

## DEPARTMENT FOR EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING

### SECTION 75 EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY SCREENING TEMPLATE

This form should be completed when considering options for a new policy, service or programme, or changing an existing policy, service or programme. Those policies identified as having significant implications for equality of opportunity must be subject to full EQIA.

The template will provide a record of the factors taken into account if a policy is screened out, or excluded for EQIA. It will be included in the quarterly Screening Report which is published on the Department's website.

#### Please complete the Cover Sheet Table below

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Policy Title (in full):</b>          | The New Further Education Strategy for Northern Ireland  |
| <b>Policy Aim</b>                       | The vision is to have an ambitious and economically integrated further education system that will be recognised locally, regionally and internationally for high quality and economically relevant education and training. |
| <b>Decision (delete as appropriate)</b> | Policy screened out <b>without</b> mitigation  |
| <b>Business Area:</b>                   | Further Education Division – Further Education Strategy Programme  |
| <b>Contact:</b>                         | Dr. Mary McIvor  |
| <b>Date of form completion:</b>         | 3 July 2015  |

#### For Equality Unit Completion:

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>Date received:</b>                  | 14/04/2015 |
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# **Screening flowchart and template** *(taken from Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for public authorities April 2010 (Appendix 1)).*

## **Introduction**

**Part 1. Policy scoping** – asks public authorities to provide details about the policy, procedure, practice and/or decision being screened and what available evidence you have gathered to help make an assessment of the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations.

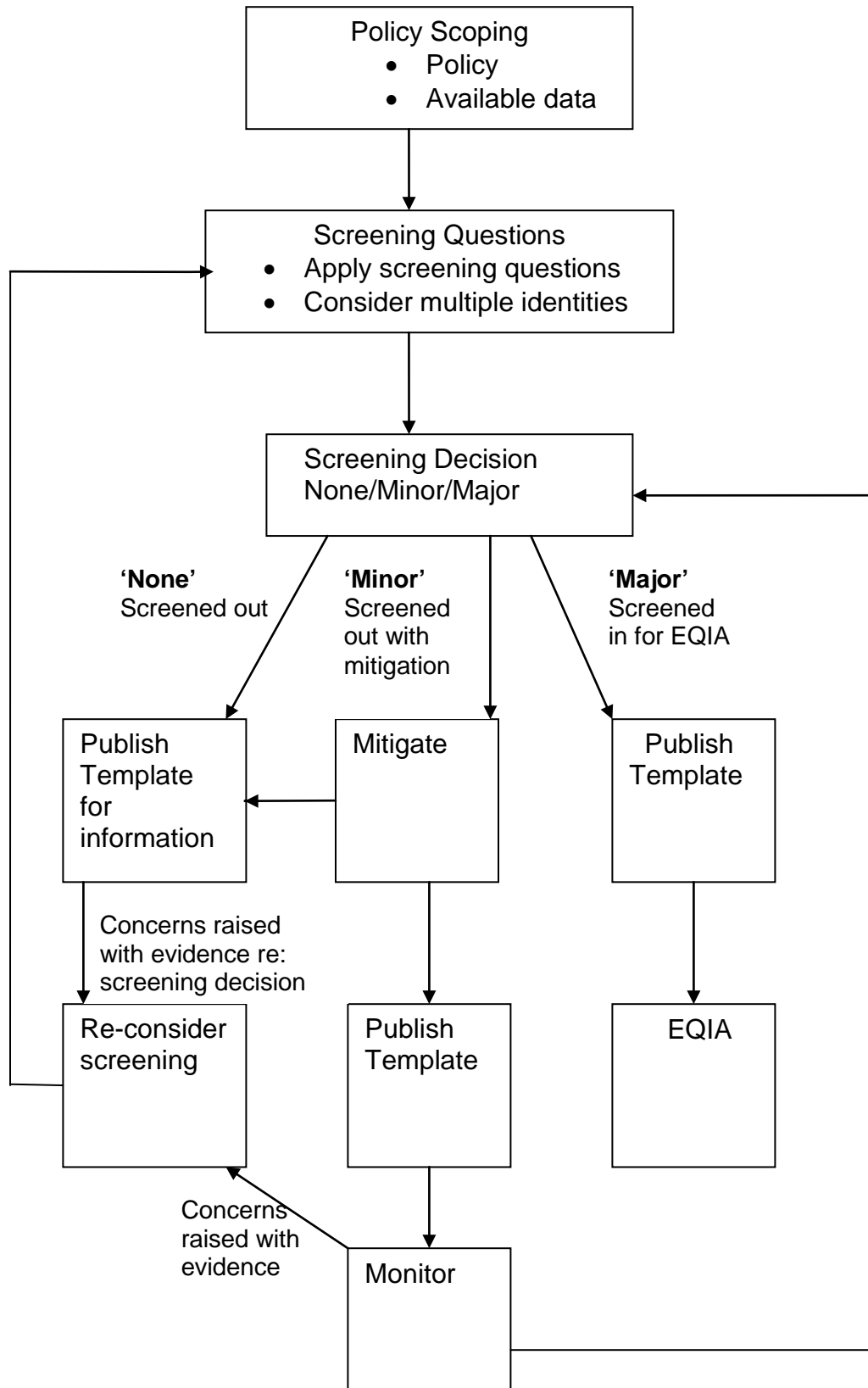
**Part 2. Screening questions** – asks about the extent of the likely impact of the policy on groups of people within each of the Section 75 categories. Details of the groups consulted and the level of assessment of the likely impact. This includes consideration of multiple identity and good relations issues.

