



EQUALITY SCHEME

**Drawn up in accordance with Section 75 and
Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998**

This document can also be made available, on request, in alternative formats including in large print, in Braille, by e-mail, on computer disc, on audio-cassette and in minority languages to meet the needs of those people who are not fluent in English.

1 October 2015

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FOREWORD

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act), requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations across a range of categories outlined in the Act.¹

In our Equality Scheme, we set out how the Education Authority (the Authority) proposes to fulfil the Section 75 statutory duties. This Scheme is important because as well as being a statement of compliance, it outlines a plan for the more effective mainstreaming of equality issues, thus ensuring that they are central to the whole range of policy decision-making within the Authority.

We will commit the necessary resources in terms of people, time and money and establish effective internal arrangements to ensure compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties, to deliver monitoring and reviewing of progress and to ensure that the Equality Scheme is implemented effectively and on time.

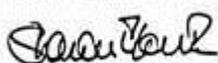
We will commit to having effective internal arrangements in place for ensuring our effective compliance with Section 75 statutory duties and for monitoring and reviewing our progress.

We will develop and deliver a programme of communication and training with the aim of ensuring that all our staff and Authority Members are made fully aware of our Equality Scheme and understand the commitments and obligations within it. We will develop a programme of awareness raising for consultees on the Section 75 statutory duties and our commitments in our Equality Scheme.

As Chair and Chief Executive of the Education Authority, we are fully committed to fulfilling our Section 75 statutory duties across all of our functions (including service provision, employment and procurement) through the effective implementation of our Equality Scheme.

We realise the important role that the community, voluntary sector and general public have to play to ensure Section 75 statutory duties are effectively implemented. Our Equality Scheme demonstrates our determination to ensure there are opportunities, for people affected by our work to influence how we carry out our functions in line with our Section 75 statutory duties. The Equality Scheme also offers the means whereby persons, directly affected by what they consider to be a failure on our part to comply with our Scheme, can make a complaint.

On behalf of the Authority we are pleased to support and endorse this Equality Scheme which has been drawn up in accordance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Commission guidelines.



Sharon O'Connor, Chair



Gavin Boyd, Chief Executive

¹ See section 1.1 of our Equality Scheme

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

- 1.1 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires the Authority to comply with two statutory duties:

Section 75 (1)

In carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland the Authority 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;
- men and women generally;
- persons with a disability and persons without; and
- persons with dependants and persons without.

Section 75 (2)

In addition, without prejudice to the obligations above, in carrying out its functions in relation to Northern Ireland, the Authority is required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

How we propose to fulfil the Section 75 duties in relation to the relevant functions of the Authority

- 1.2 Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (1) of the Act requires the Authority as a designated public authority to set out in an Equality Scheme (the Scheme) how it proposes to fulfil the duties imposed by Section 75 in relation to its relevant functions. Under Section 98 (1) of the Act, 'Functions' include the 'powers and duties' of a public authority. This includes our employment and procurement functions. A detailed explanation of our functions is set out at paragraphs 1.4 and 1.5.

This Equality Scheme is intended to fulfil our statutory requirements under the Act. It is both a statement of our arrangements for fulfilling the Section 75 statutory duties and our plan for their implementation.

- 1.3 The Authority is committed to the discharge of its Section 75 obligations in all parts of our organisation and we will commit the necessary resources in terms of people, time and money to ensure compliance with our Section 75 statutory duties and the effective implementation of our Equality Scheme.

Who we are and what we do

- 1.4 The Education Authority (the Authority) was established under the Education Act Northern Ireland 2014 and became operational on 1 April 2015. It is a non-departmental body sponsored by the Department of Education.

The Authority is responsible for ensuring that efficient and effective primary and secondary education services are available to meet the needs of children and

young people, and support for the provision of efficient and effective youth services. These services were previously delivered by the five Education and Library Boards/Staff Commission for Education and Library Boards:

- Belfast Education and Library Board
- North Eastern Education and Library Board
- South Eastern Education and Library Board
- Southern Education and Library Board
- Western Education and Library Board
- Staff Commission for Education and Library Boards

The Authority employs in the region of 39,000 staff across Northern Ireland in a wide variety of roles. This includes teachers in controlled schools, school-based support staff and staff in administrative sub regional offices.

The Authority's central activities support the provision of:

- Pre-school, primary and secondary education;
- Special education; and
- Youth services

throughout the geographical area encompassed by the Authority.

The Authority is also responsible for ancillary, supplementary and often complementary functions such as:

- Maintenance of Maintained schools;
- School attendance;
- Suspension and expulsion of pupils;
- Student support;
- School transport;
- School meals and related facilities;
- Employment of teachers in Controlled schools and peripatetic teachers;
- Employment of non-teaching staff in Controlled and Maintained schools;
- School Improvement;
- Open enrolment and transfer;
- Financing of Controlled and Maintained schools;
- Governor training;
- Behavioural support;
- Exceptional provision.

1.5 To give effect to its functions the Authority engages in a range of corporate activities including the recruitment of staff, the maintenance of the Authority's estate, the delivery and development of services and the procurement of services, goods and equipment. In keeping with the Equality Commission's Guidance, these activities are included in the concept of 'functions' for the purposes of this Scheme.

1.6 A proposed organisational structure of the Authority is contained at Appendix 1.

- 1.7 Comprehensive information on the Authority's Services is available on our website, in its Annual Accounts Reports and its Annual Equality Progress Reports which are available at: www.eani.org.uk

CHAPTER 2 - ARRANGEMENTS FOR ASSESSING COMPLIANCE WITH THE SECTION 75 DUTIES [Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (2) (a)]

- 2.1 This chapter explains our arrangements for assessing compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties. Other compliance issues are further outlined in relevant chapters of this Scheme. These include:
- Arrangements for consultation (Chapter 3)
 - Arrangements for assessing, monitoring and publishing the impact of policies (Chapter 4)
 - Staff Training (Chapter 5)
 - Complaints Procedure (Chapter 8)

Responsibilities and Reporting

- 2.2 We are committed to the fulfilment of our Section 75 obligations in all parts of our work.
- 2.3 Responsibility for the effective implementation of our Scheme rests with the Chair and Chief Executive of the Authority. The Interim Head of Corporate Human Resources is accountable to the Authority for the development of the Scheme in accordance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Act, including consideration of good practice, or guidance that has been issued by the Equality Commission.
- 2.4 Each member of the Senior Management Team is responsible to the Chief Executive for ensuring that his/her Directorate complies fully with the Scheme.
- 2.5 The first point of contact for the Scheme is Cathy Lavery. If you have any questions or comments regarding our Scheme, please contact Cathy at the address below and she will respond to you as soon as possible.
Mrs Cathy Lavery

Equality Unit, Education Authority
3 Charlemont Place
The Mall, Armagh
BT61 9AX
Tel: 028 3751 2264
Fax: 028 3751 2217
Text Relay: 18001 028 9056 4000
Email: cathy.lavery@eani.org.uk

The Equality Scheme and relevant documents will be made available as appropriate on the Authority's website: www.eani.org.uk

- 2.6** Business objectives and targets relating to the statutory duties will be integrated into our strategic and operational plans.
- 2.7** Employees' job descriptions and appraisals reflect their contribution to the discharge of the Section 75 statutory duties and implementation of the Scheme, where relevant. Appraisal plans are subject to an annual performance review, as appropriate.
- 2.8** The Authority will prepare an annual report on the progress it has made towards implementing the arrangements set out in this Scheme to discharge its Section 75 statutory duties (Section 75 Annual Progress Report).

