

## Department for the Economy



### Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties Annual Progress Report 2017-18

**Contact:**

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

Please insert link or details here

**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 2017 and March 2018**

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

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

- 1 In 2017-18, 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 NI Executive gave a commitment in the Stormont House Agreement to reduce the number of government departments from twelve to nine. As a result, the Department for the Economy (DfE) was established in May 2016. DfE combines the functions of the former Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) and the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL), with the exception of the Employment Service which is now part of the Department for Communities.

A Programme for Government (PFG) 2016-2021 has still not been finalised. In the interim DfE's key work is outlined through an annual Business Planning process. When a PFG is finalised a longer term Corporate Plan will be produced for DfE.

An Equality Scheme for DfE has not yet been finalised. However, many of the commitments in the Equality Schemes of the former DETI and DEL remain relevant to the work of DfE and will feature in DfE's Equality Scheme, when finalised. In addition to these commitments, the Department's Six Monthly Assurance Statement includes an assurance, given by all heads of Division, that Divisions, Units and Branches within the Department that Staff have been made aware of the organisation's Health and Safety Policy and Equality Policies and that these are being complied with and all Divisions conduct equality screening and, if appropriate, Equality Impact Assessments, on all new policies/amendments to existing policies, both internal and external, in line with Section 75 of the NI Act 1998.

The process of screening and the robustness of decisions taken will continue 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.

DfE has screened policies and built equality issues into policies and programmes from an

early stage of policy development. We also recognise the importance of ensuring all our policies comply with the Human Rights Act 1998. During 2017/18, equality screening exercises resulted in 3 policies being screened out. There were no full Equality Impact Assessments carried out during the reporting period.

Links to DfE Policies screened during 2017/18 are provided below:

Revocation of the 2008 Offshore Electricity Development (EIA) Regulations

<https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/publications/revocation-2008-offshore-electricity-development-eia-regulations>

Education Student Support Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018

<https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/publications/equality-screening-education-student-support-regulations-northern-ireland-2018>

Student Fees (Amounts) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017

<https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/economy/Equality-Screening-Education-Student-Support-Amendment.pdf>

Three Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP) were reviewed and completed by Corporate Services during 17/18.

During 2017/18 Corporate Services Health and Safety team made themselves available to assist managers in assessing a range of workplace reasonable adjustments. Requests included specialised seating, variable height desks, and consideration of suitable working arrangements. Phased return to work was also granted to a number of staff who returned after lengthy sick absences. If additional advice was required, requests were referred to the NICS Occupational Health Service. These referrals covered issues such as recommending what type of equipment would help the officer carry out their duties.

### **Public Appointments**

DfE, in conjunction with all other Departments, continues to work towards achieving targets agreed by the NI Executive in February 2016 to achieve gender equality (in aggregated public appointments) by 2017/18 for in-year appointments and by 2020/21 for all other appointments. The number of female applicants rose from 31% in 16/17 to 39% in 17/18.

We are also committed to looking at new ways to increase the numbers of applications from people with disabilities, people from ethnic minorities and younger people. In practice, this means integrating ideas and recommendations made by the Commissioner for Public appointments NI (CPANI) in their 2014 report on 'Under representation and lack of diversity in public appointments'.

A number of the Boards of DfE sponsored bodies (Consumer Council, Tourism NI and the Labour Relations Agency) have also agreed to participate in the Queen's University Graduate School Mentoring Scheme - aimed at encouraging participation rates of people

new to the public appointment arena and to make public bodies more representative of the communities they serve.

During 2017/18 DfE Public Appointments Unit ran two open competitions for 2 new Members of Tourism NI and for 3 new Members of the Consumer Council. A total of 173 applications were received – 106 male (61%) and 67 female (39%). In the Tourism NI competition, 6% of those who applied declared a disability and in the Consumer Council it was (18%). The number of applicants from an ethnic minority background was 4(3%) and 2(4%) respectively.

During 2017/18, the Department introduced new ways to publicise our public appointments vacancies. As well as continuing to use Twitter and LinkedIn, the Department trialled the use of Facebook for the first time to publicise the Tourism NI competition resulting in 10,586 people being reached across the 3 mediums.

With the organiser's agreement, we provided flyers publicising our vacancies at events aimed at women such as the 'NICS Women into Leadership event', the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education 'Women onto Boards' event and the 'Women in Business Award Dinner' which was attended by over 500 guests. We will continue to look out for similar opportunities both internally and externally.

In September 2017, a member of DfE's Public Appointments Unit attended the 'Business on Board Speed Networking event' liaising with community and volunteering representatives encouraging them to register an interest with the DfE's Public Appointments Unit.

DfE Public Appointments Unit continued to participate in a number of other events over the year such as the 'International Day of Persons with a Disabilities' and 'Putting Gender at the Heart of Policy' event which was sponsored by Politics Plus.

