

1. POLICY TO BE SCREENED

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 functions relating to Northern Ireland**'. The Act defines 'functions' as including powers and duties'.

These are effectively a catch-all definitions that cover all Departmental policies, strategies, schemes, procedures and functions. If in doubt please contact the Equality Unit for advice.

1.1 Title of policy to be screened:

Review Procedure

1.2 Brief description of policy to be screened:

Revision of method by which unsuccessful clients can ask for a review of a funding decision.

1.3 Aims of policy to be screened:

To clarify the process, timeframes and accountable individuals within the Review Process and provide potential claimants with a clear pathway through the process. *It is essential that **all** the aims of the policy be clearly and fully defined.*

1.4 Branch responsible for devising and delivering policy:

Arts Development

You should indicate if responsibility is shared with another Government Department or Departments.

1.5 Name of and contact details for person carrying out screening:

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2. SCREENING ANALYSIS

When proceeding to screening “proper”, the Equality Commission has stated that there are four criteria to be considered. These are listed at 2.1- 2.4 below. You are asked to consider the criteria in relation to the Section 75 groups and to answer the questions accordingly.

“Don’t know”?, “No evidence”?

The questions ask for evidence in relation to the Section 75 groups. You should not think of the “don’t know” column in the form as the easy option to respond to any of the questions. In cases where you don’t know and you don’t have data on file, you will need to make a pragmatic judgement based on experience as to whether the policy you are screening may have an impact on any of the groups. If your judgement is that the policy may have a differential adverse impact on any of the Section 75 groups (i.e. it affects them differently and less favourably than other groups), you should seek to obtain evidence. You should note that evidence can be qualitative – i.e. drawn from the experience of individuals from their perspective - as well as quantitative. Officials must give consideration to steps that they could reasonably be expected to take to obtain evidence and thereby inform their decision-making. Such steps could include meeting with a representative group or selective consultation.

Where there is little or no evidence, and common sense indicates that a differential impact may be expected, you should discuss this with the Equality Unit.

2.1 Is there any evidence of higher or lower participation or uptake by different groups? If so, please indicate below.

CATEGORY	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Gender	[]	X	[]
Sexual orientation	[]	X	[]
Religion	[]	X	[]
Political opinion	[]	X	[]
Disability (physical and learning)	[]	X	[]
Race or ethnic origin (includes Travellers)	[]	X	[]
Age	[]	X	[]
Dependant responsibilities	[]	X	[]
Marital status	[]	X	[]

If YES give details:

Give brief details of the evidence available/used:

Operation of the current Review Procedure over a prolonged period has not highlighted any possible lack of participation by Section 75 groups.

2.2 Is there any evidence that different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular policy?

CATEGORY	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Gender	[]	X	[]
Sexual orientation	[]	X	[]
Religion	[]	X	[]
Political opinion	[]	X	[]
Disability (physical and learning)	[]	X	[]
Race or ethnic origin (includes Travellers)	[]	X	[]
Age	[]	X	[]
Dependant responsibilities	[]	X	[]
Marital status	[]	X	[]

If YES give details:

2.3 Is there an opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity or better community relations by altering the policy or working with others in Government or in the larger community?

CATEGORY	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Gender	[]	X	[]
Sexual orientation	[]	X	[]
Religion	[]	X	[]
Political opinion	[]	X	[]
Disability (physical and learning)	[]	X	[]
Race or ethnic origin (includes Travellers)	[]	X	[]
Age	[]	X	[]
Dependant responsibilities	[]	X	[]
Marital status	[]	X	[]

If YES give details:

2.4 Have consultations with relevant groups, organisations or individuals indicated that particular policies create problems that are specific to them?

CATEGORY	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Gender	[]	X	
Sexual orientation	[]	X	
Religion	[]	X	
Political opinion	[]		
Disability (physical and learning)	[]	X	
Race or ethnic origin (includes Travellers)	[]	X	
Age	[]	X	
Dependant responsibilities	[]	X	
Marital status	[]	X	

If YES give details:

If the answer to **any** of the questions in respect of any of the categories is “**YES**”, you – in discussion with the Equality Unit – will have to consider whether the policy has a significant impact on equality of opportunity and, therefore, should be subject to an equality impact assessment.

If the answer to **all** the questions in section 2 is **NO** an equality impact assessment is not required.

If the answer to any of the above questions is **DON'T KNOW**, and common sense and experience indicate that a differential impact may be expected, you will need to discuss this with the Equality Unit.

It may be that a policy has an adverse differential impact on certain people in one or more of the categories as a consequence of targeting or affirmative action to combat an existing or historical inequality. If this is the case, please give details below and contact the Equality Unit if you are in doubt:

