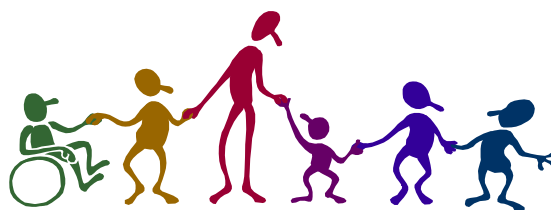


**SECTION 75 OF THE
NORTHERN IRELAND ACT 1998**

PROGRESS REPORT

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

APRIL 2023 – MARCH 2024



North West Regional College



**Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties
Annual Progress Report 2023-2024**

Contact:	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none">Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Action Plan	As above ✓ Name: Telephone: Email:
Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:	http://www.nwrc.ac.uk/Equality/
Signature: <i>Michelle Breslin</i>	

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 2023 and March 2024

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 2023-24, 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.

Throughout 2023/2024, business in the College continued with curriculum and support staff working together to support students' education.

Details of how equality of opportunity and good relations progressed are as follows:

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 staff, whether full-time or part-time, go through a weekly Induction programme that emphasises Equality in all aspects of College life. The programme includes mandatory training on Equality, SEND and Safeguarding, as well as cultural diversity training that raises awareness of all anti-discrimination risks. The programme also includes a workshop on Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE), which informs staff about this important research. Lecturing staff are encouraged to undertake TAQA training, which helps them to promote Equality in all aspects of Training and Assessment. This training helps staff to understand the legal and best practice implications of gender, disability, race, culture, religion and language for training and assessment processes.

Building on the "Hope Matters" conference last year, the Resilio team returned in January 2024 to present an action plan for the College. This was based on the ideas and proposals gathered with the Learning and Teaching team and lecturing staff on developing a Campus of Hope. This led to a week-long series of events across all campuses (22 April to 26 April) where the College was launched as a "Campus of Hope". These events focused on fostering a sense of wellbeing, belonging and community for staff and students alike. The week culminated in the Guildhall with Derry City and Strabane District Council declaring itself the first District of Hope. It is planned that this will be an annual event.

Several Learning Objects have been created by the Learning and Teaching Team. These include one on "Neurodiversity" which provides an understanding of the impact of common neurodiverse conditions and strategies to use to support students to create an inclusive environment. All new full-time and associate lecturers have completed this training.

A learning object on "Having Safe Conversations about Domestic Abuse at Work" was also created. This guidance and advice were informed by the Labour Relations Agency and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions "Safe at home, Safe at work". The learning object has also been

shared across the sector through the Cross-sector Learning and Development Forum and the Equality Coordinators' Forum.

The **SWEAR: Student Wellbeing Engagement And Resilience** workshop has been developed to support lecturers when dealing with students in crisis. It covers the presentation of poor mental health and stigma. It also explores the support that is available both inside and outside the College as well as self-care and resilience strategies. It is supported by interactive resource packs which can be accessed through a link / QR code. These can be used by lecturers in classrooms or during pastoral care tutorials to support students.

In 2022/23, Dr Suzanne Mooney, QUB, was commissioned by the Safeguarding Board NI to undertake research to provide recommendations for the advancement of Trauma Informed Approaches (TIA) across Northern Ireland. The findings from the QUB research report were shared at the launch in February 2024. The College was one of the 53 participants in this research which ascertained the work done to date on TIA. There has been a joint statement from all parties at Stormont to support this work to embed trauma-informed approaches across every school, college and organisation in the North.

The Learning and Teaching team has strengthened links with Dr Margaret Mc Lafferty (UU) who has received funding from the SFI-IRC Pathways Programme to continue work on student mental health and wellbeing.

Several members of staff, including the Head of Client Services, Student Services Manager and Safeguarding Officer, attended two conferences in February 2024 at ATU and UU on "*College Students' Mental Health and Wellbeing*". Themes included: Wellbeing and ADHD, Promoting a Whole College Approach to Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, Challenges, Opportunities and Policy priorities to Student Mental Health.

This helps the College to build on existing wellbeing actions and to assist with the integration of wellbeing across the whole campus including learning and teaching, student support services, staff development and policies. It allows the College to continue to identify opportunities in the College environment, social or academic, that can help foster an ethos of care, compassion and inclusion.

A Student Mental Health Research Network working group has been developed and a mapping exercise completed to find out as much research into student mental health and wellbeing on the island of Ireland, the findings will be shared with the group to continue to work on supporting and promoting positive mental health in colleges.

Several members of College staff are now members of this network from across curriculum areas and support teams.

A follow-up Conference was held in May 2024 in Ulster University with Mental Health Champion, Professor Siobhan O'Neill as the guest speaker.

Over the 2023/2024 academic year, many Equality days were promoted on the College's staff and student portals in our continued commitment to raise awareness.

Examples included:

- ✚ World Suicide Prevention Day (Campus video)
- ✚ World Heart Day
- ✚ International Day of Older Persons (staff photos and competition)
- ✚ Black History Month
- ✚ Wear it Pink (staff photographs)
- ✚ International Men's Day (during Movember)
- ✚ International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (including 16 days of Action)
- ✚ International Day of persons with disabilities
- ✚ World Braille Day (Student Competition)
- ✚ LGBT+ History Month
- ✚ International Women's Day (staff photographs)
- ✚ Denim Day for Dementia (staff photographs)
- ✚ BSL Week
- ✚ International Day of Happiness
- ✚ Action for Brain Injury Week (staff photographs)
- ✚ Carers' Week
- ✚ Refugee Week

The College was shortlisted in the Irish News Workplace and Employment Awards 2024 for the following categories.

- ✚ Team of the Year – Large Business (Equality Working Group)
- ✚ Best Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Award

The awards ceremony was held in the Titanic, Belfast on 6 June 2024 and being shortlisted for two awards was a success for the College.

The College has officially received confirmation that it has been successful 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. It allows the College to strengthen the diversity of our employees and highlights the important skills and abilities blind and partially sighted individuals can bring to the College.

North West Regional College is the first educational establishment in Northern Ireland to achieve this accreditation.

In addition, the Equality Administrator attended RNIB's Dining in the Dark event during World Sight day on 12 October 2023. The event was attended by RNIB's Regional Director, the Deputy Mayor and prominent RNIB staff and supporters. A welcome was also provided by Richard Moore, Children in Crossfire.

Also, the Equality Administrator was invited to attend the Seeing Derry Differently event with the Mayor, RNIB and Health and Social Care staff representing the DIAL centre. The event took

place on 15 January 2024. Discussions centred on how the council could support visually impaired individuals and how work would continue towards making Derry and Strabane inclusive and welcoming to everyone.

In addition, discussion continues with RNIB with a view to place a client who is completely blind. It was agreed that they would be placed within Client Services. Discussions are in progress regarding the support that is required to facilitate this placement.

Work continued to support North West Migrants' Forum in raising awareness and supporting migrants and refugees within the North West. The Equality Administrator attended their third Black History Month Summit in Magee College in October 2023. Speakers attending the event were Dr Hyab Yohannes, Dr Ebum Joseph, Donna Namuksasa and Professor Charlotte Williams OBE all encouraging the inclusion of black history in schools' curriculum.

The College celebrated the success for their first ever recipient of the College's Asylum Seeker Scholarship. Chukwuka Nwanony, who had been studying on the Access Adult Learning Diploma in Health and Welfare, received sector wide publicity for his success.

As a result of the scholarship, the College was recognised at an event in the House of Lords, London for its partnership with NWMF through the Good for Me, Good for FE initiative that the College delivers as part of the FE sector. This initiative is a national campaign to support FE Colleges, their staff and students to become involved in community action across the UK. The scholarship led to NWMF being awarded the FE Charity Partner of the Year which included colleges from across the UK.

<https://nwmf.org.uk/migrants-forum-volunteer-awarded-asylum-seeker-scholarship/>

The College attended NWMF's Race Awards on 7 March 2024 and were successful in achieving their Anti-Racism School of the Year Award. In addition, the College's International Officer was recognised for their work in Advancing Racial Justice and Fairness at the event.

The Equality Administrator continued to progress discussions with staff from NWMF ahead of Black History Month in October 2024. A student from Media was asked to work on a photography project for their course assessment. Due to staff availability with NWMF, this has been put on hold until the new academic year. However, College students from ESOL courses have agreed to participate in Black History Month 2024.

In addition to the work involved with North West Migrants' Forum, another liaison between Media and Multimedia staff and the Equality Administrator supported Strabane Ethnic Community Association (SECA). This involved supporting SECA as they celebrated their 20th anniversary working with the ethnic minority community and the production of a newsletter to celebrate this milestone. The Head of Client Services and Equality Administrator attended their event in April 2024 with the student's newsletter circulated before the event. The College also provided online versions of SECA's 10th and recent 20th anniversary brochures for use on their Facebook page.

