



Department for
**Employment
and Learning**
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Study of Racism in the FE Sector: Attitudes and Experiences

**Final Report
July 2007**

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Department for Employment and Learning commissioned Peer Consulting to undertake a research project into “Racism in the Northern Ireland Further Education Sector¹. The terms of reference included the following:

1. To ground the research in the context of existing literature on racism in the further and higher education sector, including the identification of examples of good practice from Northern Ireland and elsewhere. (Section 2)
2. To identify key stakeholders and to engage with those stakeholders in a meaningful way throughout the research project, including the research design. (Section 4)
3. To assess staff (teaching and non-teaching) attitudes and behaviours towards issues around race, ethnicity and nationality. (Section 6)
4. To gather data on the numbers of lecturing and/or ancillary staff in Further Education colleges from ethnic minority groups. (Section 9)
5. To assess the perceptions, attitudes and experiences of potential and current students/trainees in Further Education colleges towards issues around race, ethnicity and nationality. (Section 4 and 5)
6. To identify chill factors in further and higher education for those young people who are from ethnic minority groups. (Section 5)
7. To engage with, and gain opinion from, representatives of minority ethnic groups (e.g. NICEM). (Section 4)
8. Reflecting on primary and secondary research, to determine the likely effect on participation rates of students/trainees and potential students from ethnic minority groups. (Section 9)
9. To review existing policies and procedures in light of these findings. (Sections 7 and 8)

¹ The research is focussed on the Further Education Sector including all forms of provision e.g. vocational, academic and hobby/recreational. Any references to Higher Education relate solely to that provision within Further Education Colleges, i.e. HE in FE.

10. To draw conclusions and present practical recommendations, regionally and locally, that may help remove obstacles to participation among those who are from minority ethnic groups. (Sections 8 and 9)
11. In reaching its conclusions and recommendations, the final report will incorporate distinct responses to each of the above requirements. (Section 9)

METHODOLOGY

1.2 Our methodology consisted of the following elements which contributed to meeting the terms of reference as set out above:

- Desk Research – to provide the literature review element of our study to both identify potential issues for further consideration in our primary research and examples of best practice from elsewhere. This contributes to most of the terms of reference but particularly item 1.
- Key informant interviews were held to ensure that we met item 2 and item 7 of the terms of reference. These interviews also helped to inform our approach to the other key elements of the research and provided some input on best practice. Overall numbers of consultees were as follows, details are provided in Appendix 1;
 - College Staff – 32
 - Representatives of Ethnic Minority Groups – 12
- A major element of our primary research was a survey of current students from both indigenous and ethnic minority backgrounds: our target was 1200 completed questionnaires. We achieved a total response of 1119² with 893 indigenous and 200 ethnic minority responses³. This element of our research informs items 5, 6 and 8 of the terms of reference

² Twenty-six cases did not provide enough information to allow us to categorise them as indigenous or ethnic minority.

³ The 200 ethnic minority cases represent a significant over-sampling of this group within the FE student population to provide us with sufficient numbers to enable analysis at a disaggregated level.

- Case Studies of 6 FE Colleges including interviews with College staff and focus groups with current and potential FE students from ethnic minority backgrounds. This element of our approach enabled us to respond to items 5, 6, 8 and 9 of the terms of reference. Details of the focus groups are included at Appendix 1.
 - Current Student focus groups – 8
 - Potential Student focus groups – 3
 - To maximise stakeholder involvement, as per item 2 of the terms of reference, two Key Stakeholder Workshops were held. One at the outset to test our research tools and identify stakeholders' key issues, with another at completion to present our emerging findings.
 - Draft & Final Reports designed to meet items 10 and 11 of the terms of reference have been produced.
- 1.3 The rest of the report contains the following sections. In Section 2, we set out our literature review which looks at the current demographic situation within Northern Ireland including socio-demographic indicators e.g. reported race related crimes. It also looks at the existing literature on racism in education within Northern Ireland and sets out the current legislative framework relating to racial equality in NI.
- 1.4 In Section 3 we present the findings from our case studies of 6 FE Colleges. These comprised of interviews with key College staff and focus groups with current and potential ethnic minority students.
- 1.5 Section 4 sets out the key issues raised during our stakeholder interviews.
- 1.6 In Section 5 we present the findings from our survey of current FE students. This section looks at attitudes to race and ethnicity particularly among indigenous students. It also compares ethnic minority and indigenous student perceptions of the College environment in relation to race and ethnicity and finally it looks at the incidence of racial harassment within Colleges as reported by ethnic minority students.
- 1.7 Similarly Section 6 presents our findings in relation to the survey of attitudes to race and ethnicity amongst teaching staff and their awareness of racist activities in their college.
- 1.8 Section 7 sets out a review of the main policy areas in relation to race and ethnicity in FE Colleges and Section 8 provides a discussion of best practice based on our literature, case studies and survey findings.

1.9 Finally our conclusions and recommendations are put forward in Section 9.

2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- 2.1 This section of the report presents a review of the literature on racism, with specific reference to Further Education. The project Terms of Reference (TOR) require the research team to:

“Ground the research in the context of existing literature on racism in the further and higher education sector, including identification of good practice of examples of good practice from Northern Ireland and elsewhere”

In addition the research is to:

“identify chill factors in further and higher education for those young people who are from ethnic minority groups.”

- 2.2 It is generally acknowledged and substantiated by research that with respect to community background the chill factor is a real issue in Northern Ireland. However, to date research in Northern Ireland around the issue of chill factors with respect to race and ethnic background, be it in the labour market or access to public services has been limited. Therefore, this review is particularly focused on key issues and best practice emerging from literature in Great Britain and elsewhere.

- 2.3 This literature review examines a number of examples and discusses:

- Recent demographic changes, and context to racism in Northern Ireland;
- Background and context; an overview of recent research on racism in Northern Ireland;
- Legislation and high level policy initiatives relevant to race and education;
- Key Issues. These include, inter alia:
 - The nature of barriers and chill factors to participation in Further Education; and
 - Language Barriers.

- Developing and Monitoring Policies and Practice: The role of Further Education colleges in promoting race equality and ethnic diversity.

DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND: A DYNAMIC PICTURE

- 2.4 Data from the 2001 Census (Table 2.1) indicates that the population of Northern Ireland is overwhelming white. Of the enumerated population of 1,670,988, less than one percent, 14,279 are identified as non-white. The single largest category is the Chinese with 4,145 individuals at the time of enumeration. Of relevance to this study, it is worth noting that the proportion of the ethnic minority communities in the 16-24 age cohort does not significantly deviate from that for the overall Northern Ireland population.
- 2.5 However, with respect to race and ethnic minorities in Northern Ireland the Census figures need to be treated with caution. It is possible that there has been under-enumeration of minority, migrant, and transient populations. In particular, it is important to reflect that recent immigrant groups such as Portuguese, Polish and Lithuanian would view themselves as white and would therefore not be captured by the race question within the 2001 Census. The Census also included a question on country of birth which does allow us to identify white ethnic minority groups. The results for this question however also show very low numbers in relation to ethnic minorities from predominantly white geographical areas such as Eastern Europe. In this report the Eastern European countries most often referred to are the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. Collectively, these countries are known as the A8 countries. At the 2001 Census only 0.04% of the enumerated population identified themselves as coming from Eastern Europe (Table A1 Statistical Appendix 2).

- 2.6 Aside from the decennial census of population there are no definitive Government statistics on the composition of the population disaggregated by ethnicity, race, or country of origin. Both the National Statistics Centre for Demography⁴ and the Northern Ireland Statistical and Research Agency (NISRA) acknowledge that between decennial censuses of population it is difficult to measure the changes in the overall population by race, ethnicity or country of origin. NISRA is currently planning to develop new sources and analysis in testing migration estimates.⁵
- 2.7 It is clear from anecdotal evidence and other more recent government statistics that the situation has changed and that there has been a large and significant influx of ethnic minority groups into Northern Ireland since the Census. For example, anecdotal information would indicate that in 2004 there were large and growing Portuguese and Polish migrant worker communities in several areas of mid-Ulster, yet very low numbers were recorded in the Census in 2001.
- 2.8 The current cycle of migration also appears to be different from previous in-migrations to Northern Ireland for two reasons. First the speed and scale of current immigration is much more rapid than has previously been the case in Northern Ireland and second most migrants are coming from countries without a previous history of immigration to the UK and Ireland. The current migration is therefore not simply an increase in the scale of previous patterns, but rather represents new trends, with migrants coming predominately from Eastern Europe rather than Eastern Asia, from non-Commonwealth countries and from countries that do not necessarily have widespread use of the English language. Each of these factors adds new dynamics to the patterns of demography, service use and social diversity in Northern Ireland and a number of studies have highlighted the challenges that this presents.⁶

⁴ Estimating International Migration for Population Estimates - An Information Paper National Statistics Centre for Demography, 2005.

⁵ Development of Methods/Sources to estimate population migration in Northern Ireland, NISRA 2005

⁶ Improving Government Survey Delivery to Minority Ethnic Groups, eds Watt, P. and McGaughey ,F. OFMDFM, 2006.

“There needs to be greater recognition in policy development and related public discourse that Northern Ireland is now comprised of a number of diverse communities and this diversity will likely increase over the next few years, particularly as a consequence of EU expansion.”⁷

- 2.9 The rapidly changing nature of immigration into Northern Ireland is also noted in a report by East Tyrone Further Education College.

“The towns of Dungannon and Cookstown and the surrounding areas including Coalisland have seen an influx of migrant workers in the last five years. Initially the workers were from Portugal or were Portuguese speakers, but now include migrant workers from Lithuania, Poland, Latvia, the Ukraine, Romania and East Timor.”⁸

⁷ Ibid pg 65

⁸ New Migrant Communities in East Tyrone, A Report for East Tyrone College, Betts J and Hamilton J, Institute of Conflict Research, 2005

Table 2.1: Ethnic Composition of NI Population and Age Distribution within Ethnic Categories

	White	Irish Traveller	Mixed	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Other Asian	Black Caribbean	Black African	Other Black	Chinese	Other Ethnic Group
Under 16	23.50%	32.20%	52.30%	20.60%	34.00%	37.80%	16.30%	16.80%	27.90%	20.50%	25.50%	20.50%
16 – 24	12.50%	16.30%	15.20%	9.00%	10.30%	13.10%	13.70%	14.10%	11.20%	21.50%	17.90%	12.70%
25 – 64	50.60%	41.70%	29.10%	63.50%	50.70%	45.00%	68.40%	60.90%	56.00%	48.00%	52.90%	63.40%
65 and over	13.30%	9.70%	3.40%	6.90%	4.90%	4.00%	1.60%	8.20%	4.90%	10.00%	3.70%	3.40%
All Persons	1670988	1710	3320	1569	668	251	190	256	491	381	4145	1291
As a % of all	99.15%	0.10%	0.20%	0.09%	0.04%	0.01%	0.01%	0.02%	0.03%	0.02%	0.25%	0.08%

Source: NI Census of Population 2001

Country	2003-04	2004-05	2005-Jan 2006	Total
Poland	229	3,594	8,197	12,020
Lithuania	91	2,036	2,860	4,987
Slovakia	37	1,130	2,302	3,469
Portugal	1,482	1,292	831	3,605
Latvia	42	558	758	1,358
Czech Rep.	20	570	748	1,338
India	701	1,041	744	2,486
Philippines	549	501	474	1,542
China	405	486	426	1,317
Ukraine	218	367	282	867
NI Total	6,849	16,440	22,271	45,560

Source: DSD Operations Directorate Support
 N.B. NI Total includes all foreign applicants for a social security number and not just the top ten.

2.10 The strong anecdotal evidence discussed above is confirmed by available statistics as can be seen in Table 2.2. The overriding message from this table is that growth in applications for National Insurance numbers over the period 2003-04 to 2005-06 was largely driven by applicants from four countries; Poland, Lithuania, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. Applications from three of these countries increased between 2003-04 and 2005-06 by at least 30 fold and in the case of Slovakia by a factor of over sixty fold. These four countries were amongst the eight countries; the others being Estonia, Latvia, Hungary and Cyprus, who joined the European Union on 1 May 2004. Of the total 45,560 applications from foreign nationals for National Insurance numbers over the period 2003-04 to 2005-06, Poland accounts for 26 percent, Lithuania 11 percent with Portugal and Slovakia each accounting for approximately 8 percent.

2.11 Whether the above trend persists is difficult to predict, although historical evidence from earlier expansions of the EU would suggest that these movements tend to reduce significantly overtime i.e. these current movements could be seen as a one-off adjustment rather than an ongoing trend. However, the differences in income and living standards between the recent accession countries and the more prosperous countries within the EU are far greater than any that the EU has accommodated in the past.

2.12 In addition many studies of immigration trends at both International and European level note the propensity for new immigrants to cluster in locations with other immigrants of the same nationality i.e. once a community is established new immigrants are more likely to join them than to establish new communities elsewhere. Anecdotal evidence would suggest that this is due to extended family and community ties in the home country with new immigrants more likely to go to places where there are people they know. These studies have also noted the propensity for a significant fraction of immigrants to return home over time, even to poorer source countries. Consequently, there are a range of factors which may influence the future trends in inward migration to Northern Ireland including the following:

- The extent to which there is economic growth within the new accession countries and consequent harmonisation across the EU;
- The accession of further countries to the EU such as Bulgaria and Romania and in the medium term Turkey;
- Whether restrictions on the free movement of people and labour within the EU are introduced for any further new entrants;
- The degree to which current immigrants perceive Northern Ireland as a good place to relocate; and,
- The relative performance of the Northern Ireland economy within the EU.

Ethnic Minorities in FE

2.13 The pattern we have seen for Northern Ireland as a whole is, perhaps not surprisingly, repeated in the monitoring statistics for racial groups within FE. The figures for the sector as a whole are set out in Table 2.3 for vocational and non-vocational courses and would suggest that the proportion of students from non-white racial groups is approximately 1% with the largest single group being Chinese⁹. The level of “unknowns” and those classified as “any other” introduces some uncertainty although we feel it is likely that the vast majority of the former are white. The total population of FE enrolments on vocational courses in 2005/06 was 148,189 with a further 73,926 enrolled on non-vocational (hobby & leisure) courses.

⁹ Information on the total number of students in FE by Gender, Mode and Nature of study (Vocational/Non-Vocational) is set out in Appendix 2

Racial Group	Vocational %	Non-vocational %
Unknown	8.17	13.80
White	89.93	84.35
Black	0.25	0.10
Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi	0.23	0.20
Chinese	0.44	0.18
Mixed Other	0.15	0.07
Any other	0.83	1.31
Source: FESR		
N.B. Data relates to enrolments over the whole academic year		

- 2.14 From a more detailed analysis by college (Table A2, A3 Statistical Appendix 2) we can see that ethnic minority students are particularly concentrated in urban areas with the Belfast Institute and the North West Institute accounting for 54% of ethnic minority students on vocational courses whilst accounting for just 32% of all students enrolled on vocational courses.
- 2.15 It should be noted that with reference to official statistics, a clear demarcation between ethnicity and nationality has been, and remains, problematic. In a recent consultative exercise for the 2011 Census of Population NISRA stated that it has yet to reach a view on the race/ethnicity question but stated that revisions were likely to arise due to requirements for statutory equality monitoring¹⁰. The consultation noted that:

“25 respondents expressed a view on the ethnicity question, 15 of whom proposed it be kept in its present format. 10 respondents recommended potential modifications for the question with one main issue emerging, namely the constraints associated with the ‘white’ category. There was a strong desire to be able to identify Eastern Europeans within the ‘white’ category given the growing importance and presence of migrant workers. A similar idea was to change the categories so that individuals who would classify themselves as white can also be distinguished as, for example, Portuguese, Lithuanian, Russian etc. One respondent stressed the importance of identifying these different ethnicities as they will have completely different experiences in terms of the rights they have, racism and other barriers... It was felt that ONS inappropriately classified nationality, race and ethnic group in this question and the most powerful indicator of ethnicity is language.”

¹⁰ The Future Provision of Demographic Statistics in Northern Ireland (Towards the 2011 Census) Consultation – Summary of Responses NISRA September 2005

Conclusions

- 2.16 The main message from our analysis of the demographic trends is that the situation is changing rapidly with a particularly large influx of people from Eastern Europe. To put this in perspective the influx of people from Eastern Europe alone based on National Insurance number data in the three years from 2003-2005 is roughly double the total ethnic minority population in Northern Ireland at the time of the 2001 Census.
- 2.17 Although, as discussed above, it is difficult to know the extent to which those captured in the National Insurance number data have moved permanently to Northern Ireland or are transient workers and/or students who will return to their home country.
- 2.18 The other key question is the extent to which this trend and these numbers will continue and/or increase and as discussed above there are a number of wider economic and political factors largely at the EU level which will determine the extent to which this is a temporary adjustment or an ongoing phenomenon.

Incidence of Racial Violence in NI

- 2.19 The Demographic trends set out above clearly illustrate that the make-up of the Northern Ireland population is changing. In this section we look at some of the impacts and implications of these changes, more broadly within Northern Ireland society as a whole, and more specifically within the education sector.
- 2.20 One worrying trend has been the marked increase in racially motivated incidents or crimes in Northern Ireland as illustrated in a recent PSNI statistical report.¹¹ Key findings include:
- During 2005/06 there were 936 racial incidents, an increase of 123 (+15.1%) compared with 2004/05.
 - There were 746 racially motivated crimes during 2005/06, an increase of 112 (+17.7%) compared with the previous year.
 - Amongst the more disturbing statistics are 25 threats or conspiracy to murder crimes, 238 woundings or assaults, 69 cases of intimidation or harassment and 351 incidents of criminal damage.

¹¹ Statistical Report No. 3. Hate Incidents and Crimes 1st April 2005 – 31st March 2006, PSNI (May 2006) pg 5-6

- 2.21 The report also contains a limited spatial analysis of the incidence of these racially motivated crimes. It appears that the worst hot spots for racial incidents in Northern Ireland are Belfast, Dungannon, Craigavon and Ballymena. In comparison areas with low levels of reported incidents include Larne, Banbridge, Strabane and Limavady. However, the report does not present any analysis on the correlation between the incidence of race crimes and the relative concentration of ethnic minority groups.
- 2.22 The significant increase in racially motivated violence has been concurrent with the changing demographics in Northern Ireland discussed above and would indicate that this influx has had an impact on the attitudes of some in NI towards Ethnic Minorities¹². It is a worrying trend and suggests that at least some elements within our society have racist views in relation to people from different ethnic backgrounds moving to live and work in Northern Ireland.

RESEARCH ON RACISM IN NORTHERN IRELAND

2.23 In a more general context Dr Paul Connolly's report "Race' and Racism in Northern Ireland: A Review of the Research Evidence" is to date the most comprehensive and accessible overview of racism and attitudes to race and ethnicity in Northern Ireland. While the report acknowledges that much research still needs to be done, it identifies particular issues relating to public service provision that disproportionately affect the ethnic minority population. These are:

- **The language barrier** – a proportion of people from minority ethnic communities do not have English as a first language. Poor or no English causes particular problems for these people in relation to access to services such as health, education and training and employment;
- **Lack of information** – there is a lack of information accessible to minority ethnic people about the services that are available to them or to which they are entitled;
- **Training needs of staff** – lack of understanding or cultural sensitivity among public sector staff of the needs of minority ethnic people when trying to access public services; especially health, social services and education; and
- **The cultural needs of minority ethnic people** –the need within public services (for example, hospitals, schools etc.) to recognise and provide for the basic cultural needs of minority ethnic people, especially in terms of catering for diet and religious observance.

¹² Improvements by the Police in the monitoring, identification and classification of racially motivated crimes may account for some of the increase but is highly unlikely to account for it all.

2.24 As the report states¹³: *“the diversity and complexity of the needs identified draw attention to the importance of developing a systematic system of research, monitoring and evaluation in order to maintain an understanding of the differing needs of each community and of the effectiveness of existing programmes of intervention”*.

2.25 The fundamental importance of understanding and accommodating diversity has also recently been emphasised in a 2006 OFMDFM report, “How Public Authorities Provide Services to Ethnic Minority Groups”. This report states that:

*“An intercultural approach to public policy should increasingly inform the provision of services. This should be part of a wider approach to equality and requires service providers to move away from a ‘one cap fits all approach’ to service provision and towards the accommodation of ethnic diversity based on the principles of equality and respect.”*¹⁴

Racism and Education

2.26 Information for Northern Ireland on racist bullying and harassment in education is very limited. However, in 2000 NISRA published the report, “Opportunities for All: Minority Ethnic People’s Experiences of Education, Training and Employment in Northern Ireland” (Connolly, P. & Keenan, M.). This report examines the experiences and perspectives of minority ethnic people in Northern Ireland towards education, training and employment. It draws upon in-depth interviews with 101 respondents drawn from the four largest minority ethnic groups in the region: Chinese, Travellers, South Asians and Black Africans.

2.27 The main findings to emerge from the report include some indication of racist bullying and harassment in primary and secondary schools. Key points include:

- Racist bullying and harassment in schools appeared to be a common experience for many of the minority ethnic children interviewed.
- Such incidents of harassment usually took place in the more informal areas of the school, including corridors and the playground. The perpetrators tended to be older than the victim, male and to engage in racist harassment usually when part of a bigger group.
- The response of schools to the issue of racist bullying and harassment appears to vary enormously. Some schools appear to have dealt with specific incidents relatively successfully.

¹³ Race’ and Racism in Northern Ireland: A Review of the Research Evidence – Connolly, P. OFMDFM, 2002 , pg 63.

¹⁴ How Public Authorities Provide Services to Ethnic Minority Groups., eds Watt, P. and McGaughey, F. OFMDFM (2006), pg 64

- However, the majority of schools tended to respond inappropriately. This was often characterised by not taking the issue seriously either by minimising it or ignoring it altogether. It also included examples of teachers attempting to address the problem but, unwittingly, tending to make matters worse by the way they approached the issue.

2.28 In 2004-05 East Tyrone College, with funding support from the Community Relations Council, commissioned the Institute of Conflict and Research to assess the impact on the College of the growing ethnic minority population in the area and to assess the perceptions of the student body. The recommendations made in the report included sharing information and knowledge with other key players in the local community, keeping staff and students informed, training for staff in cultural diversity and anti-racism and exploring how existing work could be built on and extended. The published report, "New Migrant Communities in East Tyrone" included findings from a survey of students which indicated that¹⁵:

- Community background did not seem to affect attitudes;
- Males were more likely to hold negative attitudes;
- 86% of students would be willing to accept someone of a different ethnic group or nationality in their class. However, just 40% of students had positive attitudes/feelings towards people of a different race, ethnic group or culture.
- Sixty-seven per cent of students were aware of people from a different ethnic group living in their area; the majority (66%) said that these people were Portuguese, with 44% aware of Chinese and East European people respectively.
- The majority (54%) felt that it was the responsibility of ethnic minorities to integrate into the Northern Ireland culture.
- Forty per cent of students felt that the migrant workers had had a negative effect on both the economy of the area and social activities.
- Fifty-four per cent of students had witnessed some form of racism. This had mainly taken the form of verbal abuse (50%) or rudeness and hostility (33%), while 21% had witnessed property being damaged and a further 21% had witnessed physical violence.

2.29 These results suggest that there are definite attitudinal problems with regard to people from different racial and cultural backgrounds. They also provide a useful point of comparison for our own survey which covers many of the same issues.

¹⁵ New Migrant Communities in East Tyrone, Betts, J. and Hamilton, J. Institute for Conflict Research (on behalf of East Tyrone College), 2005, pg 4

LEGISLATIVE PROVISION AND HIGH LEVEL POLICY

The Statutory Duties

2.30 Section 75 and Schedule 9 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998, came into force on 1 January 2000. Responsibility for these provisions lies with the Secretary of State. Section 75.1 places a statutory obligation on public authorities (Northern Ireland departments, most non-departmental public bodies, District Councils and other bodies including UK departments designated by the Secretary of State) to carry out their functions relating to Northern Ireland with due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:

- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally;
- between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- between persons with dependants and persons without.

2.31 In addition, without prejudice to the above obligation, public authorities must have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, or racial group.

2.32 These duties require public authorities to produce an equality scheme. All equality schemes must comply with guidance issued by the Equality Commission for NI on the content of schemes. The Commission has the powers and responsibilities to oversee the effectiveness of the duties including; the approval of the Equality Schemes. A more detailed discussion of the Statutory Duties is contained in Appendix 9.

2.33 With specific reference to racial and ethnic minority groups, the Equality Schemes of Further Education colleges focus on issues concerning access to information and services. For example BIFHE's approved equality scheme contains commitments to:

*“ensure that there are no barriers to the consultation process. Information will be available on request in accessible formats... and in minority languages to meet the needs of those who are not fluent in English. The Institute will ensure that systems are put in place to make information available in accessible formats and in a timely fashion.”*¹⁶

2.34 In ensuring effective communication with the public, the BIFHE equality scheme, like all other schemes of FE colleges:

¹⁶ BIFHE Equality Scheme, July 2002, pg 24

“recognises, however, that there is a risk that some sections of the public will not enjoy equality of opportunity in accessing information provided by the Institute... Areas of concern include...members of minority ethnic groups, whose first language is not English and people with hearing difficulties whose first language is not English.”¹⁷

Race Relations

- 2.35 The Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 (RRO), as amended, follows closely the provisions of the 1976 Race Relations Act in GB. It outlaws discrimination on grounds of colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origin. The Irish Traveller community is specifically identified in the Order as a racial group against which racial discrimination is unlawful.
- 2.36 The Order makes it unlawful to discriminate either directly or indirectly through the victimisation of an individual using definitions similar to those found in the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 (FETO). The Race Order adds a further ground by providing that segregation on racial grounds also constitutes discrimination.
- 2.37 The Order prohibits discrimination in education at all levels and in addition places a general duty on educational bodies to ensure that their facilities are provided without racial discrimination.
- 2.38 The Order permits positive action in favour of members of particular racial groups to enable their special education, training and welfare needs to be met. It also allows training or education to be provided for persons from outside Northern Ireland who intend to leave the country on completion of their tuition. Providing training or encouragement for members of a particular racial group to enable them to compete for particular positions is also allowed where members of that group are either absent or under-represented. This applies to particular work, to membership or acting as an official of a trade union, an employers association or any professional or trade organisation.

Race Equality Strategy

- 2.39 In July 2005, OFMDFM published “A Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland: 2005-2010”. The overall aim of the strategy is to achieve:

‘A society in which racial diversity is supported, understood, valued and respected, where racism in any of its forms is not tolerated and where we live together as a society and enjoy equality of opportunity and equal protection.’¹⁸

¹⁷ Ibid, pg 34

¹⁸ A Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland: 2005-2010, pg 7 OFMDFM, July 2005

2.40 The strategy sets out six ancillary aims¹⁹. The two aims most relevant to this current study are:

- **Equality of Service Provision** - To ensure equality of opportunity for minority ethnic people in accessing and benefiting from all public services. As specified in the action plan, DEL has eight associated actions, including this research project, under the implementation plan.
- **Participation** - To increase participation and a sense of “belonging” of people from minority ethnic backgrounds in public, political, economic, social and cultural life. As specified in the action plan, DEL has two associated actions under the implementation plan.

2.41 In developing the strategy, OFMDFM consulted with a number of representative ethnic minority groups. Of relevance to this current research, key themes to emerge during consultation included the following²⁰:

- *Training and employment*
 - the occupational segregation of the minority ethnic population;
 - need for English language courses at different levels;
 - childcare arrangements;
 - vocational training and guidance for minority ethnic young people;
 - mentoring and job placement for minority ethnic young people;
 - long-term unemployment of Irish Travellers; and
 - recognition of foreign qualifications.
- *Education*
 - the need for additional support for children who have English as a second language;
 - a multi-cultural and anti-racist curriculum;
 - relations between teachers and parents (difficulties of language and meeting times); and
 - serious underachievement of Traveller children.

¹⁹ Ibid, pg 8

²⁰ Ibid, pg 79-80

2.42 The main conclusion from this review of the broader policy is that Northern Ireland, particularly as a result of the introduction of Section 75, has a unique and wide-ranging policy context in relation to equality generally and race specifically. This policy agenda places a particular emphasis on the role of the public sector which has the responsibility of fulfilling the requirements of this legislation and consequently working to achieve its aims of a fairer and more equitable society. This is expressed even more explicitly in the OFMDFM Race Equality Strategy which sets out a number of priority areas for action in relation to racial equality.

