



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Five-year Review Report on the Application of the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission Equality Scheme 2016-2021

Report to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

July 2021

This review report is available online at: <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/about-the-assembly/corporate-information/policies/equality-policies/>

This document can be made available in a range of alternative formats including large print, Braille etc. For more information, please contact:

Equality and Good Relations Unit
Room 26
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
Belfast BT4 3XX

Tel: 028 90 418 377
028 90 521 941

Text phone: 028 90 521 209

Email: equality@niassembly.gov.uk

This report template includes a number of self-assessment questions, which relate to the twelve key elements of an equality scheme. The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI) sets the questions. Submission of this review to the ECNI is to be made electronically and in writing, with a signed cover letter from the Chief Executive.

Name of public authority:

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

Equality Manager name and contact details:

Name: Maria Bannon
Telephone: 028 90 418 377
Email: equality@niassembly.gov.uk

Mrs Lesley Hogg
Clerk/Chief Executive

CONTENTS

Executive Summary	6
Introduction	8
1. A general introductory statement specifying the purpose of the scheme and the public authority's commitment to the statutory duties.....	9
2. An outline of how the public authority intends to assess its compliance with the section 75 duties and for consulting on matters to which a duty under that section is likely to be relevant.	13
3. The authority's arrangements for assessing and consulting on the impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted on the promotion of equality of opportunity.....	18
4. The authority's arrangements for monitoring any adverse impact of policies adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity.....	20
5. The authority's arrangements for publishing the results of equality impact assessments and of monitoring any adverse impact of policies adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity.....	21
6. A commitment that in making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted by it, that the public authority shall take into account any equality impact assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy.	21
7. The authority's arrangements for training staff on issues relevant to the duties.	22
8. The authority's arrangements for ensuring and assessing public access to information and to services provided by the authority.	24
9. The authority's timetable for measures proposed in the scheme.	26
10. Details of how the scheme will be published.....	26
11. The authority's arrangements for dealing with complaints arising from a failure to comply with the scheme.	27
12. A commitment to conducting a review of the scheme within five years of its submission to the Equality Commission and to forwarding a report of this review to the Equality Commission.....	27

Annexes

Annex 1 - Examples of staff training during the review period.

Annex 2 - Output examples for section 75 equality categories.

Annex 3 - Equality screenings from 1 April 2016 - 31 March 2021.

Annex 4 - Relevant research undertaken during the 2016-2021 review period.

Executive Summary

- a) To what extent has your public authority's approved scheme provided a workable basis for mainstreaming the need to promote equality of opportunity and good relations into policy-making over the past five years?

The Northern Ireland Assembly Commission's (the "Commission") equality scheme was approved by the ECNI in March 2016 and has provided a framework for the mainstreaming of equality issues into service provision and to new and existing policies.

Progress on meeting the commitments made in the Commission's equality scheme has been monitored over the review period and equality considerations have been mainstreamed into corporate and operational plans. Throughout the period of review, the Commission endeavored to integrate all aspects of equality into its policy and decision making processes.

Communication with staff engaged by the Commission ensured that all staff were aware of the statutory equality duties and were provided with the necessary expertise and assistance to implement them effectively. All screening and equality guidance is available on the Commission's intranet site for all staff and in particular for those responsible for policy development. The provision of equality training was available and regularly highlighted to keep staff aware of the statutory obligations outlined in the Commission's equality scheme.

The use of informal discussions (and pre-consultation) with section 75 representative groups has also proved of value in informing policy development and screening.

- b) What key lessons have been learnt over the past five years in terms of effectively implementing the approved equality scheme?

- The importance of senior level commitment to the implementation and management of the equality scheme and equality commitments.
- Benefits to policy-making and policy revision from early engagement and consultation with stakeholders.
- Benefits of a dedicated Equality Unit to provide ongoing advice and support to assist integration of equality considerations across Directorates.

c) What more needs to be done to achieve outcomes for individuals from the nine equality categories?

- Continue with the provision of equality training programmes and focused training for staff associated with the implementation of the Commission's equality scheme.
- Continue to increase understanding of the equality obligations and how to apply these to day to day work and decision making.
- Continue to develop, when appropriate, further data monitoring systems to enable assessment of policy impacts and outcomes.
- Continued identification of any additional issues to further improve the implementation of actions which contribute to outcomes.

Introduction

An equality scheme describes certain arrangements that a public authority has established, and which it is obliged to apply and follow, as a means of fulfilling the duties imposed on it by section 75(1) and (2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 i.e. the duty to have:

- due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity; and
- regard to the desirability of promoting good relations.

This includes arrangements for (a) training staff, (b) assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity, and (c) monitoring any adverse impact of those policies that have been adopted.

Public authorities who have section 75 equality schemes are also obliged to review those schemes periodically:

“A public authority shall, before the end of the period of five years beginning with the submission of its current scheme, or the latest review of that scheme under this subparagraph, whichever is later, review that scheme and inform the [Equality] Commission of the outcome of the review.”¹

The purpose of a 5-year review is to examine how equality scheme arrangements have been applied, and to assess how effective they have been in assisting public authorities to comply with the section 75 duties.

This report represents a five-year review of the Commission’s equality scheme, covering the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2021. Progress on the implementation of equality scheme commitments can be viewed via the Commission’s Annual Equality Progress Reports to the ECNI which can be accessed [here](#).

It should be noted that during the period of the review, the Assembly did not conduct normal business from January 2017 to January 2020. This three-year period impacted on the delivery of a number of Commission activities. In addition, the Spring of 2020 saw the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic which led to significant changes in how staff operated and conducted its business. During this period, the Commission decided to restrict public access to Parliament Buildings. The building was closed to visitors and only permanent Assembly pass-holders and those essential to the delivery of Assembly business had access to the building. This also impacted on a number of activities.

¹ Northern Ireland Act 1998, Schedule 9, paragraph 8(3).

1. A general introductory statement specifying the purpose of the scheme and the public authority's commitment to the statutory duties

Schedule 9.4 (1) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires the Commission as a designated public authority to set out in an equality scheme how it proposes to fulfil the duties imposed by section of the 75 Northern Ireland Act, 1998 in relation to its relevant functions.

During the period of the review equality continued to be mainstreamed into the Commission's activities, and senior management took the lead in ensuring that equality was an integral part of Commission business. The Commission remained committed to the fulfilment of its section 75 obligations in all parts of its work.

Responsibility for the effective implementation of the equality scheme lies with the Clerk / Chief Executive who is accountable to the Commission for the development, implementation, maintenance and review of the equality scheme in accordance with section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

The Equality Unit provides support to the Commission to assist in its compliance with all the statutory requirements of section 75(1) and 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and section 49A and 49B of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006).

