



Further Education Means Business

Policy proposals for:

- Curriculum provision in Further Education colleges to support the economy
- Curriculum provision in Further Education colleges to support social inclusion
- Provision in Further Education colleges for 16 to 19 year old learners

Consultation Document

November 2007

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ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Name in Full
CCEA	Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment
CEIAG	Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
ETI	Education and Training Inspectorate
FE	Further Education
FESR	Further Education Statistical Record
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GCE A level	General Certificate of Education, Advanced level
IAG	Information, Advice and Guidance
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ILP	Individual Learner Programme
NDAQ	National Database of Accredited Qualifications
NICIS	Northern Ireland College Information System
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
PEQIA	Preliminary Equality Impact Assessment
PLAQ	Prescribed List of Approved Qualifications
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
QCF	Qualifications and Credit Framework
SSC	Sector Skills Council

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Awarding body – an organisation that develops and awards qualifications.

College Development Planning Process - the annual process through which colleges describe their vision, aim and strategic objectives for future academic years.

Department - the Department for Employment and Learning

Education & Training Inspectorate: inspects educational standards in schools and FE colleges in Northern Ireland.

Essential Skills: the Essential Skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT.

Further Education Means Business: the Department for Employment and Learning's strategy for the future of further education in Northern Ireland.

Leitch Review: independent review of the UK's long term skills needs, undertaken by Lord Leitch. The final report was published in December 2006.

Level 1: qualifications that recognise basic knowledge and skills and the ability to apply learning with guidance or supervision. This level includes GCSE grades D to G.

Level 2: qualifications that recognise the ability to gain a good knowledge and understanding of a subject area of work or study, and to perform varied tasks with some guidance or supervision. This level includes GCSE grades A* to C.

Level 3: qualifications that recognise the ability to gain, and where relevant apply, a range of skills and understanding. Learning at this level involves obtaining detailed knowledge and skills. They include GCE A and AS levels.

National Database of Accredited Qualifications: contains details of qualifications that are accredited by the government's regulatory organisations in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

National Qualifications Framework: a framework designed by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, to set out the levels at which qualifications can be recognised.

Priority Skills: skills areas that are considered to be particularly important to the economy of Northern Ireland.

Sector Qualification Strategies: Sector Qualifications Strategies (SQS) outline current and future learning and qualifications needs of employers in sectors.

Sector Skills Councils: 25 independent, industry-led organisations, which provide a forum to express the skills and productivity needs of employers.

Skills Expert Group: this group has been established to provide advice on the current and future skills needs of Northern Ireland at a regional level, and to keep the priority skills for Northern Ireland under review. The group will work closely with Workforce Development Fora.

Taught Hours of Delivery: FE college students' timetabled hours as recorded against colleges' student registers.

Training for Success Provision: the Department for Employment and Learning's training provision for young people aged 16 to 24. It is based on workplace training opportunities.

Weighted Funding: the agreed distributive mechanism through which the Department allocates recurrent funding to Further Education colleges. The weightings reflect the level of provision, the economic relevance of provision and the extent of disadvantage in the areas colleges serve.

Workforce Development Fora (WDF): six WDFs have been established, covering the geographical areas of the six new Further Education colleges. WDFs provide advice on the current and future skills needs at a sub regional level, and they will work closely with the Northern Ireland Skills Expert Group.

PURPOSE OF THIS CONSULTATION

This consultation seeks views on the Department for Employment and Learning's (the Department's) proposals for the nature of the curriculum, up to and including Level 3, to be provided by Further Education (FE) colleges in Northern Ireland to support the economy and to support social inclusion.

How to respond

A separate response booklet has been produced to help you to respond to the consultation. The response booklet can be downloaded from the Department's website (**www.delni.gov.uk**) if you wish to respond in writing. If you are unable to access the response booklet, a hard copy can be requested from FE Programme Support Branch at the contact details provided below. Also, you can contact the Department if you require the document in other formats.

Tel: 028 9025 7426 or 028 9025 7438

Fax: 028 9025 7666

E-mail: FEprogramme@delni.gov.uk

Hard copy responses should be sent to:

FE Programme Support Branch,
Department for Employment and Learning,
Adelaide House,
39-49 Adelaide Street,
Belfast,
BT2 8FD.

Alternatively, if you prefer to reply electronically, your completed response booklet should be e-mailed to **FEprogramme@delni.gov.uk**.

Responses should be returned to the Department by 7 January 2008.

Responses to this consultation will be subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which gives the right of access to information held by all public authorities. A report summarising the responses will be available on the Department's website.

FOREWORD

Reforming the further education (FE) system to ensure that it is focused increasingly on meeting the needs both of employers and individual learners is a key priority for the Department over the next few years. A strong and vibrant FE sector will play a key role in achieving the Government's economic vision for Northern Ireland and in delivering "*Success Through Skills*", the Department's wider skills strategy.

The policy proposals outlined in this consultation document are central to the successful implementation of "*Further Education Means Business*", the FE strategy for Northern Ireland. The proposals focus on the type of curriculum and qualifications that colleges should provide for learners up to, and including, Level 3. One of the major issues considered is the need for colleges to deliver provision that is relevant to the needs of the Northern Ireland economy, as well as meeting the needs of individual learners. The importance of colleges providing qualifications that are externally regulated by the regulatory authorities for qualifications for England, Wales and Northern Ireland is also addressed.

During the past twelve months college representatives nominated by the FE sector have helped the Department to develop many of the proposals in this document and the sector's involvement so far has been invaluable. Your views will help the Department to refine its policies further in these very important areas.

Bernie O'Hare
Director
Further Education Division

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In response to the Assembly Committee for the Employment and Learning's inquiry into Education and Training for Industry in September 2001, the Department undertook a major review of the further education sector in Northern Ireland in order to make policy proposals for the future development of, and strategy for, the sector. The review findings formed the basis for new strategy proposals which were published for public consultation in the document *"Further Education Means Business"* in March 2004 – this document can be accessed at www.delni.gov.uk.
- 1.2 Under *"Further Education Means Business"*, the FE sector continues to be at the heart of lifelong learning in order to strengthen economic and workforce development, to enhance social cohesion and to advance individuals' skills and learning. Under this broad aim, the three main objectives for FE colleges are:
- to be a key driver of local, sub-regional and regional economic and workforce development;
 - to be an active agent for social cohesion; and
 - to be a major promoter of lifelong learning.

The Economic Vision for Northern Ireland (which can be accessed at www.delni.gov.uk), the Department's skills strategy, *"Success Through Skills"* (which can be accessed at www.delni.gov.uk), and *"Further Education Means Business"* have all identified the need for colleges to place an increasing emphasis on meeting the skills and qualifications needs of employers and individual learners in Northern Ireland.

- 1.3 This emphasis is reinforced by the "Leitch Review of Skills: Prosperity for all in the global economy – world class skills". Published after *"Further Education Means Business"* and *"Success Through Skills"*, on 5th December 2006, this major UK review demonstrates clearly the importance of skills to continued prosperity in the UK.
- 1.4 While the Leitch review had a UK wide remit, Northern Ireland, similar to the other devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales, is currently considering how it should respond to and implement the recommendations in the Leitch report. However, there is broad agreement that the Leitch case for increasing the investment in skills across the UK is also relevant in Northern Ireland, where the need to have a highly skilled workforce has already been recognised fully by both Government and industry. As a region with few natural resources and in a peripheral location in Europe, Northern Ireland must focus on services and products that are characterised as high value-added and innovative. This, in turn, relies on having a high level of skills across all areas of business and industry.

1.5 *“Further Education Means Business”* and *“Success Through Skills”* both state that the FE sector, as a prime statutory provider of professional and technical education and training, has a central role to play in raising qualification and skills levels in Northern Ireland. In order for Further Education colleges to address effectively the skills needs of the Northern Ireland economy, it will be important for skills needs to be identified and articulated. As part of the implementation of *“Success Through Skills”*, a new structure has been established to enable this to happen. The main elements of this structure are:

- the Skills Expert Group;
- six local Workforce Development Fora;
- 25 Sector Skills Councils (SSCs); and
- Sector Qualification Strategies.

“Success Through Skills” outlines this mechanism in more detail. Colleges, as members of the Workforce Development Forum in their area, will have a contribution to make to identifying local skills needs to inform their primary role in delivering economically relevant provision to learners.

1.6 The new six-college structure, which was introduced on 1 August 2007, will enhance the sector’s profile and status, particularly with learners, employers and employer representative bodies, as key providers of education and training to meet the skill needs of the economy. The new structure will also enable the sector to play an increased role in local and regional planning and in the delivery of qualifications and skills at all levels across Northern Ireland.

1.7 While the work of FE colleges will have an increasing economic focus, colleges will continue to have an important part to play in enhancing social cohesion and in providing opportunities for lifelong learning. The sector has a particularly valuable role in giving people a second opportunity for education, and in encouraging those who are unemployed, or who are socially excluded or disengaged, to participate in education and training.

1.8 In implementing *“Further Education Means Business”*, a key outcome is to strike an appropriate balance between college provision that supports employers and the economy, and provision that meets the needs of individual learners and that supports social cohesion and social inclusion. This balanced approach is reinforced by the Leitch Review, which recognises that skills are important in promoting social inclusion because, for individuals, skills provide a route to stable employment, better wages and long-term prosperity, as well as personal development and fulfilment. Therefore, achieving the most appropriate balance between these two major strategic objectives is an underlying theme in this consultation document.

1.9 In developing the policy proposals in this document, the Department has relied, as far as possible, on a robust 'evidence-base'. The main source of statistical data is the Further Education Statistical Record (FESR), which is, in turn, based on information held on the Northern Ireland College Information System (NICIS). NICIS is the computer system that all Further Education colleges use to record student enrolment data.

