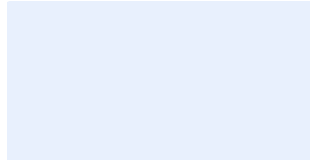


**Insert Name of Public Authority and add Logo in Picture Box**

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**Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties**

**Annual Progress Report**

**Contact details:**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and Equality Scheme</li></ul>	Name: Siobhan Gorman Telephone: 02882250109 ext 3692 Email: siobhan.gorman@swc.ac.uk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Action Plan</li></ul>	As above <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Name: Click or tap here to enter text. Telephone: Click or tap here to enter text. Email: Click or tap here to enter text.
Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:	
<b>Signature:</b>	Siobhan Gorman – HR and Equality Officer

**This report has been prepared using a template circulated by the Equality Commission.**

**It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and good relations duties, and implementing Equality Scheme commitments and Disability Action Plans.**

**This report reflects progress made between April 2023 and March 2024**

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

- 1 In 2023-24, please provide **examples** of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved.

*Please relate these to the implementation of your statutory equality and good relations duties and Equality Scheme where appropriate.*

The College's Governing Body, Chief Executive and Senior Management have and continue to demonstrate excellent leadership and commitment to Equality and inclusion through their actions and behaviours to ensure we as a College are committed to the effective fulfilment of Section 75 Duties and to the promotion of Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations.

**NI Colleges Equality Forum**

Renewal of the AccessAble Direct Award Contract is currently underway at a Sector level. We are planning to work with the sector Learning & Development forum this year on college modules on:

- Menopause
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training for all staff and students - delivered in conjunction with Disability Working Groups supported by Student Services and our Equality & HR Officer. Topics covered 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusive language & raising Awareness on Equality.
- Autism

**Policies Screened and Updated:**

- Higher Education Submission of Coursework Policy
- Higher Education Internal Moderation Policy
- Higher Education Admissions, Admission Appeals and RPL Policy
- Higher Education Assessment Appeals Policy
- Higher Education Tutorial Policy
- Centre Assessment Policy

## PART A

- Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Policy
- Fees and Charges Policy
- Management of Work Base Learning in Higher Education Policy
- Plagiarism Policy
- Accuracy & Completeness of Published Information Policy
- Feedback Assessment Policy
- Higher Education Assessment Policy
- Energy Management Policy
- Asset Management Policy
- Fixed Term Contract Policy
- Penetration Testing and Vulnerability Management Policy
- Access NI Policy
- Voluntary Severance Scheme
- Examinations Malpractice Policy
- Examinations Word Processing Policy
- Examinations Conflict of Interest Policy
- Employee Standards and Ethical Practice

### **(23)**

#### **Recruitment and Selection Training**

All College Managers, HR staff and members of the Governing Body have been provided with Recruitment and Selection training, delivered by Heads Together Consulting. The training provided a detailed and practical workshop on the College's recruitment and selection process, as outlined the Recruitment and Selection Guide, supporting full compliance with all statutory obligations including the provision of reasonable adjustments.

#### **Good For Me Good For FE**

The Good for ME Good for FE is a national campaign driving a sustainable programme of community action across the UK.

Like so many other Colleges we have come together to support this initiative, encouraging our staff and students to get involved in a wide range of volunteering and fundraising activities.

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As a result of being part of this campaign we as a college have had a positive impact on the lives of so many people within our local communities – and by working together, collectively as a college and sector, we are aiming to create an impact on people's lives, our communities, raising knowledge and awareness whilst bring everyone together to support others including charity groups.

The NI colleges have established a 'Good For Me Good For FE Working Group' to support the national campaign which is encouraging involvement in a wide range of volunteering and fundraising activities but also to recognise it. We tend to meet quarterly to share our, fundraising and activities completed to date and any ideas for potential volunteering and fundraising activities we could consider.

The Curriculum Departments, Student Services and Social Inclusion Projects are currently supporting and feeding in the initiatives and information for the Good For Me Good For FE activities with everyone engaging well with each other, supporting fundraising and volunteering activities, proposing and promoting ideas and how we can support.

**The Social and Wellbeing group at SWC** is another group within the College that supports, proposes and promotes activities and social engagements for staff.

- C25K,
- Beat the Blues Monday,
- Pancake Tuesday,
- St Patrick's Day Treats,
- Easter Event,
- Knockmany Walk,
- Rugby Trip,
- Pilates Classes,
- FUNdamentals of Eating Well Workshop,
- Table-tennis Competition,
- Summer Social End of Year Event
- Step Challenge / walking groups
- Pension Information Sessions
- Carol Singing

## PART A

- Christmas Quiz
- International Women's Day
- Soccer Challenge
- Going purple for Action Mental Health Day

### **Staff training and Engagement**

Youthscape organised staff training opportunity, which was available to all staff through the following activities:

- Good Relations Training: Bi-annual sessions by Tides Training to foster positive interactions.
- Disability Awareness Training: By the Cedar Foundation to support participants with disabilities.
- Reflective Practice Sessions: Quarterly meetings for continuous improvement in diversity and inclusion.
- Trauma Summit Online event was rolled out to all staff workshops included:
  - Prepared for peace, ready for war – how trauma affects communities
  - Trauma Biology
  - Inner-compassion and purpose
  - Patters of the past – the human givens approach to working successfully with trauma
  - Exploring healing opportunities
  - delivered in conjunction with Disability Working Groups supported by Student Services and our Equality & HR Officer. Topic covered 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusive language'

In addition, Youthscape Plus raised awareness and promoted equality and inclusion through:

- Cultural Host Days: Events that recongised and encouraged cross-cultural interactions.
- Good Relations Week: Activities led by Tides Training to celebrate diversity.

## PART A

### **GOING PURPLE FOR ACCTION MENTAL HEALTH WEDNESDAY 11th October 2023**

To mark the 2023 campaign, each campus took part in a 'Let's go Purple, Walk and Talk' along a chosen walking route, leaving from the college reception.

With a bucket collection available throughout the day to raise funds for our friends at Action Mental Health MensSana team who carry out their 'Provoking Thought' Workshops with students throughout the year.

### **International Women's Day**

On Friday 8 March 2024, we celebrated women and all things female on International Women's Day. The theme this year was 'Inspire Inclusion'.

To mark the occasion, we designed a virtual Teams Background for staff to use on the build up to and during International Women's Week. The College organised a range of events and activities for all staff to enjoy and participate in. These included:

- Cardio Fitness Class
- Lunch time walk & Talk
- Breath Work & Movement by Orba Health
- Highlighted and raised aware of 'Inspire Therapeutic and Wellbeing Services'
- 5 Steps to wellbeing

Principle, Celine McCartan, inspired at a dynamic Leadership event. Celine joined business leaders from across the province to celebrate women in leadership. The event, hosted by The NI Chamber of Commerce and Encirc, took place on Tuesday 12 September, at the Lough Erne Resort, Enniskillen.



Celine was invited to speak at the high-profile event which aimed to celebrate the achievements of women leaders while addressing the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Celine delivered a very personal keynote address focusing on her leadership journey, which resonated well with the audience.

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In her speech, Celine shared her personal journey with insights and experiences in the field of education and leadership and discussed the importance of values. She emphasized the critical role that women play in leadership positions and the importance of creating a supportive environment for their growth and development.

She also spoke about the importance of the College's recently launched All Age Apprenticeships and Skill Up programs, aimed at providing more opportunities for women in employment to upskill and develop their careers by qualifying in an area they may already have been working in.

She also outlined the College's wide range of business support, training, and funding opportunities that are available for local companies to avail of to upskill staff including Innovate Us and Skills Focus. All are funded by the Department for the Economy Flexible Skills Fund and delivered through the Colleges Innotech team.

In closing, Celine expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to participate and engage with leaders and aspiring leaders from various sectors. She reiterated her commitment to empowering women in leadership roles within the college and the wider community, highlighting the range of unique programs offered by the College to support women in their return to education and career progression opportunities.

### **Student Engagement, Social Activities and Wellbeing 23/24**

#### **Student Training**

Training has been delivered to members of staff, both Academic and Business Support, to class representatives and all students, by external agencies. This includes:

**PSNI - Awareness Sessions** (Several sessions raised for Staff and Students throughout the academic year. Our aim is to help raise awareness of current situations making staff and students aware of the consequences and what to do should they find themselves in them kind of situations)

**Action Mental Health - Provoking Thought Programme** (several workshops were organised and facilitated throughout the academic year. Our aim by organising and facilitating these workshops is to raise the profile and awareness for staff and students so that they have the tools and equipment in life to navigate. Provoking

## PART A

Thought workshops are designed to explore and facilitate discussion around various issues of mental and emotional wellbeing. A Provoking Thought mental health awareness workshop include information on the following:

- Recognising the importance of looking after our mental health and emotional well-being
- Developing confidence to seek help
- Raising awareness of signs and symptoms of mental distress
- Challenging the stigmas and misconceptions about mental health
- Identifying factors that cause stress in young people
- Developing mental health literacy
- Building resilience for well-being
- Highlighting the sources of support available
- Highlighting the value of coping skills

### **Student Health and Wellbeing Workshops include:**

**Start360 Drugs and Alcohol Workshop** provided our students with information and advice on the effects of alcohol and drugs to reduce the harm caused by substance use. To reduce risk taking behaviours, to sustain positive changes in their lives and to have healthier relationships.

**Action Mental Health Mindset Workshop** is funded by the Public Health Agency and run continuously throughout the year. The Programme is delivered in all youth & community settings across all Health Trusts. The aim is to raise awareness and increase knowledge and understanding of Mental and Emotional Health and Wellbeing, raise awareness of signs and symptoms of mental ill health, promote self-help/resilience techniques and how to maintain a safe level of positive mental/emotional health and wellbeing, promote self-care and to provide information and/or resources on mental health support organisations available (locally and regionally)

**Inspire** Therapeutic and Wellbeing Services provide a range of wellbeing support services, training and interventions that help the College, Staff and Students to thrive.

### **Training Sessions Included:**



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- Mental health awareness
- Lifestyle and wellbeing
- Leadership and management
- Development and coaching
- Substance use awareness

**Counselling and Assistance Programme** is provided through the Inspire Health and wellbeing hub, ensuring each student has the right support at the right time. Inspire provides an information library on wellbeing information, self-help and learning, 5 steps to wellbeing and a video library. In addition, there is a wellbeing toolkit providing guided self-assessments, mood and sleep tracker, gratitude diary, goal setting and productivity timer. Furthermore, there is access to counselling and mental health resources including mental and emotional health, work, lifestyle and relationships.

### **Building Self-Confidence Workshop**

Building self-confidence and awareness within our students to discover their own strengths, building positive mindsets, and assertiveness, networking tips and why mentors matter.

### **Stress Management**

- Understand the basic principles of stress management.
- Recognise your stress triggers and how to manage them.
- Develop proactive responses to stressful situations.
- Use coping tips for managing stress both at home and work.
- Learn to manage stress through diet, sleep, and other lifestyle factors.