The Section 75 Annual Progress Report will be sent to the Equality Commission by 31 August each year and will follow any guidance on annual reporting issued by the Equality Commission. Progress on the delivery of Section 75 statutory duties will be contained in the Authority's annual report. This will be made available on our website at www.eani.org.uk or by contacting Cathy Lavery, contacts details on page 6.

- 2.9** The Authority will liaise closely with the Equality Commission to ensure that progress on the implementation of our Scheme is maintained.

Action plan/action measures

- 2.10** The measures in our action plan will be relevant to our functions. They will be developed and prioritised on the basis of information gathered and analysed across the Section 75 categories, including the Audit of Inequalities. The Audit of Inequalities will identify the inequalities that exist for our service users and those affected by our policies. The Audit of Inequalities will be a living document and will be revised and extended as required.
- 2.11** Action measures will be specific, measurable, linked to achievable outcomes, realistic and time bound. Action measures will include performance indicators and timescales for their achievement.
- 2.12** We will develop an annual action plan and will align it to our corporate and business planning cycle. Implementation of the action measures will be incorporated into our business planning process.
- 2.13** We will seek input from our stakeholders and consult on our action plan before sending it to the Equality Commission and thereafter when reviewing the plan.
- 2.14** We will monitor our progress on the delivery of our action measures annually and update it as necessary to ensure that it remains effective and relevant to our functions and work.
- 2.15** The Authority will inform the Equality Commission of any changes or amendments to our action plan and will also include this information in our Section 75 Annual Progress Report to the Equality Commission. Our Section

75 Annual Progress Report will incorporate information on progress we have made in implementing our action plan.

- 2.16** Once finalised, our action plan will be available on our website at www.eani.org.uk or on request (see contact details on page 6). Please contact us if you require it in an alternative format.

CHAPTER 3 - ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONSULTING [Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (2) (a) & (b)]

- 3.1** We recognise the importance of consultation in all aspects of the implementation of our statutory equality duties. We will consult on our Scheme, action measures, equality impact assessments and other matters relevant to the Section 75 statutory duties.
- 3.2** We are committed to carrying out consultation in accordance with the principles as contained in the Equality Commission's Guidance '*Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 - A Guide for Public Authorities (April 2010)*'.
- 3.2.1** All consultations will seek the views of those directly affected by the matter/policy including the Equality Commission, representative groups of Section 75 categories, other public authorities, voluntary and community groups, our staff and their trades unions and professional bodies, and such other groups which have a legitimate interest in the matter, whether or not they have a direct economic or personal interest.

Initially all consultees (Appendix 3) will, as a matter of course, be notified (by email or post) of the matter/policy being consulted upon to ensure they are aware of all consultations. Thereafter, to ensure the most effective use of the Authority's and consultees' resources, we will take a targeted approach to consultation for those consultees that may have a particular interest in the matter/policy and to whom the matter/policy is of particular relevance. This may include, for example, regional or local consultations, sectoral or thematic consultation etc. This approach will not preclude or exclude other parties with a legitimate interest participating in such consultations.

- 3.2.2** Consultation with all stakeholders will begin as early as possible. We will engage with affected individuals and representative groups to identify how best to consult or engage with them. We will seek their preferred consultation methods and will give consideration to these. Methods of consultation may include:
- face-to-face meetings;
 - focus groups;
 - written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing;
 - questionnaires;
 - information/notification by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation;
 - internet discussions; and
 - telephone discussions.

This list is not exhaustive and we may develop other additional methods of consultation more appropriate to key stakeholders and the matter under consultation.

3.2.3 We will consider the accessibility and format of every method of consultation used in order to remove barriers to the consultation process. Specific consideration will be given as to how best to communicate with children and young people, people with disabilities (in particular people with learning disabilities), and minority ethnic communities. Such methods of consultation may be facilitated through the use of advocates and/or specifically trained facilitators, by making information accessible and providing improved visual signage. Examples of appropriate approaches may include 'peer-led focus groups, the production of information for children and young people in a child friendly format, and joint consultation with familiar adults and other mediums, for example art and drama. We will take account of existing and developing good practice, including the Equality Commission's guidance *'Let's Talk Let's Listen - Guidance for public authorities on consulting and involving children and young people (2008)'*

Information will be made available, on request, in alternative formats and in a timely manner, usually within 20 working days, or earlier if possible.

3.2.4 Specific training will be provided to those facilitating consultations to ensure that they have the necessary skills to communicate effectively with consultees.

3.2.5 To ensure effective consultation with consultees on Section 75 matters, we will develop a programme of awareness-raising on the Section 75 statutory duties and the commitments in our Scheme by undertaking the following:

- consultation on the development, implementation and review of our Equality Scheme and Action Plan;
- organisation of regular meetings of the Education Sector Joint Consultative Forum to review progress on the Scheme; and the implementation of our Section 75 duties linked to our functions;
- publication of updates to the Education Sector Joint Consultative Forum members and consultees on our Equality Scheme mailing list.
- inform all consultees of how to access a copy of the final Equality Scheme
- provide information on the Authority's website www.eani.org.uk under Equality.

3.2.6 The consultation period will last for a minimum of twelve weeks to allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves as part of the process of forming a view. However, in exceptional circumstances when this timescale is not feasible, we may shorten timescales to eight weeks or less before the policy is implemented. We may continue consultation thereafter and will review the policy as part of our monitoring commitments.

Where, under these exceptional circumstances, we must implement a policy immediately, for reasons beyond our control, we may consult after

implementation of the policy, in order to ensure that any impacts of the policy are considered.

- 3.2.7** If a consultation exercise is to take place over a period when consultees are less able to respond, for example, over the summer or Christmas break, or if the policy under consideration is particularly complex, we will give consideration to the feasibility of allowing a longer period for the consultation.
- 3.2.8** We are conscious of the fact that affected individuals and representative groups may have different needs. We will take appropriate measures to ensure full participation in any meetings that are held. We will consider, for example, the time of day, the appropriateness of the venue, in particular whether it can be accessed by those with disabilities, how the meeting is to be conducted, the use of appropriate language, whether a signer and/or interpreter is necessary, and whether the provision of childcare and support for other carers is required.
- 3.2.9** We will make all relevant information available to consultees in appropriate formats to ensure meaningful consultation. This includes detailed information on the policy proposal being consulted upon and any relevant quantitative and qualitative data.
- 3.2.10** In making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted, we will take into account any assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy.
- 3.2.11** We will provide feedback to consultees in a timely manner. A feedback report is prepared which includes summary information on the policy consulted upon, a summary of consultees' comments and a summary of our consideration of and response to consultees' input. The feedback is provided in formats suitable to consultees who engaged in the process.
- 3.2.12** A list of our consultees is included in this Equality Scheme at Appendix 3. It can also be obtained from our website or by contacting Cathy Lavery, contact details on page 6.
- 3.2.13** Our consultation list is not exhaustive and is reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure it remains relevant to our functions and policies.

We welcome enquiries from any person/s or organisations wishing to be added to the list of consultees. Please contact Cathy Lavery to provide your contact details and have your areas of interest noted or have your name/details removed or amended. Please also inform us at this stage if you would like information sent to you in a particular format or language.