2. CONSULTATION: SCOPE

- 2.1 “Further Education Means Business” is being implemented through a programme of twelve separate, but related, projects. A number of these projects, for example the introduction of the new six college structure from 1 August, seek to improve how FE is delivered. The project to ensure that the curriculum offered by colleges is sufficiently economically focused to meet the skills needs of employers, while also meeting the needs of individual learners, is the main subject of this consultation. The consultation concentrates on the nature of the provision that FE colleges should offer up to, and including, Level 3, and is restricted to college provision that is funded directly by the Department. A key consideration is to ensure that an appropriate balance is achieved between provision that meets the needs of employers and individual learners, and that provision continues to promote social inclusion.
- 2.2 The consultation is structured around the following three themes, in section 3 of this document:
- (i) supporting the economy;
 - (ii) supporting social cohesion; and
 - (iii) 16-19 provision for FE enrolled students.
- 2.3 It is also important to state those aspects of curriculum provision which are **not included** in this consultation. These are:
- (i) curriculum associated with Essential Skills, which has been the subject of separate policy considerations;
 - (ii) curriculum, at Level 4 and above, associated with Higher Education in FE (including Foundation Degrees) which is currently the subject of a separate consultation – although it is recognised that there are important linkages between provision up to Level 3 and at Level 4, for example in terms of facilitating learner progression;
 - (iii) curriculum associated with the 14 to 16 cohort of learners who are enrolled with a Post Primary school, but who are attending an FE college for elements of their curriculum entitlement; and
 - (iv) learners on Training for Success who are attending FE colleges for some aspects of their training provision.
- 2.4 A summary of all the recommendations in the consultation document is provided in the separate response booklet.

3. CURRICULUM PROVIDED IN FE COLLEGES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 As indicated in Section 1, the Northern Ireland Economic Vision, the Department's "*Further Education Means Business*" and "*Success Through Skills*" strategies and the Leitch Review all emphasise that increasing skill levels and improving participation in education and training are vital elements in ensuring a strong local economy. All of these recognise the curriculum offered by FE colleges as being central to the development of an individual's skills and to the support of the Northern Ireland economy. It is, therefore, important to ensure that FE curriculum is matched to the needs of employers and the economy.

3.2 BACKGROUND

3.2.1 In analysing the current curriculum offer provided by colleges, the Department has focused on the range and type of services that FE colleges currently provide to meet the needs of employers and individual learners in Northern Ireland. The extent to which the curriculum offer would require re-alignment to meet the needs of learners, employers and the economy, as currently understood, has also been assessed. Social inclusion in relation to individual learners has also been considered.

3.2.2 In order to ensure that an appropriate balance is achieved between the economic and social inclusion responsibilities of the FE sector, it is proposed that the curriculum offered by colleges should:

- be of a high quality;
- be recognised by employers and by other educational establishments;
- offer progression routes for all learners, whether in full-time study, part-time study, or in work; and
- be sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of employers and individual learners.

3.2.3 The current provision of each college was analysed by reviewing the data for the 2003/04, 2004/05 and 2005/06 academic years, with particular emphasis on 2005/06 data, the most recent year for which verified data is available. Specifically, the data was used to determine the baseline for the following aspects of the FE sector's current provision:

- (i) the proportion of provision falling within each of Northern Ireland's existing six priority skill areas;

- (ii) the proportion of provision falling outside the priority skill areas and the extent to which this is necessary to meet local skills needs;
- (iii) the different levels of provision up to and including Level 3;
- (iv) the proportion of provision that is accredited through qualifications which are subject to external regulation; and
- (v) the proportion of provision that is deemed to be professional and technical.

3.2.4 This analysis has formed the basis for the development of high level policy proposals relating to the curriculum offer, setting out how they will be linked to colleges' planning processes and to funding arrangements from September 2008 onwards. Elements of the 2005/06 data are referred to in this section, and in the Equality section (section 4).

3.3 THEME 1: CURRICULUM PROVISION IN FE COLLEGES TO SUPPORT THE ECONOMY

3.3.1 This theme outlines the proposed curriculum changes the Department plans to introduce into the FE Sector in order to address the recommendations contained in both the "Success Through Skills" and "Further Education Means Business", and supported by Leitch. The aim is to ensure that the curriculum will be based, increasingly, on economic relevance, on quality and on ensuring clear progression routes for learners. It is, therefore, proposed that when planning their curriculum offering, colleges should increase the proportion of their provision that:

- is in priority skills areas;
- is at Levels 2 and 3;
- is of a professional and technical (vocational) nature;
- leads to qualifications that are on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF); and
- addresses the essential skills of literacy and numeracy**.

*** Note, as indicated in paragraph 2.3(i) above, essential skills is not included in this consultation exercise.*

3.3.2 In order to ensure that colleges' provision is focused in this way, the Department will agree performance targets in all of these five areas with each of the six new Further Education colleges through the annual College Development Planning process. In addition, colleges will be encouraged and rewarded through weighted funding arrangements to deliver provision that is in priority skills areas and provision that is at Levels 2 and 3. Colleges will

also receive weighted funding for Essential Skills and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision, and to take account of the degree of disadvantage in their catchment areas – see also paragraph 3.4.14. Throughout this document the term ‘weighted funding’ will be referred to. When used, this will identify those aspects of college provision that will attract an additional level of funding, over and above the basic level of funding which is normally allocated to all provision. Weighted funding will ensure that appropriate resources are allocated to support the relevant policy areas.

- 3.3.3 The priority areas outlined above, together with specific recommendations, are developed in more detail below.

College provision in priority skills areas

- 3.3.4 In 1999 the NI Skills Task Force identified six skill areas that were considered of vital significance to the economy of Northern Ireland. These are:

- software engineering;
- electronics;
- manufacturing engineering;
- ICT;
- hospitality, catering and tourism; and
- construction.

These priority skill areas have informed the way the Department funds provision, and have been the subject of much research and analysis to examine, for example, whether priority skill needs are being met currently or are likely to be met in the future.

- 3.3.5 However, the nature of the Northern Ireland economy continues to evolve, with continued growth in the service and construction sectors, but decline in manufacturing. In addition, the evidence base in relation to the identification of skill shortage areas has been evolving since the original priority skill areas were identified. The strategic emphasis on meeting the current and future skill needs of the NI economy has been underscored in “*Success Through Skills*” and in “*Further Education Means Business*”. As part of “*Success Through Skills*”, the Department has commissioned a review of the priority skills areas, to assess whether they remain of vital importance to the NI economy, or to see whether other skills should be considered alongside or instead of the original six. “*Success Through Skills*” states that:

“The Department will also facilitate the development and maintenance of a regional employment and skills action plan that will recognise and articulate skills needs at local and regional levels and determine Northern Ireland’s priority skills areas. This will be driven by the newly established Skills Expert Group at regional level and the development of employer-led sub-regional Workforce Development Fora.”

- 3.3.6 “Success Through Skills” states that the Department will continue to view curriculum provision within the existing, and any subsequently revised, priority skills areas as a critical component of the FE sector’s contribution to meeting the needs of the economy and employers. It is on provision within these areas that the Department will require the sector to focus when developing its curriculum offer.
- 3.3.7 Evidence gathering and analysis has identified that over recent years the proportion of college provision that is in priority skill areas increased initially but now has actually gone down or, at best, remained stable. Figures for the 2005/06 academic year show that of a total of approximately 69,000 learners enrolled in courses at level 2 and above, only 15,865 were in priority skill areas.
- 3.3.8 Analysis has also shown that the total number of enrolments in the 2005/06 academic year for priority skill areas was 33,980. However, 18,115 of these enrolments were at Level 1 and below, with 15,074 in the 25+ age group. Provision at this level does not meet the skills needs that many sectors and employers report they require.
- 3.3.9 The Department also recognises that some sub-regional priority skills areas will also exist, and that these might differ from the NI-wide priority skill areas. It will be for the Skills Expert Group, the relevant Workforce Development Forum and through them the SSCs, to provide evidence to support these sub-regional skills needs. In order to ensure that the priority skills required by the Northern Ireland economy and by employers are met the Department will:

Recommendation 1

- **continue to view FE college provision within the priority skills areas as critical and continue to provide weighted funding for priority skills provision, primarily at Level 2 and Level 3.**

Recommendation 2 (see also recommendation 15)

- **consider providing weighted funding for some aspects of priority skills provision at Level 1 - where relevant SSCs identify specifically that Level 1 qualifications are important to their sectors.**

Recommendation 3

- agree enrolment targets with colleges through the annual College Development Planning process to increase incrementally the % of provision in priority skills areas.

Recommendation 4

- consider the evidence-base to support sub-regional skills needs and, if deemed appropriate, the Department may consider applying the same weighted funding that other priority skill areas will attract and consider allowing colleges to include any appropriate provision in their agreed enrolment targets.

Question 1 (Recommendations 1 to 3)

- Do you agree that, through weighted funding and performance targets, colleges should be encouraged to increase the proportion of their provision that is in Northern Ireland’s identified priority skill areas? Please comment.

Question 2 (Recommendation 4)

- Do you agree that weighted funding should be applied to sub-regional skills needs? Please comment.

College provision at Level 2 and above

3.3.10 The analysis contained in “*Further Education Means Business*”, “*Success Through Skills*” and, more recently, the Leitch review, indicates clearly the need to increase qualifications and skills at Level 2 and above if the needs of the economy and employers are to be met. The Table below shows the proportion of college provision at Levels 2 and 3 in the 2005/06 academic year.

Year	Level 2 Enrolments	% of Total Enrolments	Level 3 Enrolments	% of Total Enrolments	Level 2 + 3 Enrolments	% of Total Enrolments
05/06	33,962	23%	34,749	23%	68,711	46%

In order to contribute to progress in this important area in Northern Ireland the Department will:

Recommendation 5

- **continue to view all college provision at Levels 2 and 3 as high priority, and will support this position through weighted funding.**

Recommendation 6

- **agree enrolment targets with colleges through the annual College Development Planning process to increase incrementally the % of Level 2 and Level 3 provision delivered by the FE sector.**

Question 3 (Recommendations 5 and 6)

- **Do you agree that a key objective for FE colleges is to encourage and support learners to progress to Levels 2 and 3, and that through weighted funding and performance targets, colleges should be encouraged to increase the proportion of their provision that is at Levels 2 and 3? Please comment.**

Professional and technical college provision

3.3.11 Closely linked to the focus on supporting employers and the economy, is the need for colleges to increase the proportion of their provision that is professional and technical in nature. Professional and technical provision relates to courses which are linked directly to an occupational area. They are usually designed in line with the National Occupational Standards that are developed by Sector Skills Councils.

3.3.12 The extent to which colleges delivered professional and technical provision in the 2005/06 academic year is summarised in the Table below.

Year	Professional and Technical Provision (NQF)	% of Total Provision (NQF)
05/06	74,427	50%

Recommendation 7

The Department will agree enrolment targets with colleges through the annual College Development Planning process for the proportion of their provision that should be of a professional and technical nature.

Question 4 (Recommendation 7)

Do you agree that FE colleges should be encouraged to increase the proportion of their provision that is of a professional and technical nature? Please comment.