1a) To what extent were senior management involved in ensuring scheme compliance over the five-year period and what further steps could be undertaken to ensure effective internal arrangements?

Equality papers were regularly tabled at Secretariat Management Group (SMG) meetings and annually at Commission meetings. SMG members were involved in ensuring compliance with the equality scheme in a number of ways, namely by:

- Providing a scrutiny function in relation to equality plans, their progress and direction setting;
- Considering and taking action on equality scheme issues within the organisation, when appropriate;
- Supporting the Commission's Equality Unit in engagement with external bodies;

- Ensuring equality screening continued throughout the organisation;
- Ensuring mechanisms were in place to enable staff to comply with equality scheme commitments;
- Ensuring SMG were represented on internal equality related groups; and
- Agreeing and supporting new projects, which underpinned or furthered equality within the organisation.

Heads of Business played an important role by:

- Contributing to equality action plans and annual equality progress reporting by identifying and monitoring relevant initiatives in their area of responsibility and supplying feedback and analysis to the Equality Unit;
- Undertaking quality assurance of quarterly equality screening reports;
- Supporting the Equality Unit by supplying relevant research and audit findings;
- Liaising with the Equality Unit when consideration of policy issues may have included equality elements; and
- Ensuring the attendance of relevant staff at equality training.

In order to command confidence and facilitate compliance with the statutory duties, a number of measures were in place:

- The [Corporate Strategy 2018-23](#) and accompanying Corporate Plan 2019-23, were developed following a comprehensive engagement process with staff. The Corporate Strategy contains two aims of specific relevance to promoting equality of opportunity and good relations:
 1. Under the aim of “Building excellence and innovation in our services” is “Ensuring high standards in equality, governance and regulatory compliance through effective and efficient processes.”
 2. Under the aim of “Strengthening engagement with the public” is “Building connections with target groups including for example, support for greater female participation and the delivery of a Youth Assembly.”

The Corporate Plan 2019-23 sets out key projects and priorities the Commission intend to fulfill in the delivery of the Corporate Strategy. In

addition to the Corporate Strategy and Corporate Plan, the Commission sought to ensure that:

- All relevant equality plans and monitoring reports were tabled at SMG meetings and Commission meetings;
- The Equality Scheme, the Disability Action Plan, the Audit of Inequalities, the Good Relations Action Plan and the Gender Action Plan were published on the Assembly website;
- Policy screening arrangements were in place, including a protocol for the sign off of screening forms and collaboration arrangements with the Assembly's Research and Information Services (RaISe) in relation to 'data mining' arrangements²;
- The screening template was kept under continuous review and screening guidance updated as appropriate;
- Applicable policies submitted (new and revised) to SMG and the Commission had to include a screening form (this was a requirement of the SMG/Commission cover paper template);
- Completed policy [screening forms](#) were published on the Assembly website on a quarterly basis;
- Public consultations were held, when appropriate, on action plans in order to engage with the public and seek their views;
- Training on equality issues was incorporated into the staff training schedule; and
- Over the review period, the Clerk/Chief Executive and Directors met with the Equality Manager on a regular basis to discuss equality issues.

² "Data mining is the process of discovering potentially useful, interesting, and previously unknown patterns from a large collection of data" - <https://www.encyclopedia.com/science-and-technology/computers-and-electrical-engineering/computers-and-computing/data-mining>

- 1b) Outline annual direct expenditure of resources to ensure that the statutory duties were complied with, in terms of staff and money over the past 5 years, and comment on the extent that all necessary resources were allocated.

TABLE 1: YEARLY SPEND IN THE EQUALITY UNIT

Year	Spend
2020/21	£122k
2019/20	£78k
2018/19	£85k
2017/18	£85k
2016/17	£84k

Over the period under review, the Equality Unit consisted of two members of staff, which included a part-time Equality Manager and a full-time Assistant Assembly Clerk.

However, from October 2020, an additional member of administration staff provided assistance to the Unit and, in March 2021, an additional Equality Officer joined the Equality Unit. Table 1 above outlines expenditure within the Equality Unit which includes both salary and programme/delivery costs. The extra salary costs arising from the additional support that was in place for six months in 2020-21 explains the increase in costs in that year.

It should be noted that the costs provided above were not the total cost in meeting the equality scheme commitments. For example, senior staff provided significant time in mainstreaming equality i.e. in the implementation of equality action plans, the completion of equality screening, in the assessment of web communication, access maintenance, research provision, and in the collection, analysis and provision of data to the Equality Unit.

In addition to the expenditure associated with the above activities, the Commission also incurred other costs arising from the provision of learning and development activities for staff (see Annex 1). For example, equality training was supplied for new staff and refresher training was provided for existing staff. In addition, specific equality training was also delivered to staff involved in equality screening. All costs arising from this training were met by a central HR budget and are not included in the amounts above.

Whilst the Commission does not have a definitive cost for the activity provided, it has increased significantly over the last five years as mainstreaming equality commitments has become more successful.

2. An outline of how the public authority intends to assess its compliance with the section 75 duties and for consulting on matters to which a duty under that section is likely to be relevant.

2a) Outline impacts and outcomes (for the public authority and/or individuals from the nine equality categories) over the past five years and what further steps could be undertaken to build on these or address underreporting?

Prompt – Were annual progress reports critically reviewed before or after submission to the Commission? What examples of good practice from other public authorities could be adopted?

The Commission’s equality scheme provided the basis for the assessment of equality implications as related to, for example, strategies, policies³ and programmes. Equality screening assessment was an integral part of the policy development process and details on policies screened during the review period can be accessed [here](#) or at Annex 3.

During the review period a range of actions were undertaken in relation to the implementation of four⁴ equality action plans. These action plans were:

1. [Gender Action Plan](#) 2016-2018 and the continuing [Gender Action Plan](#) 2019-2023;
2. [Good Relations Action Plan](#) 2016-2021;
3. [Audit of Inequalities](#) 2016-2021; and
4. [Disability Action Plan](#) 2016-2021.

Detailed progress against planned outcomes for each of the action plans across individual reporting periods is included in the Commission’s Annual Equality Progress reports, these reports can be accessed [here](#). Table 2 below details the number of actions each year over the period of the review.

³ As detailed at Chapter 4, 4.1, of the Assembly Equality Scheme, the term ‘policy’ is very broadly defined and it covers all the ways in which the Commission carry out or propose to carry out its functions in relation to Northern Ireland. The term is used for any proposed/amended/existing strategy, policy initiative or practice and/or decision, whether written or unwritten and irrespective of the label given to it.

