

From the Office of the Minister  
Michelle O'Neill MLA



Department of  
**Agriculture and  
Rural Development**

[www.dardni.gov.uk](http://www.dardni.gov.uk)

AN ROINN

**Talmhaíochta agus  
Forbartha Tuaithe**

MÁNNYSTRIE O

**Fairms an  
Kintra Fordèrin**

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Our Ref: COR/44/2014

Your Ref:

20 March 2014

Robin, a chara

**Re: Committee for Employment and Learning Inquiry into post Special Educational Need Provision in education, employment and training for those with Learning Disabilities**

I refer to your request to provide a written submission in relation to the above Inquiry.

My officials have provided comments and supporting information on the main areas that are pertinent to the Department, and these are presented in the attachment to this letter.

I look forward to seeing the outcome of your Inquiry.

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**MICHELLE O'NEILL MLA**  
**Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development**

## **Annex B: Response from the Department for Agriculture and Rural Development**

### **Committee for Employment and Learning: Inquiry into post Special Educational Need Provision in education, employment and training for those with Learning Disabilities in the north of Ireland.**

#### **Background**

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) has responsibility for food, farming, and environmental policy and the development of the rural sector in the north of Ireland. It aims to promote sustainable economic growth and the development of the countryside.

DARD through its College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) is a provider of Further and Higher Education. Courses are delivered across college campuses located in Greenmount, Antrim; Loughry, Cookstown and Enniskillen.

#### **Response to Terms of Reference**

In making the response below we have considered that Terms of Reference 1 and 2 are the most pertinent. DARD has provided responses in context to its dual role as an employer and a provider of education.

**TOR1:** To examine the current range of choice and opportunities available for those with Learning Disabilities on leaving full time schooling.

##### **(a) Employment opportunities**

DARD conducts its recruitment practices in line with NI Civil Service (NICS) directives and with cognisance of its statutory duties and obligations. It is the policy of the NICS that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement in the NICS on the basis of their ability, qualifications and aptitude for the work.

DARD actively engages with staff and line managers to consider reasonable adjustments that may be needed in the workplace. Our Disability Forum provides a support network for staff with disabilities within the Department and works to raise awareness of disability issues and the concerns that many individuals continue to experience. It also provides a challenge function when needed, and in addition offers support and guidance to DARD business areas on a range of disability issues; such as providing accessible information and services, consultations and awareness raising activities.

Each year the Department produces a report on the progress it has made on towards the disability duties. To read the latest report go to - <http://www.dardni.gov.uk/disability-action-plan-review-of-progress-report-2013.pdf>

##### **(b) Education and Training Opportunities**

DARD provides training and education opportunities through its college. The CAFRE Education Service Customer Equality Monitoring Report 2013 reported 1694 enrolments with 80% of student cohort falling within the 16-25 age bracket.

5.7% of respondents stated that they had some form of disability however this is not broken down to by disability type.

Courses at CAFRE during 2013-14 cover Agriculture, Horticulture, Equine, Food and Communications. The range of provision includes vocational, further and higher education pathways as follows:

Vocational - National Vocational Qualification Level 2 (NVQ2) / Apprenticeship

- Entry to these courses is typically based on achievement at GCSE of a minimum of 2 GCSE grades A\*-C
- Course duration 78 weeks with progression to NVQ level 3 / employment

Further Education – Level 2 Diploma / Level 3 Diploma/Extended Diploma

- Entry to these courses is typically based on achievement at GCSE of a minimum of 3 GCSE grades A\*-C for Level 2 and minimum of 5 GCSE grades A\*-C for Level 3 Diploma.
- Course duration 1year Level 2 / 2yr Level 3 with progression to further education / employment

Higher Education - Foundation Degree / Higher National Diploma / Bachelor Science (BSc)

- Admission to these courses will be based on attainment at A level or performance on a course with a progression pathway.
- Course duration 2-3 years with progression to continued Higher Education/Employment

**TOR2:** To seek the views of young people, family carers and groups representing children and young people with learning disabilities; what services they would like to see in place and how the current situation meets their needs.

In developing our first Children and Young People's Action Plan (2010-2013) DARD actively sought the views of different groups of young people and their representative organisations through consultation meetings and small discussion groups. We wanted to hear their views on our proposals and about the key issues of concern to them. We continue to meet with network organisations that advocate on their behalf as we work to develop our second Children and Young People's Action Plan.

The DARD Children's Champion helps to raise awareness with senior policy makers of the need to ensure that the interests and views of children and young people are actively sought on those policies and service developments that impact significantly on their lives. The Department's Children and Young People Action Plan is available to read at - <http://www.dardni.gov.uk/children-and-young-peoples-action-plan-2011-2013.pdf>

CAFRE convenes meetings of the Staff Student Consultative Committees across each of the CAFRE campuses to give young people the opportunity to discuss the progress, direction and quality of student's learning experiences.