- 3.3.13 Although an emphasis on professional and technical provision will be a key performance target for the colleges, the sector will still need to maintain its 'A' Level and GCSE provision for adults. Analysis shows that around 3,700 'A' Level and GCSE enrolments each year are for adults. This will continue to be an important area of provision for colleges, for example in providing "second chance" education for adults. Colleges will, therefore, continue to be the main providers of academic and applied 'A' Level and GCSE provision for adults. The term "Applied" relates to those 'A' Level and GCSE courses that have an occupational emphasis in contrast to general/academic 'A' Levels and GCSEs.

Recommendation 8

- **The Department will support colleges to continue to deliver all academic and applied 'A' Level and GCSE provision for adults.**

Question 5 (Recommendation 8)

Do you agree that FE colleges should continue to be the main providers of academic and applied 'A' Level and GCSE provision for adults? Please comment.

Accreditation of college provision

- 3.3.14 By meeting the skills needs of employers, colleges are also meeting the needs of individual learners by equipping them with the skills and qualifications necessary for them to obtain and progress within, employment. However, if colleges are to meet the needs of learners and employers effectively, it is important that they base their provision on qualifications that are recognised, valued, respected and understood in the United Kingdom and abroad. In order to achieve this, colleges should base their provision on qualifications that are on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).
- 3.3.15 NQF qualifications are a benchmark of quality. These qualifications and their awarding bodies, have to meet quality criteria that have been devised and agreed by the regulatory authorities for qualifications in England, Wales and

Northern Ireland, and have been endorsed by their respective devolved administrations. The accreditation of qualifications on the NQF ensures that they are of high quality and that they meet the needs of learners and employers.

- 3.3.16 To develop proposals in this area, the Department analysed the extent to which the FE sector's provision was based on NQF qualifications that are externally accredited and subject to external regulation, as opposed to qualifications which are not on the NQF.
- 3.3.17 In the 2005/06 academic year, approximately 50% (75,969) of all college enrolments were on non-NQF courses, with 74,053 learners enrolled on NQF courses.
- 3.3.18 In order to develop policy proposals in this area, it is necessary to understand that non-NQF qualifications often carry no guarantees in terms of economic relevance, learner progression or quality. This is because employers have not always been involved in the development of non-NQF provision. Non-NQF provision is not necessarily recognised by employers or by other educational establishments and is not subject to the degree of quality assurance to which NQF provision is subjected. Non-NQF provision can be broken down into a number of broad areas. These areas, together with the Department's proposed approach to each, are outlined briefly below.
- 3.3.19 *Externally regulated courses not on the NQF:* This relates to courses that are subject to external regulation by a professional body. Often these professional bodies are referred to as "Competent Authorities" within UK legislation, for the purpose of regulating access or licence to practice within the relevant profession. In addition, there are qualifications offered by computer software and hardware companies (vendors) which accredit users as competent in the use of their own specific equipment or software. Another example is Access Courses that are designed by Northern Ireland's universities to increase access to higher education for students who do not have appropriate formal qualifications.
- 3.3.20 While not on the NQF, the Department recognises the value of some of this provision. To ensure that such provision, which is highly valued by employers, is maintained in FE colleges' curriculum offer, the Department plans to develop a Prescribed List of Approved Qualifications (PLAQ). Any qualification that receives approval from the Department for inclusion on the PLAQ will be viewed as similar in status to NQF provision for funding and performance measurement purposes. The Department will work with the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) and FE colleges in the development of the PLAQ process.
- 3.3.21 *Non externally regulated courses:* Colleges also deliver courses that are externally accredited by an Awarding Body, but that have not been subject to

the regulatory criteria that are applied to NQF qualifications. These non-externally regulated courses do not carry the guarantees of quality and progression that are associated with NQF based provision. Also, in many cases an equivalent qualification, or units of a qualification, exists on the NQF. Where available, colleges will be encouraged to offer these types of courses from the NQF.

- 3.3.22 *Courses accredited internally by colleges:* Another area of provision in the non-NQF category is “bespoke” courses that are internally accredited by colleges. While these courses will have been developed to meet the needs of specific learner groups or employers, and while there is merit and value in such provision, they, too, do not carry the guarantees of quality and progression that are associated with NQF based provision. Also, in many cases suitable accreditation for these courses exists on the NQF. Where available, colleges will be encouraged to offer these types of courses from the NQF.
- 3.3.23 *Provision that offers no formal qualifications:* Courses included in this category tend to be those that could be described as recreational. While this type of provision does not support the economic focus for the FE sector, the Department recognises that it continues to have a value for learners, either as an introduction to learning or as a recreational pursuit in its own right. This provision can also benefit the cultural fabric of communities. This is one of the main areas where it may be appropriate for some of a college’s provision not to be delivered from the NQF.
- 3.3.24 However, having said this, a considerable number of courses in this area would also be available as units of learning on the NQF. Where this is the case, the Department will encourage colleges to deliver such provision from the NQF.
- 3.3.25 As a useful reference and source of advice for education providers, employers and learners, the QCA, in partnership with the regulatory authorities for Wales (DCELLS) and Northern Ireland (CCEA), has launched an online database of accredited qualifications – the National Database of Accredited Qualifications (NDAQ). The NDAQ contains details of all qualifications which have been accredited onto the NQF and all qualifications, and units of qualifications, which have been fully accredited onto the new Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). Among other things, NDAQ provides a useful description of the accredited qualifications and units, associated progression routes and job roles, and details of the assessment methods and grading systems used. This system will provide many individuals with the opportunity to achieve a recognised qualification, or part qualification, in a “recreational” subject, if this is what they want.
- 3.3.26 It is important to strike a balance between encouraging colleges to deliver a high proportion of their provision from the NQF, while ensuring that the needs of learners can be met where it is genuinely not appropriate or

possible to meet their needs in this way. Based on the extent to which suitable NQF accreditation exists for provision in all of the categories described in paragraphs 3.3.21 to 3.3.25 above and the analysis of provision delivered by colleges currently, the Department proposes that the proportion of taught hours of delivery that are on the NQF should be increased from the current level of around 93% to 95% over the next 3 years. Consequently, the Department will provide funding for up to 5% of an individual college's taught hours of delivery in non-NQF accredited activity of the type described above. Colleges will be free to deliver as much non-NQF provision as they wish, but they will not receive funding from the Department for provision over and above the 5% limit.

3.3.27 In order to ensure that the majority of college provision is delivered through courses/units of courses that are accredited through NQF qualifications, the Department will:

Recommendation 9

- **move away from monitoring NQF Provision at course level to monitoring the extent of learner enrolments on NQF provision.**

Recommendation 10 (see also Recommendation 17)

- **agree enrolment targets with colleges through the annual College Development Planning process for the proportion of their provision that should be based on the NQF. For the sector as a whole, the recommendation is that by the 2009/10 academic year 95% of colleges' taught hours of delivery should be on courses that are on the NQF.**

Recommendation 11

- **work with QCA, CCEA and FE colleges to produce a "Prescribed List of Approved Qualifications" (PLAQ) which will be deemed to be of similar status as NQF qualifications for the purposes of setting performance targets for FE colleges and for funding. However, only those qualifications which are valued by employers and endorsed by the relevant SSC or Standards Setting Body for the occupational sector will be included on the PLAQ.**

Recommendation 12

- **discourage colleges from offering non-NQF provision by not including it in performance targets set for regulated provision and by funding colleges for no more than 5% of their taught hours of delivery (by 2009/2010) for this type of provision.**

Recommendation 13

- **use the NDAQ, and the Sector/Subject Area Classification system within it, as the standard references for classifying provision and determining which qualifications are included on the NQF.**

Question 6 (Recommendations 9 to 13)

- **Do you agree that colleges providing courses that are on the NQF is the best way to ensure that learners are offered provision that is of a high quality, that is recognised by other educational establishments and by employers and that guarantees progression routes for learners? Please comment.**

Question 7 (see also Question 12) (Recommendations 9 to 13)

- **Do you agree that NQF courses should be the main provision offered by FE colleges ie 95% of colleges' taught hours of delivery by 2009/10? Please comment.**

Question 8 (Recommendations 9 to 13)

- **Do you agree that an approved list of courses is necessary to ensure that colleges are able to deliver high quality professional and technical courses that sit outside the NQF, but which are valued by employers? Please comment.**

Performance measures

- 3.3.28 The four areas described at paragraphs 3.3.4 to 3.3.27 above are linked together, in that most learner enrolments will be included in more than one of the four areas - essentially, they represent different “views” of colleges’ enrolment patterns which enable performance measurement and monitoring that is useful both to colleges and to the Department.
- 3.3.29 Also, while some of the recommendations in this consultation document are that the Department will agree high level annual performance targets with each of the six new colleges in each of the four areas, the Department will not be prescriptive in terms of how colleges can meet the agreed targets. For example, it will be for individual colleges to decide whether they achieve their priority skills targets by concentrating on a few of the priority skills areas or on all of them, or to decide the extent to which they shift their focus from academic to applied ‘A’ Levels as a contribution to meeting their professional and technical targets. In this way, colleges will have flexibility to respond to the local needs of employers and learners in their areas, as informed by the work of their local Workforce Development Forum and by colleges’ own local knowledge.

- 3.3.30 Over the next few years, the Department and colleges will aim for gradual and achievable progress in these areas, and will keep the impact of the curriculum changes under review.
- 3.3.31 In order to ensure that colleges have sufficient flexibility to meet the needs of employers and learners in their local areas:

Recommendation 14

- **the Department will not be prescriptive in terms of how colleges can meet agreed curriculum targets. However, it will monitor progress and the impact of the curriculum changes and set performance measures accordingly.**

Question 9 (Recommendation 14)

- **Do you agree that Further Education colleges are best placed to assess how their curriculum targets are achieved to best suit local needs and that, consequently, the Department should not be prescriptive in terms of how colleges meet the agreed targets? Please comment.**

3.4 THEME 2: CURRICULUM PROVISION IN FURTHER EDUCATION COLLEGES TO SUPPORT SOCIAL INCLUSION

- 3.4.1 While there is an increasing economic focus for the Further Education sector, colleges will continue to have an important part to play in enhancing social cohesion and providing opportunities for lifelong learning, and it is important that college provision meets the needs of individual learners and the communities in which they are located. Of course, economic and social objectives are often complementary. For example, the delivery of economically relevant provision makes a significant contribution to meeting important social objectives, because one of the best ways to address social exclusion is to provide people with the qualifications and skills that will improve their chances of securing, and progressing within, employment - as indicated in Section 1 of this document, this is one of the key conclusions of the “Leitch Review of Skills: Prosperity for all in the global economy”. In addition, providing learners with qualifications that are on the NQF and which meet the needs of employers, will also guarantee learners that their qualifications are of a high quality and that they will facilitate learners’ progression through recognition by other educational establishments, as well as by employers.
- 3.4.2 However, there are those who require a second opportunity for education those who are not yet able to take advantage of provision at Level 2 and above, those who are seeking to improve their basic literacy and numeracy skills, those who want to participate in recreational courses and those who, for a variety of reasons, feel excluded from education and training opportunities. For example, according to the 2001 Census, 42% of the Northern Ireland population aged between 16 and 74 have no qualifications. Therefore, it is important that colleges’ economic focus is balanced against the requirement to meet the needs of learners.