KEY ISSUES

2.43 In this section we look at three of the main issues that have been raised with us in the course of our initial consultations and which lie at the heart of providing an inclusive environment for people from all ethnic backgrounds. They were as follows:

- The nature of the barriers and chill factors to participation in FE by ethnic minorities.
- The language barrier for new immigrants whose first language is not English and the need for education provision to help overcome this.
- Developing and monitoring the policies and practices to combat racism and enhance the participation of ethnic minorities in Further Education.

Key Issue 1: The nature of barriers and chill factors to participation

2.44 In order to widen participation, it is clear that the barriers to participation are recognised and understood. It has been argued that these can be divided into three main types²¹ (Cross, 1982). Situational barriers refer to the influence of circumstance or factors which affect a person's life (family structure, economic prosperity, cultural identity). Institutional barriers can include the cost of education, programme availability, entrance requirements and perceived chill factors. The third type of barrier is dispositional; this concerns the attitudes and values of a person towards learning. Other research studies have delineated barriers into similar categories.

2.45 At the outset there are two fundamental pragmatic concerns informing an analysis of chill factors. First, student recruitment policies and practices, including the marketing policies undertaken to attract students, can exert a strong influence on the potential intake of students to an institution. Hence, from an equality and good relations viewpoint, these policies and activities require careful scrutiny.

²¹ Cross, K. P. (1982). *Adults as learners*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

2.46 Second, how students behave in word and deed can also have a strong influence on how an institution is perceived. The extent to which an institution develops strong codes of acceptable behaviour and enforces them can determine whether an institution is perceived to be providing a safe environment for all traditions to feel welcome and secure. Previous research on the impact of sectarianism on participation in NI Further Education colleges found that failures to deal with these issues could result in an institution being perceived as being unappealing as a study destination for one community.²²

2.47 The recent review of Further Education and the proposed merger of colleges refers to the issue as noted in the quote below:

*“...rationalisation will require, in some instances, further community integration. Community division may hinder the implementation of the project with the onus on the College staff and Board of Governors to ensure this change is seen to be embraced by all”.*²³

2.48 Given concerns with possible chill factors around sectarian perceptions and attitudes ANIC, on behalf of the Department for Employment and Learning, commissioned a substantial piece of research in order to:

“Identify the chill factors within the two main communities in Northern Ireland that may make a Further Education College/institute less attractive to actual or potential students/trainees and to generate practical suggestions on how this may be addressed.”

2.49 The resulting report; Research into Chill Factors in FE Colleges was published in July 2005. Although concerned with chill factors along sectarian lines, the report made a number of findings which are relevant to this study. Amongst these are:

- Influences on student choice of college/university
The main factors which influence which college/university to attend are the availability of the course, location and transport, job prospects, quality of teaching and ambience. The main barriers discouraging students and workers from applying to certain FE colleges are location, transport (its availability and cost) and, to a lesser extent religion.

²² Collins, K, McAreavy, G and Donegan, HA (2001) Participation Rates in Further and Higher Education, Belfast, OFM/DFM.

²³ Future Size and Structure of the Further Education Sector in Northern Ireland, Economic Appraisal, DEL (2005) p 113

- Flexible provision of courses
There is a need for flexibility in the provision of courses. This is particularly important for people in full time employment and those with families. These students need to fit their studies in to suit work and family commitments.
- The nature and extent of chill factors
Superficially, the perceived composition of a college by community background does not appear to directly influence choice of college. None of the potential or actual college students mentioned religion spontaneously as a decision factor, and more than half do not claim it to be a barrier to attending certain colleges. However, for a minority (on prompting), religious and sectarian elements were thought to act as barriers to attending some colleges.
- Access to information about colleges
Word of mouth was found to be an extremely important information source for all potential students. Almost all students have family, friends or know people with experience of the colleges and universities. Students will ask their contacts details about course content, teachers, facilities, as well as the culture that exists on a campus.
- The nature and pace of change
The literature and practice review shows that the chill factor is deep seated within the Northern Ireland community and changing this will be a gradual process. This was highlighted throughout all phases of consultation, with many people acknowledging that there is no short term solution, and any significant progress is likely to be made over a number of years, and perhaps even a generation. Sectarianism is the dominant issue in respect of chill factors in Northern Ireland. However, the research highlighted that racism and homophobia among other issues are also growing problems in our society which points towards the need for a holistic approach in addressing the issues of diversity and good relations.

Racial Bullying and Harassment

- 2.50 There is an increasing, though relatively small, number of studies on the relationship between bullying and racism. Often the terms 'racial teasing', 'racial bullying' and 'racial harassment' are used interchangeably. Regardless of the terminology used, arguably the manifestation of racism throughout the education sector reflects a wider and racially structured society, and consequently, racist abuse carries extra weight.

- 2.51 According to Save the Children/Barnardo's (2002), 66% of minority ethnic school children in Northern Ireland have experienced racist harassment, while Morgan's (2002) research into the educational experience of Traveller children in Belfast found that children transferring from St. Mary's Primary School to a local secondary school were fearful of being bullied. The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission surveyed students aged 11-18 years on their aspirations for a Bill of Rights (NIHRC 2002). They found that young people particularly wanted the right to protection from bullying, including protection from racist, sectarian and homophobic harassment and violence²⁴.
- 2.52 For those colleges wishing to assess or review policies on racial harassment and bullying there is a wealth of literature on how schools and educational institutions should deal with, record and monitor incidents of racist bullying and harassment. For example, the In-service Training and Educational Development (INSTED) Unit of DfES (www.insted.co.uk/race24.pdf) lists around 70 websites that relate to race and cultural diversity. In addition, the website teachernet.gov.uk includes a listing of about 100 websites relevant to cultural diversity, racism and bullying in the education sector. This listing is included as an appendix (Appendix 3).

Key Issue 2: Language (ESOL)

- 2.53 There are many adult learners from ethnic minority communities who need education in written and spoken English language. Throughout the UK a persistent theme in research on ESOL is the immense diversity of ESOL students. Some learners may have no previous education or employment, or they might be highly educated professionals or have the ability to speak several different languages. These findings were echoed by research in Northern Ireland²⁵.
- 2.54 As Hansson, Morgan and Dunn note:

*'The core providers of this form of language teaching are the Colleges of Further and Higher Education. Some of the issues and problems identified in relation to school level provision are also relevant in the FE sector, but the picture is complicated by the range of levels of need, the varying aspirations of students and the fluidity of the client group.'*²⁶

²⁴ Racist Harassment in Northern Ireland Neil Jarman & Rachel Monaghan, OFMDFM September 2003

²⁵ Ibid, pg 62

²⁶ Minority Ethnic Groups in Northern Ireland: Experiences and Expectations of English Language Support in Education Settings , Hansson U, et al. OFMDFM, (pg 2002) pg 52

2.55 Our discussions with relevant FE staff indicated the fundamental importance of including a consideration of ESOL in this study. In addition to the formal language instruction, it is clear that there are important 'social aspects' involved in many courses. The ESOL-teacher may be the only 'native' English-speaking individual some students see on a regular personal basis and the teacher, therefore, is often called upon to act as a 'social interface'.

2.56 As we will see in the discussion on the case study colleges, the delivery of most student services, including advice giving is subsumed within the overall provision of student services. There appears to be little explicit and bespoke provision of guidance specifically directed towards ethnic minority students. This may pose a particular problem for some entry level ESOL students who, having very limited English are insecure and anxious about trying to interact with 'officials' in formal contexts. The language teachers can become, on occasion, the only person to who questions regarding a variety of matters can be confidently directed.

KEY ISSUE THREE: DEVELOPING AND MONITORING POLICIES AND PRACTICE

The role of FE colleges promoting race equality and ethnic diversity

2.57 As noted previously, although Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998) provides an innovative framework for public bodies to mainstream equality of opportunity and good relations, it does require *per se* specific initiatives and/or policies to promote equality. What then are some of the main policy considerations specific to promoting racial equality and ethnic diversity in Further Education?

2.58 A 2001 report funded by DfES raises a number of key questions for managers of support for students and general resources. Evidence from the case studies suggests that some of these questions are already being addressed by colleges in Northern Ireland. For example, all full-time students in Armagh College undergo an induction including equality awareness and cannot gain entry to the college unless this aspect of induction is undertaken. Amongst the points raised by DfES are:²⁷

- Do the college's publicity materials present appropriate and positive messages about minority ethnic groups?
- Do the student induction programme, the tutorial programme and general college information reflect the college's commitment to anti-discriminatory practice?
- Does the enrichment programme for students include opportunities to explore issues relating to race and ethnicity?

²⁷ A Report Further Education Funding Council, Race and Ethnicity in Further Education: Making a Difference

- Are there appropriate sources of practical support for learners, such as interpreters, prayer rooms, financial advice and cross-cultural counselling?

2.59 A number of recurrent and persistent themes emerge with regard to the promotion of race equality and good relations throughout the public sector, including FE Colleges. These include:

- The commitment of senior level management and staff; For example, a report by OFSTED found that;

“In colleges with the best practice, managers initiated imaginative, systematic and sustained activity to tackle endemic problems such as underachievement of learners, and imbalances in the college’s staffing, management and governor ethnic profiles. A key factor in this success was the quality of leadership by the principal and senior managers in establishing a strong college-wide ethos of equality and high aspirations for all. The colleges responding with the most vigour and imagination tended to be those operating in areas with high levels of racial diversity, although not exclusively so. In these colleges, managers had the confidence to use positive action to improve opportunities for both learners and staff of BME heritage.”²⁸

- A commitment to consistency of achievement and standards. This includes effective strategies to improve the retention, achievement and employment rates of underperforming groups.
- Relevant Staff training and awareness in ethnic minority issues and cultural diversity. This training is delivered to all staff, both academic and non-academic. The above mentioned OFSTED report found that in the FE colleges inspected:

“Most front-of-house staff received some training in equality and diversity. For a large majority of staff this was just a short staff development session. In a small minority of colleges, the training was more extensive and included ‘welcome host’ training and customer care training that focuses on dealing with diverse customers. This good practice recognises the important role of these staff in creating a welcoming atmosphere and also, in the case of security staff, in defusing potential problems.”²⁹

- The need to collect robust data on the ethnicity of students and its ongoing analysis to inform policy and practice.

²⁸ Race equality in Further Education: A report by HMI. Progress and Good Practice in colleges in the Further Education sector in response to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, OFSTED, (2005) pg 6

²⁹ OFSTED, (2005) pg 25.

2.60 The OFSTED report referred to above contains a number of key findings. Some of these issues have been addressed in the Northern Ireland FE sector. For example, the importance of leadership and management is recognised in the ANIC Race Equality for the Further Education Sector (2003). Points from the OFSTED study of particular relevance to this current study are:

- Leadership and Management

In those colleges the report identified as establishing and pursuing 'best practice', managers initiated imaginative, systematic and sustained activity to tackle endemic problems such as underachievement of learners, and imbalances in the college's staffing, management and governor ethnic profiles. A key factor in this success was the quality of leadership by the principal and senior managers in establishing a strong college-wide ethos of equality and high aspirations for all.

- Demographic Considerations: The size of the local ethnic minority population.

The colleges responding with the most vigour and imagination tended to be those operating in areas with high levels of racial diversity, although not exclusively so. In a minority of colleges, usually where there were few Black Minority Ethnic (BME) learners, managers did not see race as a relevant issue. Given that, compared with England and Wales, Northern Ireland has a relatively small population of ethnic minority students, this finding may be of particular relevance in this jurisdiction

- The Views of Students

Ethnic minority students identified as strengths that their colleges are friendly providing a safe and secure environment. The quality of teaching and learning was also important to them and value was placed on having supportive teachers, and on the respect with which they were treated as individuals. Overall, students gave very few examples of problems relating to race. The findings from the survey of ethnic minority students conducted for this study are discussed in section five of the report.

2.61 A persistent theme in much of the literature devoted to promoting ethnic and cultural diversity and combating racism throughout public sector organisations is the need for meaningful data collection and ongoing analysis. This analysis should both identify key issues and inform policies designed to address any problems identified.

2.62 Data collection is a key component of effective service delivery. It is linked to engagement and benchmarking as it informs the service provider who they should consult with, highlights gaps and inequalities that can be used to set targets and evaluate outcomes against those targets. The recently developed NICIS system used by the FE Colleges to monitor equality is specifically designed to capture all of the data required by Section 75.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

- 2.63 As discussed at the beginning of this section the population of Northern Ireland is overwhelming indigenous white British and/or Irish. However, especially since the May 2004 ascension of the A8 European states with resulting migration to Northern Ireland from Eastern Europe, the demographic picture is dynamic and changing.
- 2.64 The statutory framework within Northern Ireland to promote racial equality and good relations is robust and in some respects unique within these islands. Complementing this legislative framework Government is currently implementing an ongoing Race Equality Strategy.
- 2.65 Previous research on sectarian related chill factors in the Further Education Sector found that fear of sectarian abuse is one of the factors limiting a students choice of FE College. To date there has been limited research on the experiences of ethnic minorities throughout the education sector in Northern Ireland with no research specifically and solely examining the experience of ethnic minority students in the Further Education Sector. A common theme in some of the studies reviewed here is the persistent incidence of racist harassment experienced by ethnic minority students (Connolly & Keenan, 2000; Barnados, 2002; Morgan, 2002) in the wider education sector.
- 2.66 This review of the existing literature in relation to tackling racism and addressing perceived or potential chill factors in Further Education indicates a number of key considerations to address this problem:
- The importance of leadership by College Management including the development, dissemination and application of college marketing, student recruitment, harassment and bullying policies;
 - The underlying importance of ESOL in enabling ethnic minorities to achieve their full potential within NI;
 - Training for staff particularly frontline; and
 - Effective data collection and monitoring to inform the development and monitoring of college policies.

3 CASE STUDIES

INTRODUCTION

3.1 In this section of our report we present the information garnered from our case studies. The case studies themselves are based on interviews with key staff within the colleges. At a minimum this included Human Resources and Student Services with input in all but one case from other Senior staff³⁰. The case studies gathered information on the following issues:

- Profile of Ethnic Minority Students;
- Achievements and Standards of Ethnic Minority Students;
- Recruitment and Marketing;
- How the Needs of Ethnic Minority Students are Met;
- Incidence of Racism;
- How Policy is Disseminated, Publicised and Enforced;
- Staff Training and Awareness; and
- Best Practice.

ISSUE 1: PROFILE OF ETHNIC MINORITY STUDENTS

3.2 In the colleges studied no uniform pattern of the profile of ethnic minority students emerged. However, when staff were asked to give their informed comment on student profiles, supported by in-house statistics, a number of characteristics were consistent amongst all Colleges:

- Indigenous white students were the single largest ethnic group in all colleges.
- ESOL students accounted for the bulk, i.e. at least 75%, of all ethnic minority students enrolled at the colleges.
- Aside from one urban based college with a relatively large proportion of Chinese students, Eastern European Students accounted for the largest proportion of ethnic minority students.

³⁰ Details of the College staff members involved in our case studies are set out in Appendix 1

The Most Significant Ethnic Minority Communities at the 6 Case Study Colleges (in Descending Rank Order)					
College 1	College 2	College 3	College 4	College 5	College 6
Polish Lithuanian Slovakian Portuguese	Chinese Latvian Polish	Polish Russian Latvian Lithuanian	Lithuanian Polish Latvian	Travellers Chinese Polish Bangladeshi	Polish Iranian Latvian Lithuanian

- 3.3 Colleges were asked to comment on the comparison between the ethnic profile of the college and that of the local population. When considering this question interviewees were asked to consider issues such as location of colleges and outreach centres, socio-economic factors, local political factors, presence of refugees/asylum seekers, admissions criteria post-16, and the religious denominations of ethnic minority students.
- 3.4 In large measure any under-representation of ethnic minorities in the student population of colleges was ascribed to two inter-related factors; lack of English skills and translation facilities. In line with current course and associated examination standards, the English language remains the medium for FE and HE classes, in view of the lack of translation facilities, ethnic minority students without requisite English language skills, usually defined as ESOL level two, are in effect precluded from pursuing courses taught in English.
- 3.5 However, some colleges thought that there was no perceptible difference between the ethnic profile of college and the wider community. One college attributed this to the fact that the ethnic minority community in the college's catchments' area is, in their view, 'very small'. The College attributed this to the absence of large manufacturing firms in their area which would tend to attract migrant workers.
- 3.6 In all case study colleges the 'language barrier' also had an impact on the participation of ethnic minority students in 'hobby and recreational' (also known as Non-vocational courses). For example, a college with an extensive network of outreach centres was of the view that the lack of English language skills remains a barrier to increased ethnic minority participation in these non-academic/vocational courses. To address this issue, the college's Community Education Department negotiates directly with community groups, including ethnic minority groups, in the delivery of site specific courses.
- 3.7 Based on figures from the 2001 Census of Population, the Irish Travelling Community is amongst the largest discrete ethnic minority group. However, their participation in Further and Higher Education Colleges remains particularly low. Traveller males aged 14-16 were described as the 'missing' piece of the educational jigsaw with little current potential to flow into FE or HE courses provided by colleges.

ISSUE 2: ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS OF ETHNIC MINORITY STUDENTS

- 3.8 All colleges studied indicated that there was no evidence to suggest that ethnic minority students in general and/or any specific ethnic groups are more likely to drop out of courses, underachieve or exhibit patterns of poor attendance or punctuality compared to white indigenous students. Indeed, many comments suggested that in general, ethnic minority students perform at a standard above that of indigenous white students:

'With respect to punctuality and class attendance students from Ethnic Minorities tend to outperform indigenous students.'

'As a general rule, ethnic minority students are more conscientious and less likely to drop out than indigenous counterparts.'

- 3.9 Where ethnic minority students did exhibit problems with class attendance or drop-out rates this appears to be primarily with respect to ESOL classes, especially at entry level. Some colleges noted that given the nature and work patterns of migrant workers, i.e. changing shift work rotas and the transient nature of the work (especially in agriculture) there is a problem with some ESOL students attending and/or completing their courses. To remedy this situation, one college suggested that colleges be given greater autonomy to provide 'bite size' courses of relatively short duration to accommodate the needs of ethnic minority migrant workers.

ISSUE 3: RECRUITMENT AND MARKETING.

- 3.10 When asked to identify sources of potential students for FE and/or HE courses in no particular order of preference or priority, colleges identified discrete market niches as:

- Ethnic minority students currently in secondary education.
- Overseas students.
- Members of ethnic minorities and foreign nationals currently in employment in the local areas.
- ESOL students, especially those currently studying at levels two and one.

3.11 All case study colleges stated that recognition of ethnic and racial diversity was a key consideration in the development and dissemination of promotional materials such as leaflets and posters. These were made available in a number of languages. However, the extent to which promotional material in languages other than English was readily available at public reception areas did vary considerably amongst the colleges. For example, one college noted that all marketing events and materials, including student prospectuses, regarding student recruitment have to be diversity proofed for a number of section 75 categories including race. This college is currently developing a diversity proofing checklist to ensure consistency of approach across all college departments.

3.12 All colleges cited their participation in the all Ireland Anti-Racist Workplace week as an effective marketing vehicle. Key components of the week mentioned by colleges included:

- A clear and explicit welcome to black and ethnic minority groups, including Travellers and migrant workers.
- Communicating a message that the college actively promotes greater equality and diversity within the wider community.
- Publicising the value placed by colleges on linguistic and cultural diversity. A consistent consideration here was the college's amenability to making adjustments in course and service provision in recognition of linguistic and cultural diversity.

3.13 Specific actions arising out of this initiative included:

- The production of a short video on diversity by media students at the college. The video was displayed on the plasma screen network throughout the college.
- Student union appointment of a dedicated student equality officer.
- Multi-lingual poster campaigns targeted at the wider community emphasising the college's ongoing commitment to diversity and anti-racism.
- Staff diversity training provided by representative ethnic minority organisations.

ESOL Students

- 3.14 In an effort to attract ESOL students one college provides intensive ESOL Courses of 15 hours per week. Crucially, these courses include a citizenship module. This initiative was initially funded by Learning Skills Development Agency (LSDA)³¹. It is the assessment of the College that the course has proved particularly effective in recruiting recently arrived ethnic minority migrant workers and asylum seekers.
- 3.15 Publicity of student achievements is seen as a credible vehicle to attract ethnic minority students to a range of courses, especially ESOL. For example a group of ESOL students from the East Tyrone Cookstown campus had a cultural day out on in June 2006. The students were taken on a guided tour of a number of sites of cultural and historic interest. The day concluded with a traditional music session and buffet. The event, including the presentation of certificates by the colleges Vice-Principal received extensive coverage in the local press and, as a result, generated a noticeable increase in subsequent 2006-07 applications for ESOL courses.
- 3.16 As discussed elsewhere in this report, ESOL is viewed by many students and teaching staff as a 'stepping stone' to subsequent enrolment in FE and HE courses provided by colleges. As such, the provision of ESOL courses was explicitly cited by some colleges as a marketing and recruitment vehicle.
- 3.17 However, there was a diversity of views amongst colleges regarding the efficacy of ESOL as a means to retain and/or recruit ethnic minority students for English language based academic or vocational courses.
- 3.18 One college was of the view that many ESOL students already have a high level of academic and/or vocational qualifications; therefore these students have limited ambitions/need to attain further academic qualifications. ESOL in this sense is more of a stepping stone to employment based on previous academic and professional experience obtained outside of Northern Ireland, the UK, or the Republic of Ireland.
- 3.19 Some colleges were of the view that universities in Northern Ireland tend to attract students who have successfully completed ESOL courses thereby limiting the potential pool of ethnic minority students for the college's academic and vocational courses. However in contrast, another college said proactive measures, including guidance to individual students, were taken to retain successful Level Two ESOL students at the College by placing them on appropriate academic and vocational courses provided by the college.

³¹ LSDA NI is part of the Learning and Skills network (LSN), which is a new organisation committed to making a difference to education and training. The fundamental remit of LSDA is continuous quality improvement central to all our activities in support of the post-16 education and training sector

Migrant Workers

- 3.20 A key and consistent theme in recruiting migrant workers was the need to offer courses with a high degree of flexibility with respect to time and place of provision. All colleges evidenced an awareness of the particular issues around the shift patterns and duration of employment for migrant workers. For example, one college in partnership with representative ethnic minority groups actively designed and provided ‘taster’ courses in hobby and recreational courses at a number of outreach centres in an effort to increase minority representation. This college felt the effort yielded tangible results in terms of increased participation. In addition, the Community Education Department drew the lesson that to increase ‘on the ground’ participation of ethnic minorities it was often necessary to engage directly with locale specific representative organisations rather than larger ‘umbrella’ groups.
- 3.21 There is a general awareness of the value of colleges linking up with other public and private sector organizations in publicity and marketing events. For example, in partnership with Dungannon Council, East Tyrone College recently hosted an event for migrant workers in aid of Democracy week.³² The main aims and objectives were to raise both the awareness of the right to vote and the awareness and profile of the colleges and local council services.
- 3.22 The event included a representative from the Electoral Commission clarifying the voting procedure for migrant workers in NI. This was followed by introduction to local elected members representing the 4 largest political parties and a subsequent Question & Answers session on various issues. Crucially, interpreters from various nationalities worked very effectively with the students. Feedback from the students and other participants positively indicated the overall success of the event in raising the profile of the college amongst ethnic minority communities.

ISSUE 4: HOW ARE THE NEEDS OF ETHNIC MINORITY STUDENTS ADDRESSED WITHIN THE INSTITUTE?

- 3.23 The allocation of scarce resources amongst competing demands is a fundamental issue. Although all colleges cited specific examples of practices and initiatives to address the needs of ethnic minority students, colleges indicated that aspirations to develop support services for ethnic minority students were constrained by limited resources.

³² At the outset of all case study interviews the anonymity of the particular individual and college was assured by the research team. However, in some instances Colleges requested that particular comments or information be attributed to the College. The research team acceded to these reasonable requests.

- 3.24 Of the 6 case study colleges, one stated they provided prayer room and/or special washing facilities for particular ethnic minority groups. The others saw the value of such facilities and stated aspirations to provide such facilities in the future as resources allowed.
- 3.25 Consistent with marketing and student recruitment initiatives, flexibility in course and ancillary service provision was seen as key consideration in meeting the particular needs of ethnic minority students. However, there was a diversity of provision on the ground. While some colleges cited examples of evening or weekend provision of student support and advice giving services and/or extended library and computer access, other colleges cited the lack of resources to provide these services and facilities out of normal hours as a major impediment to increasing ethnic minority participation.
- 3.26 None of the case study colleges were able to cite substantial resources devoted to translation services. In our interviews with relevant staff, including marketing officers, limited resources were consistently cited as the constraint in expanding services in this area. Nonetheless some colleges did report that specific actions were taken to provide translation services to those ethnic minority students wishing to access student support services. For example, cognisant of the work patterns of migrant workers, one college had undertaken to provide student support services, with translation facilities, one evening per week. In an effort to extend a tangible welcoming atmosphere to ethnic minority students, one college employed a multi-lingual part-time receptionist. Fluent in English, the receptionist spoke four additional languages that were prevalent amongst ethnic minorities in the local area.
- 3.27 There was little evidence of specialist advice or support services targeted specifically at or for ethnic minority students. Although colleges had a clear awareness of the needs and experiences of particular groups of ethnic minority students, the provision of support services to ethnic minority students is generally subsumed within the overall rubric of design and delivery of student support services. For example, when discussing student mentoring schemes, one college has recently introduced a mentoring scheme with respect to sources of funding and the payment of student fees. Although the programme does not currently address the needs or particular ethnic groups, the college acknowledged that there was potential for elaborating on issues specific to particular groups, especially with respect to the issue of interest payments.
- 3.28 Some college staff interviewed did cite a perceived lack of specialist skills needed for student counselling and careers advice. A particular example cited an ESOL student with equivalent of GP medical qualification working at a local supermarket who found it difficult to obtain relevant careers guidance and support.

Funding and the role of ESOL teachers

- 3.29 In interviews at a number of colleges concerns were expressed over the level of ESOL funding, specifically in relation to the perceived lower level of per capita funding that students at ESOL entry level attract, in comparison to ESOL Levels one and two. Whilst the Department has confirmed that within the new funding model (which operative from 2007 / 2008 academic year onwards), funding weightings will only be applied for provision at level 2 and 3, it has been confirmed that ESOL provision will, regardless of the level of provision, continue to receive the highest funding weighting within the new funding model. All provision which is of a Hobby/ Leisure nature, will not receive any funding weighting.
- 3.30 Both teachers and management staff raised the issue of unsatisfactory and inappropriate class size thresholds, currently eight, as an unnecessary impediment to ESOL provision. Some interviewees thought that smaller ESOL class sizes could be justified pedagogically and also serve as a concrete means of promoting the social inclusion of ethnic minorities in Colleges and ultimately wider civic society.
- 3.31 From the case studies it appears that ESOL teachers see themselves as having to complete a unique pastoral role in addition to their teaching requirements. Particular mention was made of the important interpreting services, guidance and sign-posting roles provided by ESOL teachers. This was a consistent and persistent theme in all six case study colleges. Whilst the pastoral and guidance responsibilities of teaching staff may be implicit, ESOL staff interviewed were of the uniform view that job descriptions and contracts fail to give recognition to these particular aspects of ESOL teaching.

ISSUE 5: INCIDENCES OF RACISM

- 3.32 Amongst the six case study colleges, only one college reported a complaint of a racist nature.
- 3.33 All college staff interviewed felt ethnic minority students felt safe in the college environment. In particular, some staff did point out that while some ethnic minority students had raised concerns about their safety in the wider community, in comparison Colleges were viewed as a 'safe space'.

- 3.34 At all colleges studied full-time students and staff had been made aware of complaints procedure as part of the induction process. Given the low number of complaints of racist bullying or harassment it is not possible to assess how rigorously complaints policies and practices are adhered to. That said, all colleges indicate that follow-up to an initial complaint would be immediate and include advice from student services on pursuing complaint and offer support to the complainant.
- 3.35 In general, there was a consensus that students had confidence in the complaints system and were of the view that complaints would be dealt with sympathetically and taken seriously. However, at one college it was the experience of staff that some ESOL students perceive themselves as vulnerable to intimidation by elements of the indigenous student population and therefore may be hesitant to make and pursue complaints due to this perceived vulnerability³³.