⁴ In 2019 the 2016-2018 GAP concluded and a new continuing GAP 2019-2023 was implemented.

TABLE 2: NUMBER OF ACTIONS PER YEAR ACROSS EQUALITY ACTION PLANS

Equality Action Plan Title	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Gender Action Plan (GAP)	30	39	39	14	14
Good Relations Action Plan	41	41	41	41	41
Audit of Inequalities (Aoi)	26	26	26	26	27
Disability Action Plan (DAP)	50	50	51	51	54
Totals	147	156	157	132	136

Note: the number of activities recorded for each year recur annually.

Examples of outputs related to plan actions are included at Annex 2 by section 75 category. Examples of programmes and events delivered are also included.

Annual Equality Progress Reports to the Equality Commission

Annual Equality Progress Reports to the ECNI were produced by the Equality Unit, which co-ordinated input from all business areas. Heads of Business and/or Directors approved returns prior to inclusion in the draft reports. Equality Action Plan data, included in the Annual Equality Progress Report, was reviewed by SMG on a six-monthly basis and the Commission on an annual basis. Annual Equality Progress reports were scrutinised and reviewed by SMG, prior to consideration by the Commission. These reports provided an annual source of information to enable dissemination of on-going equality activity and examples of good practice. Following submission of the Annual Progress Report to the ECNI, a meeting was held with the ECNI each year to review content prior to the report being published on the Assembly website.

Examples of good practice in working with other bodies.

Throughout the period under review the Equality Unit participated in several cross-sectoral groups which provided valuable opportunities for discussion, and the sharing of information on equality related matters, these included:

Equality Practitioners Group (EPG)

The cross-departmental Equality Practitioners Group (EPG), Chaired by The Executive Office (TEO), met quarterly and was an important forum for discussing issues of mutual concern and the sharing of information and good practice. This forum discussed the statutory duties and their implementation.

ECNI/NICS Statutory Duties Forum

This group is separate to, but met sequentially alongside, the EPG. This group aimed to improve the quality of section 75 screening and Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) and to improve the quality of Disability Action Plan (DAP) action measures. Work plans were developed and the Equality Unit inputted into areas such as data signposting, leadership, screening, training and consultation.

ECNI/EPG Training subgroup

The Equality Unit participated in this training subgroup with the ECNI, Government Departments and the Centre for Applied Learning (CAL) to review NICS equality training in relation to the statutory duties in order to update and/or redesign training for staff. This included a review of section 75, good relations and disability training.

NICS Gender Hub

The Equality Unit and HR Unit participated in the NICS Stormont Gender Hub. The NICS Gender Hubs had localised hubs across Northern Ireland and aimed to address gender issues. Information from this group was fed back to the Gender Action Plan Implementation Group.

Inter-parliamentary Equality Group

This group consists of the Equality Managers from each of the four UK legislatures.

External Disability Advisory Group (EDAG)

This group consists of representatives from various disability related charities. The group meets twice a year. Information on the group can be found [here](#). During the review period the group inputted into policy development.

Several further examples of good practice, through working with others, are described below.

- In October 2016, the Commission signed up to the ECNI's 'Every Customer Counts' initiative, which aims to encourage organisations and businesses across Northern Ireland to consider if they can improve the service they offer to clients and customers with a disability [ECNI - Northern Ireland Assembly signs up to 'Every Customer Counts'](#)

- An [accessibility webpage](#) page was created in February 2017 to provide visitors with information on accessibility arrangements and facilities at Parliament Buildings. The page was developed by the Equality Unit in conjunction with the relevant business areas, and members of the EDAG.
- During the review period the Education Service continued to work with the CCEA to translate the primary school section of the Education Service's website into Irish.
- The Assembly was the first public building to achieve the National Autistic Society Access Award.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rkhignhrFEA>
- In 2019 the Commission became members of both the Diversity NI Programme and the Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme.

2b) Outline the number of equality scheme related consultation exercises undertaken by your authority over the past five years. Set out the number and percentage related to screening exercises and to EQIAs and indicate the extent that your scheme helped you to engage with external stakeholders.

Over the period of review, the Commission carried out 29 equality screening exercises which are detailed at Annex 3. Table 3 below details the policy screening decisions. Four policy screenings related directly to the Commission's equality scheme and represented 14% of policies which were subject to equality screening. Written correspondence was the main method of consultation, however other methods of communication were undertaken in some instances including, for example, informal meetings with stakeholders and engagement with formal forums involving representative bodies and individuals affected by policies. The majority of equality screenings related to internal policies.

2c) Indicate if your list of consultees was amended during the five-year period and what further steps could be taken to develop your level of engagement and consultation?

The Commission's list of consultees was routinely updated on a quarterly basis following the issuing of equality screening reports, and consultees could be added to the list at any time upon receipt of requests from both interested individuals and organisations. During the review period, the Commission reviewed records of gathered consent for the processing of personal information in line with the commitment to data subject rights under the UK GDPR and were content that all data subjects were aware of their rights under the legislation.

While the majority of the Commission's consultations adopted direct written communication as the principal method of consulting with stakeholders, as described above some consultation exercises adopted other methods. For example, in some cases pre-consultation discussions with stakeholders helped to pre-empt potential equality issues early, before policies were further developed.

2d) To what extent did your authority consult directly with directly affected individuals as well as with representative groups, particularly in relation to young people and those with learning disabilities, and was this sufficient?

During public consultation exercises, the Commission sought to elicit the views of both individuals and stakeholder groups affected by its policies under review. The Commission held pre-consultation and formal consultation exercises, which included stakeholder groups such as those represented on the Commission's EDAG. With regards to decisions and policies impacting on staff, the Commission undertook engagement and consultation with affected staff on issues.

3. The authority’s arrangements for assessing and consulting on the impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted on the promotion of equality of opportunity.

3a) Outline and discuss the number of policies your authority subject to screening over the past five years, setting out the number and percentage of ‘policies screened in’ on the basis of equality considerations and the percentage ‘screened in’ on the basis of the good relations duty.

Over the five-year review period, the Commission screened a total of 29 policies. Annex 3 provides a policy list of equality screenings.

TABLE 3: POLICY SCREENING DECISIONS

Decision	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	Total
Screened in ⁵	0	0	0	0	0	0
Screened out with mitigation ⁶	2 (7%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	2 (7%)	0 (0%)	5 (17%)
Screened out ⁷	7 (24%)	0 (0%)	7 (24%)	9 (31%)	1 (3%)	24 (83%)
Total no of policies screened	9	1	7	11	1	29

Note: percentages may not sum due to rounding.

