

DoF Screening template

Background

Screening is the first of two methods by which the necessary level of “regard” is demonstrated as being paid to the statutory equality goal, as set out in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The DoF Equality Scheme commits us to screening our policies. This includes our strategies and plans, policies, legislative developments; and new ways of working such as – the introduction, change or end of an existing service, procedure, policy etc.

This screening template is designed to help business areas consider the likely equality and human rights impacts of their proposed decisions on different groups of customers, service users, staff and visitors.

Detailed information about the Section 75 equality duties and what they mean in practice is available on the Equality Commission’s website:
<http://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/S75GuideforPublicAuthoritiesApril2010.pdf>

A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be ‘signed off’ and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made accessible on the DoF website as soon as possible following completion and made available in alternative formats on request.

All Section 75 consultees should be advised of the screening exercise once the final policy decision has been taken. Details of the Equality Consultee list is available from Strategic Equality Branch.

This policy has been screened by:

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Date	3 July 2018

And approved by:

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Date 3 July 2018

The screening template has 4 sections to complete. These are:

Section A - asks you to provide details about the policy / decision that is being screened.

Section B - has 4 key questions that require you to outline the likely impacts on equality groups, and all supporting evidence.

Section C - has 4 key questions in relation to obligations under the Disability Discrimination Order and the Human Rights Act.

Section D - is the formal record of the screening decision.

SECTION A

Information about the policy

This 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 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 on a step-by-step basis.

Remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for us) as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by us).

Is this a new or revised policy?

New Policy

a) Name of the policy

Review of Financial Process

b) Brief Description of the policy

Alignment of budgets, Estimates and accounts
Vote net budget amounts in Estimates
Consolidate NDPBs into departmental accounts

c) Aims of the policy/ Rationale behind the changes

Greater transparency in financial processes and between the documents produced for each. Scrutiny of these processes and documents by MLAs, NI Assembly committees and the public more easily facilitated.

d) Who will the policy affect?

All those who use NI budget, Estimates and departmental accounts documents, including MLAs and NI Assembly Committees, should find the collective suite of documents easier to understand and reconcile one to the other.

If this policy has no adverse impact on any of the Section 75 groups, please go to Section C. You must ensure that you have completed section A a) – d) fully to explain the rationale for this.

e) Is this a NICS wide policy?

yes

f) Who will implement the policy?

Project Team within DoF and all NICS departments

g) Will this policy or revision address an existing inequality? If yes, please give details.

No

h) Will this policy or revision benefit any Section 75 categories? If yes, please give details.

No

i) Will this policy or revision have an adverse differential impact upon any of the Section 75 groupings?
If yes, please give details

No

Section B

Available evidence

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data.

What evidence / information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Set out all evidence below along with details of the different groups you have met and / or consulted with to help inform your screening assessment.

Please also provide details of priorities and needs identified for each group

Section 75 category	Details of evidence / information and engagement / needs and priorities
Religious belief	
Political opinion	
Racial group	
Age	
Marital status	
Sexual orientation	

Men & women generally	
Disability	
Dependants	

No evidence held? Outline how you will obtain it:

The Review of Financial Process does not affect the budget decisions made by Ministers, rather it changes how these decisions are reflected in the published Budget, Estimates and Accounts documents. The aim of the Review is to present the information in a more consistent way across the three publications. This is not considered to have a differential impact on any S75 group.

The initial review was considered by the Committee for Finance and Personnel. The decision to proceed with the Review was endorsed by the Executive in December 2016.

Screening questions

There are 4 essential screening questions:

1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the nine Section 75 categories? (minor/major/none)
2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 categories? (yes/no)
3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact upon good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? (minor/major/none)
4. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between these three groups? (Yes/No)



1 What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? minor/major/none		
Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? minor/major/none
Religious belief	Will change presentation of financial information	None
Political opinion	Will change presentation of financial information	None

Racial group	Will change presentation of financial information	None
Age	Will change presentation of financial information	None
Marital status	Will change presentation of financial information	None
Sexual orientation	Will change presentation of financial information	None
Men and women generally	Will change presentation of financial information	None
Disability	Will change presentation of financial information	None
Dependants	Will change presentation of financial information	None

2 Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories?		
Section 75 category	If Yes , provide details	If No , provide reasons