The College has chaired the Sector Equality Co-ordinators' Forum for two years and now hands this over to SRC for 2024/2025. During this academic year, discussions during these meetings centred on the College's success at achieving RNIB's Visibly Better Employer (VBE) Standard, the Equality Commission's Mental Health Charter, the College's success at NWMF's Race Awards, suggestions for the review of the Disability Action Plans, sector focus group nominations and screening of sector policies.


The College's Equality Working Group met four times this academic year and continued to promote equality throughout the College. The range of discussions have been documented throughout this progress report including continued work with NWMF and preparation for Black History Month in October 2024, staff member being highly commended for the Skills Competition Diversity Award from WorldSkills UK Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Heroes Awards, success of Strabane Ethnic Community Association's 20th anniversary celebrations, progress on becoming a College of Sanctuary and completion of Refugee UK training, success of becoming a Campus of Hope, shortlisting for Irish News Awards for Team of the Year and Best Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Award and work with Waterside Shared Village as well as progress with Bogside and Brandywell Initiative and becoming member of the City Walls forum.




The College's newly established Mental Health Committee met on four occasions to take forward the collaborative approach to raising awareness of mental health to support staff and students, and to achieve the Pieta Amber Flag Initiative (now achieved). This initiative recognises individual efforts to create healthy, inclusive environments that support the mental wellbeing of a range of organisations, including Further Education.

A number of actions were discussed during these meetings which included the establishment of a Charity Day led by students, documented below, inclusion of two students as permanent members to represent the student voice and the ability for electronic donations to charity-held events to be introduced (now achieved). A strategic planning day was held on 13 June 2024 to prepare for 2024/2025 and the development of a strategic plan to progress work over the next few years.

Following on from the Mental Health Committee meetings, work was finalised on the student-led charity day which took place on 15 May 2024. Students from Level 2 in Sport organised the event as part of their course. Members of the Equality Working Group supported them as part of the registration for their selfie-walk around the city. A number of College staff undertook the walk and monies raised were donated to the College's charities, ie, Foyle Food Bank, Limavady Initiative for Prevention of Suicide and Strabane Ethnic Community Association. As mentioned above, electronic donations were available to allow staff and students to donate. The Selfie orientated walk coincided with Mental Health Awareness Week arranged by Student Services.

Following the publicity around the College receiving RNIB's Visibly Better Employer Standard, Londonderry Chamber of Commerce approached the College to participate in a Q&A panel at their Diversity in Leadership Event which took place on International Women's Day, 8 March 2024, in Seagate. The Chair of the Equality Working Group, agreed to participate on the panel. The other panellists were

 Dr Mary Hannon-Fletcher - Dean of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Ulster University

-  Lilian Seenoi-Barr – Founder & Director, NW Migrants Forum (and now Mayor)
-  Louise McElvaney - Director of People and Performance, Learning Pool, and
-  Dr Sandra McNeill - Sub Dean UG Education, WHSCT

The panel was also chaired by Selina Horshi, MD White Horse Hotel with input from Susan Walker, Allstate NI who became the first local employer to receive the Silver Diversity Mark Accreditation, and Anna Doherty, Londonderry Chamber of Commerce. The event was beneficial for new networking opportunities to help promote equality and diversity with other organisations.

The College has strengthened links with the Rainbow Project to further support our students and staff. The first meeting this academic year with the Rainbow Project was held on 2 November 2023. Training on their Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity training for the College's Leadership Team subsequently took place on 10 January 2024. Members of the Governing Body also undertook the training on 6 June 2024. This is to be rolled out again to other GB members unable to attend, and to students in September/October 2024.

A representative from the student LGBT Group attended the Equality Working Group meeting in February 2024 as part of the College's awareness raising piece for LGBT+ History month.

Work progressed in seeking staff views on the establishment of an LGBT+ staff network (and other networks). This followed the Equality Administrator meeting with staff from Ulster University's LGBT+ network.

Community outreach continued with the Head of Client Services, Community Education staff and the Equality Administrator meeting representatives from the Waterside Shared Village in December 2023 to discuss the provision of courses to their community to strengthen the engagement between them and the College.

In addition, the Equality Administrator attended a meeting of the City Walls Forum in February 2024. This provided the opportunity for the College to support the North West community further. Membership of the forum includes those involved in health and wellbeing, community development, cancer support, arts/cultural and heritage, sport, youth provision, older people support, environmental, peace and reconciliation. The Group discussed the priorities within the themes of Social, Economic and Environmental issues including education. Following discussion, it was agreed to develop an action plan to address the barriers and challenges identified that the College are keen to support.

In addition, a member of the group circulated a survey in their effort to rebrand the Peace Barrier's Programme which was completed by the end of May 2024 with suggestions provided.

Work on becoming a College of Sanctuary continued. The final training from Refugee UK has taken place with the potential for additional staff being trained. It was proposed that a member of the Governing Body could potentially undertake this training as it is important that every level within the College from GB members to all staff and students are aware of the meaning of FE College of Sanctuary.

A working group has now been established to take forward the necessary actions to achieve this accreditation. They have reviewed the City of Sanctuary's FE College audit tool and have begun to gather evidence as necessary prior to submission and signing the City of Sanctuary pledge.

The College continued to monitor its Disability Action Plan, with actions, for example to

1. introduce training for front line staff on disability etiquette and relevant legislation dealing with disability and the provision of goods, facilities and services (*introduction of Communications Access UK training*);
2. 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 World Braille Day and Action for Brain Injury Week*);
3. monitor and review the progress of the Disability Action Plan (*the College provided the Sector Equality Forum with suggestions to inform the review of the DAP in 2025*); and
4. promotion of AccessAble website to encourage participation of prospective students (*addition of AccessAble link within the Admissions and Enrolments Policy with the potential to be included in the Recruitment and Selection Policy upon its review*).

The annual audit of College buildings by AccessAble took place week commencing 20 November 2023 in Strabane, Limavady and Greystone. The audit did not highlight any areas of concern.

Due to the recent development of the College's Visitors Policy and the decision to remove some exits within the Strand Road Campus, the Equality Administrator advised AccessAble of the need to update their guidance.

In addition, a new member representing the FE Colleges has agreed to meet with Sector Equality Coordinators' Forum and the College's Equality Working Group to provide information on the use of their guidance and how they support not only people with disabilities, but older persons and those who experience anxiety.

The continued monitoring of sanitary products is in place to ensure that the College continued to provide products in all female/all gender toilets in all buildings at all campuses this academic year.

However, from 12 May 2024 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 will continue to provide products accordingly. The act required a survey of staff and students to determine their thoughts on the range of products, where they are located, how accessible they are and how to publicise their availability. The Act also specified that the College must prepare and publish a written statement on the arrangements which have been established to provide free period products on its premises. This is a work in progress.

The update of the College website continued following Green17's initial audits in 2021/2022. Staff have been advised to ensure accessibility of documents before uploading onto the College website.

The Equality Administrator attended the launch of the Derry City and Strabane District Council's Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan, funded by the Public Health Agency (PHA), on the first national Ageism Action Day, Wednesday 20th March. The launch, which took place in Foyle Arena, was part of the FestivALL Programme, a two-day event aimed at reducing the barriers faced by people with disabilities, carers and older people, providing a commitment to ensure the Council area continues to be a great place to live and grow older within.

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.

Work on the Strabane EQIA and RNIA was parked during this academic year, however the Equality Administrator ensured that the data provided within the EQIA was updated to reflect the new statistics from the Census 2021 information.

Following the College signing the Race at Work Charter associated with Business in the Community the College has taken practical steps to ensure barriers for ethnic minorities are tackled to increase staff and students from ethnic minority communities. The charter integrates the other work that is ongoing with North West Migrants' Forum, Strabane Ethnic Communities Association and College of Sanctuary.

The Equality Administrator continued to advise staff of policy review dates and the necessity to equality screen. Over the past year 47 policies have been screened upon their review.

The Director of Operations from Employers for Disability NI attended the College on 22 September 2023 to present the AAA accreditation certificate to the College following its successful receipt of this accreditation in June 2023. It was noted that North West Regional College was the only FE College to gain this accreditation. Following this the College has renewed its membership with them 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. Also, the Equality Administrator attended their AGM before Christmas.

The College linked in with See Her Thrive, an organisation that supports women's health and had a "*Let's Talk Menopause*" session for staff on 7 March, just before International Women's Day. The College was their first partner in both education and Northern Ireland. The webinar is available for one year and can be sourced as much as possible, also other resources are available.

Various departments with the College, ie Equality, HR Services, Student Services and the Learning and Teaching Team established a 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 2024/2025.