ISSUE 6: HOW IS POLICY ON RACIST HARASSMENT AND BULLYING DISSEMINATED, PUBLICISED AND ENFORCED?

- 3.36 All case study colleges had explicit policies with respect to bullying and harassment by either students or staff; generally these policies addressed a range of categories including, race/ethnicity, religious belief and political opinion, gender and disability. In all case study colleges the induction process for full-time students includes explicit signposting to policies on harassment bullying within the wider gambit of policies on equality, diversity and good relations.
- 3.37 However, there was little evidence to suggest efforts are undertaken to ensure that part-time students are clearly made aware of policies to do with equality and diversity in general or specifically those policies regarding bullying and harassment. The consideration here appears to be the large number of part-time enrolments combined with, in some instances, the large number of external out-reach centres providing college courses. As pointed out by one college, that provides courses through a large network of community based outreach centres, it is usually the case that students at these centres do not view themselves as students of the college.
- 3.38 As part of its Cultural Diversity Pilot Project BIFHE has developed staff and student Diversity Codes of Practice. Both codes are a 'how to' guide that can inform day to day aspects of the Institute from appropriate advertising and venue's for student events as well as curriculum development for staff. The Codes of Good practice are available on the Institute's website and can be accessed by all staff and students.

³³ This was also a common theme in our consultations with ethnic minority representatives and is supported by the ratio of reported to unreported incidents of racial harassment in our survey.

- 3.39 Subsequently BIFHE developed a more comprehensive student induction which has been delivered to all 1st year full time students since September 2005. The induction covers a range of issues including The Students Charter and Diversity training. The stated aim of this induction module is to instil respect and tolerance for students & staff from diverse backgrounds and abilities amongst new full-time students.
- 3.40 On the issue of addressing racism and ethnicity within a good relations framework the work of Armagh College, carried out in partnership with Trademark, is of particular note.
- 3.41 In February 2007 Armagh College was awarded the top prize in the Churches sponsored Beacon Award for College Partnerships to Support Students Development as Whole People and for its outstanding work and contribution to the Further Education sector³⁴.
- 3.42 The programme is a compulsory aspect of the enrichment programme at Armagh College for all full-time first year students. The programme sets out to build a greater understanding of the issues and challenges facing divided communities and ethnic groups. It seeks to identify and implement practical ways of contributing to a fair, diverse and stable background.
- 3.43 The community programme has been developed over the past 6 years. It has been validated by assessors who have spoken with learners on the programme as well as partners involved in enhancing the programme.

A student participating on the programme commented:

“My opinion has been changed greatly about migrant workers. I have a more positive attitude about them. If it can change my opinion, it could change the society we live in.”

Another student said:

“I would recommend the course to other students, as I feel that racism sectarianism etc occurs because of lack of knowledge and this course gives people the knowledge to prevent it happening.”

³⁴ The Beacon Awards Programme, launched in 1994, recognizes and is designed to promote the interdependence of Further Education colleges and business, professional and voluntary sector organizations to their mutual advantage.

The Programme aims to:

- Recognize imaginative and innovatory teaching and learning practice in colleges.
 - Draw attention to provision which encourages students to confront problems and issues creatively.
 - Highlight the breadth and quality of education in colleges throughout the UK.
- Support learning and continuous improvement through the dissemination of Award-bearing practice.

3.44 One college situated complaints regarding bullying and harassment within a commitment to continuous improvement. In this case all complaints regarding services or 'products', potentially including student or staff complaints about harassment, generate a specific case study leading to needs analysis, i.e. what needs to be changed/adjusted. For example if the job of lecturer requires a high level of competence in handling student complaints and the current level of competence in that area is low, a training need has been identified and actions are taken to raise competence levels. This in turn leads onto an examination of staff training.

ISSUE 7: STAFFING: TRAINING AND AWARENESS

3.45 All colleges state that as part of the induction process for full-time staff; both teaching and support staff, training and awareness sessions regarding equality, good relations and cultural diversity are provided within the wider commitment to staff training under equality schemes approved by the Equality Commission. However, many colleges have developed and delivered innovative diversity training for staff well beyond that required by Equality Schemes.

3.46 Arising from its Cultural Diversity Pilot exercise BIFHE has developed and disseminated a Cultural Diversity Code of Practice for all staff. As noted in the ETI evaluation of the Cultural Diversity Pilot, **'the projects have provided useful exemplars of learning and teaching in cultural diversity issues, which can inform practice across the FE sector'**.³⁵ In addition, the report is available for download from the ANIC website. The published Code includes:

- Introduction; Why we need this?
- Definitions of Direct and Indirect Discrimination
- The experience and needs Multicultural Students at Belfast Institute
- Relevant Staff Responsibilities
- The Cultural Diversity Message - A guide
- Guidance on the use of Inclusive Language

3.47 All colleges claimed to be aware of BIFHE staff diversity code of conduct handbook (see best practice examples) and are currently considering something similar. In view of the impending August 2007 merger of colleges, the colleges in this study have delayed implementing a staff code of conduct similar to BIFHE's.

³⁵ The ETI evaluation of the Cultural Diversity Pilots is discussed at paragraphs 2.32 and 2.33

- 3.48 In accordance with the Departmental Circular No 02/06, Cultural Diversity Dissemination, and subsequent guidance notes, the 6 consortia of colleges to be merged in 2007 have submitted action plans for the Cultural Diversity/ Good Relations Dissemination Project funded by DEL. All colleges in this study stated that staff training was a crucial consideration in the development and drafting of actions plans. As an example, the relevant action plan for East Tyrone, Omagh and Fermanagh Colleges is included in Appendix 4.
- 3.49 Arising from the 2005 report commissioned and published by the college; New Migrant Communities in East Tyrone (Institute of Conflict Research, diversity training designed by the South Tyrone Empowerment Programme (STEP)), was provided to all East Tyrone College full-time teaching staff and support staff, i.e. technical, admin, receptionists. This training raised awareness of issues around race and ethnicity.
- 3.50 However, the college thought it important to note that catering, cleaning and maintenance staff are not in-house but are employed by an external contractor and as a result the College could not directly provide training in this instance. In contrast Armagh College reported that as these categories of support staff are employed directly by the college, they have received training in good relations and cultural diversity. There was a perception amongst staff at some colleges that there may be some 'problems' with the attitudes and behaviours of a small number of security and/or maintenance staff. That said, no one interviewed was able to cite any specific allegations of racist harassment or inappropriate behaviour by this particular cohort of staff.
- 3.51 Finally, a consistent theme throughout discussions with all colleges was the general lack of provision of equality and diversity training to part-time teachers, especially those who have 4 or less contract hours per week. Colleges have tried a number of methods in addressing this problematic issue including putting information on the intranet, use of blackboard, paying for part-time lecturers to come in for training and formalised induction. It is noteworthy that payments for attending training were not seen to be more efficacious than other methods of training delivery.

ISSUE 8: BEST PRACTICE

- 3.52 One of the key themes of this report is the diversity between and within ethnic minority groups. As suggested by the review of literature and policy, the case studies confirm that a 'one size fits all' approach to encouraging the participation of ethnic minority and foreign national students and successfully combating racist attitudes and behaviour amongst staff and students is seen as inappropriate and ineffective.

3.53 As remarked by one interviewee there is no *'magic bullet'* to either combat racism or increase the participation of ethnic minority students. All case studies exhibited an enthusiastic commitment to enhance the participation of ethnic minorities and a genuine determination to tackle racism. What emerges from the case studies is an implicit endorsement of a holistic approach that combines a number of approaches and initiatives that are tailored to specific local needs. In all instances, the initiatives of particular colleges cited in the above sections of this chapter were described by the colleges as innovative and tailored to specific local needs. As a result it was felt these initiatives delivered tangible benefits and outcomes to both the colleges and ethnic minority communities.

What works: necessary ingredients?

3.54 In combating racist attitudes and behaviours, be it amongst staff or students, a visible high-level commitment to the robust enforcement of harassment policies and procedures was seen as essential. As previously, noted, only one college was able to specifically cite a complaint of racial harassment. Therefore, this view amongst colleges was in large measure based on the perceived successful implementation and enforcement of harassment policies with respect to sectarian and sexual, harassment. As noted above, all colleges cited recently revised induction programmes for all full-time students which highlight diversity and good relations. It was felt that the decreased incidence of sectarian harassment and the continued low incidence of reported racial harassment, in the face of increasing numbers of ethnic minority students, demonstrated the preventative efficacy of the induction programme. Along these lines, all case study college's thought students, regardless of race or nationality, viewed colleges as 'safe and neutral' places.

3.55 All colleges commented on the commitment and skills of teaching staff in addressing the needs of ethnic minority students. This was attributed to staff training and awareness sessions on equality issues in general and race in particular. Based on an evaluation of course assessment forms, a number of colleges have concluded that the most effective training sessions were those that combined teaching and non-teaching staff.

3.56 Colleges have attempted to increase the participation of ethnic minority students by reducing potential reasons for poor attendance and drop-out rates some colleges were proactive in establishing partnerships with relevant representative minority groups. For example the community education department of one college said that when setting up courses in partnership with ethnic minority groups efforts are made to tailor the course to needs of particular groups. In turn this has had a marked impact on lowering drop-out rates. This college cited a specific flexible provision of courses for workers in the catering industry.

- 3.57 Active engagement and collaboration with key stakeholders works. As noted above a positive outcome of the Cultural Diversity Pilot exercise was the work undertaken by BIFHE in the developing of codes of practice on diversity for staff and students. An important aspect in the development and implementation and acceptance of the codes was the Institute's active engagement and consultation with staff and student unions and, crucially, a wide range of ethnic minority groups.
- 3.58 Armagh City and District Council in partnership with Armagh College of Further and Higher Education has developed a course for training for community and voluntary groups in the council area on Good Relations. The training is called Challenging Prejudice and Discrimination. The course is designed to deal with highly complex and sensitive issues (e.g. racism, sectarianism, homophobia etc) in a safe environment and encourages participants to critically reflect upon and challenge their own prejudices and stereotypes. The training can be delivered in community halls or other suitable venues for groups who can get a minimum of 8 participants. It is run for 2 hours a week over a 10 week period. For those participants who wish to gain a qualification, the course is accredited at OCN Level 2. All of the training is available free of charge to groups and individuals through the council's Community Relations Programme and Armagh College's Life Long Learning Department.
- 3.59 Follow-up and commitment are essential to successful outcomes. For example, as a result of the development and dissemination of the student and staff diversity codes, at BIFHE all policies relevant to the codes have been reviewed, supplemented or amended to reflect and incorporate the key themes of the codes of practice. This is consistent with the institute's view that effective mainstreaming of diversity issues should be embedded in business planning and subsequent evaluation process.
- 3.60 As noted elsewhere in this report, in 2005 East Tyrone College published a research report, New Migrant Communities in East Tyrone. The College is now engaged in actively implementing the recommendations arising from the report. Key activities arising from the findings and recommendation of report include the provision of training in cultural diversity and anti-racism to all staff.

Areas for improvement

- 3.61 Some colleges identified a potential problem of racism amongst their ESOL customer base. There were some examples cited of ESOL students from one nationality refusing to attend classes with students from other nationalities. It was suggested that the obvious way to remedy this situation was to extend aspects of student induction materials that address equality and good relations issues to potential and actual ESOL students.

- 3.62 More than one college identified a need for 'bite size' ESOL modules to address the problem of migrant workers both moving about and/or doing shift work. Due to the nature of the employment and labour patterns many migrant workers who might benefit from ESOL provision are unable to attend courses of 36 week duration. It was suggested that in co-operation with the department, a system needs to be developed that will fit the particular needs of migrant workers.
- 3.63 A persistent theme amongst all case study colleges is an identified need for targeted pastoral support for ethnic minority students in general and ESOL students in particular.³⁶ In a similar vein, comments were made by a number of interviewees that there is a need for a named position/individual that takes the lead in engaging ethnic minority groups and pursuing their interests and needs.
- 3.64 The provision of affordable childcare, or lack thereof, remains a barrier for many women in accessing employment, training or educational opportunities. Most colleges stated there is a particular need for affordable crèche facilities to encourage increased participation of women from ethnic minorities who might not have the same access to family/neighbourhood support networks.

CONCLUSION

- 3.65 All colleges evidenced a willingness to learn from the evaluation of their own activities. With the aim of further developing good practice throughout the FE sector, all colleges showed an active willingness to share experiences and good practice between colleges. Of equal importance, participating colleges stated a willingness to learn from those actions and programmes from the wider public and private sector that have proven effective in addressing racism and increasing the participation of ethnic minorities. In Section 8, examples of good practice across a range of sectors and jurisdictions are presented.

³⁶ The term targeted pastoral support is used in a number of OFSTED inspection reports. For example, this extract from the OFSTED January 2007 inspection report on Halewood College, Knowsley, England, contains the following passage.

'The quality of care, support and guidance is good and contributes well to students' achievement and enjoyment of their learning. The school is committed to the inclusion of all students. It works hard to ensure all students, including the more vulnerable, achieve well, are happy, safe and well supported. Most students and parents agree that students are well looked after. The school has appropriate procedures in place for risk assessment and for safeguarding its students. Most students believe that the school deals with all forms of bullying well because it has good support systems in place. The school has received a Leading Aspect Award for its work on bullying. The form tutor is a central point of the school's pastoral support system and helps to monitor students' personal and academic achievement through regular individual mentoring. As a result the school provides students with well targeted pastoral support.'

3.66 From our case studies of FE colleges, it appears on the whole that colleges are well beyond a mere 'tick box' mode in complying with statutory obligations with respect to race and good relations. All colleges have chosen to actively address racism and good relations issues and, given widely differing local circumstances, are engaged in a range of actions and programmes to promote good relations, combat racism and engage with ethnic minorities.

3.67 All case study colleges:

- Stated that recognition of ethnic and racial diversity was a key consideration in the development and dissemination of promotional materials such as leaflets and posters. These were made available in a number of languages.
- Have explicit policies with respect to bullying and harassment by either students or staff. Generally these policies addressed a range of categories including, race/ethnicity, religious belief and political opinion, gender and disability. In all case study colleges the induction process for full-time students includes explicit signposting to policies on harassment bullying within the wider ambit of policies on equality, diversity and good relations.
- Are aware of the diversity between and within ethnic minority groups. In turn this awareness informs policy design, delivery and assessment across a range of issues, from course design and delivery, marketing and recruitment, staff and student training.
- Acknowledge the need for ongoing and active engagement with key stakeholders, especially representative ethnic minority groups. This is one of the most persistent themes common to all case study colleges.

4 KEY STAKEHOLDERS FEEDBACK

- 4.1 In this section we provide a summary of our consultations with our key informants from the ethnic minority sector and FE representatives. These findings arise from meetings with individual groups representing the interests of either specific ethnic minorities groups or the wider population of ethnic minorities. In addition, two larger meetings were held with key informants from the ethnic minority and Further Education Sectors. Details of the research consultees can be found in Appendix 1.
- 4.2 At the outset it is necessary to make a crucial if simple point. It is this. Different groups and individuals will have differing experiences, perceptions and opinions. Therefore we neither expected, nor found, unanimity of views on the particular issues discussed below. In addition, some of the groups have an explicit advocacy role for their particular constituencies and their opinions and assessments may be at variance with those of Government and/or the Further Education Sector. Lack of consensus does not vitiate or invalidate the views expressed by the key stakeholders. In all our discussions interviewees gave freely of their time and acted in good faith in articulating their views based on the evidence available to them.

I. GENERAL ISSUES

Data Collection and Analysis

- 4.3 In their approved equality schemes, all colleges undertake a commitment 'to monitor the impact of the policy in order to find out its effect on the relevant groups and sub groups within the equality categories.'³⁷ In our discussions with key stakeholders a number of issues around the collection and analysis of data were raised. Amongst these are:
- Data on race and nationality is notionally collected but not seen as a priority issue for colleges or the Department. For example, a number of key stakeholders asserted that data on race and nationality was not input into relevant databases.
 - Definitions: The nexus of race and nationality. A number of key stakeholders commented on the constraints associated with the term 'white' within any race categorisation. Amongst some stakeholders there is marked preference to be able to identify Eastern Europeans within the 'white' category given the growing importance and presence of migrant workers. Along these lines ideas were presented to change the categories so that individuals who would classify themselves as white can also be distinguished as, for example, Portuguese, Lithuanian, Russian etc. The general view from ethnic minority

³⁷ Guide to the Statutory Duties, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, (2005) pg 77

representatives was that monitoring systems should be designed to capture as much diversity as possible. This has come to the forefront with the unprecedented increase in inward migration, particularly from the new EU accession countries over the last 2-3 years.

- Country of birth. Amongst most key stakeholders the view emerged that there is a need to distinguish between 'immigrant' communities and 'indigenous' ethnic minorities. A number of key stakeholders made the point that some of the issues confronting 2nd or 3rd generation members of the indigenous Chinese or Indian communities would be significantly different than those confronting recent immigrants and asylum seekers.

Policies and Codes of Practice

4.4 How students behave in word and deed can also have a strong influence on how an institution is perceived. The extent to which an institution develops strong codes of acceptable behaviour and enforces them can determine whether an institution is perceived to be providing a safe environment for all traditions to feel welcome and secure. We asked key stakeholders, based on their experiences, how policy on racist harassment and bullying is disseminated, publicised and enforced.

- In contrast to the conclusions in the case studies, that Colleges are well beyond a tick box approach, a general consensus amongst our ethnic minority consultees was that colleges tend to be reactive rather than proactive in dealing with issues of racial harassment and bullying. One stakeholder made the medical analogy between preventive and therapeutic interventions, stating that the limited resources of colleges tended to be targeted at reacting to alleged incidents as opposed to positively promoting an institutional culture of respect ethnic minorities and non-indigenous nationalities. However it should be borne in mind that reported incidences are few with most case study Colleges reporting no incidents of racial harassment.
- All key stakeholders acknowledged the commitment of colleges in promoting a respect for diversity and in combating racism. However the point was raised on a few occasions that much of what is done in the equality arena at present is paper and compliance based and that greater practical application is required to impact on the student population. Those involved in cultural diversity projects reported that cultural awareness days and activities were important in educating students in this area.
- A number of key stakeholders suggested that there is a need for colleges to actively promote and publicise an ongoing engagement on issues of race and ethnic minorities at both director and management board level.

- It was felt that student engagement in anti-bullying and racism training and cultural awareness activities was just as important as staff training and involvement as this allows for the greatest impact on class management and implementation to be realised. Although it was seen as important for teachers and lecturers to take the lead in dealing with issues of racism and integration within the classroom, as this will cascade into the student population.
- It was reported from both the colleges and a number of consultees that largely due to Section 75, the Statutory Duty, many representative ethnic minority groups were experiencing 'consultation fatigue' Therefore co-ordinated consultation, often under the auspices of ANIC, in the Further Education Sector wide basis was therefore very welcome.
- It was reported that a number of courses have units within them that deal with racism e.g., Key Skills; Working with Others, childcare courses, sport and recreation etc with this type of module becoming more common in the vocational courses. However some representatives from the FE sector asserted that teachers do not receive any specific training on how to deliver these elements addressing racism. The lack of experience with ethnic minorities and no local context also makes it hard to deliver thereby reducing the impact on the student population.

Recruitment and Marketing

4.5 From an equality and good relations viewpoint, these policies and activities require careful scrutiny to identify any potential adverse impacts and in the event of their identification, a strategy to seek their amelioration.

- 'Word of mouth' awareness of college courses and opportunities offered was seen as a prevalent marketing vehicle amongst 2nd and 3rd generation members of indigenous ethnic minority groups.
- Although Arabic is one of the worlds largest language groups, there appears to be a limited amount of FE promotional and guidance material printed in Arabic. A number of stakeholders suggested that colleges be more proactive in providing printed material in Arabic.
- Most stakeholders acknowledged that in the main the FE sector has made genuine and positive efforts to present appropriate and positive messages about minority ethnic groups in publicity materials. However, a number of stakeholders indicated that there was lack of consistency across the sector with some colleges 'doing better' than others. There was no stated awareness of marketing groups and forums set up amongst the colleges to ensure a consistency of approach. Many attributed this lack of consistency to differences in the composition of the ethnic minority population within the catchments of the different colleges. Some groups acknowledged that some the colleges have limited experience and contact with ethnic minority

communities while for colleges, especially those in urban settings, contact with ethnic minorities has increased in recent years.

II. INCREASING THE PARTICIPATION OF ETHNIC MINORITIES: IMPEDIMENTS AND ENABLERS.

Age of Students and Adult Returners

4.6 We asked key stakeholder if adult students (i.e. aged 25+) from ethnic minority backgrounds encounter different barriers, be they attitudinal or logistics, then younger students? Although a small minority of stakeholders did not see age as an issue, most made a number of points indicating that age specific issues were a significant factor in colleges attracting and recruiting students from ethnic minorities. The main issues raised are:

- Equivalencies in academic qualifications. Although stakeholders acknowledged that this issue was beyond the immediate control of individual colleges a general view emerged that the lack of recognition for academic and/or professional qualifications obtained outside of the United Kingdom and/or Ireland needlessly limited members of ethnic minorities in accessing courses provided by colleges, especially at A-level and Higher Education.
- Access to affordable childcare. For women members of recent immigrant groups, who may have limited or non-existent recourse to family and/or neighbour networks, the lack of affordable childcare was seen as a genuine impediment for many minority ethnic women accessing FE courses.

ESOL

4.7 Our discussions with key stakeholders confirmed the fundamental importance of including a consideration of ESOL in this study. A number of key points regarding ESOL provision as both an enabler and impediment to the increased participation of ethnic minority students emerged.

- In addition to the formal language instruction, it is clear that many representative ethnic minority groups feel that there are important 'social aspects' involved in ESOL courses. The ESOL-teacher may be the only 'native' English-speaking individual some students see on a regular personal basis. A number of key stakeholders referred to the 'pastoral' aspects of the ESOL teacher and felt that this role was undervalued in the FE sector. Therefore it was felt important that in cases where ESOL teachers are not in a position to deal with queries/problems from the students that they have adequate information and training to enable them to refer the individual onwards.
- ESOL is seen by many stakeholders as a 'stepping stone' to subsequent ethnic minority participation in Further and Higher Education and some stakeholders felt colleges did not fully appreciate this aspect of ESOL. On a related issue a number of stakeholders

argued that greater recognition needs to be given to the wide diversity of academic and professional attainment amongst actual and potential ESOL students.

- There is a need for flexibility in the provision of ESOL courses. A 'nine to five' approach to provision is inappropriate for many potential ESOL students. Most stakeholders acknowledged that the colleges have made genuine efforts in this area but argued that greater flexibility was required around issues such as shift working and weekend provision of courses.
- A general concern was stated about raising the level of fees for ESOL and the negative impact this might have on increasing ethnic minority participation in the FE sector and in society generally. This was a particular issue with those stakeholders who noted the 'stepping stone' aspects of ESOL provision. In addition, some stakeholders suggested that consideration be given to the provision of ESOL courses on a 'cost recovery basis' from the employers of ESOL students.

Student Support

- 4.8 The point was raised in our consultations with the An Munia Tober that while other ethnic minorities have obvious barriers to education such as language the barriers to the Travelling Community are not so obvious e.g., lack of home support structure ; low education and literacy levels within the community. Less obvious barriers may also exist within the 2nd and 3rd generation members of other indigenous ethnic minority groups.
- 4.9 Many stakeholders felt the FE sector could do more to explore issues relating to race and ethnicity across a range of courses. However, there was little specific suggestion on how this might be operationalised.
- 4.10 In respect of curriculum issues, there appears to be some underlying tension between the standard curriculum and a respect and acknowledgement of cultural differences and diversity. Many group specific stakeholders expressed a desire that FE colleges should promote awareness amongst ethnic minority students of their history and culture and not assume a predominantly 'eurocentric' approach.
- 4.11 A small number of stakeholders expressed some concern that Ethnic Minority support groups may be inhibiting students progressing into wider FE provision. However, it is noted that no specific examples of this alleged phenomenon were cited.
- 4.12 It is perceived that most colleges do not provide adequate prayer room and halal facilities. This appears to be confirmed in the case studies as only one of the six colleges stated they provided prayer room and/or special washing facilities for particular ethnic minority groups.

- 4.13 Many stakeholders suggested that fees presented a particular barrier for members of some ethnic groups, especially those who may be concentrated in relatively low-paid employment. On an associated issue, in view of Muslim beliefs regarding interest payments and usury³⁸ it was argued that credible alternatives to student loans should be considered to increase the participation of Muslim students. It is our understanding that DEL have taken steps to tackle this issue, perhaps our consultees were not aware of these new arrangements.
- 4.14 In discussion with representatives of the Irish Traveller community members they raised the issue of segregated education which has been common at primary level for Traveller children in Belfast. They felt that it was important that Traveller children started to move into integrated provision. However, there is also a need to recognise that they will require peer and institutional support to help them to make this transition due to the current experiences of Irish Travellers within the education system, their existing levels of educational achievement and cultural barriers within their community. The recently published Traveller Education Strategy in the RoI also advocates this approach and the policy is now to close the segregated education that was provided by the Traveller Training Centres.
- 4.15 Greater effort should be made to work with community representatives to keep the young people from dropping out of the system. The priority should be to maximise access, attendance and hence achievement. Support from within the their own community while at FE may help to achieve this; this method of support is not specific to the Travelling Community with ESOL consultees also highlighting the benefit of a native language speaker/community representative on time-bound drop in basis within the college e.g., 1-2 hours / week.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

- 4.16 It is now widely acknowledged that the experiences, needs and expectations of different ethnic minority groups now vary widely - differing by geography, by gender, by generation and by socio-economic circumstances. The policies, research literature and specific initiatives of Further Education Colleges in Northern Ireland considered in section two demonstrate awareness that ethnic minorities are not a homogenous group. Evidence from the case studies clearly indicates that the colleges do not apply a 'one size fits all' approach in targeting specific ethnic minorities or the wider minority community. The discussions with key stakeholders confirm that there are great variations of experiences and therefore perceptions, views and needs both within and between ethnic minority groups.

³⁸ Under Islamic rules the charging of interest or usury is not permitted.

4.17 Particularly with respect to harassment policies, student/staff codes of practice and ESOL, some key stakeholders from the ethnic minority community were critical of the Further Education Sector and did not articulate a specific awareness of actions and programmes undertaken by individual colleges or the wider Further Education Sector in Northern Ireland. Although not stating an awareness of specific marketing initiatives and associated forums in the Further Education Sector, most stakeholders acknowledged that in the main the FE sector has made genuine and positive efforts to present appropriate and positive messages about minority ethnic groups in publicity materials.

5 FE STUDENT SURVEY

INTRODUCTION

5.1 In this section of the report we present the results of our survey of FE students. We received 1119 responses from across the FE College network. This element lies at the core of our research approach to respond to some of the key elements in the terms of reference which include the following:

- To assess the perceptions, attitudes and experiences of potential and current students/trainees in Further Education colleges towards issues around race, ethnicity and nationality.
- To identify chill factors in the FE sector for those young people who are from ethnic minority groups.

5.2 In the following analysis we look at perceptions of the college environment with regard to race and ethnicity. The survey results are also interpreted in light of our focus group findings with ethnic minority students in our case study colleges. However, we would note that the majority of our focus groups were with part-time ESOL students due to the much easier logistics in organising such focus groups (classes made up solely of ethnic minorities) and their prevalence within many colleges (i.e. low numbers of ethnic minority students within mainstream courses). As we will see later in this chapter this limits their usefulness in understanding problems with regard to the college environment and levels of racist harassment.

PEER CONSULTING FE STUDENT SURVEY

5.3 The distribution of the respondents to the student survey by a range of background characteristics is presented below. Where possible comparison is made with statistics for the entire FE sector sourced from DEL Further Education Statistics. Responses were received from all of the NI FE Colleges and as such were representative of rural and urban settings.

5.4 The survey was completed using a range of methods. The original intention had been for a web based survey which respondents could complete at any computer with internet access. Unfortunately, this was not possible in all cases and a considerable number of questionnaires were returned in hard copy or by e-mail.

