



SOUTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE

Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties

Annual Progress Report 2021-22

This is the fifteenth Equality Progress Report prepared by Southern Regional College. The report covers the period from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

This progress report has been prepared in accordance with the templates and prompts provided by the Equality obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, to promote equality of opportunity and good relations across the College. The College has also consulted with the Equality Commission in relation to the completion of this report.

The report also records progress on the implementation of the positive duties under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Order 2006.

Southern Regional College remains fully committed to fulfilment of the Section 75 obligations under the 1998 Act and the achievement of measures developed to implement positive duties under DDO 2006. We believe this report is reflective of our commitment.

In relation to progress, the report reflects activities during the reporting period and has been endorsed by the Staffing Committee of the Governing Body of Southern Regional College on (date to be confirmed).

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SIGNED: _____

CHAIR - STAFFING COMMITTEE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Brian Donohue', written over a horizontal line.

SIGNED: _____

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

SOUTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE



**Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties
Annual Progress Report 2021-22**

Contact:

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

www.src.ac.uk

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Helen O'Connor', is written inside a rectangular box.

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 2021 and March 2022

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

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

- 1 In 2021-22, 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.

College Development Plan

Southern Regional College (SRC) has promoted equality of opportunity and good relations through delivery of our strategic aims as set out in the annual College Development Plan. This last reporting period has seen continued pressures on students and staff due to the fallout of the Covid-19 pandemic however College staff can take enormous pride in contributing to and achieving these aims.

Aim 1: Provision of a high quality learning experience through a relevant and meaningful curriculum

Community Engagement Strategy

The College continues to implement a Community Engagement Strategy which aims to provide relevant and meaningful vocational learning opportunities to the whole community particularly those who underachieve in education, are disengaged and economically inactive.

As part of the Community Strategy there is a particular focus on engaging with individuals from those areas of our region of greatest deprivation and social disadvantage. In 2021-2022, the Community Team worked in partnership with approximately 120 community and statutory organisations and groups covering over 1,500 square miles to ensure the College identified and met their needs. Many of these organisations or groups are in areas of economic disadvantage or rural isolation. 34 of the community organisations or groups have space that the College uses as community outreach centres enabling the College to provide education and resources at the heart of a community. The Community Team has set up College laptops in many of these outreach centres, so residents have instant access to IT equipment and the internet at their doorstep.

Working alongside statutory organisations, employers and service providers, the College offers a wide and diverse portfolio of learning opportunities that connect local people with realistic employment opportunities and life improving skills. These courses range from essential skills programmes in Literacy, Numeracy and ICT, or employment focused training in transport, manufacturing, beauty, construction, catering, security and other sectors. As well as achieving City and Guilds essential skills certificates, learners are able to obtain a range of vocational qualifications, such as NPORS Excavator; Category C lorry and RITTB

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forklift licences; SIA security licences; CSR cards; various health and safety certificates; Nail and Beauty qualifications; and RSPH Food Hygiene certificates.

To support students with special educational needs, the Community Team work with residential care homes and day care providers across the southern region, to address issues experienced by residents including isolation, encouraging social interaction, as well as enhancing skills and increasing their confidence and self-esteem. There has been a reduction in this type of engagement over the last two years due to Covid pandemic but there are plans to return to previous levels next year.

As a means of supporting diversity and social inclusion, the College helps many local people in overcoming barriers to learning by providing flexible delivery methods; for example, fast track learning, (ICT courses that usually run for 16 weeks are condensed into one full week's learning) or courses are delivered in out-centres in the heart of communities at times that suit local residents recognising the needs of those with families or working commitments.

The Community Team is an active member of five Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership Boards (NRPBs) within the southern region made up of statutory organisations, resident associations and local community groups. The Community Team work in collaboration with the College's Business Support Team to identify the needs of local employers and to connect them with the hardest to reach in society by securing the commitment from key individuals in local communities to identify and support local under-employed individuals. The Community Team, as active members of NRPBs, implement projects (funded by the Department for Communities (DfC)) that specifically target those living within the five neighbourhood renewal areas of Armagh, Brownlow, Lurgan, Newry and Portadown with free industry focused training and employment enhancing opportunities. The projects also help students overcome barriers to training by providing assistance with their CVs; transport to training; accommodation and catering (for example in Cork, Enniskillen and Belfast); and extra one-to-one mentoring support for residents when required. The College Community Team successfully secured funding to continue this provision to 2021.

Through DfC projects in 2021-2022, the Team successfully enrolled 275 residents onto training programmes, providing industry recognised qualifications or licences to upskill and improve employability. These training courses have enabled local people to achieve employment or to go onto further education. The College community team has successfully secured funding to continue this provision for 2022-2023.

In order to extend provision to areas of disadvantage outside Neighbourhood Renewal Areas, the team delivered The Prosper+ programme funded by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), for residents living in rural isolated areas of the southern region. Through this initiative, a further 105 residents availed of training.

In summary, the Community Team delivered 6 specialised projects that engaged with the most disadvantaged people in society (5 DfC, 1 DAERA). These projects make a distinctive contribution to providing local people with the knowledge, skills and qualifications required to gain employment, especially with local employers.

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To enable hard to reach learners to access courses the College provides a regional wide newsletter (mail drop), advertising details of Further Education courses available in local community venues and college campuses; a community newsletter updating residents on locally focused training programmes and a direct up-to-date link to all community educational programmes and support via the College community Facebook and website.

To deal with the Covid-19 restrictions, the Community Team adapted a new delivery model working with the College faculties and out-centres. Where it was practical and courses were suitable to go online, then they were delivered virtually. Any courses that were possible to continue to run in a community out-centre were comprised of smaller sized classes with social distancing measures put in place. The Team supported local community groups in preparing risk assessments and putting in place safety measures that allowed some Community Centres to continue to deliver training.

The Community Team secured funding for two new projects. The first project was a partnership with SWC and secured funding from the Community Renewal fund to support 30 participants in Portadown outside the Neighbourhood Renewal Area to acquire qualifications and to secure employment.

The second project was focused on securing training and 12 weeks work for 16 unemployed participants in Kilkeel opening up opportunities to secure long term employment in Kilkeel Harbour.

Careers Advice

The Careers Team at Southern Regional College support learners through a range of activities such as Induction, Central Registration, Higher Education applications (UCAS and CAO), Pre-Entry Advice and Guidance (PEAS) interviews and HE presentations. These activities enable students to develop their knowledge, understanding, skills and experience of the extensive range of career opportunities. It allows students to manage their career development, making informed choices, with successful transition into education, training and employment.

Feedback from a recent ETI Inspection on the advice provided by SRC Careers Service stated:

“Proactive forward-thinking careers advice has been developed. Students are constantly talking about next steps.”