College provision at Level 1 and below

- 3.4.3 The Department is committed to contributing to those aspects of the Department’s skills strategy which is aimed at helping adults who are unemployed and/or socially excluded to attain the skills necessary to obtain or retain employment. It is clear that in order to meet challenging targets for a more highly qualified population, it will be necessary to focus attention also on those with low or no qualifications. In addition, the Department recognises that for some individuals, achieving a level 1 qualification can bring those furthest from the labour market back into the learning environment and develop their employability skills. The provision of recreational courses also provides learners with another avenue to engage with an Further Education college, which supports the widening access agenda. In particular, learners aged 25 and over are the largest section 75 group participating in these recreational type courses. Therefore, the

Department will continue to fund Further Education colleges to deliver provision at Level 1 and below. However, this provision will not attract weighted funding, and there will be a focus on provision that supports learner progression into employment and/or higher levels of learning. It is worth noting that almost 12% of the budget provided to colleges by the Department is in respect of provision at Level 1 and below.

- 3.4.4 The figures given in paragraph 3.3.10 above show that in 2005/06 college provision at Levels 2 and 3 was 46% of total college provision. Therefore, provision at Level 1 and below currently accounts for over 50% of all college provision. It is also worth noting that around 80% of college enrolments at this level are from people aged 25 years and over. As the proportion of college provision at Level 2 and above increases, there will be a corresponding decrease in the proportion of provision at Level 1 and below, although, as indicated at paragraph 3.3.30 above, this shift in emphasis will occur gradually. However, as supporting individual learners to progress to higher levels of qualifications and skills is also a key aim for the Department and the Further Education sector, the expectation is that the increased focus on Level 2 and above will be achieved, at least in part, by learners in Further Education colleges progressing from Level 1. One of the issues to be addressed in this regard is the fact that learners at Level 1 and below often undertake a number of courses at the same level, rather than progressing to higher levels of learning or into employment.
- 3.4.5 However, many of the key curriculum performance targets outlined in Theme 1 apply to all college provision, and in order to meet these colleges will also have to increase the proportion of their provision at Level 1 and below that is on the NQF and is professional and technical in nature. This shift should help to encourage progression on the part of all learners, including those at Level 1 and below.
- 3.4.6 So, for a variety of reasons, working with learners who are currently at Level 1 and below will continue to be an important area of activity for colleges. However, the increasing focus will be on providing these individuals with learning programmes that will give them the skills and support to encourage and enable them to find and progress within employment, and to enable them to progress towards higher levels of skills and qualifications.
- 3.4.7 In order for Further Education colleges to contribute fully to social inclusion, it will also be important to make college provision as accessible as possible, particularly to individuals who may be reluctant to avail of the opportunities provided by further education. So, encouraging individuals to enrol with colleges and ensuring that they follow the most appropriate courses of study are crucial areas to address. Within this context the Department will:

Recommendation 15 (see also recommendation 2)

- **continue to fund provision at Level 1 and below, although this type of provision will not attract weighted funding, except where Level 1 provision is in a priority skill area where the relevant SSC identifies specifically that it is valuable to its sector.**

Recommendation 16

- **require the focus for learners at Level 1 and below to be on learning programmes that support their progression into employment and/or on to higher levels of learning.**

Recommendation 17 (see also recommendation 10)

- **provide funding for up to 5% of a college's total taught hours of delivery in respect of provision that is not on the NQF, including recreational provision. In addition, recreational type courses that are delivered through NQF provision can also attract funding.**

Question 10 (Recommendation 15)

- **Do you agree that colleges should be funded to deliver provision at Level 1 and below, but that weighted funding should only be available for Level 1 provision identified by SSC as being relevant to their sectors? Please comment.**

Question 11 (Recommendation 16)

- **Do you agree that the focus for provision at Level 1 and below should support learner progression to higher levels of study or into employment? Please comment.**

Question 12 (see also Question 7) (Recommendation 17)

- **Do you agree that by 2009/10 only 5% of colleges' taught hours of delivery should be on non-NQF provision? Please comment.**

3.4.8 The following paragraphs outline how Essential Skills and the application of a disability weighting will continue to enhance the Further Education sector's role in supporting social inclusion.

Essential Skills

3.4.9 While this consultation document is not focusing on Essential Skills, it is, nevertheless, necessary to acknowledge the significant contribution that Essential Skills provision makes to addressing social inclusion. Essential Skills is, therefore, an important part of the provision that colleges provide at Level 1 and below.

- 3.4.10 In October 2002, the Department launched the Essential Skills for Living Strategy and Action Plan. By 31st July 2007 there have been 57,868 enrolments on Essential Skills courses in Northern Ireland, and 27,500 qualifications have been achieved.
- 3.4.11 The Essential Skills Strategy has four main themes:
- to increase awareness and drive up demand through effective promotion;
 - to put in place an infrastructure which will enable adults to progress their skills and gain recognised qualifications;
 - to improve the quality of teaching in literacy and numeracy across all provision; and
 - to increase the capacity of provision by securing funding and co-ordinating planning and delivery.
- 3.4.12 A key component of the Strategy was the need to develop a new assessment methodology for Essential Skills at Entry Level through to Level 2. A range of qualifications are now in place for the Essential Skills of literacy and numeracy from Entry Level 3 through to Level 2. In addition, the Department recognises that, to enrich social and economic aspects of individuals' lives, ICT skills are also vital for all learners. Work is under way with the CCEA to develop ICT as a third Essential Skill to ensure appropriate provision is available for those learners with no, or limited, ICT skills. Essential Skill in ICT has been running in pilot mode since September 2006, and has been expanded in the 2007/08 academic year.
- 3.4.13 To ensure this critical area is given the highest priority, the Department will continue to provide the highest funding weighting within the Further Education Funding allocation for Essential Skills provision.

Disadvantage weighting

- 3.4.14 The Department recognises the important role that colleges continue to play in addressing social inclusion. Therefore, the Department will continue to provide weighted funding to colleges to reflect the extent of the deprivation in the areas they serve, as identified by the Noble indicators of deprivation.

3.5 THEME 3: PROVISION FOR 16-19 YEAR OLD FURTHER EDUCATION ENROLLED LEARNERS

- 3.5.1 The learners referred to in this section of the document are those 16-19 year olds who are enrolled as Further Education students only. All of the main performance targets described in Theme 1 apply equally to college provision for 16 to 19 year olds. However, given the nature of this provision, it is more likely to address “automatically” some of the performance target areas – for example, most provision for 16 to 19 year olds in colleges will be on the NQF and will be professional and technical in nature, and a high proportion will be at Level 2 and above. In the 2005/06 academic year, a total of 42,006 16-19 year olds enrolled in Further Education colleges. Of these 33,607 enrolled on NQF courses, 26,277 were on courses of a professional and technical nature and 32,130 enrolled on courses at Levels 2 and 3.
- 3.5.2 The need to reform the curriculum for 16-19 year old students who are enrolled with Further Education colleges is outlined clearly in “*Further Education Means Business*”. These reforms have been subsequently referred to in “*Success Through Skills*”.
- 3.5.3 Central to the wider 14-19 reforms has been the need to develop high quality, highly valued professional and technical education for young people. It is also important to provide a personalised programme of learning that matches each young person’s career aspirations and prepares him or her for the world of work. Building on the work already being done by colleges, the Department proposes to work with colleges to develop an approach whereby every full-time 16 to 19 year-old entering an Further Education college would be provided with an individual Student Learner Agreement, setting out an agreed Individual Learner Programme (ILP). Based on an intensive initial assessment by college staff of the young person, the aim of the ILP would be to determine and agree with the young person a programme of study that would enable his/her career aspirations to be met in the most effective way. For example, an ILP could include a number of key skills areas such as problem solving, team working, managing one’s own learning and vendor specific qualifications, in addition to the young person’s core area of study - all based on individual need. It will also be important for young people to have an understanding of how a business operates to prepare them for the world of work. Learners would be provided with ongoing mentoring and support to help them to complete their programme of study.
- 3.5.4 It should be noted that the speed with which the ILP proposal outlined in paragraph 3.5.3 could be implemented is subject to availability of resources.
- 3.5.5 Subject to resource availability, the Department will:

Recommendation 18

- **in liaison with Further Education colleges, and building on work already done by colleges, develop proposals for the introduction of an Individual Learner Programme for every 16 to 19 year old enrolling with Further Education colleges, commencing in the 2008/09 academic year.**

Recommendation 19 (see also recommendation 24)

- **agree with the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) how this area of activity can be included in their routine inspection of college performance.**

Recommendation 20

- **support the colleges to ensure that the essential skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT and the wider Key Skills of problem solving, team-working and managing one's own learning, are provided for all 16-19 year olds where appropriate.**

Recommendation 21

- **build into the curriculum a component on enterprise and an understanding of how business operates in order to cultivate an entrepreneurial culture within the 16 to 19 year old cohort of students.**

Question 13 (Recommendations 18 and 19)

- **Do you think that the enhanced Individual Learner Programme will add value to the curriculum offer for 16-19 year old students and that it should be an area of college activity that should be inspected by the Education and Training Inspectorate? Please comment.**

Question 14 (Recommendations 20 and 21)

- **Do you agree that the curriculum offer for 16-19 year olds should include wider key skills that prepare young people for the world of work and should cultivate an entrepreneurial culture within this cohort of students? Please comment.**

3.5.6 Other components of policy that are particularly relevant to 16 to 19 year olds are the provision of 'A' Levels and GCSEs, and careers information advice and guidance that should be made available to learners, particularly at the college enrolment stage. These areas are developed in the following paragraphs.