- 5.5 To encourage completion by ethnic minority groups the questionnaire was translated in into Polish, Russian and Portuguese. Colleges were also asked by the researchers to identify any other languages that would be required, but no further requests were received.

Age & Gender

- 5.6 The distribution of students by age and gender is presented in the following tables.

Table 5.1: Distribution of Students by Age		
Age Group	FE Racism Survey¹ % (n=1093)	FE Enrolments 05/06² %
16-17	28.2	30.3
18-19	31.7	12.9
20-24	15.6	13.0
25-30	8.4	10.2
31-40	5.1	14.2
40+	5.1	19.3
Not stated	5.9	-
Total	100	100
Source: ¹ PEER Consulting Survey of FE Students 2006 ² DEL FESR		

- 5.7 Around 60% of students who responded were aged 16 to 19, with 15.6% aged 20 to 24, 8.4% aged 25 to 30 and 10.2% 31 years of age or older.

Table 5.2: Distribution of Students by Gender		
Gender	FE Racism Survey¹ % (n=1093)	FE Enrolments 05/06² %
Male	39.5	43.7
Female	57.7	56.3
Not stated	2.7	-
Total	100	100
Source: ¹ PEER Consulting Survey of FE Students 2006 ² DEL FESR		

- 5.8 Two-fifths of the responding students were male and 57.7% were female. This corresponds well with the overall FE student population in 2005/06.

Mode of Attendance

- 5.9 The table below presents the distribution of students by mode of attendance at FE colleges i.e., full-time or part-time.

Table 5.3: Mode of Attendance, %		
	FE Racism Survey¹ (n=1093)	FE Enrolments 05/06²
Full-time	69.4	22
Part-time	26.9	78
Don't know	3.8	-
Total	100	100
Source: ¹ PEER Consulting Survey of FE Students 2006 ² DEL FESR		

- 5.10 In terms of mode of attendance 69.4% of the students who responded to the survey classified themselves as full-time, 26.9% part-time and 3.8% were unsure or failed to respond.

Nationality, Religion and Race

- 5.11 The distribution of students in terms of their nationality, religion and race is presented below.

Table 5.4: Distribution of Students by Religion		
	FE Racism Survey¹ % (n=1093)	FE Enrolments 05/06² %
Roman Catholic	50.2	39.1
Protestant	32.0	32.6
Other	5.5	6.7
Non Stated/Unknown (including no religion)	12.3	21.6
Total	100	100
Source: ¹ PEER Consulting Survey of FE Students 2006 ² DEL FESR		

- 5.12 Looking at the religious distribution of survey respondents presented in the table above 50.2% are Catholic, 32.0% Protestant, 5.5% are of another religion (including Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist), while 12.3% did not state their religion or had no religion.
- 5.13 The following table presents a breakdown of the respondents by place of birth and nationality.

Table 5.5 Distribution of Students by Place of Birth & Nationality (n=1093)	
	Per cent
Born in Northern Ireland	71.3
Born outside Northern Ireland	26.8
Not stated	1.9
Total	100
<i>Nationality</i>	
British	30.4
Irish	28.1
Northern Irish	18.8
British and Irish	4.4
Portuguese	1.8
Eastern European	8.3
Other European	0.9
Filipino	0.5
Other	4.4
Not stated	2.3
Total	100
Source: PEER Consulting Survey of FE Students 2006	

5.14 Just over one-quarter of the students who responded to the survey were born outside of Northern Ireland, with 71.3% born inside Northern Ireland. 30.4% of the responding students gave their nationality as British, 28.1% as Irish, 18.8% as Northern Irish and 4.4% as British and Irish. Students of Portuguese, Filipino, Eastern European, other and other European origin were also represented.

5.15 The ethnicity of students, both survey respondents and FE enrolments 05/06, is presented below.

Table 5.6: Ethnic Distribution of Students		
	FE Racism Survey¹	FE Enrolments 05/06²
	% (n=1093)	%
White	93.8	98.1
Non-white	6.2	1.9
Total	100	100
Source: ¹ PEER Consulting Survey of FE Students 2006 ² DEL FESR, excludes unknowns		

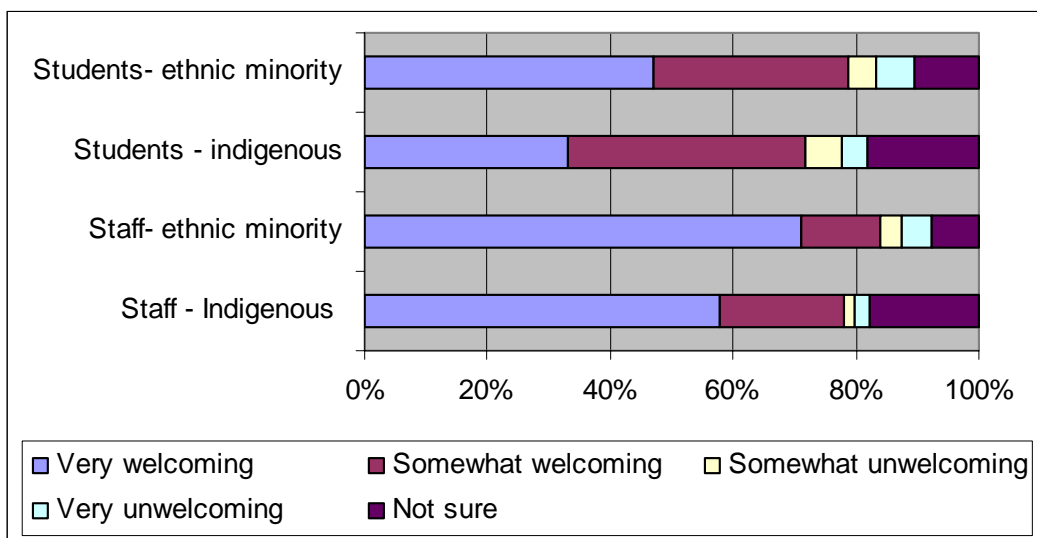
5.16 As is the case with FE enrolments the majority of the students who responded to the survey were white, 93.8% of respondents. Of the 6.2% of responding students who are non-white the categories included; mixed ethnicity, Black (African, Caribbean), Chinese and South Asian. The higher proportion of non-white students in our sample reflects our decision to over sample ethnic minority students.

PERCEPTIONS OF COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT

5.17 This section looks at the perception of both indigenous white and ethnic minority students in relation to the college environment for ethnic minorities. In the first instance we asked students the extent to which staff and students in their college were welcoming. It is interesting as we can see in Figure 5.1 that there is a distinct similarity in the views of both ethnic minority and indigenous students with regards to the extent that the college staff and students are welcoming. Overall, the majority of students both ethnic³⁹ and indigenous view staff 79.1% and students 73.0% as welcoming⁴⁰ (n=1073).

5.18 However, the real difference is in the degree to which staff and students are viewed as welcoming with both indigenous white and ethnic minority students much more likely to view staff as “very welcoming” (59.1%) compared with students (35.1%). This would suggest that there is a perception of a chill factor with regard to students in college although we would reiterate that overall the majority are viewed as welcoming. Whilst they are small numbers, nonetheless, ethnic minority students are more likely than indigenous students to perceive staff (16%) and students (21%) as unwelcoming.⁴¹

Figure 5.1: To what extent are staff and students welcoming to ethnic minorities



Source: Peer Consulting FE Student Survey (indigenous, n=880; ethnic minority, n=193)

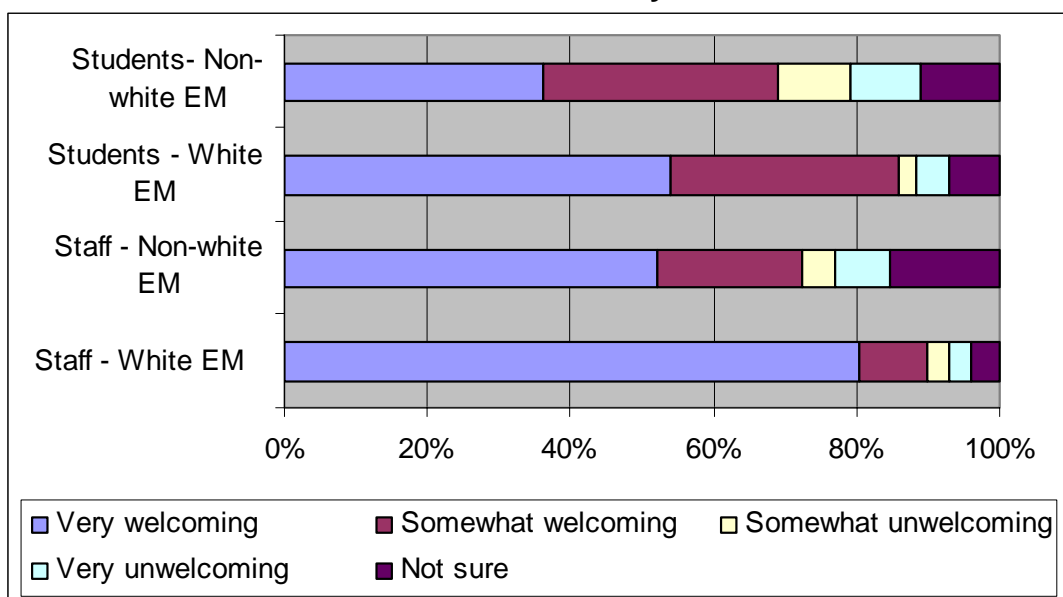
³⁹ Within this section of the report ethnic is sometimes used as an abbreviation for ethnic minority similarly indigenous is sometimes used as an abbreviation for indigenous white.

⁴⁰ Welcoming includes both those who responded “somewhat welcoming” and “very welcoming”.

⁴¹ Figures stated in paragraphs may not always correspond directly to charts due to aggregation of responses.

5.19 While figure 5.1 shows relatively little difference between ethnic minority and indigenous students there are marked differences within the ethnic minority students with full-time ethnic minority 57.4% and non-white ethnic minority students 52.3%, less likely to view staff as very welcoming. The same pattern exists in the responses with regard to the extent to which students are welcoming with 30.9% of full-time ethnic minority students and 33.8% of non-white ethnic minority students viewing students as “very welcoming”. The full responses for white and non-white ethnic minority students are set out in Figure 5.2 below.

Figure 5.2: To what extent are staff and students welcoming to ethnic minorities: white - non-white ethnic minority students



Source: Peer Consulting FE Student Survey (n=193)

5.20 In relation to the statements in Table 5.7 about the environment for ethnic minority students within the college the overall differences between the views of indigenous and ethnic minority students are more marked. The majority of ethnic minority students are positive about the college environment but to a lesser extent than indigenous with differences in the range of 5 to 15 percentage points. In particular they were much less likely to agree with the statements “Teaching staff are upfront about dealing with incidents of racial harassment and discrimination”, 69.9% compared to 85.9%, and “the Student Union at my college is actively involved in stopping racism on my campus”, 59.5% compared to 72.0%.

5.21 Nonetheless, the overall tenor of responses to this question is positive suggesting that a large majority of students both indigenous and ethnic minority feel that their College is trying to create a positive and supportive environment for ethnic minorities. However, the statements highlighted above might suggest that efforts to tackle racism within Colleges need to be given a higher profile and should look to more directly involve ethnic minority students.

Table 5.7: FE Student Views on the college environment (% positive responses)

Q3	Indigenous students Yes % ⁴²	Ethnic Minority Students Yes %
Teaching staff are aware of and sensitive to the problems faced by ethnic minority students	90.1	83.2
Non- Teaching staff are aware of and sensitive to the problems faced by ethnic minority students	79.3	68.8
College provides a supportive environment for students from ethnic minorities	89.2	85.7
College should recruit more students from ethnic minorities	77.6	81.3
College is committed to improving relations between people of different races/ethnic origins	87.6	78.5
The Student Union at my college is actively involved in stopping racism on my campus	72.0	59.5
Teaching staff are upfront about dealing with incidents of racial harassment and discrimination	85.9	69.9
Students from ethnic minorities have less of a say than white students in college affairs	24.5	20.8
Source: Peer Consulting FE Student Survey (indigenous n=888) (ethnic minority n=200)		

5.22 In Table 5.8 we look specifically at the views of full-time and part-time ethnic minority students. Our original hypothesis when undertaking this analysis was that the lower level of awareness amongst ethnic minority students of College and Student Union activities, evidenced above, might be due to the high number of part-time ethnic minority students, who account for approximately 60% of our ethnic minority sample, who potentially would not be aware of these activities given their more limited interaction with college life. However, our analysis showed the exact opposite with full-time students much more negative about the college environment than part-time. This is clearly evidenced below with full-time students much less positive in their responses with large differences of between 20 and 40 percentage points.

5.23 The main cause for concern is the qualitatively different experiences of full-time and part-time students with the former likely to have a much higher level of interaction with staff and other students as they move between classes and take breaks. On the other hand, part-time students are more likely to come into college and go straight to their class and straight home afterwards with much less interaction. This suggests that full-time students are much better situated in terms of their experiences to assess the environment for ethnic minorities in colleges.

⁴² The percentage figures in the tables relate to those who expressed an opinion.

Table 5.8: FE Student Views on the college environment (% positive responses): full-time/part-time ethnic minority students

Q3	Ethnic minority full-time students Yes %	Ethnic minority part-time students Yes %
Teaching staff are aware of and sensitive to the problems faced by ethnic minority students	70.6	93.4
Non-Teaching staff are aware of and sensitive to the problems faced by ethnic minority students	47.2	84.6
College provides a supportive environment for students from ethnic minorities	72.5	95.9
College should recruit more students from ethnic minorities	66.0	93.1
College is committed to improving relations between people of different races/ethnic origins	60.4	92.6
The Student Union at my college is actively involved in stopping racism on my campus	46.2	77.4
Teaching staff are upfront about dealing with incidents of racial harassment and discrimination	65.0	79.5
Students from ethnic minorities have less of a say than white students in college affairs	26.1	17.0
Source: Peer Consulting FE Student Survey (n=181) (F/T n=71, P/T n=110)		

5.24 In our analysis we have looked at differences in relation to perceptions for both indigenous and ethnic minority students by age, gender, mode of attendance and religion. In relation to ethnic minorities we have also looked at race or ethnic group, however, the numbers within ethnic groups are too small to allow for any meaningful analysis. Throughout the rest of this chapter where we have found consistent or large differences between these groups in their perceptions, attitudes and/or experiences we have reported them. Omission should therefore be seen as a sign that there is no substantial difference on the basis of that variable.

Table 5.9: FE Student Views on the college environment (% positive responses): male/female ethnic minority students

Q3	Ethnic minority male students %	Ethnic minority female students %
Teaching staff are aware of and sensitive to the problems faced by ethnic minority students	94.2	79.5
Non- Teaching staff are aware of and sensitive to the problems faced by ethnic minority students	81.8	67.9
College provides a supportive environment for students from ethnic minorities	94.4	83.3
College should recruit more students from ethnic minorities	89.1	82.3
College is committed to improving relations between people of different races/ethnic origins	88.5	74.6
The Student Union at my college is actively involved in stopping racism on my campus	78.6	55.0
Teaching staff are upfront about dealing with incidents of racial harassment and discrimination	78.1	68.9
Students from ethnic minorities have less of a say than white students in college affairs	15.6	27.8
Source: Peer Consulting FE Student Survey (n=189) (male n=84, female n=105)		

5.25 Table 5.9 shows a consistent and clear difference in the perceptions of male and female ethnic minority students with females less positive in their views about the college environment. Again the differences in their views are particularly marked in relation to the College's commitment to improving relationships and the role of the Student Union. They are also less positive about the sensitivity of staff both teaching and non-teaching towards the need of ethnic minority students.

5.26 Our analysis also showed marked differences in the views between white and non-white ethnic minority students in relation to the college environment. The two largest differences relate to the following statements "Non-teaching staff are aware of and sensitive to the problems faced by ethnic minority students" 78.1%/48.3% respectively for white/non-white ethnic minority students and "The Student Union at my college is actively involved in stopping racism on my campus" 70.5%/43.3% respectively. In addition it is worth noting that the question regarding the role of the Student Union received the highest level of "don't know" responses.

Table 5.10: FE Student Views on the college environment (% positive responses): white – non-white ethnic minority students

Q3	Ethnic minority white students %	Ethnic minority Non-white students %
Teaching staff are aware of and sensitive to the problems faced by ethnic minority students	87.2	75.5
Non- Teaching staff are aware of and sensitive to the problems faced by ethnic minority students	78.1	48.3
College provides a supportive environment for students from ethnic minorities	88.9	79.1
College should recruit more students from ethnic minorities	84.1	75.6
College is committed to improving relations between people of different races/ethnic origins	82.7	70.0
The Student Union at my college is actively involved in stopping racism on my campus	70.5	43.3
Teaching staff are upfront about dealing with incidents of racial harassment and discrimination	71.7	66.7
Students from ethnic minorities have less of a say than white students in college affairs	15.9	29.7
Source: Peer Consulting FE Student Survey (n=192) (white n=127 non-white n=65)		

5.27 This pattern is also evident in the comparisons of full-time/part-time and male-female ethnic minority students in Tables 5.8 and 5.9 and clearly indicates that for them there is an issue with regard to the attitude and behaviour of non-teaching staff in colleges. These differences are also common in relation to the role of the Student's Union and suggest that there is scope for considerably more involvement of the Student's Union and students in general in tackling racist views and behaviour.

Table 5.11: Views on discrimination in college and dealing with racist incidents

Q4	Indigenous Students % positive	Ethnic minority students % positive
I would feel okay about openly expressing my dislike of racist jokes or statements made by others at my college	75.5	69.4
If I were to <i>witness</i> racial harassment or discrimination at my college, I would feel okay about reporting it to teaching or non-teaching staff	85.2	81.1
If I were to <i>report</i> racial harassment or discrimination at my college, I am sure that my college would respond to it	87.4	86.1
Some <i>Teaching staff</i> discriminate against people from ethnic minorities at my college	11.6	14.7
Some <i>Non-teaching staff</i> discriminate against people from ethnic minorities at my college	17.1	16.8
Some <i>students</i> are nasty towards people from ethnic minorities at my college	53.0	29.7
Racism is a problem at my college	12.2	14.4
Source: Peer Consulting FE Student Survey (n=873) (n=200)		

5.28 The pattern in relation to the views of indigenous and ethnic minority students is the same for the issues set out in Table 5.11 with the ethnic minority students tending to be less positive, although the differences are less marked than in Table 5.7 above. The one exception is the statement “Some students are nasty towards people from ethnic minorities” where interestingly indigenous students are much more likely to agree with this statement than ethnic minority students, 53% compared to 29.7%.

5.29 Within the ethnic minority students there are still consistent differences between full-time and part-time students although the differences are not as marked as for Table 5.8 above with the exception of the statement “Racism is a problem at my College” with 26.0% of full-time students agreeing with this statement compared to 5.5% of part-time students. This reinforces our view that the large proportion of part-time ethnic minority students sample tends to understate the extent of racism within colleges.

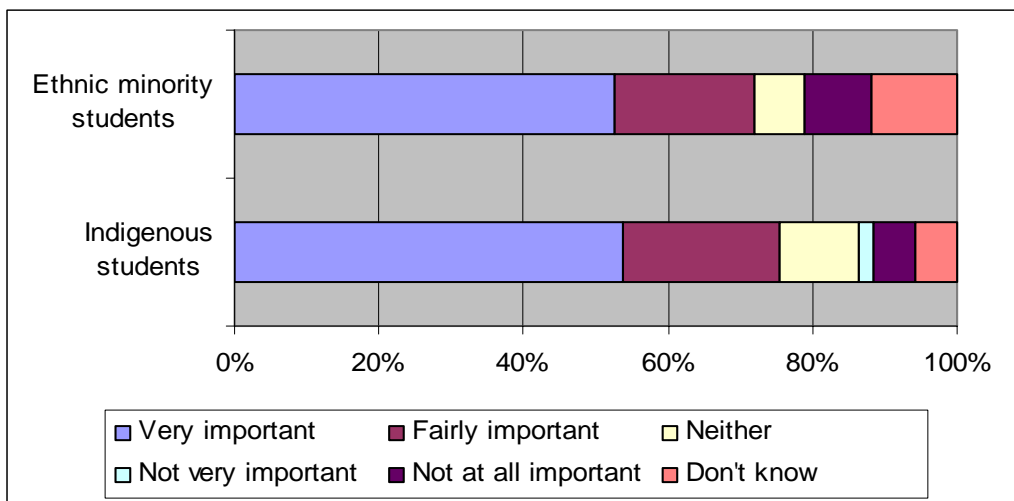
Table 5.12: Views on discrimination in college and dealing with racist incidents: white – non-white ethnic minority students

Q4	Ethnic minority white Students %	Ethnic minority non-white students %
I would feel okay about openly expressing my dislike of racist jokes or statements made by others at my college	68.6	70.9
If I were to <i>witness</i> racial harassment or discrimination at my college, I would feel okay about reporting it to teaching or non-teaching staff	86.0	70.9
If I were to <i>report</i> racial harassment or discrimination at my college, I am sure that my college would respond to it	90.6	75.7
Some <i>Teaching staff</i> discriminate against people from ethnic minorities at my college	11.6	20.9
Some <i>Non-teaching staff</i> discriminate against people from ethnic minorities at my college	11.8	27.0
Some <i>students</i> are nasty towards people from ethnic minorities at my college	27.8	34.4
Racism is a problem at my college	10.7	22.2
Source: Peer Consulting FE Student Survey (n=194)		

5.30 The results for white/non-white ethnic minority students also for the most part show a similar pattern to those above with non-white ethnic minority students less willing to report and less likely to feel that if they reported their college would act, in both cases the differential is around 15 percentage points. They are also around twice as likely to agree that teaching and non-teaching staff discriminate against people from ethnic minorities. The difference is largest for non-teaching staff with 11.8% and 27.0% respectively for white and non-white ethnic minority students this corresponds with the responses in Table 5.9 with regard to non-teaching staff.

5.31 On the positive side it is good to see that fairly high percentages of both full-time and non-white ethnic minority students would be okay about reporting racial harassment and perhaps more importantly believe that the college would act upon it. However, when we look at the actual incidence of racial harassment later in this section this willingness to report is not borne out.

Figure 5.3: How important is it to you that your college takes into account the needs of ethnic minorities?



Source: Peer Consulting FE Student Survey (Indigenous n=860 Ethnic minority n=195)

5.32 Our survey also asked students how important it was for the college to take into account the needs of ethnic minorities, interestingly indigenous students were slightly more likely to say that it was important, although over 70% of both ethnic and indigenous students viewed it as important.

5.33 Overall then in relation to perceptions of the college environment the responses from the majority of ethnic minority students are positive. However within the ethnic minority student sample there were differences with Full-time, female and non-white ethnic minority students more negative in their views of the environment at their College.

PERSONAL ATTITUDES

5.34 In this element of our analysis we focus on the personal attitudes of indigenous students in relation to race and ethnicity. We look at this from a number of angles including; the extent of their contact and/or friendship with people from an ethnic minority; their agreement or disagreement with a number of statements about attitudes to race and ethnicity in Northern Ireland society and their own personal opinions; the extent to which they would mind someone from an ethnic minority as a workmate, neighbour or marrying a close relative.

5.35 In Table 5.13 we present their responses to questions on their personal attitudes to race/ethnicity and those prevalent in Northern Ireland society.

Table 5.13: Personal attitudes to ethnic minorities and views on NI society – Indigenous students

Q8	Yes %	No %	Don't know %
It is a good thing for a society to be made up of people from different cultures	75.7 (87.5)*	10.8 (12.5)	13.4
I'm all right about being around people of different ethnic backgrounds	83.6 (89.5)	9.6 (10.5)	6.8
Generally there is racial prejudice in Northern Ireland	63.2 (85.4)	10.8 (14.6)	26.0
Northern Ireland is weakened by people of different ethnic origins sticking to their old ways	38.3 (56.9)	29.0 (43.1)	32.7
All races of people ARE equal	80.5 (90.0)	8.9 (10.0)	10.6
Source: Peer Consulting FE Student Survey (n=885) * percentages excluding "don't knows"			

5.36 The overall picture is broadly supportive of a multicultural society with large majorities of indigenous students supporting the following statements; "It's a good thing for a society to be made up of people from different cultures" (87.5%); "I'm alright about being around people of different ethnic backgrounds" (89.5%); "All races of people are equal" (90.0%).

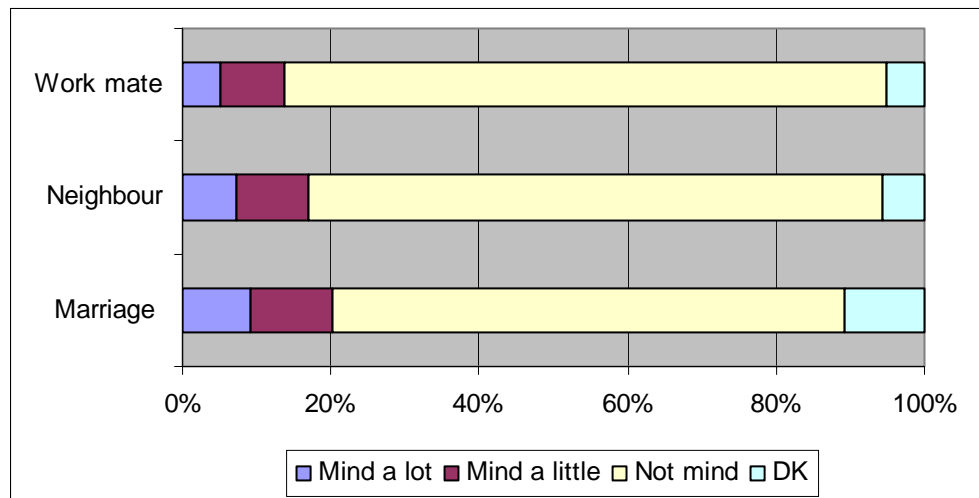
5.37 While the responses to most of these statements by indigenous students are very positive their response to the statement "Northern Ireland is weakened by people of different ethnic origins sticking to their old ways" is somewhat worrying with 56.9% agreeing with the statement. This suggests that while in general terms FE students don't have a problem with ethnic minorities they do feel that they should make some adjustments to fit in with our cultural norms. It is interesting to note that this percentage is very similar to the 54% in the East Tyrone Survey who felt that ethnic minorities should assimilate with our way of life.

Table 5.14: Personal attitudes to ethnic minorities and views on NI society – male/female indigenous students

Q8	Male Yes %	Female Yes %
It is a good thing for a society to be made up of people from different cultures	79.7	92.5
I'm all right about being around people of different ethnic backgrounds	85.0	92.3
Generally there is racial prejudice in Northern Ireland	80.4	89.4
Northern Ireland is weakened by people of different ethnic origins sticking to their old ways	52.3	61.0
All races of people ARE equal	84.1	93.9
Source: Peer Consulting FE Student Survey (n=864)		

5.38 In Table 5.14 we can see that there is a consistent difference between male and female indigenous students with male students less likely to agree with statements supporting a multi-cultural society. In particular, there is 13 percentage points difference in the number of positive responses to the statement “It is a good thing for a society to be made up of people from different cultures”. This is congruent with other studies which have tended to find higher levels of racism and racial harassment amongst males (Connolly, 2002; NILT, 2005).

Figure 5.4: Extent to which you would mind having as a workmate, neighbour or a close relative marry someone from an ethnic minority



Source: Peer Consulting FE Student Survey (n=868)

5.39 Figure 5.4 shows that the vast majority of FE students would not mind having someone from an ethnic minority as a work colleague (81.3%) or a neighbour (77.4%). Similarly, a large, albeit slightly smaller, percentage (69.1%) would not mind a close relative marrying someone from an ethnic minority. It is interesting to note how as the relationship becomes closer the percentage who “mind” increases.

5.40 Similar, although not identical, questions were asked in the NI Life and Times Survey (NILT) in 2005 and the response pattern was also similar with people more willing to accept someone from an ethnic minority as a work colleague than to have them marrying into their family. However, it is interesting to note that the responses from the FE Student Survey, whilst broadly in line with the overall response to the NILT survey, are slightly higher in terms of the proportion who would object to someone from an ethnic minority as a work colleague or marrying a close relative than those for the NILT 18-24 year old group.

