Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties
Annual Progress Report 2018-19

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Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at: [http://nireland.britishcouncil.org/about/equal-opportunities-diversity](http://nireland.britishcouncil.org/about/equal-opportunities-diversity)

Signature:

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

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

This report reflects progress made between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019
PART A

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

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

1. In 2018-19, please provide examples of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved.

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

NOTE: BRITISH COUNCIL NORTHERN IRELAND IS PART OF A GLOBAL ORGANISATION. THROUGHOUT THE REPORT, WE REFER TO OUR GLOBAL EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI) POLICIES WHICH ARE ADHERED TO BY THE NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE. SEVERAL SECTIONS OF THE REPORT ARE NORTHERN IRELAND SPECIFIC.

British Council overview:

The British Council's cultural relations work aims to develop trust and understanding between different nations and cultures, drawing on a hugely diverse workforce and set of contacts. It therefore needs strong alignment to principles and practices of equality, diversity and inclusion as well as our core values; these include valuing people, integrity, mutuality, professionalism and creativity. The British Council's EDI Policy forms the foundation of our approach to EDI and is embedded into all our programmes and practices as an organisation.

British Council Northern Ireland Senior Management Structure:

Responsibility for the effective implementation of our equal opportunities and good relations lies with Director Northern Ireland. Director Northern Ireland is accountable to the British Council for the development, implementation, maintenance and review of the equality scheme in accordance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, including any good practice or guidance that has been or may be issued by the Equality Commission.

The Director Northern Ireland works in partnership with the Northern Ireland Advisory Committee (NIAC) which meets three times a year with senior managers and this forum provides the opportunity to discuss and provide updates on our programmes which aim to build trust with a diverse range of people, including those from the 9 categories covered by Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (the Act). Our activities in our programme areas ensure we comply with the requirements of the Act.
British Council Northern Ireland premises:

An independent disability access audit was carried out by Disability Action in 2014. Several recommendations were made, all of which have been actioned. As per last year’s report, these include:

- More robust bollards in place outside the building (to protect against illegal parking on the footpath/pedestrian area adjacent to the building, thus also offering easier access and further protection to wheelchair users or those with disabilities)
- A bicycle store provided in the building basement for staff
- Promotion of Belfast Bicycle Scheme for visiting staff (bike rack adjacent to office)
- Cycle2Work is continuing. This government-backed scheme aims to encourage commuters to use bicycles for all or part of the journey to work. It enables employees to lease a bicycle and related equipment (up to a value of £1000) through a salary sacrifice agreement which is exempt from Income Tax and National Insurance during the lease period, affording a tax-free benefit to staff.
- An Evacuation Chair lift has been fitted for use throughout the premises
- Personal Emergency Evacuation procedures are in place to facilitate safe egress for persons with restricted mobility
- Display screen equipment assessments have taken place to promote good ergonomics and healthy environment
- Telephones are fitted with inductive couplers to assist those with hearing difficulties. Additionally, a text relay service/text phone is available upon request.
- The front door of the building has been fitted with automatic opening to enable ease of access for visitors with disabilities. A security officer has also been employed to reside in the main foyer area and can provide assistance to visitors.
- A defibrillator has been installed in the office. A selection of staff has undertaken training to enable them to use the defibrillator.

British Council Northern Ireland Work

The British Council is the UK’s international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. It promotes a “friendly knowledge and understanding” between the people of the UK and worldwide. Our work is divided into three main areas: Education & Society, English and Exams, and the Arts.

1) EDUCATION & SOCIETY
**Education - Schools**

We bring an international dimension to teaching and learning in schools with international links, professional development opportunities, curriculum resources, classroom support and awards.

Through our global network and portfolio of schools’ programmes, we connect our school sector to others throughout the world to achieve two outcomes:

- **‘Enriched education’** - Sustained collaboration between us and other countries on professional development, curricula and system reform, and policy dialogue, which provides improved educational outcomes for young people
- **‘Global citizenship increased’** – Young people and educators demonstrate an increased capacity in the skills, understanding and outlook required to work in a global economy and contribute responsibly to society, locally and globally.

Both of these outcomes contribute to a more prosperous and secure society.

These endeavours are supported by many of our programmes some of which are summarised below:

**Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning** - a fully funded learning journey that includes face-to-face and online courses, international professional partnerships and visit funding opportunities based around the core skills.

**eTwinning** - a free and secure online network, creating an online community for schools across Europe, where teachers from more than 40 countries can find partners, share ideas, exchange best practice and work on projects to enable pupil collaboration.

**Schools Online** - a one stop global portal for teachers around the world to find school partners, explore teaching resources and establish international links for professional development. In Northern Ireland we have a specific Schools Online ezine with content more relevant to NI teachers.

**Language Assistants** - work in primary and secondary schools, including sixth form and further education colleges to support language learning and cultural knowledge.

**Mandarin Speaking competition** - an annual competition, which provides an opportunity to give secondary schools and students the chance to test their Mandarin speaking skills in front of a panel of judges and schools from all over the UK. The second Northern Ireland heat of the Mandarin speaking competition was held at the end of 2018 and resulted in a number of pupils from Northern Ireland going forward to the UK heats. This in turn resulted in a pupil from Northern Ireland winning the UK competition in the Best Beginners’ category.

**Erasmus+** - The Erasmus+ programme provides opportunities for student and staff mobility in schools as well as institutional partnerships. Erasmus+ is an integrated programme, based around key actions rather than sectors of education. The three key actions funded by the programme include: Learning mobility of individuals; co-operation for innovation and good practices; and support for policy reform.
International School Award - a globally recognised accreditation which helps schools to enrich learning and improve teaching by guiding international learning activities, from introducing international education into the curriculum to embedding it within a school’s culture.

Education - Higher/Further Education
As an international cultural relations organisation, the British Council promotes and supports the exchange and mobility of students, scholars and academics around the world. We use our expertise in higher education to build trust and understanding with other countries by:

- supporting the development of policy and practice in the UK and internationally
- building partnerships between institutions
- promoting the mobility of academics and students

Supporting the development of policy and practice in the UK and internationally
We contribute to the development of a global academic community by providing platforms to discuss higher education globally and promoting innovative research.

We believe that engaging the UK sector in working with policy makers and practitioners and their counterparts in other countries strengthens both nations.

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Going Global Conference: the world’s largest open forum for education leaders to debate higher and further education issues and challenges, and to discuss collaborative solutions. The most recent conference took place in Berlin from 13 to 15 May 2018 with representation from Ulster University and Queen’s University Belfast.

Education Dialogues: is a series of events happening around the world which brings together policymakers and influencers to debate the challenges and opportunities facing international higher education.

Events: forums, inward missions, outward missions, study visits, roundtables, workshops, seminars. Our events aim to develop international collaborations and to be mutually beneficial.

Research and publications: we publish research and analysis that is publicly available within our knowledge centre.
Building partnerships between institutions

We focus on developing education partnerships with institutions between the UK and their counterparts in other countries. Partnerships are a powerful mechanism to engage the UK internationally and to build trust.

We help UK institutions to internationalise by providing market analysis and intelligence, developing research partnerships, and providing on the ground support for higher education partnerships.

We provide opportunities for higher education leaders to exchange knowledge and establish collaborations, and list them under the events and opportunities pages.

Our partnership programmes include:

- **Newton Fund** - Aiming to strengthen science and innovation capacity and unlock further funding to support poverty alleviation in partnering countries.
- **UK India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI)** - Aiming to strengthen educational links between India and the UK.
- **Research and Education Network for Knowledge Economy Initiatives (RENKEI)** - Platform for partnerships between the UK and Japan in industry and higher education.

Promoting the mobility of academics and students

We encourage international study and support the exchange and mobility of students, scholars and academics around the world because we believe that experiencing another country first-hand provides an unparalleled opportunity for individuals to understand and engage with people from different cultures, share ideas and work to solve global challenges.

We manage a number of mobility grants and scholarships aimed at UK academics, scholars and students, details of which can be found on our International Mobility page.

Our work aims to support the capacity and capability of governments, institutions and individuals in the UK and other countries to take an active role in developing their country, their community and themselves.

Some of the more popular outward mobility programmes open to higher education students in Northern Ireland are:

- **Study USA**
  The Study USA Programme offers undergraduate students an opportunity to study business and management for one academic year at universities and colleges in the USA with the purpose of producing graduates with an international, business-oriented perspective.

- **IAESTE**
The International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience (IAESTE) provides paid, course-related work experience abroad to students of technical degrees (primarily Science, Engineering and the Applied Arts).

Erasmus+

The Erasmus+ programme provides opportunities for student and staff mobility in higher education and further education institutions as well as institutional partnerships. Erasmus+ is an integrated programme, based around key actions rather than sectors of education. The three key actions funded by the programme include: Learning mobility of individuals; co-operation for innovation and good practices; and support for policy reform.

Science

We work in partnership with the NI Science Festival to help internationalise the festival and enhance its global connections and reach.

Society

Our work in society helps citizens and institutions contribute to a more inclusive, open and prosperous world and connects local issues to global themes, ranging from social action to diversity and youth issues.

We work in the following key areas:

Social enterprise

Our global social enterprise programme supports the development of social enterprise and social investment around the world drawing on UK expertise to share best practice and create opportunities for international connections.

Governance and civil society

Our work promotes social change and voice and accountability for all. Key areas include institutional development, justice and the rule of law, civil society and economic development.

Women’s and girls’ empowerment

We facilitate dialogues and networks to raise awareness and support initiatives that address the continuing inequalities that women face in society such as discrimination in the workplace.

Justice, security and conflict resolution

We seek to assist in the design, development and evaluation of justice and security initiatives that promote and protect universally agreed standards of human rights.

Sport

We build sport partnerships between the UK and countries around the world, enabling young people to fulfill their potential through the power of sport.
In Northern Ireland we have been exploring the international dimensions of peacebuilding and share the experience of Northern Ireland with other post-conflict societies.

2) ARTS

Our work in arts aims to promote the UK’s diverse culture, creativity and innovation overseas. We work across various art forms and with the best of UK talent to develop artistic programmes and opportunities for collaboration in Northern Ireland.

Working jointly with the Arts Council of Northern Ireland through international work, we support and promote Northern Ireland's creative output.

The Artists’ International Development Fund is a £50,000 annual programme jointly funded by the British Council and Arts Council Northern Ireland. The aim of the programme is to support individual international developmental opportunities for talent and artistic excellence from Northern Ireland and, thereby, enhance Northern Ireland’s international artistic development, reputation and standing.

The Creative Europe Desk UK is run jointly by the British Council and the British Film Institute with partners across the UK including the Arts Council in Northern Ireland.

British Council is a major partner in a number of festivals that occur in Northern Ireland throughout the year.

3) ENGLISH and EXAMS

English teaching has been at the heart of the British Council's cultural relations work since 1943. What we do in English creates opportunities for millions of people around the world through education, mobility and international engagement. In Northern Ireland there are seven British Council accredited English language centres.
2 Please provide examples of outcomes and/or the impact of equality action plans/ measures in 2018-19 (or append the plan with progress/examples identified).

General:

- **JAM Card (Impact: Disability & Social awareness raising)**
  
  British Council Northern Ireland is a JAM Card Friendly Organisation [https://jamcard.org/](https://jamcard.org/). The JAM Card is a social innovation from the NOW Group (an organisation that supports people with learning difficulties and autism into employment). We are committed to showing people with learning difficulties and communication barriers that as a JAM Card friendly organisation we will give them a little extra time and patience in customer service situations. We used our website and social media channels to widely promote our membership of this initiative.

  Our staff have undertaken the Customer Care Training course to ensure they are equipped to provide excellent customer service to people with learning difficulties and communication barriers.

- **Time to Talk Day (4 February 2019)**
  
  Drop in sessions were held across the UK for staff to take a bit of time to talk about mental health, involving themes and quizzes or just to talk, share and reflect. Staff were also sent links to the following resources: Health and well-being intranet page, Mental Health intranet page, Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), Time to Change Workplace Workshop films, Kate Ewart-Biggs, Executive Board member and Director Global Network, also spoke about mental health via webinar to all UK offices to provide an opportunity for staff to get together for a cup of tea and a chat.

  As a follow-up to Kate’s very honest talk, staff were forwarded the following links:

  a. Short 2 mins videos on how Talking to someone can help, and Some common myths and facts
  b. Mind UK resources on mental health issues.
  c. Some tips from Time to Talk on talking about mental health.

  The British Council’s Employee Assistance Programme is a 24/7 confidential counselling and support service for staff and their immediate family members, and covers topics like general health and well-being, family and relationships as well as legal and financial advice.

  Time to Talk day forms part of the British Council’s Keep Well Campaign which operates under 5 themes of Physical health, Mental health, Work/life balance and Healthy work environments. We have a dedicated Wellbeing Officer for the Belfast office, who can consider and take forward requests from the staff in
the office around this topic. She is currently looking into Cycle Safety training, and we also discussed the possibility of a health analysis for Belfast staff, and discounts at local cafes.

As part of staff wellbeing, staff can make use of the Employee Savings scheme which offers discounts at over 400 retailers.

