

**Department for Employment and Learning**



**Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties  
Annual Progress Report 2015-16**

**Contact:**

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Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:  
<http://www.delni.gov.uk/equality-and-good-relations.htm>

**Signature:**

**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 2015 and March 2016**

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

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

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In 2015-16, 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.

This is the Department for Employment and Learning’s sixteenth report on progress with the implementation of the equality and good relations duties under Section 75 of the NI Act 1998.

The Department continues to give priority to promoting equality of opportunity and to good relations, and ensuring fair and inclusive delivery of its programmes and services. The Department contributes to real social change by addressing the needs of those who are most disadvantaged in society and fulfilling our equality and good relations commitments. The Department continues to integrate all aspects of equality and other policy proofing considerations, into its policy and decision making processes. The Department has a strong tradition of mainstreaming equality and continues to ensure that equality factors are taken into account as it considers the development of new and existing policies.

The process of screening and the robustness of decisions taken have

continued to develop and improve throughout the Department. The need for the collection and use of data from a variety of sources to inform screening decisions is now embedded in the process. Increasing use of informal discussions with Section 75 representative groups has proved of value to screening findings.

The Department's Equality Unit is responsible for co-ordinating all of the Department's Section 75 'activity'. The Unit supports managers and staff throughout the Department, guiding them through their equality responsibilities and ensuring that the equality duties are to the fore in all policy considerations.

The Department continues to carry out 'Shared Future Policy Proofing', a process which the Minister introduced in April 2012. This is applied to all significant new policies and business cases. The purpose of this process is to determine whether proposals are likely to contribute positively to a shared society or inadvertently reinforce divisions, in which case mitigating measures would need to be considered. Public authorities are already required to carry out good relations proofing under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. This is limited, however, to only three of the Section 75(1) categories, namely between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial group. Shared Future Policy Proofing screenings are different and separate from the Equality screening required under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Shared Future Policy Proofing is concerned with promoting sharing or engaging together for all nine of the Section 75(1) categories. Furthermore, the current requirements are limited in scope in that, while they acknowledge the existence of divisions and/or diversity and the need to encourage

respect, they do not explicitly promote sharing or discourage separation in terms of how people access facilities or services. Shared Policy Proofing is in addition to our existing legislative responsibility. To comply, the impact of all major policies and business cases must now be assessed to determine the extent to which they promote sharing or separation in terms of how people live, learn, work, play, or access goods, facilities or services. Shared Future Policy Proofing will provide decision-makers with wider understanding of the impact of potential decisions, and thus ensure better-informed policy.

### **Employment Rights Legislation**

The promotion of equality continues to be fundamental in the Department's efforts to provide an effective employment rights framework for all workers in Northern Ireland. All new employment legislation undergoes extensive public consultation at draft stage.

Representatives of Section 75 groups are included in all consultations and specific representation is sought depending on the nature of the proposals. New employment rights policies are always "screened" to determine the impact they will have on the promotion of equality of opportunity and the promotion of good relations within the terms of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

### **The Employment Agency Inspectorate**

The Employment Agency Inspectorate (EAI) sits within the Employment Relations Policy and Legislation Branch. The EAI employs two permanent employment agency inspectors. The Inspectorate continued to implement a risk-based approach to inspection during 2015/16, in order to ensure compliance with the

Conduct of Employment Agencies and Employment Businesses Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005 (the Conduct Regulations), particularly in respect of those agencies who dealt with work seekers who were most vulnerable to exploitation.

Between April 2015 and March 2016, 10 inspections and investigations were carried out (both routine inspections and complaints investigations) and 15 complaints were received. The EAI also conducted 9 information visits to new or existing agencies to provide advice on the requirements under the Conduct Regulations.

### **Migrant Workers**

The Department is a member of the Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership (NISMP) which is one of a number of similar partnerships within the UK that takes its membership from the statutory, non-statutory, and voluntary and community sectors. During 2015/16, the Department continued to work closely with the NISMP to ensure that Northern Ireland is a welcoming place for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

The Partnership has worked to support their retention and integration, in a way that contributes to economic growth, and to reflect the regionally specific needs of Northern Ireland in the development and implementation of UK immigration policy.

The Partnership has established a migration web-site/portal that deals with migrants' information needs, myth-busting, and best practice in respect of migrant policy.

The NISMP aims to work in partnership with others, including the Department, in order to help deliver Northern Ireland's own distinct economic, welfare and labour force requirements. This has been facilitated through the work of three NISMP sub-groups:

- Welfare;
- Integration and Social Cohesion; and
- Labour and Skills.

The Department attends the Belfast City Council Migrant Forum meetings and continues to engage with the Law Centre NI in attending the Racial Equality Forum's Immigration Sub-group.

Relationships continue to be developed between relevant employment inspection and enforcement bodies; notably this year with the local HM Revenue and Customs office. Where legislation permits, information sharing has been enhanced, in order to address exploitation of migrant workers and breaches of their employment rights.

The provision of information and signposting services to migrant workers continue to develop.

### **Northern Ireland European Social Fund Programme 2014-2020**

The Strategic Aim of the ESF Programme 2014-2020 is to combat poverty and enhance social inclusion by reducing economic inactivity and to increase the skills base of those currently in work and future potential participants in the workforce.

The Operational Programme for 2014-2020, which was developed

through public consultation, was approved and adopted by the European Commission on 12 December 2014.

The programme funds activity to enhance and extend employment opportunities, in particular for those groups at a disadvantage in the labour market who are unemployed, including long term unemployed, or economically inactive.

There is also a focus on supporting young people aged 16-24 who are not in employment, education or training and on people with a disability.

The ESF programme also includes the Community Family Support Programme (CFSP). CFSP provides a wraparound family intervention support and employability mentoring service that aims to support all family members and break the cycle of intergenerational unemployment and associated poverty in communities.

The first call provides project funding for the three year period from April 2015 – March 2018 for three key priorities:

#### Priority 1: Access to Employment

There are a total of 24 projects for the Unemployed and Economically inactive strands and 13 projects for NEETs that are currently being funded and are underway. The breakdown of funding over the first call (April 2015 – March 2018) is detailed in the table below.

Investment Priority	Strand	ESF (40%)	Departmental (25%)	Match Funding (35%)	Total
8(i)	Unemployed/ Economically Inactive	£14.84m	£9.275M	£12.985m	£37.1m
8(ii)	NEETS	£7.96m	£4.976m	£6.97m	£19.906m

### Priority 2: Social Inclusion

There are currently 24 Disability projects and 6 Community Family Support projects that are currently being funded and are underway. The breakdown of funding over the lifetime of the first call (April 2015 – March 2018) is detailed below.

