



# ***Equality Scheme for Southern Regional College***

***Drawn up in accordance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 to  
the Northern Ireland Act 1998***

***This document is available in a range of formats on request.  
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Approved by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland on 25 January 2012. This scheme was first reviewed in December 2016 and again in March 2022 and the Equality Commission has been informed about the outcome.

## Foreword

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations across a range of categories outlined in the Act<sup>1</sup>.

In our equality scheme we set out how Southern Regional College proposes to fulfill the Section 75 statutory duties.

We will commit the necessary resources in terms of people, and money to make sure that the Section 75 statutory duties are complied with and that the equality scheme is implemented effectively and on time.

We commit to having effective internal arrangements in place for ensuring our effective compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties and for monitoring and reviewing our progress.

We will develop and deliver a programme of communication and training with the aim of ensuring that all our staff and board members are made fully aware of our equality scheme and understand the commitments and obligations within it.

We, the Governing Body and Chief Executive of Southern Regional College, are fully committed to effectively fulfilling our Section 75 statutory duties across all our functions (including service provision, employment and procurement) through the effective implementation of our equality scheme.

We realise the important role that the community and voluntary sector and the general public have to play to ensure the Section 75 statutory duties are effectively implemented. Our equality scheme demonstrates our commitment to the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations. It also offers the opportunity to people who perceive that we have not complied with our equality scheme to make a complaint.

On behalf of Southern Regional College and our staff we are pleased to support and endorse this equality scheme which has

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<sup>1</sup> See section 1.1 of our Equality Scheme.

been drawn up in accordance with Section 75 of and Schedule 9 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and with reference to the Equality Commission guidelines.

Chair: A Saunders

Chief Executive: B Doran

Date: 28 June 2011

Date: 28 June 2011

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## Chapter 1 Introduction

### Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

1.1 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires Southern Regional College to comply with two statutory duties:

#### Section 75 (1)

In carrying out our functions relating to Northern Ireland we are required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:

- Persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- Men and women generally;
- Persons with a disability and persons without; and
- Persons with dependants and persons without.

#### Section 75 (2)

In addition, without prejudice to the obligations above, in carrying out our functions in relation to Northern Ireland we are required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

“Functions” include the “powers and duties” of a public authority<sup>2</sup>. This includes our employment and procurement functions.

Please see below under “Who we are and what we do” for an explanation of our functions.

### **How we propose to fulfil the Section 75 duties in relation to the relevant functions of Southern Regional College.**

1.2 Schedule 9 4. (1) of the Act requires Southern Regional College as a designated public authority, to set out in an equality scheme how it proposes to fulfil the duties imposed by Section 75 in relation to its relevant functions. This equality scheme is intended to fulfil that statutory requirement. It is both a statement of our arrangements for

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<sup>2</sup> Section 98 (1) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

fulfilling the Section 75 statutory duties and our plan for their implementation.

- 1.3 The College is committed to the discharge of its Section 75 Obligations throughout the organisation. The Governing Body of the College agree to commit the necessary available resources in terms of people, time and money to ensure that the Section 75 statutory duties are complied with and that our equality scheme can be implemented effectively and on time.

### **Who we are and what we do**

- 1.4 Southern Regional College is an incorporated College of Further and Higher Education, which is governed by a Governing Body, appointed by Department for the Economy (DfE) to serve a term of 4 years. The Governors are drawn from local business, industry or other professions as well as a number of nominees from the local Education Authority, elected staff, student governors, co-optees and the Chief Executive of the College.

There are four sub-committees of the Governing Body dealing with Education, Staffing, Finance and General Purposes and Audit.

- 1.5 The Chief Executive of the College, who is also the Accounting Officer, is responsible for the operational management of the College, while the Governing Body provides governance and the strategic direction for the College.

- 1.6 At Southern Regional College our vision is:

“To be the provider of first choice for professional and technical education - prized by individuals and employers”.

This vision complements the strategic aim for the sector as laid down in “Further Education Means Success” and is and is further amplified through the Mission Statement, which articulates what this will mean to individual learners:

“To positively transform lives through meaningful and enjoyable learning experiences.”

The College offers students a diverse range of Higher Education learning experiences. Our portfolio of higher level professional and technical courses is broad ranging and we ensure that all our programmes, be they degrees, diplomas, certificates or professional qualifications, are of the highest quality. At Further Education level, the College offers courses from BTEC Level 1 Diplomas, through NVQ's, National Diplomas and A levels. We also offer Apprenticeship Training programmes where students can learn valuable trades to take into the workplace. The College is confident that we can offer students qualifications which offer clear progression pathways and which are relevant for the world of work.

1.7 In performance of the above roles, Southern Regional College carries out functions in the following areas:

- The recruitment of students onto courses designed to meet their specific needs.
- The recruitment and ongoing employee development of suitably qualified and experienced staff to deliver the wide range of curriculum offered and to provide the range of support services that will enhance the learning experience.
- The procurement and maintenance of premises, equipment and other resources to provide suitable accommodation and facilities in which the learning experience can take place.

1.8 To support and implement the above functions/services the College operates within policy guidelines laid down by the Department for the Economy (DfE) and according to policies as agreed through sector negotiation and through the College's Governing Body.

1.9 The College manages the curriculum through academic Faculties. This work is supported by a number of administrative functional areas within the College. The organisation chart is set out in Appendix 1.

## **Chapter 2 Our arrangements for assessing our compliance with the section 75 duties**

### **Schedule 9 4. (2) (a)**

2.1 Our arrangements for assessing our compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties are outlined throughout this equality scheme. In addition we have the following arrangements in place for assessing our compliance:

### **Responsibilities and reporting**

2.2 We are committed to the fulfilment of our Section 75 obligations in all parts of our work.

2.3 Overall responsibility for the ensuring effective implementation of our equality scheme lies with the Chief Executive who is accountable to the College's Governing Body for ensuring the development, implementation, maintenance and review of the equality scheme in accordance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998, any good practice or guidance that has been or may be issued by the Equality Commission and for the mainstreaming of equality throughout the functions within the College.

2.4 The Chief Executive has established a process for the management and reporting of Section 75 issues. The Assistant Director will provide regular reports to the Senior Management and the Governing Body. In addition Equality issues are consulted on at local level through the Joint Consultative Committee of senior managers, trade union representation, The College Equality Manager has a key oversight and reporting role on behalf of the Chief Executive and Governing Body and through links with various managers in the College and other regional Colleges (NI Further Education Equality Forum) and will keep the Chief Executive, the Governing Body appraised of progress on a regular basis.