The Careers Team, through effective working arrangements with Curriculum teams and other Student Service departments, provide timely and quality advice to service users, through guiding them in choosing the best option suitable to their aspirations and individual needs. This includes the facilitation of multi-disciplinary meetings with members of the Learning Support and Curriculum Teams present along with the client’s Transition/Support Worker present to work collectively on the best way forward for the client.

The team work closely with a range of external stakeholders to ensure a high-quality information, advice and guidance provision from pre-entry to exiting the College. These

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interventions are provided at crucial times of the academic year including at Pre-Enrolment and Advice Sessions (PEAS) and on exam results days. The Careers Team work collaboratively with the DfE Careers Service, with Education Authority Transitions Officers and SENCOs in local schools. Engagement includes attendance at Parents Evenings and Careers Conventions as well as promoting our course offering in local feeder schools.

Through engagement with Disability Action, a partnership model has been developed through the Job Match project. This project, co-ordinated by Disability Action, supports SRC students in accessing supported employment on completion of their course. Students are also assisted in transferring to supported programmes which cater for students' individual abilities. This work assists students in overcoming barriers to progression and transition.

Pre-entry guidance facilitated by the SRC Careers Service is available to all individuals considering studying at the College. Prospective students can access the Careers Service through a variety of sources including the College Prospectus, Open Days/Evenings, and on the relevant section on the SRC website. Potential students can make an appointment with the Careers Service to receive guidance on their course options, including courses available, entry requirements and progression routes.

The SRC Careers Service has Affiliate membership of the Career Development Institute and works to the Career Development Institute (CDI) Code of Principles and adheres to the standards of professional behaviour as set out in their principles:

- Duty of Care – to Clients, Colleagues, Organisations and Self Members have a duty of care and are expected always to act in the best interests of their clients.
- Equality - Members actively promote equality and diversity and work towards the removal of barriers to personal achievement resulting from prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination. Members must treat clients equally regardless of their gender, age, race, ethnicity, disability, religious beliefs or sexual orientation.

The Careers Service, therefore, actively promotes equality of opportunity and works towards the removal of personal achievement resulting from prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination.

As a result, professional judgement is objective and takes precedence over any external pressures or factors that may compromise the impartiality of careers guidance offered to users. When providing career guidance, members ensure that advice is based solely on the best interests of and potential benefits to the user. The SRC Careers team have the full support of Senior Management in providing impartial information, advice, and guidance. At the start of the career's guidance interview the Careers Officer outlines to the user what the service hopes to offer them and that if required referral to other agencies/services might be required. Where appropriate users are made aware of and signposted to other opportunities and organisations relevant to their needs and this agreed between the careers service and the individual. All staff understand their role and their limitations in terms of giving advice and information. Their networks allow them to be aware of the services that they can signpost or refer users to. Appropriate support can come from team members, other colleagues, and external agencies such as Inspire or Student Finance NI

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The Careers Team works with users equally regardless of their gender, age, race, disability, religious beliefs, or sexual orientation. Users are made aware of the practical steps the service can take such as providing literature in a format that meets the needs of the user for example larger text. This is highlighted in a statement at the bottom of literature as a footnote.

Through online training all the Careers Team are aware of the requirements to implement and promote equality, impartiality, confidentiality and professional integrity. At the start of the guidance interview the Careers Officers make the confidentiality statement to users. Students starting the College are also made aware of the appropriate policies and how to access them if required. Users are made aware of the practical steps the service can take such as providing literature in a format that meets the needs of the user for example larger text. All SRC documentation emphasises the confidential and diverse nature of the service delivery.

The SRC Careers Service takes into account the realistic interpretation of relevant statutory legislation when making users aware of the career options available to them. For example, a user with a career aspiration such as electrician or air traffic controller who present with a significant disability such as colour blindness. To determine the suitability of the users in this instance the careers advisor will work through a multi-disciplinary team approach to clarify the Health & Safety implications of this career pathway. A user who presents with a criminal conviction that is on the child protection register and who wishes to pursue a career in working with children or vulnerable adults. In this case there is a need to comply with legalisation therefore the careers officer will use a multi-disciplinary approach when giving advice to this user.

One of the aims of the SRC Careers Service is Widening Participation, including the implementation CEIAG Strategies to widen the educational participation of those most marginalised in society including those from socially disadvantaged backgrounds and individuals who are vulnerable to social exclusion through signposting individuals to NEET initiatives such as College Connect, the Princes Trust and Adult Apprenticeships.

The SRC Careers Service subscribes to the UK NARIC Database which enables international students presenting with qualification to have their qualifications equated to United Kingdom standard, enabling the Careers team to advise clients on the most suitable pathway.

The Careers Team at present are facilitating pre-entry advice and guidance to Ukrainian nationals who have relocated to Northern Ireland, including providing statement of equivalency for their native qualifications and signposting them to learning opportunities here at Southern Regional College including ESOL courses to improve their English.

Careers Team Engagement	Individual Interview	Query	Telephone Calls	Email
April 2001 – March 2022	7811	265	1882	3170

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Learning Resource Centres (LRCs)

LRCs support teaching and learning across all subject areas in the College. Staff and students are provided with access to a wide range of learning resources through Moodle, the College virtual learning environment. This includes:

- A comprehensive study skills programme;
- A strong learner development programme including collaboration with partner HE institutions;
- A comprehensive collection of e-resources to support teaching and learning.

LRC staff ensure that all users can easily access learning resources, both electronic and non-electronic, by providing 24/7 access to resources through the College's Virtual Learning Environment. LRC staff have established and continue to sustain national and international links with strategic information resources, which facilitate research and learning techniques. The use of e-books continues to evolve with the College again ranked highly as one of the top users of e-books in the Further and Higher Education Sector in the United Kingdom.

The continued development of electronic resources, particularly e-books and the purchase of additional online database enhances embedded learning and contributes to the College's ILT strategy commitment of providing co-ordinated management of Learning Resources.

The LRCs continue to extend the provision of e-resources available to service users. A number of new technological developments have been recently introduced including the development of the EBSCO Discovery App. Students can now access the wide range of EBSCO E-books via the app 24/7, on their mobile or tablet. Further procurement of e-resources within the LRCs included the JSTOR e-Journals package purchased specifically for students studying the Associate Bachelor's Degree in English and History. This resource gives students access to approximately five hundred e-journals and thousands of articles in the areas of Social Sciences and Humanities.

Other additional online databases available to our Higher Education students include Passport Euromonitor, an award-winning global market research database providing strategic analysis on industries, countries, and consumers and companies. The resource has been used as an effective research tool by HE students from Computing, Engineering and Business Studies programmes. The Geospatial Data Service has been uploaded onto Moodle and promoted on social media and to all relevant lecturing staff. This resource provides access to a wide range of digital mapping products to support teaching and learning. A new resource, Health and Social Care Training has been uploaded onto Moodle and advertised on social media.

