



Equality Screening Template

The Employability and Skills Strategy and Action Plan for Belfast 2015-2025

Belfast City Council - Equality Screening Template

The Council has a statutory duty to screen. This includes our strategies, plans, policies, legislative developments; and new ways of working such as – the introduction, change or end of an existing service, grant funding arrangement or facility. This screening template is designed to help departments consider the likely equality impacts of their proposed decisions on different groups of customers, service users, staff and visitors.

Before carrying out an equality screening exercise it is important that you have received the necessary training first. To find out about the training needed, contact – gilmartins@belfastcity.gov.uk or dennisl@belfastcity.gov.uk

The accompanying [Screening Guidance](#) note provides straightforward advice on how to carry out equality screening exercises. Detailed information about the Section 75 equality duties¹ and what they mean in practice is available on the Equality Commission's website.

The screening template has 4 sections to complete. These are:

Section A - asks you to provide details about the policy / decision that is being screened.

Section B - has 4 key questions that require you to outline the likely impacts on equality groups, and all supporting evidence.

Section C - has 4 key questions in relation to obligations under the Disability Discrimination Order

Section D - is the formal record of the screening decision.

¹ ECNI 'Section 75 of the NI Act 1998: A Guide for Public Authorities' April 2010. www.equalityni.org

Section A

Details about the policy / decision to be screened

Title of policy / decision to be screened:
The Employability and Skills Strategy and Action Plan for Belfast 2015-2025

Brief description of policy / decision to be screened:
(Explain - Is this a new, revised or existing policy? Are there financial / legislative / procurement implications?)

There are no financial / legislative / procurement implications envisaged at this stage. The policy being assessed is the Employability and Skills Strategy and Action Plan for Belfast 2015-2025. There is considerable evidence to suggest that skills are one of key challenges facing Belfast and that without a focused and coordinated effort these factors are set to continue.

Given the council’s new powers and remit under local government reform, there is a unique opportunity to commence the development of a city-wide approach to employability and skills which will help drive improvement in local skills provision, increase employer responsiveness and facilitate residents’ ability to access employment.

This strategy and action plan seeks to build momentum to address key labour market challenges, build stronger collaboration and more effective partnership working with employers, the public, community and voluntary sectors.

As part of the strategy, a comprehensive evidence baseline was produced and subsequently an analysis detailing the nature of employability and skills issues now and in the future. The Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) was commissioned via a procurement exercise by Belfast City Council to produce the strategy and action plan.

CLES has presented a number of key issues to consider in relation to local economics, skills and employability and these are summarised below:

Economic overview

- Belfast is a growing international centre and up to the economic downturn was one of fastest growing regional economies in the UK. Between 2002 and 2012, the total Gross Value Added (GVA)² of Belfast rose by 1.5% each year, and in 2012, 30.2% of Northern Ireland's economic output was attributed to Belfast.
- Despite the relatively strong growth of the city economy, there is still a very marked polarisation of those who are well qualified and those who have no qualifications or who are low skilled.
- Job growth between 2012 and 2025 is forecast to be relatively limited at 4%, but there is forecast to be growth in the city employment rate to 70%;
- In addition to the new growth in employment, it is important to consider that there will still be substantial demand across all sectors for replacement of staff who have left their jobs, meaning significant vacancy levels even in those sectors which are not growing as rapidly.
- The sectors of ICT, Professional, Scientific and Technical activities, Administrative and Support Services and Human Health and Social Work activities are forecast to account for 76% of employment growth up to 2025.

Skills and employability issues

- 23% of the total working age population in Belfast had no qualifications in 2012³.
- There is a significant over supply of lower skilled residents in Belfast, with more demand in the future being for higher skilled labour across many sectors. However there will be an improvement in the reduction in people with no qualifications (a continuation of the improvement over the last decade), and the supply of working age residents qualified to Level 4 and above (graduate level and higher) will also increase, forecast at 34% compared to 28% in 2012. The challenge is to further accelerate these improvements.
- 68,000 Belfast residents are classed as economically inactive (30.8%). Notably over half of this cohort are claiming out of work or 'other' benefits. Welfare reform will impact considerably upon these groups. Many of this inactive population are

² GVA is a measure in economics of the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy.

³ Oxford Economics

lower skilled and therefore less likely to be employed.

- Only 9.3% of the working age population are self-employed. This is significantly lower than the 14.7% figure for Northern Ireland. This is also lower than in other UK cities such as Liverpool (10.8%), Manchester (14.4%), Newcastle (11.7%), Leeds (12.1%), and Sheffield (10.7%)
- Following Local Government Reform and new council boundary changes, there is an increased challenge as more residents who have either no or low skills have joined the council area. It was projected that 13,000 economically inactive people would join the council area and this presents significant policy and delivery challenges.⁴
- The increase in supply of higher skilled residents will not match demand, and this will inevitably lead to an increase in net commuters with Level 4 qualifications or above.
- Skills and employability issues are a continuing concern for Belfast employers. In 2013, a third of employers had difficulty recruiting, half of those due to lack of skills. Skills shortages are more acute in certain sectors and roles, notably skilled trades and also in professional, associate professional, caring and leisure, and elementary roles. Employability skills such as team working, planning/organisation, problem solving, and communication are a particular gap, whilst work experience and attitude are a much more frequent obstacle for young job seekers (and would be employers) than qualifications.

Aims and objectives of the policy / decision to be screened:

(What is the policy trying to achieve?)

Vision

The vision for the Employability and Skills Strategy and Action Plan is:

“To realise the potential of Belfast’s economy and its people by transforming skills, employability and aspiration, resulting in higher levels of business growth, employment and incomes.”

Backing up this vision, the headline target is:

⁴ draft Integrated Economic Strategy

To achieve an employment rate that reaches at least 72% by 2025 and would mean moving an estimated 17,500 Belfast residents into work.

Targets

1. To reduce the proportion of the working age population with no qualifications from the 2012 baseline of 23% to between 9% and 12% by 2025.
2. To increase the proportion of the working age population with level two qualifications and above from the 2012 baseline of 64% to between 76% and 79% by 2025.
3. To increase the proportion of the working age population with level 4 qualifications and above from the 2012 baseline of 28% to between 37% and 39% by 2025.

Overarching aims and objectives

1. To develop a coherent and city wide employability and skills partnership.
2. To provide a rounded and whole-life package of entry and lower level skills development and provision.
3. To generate higher level skills which meet the demands of employers and investors.
4. To enable progression routes and employability skills for all.