- 2.5 The Chief Executive will keep the current reporting and management arrangements under review and take action to improve the current arrangements when necessary.
- 2.6 The College Equality Manager will be the first point of contact for the scheme. If you have any questions or comments regarding our equality scheme, please contact the Equality Manager at the address given below and we will respond to you as soon as possible:

Helen O'Connor  
Southern Regional College  
Newry Campus  
Patrick Street  
Newry  
BT61 7HN  
Telephone Number 0300 123 1223  
e-mail [ede@src.ac.uk](mailto:ede@src.ac.uk)

- 2.7 Objectives and targets relating to the statutory duties will be integrated into our strategic and operational business plans<sup>3</sup>.
- 2.8 Employees' job descriptions reflect their contribution and commitment to the discharge of the Section 75 statutory duties and implementation of the equality scheme.
- 2.9 Lecturing staff will have the opportunity to reflect on and evidence of examples of how they promote equality, inclusion and learning in the curriculum through the 'Improving Quality: Raising Standards' self evaluating process.
- 2.10 Southern Regional College will prepare an annual report on the progress made on implementing the arrangements set in this equality scheme to discharge our Section 75 statutory duties (Section 75 annual progress report).
- 2.11 The Section 75 annual progress report will be sent to the Equality Commission by 31 August each year and will follow any guidance on annual reporting issued by the Equality Commission.

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 4 'Timetable for measures proposed'

- 2.12 Our Section 75 annual progress reports are available to view on our website [www.src.ac.uk](http://www.src.ac.uk) or by contacting our Equality Manager (contact details as set out at paragraph 2.6).
- 2.13 The College will liaise closely with the Equality Commission to ensure that progress on the implementation of our equality scheme is maintained.

### **Action plan/action measures**

- 2.14 Southern Regional College has developed an Equality Improvement Plan to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. This Equality Improvement Plan is set out in Appendix 6 to this Equality Scheme but will not form part of the approved Equality Scheme.
- 2.15 To enable the College to link its Equality Improvement Plan with the Corporate Planning cycle the Equality Improvement Plan will be reviewed and updated annually in keeping with the College business planning cycle.
- 2.16 The College has consulted on our Equality Improvement Plan as part of the consultation process for the Equality Scheme.
- 2.17 The College will monitor our progress on the delivery of our action measures flowing from the Equality Improvement Plan annually and update the action plan as necessary to ensure that it remains effective and relevant to our functions and work. The College will inform the Equality Commission of any changes or amendments to action plans through the Annual Progress Report.
- 2.18 Our Section 75 annual progress report will provide information on progress we have made in implementing our Equality Improvement Plan action measures.
- 2.19 Our Equality Improvement Plan will be available on our website [www.src.ac.uk](http://www.src.ac.uk) or by contacting the Equality Manager using the contact details set out at 2.6 above.

## Chapter 3 Our arrangements for consulting

Schedule 9 4. (2) (a) - on matters to which a duty (S75 (1) or (2)) is likely to be relevant (including details of the persons to be consulted).

Schedule 9 4. (2) (b) on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by us on the promotion of equality of opportunity.

3.1 The College recognises the importance of consultation in all aspects of the implementation of our statutory equality duties.

We will consult on our equality scheme, equality impact assessments and other matters determined by the College to be relevant to the Section 75 statutory duties.

3.2 We are committed to carrying out consultation in accordance with the principles as contained in the Equality Commission's guidance '*Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for Public Authorities (April 2010)*':

3.2.1 To ensure the most effective use of both our and our consultees' resources, we will take a targeted approach to consultation for those consultees that may have a particular interest in the matter/policy being consulted upon and to whom the matter/policy is of particular relevance. This may include for example regional or local consultations, sectoral or thematic consultation etc.

3.2.2 Consultation with stakeholders will begin as early as possible and periodically seek their views on their preferred consultation methods.

Methods of consultation could include:

- 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/opt out of the consultation;
- Internet discussions; or
- Telephone consultations.

This list is not exhaustive and we may develop other additional methods of consultation more appropriate to key stakeholders and the matter being consulted upon.

3.2.3 We will consider the accessibility and format of every method of consultation we use in order to remove barriers to the consultation process for all affected groups and individuals.

Information will be made available, on request, in alternative formats<sup>4</sup>, in a timely manner.

3.2.4 Where necessary training will be provided to those facilitating consultations to ensure that they have the necessary skills to communicate effectively with consultees.

3.2.5 The consultation period lasts for a minimum of twelve weeks to allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves as part of the process of forming a view. However, in exceptional circumstances when this timescale is not feasible (for example implementing EU Directives or UK wide legislation, meeting Health and Safety requirements, addressing urgent public health matters or complying with Court judgements), we may shorten timescales to eight weeks or less before the policy is implemented. We may continue consultation thereafter and will review the policy as part of our monitoring commitments.

Where, under these exceptional circumstances, the College implement a policy immediately, as it is beyond our College's control, we may consult after implementation of the policy, in order to ensure that any impacts of the policy are considered.

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<sup>4</sup> See Chapter 6 of our equality scheme for further information on alternative formats of information we provide.

- 3.2.7 In some circumstances consideration will be given to the timing of the consultation period for example during holiday periods.
- 3.2.8 We are conscious of the fact that affected individuals and representative groups may have different needs. We will take appropriate measures to ensure full participation in any meetings held. We will consider for example the time of day, the appropriateness of the venue, in particular whether it can be accessed by those with disabilities, how the meeting is to be conducted, the use of appropriate language, whether a signer and/or interpreter is necessary, and whether the provision of childcare and support for other carers is required.
- 3.2.9 We make all relevant information available to consultees in appropriate formats to ensure meaningful consultation. This includes detailed information on the policy proposal being consulted upon and any relevant quantitative and qualitative data.
- 3.2.10 In making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted, we take into account any assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy.
- 3.2.11 We provide feedback to consultees who respond to the consultation in a timely manner and feedback will be provided in formats suitable to consultees (please also see 6.3). A feedback report is prepared which includes information on the policy consulted upon, comments received and our consideration of and response to these comments. The feedback will be provided in formats suitable to consultees. (Please see also 6.3)
- 3.3 A list of our consultees is included in this equality scheme at Appendix 3 or by contacting the Equality Manager as documented in paragraph 2.6.
- 3.4 Our consultation list is not exhaustive and is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it remains relevant to our functions and policies.

3.5 We welcome enquiries from any person/s or organisations wishing to be added to the list of consultees. Please contact the Equality Manager (contact details at 2.6 above) to provide your contact details and have your areas of interest noted or have your name/details removed or amended. Please also inform us at this stage if you would like information sent to you in a particular format or language.

## **Chapter 4      Our arrangements for assessing, monitoring and publishing the impact of policies**

**(Schedule 9 4. (2) (b); Schedule 9 4. (2) (c); Schedule 9 4. (2) (d); Schedule 9 9. (1); Schedule 9 9. (2))**

**Our arrangements for assessing the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted on the promotion of equality of opportunity (Schedule 9 4. (2) (b))**

- 4.1 In the context of Section 75, ‘policy’ is very broadly defined and it covers all the ways in which we carry out or propose to carry out our functions in relation to Northern Ireland. In respect of this equality scheme, the term policy is used for any (proposed/amended/existing) strategy, policy initiative or practice and/or decision, whether written or unwritten and irrespective of the label given to it, e.g., ‘draft’, ‘pilot’, ‘high level’ or ‘sectoral’.
- 4.2 In making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted, we take into account any assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy, as required by Schedule 9 9. (2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.
- 4.3 The College uses the tools of screening and equality impact assessment to assess the likely impact of a policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations. In carrying out these assessments we will relate them to the intended outcomes of the policy in question and will also take cognisance of the Equality Commission guidance:
- The guidance on screening, including the screening template, as detailed in the Commission’s guidance ‘*Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for Public Authorities (April 2010)*’ and
  - On undertaking an equality impact assessment as detailed in the Commission’s guidance ‘*Practical guidance on equality impact assessment (February 2005)*’.

## Screening

- 4.4 The purpose of screening is to identify those policies that are likely to have an impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations.
- 4.5 Screening is completed at the earliest opportunity in the policy development/review process. Policies which we propose to adopt will be subject to screening prior to implementation. For more detailed strategies or policies that are to be put in place through a series of stages, we will screen at various stages during implementation.
- 4.6 The College will ensure that relevant staff are involved in the screening of a policy and may include for example, equality specialists, those who implement the policy and staff members from other relevant work areas.
- 4.7 The following questions are applied to all our policies as part of the screening process:
- What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? (minor/major/none)
  - Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equality categories?
  - To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of a different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? (minor/major/none)
  - Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of a different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?
- 4.8 In order to answer the screening questions, we will consider all relevant and available information and data gathered, both qualitative and quantitative. In taking this evidence into account we will consider the different needs, experiences

and priorities for each of the Section 75 equality categories. Any screening decision will be informed by this evidence.

- 4.9 Completion of screening and taking into account our consideration of the answers to all four screening questions set out in 4.7 above, will lead to one of the following three outcomes:
1. The policy has been 'screened in' for equality impact assessment
  2. The policy has been 'screened out' with mitigation<sup>5</sup> or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted
  3. The policy has been 'screened out' without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.
- 4.10 If our screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is 'minor' in respect of one, or more, of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, we will consider measures that will mitigate the policy impact as well as alternative policies that might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity and/or good relations. In certain circumstances it may be necessary to proceed with an equality impact assessment rather than mitigate the impacts.
- 4.11 Where we mitigate we will outline in our screening template the reasons to support this decision together with the proposed changes, amendments or alternative policy.
- 4.12 This screening decision will be 'signed off' by those involved in equality screening the policy within the College.
- 4.13 If our screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is 'major' in respect of one, or more, of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, we will normally subject the policy to an equality impact assessment if the College still decides to proceed with that policy. This screening decision will be 'signed off' by those involved in equality screening the policy within the College.

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<sup>5</sup> Mitigation – Where an assessment (screening in this case) reveals that a particular policy has an adverse impact on equality of opportunity and / or good relations, a public authority must consider ways of delivering the policy outcomes which have a less adverse effect on the relevant Section 75 categories.

- 4.14 If our screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is 'none', in respect of all of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, we may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, we will give details of the reasons for the decision taken. This screening decision will be 'signed off' by those involved in equality screening the policy within the College.
- 4.15 On all occasions as soon as possible following the completion of the screening process, the screening form will be signed off and approved by those involved in the equality screening process. At an appropriate time an equality screening report will be made available on our staff intranet for internal policies and on our website [www.src.ac.uk](http://www.src.ac.uk) for external/customer facing policies and the Screening Report will be provided on request from the Equality Manager as per contact details at 2.6.
- 4.16 If a consultee, including the Equality Commission, raises a concern about a screening decision based on supporting evidence, we will review the screening decision.

### **Equality impact assessment**

- 4.17 An equality impact assessment (EQIA) is a thorough and systematic analysis of a policy, whether that policy is formal or informal, and irrespective of the scope of that policy. The primary function of an EQIA is to determine the extent of any impact of a policy upon the Section 75 categories and to determine if the impact is an adverse one. It is also an opportunity to demonstrate the likely positive outcomes of a policy and to seek ways to more effectively promote equality of opportunity and good relations.
- 4.18 Once a policy is screened and screening has identified that an equality impact assessment is necessary, we will carry out the EQIA in accordance with Equality Commission guidance if we decide to proceed with this policy. The equality impact assessment will be carried out as part of the policy development process, before the policy is implemented.

4.19 Any equality impact assessment will be subject to consultation at the appropriate stage(s). (For details see above Chapter 3 “Our Arrangements for Consulting”).

**Our arrangements for publishing the results of the assessments of the likely impact of policies we have adopted or propose to adopt on the promotion of equality of opportunity**

(Schedule 9 4. (2) (d); Schedule 9 9. (1))

4.20 We make publicly available the results of our assessments (screening and EQIA) of the likely impact of our policies on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations.

**What we publish**

4.21 Screening Reports

The College will develop a screening template as a standard for all screening exercises. Once completed this template will be known as the College Screening Form for each screening exercise.

The College will publish all equality screening forms following each screening exercise to facilitate the communication of the outcome of this exercise.

These are published once completed. Screening forms detail:

- A statement of the aim(s) of the policy/policies to which the assessment relates;
- Consideration given to measures which might mitigate any adverse impact;
- Consideration given to alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity;
- Screening decisions, i.e.
  - Whether the policy has been ‘screened in’ for equality impact assessment;

- Whether the policy has been ‘screened out’ with mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted; or
- Whether the policy has been ‘screened out’ without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.
- Where applicable, a timetable for conducting equality impact assessments

#### 4.22 Equality impact assessments

EQIA reports are published once the impact assessment has been completed. These reports include:

- A statement of the aim of the policy assessed;
- Information and data collected;
- Details of the assessment of impact(s);
- Consideration given to measures which might mitigate any adverse impact;
- Consideration given to alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity;
- Consultation responses;
- The decision taken; and
- Future monitoring plans.

#### **How we publish the information**

4.23 All information published will be accessible and can be made available in alternative formats on request. Please see 6.3 below.

#### **Where we publish the information**

4.24 Screening Forms and the results of equality impact assessments will be available on our website [www.src.ac.uk](http://www.src.ac.uk) and/or by contacting the Equality Manager (contact details as set out at 2.6 above)

4.25 In addition to the above, screening forms (electronic link or hard copy on request if more suitable for recipients) which include all policies screened over a three month period will

be available to those consultees who wish to receive a copy on a quarterly basis.

### **Our arrangements for monitoring any adverse impact of policies we have adopted on equality of opportunity**

(Schedule 9 4. (2) (c))

4.26 Monitoring can assist us to deliver better public services and continuous improvements. Monitoring Section 75 information involves the processing of sensitive personal data (data relating to the racial or ethnic origin of individuals, sexual orientation, political opinion, religious belief, etc). In order to carry out monitoring in a confidential and effective manner, the College follows guidance from the Office of the Information Commissioner and takes cognisance of the Equality Commission's monitoring guidance.

4.27 We are committed to monitoring policies with identified adverse impacts and to identifying opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations in line with Equality Commission guidance.

4.28 The systems we have established to monitor the impact of policies and identify opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations are:

- The collection, collation and analysis of existing relevant primary quantitative and qualitative data across all nine equality categories (where possible) on an ongoing basis;
- The collection, collation and analysis of existing relevant secondary sources of quantitative and qualitative data across all nine equality categories on an ongoing basis;
- An audit of existing information systems within one year of approval of this equality scheme to identify the extent of current monitoring and take action to address any gaps in order to have the necessary information on which to base decisions; and
- Undertaking or commissioning new data if necessary.

4.29 If over a two year period monitoring and evaluation show that a policy results in greater adverse impact than predicted, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, we will ensure that the policy is

revised to achieve better outcomes for relevant equality groups.

4.30 We review our EQIA monitoring information on an annual basis, together with other monitoring information.

**Our arrangements for publishing the results of our monitoring**  
(Schedule 9 4. (2) (d))

4.31 Schedule 9 4. (2) (d) requires us to publish the results of the monitoring of adverse impacts of policies we have adopted. However, we are committed to monitoring more broadly and the results of our policy monitoring are published.

4.32 EQIA monitoring information is published as part of our Section 75 annual progress report [see 2.10]

4.33 All monitoring information published is accessible and can be made available in alternative formats on request from the Equality Manager (contact details are set out at 2.6 above). Please see below at 6.3 for details.

## **Chapter 5 Staff training**

### **(Schedule 9 4. (2) (e))**

#### **Commitment to staff training**

5.1 The College recognises that awareness raising and training play a crucial role in the effective implementation of our Section 75 duties.

5.2 The Governing Body and Chief Executive wish to positively communicate the College commitment to the Section 75 statutory duties, both internally and externally.

To this end we have an effective communication and training programme for all staff and will ensure that our commitment to the Section 75 statutory duties is made clear in all relevant publications.

#### **Training objectives**

5.3 The College will provide training for its staff which will aim to achieve the following objectives:

- Raise awareness of the provisions of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, our equality scheme commitments and the particular issues likely to affect people across the range of Section 75 categories, to ensure that our staff fully understand their role in implementing the scheme;
- Provide those staff involved in the assessment of policies (screening and EQIA) with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively;
- Provide those staff who deal with complaints in relation to compliance with our equality scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to investigate and monitor complaints effectively;
- Provide those staff involved in consultation processes with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively; and
- Provide those staff involved in the implementation and monitoring of the effective implementation of the College

equality scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively.

## **Awareness raising and training arrangements**

5.4 The following arrangements are in place to ensure all our staff and Governing Body are aware of and understand our equality obligations.

- We will provide access to copies of the full equality scheme for all staff and will ensure that any queries or questions of clarification from staff are addressed effectively.
- Section 75 statutory duties form part of induction training for new staff.
- Focused training is provided for key staff within the College who are directly engaged in taking forward the implementation of our equality scheme commitments (for example those involved in research and data collection, policy development, service design, conducting equality impact assessments, consultation, monitoring and evaluation).
- Where appropriate, training will be provided to ensure staff are aware of the issues experienced by the range of Section 75 groups.
- When appropriate and on an ongoing basis, arrangements will be made to ensure staff are kept up to date with Section 75 developments.

5.5 Training and awareness raising programmes will, where relevant, be developed in association with the appropriate Section 75 groups and relevant staff groups.

5.6 In order to share resources and expertise, the College will, where possible, work closely with other bodies and agencies in the development and delivery of training.

## **Monitoring and evaluation**

5.7 Our training programme is subject to the following monitoring and evaluation arrangements:

- We evaluate the extent to which all participants in this training programme have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve each of the above objectives.
- The extent to which training objectives have been met will be reported on as part of the Section 75 annual progress report, which will be sent to the Equality Commission.

## **Chapter 6 Our arrangements for ensuring and assessing public access to information and services we provide**

### **(Schedule 9 4. (2) (f))**

- 6.1 The College is committed to ensuring that the information we disseminate and the services we provide, are fully accessible to all parts of the community in Northern Ireland. We will keep our arrangements under review to ensure that this remains the case.
- 6.2 We are aware that some groups will not have the same access to information as others.

In particular:

- People with sensory, learning, communication and mobility disabilities may require printed information in other formats.
- Members of ethnic minority groups, whose first language is not English, may have difficulties with information provided only in English.
- Children and young people may not be able to fully access or understand information.

### **Access to information**

- 6.3 To ensure equality of opportunity in accessing information, we provide information in alternative formats on request, where reasonably practicable. Where the exact request cannot be met we will ensure a reasonable alternative is provided.
- 6.4 Alternative formats may include Easy Read, Braille, audio formats (CD, mp3 or DAISY), large print or minority languages to meet the needs of those for whom English is not their first language.

- 6.5 The College liaises with representatives of young people, disability and minority ethnic organisations and takes account of existing and developing good practice.
- 6.6 The College will respond to requests for information in alternative formats in a timely manner, usually within ten working days.
- 6.7 The College will take cognisance of the needs of children and young people, people with learning disabilities and minority ethnic communities when providing information.
- 6.8 In disseminating information publicly the College will seek to advertise in the press where appropriate.
- 6.9 The College will seek to ensure that our website is accessible and provides information in an accessible format.

### **Access to services**

- 6.10 The College is committed to promoting equality for all those who use our services and will do our utmost to make our services as accessible as possible to all service users across the Section 75 categories.
- 6.11 The College also adheres to the relevant provisions of current anti-discrimination legislation.
- 6.12 The College has in place a Learning Support Team who will assess students with a disability who require reasonable adjustments to access further and higher education.

### **Assessing public access to information and services**

- 6.13 The College has monitoring arrangements in place across all its functions to monitor service delivery, in relation to access to information and services, to ensure equality of opportunity and good relations are promoted.

## **Chapter 7 Timetable for measures we propose in this equality scheme**

### **(Schedule 9 4. (3) (b))**

- 7.1 Appendix 4 outlines our timetable for all measures proposed within this equality scheme. The measures outlined in this timetable will be incorporated into our business planning cycle.
- 7.2 This timetable is different from and in addition to our commitment to developing action plans/action measures to specifically address inequalities and further promote equality of opportunity and good relations. We have included in our equality scheme a commitment to develop an Equality Improvement Plan. Accordingly, this commitment is listed in the timetable of measures at Appendix 4. For information on these action measures please see above at 2.14 – 2.18.

## **Chapter 8 Our complaints procedure**

### **(Schedule 9 10.)**

- 8.1 The College is responsive to the views of members of the public and will endeavour to resolve all complaints made to us.
- 8.2 Schedule 9 paragraph 10 of the Act refers to complaints. A person can make a complaint to a public authority if the complainant believes they may have been directly affected by an alleged failure of the College to comply with its approved equality scheme.
- 8.3 If the complaint has not been resolved within a reasonable timescale, the complaint can be brought to the Equality Commission.
- 8.4 A person wishing to make a complaint that the College has failed to comply with its approved equality scheme should contact:

Helen O'Connor  
Southern Regional College  
Newry West Campus  
Patrick Street  
Newry  
BT35 8DN

Tel: 0300 123 1223  
Email [ede@src.ac.uk](mailto:ede@src.ac.uk)

- 8.5 We will in the first instance acknowledge receipt of each complaint within ten working days of receipt.
- 8.6 The Equality Manager will carry out an internal investigation of the complaint and will respond substantively to the complainant within one month of the date of receiving the letter of complaint. Under certain circumstances, if the complexity of the matter requires a longer period, the period for response to the complainant may be extended to two months. In those circumstances, the complainant will be advised of the extended period within one month of making the complaint.
- 8.7 During this process the complainant will be kept fully informed of the progress of the investigation into the complaint and of any outcomes.
- 8.8 If dissatisfied with the outcome an appeal can be made to the Chief Executive of the College who will review the complaint or nominate a senior manager to review the complaint.
- 8.9 In any subsequent investigation by the Equality Commission the College will co-operate, providing access in a timely manner to any relevant documentation that the Equality Commission may require.
- 8.10 Similarly, the College will co-operate with any investigation by the Equality Commission under sub-paragraph 11 (1) (b) of Schedule 9 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

8.11 The College will make all efforts to implement promptly and in full any recommendations arising out of any Commission investigation.

## Chapter 9 Publication of our equality scheme

### (Schedule 9 4. (3) (c))

9.1 The College equality scheme is available free of charge in print form and alternative formats from:

Equality Manager  
Southern Regional College  
Newry West Campus  
Patrick Street  
Newry  
BT35 8DN

Tel: 0300 123 1223  
Email [ede@src.ac.uk](mailto:ede@src.ac.uk)

9.2 Our equality scheme is also available on our website at:  
[www.src.ac.uk](http://www.src.ac.uk)

9.3 The following arrangements are in place for the publication in a timely manner of our equality scheme to ensure equality of access:

- We will make every effort to communicate widely the existence of our equality scheme to all groups. This may include a press release, advertisement in the press, through, internet, publications, posters, induction materials, prospectus and information leaflets.
- We will e-mail a link to our approved equality scheme to our consultees on our consultation lists. Other consultees without e-mail will be notified by letter that the scheme is available on request. We will respond to requests for the equality scheme in alternative formats in a timely manner, usually within ten working days.
- Our equality scheme is available on request in alternative formats such as Easy Read, Braille, large print, audio formats (CD, mp3, DAISY) and in minority languages to meet the needs of those not fluent in English.

9.4 For a list of consultees please see Appendix 3 of the equality scheme which is available on our website [www.src.ac.uk](http://www.src.ac.uk) .

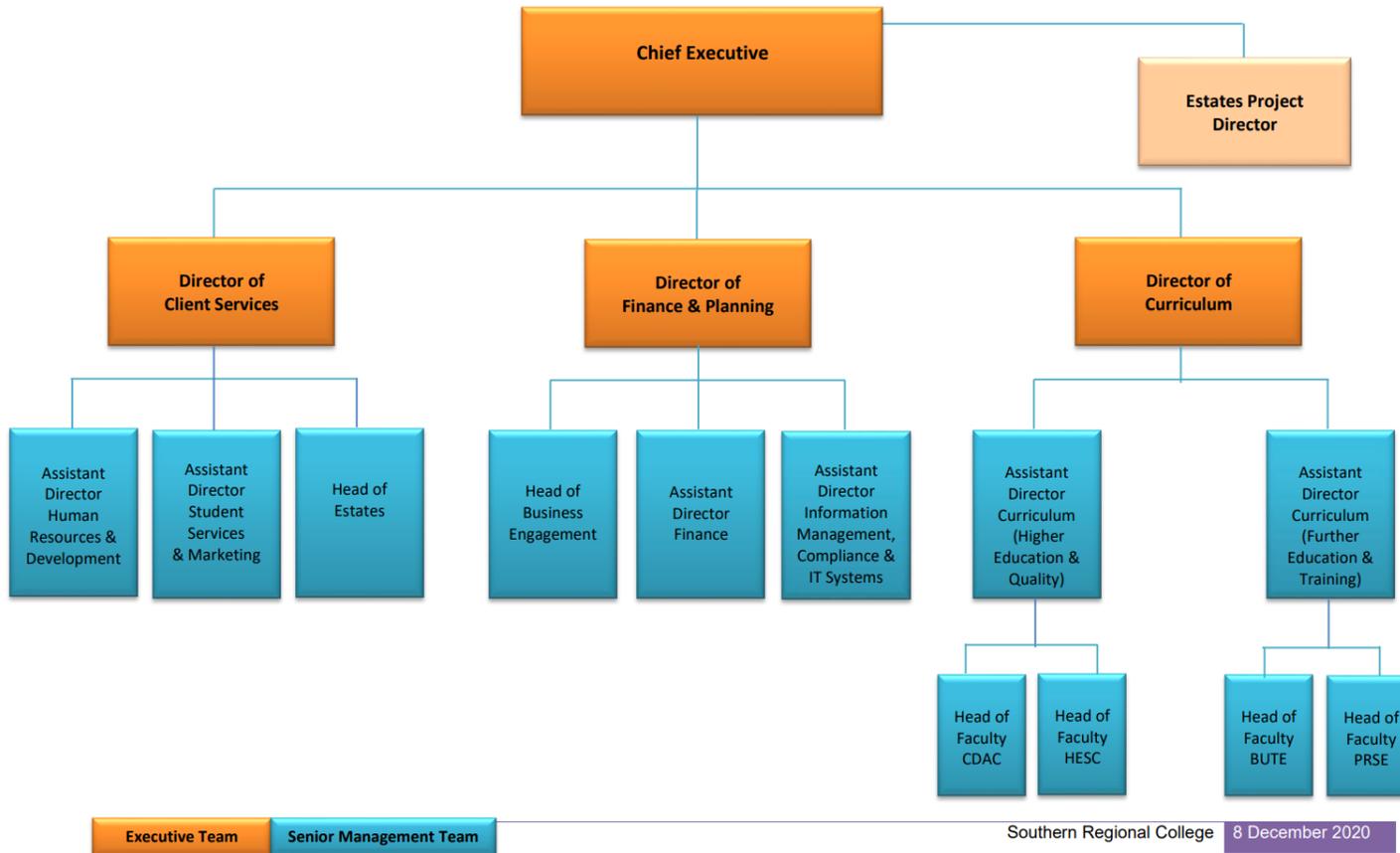
## **Chapter 10    Review of our equality scheme**