5.41 In the NILT 9% of 18-24 year olds said no to the statement “I would willingly accept as a colleague at my work” and 13% said no to the statement “I would willingly accept as a relative by way of marriage to a close member of my family”. In our survey, where 87% of respondents are 16-24 year old, 14% said they would “mind a lot” or “mind a little” having someone from an ethnic minority as a workmate similarly in relation to having a close relative marry someone from an ethnic minority 20% said they would “mind a lot” or “mind a little”. While this is not a direct comparison because the questions are phrased and worded slightly differently, nonetheless, it does suggest that racist attitudes are slightly more prevalent within the FE student population than in that age group within Northern Ireland as a whole.

FRIENDSHIP

5.42 57.4% of indigenous student respondents have a friend from an ethnic minority group. It is interesting to note that for the ethnic minority students responding to our survey this figure is 82.1%. In relation to friends from specific ethnic groups their prevalence is broadly in line with the size of that ethnic community in Northern Ireland with the largest single group being the Chinese with 31.7% of Indigenous student respondents having a friend from that community.

5.43 While the distribution is broadly in line with the size of ethnic groups within Northern Ireland there were a couple of exceptions. The proportion (27.1%) reporting having a friend from the black community is higher than we would have expected given 2001 Census figures, although it is possible that these understate the current size of that community. It is also possible that some respondents may have grouped all their friends with dark skins in this category including people from South Asia. The proportion indicating that they had a friend from an Eastern European background was also perhaps lower than might have been expected given our knowledge of the scale of the recent influx since 2003/4. This may simply reflect the short period of time since this immigration began or it may be a reflection of the age structure of those immigrants who are mainly mature individuals of working age.

INCIDENCE AND EXPERIENCES

5.44 The analysis in this subsection is largely focused on the experiences of ethnic minorities in relation to various forms of racial harassment and abuse. In the first instance however we look at the extent to which indigenous students have witnessed, heard about or participated in racist activities.

5.45 In Table 5.15 below we can see the extent to which indigenous students have witnessed or heard about a number of racist activities. It is clear from the table that verbal abuse in its many guises is by far the most prevalent form of racist abuse, with 13.4% of indigenous students claiming to have witnessed such behaviour with a further 14.1% having heard about it. Other activities with relatively high incidence include racist graffiti, jokes, cartoons or flyers with 9.3% having witnessed and 8.5% heard about and ethnic minority students being shunned or blanked which was witnessed by 7.3% with 9.5% having heard about such behaviour. Less prevalent but still worrying is the incidence of racist behaviour involving staff with 5.1% of students having witnessed such behaviour and 4.5% having heard about. There is also a small percentage of students who claim to have witnessed racial discrimination of staff, with 4.6% having seen such treatment of teaching staff and 4.5% for non-teaching staff.

Table 5.15: Have you witnessed or heard about any of the following at your college? – indigenous students

Q12	Witnessed %	Heard about %	Neither %
A student from an ethnic minority being subject to 'jokes', banter, insults or nasty remarks because of their race/ethnic origin	13.4	14.1	72.5
A student from an ethnic minority being shunned or blanked by other students because of their race/ethnic origin	7.3	9.5	83.2
A member of the teaching or non-teaching staff embarrassing, patronizing or treating someone unfairly because of his/her ethnic origin	5.1	4.5	90.4
A student from an ethnic minority leaving the college because of racial harassment	4.3	4.8	90.9
Teaching Staff being discriminated against because of their ethnic origin	4.6	3.5	91.8
Non-teaching Staff members being discriminated against because of their ethnic origin	4.5	3.3	92.2
Racist jokes, cartoons, graffiti, or flyers displayed or distributed on college premises	9.3	8.5	82.2
Source: Peer Consulting FE Student Survey (n=888)			

5.46 It is interesting to note given our earlier discussion about the greater prevalence of racist attitudes amongst male respondents to our and other surveys that males are also much more likely to witness racist behaviour than females. In fact in many cases as can be seen in Table 5.16 males are almost twice as likely to have witnessed racist activities as females. This suggests that racist behaviours is much more common amongst males than females and in the following analysis we look at self-reported levels of racist activity to see whether this is indeed the case.

Table 5.16: Have you witnessed or heard about any of the following at your college? – male/female indigenous students

Q12	Male witnessed %	Female witnessed %
A student from an ethnic minority being subject to 'jokes', banter, insults or nasty remarks because of their race/ethnic origin	18.8	10.3
A student from an ethnic minority being shunned or blanked by other students because of their race/ethnic origin	9.6	6.2
A member of the teaching or non-teaching staff embarrassing, patronizing or treating someone unfairly because of his/her ethnic origin	8.4	3.0
A student from an ethnic minority leaving the college because of racial harassment	5.8	3.5
Teaching Staff being discriminated against because of their ethnic origin	7.5	3.0
Non-teaching Staff members being discriminated against because of their ethnic origin	6.7	3.3
Racist jokes, cartoons, graffiti, or flyers displayed or distributed on college premises	14.3	6.4
Source: Peer Consulting FE Student Survey (n=867)		

5.47 In Table 5.17 we can see that 17.3% of indigenous students have themselves made racist jokes at sometime or another although only 4.8% state that they have done it often. In relation to calling someone names to their face because of their colour or ethnic origin 9.1% state that they have done so at sometime.

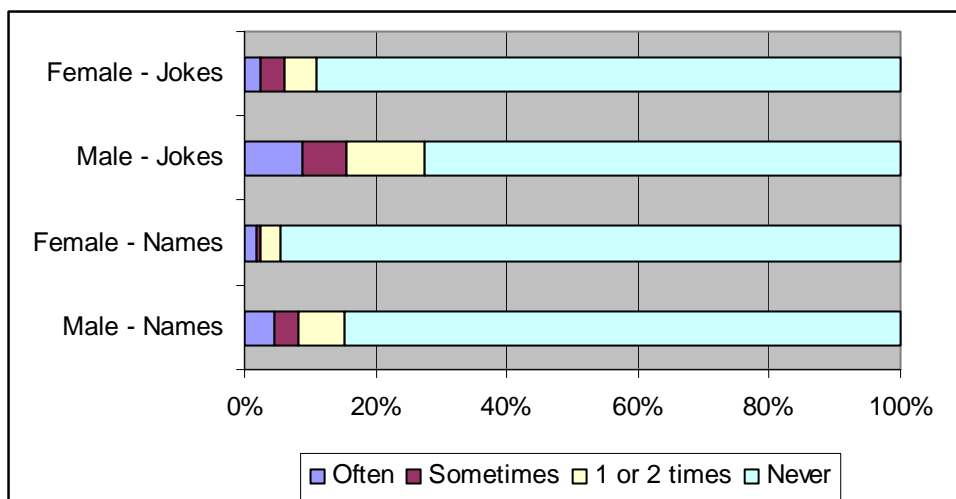
Table 5.17: Personal behaviour – indigenous students

Q13-15	Often %	Sometimes %	1 or 2 times %	Never %
Have you ever made jokes about others because of their colour or ethnic origin?	4.8	4.9	7.7	82.7
Have any of your friends at college called someone names to their face because of their colour or ethnic origin?	3.3	3.7	5.1	87.9
Have you ever called someone names to their face because of their colour or ethnic origin?	2.9	1.7	4.5	90.9
Source: Peer Consulting FE Student Survey (Q13, n=884; Q14, n=881; Q15, n=886)				

5.48 Figure 5.5 confirms our earlier comment that the incidence of racist behaviour is likely to be higher amongst males given that they were more likely to hold racist views and more likely to witness racist incidents than females. The actual difference in terms of racist actions between males and females is quite large with 27.3% of male respondents having made a racist joke at some point compared to just 11% of females. The difference in relation to name calling is even more marked with 15.4% of males having called some one a name due to their race/ethnicity compared to just 5.4% for females.

5.49 There would seem to be a clear message here from a policy perspective with any initiative to reduce levels of racism within colleges needing to target male students in particular.

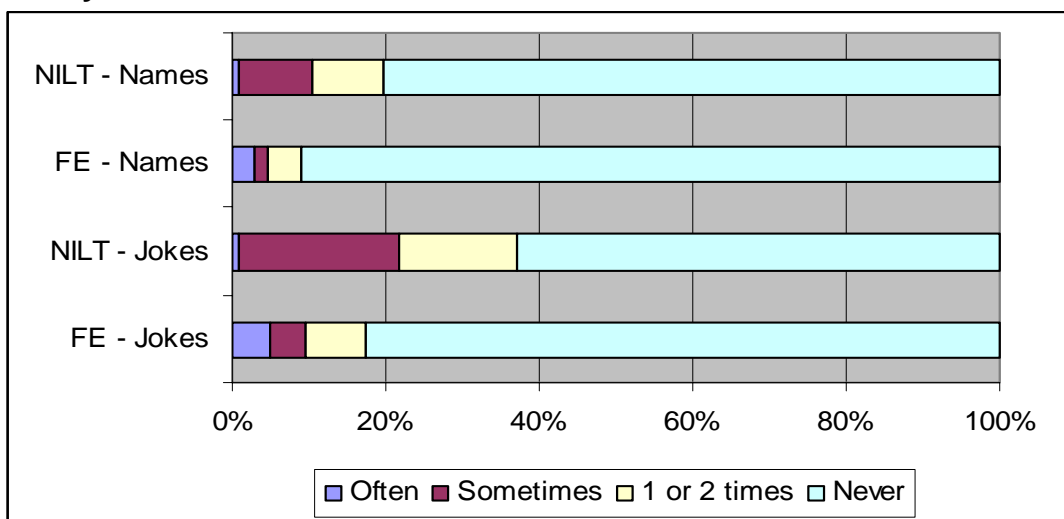
Figure 5.5: Have you ever made jokes or called someone a name to their face because of their colour or ethnic origin? – male/female indigenous students



Source: Peer Consulting FE Student Survey (n=865)

5.50 In Figure 5.6 we compare the responses to these questions with the NILT survey which in this instance asked exactly the same question. The outcome is perhaps surprising based on our previous comparison of attitudes we might have expected to see higher levels of racist behaviour amongst our FE sample, however the opposite is the case. The opposite is the case with levels of racist behaviour almost twice as high amongst the respondents to the NILT (18-24 yr olds) compared to the FE Student Survey with 36.5% having made a racist joke at some point compared to 17.3% of the FE sample and similarly for racist name calling the respective responses were NILT 19.8% and FE 9.1%. It seems difficult to square these two results, why if our FE student sample is more racist in their attitudes would they be less likely to be racist in their behaviour. One possible reason is the timing of our survey which took place some 2 weeks to 1 month after the Jade Goody Big Brother Racism Incident. It is possible that this heightened our respondent’s awareness of the potential consequences of racist behaviour and as a result they have tended to under report.

Figure 5.6: Have you ever made jokes or called someone a name to their face because of their colour or ethnic origin? – FE Student Survey/NILT survey



Sources: Peer Consulting FE Student Survey (n=865); Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey 2005 (UU/QUB)

EXPERIENCES

- 5.51 The remainder of our analysis focuses on the experiences of ethnic minority students with regard to racial harassment and abuse. In Table 5.18 we present their responses in relation to their experience of a number of different forms of racial harassment. The table also sets out whether or not the incidents that the ethnic minority students experienced were reported. There are three points of interest in this table, firstly, the extent to which the experiences of ethnic minority students reflect our earlier analysis of indigenous students recall of witnessing or hearing about racial harassment. The most significant response to that question related to verbal insults and we can see that in terms of ethnic minority student experiences this is also one of the highest. Second, this corroboration clearly reinforces the fact that there is racial harassment in FE colleges and that it is experienced by a significant minority of students. In relation to the types of harassment listed the level of incidence varies between 25% and 15% of ethnic minority respondents. Thirdly, and perhaps most worryingly the levels of reported versus non-reported incidents are about 1 to 2, so for every incident that is reported there are another 2 that are not.
- 5.52 There is a further worrying aspect of this analysis in that our six case studies only identified one reported case of racial harassment. Given that our case studies included some of the larger colleges it is difficult to understand what happened with regard to the other incidents which our ethnic minority student respondents claim to have reported. The key questions are at what level did the complaint take place? And how was it dealt with? These gaps would suggest that some form of improved incident reporting is required to ensure that all complaints of this nature are captured so that the Colleges are fully aware of the problems that exist. That said any initiative on recording would also need to look at ways of reducing the underreporting by encouraging more students to come forward when racist incidents like this happen and report them.
- 5.53 Whilst the number of incidents involving staff is one of the lowest the fact that nearly 10% of students surveyed feel that they have been treated unfairly because of their race/ethnicity and have not reported it is a concern. This is also an area where reporting is likely to be more difficult as in the normal run of things the teacher would be the first port of call for a complaint. To deal with this issue it is important that students are signposted towards the key personnel within the College administration that they can approach with such allegations. The need to improve in this area is reinforced by the responses we received to a question on student awareness of formal procedures for handling incidents of racial/ethnic discrimination and harassment, with 77.0% (n=178) not aware of their College's formal procedures for reporting racial/ethnic incidents.

Table 5.18: Ethnic Minority Students experience of racial harassment and abuse

Q27	Yes reported %	Yes sometimes reported %	Yes never reported %	No %
Being called names, insulted, or verbally assaulted because of your race/ethnic origin	4.3	1.1	10.8	83.8
Felt excluded from a social event or activity because of your race/ethnic origin	2.2	2.7	12.9	82.3
Received insulting or anonymous phone calls, letters, notes, or e-mail because of your race/ethnic origin	0.2	0.5	8.1	89.2
Been subjected to hostile stares because of your race/ethnic origin	3.8	2.2	12.4	81.6
Been physically threatened or attacked because of your race/ethnic origin	3.8	2.2	6.5	87.5
Felt ignored after expressing your ideas or sharing comments because of your race/ethnic origin	2.2	2.2	10.9	84.7
Been harassed or treated in a nasty way because of your foreign accent or for speaking a language other than English	1.2	1.1	13.0	83.7
Been in a situation where a student embarrassed, patronized or treated you unfairly because of your race/ethnic origin	2.7	2.2	10.9	84.2
Been in a situation where a member of teaching staff or non-teaching staff has embarrassed, patronized or treated you unfairly because of your race/ethnic origin	2.7	1.1	7.7	88.5
Source: Peer Consulting FE Student Survey (n=111)				

5.54 Our concerns about the level of racist incidents are further heightened by the analysis in Table 5.19 which shows a much higher incidence amongst full-time students who, as we commented earlier, have a much greater interaction with college life both in terms of staff, particularly non-teaching staff, and other students. The level of racist incidents experienced by full-time ethnic minority students is roughly 4 times greater than that for part-time ethnic minority students. In relation to the forms of racial harassment listed below, between one-third and one-fifth of full-time students reported having experienced such behaviour.

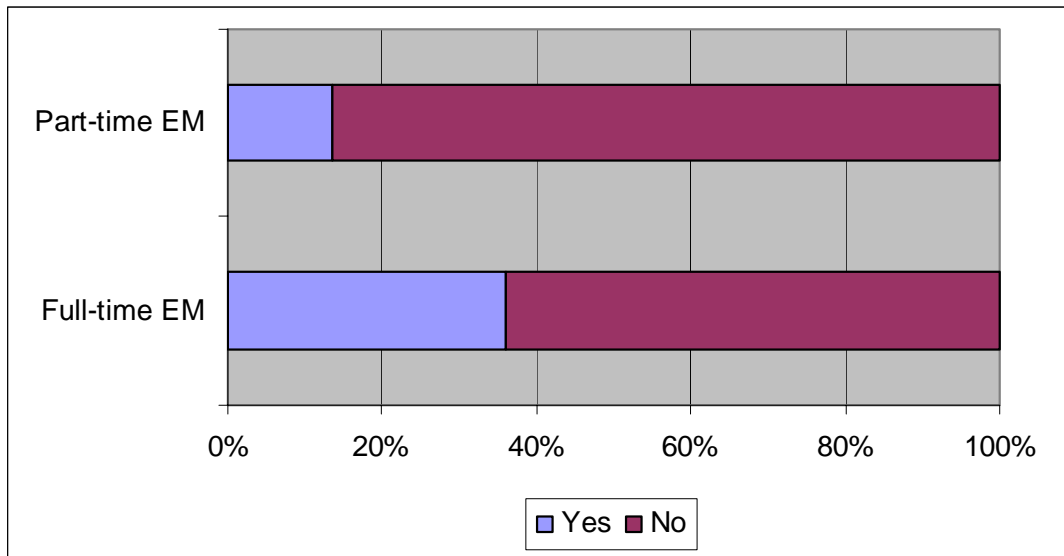
Table 5.19: Ethnic Minority Students experience of racial harassment and abuse – full-time/part-time

Q27	Full-time ethnic minority student %	Part-time ethnic minority student %
Being called names, insulted, or verbally assaulted because of your race/ethnic origin	31.3	7.5
Felt excluded from a social event or activity because of your race/ethnic origin	34.3	7.5
Received insulting or anonymous phone calls, letters, notes, or e-mail because of your race/ethnic origin	20.9	4.7
Been subjected to hostile stares because of your race/ethnic origin	34.3	9.4
Been physically threatened or attacked because of your race/ethnic origin	23.9	5.7
Felt ignored after expressing your ideas or sharing comments because of your race/ethnic origin	27.3	8.6
Been harassed or treated in a nasty way because of your foreign accent or for speaking a language other than English	26.9	10.5
Been in a situation where a student embarrassed, patronized or treated you unfairly because of your race/ethnic origin	29.9	7.7
Been in a situation where a member of teaching staff or non-teaching staff has embarrassed, patronized or treated you unfairly because of your race/ethnic origin	22.4	4.8
Source: Peer Consulting FE Student Survey (n=111)		

5.55 As with our earlier analysis on perceptions of the college environment the pattern for full-time/part-time ethnic minority students is also repeated for white/non-white ethnic minority students although the ratio is slightly lower at around 1:3 in terms of experiencing the various forms of racial harassment and abuse listed above.

5.56 This message is reinforced in Figure 5.7 which shows that full-time ethnic minority students are more than twice as likely to have felt the need to hide elements of their ethnic background in order to be able to “fit-in” at college. This relates to 35.9% of full-time ethnic minority students and clearly reflects at least some level of chill factor for these students. This pattern is also repeated for white/non-white ethnic minority students with 15.5% and 31.1%, respectively, having felt the need to hide some aspect of their ethnic background in order to “fit in” at College.

Figure 5.7: Have you ever felt the need to hide some aspects of your ethnic background in order to “fit in” at College? By full-time/part-time attendance.



5.57 It is important, however, to reflect that it is a minority of students who are racist in their attitudes and actions, and the response to the question “Thinking about your race/ethnicity, do the following groups at your college treat you with respect?” illustrates that ethnic minority students are aware of this fact with more than 80% in each instance stating that teaching staff, non-teaching staff and students treat them with respect.

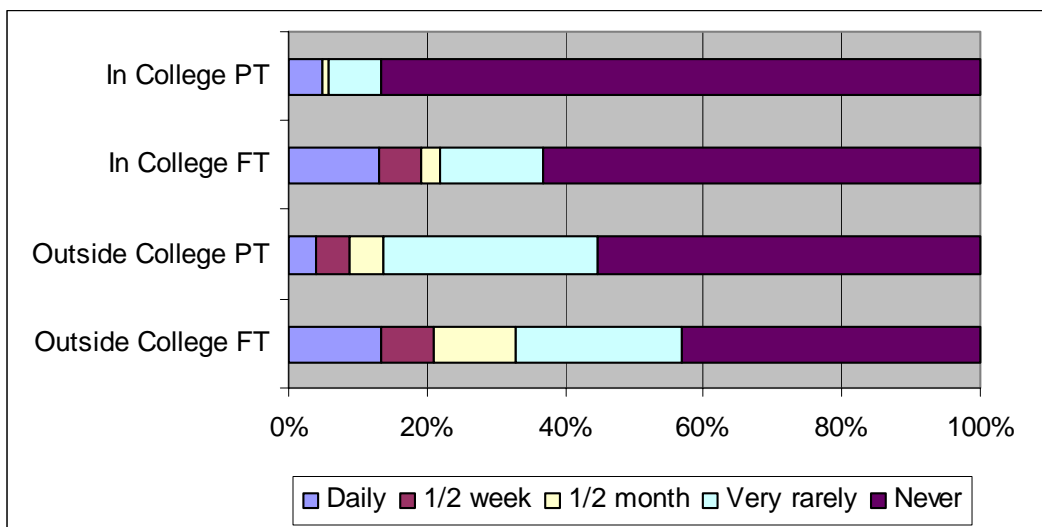
Table 5.20: Thinking about your race / ethnicity, do the following groups at your college treat you with respect?

Q25.	Yes	No
Other Students	86.3 (77.3)	13.7
Teaching Staff	82.5 (70.3)	17.5
Non-Teaching Staff	83.4 (72.5)	16.6

Source: Peer Consulting FE Student Survey (n=111)
***(Figure in brackets full-time students only)**

5.58 In Figure 5.8 we look at a comparison of the incidence of racial harassment both in and outside of College. Overall it suggests that FE Colleges provide a better environment in relation to the incidence of racist harassment than that which pertains outside of College. However one worrying aspect is that the extent of daily abuse within College for full-time students is high at 13.2% and is comparable to that experienced outside of College at 13.4%. If we also add in those who experience racial harassment once or twice a week then almost 20% of ethnic minority full-time FE students are subjected to racist harassment on at least a weekly basis. This is clearly unacceptable and it is on these full-time students that we would suggest the Colleges and DEL focus their resources and efforts in terms of dealing with racial harassment.

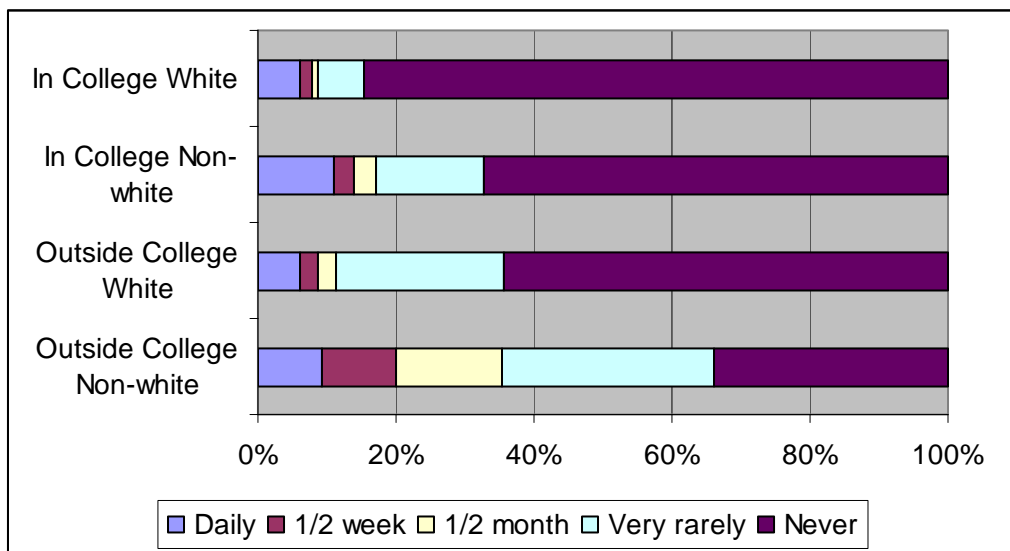
Figure 5.8: Experience of racial harassment in and outside of college – full-time/part-time



Source: Peer Consulting FE Student Survey (n=172)

5.59 In Figure 5.9 we can see that once again the pattern for white/non-white is similar to that for full-time/part-time although interestingly the incidence of racial harassment whilst similar for full-time and non-white ethnic minority students in college is somewhat higher outside of College for the non-white ethnic minority students.

Figure 5.9: Experience of racial harassment in and outside of college – white – non-white



Source: Peer Consulting FE Student Survey (n=183)

SUMMARY OF FE STUDENT SURVEY FINDINGS

College Environment

- Indigenous and ethnic minority students were more likely to view staff as “very welcoming (58.7%) compared with students (33.6%).
- The majority of ethnic minority students are positive about the college environment but to a lesser extent than indigenous students with differences in the range of 5 to 15 percentage points. The main areas of difference were:
 - “Teaching staff are upfront about dealing with incidents of racial harassment and discrimination”, 69.9% agreed compared to 85.9%; and,
 - “the Student Union at my college is actively involved in stopping racism on my campus”, 59.5% agreed compared to 72.0%
- Full-time ethnic minority students were much more negative about the college environment than part-time with large differences of between 20 and 40 percentage points in their responses to our questions on the College environment. There was a similar pattern for non-white/white ethnic minority students with the former more negative. The two largest differences were:
 - “Non-teaching staff are aware of and sensitive to the problems faced by ethnic minority students” 48.3% agreed compared to 78.1%;
 - “The Student Union at my college is actively involved in stopping racism on my campus” 43.3% agreed compared to 70.5%.
- Female ethnic minority students were also less positive in their views about the college environment on average by 15 percentage points. The differences in their views were particularly marked in relation to:
 - “My College is committed to improving relations between people of different races/ethnic origins”; 74.6% agreed compared to 88.5%
 - “The Student Union at my College is actively involved in stopping racism”. 55% agreed compared to 78.6%

Personal Attitudes

- Overall indigenous students were broadly supportive of a multicultural society with large majorities of indigenous students supporting the following statements:
 - “It’s a good thing for a society to be made up of people from different cultures” (87.5%);

- “I’m alright about being around people of different ethnic backgrounds” (89.5%);
- “All races of people are equal” (90.0%).
- While the responses to most of these statements by indigenous students are very positive their response to the statement “Northern Ireland is weakened by people of different ethnic origins sticking to their old ways” is somewhat worrying with 56.9% agreeing with this statement. This would seem to coincide with the East Tyrone Survey with 54% of students feeling that it was the responsibility of ethnic minorities to integrate in to NI culture.
- There was a consistent difference between male and female indigenous students with male students less likely to agree with statements supporting a multi-cultural society. In particular, there was a 13 percentage point difference in the number of positive responses to the statement “It is a good thing for a society to be made up of people from different cultures”. This is congruent with other studies which have tended to find higher levels of racism amongst males (Connolly, 2002; NILT, 2005; ICR, 2005).
- Our survey indicated that the vast majority of FE students would not mind having someone from an ethnic minority as a work colleague (81.3%) or a neighbour (77.4%). Similarly, a large, albeit slightly smaller, percentage (69.1%) would not mind a close relative marrying someone from an ethnic minority. However, it is interesting to note how as the relationship becomes closer the percentage who “mind” increases. This pattern was also apparent in the NILT (2005) survey results.

Incidence and Experiences

- Our survey showed that verbal abuse in its many guises is by far the most prevalent form of racist abuse, with 13.4% of indigenous students claiming to have witnessed such behaviour with a further 14.1% having heard about it.
- In relation to the types of racial harassment experienced by ethnic minority students the level of incidence varies between 20% and 10% of ethnic minority respondents. Perhaps most worryingly, however, the ratio of reported to non-reported incidents is about 1 to 2.
- The level of racist incidents experienced by full-time ethnic minority students is roughly 4 times greater than that for part-time ethnic minority students.
- The difference in full-time and part-time student experiences is reinforced by the fact that full-time ethnic minority students (35.9%) are more than twice as likely to have felt the need to hide elements of their ethnic background in order to be able to “fit-in” at college.

- This need to conform in order to fit-in is also felt keenly by non-white ethnic minority students with 31.1% indicating that they have felt the need to hide elements of their ethnic background in order to “fit-in”.

5.60 The most striking finding from our student survey is the extent to which full-time ethnic minority students are subjected to racial harassment with 45% having experienced some form of harassment at College whilst 1 in 5 experience it on a weekly basis. In addition some 35.9% of Full-time ethnic minority students have felt the need to hide elements of their ethnic background to fit-in.

6 FE STAFF SURVEY

INTRODUCTION

- 6.1 In this section we present the result of our survey of staff in Further Education colleges. In our initial analysis we looked at the responses by teaching and non-teaching staff; full-time and part-time staff; male and female staff; staff age; and, staff religion. There were no systematic or obvious differences in the views expressed by each of these groups and consequently our analysis is presented for all staff and uses comparable student responses as a point of reference. These are in themselves interesting comparisons as it shows in many cases the dissonance between the staff view of the college environment for ethnic minorities and the views of the ethnic minorities themselves.
- 6.2 In the remainder of this section the findings are set out under the following headings:
- Peer Consulting Staff Survey
 - Perceptions of College Environment
 - Staff Attitudes
 - Incidence of Racial Harassment
 - Staff Training

PEER CONSULTING STAFF SURVEY

- 6.3 This section of the reports presents a summary of the background characteristics of the staff survey respondents.

