



Northern Ireland Assembly

SECTION 75 SCREENING FORM

What is a policy?

The Equality Commission has defined 'policies' as 'all the ways a public authority carries out, or proposes to carry out, its function relating to Northern Ireland'. The Act defines 'functions' as including powers and duties.

These are effectively catch-all definitions which cover the Secretariat's policies, strategies, schemes, procedures and functions. You should remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies as well as external policies. If you are in doubt please contact the Equality Unit for advice.

Part 1 Policy scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context, and to set out the aims and objectives for the policy being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

Background to the Policy/Strategy/Procedure to be screened.

Include details of any consultations which have been conducted and whether the policy has previously been tabled at SMG/Assembly Commission meetings.

The purpose of the Business Justifications and Cases Policy is to establish a clear and consistent approach to the governance and processing of related business decisions. Business Decisions are arguments, usually documented, that are intended to convince a decision maker to approve a particular action. The Business Justification and Cases Policy is intended to provide clarity, flexibility and proportionality to management and staff when they are required to use a business justification or case.

1. Policy Details

Name of the policy to be screened:

Business Justifications and Case Policy

Is this policy new or revised?

New policy

What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes of the policy)

This policy recognizes that many operational decisions carry varying levels of risk, complexity and financial exposure. This policy reduces the bureaucracy involved in approving decision which are less complex, thereby providing a faster means to gaining approval for such decisions It also provides a detailed map and clearer governance for the process management of more complex decisions

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

John Gibson, Head of Procurement

Directorate responsible for devising and delivering the policy?

Corporate Services

2. Implementation factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?

Yes No

If yes, are they

- Financial
- Legislative
- Other, please specify: [Click here to enter text.](#)

3. Main stakeholders affected

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon?

- Staff
- Service users
- other public sector organisations
- voluntary/community/trade unions
- Other, please specify : [Click here to enter text.](#)

4. Other policies with a bearing on this policy

What are these policies? Please list:

- Consultancy and other Professional Services (Ref Fin 02/14)
- Procurement Procedures and Guidelines (Ref 15/03/2007)
- The Public Contracts Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- Single Tender Transactions (Ref 02/04)
- The terms of reference for the operation of the Resource Planning Group
- Project Management Policies

5. Consideration of available data/research (This means any data or information you currently hold in relation to the policy or gathered during policy development).

Evidence to inform the screening process may take many forms and should help you to decide who the policy might affect the most. It will also help ensure that your screening decision is informed by relevant data.

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) do you hold to inform your decision making process?

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/information
Religious belief	N/A – The policy does not in any way contain any actions that are contrary or impact upon religious beliefs.
Political opinion	N/A – The policy does not in any way contain any actions that are contrary or impact upon political opinion.
Racial group	N/A – The policy does not in any way contain any actions that are contrary or impact upon racial groups.
Age	N/A – The policy does not in any way contain any actions that are contrary or impact upon age. Consideration was given to the fact that it is a computer based system and the possible impact upon those of an older disposition. However, the technical requirements are no greater than the IT skills required throughout the organization and as some complex processes are being automated these might even be significantly less difficult for older people. Further, if staff need training to comply with the policy this will be provided.
Marital status	N/A – The policy does not in any way contain any actions that are contrary or impact upon marital status
Sexual orientation	N/A – The policy does not in any way contain any actions that are contrary or impact upon sexual orientation.
Men and women generally	N/A – The policy does not in any way contain any actions that are contrary or impact upon men or woman generally

Disability	N/A – The policy does not in any way contain any actions that are contrary or impact upon those with a disability.
Dependants	N/A – The policy does not in any way contain any actions that are contrary or impact upon dependents.

6. Current Assessment of Impact

Having looked at the data/information referred to above at point 5, what does this tell you are the needs, experiences and priorities for the people who fall into the groups below, in relation to your policy? And what is the actual or likely adverse impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by the policy. (See appendix 1 for information on levels of impact).

Section 75 category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities and details of policy impact	Level of Impact
Religious belief	The policy is technical in nature and has no relevance on Section 75 categories and will not have actual or likely adverse impact on equality of opportunity.	None
Political opinion	The policy is technical in nature and has no relevance on Section 75 categories and will not have actual or likely adverse impact on equality of opportunity.	None
Racial group	The policy is technical in nature and has no relevance on Section 75 categories and will not have actual or likely adverse impact on equality of opportunity.	None
Age	The policy is technical in nature and has no relevance on Section 75 categories and will not have actual or likely adverse impact on equality of opportunity.	None
Marital status	The policy is technical in nature and has no relevance on Section 75 categories and will not have actual or likely adverse impact on equality of opportunity.	None
Sexual orientation	The policy is technical in nature and has no relevance on Section 75 categories and will not have actual or likely adverse impact on equality of opportunity.	None

Men and women generally	The policy is technical in nature and has no relevance on Section 75 categories and will not have actual or likely adverse impact on equality of opportunity.	None
Disability	The policy is technical in nature and has no relevance on Section 75 categories and will not have actual or likely adverse impact on equality of opportunity.	None
Dependants	The policy is technical in nature and has no relevance on Section 75 categories and will not have actual or likely adverse impact on equality of opportunity.	None

If you do not have enough data to tell you about potential or actual impacts you may need to conduct a pre-consultation to generate more data and to distinguish what groups are potentially affected by your policy.