A summary of aims and objectives can be found in Appendix One (pages 30-31).

The aims and objectives of the strategy address the following areas of focus, as described by the Belfast Agenda:

1. Address educational inequalities: raising the low educational attainment levels in some areas of the city.
2. Attracts and retains skilled people: helps to attract and retain more skilled workers and students.
3. Improves skills and employability: ensuring that skills are matched with need from the market.
4. Strengthens business growth in Belfast: building closer relationships with the

business community and private sector.

5. Fosters business growth in Belfast: helping to create jobs and income by growing the private sector.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Skills and Employability Strategy will be overseen by an employability and skills partnership. Their remit will be to:

- set overarching direction around employability and skills and linking to the integrated economic strategy and other key related strategies;
- set objectives (effectively those outlined in this employability and skills strategy) and ensure the partners above are bought into them and working towards them;
- discuss activities and subsequently areas of potential duplication;
- identify further gaps in activities and demand for certain types of skills; and
- discuss the performance against the objectives.
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The role of Belfast City Council must be one of strong stewardship, enabling and coordination. To support the strategic remit of the employability and skills partnership, Belfast City Council will also set up operational groups to manage activities around employability and skills and the associated delivery of activities. A series of objectives have been set out in the strategy and are linked to a number of defined interventions. These are critical as they define what the strategy is seeking to achieve and to deliver.

On whom will the policy / decision impact?

Consider the internal and external impacts (both actual or potential)

- Staff
- Service users - unemployed/inactive individuals and students - directly affected
- Other public sector organisations
- Voluntary / Community groups / Trade Unions
- Others, please specify (training providers including Colleges and Universities), public sector, and private sector employers.

Are there linkages to other Agencies/ Departments?

The strategy reflects a number of national, regional and local policy agendas including:

- The emerging priorities of the Belfast Agenda, the Integrated Economic Strategy for Belfast and associated City Centre and Investment Plan;
- Local Government Reform;
- The Northern Ireland Programme for Government and particularly priority 1: growing a sustainable economy and investing in the future and priority 2: creating opportunities, tackling disadvantage and investing in the future;
- The Northern Ireland Economic Strategy and associated Skills Strategy for Northern Ireland;
- The statutory responsibilities of the Department for Employment and Learning and particularly the Careers Review; and
- The Northern Ireland Strategy on Apprenticeships.

Belfast City Council recognises that the success of the Employability and Skills Strategy and Action Plan for Belfast 2015-2025 will depend on working with other agencies and central government departments – as well as stakeholders from the public, private and voluntary sectors. The consultation and other desk based activities undertaken as part of the strategy has identified that whilst there is a myriad of activity going on around employability and skills in Belfast, there is little coordination, too much fragmentation and complexity. This strategy proposes to join together this disparate activity and providing a strategic, coherent and city wide approach to employability and skills, through an employability and skills partnership.

A number of organisations have been involved in the consultation including The Education Authority (formally Belfast Education and Library Board), Department of Employment and Learning (DEL), the Department of Social Development, the Department of Education, Invest NI and the Sector Skills Councils.

Employer engagement is critical to all four aims and most of the objectives of this strategy. Business representation, engagement and influence is a cross cutting action that is delivered by ensuring that businesses are included in all of the key partnerships and projects on skills and employability. Businesses including Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) need to be engaged in all areas of employability and

skills, by investing in employee skills, offering work experience opportunities and building strong connections with schools, colleges and universities.

Section B

1. Outline consultation process achieved or planned

The strategy and action plan has been put together using the following approach:

1. A comprehensive desk review was undertaken of existing strategies and documentation around employability and skills in Northern Ireland, including information about existing interventions in terms of understanding the policy context. A range of qualitative and quantitative data was gathered and reviewed to build an evidence base. This has generated a picture of the existing baseline position around employability and skills in Belfast, and allowed a projection of the future to be produced.
2. Employability and skills strategies were reviewed across the UK and internationally and activities which are best delivered at a city wide level. Consultation with stakeholders began early to build in equality considerations. Before commissioning this strategy, the council held an event for training organisations across the city in September 2014 and other relevant partners interested in employability and skills development. Almost 60 representatives from local training organisations attended and these included organisations who train people with disabilities, younger people, women, lone parents, black and ethnic minority groups. The key aim of the event was to ensure that a strategic approach was taken to the employability and skills challenges across the city. It helped the council to better understand the scale and nature of existing and planned employability support activities across the city, with a view to informing how Council could best use its resources to support projects requiring European Social Fund (ESF) match funding.
3. The council utilised Belfast City Councils Equality Consultative Forum, comprising representation from Section 75 organisations by informing, discussing and seeking their opinions about the strategy and encouraging them to participate in the consultation.
4. A range of consultation was undertaken about existing employability and skills interventions in Northern Ireland with key stakeholders across the public, commercial and voluntary and community sectors. As part of the strategy's development, engagement began early and a number of organisations were involved in the consultation via 1:1 interviews. The council used a number of mechanisms to consult and a list of stakeholders involved in employability and

skills within the city were consulted as part of the strategy and action plan and this can be found in Appendix 2, page 33. Additionally:

- two focus groups were held with elected members at Belfast City Council;
- the key partners listed above were invited to the Lord Mayor’s Forum on two occasions where the emerging strategy was discussed and shaped; and
- a focus group was held with long term unemployed residents. In line with our Equality Scheme, the views of those directly affected by the policy were sought.

5. The council will consult with key stakeholders including all consultees identified within the equality scheme (by email or post) to build awareness of the strategy. Thereafter, to ensure the most effective use of our consultees’ resources, we will take a targeted approach to consultation for those consultees that may have a particular interest in the strategy and to whom the policy is of particular relevance.
6. The strategy consultation period will last for a minimum of twelve weeks to allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves as part of the process of forming a view.