**Part 3. Screening decision** – guides the public authority to reach a screening decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment (EQIA), or to introduce measures to mitigate the likely impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

**Part 4. Monitoring** – provides guidance to public authorities on monitoring for adverse impact and broader monitoring.

**Part 5. Approval and authorisation** – verifies the public authority's approval of a screening decision by a senior manager responsible for the policy.

A screening flowchart is provided overleaf.



## Part 1. Policy scoping

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

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

### Information about the policy

|   |
|---|
| Name of the policy<br>New Further Education Strategy for Northern Ireland   |
| Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?<br>Revised  |
| What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes)<br>The vision is to have an ambitious and economically integrated further education system that will be recognised locally, regionally and internationally for high quality and economically relevant education and training   |
| Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?<br>If so, explain how.<br>One of the key strengths of the Further Education sector is that it is accessible to all, both in terms of reaching all levels, types and age of learners, and also the fact that the colleges are locally based and their reach extends into both urban and rural communities. Students within the sector come from a variety of backgrounds and have a range of learning, work and life experiences and the sector plays a valuable role in bringing together a wide cross-section of the community within Northern Ireland. Under the new strategy access to Further Education will continue to be open to and inclusive of students from all backgrounds regardless of religious belief, political opinion, racial group, marital status, sexual orientation, disability; whether they have dependents or not, age and gender. |
| Who initiated or wrote the policy?<br>The current strategy for Further Education in Northern Ireland, <i>'Further Education Means Business'</i> , has been extremely successful; with colleges now strongly focused on meeting the economic and workforce development needs of Northern Ireland. However, the Northern Ireland economy has changed considerably in recent years and the Minister for Employment and Learning, Dr Stephen Farry MLA, has decided that it is timely to refresh the strategy for further education in Northern Ireland. The development of the strategy has been led by the  |

Strategy Programme team within DEL's Further Education Division[, working in partnership with the Further Education colleges in Northern Ireland].

Who owns and who implements the policy?

The Further Education Division of the Department for Employment and Learning is responsible for the strategy and the implementation will fall across both it and the six Further Education colleges in Northern Ireland.

## Implementation factors

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

If yes, are they:

- financial
- legislative
- other - please specify

## Main stakeholders affected

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

- staff
- service users
- other public sector organisations
- voluntary / community/trade unions
- other - please specify

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

- what are they?

- who owns them?

The Department for Employment and Learning's:

- Skills Strategy, 'Success through Excellence';
- Review of Youth Training;
- Securing Our Success: The Northern Ireland Strategy on Apprenticeships;
- STEM Strategy, 'Success through STEM'
- new Strategy for Professional and Technical Qualifications; and
- Career Service Review.

## **Available evidence**

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

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

In taking forward the new Further Education strategy, information from a range of sources has been examined and used to inform its proposals. These comprise:

- an analysis of the best practice that is present in our own further education colleges;
- evidence compiled through the reviews of apprenticeships and youth training, which is relevant to the wider vocational education and training (VET) system, within which further educational colleges operate;
- an underlying evidence base setting out the economic and social context that is specific to the further education sector;
- a detailed statistical analysis of further education activity in terms of enrolments and learner retention and achievement;
- desk research of key literature and research papers, in particular recent OECD publications; and
- meetings with a range of key stakeholders.