CHAPTER 4 - ARRANGEMENTS FOR ASSESSING, MONITORING AND PUBLISHING THE IMPACT OF POLICIES [Schedule 9 paragraphs (2) (b - d) and 9 (2)]

This chapter outlines the Authority's arrangements for assessing the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted on the promotion of equality of opportunity (Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (2) (b)).

What is a policy?

- 4.1** In the context of Section 75, 'policy' is very broadly defined and it covers all the ways in which we carry out or propose to carry out our functions in relation to Northern Ireland. In respect of this Scheme, the term policy 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, e.g. 'draft', 'pilot', 'high level' or 'sectoral'.
- 4.2** In making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted, we will take into account any assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy, as required by Schedule 9 paragraph 9 (2) of the Act.
- 4.3** The Authority will use the tools of **screening** and **Equality Impact Assessment** to assess the likely impact of a policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations. In carrying out these assessments we will relate them to the intended outcomes of the policy in question and will also follow:
 - the guidance on screening, as detailed in the Equality Commission's Guidance '*Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 - A Guide for Public Authorities (April 2010)*' and the inter-Board/Staff Commission's '*Equality Screening Toolkit*' developed in consultation with consultees on our mailing list; and
 - the Equality Commission's detailed guidance '*Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment (February 2005)*' when undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment.

What is Screening?

- 4.4** The purpose of screening is to identify those policies likely to have an impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations.
- 4.5** Screening will be completed at the earliest opportunity in the policy development/review process. Policies should normally be screened prior to presentation to the Authority for review, adoption or implementation. For more detailed strategies or policies that are to be put in place through a series of stages, we will screen at various stages during implementation.
- 4.6** The lead role in the screening of a policy will be taken by the policy decision maker who has the authority to make changes to that policy. However, screening will also involve other relevant team members, for example, equality specialists, those who implement the policy and staff members from other relevant work

areas. The Equality representative will have an advisory role. Where possible we will include key stakeholders in the screening process.

4.7 The following questions will be applied to all our policies as part of the screening process:

- 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)
- Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equality categories?
- To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of a different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? (minor/major/none)
- Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of a different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

4.8 In order to answer the screening questions, we will gather all relevant information and data, both qualitative and quantitative. In taking this evidence into account we will consider the different needs, experiences and priorities for each of the Section 75 equality categories. Any screening decision will be informed by this evidence.

4.9 Completion of screening, taking into account our consideration of the answers to all four screening questions set out in 4.7 above, will lead to one of the following three outcomes:

1. The policy has been 'screened in' for Equality Impact Assessment;
2. The policy has been 'screened out' with mitigation¹ or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted;
3. The policy has been 'screened out' without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.

4.10 If screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is 'minor' in respect of one or more of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, we may on occasion decide to proceed with an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA), depending on the policy. If an EQIA is not to be conducted, we will nonetheless consider measures that might mitigate the policy impact as well as alternative policies that might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

Where we mitigate, we will outline in our screening template the reasons to support this decision, together with the proposed changes, amendments or alternative policy.

¹ Mitigation: where an assessment/screening reveals that a particular policy has an adverse impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations, a public authority must consider ways of delivering the policy outcomes which have a less adverse effect on the relevant Section 75 categories.

4.11 If screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is 'major' in respect of one or more of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, following mitigation, we will normally subject the policy to an EQIA.

4.12 If our screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is 'none', in respect of all of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, we may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, we will give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

Screening decisions will be 'signed off' by the appropriate policy Lead Officer within the EA Senior Management Team.

4.13 As soon as possible following the completion of the screening process, the screening template, 'signed off' and approved by the senior manager responsible for the policy, will be made available on our website at www.eani.org.uk or by contacting Cathy Lavery, contact details on page 6.

4.14 If a consultee, including the Equality Commission, raises a concern about a screening decision based on supporting evidence, we will review the screening decision.

4.15 Our screening reports will be published quarterly.

What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)?

4.16 An EQIA is a thorough and systematic analysis of a policy, whether that policy is formal or informal, and irrespective of the scope of that policy. The primary function of an EQIA is to determine the extent of any impact of a policy upon the Section 75 categories and to determine if the impact is an adverse one. It is also an opportunity to demonstrate the likely positive outcomes of a policy and to seek ways to more effectively promote equality of opportunity and good relations.

4.17 Once a policy is screened and screening has identified that an EQIA is necessary, we will carry out the EQIA in accordance with the Equality Commission's Guidance '*Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment*'. The EQIA will be carried out as part of the policy development process, normally before the policy is implemented.

4.18 Any EQIA will be subject to consultation at the appropriate stage(s) (For details see Chapter 3 '*Arrangements for Consulting*').

Arrangements for publishing the results of the assessments of the likely impact of policies we have adopted or propose to adopt on the promotion of equality of opportunity [Schedule 9 paragraphs 4 (2) (d); 9 (1)]

4.19 We will make publicly available the results of our assessments (screening and EQIA) of the likely impact of our policies on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations.

What will we publish?

4.20 Screening Reports

Screening Reports will be published quarterly and detail:

- all policies screened by the Authority over the three month period.
- a statement of the aim(s) of the policy/policies screened;
- consideration given to measures which might mitigate any adverse impact identified;
- consideration, as appropriate given to alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity;
- screening decisions, i.e.:
 - whether the policy has been 'screened in' for an EQIA;
 - whether the policy has been 'screened out' with mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted;
 - whether the policy has been 'screened out' without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted;
- where applicable, a timetable for conducting an EQIA;
- A link to the completed screening template(s) on our website at www.eani.org.uk

4.21 Screening Templates

For details on the availability of our screening templates please refer to 4.13.

4.22 Equality Impact Assessments

EQIA reports will be published once the impact assessment has been completed. These reports will include:

- a statement of the aim of the policy assessed;
- information and data collected;
- details of the assessment of impact(s);
- consideration given to measures which might mitigate any adverse impact;
- consideration given to alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity;
- consultation responses;
- the decision taken; and
- future monitoring plans.

How will we publish the information?

4.23 All information the Authority publishes will be accessible and can be made available in alternative formats on request.

Where will we publish the information?

4.24 The results of our assessments (screening reports and completed templates, the results of EQIAs) will be made available on our website at www.eani.org.uk or by contacting Cathy Lavery, contact details on page 6.

- 4.25** In addition to the above, screening reports (electronic link or hard copy on request if more suitable for recipients) which include all policies screened over a 3 month period will also be sent directly to all consultees on a quarterly basis.
- 4.26** We will inform the general public about the availability of this material through communications such as press releases where appropriate.

Arrangements for monitoring any adverse impact of policies we adopt on the promotion of equality of opportunity [Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (2) (c)]

- 4.27** Monitoring can assist us to deliver better public services and continuous improvements. Monitoring Section 75 information involves the processing of sensitive personal data (relating to the racial or ethnic origin of individuals, sexual orientation, political opinion, religious belief, etc.) In order to carry out monitoring in a confidential and effective manner, the Authority will follow guidance from the Office of the Information Commissioner and the Equality Commission.
- 4.28** We will monitor any adverse impact on the promotion of equality of opportunity of policies we adopt. We are also committed to monitoring more broadly to identify opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations in line with Equality Commission guidance.
- 4.29** We will establish the following systems to monitor the impact of policies and identify opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations:
- the collection, collation and analysis of existing relevant primary quantitative and qualitative data across all nine equality categories (where possible) on an ongoing basis;
 - the collection, collation and analysis of existing relevant secondary sources of quantitative and qualitative data across all nine equality categories on an ongoing basis;
 - an audit of existing information systems within one year of approval of this Equality Scheme, to identify the extent of current monitoring and take action to address any gaps in order to have the necessary information on which to base decisions; and
 - undertaking or obtaining new research if necessary.
- 4.30** If, over a two year period, monitoring and evaluation shows that a policy results in greater adverse impact than predicted, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, we will ensure that the policy is revised to achieve better outcomes for relevant equality groupings.
- 4.31** We will review our EQIA monitoring information on an annual basis. Where possible, other monitoring information will be reviewed annually.