2. Available evidence

What evidence / information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Set out all evidence below to help inform your screening assessment. Please note: It is important to record information gathered from a variety of sources such as:

- *Monitoring information*
- *Complaints*
- *Research /surveys*
- *Consultation exercise and other public authorities*

Section 75 category	Details of evidence / information and engagement
Religious belief	<p>The 2011 census shows that in Belfast, 49% of the resident population (136,000) declared they were either Catholic or brought up as Catholic, compared with 119,000 residents from a Protestant community background (42%).</p> <p>The DSD Households Below Average Income (HBAI) reports use data collected in</p>

	<p>the Family Resources Survey in Northern Ireland. The latest figures show⁵</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 22% of Catholics lived in households experiencing poverty, before housing costs. This compares to 17% of Protestants who lived in households experiencing poverty, before housing costs. The same percentages in poverty were experienced After Housing Costs (AHC) as Before Housing Costs (BHC). - there were higher proportions of Catholic working-age adults in households which were in poverty, both BHC and AHC, than Protestant working-age adults. Some 22%, BHC and AHC, of working-age Catholic adults experienced poverty. For working-age Protestant adults 15% BHC and 16% AHC experienced poverty. <p>The strategy will benefit all Belfast residents, irrespective of their religious belief.</p>																				
Political opinion	<p>The Labour Force Survey does not record the political opinion of respondents. As such, there is no available data on how this Section 75 consideration interacts with skills and employability. The strategy will benefit all Belfast residents, irrespective of their political opinion. In terms of political opinion, in the last Belfast Council election (May 2014), results by political party is as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="327 1059 1002 1592"> <thead> <tr> <th>Party</th> <th>No of Councillors</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Sinn Féin</td> <td>19</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Democratic Unionist Party</td> <td>13</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alliance Party</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Social, Democratic and Labour Party</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ulster Unionist Party (UUP)</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Progressive Unionist Party</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Green Party</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>People before Profit Alliance</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Traditional Unionist Voice</td> <td>1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Party	No of Councillors	Sinn Féin	19	Democratic Unionist Party	13	Alliance Party	8	Social, Democratic and Labour Party	7	Ulster Unionist Party (UUP)	7	Progressive Unionist Party	3	Green Party	1	People before Profit Alliance	1	Traditional Unionist Voice	1
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Racial group	<p>On Census Day 2011, 1.8% (32,400) of the resident population of Northern Ireland belonged to minority ethnic groups. The main minority ethnic groups were Chinese (6,300 people), Indian (6,200), Mixed (6,000) and Other Asian (5,000), each accounting for around 0.3 per cent of the resident population. Irish Travellers comprised 0.1% of the population. There is limited available data on how this Section 75 consideration interacts with Skills and Employability - for example in the Labour Force Survey (LFS).</p>																				

⁵ Households Below Average Income, DSD, 2013

Taken together, the migration data from NISRA and the WRS data from the Home Office suggest that there have been substantial falls in the numbers of migrants and migrant workers entering Northern Ireland over the past two years. However this does not seem to have been translated into sizeable falls in the number of migrant workers here, according to information from the LFS⁶.

Recent research commissioned by NICEM⁷ outlined a number of barriers to employment which include:

- Work experience with overseas employers being discounted
- Voluntary work abroad not being taken into consideration as ‘experience’
- Opportunities influenced by where you live in Belfast
- The importance placed on references by Northern Ireland employers
- The need for better English language ability
- The reliance on job application forms – which is something that many people are unused to
- Difficulties with employment agencies that have no capacity to translate documentation needed to support applications.

This research showed that when in work, consultees faced a range of issues. In terms of progression a ‘glass ceiling’ was identified which prevented Black Minority Ethnic people from moving into more senior roles in the workplace. People felt that the use of positive action could help to address this whilst programmes to encourage entrepreneurship amongst migrants could enable them to make their own opportunities.

A mapping exercise was conducted in 2014 which obtained the views of Irish Travellers living in Northern Ireland on the extent of their integration into Northern Ireland society⁸. Based on EU indicators, integration was measured by their answers to questions relating to employment, education, social inclusion, active citizenship and welcoming society. Participants were asked to identify their priorities for improving their sense of integration and belonging. Among the most important priorities for change among the Irish Traveller respondents were:

⁶ Labour Market Bulletin 23, DEL, March 2011

⁷ Voices for Change: Mapping the views of black and minority ethnic people on integration and their sense of belonging in Northern Ireland, NICEM: Sheila Rogers and Geraldine Scullion

⁸ Traveller Voices for Change: Mapping the views of Irish Travellers on integration and their sense of belonging in Northern Ireland, NICEM, Geraldine Scullion and Sheila Rogers April/May 2014

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved access to education and better educational outcomes; - A higher standard of accommodation and improved conditions on sites; - An end to racism and discrimination; - Better access to employment opportunities, particularly for young people. <p>The strategy will benefit all Belfast residents, irrespective of their racial grouping and measures will be designed and put in place to help individuals regardless of their racial group within this Skills and Employability Strategy, action plan and signature projects. Engagement, communication outreach is important to ensure that all groups can participate in the opportunities arising from the strategy.</p>
Age	<p>Extensive research has been conducted as part of the Employability and Skills Strategy in relation to age. Pre-consultation exercises were conducted and age issues appeared to be a strong area for consideration among three groupings; younger people in the 18-24 age bracket, those aged 25+ and for the over 40s.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work experience and attitudes/perceptions to work are a much more frequent obstacle for young job seekers (and would be employers) than qualifications. • The key and critical challenge in Belfast is a lack of employability skills - from basic to high level roles e.g. interpersonal skills and creativity. This is affecting not only those who are most marginalised from the labour market but also those leaving college and notably university. • Careers advice and access to work experience opportunities is poor in Belfast. There is too little quality provision which enables young people in particular to get informed advice about their future or to link to work experience and internship opportunities. • Graduates in non-graduate jobs has increased over the last decade, from 37% in 2001 to 47% in 2013 for recent graduates, and from 29% in 2001 to 34% in 2013 for graduates out of full time education for more than five years.⁹ • The lack of employability skills is also framed by an inflexible, segmented and competitive education system. Schools are overly focused upon technical qualifications and meeting grade requirements than providing the skills young people need to move into employment. In some schools and areas where there is a concentration of deprivation and workless households, this is likely to limit aspirations. • The proportion of people with qualifications in younger age groups is considerably larger compared to older age groups. The trend in future is likely

⁹ ONS (2013) Graduates in the UK labour market 2013 available at http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776_337841.pdf

to be a more skilled resident population, as a less skilled older workforce is gradually replaced by younger people possessing more, and higher level qualifications.