**NI CHS Vaping** Chest Heart and Stroke provided an information session to launch their anti-vaping campaign targeted towards young people.

### **Danske Bank Money Advice Workshop**

## PART A

Danske Bank, and the Consumer Council teamed up on a new digital initiative to raise awareness among students of the dangers of online gaming and gambling. Several workshops were arranged throughout the academic year to support and advise students.

- To identify risks attached to online gaming and gambling apps
- Long term impact on your mental health, wellbeing, loss of money, credit rating, addiction and scams etc

### **Promoting Positive Mental Health workshop**

The workshop focussed on How to improve your mental health and wellbeing advising the following:

- Connect with other people
- Be or get more physically active
- Learning new skills
- Gratitude and kindness
- Mindfulness

**PSNI Road Safety Road Show** was organised and facilitated to educate young and future drivers on the dangers of driving and the importance of road safety. There was a mix of theatre, video and first-hand accounts from police and emergency services to expose the dangers of driving.

**ZEST NI** delivered educational training and workshops throughout the academic year to staff and students to raise awareness on:

- Self-harm/suicide, emotional health talks to young people, parents, teachers
- Suicide and self-harm
- Alcohol and self-harm training.

In addition to formal training, awareness raising has taken place through the distribution of promotional literature, posters, flyers and plasma screen displays.

### **Winter Warmer Campaign**

Students at South West College have been enjoying free meals at campuses in Dungannon, Enniskillen and Omagh recently as part of a new initiative to help

## PART A

mitigate the continued increase in living costs that students across the region are facing.

The Winter Warmer campaign, supported by funding from the Department for the Economy, provides hot food options along with a hot drink or bottled water and is available to all college students

### **Fresher's Week**

During the Fresher's Wee events, information stands and awareness session delivered by Rebecca Browne, Accessible

### **Inspire Student Support Hub Registration/Demo Session**

#### **The Health Hub @ SWC Campus**

Delivered in partnership with the Southern Health and Social Care Trust, the Health Hub is a free, confidential service for all young people under the age of 25 and available every Wednesday.

#### **Services included:**

- Relationship advice
- STI Testing, Contraception including Emergency Hormonal Contraception (morning after pill), Pregnancy testing and onward support/advice
- Support and signposting for mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Smoking cessation, alcohol and drugs support and more

### **EPIC Programme**

The EPIC Project Based Learning Team at South west College run free Industry workshops to help businesses learn a tool to problem solve or generate ideas. This is suitable for both large and small new businesses. Teach your employees to be more innovative using our EPIC model.

The College introduced the EPIC Steps to ENTHUSE Programme – fostering Innovation and Excellence in STEM Education.

This was a collaborative initiative aimed at bringing the Project Based Learning

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Model of EPIC to post-primary school learners in the community while integrating ICT in the classroom.

The Enthuse Partnership, led by SWC in collaboration with Pulsar NI and STEM Hub NI, and funded by the Department of Economy, seeks to empower schools to address underachievement in STEM subjects, inspire excellence in the STEM curriculum, and foster enthusiasm for STEM careers and further study.

Through this programme, SWC worked in conjunction with 6 other post-primary schools and has received valuable support worth £25,000, including the provision of a STEM Learning coach, staff training, resources, teacher placement, and the involvement of STEM volunteers through the STEM Ambassador programme. Over the course of two years, this initiative offers bespoke training for staff and students, regular progress updates, and funding for supply costs and curriculum enhancement opportunities.

The programme focused on equipping schools to excel in IT education and will continue for another year. Working collaboratively with local post-primary schools, namely St Ciarans College Ballygawley, Drumglass High School Dungannon, St Patricks College Dungannon, and Aughnacloy College, SWC aims to instil core transferable skills using ICT in the classroom.

Tailored workshops were provided within this partnership aimed at enhancing students' understanding and appreciation of technology while equipping them with the necessary skills for the future job market. By fostering collaborative learning, innovation, and connectedness, the EPIC Steps to Enthuse Programme seeks to improve academic outcomes for participating students.



Sinead McGee, Head of Engineering, IT and Creative Industries claimed "The Enthuse programme has allowed us to collaborate with local schools to promote

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core skills development and encourage increased participation in STEM subjects, specifically IT related through project-based learning. We aim to empower young learners to excel academically and develop skills that will position them for success in the future. Extending our gratitude to Pulsar NI and STEM Hub NI, as well as the Department for the Economy, for their unwavering support and collaborative efforts throughout this incredible journey. Together, we are making a profound impact on education and ensuring students are prepared for future challenges."

### **Good News Story: Student Entrepreneurs' triumph at the SWC Enterprise Challenge**

There was remarkable success in the EPIC Project Based Learning (PBL) Showcase hosted at the South West College (SWC) campuses in Dungannon, Enniskillen and Omagh recently. Over twenty-five entries were submitted by students from various vocational areas within the College as part of the end-of-year programme, designed to help them gain vital employability skills, including problem-solving and communicating solutions to enhance their career prospects.

The EPIC Project Based Learning event showcased several entries from various vocational areas, providing students and curriculum staff the opportunity to present their hard work from throughout the year. Students in small teams competed in the challenge to identify an innovative solution to a specific problem, tailored towards each vocational area, which they then presented at the Colleges Dungannon Enniskillen and Omagh showcase.

The showcased student projects included a diverse range of creative designs, such as a memorial bench, various planters, a garden project, solar taps, and birdboxes, each uniquely developed by the talented students.

In the highly anticipated Campus online voting sessions, which culminated in over seven hundred votes, the Engineering students of Dungannon impressed with their remarkable Planters project, while the Joinery students of Enniskillen received recognition for their stunning Memorial Bench.

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The overall winners, due to the highest number of votes, went to the Employment, Training and Personal Development Group for their exceptional work on the Sensory Garden and Outdoor Space project.



"Employers have informed us that a qualification is not enough anymore, and students need to have much more in terms of skills and experience. In response, SWC has launched the EPIC Initiative."

The winning students were also recently crowned intercollege champions at the inaugural 2023 Sectoral Project Based Learning Awards hosted at North West Regional College. They claimed the esteemed title of "Social Impact Category" Project Winner, taking first place over all of the 6 FE Colleges.

### **Social Inclusion:**

The South West College receives €7 million funding boost for cross border good relations programmes from the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) PEACEPLUS programme. This funding will drive forward our pioneering Cross-Border Good Relations Programme, Youthscape Plus, dedicated to fostering positive relationships among young people aged 14 to 24 across Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

### **Promoting Equality and Diversity through the Youthscape Plus Programme**

Youthscape Plus is a transformative initiative for 14-24-year-olds in focusing on marginalised youth with tailored activities, neurodiverse support, and employability skills while promoting good relations. The programme engages school-leaving age youth, with provisions for 14-16-year-olds at risk of disengagement whilst ensuring support for the most vulnerable.

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Funded by PEACEPLUS and managed by the Special EU Programme Board (SEUPB), it embodies equality and diversity, ensuring every participant has the opportunity to thrive.

### THE YOUTHSCAPE+ PROJECT



The programme fosters an inclusive environment celebrating diversity. It breaks cycles of deprivation with personalized plans with dedicated Key Youth Workers (KYW), incorporating Good Relations, Citizenship, Personal Development, Employability, and Positive Progression. This ensures participants from different religious, cultural, and political backgrounds can learn and grow together.

### Social Inclusion

The College secured significant funding from several different sources which has funded the College's Social Inclusion programs. The College in conjunction with each of the Social Inclusion projects continues to deliver on its key objectives through a wide range of programs with great success stories for both the participant and staff on the projects and also the College.

Whilst this provision is a key component of the college offer, funding is not included in the core DfE grant allocation, rather the college sources this funding via applications to external funders. Over the past 13 years, the college has consistently secured funding from The European Social Fund (ESF).

South West College continues to proactively engage on funding opportunities as they arise, to date the following options are under development:

- FODC and Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnerships. The College has successfully tendered for a package of 18 sectoral employability academies, the package includes 2 full time mentors to support participants.
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund – SWC Led a consortium including Fermanagh District Council, Fermanagh Rural Community Initiative, South Tyrone

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Empowerment Programme and First Step Women's Centre to apply to the UKSPF in January 2023.

- South West College as lead the partner along with – Donegal Youth, TIDES Training and Mayo Sligo Leitrim Education and Training Board is developing a submission of a tender to Peace Plus for a new Youthscape programme building on the success of the Peace IV programme.
- South West College along with the other five FE colleges has developed a programme titled Step Up and this programme will be funded by NIO and rolled out across Northern Ireland commencing May 2023

### **College Connect Programme**

Following the success of the College Connect Programme the six Further Education Colleges in collaboration with the Department for the Economy have developed the Step-Up Programme.

Four work strands that form the Step-Up programme offered in all FE Colleges are:

- **College Connect+**, Designed for those aged 16-24 not in education, employment or training and are unsure of the vocational area they want to pursue
- **College Connect 24+** Designed for anyone aged 24+ who is unemployed or economically inactive and looking to build their skills to enter employment. This Pathway is designed to give you confidence and to develop skills.
- **Disability Access Route to Education and Employment (DARE)** Designed for anyone aged 16+ who has a disability or is neurodivergent.
- **Women Returners Access Programme (WRAP)** Designed for women, who are currently unemployed or economically inactive, wishing to return to education to refresh skills, to upskill and to build confidence.

### **Five priority cohorts for Step Up:**

- those with a disability, including special educational need.
- care leavers/ care experience young people.
- those not in employment, education, or training.



PART A

- those economically inactive.
- in areas of clear gender imbalance\*\*\*

**Participants will:**

- Receive support through mentorship, job coaching and action planning.
- An opportunity to achieve Essential Skills if required - Numeracy, Literacy and/or ICT.
- Course sampling in their chosen area of interest.
- Learn new skills.
- Receive FREE expert 1-2-1 career guidance by SWC Careers Advisors.



**Step - Up Christmas Market - Presented by Holly Jolly Decorations**

- Bespoke window boxes - £20 each
- Christmas Mug Treats - £3.50
- Christmas Tree Decoration - £2

All profits donated to local charity -MS Society.



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### **Crafting your Career with WRAP at the South West College**

WRAP (Women Returners Access Programme) is the Women's strand of our STEP UP Programme. It provides tailored support and one-to-one mentoring for women looking to upskill, re-skill and return to learning and/or education. Most of the participants are facing multiple barriers to learning and gaining employment. These can include low confidence, mental health issues, domestic violence, caring responsibilities for children / family members, lack of childcare, financial difficulties, long periods away from learning and employment.