We have a dedicated Health and Wellbeing sharepoint site for staff which contains policies on the following:

- Managing health and attendance
- HIV and AIDS policy
- Managing problem drinking and/or taking illegal substances
- Healthy Lifestyle Advice
- Managing Stress At Work
- Domestic violence
- Adjustments for staff with disabilities
- Mental well-being
- Mental ill health

**Staff Engagement Working Group**

As a result of British Council staff survey consultations, the Northern Ireland office created a Staff Engagement Working Group. The purpose of the group is to:

- Value colleagues’ wellbeing
- Value different ways of thinking, opinions, working and ideas
- Provide colleagues with opportunities to contribute views and ideas to the leadership team
- Improve communication amongst colleagues

The group meets monthly and communicates outcomes to all Northern Ireland staff.

**British Council EDI Awards**

This staff awards programme recognises teams or individuals who deliver innovative work in the area of equality, diversity and inclusion internally in the British Council or externally through our work in cultural relations.

*Agile* – A team/individual that has led an innovative approach to challenging discrimination and marginalisation

*Values* – A team/individual who has engaged, supported and inspired others to take action in support of inclusion that has achieved positive results
*Impact-led* – A team/individual that has contributed to the British Council’s aim of making a leading contribution to international aspects of diversity, as part of achieving cultural relations impact

*Values* – A team that has incorporated the [British Council’s values](https://www.britishcouncil.org/) in their work to promote inclusion

In 2018–19 the Japan Arts team won the award in the EDI category. This award recognises teams or individuals who deliver innovative work in the area of equality, diversity and inclusion internally in the British Council or externally through our work in cultural relations. The Japan Arts team was nominated as a role model in demonstrating how arts can effect huge positive social change when it is underpinned by the mainstreaming of equality, diversity and inclusion. Prior to Tokyo’s awarding of the 2020 Paralympics, the team had been tireless in their efforts to mainstream EDI into Japanese society, especially through the lens of disability, ageing and homelessness. Following the award of the Games to Tokyo, however, they accelerated their efforts to ensure that UK knowledge and experience was at the centre of discourse around the planning of 2020.

- **New LGBTQIA+ community for British Council colleagues**

The British Council prides itself on both its cultural relations and inclusion agenda, and one of the ways to incorporate this into our working life is the setting up a new voluntary led Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, Other (LGBTQIA+) group. LGBTQIA+ Community aims to support colleagues identifying as LGBTQIA+ no matter where they live and work by fostering a support network and by raising a voice for LGBTQIA+ issues within the British Council. The group welcomes participation from all British Council LGBTQIA+ colleagues and allies. Each region has a regional lead who organises events and social meet-ups locally. The Northern Ireland office distributed LGBTQIA+ pins to staff to be worn on our work lanyards to show support for all LGBTQIA+ colleagues.

- **Bridging Voices Project**

From 2013 to 2016, the Bridging Voices project produced 33 transatlantic policy dialogues on religion and international affairs. From 2017 to 2020, the project has continued these transatlantic conversations and added new, exciting components to the program: research on the topic of religion in international affairs conducted by three UK-US consortia, a formal Bridging Voices Network and closed online platform, multiple digital and face-to-face transatlantic academic and policy workshops, media and public outreach activity, and the publication of two external reports per consortium.

At its core, Bridging Voices aims to identify and fill the knowledge gap between religion and public life on both sides of the Atlantic, create lasting connections between stakeholders in the religion and public life space, and provide research-based insights and concrete, practical and targeted recommendations to US policymakers at national, local and municipal levels.
• “Mainstreaming skills and employability for young persons with disabilities” research

The British Council in Pakistan finalised its research on “Mainstreaming skills and employability for young persons with disabilities”, in summer 2018. The launch of the research findings was held on Wednesday 15 August 2018 at the Titanic Quarter Campus Boardroom, Belfast. This roundtable event looked at promoting effective and relevant skills for disabled young persons’ economic empowerment. This theme was chosen due to the strong connection between skills for employability and disability which we consider to be a very important issue and one which requires more profile.

The purpose of the event was to:

• launch British Council's research from Pakistan and share its findings
• highlight the importance of skills in supporting disabled peoples’ transition into employment/ enterprise
• share experiences and the implications of the findings
• highlight the importance of young disabled peoples’ inclusion (and youth led innovation in skills, enterprise and employment)

In February 2019, British Council Pakistan launched its policy report: Moving from the Margins: Mainstreaming young persons with disabilities in Pakistan. This report resulted from a piece of research lasting two years, which reviewed the current provision for education and employment for young people in Pakistan. The findings align closely with the social model, that young people’s voices were included at the heart of the report and that we were reaching the right array of employers, government organisations and third sector stakeholders throughout the report lifecycle. The report makes reference to the 2018 Global Disability Summit and focuses on three of the themes which emerged from the Summit: inclusive education, economic empowerment and stigma and discrimination.

British Council Northern Ireland arranged for Sean Fitzsimmons (Disability Action, Disability Rights NI and a member of the British Council Disability Advisory Panel) to travel to Pakistan to attend the launch event and deliver a keynote speech.

• ‘Women Power Politics’ Gender Report

British Council conducted research on gender equality and empowering women and girls in the UK to meet the challenge of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This study provided a stock-take of the current status of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in the UK in relation to the global commitments to achieving the SDGs by 2030.
It was noted that the issue of gender equality and empowerment of women and girls features strongly within the SDGs, particularly Goal 5 and its indicators as well as being integrated into other goals. This work is central to our role of “creating friendly knowledge and understanding” between the UK and other countries as well as contributing to revitalising the “global partnership” (Goal 17) to achieve the SDGs.

The research was intended to support UK and international stakeholders working in this sphere to learn from each other and collaborate more closely and raise awareness of the contribution that UK stakeholders from government, civil society, education and the private sector are making, highlighting any assets and strengths of the UK experience as well as identifying any gaps and opportunities for learning. It will support stakeholders both in the UK and internationally to share good practice and encourage international linkages and collaboration.

Our research team gathering evidence and case studies, conducted interviews and hosted a number of roundtables in each of the four nations of the UK including one in Belfast on 30 April 2018.

The resulting report ‘Women Power Politics’ focuses on the UK’s successes as well as gaps and priorities for further action in 5 key areas: Participation, Power and Leadership; Education; Economy; Justice and Violence Against Women and Girls and Culture (including Arts, Sports and Technology).

An electronic version and more information was shared with colleagues and networks. The research was very well received and had lots of promotion on social media. Further engagement about what changes we would like to see over the next ten years was promoted using hashtag #WomenPowerPolitics.

The report was launched in Northern Ireland on 11 March 2019 at a lunchtime panel discussion on our commissioned report at Parliament Buildings, Stormont, Women, Power, Politics: What’s changed in 100 years? sponsored by the Northern Ireland Women’s Caucus. After a brief introduction of the report, its findings were presented by the British Council research team. This was followed by a panel discussion chaired by the British Council Gender Consultant. The panel included two Members of the Northern Ireland Assembly Women’s Caucus, Clare Bailey MLA and Claire Sugden MLA, alongside Joan Balantine from Ulster University, Lynn Carvill, from Women’s Tec and Liz Law, from the Northern Ireland Women’s European Platform.

A lively debate followed regarding gender inequality in the political sphere, the role of civil society in advancing gender equality, representation and participation of women in public and political life as well as at grassroots and community level. The audience heard how the report will help reflect on the successes, challenges and priorities for women’s political participation, power and leadership in Northern Ireland and globally.
As a result of this research, a Gender Champion network has been established within the British Council. Its key ambition is to support and champion the mainstreaming of gender equality and empowerment of women and girls into our approach; both internally as a global organisation and in all programmes we deliver. In order to integrate gender equality into every stage of our activities, projects and programmes, Gender Champions have been recruited throughout the organisation to initiate relevant activities to support the mainstreaming of gender equality and contribute to expanding the community within each office or region. Full information on the Gender Champion’s Network can be found in the Appendices.

- **Workplace Wellbeing Index**

The British Council took part in the Workplace Wellbeing Index in 2018, run by the mental health charity Mind. Staff were invited to help shape our policies and practices in this very important area to show our commitment to promoting and supporting mental health in the workplace and to help make further improvements. This year 110 organisations from around the UK are taking part.

Almost one in three people will experience a mental health issue at work. These can range from relatively mild conditions that can be managed without too much disruption, to severely debilitating illness that can have a significant impact on our ability to function at work and in our personal lives.

In the British Council we want to ensure that staff feel able to talk about mental health issues so that we can better understand what support they need, and we are committed to improving the various support mechanisms that we offer.

The Index consists of two parts, an assessment of current policies, practices and support mechanisms, and an opportunity for staff to contribute their views through a survey. Based on these two sets of information, Mind will then assess our current provision and make recommendations for how we can improve. Participation in the Index is strongly supported by the Executive Board, and we’re committed to using the results to shape measures to improve support for mental health and well-being issues in the British Council.

- **Disability Advisory Panel**

The British Council Disability Advisory Panel is made up of people with significant personal and professional experience of disability and act as a ‘critical friend’ to the Diversity Unit and other teams on request.

Two representatives from Northern Ireland now sit on the panel: Louise Neeson, Equality Manager for Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and Sean Fitzsimons, Employment Advocacy Officer at Disability Action. Both Louise and Sean have great direct and indirect experience with disability and their areas of expertise are really broad. Further information about the Disability Advisory Panel can be found here.
• **Disability Confident Employer**

The British Council has a badge and a certificate which qualifies our organisation as a **Disability Confident Employer** for two years (up to January 2020). The scheme provides a step towards increasing the low numbers of disabled people within the organisation.

The **Disability Confident Employer Scheme** is a government scheme which has taken over from the previous Two Ticks Positive About Disabled People Scheme, and is designed to help organisations recruit and retain disabled people and people with health conditions for their skills and talent.

A self-assessment template and a matrix have been completed by colleagues in the Diversity Unit and HR with the support of the Disability Working Group.

• **Global Summit 2018**

This year we participated in the Global Disability Summit and pledged two commitments – to seek to *increase the representation and empowerment of disabled people and to develop capability in the area of inclusive education*.

We have identified a new group of internal Disability and Inclusion Facilitators and a Global Disability Working Group to support this area, along with our external Disability Advisory Panel, UK-based specialists in different areas of disability who strengthen our approach and our work.

• **EDI Toolkit (Impact: Training and Awareness raising – variety of protected characteristics)**

An EDI toolkit has been written for all Northern Ireland staff and visitors to access as and when necessary. The Toolkit contains all corporate and Northern Ireland specific EDI documents. There is also a range of documents on event mangement and ideas on how to mainstream EDI into everyday work. There is also a section on useful resources including accessibility guides for venues across Northern Ireland, links to interfaith calendars and international diversity days, lists of nearby places of worship for staff and visitors, and links to EDI training courses. Feedback from staff suggests this is a very useful tool and helps keep all important EDI documents in one accessible place. The Toolkit continues to be updated on an ad hoc basis.

• **Marking of International Days:**

**IDAHOT (International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia) (17 May).** This year’s theme, which was selected annually by worldwide LGBT+ organisations, was **Alliances for Solidarity**. The concept of allies and alliances is really important in the quest for equal rights.
We have produced a Sexual Orientation Inclusion Guide (see Appendices) which complements our other internal inclusion guides on disability, race equality and religion and belief. Our Accredited Diversity Facilitators have been running awareness sessions in these areas and in unconscious bias.

Staff were invited to a three-hour parliamentary debate and discussion on LGBT rights and sent the 2018 Rainbow Map and Index produced by ILGA Europe which benchmarks and ranks 48 European countries on their LGBT+ laws. Staff were also directed to the Arab Foundation for Freedom and Equality website which highlights work taking place in the MENA region to promote LGBT+ rights.

Black History Month (October 2018)
Black History Month is an important recognition of the contribution made to the UK by people of African descent. We produced a resource pack (see Appendices) to encourage discussion about race equality within British Council teams.

World Day for Cultural Diversity, Dialogue and Development (21 May). Although there was not an annual theme for this Day the UN highlighted the need to combat religious intolerance on their website. This linked well with our own work – we recently launched a guide to promote religion and belief equality and have been thinking with our Religion and Belief Steering Group how to raise awareness and engagement with religious diversity (which includes those with different and with no religious beliefs) to strengthen our cultural relations work. We interviewed Aaqil Ahmed (who was the first Muslim Head of Religious Programming at the BBC), on his views on religious literacy.

International Day of People with a Disability 2018 (3 December) was marked by a disability quiz on acceptable/inacceptable use of language and etiquette and the meaning of disability symbols – the winner won a bottle of wine.

World AIDS Day (1 December) - to mark the day, the British Council re-launched its HIV/AIDS policy. HIV/AIDS is recognised from the point of diagnosis as a disability under the GB Equality Act 2010 and therefore is covered as one of our six priority areas.

International Day of Older Persons (1 October) - as age is one of our 6 EDI focus areas, we have produced a resource pack (see Appendices) to support colleagues across the organisation to engage with this EDI area and prepare in due course to mark IDOP. This resource is also available on our intranet site (under EDI > Age).