The Commission screened 29 policies from 2016-2021, screening decisions indicated that 24 policies were screened out, 5 policies were screened out with mitigation and no policies were screened in. One of the policies screened out (with mitigation) was on the basis of the good relations duty. All of the screened policies can be viewed on the Assembly website [here](#).

Equality screening has become well established as an integral part of policy development. The Equality Unit has been consulted by colleagues seeking assistance and advice on the completion of screening forms.

Key factors contributing to equality screening progress over the review period included:

- ✓ section 75 training for relevant staff.

⁵ Screened in means that the likely impact is major and the policy will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

⁶ Screened out with mitigation means that the likely impact is minor and measures will be taken to mitigate the impact or an alternative policy will be proposed.

⁷ Screened out means that the likely impact is none and no further action is required.

- ✓ availability of specialised resources on screening developed by the Equality Unit.
- ✓ one-to-one support and advice provided by the Equality Unit.
- ✓ one-to-one screening training for policy leads provided by the ECNI.

3b) To what extent did your authority's consideration of the screening criteria **not** identify equal opportunity implications on any of s75 categories, but for which consultees then highlighted problems?

Prompt – Identify the extent the collection of quantitative and qualitative data informed screening processes. Outline the extent consultations with representative groups produced data to inform the screening process, which was not otherwise available to your authority. Outline any difficulties in identifying policies and equality implications using the definition of policy set out in the Guide to the Statutory Duties.

In general, the section 75 screening form helped staff to appropriately identify equality implications. However, staff undertaking screening cited the limited availability of up to date quantitative data in relation to some of the section 75 categories. The Commission is currently putting in place actions to address any data gaps.

Staff conducted research over the review period, both quantitative and qualitative, and this assisted in identifying equality of opportunity implications and meant that any issues could be addressed early in the policy development process. Research conducted, and seminars provided, relating to section 75 issues can be found at Annex 4.

It was also noted that where pre-consultation discussions with stakeholders took place, that this method of engagement helped to pre-empt potential equality issues which were addressed early on, before policies were further developed.

Equality screening forms were published on the Assembly website as part of quarterly screening reports and issued to consultees on the Commission's consultee list. During the review period the Commission received few comments from consultees. Mainly, consultee requests were for further information rather than equality of opportunity implications.

3c) Outline over the past five years how many EQIAs your authority commenced as a result of i) initial screening and ii) as a result of screening new/revised policies subsequently, and discuss the

extent that your authority has become more effective at identifying equality of opportunity dimensions in its policies.

The Commission did not undertake any EQIAs during the five-year review period.

- 3d) Outline over the past five-year period the percentage of your authority's initial EQIA timetable that reached i) stage 6 of the EQIA process i.e. decision making, and ii) stage 7 of the EQIA process i.e. annual monitoring & publication of results, and indicate the extent that your authority has become more effective at progressing EQIAs.

Following an EQIA on the flying of the Union flag at Parliament Buildings and the Commission's decision in 2015 that the Union flag would be flown from Parliament Buildings on designated days, as defined by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, the final EQIA stage of the process, step 7 was reached during the review period. This involved monitoring of the impact of the EQIA decision, which included regular consideration of a range of data sources such as complaints, research and related policies. Six-monthly monitoring reports were provided to the SMG and annual reports were tabled at the Commission.

4. The authority's arrangements for monitoring any adverse impact of policies adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity.

- 4a) To what extent were sufficient arrangements put in place to collect data relating to the nine equality categories to monitor the impact of policies and what could your authority do in future to develop monitoring arrangements?

Regular monitoring processes were well established throughout the period under review and the Commission's Annual Equality Progress Reports evidenced that monitoring was undertaken. During the review period, SMG agreed to extend the section 75 equality categories and data collection from recruitment competition applicants and also gave consideration to the collection of section 75 data from staff via a staff survey which was still being considered at the end of the review period. Research relating to data collection was undertaken to inform discussion.

5. The authority's arrangements for publishing the results of equality impact assessments and of monitoring any adverse impact of policies adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity.

5a) Indicate the number of reports published outlining the results of EQIAs and monitoring over the past five years, and outline what your authority could do in future in relation to improving the publication of EQIA results and monitoring.

During the review period, six-monthly Good Relations Action Plan (2016-2021) monitoring reports were published on the Assembly website. These reports contained an action to monitor the outcome of the EQIA on the flying of the Union flag at Parliament Buildings. Monitoring updates on the progress of this action can be accessed [here](#).

6. A commitment that in making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted by it, that the public authority shall take into account any equality impact assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy.

6a) In terms of the number of EQIAs that reached stage 6 i.e. decision making to what extent were mitigation measures and alternative policies adopted?

In 2015, the Commission agreed a policy decision on the flying of the Union flag from Parliament Buildings and consideration was also given to mitigating measures. As a result, the Commission agreed a mitigating action which was added to the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021 and which provided for a "Reconsideration of a Civic Occasions Protocol". The Commission is currently awaiting the outcome of the final report by the Commission on Flags, Identity, Culture and Tradition in order to inform the further development of the Civil Occasions Protocol.

6b) To what extent did consideration of EQIAs and consultations contribute to a change in policy, as opposed to policy decisions which would probably have been made in any event by your authority?

No EQIAs were undertaken during the review period. However, with regard to consultations, the Commission regularly published screening reports on a quarterly basis and a number of public consultations were undertaken during the period under review. Public consultations were held on the Disability Action Plan, the Good Relations Action Plan and the Gender Action Plan. The Commission noted where responses had resulted in changes or amendments to action plans.

7. The authority's arrangements for training staff on issues relevant to the duties.

7a) To what extent were sufficient arrangements put in place to develop and deliver a training programme in accordance with scheme commitments?

The Commission is committed to training and to ensuring that sufficient arrangements are in place to develop and deliver training programmes and awareness events aligned with its responsibilities under its equality scheme.

The Corporate Strategy 2018-23 sets out the following objective: *"Maximising the potential of our people through a longer term focus on learning and development opportunities"*. This is deliverable through the planned outcome of the development and implementation of a 4-year Learning and Development Strategy, which was underway during the review period.

A training plan was developed and agreed by SMG each year of the review period, and in consultation with the Equality Unit, to ensure continued learning and development for staff in relation to equality.

During the five-year review period, a range of training events were delivered and supported, examples are included at Annex 1.

In addition to open courses, the HR Learning and Development (L&D) team facilitated the training and development of a range of corporate volunteer groups including, Mental Health First Aiders, Autism Champions and Harassment Contact Officers. These groups were routinely added to each consecutive L&D training plan to ensure their skills and knowledge were kept up to date.