Football Academy

The College teamed up with the Irish Football Association to provide young footballers with the opportunity to enhance their football skills while gaining an A'level equivalent qualification in sport. Academically, the course will be based at the Lurgan campus starting in September 2022.

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BAFTA Young Game Designer Awards

Two Games Development students made it through to the final of this year's BAFTA Young Game Designer Awards - an initiative by BAFTA that inspires and supports young people to create, develop and present their new game idea to the world.

Annual Association of Hairdressers and Therapists Competition

Students at the annual Association of Hairdressers and Therapists Competition were presented with 18 awards and 5 high commendations. Due to the pandemic, students had to submit photographic entries as the event could not be hosted live however staff quickly adapted to the challenges and trained the students to an exceptionally high level.

Autism Accreditation by the National Autistic Society

The College was awarded Autism Accreditation by the National Autistic Society. This is the UK's leading charity for autistic people and the Accreditation is awarded to businesses and organisations who showcase outstanding provision and support for those living with Autism and the positive outcomes that follow these measures.

Southern Regional College was assessed by the National Autistic Society in November, with lecturers and staff observed on their practice and a review of individual support plans.

The assessment found that departments within the College work well collaboratively to ensure adaptations and adjustments are provided for autistic students; while there has also been significant investment in technology to help promote independent learning; and the development of clear systems which allows for consistent information sharing on the needs of individual students.

Women Returners' programme

The College worked with women across the southern region, providing the opportunity for them to boost their confidence, meet like-minded women, learn new skills and crucially obtain relevant industry experience and a level 3 qualification in business administration. The 'Women Returners' programme is completely free for participants, funded through DfE's "Skill Up – Flexible Skills Fund Programme. Women signing up to the programme received a weekly training allowance of £150 and part finance for childcare costs for the duration of the course.

First female plumbing lecturer

The College was delighted to welcome its first female plumbing lecturer, Colleen Rafferty, onto its team. Misconceptions about gender specific roles are gradually diminishing with a growing number of women choosing a career in construction. Colleen Rafferty, a former student of SRC, is leading the way and inspiring young girls to follow in her path

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Aim 2: Support economic growth and innovation through flexible business support solutions

Covid-19 challenges

2021-22 continued to present challenges due to the effects of Covid-19. The Business Support and Innovation (BSI) team continued to operate via remote working and engage with client businesses remotely, providing mentoring and training support through Microsoft Teams and Zoom. Staff were committed to maintaining contact with businesses, particularly small businesses that needed much support during that turbulent time. As the restrictions started to ease throughout the year, staff resumed to face-to-face delivery with clients, which was particularly welcome for the practical projects.

In order to reach out to new clients during that time, the team continued to design and deliver a series of topical webinars. All of our industry events have been delivered in this way since April 2020, as it has helped us to reach a wider audience and give greater exposure to the business support services offered by SRC, particularly in this challenging time. As we move out of restrictions and get back to face-to-face engagement, we will offer a hybrid model where we will have some face-to-face events and others will be online to accommodate all needs.

Skills Focus and InnovateUs Programmes for SMEs

Funded by the DfE, the flagship business support programmes “InnovateUs” and “Skills Focus” continued to be 100% funded to SMEs during 2021-22 and were also opened up to include social enterprises. The Business Support team prioritized these much-needed support programmes and agreed to undertake additional projects during 2021-22 to ensure the needs of our local businesses were met. Much of the support required was in digital skills as many small businesses had to quickly learn how to move their services and operations online. A lot of businesses did not know which digital platforms and tools best suited their business needs, so the team was able to provide this support successfully through remote channels.

Skills Up – The Flexible Skills Fund

Fully funded by DfE, the Skill Up (Flexible Skills Fund) has been established to help upskill and reskill individuals to meet the needs of the economy as we emerge from the pandemic and instill a culture of lifelong learning with courses that are accessible for all. The College has developed and delivered a range of short courses for individuals, most of which were delivered virtually, including digital skills, data analytics, leadership and management, health and social care, childcare, green technologies and advanced engineering. The College also designed and delivered a programme specifically aimed at women returners including a business administration level 3 qualification, work placement, mentoring and soft skills. This programme was very successful with two cohorts delivered in-year, supporting 25 women into jobs. The Skill Up programme generated 720 enrolments and great opportunities for local people to gain recognized qualifications in key economic priority areas.

BIG Apprenticeship Event

The BIG Apprenticeship Event is firmly established in SRC’s events calendar and the annual event was delivered in February 2021. This event was delivered online due to Covid restrictions but it was very successful due to the substantial promotion that took place. In

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partnership with ABC Borough Council and NMD District Council, this online event and follow-up resource was rich in information, testimonials and video blogs to present the myriad of apprenticeship and HLA opportunities in the region – for apprentices, parents, employers and teachers/careers advisors. We hosted a live Q&A session where over 80 queries were dealt with and a new HLA employer information section was created on the SRC website.

Webinars

Due to the ongoing impacts of Covid-19, the Business Support team continued to deliver virtual events to maintain the College's profile and reach out to new clients. A range of topical webinars were designed and delivered by our specialist staff with over 150 businesses in attendance. These included:

- AR/VR For Tourism Industry
- Podcasting for the Tourism Industry
- Cut It, Cook It, Quaff It
- Selling Online with effective e-commerce
- Instagram Reels for Retail
- How SRC Can help your tourism business
- Tools to Create Content
- Are you an entrepreneur?
- Allergen Labelling Changes
- AR/VR for Retail Businesses
- Automation in Manufacturing
- Screen Recording Tips

These webinars are available for viewing on BSI's YouTube channel and continue to be a useful resource for businesses and curriculum staff alike

Aim 3: Inspired people and Organisation Development

Investors in People

The College currently holds the Investors in People silver award. Key priorities identified within the Investors in People Action Plan continue to be implemented. The Investors in People staff survey was launched in March 2022 and a further update will be provided in the next reporting period.

Corporate & Wellbeing day

The College holds its annual Corporate & Wellbeing day on the first day of the new academic year in August 2020. This year, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the event was held virtually. The aim was to welcome staff back to work after the holidays and demonstrate that the College values and cares for our employees.

College Nominated Charity

Over the past number of years, staff worked together on a variety of fundraising initiatives for their official nominated charity – Air Ambulance NI. In total, staff and students raised £21,000 for this worthwhile charity. Fundraising activities throughout the reporting period included an on-line raffle, Christmas Jumper day and sponsored walk.

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Sector Committees

The College is a member of the FE Equality Co-ordinators Forum which consists of the six further education colleges within Northern Ireland. This best practice forum meets four times per year and helps promote a consistent approach to the implementation of Section 75 within FE in Northern Ireland. During 2021-22, the forum considered the mandatory wearing of face masks, screening of sector policies, equality audit, and sought advice and guidance from the Equality Commission FE representative, Mr Donal Collins.