International Women’s Day (8 March 2019)
To mark International Women’s Day 2019, we hosted a lunchtime panel discussion of our commissioned report, British Council’s report, Women, Power and Politics What's Changed in 100 years? The event was sponsored by the Northern Ireland Women's Caucus. Discussion reflected on the successes, challenges and priorities for women’s political participation, power and leadership in the UK and
globally. All Northern Ireland staff are invited to attend the event and to join a webinar which built on the recommendations from the Women Power Politics Report and celebrate the International Women’s Day theme for 2019; ‘Better the balance, better the world’ and the UN Women’s IWD theme, ‘Think Equal, Build Smart, Innovate for Change’.
Northern Ireland staff also took part in a Quiz which sparked a lot of discussion and debate around the topic.

- Which country achieved the highest representation of women in parliament in the world?
- Which country was the first to allow women’s vote?
- Which nation became the first in the world to achieve 50:50 representation in its national legislature?
- What is the meaning of the suffragette colours in the UK which are green, white and violet?
- Which country of the UK has the lowest gender pay gap?

**World Mental Health Day – 10 October 2018**

The theme for this year’s event was “Young people and Mental Health in a Changing World” the intention was to raise awareness of mental health issues and to send a message that it’s okay to talk about mental health within the British Council.

The reason for this year’s theme was:

- Worldwide 10-20% of children and adolescents experience mental disorders. Half of all mental illnesses begin by the age of 14 and three-quarters by mid-20s. (WHO)
- In the UK, almost 1 in 4 children and young people show some evidence of mental ill health (including anxiety and depression). In 2015, suicide was the most common cause of death for both boys (17% of all deaths) and girls (11%) aged between 5 and 19 (Young Minds).
- Common mental health issues amongst young people include depression, self-harm, anxiety and eating disorders.

Within the British Council we offer a confidential Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), who provide a range of advice and support for colleagues and their immediate families (the attached document is from the provider). We also have the Keep Well campaign which includes further support for mental well-being as part of our pledge around ‘time to change’

Staff were sent the following links for further information:
The WHO page for World Mental Health Day 2018. This contains a brief overview of the issues as they relate to young people, plus links to some related WHO resources.

- Information about self-harm from the Mental Health Foundation.
- Information about eating disorders from the Mental Health Foundation.
- Information about depression from the Mental Health Foundation.
➢ The Stand Up Kid: a young person declares a mental illness in a school classroom (video, 3 minutes, subtitles)

- Gender & Inclusion
A Gender & Inclusion Community of Practice webinar took place in February 2019 to deepen knowledge or understanding of terms and concepts around Violence Against Women and Girls, as well as providing insight into a handful of British Council programmes from across the network. A zoom recording (audio and visual) can be viewed here.

- Gender Pay Gap
The British Council’s annual Gender Pay Gap Report for 2017/18 (based on a snapshot of UK appointed staff data, as of 31 March 2018) was made available online for all staff and staff were also invited to join briefing sessions to facilitate a greater awareness and understanding of the main findings, our plan of action, and provide the opportunity to ask questions and comment on the findings.

This was our second pay gap report and covered all employees on UK contracts, including those working overseas. As per last year, we also chose to report on our ethnicity pay gap.

Key findings:
- Our pay gaps have widened slightly on gender (and to a lesser degree on ethnicity)
- The reasons the pay gaps have widened is because we’ve fewer women proportionally in senior management and more women proportionally in junior management compared to the previous report
- The main reasons for these changes in demographics are we had more women proportionally leaving senior management than men and four out of five new recruits to junior management were female
- The most senior five per cent of roles have changed from being 50 per cent to 40 per cent female – if we took this group out the median pay gap would reduce from 16 to 12 per cent
- We show larger average bonus gaps than our pay gaps, but we expect these to improve significantly in our next report, once our new approach introduced in 2018 of paying fixed cash bonuses for all staff, including senior management, is reflected in the data.

Action taken since the last report:
- We’ve set senior management representation targets for female and minority ethnic staff
- We implemented a new approach to bonuses
- We’ve developed a talent management and succession planning process
- We’ve developed a business unit pay gap action planning process.
Action we will take in the year ahead:
- Implement the next phase of talent management and succession planning
- Implement business unit specific action planning in Education and Society and English and Exams
- Investigate why women left senior management in higher numbers and whether this was a one off or part of a wider trend
- Investigate whether there are any issues with the way we recruit at junior levels – i.e. why do we not attract more men and why is it that those who do apply are less likely to be recruited than a female applicant.

• Global Voices 2018

Our first ever global staff event Global Voices 2018 took place in October 2018. The week-long campaign focussed on informing colleagues on what cultural relations looks like around the world. A global webinar session on the global gender pay gap and one on "How can we make everything we do inclusive for disabled people?" which shared updates about DfID’s strategy for disability and inclusion and talked about commitments British Council made at the Global Disability Summit in July 2018.

• Living Library

The British Council’s Living Library was developed as a means of promoting inclusion within the British Council. It is an online catalogue designed to promote dialogue between staff and encourage them to learn from and understand each other and engage directly in our rich diversity in a very direct way, led by what we are curious about and interested in. The library provides an excellent opportunity for intercultural learning and understanding of our incredible diversity. Staff may never have spoken in any detail to someone with particular experiences, or from a particular cultural or linguistic group. ‘Living books’ are given by members of staff who relay stories or accounts of their lives and backgrounds (or aspects of them). This includes their experiences, knowledge, struggles, achievements, interests, perspectives and aspects of their identity.

• Mobiloo

A delegate got in touch with British Council Northern Ireland asking if we could provide a Mobiloo service to enable him to attend the international Peace and Beyond conference held in Belfast in April 2018. This service was provided, enabling the delegate, who is disabled, to participate fully in the conference across a number of sites in Belfast including Titanic Belfast and Belfast City Hall.

• Staff Training
- Ongoing training from Equality Commission on NI equality legislation and Section 75 requirements. The next refresher training will take place on 3 October 2019. Our senior HR account manager, based in our London office, will attend to hear about the differences and similarities in Northern Ireland Equality legislation to the rest of the UK.

- 3 December 2018 - Adults at Risk policy mandatory training. All staff took part in a 2-hour training session. The objectives for the sessions were to increase understanding of our Adults at Risk Policy:
  - its importance
  - what it sets out in a number of areas
  - how we are implementing it
  - how to get involved and contribute
  - who to contact for support

Staff found the training very beneficial as it enabled them to find out how to become involved and contribute; how to raise concerns; and establish points of contact for support. The session explored how to identify who an adult at risk could be; why a policy around this is so vital; and how the policy underpins our values as an organisation.

- Religion and Diplomacy course: On 18th and 19th February, two team members from the Northern Ireland office travelled to London for a two-day course for FCO and British Council staff entitled Religion and Diplomacy: Beyond Secular Assumptions. Run by the London School of Economics Faith Centre, the course aimed to build deeper understanding of world religions; to encourage reflection on how faith and belief considerations factor into FCO policy; to boost confidence for participants when engaging with religious groups in their contexts; and to inspire further research and wider awareness of faith and belief concerns in future foreign policy formulation.

- Diversity Assessment Framework (DAF) webinars have been delivered to all staff in May, July and October 2018 and 2 further sessions in Jan 2019.

- The following additional training sessions were also available to all UK staff throughout the period:
  a. Disability and Inclusion (aligned to our organisational Equality Guide)
  b. Race and ethnicity (aligned to our Equality Guide)
  c. Discussing Religion and Belief in the British Council (aligned to our Equality Guide and Guide to Promote Religion and Belief Equality)
d. Unconscious Bias (face to face and webinar training)
e. Global Race Panel Discussion: On 15 May 2019 a global panel discussion on race and culture was held. The panel was chaired by Fiona Bartels-Ellis, head of Diversity Unit and consisted of Jean September (Deputy Director South Africa), Amir Ramzan (Country Director Saudi Arabia), Christopher Wade (Director Strategy and Marketing and the British Council's Race Champion) and Fouzia Younis-Suleman (who leads the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Group at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office).

- External Monitoring

Monitoring of customers from the protected characteristic groups taking active part in programmes and activities offered by the British Council Northern Ireland (Language Assistants, eTwinning, IAESTE, Connecting Classrooms, Study USA, Mock Council of the European Union)

A questionnaire covering all section 75 protected groups is sent to all external customers across a number of programmes on an annual basis.

Findings:

- Greater participation rate in our education programmes amongst grammar schools over secondary schools
- More female than male participants, and fewer males than national average, providing an opportunity to find ways to target boys in our programmes.
- Mainly 16-25 single with no dependents (due to nature of programmes)
- Mainly white

We will continue to monitor our customers on an annual basis and take action to find ways to address any inequalities.

ARTS:

- Unlimited Disability Arts Festival

Writer and producer Shannon Yee attended the celebrated disability arts festival, Unlimited in London’s South Bank in September 2018 promoting her artistic practice to Unlimited International delegates and was subsequently invited to the Hong Kong Arts Festival both with British Council support sharing her theatre installation “Reassembled Slightly Askewed”.

Shannon describes herself as a queer artist with a disability, and a bi-racial artist with US-Asian roots now living and working in Northern Ireland. Shannon and her partner were the first same sex civil partnership in NI and are ongoing advocates for marriage equality in NI and have also recently become new parents.
Shannon plans to attend the British Council Edinburgh Showcase in August 2019 where she will have the opportunity to meet with International theatre bookers and festival directors to continue to promote Reassembled and her new work which is currently in development https://s-yee.co.uk/

British Council annually supports the Unlimited project which is a ground-breaking three-year initiative that commissioned 29 new pieces of work by deaf and disabled artists from the UK. We supported five UK international collaborations with artists from seven countries which premiered in: Birmingham, Cambridge, Liverpool, Newcastle and Weymouth prior to a major showcase during the Paralympics, at the Southbank Centre, part of the London 2012 Festival.

The Unlimited Festival attracted live audiences of 20,000 people at ticketed and free events and engaged with an estimated 11,000 people through digital media. In addition, the international commissions we supported reached an audience of over 65,000 through websites, exhibitions and performances at venues across the UK. LOCOG has reported that the International Olympic Committee has recognised this as an extremely successful initiative.

Unlimited gave artists the opportunity to develop new skills and collaborate with international partners. It is anticipated that many of the artists, drawing on this experience, will develop new, exciting collaborations in the future. Feedback from participants showed that they had built confidence and connections, with over half saying they would like to initiate new international projects. Many artists who were involved have since accepted invitations to present their work as part of major festivals in South Africa, Brazil and Qatar, while five UK sector specialists will be invited to speak or train at international events.

Unlimited is principally funded by the National Lottery through the Olympic Lottery Distributor, and delivered in partnership between London 2012, Arts Council England, Creative Scotland, Arts Council of Wales, Arts Council of Northern Ireland and the British Council.

- **Inclusive Arts programme**

Our programmes on Inclusive Arts aim to utilise world-leading innovation and creativity to make a positive contribution to society, institutions and government policy. Over the last two years, research has been undertaken in Indonesia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan to scope potential opportunities and development in the area of arts and disability and the results will inform and shape our programme direction in consultation with local partners.

Inclusion, diversity and equality are at the core of the British Council’s cultural relations aims and part of building trust, respect and understanding between the UK and Singapore.
With a strategic programme of research, awareness raising events and projects, our work in the arts will therefore focus on the area of arts and disability and inclusive design with a view to contributing to a dynamic and inclusive cultural scene where disabled artists and patrons are able to access equal opportunities to participate in the arts.

See Inclusive Arts for details on a range of programmes and our participation in the Arts & Disability International Conference 2018.

- **Arts and Social Transformation**

As part of our arts and social transformation work, we are continuing to grow links between Northern Ireland and Colombia.

British Council Northern Ireland and British Council Colombia collaborated around urban street art through two festivals: Graficalia Festival in Cali, Colombia and Hit the North Festival in Belfast with Seedhead Arts. The work involved the exchange of artists between the two cities, resulting in street art in Belfast produced by Colombian street artists Sancho and Anderson and street art in Cali produced by local Belfast street artists Friz (Marian Noone) and EMIC (Eoin McGinn).

We continue to work with Stuart Bailie, author of the book “Trouble Songs” about music and conflict in Northern Ireland and the role of urban arts in Northern Ireland and Colombia and have supported his participation in several festivals during the year.

Kwa Daniels, Bounce Culture – we have been improving networks for Northern Ireland’s BAME artists. Kwa followed up on her trip to take part in the networking symposium organised by British Council Sub Saharan Africa team and the Royal African Society in London. Kwa travelled to Ghana with visual arts curator, Sara Greavu of the Centre for Contemporary Art in Derry-Londonderry, exploring opportunities to network and build creative connections between Ghana, Northern Ireland and other parts of the UK.

We worked with Belfast dance artist and choreographer Oona Doherty during the year culminating in her performance at Edinburgh Fringe festival with Hard to be Soft: A Belfast Prayer

- **IDA Scheme**

British Council supports the Arts Council Northern Ireland’s work with fourteen deaf and disabled artists from Northern Ireland who are recipients of the iDA (Individual Disabled/Deaf Artists) scheme, a dedicated arts stream delivered through the Arts & Disability Forum (ADF), which allows them to develop their professional artistic careers.