Age & Gender

- 6.4 The following tables present the age and gender characteristics of our staff survey respondents.

Table 6.1: Age Distribution of Staff (n=239)	
Age Range	Per cent
16-24	4.6
25-34	16.3
35-39	18.8
40-49	23.8
50+	20.9
Not stated	15.5
Total	100
Source: PEER Consulting Survey of FE Staff 2007	

- 6.5 A range of ages responded to the survey, with a fifth of respondents 30 years or younger, 18.8% aged between 35 and 39 and 44.7% aged 40 or older.

Table 6.2: Gender Distribution of Staff (n=239)	
Gender	Per cent
Male	27.6
Female	62.8
Not stated	9.6
Total	100
Source: PEER Consulting Survey of FE Staff 2007	

- 6.6 In terms of gender, 62.8% of the respondents were female and 27.6% male with 9.6% non-stated.

Work Related

- 6.7 The following presents the distribution of staff in terms of their job role, hours worked and length of time employed at the college.

Table 6.3: Work Related Distribution of Staff (n=239)	
	Per cent
Teaching	43.9
Non teaching	48.5
Not stated	7.5
Total	100
Full-time	46.9
Part-time	4.2
Not stated*	49.0
Total	100
<i>Years employed in the FE sector</i>	
Less than 5	24.6
5-15	34.3
16-25	18.8
25+	10.2
Not stated	12.1
Total	100
Source: PEER Consulting Survey of FE Staff 2007	
* Hard copy questionnaires distributed in error did not contain Ft/PT breakdown	

- 6.8 Just under half of respondents, 48.5% were non-teaching staff with 43.9% of those responding being teaching staff. 7.5% of respondents failed to state if they were teaching or non-teaching.
- 6.9 In terms of the number of years employed in the FE sector, 24.6% were employed for 5 years or less, 34.3% between 5-15 years, 18.8% between 16-25 years and 10.2% in excess of 25 years.

Religion

- 6.10 A breakdown of the respondents to the staff survey in terms of their religion, place of birth and their race is presented below.

Religion	Per cent
Protestant	33.1
Catholic	46.0
Other Christian	0.8
Other Non Christian	0.8
No religion	9.2
Not stated	10.0
Total	100

Source: PEER Consulting Survey of FE Staff 2007

6.11 One-third of respondents stated that they were Protestant, 46.0% Catholic, 0.8% other Christian and other non Christian; with 9.2% stating that they were of no religion.

Place of birth, nationality and race.

6.12 Looking at place of birth, 81.6% of respondents were born in Northern Ireland and 10.9% born outside of Northern Ireland.

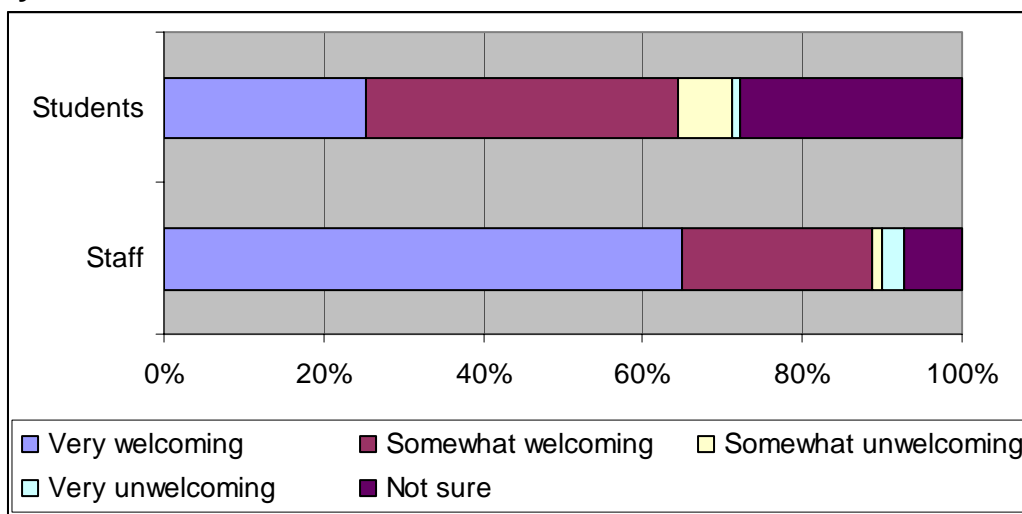
6.13 The most common nationality of the respondents was British (38.9%), followed by Irish (31.4%), Northern Irish (12.1%), British and Irish (8.4%) and Other (1.7%). 7.5% of respondents did not state their nationality.

6.14 In terms of race, 88.3% of respondents stated that they were White (British, Irish, Northern Irish or British & Irish), with 2.9% White (other nationality), 0.4% Irish Traveller and 8.4% did not state their nationality.

PERCEPTIONS OF COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT

6.15 Figure 6.1 presents analysis of the extent to which staff feel that they and students are welcoming to ethnic minorities. We can see that this presents a similar, if slightly more marked, pattern in relation to the degree to which staff and students are welcoming. It shows that staff are much more likely to view themselves as very welcoming compared to students, 65% to 25.2% respectively.

Figure 6.1: Extent to which staff and students are viewed as welcoming by FE Staff



Source: Peer Consulting Staff Survey n=228

6.16 In Table 6.5 we present staff perceptions of the college environment for ethnic minority students. In general these responses are all highly positive although it is interesting to note that in respect of the questions regarding the recruitment of students or staff from ethnic minorities that the level of don't know responses show a large increase to 33.0% and 30.5% respectively.

Table 6.5: FE Staff Views on the college environment

Q3.	Yes	No	Don't Know
I am aware of and sensitive to the problems faced by students from ethnic minorities.	90.8	3.5	5.7
In my work I provide a supportive environment for students from ethnic minorities	85.0	4.0	11.0
In general, my college provides a supportive environment for students from ethnic minorities.	79.9	3.5	16.6
My college should recruit more students from ethnic minorities.	61.7	5.3	33.0
My college should recruit more staff from ethnic minorities.	62.8	6.6	30.5
My college is committed to improving relations between people of different ethnic origins.	75.9	1.8	22.4
I am upfront about dealing with incidents of racial harassment and discrimination.	76.8	4.4	18.8

Source: Peer Consulting FE Staff Survey n=230

6.17 In Table 6.6 below we compare the views of staff and students where they were asked similar questions. In general we can see that staff have a more positive view of the college environment than indigenous and ethnic minority students. The gap is generally larger with respect to the views of ethnic minority students and is in the region of 10 percentage points, with the exceptions of “my college is committed to improving relations between people of different ethnic origins” where the gap is closer to 20 percentage points and “Teaching Staff are up front about dealing with incidents of racial harassment and discrimination” where the gap is 25 percentage points.

Table 6.6: Views on the college environment comparison of staff and indigenous and ethnic minority student responses

Q3.	Staff Yes%	Indigenous Students Yes %	Ethnic Minority Students Yes%
I am aware of and sensitive to the problems faced by students from ethnic minorities.	96.3	90.1	83.2
In general, my college provides a supportive environment for students from ethnic minorities.	95.8	89.2	85.7
My college should recruit more students from ethnic minorities.	92.1	77.6	81.3
My college is committed to improving relations between people of different ethnic origins.	97.8	87.6	78.5
I am upfront about dealing with incidents of racial harassment and discrimination.	94.7	85.9	69.9

Source: Peer Consulting FE Staff and Student Surveys (staff n=230; indigenous student n=888 ethnic minority students n=200)

6.18 However, comparing these differences based on the total ethnic minority student population ignores the significant difference within that group between full-time and part-time ethnic minority students. Table 6.7 below shows the much wider gap between the views of staff and those of full-time ethnic minority students. In this comparison the gaps are all over 20 percentage points with particularly large gaps with regard to the statements “my college is committed to improving relations between people of different ethnic origins” at 37 percentage points and “Teaching staff are up front about dealing with incidents of racial harassment or discrimination” at 30 percentage points.

Table 6.7: Views on the college environment comparison of FE staff and full-time ethnic minority student responses

Q3.	Staff Yes%	FT Ethnic Minority Students Yes%
I am aware of and sensitive to the problems faced by students from ethnic minorities.	96.3	70.6
In general, my college provides a supportive environment for students from ethnic minorities.	95.8	72.5
My college should recruit more students from ethnic minorities.	92.1	66.0
My college is committed to improving relations between people of different ethnic origins.	97.8	60.4
I am upfront about dealing with incidents of racial harassment and discrimination.	94.7	65.0

Source: Peer Consulting FE Staff and Student Surveys (staff n=230; ethnic minority full-time students n=71)

6.19 In Table 6.8 we present the views of staff in relation to discrimination and harassment in their College and how comfortable they would be in reporting. As for Table 6.7 above we have compared these responses with those for full-time ethnic minority students and as we might expect they show a similar pattern with Staff generally more positive about reporting and less likely to feel that there is discrimination.

6.20 The most interesting differences are in respect of the issue of discrimination or harassment by staff, both teaching and non-teaching, and students. Full-time ethnic minority students are twice as likely to state that teaching and non-teaching staff discriminate against ethnic minorities but on the other hand are less likely to state that students are nasty to people from ethnic minorities 38.3% compared to 52.7% for staff. The most striking difference relates to the statement “racism is a problem at my college” with full-time ethnic minority students 3 times more likely to agree with this statement than FE staff, 26% and 8.5% respectively.

Table 6.8: Views on existence of discrimination in college and willingness to report incidences for FE staff and full-time ethnic minority students

Q4	Staff Yes%	Full-time Ethnic Minority Student Yes%
I would feel okay about openly expressing my dislike of racist jokes or statements made by others at my college.	93.2	70.7
If I were to witness racial harassment or discrimination at my college, I would make and pursue a complaint.	95.9	73.8
Some Teaching Staff discriminate against people from ethnic minorities at my college.	11.2	22.8
Some Non-teaching staff discriminate against people from ethnic minorities at my college.	13.2	23.1
Some students are nasty towards people from ethnic minorities at my college.	52.7	38.3
Racism is a problem at my college.	8.5	26.0

Source: Peer Consulting FE Staff and Student Surveys (Staff n=230; Students n=71)

6.21 These gaps are of some concern given that they would indicate that staff are not aware of the actual extent of discrimination and harassment that ethnic minority students experience and consequently have a very positive view of the college environment for these students. However, hopefully the dissemination of this research can help to bridge that gap.

STAFF ATTITUDES

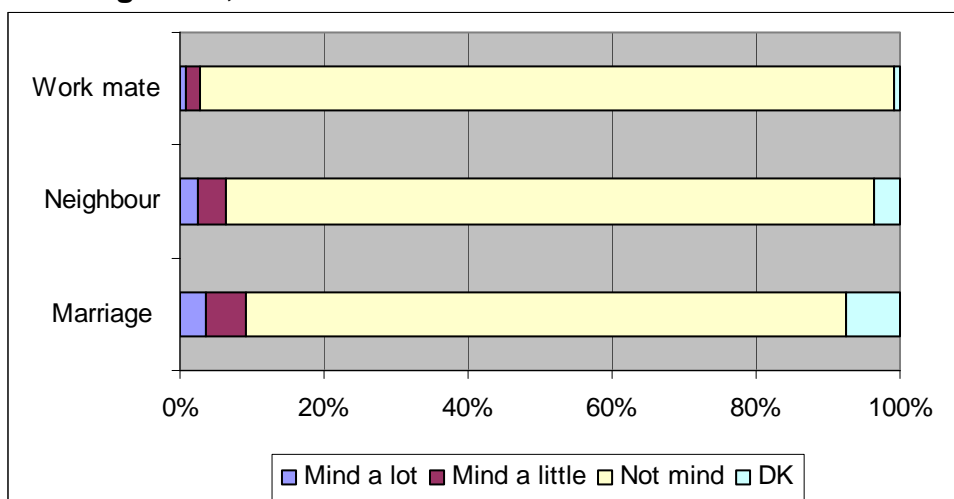
6.22 In this section we present staff responses to a number of questions intended to assess their general attitudes to ethnic minorities. Overall the responses are even more positive than those of indigenous students with the vast majority supportive of a multi-cultural society in Northern Ireland.

Table 6.9: Personal attitudes to ethnic minorities and views on NI society

Q8.	Staff Yes%	Indigenous Students Yes%
It is a good thing for a society to be made up of people from different cultures	97.2	87.5
I'm alright about being around people of different ethnic backgrounds	97.9	89.5
Generally there is racial prejudice in Northern Ireland	86.1	85.4
Northern Ireland is weakened by people of different ethnic origins sticking to their old ways.	32.9	56.9
All races of people ARE equal	96.8	90.0
Source: Peer Staff and student surveys (Staff n=236, Student n=893)		

6.23 This pattern is repeated in relation to the staff views on how they would feel about having a person from an ethnic minority as a work mate, a neighbour or marrying a close relative with much smaller proportions saying that they would mind a little or mind a lot than for the student responses. Although it is interesting that the graduation from workmate, through neighbour to marriage to a close relative is the same.

Figure 6.2: FE Staff attitudes to having a member of an ethnic minority as a neighbour, workmate or married to a close relative



Source : Peer Consulting Staff Survey n=230

6.24 These responses therefore indicate that the vast majority of staff don't have an issue with regard to the presence of ethnic minorities in Northern Ireland. However, it is worth noting that there are still some even if very small numbers who do have issues with the presence of ethnic minority groups in Northern Ireland society. In particular there were 18 individuals 10.2% of those who expressed a view who felt that there are certain ethnic minority groups that do not fit in to Northern Ireland Society. The question further asked them to state which ethnic groups did not fit in to NI society their responses are set out in Table 6.10.

Table 6.10: Ethnic Minority Groups that do not fit into Northern Ireland Society

Ethnic Group	Number of Positive Responses*
Black (African, Caribbean)	5
Chinese	2
South Asian (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi)	5
Irish Traveller	7
Portuguese	3
Eastern European	9
Filipino	3
Other ethnic group	3

Source: Peer Consulting Staff Survey (n=18)

* Multiple responses permitted

6.25 This table simply helps to illustrate that we cannot be complacent about racism, even where the vast majority are non-racist in their views there are some, and it doesn't take large numbers to have an effect, who still harbour racist views.

INCIDENCE

6.26 This element of our questionnaire was designed to assess the extent to which FE staff had witnessed or were aware of racial harassment in their College. In terms of witnessing the percentages are quite low however even at these levels they suggest a higher level of incidence than the official complaints of racial harassment that our six case study colleges were aware of. However that is not to say that they were not dealt with appropriately, it is quite possible that the individual who suffered the harassment did not want the issue taken any further.

- 6.27 Nonetheless while the action taken by the member of staff witnessing the incident may have been appropriate at the time we feel it would still be useful if some form of monitoring of incidents of racial harassment were put in place to give College management a better idea of the extent of the problem. All that needs to be recorded is that an incident took place and perhaps some categorisation of the type of harassment. There should be no need to capture personal details if the individual involved does not wish to proceed.
- 6.28 That said it is also important that as far as possible the college creates an environment in which the victims of racial harassment feel that they can make a complaint and that this will be dealt with appropriately and will involve other agencies where necessary to ensure that the issue is resolved and there is no scope for a repeat of such behaviour.

Table 6.11: Have you witnessed or heard about any of the following at your college?

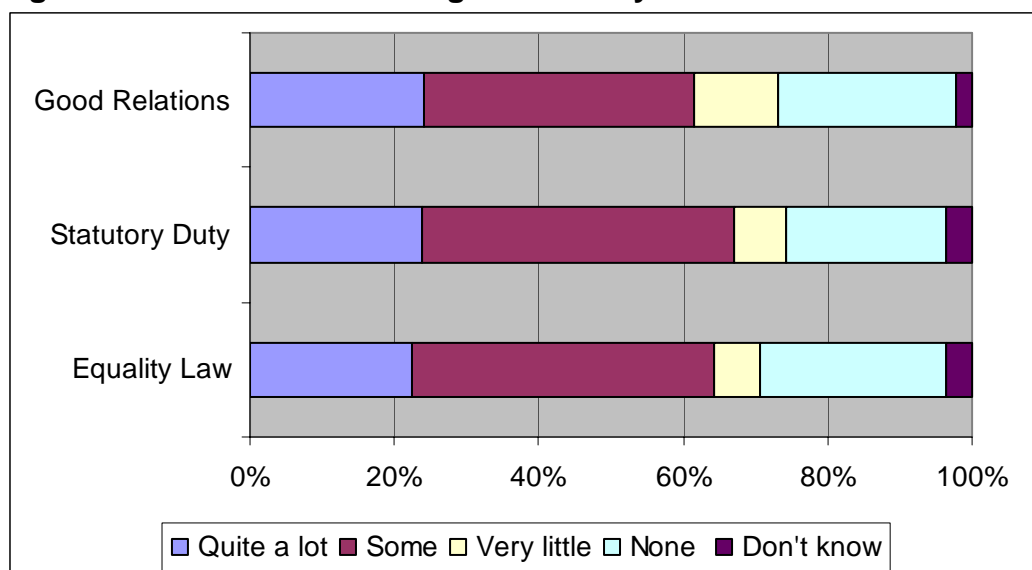
Q12	Witnessed %	Heard about %	Neither %
A student from an ethnic minority being subject to 'jokes', banter, insults or nasty remarks because of their race/ethnic origin	4.8	14.0	81.2
A student from an ethnic minority being shunned or blanked by other students because of their race/ethnic origin	3.4	8.3	88.2
A member of the teaching or non-teaching staff embarrassing, patronizing or treating someone unfairly because of his/her ethnic origin	3.9	4.4	91.7
A student from an ethnic minority leaving the college because of racial harassment	0.9	3.5	95.6
Teaching Staff being discriminated against because of their ethnic origin	1.3	3.1	95.6
Non-teaching Staff members being discriminated against because of their ethnic origin	1.7	4.8	93.4
Racist jokes, cartoons, graffiti, or flyers displayed or distributed on college premises	10.1	2.6	87.3
Source: Peer Consulting FE Staff Survey (n=229)			

- 6.29 It is interesting that while the general levels of witnessing are low, 10.1% of staff have witnessed racist graffiti, jokes, cartoons or flyers in the college. This is clearly an area where the college can be more vigilant to ensure that such material is not distributed and if racist graffiti is put up that it is quickly removed.

STAFF TRAINING

6.30 In this final subsection of our analysis of the FE staff survey we have looked at the incidence of training in relation to the following issues; equality law; the statutory duties imposed on designated public bodies; and, the good relations duty. In Figure 6.3 we can see that there are relatively few differences in the extent to which staff have received training in each of these areas.

Figure 6.3: Amount of training received by FE staff in these areas.



Source: Peer Consulting Staff Survey (n=230)

6.31 While it is a minority there were still approximately 30% of staff who had received very little or no training in these areas. In particular 36.4 % of staff stated that they had received very little or no training with regard to the good relations duty.

SUMMARY OF FE STAFF SURVEY FINDINGS

College Environment

- In general staff had a more positive view of the college environment than indigenous and ethnic minority students. The gap is generally larger with respect to the views of ethnic minority students and is in the region of 10 to 20 percentage points. The largest differences related to:
 - “my college is committed to improving relations between people of different ethnic origins” 97.8% compared to 78.5%;

- “Teaching Staff are up front about dealing with incidents of racial harassment and discrimination” 94.7% compared to 69.9%
- These gaps are even larger for full-time ethnic minority students by on average 10 percentage points.
- Full-time ethnic minority students are twice as likely to state that teaching and non-teaching staff discriminate against ethnic minorities but on the other hand are less likely to state that students are nasty to people from ethnic minorities 38.3% compared to 52.7% for staff.
- However, the most striking difference relates to the statement “racism is a problem at my college” with full-time ethnic minority students 3 times more likely to agree with this statement than FE staff, 26% and 8.5% respectively.
- These gaps are of some concern suggesting that staff are unaware of the extent of discrimination and harassment that ethnic minority students experience. However, earlier research by Connolly (2000), albeit related to experiences in schools, suggests that most harassment takes place in the more informal areas of school such as corridors or playgrounds where teachers are less likely to observe it.

Staff Attitudes to Ethnic Minorities

- In relation to staff attitudes their responses indicate that the vast majority of them don't have an issue with regard to the presence of ethnic minorities in Northern Ireland. However, it is worth noting that there is a small minority (10.2%) who feel that some ethnic minority groups don't fit into Northern Ireland society.

Staff Training

- While it is a minority there were still approximately 30% of staff who had received very little or no training in the areas of equality law, statutory duties and good relations. In particular 36.4 % of staff stated that they had received very little or no training with regard to the good relations duty.

6.32 The overall picture for FE staff shows low levels of racist attitudes. However, it should be noted that there is a small minority some 10.2% with racist views who feel that there are ethnic minority groups that do not fit in to NI Society.

7 POLICY REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

- 7.1 This section presents an analysis of college policies and their contribution to increasing the participation of ethnic minority students.

BACKGROUND

- 7.2 In October 2004 the Department of Finance and Personnel (DfP) published a consultation document “Fit for Purpose” The reform agenda in the Northern Ireland Civil Service. The reform programme for the Northern Ireland Civil Service set out in the document contains three high level considerations⁴³. These are:

1. Putting the priority front line services first, so that resources are focused on meeting the needs and aspirations of the community.
2. Building capability, for example by enhancing leadership and professionalism, developing talent, better performance management, and improving employee relations.
3. Embracing diversity, by more external recruitment and interchange, more outreach to groups who may be under-represented and enhanced equal opportunities and diversity monitoring.

- 7.3 In assessing a selection of college policies, we have concentrated on point 3 above, embracing diversity. In this assessment of college policies and practices, fitness for purpose is defined as the extent to which policies and practices:

- Acknowledge cultural diversity in service design and delivery.
- Demonstrate awareness of the needs and experiences of particular ethnic minority groups and foreign nationalities effectively enhancing equal opportunities.
- Are consistent with the colleges’ obligations under Section 75 (parts 1&2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

⁴³ For a more detailed specification of Fitness for Purpose, at appendix A we have included a list of indicative questions to assist managers in assessing Fitness for Purpose published in Is Whitehall Fit For Purpose? An Analysis of the Capability Reviews, Lodge, G., Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), Dec 2006

7.4 The Equality Commission's "Guide to Statutory Duties" specifies that consultation must take place on the "impact of policies". This involves an initial screening of policies that considers four questions:

- Is there any evidence of higher or lower participation or uptake by different groups?
- Is there any evidence that different groups have different needs, experiences, issues, and priorities in relation to the particular policy?
- Is there an opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity or better community relations by altering the policy or working with others in government or in the larger community?
- Have consultations with relevant groups, organisations or individuals indicated that particular policies create problems which are specific to them?

7.5 If the answer to any of these is positive, then consideration must be given to whether to subject the policy to the equality impact assessment (EQIAs) procedure.

7.6 In both policy screening exercises and the conduct of EQIAs public authorities are duty bound to engage in consultation regarding the likely impact on the promotion of equality of opportunity and of its existing and proposed new policies.

7.7 There are two key considerations at the heart of the EQIA are process:

- Does the policy potentially generate any adverse impacts amongst any of the nine section 75 categories? If yes, what measures might be reasonably taken to mitigate such adverse impacts?
- Even if no adverse impacts are readily discernible, are there any adjustments to the policy that may enhance equality of opportunity for any of the nine section 75 categories?

7.8 In making decisions about possible revisions to existing or proposed policies colleges must take into account the outputs arising from 'meaningful and inclusive' consultation with key stakeholders and the wider community.

7.9 All colleges conducted their initial screening of policies exercise in accordance with the arrangements specified within their then individual 'draft' Equality Schemes. All joined together in adopting a two-phased approach to consultation on the screening of policies. It is important to note that many of the policies operated by the colleges are generic to all sixteen colleges, either because the policy is derived from a single source e.g. the Department for Employment and Learning, or because it is a policy adopted by agreement between the colleges.

7.10 Phase 1 involved the specification of all college policies and this was subsequently disseminated to consultees for comment. Phase 2 of the process involved the production of a consultation paper, which detailed:

- Preliminary results of the screening of policies.
- Details of the “source” of a policy.
- Approach adopted to a co-ordinated approach to screening.
- Rationale for the prioritisation of policies for equality impact assessment.

7.11 The consultation on the Screening of Policies report was issued by individual colleges during winter 2001-02. The Association of Northern Ireland Colleges also issued its’ “generic” report to include all colleges in November 2001.

7.12 To facilitate consultation a response pro forma was developed in order to give choice to consultees concerning the type of meeting they wished to attend. To facilitate the second stage of the process consultees were invited to indicate their preferred method of consultation and, if appropriate, the specific college(s) they wished to meet with and any requirements they had.

7.13 While all colleges conducted their own screening of policies, they also collaborated with each other on the results of their screening. A common and co-ordinated approach was adapted in both stages of the college’s initial screening exercise. In the face of increasing ‘consultation fatigue’, consultees welcomed this collaborative approach.

7.14 Based on our reading of the screening reports of college policies required under section 75, we have used the following typology in categorising policies.

SPECIFIC RACIAL EQUALITY RELATED INITIATIVES

7.15 In the Northern Ireland Further Education sector the increasing importance of ethnic and cultural diversity has been recognised in recent policy initiatives. In 2004 the Department for Employment and Learning provided a total of £150,000 to fund three cultural diversity pilot projects (£50,000 for each pilot). The projects aimed to explore strategies for the promotion of good relations in the FE sector, by providing opportunities for students and staff from differing identities, backgrounds and traditions to develop and enhance relationships of trust and understanding, and promote mutual respect in every aspect of college life. The participating colleges were Armagh College of Further and Higher Education, Belfast Institute of Further and Higher Education, (BIFHE) and the collaborative project undertaken by the Upper Bann and North West Institutes of Further and Higher Education, (UBIFHE and NWIFHE).

7.16 A subsequent evaluation of the pilot projects was carried out by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) in 2005. The evaluation found that:⁴⁴

- All of the projects have met almost all of the objectives approved by the Department;
- the work undertaken in each of the projects has been successful in making most of the students, who have participated, aware of issues relating to cultural diversity, and instrumental in promoting a positive attitude change among a significant minority of students;
- the projects have provided useful exemplars of learning and teaching in cultural diversity issues, which can inform practice across the FE sector;
- in each of the participating colleges, there is a strong commitment by the senior management team to the development of an ethnically-sensitive and inclusive environment; and
- each of the colleges has begun the process of establishing good links with relevant personnel from a number of ethnic minority groups and securing their representation on steering groups and student consultative groups.

⁴⁴ Report of an Evaluation of the Cultural Diversity Pilot Projects, ETI, (2005) pg 4.

7.17 It is clear from the ETI evaluation report and the activities that were undertaken as part of the cultural diversity pilots by BIFHE, NWIFHE, Upper Bann Institute and Armagh College that the FE sector is undertaking considered and positive measures to address the issues of increasing ethnic diversity in our society. The ETI report would further suggest that these pilot projects have had a positive effect within these Colleges. As a result the Department has rolled out this initiative and recently approved bids by the six new amalgamated colleges to carry out further work on good relations building on the successful elements of the pilots.

7.18 In addition to the above, ANIC assisted by the Trademark Partnership, has established the AGREE Programme (Actioning Good Relations, Equity and Equality). All FE colleges have agreed that they will “pro-actively promote as a priority” the good relations duty. The seven steps of the programme are:

- Step 1 Invitation: establish a Project Working Group to agree an initial plan of work.
- Step 2 Establish Critical Dialogue: establish a Development Group representative of all college structures.
- Step 3 Grow Leadership Commitment and Understanding: bring formal and informal leadership into new conversations around the principles of fairness and valuing difference and develop an Equality and Good Relations training course.
- Step 4 Identify the Issues: an audit of programmes and activities.
- Step 5 Grow Commitment and Understanding Across the Wider Organisation: engage with various inter-college groups and structures and develop a college training strategy.
- Step 6 Experimenting with and Modelling New Working Practices.
- Step 7 Implement New Models of Practice into Mainstream Structures and Relationships.

