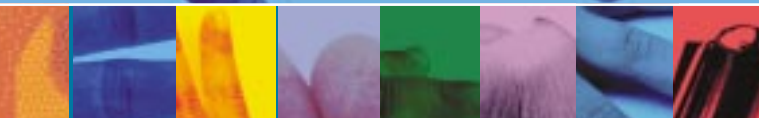




# Equality Toolkit



Equality and Policy Development



Step By Step Guide to

General Guidelines

Develop

# equality proofing New Policies

The term policy should be interpreted to mean all the ways in which the Council carries out its functions relating to Northern Ireland. This is deliberately a wide definition which can include all types of Council business including strategies, procedures, programmes, initiatives and codes of practice as well as what we have normally regarded as a policy in the past (i.e. a specific decision by the Council about the delivery of a service).

When identifying and drafting a policy, please try to take the perspective of someone outside the Council. As outsiders, what would they expect the Council to have by way of policies regarding a particular service? For example, in respect of leisure centres, a member of the public might expect to see policies on charging, room hire, opening hours, range of facilities, single sex sessions, cleaning, health and safety, etc. and these are the sort of policies you should include.

In terms of the size of a policy you are asked to adopt a common sense approach. Too large in scope and the policy may well try to capture too much business, too small and you may miss the interconnectedness of how business is conducted. This has to be a judgment call and which takes into account the context in which each policy operates.

As far as possible we would like you to produce written policy documentation as you proceed. This does not always have to be a specific document headed "policy". It could be an extract from the Council minutes, from an SIA, a DSO agreement or a code of practice (your own or supplied from outside) or a guideline issued to staff. Do not omit a policy just because there is no written document, but please remember that during the consultation phase a group might ask to see the policy.

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Step

Describe your policy / strategy  
procedure / programme

1



Clarify



First of all, give your policy a title that accurately describes its focus and make sure all relevant documents are kept together. From this starting point, make clear the aims of the policy and indicate who, if anyone else is involved in the policy. For example have you adapted this policy from a government policy or is the Council working in partnership on the policy? Where the Council is developing the policy according to statutes or guidance from elsewhere do make this clear – do not be seen to have responsibility for something which ‘belongs’ to another body.



Step

2

List stakeholders



Interface

>>

Think about who is going to be involved or affected by this policy, both internally and externally. Consider other agencies or bodies you are likely to interface with when you reach implementation stage.

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Step

Consider Key Factors/  
Contributions

3



Think



Step

4

Information



Gaps



Step

Considering the Nine  
Section 75 Dimensions

5



Impact . .



As you are starting to develop a policy continue to bear in mind the potential effect on groups linked with the Section 75 dimensions. Some groups may be more affected than others by your policies and some groups may have different needs, experiences and issues and priorities in relation to this policy. At this stage it may be useful to consult informally with relevant groups, organisations or individuals to gain more information. The nine Section 75 dimensions are: Religious belief, political opinion, race, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender, disability and dependancy. Remember, each dimension encaptures everyone (e.g. with or without disability, religion or dependancy)..



Step

6

Consider Good Relations



Relations



The aim of the equality agenda is not only to promote equality of opportunity but also to promote good relations in relation to three dimensions – race, religious belief and political opinion. Consider the potential of the policy to promote good relations with these groups as you move forward.

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Step

7

Consultation



Interact



The best way to gauge how your policy is likely to affect groups is to consult with representatives of those groups, relevant organisations, or individuals. Consider the need to interact with other Governmental agencies, and the wider community.



Step

Write the Policy  
and Screen

8



Script..

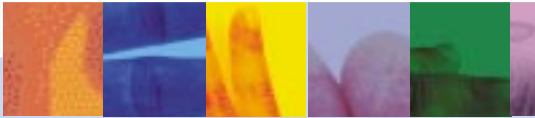


If you have got this far you will have already gone a long way towards considering the equality issues in your policy and completing the screening of the policy. The next stage once your policy has been accepted by Council is to proceed to the screening process itself.





# Policy Screening Form



## Background

Under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Council is required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:

- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally;
- between persons with a disability and persons without; and;
- between persons with dependants and persons without.

Without prejudice to the obligations set out above, the Council is also required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

## Screening

The screening procedure should lead to one of two conclusions:

- The policy being screened does not have a significant impact on equality of opportunity and therefore does not require an EQIA
- The policy being screened has (or is likely to have) a significant impact on equality of opportunity and may require an EQIA.

## Scoping the Policy

Title of Policy:

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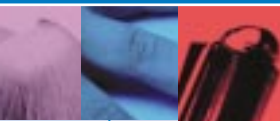
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Brief Description:

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Who defines or defined the policy?

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Who implements the policy?

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Is the policy applied uniformly throughout the Council?  
If NO, what are the consequences

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Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy?

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What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the aim or implementation of the policy?

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How do we interface with other bodies in relation to implementation of this policy?

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What data are currently available to facilitate the screening of this policy?

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2. Do different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this policy issue?

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	Yes	No	Not known
Religious belief			
Political opinion			
Racial group			
Age			
Marital status			
Sexual orientation			
Gender			
Disability			
Dependency			

Please comment:

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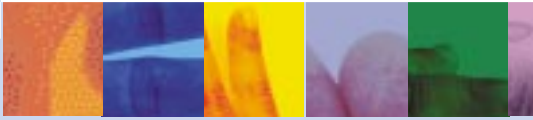
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## Screening the Policy



3. Have consultations with relevant groups, organisations or individuals indicated that policies of this type create problems that are specific to them?

	Yes	No	
Religious belief			
Political opinion			
Racial group			
Age			
Marital status			
Sexual orientation			
Gender			
Disability			
Dependency			

Please comment:

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4. In relation to implementing this policy, is there an opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations by altering the policy or by working with others in Government or in the larger community?

Yes  No

Please elaborate:

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5. With reference to Questions 1 to 4 please summarise how you believe the policy may impact on the Council's obligation to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity.

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6. What data do you believe will be required to ensure effective monitoring of the policy following implementation?

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7. In the context of Question 3 are there any relevant groups which you believe should be consulted at this time? Please specify

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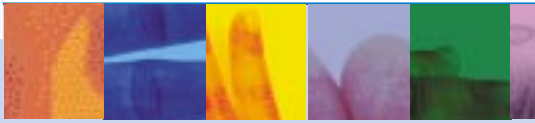
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## Screening the Policy



8. Any other comments on the policy and/or screening exercise?

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9. On the basis of answers to Questions 1 to 4 above (and in particular positive answers), do you recommend that the policy should be subjected to a full impact assessment?

Yes  No

Please elaborate

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N.B. If an EQIA is recommended, please continue overleaf.

If an EQIA is not recommended, please sign and date this form and ensure that the reason for not recommending is made clear.

Screened by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Screened by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Screened by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Screened by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### 10. Timetable for Equality Impact Assessment.

a. On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being the lowest priority and 5 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

	Rating
Social need. Effect on people's daily lives. Effect on economic, social and human rights.	

b. Is the policy affected by internal or external strategies, policies or initiatives that are relevant to the scheduling of the EQIA?

Yes

No

Please elaborate:

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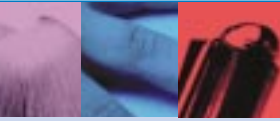
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Screened by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Equality Toolkit