### **(Schedule 9 8. (3))**

- 10.1 As required by Schedule 9 paragraph 8 (3) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 the College will conduct a thorough review of this equality scheme. This review will take place either within five years of submission of this equality scheme to the Equality Commission or within a shorter timescale to allow alignment with the review of other planning cycles.
- 10.2 The review will evaluate the effectiveness of our scheme in relation to the implementation of the Section 75 statutory duties relevant to our functions in Northern Ireland.
- 10.3 In undertaking this review we will take cognisance of the guidance issued by the Equality Commission. A report of this review will be made public and sent to the Equality Commission

# Appendix 1 Organisation Chart

## Executive and Senior Management Team



## Appendix 2 Example groups relevant to the Section 75 categories for Northern Ireland purposes remains as is

***Please note, this list is for illustration purposes only, it is not exhaustive.***

Category	Example groups
Religious belief	<p>Buddhist; Catholic; Hindu; Jewish; Muslims, people of no religious belief; Protestants; Sikh; other faiths.</p> <p>For the purposes of Section 75, the term “religious belief” is the same definition as that used in the <i>Fair Employment &amp; Treatment (NI) Order</i><sup>6</sup>. Therefore, “religious belief” also includes any <i>perceived</i> religious belief (or perceived lack of belief) and, in employment situations only, it also covers any “<i>similar philosophical belief</i>”.</p>
Political opinion <sup>7</sup>	Nationalist generally; Unionists generally; members/supporters of other political parties.
Racial group	Black people; Chinese; Indians; Pakistanis; people of mixed ethnic background; Polish; Roma; Travellers; White people.
Men and women generally	Men (including boys); Trans-gendered people; Transsexual people; women (including girls).
Marital status	Civil partners or people in civil partnerships; divorced people; married people; separated people; single people; widowed people.
Age	Children and young people; older people.
Persons with a disability	Persons with disabilities as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
Persons with dependants	Persons with personal responsibility for the care of a child; for the care of a person with a disability; or the care of a dependant older person.
Sexual orientation	Bisexual people; heterosexual people; gay or lesbian people.

<sup>6</sup> See Section 98 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, which states: “*In this Act...“political opinion” and “religious belief” shall be construed in accordance with Article 2(3) and (4) of the Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order 1998.*”

<sup>7</sup> *ibid*

## **Appendix 3 List of consultees reviewed in 2022**

(Schedule 9 4. (2) (a))

### Age (older and younger people)

Age NI

Barnardo's Newry Family Resource Centre

Extra Care for Elderly People

Include Youth Give and Take Scheme (Armagh)

Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children & Young People

Youth Link NI

### Dependants

#### Carers NI

Family Support NI

Home Start

Newry and Mourne Carers Centre

Parenting NI

### Disability

Action on Hearing Loss

Action Mental Health

Autism NI

Disability Action

Diversiton

Guidedogs for the Blind

MENCAP

National Deaf Children's society

NI Dyslexia Society

Inspire

Praxis Mental Health (Newry)

Royal National Institute for the Blind

The Cedar Foundation Newry

### Education

Council for Catholic Maintained Schools

Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment

Education Authority

Libraries NI

Ofqual (NI)

Queens University Belfast

Stranmillis University College

Ulster University

Belfast Metropolitan College

Northern Regional College

North West Regional College

South Eastern Regional College

South West College

### Equality

Committee on the Administration of Justice  
Equality Coalition  
Equality Commission for NI  
Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission

### Gender

Chrysalis Women's Centre  
Northern Ireland Rural Women's Network  
Women's Resource & Development Agency  
Women's Aid  
SAIL NI  
Transgender NI

### Good relations

Co-Operation Ireland  
Labour Relations Agency  
Northern Ireland Community Relations Council  
NI Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA)

### Political

Alliance Party  
Democratic Unionist Party  
Social Democratic and Labour Party  
Sinn Fein  
Ulster Unionist Party  
Green Party in Northern Ireland  
Traditional Unionist Voice  
People Before Profit

### Public Authorities

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council  
Department for the Economy  
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council  
Police Service for Northern Ireland  
Probation Board for Northern Ireland  
Southern Health and Social Care Trust

### Race

African & Caribbean Support Organisation NI  
An Munia Tober  
Chinese Welfare Association

Craigavon Traveller Support Committee  
Indian Community Centre  
NI Community of Refugees & Asylum Seekers Northern Ireland  
Council

Northern Ireland Muslim Family Association

Religious belief

Northern Ireland Interfaith Forum

Sexual orientation

Cara-Friend

The Rainbow Project

Gay & Lesbian Youth Northern Ireland

Unions

National Associations of Schoolmasters Union of Women

Teachers (NASUWT)