**10 March 2014**

### 8.3 CAFRE Further and Higher Education Programmes 2013/14 (*courses in italics are the current titles for the new Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) programmes*)

The QCF is the Government framework for creating and accrediting qualifications in England, Wales and the north of Ireland.

It aims to give a wider range of learners the opportunity to get the qualifications they need, in a way that suits them. QCF qualifications have been designed with the help of employers so learners can be assured that they're gaining skills that employers are looking for.

<b>Agriculture</b>
<i>Level 2 Apprenticeship in Agriculture/Diploma in Workbased Agriculture</i> (formerly NVQ Level 2 in Livestock Production)
<i>Level 2 Diploma in Workbased Land-based Engineering Operations</i> (formerly NVQ Level 2 in Landbased Service Engineering)
Multiskilling programme
Level 2 Certificate for Animal Nursing Assistants – formally known as Animal Nursing Assistant
<i>Level 2 Diploma in Agriculture</i> (formerly National Certificate in Agriculture)
<i>Level 3 Apprenticeship in Agriculture/Level 3 Diploma in Workbased Agriculture</i> (formerly NVQ Level 3 in Livestock Production)
<i>Level 3 Diploma in Workbased Agriculture – Poultry Production –</i> (formerly NVQ level 3 in Poultry Production)
<i>Level 3 Extended Diploma in Agriculture –</i> (formerly National Diploma in Agriculture)
NVQ level 3 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing
<i>Level 2 Diploma in Land-based Technology</i> (formerly First Diploma in Landbased Technology)
<i>Level 3 Diploma/Extended Diploma in Land-based Technology</i> (formerly National Certificate / Diploma in Landbased Technology)
Higher National Diploma in Agriculture
Foundation Degree in Agriculture and Rural Studies (full and part time)
Higher National Certificate in Agriculture
Foundation Degree / Certificate of Higher Education in Rural and Countryside Management (part-time)
BSc (Hons) in Agricultural Technology (jointly delivered with Queen's University, Belfast)

<b>Horticulture</b>
<i>Level 2 Diploma in Workbased Horticulture, Parks, Gardens and Green Spaces – (formerly NVQ Level 2 in Amenity Horticulture (Landscaping))</i>
<i>Level 2 Diploma in Horticulture (FT and PT)</i>
<i>Level 3 Extended Diploma in Horticulture</i>
<i>Level 2 Diploma in Floristry</i>
<i>Level 3 Diploma in Floristry</i>
<i>Level 2 Diploma in Workbased Horticulture, Sportsturf Greenkeeper – (formerly NVQ Level 2 in Amenity Horticulture (Sportsturf))</i>
<i>Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Horticulture (sports turf management)</i>
<i>Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Horticulture (landscaping)</i>
Foundation Degree in Horticulture - Amenity
Foundation Degree in Horticulture - Landscape
Foundation Degree in Horticulture – Sportsturf Management
Foundation Degree with options in Landscape, Sportsturf Management and Amenity Horticulture (part-time)
<b>Equine</b>
<i>Level 2 Diploma in Horse Care</i>
<i>Level 2 Workbased Diploma in Racehorse /Horse Care</i>
Pre Farriery Programme
<i>Level 3 Extended Diploma in Horse Management</i>
Farriery Upskilling Programme
Modules of the Certificate / Diploma in Equine Science
Foundation Degree in Equine Management
BSc (Hons) in Equine Management with options
Certificate and Diploma in Equine Science through Distance Learning

<b>Food</b>
Level 2 Award in Poultry Meat Inspection
National Diploma in Food Technology
National Diploma in Food Nutrition and Health
National Certificate in Food Technology
National Certificate in Food, Nutrition and Health
Award in Packaging (part time)
Diploma in Packaging (part time)
Owner Manager Training Programme
Advanced Certificate / Award in Food Product Innovation
Advanced Award in Competitive Food Manufacture
Advanced Certificate in Competitive Food Quality & Safety
Advanced Certificate in Dairy Processing Technology
Advanced Certificate in Meat Technical Skills
Advanced Professional Certificate in Environmental Health Food Law Enforcement
Foundation Degree in Food Manufacture (full-time and part-time)
Foundation Degree in Food Nutrition and Health (full-time and part-time)
BSc (Hons) in Food Technology (full-time and part-time)
BSc (Hons) in Food Management and Marketing (full-time and part-time)
BSc (Hons) in Food Design and Nutrition (full and part-time)
<b>Communications</b>
MSc in Communication
Postgraduate Diploma in Communication
Postgraduate Certificate in Communication
Advanced Diploma in Personal and Business Communication