Awards under the iDA scheme are made annually to Deaf and disabled artists working in a range of art forms. The bursaries, funded through the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, will allow each artist to produce a new creative work or receive training or professional mentoring. The artists include eight visual
The artists have impairments ranging from physical disability, visual impairment, mental-ill health and learning difficulties.

British Council works strategically with the Arts Council of Northern Ireland under a joint MOU aiming to internationalise opportunities for the artists and arts organisations we jointly work with.

**Outburst Queer Arts Festival (Impact: Sexual Orientation awareness raising and promoting diversity)**

The British Council and Outburst Arts Festival invited an LGBTQ+ delegation to Northern Ireland for the 12th Annual OUTBURST Queer Arts Festival (7-12 November 2018) and fourth British Council inbound visit to see work and to take part in a series of curated conversations about queer arts practice, development and international collaboration.

We welcomed 21 delegates for the 5 day showcase with visitors from our ongoing partnership in the Americas including Mexico, Venezuela, Brazil and Jamaica and for the first time from Middle East North Africa, Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan.

British Council Americas have worked closely with Outburst over the past three years to develop an "Outburst Americas" network with producers and arts organisers who are already making exciting queer work and projects happen in Brazil, Peru, Argentina and Jamaica. The idea of the network is that we all share ideas and expertise, support artists to create new work and develop collaborations and pathways to show work locally and internationally.

There are many challenges across the world right now for LGBT+ people and we want to explore how we can respond to this creatively, bringing an active awareness of our own national contexts for ‘queer’ or LGBT+ work and exploring common emerging themes.

British Council has been working in partnership with Outburst Arts Festival for over 4 years and directly with the Americas region. In this time we have hosted around 100 queer arts programmers, curators and artists at the November Outburst Festival held annually in Belfast and in the last 2 years at events taking place within the Americas including festivals, conferences and platforms including Brazil, Jamaica, Uruguay and Mexico.

Rights for queer and trans communities in Northern Ireland are still substantially lagging behind the rest of the U.K. (and many parts of the world) and the festival plays a leading role in Northern Ireland and now internationally (Middle East North Africa) in building conversations with artists and creative networks to support and advance equality, representation and collaboration for LGBTQ+ Artists and diverse audiences.
About Outburst

The Outburst Festival is an exciting LGBTQ+ theatre, film, music and visual art making OUTBURST one of the UK’s leading festivals celebrating local and international LGBTQ+ art and performance. It is Northern Ireland’s only, and rapidly growing LGBTQ+ arts festival and aims to support, encourage and inspire local LGBTQ+ creativity, in addition to bringing the best in international queer arts to the city of Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Outburst Queer Arts Festival started in 2007 as a grassroots LGBTQ community-led showcase for queer creativity. Since then it has grown into one of the most innovative and exciting small festivals in Ireland and the UK, with an eclectic programme unlike any other in Northern Ireland.

The overall vision for Outburst is simple: to create a bold, brave and innovative platform in Northern Ireland for new local and international queer arts, performance and brilliant creative ideas. From celebrated cutting-edge international artists to explosive new local talent, Outburst shines a spotlight on the best of LGBTQ creativity in theatre, performance, spoken word, film, music, dance and more.

While focusing on the creative voices and engagement of LGBTQ+ artists and community, they actively promote Outburst as a festival where everyone is welcome, making it one of the most inclusive, welcoming and diverse queer arts events in the world.

The British Council’s work with Outburst supports international artists but also creates dialogue and profile for inequalities still felt by Northern Ireland’s queer community.

Outburst Festival Artistic Director, Ruth McCarthy is also a member of the British Council’s Arts Advisory Board in London.

- Five Films for Freedom Campaign

#FiveFilms4Freedom is the world’s widest-reaching LGBTQ+ digital campaign. The British Council in partnership with BFI Flare: London LGBTQ+ Film Festival made five LGBTQ+ themed short films available for the world to watch online for free, over a 12-day period.

The British Film Institute and the British Council promoted the programme through a digital campaign taking place in March 2019.

The programme, which featured work by emerging filmmakers from across the world, were selected from and coincided with BFI Flare.

In 2018, the films were viewed 1.8 million times by people in 202 countries and principalities, including parts of the world where homosexuality is criminalised, and in some cases, punishable by the death penalty.
In the Northern Ireland office, all staff were invited to the conference rooms to watch the five films (which can be viewed here: #FiveFilms4Freedom).

Afterwards, to celebrate the screening in Belfast, we invited Marie Quiery, an LGBTQ+ activist to address the office with her own experience of growing up as a lesbian in Belfast during the 1970s and address how the LGBT+ community has grown over the years.

**About the programme**

The British Council, in partnership with BFI Flare: London LGBTQ+ Film Festival, makes five LGBTQ+ themed short films available for the world to watch online for free, over an 11-day period each year.

The programme, which features work by emerging filmmakers from across the world, is selected from and coincides with BFI Flare. Through our global network in more than 100 countries, we encourage people to watch the films in solidarity with LGBTQ+ communities in places where freedom and equal rights are limited. We ask audiences to share the films using the hashtag #FiveFilms4Freedom in recognition of the fact that Love is a Human Right.

Running since 2015, the programme has seen more than ten million people viewing one of the films in more than 200 countries and principalities, including many parts of the world where homosexuality is criminalised, and in some cases, punishable by the death penalty.

- **Disability Arts International**

  **Disability Arts International** promotes increased access to the arts for disabled artists and audiences around the globe. We are supporting the improved profile of artists with a disability by developing links with the Arts and Disability Forum and Bounce Festival Northern Ireland. Chris Ledger, Chief Executive ADF and Bounce Festival. We have been able to support the profiling of the partially blind dance artist Helen Hall who has been able to take part in the Unlimited Symposium and festival at the Southbank Centre in London. There is both a video and blog.

The Disability Arts International platform is designed for international arts programmers, venue managers and policymakers, to:

- Browse our growing directory of disabled Artists and disabled-led companies with work ready to tour or exhibit internationally
- Read more in our Blogs and Case Studies about how artists and arts organisations are working together to make excellent work and grow and develop this vibrant arts sector
- View our growing collection of Films introducing the work of disabled artists and exploring ways in which arts organisations are improving access to the arts for disabled audiences and visitors.
• **INTERSECT 2018**

This a new initiative led by the British Council and Diversity Arts Australia, launched in September 2018. The project aims to promote international collaboration between cultural programmers to encourage greater cultural diversity and inclusion. Both the UK and Australia have multi-ethnic societies, but diverse voices are still underrepresented in the arts, especially in senior leadership roles. INTERSECT aims to rebalance representation on stage, in art galleries, and on screen by supporting a broad spectrum of programming decision-makers with training and opportunities – to help them to widen their professional networks, make connections, and develop and collaborate on best practice.

Six experienced and talented British and Australian curators, producers, and artistic directors have been selected as the first intake for the programme. The Australian participants travelled to the UK in September to take part in a knowledge exchange programme, partly designed by their UK partners to introduce their working context, key colleagues and collaborators. The full group travelled to Wales to meet with members of the creative community in Cardiff.

The INTERSECT participants continued to work together on their individual and shared goals in a peer mentoring programme until summer 2019. In February 2019 they came together again to share what they learned on an Australian trip. The group are working towards a digital online resource to host their research and case studies and a touring platform that will support British artists from minority ethnic backgrounds to tour their work in Australia.

• **With One Voice (WOV)**

The British Council supported With One Voice (WOV), the international arts and homelessness movement in its global activity in 2018-19, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals of reduced inequalities (SDG 10) and sustainable cities and communities (SDG11). These included:

- Review of Cultural Spaces’ Responses to Homelessness to explore what different approaches, practices and programmes exist, and encourage an exchange on how cultural spaces can be open spaces to welcome people who are experiencing homelessness.
- Literature Review of arts and homelessness research and documentation - the world’s first critical analysis of the literature on this topic. This review will provide a valuable resource to help the sector make the case more strongly about the impact of their work
- International Arts and Homelessness Summit and Festival (Manchester, November 2018) to help to inform the development of a set of resources and a training package for cultural spaces involving homeless people themselves delivering training (launched April 2019).

• **Arts and Disability**
British Council Northern Ireland supported five young people with learning disabilities to link up with their peers in Europe in a €237,000 project to improve digital skills and produce new artistic performances.

The University of Atypical coordinated ‘Yes We Are In’, which paired the young ambassadors with counterparts in Belgium, Croatia, Finland and England to explore similarities and differences between their lives in Belfast and those of disabled ambassadors from the other countries, build new friendships and grow digital skills while supporting experimentation to devise and co-produce performances with younger people with learning disabilities.

The project will provide an enormous opportunity for Northern Ireland's arts and disability sector.

Delegates from the other countries will visit Belfast in June 2019 and the University of Atypical will invite local arts and disability practitioners to meet them and share experiences. At the end of the project, there will be a live performance as part of Bounce Festival 2021, with live web streaming from project partners in other countries.

EDUCATION:

- Inclusive Education Practices

In the Education and Society team, the British Council is working together to mainstream principles of inclusive education in programmes and projects across our schools’ work and in our Continuous Professional Development Framework approach. Our aim in implementing inclusive practices in education is to contribute to supporting more inclusive education systems through transformational approaches that can make positive change based on a belief that every classroom and learning situation should be an inclusive one enabling and ensuring quality education for all.

We have a range of courses, resources and materials created for education projects for colleagues to use in supporting inclusive education. These include:

- A system level inclusion audit tool, completed by our recent publications: Unlocking a World of Potential - Core Skills for All, and Creating an inclusive learning experience for English language learners with specific needs;
- The SEN (Special Educational Needs) Policy Toolkit, which outlines the British Council’s key messaging around the education of children and young people with additional needs and includes a range of materials that facilitate understanding and discussion of access and engagement, enablement and empowerment, and the social versus medical model;
- the inclusive pedagogies course;
- Our Teaching English Special Educational Needs modules, with self-access versions free for all British Council staff;
➢ The dedicated page on inclusive practices available on our Teaching English website.

• eTwinning recruitment (Impact: Inclusion and Diversity)

Although there were no EDI focussed eTwinning workshops during the year, the recruitment practices for teachers who apply for places at our professional development events are always inclusive and we remove barriers to participation whenever possible. Erasmus+, in which eTwinning is an integral part, encourages inclusive education as one of its ten key priorities in school education. For example, we held a partner finding seminar for teachers in the UK and Ireland in November 2018 in Belfast which attracted applications from a wide range of schools. Our target group was teachers of pupils aged 11-16. We gave a place to a school who specialises in pupils with behavioural difficulties in this age range who would benefit from project-based learning scenarios as an alternative to traditional teaching.

• Mandarin Speaking Competition (Impact: Ethnic minorities language learning)

2018 saw British Council Northern Ireland’s second year competing in the annual UK-wide British Council Mandarin Speaking Competition. Now in its 17th year, the competition – the only of its kind in the UK - seeks to find our best young non-native Mandarin speakers, through a series of heats up and down the UK involving some 80 schools and 350 pupils, culminating in a grand final each February. International education collaboration and language learning are central to the British Council’s purpose, and the competition responds directly to the evidence for specific demand for Mandarin in the UK, currently ranked as the 2nd most vital language for the UK’s future. The competition received huge interest from schools throughout Northern Ireland, with pupils progressing to the finals in the two consecutive years that we have been involved. In the most recent edition, pupils from Thornhill College and Rathmore Grammar School scooped 1st and 2nd prize overall in the Beginner category, beating competition from counterparts across the UK.

• Rostulla Special School (Impact: Inclusion and Diversity)

Having been approached in summer 2018 by Rostulla Special School, one of our team members visited the school on 1st October to give a presentation to staff of the British Council Northern Ireland schools offer. Attended by 15 staff members representing a range of curriculum areas and Key Stages, the session was an extremely useful opportunity, both for staff to ask questions about how pupils with special needs to get involved with our programmes, and for British Council Northern Ireland to establish a stronger working link with the school and the wider Special school sector.
- **Next Generation Ireland-Northern Ireland research (Impact: good relations)**

Between 2018 and 2019, we commissioned our *Next Generation Ireland-Northern Ireland* research. A joint effort between British Council Ireland and British Council Northern Ireland and carried out by the Institute for Conflict Research, the research is part of the wider British Council Next Generation research series, which aims to examine the conditions that support young people in becoming creative, fulfilled and active citizens in their countries, amplify youth voice and support better youth policy-making. The reports look at young people’s degree of domestic and international engagement, the values and beliefs that affect their lives, and their hopes and fears for the future. Next Generation Ireland-Northern Ireland has five thematic foci: education; employment; social issues; politics’ and looking ahead. The report surveyed over 1000 people across Ireland and Northern Ireland between the ages of 18 and 30, with a series of focus groups and surveys. Specific attention was paid to ensuring island-wide geographical spread, as well as gender, socioeconomic status and community background, and, as such paints a wholly representative picture of the views of young people across Ireland and Northern Ireland. The report received huge traction, featuring across all mainstream Northern Ireland media, making it one of the most successful months for press in British Council Northern Ireland history.