The College's procurement of 20 licences for staff to undertake an Introductory e-Learning module through Signature continued to support staff. Staff who were unable to complete the training agreed to offer them to other staff who had expressed interest in the online training at the time of seeking expressions of interest.

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.

Also, a recent webinar held by Business Disability Forum was attended by the Equality Administrator as well as staff from Marketing. The webinar centred on Changing the Image of Disability that ensures that organisations who use images of people with disabilities on their promotion platforms, should ensure they use images of people with hidden disabilities.

The College continued to support its neurodiverse and increasingly ethnic student population and has created a unique environment where students with neurodivergent conditions are supported, celebrated, and included in all aspects of the student experience. While the College has a strong learning support department providing individual support and adjustments to over 700 students who have disabilities and/or conditions, recent attention has been to ensure that neurodivergent students feel empowered to “*take up space*” and be recognised for the strengths they bring to the table across all aspects of College life.

The College hosted a fully booked neurodiversity performance this year where both neurotypical and neurodivergent students performed. A student-led neurodiversity social club has also been created where students can socialise in a comfortable environment, meet new people, and take part in carefully planned activities. International recognised speakers with lived experience have trained staff on autism and ADHD and the Learning Link department have created scenario based internal training for lecturers, in addition to mandatory SENDO training to build acceptance. The strengths that neurodiversity brings to entrepreneurship has also been celebrated through the recent “*Ideator Awards*” where an autistic student won the prize for the “*best vision for business growth*” which was sponsored by British Business Bank.

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. During the reporting period, there was a decrease of 48 students who registered with them for support. The team provided critical support to students over this period.

The Study Skills service was delivered over a combined total of 25.5 weeks this academic year from October 2023 - June 2024. The number of sessions attended in by students was 414.

The Learning Link team were audited by the Joint Council for Qualifications in 23/24. The outcome was that 100% of audited files met JCQ compliance criteria and the Learning Link team received no recommendations and a fully compliant outcome report.

The Learning Link team developed a September mentor programme in 23/24. The study skills service supported 24 newly registered Learning Link students settle into the College this academic year during the Summer and throughout September, assisting students with their transition into life at FE and HE.

The Learning Link operates a support worker service for students who require additional learning support within the classroom. Duties include campus assistance, notetaking,

reinforcement, and organisation. During the academic the College had 28 support workers who supported 67 mainstream students throughout their studies.

The Learning Link held meetings with Curriculum Managers in September regarding 'complex cases' and students with high needs so that they were fully informed to support coordinators and lecturers with in class management of reasonable adjustments. Lecturing teams advised that this was useful and will continue into 24/25.

As mentioned previously, in April 2024, the College supported the launch of Derry City and Strabane District Council as the first District of Hope, with the College being declared the first Campus of Hope. "*Making Hope Happen*" is a partnership initiative with RESILIO and North West Community Network and has been endorsed by the Mayor of Derry City and Strabane District Council. The College acknowledged that this is a time of uncertainty for many and that hopelessness is one of the prime predictors for poor mental health. With that in mind, the College ran a week-long series of activities taking place in all campuses for both staff and students in April 2024. This included a coffee morning for staff and students, where mental health resources were available and sunflower seeds as the sunflower is the universal symbol of Hope.

The Safeguarding Team promoted Mental Health awareness week in May 2024 by developing a schedule of events which ran across all campuses throughout the week. The theme this year was "*movement*" and enjoyable activities were developed for all students to take part in throughout the week, this included laughter yoga, Peace of the Foyle walk (the student-led selfie walk around the city mentioned earlier), games and "*Wear it Green*" day.

Local mental health organisations attended the "*Feel Good Fair*" including, Aware NI, Papyrus, NSPCC, Common Youth, Aware Defeat Depression, Hive and Therapy dogs NI to promote their services and to support young people. ASCERT Drug and Alcohol service for the WHSCT delivered "*Understanding Substance Misuse*" workshops across all campuses throughout the week. Also, students had the opportunity to take part in a "*Have Your Say Day*" student voice conference which gave them the chance to give feedback on their experience as a student in the College.

A planning date has been scheduled for further initiatives for next year and will form part of next year's report.

The Widening Access and Participation Officer (WAP) delivers the Inspire Employability programme at the Women's Centre. The aim of the programme is to provide help, support and advice to women who are currently unemployed so that they can develop the skills needed to begin a successful job hunt. The College delivered different workshops which include CV building, interview preparation, building resilience as well as promoting job opportunities. 44 people took part in this programme through the Women's Centre. 88% progressed onto education or further study after completing the workshops.

In 2023/24, the WAP officer worked with the youth club in the Galliagh Community Centre. The aim of the workshops was to get 14–16-year-olds prepared for applying for jobs as well as preparing them for interviews should they happen to have one. They looked at building and

developing their CVs along with a transversal skills workshop which looked at implementing communication, team building and problem-solving activities into the class.

The WAP Officer also uses the college curriculum to take the youth club members through the wide variety of courses available at the College. They also worked alongside the marketing team to provide the youth club with branded merchandise along with college prospectuses. 24 young people took place in the Inspire employability programme this year.

In January 2024 our WAP officer delivered the Inspire employability programme in Magilligan prison. The workshops were designed and planned in a way that they would give inmates a better chance of gaining employment and having a positive impact on their local community. After researching what workshops the people would benefit from, it was agreed to offer CV Building, Interview hints and tips, Building resilience and transversal skills with 13 people taking part in the workshops and whilst many of the participants are still serving their sentence, the feedback received was very positive. The College has been asked back to deliver the programme to more inmates.

Our WAP officer works closely with the Education Authority and in particular the school aged mothers' (SAMs) group. The aim of this engagement is to help young people re-engage with education since having to step away to give birth. Once they have re-engaged in part-time or full-time education, support mechanisms (safeguarding, careers, student finance etc.) are put in place to make their education journey as comfortable and as successful as possible. In 2024 the College met with 7 SAMs who have progressed onto a range of courses including Foundation Degrees.

The College's Careers Academy team deliver a series of presentations and workshops and attend Careers Fairs which aim to help students at secondary schools understand their options and take a proactive and reflective approach to decision making. With a range of support offered to post-16 students in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, the team help students make informed choices at key decision points so that they make the most of their prospects. The College's Careers staff provide information on higher education, progression routes, course options as well information on the College and the wide range of opportunities it has to offer. In 2023 the WAP office, along with our careers team attended 22 in-person school visits and 4 careers fairs.

As previously reported, DIAL 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.

DIAL hosted several local and international events throughout the academic year 2023/24, with a range of external and internal stakeholders. In February 2024, an event themed: "*Innovating Health and Housing*" (Connected NI funded) was delivered in DIAL, bringing together a range of digital innovators, SMEs, academics, and members of the public. The full-day conference provided opportunities for both internal and external stakeholders to connect, and to explore how technology could be used to support and maintain independent living for those living with a disability. All of the technology innovators were from the local and regional area, that

demonstrated the high-quality tech innovations that were being developed across Northern Ireland.

The partnership with Ulster University, and their Occupational Therapy faculty, continued this year. The relationship provided Ulster staff and students to use the DIAL Centre to support teaching, learning and assessment in a simulated homecare setting. A shared learning masterclass opportunity was provided by Seating Matters, in DIAL, to both the students from Ulster University and students studying a range of Health and Social Care courses at the College.

Occupational Therapists from Western Trust used the DIAL homecare area to assess their clients, in relation to types of technology, equipment and/or furniture that would be required to support their independence in future.

Information and open sessions, for members of the public were hosted in DIAL to observe the future of technology to maintain an individual's independence.

RNIB used the College's DIAL centre as a resource to deliver Visual Awareness Training with members of the public throughout the year.

International guests to the College, including staff and students, were provided tours of DIAL and discussions were held around the use of technology enabled care, IoT, and assistive technologies to support independent living for individuals living with dementia and/or complex and chronic illness.

In September 2023, to raise awareness of Dementia, and to mark World Alzheimer's Day, an event was delivered in DIAL, bringing members of the public together, to learn about dementia, and to learn about ways in which design and technology can be used to support individuals to live independently at home.

The Safeguarding Team continued to promote positive mental health for students during their time at the College. From September 2023 to May 2024, there have been 427 referrals made, a significant increase of 70 from the previous year. Anxiety continues to be the most common reason for referral (125) however this is a decrease in the number of students since last year.

The Safeguarding team have put a major focus on positive mental health events throughout the academic year which has had a positive impact on students and staff. There has been a decrease in the number of students disclosing abuse, and also a decrease in the number of students presenting with a plan to self-harm and feeling suicidal. To support these students, the College has promoted Inspire's Student Hub with features such as iHelpr Chatbot, Mood Tracker and Resource Library. There is also a LiveChat feature which allows students to chat to the team for support and signposts.