Trauma Informed Practice

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are stressful and potentially traumatic experiences occurring during childhood that directly harm a child or affect the environment in which they live. This can have a lasting impact into later adulthood affecting social, emotional, psychological and physical health.

Trauma Informed Practice at SRC involves everyone within the College community including its partners, to have a basic understanding around childhood trauma and adversity and how it can affect children, young people, adults and their families.

In line with the College's Safeguarding Policy, the College is committed to developing knowledge and understanding of Trauma Informed Practice and the impact of ACEs to help staff have a better understanding. This commitment aims to enhance and work alongside existing safeguarding protections, policies and measures for children, young people, adults at risk of harm or adults in need of protection. A key action within Tier 1 of the College's Action Plan in 2021/2022 is to become a Trauma Informed College.

In this reporting period, a working group with lecturing and support staff representation met on four occasions. An implementation plan was developed and updated quarterly. 10 adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Champions were appointed through a train the trainer approach and training was rolled out to 149 staff by the end of March 2022. Training will continue to be rolled out. The College worked with OCN NI and the Safeguarding NI body to have the ACE training accredited to a Level 3 qualification.

Section 75 Equality Audit

A Section 75 Equality Audit was completed during the last reporting period. The objective of this audit was to enable the Governing Body and Senior Management Team of the College to be assured that Section 75 is being effectively implemented; that they are adhering to their equality scheme commitments; and to identify any areas where improvements may be made. Actions for improvement included exploring the possibility of integrating Section 75 duties into key business activities such as the annual Self Evaluation Review process and Risk Registers and development of the new EBS system will include a standard report to effectively provide management information on student equality data.

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Aim 5: Provision of a safe and stimulating environment

The College continues to progress with the implementation and delivery of its Estates Strategy with the aim of providing a modern physical environment that will best support the delivery of education and training across the region. The first phase of the Estate's Strategy includes an investment of nearly £100m in three new build projects in Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon.

Armagh

During that last reporting period, the Estates team were operating and maintaining the Armagh Campus whilst completing Seasonal Commissioning of all Building Services with the contractor. The team have also implemented new digital system to improve the quality and traceability of status of each work order. The BIM enabled Computer Aided Facilities management System (CAFM) is the first case study in the UK and has been an excellent innovation. This 14,000 sq. metre campus has been carefully designed to include a modern Learning Resource Centre, integrated student social areas and Learning Support services, in addition to specialist spaces to support practical and theory-based learning in areas such as ceramics, photography, fine art, dance, music, performing arts, sport, science, hospitality, hair and beauty. Five world class construction and engineering workshops also enhance the College's STEM-focused credentials. The campus also houses a state of the art, purpose designed area which has been created to support the delivery of project-based learning (PBL). The campus' SOLVE Centre is equipped with a wide range of industry leading technology, equipment and software. Project-Based Learning is a dynamic approach to teaching and learning, in which students explore real-world industry-based problems and challenges.

Banbridge

In parallel, the College also worked closely with its contractor to ensure the successful completion and Seasonal Commissioning of all Building Services of Banbridge Campus. The Banbridge campus is a dedicated centre for multimedia and digital design, offering a wide range of full-time and part-time courses through to degree level, whilst also providing a range of courses in areas such as health, social care and childcare.

Craigavon

The College has successfully obtained full planning consent to create a new, state-of-the-art education campus in Craigavon as part of a £45m investment in partnership with the DfE. This new landmark campus will support hundreds of new jobs during construction, create more than 350 new local apprenticeship opportunities annually and underpin the College's status as a major employer in the area. It will also provide enhanced full and part-time educational and training opportunities for an even greater number of people within the area. As well as delivering increased curriculum provision on site, a wider range of degree and postgraduate level courses will be accessed locally.

Newry

The College acquired and demolished the Newry Sports Centre and car park, located on Patrick Street, from Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. This acquisition and demolition is the first stage of the College's plans to expand its existing Newry East campus, which is adjacent to this site, and pave the way for the creation of a new Higher Education and Innovation Centre.

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This expansion will provide increased Further and Higher Education training and skills opportunities for citizens which is welcome and positive news for everyone. The new building will greatly enhance the existing provision at the adjoining campus by significantly improving the College's curriculum provision, service delivery, student experience and equality of opportunity through improved accessibility.

In 2020, the Council launched its Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy, of which Skills and Employability is a key pillar. This new campus development will see the regeneration of this area of Newry and will bring real economic and skills benefits into its Newry campus. The investment will support the direct delivery of high quality professional and technical education and new employment opportunities for local citizens right across the district area, which in turn will help local businesses source the skilled staff they need.

Aim 6: Increased International Links

A key strategic aim is to promote an outward and forward-looking College through the development of international links supporting staff, students, and knowledge exchange. The College recognises and values the importance of broadening the learner's experience through exposing students to different learning and cultural activities in conjunction with a range of European and Transatlantic partners.

This work promotes social inclusion and equality, proactively targeting the most disadvantaged learners while promoting cultural awareness and mutual understanding. The College is recognised as an example of best practice on how international projects can be used as a vehicle for building community relations, promoting social inclusion, integration and developing an international mind-set for learners.

Annually, the EFIAT promotes SRC on a regional, national European & international basis. On average 120 students and 60 staff avail of placements and transnational meetings across Europe. Due to travel restrictions because of the Covid-19 pandemic, student placements were postponed. However going forward the new Turing programme will enable the College to send students on international mobilities now that restrictions have eased.

Since 2016, the International Team has secured funding of €3.1m through the Lifelong Learning and Erasmus + Programmes. The EFIAT continues to promote social inclusion and diversity, through a range of strategic partnership projects.

The Well Project

During the reporting period, the EFIAT promoted social inclusion through the Erasmus+ KA2 'Promoting Mental Well-being' for students transitioning to Higher Education. To date the project has produced a transition strategy as well as a level 2 programme, with a student handbook and resilience tool kit for students starting College or University. To date 16 staff from the North and South of Ireland and Spain have been trained to deliver the promoting well-being course through a 5-day virtual event organised by the College. This project will help students transition to Higher Education and will also target adults from areas of social deprivation who are returning to College and or higher

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education. This course will be embedded within the College curriculum next academic year.

- A level 2 accredited version of the course has been delivered to just over 260 level 3 students to help them prepare for their move to Higher Education. Feedback from staff and learners have been incredibly positive and both have noted the courses was incredibly useful and though provoking.
- All resources have been digitised into interactive lessons and will be made available via the [project website](#). A survival toolkit has also been developed to support learner both during their transition and upon arrival in Higher Education: [The Well Project: Survival Toolkit](#)

Bridges Project

During 2021-22, the EFIAT managed and led the Bridges project. This Erasmus + project is currently developing resources for disadvantaged older learners especially those from migrant, asylum seeker and refugee communities to enable them to become more connected and less isolated.