| <b>Section 75 category</b>      | <b>Details of evidence/ information</b>  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <p><b>Religious belief</b></p>  | <p>The current Further Education sector does not exclude anyone on the basis of religious belief. The Further Education colleges in Northern Ireland are designated as public authorities, for the purposes of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, and all six have their Equality Schemes approved by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. The colleges therefore have a statutory obligation to promote equality of opportunity and good relations within the various Section 75 categories including religious belief. Colleges through their general operations, make a significant contribution to promoting equality of opportunity between all people, including those of different religious beliefs.</p> <p>In 2013/14 statistical data indicates that 25.0% of all ‘regulated’ enrolments at Further Education colleges were of Catholic religious belief while 9.4% were of Protestant belief. However 28.4% of ‘regulated’ enrolments had no religious belief while for 31.2% of ‘regulated’ enrolments the religious belief was unknown. It should be noted that equality related data on religious belief was only introduced to the data capture process within the Further Education colleges in 2013/14 and therefore the information is only currently available for that academic year<sup>1</sup>.</p> <p>In comparison, the Northern Ireland population split, as per the 2011 Census data, was 40.8% Catholic religion and 41.6% Protestant and other Christian (including Christian related). In the case of the Census data 10.1% of usual residents stated they had no religion while 6.8% did not state their religion<sup>2</sup>.</p> <p>The revised Strategy for Further Education will put in place measures designed to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment regardless of their religious belief.</p> <p>Representatives from a broad spectrum of religious beliefs will be invited to the proposed stakeholder engagement meetings.</p> |
| <p><b>Political opinion</b></p> | <p>The current Further Education sector does not exclude anyone on the basis of political opinion. The Further Education colleges in Northern Ireland are designated as public authorities, for the purposes of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, and all six have their Equality Schemes approved by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. The colleges therefore have a legal obligation to promote equality of opportunity and good relations within the various Section 75 categories including political opinion.</p> <p>In 2013/14 statistical data indicates that 10.0% of all ‘regulated’ enrolments at Further Education colleges were of Nationalist political opinion while 6.9% were of Unionist political opinion. However the political opinion was unknown for 78.9% of ‘regulated’ enrolments. It should be noted that equality related data on political</p>  |

<sup>1</sup> Further Education Activity in Northern Ireland: 2009/10 to 2013/14, Department for Employment and Learning

<sup>2</sup> Census 2011 – Key Statistics for Northern Ireland December 2012, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
|                            | <p>opinion was only introduced to the data capture process within the Further Education colleges in 2013/14 and therefore the information is only currently available for that academic year<sup>3</sup>.</p> <p>The revised Strategy for Further Education will put in place measures designed to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices regardless of their political opinion.</p> <p>MLAs from all political parties will be engaged in the public consultation phase of the development of the revised strategy and members of the public will be able to comment regardless of their political opinion.</p>  |
| <p><b>Racial group</b></p> | <p>The current Further Education sector does not exclude anyone on the basis of race. The Further Education colleges in Northern Ireland are designated as public authorities, for the purposes of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, and all six have their Equality Schemes approved by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. The colleges therefore have a legal obligation to promote equality of opportunity and good relations within the various Section 75 categories including racial group.</p> <p>In 2009/10 the vast majority of ‘regulated’ enrolments at Further Education colleges (87.4%) were of white ethnicity while the ethnicity of a further 10.7% of regulated enrolments was unknown. The figures for 2013/14 are broadly similar with 88.2% of regulated enrolments of white ethnicity and 9.6% of unknown ethnicity<sup>4</sup>.</p> <p>In comparison, 2011 Census data indicates that 98.2% of all usual residents were of white ethnicity<sup>5</sup>.</p> <p>The revised Strategy for Further Education will put in place measures designed to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices regardless of their racial group.</p> <p>The stakeholder engagement events will include representation from a broad spectrum of racial groups and groups representing different racial groups will be able to respond to the public consultation.</p> |
| <p><b>Age</b></p>          | <p>The current Further Education sector does not exclude anyone on the basis of age. The Further Education colleges in Northern Ireland are designated as public authorities, for the purposes of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, and all six have their Equality Schemes approved by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. The colleges therefore have a legal obligation to promote equality of opportunity and good relations within the various Section 75 categories including age.</p>   |

<sup>3</sup> Further Education Activity in Northern Ireland: 2009/10 to 2013/14, Department for Employment and Learning

<sup>4</sup> Further Education Activity in Northern Ireland: 2009/10 to 2013/14, Department for Employment and Learning