7.19 Although the good relations duty refers to religious belief, political opinion, and race, from discussions with colleges and key stakeholders a common view emerged that the AGREE programme is, for all intents and purposes, focused exclusively on sectarian/community background issues. However, from discussions with ANIC and an examination of the trainers course documentation it is clear that the AGREE programme contained a discrete and specific unit on Anti-Racism. The main objectives of this Anti-Racism unit included:

- An understanding of racism at individual, group and organisational levels;

- An understanding of the historical, political and cultural context of racism;
- An ability to challenge racist myths and attitudes; and
- An understanding of the need and difficulties in moving from anti-racist policy to anti-racist practice.

WIDER COLLEGE POLICIES

Table 7.1 The Categorisation of Policies
<p><i>STUDENT SERVICES</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Admissions and Enrolment ▪ Student Fees / Loans ▪ Induction ▪ Student Charter ▪ Access Funds/Support Funds ▪ Student Guidance Counselling ▪ Support for students with learning difficulties/disabilities ▪ Childcare Facilities
<p><i>CURRICULUM</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lifelong Learning ▪ Widening Access ▪ Curriculum 2000 ▪ Outreach Initiatives
<p><i>HUMAN RESOURCES</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recruitment and Promotion ▪ Family Friendly ▪ Managing Leave and Attendance Policies ▪ Visual Display of Materials ▪ Appointments and Promotions Policies ▪ Equal Opportunities Policy ▪ Staff Development ▪ Employment Policies – General
<p><i>ESTATES / FINANCE / MANAGING INFORMATION SYSTEMS</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Estates ○ Transport ○ Purchasing and Procurement ○ Monitoring ○ Marketing
<p><i>MULTI-THEME POLICIES</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complaints and Harassment ○ Communication

7.20 On the following pages we examine a selection of policies which screening reports indicate have or will be subject to 'review' rather than a full equality impact assessment. In examining an indicative selection of policies we recommend revisions which may enhance cultural diversity in the colleges and encourage wider participation from ethnic minority and/or foreign national students.

STUDENT SERVICES COUNSELLING

7.21 Below is an extract from the Counselling Service Policy of an FE college.

- Entitlement
The Counselling Service is available to all students of the Belfast Institute on all main sites. Students are entitled to expect a high quality Counselling Service which:
 - is client-focused
 - is delivered by counsellors who are trained and committed to maintaining their competence through on-going professional development
 - abides by the Ethical Framework of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)
- Marketing strategy
The Counselling Service will be publicised to students and staff via:
 - induction talks
 - Student Services publicity materials
 - posters
 - staff and student intranets
 - tutorial programmes

7.22 In reviewing counselling policies and practices, colleges may wish to consider referral to a recognized and BACP⁴⁵ accredited counselling service that has the capability to provide services in the first language of the student client.

7.23 In addition, those marketing materials and initiatives regarding students' services in general, and counselling in particular, should be audited to ensure that they are readily accessible and comprehensible to the all students, regardless of ethnic or national background.

⁴⁵ British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy

STUDENT ICT SECURITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

7.24 Current policies contain a statement to the effect that: *obscene, inappropriate or offensive material must not be accessed or distributed*. When reviewing these policies colleges may wish to consider the need for the policy to include a clear statement any message, document or image that could constitute bullying or harassment (e.g. on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, religion, political opinion, race or disability). Such material may for example be contained in jokes sent by e-mail'. In addition consideration may be given to making explicit reference and intranet link to staff handbooks on bullying and harassment.

CURRICULUM; OUTREACH INITIATIVES SATURDAY COLLEGE AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING

7.25 Website and promotional literature currently contains statement encouraging participation from those with a disability. The college welcomes applications from students with a disability and/or learning difficulty. We recognise that coming into a large Institution can be a daunting experience for any student, but can be particularly challenging for those with a disability or medical condition. For example, welcoming statements for Saturday Colleges could be revised to include a positive statement encouraging applications from members of ethnic minorities and/or foreign nationals who may wish to attend courses at the Saturday College.

HUMAN RESOURCES: GENERAL

7.26 E-mails that are abusive can be a source of stress and damage work relationships. It should be noted that such material may also be contained in jokes sent by e-mail'. Colleges may wish to ensure that similar policies contain explicit reference and intranet link to staff handbooks on bullying and harassment.

STUDENT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICIES AND RECRUITMENT

7.27 Below is an extract from a college's student Equal Opportunities Policy.

- General Policy

It is the policy of the college that all eligible persons will have equal opportunity to enter a course/learning programme and to progress on that course/learning programme irrespective of perceived religious belief, political opinion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability or race.

Selection for a course/learning programme and for progression in the course/learning programme will be on the basis of ability, qualifications and aptitude. In selection or progression there will be no unlawful discrimination, direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, victimisation or harassment on any of the grounds stated in paragraph 1.

- Recruitment

The college will endeavour to reach the widest possible potential student market. All material advertising courses will contain a statement promoting the Equal Opportunities Policy and will not be confined to particular geographical areas or media publication which may exclude particular groups. Eligibility criteria for each course/learning programme will be clearly and publicly stated and adhered to for the purposes of selection and applicants may ask for the reasons why their application has been unsuccessful.

7.28 In considering eligibility criteria colleges, in partnership with ANIC and CCEA may wish to consider the following.

The issue of equivalencies of overseas academic and/or vocational qualifications is seen by many stakeholder groups as a barrier to participation for ethnic minority students and foreign nationals in further and higher education. In those instances where questions may arise regarding an applicants overseas qualifications, we recommend that before a final decision is made regarding an applicants eligibility for a particular course, the issue is referred to the National Recognition Information Centre for the United Kingdom (NARIC).

NARIC is the UK wide agency for the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). The centre claims 'We are the only official information provider on the comparability of international qualifications from over 180 countries worldwide.'

NARIC maintains an International Comparisons searchable database containing the latest information on the UK equivalent level of over 2000 qualifications from Secondary to Postgraduate level in over 180 countries. Recent contact with NARIC indicates that annual subscription fee for access to this database is currently (2007) £850 plus VAT. If an organisation makes an enquiry on behalf of a candidate, the charge is £65.00 + VAT. For individual enquiries made by the applicant, a charge of £34 + VAT is payable by the individual.

The service is the starting point when considering progressions towards further studies or employment in the UK. As an individual, the Evaluation Service recognises overseas awards and provides a clear indication of the comparable level of qualifications from another country. The recognition of the level of education and training received from overseas will enables potential students to better identify the best options when planning:

- to apply for a study programme at a UK university or

<p style="text-align: center;">Further Education college to gain a further qualification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ to consider employment opportunities in the UK in your chosen occupation ▪ to apply for a professional status to be able to work as a fully qualified professional such as a teacher or a doctor (etc.) ▪ to apply to the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme as part of Work Permits application process

Conclusions

- The first thing to say is that the main policy areas (see Table 7.1) that are likely to impact on racial equality are already subject to a rigorous review process in compliance with the requirements of Section 75. Also of note in this context is the issue of mainstreaming and the consequent need to ensure that equality is not treated as a separate policy entity but is considered in the development of all policies.
- That said, we welcome the draft race equality strategy produced by ANIC in conjunction with the Colleges. It pulls together the relevant issues and sets out the requirements under the statutory duties and the roles and responsibilities of staff and students within Colleges in a very clear and accessible way.
- However, we also understand why the Colleges have decided to use this information as a basis to develop their own local policies. It is clear to us from our experiences with the case studies that the circumstances faced by each College are different with regard to ethnic minorities and their related issues. It is our conclusion that a “one size fits all” approach is simply not appropriate.
- The second point we would make is that while policies themselves may be well drafted and considered it is the implementation of that policy on the ground which influences the outcomes. In this case reductions in racial harassment and greater opportunities for ethnic minorities to participate and progress in FE.
- There are a number of specific points that are made which may help to improve services to ethnic minority groups:
 - Colleges might consider where appropriate the referral of ethnic minority students to a BACP⁴⁶ accredited counselling service with the capability to provide services in the first language of the student.
 - Colleges should ensure that, in particular, marketing or informational material relating to student services and counselling is readily available in a range of languages.

⁴⁶ British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy

- College's policies on electronic communications already include a reference to the effect that "obscene, inappropriate or offensive material must not be accessed or distributed". However, we feel that it might be helpful if this was more specific in relation to equality related issues stating that messages which contained material viewed as derogatory or discriminatory on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, religion, political opinion, race or disability could be considered as bullying or harassment.
- A key issue in terms of access to FE for many ethnic minority groups is qualification equivalences. Where this is an issue Colleges should consider using the National Recognition Information Centre (NARIC) the UK wide Agency under the Department for Education and Skills which claims that it is "the only official information provider on the comparability of international qualifications from over 180 countries world wide.

7.29 In broad terms Colleges are already working to try and eliminate racial inequality and any forms of racial bullying or harassment. There are areas where they can look to improve but these need to take into account local circumstances and needs.

8 BEST PRACTICE

- 8.1 Arising from the case studies, an underlying dynamic is clear and obvious. Multi-faceted and difficult change – such as embedding diversity and inclusion into an organization’s culture – does not occur by chance. Rather it happens because a range of interventions, based on an awareness of the issues and needs of ethnic minority students, have been designed and delivered in order to initiate, encourage and proliferate change.
- 8.2 As the number of websites listed in Appendix 3 providing advice on racial diversity and tackling racism testifies there is a lot of advice out there. The difficulty is in identifying that which is appropriate to specific circumstances and can also be considered as best practice. In this section we set out some instances of best practice largely, although not entirely, in the education sector based on our understanding through this research of the problems that the FE sector faces in tackling racial harassment and promoting diversity. Our selection is based on the degree to which they appear innovative and are viewed, at least by their authors, as being successful.

WHAT IS BEST PRACTICE IN POLICY AND PRACTICE?

- 8.3 The identification, collection and dissemination of best practice is a commonly used approach to improving practice. However, there is no standard or accepted definition of ‘best practice’. Therefore, in order to identify best practice we first need to identify and agree the key components that make it up.
- 8.4 A key aspect of best practice in the formulation of policy and practices is that it is inclusive and based on consultation and partnership with key stakeholders. Within Northern Ireland, the policy screening and equality impact assessments arising from Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998) provide a necessary framework for the development of best practice. Therefore the criteria listed here are the result of consultation and discussion both with FE college staff and a wide range of external stakeholders.

WHAT DEFINING BEST PRACTICE IS NOT

- 8.5 The identification of the key elements of best practice is not an attempt to standardise the development of policy and practice; far from it. A key finding of this research is the diversity between and amongst ethnic minority groups. Therefore a one size fits all response does not work. An additional consideration arising from the research is the diversity of the composition of ethnic minority populations within Northern Ireland. Therefore, it is important that best practice paradigms account for locally specific needs and that policies/practices give due recognition to local needs and circumstances. As noted previously in the report, all case study colleges take local needs into consideration when designing and delivering courses.
- 8.6 The following examples of good practice have been selected because they meet a number of the criteria below.
- Delivers effective, identifiable and measurable outcomes, meeting identified needs or filling gaps in provision of services.
 - Provides value for money in making good use of scarce resources such as finance, buildings and plant, staff and their skills.
 - Demonstrates an awareness of local circumstances and conditions.
 - Is grounded in robust self evaluation; considers and learns from previous examples and experience both within the institution, the FE sector and wider society.
 - Is flexible and can adapt to changing needs and circumstances.
 - Is creative and risk taking in its approach to problem solving.
 - Is portable in that it provides transferable models/blueprints for others to follow, without over-reliance on exceptional individuals.
 - Is capable of long term sustainability and viability.
 - Demonstrates cross sector and partnership working.
 - In the design of policy or practice a fundamental cornerstone is recognition of diversity.
- 8.7 Recognition of diversity is necessary both to meet current needs and, given the rapidly changing demographic picture regarding inward migration to Northern Ireland, changing future conditions and circumstances. Finally, it should be noted that not all examples of best practice are drawn exclusively from the Further Education sector. There is relative paucity of publicly disseminated examples of good practice in the FE sector, in Northern Ireland and elsewhere, in regards to race, ethnicity and associated chill factors. Therefore, examples of good practice, were judged relevant to this research, are also taken from the secondary and higher education sectors. We have also included a brief concluding section on some relevant examples from the UK corporate sector.

- 8.8 Finally, it must be emphasised that the examples drawn from the FE sector in Northern Ireland is an indicative list of good practice. In this respect we do not claim the following is a comprehensive compilation of good practice in the Northern Ireland Further Education sector merely those that we are aware of from our case studies and review of the literature.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Good Practice Example One: BELFAST INSTITUTE OF FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION (BIFHE)

- 8.9 BIFHE was one of the colleges funded in 2004-05 to participate in the Cultural Diversity Pilot Programme. The BIFHE pilot aimed “to promote good relations in the FE sector by providing opportunities for students and staff from differing identities, backgrounds and traditions to develop and enhance relationships of trust and understanding and promote mutual respect in every aspect of college life”. It involved students researching issues of cultural diversity, linking students from diverse cultural groups, and developing, and making available on video, “a dramatic production outlining cultural diversities and traditions”. This play, “Darkie”, was performed publicly by second year HND Performing Arts students in May 2005. In 2004-05 other BIFHE good relations activities included:
- An equality and diversity awareness day, held in November 2004, during which staff from different areas of the Institute presented to ten representatives of ethnic minority groups “an overview of the types of services, support, access and outreach measures the Institute was taking to encourage wider participation from students from ethnic minority communities”.
 - In December BIFHE students hosted a World Festivals event to highlight the many different cultural and religious festivals around the world at that time of year and to raise money for homeless people.
- 8.10 The key lesson from the BIFHE experience is the impact of using different mediums, in this case, theatre to get messages across in relation to issues of race and ethnicity. It need not necessarily be theatre, other mediums such as photography or film could be just as powerful in involving people and transmitting positive messages.
- 8.11 In addition the simple act of inviting representatives from local ethnic minority groups into the College to provide them with a better understanding of what it has to offer and project a positive engagement should be a first step for all colleges in encouraging diversity and dealing with any problems of racial harassment.

Good Practice Example Two: City College of San Francisco Clubs and Societies

- 8.12 At City College of San Francisco in California the list of clubs includes: African Americans Changing Times; Asian Music Club; German Club; Chinese Cultural Club; Cantonese Youth Fellowship; Club Indian; Club Italiano; Japanese Cultural Club; and the Vietnamese Club.
- 8.13 Cultural celebrations on campus provide a glimpse into other ethnicities. The college celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month, Intercultural Festival, Holocaust Remembrance Week, Women's History Month, and African American History Month, for example. At these commemorations, students can view the re-creation of an African slave ship, join discussions about the media view of Hispanics, and listen to first-hand testimony of Holocaust survivors.
- 8.14 Meeting people of different backgrounds proves to be an enlightening experience for most community college students. *"I used to have a specific group of friends of a specific ethnic background, but since I came here, my group of friends has diversified, thanks to the great diversity in this college,"* said one student.
- 8.15 Events of this nature if managed properly can provide the dual benefit of making ethnic minority students feel welcome and if they are involved in their development can also help get them to become more active in extracurricular activities.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS OF ETHNIC MINORITY STUDENTS

- 8.16 Enrolling students in college really doesn't do anyone much good if they fail and drop out. When those students are from ethnic minorities, the loss can potentially undermine the positive actions of those colleges that reach out to such students. This is the core concept behind a growing movement in community colleges across United States to find ways to help students, even those with very poor high school preparation, succeed. One of the findings of the case studies was that males from the traveling community are the 'missing piece of the jigsaw' in increasing traveler participation in FE colleges. The example below may be of some relevance in this regard.

Good Practice Example Three: Pellissippi State College Intensive Remedial Programme for Black entrants⁴⁷.

- 8.17 To enhance its recruitment and retention of black students, Pellissippi State College has created a programme that identifies black students who will need remediation based first on their ACT scores and then on other diagnostic tests. During the May of their senior years in high school, the students are offered a spot in the programme, through which they are taken to the main campus of the community college and receive 17.5 hours of intense instruction in areas where their skills are weak, 3 hours of personal tutoring, 2 hours of instruction in college survival skills, and a total of 5.5 hours of testing (at the beginning and end of the program). All of the instruction takes place over a two-week period, a few hours a day, and plenty of free pizza is provided, along with some social events where they can meet students from their own communities who are succeeding at the college.
- 8.18 The results of the programme have been striking in the two years since it was created: Of the participants, 85 percent gained at least one level, meaning avoiding the need to take at least one remedial course they would have otherwise needed, and 28 percent gained two levels. Of the developmental courses the students did take when they enrolled, the pass rate was 66 percent, compared to a normal pass rate for black students of 55 percent. And the fall to spring retention rate for the students was 76 percent, compared to a 58 percent average for black freshmen. The college is now preparing to expand the programme beyond black students to all who could benefit from it.
- 8.19 Leigh Anne Touzeau, director of admissions said it was especially encouraging to see that many of the students could — in a relatively short time period — make real progress. She said that while many students were way behind in math, it was sometimes only a few concepts that were preventing a rapid advance in knowledge. By doing in-depth diagnostic testing and then focusing on those concepts, the college could have a big impact, she said. “A lot of this is the personal tutoring,” she said. Not only is the education more effective, but a real message is sent to the student. *“We’re saying that if you look at people at individuals, they can succeed. People are used to getting pushed aside in large classes and not getting the help that they need.”*
- 8.20 The simple lesson from this example is that if the will is there and colleges are willing to be innovative there are ways to overcome barriers to entry for disadvantaged groups within our society and help them achieve more and better qualifications.

⁴⁷ For more information the Pellissippi State website address is www.pstcc.edu

RECRUITMENT AND MARKETING

Student Recruitment

8.21 There appears to be limited research on those practices which are most successful in recruiting ethnic minority students.

‘Evidently, more research is needed to ascertain the scope of recruitment strategies to encourage application from ethnic minority candidates in the UK. A useful approach might be to ascertain which strategies are successful in recruiting ethnic minority students, and whether there are any particular features of the recruitment process that are more likely to attract such students and ensure their successful application.’ Source: Recruitment to and Retention on Initial Teacher Training: a Systematic Review, Edmonds, S. et al, National Foundation for Educational Research (2002).

8.22 We have identified models used by Aimhigher as a potential vehicle to increase ethnic minority participation in FE colleges. Aimhigher is a national initiative by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). The initiative also extends to Northern Ireland. The main purpose of Aimhigher is to enable the education sector - schools, FE colleges and universities working together, along with other local partners including business - to achieve the Government's target that 50% of those aged 18-30 should benefit from higher education by 2010. It targets those with little or no family experience of higher education.

Good Practice Example Four: Aimhigher School Flood

8.23 About 40 undergraduates from a specific university visit one secondary school for a day. Each undergraduate is assigned to a teacher, and attends the teacher's classes for the day. During each lesson the undergraduates:

- Give a short talk to pupils in the class at the start of the lesson, giving details about university, what they are doing, their ambitions etc.
- Provide subject support to pupils during the lesson, and answer any questions pupils might have.
- Give a short talk to the class at the end of the lesson.

8.24 During the day every pupil will meet up to 5 undergraduates and will have a lot of information about how good it is to attend university and gain qualifications that open up exciting career opportunities.

- 8.25 Evidence is that pupils are strongly motivated by this experience, and that a real "buzz" is created in the school. The possibility of following this up with staff training on the wide variety and value of courses in higher education, and possibly a related parents' evening is being considered for future years.
- 8.26 Although not specifically targeted at ethnic minorities, the 'Flood' Approach may provide a framework within which ethnic minority students from colleges visit secondary and grammar schools and employers in the college's catchment area that have a relatively high proportion of individuals from ethnic minority backgrounds to encourage them to consider participation in FE.

Good Practice Example Five Cultural Diversity in Publications: Guidelines for Good Practice

- 8.27 Published by the University of Melbourne (Australian) this short guide includes key considerations in ensuring that publications, including promotional material, reflect the diversity of the university community. A checklist includes the following points:
- uses language and visual images which are representative of the multi-cultural nature of the University environment.
 - keeps language as simple and straightforward as possible.
 - does not include stereotypical references in text or visual image.
 - includes positive images of people from diverse cultural groups without a token or oddity factor.
 - does not include gratuitous, sensationalizing references, or irrelevancies related to cultural 'difference'.
 - avoids inappropriate generalizations and reports culturally relevant information with accuracy and equal respect.
 - uses acceptable and appropriate references and descriptions for groups.
 - does not include culturally specific language, e.g. Australian colloquialisms and examples.
 - Contains a feedback loop to ensure people from a range of cultural backgrounds have been consulted from the initial concept stage, and have contributed to the content and compilation of the copy.
- 8.28 In addition, the Human Resources section of the University's website⁴⁸ contains a clear statement on the need to and the benefits arising from a respect for cultural diversity. It states that:

⁴⁸ Source: Equity and Learning Programs Unit Equal Opportunity Unit April 2000
www.services.unimelb.edu.au/edp/downloads

'Respect for diversity refers to an openness about and sensitivity to the differences of others and your own difference to them. It indicates an acceptance that there are many different cultural rules, meanings and ideas contributing to the University community, apart from those to which you may personally adhere or with which you may be familiar. Respect for racial diversity can be reflected in:

- *approaching difference with interest rather than fear;*
- *acknowledging stereotypes and then moving beyond them;*
- *challenging our own assumptions, set of values, attitudes, ways of perceiving, thinking and communicating*
- *being sensitive to how others perceive and respond to our own behaviour.*

Rather than encouraging assimilation, coercing 'others' to be the 'same' as 'us' and being blind to the difference of one's own racial and cultural characteristics and their impact on others, the University adheres to the principle of collaboration, allegiance, and learning through diversity.

Benefits of Respecting Racial Diversity

The profile of the University community reflects the heterogeneity of Australia's population in terms of origin, descent, language, culture, religion and other characteristics. This fact is impetus enough to develop and maintain policies, procedures and programs to eliminate race discrimination and encourage respect for diversity.

The policy of encouraging an environment free from racism and its manifestations, such as discrimination and harassment, assists in:

- *fostering a world-class institution for ALL staff and students;*
- *enabling an informative dialogue between those from various backgrounds that enriches our understanding of racial and cultural differences; and*
- *encouraging staff and students from around the world to attend the University and contribute to a vibrant, productive and motivated social and work environment'.*

8.29 The key lesson on this example of best practice is for the institution to be very aware of how it projects itself and to try and ensure that it is a culturally inclusive as possible. It is also useful to recognise and emphasise the positives which arise from diversity.

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF ETHNIC MINORITY STUDENTS**Good Practice Example Six: ESOL. Northwest Institute for Further and Higher Education**

8.30 Amongst the 2005-06 Section 75 annual progress reports prepared by FE colleges, the North West Institute's report contains a detailed description of its ESOL activities. Consistent with the above finding from Hansson et al regarding the wide variation in the requirements, and English language skills of ESOL students, the Institute has a range of appropriate courses and qualifications that meets the needs of ESOL students. These classes provide the possibilities for an improved quality of life as the students gain the self-confidence to communicate and relate better to others. There are currently a total of 210 students enrolled on approximately 18 different courses at the NWIFHE. The languages offered include: Polish; Lithuanian; Portuguese and Chinese. The courses include:

- In-company training for migrant workers;
- Classes in local primary schools for parents of children;
- English classes for the hospitality industry;
- English classes in community organisations e.g. Chinese Welfare Association;
- Classes for migrant workers in Lurgan, Portadown, Dungannon through NWIFHE's partnership arrangements with Trade Unions.

8.31 As noted in the literature review, consistent with findings of the research by Hansson, ET. Al, the NWIFHE report stated that the adults attending these classes are not a homogeneous group. They include factory workers, parents of children at local schools, hotel and restaurant staff, medical doctors and nurses. Some have come to live in Ireland on a permanent basis for a variety of reasons: to join their family, to find employment, for business or as asylum seekers. These varied groups have different language needs arising from their diverse language, educational and professional/employment backgrounds.

8.32 We therefore need to look to provide a range of delivery options both in relation to timing, level and location to meet the diverse needs within ethnic minority populations.

**Good Practice Example Seven: Raising the Employability of Minority Ethnic Students and Graduates
Southampton Institute⁴⁹**

- 8.33 This good practice example is a programme of employer-based work shadowing, mentoring and campus-based careers coaching and tutoring with advanced careers skills seminars, supported by student 'buddying'. The scheme targets minority ethnic students and graduates who are severely disadvantaged as a group in the labour market. On-going consultation with the target group has taken place via special seminars, the Students' Union, student societies and Careers Service student contacts.
- 8.34 The scheme is part of a range of measures provided by Student Services aiming to support the specific needs of groups of students who are disadvantaged within HE or in the labour market (a similar programme runs for disabled students).
- 8.35 This is a clear example of the institution being pro-active in tackling a specific problem for ethnic minority students. One of the key lessons is that they were able to identify the problem by monitoring the situation and take steps to address it.

**Good Practice Example Eight: International Student Support.
Bournemouth & Poole College: 2004-
2005 British Council
Award for International Student**

The Planning: Purpose and Process

- 8.36 Bournemouth & Poole College has recruited international students for over 14 years. The International Student Support Project identified best practice to support international students from recruitment through to completion of qualifications, which has led to the annual recruitment of 600+ international students from over 40 countries.
- 8.37 The mission statement of the College's International Operations section is: *"To promote, world-wide, the College's range of services, in line with the UK brand of Excellence in Education and to provide each teaching centre with the international expertise and support to enable the recruitment and retention of international students."*

⁴⁹ The Student Services Research Project: Effective Approaches to Retaining Students in Higher Education: Directory of Best Practice, UK Universities, (2003) pg 30

Planning into Practice

8.38 Planning objectives were set within the College Strategic Plan, the International Strategic Plan, and the International Operations Annual Business Plan. Details of student support in relation to academic issues, including English, study skills and training were documented and made available to students within the International Students Handbook, the UK Students Handbook, the Tutors Handbook and learner support documentation. Clear guidelines, including working procedures, were available within the College's ISO 9000:2000 quality procedures for international students and the College Quality Assurance Policy Manual. The College, through the International Operations department, together with the student support team (STACS) and the College's qualified counsellors provided extensive welfare support to the international students. This covered the areas of pre-departure information, accommodation, welfare, orientation programmes, counselling, and careers guidance. Other marketing activities by the College included:

- Attendance at British Council exhibitions.
- An extensive website of information.
- An international CD and video.
- Trade Partners overseas missions.
- The hosting of inward missions from various countries.
- Overseas seminars and workshops.
- Visits to local UK-based language schools, dedicated international student recruitment days, and annual formal College general open evenings.

Continuing Development

8.39 Monitoring is conducted in several ways. Together with the Self-Assessment Review (SAR), the College SPOC (Students Perception of College) forms part of the College's overall Quality Assurance procedures which are used to evaluate, monitor, and provide information to the International Business, Development, and Strategic Plans.

8.40 International Operations is a major part of the College's full cost income provision and as such has support from the board of governors, the College executive, the principal, and the College Management Team (CMT). The board of governors closely monitors the international operations of the College.

Outcomes/ Benefits to Date

- The high level of support to students has been maintained.
- The excellent work undertaken by project tutors has been highlighted.

- The importance of international students has been highlighted throughout the College.

8.41 There are two interesting aspects to this instance of best practice. At the wider level it demonstrates that with proper planning it is possible to attract and support overseas ethnic students. The more specific point we would pick up on is the use of the Students Perception of College questionnaires which could potentially be adapted by NI FE Colleges to give them a better understanding of the issues faced by the ethnic minority students attending their College.

HOW IS POLICY ON RACIST HARASSMENT AND BULLYING DISSEMINATED, PUBLICISED AND ENFORCED?

Good Practice Example Nine: Dealing with racist incidents

8.42 Guidance published by DfES⁵⁰ in 2004 outlines a number of recommendations for dealing with racist incidences. The Sectoral Race Policy developed by ANIC in association with the colleges addresses many of the issues outlined below:

- There is shared understanding amongst all staff - including support and administrative staff as well as teachers - of ways in which bullying based on background, colour, religion or heritage is both similar to and different from other kinds of bullying;
- There is the same shared understanding amongst pupils, parents and governors;
- These shared understandings include acceptance and use of the definition of racist incident that was proposed by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry report;
- There is a code of practice which clearly outlines specific procedures to be followed for recording and dealing with racist incidents, as also with other kinds of abuse and bullying, on the school premises, and on journeys to and from school; and
- The governors take seriously their responsibility to report regularly to the LEA the number and nature of racist incidents at their school, and they indicate in their reports how the incidents were dealt with.