The L&D team proactively networked with a range of training organisations and developed key partnerships. In collaboration with the ECNI, further training was targeted at senior staff (policy makers/developers) on particular aspects of the equality scheme implementation including screening and EQIAs.

Staff were routinely advised of any updates by the Equality Unit and updated on relevant policy. Guidance and information resources were also held on the Assembly's Intranet for staff to access.

In addition to obtaining input from staff surveys, the L&D team sought evaluations for each training event. The results of feedback were then fed into the annual monitoring of activities to highlight satisfaction levels and propose ideas/solutions for future delivery. Going forward, the Equality Unit is working closely with the ECNI and NICS in the design of an e-learning package encompassing the main areas of section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

7b) Have all staff received awareness training and what could your authority do in future to deliver an effective training programme?

Prompt – Does the authority have evidence that over the past five years' staff understood their role in implementing the scheme? What were the lessons learnt in terms of enablers and impediments to communication and training?

Relevant section 75 training was provided to all staff involved in the delivery of the Commission's equality scheme and staff were encouraged to update and refresh their knowledge through the uptake of training opportunities and attendance at relevant events, such as external seminars and conferences.

The most recent delivery of section 75 refresher training to all staff was in January 2021 via e-learning where completion was mandatory.

The HR team delivered a blended approach to raising awareness of equality matters throughout the five-year period. New staff received awareness training on equality as part of their formal induction and on-boarding programme. This included information on both the equality scheme and relevant policies. Staff were required to complete awareness training and this was delivered in a range of ways over the period of this review.

The HR L&D team found that the most effective method for delivering awareness on the requirements of section 75 (including screening and EQIAs) was through the use of e-learning packages, supplemented by access to guidance and resource documentation.

In raising awareness of the issues affecting section 75 groups, the HR L&D team were of the view that direct 'classroom' style events were the most useful with key speakers and relevant organisations highlighting 'their story'.

8. The authority's arrangements for ensuring and assessing public access to information and to services provided by the authority.

8a) To what extent were sufficient arrangements put in place to ensure and assess public access to information and to services provided by the authority?

During the review period the Commission took a number of steps to ensure equality of opportunity was in place for people accessing information and services:

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY WEBSITE

Since the introduction of The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations the Communications Office has taken a number of steps to improve the accessibility of the Assembly website. This included:

Audit

An audit of the main sections of the website and selected webpages was undertaken to check how accessible they were and to make adjustments where possible. The accessibility statement was regularly monitored to ensure its accuracy. Efforts were made to make sure that the most popular and significant material on the website was made available in an accessible format. Any issues were recorded in the accessibility statement.

Accessibility Guidance

Upon review of the guidance published by gov.uk on website accessibility for public sector websites a new guidance section was created on the AsslSt intranet to inform staff of the new website accessibility regulations and what it meant for the content they produce. The guidance will be expanded upon over time as business need requires.

Accessibility Checks

Content added to the Assembly website by members of the Communications Office web team was checked in accordance with the website accessibility guidance on gov.uk (and other resources). Online tools were also used to help evaluate the accessibility of web pages.

INTERPRETATION, TRANSLATION AND TRANSCRIPTION SERVICES

The Department of Finance's Construction and Procurement Delivery unit (CPD) put in place a framework for the provision of interpretation,

translation and transcription services for the Northern Ireland public sector, which the Commission had access to over the review period. The Equality Unit worked with the Procurement Office to develop internal protocols, established an intranet page and issued information to all staff to keep them informed of internal process requirements and new developments. Over the review period a number of requests were made through the framework.

The Equality Unit also developed and made available a number of guides for staff, these included an 'Inclusive and Accessible Events: Guide and checklist' and 'Sign Language Guidance'.

EXAMPLES OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND SERVICES AT DIRECTORATE LEVEL

Assembly Connects Education Webpage

During the summer of 2020, the Engagement Team, along with the Communications Office reviewed content available to the public, which supports engagement with the Assembly. Much of the content was written in technical language and difficult for those unfamiliar with the processes of government to understand.

To make the work of the Assembly more accessible an Assembly Connects education portal was created for the Assembly website. It includes updated guidance that has been re-written in plain English, accessible videos and interactive content. There was a soft launch of the portal in March 2021. More development work is in progress and it is hoped Assembly Connects will formally launch later in 2021.

Education Service Website

The Assembly provides an [education service](#), which makes information about the work of the Assembly accessible to young people, through its inward and outreach visits programmes and its dedicated website.

During the review period the education service continued to work with CCEA to make information and activities on the education website accessible and easy to use for all young people, and to support teachers and students in the study of the Assembly and the democratic process. The website complies with W3C guidelines and website content was designed to suit a range of age and ability levels.

Education staff and CCEA teams have worked to ensure the conversion of all online games and activities to HTML, a format which can be assessed by all kinds of devices.

9. The authority's timetable for measures proposed in the scheme.

9a) Outline the extent to which measures set out in the original timetable have been implemented. Any detailed information should be included as an appendix to the report.

The Commission has met its commitments as set out in its equality scheme timetable. This has included, for example, to provide an Annual Equality Progress Report to the ECNI, to conduct an Audit of Inequalities, to implement its training plan relating to equality and to communicate the commitments as set out in its equality scheme. Information related to the Commission's commitments can be found on the [equality page](#) of the Assembly website.

9b) If your authority was to be reconstituted in the next five years what would be the main scheme actions/equality considerations that an incoming authority should address?

It would be recommended that continued mainstreaming in the following areas of scheme implementation should take place:

- screening and EQIAs;
- data collection and interpretation;
- activities to further mainstream; and
- monitoring.

10. Details of how the scheme will be published.

10a) Were scheme commitments in this section delivered and what evidence supports this view?

The Commission's list of consultees were notified of the draft and final versions of the equality scheme, which were published on the Assembly's website and made available on request from the Equality Unit. Staff were also informed of the availability of equality scheme and its content.

11. The authority’s arrangements for dealing with complaints arising from a failure to comply with the scheme.

11a) Outline the number and nature of complaints received by your authority, and what your authority could do in future to develop its complaints handling process and learn from complaints.

The Commission’s equality scheme sets out the procedure for dealing with complaints arising from a perceived failure to comply with the equality scheme. During the period of the review, three complaints were received.