Objectives:

- Building confidence
- Nurturing new skills
- Creating social connection
- Discovering talents
- Networking
- Exploring opportunities

The WRAP Programme to date has:

- Engaged with various women based community organisations locally including Women's Aid and local community women's groups.
- Recruited and mentored around 45 women through the programme

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- They participated in a wide range of taster classes including Crafts, DIY/Woodwork, Creative Writing, Childcare / MAKATON, Beauty, Holistic Therapies, Essential Skills
- The College and the programme supported a group of over 20 participants to form a new constituted Women's Group in Omagh (Women's Hub Omagh) to enable them to continue to meet and work together when they finished up on WRAP Programme
- The ladies represented SWC at the EPIC Entrepreneurship HUB regional competition in NWRC where they showcased their crafts, and some highlighted their plans to start small businesses based on their craft and creative skills
- The College and the WRAP Programme engaged with the travellers Health support worker from WHSCT to run a 3-week DIY / Woodwork taster for traveller women in Omagh.
- Through one-to-one mentoring and support, a small number of women progressed directly into work while the majority of women will now progress onto higher level courses and qualifications within the college part time / full time FE framework.
- Working in collaboration with other support agencies such as NIRWN (Northern Ireland Rural Women's Network), Fermanagh Omagh District council and Go Succeed NI to support and signpost women for additional assistance based on their needs
- The College and the WRAP Programme supported the Women's Hub Omagh in submitting and application to Libraries NI to compete for one year's use of a creative space within Omagh Library (still hopeful and awaiting their decision!)



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### Crafting your career & DIY



Therapeutic                      Scalable                      Ability to network

Flexibility to work from home                      Sustainable materials

### Where are we going?



### Good Relation Story – WRAP Programme

*Marcella*

"It just shows that programmes offered to women thinking of re-entering the workforce are not just returning - they are accelerating a chapter of fortitude and transformation that can redefine who they are."

I myself have transformed massively, I have found my identity again. I feel I can move forward without fear."

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**REAP (April 2023 – Current)**

Rural Economic Accelerator Programme (REAP) - Lead partner South West College (SWC) officially launched the Rural Economic Accelerator Programme (REAP) in partnership with Fermanagh and Omagh District Council (FODC), First Step Women’s Centre (FSWC) and South Tyrone Empowerment Programme (STEP) on Thursday 5 October 2023 at The Workhouse in Enniskillen.



The new £2.8m employability programme is funded through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) as part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) under the Northern Ireland People and Skills strand.

With funding available until 31 March 2025, REAP aims to engage 1,340 economically inactive beneficiaries from the Mid Ulster and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council areas, moving at least 20% into employment using an innovative three phase employability model.

SWC, working in partnership with Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, First Steps Women’s Centre, and South Tyrone Empowerment Programme, aim to engage participants across 5 strands (NEET young people, 50+, Health conditions, Ethnic minorities and Women) to support them in gaining new skills, building their

## PART A

confidence and helping them further develop their career path either into employment, education or training.

The REAP Programme aims to provide comprehensive support to local people to help them to navigate their journey to employment. The support includes training, mentoring tools and resources to enhance skills in confidence building, digital technology, job searching, CV development and interview preparation along with opportunities for work experience.

By successfully developing and enhancing such skills, our residents will be able to embrace employment opportunities and achieve greater financial stability. In addition, individuals can also benefit from increased social interaction which can lead to improved mental health and wellbeing.

REAP will engage 1,340 economically inactive beneficiaries from Mid Ulster and Fermanagh Omagh District Council, moving at least 20% into employment using an innovative three phase employability model.

### **THREE PHASE EMPLOYABILITY MODEL**

- Enabling personal development – Developing self-esteem, belonging self-worth.
- Creating a positive environment – Safe space, building confidence, resilience.
- Encouraging positive behaviour – Promoting achievement, and celebrating distance travelled.

### **PHASE 1: ENGAGEMENT AND INITIAL ASSESSMENT**

Following referral to a specific strand (NEETS, Women, Ethnic, 50 +, Disability Health Conditions) beneficiaries are assigned a Key Worker and a baseline assessment to identify any barriers to progression, such as childcare/travel or a need for specialist life and basic skills intervention.

Results from the BA will inform an individualised Personal Development Plan (PDP) identifying specialist life and basic skills (digital, English and maths needs); informing goal setting for each recipient.

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### **PHASE 2: DELIVERY**

Recipients will complete specialist life and basic skills (digital, English and math) modules as detailed in their PDP to support progression to employment. Modules include:

- Career hub (Interview techniques/preparation, industry visits, CVs, job search/application support)
- Digital literacy (Email, social media, internet safety, online banking)
- Financial Literacy (Budgeting, Debt/benefits advice, better off calculations)
- Health Literacy (Healthy eating, anxiety management, mindfulness, exercise)
- Work/Life Skills (Resilience, team working, conflict management, self-esteem/confidence)
- Volunteering (Social Impact Projects, work sampling)
- English, math & ESOL, as required.

To augment the core programme, phase 2 involves specialist support tailored to each of the target groups:

#### **NEETS**

- Drug/Alcohol awareness
- Healthy Relationships
- Mental health training
- Career development
- Social Impact Projects

#### **WOMEN**

- Re-entry to work and career planning.
- Building resilience
- Spring cleans your life - goal setting and coaching
- Managing stress

#### **50+**

- Digital Fundamentals for digitally Inactive e.g. SMART Phone use

## PART A

- Health & Wellbeing Fitness
- Confidence Building, Motivation and Resilience
- Reintroduction to workplace

### **DISABILITY HEALTH CONDITIONS**

Dedicated Key Workers to support with their journey towards employment via the following:

- Health and wellbeing activities
- Confidence, self-esteem and building routine workshops
- Soft Skills development

### **ETHNIC**

- Basic English
- Advice, Guidance; & advocacy
- Supported learning
- Advocacy building relationships with local community.
- Community Enterprise

### **PHASE 3: TRANSITION**

The Key Worker supports and arranges work sampling activities aligned with recipient employment aspirations as detailed on PDP and support with job applications / interview preparation. College Careers Service staff provide additional support and careers guidance.

Key Workers will maintain a Red Amber Green based post progression support for six months. Self-employment awareness raising will be a key focus with staff from the Council led Entrepreneurship Support Services delivering an awareness raising workshop to engage participants and funnel interested participants into the programme.

**Rural Economic Accelerator Programme (REAP) Overview, Success Stories, Good Relations and Celebrations**



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The Rural Economic Accelerator Programme (REAP), funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, has been instrumental in promoting equality and fostering community empowerment in the regions of Enniskillen, Dungannon, and Omagh.

This report highlights recent achievements and successes, demonstrating how REAP has supported diverse individuals in overcoming barriers and achieving their goals.



### Empowering Diverse Backgrounds

Two sisters from overseas, initially lacking confidence in their language skills and abilities, completed the L1 OCN Vocational Course. They are now employed part-time and have enrolled in an Access course, aiming to pursue their dream of studying Nursing. This success story demonstrates REAP's role in empowering individuals from diverse backgrounds to achieve their aspirations.



### Overcoming Social Anxiety

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A young man with social anxiety, eager to join the workforce, found work experience through REAP. His placement led to a part-time job, which he credits with changing his life. REAP's support has been pivotal in helping him integrate into the workforce and build his confidence.



### Supporting Health Conditions

Another young man with a complex health condition initially joined REAP for help with his theory test. Through REAP, he found a volunteering opportunity at a local charity shop, allowing him to contribute to society and improve his social life. This case demonstrates REAP's commitment to supporting individuals with health challenges.



REAP has facilitated numerous achievements, including helping participants secure part-time employment. Several participants earned their RLSS lifeguard certificates, thoroughly enjoying the process. Additionally, several participants have enrolled in a full-time Welding Course starting in September, thanks to REAP's support she has been in contact with potential employers.

### Multiply Programme: Year 2 (March to August)

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The SWC Multiply programme, has partnered with community organisations to boost numeracy confidence among economically inactive participants. This holistic approach includes interactive methods such as outdoor learning and DIY workshops, reaching 79 participants in Fermanagh, Omagh, and Mid Ulster Council areas.



**Go Wild with Numbers**

The Go Wild with Numbers project, in collaboration with Inspire, promotes mental health by integrating numeracy skills with gardening activities. Delivered at Fermanagh House and Lisnaskea Allotment Area, this initiative enhances numeracy through practical, engaging tasks.



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### **Mindfulness by Numbers**

Partnering with MACCA in Omagh, the Mindfulness by Numbers project supports socially disadvantaged and isolated participants. Through creative arts, bingo, music, and drumming, this initiative aims to boost numeracy confidence among MACCA Women's group members.



### **Celebrating Success: REAP Event Highlights**

A celebration event at The Junction in Dungannon showcased the achievements of REAP. The event highlighted the transformative outcomes of REAP's programmes, including the delivery of diverse qualifications such as First Aid training, Level 1 Welding Skills, Employability Skills, and Grassroots Soccer Coaching.



### **Charity Project with SpecDrum Engineering**

A standout project involved designing, developing, and selling Christmas trees manufactured by REAP participants on the welding course, with profits donated to the Niamh Louise Foundation.

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This project exemplified REAP's commitment to community collaboration and meaningful causes.



**First Step Women's Centre Initiatives**

First Steps Women's Centre organised activities such as candle making and holistic therapies, alongside employability skills training. These initiatives support women in the community by providing practical skills and promoting overall health and wellbeing.

**Conclusion**

REAP's commitment to equality is evident through its diverse programmes and success stories. By providing qualifications, employment opportunities, and holistic support, REAP empowers individuals from all backgrounds to overcome barriers and achieve their goals.

The programme's collaborative efforts with community organisations further show its impact, to develop social inclusion and community empowerment across the region.

**Other Good News Stories and Good relations include:**

In October 2023 SW College Welcomed Icelandic Visitors to Fermanagh for ERASMUS+ Staff Mobility trip

The SWC was thrilled to host distinguished guests from Idan Education Centre, Iceland as part of a ERASMUS+ Staff Mobility program! This international

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collaboration was a fantastic opportunity for cultural exchange and professional development.

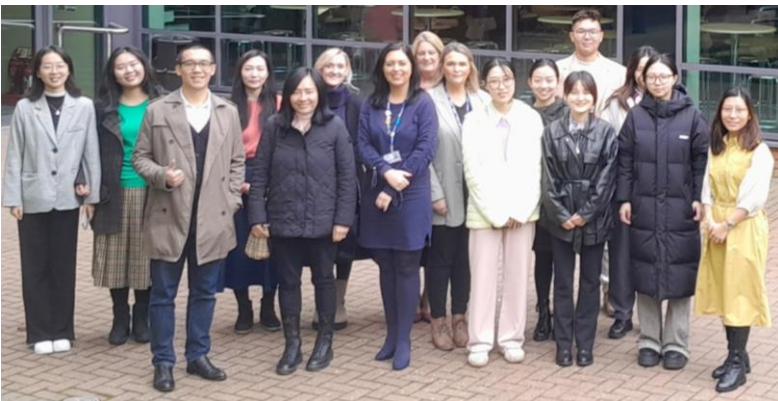
The visit signified a commitment to strengthening ties and exploring further collaboration between the two institutions, while also promoting international education and fostering global and cultural partnerships within the academic community.