In this project, the College is working collaboratively with a wide range of transnational partner organisations who have expertise in developing and delivering resources to support older learners. Again, this project promotes social inclusion and diversity as well as challenging racism and sectarianism.

Due to the unprecedented numbers of people seeking refuge and sanctuary in the UK and Ireland, the creation of the Pre-A1 language course was greatly accelerated and a BETA version of the [BRIDGES to ESOL](#) course is now ready for release. These innovative, interactive resources are designed to help migrants, refugees and asylum seekers to start their language learning journey. Supporting resources currently available include a learner dictionary and [flyers in 16 languages](#): – an accompanying 140-page learner workbook and ‘language mats’ in multiple languages will follow in the next academic year. Other courses for the project – citizenship, employability and digital skills – are also in production and will also be available in the next academic year.

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- 2** Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2021-22 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

During this reporting period the College continued to monitor the actions in our Equality Improvement Plan which forms part of our Equality Scheme and the Disability Action Plan. Details of the outcomes and/or the impact of the equality action plan are set out in Section 7.

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3 Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2021-22 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

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

Please provide any details and examples:

n/a

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

Please provide any details and examples:

n/a

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):*

n/a

As a result of what was identified through the EQIA and consultation exercise *(please give details):*

n/a

As a result of analysis from monitoring the impact *(please give details):*

n/a

As a result of changes to access to information and services *(please specify and give details):*

n/a

Other *(please specify and give details):*

n/a

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 2021-22 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:

Each job description requires the post holder to ensure full compliance with College equality requirements within the context of the post.

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2021-22 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:

Within the Equality Scheme timetable for measures proposed for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, objectives and targets relating to statutory duties have been integrated into the College Development Plan; Action Plans; and Human Resources and Development (HRD) Strategy. These plans continue to reflect the College's commitment to Section 75 duties and are underpinned by the Operational Plans for the relevant HRD functional areas. The Level 3 Action Plan is reported on to the Director of Client Services as part of a regular reporting routine and these documents also provide further explanation of the actions to be taken forward in the achievement of our strategic objectives.

PART A

6 In the 2021-22 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 2021-22 report
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

During this reporting period the Human Resources and Employee Development and Equality operational plans identified a range of equality KPIs that are reported quarterly to the Staffing Committee and monthly to the Senior Management Team.

Equality action plans/measures

7 Within the 2021-22 reporting period, please indicate the number of:

Actions completed:	3 (a to c)	Actions ongoing:	4 (d to g)	Actions to commence:	0
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Please provide any details and examples (*in addition to question 2*):

PART A

- a) Monitor, review & utilise annual workforce & student data to inform policy development and marketing.

The College continues to monitor existing student data against courses.

- b) Further, embed equality and diversity into the College & Curriculum through awareness raising & promotion.

Equality and Diversity continues to form part of the overall induction for staff.

Organisational inductions for all staff were traditionally held as a face-to-face sessions and have been delivered on-line since the Covid pandemic.

The College's Equality Manager developed a Dignity at Work online programme for the Sector and shared this with Members of the Equality Working Group to adopt. The College continues to develop and embed equality across the curriculum either through specific modules or as an integral part of the curriculum delivery (as detailed in Section 1).

- c) Recruit a diverse student population

The College continually reviews and updates publicity materials to ensure that we continue to promote an inclusive culture and one that is representative of the diverse range of students across Northern Ireland. Towards the end of the reporting period and with a return to campus of both students and staff, the shooting of new photography and videography to promote the College was facilitated. This included ensuring that students of a diverse nature were included through reflecting difference in ethnicity and disability. Full and relevant permissions are always sought for these images which are used in College printed publications, in advertising campaigns and digitally (website and social media platforms).

The College is also developing a new website at present. Again, photography and videography used on the new site, demonstrates the diverse nature of our students. A key aspect of this project will be developing the new College website to AA Accessibility Standards (W3C) to ensure that our site is fully accessible to those who need to use assistive technology to access it.

We regularly seek the students' views in the development of our communications through the use of surveys and focus groups. This has recently included asking our students for feedback on key publications such as the Student Diary and around improvements we can make to events aimed at the student body.

Over the past three years we have also developed marketing campaigns to promote the under - representation of females within the Construction and Engineering sector and likewise within courses related to these areas. The College's Marketing & Communications team won a WorldSkills Hero's & Diversity Award related to one of these campaigns.

We also work with our colleagues across the sector to promote equality and diversity within the sector. There is a Communications & Marketing Collaboration Group which

meets monthly and is supported by an external PR agency. This has led to the creation of a sector brand 'FE for ME'. This brand is active across local and regional media and social media channels and a number of sector events have been broadcast live to promote the FE message widely within NI. A key outcome from this is the promotion of HE in FE with a key message focused on the inclusive nature of our HE programmes, from those leaving school to adult returners.

d) Further, develop student support mechanisms to reduce barriers to education and learning.

The needs of our students continue to be our main priority as evidenced in one of the core College values which is "putting the learner first". Their diverse needs and concerns continue to be met by staff across the College and as a College we strive to provide all staff and in particular the Learning Support Team with the knowledge, skills and confidence to ensure the needs of our learners are met. A range of activities has been carried out by the Learning Support Team as follows:-

- During the period of College closure (due to Covid-19), the Learning Support Team continued to develop processes to ensure that students who had made a referral for Learning Support for September 2021 were contacted and the completion of initial needs assessments continued remotely where appropriate during this period. A total of 1669 online referrals were made for learning support an 3% increase from the same period the previous year.
- The Learning Support Manager and Assistant Director for Student Services and Marketing applied for a Carers Federation Quality Standard in Carer Support accreditation which was achieved in July 2021. The College now has newly developed processes in place to identify and provide support for students who are Young Carers which will be co-ordinated by staff within Student Services and overseen by the Learning Support Manager.
- The College received a total Additional Support Fund allocation of £610,063 from the Department for the Economy to support students with learning difficulties and disabilities during the 2020-21 academic year. A total number of 675 Further Education mainstream, TFS/ APPNI and discrete students received additional learning support during this period. Learning Support also provided additional support for 19 HE students.
- Development of a core team of 18 permanent LSAs and Mentors to improve retention and consistency of support for students
- Learning Support Co-ordinators were invited into remote final annual reviews by SENCOs in 13 local schools, this provided an opportunity for each Co-ordinator to meet with new students, parents and transition staff for students with Statements of Educational Needs.
- The Learning Support Team processed 631 examination access applications for students, this is an 8% increase from the previous year.
- Planning and reviewing activities for the Health and Wellbeing HUB, this included the introduction of resources to support students with 'Repair, Recovery & Re-establishing connection' when College re-opens following COVID.