- **W5 Collaboration - Seismic Citizenship (Impact: Good relations)**

W5 and the British Council delivered a revised version of the Seismic Citizenship programme this year.

The Seismic Citizenship programme brought together two main elements:
1. The importance of learning about other languages, cultures and places.
2. Global citizenship along with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Our programme with W5 has demonstrated to teachers the importance and relevance of forming international partnerships. Working alongside language assistants has been a vital part of the programme to encourage widening participation by targeting schools that have high numbers of pupils from socially deprived areas. In total, W5 engaged with 179 key stage two pupils and their teachers from seven schools located in areas of social deprivation, all from County Londonderry.

- **International Study Visit to Basque Country, Spain, 17-21 February 2019 (impact: Good relations, Immersive Education)**

Five teaching professionals, accompanied by the Head of the Irish Medium and Integrated Education Team from the Department of Education Northern Ireland visited the Basque Country to gain first-hand knowledge of the policy framework for pluri-lingual education within the Basque country model and to observe best practice on the integration of two official languages in the classroom. This was
an excellent opportunity to explore bilingual education in a Basque context, and to bring back ideas on how the Irish-Medium sector can move forward in finding official recognition for teaching in the Gaeilge language.

- **Irish Language Assistants (Impact: Good relations)**

Irish Language Assistants (ILAs) has been on the decline for a number of years due to funding and other issues. We had set a target of 5 ILAs in the International Education Programme contract for 2018/19.

The British Council was very keen to increase numbers of schools applying for an ILA as well as the number of candidates applying. We ensured that the information on the programme was translated into Irish by working with a native Irish speaker and developed with the Communications Manager a marketing plan to promote the initiative using social media.

As a result, 10 applications were received and 1 request from a school in West Belfast.

- **Study USA Programme (Impact: Inclusion and Diversity)**

For the 2018-19 Study USA Cohort who travelled to the US over the period of August 2017-May 2018, we have the following declarations:

- 2 students indicated that they had dyslexia. Extra support whilst attending the US campus was requested and provided.
- 1 student indicated type 1 diabetes. We were not required to make any adjustments for this as the student was able to self-manage this.
- 1 student indicated they are a LGBT community member. We were not required to make any adjustments for this student.

Post acceptance to an African country, one student indicated they were a LGBT community member. We therefore found them a placement in an alternative location.
Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any changes to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2018-19 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- [ ] Yes  
- [x] No  
- [ ] Not applicable  

Please provide any details and examples:

With regard to the change(s) made to policies, practices or procedures and/or service delivery areas, what **difference was made, or will be made, for individuals**, i.e. the impact on those according to Section 75 category?

Please provide any details and examples:

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

- [ ] As a result of the organisation’s screening of a policy *(please give details):*

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

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

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

- [ ] Other *(please specify and give details):*
Section 2: Progress on Equality Scheme commitments and action plans/measures

Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)

4 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2018-19 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes, organisation wide

☐ Yes, some departments/jobs

☐ No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment

☒ No, has already been done

☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The job descriptions and person specifications for advertised vacancies contain a statement of British Council Northern Ireland’s commitment to its equal opportunity and good relations obligations under Section 75.

The following text appears in the role profile of all advertised vacancies:

**OUR EQUALITY COMMITMENT:**

Valuing diversity is essential to the British Council’s work. We aim to abide by and promote equality legislation by following both the letter and the spirit of it to try and avoid unjustified discrimination, recognising discrimination as a barrier to equality of opportunity, inclusion and human rights.

As an Equal Opportunities Employer, all job applicants are required to complete an Equal Opportunity and Diversity Monitoring Form. Provision of this information is voluntary and assists the British Council in its commitment to a policy of equal opportunity and the development of positive policies to promote equal opportunity in employment. The British Council welcomes applications from all sections of the community as we believe that a diverse workforce gives added depth to our work. We aim to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the basis of gender including transgender, marital status or civil partnership, sexual identity, religion and belief, political opinion, race, colour, nationality or ethnic origin, work pattern, age, disability or HIV/AIDS status, socio-economic background, spent convictions, trade union activity or membership, on the basis of having or not having dependants, or any other irrelevant grounds.

The British Council monitors all stages of our recruitment and selection process to ensure there is no potential for unjustified discrimination on irrelevant grounds. Our monitoring data is externally analysed each year, and recommendations are published and acted upon. All information supplied is treated in strict confidence and no identifying details are attached to it. It helps us to monitor and evaluate the success
and application of our equal opportunity policy and diversity strategy and to compile anonymised statistics which are included within our formal reporting structures.

A specific requirement relating to Community Background is requested within the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Monitoring Form for applicants applying for posts that have the potential to be based in the Northern Ireland office whereby applicants are encouraged to declare their Community Background, regardless of which location they are applying from.

An additional section has been added to the British Council application form for internal and external vacancies. This section states that the British Council operates a Guaranteed Interview Scheme for disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria for a vacancy. All disabled applicants are asked to confirm whether reasonable adjustments are required (and to specify the nature of those adjustments) at application stage.

We monitor the Community Background of our job applicants and employees in order to demonstrate our commitment to promoting equality of opportunity in employment and to comply with our duties under the Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order 1998.

The British Council has a Core Skills dictionary which sets out the skills which are required most often in roles throughout the British Council. They include a requirement for team leaders to coordinate a diverse team with awareness of equality and diversity impact as part of project specifications. The Dictionary also specifies that in all communications with internal and external audiences, staff must demonstrate an awareness of a diverse audience in speaking and writing.

Likewise, our British Council behaviours were designed in consultation with staff and based on the attributes identified as essential to the Council’s ongoing success. The Behaviours are intended to be used as an integral part of all recruitment and selection across the British Council. There are 6 behaviours, each with three requirement levels used to identify the degree of knowledge, skills and experience that is necessary to enable effective performance in the role. The 6 Behaviours are: Creating Shared Purpose, Connecting with Others, Working Together, Being Accountable, Making it Happen and Shaping the Future. Within the Connecting with Others Behaviour, applicants must demonstrate how they achieve understanding and trust in a culturally sensitive way, showing how they take steps to learn about other people, cultures and organisations and adjust their behaviour to respond to how other people think and behave in different cultures or environments.

All staff worldwide are required to ensure their behaviour is consistent with our policies.

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2018-19 reporting period? (tick one box only)

☐ Yes, organisation wide

☐ Yes, some departments/jobs

☐ No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
PART A

X No, this has already been done

☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The British Council Behaviours form a core part of the formal performance planning and evaluation cycle. Within the Connecting with Others Behaviour, applicants must demonstrate how they achieve understanding and trust in a culturally sensitive way, showing how they take steps to learn about other people, cultures and organisations and adjust their behaviour to respond to how other people think and behave in different cultures or environments.

Staff are encouraged to dedicate a performance management deliverable to Equality Diversity and Inclusion and spend time thinking about what EDI means to them, their experiences and how they can improve their knowledge of EDI as well as how to put this into practice in the workplace. Staff are also encouraged to commit time to looking in detail on the intranet at our EDI Policy, Diversity Strategy and the British Council’s approach to equality and diversity as well as discrimination legislation.

Marketing and Communications staff play a pivotal role in communicating our EDI commitment to our audiences by ensuring all images used in communications reflect diversity. They also must ensure access to our communications for disabled people and speakers of minority languages and implement changes to address inequalities.

Facilities staff must create the environment in which all customers and colleagues can feel safe and secure by ensuring all refurbishment projects incorporate communication of a clear message of inclusion and accessibility to a wide range of people, for example, disabled people and people with young children. In the Northern Ireland office, we took advice from Disability Action to support us in addressing access issues and ensuring personal evacuation plans are in place for anyone who might need additional support in the event of an emergency.

A member of the Northern Ireland staff is an active participant in our internal Disability Working Group. The group comprises of seven staff from across the UK who give 5% of their time to the group. They meet about six times a year and help us to take forward the disability related action points in our Integrated Equality Scheme and to generally keep disability on the corporate agenda.

Programme staff ensure that every participant attending our events feel welcomed and valued by checking all venues for accessibility issues. We also ensure that equality monitoring data (as a minimum in the areas of gender and age) for customers is carried out to identify under- and over-represented groups and results are discussed and acted upon in relation to the local context and local demographics. Programme staff also provide catering at all events that meets the diversity of participants.

Senior Managers' leadership role is critical to embedding our EDI principles by becoming involved in diversity initiatives and projects. They ensure that Equality Impact Assessments of key policies, programmes and services are carried out as required. Senior Managers ensure staff have EDI deliverables and undertake mandatory EDI training during the year. In general, senior managers champion EDI, promote the merits of a good work-life balance and initiate activities to back this up.
For all Northern Ireland staff, if they have a particular examples of how they have promoted equal opportunities and good relations in an aspect of their work, this is championed throughout the Northern Ireland office and fed to our UK Diversity Team.

6 In the 2018-19 reporting period were objectives/ targets/ performance measures relating to the Section 75 statutory duties integrated into corporate plans, strategic planning and/or operational business plans? (tick all that apply)

X Yes, through the work to prepare or develop the new corporate plan

X Yes, through organisation wide annual business planning

☐ Yes, in some departments/jobs

☐ No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisation’s ongoing corporate plan

☐ No, the organisation’s planning cycle does not coincide with this 2018-19 report

☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The British Council’s five corporate values are at the heart of what we do and how we work. They are: Valuing People (specifically how we value diversity and respect), Integrity, Mutuality, Creativity and Professionalism.

The British Council's Corporate Plan outlines the organisation’s intention to continue to enable the people of the UK to share their culture and way of life with over 600 million people and partners throughout the world, through the programme areas of Arts, Education and Society, and English. Promoting equality of opportunity and good relations is integrated into this intention. We set diversity targets in our Corporate Plan through the Diversity Assessment Framework (DAF). The UK target for 2019 is eight out of ten (an increase from our 2018 score of four out of ten).

We have developed mentoring programmes for women and have taken first steps towards more flexible deployment to help colleagues appointed locally to develop and progress into more senior roles.

We plan to adopt more flexible deployment to broaden opportunities for locally appointed staff and maximise the diversity of our workforce. This includes an intention to transition all staff at senior management level to a single SMT payband. The reason for this is to give greater flexibility to redeploy senior management staff at any time across all geographical locations without the barrier of grade and payband.

EDI is also mainstreamed into our Northern Ireland Country Plan. The Annual Corporate Plan outlines targets, successes to date and proposed outcomes against targets. Part of the remit to ‘inspire, educate and teach is to be achieved by;

• Continuing to develop the professional expertise of our staff across all areas
• Investing to develop our staff and attract talented new people to work with us globally.

• Continuing to be a diverse organisation that strives to reflect our society today – is skilled in engaging with different cultures and follows best practice in equal opportunities and diversity

• Upholding the British Council values of valuing people, integrity, mutuality, creativity and professionalism.

We contribute to the UK government’s commitment to international development support for stability, economic development, reduced inequalities and good governance in developing, fragile and conflict-affected countries around the world, including those vital to the UK’s strategic interests. Our work will continue to align with the emerging post 2015 Development Agenda, in particular around poverty eradication, quality education, gender equality and sustainable development.

We are aware that globalisation is now affecting every part of the UK touching the lives of citizens, changing communities and shaping our economic futures. At the same time, the UK context is changing, with an increasing focus on the diversity of the UK and embracing the cultural strengths and involving people from across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, their regions and major cities. In order to make the greatest impact, we plan to tailor our programmes to contribute to the policy objectives of the UK as a whole and to meet the priorities of the four nations of the UK.

We value the opportunity to make greater use of the diversity of the contemporary UK as an asset in itself.

In arts we plan to promote and scale up our innovative digital offer including the continued development of unique digital projects using our disability arts and diversity expertise.

Equality action plans/measures

7 Within the 2018-19 reporting period, please indicate the number of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions completed:</th>
<th>Actions ongoing:</th>
<th>Actions to commence:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
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Please provide any details and examples (in addition to question 2):

1) Ensure Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is mainstreamed into our current practices (ongoing)

• Celebration of key diversity days throughout the year

• A document entitled “Building EDI into your work” has been circulated amongst staff which provides ideas on how to integrate EDI into everyday work, split by job type.

• A “Guide to Mainstreaming Equality and Diversity in Project Development and Delivery” has been circulated to all staff. This is a checklist for staff to use as guidance about how to mainstream equality and diversity principles and
issues into the development, delivery and review of programme work in a more systematic and comprehensive way.

- EDI is mainstreamed into event management using a guidance and accessibility checklist. Brand guidelines ensure documents and formats are fully accessible.