During their visit, the team engaged in knowledge sharing and had the unique opportunity to learn about the unique features of the Erne campus building, delving into sustainability and the pioneering work that SWC has been doing to enhance its green credentials on an international scale.

### **Confucius welcome day – 28/09/2023**

SWC staff Linda Beatty and Fey Cole welcomed the new Confucius lecturers.

Linda and Fey met with representatives from Confucius Institute in Northern Ireland at Ulster University (CINIUU) and our new cohort of tutors to SWC Confucius Hub for this year (2023/24).



### **Confucius**

The Confucius project is now in its eleventh year of fifteen, is a partnership with CINIUU (Confucius Institute for Northern Ireland at Ulster University) and South West College is one of eight hubs (and the only FE College) delivering Mandarin

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Chinese Language and Culture classes. The tutors are a mix of trainee and qualified teachers from China who come to work in our Hub for between 1-3 years to deliver to primary and post-primary schools.

During 2023/24 we had 4000+ enrolments from 1 nursery, 29 primary and 10 post-primary schools (16 from Controlled Sector and 24 from Catholic Maintained). From Nursery up to Y4 the Mandarin tutors place an emphasis on culture but include basic language learning including, counting, colours, simple greetings etc. and from Y5 upwards they continue to have a blend of both however focus more on the language to ensure all curriculum is covered and prepare students for Chinese exams (should they wish to take them). SWC also offer part-time evening classes in each of our campuses with the language available to all SWC students. Our partner schools also engaged in a variety of competitions throughout the year – Young Ambassador Award, Mandarin Speaking Competition, Chinese Bridge Competition and Chinese New Year Poster Competition with many successes in each of these.

This year the programme hosted a range of events including our own very successful Chinese New Year celebrations in Dungannon Campus whereby our tutors delivered Chinese cultural activities during the day to 150 pupils from a number of primary schools followed by a Gala Dinner for guests and stakeholders in the evening at the College's Restaurant One Eighty. In addition to this our tutors held various cultural events in their schools showcasing both cultural activities and performances. One of our partner primary school choirs was invited to sing at CINIUU's Chinese New Year event in Belfast City Hall where their choir sang a song in Mandarin! At CINIUU's Annual Conference in Galgorm Resort two staff members delivered a workshop to delegates on best practice and how schools and tutors are managed on a day-to-day basis.

The Chairperson of Fermanagh Omagh District Council hosted a reception in Enniskillen Townhall to recognise the work and teaching that's delivered to pupils from participating schools and developing their knowledge and understanding of Chinese culture.

A group of twenty students & staff from one of our partner schools participated on a

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two-week study trip to China in November 2023.

One of our partner schools hosted a visit by the Mayor of Huangshi, Mr Wu Zhiling in April 2024 which was supported by our Hub tutors.

**South West College celebrates Chinese New Year 2023 - Welcoming the 'Year of the Rabbit'**



To celebrate Chinese New Year – the Year of the Rabbit, South West College Confucius Hub hosted a full day of celebrations on Thursday 26 January 2023 in Erne Campus, Enniskillen.

During the day, 150 pupils, from five different primary schools participated in a range of Chinese cultural activities including: Chinese Calligraphy Brush Writing, designing a Peking Opera Mask, making Chinese Knots/Bracelets, spinning Handkerchiefs and playing Jianzi, using Chopsticks, having a go at Tai Chi and trying on traditional Chinese Dress/Costumes. Pupils and their teachers who attended the event from Jones Memorial Primary School, Enniskillen, Moat Primary School, Lisnaskea, St Mary's Primary School, Newtownbutler, Kesh Primary School and St Mary's Primary School in Maguiresbridge thoroughly enjoyed the activities and expressed their gratitude and thanks for the opportunity to participate in the celebrations.



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In the evening, South West College Confucius Hub Gala Dinner gave guests, stakeholders and prize winners the further opportunity to celebrate and highlighted a number of programme successes, which is celebrating its tenth year. Guests were presented with a delicious traditional Chinese feast, which was all prepared, cooked and served by South West College catering and hospitality students. In addition, guests were treated to Scottish Dancing by Sollus School of Highland Dance and two wonderful Chinese performances: Peking Opera and the Yangqin (a traditional Chinese instrument) and to conclude the event South West College Confucius Hub's Mandarin Chinese tutors sang traditional Chinese New Year songs.

### **CULTURE DAY – SEPTEMBER**

Our mandarin lecturers shared two performances with pupils during the showcase and it was an exceptional day to celebrate the diversity and shared values of the community.



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### **B-READY, STEADY, GO! CHILDCARE STUDENTS' WELCOME MINI VISITORS**

Students from 'Children's care, learning and development' hosted an event and delivered a celebration of breads for Dungannon Primary school. A group of early years pupils joined the students and college at breaktime and explored their way around the tastes and textures of breads of the world.



Hosting an event like this helps students to develop organisational skills and increases knowledge of areas such as safeguarding and allergy awareness, which is invaluable for the world of working with children.

### **Early Years Conference**

South West College was delighted to host its 11th Early Years Conference at the Dungannon campus, with over 100 guests from the early years sector in attendance. The event aimed to support, inspire, and facilitate information sharing and best practices through interactive workshops and thought-leading insights.

The conference offered valuable professional development opportunities for individuals in the Early Years sector in the Tyrone and Fermanagh region, as well as SWC staff and students from childcare and early years programmes. This year's theme, 'The Neuroplastic Mind' – How our early relational experiences shape our biology, featured a comprehensive programme with five professional workshops and a lineup of industry-leading speakers.

Keynote speaker Orla Connelly from Safeguarding Board NI delivered an informative address, exploring trauma, attachment, neuroscience, and child development along with representatives from the Regional Trauma Network. Dr. Joanne Menary, Consultant Clinical Psychologist, co-facilitated the final workshop of the day.

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### **Workshops at the event included:**

- 'EQ V IQ' Delivered by Early Years Organisation
- 'Nurturing Children to Success' Delivered by Dr Kevin Brookfield and Dr Joanne Menary
- 'Neurodiversity' Rebecca McCullough Eden Consultancy
- 'Supporting Children whose parents have a terminal illness' Delivered by Pulmonary Fibrosis NI
- 'Infant Mental Health' delivered by Early Hospitalisation Nicola Doherty
- 'Perinatal Mental Health' delivered by Early Hospitalisation Nicola Doherty

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- 'Trauma' Delivered by Dr Orla Connelly from Safeguarding Board NI and Dr. Joanne Menary, Consultant Clinical Psychologist

Intergenerational Harmony: A beacon of unity as community members of all ages collaborates at the South West College



The Intergenerational Café returned to South West College, following its successful launch by the Childcare staff and students back in 2018.

This ground-breaking initiative brings together members of the local community of all ages, from primary school children to nursing home residents, to celebrate diversity and promote learning and understanding across generations. The Café was a resounding success, with a positive impact that extended beyond the college campus and into the wider community.

The students organised a Christmas-themed session of arts and crafts, bottomless tea and coffee, freshly made crepes, and a fun and highly competitive game of bingo, which culminated in some live Christmas music and an impromptu dance-along. They were joined by the pupils from Howard Primary School alongside their friends and relatives from across the generations.

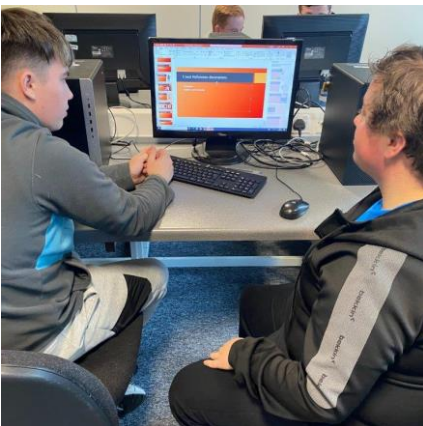
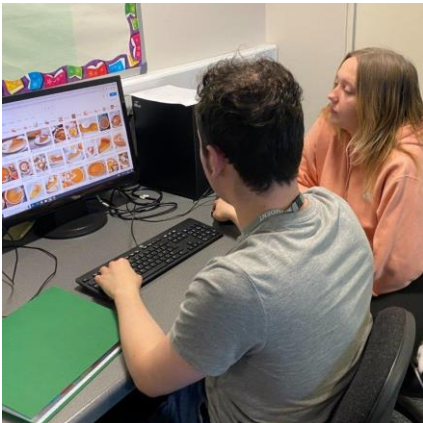
### **World Skills Event in IT Software Solutions for Business (F Skills)**

In September 2023, Level 3 BTEC National Extended Diploma Year 2 students undertook a joint project with Level 1 Diploma in Skills for Employment, Training and Personal Development SEN students in the Omagh Campus.

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Every Thursday, our IT students would design and deliver a computer lesson to the Level 1 students around the areas of Word, PowerPoint, Excel and Email. This was all in preparation for the cross-campus World Skills event in IT Software Solutions for Business (F Skills). This was an incredible opportunity for the Level 3 students to showcase and share their own skills, knowledge and abilities in computing with others in the college. This was a great opportunity for staff and students delivering on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion being delivered to a range of different students of diverse abilities and backgrounds mixing and enjoying the experience all whilst working towards our educational objective of the World Skills event.

The overall World Skills event in March 2024 seen SEN students from Cookstown, Dungannon and Enniskillen travel to Omagh for a cross-campus competition which was a roaring success and seen all students compete for prizes, with everyone going home with a goodie bag. This project will continue moving forward with the new cohorts of Level 1 and Level 3 students in September 2024.



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**The Brew Crew**

The Brew Crew put the feel-good into every Friday morning at the SWC. The weekly serving of freshly baked scones with bottomless tea and coffee provided a great buzz around campus.

'OCN NI Developing Skills for Life' classes are a busy group whose programme covers Arts, Catering, Life Skills, ICT, Horticulture and Sport, as well as employability, ICT, Literacy and Numeracy.

Their weekly 'Bottomless Coffee Morning' runs from 10:30-11:15 on a Friday for staff, students and the public. This event has been very well supported and attended with everyone looking forward to their Friday morning scones, tea and coffee and the 'craic' with the students.



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**New Sensory Garden enhances Student wellbeing at the South West College**

Students from Level 1 Skills in Employment, Training and Personal Development at the South West College (SWC) Omagh campus have recently developed in conjunction with the Sustainability Department, a new outdoor space and sensory garden to address the lack of suitable outdoor space for students including those with learning difficulties and special educational needs.



The students identified an underused outdoor space at the Omagh campus situated at the Gallery restaurant beside the Strule River and completed extensive research to transform it into a usable area filled with sensory experiences. This area was a collaborative success and now includes benches and picnic tables purchased by the Sustainability Department, flowers planted with the Estates Department, and purpose-built planters designed and crafted by the Mitie team in Omagh.