Arrangements for publishing the results of our monitoring [Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (2) (d)]

4.32 Schedule 9 paragraph 4(2) (d) requires us to publish the results of the monitoring of adverse impacts of policies we have adopted. However, we are committed to monitoring more broadly and the results of our policy monitoring will be published as follows:

- EQIA monitoring information will be published as part of our Section 75 Annual Progress Report (see 2.16).
- Monitoring information will also be published and made available on the Authority's website www.eani.org.uk
- All information published will be accessible and can be made available in alternative formats on request. (see 6.3).

CHAPTER 5 - STAFF TRAINING [(Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (2) (e)]

Commitment to Staff Training

5.1 We recognise that awareness raising and training play a crucial role in the effective implementation of our Section 75 statutory duties.

5.2 The Authority is committed to positively communicating its commitment to the Section 75 statutory duties, both internally and externally. To this end we will introduce an effective communication and training programme for staff and will ensure that our commitment to the Section 75 statutory duties is made clear in all relevant publications.

Training Objectives

5.3 The Authority will draw up a detailed training plan for its staff which will aim to achieve the following objectives:

- to raise awareness of the provisions of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, our Scheme commitments and the particular issues likely to affect people across the range of Section 75 categories, to ensure that our staff and the EA Board fully understand their role in implementing the Scheme;
- to provide those staff involved in the assessment of policies (screening and EQIA) with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively;
- to provide those staff who deal with complaints in relation to compliance with our Scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to investigate and monitor complaints effectively;
- to provide those staff involved in consultation processes with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively; and
- to provide those staff involved in the implementation and monitoring of the effective implementation of the Authority's Scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively.

Awareness raising and training arrangements

5.4 The following arrangements will be put in place to ensure all our staff and the EA Board Members are aware of and understand our equality obligations:

- we will develop a summary of this Scheme and make it available to staff;
- we will provide access to copies of the full Scheme for staff, and ensure that any queries or questions of clarification from staff are addressed effectively;
- the Section 75 statutory duties will form part of induction training of new staff;
- focused training will be provided for key staff within the Authority who are directly engaged in taking forward the implementation of our Scheme commitments (for example, those involved in research and data collection, policy development, service design, conducting EQIAs, consultation, monitoring and evaluation);
- where appropriate, training will be provided to ensure staff are aware of the issues experienced by the range of Section 75 groups; and
- when appropriate and on an ongoing basis, arrangements will be made to ensure staff and the EA Board are kept up to date with Section 75 developments.

5.5 Further training and awareness raising programmes will be developed (where relevant) in association with the appropriate Section 75 groups and our staff. Training will be reviewed and updated as appropriate.

In order to share resources and expertise, the Authority will work closely (where possible) with other bodies and agencies in the development and delivery of further training.

Monitoring and evaluation

5.6 Our training programme will be subject to the following monitoring and evaluation arrangements:

- an evaluation of the extent to which all participants in the training programme have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve each of the above objectives; and
- the extent to which training objectives have been met will be reported on as part of the Section 75 Annual Progress Report, which will be sent to the Equality Commission.

CHAPTER 6 - ARRANGEMENTS FOR ENSURING AND ASSESSING PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND SERVICES WE PROVIDE [Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (2) (f)]

6.1 The Authority is committed to ensuring that the information we disseminate and the services we provide are fully accessible to all parts of the community in Northern Ireland. We will keep our arrangements under review to ensure that this remains the case.

6.2 We are aware that some groups will not have the same access to information as others. In particular:

- people with sensory, learning, communication and mobility disabilities may require printed information in other formats;
- members of ethnic minority groups, who are not fluent in English, may have difficulties with information provided only in English; and
- children and young people may not be able to fully access or understand information.

Access to information

6.3 To ensure equality of opportunity in accessing information, we aim to provide information in alternative formats on request, where reasonably practicable. If the exact request cannot be met we will ensure a reasonable alternative is provided.

Alternative formats may include Easy Read, Browse Aloud, Braille, audio formats (CD, mp3 or DAISY), large print or minority languages to meet the needs of those who are not fluent in English.

The Authority will respond to requests for information in alternative formats in a timely fashion, usually within 20 working days.

The Authority will liaise with representatives of young people and disability and minority ethnic organisations and will take account of existing and developing good practice.

Consideration will be given and advice sought from those with specialist knowledge in this area as to how best the Authority can communicate with specific groups e.g. young people, those with learning disabilities, ethnic groups, older persons and persons who have a mental illness; this will be facilitated through the use of specially trained staff and/or advocates.

6.4 In disseminating information through the media we will consider advertising in the press, where appropriate.

6.5 We will seek to ensure that our website is accessible and provides information in an accessible format. The Authority will use its website, the Corporate Plan, the Section 75 Annual Progress Report and various other publications in order to disseminate information.

Access to services

6.6 The Authority is committed to ensuring that all of our services are fully accessible to everyone in the community across the Section 75 categories.

The Authority also adheres to the relevant provisions of current anti-discrimination legislation.

- 6.7** The Authority seeks to provide suitable and qualified interpreters for those not fluent in English and those who require sign language interpreters, as appropriate.
- 6.8** The Authority will work towards the provision of accessible buildings.

Accessing public access to information and services

- 6.9** We intend to monitor on an ongoing basis across all our functions, in relation to access to information and services, to ensure equality of opportunity and good relations are promoted.
- 6.10** These monitoring systems will include:
- provision of interpreting/translation services – annual reports;
 - monitoring of complaints – ongoing and annually;
 - reasonable adjustments - ongoing and annually;
 - satisfaction surveys – periodically;
 - Article 55 Review – every three years.

CHAPTER 7 - TIMETABLE FOR MEASURES WE PROPOSE IN THIS EQUALITY SCHEME [Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (3) (b)]

- 7.1** Appendix 4 outlines our timetable for all measures proposed within this Equality Scheme. It is our intention that in due course the measures outlined in this timetable will be incorporated into our business planning processes.
- 7.2** This timetable is different from and in addition to our commitment to developing action plans and measures to specifically address inequalities and further promote equality of opportunity and good relations. We have included in our Scheme a commitment to develop an Action Plan. Accordingly, this commitment is listed in the timetable of measures at Appendix 4. For information on these action measures please see paragraph 2.12 - 2.18.

CHAPTER 8 - COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE [Schedule 9 paragraph 10.]