The Safeguarding Team have supported 12 Looked After Young People with one-to-one meetings, liaising with social workers and personal advisors, attending LAC reviews and Care planning meetings throughout the academic year.

The Safeguarding team have supported 6 young adult carers and carried out monthly check-in sessions. All carers have completed a support plan with the deputy Safeguarding Officer which has been shared with their course co-ordinator. The Plan outlines their caring responsibilities at home avoiding the frequent explanations about why they must answer calls or attend appointments.

The Safeguarding Team promoted Sexual Health Awareness week in February 2024 with Common Youth delivering a Consent workshop to 110 Performing Arts and Music students. They also arranged a sexual health promotion table to be displayed in the foyer of the campus to promote the College's C-Card scheme and to share sexual health and consent resources. Student Services also promoted "*Love Yourself*" on Valentine's Day.

The Head of Client Services, Student Services Manager and Safeguarding Officer attended a partnership meeting with founder of ARC Fitness in May 2024. ARC Fitness is Addiction Recovery Coaching which aims to bring hope to individuals directly impacted by substance misuse. ARC is a charity that helps people with substance use disorders improve their mental and physical well-being through physical activity, education, and support. Due to an increase in students presenting with alcohol and drugs addictions the aim of the partnership would be to link with ARC to refer students and staff presenting with addition issues for support through the referral process.

The Safeguarding Officer and Student Union Officer supported the Level 2 ICT Traineeship group with their project in which they had to deliver to a "*live client scenario*" on promoting positive mental health in the College throughout the month of May 2024. The group had to develop a range of marketing materials to include graphics on promoting mental health in the College, such as posters, social media posts and business cards. It was agreed to display all of the students posters on the mental health tables for mental health awareness week to showcase their hard work.

In addition, the Department for the Economy visited the College in May 2024 and attended the "*Have Your Say Day*" Student Voice Conference. They stated, "*The team were so impressive, the care for your learners shone through*".

The College's Turing Scheme and Erasmus+ projects create life-changing opportunities for students, providing them with the chance to develop new skills, gain vital international experience and boost their employability. Students can also develop a wide range of soft skills, language skills and a better understanding of other cultures.

The project's selection processes are fair and offer equal access to the overseas training opportunities for all eligible students. The College actively promotes opportunities to disadvantaged learners, learners from under-represented groups in international Mobility and learners with additional educational needs. Additional grants are requested to cover exceptional costs, special education needs or to provide extra financial support for those from low-income backgrounds. The additional funding helps to remove any obstacles for students who require the additional support. The College has seen an increase in the number of students declaring they have SENDs or come from disadvantaged backgrounds and have supported an international

student in securing a visa for a mobility training trip to Spain under the College's current Turing Scheme project "*10x on the move*".

The International Officer submitted a number of applications on behalf of students to Capita, who are awarding bursaries for students in need of additional financial support for their participation in a Turing Scheme training mobility. The College is currently awaiting outcome of bursaries being awarded.

As well as working on international opportunities for our own students, the College provides support and makes adaptations to visiting students with special education needs. Visiting students receive a full welcome induction and are introduced to Student Services so they can avail of additional support during their training.

The international department deals with all international student enquiries including people seeking international protection (Asylum seekers) and those granted international protection (refugees). All enquiries and applications are welcome and each applicant or potential student is treated fairly, without any racial discrimination or prejudice. The College continues to use a simplified process for students wishing to register on English Language for Speakers of Other Languages courses (ESOL) and for people seeking international protection, making it easier for them and to remove any unnecessary barriers including miscommunication. The ESOL Coordinator and Lecturers help students complete the College's application form once they have been allocated an English language class at the appropriate level.

The College welcomes applications from International students and encourage them to be involved in College life, especially the clubs and societies. One International Student ran in the Students' Union elections and is a class representative.

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 56 various community groups and centres held courses during the reporting period. This included additional venues, eg, Lincoln Courts Community Centre, St Eithne's Primary School and Benbradagh Centre.

The Business Support Centre (BSC) continued to support students presenting with different needs including those who are neurodivergent and special needs. The range of BSC Skills courses supporting the equality agenda included the Level 2 qualification in Autism Awareness,

Level 3 and Level 4 qualifications in ACES, as well as the Level 2 qualification in Mental Health Awareness.

In addition, the BSC delivered a Women Returners' Programme aimed towards women who have been away from work or had a career gap due to family, health, or caring responsibilities. It can help them get back into the job market and could be the start of new opportunities. To facilitate potential school runs, the start and finish times have removed that barrier to education. The programme also provided childcare and travel costs to eliminate barriers to attendance, with the inclusion of the "Dress for Success" to support those in low socio-economic groups. It was noted that 75% of participants who took part in the previous Women Returners' programme were now in full-time / part-time employment.

The Equality Administrator regularly met with HR Services during 2023/24 to bring forward positive actions relating to equality in HR. As a result, advertising job opportunities continued to be provided to groups representing the disability and LGBTQIA+ communities, the update of some HR Policies, the review of various guidance documents relating to the LGBTQIA+ community and the successful achievement of the RNIB Visibly Better Employer Standard.

At the Graduation ceremony in October 2023, a translated version of the graduation booklet in Polish was made available to one student at their request to ensure their parents could participate in the ceremony. The student thanked the College stating "*The translated booklet was helpful for my parents. Thank you for making my graduation day special!*"

The College's TELS team have been working with a range of EU partners on a DigiVET project to support the creation of Virtual Reality learning resources, as well as the provision of a range of training sessions to support all learners including those who have mobility issues or caring responsibilities.

Examination support for relevant students continued this academic year. Arrangements included 25% to 100% extra time, use of a Scribe, Reader, rest breaks, prompter, a smaller venue or separate room, keyboard input, reading pen, support worker, Read and Write Gold Software and home invigilation. Over 360 instances of support were provided.

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- 2 Please provide examples of outcomes and/or the impact of equality action plans/ measures in 2023-24 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

Please see Equality Improvement Plan attached

3 Has the application of the Equality Scheme commitments resulted in any changes to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2023-24 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 is now able to promote its successful achievement of RNIB’s Visibly Better Employer Standard within its Recruitment online system and within relevant staff email addresses.
- The College has instigated its first scholarship for an international student after taking cognisance of the fees associated with being an international student who is a migrant.
- The establishment of the College as a Campus of hope shows its commitment to incorporating hope into all aspects of College life, both for students and staff.
- The College has reviewed its current practice in supporting migrants and refugees to gain further education at the College to allow it to continue its work towards becoming a College of Sanctuary.
- The College has established a Mental Health Cross College Committee to support all aspects of working in collaboration to supporting staff and students who are experiencing mental health concerns. The College has also become a member of the Student Mental Health Research Network across the island of Ireland.
- The College has continued its collaboration with the Rainbow Project and additional interaction and training for staff and GB members
- The College has established new links the College now has with the City Walls Forum that supports community and voluntary groups and organisations in the North West.

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

Please provide any details and examples:

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- As a result of achieving RNIB's Visibly Better Employer Standard, the College is seen as an employer who welcomes applications and enrolments from people who are blind or partially sighted.
- As a result of awarding its first scholarship to an Access Student, the College raised its profile as an employer who welcomes applications and enrolments from all ethnic communities. Work with the North West Migrants' Forum has also resulted in them achieving recognition at the Good For Me, Good For FE UK awards as Charity of the Year, with the College achieving recognition at NWMF's Race Awards in March 2024 as School of the Year and the International Officer commended for her work in Advancing Racial Justice and Fairness.
- The establishment of the College as a Campus of hope shows its commitment to incorporating hope into all aspects of College life, both for students and staff.
- As a result of the College reviewing how it supports migrants and refugees to gain further education, the work it undertakes to attain the College of Sanctuary accreditation will benefit new migrants and refugees settling in the North West, with the hope of achieving the accreditation in 2024/2025.
- The establishment of the cross College Mental Health Committee will allow the collaboration to raise awareness and support good mental health, with the joint provision of tools and training to support staff and students. With it also be part of the all-Ireland working group, further research should take the working of the group further in the support of staff and students.
- Due to its continued relationship with the Rainbow Project, more staff and students and GB members will be trained on supporting the LGBTQIA+ community, thereby reaching out beyond the College to each staff member and student's families and friends, and other working relationships.
- Through its newly established link with the City Walls Forum, the College can support the community and voluntary groups with promotion of potential training sessions and courses for all communities in the North West.

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):

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- 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

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 2023-24 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 2023-24 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 the full implementation for the Widening Access and Participation Plan continued to be a fundamental aspect of work within the College.

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- Continued identification of Equality training as mandatory and to be undertaken every 3 years. This ensures equality training features in all staff development plans.
- 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 through its Development Plan.