Since the space's development, the entire College community have benefited from the therapeutic space and have enjoyed participating in activities like Tai-Chi, Yoga, Mindfulness, and Bocca lessons. The key to maintaining this area for continuous use is students taking responsibility for tasks such as watering plants, litter-free maintenance,

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and making bird boxes, which will continue yearly as new students will be trained up by the previous students.

The students at SWC helped create this new space as part of a joint initiative with the Sustainability Department and the EPIC project-based learning (PBL) model, which is offered to students on different levels, at the College from entry level to honours degree.



Speaking about this contemporary approach to education, Gemma Dunn, EPIC project-based learning coordinator at SWC, said:

"Project-Based Learning has gained immense popularity, fostering students who are job-ready for the 21st century by actively engaging them in real-world projects and nurturing their entrepreneurial skills. It inspires critical and creative thinking, as well as problem-solving abilities among our students and the success of this pioneering project stands as a testament to its efficacy.

We are delighted that this space now serves a purpose, providing the entire college community an essential outlet where they can relax and enjoy, as well as a safe haven for students who may feel overwhelmed in the classroom. Even at this early stage, it has already dramatically enhanced the well-being and mental health of our students, particularly those with special educational needs."



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Supriya Foster on behalf of the Sustainability Department said:

“As part of our outreach and internal mentorship programs, the Sustainability department was honoured to facilitate this project. Our commitment to the Sustainable development goals, which the College uses as its guiding principles, includes the promotion of Health and Wellbeing. Sensory gardens play a crucial role in promoting well-being and inclusivity by engaging all the senses and providing therapeutic benefits.

“By creating wellness areas across our campuses, it is our hope that we can provide spaces where individuals can connect with nature, reducing stress and improving mental health. Furthermore, the diverse plant species in sensory gardens support biodiversity, aligning with our Sustainable Development Goal – 15 (life on land) on preserving and restoring ecosystems. We hope to continue working with our students to create healthier and more sustainable campuses.

### **Stem Cell Donor Drive – ‘Be a lifesaver!’ Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> May**

Health and Social Care staff and students in conjunction with DKMS arranged and organised a Stem Cell Donor Drive for the College and Public to engage.

Providing staff and students with training sessions to prep for the event.

This was a very successful event.



### **EPIC/T Skills Project – Student Project**

Free Soup / Bake Potatoes, tea, coffee and biscuits for Students was made available to students on 14<sup>th</sup> March through this project.

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Target consumers: De Paul Dungannon, Vineyard, STEP at Junction, The Hub Cookstown, SVP Cookstown, Eat Well Be Well students.

In recent times, our community has found itself at the intersection of two significant challenges:

1. a relentless cost of living crisis and the enduring repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. The combination of these issues has given rise to an urgent and pressing social concern – a surge in the demand for food banks and a disturbing increase in homelessness and social exclusion.

As inflationary pressures persist and wages struggle to keep pace, an increasing number of households find themselves grappling with the difficult choice between putting food on the table and meeting other basic needs. It was identified that several college students attended class without having breakfast or struggle to be able to afford lunch.

In response to these pressing issues, our students were given a project to design and implement a college-based project that would help address food insecurity, while fostering social inclusion within the college environment.

This Project-Based Learning initiative was to empower students to become catalysts for positive change within our college community whilst fostering social inclusion.

The students were required to:

- Conduct research on the factors contributing to the cost-of-living crisis, food insecurity, and homelessness in our community and the use of the food bank boxes in college.
- Identify existing resources such as food banks, shelters, and support services in the community.
- Use the information gathered to identify solutions we could offer within the college environment.
- Explore potential partnerships within the local community and local businesses to reduce food costs and budget restraints.
- Implement, monitor and review solution.

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Some of the donations from the event came from student's employers and included:

- The Food Doc, Dungannon
- Glenavon Hotel, Cookstown
- Kelly's Eurospar Moneymore
- The Cohannon Inn, Dungannon

### **Empatheyes – Experiencing the world of the visually impaired**

In March 2024 Empatheyes delivered training to staff. Our aim was to raise awareness of what it is like to be visual impairment using VR technology. Empatheyes demonstrating and educating us on some of the aids that are available to help those with visual impairment but also how we can support, improve and raise awareness of the importance of making sure our resources are correct and appropriate.

This was a CPD-certified training session designed to help professionals like ourselves who work with or for those who are caregivers, or with families that support adults and children with visual impairments but also to raise our awareness and knowledge to educate us to ensure that we are adapting the right resources or making alternatives available. Delivering this training has educated, re-educated and has raised awareness making us more conscious to ensure we have adapted our resources to meet the needs of those individuals and generally just to raise more awareness in a number of positive ways:

- Promote understanding and awareness of visual impairments
- Understand complex medical terminology surrounding visual impairment.
- Develop strategies for supporting a broad spectrum of visually impaired clientele.
- Increase working environment accessibility for those who are visually impaired – more conscious of our documentation, our presentation making it more visible for all.

Empatheyes training was very well supported with a mixture of lecturing and support staff present.

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**Good Relations – Good News Stories**

**Raising money for Foodbanks**

Business studies Students raised £500 for Enniskillen foodbank through a prize draw organised as part of their Event Management module.



**The Brew Crew** from the 'Developing Skills for Life' class at Dungannon Campus held a Christmas Coffee Morning. Instead of charging for their delicious scones and coffee, they asked for donations to the SWC Foodbank appeal, filling the collection box several times over!

As usual, it was a full house, full of festive fun.



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### **Good News Story – Student**

Student Conor McKenna, has overcome adversity to achieve his Foundation Degree in Business Management at South West College

By pursuing his Foundation Degree in Business Management, Conor was able to access higher education without the need to travel long distances or leave his local community.

Conor who has cerebral palsy, demonstrated immense determination and resilience throughout his academic journey and serves as an inspiring testament to the inclusivity and support systems in place at the College.



After finishing secondary school, Conor was determined to further his education whilst having options that suited him best. He found that SWC gave him the flexibility and convenience he was looking for, alongside allowing him to progress in his education.

Beginning with Level 2 Business Administration, Conor climbed up the ladder passing his Level 3 Business Diploma and then entering his Foundation Degree at SWC and completing it by achieving a 2.1.

Conor's academic journey has equipped him with a solid foundation in business management, preparing him for a promising future in the field.

Conor was one of a number of students at SWC who has additional needs and was able to be supported through his education pathway with the help of a support worker alongside the commitment of his lecturers. Armed with the support network of dedicated professionals, Conor faced his further education with confidence.

*Conor said: "I feel that it was the best thing for me to come to SWC as I feel they really cared and nourished me and made me feel that I could achieve everything I wanted. I never thought that I would be in the position that I am, graduating with a 2:1 in Business Management and this is all thanks to everyone working as a team. The support and guidance I received here have been instrumental in my success and I hope my story can inspire others facing similar challenges to keep pursuing their dreams."*

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**SWC Student crowned 'Essential Skills Learner of the Year'**

Zarema, originally from Ukraine, became a part-time adult learner at South West College in September 2022. She dedicated herself to studying Essential Skills and Level 2 ESOL, successfully completing both levels within the academic year.



Additionally, Zarema was able to secure employment in the Administration department at Omagh Hospital. Her relentless determination and hard work ultimately paid off and she was recently awarded the top accolade at the OCN NI Learning Endeavour Awards.

Congratulating Zarema for this well-deserved recognition, Zarema's tutor Brid Patterson, South West College said:

"Zarema is a very motivated learner and her enthusiasm for improving and developing her literacy skills is unrelenting. She is a working mother, who balances family life and the demands of two young children, their new school environment, the policies, and practicalities of starting a new life in a new country, with endless grace and determination.

"She is a highly educated woman in Ukraine, who loves learning, and has really enjoyed learning again in a safe and supportive environment. She is constantly improving herself, in all ways, and is an inspiring student to all.

"I am delighted for Zarema, she is a deserving winner of the 'learning bursary' (£1000), so generously awarded by OCN, and I know she will use it to further improve her prospects in N.I., including spending a portion of it on driving lessons!"

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**Breaking Barriers – Aoife Glackin**, has navigated the challenges of mental ill health to proudly graduate, marking a significant milestone in her journey towards personal and academic success.

Aoife's extraordinary journey from overcoming mental health setbacks to graduation to becoming a business owner is an inspiring story of triumph over personal adversity.

Armed with her qualifications, Aoife has now established her own business called 'Calm and Contentment,' offering personalised health and beauty treatments as a mobile service, enabling clients to enjoy treatments in the comfort of their homes. Aoife's business is growing each day and continues to thrive, fulfilling her passion for bringing calm and contentment to others.

Looking to the future, Aoife's ultimate career aspiration is to become a lecturer within South West College. She intends to pursue further training through the numerous courses offered by SWC and would wholeheartedly recommend SWC to others.



**Local Hero: 13-time special Olympics gold medallist embarks on educational journey at 50.**

Brian Whittendale, a dedicated employee for 26 years, found himself facing an uncertain future when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, and he was no longer able to work. Determined to get back into employment, Brian made the proactive decision to return to education at the South West College Erne campus studying an NOCN NI Level 1 Award in Employment, Training and Personal Development to upskill and further his computing knowledge.



Despite being out of education since school, Brian, now in his first year of a two-year course, is enjoying his studies at the College. With the support of his tutors, he has enhanced his knowledge and skillset, and has gained a wide range of employability skills. In addition to his academic pursuits, Brian has also had the opportunity to engage in

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personal and professional growth outside the classroom, which he has found hugely beneficial.

Brian, a holder of an impressive 13 gold Special Olympic medals for wheelchair racing, has enjoyed participating in a number of sporting opportunities and was delighted to participate in a wheelchair race organized by the College, reigniting his passion for the sport and fuelling his ambition to get back into racing.

Brian is also completing a work placement with the marketing team at SWC, showcasing his new skills and building his confidence in the workplace for potential future employment in a similar role.

Brian shared his thoughts on his time at the College, stating: "The support and guidance from the tutors at the College have been outstanding. As a mature student at 50, making my transition back into education seamless. I have already gained so much knowledge from the course and have acquired a wide range of employability skills, propelling me towards my goal of returning to work as a receptionist."

Brian encourages others, regardless of age or circumstances, to explore the educational and personal development offerings at their local college. He believes that it can build confidence, help in returning to work, and steer careers in the right direction. As he continues his studies and pursues his passion for wheelchair racing, Brian is excited about the opportunities that lie ahead and is confident he is on the right track to achieving his career ambitions.



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

**Monitor, Review & utilise annual workforce & student data to inform policy development and marketing.**

SWC continues to monitor and review staff data and policies in relation to FE reporting requirements and analysis is completed annually and presented to management and governing body for their review and to inform the Article 55 returns every 3 yrs.