### **DfE Diversity Group**

The DfE Diversity Group continued to meet on a quarterly basis. The Diversity Group was established to:

- promote and encourage good diversity practice
- consider all diversity/inclusion issues as they affect staff in the Department
- identify actions to enhance the way we work with each other
- support the DfE Diversity Champion and DfE Racial Champion

The Diversity Group membership is representative of job roles directly related to equality and diversity, Trade Union Side plus volunteers who express an interest in diversity.

During 2017/18 the Diversity Group published nineteen diversity related articles on the Department's Intranet site and arranged a visit to Adelaide House by Action Mental Health to promote World Mental Health Day. The Group also arranged a visit by Guide

Dogs NI to promote World Sight Day and World Blindness Month. In December 2017 the Group organised a seminar to promote International Day for People with Disabilities at which we had speakers from the Department for Communities (DfC), Access to Work Scheme and the Supported Employment Solutions partnership (SES) who spoke about the work SES carries out supporting people with disabilities return to and remain in employment via the Workable (NI) programme.

Contact with the Voluntary and Community Sector continues through various fora for the benefit of both the sector and the Department.

### **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 "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. During 2017/18 there were no new employment rights consultations.

### **The Employment Agency Inspectorate**

The Employment Agency Inspectorate (EAI) sits within the Employment Relations Policy and Legislation Branch 2. The EAI employs two permanent employment agency inspectors. The Inspectorate continued to implement a risk-based approach to inspection during 2017/18, 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 2017 and March 2018, 11 inspections and investigations were carried out and 3 additional complaints were dealt with. The EAI conducted 3 information visits to new or existing agencies to provide advice on the requirements under the Conduct Regulations.

The EAI also attended meetings of the DoJ Organised Task Force on Immigration and Human Trafficking and attended the Belfast City Council Migrant Forum meetings.

### **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 2017/18, the Department continued to work with the NISMP to ensure that Northern Ireland is a welcoming place for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

The Partnership is a multi-agency, cross-party and cross-departmental body working to reflect the regionally specific needs of Northern Ireland in the development and implementation of UK immigration policy. It works across spheres of government, private and voluntary sectors in the region to ensure that Northern Ireland is a welcoming place for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, and supports the retention and integration of people in a way which meets skills and labour requirements to support future economic growth. The Partnership is an independent body made up of relevant stakeholders and is hosted by its lead partner, the Northern Ireland Local Government Association, and is funded by the Home Office.

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.

Relationships continued to be developed between relevant employment inspection and enforcement bodies. Where legislation permits, information sharing has been enhanced, in order to address exploitation of migrant workers and breaches of their employment rights. The EAI has strong links with BEIS agency inspectors and with the Gangmasters Licensing Authority on issues relating to labour exploitation; where migrant workers are particularly at risk. It also sits on the DoJ Organised Crime Task Force on Immigration and Human Trafficking.

### **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.

In Call 1, under ESF Priorities 1 & 2 of the Programme, 65 projects were supported. Following a Second Call for projects under ESF Priorities 1 & 2, DfE issued funding offers to 69 successful applicants covering the period 01 April 2018 – 31 March 2022.

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.

In addition, the programme 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 (Priority 1 and 2). A separate Apprenticeships priority is also funded (Priority 3).

The ESF programme has been developed in line with the Section 75 requirements. The

programme has been screened for equality implications and is compliant with the requirements for the Section 75 legislation. Policies on which the ESF programme is based have been subject to equality screening as a normal part of the policy development process.

As part of the application process, applicants were required to demonstrate their commitment to equality and equal opportunities.

### **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 is specified on a Personal Training Plan for all individual participants.

### **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 define, 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 are 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 all targeted qualifications in the Skills for Work level 2 provision and who have residual training entitlement 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**

A new Northern Ireland strategy for youth training (Generating Our Success) was published in June 2015. The new system, to be introduced from September 2019, will deliver a step-change to the youth training system at level 2, which will be branded 'Traineeships'.

### **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 agreed with the relevant Industry Representative Bodies to meet the need of each particular sector.

In the case of apprentices aged 16-24, the Department for the Economy funds 100% of the cost of off-the-job training. Funding for apprentices aged 25 years and over is focused on priority economic areas and set at fifty percent of that available for 16-24



year olds.

### **Higher Level Apprenticeships**

This programme provides an all age service for Apprenticeships at levels 4,5,6 and 7, with training provided through a local FE College, HE Institution or CAFRE. The Department for the Economy funds 100% of the cost of the off-the-job training for all eligible participants, and disability support may be payable to provide additional resources in terms of training time, specialist equipment or other support in order for participants to benefit fully from training. The programme is part funded through the European Social Fund at levels 4 and 5.

### **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.

### **Assured Skills**

Assured Skills is a joint programme between the Department for the Economy and Invest Northern Ireland which seeks to ensure the delivery of a range of activities and interventions guaranteeing potential inward investment companies, or existing companies wishing to expand, that NI has the ability to satisfy their future skills and training needs.