In the 2023-24 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 2023-24 report
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Please see Paragraph 5 above

Equality action plans / measures

7 Within the 2023-24 reporting period, please indicate the number of:

Actions completed:	17	Actions ongoing:	26	Actions to commence:	1
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Please provide any details and examples *(in addition to question 2)*:

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Not applicable

8 Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2023-24 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 2023-24 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 details and examples of good practice in consultation during the 2023-24 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 in the review of policies through its consultation list

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- ✓ students, for example, through use of the So Far so Good (Learner Services) Survey, Induction Survey, Quality of Teaching and Learning Survey and the Student Voice through Student Services
- ✓ staff through exit questionnaires to ensure there were no issues in relation to equality of opportunity for staff
- ✓ newly appointed staff in relation to service provided during recruitment process, including any issues in relation to equality of opportunity
- ✓ the Sector Equality Co-ordinators Forum in relation to the promotion of equality throughout the six FE Colleges
- ✓ the Equality Commission in respect of all consultations

12 In the 2023-24 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were most frequently used by consultees: (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 2023-24 reporting period? (tick one box only)

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Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Not applicable

14 Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2023-24 reporting period? (tick one box only)

Yes No Not applicable – no commitment to review

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

47 (includes 2 sector policies)

16 Please provide the number of assessments that were consulted upon during 2023-24:

47 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 main consultations conducted on an assessment (as described above) or other matters relevant to the Section 75 duties:

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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 2023-24 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 2023-24 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

Yes No, already taken place

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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 2023-24 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:

- The monitoring of College policies on an annual basis following their equality screening continued during the reporting period. Over 45 policies were monitored.
- A number of student surveys continued to be carried out to identify any areas of concern that students may have experienced during their educational journey at the College.
- The College continued to monitor staff's experience of the College as an equal opportunities employer via exit interviews, as well as an annual Customer Satisfaction survey of recruitment processes and the Equal Opportunities Employer for new staff survey. In addition the Fair Employment Monitoring Return is annually completed and reported to the College's Governing Body.
- Safeguarding and SENDO reports are also provided to the Governing Body outlining the support provided to all students as necessary. This informs planning for the resources

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needed each year as part of Governing Body commitments to provide the necessary resources to implement the College’s Equality Scheme actions.

- The College continued to monitor its Complaints and Compliments Policy to ensure fair participation and the promotion of equality of opportunity for individuals accessing the College’s service provision.
- Success rates and retention figures continued to be monitored to address concerns and improve service provision as necessary.

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 2023-24, 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
Adolescent Neglect NSPCC	9	Excellent – 60% Very Good – 40%	Very informative Very good training Excellent topic, worthwhile
Deaf Awareness	10	Excellent – 75% Very Good – 12.5% Good – 12.5%	Very informative and useful training session
Domestic Abuse Awareness	19	Excellent – 80% Very Good – 20%	Brilliant session on a tough topic If found it very interesting and informative
Hope Action Planning Day	9	Excellent – 40% Very Good – 20% Good – 40%	Fantastic session – their belief in hope is infectious
Managing Diversity and Preventing Bullying	15	Excellent – 100%	This was not only a very informative training session but it was enjoyable and interactive Excellent course, everyone contributed to discussions, delivered expertly Very enjoyable session and informative
Mental Health First Aid	8	Excellent – 87.5% Very Good – 12.5%	Very informative and through provoking training

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Course	No of Staff who attended /participated	Evaluation	Comments
			The training was delivered very well, training providers were excellent
Neurodiversity Awareness	30	Excellent – 63% Very Good – 32% Poor – 5%	Very good training and the trainer was very informative This was an excellent, engaging, informative training course delivered by an expert in the field of supporting neurodivergent adults in the workplace
Neurodiversity International Jude Morrow	59	Excellent – 74% Very Good – 19% Good – 7%	It was personalised, student-focused and engaging. He managed to have difficult discussions in a light-hearted manner and challenged misconceptions and unconscious bias faced by many autistic people In all my years working at NWRC this was the best workshop/talk I have attended A Brilliant speaker who inspired me to rethink many aspects and beliefs I had about autism. Probably the most useful training ever! I found this training very educational in all aspects of the presentation and training and it really enlightened my knowledge on students, colleagues and family with autism
NSPCC Online Safety Workshop	4	Excellent – 87.5% Very Good – 12.5%	Excellent session. The presenter was enthusiastic and informative, and made a very serious issue fun to learn The presentation was engaging and very interactive
Sexual Orientation and Gender Awareness	25	78% of respondents rated training as Excellent 22% as Very Good (for 03.11.23 session) 50% of respondents rated training as Excellent 25% as Very Good, 25% as Poor (for 10.01.24 session)	A very well delivered course which was both professional and educational A very informative training session A recommendation was made to ensure that medical statements made were backed up with medical evidence.
Age UK Training	12	Excellent – 67% Very Good – 33%	Presenter was very pleasant and welcoming and had good knowledge Very comprehensive with good participant interaction

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Course	No of Staff who attended /participated	Evaluation	Comments
			Very informative training session with lots of opportunity for discussion

Furthermore, the percentage breakdown of staff (not part-time lecturers) who have completed mandatory equality and diversity training is 95%.

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 staff development attendances

Course	No of Staff who attended /participated
Autism Training	27
Communicate-ed Training	18
Communication Access UK Training	23 completions
Dignity at Work	4 completions
EmpathEyes Workshop	3
Menopause Awareness	15
Bullying and Harassment Training	9
Recruitment and Selection Training	2
Transgender Awareness	21
Welcoming Refugees in FE College	6

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

26 Please list any examples of where monitoring during 2023-24, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation to access to information and services:

- As a result of monitoring the Equality Scheme and the achievement of RNIB’s Visibly Better Employer accreditation, this has highlighted the changes to GetGot’s recruitment pages which will have improved access to information and services for people who are blind or partially sighted on the College’s recruitment pages, as well as sector wide.

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

27 How many complaints in relation to the Equality Scheme have been received during 2023-24?

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 2026

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.

In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what equality and good relations priorities are anticipated over the next (2024-25) 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. One GB member remains a listed Director with Age NI Enterprises.
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 Year 1 – Year 5	LMT / Committee Chairs	Membership of committees / groups to demonstrate participation of those with disabilities.	Two staff members with a disability continued to attend internal committee meetings and have continued to contribute to the College decision making processes.
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 students'	The College's Equality Working Group has the Equality and Diversity Officer as a representative from the Students' Union. They attended NWMF's Race Awards in March 2024 and suggested raising awareness for Brain Injury Week in May 2024. The College had over 180 classroom representatives last academic year supporting the Students' Union, approximately 36% had a disability.

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No	Action	Timescale	Responsible Person(s)	Outcome/Measure	Updates
				union and sporting activities.	<p>Over 54% of the students that took part in mobility activities under Turing Scheme, Erasmus and DFHERIS Euro Exchange projects are from lower socio-economic backgrounds and over 36% have additional education needs. 6 students submitted applications for the Capita Turing Scheme Bursary for those from low income families. 2 students from low income families were selected for the British Council Study USA 2024/25 programme. 1 student accepted their place and has now travelled out to the USA to begin their studies.</p> <p>Additional grant payments were made to 4 students from low income to have them 'ready for travel. This additional funding was offered to all students who required the additional financial support undertaking a mobility activity under our funded projects.</p> <p>Williamsport, PA, USA trip, and activities to Malaga, Spain, Malta and throughout Ireland – included students with SEN or medical conditions.</p>
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	<p>There were a number of awareness days specific to disability promoted in 2023-2024, including</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stress Awareness Month 2. Deaf Awareness Week 3. Carers' Week 4. World Suicide Prevention Day 5. World Heart Day 6. World Mental Health Day 7. Wear it Pink 8. International Men's Day

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No	Action	Timescale	Responsible Person(s)	Outcome/Measure	Updates
					9. International Day of Persons with a disability 10. World Braille Day 11. Blue/Brew Monday 12. Time to Talk Day 13. Denim Day for Dementia 14. BSL Week 15. Neurodiversity Week 16. Mental Health Awareness Week
DAP5	Promote the use of AccessAble website to encourage participation of prospective students. [DAP]	Annually and ongoing Year 1 – Year 5	Director of Finance Compliance and Admissions Manager	Benchmark usage of AccessAble webpage.	<p>The annual audit of College buildings by AccessAble took place week commencing 20 November 2023 in Strabane, Limavady and Greystone.</p> <p>Due to the recent development of the Visitors Policy and the decision to remove some exits within the Tower Building, AccessAble updated their guidance in relation to the Strand Road Campus.</p> <p>In addition, a new member representing the FE Colleges has agreed to meet with Sector Equality Coordinators’ Forum and the College’s Equality Working Group to provide information on the use of their guidance and how they support not only people with disabilities, but older persons and those who experience anxiety.</p> <p>Furthermore, updates to external College policies such as the Admissions and Enrolments Policy have been carried out and the Recruitment and Selection Policy is being considered to include the link to AccessAble with the view</p>