‘A’ LEVEL AND GCSE PROVISION

- 3.5.7 As indicated above, the learners referred to in this section of the document, are those 16-19 year olds who are enrolled as Further Education students only. The aim is to identify the nature and type of ‘A’ Level and GCSE provision that is on offer to this cohort of young people and to determine its appropriateness in the context of the aim and purpose of further education as outlined in the Introduction section of this document. Although ‘A’ Level and GCSE provision is widely available for 16-19 year olds in the Post Primary Sector, for a number of young people further education is their place of choice to pursue these qualifications. The Department would view this as an option that should always be available to these young people.
- 3.5.8 In reviewing this aspect of provision for 16-19 year old Further Education students, consideration was also given to the ongoing work between the Department and the Department of Education on the wider reform of provision for 14-19 year olds. This included consideration of the most appropriate place for delivery of learning provision, including, ‘A’ levels and GCSEs.
- 3.5.9 In this context, the aim of policy recommendations in this area is to ensure that the Further Education sector plays to its own strengths and avoids unnecessary duplication between it and the post primary sector. In broad terms, the assumption is that, in the future, colleges should focus on applied ‘A’ Level and GCSEs for 16-19 year old students enrolled in Further Education colleges, with schools concentrating on academic ‘A’ Level and GCSEs for the 16-19 year old students enrolled in Post Primary schools.
- 3.5.10 With this in mind, the Department has assessed the nature and extent of ‘A’ Level and GCSE provision for the 16 to 19 cohort delivered in Further Education colleges. Unfortunately the data could not identify applied courses separately from general/academic A levels and GCSEs.
- 3.5.11 However, the analysis did show that there is considerable variation in the extent to which A levels and GCSEs are offered by individual colleges, reflecting local arrangements that have developed over years. The balance could continue to differ from area to area, but the optimum balance should be developed locally between school and college collaboration. This will be carried out in the context of the area planning process for the delivery of education services, which the Department is actively engaged in with the Department of Education and through local collaboration between Further Education colleges and schools. To progress this area, the Department will:

Recommendation 22

- **support and encourage individual colleges to continue to work collaboratively with post-primary schools in the context of area planning, to determine the most appropriate balance between academic and applied ‘A’ Level and GCSE provision for 16 to 19 year olds.**

Recommendation 23

- **not set specific targets for colleges regarding the balance to be achieved between academic and applied 'A' Level and GCSE provision. However, colleges can take this provision into account in achieving their wider curriculum performance targets.**

Question 15 (Recommendations 22 and 23)

- **Do you agree that Further Education colleges should focus on providing more Applied 'A' Levels and GCSEs for 16-19 year olds in the context of Area Planning? Please comment.**

CAREERS EDUCATION, INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE (CEIAG)

- 3.5.12 The Department's "*Success Through Skills*" strategy and the Department of Education's "Entitled 2 Succeed" programme both highlight the need for an independent all-age strategy for Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) in Northern Ireland. The proposed strategy, which is currently the subject of separate public consultation, aims to support young people and adults in better-informed decision-making, leading to more effective career planning and increased participation in education, training and employment. Responsibility for the development and implementation of the strategy lies with the Department for Employment and Learning and the Department of Education.
- 3.5.13 The CEIAG consultation document identifies a number of possible delivery models. Whichever of the proposed models is eventually adopted, it will be important for the guidance processes in colleges to complement the wider CEIAG structure. It is crucial to ensure that the curriculum offer provided by colleges to each individual student is focused on his/her needs, matches identified career aspirations and has clear progression routes to further and higher education, where appropriate. It is also necessary to ensure that curriculum choices match the needs of the economy, with higher priority given to those occupational areas that meet local and regional priority skill needs.
- 3.5.14 Colleges already have careers guidance sections, and in developing these proposals care will be taken to ensure that existing best practice in colleges can be identified and enhanced. The wider CEIAG strategy includes proposals in respect of raising the standards and improving the quality of CEIAG provision in whatever setting it takes place – for example, proposals in that consultation document include the possible adoption of the "Matrix", which is made up of eight quality elements. The guidance offered in colleges will adopt whatever quality standards are used in other guidance settings.

- 3.5.15 The CEIAG strategy emphasises that impartial careers advice and guidance also has an important role to play in supporting adults to make effective career decisions. Consideration will be given to extending the proposed ILP approach to adult learners who would benefit from this approach as part of widening access to Further Education, and to encourage and support learners to progress from basic to higher skill levels. Therefore, consideration will be given to how this approach could be used to support the effective implementation of recommendations in this consultation document relating to adult provision – in particular, to provision at Level 1 and below.
- 3.5.16 It should be noted that implementing the proposals outlined in paragraphs 3.5.12 to 3.5.15 will be subject to the outcome of the wider CEIAG consultation exercise.
- 3.5.17 In order to ensure that effective guidance is provided to learners enrolling in Further Education colleges and subject to the outcome of the Department’s wider CEIAG strategy, the Department will:

Recommendation 24 (see also recommendation 19)

- **agree with the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) how this area of activity can be included in their routine inspection of Further Education college performance.**

Recommendation 25

- **require each college to develop an Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) strategy, to be agreed with the Department and monitored under the College Development Planning process.**

Recommendation 26

- **ensure that all IAG strategies are in line with the outworkings of the Department’s CEIAG strategy, that is currently the subject of separate consultation.**

Question 16 (Recommendations 24 to 26)

- **Do you agree that colleges should develop Information Advice and Guidance strategies to ensure that all 16 to 19 year old students enrolling in Further Education colleges (and where appropriate adult learners enrolling in Further Education colleges), are provided with the most appropriate package of learning to meet their specific learning needs? Please comment.**

4. EQUALITY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

- 4.1.1 The Department for Employment and Learning is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and harmonious community relations, protecting human rights and meeting the objectives of the New Targeting Social Need policy.
- 4.1.2 In developing policy for the Further Education sector, the Department has sought at all times to meet its obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and to ensure that policy impact assessments are carried out in accordance with the Northern Ireland Civil Service's Policy Making Guide.
- 4.1.3 In addition, all of the Further Education colleges are identified as public sector bodies for the purposes of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act. Therefore, colleges also have to comply with the requirements of Section 75.
- 4.1.4 In line with the requirements of its Equality Scheme, the Department has conducted a Preliminary Equality Impact Assessment (PEQIA) on the recommendations set out in this consultation document. The outcome of the PEQIA has informed this Equality section of this consultation document. The complete PEQIA is available on the Department's Internet site: www.delni.gov.uk.
- 4.1.5 The outcome of the PEQIA on the curriculum proposals was that there was potential for some adverse impact on one of the Section 75 groups. Therefore, the proposals are the subject of a more detailed analysis in this equality section.

4.2 DATA

- 4.2.1 The main data that has been used to inform this equality section is Further Education college enrolments in the 2005/06 academic year, which is the most recent validated data that is available. Colleges' enrolments are recorded on the Northern Ireland College Information System (NICIS). As the information held is based on the number of enrolments rather than on the number of people attending the college, there is some degree of double counting ie a number of people could have enrolled on more than one course. In addition, some enrolments are on short part-time courses, while others are in respect of full-time courses. In the analysis, comparisons are drawn between college enrolment trends and information on the Northern Ireland population as a whole, taken from the 2001 Census.

4.2.2 In 2005/06, Further Education provision was delivered through the, then, 16 colleges, now six colleges, 48 campuses and 847 outreach centres. The data used in this section reflects the position across the entire Further Education sector.

4.3 THE NATURE OF THE ANALYSIS

4.3.1 The Department has considered the potential implications of the new Curriculum policy on equality across all Section 75 groups, with the exception of Political Opinion and Sexual Orientation, in respect of which the Department and colleges do not currently hold data.

4.3.2 In doing this, the Department has analysed the pattern of participation by the Section 75 groups on the main aspects of college provision identified in the consultation document. These are:

- all enrolments, at different levels;
- priority skill enrolments at different levels;
- professional and technical enrolments at different levels;
- enrolments at different levels that are on the NQF;
- enrolments at different levels that are not on the NQF; and
- 'A' Level and GCSE enrolments.

The detailed data to support this analysis is presented through six tables that are provided in Appendix 1.

4.3.3 In considering the data provided, it is important to bear in mind that Further Education provision is available to everyone in Northern Ireland who is over 16 years of age. Further Education colleges are welcoming environments, are genuinely cross community in their appeal, and learner access to the services provided by the six new colleges is facilitated through 48 campuses and 847 outreach centres throughout Northern Ireland. Therefore, many, if not all, of the different patterns of participation in Further Education by the various Section 75 groups is influenced very heavily by the personal choice of individuals, who will decide to embark on particular courses for a wide variety of reasons. Against this background, the following paragraphs record the Department's findings and comments, and, where it is considered necessary, describe measures the Department will take to mitigate any perceived adverse impact.

4.4 GENDER

4.4.1 In 2005/06 there were a total of 53,840 (36%) male and 96,182 (64%) female enrolments in Further Education Colleges, compared with 49%

(males) and 51% (females) from the 2001 Census. This reflects a historical pattern of enrolment in Further Education courses in Northern Ireland. This trend for higher rates of participation in Further Education by females is present in all but one of the main aspects of college provision. So, for example, female participation in the different types of college provision ranges from 55% for priority skills at Level 1 and below to 68% for non-NQF provision at Level 1 and below. The exception is priority skills at Level 2 and above, where there is higher participation by males - the male/female split here is 59% and 41% respectively.

- 4.4.2 All FE provision is available to male and females on an equal basis, and the Department has no information to explain why, historically, more females participate in Further Education provision. The new curriculum proposals are unlikely to have a significant impact on the balance of male/female participation, and this is not their intention. However, the fact that priority skills at Level 2 and above is one of the priority areas for future Further Education provision may address the overall male/ female balance, but this is likely to be marginal.
- 4.4.3 In summary, the curriculum proposals are unlikely to have an adverse impact on the Gender dimension of Section 75.

4.5 RELIGIOUS BELIEF/COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

- 4.5.1 In 2005/06 there were 54,095 (36%) college enrolments from the Catholic community and 44,337 (30%) enrolments from the Protestant community. There were also significant numbers of enrolments of those whose religious beliefs were not known (20,398 - 14%) or not stated (21,952 - 15%). It is not possible to determine what impact the not known and not stated figures have on the Catholic and Protestant figures. The Catholic and Protestant figures compare with 40% and 40% respectively from the 2001 Census. The proportion of Catholic enrolments is higher than the proportion of Protestant enrolments in all the main areas of Further Education provision. The other categories of religious belief/community background make up a very small proportion of the overall enrolments, and the pattern is similar to the Census position.
- 4.5.2 All Further Education provision is available to everyone, irrespective of religious belief or community background. Further Education colleges, similar to Universities, are among the few educational establishments in Northern Ireland that can claim to be genuinely cross community, and colleges are recognised for the positive approach they take to encouraging cultural diversity. The new curriculum proposals are unlikely to have a significant impact on the balance of participation from the different communities in Northern Ireland, and this is not their intention.