During 2017/18, Assured Skills provided 7 Academy programmes. A total of 133 applicants were invited onto the academies, comprising 102 males and 31 females. 10 applicants were from individuals who declared they came from a minority ethnic background.

The following statement is contained within the Assured Skills letters of offer to our clients:

*“The Client shall comply with the relevant statutory provisions from time to time in force in Northern Ireland imposing obligations on the Client in relation to discrimination on the grounds of religious belief, political opinion (including in relation to section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998), racial group, marital status, age, sexual orientation, gender, disability and having dependants”.*

### **Bridge to Employment**

Bridge to Employment is a pre-employment programme aimed at providing customised training courses to equip unemployed people, as well as those returning to the labour

market, with the skills necessary to compete for new employment opportunities on an equal basis with others.

During 2017/18, Bridge to Employment provided 14 programmes. A total of 147 people participated on the programmes, 117 male (80%) and 30 female (20%). 0 participants declared that they had a disability.

Both the Assured Skills and Bridge to Employment programmes are open to applicants irrespective of age, gender, disability, ethnicity or community background.

### **Employer Support Programme**

The Employer Support Programme is a skills development programme funded by the Department and delivered across Northern Ireland by the six FE colleges. There are two strands to the programme, InnovateUs and Skills Focus. In delivering the Employer Support Programme, colleges focus on providing support to employers; identifying future skills needs; collaboration with employers/skills groups; and being both proactive and reactive to employer needs.

Skills Focus and InnovateUs are open to all companies irrespective of age, gender or religion of employees. It is up to the company who they select to send on the programmes. The following statement is contained within our letters of offer to the colleges:

“The College shall comply with all applicable fair employment, equality of treatment, and anti-discrimination legislation, including, in particular, the Employment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002, the Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, the Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Orders 1976 and 1988, the Equal Pay Act (Northern Ireland) 1970, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, the Employment Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1999, and the Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996, and shall use its best endeavours to ensure that, in its employment policies and practices, and in the delivery of the services required of the College under this agreement, it has given due regard to the need to promote equality of treatment and opportunity between:

- persons of different religious beliefs or political opinions;
- men and women, or married and unmarried persons;
- persons with and without dependants (including women who are pregnant, or on maternity leave, and men on paternity leave);
- persons of different racial groups (within the meaning of the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997);
- persons with and without a disability (within the meaning of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995);
- persons of different ages; and
- persons of differing sexual orientation

## **Higher Education**

### **Widening Participation**

Widening participation in higher education (HE) is a key priority for the Department. Widening participation in higher education facilitates and increases the participation of those groups which are currently underrepresented 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 favourably 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 2016/17 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'. This is a strategy with 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)**

This Department 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.

'Pathways to Success' had a particular focus on helping those young people who face barriers to participation, while also dovetailing with complementary proposals and actions to tackle the wider problem of youth unemployment at the time of the 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.

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) and a revised Priorities and Action Plan is currently being developed.

### **Peace4Youth**

Peace4Youth is a multi-outcome programme that will engage 7,400 disadvantaged and marginalised 14–24 year olds across NI and the Border Region of Ireland between 2017–21, supporting them to develop capabilities in the areas of personal development, good relations and citizenship, ultimately enhancing their employability and improving their life chances. The programme is targeting 14-24 year olds who are disadvantaged, excluded or marginalised; have deep social and emotional needs; and are at risk of becoming involved in anti-social behaviour, violence or paramilitary activity. This includes young people who are not in education, employment or training, as well as those of are at risk of falling into that category.

Peace4Youth is built on 12 essential design features drawn from the United Youth pilot phase evaluation, and the programme has a strong focus on engaging, non-formal learning approaches delivered via a professionally-founded youth work approach.

Following a call and a two-stage assessment process, 10 projects (each made up of a consortium of delivery organisations with a lead partner) were selected. A range of organisations are involved, including youth/community/voluntary sector organisations, training providers and Further Education colleges. A Quality & Impact Body (a

partnership of Co-operation Ireland, Ulster University, POBAL and the National Youth Council of Ireland) was also appointed to perform a quality assurance and impact support role with the projects.

Delivery commenced in late 2017. Phase 1, involving 1,875 young people, will conclude in late 2018, and subject to a successful evaluation Phase 2, involving 5,525 young people, will then run until December 2021. Queen's University has been appointed as impact evaluator for the programme, and their first report is due in October 2018, followed by two further reports in 2020 and 2022.

### **Careers Service**

The Careers Service is an all-age, all-ability service that provides impartial guidance on career planning to people in education, employment, and training and to the unemployed. The Careers Service has developed and implemented a social inclusion policy which focuses on addressing the needs of young people and adults facing, or vulnerable to, social exclusion, including clients with a disability.

The Careers Service has Partnership Agreements in place with 98% of post-primary schools in Northern Ireland, including Special Schools. These formal agreements, which are reviewed annually, provides a mechanism for schools and the Department for the Economy's Careers Service, to ensure that the services delivered are appropriate to the needs of pupils and ensures that specific measures are in place to support learners in the transition process.