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No	Action	Timescale	Responsible Person(s)	Outcome/Measure	Updates
					<p>to attracting more applicants with disabilities to learn and work at the College.</p> <p>The usage numbers from May 2023 - May 2024 are 1,064 Users and 3,828 Page views. These figures have increased significantly potentially due to the increased presence on the College's websites and social media platforms. The inclusion within the Admissions and Enrolments policy of AccessAble should see further increases next year.</p>
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.	<p>Each semester a Health & Wellbeing Programme is developed by the HR Team with a variety of activities and events.</p> <p>The College divides these activities into four categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical and Psychological Health • Better Work • Better Relationships • Better Specialist Support <p>Under these categories, the College delivered successful programmes with examples of the health and wellbeing initiatives listed below:</p> <p><i>Aware</i> provided Training for our new Mental Health First Aiders in September, who are a point of contact for staff experiencing mental health issues or emotional distress.</p> <p><i>Aware</i> training sessions offered to support employee wellbeing in October and November on the following topics:</p>

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No	Action	Timescale	Responsible Person(s)	Outcome/Measure	Updates
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mood Matters • Supporting employee Wellbeing <p><i>ONUS</i> – Level 1 & 2 Domestic Violence and Abuse Awareness training was implemented throughout the year.</p> <p>The College welcomed Philomena Mc Faul, a Specialist Menopause Nurse in October and provided a Menopause Awareness session.</p> <p>The Action Cancer “Big Bus” was secured for the Springtown Campus in April 2024 with Breast Screening appointment appointments available and health checks.</p> <p>In addition, MOT Health Checks were arranged across the College Campuses in November and March which proved to be very popular.</p> <p>In addition, HR have created an Employee Wellbeing Toolkit where staff can avail of wellbeing support and advice, with useful contacts and Information sources available.</p> <p>Staff members continue to avail of the Fitness sessions in College, with Body Tone, Zumba and Yoga being offered throughout the year. The College has been able to acquire discounted gym membership from Derry & Strabane Council Arenas and Gyms.</p>

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No	Action	Timescale	Responsible Person(s)	Outcome/Measure	Updates
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	<p>Following on from the success of the placement from CEDAR with the College, it was hoped that a further placement would happen. This will be reviewed in September 2024.</p> <p>Progress was made for a client from RNIB to be placed within Client Services. This client is completely blind and has a guide dog. An update on this placement will be provided in the next annual progress report.</p>
DAP8	Introduce training for front line staff on disability etiquette and relevant legislation dealing with disability and the provision of goods, facilities and services. [DAP]	Ongoing	HR Manager	Increased use of services and facilities of those people with a disability.	<p>The College researched and rolled out free training from Communications Access UK. This training has been supported by a range of disability organisations, ie, Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists, Communication Matters, Motor Neurone Disease Association, Stroke Association, Headway (the Brain Injury Association), National Network of Parent Carer Forums, Business Disability Forum, Disability Rights UK and Makaton. It has been rolled out to all front line staff in Admissions.</p> <p>The Staff Development Programme continued to include training opportunities for staff to undertake a range of disability related training. These included</p> <p>Deaf Awareness Hope Action Planning Day Mental Health First Aid Neurodiversity Awareness Neurodiversity International Jude Morrow Age UK Training</p>

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No	Action	Timescale	Responsible Person(s)	Outcome/Measure	Updates
					Staff continued with the BSL e-Learning Modules from Signature and those that were unable to commence the online training, offered their licences to other staff members who had shared an interest in the training.
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.	<p>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.</p> <p>As there were a few new members to the Forum, the Chair shared NIUSE proposals on how College could improve their recruitment processes to encourage applicants with a disability to apply.</p> <p>Colleges shared good practice in relation to training on Dementia, NWRC's achievement of RNIB's VBE, new initiatives in relation to "reverse job fairs" where organisations sought support from disability related groups, BSL week initiatives, potentially sourcing outdoor pods no longer in use to support autistic students, every customer counts consultation and NWRC's attendance a webinar provided by Business Disability Forum on the use of marketing materials to include people who may have hidden disabilities.</p>
DAP10	Through Widening Participation scheme increase number of	Annually	Head of Client Services	Raise educational awareness, aspirations and educational	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

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No	Action	Timescale	Responsible Person(s)	Outcome/Measure	Updates
	students with a disability entering the College. [DAP]			attainment amongst the target group	<p>continued to support students to embrace FE as they progress.</p> <p>The College’s aim is to continue to improve well-being 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.</p>
DAP11	Monitor and review the progress of the Disability Action Plan. [DAP]	Annually August Year 1 – Year 5	Administrator – Equality	Provision of update contained within Progress Report	Ongoing, however the College has commenced work in relation to updating its Action Plan in 2025. Suggestions have been shared with the EC Forum Sector group for consideration within the Plan. This will be reported in the next progress report.

Appendix 1 – Equality Improvement Plan

No	Action	Timescale	Responsible Person(s)	Outcome/Measure	Updates
EIP1	Assess effectiveness of communication with students regarding equality [EIP]	Annually	Head of Client Services	Address any concerns identified	<p>The Student Services Facebook, Instagram and Twitter 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.</p> <p>Students take part in focus groups, student surveys and surveys relating to disability services within the College to ensure that their voices are heard.</p> <p>DFE visited the College in May and attended the “<i>Have Your Say Day</i>” Student Voice Conference. Moira Doherty from DFE stated, “<i>The team were so impressive, the care for your learners shone through</i>”.</p> <p>The annual online student survey and “<i>Have your Say Day</i>” (Student Voice Conference) were carried out in May/June 2024 with suggestions received from students on how to improve student experience at the College. 88% of participants felt they belonged in the College community, and 86% agreed if they needed support for their wellbeing and /or mental health, they would know where to find this.</p>
EIP2	Continue to ensure that equality is embedded into the College curriculum [EIP]	To be assessed annually in June	Director of Curriculum and Academic Standards	To be approved by Director of Curriculum and Academic Standards	Completed and ongoing. On an annual basis, the College reviews curriculum areas to determine how effective equality is embedded into the curriculum. A few examples

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					<p>Early Years students completed Story Sacks project for use at local library. They were tasked with designing and creating Story Sacks to be used in a local library in order to promote the talking and listening skills of young children.</p> <p>The College delivered a brand new course for staff working in the local health and social care sector and those working to support victims of domestic abuse. The new Level 3 course in Preventing and Tackling Domestic Violence was made available thanks to funding from the Department for the Economy. It is being supported by the Western Trust, Woman’s Aid, the PSNI and Probation Board for Northern Ireland.</p> <p>The College sought applicants for an innovative employability programme to enable professionals to return to work after an extended career break. Funded by the Department for the Economy Skill Up programme this 15-week Women Returners’ Programme began in January 2024 at the College’s Strabane Campus to provide women with an OCN Level 2 Certificate in Business Administration Skills and Soft Skills.</p>
EIP3	Provision of Equality awareness training to all staff and students [EIP] + [ES]	Annually	Principal and Chief Executive 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.

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No	Action	Timescale	Responsible Person(s)	Outcome/Measure	Updates
			Head of Client Services	Increase in awareness of equality and diversity	<p>Following on from last year’s report, the Student Induction module was completed and the roll out to students is to commence during 2024/2025 academic year at the College.</p> <p>Other training provided to staff via Equality was Sexual Orientation and Gender Awareness facilitated by the Rainbow Project. This was attended by senior staff and members of the Governing Body.</p>
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	<p>The College’s Quality of Teaching and Learning Surveys have again captured how students have experienced their time at the College.</p> <p>The two Sector agreed equality questions and the additional question added previously remained, albeit slightly reworded.</p> <p>(1) <i>“I believe I have been treated fairly and with respect”</i> (2) <i>“I believe the College is committed to promoting an inclusive learning environment”</i> and (3) <i>“I believe that the College is inclusive and welcoming and that staff and students have a mutual respect.”</i></p> <p>The responses were 1 – No 49 / Yes 2,179 – (No – 2.2%) 2 – No 38 / Yes 2,190 – (No - 1.71%) 3 – No 56 / Yes 2,172 – (No – 2.51%)</p>

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No	Action	Timescale	Responsible Person(s)	Outcome/Measure	Updates
					(No complaints were received by the College) As mentioned above, the annual online student survey And Have your Say Day (Student Voice Conference) were carried out in May/June 2024. 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 Equality Working Group	Evaluation of Each Event Increased Awareness of Equality Categories	A number of awareness days were raised during the reporting period as follows World Music Day, World Suicide Prevention Day (Campus video), World Heart Day, International Day of Older Persons (staff photos and competition), Black History Month, Wear it Pink (staff photographs), International Men’s Day (during Movember), International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (including 16 days of Action), International Day of persons with disabilities, World Braille Day (Student Competition), LGBT+ History Month, International Women’s Day (staff photographs), Denim Day for Dementia (staff photographs), BSL Week, International Day of Happiness, Action for Brain Injury Week (staff photographs), Carers’ Week, Refugee Week.
EIP7	Continue to work with RNID and achieve their new Employment programme [EIP]	Academic year 2023/2024	LMT Members	Achievement of Employment Programme	During the reporting period, the Equality Administrator routinely linked in with RNID regarding any initiatives they had, including their proposed Employment Programme progress. At the time of reporting, their Employment programme has not yet commenced however, this will be kept as an action to finalise.