- 4.5.3 In summary, the curriculum proposals are unlikely to have an adverse impact on the religious/community background dimension of Section 75.

4.6 PEOPLE WITH AND WITHOUT A DISABILITY

- 4.6.1 Out of a total of 150,022 college enrolments in 2005/06, 7,068 (or 5%) were in respect of people with a disability. This is compared with 20% recorded in the 2001 Census. However, the definitions of people with a disability are very different. For example, the figures from the NI Census are a broad definition of self-certified disability and include people with any limiting long term illness, health problem or disability which limits daily activities or work. It is, therefore, very difficult to make meaningful comparisons between Census and Further Education enrolment data in this Section 75 grouping. However, the data for 2005/06 shows that in broad terms there is a higher proportion of people with a disability enrolled on courses that are not on the NQF, or on courses at Level 1 and below – enrolments on these types of provision range from 5% to 7%. On the other hand, the proportion of people with a disability enrolled on Level 1 and Level 2 courses, and courses at these Levels in priority skill areas are 2% each. However, of the total enrolments in Level 1 and below professional and technical provision, 7% were in respect of people with disabilities.
- 4.6.2 Therefore, care will need to be taken to ensure that the proportion of disabled people participating in college provision does not fall if the proportion of college provision at higher levels and in vocational and priority skill areas increases. This will be achieved in a number of ways. Firstly, as indicated in paragraphs 3.4.3 to 3.4.6, the Department will continue to fund provision at Level 1 and below, although even here the focus will be, increasingly, on professional and technical and NQF provision. Secondly, colleges take very seriously their duty to make their provision accessible to disabled people, for example: through the physical design of their accommodation; through the provision of additional support in the classroom; and through financial assistance to individual students where appropriate. In addition, while many students with disabilities are taught within mainstream college provision, there are instances when discrete provision is required. The Department, in consultation with colleges, has weighted the funding available for discrete provision to ensure the continuity of this vital support to students with severe disabilities.
- 4.6.3 The new curriculum proposals are unlikely to have a significant impact on the level of participation on the part of disabled people and this is not their intention. However, this dimension will have to be monitored carefully.
- 4.6.4 In summary, the curriculum proposals are unlikely to have an adverse impact on the disability dimension of Section 75.

4.7 ETHNICITY

- 4.7.1 The pattern of college enrolments across the various categories of ethnicity matches very closely to the 2001 Census figures across all of the main aspects of college provision. For example, of the total of 150,022 enrolments in 2005/06, 147,161 (98%) were in respect of those categorising themselves as white. This compares to the Census figure of 99%.
- 4.7.2 Similar to the religion/community background Section 75 group, Further Education colleges are recognised for the positive approach they take to addressing issues of race and ethnicity. The new curriculum proposals are unlikely to have a significant impact on the balance of participation in respect of people from different races, and this is not their intention.
- 4.7.3 In summary, the curriculum proposals are unlikely to have an adverse impact on the ethnicity dimension of Section 75.

4.8 AGE

- 4.8.1 It is the age dimension of Section 75 where the pattern of participation in Further Education provision differs most markedly from the Northern Ireland Census figures. While the pattern of total Further Education enrolments compares closely with Northern Ireland Census figures across all age groups analysed, there are considerable differences in respect of the various types of Further Education provision.
- 4.8.2 It is difficult to summarise the levels of participation in the various types of Further Education provision across the different age groupings, because there are a large number of variables to be analysed. However, some general statements can be made.
- 4.8.3 In broad terms, when compared to its Census representation (30%), the 19 and under age group tends to have a higher level of participation in enrolments at Levels 2 and 3 (47%), in priority skill areas (48%), in professional and technical areas (40%), and in 'A' Levels (77%) and GCSEs (57%). On the other hand, this age group's participation tends to be lower in areas such as provision at Level 1 and below (12%), and non-NQF provision (11%).
- 4.8.4 Numerically, 20 to 24 year olds constitute the second smallest of the age groups analysed, both in Census terms and in terms of overall Further Education enrolments. The pattern of participation of this group across the various types of Further Education provision is similar to the 19 and under age group. The main exception to this is 'A' Level and GCSE provision, where this age group is less well represented.

- 4.8.5 While there are a few exceptions, the 25 to 59 age group tends to have a fairly even pattern of participation, being well represented in all of the main areas of college provision – even in respect of ‘A’ Levels and GCSEs, where they are the second highest age group.
- 4.8.6 Finally, as far as the combined 60 to 64 and 65 and over age groups are concerned, there is a very marked level of participation in enrolments at Level 1 and below (30%), and enrolments not on the NQF (28%), and very low levels of enrolment in courses at Levels 2 and 3 (2%).
- 4.8.7 Based on the pattern of participation across the various learner age groups described above, it would appear, at first sight, that the increasing emphasis on curriculum that supports economic development may have a disproportionate impact on learners aged 60 and over. However, there are a number of factors that could lessen any impact. Firstly, while recommendation 12 in this consultation is to restrict non-NQF provision to around 5% of colleges’ taught hours of delivery (see paragraphs 3.3.21 to 3.3.26), this equates to a considerable level of resource – around £5.7 million per year. In addition, colleges will be encouraged to transfer much of their current non-NQF provision to provision that is on the NQF. This will enable this level of budget to be focused primarily on provision that is not on the NQF, such as a variety of community based learning. It is also worth noting that, over the past few years, colleges have been reducing the amount of their provision that is not on the NQF and the current figure across the sector is around 93% of taught hours of delivery. Therefore, it is possible that much of the current non-NQF provision, including the recreational provision that most older learners tend to participate in, will still be available ie either through provision that has been transferred to NQF courses, or through courses funded from within the 5% described above. Secondly, as indicated in recommendation 15 in this consultation, the Department will continue to fund colleges to deliver provision at Level 1 and below. Thirdly, the curriculum policy emphasis in this consultation document relates only to provision that the Department for Employment and Learning funds directly. The Department sets no restrictions on the type of provision offered by colleges that it does not fund. In addition, colleges have demonstrated that much of the recreational provision which fulfils a social role for older learners can be facilitated using a range of Department and non-Departmental funding arrangements.
- 4.8.8 In summary, while there is some potential for the curriculum policies outlined in this consultation to have an adverse impact on the age dimension of Section 75, that impact could be minimised by the factors outlined at paragraph 5.8.7 above.

4.9 MARITAL STATUS

- 4.9.1 The majority of college enrolments in 2005/06, 69,541 (46%), were in respect of single people, while 42,047 (28%) enrolments were recorded as married or cohabiting, 5,995 (4%) as separated or divorced and 4,998 (3%) as widowed. The status of 27,441 (18%) enrolments was recorded as not known. With the exception of enrolments in respect of single people, college enrolments in other categories of marital status are around half of the respective Census figure. The Department has no information to explain why this is the case.
- 4.9.2 In summary, the curriculum proposals are unlikely to have an adverse impact on the marital status dimension of Section 75.

4.10 DEPENDANTS

- 4.10.1 The proportion of enrolments for learners with dependant adults or dependant children are much lower than for Northern Ireland as a whole as identified in the 2001 Census figures. With very few exceptions, this pattern is repeated across all of the main aspects of college provision. For example, of the total of 150,022 enrolments in 2005/06, 133,494 (89%) were in respect of those with no child dependants. This figure compares with 36% in the Census.
- 4.10.2 With a wide range of full time and part time courses, many of which are available at different times of the day, colleges offer flexibility that can facilitate access for those with dependants. The new curriculum proposals are unlikely to have a significant impact on the balance of participation in respect of people with dependants, and this is not their intention.
- 4.10.3 In summary, the curriculum proposals are unlikely to have an adverse impact on the dependants dimension of Section 75.

4.11 POLITICAL OPINION

- 4.11.1 The Department currently has no data available on learners' political opinions.

4.12 SEXUAL ORIENTATION

- 4.12.1 The Department currently has no data available on learners' sexual orientation.

CURRICULUM AND ACCESS CONSULTATION APPENDIX 1:

Mapped Further Education funded data by level of study and equality categories 2005-06

Northern Ireland ¹	Northern Ireland ²	Gender	Enrolments at Level 1 and below	% Enrolments at Level 1 and below	Enrolments at Level 2 and Level 3	% Enrolments at Level 2 and Level 3	Total FE Enrolments	% Total FE Enrolments
863,818	51%	Female	53,628	66%	42,554	62%	96,182	64%
821,449	49%	Male	27,683	34%	26,157	38%	53,840	36%
1,685,267	100%	Total	81,311	100%	68,711	100%	150,022	100%
		Community Background						
678,462	40%	Roman Catholic	26,515	33%	27,580	40%	54,095	36%
665,703	40%	Protestant	21,697	27%	22,640	33%	44,337	30%
102,221	6%	Other Christian	1,420	2%	1,371	2%	2,791	2%
5,028	0%	Non-Christian	361	0%	335	0%	696	0%
-	0%	No Religion	2,361	3%	3,392	5%	5,753	4%
233,853	14%	Not Stated	14,854	18%	7,098	10%	21,952	15%
-	0%	Not Known	14,103	17%	6,295	9%	21,952	14%
1,685,267	100%	Total	81,311	100%	68,711	100%	150,022	100%
		Disability Status						
343,107	20%	Disabled	5,380	7%	1,688	2%	7,068	5%
1,342,160	80%	Not Disabled	75,931	93%	67,023	98%	142,954	95%
1,685,267	100%	Total	81,311	100%	68,711	100%	150,022	100%
		Ethnicity						
1,670,988	99%	White	79,500	98%	67,661	98%	147,161	98%
1,136	0%	Black	208	0%	189	0%	397	0%
1,567	0%	Indian	94	0%	98	0%	192	0%
666	0%	Pakistani	58	0%	39	0%	97	0%
252	0%	Bangladeshi	24	0%	13	0%	37	0%
4,145	0%	Chinese	456	1%	214	0%	670	0%
6,513	0%	Irish Traveller / Other	971	1%	497	0%	1,468	1%
1,685,267	100%	Total	81,311	100%	68,711	100%	150,022	100%
		Age Group						
500,153	30%	19 & under	9,876	12%	32,130	47%	42,006	28%
109,385	6%	20 to 24	5,845	7%	9,018	13%	14,863	10%
778,817	46%	25 to 59	41,889	52%	25,846	38%	67,735	45%
73,587	4%	60 to 64	7,029	9%	749	1%	7,778	5%
223,325	13%	65 & over	16,672	21%	968	1%	17,640	12%
1,685,267	100%	Total	81,311	100%	68,711	100%	150,022	100%
		Over 16 only						
		Marital Status						
426,214	33%	Single	27,223	33%	42,318	62%	69,541	46%
658,083	51%	Married / Co-habiting	28,502	35%	13,545	20%	42,047	28%
102,423	8%	Separated / Divorced	3,570	4%	2,425	4%	5,995	4%
100,491	8%	Widowed	4,543	6%	455	1%	4,998	3%
-	0%	Not Known	17,473	21%	9,968	15%	27,441	18%
1,287,211	100%	Total	81,311	100%	68,711	100%	150,022	100%
		Dependant Adults						
		No	79,121	97%	67,070	98%	146,191	97%
		Yes	2,190	3%	1,641	2%	3,831	3%
1,685,267		Total	81,311	100%	68,711	100%	150,022	100%
		Dependant Children						
614,576	36%	No	73,338	90%	60,156	88%	133,494	89%
1,070,691	64%	Yes	7,973	10%	8,555	12%	16,528	11%
1,685,267	100%	Total	81,311	100%	68,711	100%	150,022	100%