Investment Priority	Strand	ESF (40%)	Departmental (25%)	Match Funding (35%)	Total
9(i) (a)	Disability	£16.09m	£10.06m	£14.08m	£40.23m
9(i) (b)	Community Family Support	£3.21m	£2m	£2.81m	£8.02m

### Priority 3: Skills for Growth

Eligibility Period	ESF (40%)	Departmental (60%)	Total
September 2015 – March 2017	£12.1m	£18.1m	£30.2m

Priority 3 is organized via closed government programme calls.

A second call for applications is planned for 2017.

Thematic Objective 9, Investment Priority 9(i) (a) of the programme has the specific objective of enhancing social inclusion by reducing unemployment in people with a disability. Within this investment priority, support is offered to people with a disability through specialist, tailored training and employment support projects where the specific needs of the individual are addressed.

The targets for Thematic Objective 9, IP9(i) (a) over the lifetime of the programme are:

- To provide support to a total of 13,000 People with a disability
- 1,300 (10%) to enter employment upon leaving;
- 650 (5%) to remain in employment 6 months after leaving;
- 1,950 (15%) to enter education/ training upon leaving.

A total of €127,678,284 (Approximately £107.53m) will be allocated to projects supporting employability among people with disabilities during the lifetime of the ESF programme. This represents approximately 25% of the total funding available.

The figure is comprised of 40% funding from ESF, 25% from DEL and a further 35% match funding from other private or public sources.

The Programme includes gender equality and equal opportunities as a cross cutting theme. As part of the application process, applicants were required to demonstrate their commitment to equality and equal opportunities. Failure to achieve the required score in this area

resulted in the application not being successful. The Programme may fund specific activities to support women and disadvantaged groups and will integrate equal opportunities into every stage of the programme as a whole.

The total value of the new ESF Programme is €513m (Approximately £432m – over 20% more than the initial allocation to the previous programme. Of this €513m, €300m (Approximately £252.94m) relates mainly to the voluntary and community sector (Priorities 1 and 2), €205m (Approximately £172.65m) relates to government programmes (Priority 3) and €8m (Approximately £6.74m) relates to management of the programme (Priority 4).

Completion of the database project (2014) is still ongoing.

Below is an initial summary of participation caseload figures as at April 2016, based on the participant monitoring data which has been submitted to date by ESF Projects.

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Caseload Performance Target - 3 Year Total</b>	<b>Caseload Performance Target - Year 1 (2015/16)</b>	<b>Actual Caseload Performance Year 1</b>
Unemployed /Economically Inactive	15,000	5,000	6,987
NEET	9,350	3,116	2,227
Disability	4,850	1,616	2,834
CFSP	4,750	1,566	598
<b>Total</b>	<b>33,950</b>	<b>11,298</b>	<b>12,696</b>

These are provisional figures only, and in the absence of the database, the data is not sufficiently robust for the ESFMA to conduct

full analysis.

The ESF PDB is presently in the process of collecting project performance data for Year 1 (2015/16) of the 2014-2020 ESF Programme. This exercise has been hampered by the lack of a central programme database but, when complete, information will be available on the number of participants that enrolled on the programme, outcome destinations and qualifications gained. This exercise is planned to be completed by the autumn 2016. It is anticipated that 34,000 participants will be supported during the 3 years of the programme.

### **Training for Success**

The Training for Success Programme (TfS) provides training for young people who have not yet found full time employment. It is designed to enable young people to progress to higher level training, further education, or employment. It provides training to address personal and social development needs, develop occupational and employability skills and, where necessary, Essential Skills. The structure and components of the programme are detailed below:-

The Training for Success programme consists of the following four strands: Skills for your Life, Skills for Work level 1, Skills for Work level 2, and Skills for Work level 3.

While the Department provides a guarantee of a training place to those who are unemployed and in the 16 & 17 year old age group,

there is extended eligibility criteria in TfS for those aged under 22 with a disability; and under 24 for those young people who qualify under the Children (Leaving Care) Act (NI) (2002).

Participants will receive an entitlement of 104 weeks on the Training for Success programme, or up to 156 weeks for those with a disability who have an identified need for additional time. Suppliers are required to maximise the outcomes available to young people and progress them through the strands at a pace which is appropriate to individual needs. The length of time which individuals will spend on each strand of the programme will be determined by the individual need as ascertained by the initial assessment process. This should be specified on the Personal Training Plan.

### **Skills for Your Life**

This strand is designed to address the personal and development needs of young people who have disengaged from learning and/or have significant obstacles. It is designed to address the need for more focused provision for the significant minority of young people for whom Skills for Work is not suitable.

This group is difficult to describe, such is the range and complexity of the characteristics displayed by the group. The young people often have multiple barriers to education, training or employment, for example regular alcohol, solvent or drug related abuse or dependencies; health related problems; homelessness or family problems; second or third generation unemployed; involvement in illegal or anti-social criminal activities. In addition, most of these young

people have Essential Skills needs, poor records of attendance and achievement in school, as well as attitudinal problems to education, training and / or employment.

### **Skills for Work level 1**

This strand is designed to help young people gain skills and qualifications at level 1, to be able to gain employment, to progress to Skills for Work level 2 or ApprenticeshipsNI.

Participants should be offered two pathways on this strand, as specified below:

- Work sampling: for those participants who are unclear about a preferred occupational area, there should be a period of work sampling followed by professional and technical training in their chosen occupational area; and / or
- Professional and technical training: for those who have already chosen an occupational area and for those who choose an area after a period of job sampling.

### **Skills for Work level 2**

This strand is designed to ensure that those who have been assessed as being capable of achieving at level 2, but who have not yet secured employment, are prepared for future progression to employment as an apprentice.

### **Skills for Work level 3**

To ensure that those who have achieved level 2 qualifications and

have completed the Skills for Work level 2 provision and have not yet progressed to employment can develop level 3 knowledge.

### **Additional Learning Support**

Additional learning support is the direct responsibility of the Supplier. Support services are offered directly to participants by qualified and experienced staff or via external providers with the expertise to deliver the support required.

Such support is targeted at participants who have significant barriers to learning and employment, and/or require additional input of resources in terms of training time, equipment, or support, but do not fall into the disabled category.

### **Traineeships 2016**

A new Northern Ireland strategy for youth training (Generating Our Success) was published in June 2015. The new system, to be introduced from September 2017, will deliver a step-change to the youth training system at Level 2, which will be branded 'Traineeships'.

The Department is currently testing aspects of the new model through a number of traineeship pilots.

### **ApprenticeshipsNI**

This programme is open to those who have attained the minimum school-leaving age, are either entering or already in employment and contracted to work a minimum of 21 hours per week. Apprentices follow a national training framework which leads to attainment of a competence based qualification at Level 2 or 3, Essential Skills and a knowledge based qualification. The frameworks are designed by

Sector Skills Councils and Industry Representative Bodies to meet the need of each particular sector.

In the case of apprentices aged 16-24, the Department for Employment and Learning funds 100% of the cost of off-the-job training. Funding for apprentices aged 25 years and over is focused on priority economic areas (including Electric Power Engineering ) and set at fifty percent of that available for 16-24 year olds.