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No	Action	Timescale	Responsible Person(s)	Outcome/Measure	Updates
EIP8	Continue the provision of support for people with a disability to improve employability [EIP]	March 2024	Student Services Manager	<p>Delivery of WAPP</p> <p>Number of students attending Inspire Programme</p> <p>Number of students enrolled through College's Connect Programme</p> <p>Number of students enrolled on Princes Trust Programme</p>	<p>The Widening Access and Participation Officer (WAP) delivers the Inspire Employability programme at the Women's Centre. 44 people took part in this programme through the Women's Centre. 88% progressed onto education or further study after completing the workshops.</p> <p>In 2023/24, the WAP officer worked with the youth club in the Galliagh Community Centre.</p> <p>The WAP Officer also uses the College curriculum to take the youth club members through the wide variety of courses available at the College. 24 young people took place in the Inspire employability programme this year.</p> <p>In January 2024 the WAP officer delivered the Inspire employability programme in Magilligan prison. 13 people took part in the workshops and the feedback received was very positive. The College has been asked back to deliver the programme to more inmates.</p> <p>The WAP officer works closely with the Education Authority and in particular the school aged mothers' (SAMs) group. In 2024 the College met with 7 SAMs who have progressed onto a range of courses including Foundation Degrees.</p> <p>The College's Careers Academy team deliver a series of presentations and workshops and attend Careers Fairs.</p>

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No	Action	Timescale	Responsible Person(s)	Outcome/Measure	Updates
					<p>In 2023 the WAP officer, along with the Careers team attended 22 in-person school visits and 4 careers fairs.</p> <p>Students within The Prince’s Trust Programme volunteered with the Acorn Project and created 200 raised planting beds to be distributed within the community to help families “<i>Grow their own</i>”.</p> <p>The College continued to offer Prince’s Trust and College Connect programmes to disadvantaged young people to ensure options were made available to gain employment and to take part in community projects.</p>
EIP9	Review the Mental Health Charter (Equality Commission) to assess actions necessary to promote and raise awareness [EIP]	Academic year 2023/2024	HR Manager Learning and Teaching Manager	Awareness of College as Trauma informed College Number of staff attending Resilience Conference	<p>Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Training continued at the College during the reporting period. As previously reported, research in relation to the traumatic impact of child maltreatment and other adverse childhood experiences, as well as newly identified means of promoting resilience and recovery for individuals, is being integrated into policy and practice in health, education and justice sectors under the umbrella term “<i>trauma-informed practice</i>”. Workshops on ACEs continued to be made available.</p> <p>The College continued to work towards the Equality Commission’s Mental Health Charter.</p> <p>The College has set up a Mental Health and Wellbeing Committee to take forward the collaborative approach to raising awareness of mental health to support staff and students. The College also achieved Pieta’s Amber</p>

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					<p>Flag initiative which recognises individual efforts to create healthy, inclusive environments that support the mental wellbeing of a range of organisations, including Further Education.</p> <p>The College is also a member of a Student Mental Health Research Network working group which has been developed and a mapping exercise was completed to find out as much research into student mental health and wellbeing on the island of Ireland, the findings will be shared with the group to continue to work on supporting and promoting positive mental health in colleges.</p>
EIP10	Further develop student support mechanisms to reduce barriers to education and learning, to include people with mental ill health [EIP] + [ES]	Academic year 2023/2024	<p>Head of Client Services</p> <p>Director of Curriculum and Academic Standards</p>	<p>Increase in student numbers</p> <p>Barriers identified and an increase in applications from individuals with a mental health illness</p>	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. Please see below.
EIP11	Health and Wellbeing Programme to continue to address concerns regarding poor mental health among staff and students [EIP]	Annually	<p>HR Manager</p> <p>Head of Client Services</p>	Programme of events and evaluations	Please see DAP6 above
EIP12	Continue partnership working with Inspire Wellbeing Hub to maximise	Academic year 2023/2024	Head of Client Services	Raised Awareness	The College no longer works with Recovery College Projects but has continued their working partnership with Inspire Wellbeing Hub to integrate and develop

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	benefits to staff and students [EIP]				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. At the end of the 23/24 academic year, the College organised and coordinated a Cross Sector Wellbeing Programme for FE NI students in partnership with UU and ATU Letterkenny. The Wellbeing programme took place in ATU Letterkenny in June 2024 and was funded by the Republic of Ireland’s Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.
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 Increased number of students attending College with mental health issues	The Student Services Facebook, Instagram and Twitter sites for students continued to increase the College’s social media presence. This presence continued to allow students to access equality information / resources, specifically targeting those with poor mental health.
EIP14	Continue the work on the Good for Me, Good for FE Campaign [EIP]	June 2023	Administrator – Equality	Raised Awareness Support Provided	The College, along with the other five FE Colleges, continued to support the Good for Me, Good for FE Campaign. The College was recognised at an event in the House of Lords, London for its partnership with NWMF through the Good for Me, Good for FE initiative that the College delivers as part of the FE sector. The scholarship led to

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					<p>NWMF being awarded the FE Charity Partner of the Year which included colleges from across the UK.</p> <p>The overall volunteering and food bank donations (items) for 23-24 are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donated Food bank items (from all campuses): 777 (equivalent to £ 1,045.96 in social value) • Reported staff volunteering hours: 794 (equivalent to £12,775.46 in social value) • Reported student volunteering hours: 1017 (equivalent to £16,363.53 in social value) <p>For example, Princes Trust built raised planter beds (200) for distribution into the community, Business students raised £333 for College charities and Transition students collected and donated a total of 234 items for Foyle food bank.</p>
EIP15	Become a trauma informed College [EIP]	June 2024	Learning and Teaching Manager	Raised Awareness	<p>Building a trauma-informed environment across the College is one of the key priorities for the Learning and Teaching Development team. To this aim, ACE training continues to be offered.</p> <p>In 2022/23, Dr Suzanne Mooney, QUB, was commissioned by the Safeguarding Board NI to undertake research to provide recommendations for the advancement of Trauma Informed Approaches (TIA) across Northern Ireland. The findings from the QUB</p>



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					research report were shared at the launch in February 2024. The College was one of the 53 participants in this research which ascertained the work done to date on TIA. There has been a joint statement from all parties at Stormont to support this work to embed trauma-informed approaches across every school, college and organisation in the North.
EIP16	Encourage all departments to promote equality throughout the year and report in Progress Report in 2023/2024 [EIP]	Academic year 2023/2024	Administrator – Equality	Awareness raising and number of activities	<p>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.</p> <p>Many departments promoted equality from undertaking equality related training (CAUK, Neurodiversity, Age UK training) to supplying Hidden Disability lanyards to relevant clients.</p>
EIP17	Continue to increase participation of relevant staff in the screening / monitoring of policies relevant to their respective areas [EIP]	Academic year 2023/2024	Administrator – Equality	Increased awareness of the importance of screening / monitoring by each department thereby influencing policy decisions	The Equality Administrator continued to advise staff of policy review dates and the necessity to equality screen. Over the past year over 45 policies from a range of departments have been screened upon their review. Also, over 25 policies have been monitored based on their screening commitments.
EIP18	Consider staff network groups for staff with cancer or are carers [EIP]	Academic Year 2023/2024	Administrator – Equality	Increased support and awareness	The College reached out to staff to determine their views on the establishment of 3 potential staff networks during the reporting period but these did not materialise. This action will remain on this EIP to address in the next academic year.