Our fair employment monitoring return is submitted annually to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

Males Employees	Females Employees
36.6%	63.4%

Male Employees		Female Employees	
Protestant	26.8%	Protestant	27.3%
Roman Catholic	67.4%	Roman Catholic	69%
Non-determined	5.8%	Non-determined	3.7%

Males Appointed	Females Appointed
37.6%	62.4%

Males Promoted	Females Promoted
31.8%	68.2%

In 2023/24, 12.6% of students who participated in higher education at the South West College were from quintile 1, most economically deprived in Northern Ireland. This was down from 0.1% from the 2021/22 period. This compares favourably to the population profile of the South West Region where 7.50% of the population reside in this quintile.

Students from quintiles 1 and 2 make up 48.5% of the enrolment for 23/24. This was up which represented a 5.2% increase from 2021/22 period.

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

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All curriculum teams provided evidence at the end of the academic year in relevant sections of the ISEF document in terms of the importance of respecting others and how the college promotes equality and social inclusion. Due to industrial action the teaching and learning survey didn't go ahead. However, during the CPD day for all lecturing staff the Quality Department delivered a session on ISEF Teacher Assessed Grading.

### **New staff:**

On commencing employment at SWC all new staff are invited to participate in a 'New Staff Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Session' along with completing a Corporate Module on "Equality". This is to ensure all staff within the SWC are fully aware of their duties and responsibilities while representing the college as a Public Authority in respect to Equality and inclusion for all and to know where and how to access the relevant policies, support, training and who the relevant points of contact are. The SWC are actively training, promoting and raising awareness of and improve Equality, Diversity and inclusion in the workplace and in our everyday practices to help embed social inclusion and for all staff and students see the value of an inclusive and diverse environment and how we as a college can collectively achieve this.

Diversity and Inclusion are integral to the support of students and staff in SWC and this is delivered through the work of student services, Equality and the Advanced Practitioner of Learning, Teaching & Assessment. Through the work of our Advanced Practitioner of Learning and Assessment, staff have access to support the accessibility of their sessions in a variety of areas. She has developed a new internal site on Gateway which will provides a wide range of resources including sections on SEN, Diversity & Inclusion which will support staff development as well as classroom resources. A number of online training modules have also been development in these areas, that staff can work through at their own pace, and then amend their own practice accordingly. Some of the workshops that have been developed and facilitated by the Advanced Practitioner of Learning and Assessment included:

- Introduction to Autism and the confusing world
- Teaching and Thinking Skills

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Equality Inductions are provided for new staff and awareness raising around supporting students from diverse backgrounds. There has been an increased focus on the mental health challenges we all faced during lockdown and the sessions alongside various wellbeing initiatives provided staff and students with an increased awareness and support.

### **Implement actions to attract a Diverse student population**

#### **Scholarships and bursaries available to SWC students studying on Higher Education courses.**

The awarding of scholarships not only to support students from areas of high deprivation across the geographical area but in areas of under representation e.g. gender. Accessing Higher education is ever more challenging for students who don't have the finances to live and learn in the cities across NI or wider afield and the availability of Higher Education Learning at SWC provides a route to education however, financing learning can still be a real challenge.

As part of the College's commitment to widening access and participation Plan the SWC offers Higher Education Scholarships to students from local feeder schools who live in the top two most deprived areas. The scholarships are open to students across all SWC campus.

During 2023/24, 'Chief Executive Scholarship' was offered to Lydia Kelly a higher education student. This scholarship will provide Lydia with a fee waiver of £10,110 across three years to cover the full-time tuition fees for the two-year Open University Foundation Degree in Sport and Exercise programme and the one-year Open University BSc (Hons) Degree in Sport and Exercise Top-Up.



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SWC students in receipt of a full maintenance grant (household income below £19,203), may be eligible to receive a bursary of 10% of their full-time tuition fees. Care Experienced and students from ROI may also be eligible to apply for this bursary. (T&Cs apply)

The College also promotes scholarships to students that are funded by external organisations, including:

The JP McManus All Ireland Scholarship Scheme is valued at £5,500 per annum and is offered to the 25 top-performing students from low-income households who intend to take up full-time undergraduate courses (T&Cs apply)

CITB NI offers a bursary worth £1,000 to encourage more school leavers to consider a career in construction and undertake a third level Built Environment related qualification. The bursary is aimed at first year full time students and is intended to assist with the cost of their training.

The SSE Renewables Scholarship is a third level scholarship programme funded by the SSE Renewables Regional Fund for three wind farms. The scholarship is valued at £2,500 and eligible applicants must be registered on the first year of a programme of study at South West College (visit website for courses deemed eligible by SSE Renewables and further T&Cs). Applicants must also have a home address in Co. Tyrone, Co. Derry-Londonderry, Co. Fermanagh or Co. Donegal.

The Institution of Civil Engineers Quest Technician Scholarship is available to students on further or higher education courses that could lead to becoming a qualified ICE technician member. The scholarship has a value of up to £1,000.

Four Higher Level Civil Engineering Apprentice students from South West College (SWC) have been awarded the prestigious Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) Quest Technician Scholarship. This award is a sign of excellence and is a recognition of the achievement and ambition of higher level technicians in the

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civil engineering industry.

The four SWC winners, Micheál MacSalaigh, Pauric Lafferty, Warren Stewart and Jake Reid, who completed the Foundation Degree in Civil Engineering as Higher Level Apprentices (HLAs) at the Omagh Campus were awarded a Scholarship of £1,000, in recognition of their outstanding achievements.

Two South West College Students receive Engineering Bursary - Rebecca Hendron from Newtownabbey and Kim Hunter from Cookstown, who are studying Post 16 Engineering at South West College (SWC), have been granted the Royal Academy of Engineering, Northern Ireland Post 16 Bursary. This bursary is worth a total of £1500 and aims to address the shortage of engineers in the UK while promoting diversity and inclusivity.

The bursary scheme is part of the Northern Ireland Engineering Education Programme in collaboration with the Department for the Economy in Northern Ireland. It supports young women who are passionate about engineering and are enrolled in full-time post-16 STEM study at an eligible FE College or school.

The bursaries are intended to assist women students in pursuing Level 3 vocational engineering qualifications or A Levels, with a focus on engineering studies or a future engineering career. The Royal Academy of Engineering is devoted to promoting diversity and inclusion and encouraged applications from women who are currently underrepresented in the field of engineering.

Rebecca and Kim met the criteria for the bursary and were successful in their application at the beginning of their first year of study. Over the course of two years, they will each receive £1500 in financial support to cover their study expenses as they complete their Level 3 Gold Engineering program at the SWC Dungannon campus.

Rebecca and Kim expressed their gratitude for being awarded the bursary, saying it will ease the financial burden of studying and support their progression

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into exciting engineering careers. As an apprentice Rebecca, studies at the college one day per week alongside employment at Moy Park. Upon completion, she hopes to progress to a Foundation Degree in Electrical or Aeronautical Engineering, whereas Kim aspires to become a mechanical engineer.

SWC Deputy Head of School, Joanne McGovern said:

“The bursary scheme aims to support young women with a passion for engineering and an idea of where an engineering qualification will lead them. The Royal Academy of Engineering provides support on students' journey through education, so they can achieve their ambitions of working in the ground-breaking engineering industry.

I am delighted to partner with the Royal Academy of Engineering to support females in the field of Engineering and provide opportunities to help female engineers grow and develop their skills for the future.”

The Strickland Scholarship is a prestigious annual bursary scheme organised by South West College, in conjunction with Strickland. The scheme will provide bursaries to students undertaking an Honours Degree/ Foundation Degree or HND/C in Engineering at South West College.

The Dalradian scholarship is offered to five students every year. Eligible students must study at South West College and be able to show alignment to programme studies compatible with the following disciplines:

- Geology and associated disciplines
- Civil Engineering
- Environmental Sciences
- Business Administration
- IT and Health and Safety

SWC Erne campus, which is located in the Devenish electoral ward, SWC is

## PART A

also delighted to offer a fully funded Higher Education Scholarship to three successful applicants who reside within a Devenish ward postcode. These Scholarships are related to either a full-time two-year Foundation Degree programme, plus a one-year full-time Bachelor of Honours Degree top-up, offered internally at South West College (and subject to availability) with a total tuition fee value of between £9,730; or the full-time three-year Open University BSc (Hons) in Corporate Law and Finance (Omagh Campus), with a total tuition fee value of £13,890; or students who possess a relevant HND or Foundation Degree may apply for a full-time one-year Honours Degree top-up, with a total tuition fee value of £4,530.

There has been active STEM activity during the period of March 22-April 23. The Engineering Department had Sentinus in for Schools groups developing STEM understanding and boosting interest.

This involved over 50 students across the three campuses for students aged 15-19.

### **SWC Library Evaluation**

South West College, together with LibrariesNI undertook a range of collaborative activities between January and April in the Mid-Ulster and the South West areas. The essence of the working arrangement was to widen access to those in our society who are hardest to reach. Individuals within this cohort use the libraries for a range of reasons and may be less likely to connect with DfE funded opportunities, including entering a college to address skills gaps.

Over a short period, January to March (which extended into April), both organisations drew up a schedule of interventions within which the college could engage with individuals using library services. Targets were set and agreed between DfE and SWC. Attached is an evaluation/ update summary on the interventions' outcomes.

One positive is the very good connection both organisations now have and are willing to work together on an ongoing basis to connect to those using the libraries facilities and support onward progression. The college acknowledge that the pilot time period was short, however a target of 161 engagements was set, with 99 engagements having taken

PART A

place (61%). Of the 99 who engaged, 45 individuals in the timeframe progressed to further learning opportunities following initial engagement sessions (45%).



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

Yes

No (go to Q.4)

Not applicable (go to Q.4)

Please provide any details and examples:

Click or tap here to enter text.

**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:

Click or tap here to enter text.

**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):*

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

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Other (please specify and give details):

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

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

**4** Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2023-24 reporting period? (tick one box only)

- Yes, organisation wide
- Yes, some departments/jobs
- No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

As per our Outreach Action Plan we have an Equality Opportunities statement on all job advertisements and identified commitment to applicants with disabilities as well as inclusion of 'valuing diversity' in our Competency Framework. In our Rewards and benefits information available to all applicants we commit to Equality stating

Included in the job description of all staff is the requirement of staff:

"Ensure that the College's Equality Policy is implemented in all areas of responsibility."

In our Induction all new start have complete an equality module on 'gateway' and this is renewed at every academic year. All staff receive a with an Equality section highlighting our commitment to Equality, diversity and inclusion and the availability of the Dignity At Work Advisory service with at least one adviser based at each of the college's campus.

We have an Equality, Diversity and Inclusive Language training session for all new staff at induction. These sessions are informative, welcoming and engaging for all new staff on acceptable codes of conduct within the college and how to raise any concerns.

Training is being rolled out annually to all staff to raise awareness around the topic.

Equality and HR Officer currently sits on Sector meetings.