- There were 9,000 Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) 16-24 year olds (26% compared to a NI rate of 20% and UK rate of 18%)¹⁰

Those aged above 25

- Over 25s lack general technical skills. A significant proportion of the over 25s working age population have left school with no formal qualifications and have subsequently found it very difficult to move into employment.
- There is a large number of people aged 40 years and over who have been affected by the decline of heavy primary industry and manufacturing and have been unable to move back into employment with limited skill sets. They have predominantly worked for an organisation for a number of years, with little formal training or indeed work on their literacy and numeracy skills. This is challenging as many are unable to access opportunities in sectors driven by new technologies.
- A key contributory factor to the low levels of the employability skills in Belfast is a lack of a coordinated avenue into work experience opportunities for those furthest away from the labour market, which would offer routes into sustainable employment. The challenge is exacerbated particularly for those aged over 24 and notably those aged over 40.
- An objective of the Strategy is to provide work experience opportunities and upskilling for those furthest away from the labour market and for those aged over 24 enhancing their employability skills. Belfast City Council will therefore, through the operational group, develop a coordinated programme of work experience opportunities for those without formal experience and marginalised from the labour market; specifically aimed at those aged over 24 (and notably over 40). There will also be a diversity to the target groups with key emphasis placed upon women, people with disabilities, and those from Black and Minority Ethnic communities. (Cross referenced to Disability and Racial Group categories).

¹⁰ Research into a targeted Employability initiative for Belfast, 2014

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on the new council boundaries, the 2011 Census illustrated that almost a third of the adult population had no qualifications (30.4% compared to 23.2% in the UK). Of this group with no qualifications, those aged 16-44 had just a 36% employment rate; contrasted with rates of employment of 58% of those with a Level 1 qualification and 87% of those qualified to Level 4. Economic activity rates vary significantly by qualification levels. There are low level activity rates across the 45-74 age group, which is expected considering that it incorporates many who are retired and with low or no qualifications. Amongst younger people in particular (and the wider population in general), the higher the qualification level, the higher the economic activity rate (Belfast has an increasing younger population). The strategy and action plan will target Belfast residents who are in the working age population and in particular, those age groups where there are gaps in activities. They will be targeted through outreach to ensure active participation in the development of the action plan and signature projects. 															
Marital status	<p>Marital and Civil Partnership Status</p> <p>As figures for the new council boundaries were not available, the 2011 census figures were used. The table below shows that a relatively high percentage of Belfast residents are single at 45.32% compared with the NI average of 36.14%. There are fewer married people aged 16+ (35.7%) compared with the NI average of 47.56%¹¹.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="327 1512 1465 1908"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Belfast %</th> <th>NI %</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Categories</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Single (never married or never registered a same-sex civil partnership): Aged 16+ years</td> <td>45.32</td> <td>36.14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Married: Aged 16+ years</td> <td>35.57</td> <td>47.56</td> </tr> <tr> <td>In a registered same-sex civil partnership: Aged 16+ years</td> <td>0.13</td> <td>0.09</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Belfast %	NI %	Categories			Single (never married or never registered a same-sex civil partnership): Aged 16+ years	45.32	36.14	Married: Aged 16+ years	35.57	47.56	In a registered same-sex civil partnership: Aged 16+ years	0.13	0.09
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¹¹ Marital Status of residents aged 16+ years, Census 2011
<http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/pivotgrid.aspx?dataSetVars=ds-4059-lh-73-yn-2011-sk-136-sn-Census%202011-yearfilter-->

Separated (but still legally married or still legally in a same-sex civil partnership): Aged 16+ years	5.35	3.98
Divorced or formerly in a same-sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved: Aged 16+ years	6.17	5.45
Widowed or surviving partner from a same-sex civil partnership: Aged 16+ years	7.46	6.78

- Belfast Local Government District (LGD) has the second highest proportion of lone parent households (12%) with Derry LGD (14%) the highest followed by Strabane (10%).¹²
- Lone parents are at greater risk of economic disadvantage than other household types; 39% of people living in a lone parent household are living in relative poverty.¹³
- Research published in 2010¹⁴ indicated that the greatest impact of the recession has been on those who are single or separated, although this finding is largely driven by the fact that this group is likely to be made up of large numbers of younger people.
- The Employability and Skills Strategy and Action Plan recognises that affordable childcare is an important consideration for low income groups trying to get back into employment – particularly lone parents requiring childcare (also cross referenced to the Dependents category). As part of the Employability and Skills Strategy evidence base, a focus group with long term unemployed residents was held. This highlighted a multitude of issues that many residents face, among which was high childcare costs - as well as transport costs which makes many opportunities inaccessible particularly for those people in accessing on low paid work.
- Jobseekers allowance figures are the most regularly updated, and provide an indication as to the strength of the local labour market. Numbers of claimants have increased in recent years due to changes in welfare reform. Many of those who used to be on lone parent benefits, or incapacity benefit claimants who have been assessed as being 'fit for work', are now claiming Jobseekers Allowance (JSA). Therefore it is more likely that JSA claimants will have a

¹² <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/globalassets/documents/raise/publications/2013/general/3013.pdf>

¹³ Breakthrough Northern Ireland, Centre for Social Justice, 2010

¹⁴ Employment Inequalities in an Economic Downturn, Equality Commission for NI, 2010

	<p>higher proportion with sickness or disability affecting their potential for work.¹⁵</p> <p>The strategy will benefit all Belfast residents, irrespective of their marital or civil partnership status.</p> <p>In order to contribute to objectives and the wider aims of the Employability and Skills Strategy, linkages will be made into the Department of Employment and Learning's existing family support programme. This is a programme of activities which brings together a range of service providers to address the complex needs which certain families face.</p>														
Sexual orientation	<p>The Labour Force Survey does not record the sexual orientation of respondents. As such, there is no available data on how this Section 75 consideration interacts with skills and employability. The strategy will put in place measures designed to help economically inactive individuals regardless of their sexual orientation.</p> <p>Sexual Identity (2013-14) in NI</p> <p><i>Persons aged 16 and over</i> <i>Percentages</i></p> <hr/> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Sexual Identity</th> <th style="text-align: right;">2013-14</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Heterosexual/Straight</td> <td style="text-align: right;">94.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gay/Lesbian</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bisexual</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Don't Know/Refusal</td> <td style="text-align: right;">3.1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Base=100%</td> <td style="text-align: right;">3,753</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Source: Continuous Household Survey</p>	Sexual Identity	2013-14	Heterosexual/Straight	94.7	Gay/Lesbian	0.7	Bisexual	0.9	Other	0.6	Don't Know/Refusal	3.1	Base=100%	3,753
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Base=100%	3,753														
Men & women generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposals contained within the Skills and Employability Strategy and Action Plan are intended to help inactive individuals with barriers to employment move into work and will target both males and females. • The strategy will benefit both female and male residents in Belfast. This has been reflected in the focus of the strategy, as the issues facing groups such as lone parents in the dependents category impact on women more than men. Taking this into account, the strategy will put in place measures designed to help economically inactive individuals regardless of whether they are men or 														

¹⁵ Belfast Employability and Skills Strategy, Stage 1 Report, August 2014

women, however for interventions to help those with family commitments, these measures may benefit more women than men.