Those most at risk of leaving school early or at risk of not successfully transferring to education, training or employment are identified early in school, and actively supported until they are settled in a positive destination.

Through Partnership Agreements with schools Careers Advisers attend Transition Planning meetings for Year 10 pupils and subsequent Annual Reviews for pupils who have a statement of special educational need. This helps young people and their parents/guardians to make informed decisions about the options available to them on leaving school.

During the 2016/17 academic year, careers advisers attended and provided careers guidance at 1,227 Transition Planning meetings and a further 1,901 annual reviews.

The Careers Service, with parental /guardian consent as appropriate, refer school leavers with a disability or learning difficulty who are interested in progressing into training to one of DfE's contracted Disability Support Providers. These providers specialise in disability and learning support and give every child the best possible training experience and outcome.

The Careers Service provides services to adults who are economically inactive through partnership working with DfC's Employment Service, which includes attendance at Job Fairs, employer recruitment initiatives and redundancy clinics.

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The Careers Service is also a key contributor to DfC's Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities, providing a seamless transition for those who need support from school age right through to adulthood.

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

To support the social inclusion of all hard to reach groups the Careers Service has established effective partnership working arrangements with a wide range of community, voluntary and statutory organisations who advocate on behalf of vulnerable young people and adults to help them in their career planning and help them access education, training or employment.

The Careers Service also has Partnership Agreements in place to support specific potentially vulnerable groups including with:

- all five Health and Social Care Trusts, for young people 16+ in and leaving care; and
- the Youth Justice Agency for young people referred to the justice system either a community or custodial setting.

The Careers Advisory Forum advises both the Department for the Economy and the Department of Education on current and future Careers provision in the context of the refreshed Careers Strategy, 'Preparing for Success 2015-2020'. The Forum comprises representatives from education, business, and other key stakeholders such as parents and the community and voluntary sector including a representative from Disability Action.

- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2016-17 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

### **The Department's Diversity Group**

Part of the DfE Diversity Group's remit includes the promotion and encouragement of good diversity practice, and raising awareness of diversity issues among the Department's staff. During 2017/18 the Diversity Group published nineteen diversity related articles on the Department's Intranet site and arranged a visit to Adelaide House by Action Mental Health to promote World Mental Health Day. The Group also arranged a visit by Guide Dogs NI to promote World Sight Day and World Blindness Month. In December 2017 the Group organised a seminar to promote International Day for People with Disabilities at which we had speakers from the Department for Communities (DfC), Access to Work Scheme and the Supported Employment Solutions partnership (SES) who spoke about the work SES carries out supporting people with disabilities return to and remain in employment via the Workable (NI) programme.

### **Public Appointments**

DfE, in conjunction with all other Departments, continues to work towards achieving targets agreed by the NI Executive in February 2016 to achieve gender equality (in aggregated public appointments) by 2017/18 for in-year appointments and by 2020/21 for all other appointments.

We are also committed to looking at new ways to increase the numbers of applications from people with disabilities, people from ethnic minorities and younger people. In practice, this means integrating ideas and recommendations made by CPANI in their 2014 report on 'Under representation and lack of diversity in public appointments'.

Various boards of DfE sponsored bodies have also agreed to participate in two mentoring schemes – The Boardroom Apprentice and the Queen's University Graduate School Mentoring Scheme - aimed at encouraging participation rates of under-represented groups and to make public bodies more representative of the communities they serve.

### **The Department's Consumerline and Trading Standards Service**

One of the objectives of DfE's Equality Action Plan is to gather more information about those contacting the Department's Consumerline. Based on the analysis of information collected through previous customer surveys, and other intelligence sources, the Trading Standards Service (TSS) in Northern Ireland engaged with a wide range of stakeholders to highlight the financial and psychological harm caused by scams, doorstep crime and to work in partnership to tackle this major issue.

Each year mass marketing mail scams, which often target vulnerable or disadvantaged consumers, cause approximately £3.5 billion worth of detriment to UK consumers. The Trading Standards Service helps tackle mass marketing scams and disrupts the operations of perpetrators behind mail scams. It works in partnership with agencies across the country to identify and support victims of mass marketing fraud.

TSS has been working extremely closely with the Trading Standards National Scams



Team, to reach out to all the known scam victims in Northern Ireland – names that appear on a list of people that have sent money off to scammers - in the majority of cases victims have lost thousands of pounds and have been identified as incredibly vulnerable. TSS has also seen many examples of individuals that have lost not just tens of thousands but hundreds of thousands of pounds to scammers. TSS officers have been visiting these victims and providing valuable advice and support to each person as well as investigating, where possible.

The Trading Standards Service has worked extremely hard this year to help combat the scourge of scams on consumers in Northern Ireland. Ongoing criminal investigations as well as a robust education and awareness-raising policy has seen the problem of scams brought to the fore of the public's consciousness. Consumers are becoming increasingly savvy to the scammers and are contacting Trading Standards in their thousands to alert us to the latest cons and tricks. TSS has generated a large amount of publicity highlighting the latest scams through national and local media outlets and has worked closely with the BBC NI's Spotlight programme on a dedicated scams episode.