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Equality working group has been reestablished with 4 meetings a year planned. Staff and students are encouraged to sit on the group to be part of the change, to raise awareness and to improve how we go forward as a College.

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2023-24 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes, organisation wide
- Yes, some departments/jobs
- No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Section 75 – new systems was installed supporting the reporting performance for FEMR. Previously, our fair employment report was completed manually across campus. We have recently installed a digital reporting system which has ensured accuracy and reliability in how we can now generate reports.

6 In the 2023-24 reporting period were **objectives/ targets/ performance measures** relating to the Section 75 statutory duties **integrated** into corporate plans, strategic planning and/or operational business plans? *(tick all that apply)*

- Yes, through the work to prepare or develop the new corporate plan
- Yes, through organisation wide annual business planning
- Yes, in some departments/jobs
- No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisation's corporate plan
- No, the organisation's planning cycle does not coincide with this 2023-24 report
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

South West College have placed a high priority on supporting all students. As part of the Whole College review and a Social Inclusion, Community Learning and Development Centre for Excellence was established alongside centres for Higher Education, Further Education & Learner Management, Work Based Learning, and

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Digital Learning. The Corporate Development Plan 23/24 notes the role of the Colleges in 'supporting social inclusion by providing those with low or no qualifications, or who have other barriers to learning, with the skills and qualifications needed to find employment and to become economically active'.

**Equality action plans/measures**

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

Actions completed:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Actions ongoing:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Actions to commence:

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

**Monitor, Review & utilise annual workforce & student data to inform policy development and marketing.**

SWC continue to monitor and review staff data in relation to FE reporting requirements and analysis is completed annually and presented to management and governing body for their review and to inform the Article 55 returns every 3 yrs. We are currently working to further streamline the data collection aspect of our recruitment processes and improve on our use of the JANE HR system to monitor each stage of the process. The improvements in training and use of the system will allow for staff to update their Section 75 data and further improve on our ability to identify under representation and put in place positive measures to respond to this.

Equality sessions for new staff have been positively received. In October 2022 at our Annual Curriculum Conference this year's theme was 'Belonging, Inclusion: It's for Everyone'. Keynote speakers included Denise Wright and Catherine McCrory (Equality Officer, South West College)

Program of events included: The personal challenges of delivering to diverse learners, Parent and Student expectations.

Workshops Included:

- Neurodiversity and Autism: The Facts and Myths (Rebecca McCullagh, Eden Consultancy)

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- Sexual Orientation and Gender Awareness
- World skills Educator Programme,
- Helpful strategies to support Neurodiversity. (Rebecca McCullagh, Eden Consultancy)
- Small worlds Café, (Belfast Friendship Club, Catherine McCrory)
- Employability Skills for 21st Century

Attended by all FE staff.

### **Further, embed equality and diversity into the College & Curriculum through awareness raising & promotion.**

Equality & Diversity Induction sessions with our Work Based Learning and Class Representatives have been reintroduce for 2022/2023 students and we look forward to offering this out to further groups throughout the year.

We are in discussions with the Sector and an external provider to access a wider training resource which would allow for access to up-to-date training materials covering a wide range of Diversity topics which if successful will provide us and other services within the college with resources to support our Diversity & Inclusion work in SWC. NRC have recently purchased the training material and are planning to provide feedback in October 2023 at our Equality Co-Ordinator's Forum meeting.

### **Implement actions to attract a Diverse student population**

Our social inclusion projects support and promote Diversity and Social Inclusion REAP, Youthscape, College Connect+, College Connect 24, Disability Access Route to Education and Employment, Women Returners Access Programme (WRAP) Crafting your careers, Step Up, Multiply Programme (Pages 14 – 29)

In-house student services team, along with student engagement, social activities and wellbeing from Inspire Hub provide additional support to our students.

### **Further, develop student support mechanisms to reduce barriers to education and learning (eg) learning support including disability, childcare, language & mental health & wellbeing, anti-bullying prevention & intervention.**

Our Social Inclusion projects led the way in identifying innovative solutions, as you will have seen above. We have a partnership with Inspire offering staff and

## PART A

student's access to wellbeing support including counselling, mediation and critical Incident management.

student services team, along with student engagement, social activities and wellbeing initiatives continue to promote and raise awareness of support and reporting concerns.

### **Monitor, Review and Update of Disability Action Plan.**

As a Disability Confident & Committed Employer we are committed to ensuring our recruitment process is inclusive and accessible, communicating and promoting vacancies, offering interviews to all those who meet the minimum criteria, anticipating and providing reasonable adjustments as required, Supporting existing employees who acquires a disability or a long term health condition, enabling them to stay in work and promoting at least one activity that will make a difference and promote inclusion.

Statistics from AccessAble has shown a considerable increase in traffic to our website specifically seeking the accessibility of our services.

### **Provide a range of Equality & Diversity training & Support to all staff & students.**

Our Corporate Modules are renewed annually. Modules include Equality and Diversity, SENDO, Digital Wellbeing and Mental Health Awareness. The new staff induction provides staff with an overview of how Equality & Diversity features in their roles and provides the direct link.

### **Monitor, Evaluate and Review**

- **Equality Improvement Plan**
- **Disability Action Plan**
- **Outreach Action Plan**

As an ongoing commitment improving Equality across all areas of the College our plans are reviewed on an annual basis. The Equality Action Plan 2022-2027 was reviewed and agreed by the sector during the year.

- 8** Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2023-24 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

The Equality Action Plan was reviewed, updated and agreed by the Sector (see attached).

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9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2023-24 reporting period, the following have been identified: *(tick all that apply)*

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

**Arrangements for consulting (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 3)**

10 Following the initial notification of consultations, a targeted approach was taken – and consultation with those for whom the issue was of particular relevance: *(tick one box only)*

- All the time
- Sometimes
- Never

11 Please provide any **details and examples of good practice** in consultation during the 2023-24 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:

We continue to exercise and demonstrate good practices promoting equality and inclusiveness when it comes to reviewing, updating policies and promoting employee and good relations.

We continue to work well and collaborate other departments within the college including our Social Inclusion team on best practices on how we can do and improvement our practices.

12 In the 2023-24 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently used by consultees**: *(tick all that apply)*

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- Face to face meetings
- Focus groups
- Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing
- Questionnaires
- Information by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation
- Internet discussions
- Telephone consultations
- Other (*please specify*): Click or tap here to enter text.

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:

Click or tap here to enter text.

- 13** Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2023-24 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable – no commitment to review



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

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

23 Policies were screening 23/24

- Higher Education Submission of Coursework Policy
- Higher Education Internal Moderation Policy
- Higher Education Admissions, Admission Appeals and RPL Policy
- Higher Education Assessment Appeals Policy
- Higher Education Tutorial Policy
- Centre Assessment Policy
- Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Policy
- Fees and Charges Policy
- Management of Work Base Learning in Higher Education Policy
- Plagiarism Policy
- Accuracy & Completeness of Published Information Policy
- Feedback Assessment Policy
- Higher Education Assessment Policy
- Energy Management Policy
- Asset Management Policy
- Fixed Term Contract Policy
- Penetration Testing and Vulnerability Management Policy
- Access NI Policy
- Voluntary Severance Scheme
- Examinations Malpractice Policy
- Examinations Word Processing Policy
- Examinations Conflict of Interest Policy
- Employee Standards and Ethical Practice

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

23 Policy consultations conducted with **screening** assessment presented.

23 Policy consultations conducted **with an equality impact assessment (EQIA)** presented.

0 Consultations for an **EQIA** alone.

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

23 Policies were screening 23/24

- Higher Education Submission of Coursework Policy
- Higher Education Internal Moderation Policy
- Higher Education Admissions, Admission Appeals and RPL Policy
- Higher Education Assessment Appeals Policy
- Higher Education Tutorial Policy
- Centre Assessment Policy
- Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Policy
- Fees and Charges Policy
- Management of Work Base Learning in Higher Education Policy
- Plagiarism Policy
- Accuracy & Completeness of Published Information Policy
- Feedback Assessment Policy
- Higher Education Assessment Policy
- Energy Management Policy
- Asset Management Policy
- Fixed Term Contract Policy
- Penetration Testing and Vulnerability Management Policy
- Access NI Policy
- Voluntary Severance Scheme
- Examinations Malpractice Policy
- Examinations Word Processing Policy

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- Examinations Conflict of Interest Policy
- Employee Standards and Ethical Practice

**18** Were any screening decisions (or equivalent initial assessments of relevance) reviewed following concerns raised by consultees? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes
- No concerns were raised
- No
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Arrangements for publishing the results of assessments (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)**

**19** Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published during the 2023-24 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Arrangements for monitoring and publishing the results of monitoring (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)**

**20** From the Equality Scheme monitoring arrangements, was there an audit of existing information systems during the 2023-24 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes
- No, already taken place
- No, scheduled to take place at a later date

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Not applicable

Please provide any details:

Click or tap here to enter text.

**21** In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies? (*tick one box only*)

Yes

No

Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Review of policies has been agreed as per review schedule and we have now included a review schedule date and an additional box to ask if the policy has been screened. All policies to be reviewed are taken to the Risk & Compliance meetings for approval prior to publishing / updating.

**22** Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2023-24 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

Click or tap here to enter text.

**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:

Our analysis of the FE return data alongside the CDR returns provides us with data to inform service delivery, support and policy development.

**Staff Training (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 5)**

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- 24** Please report on the activities from the training plan/programme (section 5.4 of the Model Equality Scheme) undertaken during 2023-24, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

All new and current staff attend an Equality training session facilitated by The Equality Officer covering Section 75 and the responsibilities of staff and the College including Equality, Diversity and Inclusive Language.

The requirement to confirm completion of a screening exercise on new/revised or updated policies is now part of the approval process for policies and has resulted in an increase in the screening of these policies and Policy owners in partnership with the Equality Officer carry this out.

Our Equality Officer attended Equality Commission training during the year on Public Sector: Section 75 duties and Equality Assessments to ensure we are up to date on the training.

Our Equality Scheme is available on the website and referred to in the New Staff Induction and key staff have been trained in managing complaints.

- 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:

The move to online delivery of training as a result of the pandemic has removed some of the barriers to participation, improved social inclusion, equality and good relations which may have previously prevented staff and students from engaging and committing to courses, programs etc. (lack of or cost of transport, time commitments, accessible, social engagement and confidence to engage in large face to face sessions).

All new and current staff attend an Equality training session facilitated by The Equality Officer covering Section 75 and the responsibilities of staff and the College including Equality, Diversity and Inclusive Language. This has been positively received among staff and student increasing our own awareness and knowledge and promoting inclusion.

Our Equality Working Group is supported by a range of staff from both academic and support including students. Our Equality working Group meets four times a year and we aim to work in collaboration with several different departments that will help, support, advise, raise awareness whilst trying to promote positive change and support to promote and encourage equality, diversity and inclusion.