PART A

- A total of 81 students received counselling support from Inspire, this was a 8.6% increase from the previous year. The total number of counselling sessions arranged was 344.
- Safeguarding refresher training delivered by Volunteer Now was undertaken by the Safeguarding team.
- Hosting transition working group meetings enhanced stakeholder engagement and strengthened the working relationship between SRC and external transition agencies.
- Continuing to work in collaboration with many internal and external staff in a student-centred approach to support the holistic needs of the students.

The following training was arranged specifically for Learning Support Staff:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Assistive Technology
- Diabetic Nurse
- JCQ Access Arrangements
- Basic Life Support
- Sign language
- Carers lead
- Suicide awareness

e) Monitor, review and update of Disability Action Plan

Please refer to Part B.

f) Provide a range of Equality & Diversity training to all staff & students.

As at 31 March 2022, 79% of current College staff completed the Equality and Good Relations training programme. In addition, the College continues to offer a range of opportunities to attend equality and diversity training events suited to their development and/or enhancing their understanding e.g. Legal Island Conferences, Equality Commission events. During the reporting year the College engaged with the Equality Commission for advice and support for staff on a range of areas.

During the reporting period the College has continued to engage and consult with students through, for example, the Student Union (SU), student focus groups and class representatives. As a result, we have in place a range of activities and events that continue to embed through our student population as listed in the following table: -

Activity	Content	Impact
Student Focus Groups/ Student Council Meetings	1 April 2021- 31 March 2022 Range of agenda items and issues discussed including open discussion on equality and diversity issues as and when raised by Class Reps	610 students across all Campuses.

	<p>e.g., Students marginalised by the Covid-19 pandemic, recognition of Cultural Diversity within the student body. This has been instrumental in the development of a Cultural Diversity Day that is designed to better inform staff and students about the different cultures that make up the SRC community. There is also a continued develop of a supportive environment for students identifying as LGBTQ+. This entailed developing Trans-awareness throughout the wider student body and external workshops on understanding and accepting pro-nouns.</p>	
Student Union	<p>SRC Student Union Elections. Two LGBTQ+ officers, two Disability officers and two Cultural Diversity officers were elected to the student council.</p> <p>National Union of Students Northern Ireland (NUS USI) Regional conference- Student Union Officers attended a regional conference to have an input into NUS USI policy across Northern Ireland region including disability and equality campaigns and rights for students.</p>	<p>Total of 11 Student Union Elected Officers involved in developing policy and working with the Engagement team to support campaigns as part of Fresher's, LGBTQ+ awareness, International Women's Day, Sexual Health Week, Mental Health Awareness Week, Cultural Diversity Awareness Day, Time to talk day and E safety.</p>
Clubs and Societies	<p>Continuous development of an LGBTQ+ Society.</p> <p>The aim at the LGBTQ+ Society is to provide a safe and welcoming space for all</p>	<p>Total of 52 students registered to be part of the LGBTQ+ society. They were involved in developing a variety such as online pub quizzes and regular talks to</p>

	<p>SRC students who self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, asexual, and/or unsure/undecided, and for anyone who experiences any sort of homophobia, biphobia and/or transphobia.</p> <p>Development of a Cultural Diversity and inclusion Council</p> <p>A Diversity and Inclusion council provided representation from different backgrounds within the SRC to discuss diversity issues on campus and discuss initiatives on raising awareness and acceptance.</p>	<p>educate and discuss LGBTQ+ topics. This was to bring attention to the issues that they face LGBTQ+ related or not.</p> <p>Total of 12 students registered to be part of the Cultural Diversity and inclusion Council. They were involved in the development of a Cultural Diversity workshop that is being delivered by the Student Engagement Team. They were also instrumental in the planning and delivery of the SRC Cultural Diversity Day and were successful in arranging external speakers and creating unprecedented awareness</p>
Virtual Fresher's Fair	<p>September 2021</p> <p>Range of exhibitors attending including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electoral office Equality Commission Rainbow Project Disability Action Cara Friend National Union of Students Union of Students Ireland Anti-Bullying network PSNI/ Policing and Community Safety Partnership 	<p>Approx. 13,000 students were reached via internal email and social media platforms</p>
Consent and Healthy Relationships Programme	<p>Range of workshops delivered to all students in all campuses. This was supported by Woman's Aid and focused on identifying and addressing signs of</p>	<p>This was delivered to a total of 162 students which included 104 young women.</p>

PART A

	<p>unhealthy relationships along with signposting to support available.</p> <p>In conjunction with PHA, Students completed an online healthy relationships course that was delivered via an online platform. This focused on the dangers young people can experience via social media, chatrooms etc.</p>	<p>This was delivered to a total of 102 students.</p>
<p>Common youth and Rainbow Project workshops on Sexual Health and Consent.</p>	<p>Delivered to students on all campuses that focused on sexual health and consent</p>	<p>This was delivered to 53 students aged 16-24 which included 27 young women.</p>
<p>Action Mental Health BodyTalk Programme.</p>	<p>Delivered to young women in the Newry campuses that focused on body image.</p>	<p>This was delivered to 53 young women.</p>
<p>Tutorial programme</p>	<p>Range of classroom tutorials delivered by the Graduate Interns raising awareness on issues such as Bullying, Sexual Health, Homophobia and Transphobia bullying and its impact. This was delivered in partnership with Common Youth, Positive Life, and the Rainbow Project. There was also a drive on awareness raising on hate/sectarian crime as part of this programme with the PSNI/PCSP. Tutorials also delivered on E Safety, sexual health and Healthy relationships and cultural diversity.</p>	<p>A total of 208 tutorials have been held this year with 2681 students.</p>
<p>Health Clinic</p>	<p>A Health Clinic delivered on campus providing access to sexual health services, support and advice including LGBTQ groups.</p>	<p>10 LGBTQ young people accessed the services.</p>

g) Grow and enhance relations with local community groups

In December 2021, the FE Sector joined a new national initiative - #GoodforMeGoodforFE campaign - which aims to help staff and students support and connect with local communities. The campaign aimed to generate £1 million of social value through a range of sustainable community actions including volunteering, fundraising and charitable partnerships. Over 100 Colleges across the UK have already signed up to this initiative.

The campaign has 3 primary strands:

1. FE Foodbank donations;
2. Encouraging staff and student volunteering activity inside and outside the College community; and
3. Promoting and developing corporate and charitable partnerships.

In order to support the campaign and to share good practice a Sector working group was established in November 2022. The Equality Manager chaired this group which met every 6 – 8 weeks and each college was represented at this group. The group is the conduit for sharing good news stories, statistical data on number of hours volunteering and the total amount generated in social value; and fundraising /charitable partnerships across the sector. Items for action are agreed at each meeting and each College undertakes their responsibilities to close out on these actions. Each College was asked has been asked to feedback to the #GoodforMeGoodforFE initiative which is based in the UK on either a weekly or monthly basis.

FE Food donations

It has been a real team effort to launch this initiative with several departments across each College including HRD, Student Activities, Marketing, Campus Services and Estates working together, sharing their skills and knowledge, to set up and promote food donation points across each College Campus.