### **Disability Support**

For both ApprenticeshipsNI and Training for Success, Disability support is available from Disability Support Suppliers (DSS) separately contracted by the Department. Training Suppliers work with these organisations to ensure that appropriate arrangements are put in place to assist participants in their training and in the achievement of the best possible outcomes, where such support is deemed to be of benefit to the participant. It should be noted that not every participant with a disability will require such support.

In addition, disability supplements may be payable to Training Suppliers to provide additional resources in terms of training time, specialist equipment or other support in order for participants to benefit fully from training.

In exceptional circumstances, where a Training Supplier identifies the possibility of a disability which had not been previously known, referral for assessment by the Department's Occupational Psychology Service may be made through the Department's Careers Service. The resultant assessment will assist in the determination of any additional

support needs within training.

### **Steps to Work/Employment Service Support/Steps2Success**

Steps to Work (StW) was the Department's main adult return to work provision. It was a flexible programme which tailored provision to the individual's needs with the aim of assisting participants who were unemployed or economically inactive to find and sustain employment. StW offered participants the opportunity to undertake work experience, qualifications, training, and assistance for those interested in self-employment, subsidised employment and intensive help with job search.

As an additional aid to support the delivery of the Department's Youth Employment Scheme (YES) the StW programme was flexed to incorporate two new youth strands, i.e. Work Experience and Skills Development. All strands were delivered by contracted providers.

In October 2014 the Department introduced the Steps 2 Success (S2S) programme to replace Steps to Work. S2S is delivered by Lead contractors with extensive supply chains across three contract areas. S2S differs from previous provision by moving from a heavily prescribed model to one in which the contractors are allowed flexibility to engage with clients and to identify their individual needs and agree a Progression into Employment Plan. The level of service delivered to each individual is underwritten a Service Guarantee.

The three Lead Contractors have been set challenging targets that build on the actual performance achieved in Steps to Work, with an emphasis on sustaining employment. The first, limited, performance figures were published in February 2016 and covered performance in

the first three months of the programme's operation.

In April 2015 the department introduced Into Work Training Support as an 18 month pilot delivered by the six Further Education colleges. This programme delivers short vocational relevant training to Employment Service customers who are almost job ready.

### **Widening Participation**

Widening participation in higher education (HE) is a key priority for the Department for Employment and Learning. Widening participation in higher education facilitates and increases the participation of those groups which are currently under represented in HE in particular students from disadvantaged backgrounds and students with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Since 2000 the Department has been addressing the issue of widening participation in higher education through a number of broad policy directions and a number of specific actions. These actions have included:

- an increase in HE provision in universities and in higher education provision delivered in the Further Education Colleges (includes anything at level 4 and above e.g. HND, HNC and Foundation Degrees) ;
- the introduction of Foundation Degrees;
- a widening participation premium paid to HE Institutions in respect of students from disadvantaged backgrounds;
- a widening access premium paid to HE Institutions in respect of students with disabilities;
- special initiative funding to develop partnerships between the

- universities and schools, colleges and local communities in areas of high deprivation and with traditionally low levels of participation in HE;
- capital funding to assist the universities improve access for disabled students;
  - a wide range of Student Support measures including means-tested maintenance grants, loans and allowances. Disabled Students Allowances (DSA) covers the extra costs of any support a student may require throughout their course as a direct result of their disability, mental health condition or specific learning difficulty. DSA can be available to provide specialist equipment, non-medical helpers support and reasonable extra travel costs incurred by the student to attend the university or college course as a result of a disability; and
  - the introduction of a requirement upon higher education providers who wish to charge tuition fees above the standard level to have a Widening Access and Participation Plan in place which includes the provision of; bursaries for students from disadvantaged backgrounds and “outreach” activities to promote / support widening participation in higher education.

The higher education providers have demonstrated a significant commitment to widening participation. As a result, Northern Ireland’s record of participation in higher education has increased steadily and compares very favorably to other areas of the United Kingdom – with participation rates for young people at almost 50%.

Northern Ireland has also been very successful in achieving its

objectives of raising motivation, aspirations and attainment of students who otherwise may not have considered going to higher education. In academic year 2014/15 around 34% of our higher education students came from the two most-deprived Multiple Deprivation Quintiles of Northern Ireland.

However, despite the above success certain parts of the Northern Ireland community continue to be under-represented in higher education. The Department recognises that addressing disadvantage and social exclusion will require coordinated action and consequently it is leading on the delivery of Access to Success, an integrated Regional Strategy for Widening Participation in Higher Education. It is being supported in this by other government departments the Higher Education Institutions, the Further Education Colleges and other relevant stakeholders.

The Department's vision is that by 2020 any appropriately qualified individual in Northern Ireland should be able to gain access to higher education that is right for them, irrespective of their personal or social background or location of study. Learners should be able to progress to a level which fulfils their potential and to get proper recognition and respect for their achievements from employers, educationalists and the wider community. Efforts should be focused on ensuring that the people who are most able but least likely to participate are given every encouragement and support to achieve the necessary qualifications to apply to, and to benefit from, the higher education that is right for them.

The Department has continued the implementation of Access to

Success. The strategy has a strong focus on the creation of a more accessible sector in which the people who are most able but least likely to participate are given every encouragement and support to apply to, and to benefit from, higher education.

Significant progress has been made on a range of measures in the strategy. These include:

- the launch in March 2014 of “Reach Higher” a single, centralised and co-ordinated higher education awareness and aspiration raising campaign to better communicate the benefits of higher education to under-represented sections of the community;
- the introduction in 2015 of the “Reach” programme which aims to expand the range of aspiration and educational attainment raising programmes at school, college, community and the workplace;
- the introduction of Widening Access and Participation Plans – which include a summary of an institution’s widening participation strategy, a review of its past achievement against regional benchmarks and a detailed programme of anticipated progress each year towards its own targets;
- the development of additional support measures for students to sustain continuing participation; and
- an expansion in employer demand led Foundation Degrees in the workplace.

### **Young People not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)**

DEL takes the lead on the Executive’s “Pathways to Success” strategy

for young people not in education, employment or training (NEET).

The strategy contains a three tier package aimed at:

- preventing young people missing opportunities for Education and Training, and/or becoming unemployed;
- helping young people in the 16-18 age group, especially those facing barriers; and
- assisting unemployed young people aged 18-24 more generally.

The strategy contains an Action Plan which pulls together these tiers and actions across Departments and supports implementation. Implementation is further supported by a delivery infrastructure including the NEET Advisory Group which is further outlined below.

Pathways to Success has a particular focus on helping those young people who face barriers to participation, while also dovetailing with complementary proposals to tackle the wider problem of youth unemployment in the current challenging economic context.