Part 2 Screening Questions

1 Are there any steps/actions which could be taken to reduce any adverse impact as addressed in question 6?		
Section 75 category	Issue	Mitigating Measure
Religious belief	N/A	None
Political opinion	N/A	None
Racial group	N/A	None
Age	N/A	None

Marital status	N/A	None
Sexual orientation	N/A	None
Men and women generally	N/A	None
Disability	N/A	None
Dependants	N/A	None

2. Is there an opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations in what you are proposing to do?

Please provide reasons.

The policy establishes a clear protocol for all related decision making and therefore will promote clarity and possibly equality within these processes.

3. Consultation

Tell us about who you have talked to about your proposals, either internally or externally, to help you decide if the policy needs further or no further equality investigation?

Informal discussion with the NIA Equality Office and with the management of all Directorates.

4 Disability Duties?

Consider whether the policy:

- a) Discourages disabled people from participating in public life and fails to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.

N/A – This policy is technical in nature and has no relevance to issues around disability

- b) Provides an opportunity to better positive attitudes towards disabled people or encourages their participation in public life.

The policy will encourage staff to consider all issues, including disability, in the development of a business case and therefore will promote early consideration of these issues.

Additional considerations

Multiple identities

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?

(For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).

Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

N/A - The policy is technical in nature and has no relevance on Section 75 categories.



Part 3 Screening decision

1. If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment (*none*), please provide details of the reasons.

As can be seen from the screening process no negative impacts have been identified upon section 75 categories and there may be a number of small but positive attributes. On this basis it has been decided to screen this out from requiring an EQIA.

2. If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, but the policy has minor equality impacts which can be mitigated/provided by an alternative policy, and therefore does not require an EQIA (*minor*), provide details of the reason for the decision with proposed changes/amendments for an alternative policy to be introduced.

N/A

3. If the decision is to subject the policy to an equality impact assessment (*major*), please provide details of the reasons.

N/A

4. Timetabling and prioritising for EQIA

Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment.

If the policy has been ‘**screened in**’ for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Priority criterion	Rating (1-3)
Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations	Click
Social need	Click
Effect on people’s daily lives	Click
Relevance to a public authority’s functions	Click

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the CCSU in timetabling. Details of the Equality Impact Assessment Timetable will be included in the quarterly Screening Report.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?

Yes No

If yes, please provide details

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Part 4 Monitoring

Effective monitoring will help identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which may lead the Commission to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

The Equality Commission for NI (ECNI) recommends that where a policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, the public authority should monitor more broadly for adverse impact.

See ECNI Monitoring Guidance for use by Public Authorities (July 2007) pages 9-10, paragraphs 2.13 – 2.20

What data is required in the future to ensure effective monitoring?

What are these policies? Please list:

The resource planning group will be responsible for monitoring this policy and this will include picking up on any Section 75 issues.

Part 5 - Data Protection

1. If applicable, has legal advice been given due consideration?

Yes No N/A

2. Has due consideration been given to information security in relation to this policy?

Yes No

Part 6 - Approval and authorisation

Screened by:	Position/Job Title	Date
Eamonn Lynch	Procurement Manager	18/04/2014
Approved by:		
John Gibson	Head of Procurement	04/09/2014

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be 'signed off' and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy. A copy of the completed screening template and any other relevant associated documentation should be forwarded to the Equality Manager.

The Equality Manager will make the completed screening template available on the NIA website as soon as possible following completion, and approval of the screening form.

Appendix 1 **Screening Questions**

Introduction

In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, you should consider your answers to the questions above.

In addition, the screening questions above further assist you in assessing your policy and must be completed. Some of these questions require you to assess the level of impact of the proposed policy on “equality of opportunity” and “good relations”. The scale used when assessing this impact is either “None”, “Minor” or “Major”. The following paragraphs set out what each of these terms mean.

If your conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then you may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is ‘screened out’ as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, you should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

If your conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

If your conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories and/or good relations categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:

- measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
- the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of a ‘major’ impact

- a) The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
- b) Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;
- c) Potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged;

- d) Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;
- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

In favour of 'minor' impact

- a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
- b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;
- c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;
- d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of none

- a) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
- b) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.