction training session during a classroom setting was reviewed in 2025/2026 and should be available for students for the start of the next academic year. |
| EIP25 | Monitor, evaluate and review the Equality | April each year to inform | Head of Client Services | Completion of actions identified and reported in annual | The College's Equality Improvement Plan is routinely reviewed. This is ongoing. |

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| | Improvement Plan [ES] | annual Progress Report | Compliance and Admissions Manager<br><br>EDI Officer | Progress Report to the Equality Commission | |
| EIP26 | Develop and provide welcoming activities for international students | Annually | Head of Client Services<br><br>European and International Projects Officer<br><br>EDI Officer | Increased awareness and support for students | The College's International Administrator and EDI Officer continued to work together to ensure the continued commitment to the College of Sanctuary accreditation.<br><br>Actions discussed included<br>• having Welcome pop-up stands in a range of languages to support prospective students at receptions across all campuses,<br>• the establishment of the first International student group to give a space for international students to interact and have their voices heard,<br>• facilitating drop in days in the library for ESOL students in order to take them through additional support the College can provide,<br>• the provision of an International Welcome Booklet,<br>• the provision of an app on iPads at receptions to support live translations of various documents, and training provided to relevant staff on its use and<br>• linking with the range of schools who have successfully been accredited with Schools of Sanctuary.<br><br>The EDI Officer met with Jane Camara from the EANI to discuss the plans the college has in relation to meeting with the various schools to collaborate on the range of support available. |

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| | | | | | In addition, the College was invited to attend Queens University Belfast's Sanctuary Pathways Through FE & HE event on 4 March 2026. The event was designed to support people from refugee and asylum-seeking backgrounds, bringing together FE and HE institutions to co-create sanctuary pathways and opportunities.<br><br><br><br><br>Staff were invited to attend the College's Culturally themed Health and Wellbeing day which took place on 22 May 2026. The event was opened by Dr Katy Radford from the Office of Identity and Cultural Expression and began with an Indian classical and Bollywood dance. There was also a cookery demonstration by Chef Paula McIntyre.<br><br>Staff and students participated with traditional Irish and Ulster-Scots music from both staff and representatives from Newgate Arts and Cultural Centre. Staff performed and participated in Bulgarian, Bollywood and |

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| | | | | | Flamenco dances, with singing performances from staff and students, including renditions in Greek. Students also participated.<br><br>A range of workshops were provided by North West Migrants Forum and Sarika Shah Art which included Indian Heritage Block Printing Workshop, Chinese Lantern Making workshop, Mexican decorating sugar skull (face mask) workshop, Henna tattoos, drumming workshop, Ukrainian Montanka Workshop, yoga, scented candle workshop, and an exhibition of Bready Ulster Scots photography. Various food samples were on offer from North West Migrants Forum, African and Caribbean Community Network and Strabane Ethnic Community Association.<br><br>The brochure for the activities across the campuses is included below<br><br>https://online.fliphtml5.com/fxyij/cxfb/<br><br>A survey was carried out to gauge comments following the event. Ratings of cultural representation and activity engagement had the strongest relationship with overall event satisfaction. Participants who rated cultural representation as **Excellent** overwhelmingly also rated the event **Excellent**, suggesting that the diversity and authenticity of cultural content was a key success factor. |

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<tr><th>Cultural Representation</th><th>Proportion</th><th>Overall Rating</th></tr>
<tr><td>Excellent</td><td>55.6 %</td><td>80% rated event Excellent</td></tr>
<tr><td>Very Good</td><td>37.0%</td><td>40% rated event Excellent, 60% Very Good</td></tr>
<tr><td>Good</td><td>7.4%</td><td>50% Good, 50% Fair</td></tr>
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<tr><td>EIP27</td><td>Increase Marketing communications and engagement content to reflect the diversity of staff / students and ensure accessibility of content</td><td>Annually</td><td>Head of Client Services<br><br>Marketing and PR Manager<br><br>EDI Officer</td><td>Increase in enrolments from all Section 75 equality categories<br><br>Increase in job applications from all Section 75 equality categories</td><td>Following Green17’s initial audits in 2021/2022, the Marketing team has requested a further audit to be compiled and presented by the end of November 2026.<br><br>In addition, the EDI Officer has prepared an Easy Read version of the Equality Scheme and is available on the Equality Section of the college website<br><br>https://www.nwrc.ac.uk/equality<br><br>Furthermore, there has been an increase in social media followers throughout all of the College’s social media platforms.</td></tr>
<tr><td>EIP28</td><td>To ensure the College e-learning resources are accessible for students with disabilities</td><td>June 2026</td><td>TELS Team<br><br>EDI Officer</td><td>Increased accessibility of content</td><td>The College’s Digital Learning Strategy, ie, accessibility of teaching and learning resources, support for learners with disabilities and support for learners for whom English is a second language (ESOL / EAL), allows the TELS team to support staff and students.</td></tr>
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| No | Action | Timescale | Responsible Person(s) | Outcome/Measure | Updates |
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| | | | | | TELS has overseen a significant system transition in accessibility monitoring and has supported staff through a change in accessibility practice.<br><br>The Strategy committed TELS to deliver 6 accessibility workshops by March 2026 which has been achieved.<br><br>In addition, TELS has gone beyond live training by producing online video demonstrations and focused on Microsoft accessibility tools, including the accessibility checker, immersive reader and built-in translation and captioning tools.<br><br>Furthermore, TELS has introduced Microsoft Translator on iPads used by front-facing reception staff.<br>This directly supports prospective students, applicants and enquirers for whom English is not their first language, removing a key access barrier at first contact. |