National Union of Students

Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance

Unison

University and College Union

## Appendix 4 Timetable for measures proposed within Equality Scheme

### Year 1

Equality Scheme Ref	Action	Responsible Person
Foreword and 1.3	Commit the necessary resources in terms of people, time and money to comply with Section 75 statutory duties and implement equality scheme.	Chief Executive
2.5	Review internal arrangements for ensuring effective compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties and for monitoring and reviewing progress.	Chief Executive
5.4	Provide access to copies of the full equality scheme for all staff.	Equality Manager
5.4	Develop and deliver a programme of communication and training for staff and board members on s75 obligations and equality scheme commitments.	Equality Manager
2.7	Integrate objectives and targets relating to the statutory duties into strategic and operational business plans.	Senior Management Team
2.8	Employee job descriptions continue to reflect their contribution and commitment to the discharge of the Section 75 statutory duties and implementation of the equality scheme.	Assistant Director Human Resources and Development (ADHRD)
2.9	Ensure SER process facilitates the reporting of examples to meet equality statutory obligation.	Head of Quality
2.11 2.12	Draft and submit the annual report on progress to the Equality Commission by 31 August each year and post report on website	Equality Manager
2.14	Reference Equality in our Corporate	Senior Management

	Plan	Team
2.15	Review Action Plan annually	ADHRD and Equality Manager
2.17	Establish process to monitor action measures and monitor progress.	ADHRD and Equality Manager
3.1	Consult on action plan, EQIAs and Equality Schemes.	Equality Manager
3.2	Take into consideration Equality Scheme commitments and EOC guidance for future consultations.	Equality Manager
3.4	Review consultation lists annually	Equality Manager
4.23	Publish screening results as per commitments	Equality Manager
4.28	Monitor policies with an adverse impact	Senior Management Team
4.29	Identify the monitoring information required by the College's and sector and how this will be considered by management.	Senior Management Team and Equality Manager
4.32	Establish process for publishing monitoring results.	Equality Manager
4.7	Introduce new screening process and screening questions	Equality Manager
5.3	Take forward training objectives as stated in Equality Scheme.	Equality Manager
5.4	Provide a summary scheme and make available to staff and students.	Equality Manager
5.7	Establish process for monitoring the effectiveness of equality training.	Equality Manager
6.1	Review the accessibility of the information provided by the College	Equality Manager
6.3	Monitor/review process for the provision of information in accessible formats	Equality Manager
6.5	Ensure that the website and any information posted on it is accessible	Assistant Director Student Services and Marketing
6.8	Establish process for monitoring in relation to the access of information and services.	Senior Management Team
8.	Communicate complaints process and ensure process is accessible	Equality Manager

9.	Publish the Equality Scheme and action plan in keeping with Scheme commitments	Equality Manager
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## **Appendix 5 Glossary of terms**

### **Action plan**

A plan which sets out actions a public authority will take to implement its Section 75 statutory duties. It is a mechanism for the realisation of measures to achieve equality outcomes for the Section 75 equality and good relations categories.

### **Action measures and outcomes**

Specific measures to promote equality and good relations for the relevant Section 75 and good relations categories, linked to achievable outcomes, which should be realistic and timely.

### **Adverse impact**

Where a Section 75 category has been affected differently by a policy and the effect is less favourable, it is known as adverse impact. If a policy has an adverse impact on a Section 75 category, a public authority must consider whether or not the adverse impact is unlawfully discriminatory. In either case a public authority must take measures to redress the adverse impact, by considering mitigating measures and/or alternative ways of delivering the policy.

### **Affirmative action**

In general terms, affirmative action can be defined as being anything consistent with the legislation which is necessary to bring about positive change. It is a phrase used in the Fair Employment and Treatment Order (NI) 1998 to describe lawful action that is aimed at promoting equality of opportunity and fair participation in employment between members of the Protestant and Roman Catholic communities in Northern Ireland.

### **Consultation**

In the context of Section 75, consultation is the process of asking those affected by a policy (i.e. service users, staff, the general public) for their views on how the policy could be implemented more effectively to promote equality of opportunity across the nine categories. Different circumstances will call for different types of consultation. Consultations could, for example, include meetings, focus groups, surveys and questionnaires.

## **Discrimination**

The anti-discrimination laws prohibit the following forms of discrimination:

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Disability discrimination
- Victimisation
- Harassment

Brief descriptions of these above terms follow:

### **Direct discrimination**

This generally occurs where a public authority treats a person less favourably than it treats (or, would treat) another person, in the same or similar circumstances, on one or more of the statutory non-discrimination grounds. A decision or action that is directly discriminatory will normally be unlawful unless: (a) in an age discrimination case, the decision can be objectively justified, or (b) in any other case, the public authority can rely on a statutory exception that permits it – such as a *genuine occupational requirement exception*; or, a *positive action exception* which permits an employer to use “welcoming statements” or to take other lawful positive action to encourage participation by under-represented or otherwise disadvantaged groups.

### **Indirect discrimination**

The definition of this term varies across some of the anti-discrimination laws, but indirect discrimination generally occurs where a public authority applies to all persons a particular provision, criterion or practice, but which is one that has the effect of placing people who share a particular equality characteristic (e.g. the same sex, or religious belief, or race) at a particular disadvantage compared to other people. A provision, criterion or practice that is indirectly discriminatory will normally be unlawful unless (a) it can be objectively justified, or (b) the public authority can rely on a statutory exception that permits it.

### **Disability discrimination**

In addition to direct discrimination and victimisation and harassment, discrimination against disabled people may also occur in two other ways: namely, (a) *disability-related discrimination*, and (b) *failure to comply with a duty to make reasonable adjustments*.

(a) *Disability-related discrimination* generally occurs where a public authority, without lawful justification, and for a reason which relates to a disabled person's disability, treats that person less favourably than it treats (or, would treat) other people to whom that reason does not (or, would not) apply.

(b) *Failure to comply with a duty to make reasonable adjustments*: One of the most notable features of the disability discrimination legislation is that in prescribed circumstances it imposes a duty on employers, service providers and public authorities to take such steps as are reasonable to remove or reduce particular disadvantages experienced by disabled people in those circumstances.

### **Victimisation**

This form of discrimination generally occurs where a public authority treats a person less favourably than it treats (or, would treat) another person, in the same or similar circumstances, because the person has previously exercised their rights under the anti-discrimination laws, or has assisted another person to do so. Victimisation cannot be justified and is always unlawful.

### **Harassment**

Harassment generally occurs where a person is subjected to unwanted conduct that is related to a non-discrimination ground with the purpose, or which has the effect, of violating their dignity or of creating for them an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Harassment cannot be justified and is always unlawful.