The NI Trading Standards Service is also been member of the UK Mass Marketing Scams Group which shares intelligence and helps formulate policy on protecting vulnerable consumers in the UK from being caught out by sophisticated and extremely detrimental scams. The group contains members of all the major enforcement bodies such as the TSI National Scams Team, The Competition and Markets Authority, The NCA, Regional Scambusters, etc...

TSS has assigned a significant level of resource to undertaking pro-active work in combating mass marketed scams, this work has included:-

- Actively participating in the COSLA/NTSST initiative involving the training of local Royal Mail staff which will enable postal workers to identify scam posts and make referrals to their internal security teams. These referrals help the Trading Standards Service to identify potential scam victims;
- Presenting at major charity/government events to local community groups on the issue of mass-marketed scams; Attending the Older Persons Commissioner's Office round table meeting;
- Meetings with a wide range of organisations/stakeholders to highlight the detriment caused to citizens by scams e.g. PSNI, Church Leaders, Health and Social Care Board, Safeguarding Teams in the Health Care Trusts, Older Persons Commissioner's Office, Carer Groups, the Rural Community Network, Dementia Care and others;
- Identifying opportunities for a more 'joined up' working approach to combating scams e.g. TSS has been working with local Crime Prevention Officers, local Policing and Community Safety Partnerships, Community Police and Liaison Committees and Neighbourhood Watch Groups as it

appears that scam victims are also targeted by rogue doorstep traders;

- Undertaking educational work with Social Workers, Carers, Dementia Groups to help them identify scam victims. This has already proven to be very worthwhile in that scam victims have been identified by care workers. This has resulted in referrals to TSS that has enabled officers to provide the victims one to one advice and to persuade them to stop responding to scam mail;
- Assisting the National Scams Team by participating in a pilot project relating to the use of Call Blockers as a means to disrupt telephone scammers. (These are devices which block scam phone calls while allowing legitimate callers to get through); Working with our colleagues in the Department of Justice and the Northern Ireland Policing Board to secure funding for the purchase of call blockers;
- Contributing to the Police Service of Northern Ireland initiative to produce 'No Cold Calling' Stickers. The display of such stickers is to prevent a person from becoming the victim of a rogue doorstep trader; working with DOJ and PSNI to pilot selected "No Cold Calling Zones" to determine their effectiveness in reducing crime.
- Working with Health Trust representatives who have responsibilities for safeguarding vulnerable individuals;
- Press releases issued to the local media concerning the latest scams; Regular local and national TV and radio appearances highlighting scams on shows such as the On Your Behalf Programme, the One Show, the Secret Scammer, Rip Off Britain and Spotlight; Working with the BBC NI's Spotlight programme on a dedicated scams episode. Placing posts on the TSS social media to alert followers to scams; Currently the #1 ranked TSS Facebook page in the UK; Working with the Scamwise NI partnership on media advertising campaigns
- Social Security Agency - referring scam victims, who may be entitled to extra benefit;
- Action Fraud - making referrals;

In addition to undertaking the above, TSS worked very closely with the Consumer Empowerment Alliance and the National Scams Team. Part of this work included visiting people who TSS believe are responding to scam mail, scam phone calls, scam e-mails and scam text messages. During each visit, an officer would provide specialist one to one advice.

TSS continually promote their activities as by doing so, people become more aware of the work that is undertaken on a daily basis including issuing press releases regarding

## PART A

TSS court cases, regular postings on TSS Social Media pages and appearances on TV/Radio news items.

People who contact TSS for consumer advice are made aware of their consumer rights and their business obligations. Consumers in particular, are more able to obtain redress for their consumer problem/issue as a result of the advice which they have received from the Service.

The above initiatives promote access to TSS services across all Section 75 groups. In particular, scam victims benefit from one to one advice which is provided by our service.

**3** Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2017-18 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

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

Please provide any details and examples:

**Public Appointments**

Seventeen (10%) applicants in 2017/18 declared a disability. Fifteen applied under the Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS), nine of whom were successful at getting through for interview. Four subsequently made it through to the 'suitable for appointment' list. DfE will continue to employ the GIS in future competitions.

**Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)**

All business areas were asked to provide DfE's Equality Unit with information concerning the number of PEEPs that have been updated/developed during 2017/18. Business areas were informed that the information would be included in the Department's Annual Report to the Equality Commission. In addition, the Department's Corporate Services branch undertook an Office Risk Assessment Exercise which also included a section on PEEPs; this asked managers whether they have a member of staff with mobility/other related issues, and if so, whether a PEEP has been agreed with such staff. As well as providing a reminder of the need for PEEPs it also offered an assurance that PEEPs are in place where required.