There is still more work to do to ensure that EDI is considered at all stages of programme delivery and to encourage an EDI deliverable to be inserted into all staff performance portfolios. Further EDI training is also planned in 2019-20. Our mainstreaming chart which forms part of our EDI strategy is as follows:

2) Monitor data and data accuracy across all protected characteristics for staff within British Council Northern Ireland (ongoing)

The British Council's global people data system MyHR was launched in the UK and Kenya on 6 December 2017 and was rolled out to all staff globally by the end of 2018. It is a centralised, global database for all of our HR information and includes instant access to accurate and up-to-date information supported by simplified and standardised processes. MyHR also gives us a clear picture of our global workforce
and ensure all our HR work is delivered in a secure, compliant and risk-controlled manner. The new system enables users to:

- access, update and manage personal data securely
- book and manage leave easily
- search for colleagues, see the organisational structure and access accurate, up-to-date data in real time
- access the Employee Service Centre (AskHR) for HR advice and system issues
- receive timely automated reminders and guidance relating to specific global processes
- any time access via the MyHR mobile app

Steps were taken to encourage staff to complete their personal data on the myHR system via a series of email reminders. Improvements were made to the system as a whole for assessing equality monitoring data for staff across all job bands. This has ensured that equality monitoring data is appropriately collected, kept up to date with as much consistency as possible, held as confidential sensitive data, and easily retrieved in a format for reporting purposes. We will continue to encourage staff to update this data on an ongoing basis. **NOTE: The MyHR database does NOT contain data on community background for Northern Ireland staff. Community background data is requested on an adhoc basis from our HR department and stored securely in a protected file. Only the Equality Manager has access to this data and therefore staff are unable to view or change it.**

3) Continue communication with HR team to improve system for obtaining external and internal job applicant data – to be obtained for full analysis and inclusion in annual and periodic monitoring reports (ongoing)

We have been working closely with our central HR department to clarify our specific monitoring requirements for Northern Ireland. All recruited posts which are (or have the potential to be) based in Northern Ireland are encouraged to complete an Equality Monitoring form which contains a specific question on community background.

Our central HR department must now retain all HR records for a minimum of 3 years of appointment date to ensure data is available for the 3 yearly periodic review. Monitoring data is requested from HR for new starts or promotees twice yearly and is recorded locally on a protected spreadsheet. We have applied the residuary method to 4 staff this year using a formalised approach and again this data is recorded locally.

4) Improve communication on EDI updates, news and best practice to all British Council Northern Ireland staff (ongoing)

A dedicated Equality Manager in the Northern Ireland office communicates with staff to increase awareness of EDI issues. Staff are kept up to date with key EDI issues and dates on an ongoing basis. Colleagues subscribing to the global diversity mailbase are kept informed of ongoing issues and there have been Staff Bulletin notices and global staff talks around International Women’s Day, International Day of Disabled People, Black History Month, International Day of Older People, etc. Further communication and training schedules are planned in 2019-20..
An EDI toolkit is being used on a regular basis and is located for all staff and visitors to access as and when necessary. The Toolkit contains all corporate and Northern Ireland specific EDI documents. There is also a range of documents on event management and ideas on how to mainstream EDI into everyday work. There is also a section on useful resources including accessibility guides for venues across Northern Ireland, links to interfaith calendars and international diversity days, lists of nearby places of worship for staff and visitors, and links to EDI training courses. Feedback from staff suggests this is a very useful tool and helps keep all important EDI documents in one accessible place. The Toolkit will continue to be updated on an ad hoc basis.

5) Revise EDI training plan for all British Council Northern Ireland staff (ongoing)

Aside from the various EDI related webinars throughout the year, face to face training sessions took place in the Northern Ireland office this year (see Q2 for more details):

Adults at Risk training: On 3rd December, British Council Northern Ireland staff completed an inhouse training session to disseminate information on our revised internal policy around the subject, focussing on how British Council will implement this; how staff can become involved and contribute; how to raise concerns; and points of contact for support. The session explored how to identify who an adult at risk could be; why a policy around this is so vital; and how the policy underpins our values as an organisation.

This training was well attended and feedback was extremely positive. The most important outcome of the training was that staff are still unsure about the correct terminology and etiquette to use when dealing with gender and disability issues. Each training session created a meaningful debate among staff on all aspects of gender and disability and to raise awareness of how often unacceptable terms are used in ignorance.

The training plan is being revised for 2019-20, with the intention of an indepth Equality and Section 75 training session to be delivered by a representative from the Equality Commission.

6) Reasonable Adjustments - record and monitor annual data on number of reasonable adjustment requests received and actioned (internally and externally). Remain vigilant of issues affecting disabled staff and customers and ensure an accessible environment (ongoing)

We have designed an Access Sheet for use when planning events. There is a template form attached to our Global Reasonable Adjustments Policy and a good practice form linked to our Disability Assessment Framework that is used in various offices to record reasonable adjustments requests.

The Disability Working Group is looking at ways to log these requests centrally and keep a record of how they are addressed in order to help deal with future requests.

We now have a formal global Reasonable Adjustments Policy (see Appendices) for staff with disabilities.
We have a contact with a senior member of staff at Disability Action whom we use as a reference point and we also receive Disability Action’s monthly Ezine which helps us keep abreast of issues affecting disabled people across Northern Ireland.

7) Action to help make progress towards the protected characteristics targets, particularly in senior management (ongoing)

We have developed mentoring programmes for women and have taken first steps towards more flexible deployment to help colleagues appointed locally to develop and progress into more senior roles.

We plan to adopt more flexible deployment to broaden opportunities for locally appointed staff and maximise the diversity of our workforce. We have transitioned all staff at senior management level to a single SMT payband to give greater flexibility to redeploy senior management staff at any time across all geographical locations without the barrier of grade and payband.

As a means of increasing the number of disabled staff across the organisation, recruitment teams have specifically addressed the issue of broadening access to those with disability by establishing contracts with specialist diversity recruiters (such as Employability, Equal Approach, Diversity Jobs) using accredited diverse talent specialists, working across a range of diverse strands including: Disability, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Race, Religion, Generational, Transgender, Obesity, Education, Class, Working Parents and Carers. This has broadened access not only to those with disability but groups across the range of protected characteristics. In line with the British Council EDI strategy these efforts shall continue until targets have been met to address areas of under representation and remove any possible barriers to equality of opportunity. By respecting and valuing diversity we are more likely to attract talent and fresh perspectives, nurture creativity, innovation and flexibility and new opportunities and sources of support, so we remain relevant and dynamic and achieve greater reach and impact.

All staff are encouraged to declare their disability on the online HR portal and as a result there has been an increase in the response rate.

When advertising for vacancies, British Council recruitment processes ensure reasonable adjustment is actioned for candidates with disability or special needs. We also display the ‘positive about disabled people’ logo on all recruitment advertisements and our web pages, and offer a guaranteed interview to all disabled applicants meeting our recruitment criteria.

We also consider opportunities for disabled people to work for the British Council Northern Ireland for example through work experience or internship programmes.

Across the organisation, although there have been increases in progress towards the disability and gender targets there has been some progress towards the ethnicity targets. Research was conducted that led to focus groups and we ran a series of masterclasses targeted at minority ethnic staff in the UK, recognising their under-representation at senior levels and organisational cultural issues that seem to be preventing their progression, and it is hoped that increased attention will be given to this and other areas of under-representation in the coming year, supported by refreshed equality targets.
Within the Northern Ireland office specifically, we seek ways to increase the percentage of ethnic minority staff which is currently low (although this most likely reflect the low percentage in the local population) but this is a group which we could target when recruiting.

The age profile of staff will continue to be regularly monitored to ensure there are no barriers to staff in the 51+ age group. Only 339 staff globally are 60 or older and the EU Region and the UK appear to be employing the largest number of people over 60, which seems to be in line with the ageing trends in their societies (Eurostat reports that in 2017, nearly one fifth i.e. 19% of the EU population was aged 65 and over). An age-related information and resource pack was produced in 2018 (see Appendices for full report) to encourage staff to reflect on how age-inclusive we are as an organisation.

The British Council published a case study in CIPD’s publication on “Addressing Barriers on employee career progression to the top”. This included research into barriers to career progression facing staff from ethnic minority backgrounds and ran masterclasses to provide information on how to help address them.

8) External Monitoring – monitoring of customers from the protected characteristic groups taking active part in programmes and activities offered by the British Council Northern Ireland (ongoing)

A questionnaire covering all section 75 protected groups is sent to all external customers across a number of programmes. The data has been recorded on a central spreadsheet and patterns and trends identified. Some underrepresentation was identified among boys, with a higher uptake of girls participating in many of our programmes, thus presenting an opportunity for us to target boys. We have also seen a greater participation rate in our education programmes amongst grammar schools over secondary schools which we will find ways to address. We will continue to monitor our customers throughout 2019 and will address any underrepresentation as it arises.

9) Recruitment and induction – encourage job applications from a diverse audience and an understanding of EDI from the outset (ongoing)

The Disability Advisory Forum offers a recruitment audit service that will assess the accessibility recruitment processes and procedures offering support and guidance where needs have been identified. This is also an avenue which should be further explored and disseminated to staff. As part of the general HR process, all line managers are required to perform exit interviews on all staff who leave the organisation. This highlights any EDI related issues that may be raised and action taken.

All new staff- both permanent and temporary receive comprehensive induction training which includes an explanation of duties/responsibilities as they apply under Section 75. All new staff are given a copy of our Equality Scheme and EDI training is carried out during induction process as part of the general HR procedures. All new staff are also given a copy of the booklet “Welcome to the British Council” which contains full information on our EDI Policy.
We will seek to establish contacts with specialist diversity recruiters in Northern Ireland using accredited diverse talent specialists, working across a range of diverse strands including; Disability, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Race, Religion, Generational, Transgender, Obesity, Education, Class, Working Parents and Carers. This will broaden access not only to those with disability but groups across the range of protected characteristics.

10) Support the British Council global society agenda work (ongoing)

The British Council will continue to strengthen our support for growth in developing countries by promoting the rule of law and through programmes which deliver access to justice, equality and a reduction in violence against women and girls. We aim to develop the skills, confidence and life chances of women and girls through personal development opportunities and training for female community leaders. We will provide access to skills in social entrepreneurship, the creative economy and the English language, support professional skills and career development for female scientists and amplify women and girls’ voices and engagement through creative experiences. Build the UK’s global reputation as a world leader in social enterprise, engaging with governments around the world to influence policy and embed the teaching of social enterprise into education systems. We will seek to support social and creative enterprises to grow and access social investment in order to enhance impact and demonstrate the UK’s leadership in this area.

11) Ensure all suppliers are aware of our EDI policy and they too have similar policies. Ensure the diversity clause appears in the main body of contracts. (ongoing)

In addition to building in reference to diversity to the supply of contracted goods and services across the reporting period, the British Council’s standard contract template has been commissioned and overseen by the Legal team. The team has ensured that the contract includes specific reference to Equality Legislation and the British Council’s own policies - including a link to our Policies website, which includes the Equality Policy. This template is used by colleagues across the organisation for procurement of goods and services. The template itself can be found on the contracts portal, with a copy uploaded to the departmental EDI SharePoint site for ease of reference.

The two specific clauses are:

“British Council Requirements” means the instructions, requirements, policies, codes of conduct, guidelines, forms and other documents notified to the Partner in writing or set out on the British Council’s website at Policies for Consultants or such other web address as may be notified to the Partner from time to time (as such documents may be amended, updated or supplemented from time to time during the Term);”

“Equality Legislation” means any and all legislation, applicable guidance and statutory codes of practice relating to diversity, equality, non-discrimination and human rights as may be in force from time to time in England and Wales or in any other territory in which, or in respect of which, the Partner performs its obligations in this Agreement;"
12) Promote British Council EDI strategy externally to stakeholders (customers, audiences, students, candidates, alumni, partners, programme participants, etc) (ongoing)

Our dedicated EDI Webpage explains our approach that EDI is central to everything we do.

Marketing and Communications staff play a pivotal role in communicating our EDI commitment to our audiences by ensuring all images used in communications reflect diversity. They also must ensure access to our communications for disabled people and speakers of minority languages and implement changes to address inequalities.

To improve our EDI performance internally and externally, we have appointed senior level Diversity Champions. Diversity Champions usually occupy a board or executive level position and take on this role in addition to their existing senior leadership role. Diversity Champions have a range of formal, structured and specific responsibilities with the expressed aim of driving improvements in organisational diversity performance generally, or in a specific area and operate in the Champion role in the context of the corporate strategy.

Diversity Champion activities are consistently aligned with the needs and strategic objectives of the British Council and require the Champion to develop a deep understanding of the relevance of EDI to our core work and stakeholders - and the varying ways in which it impacts our people and service delivery. They help to promote EDI and raise awareness of related issues and drive the changes required to embed EDI across the British Council: to engage staff and customers. Another benefit is that they leverage EDI benefits in terms of employee engagement, enhanced reputation and support our ambition to become a market leader in the services we deliver worldwide.

Locally, we disseminate our commitment to EDI, and the measures we take to address it, at promotional/information events to key stakeholders and customers and also through consultation. We are a JAM Card Friendly Organisation (see Q2) and champion diversity by creating diverse teams and flexing our style to appropriately match others in an inclusive way.