Religious belief		No, simply changes presentation of financial information in Budgets, Estimates and Accounts. Does not affect underlying decisions
Political opinion		As above
Racial group		As above
Age		As above
Marital status		As above
Sexual orientation		As above
Men and women generally		As above

Disability		As above
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Dependants		As above
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3 To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? minor/major/none

Good relations category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact minor/major/none
Religious belief	Will change presentation of financial information	None
Political opinion	Will change presentation of financial information	None
Racial group	Will change presentation of financial information	None

4 Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Good relations category	If Yes , provide details	If No , provide reasons
Religious belief		No, simply changes presentation of financial information in Budgets, Estimates and Accounts. Does not affect underlying decisions
Political opinion		As above

Racial group		As above
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Additional considerations Multiple identity

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).

No

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

No specific data but as policy only affects presentation of financial information and not underlying decisions it is not considered to have any differential impact

Mitigation

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is 'minor' and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Alternatively there may already be policies in place which would mitigate any adverse impact identified.

Please provide details in the box below:

N/A

Section C

DoF also has legislative obligations to meet under the [Disability Discrimination Order](#) and the [Human Rights Act](#) . The following questions relate to these two areas.

Consideration of Disability Duties

- a) Does the proposed policy / decision provide an opportunity for DoF to better **promote positive attitudes** towards disabled people?

Explain your assessment in full

This policy does not specifically change how NICS departments interact with any sector including disabled people, by changing the format in which we produce outputs from financial processes. Instead it makes the outputs from those financial processes easier to reconcile one with the other.

- b) Does the proposed policy / decision provide an opportunity to actively **increase the participation** by disabled people in public life?

Explain your assessment in full

It is not intended that the format in which any of the individual documents are produced will change, it is therefore unlikely that this policy will have an impact on participation by disabled people in public life.

Consideration of Human Rights

- c) The Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998 brings the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into UK law and it applies in N Ireland. Articles 3 and 4 are classified as “absolute” rights ie the

State can never withhold or take away these rights. All others are either “qualified” or “limited”. Further information is available via the following link

<http://www.nicshumanrightsguide.com/>

Indicate any potential adverse impacts that the policy / decision may have in relation to human rights issues.

No adverse impacts

		<u>Adverse impact</u>
Right to Life	Article 2	Yes/no
Prohibition of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment	Article 3	Yes/no
Prohibition of slavery and forced labour	Article 4	Yes/no
Right to liberty and security	Article 5	Yes/no
Right to a fair and public trial	Article 6	Yes/no
Right to no punishment without law	Article 7	Yes/no
	Article 8	Yes/no
Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence		
Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion	Article 9	Yes/no
Right to freedom of expression	Article 10	Yes/no
Right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association	Article 11	Yes/no
Right to marry and to found a family	Article 12	Yes/no
The prohibition of discrimination	Article 14	Yes/no

Protection of property and enjoyment of possessions	Protocol Article 1	Yes/no 1
Right to education	Protocol Article 2	1Yes/no
Right to free and secret elections	Protocol Article 3	1Yes/no

Please indicate any ways which you consider the policy positively promotes human rights.

none

Please explain any adverse impacts on human rights that you have identified.

none

If you have identified any adverse impacts on human rights through this screening you must complete a Human Rights Impact Assessment: <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/human-rights-impactassessment-proforma>.

Monitoring Arrangements

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's [Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities \(July 2007\)](#):

<http://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/S75MonitoringGuidance2007.pdf>

The Commission recommends that where the policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, the public authority should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

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

Please detail proposed monitoring arrangements below:

<p>Check that the availability of all documents referred to in Review of Financial Process is not diminished after implementation</p>

Section D

Formal Record of Screening Decision

Title of Proposed Policy / Decision being screened:
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I can confirm that the proposed policy / decision has been screened for –

X	equality of opportunity and good relations
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X	disabilities duties; and
X	human rights issues

On the basis of the answers to the screening questions, I recommend that this policy / decision is –

	* <u>Screened In</u> – Necessary to conduct a full EQIA
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X	* <u>Screened Out</u> – No EQIA necessary (no impacts)
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	* <u>Screened Out - Mitigating Actions</u> (minor impacts) Provide a brief note here to explain how this decision was reached:
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Screening assessment completed by -
by –

approved

Name: Pamela Galloway

Name: Jeff McGuinness

Grade 7

Grade 5

Date 18 March 2021

Date 18 March 2021