TABLE 4: COMPLAINTS MADE UNDER THE 2016-2021 EQUALITY SCHEME

Year	No.	Issue	Decision
2016-17	2	Two complaints were received concerning an event held on 16 November 2016 entitled ‘ <i>Abortion policy and law: Key considerations</i> ’.	Following an investigation into the complaints one complaint was upheld. The policy was re-screened and mitigations were put in place.
2020-21	1	One complaint was received concerning the equality screening of the Recruitment and Selection Policy and policy content.	Following an investigation into the complaint, the complaint was not upheld.

12. A commitment to conducting a review of the scheme within five years of its submission to the Equality Commission and to forwarding a report of this review to the Equality Commission.

12a) What has been your authority’s experience of conducting this review? To what extent has the Commission’s guidance been useful in undertaking the review?

This review was conducted with input from Assembly Directorates, and in line with the ECNI’s guidance. The process has provided a helpful overview of achievements and an opportunity to reflect on current plans.

ANNEX 1 - EXAMPLES OF STAFF TRAINING DURING THE REVIEW PERIOD 2016-2021

TABLE 1 - 2020-21 Examples of Staff Training

Master classes	Master classes	Formal Training	E-Learning
It's Time to Stop Racism	Diversity & Inclusion - A Practical Guide Going Online!	Harassment Contact Officer	Diversity Now
Equality and Diversity Link and Learn	Menopause Clinic	PMP Module 5: Mental Health Awareness for Managers	Introduction to section 75 (NIA)
LGBT Awareness	Take 5 to Rethink your Resilience	Supporting and Engaging People with Autism	Resilience and Mental Strength in Times of Uncertainty

TABLE 2 - 2019-20 Examples of Staff Training

Master classes	Master classes	Formal Training	E-Learning
Mental Health awareness	Releasing your inner coach	British Sign Language - level 3	Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Awareness
Domestic Violence and Abuse	Trusted Colleague Training	Mental Health Awareness (6 week course)	Positive Mental Health Toolkit for Line Managers
Disability Awareness	Emotional Wellbeing & Suicide Prevention	-	Positive Mental Health Toolkit for all Staff

TABLE 3 - 2018-19 Examples of Staff Training

Master classes	Master classes	Formal Training	E-Learning
Stroke Awareness Masterclass	Section 75 Awareness Workshop	British Sign Language Level 3	Unconscious Bias
Trans inclusion Awareness Masterclass	Masterclass on Racial Equality	British Sign Language Level 2	Managing Personal Stress and Resilience

Master classes	Master classes	Formal Training	E-Learning
Dementia Awareness Masterclass	Equality Screening Workshop	Conferences	Workshops
Masterclass on Menopause Awareness	Masterclass on Domestic Violence	Women in Leadership in a Changing World	Makaton Workshop

TABLE 4 - 2017-18 Examples of Staff Training

Master classes	E-learning	Conferences	Formal Training
Mental Health Awareness Masterclass	Line Managers role in Managing Stress	CIPD Wellbeing & Resilience Conference 2017	British Sign Language Level 2
Carer Awareness	Unconscious Bias	Delivering on Diversity: NICS People Strategy	Mental Health First Aid training
Addiction NI: Interactive Sessions on Drugs and Alcohol	-	Annual Review of Employment Law	Mediation Theory and Practice

TABLE 5 - 2016-17 Examples of Staff Training

Master classes	Other training	Conferences	Formal Training
Masterclass on Visual Awareness	Mental Health first aiders	Justice Human Rights Law Conference	British Sign Language level 2
Masterclass on Sexual Orientation	Harassment Contact Officer training	Social Justice & Human Rights	British Sign Language level 2
Working with individuals with Communication Difficulties	Designated Child Protection Officer Training	Introduction to the Disability Discrimination Act	-
Masterclass on Hearing Loss	-	-	-

ANNEX 2 - OUTPUT EXAMPLES FOR SECTION 75 EQUALITY CATEGORIES

Section 75 Equality Categories	Examples of Actions undertaken during the review period
Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of the 2016-2018 Gender Action Plan (and related outcomes) and publication of the gender closure report (March 2019). • Participated in the Business in the Community (BITC) Gender Project (2015-2019). As part of this project, a gender balance audit was conducted. • Research was conducted over the review period, for example, a paper entitled 'Supporting Women in the Workplace – Models of Good Practice'. • Guidance was developed to help Heads of Business and Directors take account of gender-related issues when establishing internal panels and groups. • Data was analysed on the gender balance of staff presenting at SMG and Commission meetings (from 2016-2019) and guidance published. • Ensuring opportunities to attend learning and development events were provided to accommodate all work patterns. • The development of policies and guidance to support the life balance and health and well-being of staff (e.g. the Domestic Violence and Abuse Policy). <p>Provision of events related to gender during the review period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A special debate in the Assembly Chamber, chaired by the Speaker, was held to mark International Women's Day on 6 March 2020. The theme for 2020 was "Balance for Better". • In partnership with the Rural Community Network, over 80 women from rural areas attended a day-long conference with training on how to get their voice heard in the Assembly. • In partnership with the Education Authority, an event was held for approximately 200 young women in 2018 to mark the centenary of the Representation of the People Act 1918.
Age	<p>During the period of review there was continued engagement with young people through the education service, engagement services and Committees. Examples of actions are detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Education Service conducted focus groups on behalf of Assembly Committees, and the Assembly's Research and Information Service (RaISe) developed a framework for

Section 75 Equality Categories	Examples of Actions undertaken during the review period
	<p>selecting a broad cross-section of the youth populations, thereby ensuring that children from all sectors, including those attending special schools and in Irish-medium education, could take part in these consultations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the review period, work was carried out with CCEA to update and create new resources for the Education Service website. This included a number of short films, which aimed to explain the work of the Assembly to young people and encourage them to engage with its work. http://education.niassembly.gov.uk/video-gallery/how-laws-are-made-northern-ireland-assembly. • The Education Service online resources will continue to be up to date in terms of technology and content which supports the curriculum. http://education.niassembly.gov.uk/video-gallery • An announcement was made that a Youth Assembly would be launched and go live in 2021. <p>Provision of programmes and events related to age during the review period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In partnership with the National Children’s Bureau and the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum, a special debate chaired by the Speaker was held to mark Anti-Bullying Week. • The Education Service worked with the Northern Ireland Youth Forum to facilitate a youth debate in the Assembly Chamber on 22 February 2018, chaired by the Speaker. This involved over 180 young people from different backgrounds. • On 13 March 2018, the Education Service worked with the YMCA on a ‘Youth in Government’ programme for 20 young people from different backgrounds, which included meeting with MLAs and participating in an Assembly-style debate. • Among the adult groups that participated in the education programme were members of UNISON (May 2017) and elected student representatives from the National Union of Students/Union of Students Ireland (NUSUSI) (October 2017). • The launch of the Speaker’s ‘Creating Opportunities’ theme saw 100 young people from disadvantaged backgrounds visit the Assembly and give their views on what is important to them. Clerks from the Economy, Education and Communities Committees also attended the event to hear the views of young people.