- Belfast has more females (52.25%) than males (47.75%) in the population. This is slightly higher than the NI figure of 50.88%.
- Women remain the largest under-represented group when it comes to enterprise in Northern Ireland. In 2013 the female level of entrepreneurial activity in Northern Ireland was 2.2% compared to 8.2% for males.¹⁶
- Unemployment figures for young men are a particular concern, especially if they translate into long term unemployment. Women are also in a vulnerable position in the jobs market in low paid, part-time employment.¹⁷
- The economic activity rate and employment rate was higher among males than females in Belfast in November - January 2015.

	Activity rate working age 16-64 (%)	Employment working age Rate (%)16-64
Males	78.0%	72.5%
Females	65.9%	62.6%

- The Labour Market Structure (2013) shows various employment patterns. There were more males than females in full time employment compared to women (67,000 compared to 57,000) and as expected, there are more women in part-time employment (9,000 compared to 23,000).

2013 Population Labour Market Structure: NUTS III 16+

	Belfast		
	Thousands /Percentages		
	Male	Female	All
Employee	57	55	111
Self-employed	9	*	10
In employment¹	67	57	123
In full-time employment	57	33	90
In part-time employment	9	23	32

¹⁶ Women into Business (source: Invest NI, Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) 2013 UK report)

http://www.detini.gov.uk/women_in_northern_ireland_2014.pdf?rev=0

¹⁷ Employment Inequalities in an Economic Downturn, Equality Commission for NI, 2010

Unemployed	*	*	8
Economically active	72	60	132
Economic activity rate %	68.4	52.0	59.8
Unemployment rate %	*	*	6.2
Employment rate %	63.5	49.4	56.1
Economically inactive			
- wanting or seeking work	*	6	10
Economically inactive			
- neither wanting nor seeking work	30	49	78
Total economically inactive	33	55	88
Total Aged 16+	105	115	220

- A baseline study in 2013¹⁸ analysed several key characteristics of the economically inactive: gender, age, location, and level of education within NI. The stable inactive rate concealed different trends for men and women. Female inactivity rates were shown to be higher but falling, while male rates rose. There were more men than women in the long-term sickness and disability category, but women accounted for the vast majority of those with family commitments. Job interventions need to be flexible in order to consider gender issues.

Disability

Research into a targeted Employability initiative for Belfast conducted in 2014 showed there were:

- 22,941 economically inactive residents including those who were long term sick or disabled;
 - 16,130 JSA claimants;
 - 15,550 ESA claimants; and
 - 18,560 Income Support claimants
- A higher proportion of economically inactive persons, aged 16-64, in NI identify being long term sick/disabled (29.6%) as their main reason for not wanting work, compared to the UK (20.7%). Strabane and Belfast (both 24%) had the highest proportions of residents with a long-term health problem or disability.
 - Based on NI figures, the employment rate for those without disabilities (76%) is twice that of people with disabilities (38%). Over twice the proportion of disabled persons had no qualifications compared to non-disabled persons at

¹⁸ Outcomes of the Baseline Analysis of Economic Inactivity, DEL Oral Statement, 9 April 2013

	<p>January – March 2014. Overall, persons with a disability are less qualified than those without. In particular, only 8.4% of those with a disability held a degree or equivalent qualification, compared with 23.7% of non-disabled persons. Thirty two percent of those with a disability had no qualifications, over twice the proportion of those without a disability (13.4%).¹⁹</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living in a household with one or more disabled adults have a higher than average risk of living in relative poverty.²⁰ 30% of individuals living in a household with one or more disabled adults live below the poverty line compared to 21% of individuals in the population as a whole. (Relative poverty is defined as all those living below 60% of the median UK income).
<p>Dependants</p>	<p>The strategy will target residents in Belfast with and without dependants. Research into a targeted Employability Initiative for Belfast conducted in 2014 showed there were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10,981 households with dependent children and that had no adult in employment • 8,832 lone parent households with dependent children where the lone parent was unemployed • 11,760 economically inactive residents looking after the home or family <p>Persons with dependants are likely to face additional barriers to employment. These include access to affordable childcare and continuation of benefits once in employment.²¹</p> <p>OECD Reviews on Local Job Creation asserts that childcare or poor accessibility to it (due to cost and availability) remains a barrier to employment for women in Northern Ireland. Childcare and family friendly policies are recommended to support women’s participation in employment and integrate them into the labour market.</p>

¹⁹ Labour Force Survey, January – March 2014

²⁰ Households Below Average Income, DSD, 2010

²¹ What Can We Do to Tackle Child Poverty in NI?, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2009

3. What is the likely impact (indicate if the policy impact is positive or negative) on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? What is the level of impact?

Where an external partner takes the lead in implementing a particular project/ programme, they will be responsible for ensuring that the statutory duties are met but the Council will use its knowledge of key inequalities in Belfast to assist in the process of assessing and addressing equality impacts.