<sup>5</sup> Census 2011 – Key Statistics for Northern Ireland December 2012, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency



|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
|                              | <p>The Further Education sector will continue to be open to people throughout Northern Ireland regardless of age. Over the 5 year period between 2009/10 and 2013/14, the majority of regulated enrolments were aged '19 and under', with a year-on-year increase from 50.5% in 2009/10 to 58.0% in 2013/14. Conversely, the proportion of regulated enrolments aged '25 and over' have decreased each year from 36.6% to 28.6%. Those aged '20 to 24' increased slightly, accounting for 12.8% in 2009/10 and 13.4% in 2013/14<sup>6</sup>.</p> <p>A very different pattern is apparent with non-regulated enrolments across the same 5 year period. The majority of non-regulated enrolments each year were aged '25 and over'. In 2009/10, 69.8% of all non-regulated enrolments were aged '25 and over', falling to 66.6% in 2013/14. Non-regulated enrolments aged '19 and under' remained constant between the two years (23.2% in 2009/10 to 23.3% in 2013/14) and those aged '20 to 24' showed a slight increase from 6.5% to 9.1%. It is evident that older people are enrolling on 'non-regulated' type courses while younger people enrol on formally recognised qualification based courses.</p> <p>In comparison, 2011 Census data indicates that 7.06% of all usual residents were in the 20-24 age group while 66.5% of all usual residents were aged '25 and over'<sup>7</sup>.</p> <p>The proposals contained within the revised Strategy for Further Education are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help all people, irrespective of age, into employment and promote good employment practices.</p> |
| <p><b>Marital status</b></p> | <p>The current Further Education sector does not exclude anyone on the basis of marital status. The Further Education colleges in Northern Ireland are designated as public authorities, for the purposes of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, and all six have their Equality Schemes approved by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. The colleges therefore have a legal obligation to promote equality of opportunity and good relations within the various Section 75 categories including marital status.</p> <p>In 2009/10 the majority of 'regulated' enrolments at Further Education colleges (61.1%) were single (never married) while 15.5% of regulated enrolments were married or co-habiting and the marital status of a further 20.1% of regulated enrolments was unknown. This compares with the statistics for 2013/14, again the majority of regulated enrolments at Further Education colleges (70.5%) were single (never married) while 11.1% of regulated enrolments were married or co-habiting and the marital status of a further 16.0% of regulated enrolments was unknown<sup>8</sup>.</p>   |

<sup>6</sup> Further Education Activity in Northern Ireland: 2009/10 to 2013/14, Department for Employment and Learning

<sup>7</sup> Census 2011 – Key Statistics for Northern Ireland December 2012, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

<sup>8</sup> Further Education Activity in Northern Ireland: 2009/10 to 2013/14, Department for Employment and Learning

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|---------------------------------------|---|
|                                       | <p>In comparison, 2011 Census data indicates that the Northern Ireland marital status of all usual residents, aged 16 and over, was 36.1% single (never married or never registered a same-sex civil partnership) while 47.66% were married<sup>9</sup>.</p> <p>The proposals contained within the revised Strategy for Further Education are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help all people, irrespective of marital status, into employment and promote good employment practices.</p>   |
| <p><b>Sexual orientation</b></p>      | <p>The current Further Education sector does not exclude anyone on the basis of sexual orientation. The Further Education colleges in Northern Ireland are designated as public authorities, for the purposes of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, and all six have their Equality Schemes approved by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. The colleges therefore have a legal obligation to promote equality of opportunity and good relations within the various Section 75 categories including sexual orientation.</p> <p>In 2013/14 statistical data indicates that 39.5% of all regulated enrolments at Further Education colleges were of heterosexual orientation while the sexual orientation of 58.9% was not stated or unknown. It should be noted that equality related data on sexual orientation was only introduced to the data capture process within the Further Education colleges in 2013/14 and therefore the information is only currently available for that academic year<sup>10</sup>.</p> <p>The proposals contained within the revised Strategy for Further Education are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help all people, irrespective of their sexual orientation, into employment and promote good employment practices.</p> |
| <p><b>Men and women generally</b></p> | <p>The current Further Education sector does not exclude anyone on the basis of gender. The Further Education colleges in Northern Ireland are designated as public authorities, for the purposes of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, and all six have their Equality Schemes approved by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. The colleges therefore have a legal obligation to promote equality of opportunity and good relations within the various Section 75 categories including men and women generally.</p> <p>In terms of gender profile, the proportion of females enrolled in regulated provision at Further Education colleges was 49.1% in 2013/14, while corresponding male proportion was 50.9% over the same period. The 2013/14 figures for regulated enrolments are therefore broadly equivalent on a gender basis<sup>11</sup>.</p>  |