**DfE's Diversity Group – raising awareness of diversity issues among staff**

During 2017/18 the Diversity Group published nineteen diversity-related factsheets and articles on the department's intranet site. The factsheets were produced to promote understanding among staff of the needs of all Section 75 groups and to encourage best practice within the Department. The factsheets focused on a wide variety of subjects, and provided background information and advice for staff and line managers to encourage understanding and promote positive attitudes toward diversity; for example, a factsheet was provided to staff as part of participation in World Autism Awareness Day 2017.

**Postgraduate Awards – S75 Monitoring**

An opportunity was identified during the year to improve the Department's oversight of S75 monitoring in respect of recipients of its postgraduate awards scheme. While S75 monitoring data is collected by Higher Education Institutions for the wider postgraduate population, the data could not be broken down for specific cohorts under the Department's Postgraduate Awards Scheme. Steps were taken during 2017/18 to ensure that this data is collected and monitored from now on.

**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:

**Public Appointments**

The wider promotion of opportunities and the design and choice of criteria has seen an increase in the number of women and those with a disability applying for public appointments.

**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):*

DfE's Equality Scheme includes a commitment to achieving effective communication and ensuring that all our services are fully accessible to everyone in the community across the Section 75 categories.

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 2017-18 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

Yes, organisation wide

PART A

- 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:

Job descriptions for staff in DfE's Equality & Diversity Unit reflect their contributions to the discharge of the Section 75 statutory duties.

**5** Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2017-18 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:

Under the NICS Performance Management Framework, commitments set out in DfE's Equality Scheme are reflected in the Performance Assessments of relevant staff and reviewed throughout the year.

**6** In the 2017-18 reporting period were **objectives/ targets/ performance measures** relating to the Section 75 statutory duties **integrated** into corporate plans, strategic planning and/or operational business plans? *(tick all that apply)*

- Yes, through the work to prepare or develop the new corporate plan
- Yes, through organisation wide annual business planning
- Yes, in some departments/jobs
- No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisation's ongoing corporate plan
- No, the organisation's planning cycle does not coincide with this 2016-17 report
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

In addition to the commitments already contained in the Equality Scheme, the Department’s Six Monthly Assurance Statement includes an assurance, given by all Heads of Division , that Divisions, Units and Branches within the Department that staff have been made aware of the organisation’s Health and Safety Policy and Equality Policies and that these are being complied with and all Divisions conduct equality screening and, if appropriate, Equality Impact Assessments, on all new policies/amendments to existing policies, both internal and external, in line with Section 75 of the NI Act 1998.

**Equality action plans/measures**

**7** Within the 2017-18 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed:		Actions ongoing:	9	Actions to commence:	
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Please provide any details and examples (*in addition to question 2*):

See question 8 below.

**8** Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2017-18 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

A new Equality Action Plan was drafted for the Department which combines the functions of the former Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment and the Department for Employment and Learning, with the exception of the Employment Service which is now part of the Department for Communities. During 2017/18 no changes or amendments have been made to the Equality Action Plan as the commitments remain relevant to our functions and work. However, the Equality unit continues to oversee the implementation of the existing commitments and the actions set out in the Plan.

**9** In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2017-18 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 2017-18 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:

**12** In the 2017-18 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently used by consultees**: *(tick all that apply)*

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

Please provide any details or examples of the uptake of these methods of consultation in relation to the consultees' membership of particular Section 75 categories:

**13** Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2017-18 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes                       No                       Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:



**14** Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2017-18 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]

<https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/consultations>

<https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/department-economy-equality>

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

3
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**16** Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2017-18:

0	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:

**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:

**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 2017-18 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes       No       Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

**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 2017-18 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes       No, already taken place  
 No, scheduled to take place at a later date       Not applicable

Please provide any details:

**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 2017-18 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

None identified.

- 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:

None identified.

### **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 2017-18, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

During 2017/18, the DfE Induction programme was reviewed and updated to reflect the changes to the HR function with the establishment of NICSHR. A new Unconscious Bias training course, designed to minimise the effects of Unconscious Bias in the workplace, was also made available by NICSHR (DoF) in July 2017.

NICS also offers a range of training, both classroom based and e-learning, which seeks to assist staff in achieving both the understanding and skills required to promote equality of opportunity and good relations and to make equality central to the whole range of public policy decision-making. In addition to assisting the department achieve its statutory duties in respect of service to the people of Northern Ireland, the range of training available also seeks to ensure that the principles of equal opportunity and fair treatment are also extended to staff by colleagues and managers alike.

A range of the training undertaken by DfE staff in 2017/18 is outlined below:

#### **Mental Health Awareness for Line Managers**

The aim of this e-learning course is to raise awareness of the issue of Mental Health in the workplace, and to assist line managers in supporting and signposting staff who may be going through a mental health issue. During 2017/18, 5 DfE managers successfully completed his training.