13) Monitoring of Selection Panels, Working Groups and Monitoring Committees to ensure representation of as many S75 categories as possible (ongoing)

- An annual review of the Board of Trustees is carried out every year, including a request for feedback put to all Board and Executive members on “The mix of skills, experience, knowledge and diversity on the Board and the use made of those skills”.
- Equality monitoring reports are run on the Northern Ireland Advisory Committee which provide valuable insight into the profiles of our committees and country offices.
- A review of the diversity of the Boards of Directors of the British Council’s subsidiary companies was conducted by an external consultant, which led to a change in advertised role profiles.
- A review of recruitment to Country Committees and Sector Advisory Groups was carried out by the Governance team, resulting in standardised recruitment for all roles,
PART A

making recruitment fairer and more transparent and creating the opportunity for these
groups to become more diverse.

8 Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action
plan/measures during the 2018-19 reporting period (points not identified in an
appended plan):

None

9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2018-19
reporting period, the following have been identified: (tick all that apply)

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

Arrangements for consulting (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 3)

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

- X All the time  □ Sometimes  □ Never

11 Please provide any details and examples of good practice in consultation during the
2018-19 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that
has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the
desirability of promoting good relations:

In accordance with the commitments made in our Equality Scheme we recognise the
importance of consultation in all aspects of the implementation of our statutory equality
duties. We consult as a matter of form on our equality scheme, equality impact
assessments action measures and any other matters deemed relevant to Section 75
Statutory duties.

We carry out our consultation in accordance with the principles contained in the
Equality Commissions’ guidance Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A
Guide for Public Authorities (2010). All consultations will seek the views of those
directly affected by the matter/policy, the Equality Commission, representative groups
of Section 75 categories, other public authorities, voluntary and community groups, our
staff and such other groups who have a legitimate interest in the matter, whether or
not they have a direct economic or personal interest. We consider the accessibility and
format of consultation we use in order to remove barriers to the consultation process.

Specific consideration is given to how best to communicate with people with
disabilities, including people with learning disabilities and minority ethnic communities.
Information is made available, on request, in alternative formats in a timely manner.
We ensure that such consultees have equal time to respond.

We provide feedback to consultees in a timely manner. A feedback report is prepared
which includes summary information on the policy consulted upon, a summary of
consultees’ comments and a summary of our consideration of and response to
consultees’ input. The feedback is provided in formats suitable to consultees.

Internally, HR visit each region and conduct climate surveys on staff ‘wellbeing’. This
provides a forum for staff to meet face-to-face with a HR colleague, share viewpoints
and outline what ‘wellbeing’ in its broadest context meant to them as a British Council
employee. Follow up communication was circulated to staff outlining next steps and
action measures.

Externally, feedback is sought from service users on all our programmes many of
which are schools or college programs. The views of participants (children, teenagers
and young adults) are taken into consideration directly and indirectly via teachers and
program directors and help shape development and direction of future programmes
and services.

The British Council Northern Ireland offers a number of internships each year to
enable a group of interns to see and experience the work of the British Council at first
hand and champion the value of cultural relations.

The objectives of the internship scheme is as follows:

• To offer structured work experience placements within a specific business area to a
group of interns
• To give a real introduction to the field of cultural relations to a group of interns
• To enable British Council departments to get support and benefit from a different
perspective on their work

As part of the Internship programme, interns attend a three day corporate induction
before joining a specific department for twelve weeks. They have a line manager and
are set specific deliverables during their stay. In addition, they also undertake a
group project which they present to staff and stakeholders at the end of the
programme.

Work experience programmes are also managed for approximately ten school
students a year and approximately five for higher education students. This
scheme is co-ordinated by a local manager affording students the opportunity to gain
insights into the broad remit of learning and development opportunities available
according to their interests.

In the 2018-19 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which
consultation methods were most frequently used by consultees: (tick all that apply)
PART A

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

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

We have an extensive list of consultees from across a wide range of organisations across all the Section 75 groups. See Appendices for full list.

We ensure accessibility of all documentation by making all documents available in alternative formats on request. All documentation is also accessible on our website.

13 Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2018-19 reporting period? (tick one box only)
☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

We informed the general public about the availability of this material through press releases where appropriate

14 Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2018-19 reporting period? (tick one box only)
☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable – no commitment to review

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

https://nireland.britishcouncil.org/about/equal-opportunities-diversity
15 Please provide the number of policies screened during the year (as recorded in screening reports):

8

16 Please provide the number of assessments that were consulted upon during 2018-19:

8

Policy consultations conducted with screening assessment presented.

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

Consultations for an EQIA alone.

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

See links below on the Northern Ireland EDI webpage:

ESIA - Bullying and Harassment
ESIA - UK Maternity Leave
ESIA - Pre Appointment Screening Policy
ESIA - International Postings
ESIA - Instances of Holding a Minute's Silence
ESIA - ER Policies Appeals, Bullying and Harassment Grievance
ESIA - Disciplinary and Managing Under-performance policies
ESIA - Desk Booking

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

[ ] Yes  [X] No concerns were raised  [ ] No  [ ] Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Arrangements for publishing the results of assessments (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)
19 Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published during the 2018-19 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- [ ] Yes
- [x] No
- [ ] Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

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

20 From the Equality Scheme monitoring arrangements, was there an audit of existing information systems during the 2018-19 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

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

Please provide any details:

We monitor our progress on the delivery of our action measures annually and update the action plan as necessary to ensure that it remains effective and relevant to our functions, internal processes, staff and customers. We also monitor participation in our programmes via monitoring questionnaires and we also monitor complaints if they arise.

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

- [ ] Yes
- [x] No
- [ ] Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

22 Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2018-19 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

No changes were made to the Equality Action Plan. Please see Q7 for full details on action measures and current progress.

23 Please provide any details or examples of monitoring that has contributed to the availability of equality and good relations information/data for service delivery planning or policy development:
Staff Training (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 5)

24 Please report on the activities from the training plan/programme (section 5.4 of the Model Equality Scheme) undertaken during 2018-19, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

See Q2 for training undertaken in 2018-19.

We have in place a communication and training programme for all staff and continued to ensure that our commitment to the Section 75 statutory duties was made clear in all relevant publications.

We ensure that staff are informed of interesting and relevant stories or case study examples of particular issues affecting people across the range of Section 75 categories, to ensure that our staff fully understand their role in implementing the scheme.

Our training plan for staff achieved the following objectives:

• raised awareness of the provisions of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, our equality scheme commitments and the particular issues likely to affect people across the range of Section 75 categories, to ensure that our staff fully understand their role in implementing the scheme

• provided those staff involved in the assessment of policies (screening and Equality Impact Assessment) with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively

• provided those staff who deal with complaints in relation to compliance with our equality scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to investigate and monitor complaints effectively

• provided those staff involved in consultation processes with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively

• provided those staff involved in the implementation and monitoring of the British Council Northern Ireland’s equality scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively.

All British Council Northern Ireland staff and the Northern Ireland Advisory Committee have a copy of the Equality Scheme and were invited to comment on it. All new staff - both permanent and temporary have received comprehensive induction training which included explanation of duties/responsibilities as they apply under Section 75.

A document entitled ‘Mainstreaming Disability and Accessibility Awareness into Event Management’ is circulated to all programme teams to support and facilitate participation of those with special needs in all British Council open programmes and events.

An Accessibility Access form has been devised and circulated to all staff which contains important issues to consider, to ensure support for
participants with disabilities. All venues for British Council events are checked for accessibility and related services. The British Council policy clearly mandates they will react to specific needs which includes those requiring or requesting Personal Readers, Infra-red or induction loops, Guiders, Braille, Lip Speakers, Temporary wheelchair access lifts, and Sign Language Interpreters.

Additionally, there is an anticipatory duty across the following categories: Mobility, Hearing impairment, Visual impairment, Learning disabilities and difficulties, mental health and severe disfigurement. Consideration is made for religious or cultural request such as the availability of rooms for prayer and special dietary needs.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training is incorporated into local Induction Training programmes which covers all legal requirements under the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Section 75 statutory duties.

EDI is an inherent component of regular British Council online training which is a mandatory requirement and all staff must complete on an annual basis.

The Diversity Unit has created a document which includes tips to help anyone that designs or modifies websites to have web accessibility in mind. When designing a website it is important to realise how people with disabilities use the Web, what difficulties they may face and how to assist them in overcoming those difficulties.

In an attempt to raise office awareness of Diversity, we marked and celebrated some key international diversity days throughout the year and organised regional diversity weeks across our global network that have helped staff and external audiences engage with diversity issues in a new way.

Also, as the British Council offer so many courses and programmes via web links, they are constantly growing and being updated. Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) is available for those designing a website which outlined advice on making the site more easily accessible to older people. Included also is a template for accessibility evaluation reports to assess if needs are being met.

We have produced a document with information for Intranet users who are visually impaired and/or who would prefer to change the appearance of the intranet pages to make them more accessible.

The Northern Ireland office has a dedicated Equality Manager who is specifically responsible for ensuring that staff are aware of their obligations in meeting the requirements of/developments within Section 75 and the commitments of our equality scheme. The Equality Manager is our direct link to other parts of the UK to ensure that our legislative requirements specific to Northern Ireland are incorporated into all policies and processes.

As a means of raising awareness of LGBT issues the British Council created the Five Films for Freedom Campaign. This was the world’s first global, digital LGBT film festival initiated by the British Council and the
British Film Institute and runs annually in March. The campaign seeks to promote freedom, equality and LGBT rights in 135 countries across the social media network and all staff are invited to a screening of the films annually.

Our Global Diversity Network is made up of two or more representatives from each region, who work with the Diversity Unit in a formalised way. They support their management teams in each region to mainstream equality and diversity in all our practices. They have expertise and understanding of the different cultures and contexts in which they work, so they can ensure our corporate diversity initiatives are meaningful and relevant and can be applied in each region. The GDN share ideas and good practice using a GDN mailbase. This is a mailing list that all staff interested in finding out more about equality and diversity can subscribe to. It is a place for sharing good practice, asking for advice from other colleagues and joining in debates and discussions about topical issues related to global equality and diversity so that we can all learn from each other around equality and diversity.

25 Please provide any examples of relevant training shown to have worked well, in that participants have achieved the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the stated objectives:

Feedback from staff showed that the online mandatory Equal Opportunities and Diversity training is clear and informative.

Adults at Risk training: On 3rd December, British Council Northern Ireland staff completed an inhouse training session to disseminate information on our revised internal policy around the subject, focussing on how British Council will implement this; how staff can become involved and contribute; how to raise concerns; and points of contact for support. The session explored how to identify who an adult at risk could be; why a policy around this is so vital; and how the policy underpins our values as an organisation. The involvement of case studies is also extremely beneficial in helping staff understand EDI issues. We invited Ruth McCarthy (Outburst) to speak at an all staff meeting this year (also including our Director of Strategy & Engagement) to reinforce understanding of LGBTQ+ issues. This approach was extremely informative for staff and therefore is something we will replicate in the future.

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

26 Please list any examples of where monitoring during 2018-19, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation to access to information and services:
The Communications team on an ongoing basis prioritise links to specific platforms to meet identified demand thus increasing accessibility to relevant programmes and information eg a 'Fronter room' link existed for the C2K teachers online platform to ensure relevant British Council programme information is more easily accessible to all primary and secondary teachers across Northern Ireland.

An alerts communication is emailed to schools outlining upcoming events or programme opportunities, thus capturing a broader audience and increasing participation levels.

We measure how people view the quality of our work in three main ways:

• Scores from a customer satisfaction survey distributed both at face-to-face events and online.

• The percentage of people we work with who report gaining new knowledge or skills.

• A net recommendation score, which is a measure of the willingness of participants to recommend others to work with us or use our services. The net percentage is calculated from advocates minus detractors, in line with standard international practice.

In 2018-19, for the first time, we focussed solely on those customers who have paid for our services, rather than aggregating fee-paying customers with those receiving services for free. We feel this provides a clearer picture and avoids potential distortion of the results. Our customer satisfaction scores showed that a significant majority of our customers agree or strongly agree that our programmes are of high quality. Our net recommendation score (47 in line with target) reflects the extent to which our customers would recommend our work to others. Overall our results continue to benchmark well against industry averages.

The percentage of customers reporting gaining new knowledge or skills is high at 82 per cent. Although the customer satisfaction and net promoter scores are high, there has been a minor drop against these indicators compared to last year. We are analysing customer feedback and conducting research to find out where we might not be meeting expectations. We are, for example, improving payment and refund processes, improving test day experiences for our exams customers, providing more support to enable customers to prepare for tests, improving access to and quality of customer services, and improving the availability of accurate and up-to-date online information.


See also our Customer Management Framework (in Appendices).

While programmes are open to all sections of the community, the uptake and participation rates are monitored to determine if positive action can be taken to increase participation amongst those from disadvantaged areas or
PART A

those from minority groups. We plan to formalise this process in more
detail in 2019 (see Question 29).

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

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

Insert number here: 0

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

No complaints were raised this year.

As part of our response to the Triennial Review, the Executive Board
decided to procure the services of an independent company to investigate
and review complaints about British Council services and make
recommendations to us for remedial action and/or product and service
improvements. After a public procurement exercise, we have now selected
a company called Verita to run this service for us. Verita has a strong track
record of carrying out independent complaints services in the public sector,
and they run a similar service for Arts Council England and the Lottery
Forum – so we are pleased to have them on board.