- 8.1** The Authority is responsive to the views of members of the public. We will endeavour to resolve all complaints made to us.
- 8.2** Schedule 9 paragraph 10 of the Act refers to complaints. A person can make a complaint to the Authority if the complainant believes he or she may have been directly affected by an alleged failure of the Authority to comply with its approved Scheme. If the complaint has not been resolved within a reasonable timescale, the complaint can be brought to the Equality Commission.
- 8.3** A person wishing to make a complaint that the Authority has failed to comply with its approved Scheme should contact:-
Mrs Cathy Lavery

Equality Unit, Education Authority
3 Charlemont Place
The Mall, Armagh
BT61 9AX
Tel: 028 3751 2264
Fax: 028 3751 2217
Text Relay: 18001 028 9056 4000
Email: cathy.lavery@eani.org.uk

- 8.4** In accordance with our Complaints Procedure, the Authority will, in the first instance, acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 working days.
- 8.5** The Equality Unit will carry out an internal investigation of the complaint and will respond substantively to the complainant within 20 working days of the date of receiving the letter of complaint. Under certain circumstances, if the complexity of the matter requires a longer period, the period for response to the complainant may be extended to 40 working days. In those circumstances, the complainant will be advised of the extended period within one month of making the complaint.
- 8.6** During this process the complainant will be kept fully informed of the progress of the investigation into the complaint and of any outcomes. If a complainant is dissatisfied with the Authority's response to their complaint, the complainant can then make a formal complaint in writing to the Equality Commission and request the Commission to investigate.
- 8.7** In any subsequent investigation by the Equality Commission, the Authority will co-operate fully, providing access in a timely manner to any relevant documentation that the Equality Commission may require.

Similarly, the Authority will co-operate fully with any investigation by the Equality Commission under sub-paragraph 11 (1) (b) of Schedule 9 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

- 8.8** The Authority will make all efforts to implement promptly and in full recommendations arising out of any Equality Commission investigation.

CHAPTER 9 - PUBLICATION OF OUR EQUALITY SCHEME [Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (3) (c)]

- 9.1** The Authority is committed to ensuring that its Equality Scheme is widely published and in a manner which will ensure equality of access. The Scheme will be made available to its staff, service users, individuals and representatives of Section 75 organisations. An Equality Scheme summary will be available and an Easy Read version will also be available. The Authority's Equality Scheme is available free of charge in print form and alternative formats from:

Mrs Cathy Lavery
Equality Unit, Education Authority
3 Charlemont Place
The Mall, Armagh
BT61 9AX
Tel: 028 3751 2264
Fax: 028 3751 2217
Text Relay: 18001 028 9056 4000
Email: cathy.lavery@eani.org.uk

The Equality Scheme, summary and Easy Read version will be made available as appropriate on the Authority's website: www.eani.org.uk

9.3 The following arrangements are in place for the publication of our Scheme in a timely manner to ensure equality of access:

- the Authority will make every effort to communicate widely the existence and content of its Equality Scheme. This may include press releases, advertisements in the press, on-line and through direct mail shots to groups representing the various Section 75 groupings;
- we will email a link to our approved Equality Scheme to our consultees on our consultation lists. Other consultees, without email, will be notified by letter that the Scheme is available on request.
- we will respond to requests for the Equality Scheme in alternative formats in a timely manner, usually within 20 working days;
- our Scheme will be available on request in alternative formats such as Braille, large print, audio formats (CD, mp3, DAISY) and in some of the most frequently used minority languages to meet the needs of those not fluent in English; and
- specific consideration will be given and advice sought from those with specialist knowledge as to how the Authority can communicate with children and young people, people with disabilities (in particular people with learning disabilities), minority ethnic communities, and others e.g. older persons; this may be facilitated through the use of specifically trained staff and/or advocates.

9.4 For a list of our stakeholders and consultees please see Appendix 3 of this Scheme.

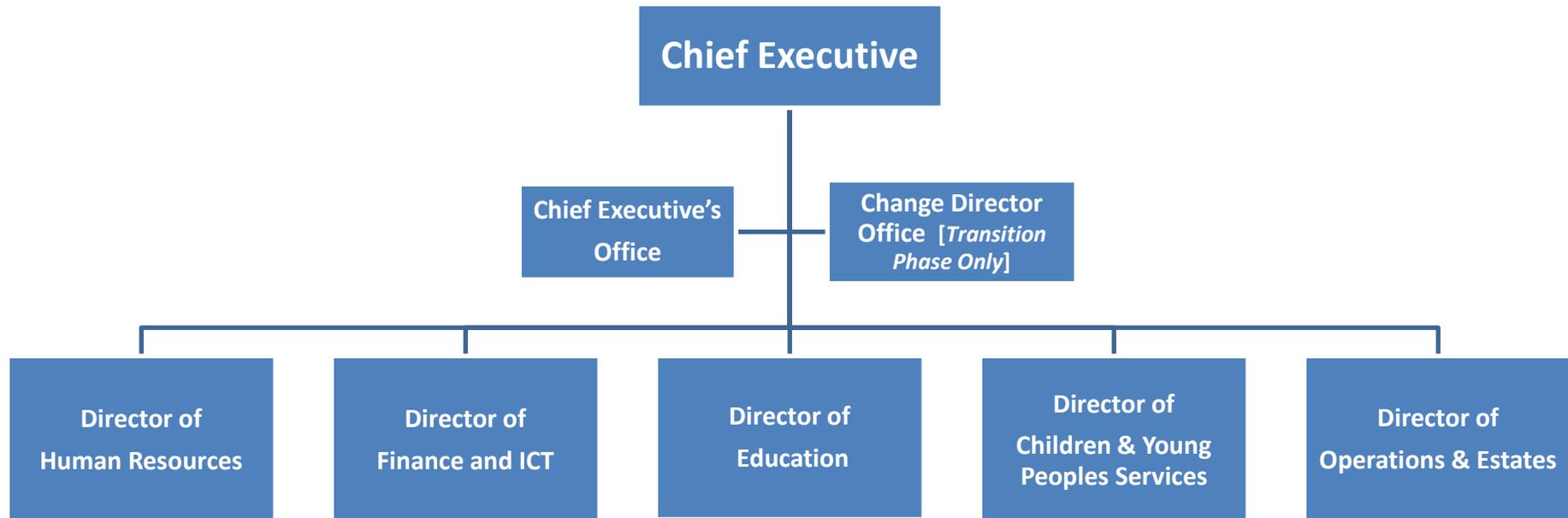
CHAPTER 10 - REVIEW OF OUR EQUALITY SCHEME [Schedule 9 paragraph 8 (3)]

10.1 As required by Schedule 9 paragraph 8 (3) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Authority is committed to conducting a thorough review of this Equality Scheme. This review will take place either within five years of submission of this Equality Scheme to the Equality Commission, or within a shorter timescale to allow alignment with the review of other planning cycles.

The review will evaluate the effectiveness of our Scheme in relation to the implementation of the Section 75 statutory duties relevant to our functions in Northern Ireland.

- 10.2** In undertaking this review we will follow any guidance issued by the Equality Commission.
- 10.3** A report of this review will be made public through the Authority's website at www.eani.org.uk, sent to the Equality Commission and issued to consultees on the Equality Scheme mailing list, Appendix 3.

APPENDIX 1 - ORGANISATION CHART



APPENDIX 2 - EXAMPLE GROUPS RELEVANT TO THE SECTION 75 CATEGORIES FOR NORTHERN IRELAND PURPOSES

Please note, this list is for illustration purposes only, it is not exhaustive.