Section 75 Equality Categories	Examples of Actions undertaken during the review period
Dependants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the review period staff could claim Childcare Vouchers or apply for a Tax free scheme if using registered childcare. • Support for staff was in place for those who incurred additional childcare costs as a direct result of the need to attend or remain in their place of employment outside of their normal working pattern to facilitate Assembly business. • Support for staff was in place for staff whose children have a disability that are unlikely to be accommodated within usual childcare arrangements.
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Five Year Review of Disability Action Plans was submitted to ECNI (May 2018). • An annual disability survey of staff was conducted each year of the review period. • Maintenance of the Assembly’s quiet room, changing places facility, tactile ‘tour map’ of Parliament Buildings, iPad with subtitled version of the Assembly tour, Braille signage and other signage in Parliament Buildings including pictorial signage images continued during the review period. • The Assembly Commission continued to maintain accreditation awards for the ‘Louder than Words’ (RNIB) and the Access Award (National Autistic Society) Standards. (Accreditation standards can be accessed at the following here). • “Autism Champions” and “Mental Health First Aiders” were in place. • The web page entitled ‘Autism and the Assembly’ continued to be maintained to provide information to the public on access arrangements when visiting the Assembly. • A further web-based video was made available showing how to access Parliament Buildings. This video was created for visitors on the autism spectrum, but others have also found this useful with planning their visit. (A subtitled version of the video was also available as was a printable version to download). • In 2018 an ‘Inclusive and Accessible Events: Guide and Checklist’ was developed and implemented for staff. The guide and checklist was developed for staff involved in the planning, organising and delivery of events at Parliament Buildings and at external venues. • During this reporting period, sign language guidance for staff was developed.

Section 75 Equality Categories	Examples of Actions undertaken during the review period
	<p>Physical works in Parliament Buildings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In September 2017, the Commission completed a programme of work to further improve access in Parliament Buildings, in particular for the floors that are open to the public. This work involved relocating the existing shop and café, constructing an access ramp from the entrance lobby to the ground floor and the automation of corridor doors in the basement, ground and first floors. In addition, the south lift was upgraded to fire evacuation standard to facilitate the evacuation of persons with a disability in the event of a fire and alterations to counters in the Members' Bar, Business Office and Stationery Office to facilitate wheelchair access took place. <p>Example of events held:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assembly Community Connect (ACC) Programme. The ACC programme works to enhance connections between the Assembly and the community through education and outreach, and it provides free training, information and support for local community groups. In December 2018, the Assembly hosted a number of tours for people with a range of disabilities. These included tours for those with a learning difficulties; those with a physical and sensory disability; and those with autism. Members of the public attended, with representatives of Mencap, the Cedar Foundation, the MS Society and the National Autistic Society were also present.
Sexual Orientation (and Gender)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At its meeting of 19 December 2018, the Commission agreed to become a member of the Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme. The Commission became a member in January 2019. During the review period work commenced on a review of a number of HR policies and completion of the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index as part of this process.
Good Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The "Perspectives On" series of events was established as part of the approach and principles agreed by the Commission in 2012 to govern how centenaries would be marked within Parliament Buildings. Events marked since this time have included the Ulster Covenant, Female Suffrage, the Dublin Lockout, the Outbreak of World War 1, the Easter Rising and

Section 75 Equality Categories	Examples of Actions undertaken during the review period
	<p>the Battle of the Somme, the 100th anniversary of the Dáil Éireann and the 100th anniversary of the Government of Ireland Act which established Northern Ireland.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A paper dealing with Irish, Ulster Scots and minority ethnic languages was considered by SMG in March 2017 in anticipation of it being presented to the Commission when the Assembly resumed normal business, this action was superseded by the language commitments in the New Decade, New Approach (NDNA) deal, which was published in January 2020. The Commission will consider the actions required within its remit in the context of the legislation passed by the Assembly. <p>Provision of programmes and events related to good relations during the review period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During this review period, the Education Service continued to deliver programmes that have a cross-community aspect. Examples included groups collaborating as members of School Learning Communities and Shared Education Partnerships (new in 2017-18); and groups participating in the National Citizen Service programme, which brings together young people from a variety of backgrounds in summer school residential settings. • <i>Assembly Art Exhibition - Stormont: A sense of place.</i> In March 2016, a successful collaboration between the Assembly and the Belfast School of Art produced 16 pieces of artwork exploring aspects of Northern Ireland's history and future. • Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in the closure of Parliament Buildings to the public in March 2020, work was undertaken by the Assembly's Engagement Service to design outputs for the virtual delivery of training. Requests for training were received from two organisations representing refugees and asylum seekers which were facilitated. Since June 2020, the service has been working with the Ad Hoc Committee on the Bill of Rights to help it engage with hard-to-reach and marginalized groups, including black and ethnic minority groups. • One of the education officers became an Irish language champion and delivered tours and presentations in Irish to visiting groups. Groups were also able to meet with MLAs who speak Irish.

ANNEX 3 - EQUALITY SCREENINGS FROM 1 APRIL 2016- 31 MARCH 2021

No.	Title of Policy	Screening Quarter
1	Deputising and Temporary Promotions Policy	April –June 2016
2	Shared Parental Leave Policy	April –June 2016
3	Vacancy Management Policy	April –June 2016
4	Redeployment Policy	April –June 2016
5	Protocol for Answers to Assembly Questions	April –June 2016
6	NI Assembly Commission Complaints Policy and Procedures	July-September 2016
7	Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021	October –December 2016
8	Disability Action Plan 2016-2021	October –December 2016
9	Revised Exhibition and Arts Engagement Policy	October –December 2016
10	Mandatory Temporary Redeployment Policy	July -September 2017
11	Mental Health Policy and Line Managers Guide	April -June 2018
12	Data Protection Policy	April -June 2018
13	Managing and Processing of Images Policy	April -June 2018
14	Annual Disability Survey (Members)	October -December 2018
15	Assembly Skills and Behaviours	October -December 2018
16	Managing and Developing Performance in the Assembly	January –March 2019
17	Domestic Violence and Abuse Policy	January –March 2019
18	Staff Hours at Work Policy	April -June 2019
19	Apprenticeship and Placement Framework	April -June 2019
20	Whistleblowing Policy	April -June 2019
21	Risk Management Strategy	April -June 2019
22	Flexible Working and Partial Retirement Policy	July –September 2019
23	Capability Policy	October –December 2019
24	Parliament Buildings Special Lighting Policy	October –December 2019
25	Data Protection Policy (revised)	October –December 2019
26	Recruitment and Selection Policy Statement and Procedures	January –March 2020
27	Corporate Procurement Policy	April – June 2020
28	Staff Travel and Subsistence Policy	April – June 2020
29	Policy on the underlying aspects of the Assembly Members (Remuneration Board) draft Bill	October –December 2020