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No	Action	Timescale	Responsible Person(s)	Outcome/Measure	Updates
EIP19	Continue to provide support mechanisms for staff who have experienced a miscarriage [EIP]	Academic Year 2023/2024	HR Services Manager Compliance and Admissions Manager	Support provided to staff and increased awareness	Following the development of a Miscarriage Policy, the College has signed up to the Miscarriage Association’s Pregnancy Loss Pledge to support staff who are experiencing loss and to ensure they receive the support necessary during their grief. In addition, potential training from Miscarriage Association is scheduled to be part of the Staff Development Programme for 2024/2025.
EIP20	Continue the work involved for the College to become a Diversity Champion recognised organisation through Stonewall [EIP]	Academic Year 2023/2024	Head of Client Services Compliance and Admissions Manager Administrator – Equality	Increase in numbers of applicants from the LGBTQ+ communities	<p>The College continued its progress with Stonewall’s Diversity Champion. The College strengthened its collaboration with the Rainbow Project who provided Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity to staff, College Leadership Team and GB members during the reporting period.</p> <p>A Trans Policy for staff was completed through the Equality Working Group (to be approved) and included information</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Guidance for HR to support transitioning employees 2. Guidance for Managers on Staff Transitioning 3. Guidance for an employee who is transitioning 4. Guidance for Colleagues to support transitioning staff 5. Guidance on how to be a Trans ally <p>As well as Guidance on Gender Neutral Language was developed.</p>

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No	Action	Timescale	Responsible Person(s)	Outcome/Measure	Updates
					<p>Also, work progressed in seeking staff views on the establishment of an LGBT+ staff network (and other networks). This followed the Equality Administrator meeting with staff from Ulster University's LGBT+ network.</p>
EIP21	<p>In addition to a calendar of events for equality related themes, College to organise 6 to 7 high level equality awareness campaigns [EIP]</p>	<p>Academic Year 2023/2024</p>	<p>Administrator – Equality Equality Working Group</p>	<p>Increased awareness and support for various equality themes</p>	<p>The College raised awareness of many equality related days including</p> <p>World Suicide Prevention Day where the College's 5 campuses were linked through video</p> <p>📺Suicide Awareness Week 1.mp4</p> <p>International Day of Older Persons where staff had to guess other staff members from their baby pictures.</p> <p>World Braille Day where students had the opportunity to answer questions posed in Braille</p> <p>World Braille Day - 4 January 2024 (office.com)</p> <p>LGBT+ History Month</p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">   </div>

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No	Action	Timescale	Responsible Person(s)	Outcome/Measure	Updates
					<p data-bbox="1429 308 2085 371">Action for Brain Injury Week where staff and students wore hats to raise awareness</p>  <p data-bbox="1794 667 2101 695">Denim Day for Dementia</p> 
EIP22	Commencement of work to obtain Race at Work Charter [EIP]	Academic Year 2023/2024	Administrator – Equality	Increase in number of applications from ethnic minority groups for both employment and courses	<p data-bbox="1429 946 2085 1046">The College continued to work on Business in the Community’s Race at Work Charter signed in July 2022. The actions required to be addressed are as follows:</p> <ul data-bbox="1429 1094 2056 1409" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1429 1094 1928 1123">• Appoint an Executive Sponsor for race <li data-bbox="1429 1129 2018 1158">• Capture ethnicity data and publicise progress <li data-bbox="1429 1165 1989 1230">• Commit at Board level to zero tolerance of harassment and bullying <li data-bbox="1429 1236 2056 1337">• Make it clear that supporting equality in the workplace is the responsibility of all leaders and managers <li data-bbox="1429 1343 2056 1409">• Take action that supports ethnic minority career progression

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No	Action	Timescale	Responsible Person(s)	Outcome/Measure	Updates
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support race inclusion allies in the workplace • Include Black, Asian, Mixed Race and other ethnically diverse-led enterprise owners in supply chains <p>Work continued to support North West Migrants' Forum in raising awareness and supporting migrants and refugees within the North West. The Equality Administrator attended their third Black History Month Summit in Magee in October 2023.</p> <p>The College celebrated the success for the first ever recipient of the College's Asylum Seeker Scholarship. Chukwuka Nwanoneny, who had been studying on the Access Adult Learning Diploma in Health and Welfare, received sector wide publicity for his success.</p> <p>As a result of the scholarship, the College was recognised in the House of Lords, London for its partnership with NWMF through the Good for Me Good for FE. The scholarship led to NWMF being awarded the FE Charity Partner of the Year which included colleges from across the UK.</p> <p>The College attended NWMF's Race Awards on 7 March 2024 and were successful in achieving their Anti-Racism School of the Year Award. In addition, the College's International Officer was recognised for her work in Advancing Racial Justice and Fairness at the event.</p>

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No	Action	Timescale	Responsible Person(s)	Outcome/Measure	Updates
					The College supported Strabane Ethnic Community Association (SECA). This work involved a student supporting them as SECA celebrated their 20 th anniversary working with the ethnic minority community and the production of a newsletter to celebrate this milestone. The student's newsletter was circulated before the event in April 2024. The College also provided online versions of SECA's 10 th and recent 20 th anniversary brochures for use on their Facebook page.
EIP23	Monitor, Review and utilise annual workforce and student data to inform policy development and marketing [ES]	Annually in June	HR Manager Head of Client Services Administrator - Equality	Improved equality data used for screening College policies and decisions made by the College 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, 28 policies were monitored and 47 policies screened (this includes 2 sector policies). Annually, the FE Sector equality group gather staff data to inform FE College's policy reviews. This data was included in the recent Voluntary Severance Scheme screening. Staff data is reviewed as part of the annual Fair Employment Monitoring return to the Equality Commission and Article 55 review. Student data is reviewed annually. Please see link to 2022/23 data https://www.nwrc.ac.uk/assets/files/Student-Equality-Data-2022-2023.pptx

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No	Action	Timescale	Responsible Person(s)	Outcome/Measure	Updates
EIP24	Recruit a Diverse student population [ES]	Annually	Head of Client Services	Annually	Student Services / Equality continued to promote a range of awareness days. See EIP6 above for the awareness dates. 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, Ethnic minority groups, etc, to encourage further enrolments.
EIP25	Grow and enhance relations with local community [ES]	Annually	Head of Client Services Compliance and Admissions Manager	Increased participation by community groups to inform College decisions Identification of new initiatives undertaken by the College to promote equality Increase in numbers attending community education courses Increase in community education provision	Please see EIP21 and EIP24 above In addition, the College continued to provide training opportunities to a wide range of community groups within the Derry~Londonderry, Limavady and Strabane areas. A total of 56 various community groups and centres held courses during the reporting period. The College met with representatives from the Waterside Shared Village in December 2023 to discuss the provision of courses to their community to strengthen the engagement between them and the College. Also the College is a member of the City Walls Forum which has provided the opportunity to support the North West community further. Membership of the forum includes those involved in health and wellbeing, community development, cancer support, arts/cultural and heritage, sport, youth provision, older people support, environmental, peace and reconciliation. The Group discussed the priorities within the themes of Social, Economic and Environmental issues including education. Following discussion, it was agreed to

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No	Action	Timescale	Responsible Person(s)	Outcome/Measure	Updates
					<p>develop an action plan to address the barriers and challenges identified that the College are keen to support.</p> <p>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. Since the last report three further consultees were included, Include Youth, NWMF and Foyle Search and Rescue.</p>
EIP26	Review Student Induction to ensure Equality and Diversity is promoted widely [ES]	Academic Year	<p>Head of Client Services</p> <p>Administrator – Equality</p>	Increased awareness of Equality categories	<p>The FE Sector Equality Group developed a student induction training session to be rolled out during a classroom setting at the beginning of their course. This training captures awareness of all Section 75 equality categories.</p> <p>In addition, as part of increased awareness of LGBTQIA+, the College scheduled training from the Rainbow Project for students however, this will now take place in 2024/2025 academic year.</p>
EIP27	Monitor, evaluate and review the Equality Improvement Plan [ES]	April each year to inform annual Progress Report	<p>Head of Client Services</p> <p>Compliance and Admissions Manager</p> <p>Administrator – Equality</p>	Completion of actions identified and reported in annual Progress Report to the Equality Commission	The College’s Equality Improvement Plan is routinely reviewed. This is ongoing.

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No	Action	Timescale	Responsible Person(s)	Outcome/Measure	Updates
EIP28	Develop and provide welcoming activities for international students	Annually	Head of Client Services European and International Projects Officer Administrator – Equality	Increased awareness and support for students	The College is working towards becoming a College of Sanctuary with this action being one to achieve in the next academic year.
EIP29	Increase Marketing communications and engagement content to reflect the diversity of staff / students and ensure accessibility of content	Annually	Head of Client Services Marketing and PR Manager Administrator – Equality	Increase in enrolments from all Section 75 equality categories Increase in job applications from all Section 75 equality categories	New processes were set up during the reporting period to encourage the provision of accessibility checked content for the College’s website. Green 17, the website controller, works in partnership with the College to ensure content is accessible. This will continue into the next academic year. In addition, there has been an increase in social media and website coverage of recent equality success and achievements of support and academic staff. This will also progress into next year.
EIP30	Provide specialist advice and guidance to staff supporting students with disabilities		Head of Client Services Learning Support Officer Administrator - Equality	Increased awareness	Student Services staff provided training on supporting students with disabilities to relevant senior staff in 2023.