Section 75 category	Likely impact?	Level of impact? Minor/Major/None
Religious belief	<p>The Employability and Skills Strategy and Action Plan for Belfast will have a positive impact between people from different religious backgrounds.</p> <p>The Employability and Skills Strategy and Action Plan for Belfast is inclusive and has the potential to promote equality and good relations while addressing issues of exclusion and marginalisation.</p>	<p>Positive</p> <p>Minor</p>
Political opinion	<p>The Employability and Skills Strategy and Action Plan for Belfast is inclusive and will have a positive impact between people with different political opinions.</p> <p>The Employability and Skills Strategy and Action Plan for Belfast is inclusive and has the potential to promote equality and good relations while addressing issues of exclusion and marginalisation.</p>	<p>Positive</p> <p>Minor</p>
Racial group	<p>The Employability and Skills Strategy and Action Plan for Belfast will have a positive impact between people in various racial groups.</p> <p>The Employability and Skills Strategy and Action Plan for Belfast is inclusive and has the potential to promote equality and good relations while addressing issues of exclusion and marginalisation.</p>	<p>Positive</p> <p>Major</p>

Age	The Employability and Skills Strategy and Action Plan for Belfast will have a positive impact between people in the various age groups. It is inclusive and has the potential to promote equality while addressing issues of exclusion and marginalisation.	Positive Major
Marital status	The Employability and Skills Strategy and Action Plan for Belfast will have a positive impact between people regardless of their marital status. It is inclusive and has the potential to promote equality while addressing issues of exclusion and marginalisation.	Positive Major
Sexual orientation	The Employability and Skills Strategy and Action Plan for Belfast is inclusive and will have a positive impact between people regardless of their sexual orientation. It is inclusive and has the potential to promote equality while addressing issues of exclusion and marginalisation.	Positive Minor
Men and women generally	The Employability and Skills Strategy and Action Plan for Belfast is inclusive and will have a positive impact on men and women. It is inclusive and has the potential to promote equality while addressing issues of exclusion and marginalisation.	Positive Major
Disability	The Employability and Skills Strategy and Action Plan for Belfast is inclusive and will have a positive impact on people with and without a disability. It is inclusive and has the potential to promote equality while addressing issues of exclusion and marginalisation.	Positive Major

Dependants	<p>The Employability and Skills Strategy and Action Plan for Belfast is inclusive and will have a positive impact on people with and without dependants.</p> <p>It is inclusive and has the potential to promote equality while addressing issues of exclusion and marginalisation.</p>	Positive Major
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4. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories?

Section 75 category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons
Religious belief	<p>The proposals within the strategy and action plan are aimed at helping residents address skills and employment barriers, irrespective of their religious beliefs.</p> <p>Equality information will be monitored and reviewed on a yearly basis.</p>	
Political opinion	<p>The proposals within the strategy and action plan are aimed at helping residents address skills and employment barriers, irrespective of their political opinions.</p> <p>Equality information will be monitored and reviewed on a yearly basis.</p>	
Racial group	<p>The proposals within the strategy and action plan are aimed at helping residents address skills and employment barriers, irrespective of their racial group.</p>	

	<p>Based on research, the strategy aims to provide a rounded and whole-life package of entry and lower level skills development, to generate higher level skills which meet the demands of employers and investors and to enable progression routes and employability skills for all and will have a positive effect on this grouping.</p> <p>Equality information will be monitored and reviewed on a yearly basis.</p>	
Age	<p>The proposals within the strategy and action plan are aimed at helping residents address skills and employment barriers, irrespective of their age.</p> <p>Based on research, the strategy aims to provide a rounded and whole-life package of entry and lower level skills development. This will have a positive effect on people aged over 24 by enhancing their employability skills. Young people will benefit from youth training and apprenticeships through social clauses.</p> <p>The strategy aims to enable progression routes and employability skills for all. This will benefit people who are aged over 40.</p> <p>Equality information will be monitored and reviewed on a yearly basis.</p>	
Marital status	<p>The proposals within the strategy and action plan are aimed at helping residents address skills and employment barriers, irrespective of their marital status.</p> <p>Based on research, the strategy aims to provide a rounded and whole-life package of entry and lower</p>	

	<p>level skills development. It also aims to enable progression routes and employability skills for all. This will have a positive effect on people who are lone parents and also accommodate childcare provision requirements.</p> <p>Equality information will be monitored and reviewed on a yearly basis.</p>	
<p>Sexual orientation</p>	<p>The proposals within the strategy and action plan are aimed at helping residents address skills and employment barriers, irrespective of their sexual orientation.</p> <p>Equality information will be monitored and reviewed on a yearly basis.</p>	
<p>Men and women generally</p>	<p>The proposals within the strategy and action plan are aimed at helping residents address skills and employment barriers among men and women. Based on research, the strategy aims to provide a rounded and whole-life package of entry and lower level skills development. It also aims to enable progression routes and employability skills for all and elements have been designed to meet the needs of both men and women.</p> <p>Based on research, the strategy aims to provide a rounded and whole-life package of entry and lower level skills development, to generate higher level skills which meet the demands of employers and investors and to enable progression routes and employability skills for all and will have a positive effect on this grouping.</p> <p>Equality information will be monitored and reviewed</p>	

	on a yearly basis.	
Disability	<p>The proposals within the strategy and action plan are aimed at helping residents address skills and employment barriers among people with and without a disability.</p> <p>Based on research, the strategy aims to provide a rounded and whole-life package of entry and lower level skills development and aims to enable progression routes and employability skills for all, which benefits people with disabilities.</p> <p>Equality information will be monitored and reviewed on a yearly basis.</p>	
Dependants	<p>The proposals within the strategy and action plan are aimed at helping residents address skills and employment barriers among people with and without dependents.</p> <p>Based on research, the strategy aims to provide a rounded and whole-life package of entry and lower level skills development and provision. This will have a positive effect by creating a cultural shift in aspirations through engaging families with complex needs. Additionally, childcare barriers are also recognised, particularly among women and lone parents.</p> <p>Equality information will be monitored and reviewed on a yearly basis.</p>	

5. To what extent is the policy likely to impact (positive or negatively) on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? What is the level of impact?

Good relations category	Likely impact?	Level of impact? Minor/Major/None
Religious belief	Ensure that all communities are welcome to apply for programmes arising from the action plan.	None
Political opinion	Ensure that all communities are welcome to apply for programmes arising from the action plan.	None
Racial group	Ensure that all communities are welcome to apply for programmes arising from the action plan.	None

6. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Good relations category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons
Religious belief	Monitor/evaluate the uptake to ensure that all communities have access to information and can participate in activities and programmes organised in the action plan. The strategy has a comprehensive baseline detailing the nature of employability and skills issues now and into the future. Target provision, monitor take up and retarget to ensure balance in the programme. If over a two year period monitoring and evaluation show that a policy results in greater adverse impact than predicted, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, we will ensure that the policy is revised to achieve better outcomes for relevant equality	

	groups.	
Political opinion	Monitor/evaluate the uptake to ensure that all communities have access to information and can participate in activities and programmes organised in the action plan. The strategy has a comprehensive baseline detailing the nature of employability and skills issues now and into the future. Target provision, monitor take up and retarget to ensure balance in the programme	
Racial group	Monitor/evaluate the uptake to ensure that all communities have access to information and can participate in activities and programmes organised in the action plan. The strategy has a comprehensive baseline detailing the nature of employability and skills issues now and into the future. Target provision, monitor take up and retarget to ensure balance in the programme	