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

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

Accessibility of online information has improved access and awareness of the need to ensure online content is accessible. Our digital team has facilitated staff training throughout the year on making information accessible and this has been followed up by an annual 'Fix your content day' reminding staff on the importance of ensuring both internal and external information is accessible to all.

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

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

Insert number here: 0

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Section 3: Looking Forward**

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

Our Equality Scheme was reviewed during this year with a change to Equality Action Plan and an update of our consultee list. This plan will be due for the 5yr review in 2026.

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

Screening will continue to be a strong focus for us with a plan to raise awareness at all levels of the organisation around the importance of incorporation of screening as part of every decision we make.

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We will continue to train and support existing and new staff on the importance of consultation and continued development to ensure we maintain the highest Equality standards.

**30** In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next 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):

Click or tap here to enter text.

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:**

Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
9	2	0

**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 <sup>i</sup>	Outcomes / Impact <sup>ii</sup>
National <sup>iii</sup>			
Regional <sup>iv</sup>			
Local <sup>v</sup>			



PART B

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

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Increased awareness of specific barriers faced by people with a disability.	<p>Delivery of Equality Sessions to new &amp; current staff, provision of IT sessions to promote the accessibility of online and digital material. Update and redesign of corporate modules including Equality, SENDO and Digital Wellbeing Modules.</p> <p>Access to the JISC Blended learning modules for staff in ensuring Equality &amp; Diversity of learning materials and resources for classroom use.</p> <p>Availability of Equality Officer, Student Services support and that of the Advanced Practitioner of Learning, Teaching and Assessment to support inclusion.</p>	<p>A more holistic approach to incorporating Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion into the work of all employees and with increasing more accessible physical buildings as well as digital resources the learning from more disabled students enrolling and studying with us has been hugely effective.</p> <p>A movement from the focus on Accessibility being only within Student Services or via the Equality Officer to building a wealth of experience throughout the College to support students and staff in the learning environment.</p>

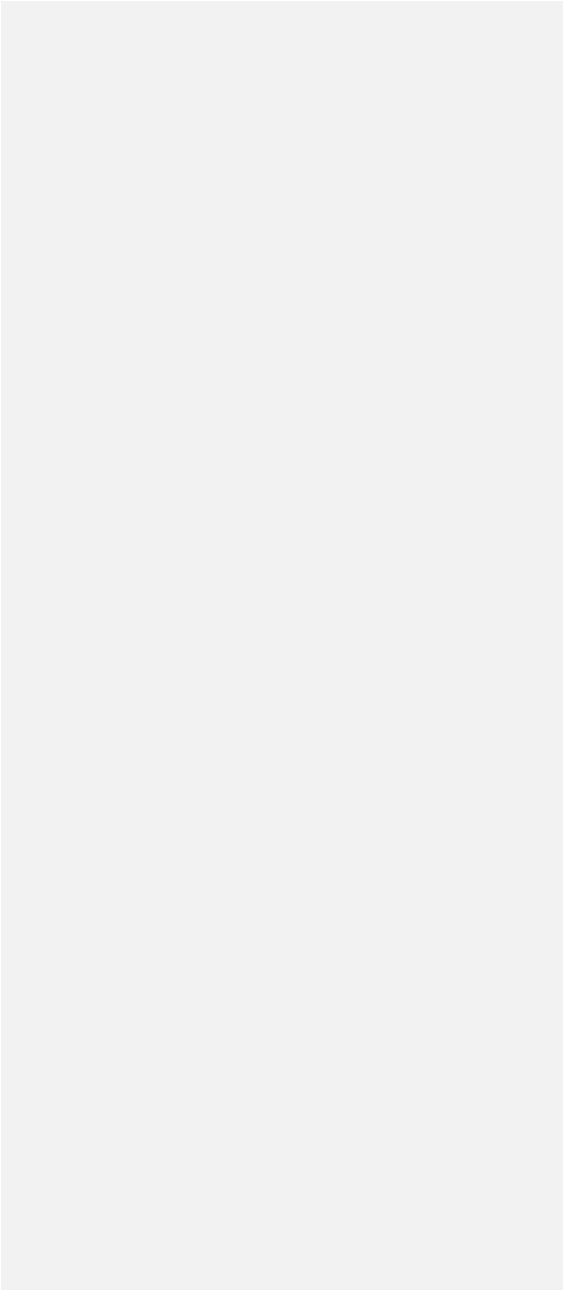
PART B

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	Promote the use of the AccessAble Website to encourage participation of prospective students.	Through the inclusion of the AccessAble link on the footer of our website we have seen a huge increase in the monitored traffic to the access information for the campuses with 1500 hits reported in our last report.	Increased awareness of the accessibility features of our campuses has provided prospective students with the reassurances needed to meet accessibility needs whilst in any of our campuses.
2	Create an open and inclusive workplace culture, which displays respect for those with mental ill health.	<p>Develop a suite of physical and mental well-being initiatives that are available to staff. Promote existing materials and opportunities available to staff making staff aware of our Inspire Support Hub and Employee Assistance programme at Induction as well as being part of the back to work conversation.</p> <p>Develop annual calendar of activities in association with the Culture and Well-being Group.</p> <p>Appointment and training of Mental Health First Aiders offering initial face to face support for staff.</p> <p>Social media campaigns around the</p>	The looking after your mental health message is reinforced through a variety of communications to ensure that where staff are feeling they may need support there are options available to them and line managers are reminded to offer these. The outcome is open and positive messaging around the benefit to you and the organisation when you prioritise your mental health and the subsequent impact this has on retaining staff in work and the success of the welcome back process if they do take time off.

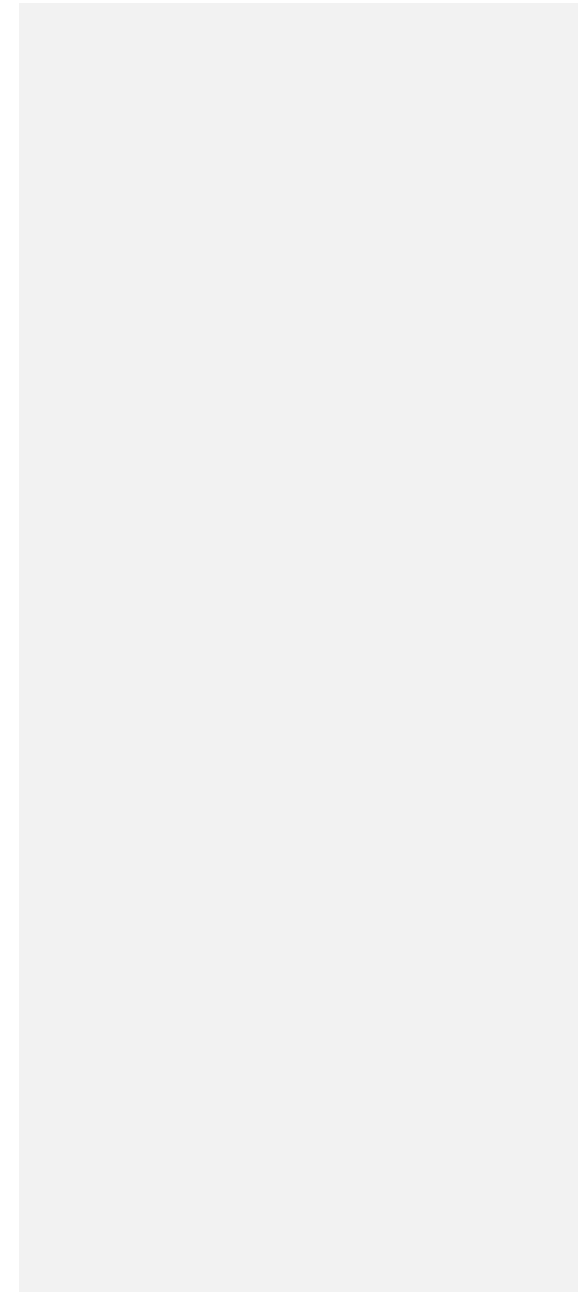
PART B

		<p>importance of our mental health and training for staff &amp; line managers on identification and management of stress in the workplace. Training and appointment &amp; promotion of our Mental Health First Aiders to support staff has also been ongoing.</p>	
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3	Explore the scope of offering meaningful placements and work shadowing and volunteering for disabled people.	The Into Employment Mentor focuses on securing and supporting SEN students into work placements.  Working in collaboration with Social Inclusion we hope to create more meaningful placements and work shadowing and volunteering opportunities for disabled people.	Since the appointment of a Mentor we have achieved 100% placement success for all students who have had a referral (Nov 21 – March 22, 72 SEN students in placement).
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PART B

4	Continue to encourage the participation of disabled people on committees, student representatives on the Governing Body and groups across the College.	The Equality Working Group and Disability Advisory Group have strong representation of disabled people on the committees. Members of the Disability Advisory Group also co-facilitate on Equality sessions with students.	A first hand and lived experience perspective that provides a 360 insight into the conversations.
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2 (d) What action measures were achieved to 'encourage others' to promote the two duties:

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	The College will endeavour to influence the Department for the Economy to ensure participation of disabled people on the Governing body of the Colleges.	During the recruitment drive by DfE in Summer 21 we raised awareness about the opportunity with 2 local Migrant support and Disability projects in the Omagh & Dungannon areas.	Whilst we are unaware of the applications received by DfE in these areas any opportunity to raise the public appointments will increase the awareness of the process and we hope will also increase diversity in these positions.

Commented [SG1]: Camilla and Celine to advise

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2	Monitor and Review the progress of the Disability Action Plan.	Annual monitoring of the Disability Action Plan in line with our commitments.	Provides us with an ongoing focus on our progress toward achieving the outcomes of increased Disability awareness and Equality obligations.
3	Encourage students with a disability to participate more fully in College life.	Involvement of disabled students in all aspects of student life including in co delivery of Equality sessions.	Visibility of Disabled students in FE and HE classes, in and around the college and in Clubs, societies and College activities.

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

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	Consider development of a Disability Advisory Group involving staff and students with a disability (initially at local level and then at sectoral level).	The Disability Advisory Group has continued to meet and have also joined the Equality Working Group.	The ability to draw on the lived experience of our Disabled members has helped to widen the conversation and improve upon skills in working in a committee session.	The ability to facilitate the wider development of a sector group has not been further explored to date.

PART B

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

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1	Delivery of face to face Equality & Diversity Induction to WBL students and FE / HE Class Reps	Communication, resourcing & Restructure. New Equality Working Group is currently available and willing to support Student Services on the delivery of training.

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 in the form of surveys (health & wellbeing, staff and students), emails, conversations and requests for training

(b) Quantitative

Numbers attending training sessions and meetings.

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?

Please select

If yes please outline below:

PART B

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
2	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
3	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
4	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
5	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

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?

Click or tap here to enter text.

<sup>i</sup> **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.

<sup>ii</sup> **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.

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

<sup>iv</sup> **Regional**: Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level

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