By week ending 29 April 2022, **8,138 food items** were donated across the Sector and distributed to foodbanks within the local community. Of the food items donated across the Sector, the College donated **1,689 food items**

Volunteering Activities

A Sector Press release was launched in January 2022 promoting the #GoodforMeGoodforFE initiative.

A volunteering survey was distributed to staff and students within the Sector to provide a baseline data needed to measure the impact of #GoodforMeGoodforFE over the coming year.

The impact of volunteering is measured through a “social value calculator”; calculating the amount of volunteering hours that have been contributed in monetary terms to social goals

PART A

such as increasing access to employment and skills; helping the environment; and growing businesses.

So far, as a Sector **6,852** volunteering hours have been captured which is equivalent to £110,249 social value generated (using the TOMS Framework 2021, 1 hour of volunteering is worth £16.09 per hour to the community). The College captured **5,464** volunteering hours which is equivalent to £87,916 social value generated.

The Sector will continue to promote this initiative by showcasing staff and student volunteering activities using videos and regular updates in staff and student newsletters. The initiative will be promoted using a range of methods such as screens; PC screen savers; social media; the College website; newsfeed and via case studies published in FE Week. Good news stories from staff and students across the Sector have been collated showcasing the range of volunteering activities.

FE Black Leadership Group

In the reporting period, the College participated in the FE Black Leadership Group which involved a monitoring exercise for staff and students.

h) Monitor, evaluate and review the Equality Improvement Plan

The Equality Improvement Plan was reviewed and revised in 2022, following a review of the Equality Scheme. This report reflects progress on the new actions as set out in the plan.

8 Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2021-22 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

The Equality Scheme and Action Plan were reviewed within the reporting period.

9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2021-22 reporting period, the following have been identified: (*tick all that apply*)

- Continuing action(s), to progress the next stage addressing the known inequality
- Action(s) to address the known inequality in a different way
- Action(s) to address newly identified inequalities/recently prioritised inequalities
- Measures to address a prioritised inequality have been completed

Arrangements for consulting (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 3)

PART A

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 2021-22 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:

This reporting period, there have been several opportunities for communicating and consulting with staff; these include:-

- The College launched the Investors in People Staff Survey in March 2022.
- Regular Chief Executive and Senior Management Webinars and email updates continued to be held throughout the reporting period and staff had the opportunity to interact with Senior Management and post questions to them on-line;
- A remote Christmas coffee morning was held in December 2021 presented by the CEO;
- The use of technology using MSTeams continues to ensure managers maintain regular contact and communication with their staff through phone calls or virtual meetings.

12 In the 2021-22 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were most frequently used by consultees: (tick all that apply)

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

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:

See 11 above – as most College staff were working remotely for some or all the reporting period, there were less face-to-face meetings due to social distancing.

PART A

13 Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2021-22 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

n/a

14 Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2021-22 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- Yes No Not applicable

Arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

The link to the College website <https://www.src.ac.uk/the-college/equality> will provide details where equality information is accessible to internal and external stakeholders.

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

2

Two policies were screened out as there was no adverse impact identified relating to the nine equality categories:-

- Equality and Good Relations (Staff and Students)
- Health and Wellbeing (Staff and Students)

16 Please provide the number of assessments that were consulted upon during 2021-22:

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

PART A

Please provide any details and examples:

n/a

- 22 Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2021-22 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:**

n/a

- 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:**

n/a

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 2021-22, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

Staff induction continues to provide awareness of not only our obligations under Section 75, but highlights tools available to support staff in the Employee Handbook and/or specific training.

New staff are also required to undertake mandatory Equality training in respect of Equality, Good Relations, SENDO and Safeguarding. The College continues to keep staff up to date, through its Employee Handbook, the Equality Information and Communications Support sections.

During the reporting period the College reviewed and released the on-line mandatory training programmes.

The College continues to promote Access Able to promote the usage of disability access guides across all campuses and updated new guides for the new Armagh and Banbridge campuses.

Staff across the College have been offered the opportunity to engage in a range of training and development activities to enhance and develop their knowledge and skills in respect of supporting an inclusive College environment. Some activities would not appear to specifically address equality issues but provide awareness and information for staff to better equip them in responding to complex staff and student issues, examples such as Safe Talk, Understanding Self Harm, Mental Health Awareness, Admissions training.

PART A

25 Please provide any examples of relevant training shown to have worked well, in that participants have achieved the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the stated objectives:

n/a

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

26 Please list any examples of where monitoring during 2021-22, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation to access to information and services:

n/a

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

27 How many complaints in relation to the Equality Scheme have been received during 2021-22?

Insert number here:

0

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

n/a

Section 3: Looking Forward

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

The College Equality Scheme was reviewed in 2022 and only superficial changes were made to the Scheme.

29 Are there areas of the Equality Scheme arrangements (screening/consultation/training) your organisation anticipates will be focused upon in the next reporting period? (please provide details)

- Policy Development and Review Schedule – policies will be reviewed in the next reporting period and staff are consulted.
- New Members of the Governing Body will receive access to the College’s Mandatory online programmes in Equality and Good Relations and other areas such as Safeguarding and SENDO.

PART A

- Flexible Working practices – following the staff survey into remote working, the FE Sector is reviewing their flexible working practices to include remote working.

30 In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what equality and good relations priorities are anticipated over the next (2021-22) 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

PART B - Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) and Disability Action Plans

1. Number of action measures for this reporting period that have been:

5

Fully achieved

5

Partially achieved

1

Not achieved

2. Please outline below details on all actions that have been fully achieved in the reporting period.

2 (a) Please highlight what public life measures have been achieved to encourage disabled people to participate in public life at National, Regional and Local levels:

Level	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs ⁱ	Outcomes / Impact ⁱⁱ
National ⁱⁱⁱ	n/a	n/a	n/a
Regional ^{iv}	n/a	n/a	n/a
Local ^v	n/a	n/a	n/a

ⁱ **Outputs** – defined as act of producing, amount of something produced over a period, processes undertaken to implement the action measure e.g. Undertook 10 training sessions with 100 people at customer service level.

ⁱⁱ **Outcome / Impact** – what specifically and tangibly has changed in making progress towards the duties? What impact can directly be attributed to taking this action? Indicate the results of undertaking this action e.g. Evaluation indicating a tangible shift in attitudes before and after training.

ⁱⁱⁱ **National** : Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments

^{iv} **Regional**: Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level

^v **Local** : Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local fora.

PART B

2(b) What training action measures were achieved in this reporting period?

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Introduce training for front line staff on disability etiquette and relevant legislation dealing with disability and the provision of goods, facilities and services	<p>In the reporting period, the College revised and released its SENDO programme (August 2021). As at 31 March 2022, completion rates were as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality and Good Relations (79%) • SENDO (68%) • Safeguarding (71%) • Disability Awareness (88%) <p>The Disability Awareness programme is currently being revised and will be released next reporting period.</p>	Increased awareness of legislation and individual/organisation responsibilities.