Barriers are characteristics of a young person's circumstances which may have been present from early on in a person's life. Young people who are not in education, employment or training and face barriers are, for the most part, young people who: are or have been in care; left care; or are on the edge of care; have had a negative experience of education; have suffered from bullying at school; have literacy and numeracy problems; are carers; are parents; have been involved with drug and alcohol abuse; have a physical or learning disability; have committed a crime; have a mental illness; suffer an economic disadvantage; and/or are homeless.

These characteristics are often not mutually exclusive and in many

cases a young person will experience several of them simultaneously. In addition to this, the relationship between individual factors is also complex. Young people who are not in education, employment or training are not a homogeneous group and there exists a wide spectrum of problems and barriers which can be multiple and compounded, often from their earliest years.

The NEET Advisory Group, chaired by DEL, brings together key decision makers from government departments, voluntary and community, education, health, social care and business sectors and local government.

The group meets 3 times a year to monitor the effectiveness of the implementation of the 'Pathways to Success' strategy and provides advice and guidance to the Minister and the Department on a regular basis.

In developing the 'Pathways to Success' strategy, DEL also helped establish the independent NEET Strategy Forum to engage and help join up those organisations in the voluntary and community sector who deliver services in this area. The Forum consists of some 80 members currently, membership is open and Forum members are also represented on the NEET Advisory Group.

Data on NEETs in Northern Ireland is limited (the latest Labour Force Survey (Q1 2014) estimates the number of young people age 16-24 who are NEET to be 32,000 and of this an estimated 8,000 are aged 16-19 and plans are underway to augment our information. In support of implementation, a research project was undertaken to examine the potential for developing a Young Persons Tracking System for

Northern Ireland. The key findings are currently being considered and the Department is investigating the logistics of putting a Tracking System in place.

A formal evaluation of Pathways to Success (PtS) has been undertaken by the Centre for Economic & Social Inclusion, (CESI, a London based not-for-profit company). The outcomes of the evaluation were positive and will be used to inform decisions on the future direction of Pathways to Success, including a refreshed PtS Strategy and Action Plan. The final evaluation report has been published on the DEL website.

The strategy also introduced a number of specific new initiatives which build on existing programmes. These include the:

### **Community Family Support Programme**

The CFSP was an initiative designed by DEL to help families make a life changing decision to enhance their prospects and support them to become full participants in society. The programme provides a wraparound family intervention support and employability mentoring service that aims to support all family members and break the cycle of intergenerational unemployment and associated poverty in communities.

CFSP is now supported through the NI ESF Programme 2014-2020. Thematic Objective 9, Investment Priority 9(i) (b) of the programme

has the specific objective of enhancing social inclusion by reducing the number of NEETS participants aged 16 and over within families receiving CFSP.

The targets over the lifetime of the programme are:

- 4,200 families to receive Community Family Support;
- To support 12,600 NEET participants aged 16 and over in families receiving Community Family Support;
- 6,300 NEET participants (50%) to be engaged in job searching upon leaving;
- 2,520 NEET participants (20%) to enter education/training upon leaving.
- 2,500 NEET participants (20%) to gain a qualification upon leaving;
- 1,260 NEET participants (10%) to be employed upon leaving.

A total of €26,336,554 (Approximately £22.18m) will be allocated to enhancing social inclusion by reducing the number of NEET participants within families receiving CFSP during the lifetime of the ESF programme. The figure is comprised of 40% funding from ESF, 25% from DEL and a further 35% match funding from other private or public sources.

The programme is currently in year 2 of the first call (spanning a three year period from April 2015 - March 2018). Six CFSP Projects are currently being funded and are underway, with a total allocated funding of £8.025 million. This comprises of:

- ESF (40%) - £3.209 million
- Departmental match funding (25%) - £2.006 million
- External Match-funding (35%) - £2.81 million

Completion of the database project is still ongoing therefore robust performance data is not yet available. Performance data is being collected and collated manually in the interim by the ESF Project Delivery Branch.

### **Youth Employment Scheme**

The Youth Employment Scheme (YES) was introduced in July 2012 to provide young people aged between 18 and 24 years with the opportunity to gain skills to help them compete for jobs during the economic downturn.

YES was particularly effective in engaging employers. Employers, large and small, were committed and willing delivery partners, offering suitable opportunities for young people. Over 5,500 employers signed an agreement to participate in the scheme, which at the end of March 2015 had helped 3,419 participants move into employment.

A refreshed Youth Employment Scheme work experience scheme, commenced in August 2015, offering a short (2-8 week) placement with an appropriate employer.

### **Employer Subsidies**

Building on the success of previous subsidies, two 26-week Employer Subsidies were introduced in December 2015: one for employers willing to employ 18-24 year olds who were unemployed for 13 weeks

or more, and another for employers recruiting a jobseeker aged 25+ who were unemployed for 26 weeks or more. These subsidies closed to new applications on 21 March 2016).

### **Disability Employment Provision**

The Department, through the Disability Employment Service (DES) and the Employment Adviser Teams across the Jobs and Benefits Office and Jobcentre network, continue to provide a specialist employment service for people with disabilities to help them progress towards and move into and retain employment.

The Disability Employment Service manages the following range of specialist programmes and services:

Access to Work (NI)

Work Connect

Workable (NI)

Condition Management Programme

Job Introduction Scheme

Occupational Psychology Service

Work Connect programme - from 1 April 14 – 31 Mar 16 there have been 928 referrals, resulting in 589 Programme starts and 230 people with disabilities into employment.

Condition Management Programme - A total of 2,562 people with health conditions/disabilities were assisted.

Residential Training - 9 clients with disabilities were supported.

Workable (NI) - At 31st March 2016, 606 people were receiving support from the programme.

Targets for starts and progression for those on the programme now requiring less support in work have been achieved.

Access to Work (NI) programme – At 31 March 2016 739 people with disabilities are being supported.

In addition to the above programmes, DES staff work directly with Employment Service Advisers to identify the support needs of people with disabilities to help them to return to work or source internal or external provision to meet their needs. The Department is, therefore, very much aware that people with disabilities require engagement in meaningful work activity to enhance their confidence and learn skills for work. The Department has a close partnership working with the Disability Sector, which is crucial to ensure that as many people with disabilities as possible reach their employment potential.

An Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities was launched, by the Minister for Employment and Learning on 23 March 2016. The strategy is a five year strategy which will run until March 2021. The implementation of the strategy will be delivered through an annual action plan under each of the key themes.

Whilst the strategy has been led by officials from the Department for Employment and Learning's (DELS) Disability Employment Service it has been developed in partnership with key representatives from the main disability organisations.

The strategy is focused on supporting those people with the most

significant disability- related barriers to work, but who want to work, are motivated, and with the right type of and level of support, will secure and sustain paid employment opportunities across every employment sector.