### **Equality impact assessment**

The mechanism underpinning Section 75, where existing and proposed policies are assessed in order to determine whether they have an adverse impact on equality of opportunity for the relevant Section 75 categories. Equality impact assessments require the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data.

### **Equality of opportunity**

The prevention, elimination or regulation of discrimination between people on grounds of characteristics including sex, marital status, age, disability, religious belief, political opinion, dependants, race and sexual orientation. The promotion of equality of opportunity entails more than the elimination of discrimination. It requires

proactive measures to be taken to secure equality of opportunity between the categories identified under Section 75.

### **Equality scheme**

A document which outlines a public authority's arrangements for complying with its Section 75 obligations. An equality scheme must include an outline of the public authority's arrangements for carrying out consultations, screening, equality impact assessments, monitoring, training and arrangements for ensuring access to information and services.

### **Good relations**

Although not defined in the legislation, the Commission has agreed the following working definition of good relations:

'the growth of relations and structures for Northern Ireland that acknowledge the religious, political and racial context of this society, and that seek to promote respect, equity and trust, and embrace diversity in all its forms'.

### **Mainstreaming equality**

The integration of equal opportunities principles, strategies and practices into the every day work of public authorities from the outset. In other words, mainstreaming is the process of ensuring that equality considerations are built into the policy development process from the beginning, rather than being bolted on at the end. Mainstreaming can help improve methods of working by increasing a public authority's accountability, responsiveness to need and relations with the public. It can bring added value at many levels.

### **Mitigation of adverse impact**

Where an equality impact assessment reveals that a particular policy has an adverse impact on equality of opportunity, a public authority must consider ways of delivering the policy outcomes which have a less adverse effect on the relevant Section 75 categories; this is known as mitigating adverse impact.

### **Monitoring**

Monitoring consists of continuously scrutinising and evaluating a policy to assess its impact on the Section 75 categories. Monitoring must be sensitive to the issues associated with human rights and privacy. Public authorities should seek advice from consultees and Section 75 representative groups when setting up monitoring systems. Monitoring consists of the collection of

relevant information and evaluation of policies. It is not solely about the collection of data, it can also take the form of regular meetings and reporting of research undertaken. Monitoring is not an end in itself but provides the data for the next cycle of policy screening.

### **Northern Ireland Act**

The Northern Ireland Act, implementing the Good Friday Agreement, received Royal Assent on 19 November 1998. Section 75 of the Act created the statutory equality duties.

### **Policy**

The formal and informal decisions a public authority makes in relation to carrying out its duties. Defined in the New Oxford English Dictionary as 'a course or principle of action adopted or proposed by a government party, business or individual'. In the context of Section 75, the term **policies** covers all the ways in which a public authority carries out or proposes to carry out its functions relating to Northern Ireland. Policies include unwritten as well as written policies.

### **Qualitative data**

Qualitative data refers to the experiences of individuals from their perspective, most often with less emphasis on numbers or statistical analysis. Consultations are more likely to yield qualitative than quantitative data.

### **Quantitative data**

Quantitative data refers to numbers, typically derived from either a population in general or samples of that population. This information is often analysed by either using descriptive statistics, which consider general profiles, distributions and trends in the data, or inferential statistics, which are used to determine 'significance' either in relationships or differences in the data.

### **Screening**

The procedure for identifying which policies will be subject to equality impact assessment, and how these equality impact assessments will be prioritised. The purpose of screening is to identify the policies which are likely to have a minor/major impact on equality of opportunity so that greatest resources can be devoted to improving these policies. Screening requires a systematic review of existing and proposed policies.

## **Schedule 9**

Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 sets out detailed provisions for the enforcement of the Section 75 statutory duties, including an outline of what should be included in an equality scheme.

## **Section 75**

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act provides that each public authority is required, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:-

- Persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status and sexual orientation;
- Men and women generally;
- Persons with a disability and persons without; and
- Persons with dependants and persons without.

Without prejudice to these obligations, each public authority in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland must also have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

## **Section 75 investigation**

An investigation carried out by the Equality Commission, under Schedule 9 of the NI Act 1998, arising from the failure of a public authority to comply with the commitments set out in its approved equality scheme. There are two types of Commission investigation, these are as follows:

1. An investigation of a complaint by an individual who claims to have been directly affected by the failure of a public authority to comply with its approved equality scheme;
2. An investigation initiated by the Commission, where it believes that a public authority may have failed to comply with its approved equality scheme.

## Appendix 6            Equality Improvement Plan

The College has drawn up this Equality Improvement Plan which identifies a range of actions and measures which will enable the College to address inequalities identified through internal and external research. The College will monitor progress on the delivery of this Equality Improvement Plan in conjunction with our Equality Scheme.

Action	Timescale	Responsible person/ Department	Outcome/Measure	Equality Category
Monitor, review & utilise annual workforce & student data to inform policy development and marketing.	June	Director of Client Services Director of Curriculum HRD Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved equality data used for screening college policies and decisions made by the College</li> <li>Improved equality data to inform marketing objectives and to target under-represented communities</li> </ul>	All
Further, embed equality and diversity into the College & Curriculum through awareness raising & promotion.	Ongoing	Director of Client Services Director of Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased awareness of equality and diversity for all equality areas</li> <li>Positive evaluation feedback from all student surveys</li> </ul>	All

Recruit a diverse student population	Ongoing	Director of Client Services Director of Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measure participation in programmes</li> </ul>	All
Further, develop student support mechanisms to reduce barriers to education and learning.	Ongoing	Director of Client Services Director of Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in student numbers from under-represented communities</li> </ul>	All
Monitor, review and update of Disability Action Plan	Annually	Director of Client Services Director of Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in student and staff members with disabilities</li> <li>• Awareness of disability across the College and support available</li> </ul>	Disability
Provide a range of Equality & Diversity training to all staff & students.	Ongoing	Director of Client Services Director of Curriculum HRD Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in awareness of equality and diversity through measuring participation in programmes</li> </ul>	All
Grow and enhance relations with local community groups	Annually	Director of Client Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased participation by community groups to inform college decisions</li> <li>• Identification of new initiatives undertaken by the College to promote equality</li> </ul>	All

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in numbers attending community education courses</li> <li>• Increase in community education provision</li> </ul>	
Monitor, evaluate and review the Equality Improvement Plan	April each year to inform annual Progress Report	Director of Client Services Equality Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of actions identified and reported in Annual Progress Report to the Equality Commission</li> </ul>	All