#### **Autism Spectrum Disorder Awareness**

This e-learning course was been developed by the Northern Health and Social Care Trust, providing information about what ASD is and the challenges faced by individuals living with it. Having an awareness of ASD will help staff understand why an individual with ASD may be acting or reacting in a particular way and it will help create and maintain positive working relationships. During 2017/18, 2 staff completed training.

#### **Disability Awareness for front line staff**

The aim of this e-learning training is to increase staff knowledge of disability and to

provide frontline staff with an introduction to disability awareness. The course is aimed at staff at all grades who are in, or new to a post that deals with the public. During 2017/18, 3 staff completed the training.

### **Supporting Vulnerable People**

This e-learning course has been designed to assist staff in supporting vulnerable people who may seek to use the services offered by the department. On completion of the course staff should be able to describe and define what a vulnerable person is, recognise ways to identify vulnerable people, explain ways to support vulnerable people, including methods for dealing with third parties, and state the sources of help, advice and support available in the NICS for employees. The course is entirely voluntary and during 2017/18, 1 member of staff completed, or registered an interest in completing, the training.

### **Unconscious Bias**

This e-learning course aims to help staff discover what personal bias they may have, explore its causes and consider some techniques to manage it. On completion of the course staff should be able to define what Unconscious Bias is; explain how Unconscious Bias can impact in the workplace and state ways to tackle Unconscious Bias. During 2017/18 this course was mandatory for completion by all DfE staff in management grades i.e. EOII and above and 690 staff successfully completed the training. In addition to this a further 13 senior officials from DfE attended a classroom based training course.

### **Introduction to Section 75**

Staff who require this e-learning training are those with responsibility for policy development or policy review and staff involved with the implementation of Section 75 duties, whether directly or indirectly. The aim of this course is to familiarise participants with the two statutory duties as outlined in Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and the guidance provided by the Equality Commission NI. 13 DAERA staff received training in this area between April 17 and March 2018.

- 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:

Equality Unit staff have attended various training and awareness raising events provided by the Equality Commission.

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

- 26** Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2017-18, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

None identified

### Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

27 How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2017-18?

Insert number here:

0

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

### Section 3: Looking Forward

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

A DfE Equality Scheme covering the period 2016-2021 is planned but has not yet been finalised; when finalised, the Equality Scheme will become due for review in 2021. In the absence of an approved Equality Scheme, the current report focuses upon those elements of the former DETI and DEL Equality Schemes that continue to be relevant to DfE, and also recent equality issues and activities that are likely to feature in a DfE Equality Scheme when published. With regard to the Equality Schemes for the former DETI and DEL, these were reviewed 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)*

None identified.

30 In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next (2017-18) reporting period? *(please tick any that apply)*

- Employment
- Goods, facilities and services
- Legislative changes

PART A

- Organisational changes/ new functions
- Nothing specific, more of the same
- Other (please state):

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

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

**9**

Fully achieved

**1**

Partially achieved

**N/A**

Not achieved

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

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

Level	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs <sup>i</sup>	Outcomes / Impact <sup>ii</sup>
National <sup>iii</sup>	DfE, as part of the cross-departmental Public Appointment Forum (PAF), will work to address the recommendations made by the Commissioner for Public Appointments, Northern Ireland (CPANI), in his report on under-representation and lack of diversity in public appointments in Northern Ireland – published in January 2014.  We continue to seek to identify additional measures which might	Public Appointments Forum meetings attended quarterly and Department has contributed to actions being co-ordinated centrally.  Use of social media (Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook) to publicise competitions, the	The number of applications from women and people with a disability has increased because of our efforts on the publicity front and work on helping applicants to understand the criteria. CPANI are aware of financial factors which can act as a barrier for people with a disability.  Total applications received/those who declared a

PART B

	<p>increase the appeal of DfE public appointments to a wider audience.</p>	<p>placing of articles in publications and on websites and the distribution of flyers at events targeting under-represented groups to reach new audiences.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>disability/percentage:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>2013/14</td> <td>121/3</td> <td>(2.5%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014/15</td> <td>291/8</td> <td>(2.7%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2015/16</td> <td>71/6</td> <td>(8%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2016/17</td> <td>55/7</td> <td>(13%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2017/18</td> <td>173/17</td> <td>(10%)</td> </tr> </table>	2013/14	121/3	(2.5%)	2014/15	291/8	(2.7%)	2015/16	71/6	(8%)	2016/17	55/7	(13%)	2017/18	173/17	(10%)
2013/14	121/3	(2.5%)																
2014/15	291/8	(2.7%)																
2015/16	71/6	(8%)																
2016/17	55/7	(13%)																
2017/18	173/17	(10%)																
<p>Regional<sup>iv</sup></p>	<p>Further Education Estates Branch continues to support FE Colleges by funding capital works to ensure compliance with Disability Discrimination Act legislation.</p> <p>All venues for external events checked to ensure they are accessible for people with disabilities to attend and make their contribution.</p>	<p>We are currently investing over £200m in six new campuses across Northern Ireland to replace ageing facilities.</p>	<p>These new facilities will be modern and are designed to be fully accessible</p> <p>Evaluation of and feedback from events helps to inform future management.</p>															