### **Ring Fenced Vacancies**

DES continues to work in close collaboration and partnership with local disability organisations and employers to identify employment opportunities and quality work placements for people with disabilities. In 2015/16, there have been further recruitment exercises carried out with Belfast City Council and, following on from the very successful Inclusive Employment Scheme with Queens University Belfast, DES facilitated work placement opportunities for a second year.

Through the previous partnership approach with the disability sector, a number of organisations are supporting eight individuals with disabilities in a variety of work placement posts across a number of schools in the University campus.

In all of the recruitment exercises, DES works very closely with the disability sector organisations to select the most appropriate candidates and help prepare them for employment or the work placement interview process.

### **Further Education Pilot initiative for disabled students**

DES has been running a pilot, Work First, with the Further Education sector (Northern, North Western & Southern Regional College) that will increase the opportunities for students within the Discrete Learning Units to gain employment and realise their potential in the labour market.

From September 2015 to March 2016, 30 students have participated on the project. 24 of these students are still in work experience placements and 6 have secured permanent paid employment. Since beginning of project in 2013, 221 students have participated in the project and to date, 65 have secured permanent paid employment.

Looking ahead to 2016/17, DES, working with colleagues from FE Policy, are in the process of organising meetings with all of the FE College co-ordinators to establish this initiative as a mainstream partnership between DES, the FE College network and the local disability sector throughout Northern Ireland.

### **Enabling Success; the Economic Inactivity Strategy**

The Department took the lead on the development and implementation of the Executive's major, new strategy to reduce inactivity in Northern Ireland.

Following an extensive consultation and development process over a number of years, the strategy was finally approved by the Executive on 16 April 2015.

Developed in partnership with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, the Department for Social Development, Invest NI and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, the strategy focuses on the forms of economic inactivity which are caused when an individual's particular personal circumstances, often combined with various structural issues, geographical nuances and economic conditions, restrict their access to the labour market. The

strategy specifically seeks to help the following target groups:

- individuals with work-limiting health conditions or disabilities;
- lone parents; and
- individuals with caring commitments.

The strategy commits to help people in these target groups to overcome their personal labour market barriers, on a purely voluntary basis, by providing the tailored solutions required to move into employment. In so doing, the strategy also seeks to increase the overall level of employment in Northern Ireland. At a macro level, this will have the potential to increase Northern Ireland's economic competitiveness in the global market.

The strategy will be delivered across a 15 year lifespan through 11 cross departmental projects with a strategic goal by 2030 to contribute towards a stable and competitive employment rate in Northern Ireland which exceeds the United Kingdom average, through a reduction in the proportion of the working age population (16-64) classified as economically inactive.

Implementation of the strategy will commence once resources have been secured on a cross departmental basis.

### **United Youth Programme**

The Department is leading on United Youth, a good relations programme that aims to provide flexible, high-quality, young-person-centred opportunities for 16–24 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). The programme is a key commitment in the Northern Ireland Executive's 'Together: Building a United

## Community' Strategy.

Following an extensive co-design process, 12 pilots ran across Northern Ireland from August 2015 until the end of March 2016, involving over 300 young people and funded by the Northern Ireland Executive's Change Fund.

The purpose of the Pilot Phase was to test a range of approaches with a view to developing a service design framework for the United Youth Programme post 2015/16, and to test an Outcomes and Principles Framework. This framework set out the outcomes participants were to be supported to achieve, in the form of capabilities, as well as principles for delivery.

One of the four outcomes was good relations – addressing community division, sectarianism and racism, and developing respect for diversity and sensitivity towards the values, beliefs, customs and traditions of others.

The other three outcomes were citizenship, personal development and employability. Similarly, one of the eight principles was respect for difference; tackling sectarianism and racism, and other discriminatory and damaging attitudes and behaviors.

The pilot providers were tasked with delivering their activities on a cross-community basis, and this was monitored throughout via a series of Implementation and Planning Review meetings with each provider.

An independent external evaluation of the pilot phase, focusing on

delivery of outcomes, will report in Summer 2016.

The Northern Ireland Executive has secured EU PEACE IV funding (Children and Young People Priority 2.1) to deliver a cross-border Youth Initiative / United Youth Programme going forward.. A cross-border programme level target of engaging with up to 10,000 14–24 year olds who are NEET or are at risk of becoming NEET has been agreed.

### **Careers Service**

DEL's first point of contact with young people in schools is through the Careers Service. The Careers Service implements a social inclusion policy which focuses on addressing the needs of young people facing, or vulnerable to, social exclusion, including young people with disabilities. Towards this end, Partnership Agreements have been put in place with post-primary schools including special schools to support the schools' careers education programme.

The Agreements allow careers advisers to attend Transition Plan meetings of Year 10 pupils and subsequent Annual Reviews. This helps young people and their parents/guardians to make informed decisions about the options available to them on leaving school. Advisers have an active role in the transition planning process of young people with a Statement of Special Educational Need. Data-sharing agreements are signed by school principals and careers managers in post primary schools. The purpose of this agreement is to share relevant pupil data between the school and DEL, to enable the Department to conduct its statutory functions.

The Careers Service, with parental /guardian consent as appropriate,

refers school leavers with a disability or learning difficulty who are interested in progressing into training to one DEL's contracted Disability Support Providers. These providers specialise in disability and learning support; and include Disability Action, the Cedar Foundation, Sensory Learning Support and Ulster Supported Employment (USEL).

The Careers Service is represented on the Autism Strategy Regional Multi-Agency Implementation Team (ASRMAIT) and networks extensively with partner organisations to ensure appropriate and timely provision of careers services to clients with autism.

In 2015/16 DEL careers advisers provided a total of 11,904 guidance interviews to adult clients (of which 6,953 had disclosed a disability). Figures for young people for the 15/16 business year are not yet available.

In the 2015/16 business year 1,044 parents/clients were made aware of pre entry training support by DEL's Careers Service and a total of 159 young people subsequently availed of this support.

The Careers Service has established links with all 5 Health Trust Regional Autism Co-ordinators to ensure that appropriate referral arrangements are in place and that clients with Autism are aware of and have access to careers services.

### **Careers Strategy**

On the 1st March 2016, DEL and the Department of Education launched a careers strategy: Preparing for Success Strategy 2015-

2020.

Preparing for Success 2015-2020, sets out both Departments' strategic vision for careers education and guidance for this five year period. The overall vision for the strategy is that young people and adults are able to develop the skills and confidence to realise their potential and follow the career path which best enables them to contribute to the community, and to support economic development and social prosperity.

<https://www.delni.gov.uk/publications/preparing-success> Preparing for success 2015 -202 clearly articulates that the careers service will continue to support young people with disabilities at key transition stages in school.

This strategy also articulates that the Careers Service will play a key role in DEL's Employment and Skills Strategy for people with disabilities to ensure a seamless transition for those who need support from school age right through to adulthood.