PART B

2(c) What Positive attitudes action measures in the area of Communications were achieved in this reporting period?

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Increase awareness of specific barriers faced by people with a disability including through linking with National Awareness days or weeks.	The College raised awareness during the reporting period by linking with National Awareness campaigns and providing information to staff on topical issues such as: Stress Awareness Month (April 2021); National Walking month (May 2021); Healthy Eating Week (June 2021); Workplace Safety and Good Practice (Sept 2021); Mental Wellbeing (Oct 2021); Financial Wellness (Nov 2021); International Day of People with Disabilities (Dec 2021); Love your Liver month (Jan 2022); Time to Talk (Feb 2022); Oral Health and No Smoking day (March 2022).	Increased awareness and understanding of barriers faced by people with a disability.
2	Promote the use of Access Able website to encourage participation of prospective students.	The Equality Section on the College website has a subsection (Equality Information) which specifically links prospective students/staff to the Access Able website. The Access Able website is also promoted to potential applicants during the staff recruitment & selection process. The User numbers have begun to increase to pre-	Easy accessibility to Access Able website which will enable prospective students/students to view available facilities and which will encourage participation of prospective students on a wide range of programmes of study.

PART B

		<p>pandemic numbers 2020 however the page views had decreased.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="801 304 1317 743"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="801 304 1034 424">Year</th> <th data-bbox="1034 304 1184 424">User Numbers</th> <th data-bbox="1184 304 1317 424">Page Views</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="801 424 1034 504">Jan to Dec 2018</td> <td data-bbox="1034 424 1184 504">1500</td> <td data-bbox="1184 424 1317 504">4248</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="801 504 1034 584">Jan to Oct 2019</td> <td data-bbox="1034 504 1184 584">1620</td> <td data-bbox="1184 504 1317 584">3070</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="801 584 1034 663">Jan to Dec 2020</td> <td data-bbox="1034 584 1184 663">1363</td> <td data-bbox="1184 584 1317 663">3249</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="801 663 1034 743">Jan to Dec 2021</td> <td data-bbox="1034 663 1184 743">1512</td> <td data-bbox="1184 663 1317 743">2395</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	User Numbers	Page Views	Jan to Dec 2018	1500	4248	Jan to Oct 2019	1620	3070	Jan to Dec 2020	1363	3249	Jan to Dec 2021	1512	2395	
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3	<p>Create an open and inclusive workplace culture which displays respect for those with mental ill health.</p>	<p>The College signed up to the Equality Commission’s Mental Health Charter. The College continues to update its “MindHub” intranet page which brings together a number of resources to support employees and managers in looking after their emotional health and wellbeing at work. This included information on working from home and dealing with staff wellbeing during the Covid-19 pandemic.</p>	<p>Positive engagement, increased provision of information and monitoring.</p>															

PART B

2 (d) What action measures were achieved to ‘encourage others’ to promote the two duties:

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Monitor and review progress of Disability Action Plan (DAP).	Review undertaken	Evidence of progress in eleven of the twelve identified actions in the DAP.

2 (e) Please outline any additional action measures that were fully achieved other than those listed in the tables above:

	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
1	n/a	n/a	n/a

PART B

3. Please outline what action measures have been partly achieved as follows:

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones / Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
1	The College will endeavour to influence DfE to ensure participation of disabled people on the Governing Body of the College.	DfE will include an affirmative action statement in recruitment advertisements to attract disabled people to apply to the Governing Body of the College.	Governing Body will include members with disabilities.	This is outside of the control of the College as recruitment is handled by the DfE.
2	Continue to encourage the participation of disabled people on committees, student representatives on the Governing Body and groups across the College.	Increased number of students with disabilities on Level 1 courses represented through the class rep system on student council supported by Learning Support Assistants.	Increased participation in student voice leading to increased participation in public life. Development of new working relationships with the following transition teams to refer disabled people to College: - Adult Learning Disability Team - Day Opportunities Forum Attendance at School Information evenings and EA Transition Evenings to raise awareness of courses on offer to	College will continue to identify ways of encouraging staff and students with disabilities to actively participate in groups and committees. The College will continue to engage at sector level and to share and seek good practice from across the sector ways of engaging staff and/or students with disabilities to participate.

PART B

			<p>transitioning students and their parents.</p> <p>Separate Open Days for Full time discrete provision where parents and students are invited into College premises to meet with curriculum and support staff.</p>	
3	Encourage students with a disability to participate more fully in College life.	The College has integrated Discrete Student Groups with mainstream classes in non-curricular activities and events for example “Freshers” Week, Mental Health Awareness, and e – safety.	Increased participation in student focus groups, student surveys, Student Union Membership and where applicable non-curricular activities such as students union and sporting activities etc	College will continue to monitor the impact to ensure students with a disability are integrating into College life.
4	Explore the scope of offering meaningful placements and work shadowing and volunteering for people with a disability	The College’s Careers Service has formed an alliance with Disability Action who will support our students into supported employment on completion of their course through the job match programme.	Develop capacity of people with a disability to find employment.	The College will continue to engage with disability groups to enable work placement opportunities within the College/external to the College.

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		The College has signed up to the Disability Confident Scheme.		
5	Through Widening Participation scheme increase number of students with a disability entering the College.	As a College we believe in “putting our learners first” striving to serve the needs of our learners and to remove all barriers to learner success. The marketing of courses through the prospectus and other College documents/ references the support available for students with a disability.	Students have assurance through our commitment to them that we will prioritise their needs and support them through their learning journey, maximising their potential.	College will continue to review this area of work and will seek new and innovative ways through which we can continue to promote accessibility to encourage prospective students with disabilities to apply.

4. Please outline what action measures have not been achieved and the reasons why.

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1	Consider development of a (Sectoral) Disability Advisory Group that could involve staff and students.	This is a new action measure that has recently been developed under the revised DAP. It was agreed to have the Disability Action Plan as a standing agenda item on each NI FE Equality Sector Group meeting. The six Colleges have discussed best practice around promotion of placements for students with disabilities.

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5. What monitoring tools have been put in place to evaluate the degree to which actions have been effective / develop new opportunities for action?

- (a) Qualitative
Feedback from evaluations, consultative processes, staff and student focus groups.
- (b) Quantitative
Numbers undertaking training, enrolment and recruitment and selection statistics.

6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions has your organisation either:

- made any revisions to your plan during the reporting period or
- taken any additional steps to meet the disability duties which were not outlined in your original disability action plan / any other changes?

No

If yes please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1	n/a	n/a	n/a

7. Do you intend to make any further revisions to your plan in light of your organisation's annual review of the plan? If so, please outline proposed changes?

N/A

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