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			The views / contribution from people with disabilities will help inform future policy.
Local <sup>v</sup>	<p>All venues for external events checked to ensure they are accessible for people with disabilities to attend and make their contribution.</p> <p>DfE will maintain and review the adjustments it has taken for staff to comply with DDA requirements.</p>	<p>Ensure all identified reasonable adjustments, including employee and customer access, have been considered and subsequently implemented, as appropriate.</p>	<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> <p>In 2017/18 the Department continued to examine equipment solutions to assist staff with any form of disability.</p>

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

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Departmental HR to provide induction training for all new entrants, which includes information on the disability duties.	Induction programme developed for the new DfE.	The Online Induction programme was made available via the departmental Intranet. Corporate Services has now taken responsibility for the review of material included in the Induction programme.
2	The NI Civil Service has an updated Diversity Training	All new recruits to the NICS to attend classroom based Diversity training	Staff are encouraged to recognise the importance of an inclusive working environment

PART B

	<p>package which promotes an inclusive working environment and stresses the importance of valuing differences. The package also includes material on the duty to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and on current disability equality legislation.</p>	<p>delivered by the Centre for Applied Learning.</p> <p>Module 1 of a series of modules to address diversity training was produced during 16/17 with departmental involvement and rolled out during 2017.</p>	<p>and the importance of valuing differences.</p>
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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	<p>In line with the Autism Strategy 2013-2020 and associated Action Plan 2013-2016 which were launched on 15 January 2014, DfE will raise awareness of autism amongst all DfE staff.</p>	<p>Autism Factsheet to be distributed to all DfE staff and their NDPBs.</p>	<p>The Autism Factsheet was distributed to all DfE staff as part of participation in World Autism Awareness Day 2017.</p>
2	<p>A DfE Diversity Group has been established. It will produce factsheets to promote understanding amongst staff of the needs of all Section 75</p>	<p>The Diversity and Staff Induction internal web pages have been updated.</p>	<p>During 2017/18 the Diversity Group published nineteen diversity related articles on the Department's Intranet site and arranged a visit to Adelaide House by Action Mental Health to</p>

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	<p>groups and to encourage best practice within DfE. Each factsheet will focus on a different subject, providing background information and advice for staff and line managers to encourage understanding and promote more positive attitudes as well as raising awareness of the types of reasonable adjustments available.</p>		<p>promote World Mental Health Day. The Group also arranged a visit by Guide Dogs NI to promote World Site Day and World Blindness Month. In December 2017 the Group organised a seminar to promote International Day for People with Disabilities at which we had speakers from the Department for Communities (DfC), Access to Work Scheme and the Supported Employment Solutions partnership (SES) who spoke about the work SES carries out supporting people with disabilities return to and remain in employment via the Workable (NI) programme.</p>
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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	<p>Attendance at OFMdfM/ECNI etc. events.</p>	<p>DfE Equality Unit staff seeks to provide colleagues in DfE and NDPBs with details of relevant TEO/ECNI etc. events.</p>	<p>Representatives from DfE’s Equality Unit attended various ECNI-led equality events during 2017-18.</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	Line Managers, with advice from Corporate Services as required, will take forward Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs).	Corporate Service staff will seek to raise Line Managers' Awareness of their responsibility to complete PEEPs as required.	<p>Business areas are asked to advise DfE's Equality Unit how many PEEPs have been revised/ developed during the reporting period for inclusion in the Annual Report to ECNI.</p> <p>In addition, the Office Risk Assessment Exercise, which Corporate Services issues annually to all business areas, includes a section on PEEPs. This asks managers whether they have a member of staff with mobility/ other relevant issues and, if so, whether a PEEP has been agreed. As such it helps to provide an assurance that PEEPs are in place where required.</p>

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

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestonesvi / 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 2017/18 include:</p> <p>the approval of institutional Widening Access and Participation Plans (WAPP) in respect of academic year 2018/19, which include detailed programmes to accelerate progress towards the higher education institutions' individual WP targets;</p> <p>the monitoring of each institution's performance against commitments set out in their Access</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 and disabilities.</p> <p>In line with the expectations in Access to Success all HE providers have in their 2018/19 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</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 that it can meet the identified needs at this time.

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		<p>Agreements for 2015/16</p>	<p>and benefit from the HE that is right for them.</p> <p>Monitoring of the widening participation commitments in respect of academic year 2015/16 - including detail on expenditure on bursaries, outreach activity, and progress against WP targets and milestones was carried out as part of the 2018/19 WAPP process.</p>	
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4. Please outline what action measures **have not been achieved** and the reasons why.

	Action Measures not met	Reasons

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

PART B

None

(b) Quantitative

The Department's Public Appointments Unit will continue to monitor the number of applications those with a declared disability and use the findings to inform future initiatives.

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

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

No

If yes please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1			

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?

No

## PART B

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- <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.
- <sup>vi</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.