### **Inter-Departmental Liaison**

In late 2013, the DEL Minister raised the cross cutting issue of transitions and provision for young people with severe learning difficulties/disabilities at the post 19 stage with the Inter-Ministerial Group on Mental Health and Learning Disability (led by DHSSPS). Subsequently, DEL (under the auspices of the Disability Strategy) agreed to Chair a cross Departmental Transitions Focus Group to scope the role of relevant Departments, identify issues of concern and propose options for addressing same.

In addition, DEL officials have engaged with DHSSPS officials and the Chair of the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership's (CYPSP) Transitions Sub-Group to consider the Health and Social Care Board's (HSCB) review of 'Day Opportunities' and how improvements to Transition services can be taken forward across a number of key Departments' responsibilities.

### **Public Appointments**

The Department has taken a number of steps to enhance diversity amongst applicants. These include using social media to publicise competitions, engaging with diversity bodies, and clarifying and streamlining the application process. Officials continue to liaise internally and with colleagues across other Departments with a view to increasing diversity and identifying new ways to broaden interest in public appointments.

PART A

- 2** Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2015-16 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

A copy of the Department's Action Plan, which includes progress during 2015-16, is included with this report.

PART A

- 3** Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2015-16 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

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

Please provide any details and examples:

- 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:

- 3b** What aspect of the Equality Scheme prompted or led to the change(s)? *(tick all that apply)*

As a result of the organisation's screening of a policy *(please give details):*

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

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

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

Other *(please specify and give details):*

## 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 2015-16 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:

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2015-16 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:

6 In the 2015-16 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

PART A

- Yes, in some departments/jobs
- No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisation's ongoing corporate plan
- No, the organisation's planning cycle does not coincide with this 2014-15 report
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

**Equality action plans/measures**

**7** Within the 2015-16 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed:	1	Actions ongoing:	8	Actions to commence:	0
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Please provide any details and examples (*in addition to question 2*):

Details of these can be found in the Department's Action plan which is appended.

**8** Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2015-16 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

**9** In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2015-16 reporting period, the following have been identified: (*tick all that apply*)

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

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

PART A

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

All the time                       Sometimes                       Never

- 11** Please provide any **details and examples of good practice** in consultation during the 2015-16 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:

**Shared Future Policy Proofing**

The Department continues to carry out ‘Shared Future Policy Proofing’, a process which the Minister introduced in April 2012. This is applied to all significant new policies and business cases. The purpose of this process is to determine whether proposals are likely to contribute positively to a shared society or inadvertently reinforce divisions, in which case mitigating measures would need to be considered.

**Ring Fenced Vacancies**

The Disability Employment Service continued to work in close collaboration with Queens University Belfast to support 8 employment placements in a variety of jobs across a range of University campus. DES worked closely with the disability sector organisations to select disabled people, prepare them for job interview and support them in their placements.

**Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities**

Whilst this is being led by officials from the Department for Employment and Learning’s (DELs) Disability Employment Service it has been carried out in partnership with key representatives from the main disability organisations.

- 12** In the 2015-16 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently used by consultees**: *(tick all that apply)*

- Face to face meetings  
 Focus groups  
 Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing  
 Questionnaires

PART A

- Information/notification by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation
- Internet discussions
- Telephone consultations
- Other (*please specify*): Citizenspace consultation software for government departments and citizen engagement

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:

Due to the nature of this consultation the respondents would have come under the Section 75 disability category

- 13** Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2015-16 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

Yes       No       Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

- 14** Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2015-16 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

Yes       No       Not applicable – no commitment to review

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

*[insert link to any web pages where screening templates and/or other reports associated with Equality Scheme commitments are published]*

<http://www.delni.gov.uk/index/equality-and-good-relations/es-equality-impact-assessment.htm>

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

6

- 16 Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2015-16:

2	Policy consultations conducted with <b>screening</b> assessment presented.
0	Policy consultations conducted <b>with an equality impact assessment (EQIA)</b> presented.
0	Consultations for an <b>EQIA</b> 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:

#### **Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities**

The Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities was launched, by the Minister for Employment and Learning on 23 March 2016. The strategy is a five year strategy which will run until March 2021. The implementation of the strategy will be delivered through an annual action plan under each of the key themes. The strategy is focused on supporting those people with the most significant disability related barriers to work, but who want to work, are motivated, and with the right type of and level of support, will secure and sustain paid employment opportunities across every employment sector. The strategy is structured around five key themes, with a number of supporting proposals: empowering and supporting people to gain paid employment; job retention and career development; working with employers; research and development; and strategic partnership and engagement.

#### **The New Further Education Strategy for Northern Ireland**

One of the key strengths of the Further Education sector is that it is accessible to all, both in terms of reaching all levels, types and age of learners, and also the fact that the colleges are locally based and their reach extends into both urban and rural communities. Students within the sector come from a variety of backgrounds and have a range of learning, work and life experiences and the sector plays a valuable role in bringing together a wide cross-section of the community within Northern Ireland. Under the new strategy access to Further Education will continue to be open



data.

The Department in partnership with NISRA identified a need to produce more detailed sub-regional and sub-group statistics from household surveys. Following an in-house feasibility study, it was found that by combining data from four existing core Northern Ireland household surveys such statistics could be produced. As a result, statistics on labour market and other demographic factors have been generated with both greater geographical detail and smaller sampling errors than up to now. The pooled sample survey work has been completed and can now provide more robust estimates of employment, unemployment and inactivity rates as well as age, sex, religion and ethnicity.

### **European Social Fund (ESF)**

The programme is currently in year 2 of the first call (spanning a three year period from April 2015 – March 2018). There are 24 Disability projects that are currently being funded and are underway, with total allocated funding of £40.02 million. This comprises of:

- ESF (40%) - £16.01 million
- Departmental match funding (25%) - £10.006 million
- External Match-funding (35%) - £14.008 million

Completion of the database project is still ongoing therefore robust performance data is not yet available. Performance data is being collected and collated manually in the interim by the ESF Project Delivery Branch

**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:

**22** Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2015-16 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

- 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:

See question 20.

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

- 24** Please report on the activities from the training plan/programme (section 5.4 of the Model Equality Scheme) undertaken during 2015-16, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

The Department continues to emphasise to officials the importance of the application of the statutory duties. This is reinforced with the provision of training to staff and all new entrants to the Department receive an Equality and Good Relations presentation as part of their online induction training. Training in Section 75 and the Equality Scheme was identified as a priority for the Department in 2013/14; a commitment that has continued into 2015/16.

- 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:

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

- 26** Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2015-16, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

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

- 27** How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2015-16?

Insert number here:

2
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Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

The department received 2 complaints, both relating to the NI European Social Fund (NIESF) Programme 2014-2020. The first complaint queried the screening decision of the programme and the second complaint queried the screening decision and the level of qualifications available to women participants under the Programme. Having considered the issues raised in the complaints, the Department believes it complied with its Equality Scheme in both cases.