Source: FESR

¹Data in this column are population figures taken from the Northern Ireland 2001 Census broken down by the various Section 75 categories.

²Data in this column are the percentage breakdown of the population figures taken from the Northern Ireland 2001 Census by the various Section 75 categories.

CURRICULUM AND ACCESS CONSULTATION APPENDIX 1:

Mapped Further Education funded data by priority skill level and equality categories 2005-06

% Northern Ireland ¹	% Total FE Enrolments ²	Gender	Priority Skills Enrolment at Level 1 and below	% Priority Skills Enrolment at Level 1 and below	Priority Skills Enrolment at Level 2 and 3	% Priority Skills Enrolments at Level 2 and 3	Total Priority Skills Enrolments Levels 1-3	% Total Priority Skills Enrolments Levels 1-3
51%	64%	Female	9,919	55%	6,487	41%	16,406	48%
49%	36%	Male	8,196	45%	9,378	59%	17,574	52%
100%	100%	Total	18,115	100%	15,865	100%	33,980	100%
		Community Background						
40%	36%	Roman Catholic	5,850	32%	6,079	38%	11,929	35%
40%	30%	Protestant	5,773	32%	5,258	33%	11,031	32%
6%	2%	Other Christian	283	2%	263	2%	546	2%
0%	0%	Non-Christian	48	0%	60	0%	108	0%
0%	4%	No Religion	406	2%	670	4%	1,076	3%
14%	15%	Not Stated	3,202	18%	2,100	13%	5,302	16%
0%	14%	Not Known	2,553	14%	1,435	9%	3,988	12%
100%	100%	Total	18,115	100%	15,865	100%	33,980	100%
		Disability Status						
20%	5%	Disabled	1,003	6%	332	2%	1,335	4%
80%	95%	Not Disabled	17,112	94%	15,533	98%	32,645	96%
100%	100%	Total	18,115	100%	15,865	100%	33,980	100%
		Ethnicity						
99%	98%	White	17,837	98%	15,636	99%	33,473	99%
0%	0%	Black	33	0%	44	0%	77	0%
0%	0%	Indian	19	0%	23	0%	42	0%
0%	0%	Pakistani	14	0%	11	0%	25	0%
0%	0%	Bangladeshi	1	0%	3	0%	4	0%
0%	0%	Chinese	22	0%	59	0%	81	0%
0%	0%	Irish Traveller / Other	189	1%	89	0%	278	1%
100%	100%	Total	18,115	100%	15,865	100%	33,980	100%
		Age Group						
30%	28%	19 & under	2,081	11%	7,672	48%	9,753	29%
6%	10%	20 to 24	960	5%	1,633	10%	2,593	8%
46%	45%	25 to 59	9,787	54%	6,067	38%	15,854	47%
4%	5%	60 to 64	1,790	10%	208	1%	1,998	6%
13%	12%	65 & over	3,497	19%	285	2%	3,782	11%
100%	100%	Total	18,115	100%	15,865	100%	33,980	100%
		Marital Status						
33%	46%	Single	5,298	29%	8,940	56%	14,238	42%
51%	28%	Married / Co-habiting	7,431	41%	3,360	21%	10,791	32%
8%	4%	Separated / Divorced	896	5%	445	3%	1,341	4%
8%	3%	Widowed	905	5%	104	1%	1,009	3%
0%	18%	Not Known	3,585	20%	3,016	19%	6,601	19%
100%	100%	Total	18,115	100%	15,865	100%	33,980	100%
		Dependant Adults						
	97%	No	17,406	96%	15,454	97%	32,860	97%
	3%	Yes	709	4%	411	3%	1,120	3%
	100%	Total	18,115	100%	15,865	100%	33,980	100%
		Dependant Children						
36%	89%	No	15,971	88%	14,106	89%	30,077	89%
64%	11%	Yes	2,144	12%	1,759	11%	3,903	11%
100%	100%	Total	18,115	100%	15,865	100%	33,980	100%

Source: FESR

¹Data in this column are the percentage breakdown of the population figures taken from the Northern Ireland 2001 Census by the various Section 75 categories.

²Data in this column are the percentage breakdown of the Total Further Education Sector enrolments by the various Section 75 categories.

CURRICULUM AND ACCESS CONSULTATION APPENDIX 1:

Mapped Further Education funded data by professional & technical level and equality categories 2005-06

% Northern Ireland ¹	% Total FE Enrolments ²	Gender	Enrolments that are Professional and Technical Level 1 and entry Level	% Enrolments that are Professional and Technical Level 1 and entry Level	Enrolments that are Professional and Technical Level 2 and 3	% Enrolments that are Professional and Technical Level 2 and 3	Total Enrolments that are Professional and Technical	% Total Enrolments that are Professional and Technical
51%	64%	Female	13,565	59%	32,254	62%	45,819	62%
49%	36%	Male	9,235	41%	19,373	38%	28,608	38%
100%	100%	Total	22,800	100%	51,627	100%	74,427	100%
		Community Background						
40%	36%	Roman Catholic	7,784	34%	20,989	41%	28,773	39%
40%	30%	Protestant	6,502	29%	16,966	33%	23,468	32%
6%	2%	Other Christian	582	3%	1,003	2%	1,585	2%
0%	0%	Non-Christian	177	1%	243	0%	420	1%
0%	4%	No Religion	963	4%	2,223	4%	3,186	4%
14%	15%	Not Stated	3,601	16%	5,774	11%	9,375	13%
0%	14%	Not Known	3,191	14%	4,429	9%	7,620	10%
100%	100%	Total	22,800	100%	51,627	100%	74,427	100%
		Disability Status						
20%	5%	Disabled	1,495	7%	1,206	2%	2,701	4%
80%	95%	Not Disabled	21,305	93%	50,421	98%	71,726	96%
100%	100%	Total	22,800	100%	51,627	100%	74,427	100%
		Ethnicity						
99%	98%	White	21,954	96%	50,921	99%	72,875	98%
0%	0%	Black	125	1%	141	0%	266	0%
0%	0%	Indian	57	0%	72	0%	129	0%
0%	0%	Pakistani	32	0%	21	0%	53	0%
0%	0%	Bangladeshi	18	0%	11	0%	29	0%
0%	0%	Chinese	312	1%	138	0%	450	1%
0%	1%	Irish Traveller / Other	302	1%	323	1%	625	1%
100%	100%	Total	22,800	100%	51,627	100%	74,427	100%
		Age Group						
30%	28%	19 & under	5,570	24%	20,707	40%	26,277	35%
6%	10%	20 to 24	2,300	10%	6,969	13%	9,269	12%
46%	45%	25 to 59	11,431	50%	22,434	43%	33,865	46%
4%	5%	60 to 64	1,263	6%	660	1%	1,923	3%
13%	12%	65 & over	2,236	10%	857	2%	3,093	4%
100%	100%	Total	22,800	100%	51,627	100%	74,427	100%
		Marital Status						
33%	46%	Single	10,455	46%	29,324	57%	39,779	53%
51%	28%	Married / Co-habiting	7,082	31%	12,046	23%	19,128	26%
8%	4%	Separated / Divorced	1,100	5%	2,137	4%	3,237	4%
8%	3%	Widowed	686	3%	398	1%	1,084	1%
0%	18%	Not Known	3,477	15%	7,722	15%	11,199	15%
100%	100%	Total	22,800	100%	51,627	100%	74,427	100%
		Dependant Adults						
	97%	No	22,129	97%	50,251	97%	72,380	97%
	3%	Yes	671	3%	1,376	3%	2,047	3%
	100%	Total	22,800	100%	51,627	100%	74,427	100%
		Dependant Children						
36%	89%	No	20,193	89%	44,382	86%	64,575	87%
64%	11%	Yes	2,607	11%	7,245	14%	9,852	13%
100%	100%	Total	22,800	100%	51,627	100%	74,427	100%

Source: FESR

¹Data in this column are the percentage breakdown of the population figures taken from the Northern Ireland 2001 Census by the various Section 75 categories.

²Data in this column are the percentage breakdown of the Total Further Education Sector enrolments by the various Section 75 categories.