7. Multiple Identities

Provide details of data on the impact of the policy with multiple identities

Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

- Given the high levels of inactivity in Belfast, the Economic Inactivity Strategy for Northern Ireland (Enabling Success) is particularly important to the Employability and Skills Strategy and Action Plan for Belfast, in terms of reaching those at the margins of the labour market. It will be important for the Council and partners to feed into this and influence local delivery and provision, to create maximum impact relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

The Enabling Success Strategy aims to:

- Reduce the levels of economic inactivity due to work-limiting health conditions or disabilities by helping individuals in this group move into employment;
- Reduce the levels of economic inactivity due to family commitments by helping lone parents currently in receipt of out-of-work benefits move into employment;

- Reduce in-flows to inactivity through initiatives designed to promote flexible working, extend working lives, and maintain employment for individuals who develop health conditions or take on caring responsibilities;
 - Alleviate barriers to employment and contribute to a reduction of the unemployment rate to pre-recession levels through programme design.
- Nearly 10% of Belfast's working age population are classified as long term sick or disabled (higher only in Derry and Strabane) – which means linking the strategy to a wider joined up strategic approach to transforming people's health and addressing key barriers to work. A focus group with long term unemployed residents was undertaken as part of the development of the evidence base, and this outlined a range of barriers such as:
 - Fears amongst older workers about competing with younger people in the labour market;
 - Mental and physical health issues;
 - Alcohol dependency;
 - Low wages and zero hour contracts meaning that work does not always pay;
 - High childcare and transport costs which makes many opportunities inaccessible particularly with the emphasis on low paid work.
- The 'cumulative impact' of multiple sources of disadvantage – low incomes, dependency on benefits, limited skills and qualifications, absence of role models – have the potential to combine together to create long term inequalities in our society. Therefore there is a need to work intensively within communities, to provide residents with the skills and opportunities they need to succeed.
- Belfast Employability and Skills Strategy and Action Plan is likely to have a positive impact on all Section 75 groups, both directly and indirectly, by contributing to economic growth and social progress. It is anticipated, however, that some areas of the strategy will have a differential impact on a number of Section 75 groups in a positive manner through addressing recognised need and these are highlighted below.

Section C

Belfast City Council also has legislative obligations to meet under the [Disability Discrimination Order](#) and Questions 5 -6 relate to these two areas.

Consideration of Disability Duties

8 Does this proposed policy / decision provide an opportunity for the Council to better promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?

Explain your assessment in full

Our communication and outreach plans will ensure that working aged residents in Belfast with a disability have the opportunity to participate in activities arising from the Action Plan. Where relevant, possible positive attitudes will be promoted through promotional activities (press, online media).

The Council is committed to making information available online through our website www.belfastcity.gov.uk. Our own magazine, City Matters, published several times a year, is distributed to over 130,000 addresses in Belfast.

9. Does this proposed policy / decision provide an opportunity to actively increase the participation by disabled people in public life?

Explain your assessment in full

The Strategy and Action Plan's overarching aims and objectives are to:

1. To develop a coherent and city wide employability and skills partnership.
2. To provide a rounded and whole-life package of entry and lower level skills development and provision.
3. To generate higher level skills which meet the demands of employers and investors.
4. To enable progression routes and employability skills for all.

The Strategy and Action Plan supports the need for specific, targeted interventions to ensure that the city's residents have the opportunity to develop the skills necessary to apply for and secure jobs, with a particular emphasis on people with disabilities, people in the age categories of 16-24, over 25s and over 40s. People with a disability who are inactive will be assisted to help them access training, education and employment opportunities. Lone parents and ethnic minority groups will also

benefit positively.

Section 2 of the Equality Screening template recognises that people with disabilities face a range barriers including transport, access, general facilities. For persons with a disability the employment rate is considerably lower than that for persons without a disability and therefore the Council’s communication and outreach plans will recognise the need to promote programme activities to disability specialist groups to encourage participation.

As the council develop signature projects within the action plan, we will also seek input people who are directly affected by the strategy to ensure that their needs are met.

Monitoring Arrangements

Section 75 places a requirement on the Council to have equality monitoring arrangements in place in order to assess the impact of policies and services etc; and to help identify barriers to fair participation and to better promote equality of opportunity.

Outline what data you will collect in the future in order to monitor the impact of this policy / decision on equality, good relations and disability duties.

Equality	Good Relations	Disability Duties
Information will be collated by delivery partners and reported to Belfast City Council on a yearly basis. This will be reviewed where gaps emerge.	Information will be collated by delivery partners and reported to Belfast City Council on a yearly basis. This will be reviewed where gaps emerge.	Information will be collated by delivery partners and reported to Belfast City Council on a yearly basis. This will be reviewed where gaps emerge.

- There are a wide range of specific and bespoke measures within the Action Plan, designed to track the success of each of the individual actions. In addition to the headline indicators around the employment rate and qualification levels, the strategy will also contribute to a range of wider but strategically important

metrics, some of which are within the action plan, but which are given prominence below. These include:

- Employment rate across key target groups: e.g. long term sick and disabled moving into employment, young people in employment (male and female)
- Economic inactivity rates
- Median income levels
- Percentage of the population earning less than the mean income level
- Youth unemployment
- Number and percentage of the citywide 16-24 population classified as NEET
- Number and percentage of the resident population who are workless
- Number and percentage of workless households
- Percentage of wards falling within the top 20% and 10% of the most deprived in Northern Ireland, accompanied by changes across all wards
- Productivity improvements (GVA per worker).

It will be important to gather information on monitoring and labour market performance over time, to determine the performance through delivery outcomes and wider labour market changes. One of the actions in the action plan is focused around a Management Information System, which gathers labour market data.

Annually updated forecasting data will be utilised to determine short and medium term demand across key sectors within Belfast. Importantly, forecasting models are directly correlated to wider UK and global trends, which will help the partnership understand how the economy is constantly shifting and impacting upon Belfast. It will help the partnership orientate its future work.

Part of the monitoring process will also include understanding the current and planned private sector investment streams into the city. It will be important in this regard to connect with Invest NI and utilise their knowledge of current trends.