### Section 3: Looking Forward

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

The Equality Scheme is due for review in 2016.

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)*

No

30 In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next (2016-17) reporting period? *(please tick any that apply)*

- Employment
- Goods, facilities and services
- Legislative changes
- Organisational changes/ new functions
- Nothing specific, more of the same
- Other (please state):

**PART B: 'Disability Duties'**  
**Annual Report 1 April 2015 / 31 March 2016**

**1. How many action measures for this reporting period have been**

14



0

0

Fully  
Achieved?

Partially  
Achieved?

Not  
Achieved?

2. Please outline the following detail 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>1</sup>	Outcomes / Impact <sup>2</sup>
National <sup>3</sup>	The Department was represented on the Diversity Working Group chaired by the Commissioner for Public Appointments (CPA).	Public Appointments Forum meetings attended quarterly and Department has contributed to actions being co-ordinated	Use of alternative processes e.g. new approaches to drafting essential criteria and publicising competitions, encourage individuals to apply who might not otherwise have

<sup>1</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>2</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>3</sup> **National** : Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments

	<p>We are considering the recommendations made in the CPA Report and will be reviewing DEL procedures.</p> <p>We are also working with colleagues in other Departments on a Public Appointments Forum to take forward actions from the Report on a NICS wide basis.</p> <p>Specific actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application forms offered in accessible versions (large print, braille and audio formats)</li> <li>• Option to request application by</li> </ul>	<p>centrally.</p> <p>DEL procedures reviewed internally and range of approaches identified for consideration and use, as appropriate, during each competition, in order to increase the appeal of public appointment opportunities to a wider and more diverse range of people.</p> <p>Use of social media to publicise competitions, engaging with diversity bodies, clarifying and streamlining the application process.</p>	<p>done so.</p> <p>Initiatives to date appear to have had a significant positive effect on applicant numbers.</p> <p>Regular monitoring of feedback from applicants, including people with disabilities, helps inform policy and procedure.</p>
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	<p>Textphone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision made for any special requirements at interview</li> </ul> <p>A list of groups representing disabled people have been informed about each competition and asked to advertise the competition on their website, by an email shot to their members, or by re tweeting.</p> <p>DEL public appointment competitions have been promoted through the DEL and OFMDFM websites, NI Executive Twitter Account, NI Direct and Linked IN with a view to increasing diversity.</p>	<p>During the period of this Annual Report DEL ran two Public Appointment Competitions, inclusive of the most recent competition to recruit Further Education College Governors, which were promoted through social media in addition to the adverts placed in local press.</p>	
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	<p>Feedback request is issued to everyone who requests an application form for a Public Appointment to enable us to identify and address any barriers which exist to applying for a public life position.</p> <p>The DEL website included a link to benefits information and advice for persons who might be reluctant to apply for or accept a Public Appointment for fear it might affect their entitlement to disability benefits.</p> <p>We have already made a number of amendments to DEL processes in an effort to</p>		
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	<p>increase the number and diversity of applicants to public appointment positions, such as varying our approach to setting essential criteria for posts.</p> <p>We continue to seek to identify additional measures which might increase the appeal of DEL public appointments to a wider audience.</p> <p>On the DEL website and in competition documentation, we have affirmed our commitment to ensuring as far as possible that the public boards we sponsor reflect the diverse society in which they operate.</p>		
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	All venues are checked to ensure they are accessible for people with disabilities to attend and make their contribution and any other reasonable adjustments requested are accommodated.		
Regional <sup>4</sup>	All venues for external events checked to ensure they are accessible for people with disabilities to attend and make their contribution.		<p>Evaluation of and feedback from events helps to inform future management.</p> <p>The views / contribution from people with disabilities will help inform future policy.</p>
Local <sup>5</sup>	All venues for external events checked to ensure they are accessible for people with		Evaluation of and feedback from events helps to inform future management.

<sup>4</sup> **Regional:** Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level

<sup>5</sup> **Local :** Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local fora.

PART B

	disabilities to attend and make their contribution.		The views / contribution from people with disabilities will help inform future policy.
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2(b) What **training action measures** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	A new Employment and Support Allowance Customer Journey training was designed and roll-out of the delivery will be completed by the end of June '16 to all Employment Advisers and Team leaders across the Jobs and Benefits Office (JBO) network.	460 front-line Advisers trained to date	Increased knowledge of front-line Employment Advisers and Team leaders, evidenced by the evaluation of the training and increased referrals and sign posting to specialist disability employment and health programme provision, such as CMP, Work Connect, Workable and Access to Work.
2	Condition Management Programme (CMP) and Work Connect Providers continue to visit the JBO offices on an ongoing basis and also on request to explain and promote	CMP teams from all five Trusts have visited local offices within their geographical area.  Work Connect staff have conducted visits to all 35 local	Increased referrals and participation on these two specialist disability employment and health programmes.

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	these specialist programmes/services.	JBO offices in 2015/16 and continue to visit on an ongoing basis.	
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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	Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities  Following earlier pre-consultation events, a formal public consultation process took place between September and	58 responses received; 22 from individuals and 36 on behalf of organisations.	Feedback from the public consultation process directly influenced the final Employment Strategy document – this was acknowledged by disability sector representatives.

	<p>December 2015.</p> <p>This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The use of a software package “Citizen Space”, to gather responses on-line or in hard copy, as preferred by the respondents.</li> <li>- Four regional public consultation and two additional disability specific consultation events.</li> <li>- To assist people</li> </ul>	<p>Very positive feedback from the disability sector and people with disabilities was received. Over 200 people, including people with a variety of disabilities, attended these consultation events.</p> <p>9 of the responses were received via the Easy Read version of the questionnaire.</p>	<p>The new ‘Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities’ – Supporting Inclusive Employment, was launched on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2016.</p>
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	<p>with learning difficulties, an Easy Read version outlining the draft Strategy, along with a subsequent questionnaire was provided.</p>		
2	<p>The Department continues to work in collaboration with Employment Service staff throughout the JBO network and Supported Employment Solutions Consortium (SES) who have published a range of Work Connect client profiles and Good News Stories via the SES website.</p>	<p>During 2015/16 SES have published 10 Case Studies (including 1 Employer Case Study) and continue to promote the programme through regular /quarterly Business publications.</p>	<p>Increased promotion and awareness of disability employment services.</p>

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

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Financial assistance provided to Further Education (FE) colleges to help provide additional support to those students with a learning difficulty and / or disability (SLDD) through the Additional Support Fund (ASF).	Provision of technical and personal support to 3,505 students studying Level 3 and below FE provision in 2014/15.	SLDD in mainstream and discrete provision receive appropriate levels of additional support to allow them to successfully complete their studies.
2	Disability Employment Service continues to attend Employment Service Job Fairs and delivered presentations at events.	Activities included attending events, manning display stands, dealing with specific enquiries from the public on the programmes and services of DES, preparing and delivering Powerpoint presentations and managing question and answer	Increased awareness by the public and employers of the help available through Disability Employment Service to assist people with disabilities find work and retain work.