Category	Example groups
Religious belief	Buddhist; Catholic; Hindu; Jewish; Muslims, people of no religious belief; Protestants; Sikh; other faiths. For the purposes of Section 75, the term "religious belief" is the same definition as that used in the Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order ³ . Therefore, "religious belief" also includes any perceived religious belief (or perceived lack of belief) and, in employment situations only, it also covers any "similar philosophical belief".
Political opinion	Nationalist generally; Unionists generally; members/supporters of other political parties.
Racial group	Black people; Chinese; Indians; Pakistanis; people of mixed ethnic background; Polish; Roma; Travellers; White people.
Men and women generally	Men (including boys); Transgender people; Transsexual people; women (including girls).
Marital status	Civil partners or people in civil partnerships; divorced people; married people; separated people; single people; widowed people.
Age	Children and young people; older people.
Persons with a disability	Persons with disabilities as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
Persons with dependants	Persons with personal responsibility for the care of a child; for the care of a person with a disability; or the care of a dependant older person.
Sexual orientation	Bisexual people; heterosexual people; gay or lesbian people.

³ See Section 98 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, which states: "In this Act..."political opinion" and "religious belief" shall be construed in accordance with Article 2(3) and (4) of the Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order 1998."

APPENDIX 3 - MAILING LIST FOR THE EDUCATION AUTHORITY'S REVISED EQUALITY SCHEME

The consultation list given below is indicative and will be reviewed as appropriate to ensure it remains relevant to the functions of the Authority.

<p><u>Age (older and younger people)</u> Age NI Age Sector Platform Barnardos Boy's Brigade Challenge for Youth Children in Northern Ireland Children's Law Centre Early Years Extra Care Girl Guiding Ulster Include Youth Lifestart NI National Children's Bureau NI NI Commissioner for Children & Young People (NICCY) NI Youth Forum National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) Playboard NI Ltd. Save the Children The Senior Citizens Consortium Youth Action Youth Council for NI Youth Link NI Youth Net</p> <p><u>Dependents</u> Care for NI Carers Matter Carers NI Down Lisburn Carers Employers for childcare Gingerbread NI NI Carers Association</p> <p><u>Disability</u> Action Mental Health Action on Hearing Loss ADAPT NI ADD-NI AFASIC NI Alzheimer's Disease Society Arthritis Care Arts and Disability Forum</p>	<p><u>Others</u> Armagh GAA County Board Child Maintenance Service Community Evaluation NI (CENI) Community Foundation for NI Community Transport Association (CTA NI) Conradh na Gaeilge Council for the Homeless NI Crossfire Trust Extern INCORE Conflict Resolutions Ltd Information Commissioner Nexus Institute NI Anti-Poverty Network NI Mediation Service POBAL Relate NI Shelter NI Ltd Simon Community NI South Lough Neagh Regeneration Association The Ulster-Scots Language Society Ulster Historical Foundation Volunteer Now Waterways Ireland West Belfast Economic Forum</p> <p><u>Political</u> Alliance Party Basil McCrea NI Assembly Chair of Education Committee NI Assembly (Michelle McIlwain) Conservatives NI Democratic Unionist Party Education Committee - NI Assembly Green Party Labour Party NI Progressive Unionist Party of NI Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) Sinn Fein The Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland Traditional Unionist Voice (TUV) Ulster Scots Community Network Workers Party</p>
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<p>Association of Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Autism NI British Deaf Association British Epilepsy Association British Heart Foundation NI Diabetes UK Northern Ireland Disability Action Disability Sports NI Down's Syndrome Association Employers Forum on Disability Enable NI Guide Dogs for the Blind Leonard Chesire Disability Mencap Mindwise New Vision Multiple Sclerosis Society NI Muscular Dystrophy NI Group National Deaf Children's Society NI ADD Support Centre NI Chest, Heart and Stroke Association NI Deaf Youth Association NI Dyslexia Association NI Institute for the Disabled North West Forum of People with Disabilities Parents & Professionals and Autism PRAXIS Care Prospects for People with Learning Disabilities Reconnect Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID) Sense NI The Cedar Foundation The Orchardville Society The Stroke Association Ulster Deaf Sports Council Ulster Support Employment Ltd</p>	<p><u>Public Authorities</u> Antrim and Newtownabbey District Council Ards and North Down Borough Council Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon District Council Belfast City Council Belfast Health & Social Care Trust British Council Causeway Coast and Glens District Council Department for Regional Development Department for Social Development Department of Agriculture & Rural Development Department of Culture Arts & Leisure Department of Finance & Personnel Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety Department of Enterprise, Trade & Investments Department of the Environment Derry City and Strabane District Council Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Health & Safety Executive NI Health and Social Care Board Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Local Government Staff Commission Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Mid Ulster District Council Newry, Mourne and Down District Council NILGOSC North Down Borough Council Northern Health & Social Care Trust Northern Ireland Housing Executive Northern Ireland Office Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency Northern Ireland Tourist Board Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) Probation Board for NI Public Health Agency South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust Southern Health & Social Care Trust Sports Council for Northern Ireland The Consumer Council for Northern Ireland Western Health and Social Care Trust</p>
<p><u>Education</u> Association of Northern Ireland Colleges (ANIC) The Council for the Curriculum, Examinations & Assessment (CCEA) Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) Central Management Support Unit (CMSU) Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta</p>	

<p>Department of Education NI Department for Employment & Learning Education Authority – Belfast Region Education Authority – North Eastern Region Education Authority – South Eastern Region Education Authority – Southern Region Education Authority – Western Region Education Authority - Chief Executive’s Office, Forestview General Teaching Council Libraries NI Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) Queens University Belfast St Mary’s University College Stranmillis University College The Open University University of Ulster</p> <p><u>Equality</u> Equality Coalition Equality Commission for Northern Ireland Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission</p> <p><u>Gender</u> Belfast Women's Aid Derry Well Women Federation of Women's Institutes Magherafelt Women's Group Newry & Mourne Women NI Women's Aid Federation NI Women's European Platform SAIL Transforum Transgender NI Women's Forum NI Women's Resource & Development Agency Women's Support Network</p> <p><u>Good Relations</u> Amnesty International Northern Ireland Arts Council for Northern Ireland Belong NI British Council Committee on Administration of Justice (CAJ) Community Development and Health Network Confederation of Community Groups Co-operation Ireland</p>	<p><u>Race</u> African & Caribbean Support Organisation Altram An Munia Tober Armagh Traveller Support Group Chinese Welfare Association Craigavon Travellers' Support Committee Embrace NI Indian Community Centre Italian Society Multi-Cultural Resource Centre NI Community of Refugees & Asylum Seekers Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM) Northern Ireland Muslim Family Association Omagh Ethnic Community Support Group Traveller Movement Tuar Ceatha Barnardos Wah Hep (Chinese Community Association)</p> <p><u>Religious Belief</u> Association of Baptist Churches in Ireland Belfast Islamic Centre Church of Ireland Methodist Church in Ireland Presbyterian Church in Ireland Roman Catholic Church The Belfast Baha'i Community NI Inter-Faith Forum</p> <p><u>Sexual Orientation</u> Cara Friend Foyle Friend Gay & Lesbian Youth Northern Ireland (GLYNI) Lesbian Line Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association (NIGRA) QueerSpace Rainbow Project</p> <p><u>Trades Unions</u> Association Of Education Psychologist (AEP) Association of Teachers & Lecturers (ATL) Causeway Trades Union Council GMB Irish Congress of Trades Unions (ICTU) Irish National Teachers’ Organisation</p>
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<p>East Belfast Community Development Agency Falls Community Council Habitat for Humanity Labour Relations Agency Newstart Education Centre NI Association for the Care & Resettlement of Offenders (NIACRO) NI Community Relations Council NI Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA) North West Community Network Rural Community Network South West Belfast Community Forum Victim Support</p>	<p>(INTO) National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT) Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance (NIPSA) National Union of Students (NUS) Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians (UCATT) Ulster Teachers' Union (UTU) UNISON Unite the Union</p>
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APPENDIX 4 - TIMETABLE FOR MEASURES PROPOSED WITHIN THE SCHEME