CURRICULUM AND ACCESS CONSULTATION APPENDIX 1:

Mapped Further Education funded data by NQF level equality categories 2005-06

% Northern Ireland ¹	% Total FE Enrolments ²	Gender	Enrolments on the NQF at Level 1 and below	% Enrolments on the NQF at Level 1 and below	Enrolments on the NQF at Level 2 and 3	% Enrolments on the NQF	Total Enrolments on the NQF	% Total Enrolments on the NQF
51%	64%	Female	10,272	59%	35,620	63%	45,892	62%
49%	36%	Male	7,116	41%	21,045	37%	28,161	38%
100%	100%	Total	17,388	100%	56,665	100%	74,053	100%
		Community Background						
40%	36%	Roman Catholic	6,169	35%	22,762	40%	28,931	39%
40%	30%	Protestant	4,341	25%	18,959	33%	23,300	31%
6%	2%	Other Christian	420	2%	1,124	2%	1,544	2%
0%	0%	Non-Christian	154	1%	284	1%	438	1%
0%	4%	No Religion	755	4%	2,817	5%	3,572	5%
14%	15%	Not Stated	2,589	15%	5,662	10%	8,251	11%
0%	14%	Not Known	2,960	17%	5,057	9%	8,017	11%
100%	100%	Total	17,388	100%	56,665	100%	74,053	100%
		Disability Status						
20%	5%	Disabled	1,461	8%	1,463	3%	2,924	4%
80%	95%	Not Disabled	15,927	92%	55,202	97%	71,129	96%
100%	100%	Total	17,388	100%	56,665	100%	74,053	100%
		Ethnicity						
99%	98%	White	16,679	96%	55,768	98%	72,447	98%
0%	0%	Black	112	1%	144	0%	256	0%
0%	0%	Indian	51	0%	86	0%	137	0%
0%	0%	Pakistani	38	0%	34	0%	72	0%
0%	0%	Bangladeshi	15	0%	12	0%	27	0%
0%	0%	Chinese	293	2%	191	0%	484	1%
0%	1%	Irish Traveller / Other	200	1%	430	1%	630	1%
100%	100%	Total	17,388	100%	56,665	100%	74,053	100%
		Age Group						
30%	28%	19 & under	4,415	25%	29,192	52%	33,607	45%
6%	10%	20 to 24	1,902	11%	6,970	12%	8,872	12%
46%	45%	25 to 59	8,643	50%	19,318	34%	27,961	38%
4%	5%	60 to 64	841	5%	543	1%	1,384	2%
13%	12%	65 & over	1,587	9%	642	1%	2,229	3%
100%	100%	Total	17,388	100%	56,665	100%	74,053	100%
		Marital Status						
33%	46%	Single	8,298	48%	36,314	64%	44,612	60%
51%	28%	Married / Co-habiting	4,998	29%	10,078	18%	15,076	20%
8%	4%	Separated / Divorced	742	4%	1,789	3%	2,531	3%
8%	3%	Widowed	474	3%	336	1%	810	1%
0%	18%	Not Known	2,876	17%	8,148	14%	11,024	15%
100%	100%	Total	17,388	100%	56,665	100%	74,053	100%
		Dependant Adults						
	97%	No	16,815	97%	55,421	98%	72,236	98%
	3%	Yes	573	3%	1,244	2%	1,817	2%
	100%	Total	17,388	100%	56,665	100%	74,053	100%
		Dependant Children						
36%	89%	No	15,404	89%	50,014	88%	65,418	88%
64%	11%	Yes	1,984	11%	6,651	12%	8,635	12%
100%	100%	Total	17,388	100%	56,665	100%	74,053	100%

Source: FESR

¹Data in this column are the percentage breakdown of the population figures taken from the Northern Ireland 2001 Census by the various Section 75 categories.

²Data in this column are the percentage breakdown of the total Further Education Sector enrolments by the various Section 75 categories.

CURRICULUM AND ACCESS CONSULTATION APPENDIX 1:

Mapped Further Education funded data by non-NQF level equality categories 2005-06

% Northern Ireland ¹	% Total FE Enrolments ²	Gender	Enrolments not on the NQF at Level 1 and below	% Enrolments not on the NQF at Level 1 and below	Enrolments not on the NQF at Level 2 and 3	& Enrolments not on the NQF at Level 2 and 3	Total Enrolments not on the NQF	% Total Enrolments not on the NQF
51%	64%	Female	43,356	68%	6,934	58%	50,290	66%
49%	36%	Male	20,567	32%	5,112	42%	25,679	34%
100%	100%	Total	63,923	100%	12,046	100%	75,969	100%
		Community Background						
40%	36%	Roman Catholic	20,346	32%	4,818	40%	25,164	33%
40%	30%	Protestant	17,356	27%	3,681	31%	21,037	28%
6%	2%	Other Christian	1,000	2%	247	2%	1,247	2%
0%	0%	Non-Christian	207	0%	51	0%	258	0%
0%	4%	No Religion	1,606	3%	575	5%	2,181	3%
14%	15%	Not Stated	12,265	19%	1,436	12%	13,701	18%
0%	14%	Not Known	11,143	17%	1,238	10%	12,381	16%
100%	100%	Total	63,923	100%	12,046	100%	75,969	100%
		Disability Status						
20%	5%	Disabled	3,919	6%	225	2%	4,144	5%
80%	95%	Not Disabled	60,004	94%	11,821	98%	71,825	95%
100%	100%	Total	63,923	100%	12,046	100%	75,969	100%
		Ethnicity						
99%	98%	White	62,821	98%	11,893	99%	74,714	98%
0%	0%	Black	96	0%	45	0%	141	0%
0%	0%	Indian	43	0%	12	0%	55	0%
0%	0%	Pakistani	20	0%	5	0%	25	0%
0%	0%	Bangladeshi	9	0%	1	0%	10	0%
0%	0%	Chinese	163	0%	23	0%	186	0%
0%	1%	Irish Traveller / Other	771	1%	67	1%	838	1%
100%	100%	Total	63,923	100%	12,046	100%	75,969	100%
		Age Group						
30%	28%	19 & under	5,461	9%	2,938	24%	8,399	11%
6%	10%	20 to 24	3,943	6%	2,048	17%	5,991	8%
46%	45%	25 to 59	33,246	52%	6,528	54%	39,774	52%
4%	5%	60 to 64	6,188	10%	206	2%	6,394	8%
13%	12%	65 & over	15,085	24%	326	3%	15,411	20%
100%	100%	Total	63,923	100%	12,046	100%	75,969	100%
		Marital Status						
33%	46%	Single	18,925	30%	6,004	50%	24,929	33%
51%	28%	Married / Co-habiting	23,504	37%	3,467	29%	26,971	36%
8%	4%	Separated / Divorced	2,828	4%	636	5%	3,464	5%
8%	3%	Widowed	4,069	6%	119	1%	4,188	6%
0%	18%	Not Known	14,597	23%	1,820	15%	16,417	22%
100%	100%	Total	63,923	100%	12,046	100%	75,969	100%
		Dependant Adults						
	97%	No	62,306	97%	11,649	97%	73,955	97%
	3%	Yes	1,617	3%	397	3%	2,014	3%
	100%	Total	63,923	100%	12,046	100%	75,969	100%
		Dependant Children						
36%	89%	No	57,934	91%	10,142	84%	68,076	90%
64%	11%	Yes	5,989	9%	1,904	16%	7,893	10%
100%	100%	Total	63,923	100%	12,046	100%	75,969	100%

Source: FESR

¹Data in this column are the percentage breakdown of the population figures taken from the Northern Ireland 2001 Census by the various Section 75 categories

²Data in this column are the percentage breakdown of the Total Further Education Sector enrolments by the various Section 75 categories.

CURRICULUM AND ACCESS CONSULTATION APPENDIX 1:

Mapped Further Education funded data by the GCSE/A-Level and equality categories 2005-06

% Northern Ireland ¹	% Total FE Enrolments ²	Gender	A Level Enrolments	% A Level Enrolments	GCSE Enrolments	GCSE Provision	Total A Level and GCSE Enrolments	% Total A Level and GCSE
51%	64%	Female	5,196	61%	5,094	59%	10,290	60%
49%	36%	Male	3,305	39%	3,479	41%	6,784	40%
100%	100%	Total	8,501	100%	8,573	100%	17,074	100%
		Community Background						
40%	36%	Roman Catholic	2,996	35%	3,594	42%	6,590	39%
40%	30%	Protestant	2,913	34%	2,760	32%	5,673	33%
6%	2%	Other Christian	177	2%	191	2%	368	2%
0%	0%	Non-Christian	64	1%	28	0%	92	1%
0%	4%	No Religion	743	9%	424	5%	1,167	7%
14%	15%	Not Stated	579	7%	743	9%	1,322	8%
0%	14%	Not Known	1,029	12%	833	10%	1,862	11%
100%	100%	Total	8,501	100%	8,573	100%	17,074	100%
		Disability Status						
20%	5%	Disabled	194	2%	288	3%	482	3%
80%	95%	Not Disabled	8,307	98%	8,285	97%	16,592	97%
100%	100%	Total	8,501	100%	8,573	100%	17,074	100%
		Ethnicity						
99%	98%	White	8,319	98%	8,411	98%	16,730	98%
0%	0%	Black	18	0%	30	0%	48	0%
0%	0%	Indian	15	0%	11	0%	26	0%
0%	0%	Pakistani	7	0%	11	0%	18	0%
0%	0%	Bangladeshi	1	0%	1	0%	2	0%
0%	0%	Chinese	56	1%	20	0%	76	0%
0%	1%	Irish Traveller / Other	85	1%	89	1%	174	1%
100%	100%	Total	8,501	100%	8,573	100%	17,074	100%
		Age Group						
30%	28%	19 & under	6,534	77%	4,889	57%	11,423	67%
6%	10%	20 to 24	923	11%	1,126	13%	2,049	12%
46%	45%	25 to 59	977	11%	2,432	28%	3,409	20%
4%	5%	60 to 64	26	0%	60	1%	86	1%
13%	12%	65 & over	41	0%	66	1%	107	1%
100%	100%	Total	8,501	100%	8,573	100%	17,074	100%
		Marital Status						
33%	46%	Single	6,846	81%	6,146	72%	12,992	76%
51%	28%	Married / Co-habiting	389	5%	1,108	13%	1,497	9%
8%	4%	Separated / Divorced	62	1%	223	3%	285	2%
8%	3%	Widowed	20	0%	37	0%	57	0%
0%	18%	Not Known	1,184	14%	1,059	12%	2,243	13%
100%	100%	Total	8,501	100%	8,573	100%	17,074	100%
		Dependant Adults						
	97%	No	8,408	99%	8,402	98%	16,810	98%
	3%	Yes	93	1%	171	2%	264	2%
	100%	Total	8,501	100%	8,573	100%	17,074	100%
		Dependant Children						
36%	89%	No	8,139	96%	7,625	89%	15,764	92%
64%	11%	Yes	362	4%	948	11%	1,310	8%
100%	100%	Total	8,501	100%	8,573	100%	17,074	100%

Source: FESR

¹Data in this column are the percentage breakdown of the population figures taken from the Northern Ireland 2001 Census by the various Section 75 categories

²Data in this column are the percentage breakdown of the Total Further Education Sector enrolments by the various Section 75 categories.

people:skills:jobs:



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