PART B

		sessions.	
3	The Department's Disability Employment Service worked with disability sector organisations to place people with disabilities into employment opportunities ring-fenced by employers Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.	Agreed applicants with disability organisations, designed and delivered pre-employment training, scheduled interviews and put appropriate programme support in place.	Position of employment secured for individual with mental health difficulties. Three others have been held on a reserve list for future opportunities
4	Continued delivery of the Further Education / Employment Service partnership service, aimed at helping people with learning disabilities into employment.	The Department's staff is working, together with Regional College staff to canvass on behalf of students leaving Discrete Learning provision to help them secure employment with their work experience placement employers.	15 students secured employment over the 12 month period to 31 March 2016 period. Departmental staff are currently engaging with the students, their parents, college tutors and employers in an attempt to assist the students find work.
5	Extensive negotiations	The Disability Employment	Eight people with disabilities started

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	<p>involving Queen's University, the Disability Employment Service and local disability organisations took place to agree the way forward for Year 2 of the work placement scheme at Queen's.</p>	<p>Service provided central co-ordination between disability organisations, potential participants and Managers in Queen's. Disability organisations identified disabled clients interested in placements in a variety of roles. Pen Pictures submitted to Queen's. Clients matched to roles.</p>	<p>their work placements at the beginning of 2016 in a range of posts across the University network. Local disability organisations will provide support to participants and their Managers throughout their time working at Queen's. The placements offer a variety of work hours to suit both business needs and the needs of the people with disabilities.</p>
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2 (e) Please outline **any additional action measures** that were fully achieved other than those listed in the tables above:

	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
1	Through a contract delivered by Supported Employment Solutions	Good local partnerships established between	From April 2015 – March 2016 there were 328 referrals

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	<p>(SES), Work Connect offers assistance which helps unemployed clients who are in receipt of health related benefits, ESA/IB find and sustain employment.</p>	<p>Employment Service staff and the SES providers.</p> <p>A specialist disability pre-employment support service for people across N. Ireland.</p>	<p>to the programme with 221 starting the programme. The total number of clients obtaining employment was 77. The number who sustained after 26 weeks in work was 37.</p>
2	<p>The DES working in collaboration with Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT) has worked in partnership to provide a “one stop shop” advice clinic for people with autism on a range of issues from e.g. Education through to employment.</p> <p>The multi-agency advisory team is comprised of representatives from BHSCT, the Department of</p> <p>Employment and Learning (DEL), the Disability Employment Service (DES), the ‘Improving Benefit Uptake Team’ from the Social</p>	<p>A member of DES staff attends the weekly clinics which are held on Tuesday afternoons in both Ballymena and Belfast</p>	<p>Feedback from people on the Autistic spectrum and the department’s partners in the delivery of this service has been very positive and has led to a number of people availing of various public services, including those relating to careers advice or employment.</p>

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	<p>Security Agency, and two voluntary sector providers, the National Autistic Society (NAS) and the Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB).</p> <p>A similar clinic is in operation in Ballymena, the Northern Health and Social Care Trust area.</p>		
3	<p>Through contracts delivered by three local disability organisations who have extensive experience of meeting the vocational needs of people with disabilities: Disability Action; Supported Employment Solutions (SES); and Ulster Supported Employment Ltd (USEL), Workable (NI) provides a flexible range of long term support to assist people with disabilities who have substantial barriers to employment, to find and retain work.</p>	<p>Local partnerships between Employment Service staff and Workable (NI) Providers.</p>	<p>Programme participation at 31 March 2016 was 614. During the year 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 211 people started receiving support through Workable (NI).</p>

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4	<p>The Condition Management Programme (CMP) is a cross departmental health and employment service to help clients manage their own condition and firmly refocus them on their potential to progress towards, move into or return to paid employment. CMP is a voluntary programme and originally was aimed at clients in receipt of ESA benefit but has now become more flexible / adaptable to allow entry to clients in receipt of JSA.</p>	<p>CMP is facilitated by Healthcare Professionals from the 5 Health Trusts throughout Northern Ireland.</p>	<p>CMP Participation for 2015-16 was 1608 Referrals and 1113 Starts, with a percentage uptake of 69%.</p> <p>Of those clients who fully participated and completed CMP, 68% achieved a positive outcome.</p> <p>From April 2016 CMP will be open to clients who also avail of Workable (NI) and/or Access to Work.</p>

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

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones <sup>6</sup> / Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
1	The implementation of Access to Success an integrated regional strategy for widening participation in higher education in Northern Ireland by students from disadvantaged backgrounds including students with learning difficulties and disabilities.	<p>Significant milestones in the implementation of the Access to Success strategy during 2015/16 include:</p> <p>Continuation throughout 2015/16 of “Reach Higher” a single, centralised and co-ordinated higher education awareness and</p>	<p>Survey research indicates that the “Reach Higher” campaign continues to increase the level</p>	<p>The Access to Success strategy articulates a longer term vision for widening participation in Northern Ireland by 2020, and maps the actions required to deliver it. Although the strategy envisages a 2020 timeframe for its full effects to be realised, Access to Success has been formally reviewed and updated to ensure</p>

<sup>6</sup> **Milestones** – Please outline what part progress has been made towards the particular measures; even if full output or outcomes/ impact have not been achieved.

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		<p>aspiration raising campaign to better communicate the benefits of higher education to under-represented sections of the community;</p> <p>the availability during 2015/16 of the “R.E.A.C.H” programme, which aims to expand the range of aspiration and educational attainment raising programmes at school, college, community and the workplace;</p>	<p>of awareness of the value of higher education among the target groups, including disabled students.</p> <p>Funding is available for universities and colleges to develop specific initiatives to raise the aspirations and educational attainment of students with learning difficulties</p>	<p>that it can meet the identified needs at this time.</p>
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		<p>the approval of institutional Widening Access and Participation Plans (WAPP) in respect of academic year 2016/17, which include detailed programmes to accelerate progress towards the higher education institutions' individual WP targets;</p>	<p>and disabilities. .</p> <p>In line with the expectations in Access to Success all HE providers have in their 2016/17 WAPPs identified students with disabilities as a target group for interventions to raise aspirations and educational attainment in order to encourage and support them to apply to and benefit from the HE that is</p>	
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		the monitoring of each institution's performance against its Access Agreement commitments for 2013/14	right for them.  Published the second "Annual Statement on Widening Participation in Higher Education" in respect of academic year 2013/14 - including detail on expenditure on bursaries, outreach activity, and progress against WP targets and milestones.	
2				
3				

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4				

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

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1		
2		
3		

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

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(a) Qualitative

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(b) Quantitative

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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?

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Please delete: ~~Yes~~ / No

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If yes please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

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?

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