Measure	Action Taken/ To Be Taken	Lead Responsibility	Timetable
ARRANGEMENTS FOR ASSESSING OUR COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 75 DUTIES			
Have in place appropriate structures and reporting mechanisms	Structures and reporting mechanism established	Chief Executive Senior Management Team	Interim structures in Place
Ensure Section 75 duties are mainstreamed within the Authority	Section 75 objectives and targets will be integrated into annual operational business plans	Chief Executive Senior Management Team	In line with planning cycle from April 2015 onwards
	Employees' job descriptions and staff performance plans as appropriate	Human Resources Director	Annually
Prepare Section 75 Annual Progress Report and include section in Authority's own Annual Report	Information collated throughout the year for inclusion in the Annual Progress Report	Equality Unit	31 August (annually)
	Article written for inclusion in Authority's Annual Report		Annually
Progress Reports provided to: (i) Chief Administrative Officer (interim) (ii) EA SMT (iii) Authority Members (iv) Relevant committees (v) JNC/TNC (vi) JCF	Reports compiled as appropriate	Equality Unit	(i) Quarterly (ii) Quarterly (iii) Annually (iv) As required (v) Quarterly (vi) 3 times yr.
ACTION PLAN			
Development of an Action Plan to include anticipated outcomes and timescales, aligned to corporate planning cycle and based on the findings of the Audit of Inequalities	Conduct an Audit of Inequalities	Equality Unit	Oct – Feb 2016
	Develop a draft Equality Action Plan		Oct – Feb 2016
	Consult with stakeholders including relevant EA Officers, voluntary and community sector on the findings of the Audit		March - May 2016
Consultation on draft Action Plan	Consult with stakeholders before submission to Equality Commission	Equality Unit	As above
Publish Action Plan	Publish on website and intranet and advise of availability. Take account of alternative formats etc.	Equality Unit	May/ June 2016

Measure	Action Taken/ To Be Taken	Lead Responsibility	Timetable
Deliver on Action Plan	Implement and deliver actions contained in Action Plan	Senior Management Team, Heads of Service and Equality Unit	Annually
Arrangements for monitoring progress in place	Identify whether targets have been met and update Plan as necessary	Equality Unit in conjunction with Senior Management Team	Every August in line with Annual Progress Report
ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONSULTING			
Consultation list reviewed and updated	All current consultees contacted to update details and preferred method/format of communication updated on central consultation list	Equality Unit	Annually
Ensure effective consultation with consultees	Workshop style event via JCF to measure if current consultation methods appropriate.	Equality Unit	At JCF meeting (June 2015)
Conduct consultation as part of the policy-making process	Review Screening Toolkit	Senior Management Team	Publish screening reports quarterly on website
Provide feedback report to consultees in timely manner in formats suited to consultees	As per consultation list in their preferred format Review feedback received Publicise and communicate decisions made	Lead Policy Officer/ Equality Unit	Mechanisms in place to provide feedback
SCREENING			
Implement screening toolkit to reflect Guidance	Review and update screening toolkit. Provide training on screening method Monitor screening of policies Publish quarterly review Reports	Screening Panel/ Equality Unit Research new methods for training e.g.: intranet/ on line/ neelb TV	March 2016

Measure	Action Taken/ To Be Taken	Lead Responsibility	Timetable
EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS			
Produce an EQIA timetable	Provide advance notice of scheduled EQIAs	Equality Unit	On-going
Conduct EQIAs in accordance with Equality Commission Guidance	EQIA Project Team appointed Training provided to EQIA Project Team EQIA consultation reports and results of EQIAs published on the internet Information issued to consultees, as appropriate, in their preferred format as per the Equality Scheme and Equality Commission Guidelines	EQIA Project Team	As each consultation exercise ends
MONITORING			
Revision of policies as a result of monitoring	Collect and analyse qualitative and quantitative data in order to monitor adverse impact of policies adopted. Identify opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations through the policy-making monitoring processes.	Lead Policy Officer/ Equality Unit	On-going
Publication of monitoring information	Publish monitoring information in our Section 75 Annual Progress Report template on the website	Equality Unit	Annually
STAFF TRAINING			
Draw up a training plan	To cover briefing on the revised scheme, and focused training for staff involved in data collection, policy development, service design, conducting consultations, screening EQIAs, monitoring and evaluation, and dealing with complaints, as appropriate	Training & Development/ Equality Unit	December 2015

Measure	Action Taken/ To Be Taken	Lead Responsibility	Timetable
Prepare a summarised version of the scheme	Issued to all Staff	Equality Unit	Within two months of approval of scheme
Provide access to full copy of Scheme to all staff	Full Scheme to be published on intranet and internet and made available in alternative formats on request	Equality Unit	October 2015, subject to approval by the ECNI
Evaluation of training	Assess the extent to which those being trained have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to undertake screening, conduct EQIAs, etc. Provide refresher training	Training & Development/ Equality Unit	Mechanisms in place i.e. Policy Leads undertake screening and EQIAs training as required
ARRANGEMENTS FOR ENSURING AND ASSESSING PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND SERVICES WE PROVIDE			
Ensure information we disseminate and services we provide are fully accessible to all parts of the community in Northern Ireland	Update of Section 75 consultation list will ask for preferred methods and formats of communication Provide information in alternative formats on request	Equality Unit	Mechanisms in place
Ensure buildings are accessible	Access audits have been conducted and remedial works undertaken where buildings were not found to be accessible, to include more loop systems, touchpad doors, lifts etc. New builds take account of all access requirements	Property Services	Further works undertaken as required
Assessing access to information and services	Monitor uptake of interpreting services and requests for translations and alternative formats	Equality Unit	Annually
Provide reasonable adjustments	Buildings are accessible to all service users, using reasonable adjustments where necessary for both service users and staff members	Property Services	Reasonable adjustments provided as required by users and staff
Monitor complaints	Monitor complaints to identify areas where equality of opportunity and good relations could be improved	Complaints Officer/ Equality Unit	Analyse annually to identify any trends

Measure	Action Taken/ To Be Taken	Lead Responsibility	Timetable
COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE			
Ensure arrangements are in place to deal with complaints under the Equality Scheme	<p>Complaints procedure established and information made available in alternative formats</p> <p>Complaints regarding failure to adhere to Equality Scheme acknowledged and responded to within the terms of the Complaints Procedure</p>	Chief Administrative Officer/ Head of Corporate HR/ Equality Unit	<p>October 2015</p> <p>All complaints dealt with according to prescribed timescales</p>
PUBLICATION OF OUR EQUALITY SCHEME			
Equality Scheme published on website and intranet	Equality Scheme and Annual Progress Report on website	Equality Unit	<p>Equality Scheme uploaded when approved by the ECNI</p> <p>Annual Progress Reports uploaded each September</p>
Communication of revised Equality Scheme to consultees and staff	<p>Once approved, communicate the new Equality Scheme via the Joint Consultative Forum, Joint Negotiating Council for the Education Authority and through the Equality Scheme mailing list</p> <p>Develop an Easy Read version of the Equality Scheme</p>	Equality Unit	<p>Within one month of approval of the scheme</p> <p>Within two months of approval of scheme</p>
Produce Scheme in alternative formats on request	Produce the Scheme in alternative formats on request as per the Scheme	Equality Unit	As and when requested
REVIEW OF EQUALITY SCHEME			
Scheme reviewed within five years of submission to the Equality Commission or within a shorter timescale to allow alignment with other planning cycles	Review conducted in accordance with corporate planning process	Equality Unit	September 2020

APPENDIX 5 - GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Action plan

A plan which sets out actions a public authority will take to implement its Section 75 statutory duties. It is a mechanism for the realisation of measures to achieve equality outcomes for the Section 75 equality and good relations categories.