The service will cover complaints in all areas of our operational work,
including related issues such as fair competition, service delivery and
product content. Verita will interview relevant parties, including British
Council staff who have been most closely involved with the case, to assess
whether we have acted in accordance with our Corporate Plan, policy
statements and guidance.

Most complaints are resolved at working contact level, but where they’re
not satisfactorily concluded, our process for escalation will vary around our
network of offices. Teams have been working on refining our escalation
process to make it clear what should happen at each stage of a
complainant’s journey, and who will be responsible at each level. Where a
complainant is dissatisfied with our internal conclusions following the
escalation process, we will offer, in fact encouraging, the option of a final
independent review via Verita.

The aim is to hear what people are saying and learn lessons from it. This
could potentially give us a lot of management information that we are not
currently accessing; help us to improve our products and services, as well
as build confidence in our stakeholders and customers that their concerns
are properly taken into account.
Section 3: Looking Forward

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

The Equality Scheme was reviewed in April 2019 and will run until April 2024.

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

- Monitoring

1) External: In 2018-19 we conducted a formal equality audit of our beneficiaries through the use of a Monitoring Questionnaire based around the nine Section 75 groups. This allowed us to gain a better insight into what groups taking active part in all programmes and activities offered by the British Council. The results were collated and analysed we identified that there was a slight underrepresentation of customers throughout our programmes from the protestant community. We also established that there was an overrepresentation of grammar schools participating in our programmes over secondary schools and fewer boys participating also. We will continue to monitor our beneficiaries in 2019-20 to see if and how the pattern changes. We intend to work with relevant programme managers to seek opportunities to promote greater equality of opportunity and will look at our current policies.

2) Internal: UK wide we are making efforts to reach a target of 100% response rate on online HR portal for staff as well as Northern Ireland Advisory Committee (NIAC) and Board of Trustees to record their personal monitoring data.

With regards to **global staff monitoring**, there are several areas in our organisation where there is diversity and good representation. There is a wide age range of staff and good diversity in relation to religion or belief, with staff from the six main religions or beliefs and of no religion or belief.

The chart below shows that we have met our target for women in senior roles but have fallen short of our target for minority ethnic and disabled staff in senior roles. We are taking action to address this by running a series of masterclasses targeted at minority ethnic staff in the UK, recognising their under-representation at senior levels and organisational cultural issues that seem to be preventing their progression.

We aim to increase the number of staff with disabilities via our guaranteed interview scheme for disabled applicants.

From next year we will be monitoring progress towards new targets for 2021: 50 per cent women; 15 per cent minority ethnic staff and seven per cent disabled staff in senior roles.
The Equality Monitoring intranet site has been revised. The site contains a new animation about how and why we carry out equality monitoring at the British Council, plus guidance on carrying out equality monitoring, our 12 top tips to consider before embarking on equality monitoring, and links to the latest UK equality monitoring reports and some of the good examples of equality monitoring carried out in different country offices. See all guides here: www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/how-we-work/equality-diversity-inclusion/resources

- **Underrepresentation within protected characteristics**

We will continue to seek to find ways to further increase the underrepresented groups in senior management (women, ethnic minorities and disabled staff).

We will seek to establish contacts with specialist diversity recruiters in Northern Ireland using accredited diverse talent specialists, working across a range of diverse strands including; Disability, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Race, Religion, Generational, Transgender, Obesity, Education, Class, Working Parents and Carers. This will broaden access not only to those with disability but groups across the range of protected characteristics.

The Disability Advisory Forum offers a recruitment audit service that will assess the accessibility recruitment processes and procedures offering support and guidance where
needs have been identified. This is also an avenue which should be further explored and disseminated to staff.

We have developed mentoring programmes for women and have taken first steps towards more flexible deployment to help colleagues appointed locally to develop and progress into more senior roles.

We plan to adopt more flexible deployment to broaden opportunities for locally appointed staff and maximise the diversity of our workforce. Staff at senior management level are now within a single SMT payband to give greater flexibility to redeploy senior management staff at any time across all geographical locations without the barrier of grade and payband.

**Masterclass Programme - November 2018 – March 2019 (London)**

In 2016, the Diversity Unit responded to development priorities identified by minority ethnic colleagues by running its successful Masterclass series. In 2018 we launched the third series of the Masterclass programme. This programme is for employees who want to develop their career goals and make the most of their potential. The classes included sessions on: managers' briefing, finding your voice, strategic thinking, networking and influencing and career workshops.

Within the Northern Ireland office specifically, we will seek ways to increase the percentage of ethnic minority staff which is currently low (although this most likely reflect the low percentage in the local population) but this is a group which we could target when recruiting. The age profile of staff should continue to be regularly monitored and ensure there are no barriers to staff in the 51+ age group. We also will consider opportunities for disabled people to work for the British Council Northern Ireland for example through work experience or internship programmes. Across the global network, there are plans in place to roll out the minority ethnic masterclass model beyond the London office.

As a means of increasing the number of disabled staff across the organisation, recruitment teams have specifically addressed the issue of broadening access to those with disability by establishing contracts with specialist diversity recruiters (such as Employability, Equal Approach, Diversity Jobs) using accredited diverse talent specialists, working across a range of diverse strands including; Disability, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Race, Religion, Generational, Transgender, Obesity, Education, Class, Working Parents and Carers. This has broadened access not only to those with disability but groups across the range of protected characteristics. In line with the British Council EDI strategy these efforts shall continue until targets have been met to address areas of under representation and remove any possible barriers to equality of opportunity. By respecting and valuing diversity we are more likely to attract talent and fresh perspectives, nurture creativity, innovation and flexibility and new opportunities and sources of support, so we remain relevant and dynamic and achieve greater reach and impact.

All staff are encouraged to declare their disability on the online HR portal and as a result there has been an increase in the response rate.

When advertising for vacancies, British Council recruitment processes ensure reasonable adjustment is actioned for candidates with disability or special needs. We
also display the ‘positive about disabled people’ logo on all recruitment advertisements and our web pages, and offer a guaranteed interview to all disabled applicants meeting our recruitment criteria.

We also consider opportunities for disabled people to work for the British Council Northern Ireland for example through work experience or internship programmes.

- **Reasonable Adjustments**

We will record and monitor annual data on number of reasonable adjustment requests actioned (internally and externally) and in 2019 will look to find the most efficient way of achieving this in collaboration with the British Council Disability Working Group. We will also assess the effectiveness of reasonable adjustments made using a formalised approach.

- **Gender & Inclusion**

To address our slightly widened gender pay gap due to fewer women proportionally in senior management and more women proportionally in junior management, the action we will take in the next year is as follows:

- Implement the next phase of talent management and succession planning
- Implement business unit specific action planning in Education and Society and English and Exams
- Investigate why women left senior management in higher numbers and whether this was a one off or part of a wider trend
- Investigate whether there are any issues with the way we recruit at junior levels – i.e. why do we not attract more men and why is it that those who do apply are less likely to be recruited than a female applicant.

- **Diversity Strategy**

1) We will focus our efforts on increasing the Diversity Assessment Framework score target from 4 out of 10 indicators to 8 out of 10. The next deadline for submissions is February 2019.

2) In British Council Northern Ireland we plan to support the British Council global society agenda work by identifying opportunities from the Northern Ireland equality sector expertise and knowledge which could be of interest to an international audience.

- **Training & Communications**

1) Further staff training has been planned throughout 2019-20 throughout the UK. Within the Northern Ireland office, we will run Equality Commission refresher training on NI equality legislation and Section 75 requirements for staff on 3 October 2019. Our senior HR account manager, based in our London office, will attend to hear about the differences and similarities in Northern Ireland Equality legislation to the rest of the UK.
2) We will encourage all staff to create an EDI deliverable in their performance portfolio for 2019-20 find ways to ensure EDI is mainstreamed across the office.

3) We will seek ways of further improving communications with staff on EDI updates. As well as the Annual Report, Corporate Plan, dedicated EDI web pages, we intend to meet more regularly with leaders of all SBU’s in the Northern Ireland office regarding the impact of EDI on their work programmes in order to re-affirm our commitment to and awareness of EDI responsibilities and Section 75 duties.

- **Consultation**

We will consider a more focussed consultation strategy through the use of press releases, direct mail shots and possibly focus groups to groups representing the various categories in Section 75 and will continue to revise our consultation list on a regular basis.

30 In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next (2018-19) reporting period? *(please tick any that apply)*

- [X] Employment
- [ ] Goods, facilities and services
- [ ] Legislative changes
- [X] Organisational changes/ new functions
- [ ] Nothing specific, more of the same
- [ ] Other (please state):
PART B - Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) and Disability Action Plans

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fully achieved</th>
<th>Partially achieved</th>
<th>Not achieved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Public Life Action Measures</th>
<th>Outputs(^i)</th>
<th>Outcomes / Impact(^ii)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National(^iii)</td>
<td>Ensure the Disability Symbol is displayed on all job advertisements to show commitment to employment and retention of those with disability.</td>
<td></td>
<td>As evidenced in recruitment records, this has been achieved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional(^iv)</td>
<td>Identify a local ‘diversity champion’ who can co-ordinate with an established diversity working group to facilitate training, communication, and adherence to EDI principles providing feedback to teams locally on disability and</td>
<td>A dedicated Equality Manager acts as a link between local staff and EDI staff in other offices.</td>
<td>This has enhanced existing support and enabled more regular communication and training for NI staff. This has also enabled tighter monitoring of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local(^v)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EDI organisational and local issues. | desired outcomes against targets.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Action Measures</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Outcome / Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Disability Action Plan to be included in disability awareness training and EDI training</td>
<td></td>
<td>Increased awareness of issues facing those with disability. The DAP will be revised and re-submitted to the Equality Commission by the end of 2019.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Ensure EDI Disability Issues are covered with permanent and temporary staff, completing e-learning modules at the initial induction process. Locally, automatically incorporated into permanent and temporary staff induction and currently covered in Induction Health and Safety Training. Extend to all contractors, consultants and interns also.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Raised awareness by incorporating into short term temporary staff and intern/student placement inductions and communication to business partners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2(c) What Positive attitudes **action measures** in the area of **Communications** were achieved in this reporting period?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communications Action Measures</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Outcome / Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Mainstreaming Disability and Accessibility Awareness into Event Management - guidelines are circulated to all event management teams.</td>
<td>Increased awareness of measures which can be taken to facilitate participation in events by those with disability.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Shared Action Plans with all recruitment managers and teams to help make progress towards achieving disability targets for both new positions, moves or promotions</td>
<td>Monitored progress percentages and target achievement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Ensure appropriate and accurate collation of monitoring data UK wide and provide in an appropriate format for reporting and monitoring purposes.</td>
<td>Significant progress has been made in improving the retention and output of data by central HR on an ad hoc basis.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Development of more robust systems for maintaining equality monitoring data on internal and external job applicants facilitating easy and accurate retrieval via hub UK systems.</td>
<td>All NI Specific jobs or jobs where there is any potential to be based in Northern Ireland have community background assigned. Production of data by central teams is still much improved and can be retrieved much more easily.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 (d) What action measures were achieved to ‘encourage others’ to promote the two duties:
2 (e) Please outline **any additional action measures** that were fully achieved other than those listed in the tables above:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Outcomes / Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Measures partly achieved</th>
<th>Milestones / Outputs</th>
<th>Outcomes / Impacts</th>
<th>Reasons not fully achieved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>As members of the Business Disability Forum communicate more broadly to staff members what this means and what they offer i.e. membership provides; an evaluation of the Disability Standard, consultative advice, tailored training</td>
<td></td>
<td>Members will feed back current issues to the Global Diversity Network who will disseminate this in order to broaden scope for participation by those with disability – job</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and master classes and a content license for our full range of toolkits available for member distribution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Measures not met</th>
<th>Reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Limited opportunities to do so due to so few externally placed ads, however we did advertise the post for Chair Northern Ireland Advisory Committee role was placed on the WIPNI and Women on Boards UK websites in an attempt to encourage applications from females in senior positions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Please outline what action measures **have not been achieved** and the reasons why.
5. What **monitoring tools** have been put in place to evaluate the degree to which actions have been effective / develop new opportunities for action?

(a) Qualitative

Feedback from staff, Business Disability Forum, recruiting managers, Diversity Unit and HR department.

(b) Quantitative

Feedback from customers using event evaluation forms.

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

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

No

If yes please outline below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revised/Additional Action Measures</th>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. Do you intend to make any further revisions to your plan in light of your organisation's annual review of the plan? If so, please outline proposed changes?

The Disability Action plan will be revised, consulted and re-submitted to the Equality Commission by the end of 2019.

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1 Outputs – defined as act of producing, amount of something produced over a period, processes undertaken to implement the action measure e.g. Undertook 10 training sessions with 100 people at customer service level.
2 Outcome / Impact – what specifically and tangibly has changed in making progress towards the duties? What impact can directly be attributed to taking this action? Indicate the results of undertaking this action e.g. Evaluation indicating a tangible shift in attitudes before and after training.
3 National : Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments
4 Regional: Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level
5 Local : Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local fora.
6 Milestones – Please outline what part progress has been made towards the particular measures; even if full output or outcomes/ impact have not been achieved.