ANNEX 4 - RELEVANT RESEARCH UNDERTAKEN DURING 2016-2021

TABLE 1

No.	Title of research	Year
1	Secretariat Staff Survey 2019. (Gender Report).	2020
2	Northern Ireland Assembly Secretariat Equal Pay Review (reports were produced by NISRA).	2020
3	Section 75-related questions asked in the Census and a selection of government surveys in Northern Ireland.	2020
4	Secretariat Staff Survey 2019.	2020
5	Northern Ireland Assembly Visitor Survey (Good Relations) Autumn 2019 results.	2019
6	Gender balance of staff presenting at Secretariat Management Group and Northern Ireland Assembly Commission meetings 2016/17-2018/19.	2019
7	Gender balance of staff presenting at Secretariat Management Group and Northern Ireland Assembly Commission meetings 2018/19.	2019
8	Commission Audit of Inequalities 2019 Review.	2019
9	Northern Ireland Assembly Equal Pay Review (reports were produced by NISRA) December 2019 (based on data at Aug 2019).	2019
10	Equality and Good Relations Survey 2018.	2019
11	Northern Ireland Assembly Equal Pay Review (reports were produced by NISRA) January 2018 (based on data at Aug 2017).	2018
12	Gender balance of staff presenting at Secretariat Management Group and Northern Ireland Assembly Commission meetings 2017/18.	2018
13	Staff Survey 2017 (Gender Report).	2018
14	5 year review of Disability Action Plans (April 2013-March 2018).	2018
15	Northern Ireland Assembly Visitor Survey (Good Relations) March 2018.	2018
16	Review of Behaviours at Work Report (by Inspire).	2018
17	Supporting Women in the Workplace – Models of Good Practice. Research Paper, 31 March 2017.	2017
18	Northern Ireland Assembly Visitor Survey (Good Relations) November 2017.	2017
19	Secretariat Staff Survey 2017.	2017
20	Gender balance of staff presenting at SMG and Commission meetings and at Assembly Community Connect Sessions June 2017.	2017
21	Northern Ireland Assembly Gender Project Survey (Business in the Community).	2017
22	Northern Ireland Assembly Visitor Survey (Good Relations) November 2016.	2016

EXAMPLES OF EQUALITY RELATED RAISE PRODUCTS 2016-20

TABLE 2

PRODUCT	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Published research papers	Underachievement: a brief overview; Diversity and Public Appointments in Northern Ireland	Support to Appeal Rights Exhausted Asylum Seekers in Northern Ireland; Women's Economic Transition to Retirement	Who Runs Northern Ireland? A Summary of Statistics Relating to Gender and Power in 2019; Fair Employment in Northern Ireland: the decades of change (1990 – 2017)	Who Runs Northern Ireland? A Summary of Statistics Relating to Gender and Power in 2020; Key Issues for a Bill of Rights	Definitions of the 'Particular Circumstances' of Northern Ireland OR Rights, Safeguards and Equality of Opportunity in the Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol: The Dedicated Mechanism
Knowledge Exchange Seminars	Abortion Policy and Law: Key Considerations; Women in the Workplace	Parity of Esteem – A Citizens' Enquiry Model; Social Welfare Issues Relating to Poverty	N/A	N/A	N/A
Research Matters blog articles	Modernising equality legislation; How big is the gender pay gap in NI's public and private sectors?	Women's economic transition to retirement; What is the gender pay gap in Northern Ireland?	Who runs Northern Ireland? Taking stock of gender and power in Northern Ireland; What is the Gender Pay Gap in Northern Ireland in 2019?	N/A	Northern Ireland Gender Pay Gap: a 2021 update
Support to Committees	Diversity and Public Appointments in Northern Ireland for the Committee for Communities; International Human Rights	N/A	N/A	Research support to the Ad Hoc Committee for a Bill of Rights	Parliamentary Committee scrutiny of Human Rights and other support to Ad Hoc Committee for a Bill of Rights

PRODUCT	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
	Standards: Recommendations Relating to Northern Ireland for the Committee for the Executive Office				
Other publications	Articles for Consider This...Research reflections for the 2016-2021 mandate , including: An equal start? Overcoming early disadvantage; Addressing gender imbalance in physical activity levels.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Support to other bodies of the Assembly	Research support to the Women's Caucus	N/A	N/A	Research support to the Women's Caucus on gender-sensitive parliaments and young women's empowerment programmes	Hate Crime Legislation (paper for Bill Office Clerk).

RELEVANT KESS SEMINARS HELD DURING THE REVIEW PERIOD

The Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series (KESS) is delivered by the Assembly's Research and Information Service (RaISe) in partnership with all three universities located in Northern Ireland: Queen's University Belfast, Ulster University and the Open University. Further information on KESS can be found [here](#).

During the review period a number of relevant seminars were held, as detailed at Table 3 below:

TABLE 3

Series No	Seminar Title	Date	Web Link
Series 5	Understanding and supporting cultural diversity	15 June 2016	Understanding and Supporting Cultural Diversity
Series 6	Children and Young Persons' Attitudes and Experiences	14 December 2016	Children and Young Persons' Attitudes and Experiences
Series 6	Addressing Autism	29 March 2017	Addressing Autism
Series 6	Women in the Workplace	5 April 2017	https://kess.org.uk/women-in-the-workplace/
Series 6	Preventative Health: New Developments	10 May 2017	https://kess.org.uk/2017/05/10/diabetes-education-adults-learning-disabilities-addressing-inequalities/
Series 6	Understanding and Promoting Community Well-Being	21 June 2017	Understanding and Promoting Community Well-Being
Series 7	Language in Education	29 November 2017	https://kess.org.uk/29-november-2017-language-education/
Series 7	Mental Health: Understanding & Supporting People	7 February 2018	https://kess.org.uk/7-february-2018-mental-health-understanding-supporting-people/
Series 7	Parents/Mothers & Children	21 March 2018	https://kess.org.uk/21-march-2018-parentsmothers-children/
Series 7	Dealing with the Past – Key Themes	18 April 2018	Dealing with The Past – Key Themes
Series 7	Enabling society through interaction	20 June 2018	Enabling Society Through Interaction