Action measures and outcomes

Specific measures to promote equality and good relations for the relevant Section 75 and good relations categories, linked to achievable outcomes, which should be realistic and timely.

Adverse impact

Where a Section 75 category has been affected differently by a policy and the effect is less favourable, it is known as adverse impact. If a policy has an adverse impact on a Section 75 category, a public authority must consider whether or not the adverse impact is unlawfully discriminatory. In either case a public authority must take measures to redress the adverse impact, by considering mitigating measures and/or alternative ways of delivering the policy.

Audit of Inequalities

An audit of inequalities is a systematic review and analysis of inequalities which exist for service users and those affected by the public authority's policies. An audit can be used by a public authority to inform its work in relation to the Section 75 equality and good relations duties. It can also enable public authorities to assess progress on the implementation of the Section 75 statutory duties, as it provides baseline information on existing inequalities relevant to a public authority's functions.

Consultation

In the context of Section 75, consultation is the process of asking those affected by a policy (i.e. service users, staff, the general public) for their views on how the policy could be implemented more effectively to promote equality of opportunity across the 9 categories. Different circumstances will call for different types of consultation. Consultations could, for example, include meetings, focus groups, surveys and questionnaires.

Differential impact

Differential impact occurs where a Section 75 group has been affected differently by a policy. This effect could either be positive, neutral or negative. A public authority must make a judgement as to whether a policy has a differential impact and then it must determine whether the impact is adverse, based on a systematic appraisal of the accumulated information.

Equality impact assessment

The mechanism underpinning Section 75, where existing and proposed policies are assessed in order to determine whether they have an adverse impact on equality of opportunity for the relevant Section 75 categories. Equality impact assessments require the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data.

Equality of opportunity

The prevention, elimination or regulation of discrimination between people on grounds of characteristics including sex, marital status, age, disability, religious belief, political opinion, dependants, race and sexual orientation. The promotion of equality of opportunity entails more than the elimination of discrimination. It requires proactive measures to be taken to secure equality of opportunity between the categories identified under Section 75.

Equality Scheme

A document which outlines a public authority's arrangements for complying with its Section 75 obligations. An Equality Scheme must include an outline of the public authority's arrangements for carrying out consultations, screening, equality impact assessments, monitoring, training and arrangements for ensuring access to information and services.

Good relations

Although not defined in the legislation, the Equality Commission has agreed the following working definition of good relations: 'the growth of relations and structures for Northern Ireland that acknowledge the religious, political and racial context of this society, and that seek to promote respect, equity and trust, and embrace diversity in all its forms'.

Mainstreaming equality

The integration of equality of opportunity principles, strategies and practices into the everyday work of public authorities from the outset. In other words, mainstreaming is the process of ensuring that equality considerations are built into the policy development process from the beginning, rather than being bolted on at the end. Mainstreaming can help improve methods of working by increasing a public authority's accountability, responsiveness to need and relations with the public. It can bring added value at many levels.

Mitigation of adverse impact

Where an equality impact assessment reveals that a particular policy has an adverse impact on equality of opportunity, a public authority must consider ways of delivering the policy outcomes which have a less adverse effect on the relevant Section 75 categories; this is known as mitigating adverse impact.

Monitoring

Monitoring consists of continuously scrutinising and evaluating a policy to assess its impact on the Section 75 categories. Monitoring must be sensitive to the issues associated with human rights and privacy. Public authorities should seek advice from consultees and Section 75 representative groups when setting up monitoring systems. Monitoring consists of the collection of relevant information and evaluation of policies. It is not solely about the collection of data, it can also take the form of regular meetings and reporting of research undertaken. Monitoring is not an end in itself but provides the data or the next cycle of policy screening.

Northern Ireland Act

The Northern Ireland Act, implementing the Good Friday Agreement, received Royal Assent on 19 November 1998. Section 75 of the Act created the statutory equality duties.

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission

A statutory body established under Section 68 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, which works to ensure that the human rights of everyone in Northern Ireland are fully protected in law, policy and practice.

Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency (NISRA)

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) is an Executive Agency within the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP). They provide statistical and research information regarding Northern Ireland issues and provide registration services to the public in the most effective and efficient way.

OFMDFM

The Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister is responsible for providing advice, guidance, challenge and support to other NI Civil Service Departments on Section 75 issues.

Policy

The formal and informal decisions a public authority makes in relation to carrying out its duties. Defined in the New Oxford English Dictionary as 'a course or principle of action adopted or proposed by a government party, business or individual'. In the context of Section 75, the term **policy** covers all the ways in which a public authority carries out or proposes to carry out its functions relating to Northern Ireland. Policies include unwritten as well as written policies.

Positive action

This phrase is not defined in any statute, but the Equality Commission understands it to mean any lawful action that a public authority might take for the purpose of promoting equality of opportunity for all persons in relation to employment or in accessing goods, facilities or services (such as health services, housing, education, justice, policing). It may involve adopting new policies, practices, or procedures; or changing or abandoning old ones. *Positive action* is not the same as *positive discrimination*. Positive discrimination differs from positive action in that *positive action* involves the taking of lawful actions whereas *positive discrimination* involves the taking of unlawful actions. Consequently, *positive action* is by definition lawful whereas *positive discrimination* is unlawful.

Qualitative data

Qualitative data refers to the experiences of individuals from their perspective, most often with less emphasis on numbers or statistical analysis. Consultations are more likely to yield qualitative than quantitative data.

Quantitative data

Quantitative data refers to numbers, typically derived from either a population in general or samples of that population. This information is often analysed by either using descriptive statistics, which consider general profiles, distributions and trends in the

data, or inferential statistics, which are used to determine 'significance' either in relationships or differences in the data.

Screening

The procedure for identifying which policies will be subject to equality impact assessment, and how these equality impact assessments will be prioritised. The purpose of screening is to identify the policies which are likely to have a minor/major impact on equality of opportunity so that greatest resources can be devoted to improving these policies. Screening requires a systematic review of existing and proposed policies.

Schedule 9

Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 sets out detailed provisions for the enforcement of the Section 75 statutory duties, including an outline of what should be included in an Equality Scheme.

Section 75

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act provides that each public authority is required, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:

- (vi) persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status and sexual orientation;
- (vii) men and women generally;
- (viii) persons with a disability and persons without; and
- (ix) persons with dependants and persons without.

Without prejudice to these obligations, each public authority in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland must also have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

Section 75 investigation

An investigation carried out by the Equality Commission, under Schedule 9 of the NI Act 1998, arising from the failure of a public authority to comply with the commitments set out in its approved Equality Scheme. There are two types of Commission investigation, these are as follows:

1. An investigation of a complaint by an individual who claims to have been directly affected by the failure of a public authority to comply with its approved Equality Scheme;
2. An investigation initiated by the Commission, where it believes that a public authority may have failed to comply with its approved Equality Scheme.