Section D

Formal Record of Screening Decision

Title of Proposed Policy / Decision being screened:

The Employability and Skills Strategy and Action Plan for Belfast 2015-2025

I can confirm that the proposed policy / decision has been screened for –

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Equality of opportunity and good relations
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Disabilities duties

On the basis of the answers to the screening questions, I recommend that this policy / decision is –

****place an X in the appropriate box below***

<input type="checkbox"/>	*Screened In – Necessary to conduct a full EQIA
--------------------------	--

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	*Screened Out – No EQIA necessary (no impacts) Provide a brief note here to explain how this decision was reached: Risks will be mitigated by further consultation and engagement with Section 75 specialist groups, particularly in the development of signature projects identified within the action plan.
-------------------------------------	--

<input type="checkbox"/>	* Screened Out - Mitigating Actions (minor impacts) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide a brief note here to explain how this decision was reached:• Explain what mitigating actions and / or policy changes will now be introduced:
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Formal Record of Screening Decision (cont)

Screening assessment completed by (Officer level) -

Name: Nora Quigley

Date: 18 April 2015

Department: Economic Development

Signature: please insert a scanned image of your signature below

Screening decision approved by -

Name: Colin McCabrey

Date:

Department: Economic Development

Signature: please insert a scanned image of your signature below

Please save the final version of the completed screening form and forward to the Equality and Diversity Officer – gilmartins@belfastcity.gov.uk or dennisl@belfastcity.gov.uk . The screening form will be placed on the BCC website and a link provided to the Council's Section 75 consultees.

For more information about equality screening contact –

Stella Gilmartin / Lorraine Dennis

Equality & Diversity Officer (job-share)

Belfast City Council

City Hall

Belfast

BT1 5GS

Telephone: 028 90270511

gilmartins@belfastcity.gov.uk or dennisl@belfastcity.gov.uk

Appendix 1 Summary of vision, overarching aims, and objectives

Vision: ‘To realise the potential of Belfast’s economy and its people by transforming skills, employability and aspiration, resulting in higher levels of business growth, employment and incomes’

Aims

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| <p>1. to develop a coherent and city wide employability and skills partnership</p> | <p>2. to provide a rounded and whole-life package of entry and lower level skills development and provision</p> | <p>3. to generate higher level skills which meet the demands of employers and investors</p> | <p>4. to enable progression routes and employability skills for all</p> |
|--|---|---|---|

Objectives

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| <p>a. draw together key stakeholders to develop a strategic employability and skills partnership</p> <p>b. develop an operational group to manage aims 2,3,4</p> | <p>a. work collaboratively with DEL and DE to influence the attainment and attitudes of schools and further education providers</p> <p>b. create a cultural shift in aspirations through engaging families with complex needs</p> <p>c. provide work experience opportunities</p> | <p>a. work with Invest NI, employers and higher education providers to ensure course provision meets business needs</p> <p>b. coordinate more higher and advanced</p> | <p>a. coordinate an enhanced programme of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) with government departments, better connecting education and employers</p> <p>b. enhance (pre and post-employment) employability skills and how they are developed through education, businesses and the voluntary and community sector</p> |
|--|--|---|--|

<p>c. connect to the Belfast Agenda and economic strategy</p> <p>d. monitor and evaluate performance</p> <p>e. connect into business support system and Steps to Success</p>	<p>and upskilling for those furthest away from the labour market and for those aged over 24, enhancing their employability skills</p> <p>d. join up with transport providers to connect people to skills and job opportunities</p> <p>e. coordinate more intermediate level apprenticeships and foster youth training through social clauses</p>	<p>level apprenticeships</p> <p>c. stimulate employers to invest in innovation, new markets and skills in order to close the output gap</p> <p>d. attract and retain talent</p>	<p>c. coordinate and extend internships and placements with employers across the city</p> <p>d. build enterprise, entrepreneurship and self-employment skills through targeted programmes</p> <p>e. ensure opportunities for progression along the skills escalator at all levels, including individualised approaches</p>
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Appendix One – Key aims of the Employability and Skills Strategy

The strategy has four key aims, each supported by a suite of objectives. Actions associated with these aims and objectives are specified in a comprehensive action plan:

1. To develop a coherent and city wide employability and skills partnership: The consultation and other desk based activities undertaken as part of this work has identified that whilst there is a myriad of activity going on around employability and skills in Belfast, there is little coordination, too much fragmentation and complexity. What is required is a means of joining together this disparate activity and providing a strategic, coherent and city wide approach to employability and skills, through an employability and skills partnership.
2. To provide a rounded and whole-life package of entry and lower level skills development and provision: a significant proportion of the Belfast resident population lack the very basic skills required to move into, and sustain employment. This is a whole life issue and is being affected by the culture in which children are brought up; the technical nature of the education sector; and the restructuring of traditional industry. There is therefore a need for Belfast City Council and other stakeholders to start at Year 0 in a person's life and provide a rounded and whole-life package of entry and lower level skills development and provision.
3. To generate higher level skills which meet the demands of employers and investors: the increase in the supply of labour with high level skills is not currently forecast to match the pace of demand. The consequence, based on previous trends, will be increased reliance on higher skilled commuters into the city over the next decade. This imbalance in the supply and demand of high level skills therefore requires action and is the focus of this aim - to develop more highly skilled Belfast residents.
4. To enable progression routes and employability skills for all: this aim is focused on ensuring that there are clear and accessible progression routes between entry/lower level skills and higher level skills, so that individuals can make the most of their potential through upskilling. This will bring developmental, career advancement and income benefits for individuals, and productivity benefits for their employers.

Appendix Two – Consultation Employability and Skills Strategy

Interviews were held with the following organisations:

- North City Business Centre
- Department of Employment and Learning
- Chamber of Commerce Northern Ireland
- Northern Ireland Advisor on Employment and Skills
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Belfast City Council Corporate Policy
- Belfast City Council Community Services
- Belfast City Council Corporate HR Services
- Ingeus
- Belfast Metropolitan College
- Business in the Community NI
- Creative Skillset
- Institute of Directors
- Invest NI
- CBI
- Belfast Education and Library Board
- University of Ulster
- Queens University
- People 1st
- Creative and Cultural Skills
- NICVA
- Department of Social Development
- North Belfast Partnership Board (on behalf of all the Partnership Boards),
- Belfast Strategy Partnership
- Life Long Learning Thematic Group
- Ashton Centre
- Job Assist Centre
- Upper Springfield Development Company Ltd
- GEMS NI