⁵⁰ Aiming High: Understanding the Educational Needs of Minority Ethnic Pupils in Mainly White Schools: A Guide to Good Practice, DfES, 2004, pg 19. *NB. The above is a compilation of guidance from a range of local authorities, including Cambridgeshire, Coventry, Derbyshire, Ealing, Lancashire, Leicester and Windsor and Maidenhead.*

8.43 These criteria reinforce the need to have clear codes of practice in dealing with racial incidents. It is useful to note that only one in three of the racist incidents experienced by the students in our survey were reported. It also reinforces the need for communication between all involved to ensure that they have a shared understanding of the issues and procedures.

STAFFING: TRAINING AND AWARENESS

Good Practice Example Ten: BIFHE Cultural Diversity: Codes of Good Practice for Staff

8.44 The Department for Employment and Learning provided financial support totalling £150,000 (£50,000 per pilot) for three Cultural Diversity pilot projects, which were completed in March 2005. The purpose of supporting three Cultural Diversity pilots was primarily to promote “Good Relations” in the FE sector, by providing opportunities for students and staff from differing identities, backgrounds and traditions to develop and enhance relationships of trust and understanding, and promote mutual respect in every aspect of college life.

8.45 A subsequent evaluation of the pilot projects by the Educational Training Inspectorate (ETI) cited BIFHE’s Cultural Diversity: Codes of Good Practice for Staff as an exemplar of good practice arising from the pilot Projects.

8.46 The codes of good practice for staff and students were developed in partnership and consultation with key stakeholders. The code of practice was subsequently endorsed by, the student union, the Equality Commission, Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities, and representatives from the Indian and Chinese communities. The Code of Practice includes a clear and accessible discussion of staff responsibilities including the use of inclusive language.

8.47 This example follows on from the previous and highlights the fact that codes of practice are available in NI and are being adopted by all of the NI FE Colleges. However, it is also important to ensure that the second element of the learning from the DFES study is also achieved with communication of these codes of practice to all involved and efforts to create a joint understanding of racism and the ways in which the College will seek to deal with it.

EVIDENCE FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR: WHAT WORKS IN INCREASING ETHNIC MINORITY PARTICIPATION AND COMBATING AND RACIST ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS

8.48 The Private sector case study examples below are from Race Equality: The benefits for Responsible Business. Commissioned by the Task Force on Race Equality and Diversity in the Private Sector, published by the Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR), 2004.

Marketing

8.49 B&Q wanted the workforce in its new store in Bolton to reflect the local community, and discovered that levels of interest from all ethnic minority groups was low, although minority groups made up ten per cent of the local population. With help from the Bolton Ethnic Minority Business Centre the team organised a presentation evening for the local Muslim community, where the HR Advisor outlined the opportunities on offer and B&Q's diversity policies. Her approach proved disarming: after initial scepticism, community leaders left with copies of recruitment leaflets to distribute and an improved awareness of B&Q as a socially responsible business.

8.50 By the time the store opened, B&Q had recruited 12.5 per cent of staff from an ethnic minority background - compared to the original level of interest of 2.5 per cent. Staffing the store with more ethnic minorities led to a greater understanding of local customer needs and increased sales. This learning has developed into company policy and all new and existing stores are proactive in understanding and responding to local demographics from both an employment and customer perspective.

8.51 This example simply demonstrates that the implementation of a good relations strategy can have positive outcomes for both the institution and local ethnic minority groups.

Training: Managing Fears About Race Equality

8.52 The investment in managing race equality effectively, including the fears around it, pays off continuously. When employees realize that in promoting race equality Barclays plc is promoting management practices that benefit everyone, they work more effectively together and the business becomes more productive. A majority of staff – mainly white, middle-class men – did not feel part of the company's Equality and Diversity (E&D) Strategy. At best they didn't understand what it meant for them; at worst they felt something was being done to them.

8.53 Barclays plc now provides a Learning Framework for all employees on equality and diversity. It combines workshops, learning from practical experience and open learning materials. Employees consider:

- How equality and diversity can contribute to Barclays plc's business success.
- Their own case for pursuing equality and diversity.
- How they will 'walk the talk' – and put it into practice.

8.54 Transformation starts at the top. If leaders are not clear and articulate about it, E&D risks being seen as a 'passing fad' and employees would simply get on with business as usual. So Barclays plc's training is leader-led: when a senior manager has completed the training, he or she cascades it to the team. To train convincingly, managers have to internalise the message, and share the belief that race equality is critical to their business.

8.55 This reiterates some of the earlier points made in the report about the importance of strong and visible leadership from the very top of the institution as does the next example from J Sainsbury PLC. It also highlights the need to ensure that all groups within the college participate in good relations activities and not just ethnic minority students.

LEADERSHIP: SENIOR MANAGEMENT DRIVES ACTION

8.56 J Sainsbury plc believes that race equality and diversity, like all changes in business, depend on senior level commitment and leadership. Equality and diversity are sponsored at Board level, and the Supermarket Board receives regular updates on the progress of the diversity strategy. Race, disability, gender, age and sexual orientation each have a Director level sponsor, who works with practitioners to integrate diversity into business as usual: behaviours change when senior management is engaged.

8.57 Senior managers understand that they are role models for the company and they play an important part in listening to colleagues' and customers' needs. Store managers, in turn, play a part. The results of annual 'colleague engagement' surveys are analyzed by different demographics, including ethnic groups; store managers, with an accurate picture of satisfaction levels within ethnic groups, can take action to make improvements. The results form part of their reward package. J Sainsbury plc has a diverse staff and customer base, so for them there is no question that positive action on diversity is good business sense.

Monitoring and Information Management: Race for Opportunity

8.58 Can you manage what you can't measure? No, say 120 business organisations that participated in the 2003 benchmarking survey run by Race for Opportunity (RfO), the UK business forum on race. Ethnic monitoring is a fundamental component of any successful race and diversity programme.

8.59 The 120 participating organisations employ approximately two million employees, or seven per cent of the UK workforce and 91 per cent can provide breakdowns of their workforce by numbers of ethnic minority employees, up from 54 per cent of organizations in 2002 (Race for Opportunity 2003). These organizations are increasingly confident about involving ethnic minority employees in their action plans on race. Nearly 62 per cent of businesses regularly seek feedback from their ethnic minority employees. Monitoring also covers current employees, job applicants, recruitment and employees' progression, as well as their satisfaction levels. Businesses use the information to:

- inform Board discussions, policies and forward planning;
- manage on the basis of facts rather than feelings;
- identify patterns that show problems or opportunities; and
- challenge the assumption that nothing needs attention.

8.60 This reinforces the need for effective monitoring in relation to race and ethnic minorities to enable Colleges to identify any problems early and put mechanisms in place to ameliorate them. We understand that the NICIS information system which has been introduced into the College over the last few years has the potential to provide a considerable amount of information to support effective monitoring of ethnic minority numbers and outcomes.

Conclusions

8.61 The best practice examples presented here reinforce many of the messages that were already identified in our literature review from previous research and our case studies. The key lessons include the following:

- The need for good communication between all the stakeholders in the College with regard to its race policies and in particular procedures for dealing with any incidents of a racist nature.
- The importance of monitoring in ensuring that the College is able to react quickly to any issues which arise with regard to participation or achievement amongst ethnic minority groups.
- The benefits of regular surveys to garner the perceptions and experiences of ethnic minority students attending the College.
- The potential for using existing students as role models to encourage more individuals from their ethnic group to make use of the education services the College offers.
- The opportunities which exist to use innovative mediums such as theatre, film or photography to get the message across.

9 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 In this final section of the report we pull together the various strands of our research and attempt to present an overall picture on the current situation with regard to race and ethnicity in the Northern Ireland Further Education sector. The key themes that emerge are that:

- Society in Northern Ireland is changing rapidly with regard to ethnic background both in its diversity and scale;
- Due to the implementation of the Section 75 legislation and the work to date by the sector supported by ANIC a considerable amount of work has already been done to tackle racism;
- There is, based on the responses to our survey, a worrying prevalence of racial harassment amongst full-time ethnic minority students;
- FE staff are not aware of the scale and nature of ongoing racial harassment in their colleges, however previous research would indicate that most racial harassment takes place in informal areas where staff are less likely to be present.

In the rest of these conclusions we set out the evidence which underpins these statements.

LITERATURE REVIEW

9.2 The purpose of our literature review and the key stakeholder interviews was to identify and explore issues in relation to the nature of racism in the FE sector, the current policy responses within FE Colleges and the wider context with regard to race and ethnicity in Northern Ireland. With regards to the general findings from previous studies we have included reference to them in the relevant sections of our own analysis. Under this heading we set out some of the main contextual issues and existing equality legislation in NI.

Context

- The rapidly changing demographic picture in Northern Ireland due to the major influx of people from the newly joined EU member states in Eastern Europe, particularly; Poland; Lithuania; Slovakia; and, the Czech Republic. It is worth noting that this influx has not been evenly spread geographically with particular concentrations in urban areas and areas where the food processing industry is concentrated.
- A concurrent and dramatic increase (five fold) in the level of racially motivated attacks in Northern Ireland.

Equality Legislation

9.3 Our literature review also reviewed the current equality legislation within Northern Ireland highlighting the statutory duties that it imposed on all public bodies including FE colleges. The main legislation includes the Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 and Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. They place the following requirements on FE Colleges, to:

- Eliminate unlawful race discrimination;
- Promote equality of opportunity; and,
- Promote good relations between people from different racial groups.

The legislation also specifies a number of duties on public bodies:

- Prepare and maintain a written race equality policy;
- Assess the impact of its policies on students and staff from different racial groups through screening and equality impact assessment;
- Monitor the admission of students and the recruitment and career progress of staff by racial groups;
- Report to the equality commission on their arrangements for and progress in ensuring compliance with the legislation.

9.4 This is an important context for our analysis of current College policies in relation to racial equality given that race is one of the 9 categories specified under the Section 75 legislation and as set out above that legislation already places a number of requirements and duties on Colleges.

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

9.5 The purpose of our key stakeholder interviews, particularly the ethnic minority representative groups, was to help us ensure that our research approach was comprehensive, i.e. that we were aware of all the key issues and secondly to identify specific areas of concern for them. The main issues raised were as follows:

- There was a general consensus that colleges tend to be reactive rather than proactive in dealing with issues of racial harassment and bullying. However, all the stakeholders acknowledged the commitment of colleges in promoting a respect for diversity and in combating racism.

- A number of our consultees felt that what is currently done in the equality arena is too much paper and compliance based and that greater practical application is required to impact on racism⁵¹.
- A number of consultees suggested that there is a need for colleges to actively promote and publicise an ongoing engagement on issues of race and ethnicity at both director and management board level.
- A number of stakeholders indicated that they felt there was lack of consistency across the sector with some colleges 'doing better' than others, although to some extent this can be related to the nature and scale of ethnic minorities within the College itself⁵².
- Many stakeholders felt the FE sector could do more to explore issues relating to race and ethnicity across a range of courses with many group specific stakeholders expressing a desire that FE colleges should promote awareness amongst ethnic minority students of their history and culture.

9.6 Overall, our consultees recognised that all Colleges were making an effort to tackle racism and encourage participation by ethnic minority groups. However, this was qualified by the view that some Colleges were doing it better than others. In general, they would like to see the Colleges be more proactive in developing links with ethnic minority groups and would like to see issues around race, ethnicity and culture more integrated into the mainstream of FE provision.

FE STUDENT SURVEY FINDINGS

9.7 Our student survey (n=1119) focused on four main topics; perceptions of the college environment amongst both indigenous white and ethnic minority students; the attitudes of indigenous students to race and ethnicity; the incidence of racial harassment from the perspective of indigenous students; and, experiences of racial harassment amongst ethnic minority students. The main findings were as follows:

College Environment

- Indigenous and ethnic minority students were more likely to view staff as "very welcoming" (58.7%) compared with students (33.6%).
- The majority of ethnic minority students are positive about the college environment but to a lesser extent than indigenous students with differences in the range of 5 to 15 percentage points. The main areas of difference were;

⁵¹ This was a general concern with regard to the implementation of equality legislation across the public sector although as such it clearly applies to the FE sector as well.

⁵² More Specifically the Colleges that were highlighted as doing a good job tended to be those with large populations of ethnic minority students.

- “Teaching staff are upfront about dealing with incidents of racial harassment and discrimination”, 69.9% agreed compared to 85.9%; and,
 - “the Student Union at my college is actively involved in stopping racism on my campus”, 59.5% agreed compared to 72.0%
- Full-time ethnic minority students were much more negative about the college environment than part-time with large differences of between 20 and 40 percentage points in their responses to our questions on the College environment. There was a similar pattern for non-white/white ethnic minority students with the former more negative. The two largest differences were:
 - “Non-teaching staff are aware of and sensitive to the problems faced by ethnic minority students” 48.3% agreed compared to 78.1%;
 - “The Student Union at my college is actively involved in stopping racism on my campus” 43.3% agreed compared to 70.5%.
 - Female ethnic minority students were also less positive in their views about the college environment on average by 15 percentage points. The differences in their views were particularly marked in relation to:
 - “My College is committed to improving relations between people of different races/ethnic origins”; 74.6% agreed compared to 88.5%;
 - “The Student Union at my College is actively involved in stopping racism”. 55% agreed compared to 78.6%.

Personal Attitudes

- Overall indigenous students were broadly supportive of a multicultural society with large majorities of indigenous students supporting the following statements:
 - “It’s a good thing for a society to be made up of people from different cultures” (87.5%);
 - “I’m alright about being around people of different ethnic backgrounds” (89.5%);
 - “All races of people are equal” (90.0%).
- While the responses to most of these statements by indigenous students are very positive their response to the statement “Northern Ireland is weakened by people of different ethnic origins sticking to their old ways” is somewhat worrying with 56.9% agreeing with this statement. This would seem to coincide with the East Tyrone Survey with 54% of students feeling that it was the responsibility of ethnic minorities to integrate in to NI culture.

- There was a consistent difference between male and female indigenous students with male students less likely to agree with statements supporting a multi-cultural society. In particular, there was a 13 percentage point difference in the number of positive responses to the statement “It is a good thing for a society to be made up of people from different cultures”. This is congruent with other studies which have tended to find higher levels of racism amongst males (Connolly, 2002; NILT, 2005; ICR, 2005).
- Our survey indicated that the vast majority of FE students would not mind having someone from an ethnic minority as a work colleague (81.3%) or a neighbour (77.4%). Similarly, a large, albeit slightly smaller, percentage (69.1%) would not mind a close relative marrying someone from an ethnic minority. However, it is interesting to note how as the relationship becomes closer the percentage who “mind” increases. This pattern was also apparent in the NILT (2005) survey results.

Incidence and Experiences⁵³

- Our survey showed that verbal abuse in its many guises is by far the most prevalent form of racist abuse, with 13.4% of indigenous students claiming to have witnessed such behaviour with a further 14.1% having heard about it.
- In relation to the types of racial harassment experienced by ethnic minority students the level of incidence varies between 20% and 10% of ethnic minority respondents. Perhaps most worryingly, however, the ratio of reported to non-reported incidents is about 1 to 2.
- The level of racist incidents experienced by full-time ethnic minority students is roughly 4 times greater than that for part-time ethnic minority students.
- The difference in full-time and part-time student experiences is reinforced by the fact that full-time ethnic minority students (35.9%) are more than twice as likely to have felt the need to hide elements of their ethnic background in order to be able to “fit-in” at college.
- This need to conform in order to fit-in is also felt keenly by non-white ethnic minority students with 31.1% indicating that they have felt the need to hide elements of their ethnic background in order to “fit-in”.

⁵³ The term incidence in this context refers to racial harassment witnessed or heard about by indigenous students while experienced refers to the responses by ethnic minority students to questions about their own experience of racial harassment.

- 9.8 The most striking finding from our student survey is the extent to which full-time ethnic minority students are subjected to racial harassment with 45% having experienced some form of harassment at College whilst 1 in 5 experience it on a weekly basis. In addition some 35.9% of Full-time ethnic minority students have felt the need to hide elements of their ethnic background to fit-in.

FE STAFF SURVEY

- 9.9 Our staff survey involved teaching (n=105) and non-teaching staff (n=116) and covered similar ground to the student survey. The topics covered included; the college environment; attitudes to race and ethnicity and awareness of incidents of racial harassment. In addition we asked staff whether they had received training in equality or good relations.

College Environment

- In general staff had a more positive view of the college environment than indigenous and ethnic minority students. The gap is generally larger with respect to the views of ethnic minority students and is in the region of 10 to 20 percentage points. The largest differences related to:
 - “my college is committed to improving relations between people of different ethnic origins” 97.8% compared to 78.5%;
 - “Teaching Staff are up front about dealing with incidents of racial harassment and discrimination” 94.7% compared to 69.9%
- These gaps are even larger for full-time ethnic minority students by on average 10 percentage points.
- Full-time ethnic minority students are twice as likely to state that teaching and non-teaching staff discriminate against ethnic minorities but on the other hand are less likely to state that students are nasty to people from ethnic minorities 38.3% compared to 52.7% for staff.
- However, the most striking difference relates to the statement “racism is a problem at my college” with full-time ethnic minority students 3 times more likely to agree with this statement than FE staff, 26% and 8.5% respectively.
- These gaps are of some concern suggesting that staff are unaware of the extent of discrimination and harassment that ethnic minority students experience. However, earlier research by Connolly (2000), albeit related to experiences in schools, suggests that most harassment takes place in the more informal areas of school such as corridors or playgrounds where teachers are less likely to observe it.

Staff Attitudes to Ethnic Minorities

- In relation to staff attitudes their responses indicate that the vast majority of them don't have an issue with regard to the presence of ethnic minorities in Northern Ireland. However, it is worth noting that there is a small minority (10.2%) who feel that some ethnic minority groups don't fit into Northern Ireland society.

Staff Training

- While it is a minority there were still approximately 30% of staff who had received very little or no training in the areas of equality law, statutory duties and good relations. In particular 36.4% of staff stated that they had received very little or no training with regard to the good relations duty.

9.10 The overall picture for FE staff shows low levels of racist attitudes. However, it should be noted that there is a small minority some 10.2% with racist views who feel that there are ethnic minority groups that do not fit in to NI Society.

POLICY REVIEW

9.11 Our review of the current policy regime in relation to racial equality in colleges is based on our six College case studies and our review of the written policy documents available to us. The case studies provide an overview of the current activities of colleges while the policy documents allow us to look at more specific policy issues.

Case Studies

Overall

- Across our case studies of FE colleges it appears that colleges are well beyond a mere 'tick box' mode in complying with statutory obligations with respect to race and good relations. All colleges have chosen to actively address racism and good relations.
- All colleges evidenced a willingness to learn from the evaluation of their own activities. With the aim of further developing good practice throughout the FE sector, all our case study colleges showed an active willingness to share experiences and good practice between colleges.

Recruitment and Marketing

- All case study colleges stated that recognition of ethnic and racial diversity was a key consideration in the development and dissemination of promotional materials such as leaflets and posters. These were made available in a number of languages. Although from

our visits it was clear that these materials were more accessible in some Colleges than others.

How are the specific needs of ethnic minority pupils addressed?

- None of the case study colleges was able to cite substantial resources devoted to translation services. Limited resources were consistently cited as the constraint in expanding services in this area. Nonetheless some colleges did report that specific actions were taken to provide translation services to those ethnic minority students wishing to access student support services. There was little evidence of specialist advice or support services targeted specifically at or for ethnic minority students.

Incidences of Racism

- Amongst the six case study Colleges only one College reported a complaint of a racist nature. All College staff interviewed felt ethnic minority students felt safe in the College environment. This level of reported incidence seems low compared to our student survey results above.

Dissemination of policies on racial harassment?

- All case study colleges had explicit policies with respect to bullying and harassment by either students or staff. Generally these policies addressed a range of categories including, race/ethnicity, religious belief and political opinion, gender and disability. In all case study colleges the induction process for full-time students includes explicit signposting to policies on harassment bullying within the wider ambit of policies on equality, diversity and good relations.

Staffing: Training and Awareness

- All colleges state that as part of the induction process for full-time staff; both teaching and support staff, training and awareness sessions regarding equality, good relations and cultural diversity are provided within the wider commitment to staff training under equality schemes approved by the Equality Commission. However, many colleges have developed and delivered innovative diversity training for staff well beyond that required by Equality Schemes.
- There is, however, a recognised gap in relation to the provision of such training for part-time staff. There is a similar issue in terms of induction for part-time students.

Review of policy documents

- The first thing to say is that the main policy areas (see Table 7.1) that are likely to impact on racial equality are already subject to a rigorous

review process in compliance with the requirements of Section 75. Also of note in this context is the issue of mainstreaming and the consequent need to ensure that equality is not treated as a separate policy entity but is considered in the development of all policies.

- That said, we welcome the draft race equality strategy produced by ANIC in conjunction with the Colleges. It pulls together the relevant issues and sets out the requirements under the statutory duties and the roles and responsibilities of staff and students within Colleges in a very clear and accessible way.
- However, we also understand why the Colleges have decided to use this information as a basis to develop their own local policies. It is clear to us from our experiences with the case studies that the circumstances faced by each College are different with regard to ethnic minorities and their related issues. It is our conclusion that a “one size fits all” approach is simply not appropriate.
- The second point we would make is that while policies themselves may be well drafted and considered it is the implementation of that policy on the ground which influences the outcomes. In this case reductions in racial harassment and greater opportunities for ethnic minorities to participate and progress in FE.
- There are a number of specific points that are made which may help to improve services to ethnic minority groups;
 - Colleges might consider where appropriate the referral of ethnic minority students to a BACP⁵⁴ accredited counselling service with the capability to provide services in the first language of the student.
 - Colleges should ensure that, in particular, marketing or informational material relating to student services and counselling is readily available in a range of languages.
 - College’s policies on electronic communications already include a reference to the effect that “obscene, inappropriate or offensive material must not be accessed or distributed”. However, we feel that it might be helpful if this was more specific in relation to equality related issues stating that messages which contained material viewed as derogatory or discriminatory on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, religion, political opinion, race or disability could be considered as bullying or harassment.
 - A key issue in terms of access to FE for many ethnic minority groups is qualification equivalences. Where this is an issue Colleges should consider using the National Recognition Information Centre (NARIC) the UK wide Agency under the Department for Education and Skills which claims that it is “the only

⁵⁴ British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy

official information provider on the comparability of international qualifications from over 180 countries world wide.

9.12 In broad terms Colleges are already working to try and eliminate racial inequality and any forms of racial bullying or harassment. There are areas where they can look to improve but these need to take into account local circumstances and needs.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

9.13 The most striking finding from our study is the extent to which full-time ethnic minority students are subjected to racial harassment with 45% having experienced some form of harassment at College whilst 1 in 5 experience it on a weekly basis. In addition some 35.9% of full-time ethnic minority students have felt the need to hide elements of their ethnic background to fit-in.

9.14 However, in general ethnic minority students are relatively positive in their assessment of the college environment, although in line with their greater experience of harassment full-time and non-white ethnic minority students tend to be more negative in their assessment of the college environment.

9.15 Based on our survey responses and our focus groups we feel that overall ethnic minority students do feel safer in College than outside of it and consequently we feel that while racism is an issue in the Colleges it is not a major barrier to participation by ethnic minority students.

9.16 There is also a large gap between the perceptions of staff with regard to the college environment for ethnic minority students and those stated by the ethnic minority students themselves, particularly full-time and non-white ethnic minority students. Clearly if the problem is to be addressed staff need to recognise that the problem exists.

9.17 In responses to our questions there is limited evidence of racist attitudes amongst both FE Staff and indigenous FE students, with slightly higher levels of racist attitudes amongst students. However even the racist attitudes that are exhibited by a very small number of staff are a concern and show that there is no room for complacency in tackling racism within Further Education.

WAY FORWARD

9.18 In relation to the way forward we feel that an overly prescriptive approach is not appropriate for a number of reasons:

- Each of the Colleges operates within a different community structure and dynamic in relation to the incidence and extent of particular ethnic minority groups. It is therefore important the Colleges identify approaches that work for them; there is no “one size fits all” solution in this context.
- All of our case study Colleges were already engaged in initiatives to deal with this issue and in a number of cases we have highlighted there current activities as best practice. It would therefore not be appropriate to use a prescriptive recommendation style when some Colleges are already engaged in this way.
- When trying to tackle a problem like racism, with its associated adverse effects of discrimination and harassment on racial grounds, it is often not the quality of the written policies and procedures that matters but rather the way in which they are implemented. With an issue of this type it is as much the spirit of the intervention as the nature of the intervention itself that makes the difference. This is illustrated well by the following quote by Jewson (1990)⁵⁵ in relation to race equality in employment:

“Our case studies do not suggest that there is a single formulator employment practice which can be said to guarantee the fair and equal operation of procedures or equality of distribution of members of different ethnic categories in the workforce. The effects of formalisation are equivocal. The existence of formal procedures in itself is no guarantee of fairness. The principles on which formalisation is built may themselves be unfair. Even when fair, formal procedure may not be implemented. Even when implemented it may be subject to manipulation and circumvention. It may, moreover, be merely token” (Jewson et al., 1990 p 12)”.

9.19 We have therefore attempted both through the examples of best practice listed in Section 8 and in our anti-racism check-list at Appendix 8 to encourage Colleges to think about the issue of racism in new ways and identify new and more inclusive approaches to tackling it.

9.20 The questions set out in our check-list can all be viewed as recommendations, albeit, we feel that it is up to the Colleges to identify which areas they should act on based on what they are currently doing and what they perceive the needs to be in their local area.

9.21 In terms of implementation and reporting we feel that initially Colleges should provide the Department with a short narrative in relation to each policy area in the check-list setting out what steps they intend to take and their expected outcomes. In subsequent years the Colleges should report progress in terms of their own action plan as set out in the first year.

⁵⁵ Jewson, N, Mason, D, Waters, S and Harvey, J (1990) Ethnic minorities and employment practice: a study of six organisations. Employment Department Group Research Papers No.76. London: Department of Employment.

9.22 However, there are some recommendations which are universal and while we recognise that Colleges may already have done or are in the process of doing some of these activities it is nonetheless useful to reiterate them:

- Colleges need to ensure that they establish strong two-way communications with leaders and representatives of ethnic minority groups in their locality. They need to be proactive in seeking their views and ensure that they know who to contact within the College if any issues do arise. This approach is the best way to avoid problems and encourage greater participation by ethnic minority groups.
- It is important that the College's policies and procedures in relation to diversity and good relations are communicated to all stakeholders. It is particular important that all students and staff should be aware of the procedures for reporting and dealing with incidents of racial harassment.
- A senior member of staff, at Director level, should be allocated responsibility for ensuring a whole college approach to diversity and race issues. It is important that policies on racial diversity and good relations are given visible and enthusiastic support at a senior level within the College.
- Colleges should implement steps in staff training and student induction to ensure that all students are fully supported and given the confidence to report all incidents of harassment, abuse or racist behaviour in light of the high level of unreported incidents of racial harassment with only one in three being reported.
- Ethnic and racial diversity should be a key consideration in the development and dissemination of promotional materials such as leaflets and posters. Through the use of positive and inclusive images of ethnic minority staff and student images.
- Colleges should look to be innovative in designing provision to meet the varied needs of ethnic minority groups. In addition were particular barriers have been identified for specific ethnic groups they should look to develop approaches to dismantle these barriers.
- Policies and practices should be in place to ensure that the college is fully equipped to respond to personal and pastoral care needs of all its students taking account of religious, ethnic and cultural concerns and backgrounds. The provision of such advice services to ethnic minority students, whose first language is not English, in their own language should also be considered. Although we recognise that this may not always be practicable due to the possible cost implications it may be possible working in partnership with local ethnic community groups to identify cost effective ways of delivering such a service.
- We would lastly stress the importance of monitoring in ensuring that the College is able to react quickly to any issues which arise with regard to participation or achievement amongst ethnic minority groups.