<sup>9</sup> Census 2011 – Key Statistics for Northern Ireland December 2012, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

<sup>10</sup> Further Education Activity in Northern Ireland: 2009/10 to 2013/14, Department for Employment and Learning

<sup>11</sup> Further Education Activity in Northern Ireland: 2009/10 to 2013/14, Department for Employment and Learning

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
|                          | <p>In comparison, 2011 Census data indicates that 51.0% of usual residents were female while 49.0% were male<sup>12</sup>.</p> <p>The revised Strategy for Further Education will put in place measures designed to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices regardless of their gender.</p>   |
| <p><b>Disability</b></p> | <p>The current Further Education sector does not exclude anyone on the basis of disability. The Further Education colleges in Northern Ireland are designated as public authorities, for the purposes of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, and all six have their Equality Schemes approved by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. The colleges therefore have a legal obligation to promote equality of opportunity and good relations within the various Section 75 categories including disability.</p> <p>Under the Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 colleges are required to provide accessibility to both their premises and the curriculum to all disabled/prospective students with disabilities. The Department assists the six colleges fulfil this obligation by making £4.5 million per annum funding available to support students with disabilities through the Additional Support Fund. This funding includes two elements, £2.5 million helps FE colleges provide technical and personal support for these students and £2 million to help meet the cost of providing tailored discrete courses for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities for whom mainstream courses are not appropriate due to the nature/degree of their disability/learning difficulty.</p> <p>In 2013/14, there were 1,299 students in regulated FE discrete provision. These are students with more severe learning difficulties and / or disabilities who are unable to participate in mainstream courses and therefore participate in discrete provision which has smaller class sizes and additional in built support as standard. A move to FE for these students, who range from 16 years upwards, offers highly significant opportunities for them to become more independent, integrate with the wider community and gain valuable life skills.</p> <p>In 2009/10 the majority of regulated enrolments at Further Education colleges (89.8%) did not have a disability while 10.2% of enrolments had a disability. This compares with the statistics for 2013/14, when again the majority of regulated enrolments at Further Education colleges (87.2%) did not have a disability while 12.8% of regulated enrolments had a disability<sup>13</sup>.</p> <p>The revised Strategy for Further Education will put in place measures designed to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices regardless of whether or not they have a disability.</p> |

<sup>12</sup> Census 2011 – Key Statistics for Northern Ireland December 2012, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

<sup>13</sup> Further Education Activity in Northern Ireland: 2009/10 to 2013/14, Department for Employment and Learning

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>Dependants</b> | <p>The current Further Education sector does not exclude anyone on the basis of whether or not they have dependants. The Further Education colleges in Northern Ireland are designated as public authorities, for the purposes of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, and all six have their Equality Schemes approved by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. The colleges therefore have a legal obligation to promote equality of opportunity and good relations within the various Section 75 categories including those with or without dependants.</p> <p>In 2009/10 91.0% of all regulated enrolments had no dependents while 9.0% had dependants. The data for 2013/14 showed an increase of regulated enrolments with dependants to 10.8% while the number of total regulated enrolments without dependants correspondingly decreased slightly to 89.2%. It should be noted that in 2013/14 additional dependant categories (elderly, disability, no care required) have been added to the data collection process. In previous academic years only dependant adults and children were recorded. It should be noted that this may inflate the figures presented for the number of enrolments who indicated having a dependant in 2013/14 in comparison with earlier academic years<sup>14</sup>.</p> <p>The revised Strategy for Further Education will put in place measures designed to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices regardless of whether or not they have dependants.</p> <p>There is existing provision via the colleges for young people who require assistance with childcare, to allow them to start or continue their education, in the form of financial support under the Department's Care to Learn scheme. The scheme is aimed at those aged under 20 at the time of enrolment. In the 2013/14 academic year 95 students were supported under the Scheme. There are no plans to change this under the new strategy.</p> |
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<sup>14</sup> Further Education Activity in Northern Ireland: 2009/10 to 2013/14, Department for Employment and Learning

## Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories

| <b>Section 75 category</b> | <b>Details of needs/experiences/priorities</b>   |
|----------------------------|--|
| Religious belief           | The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices, irrespective of their religious beliefs.  |
| Political opinion          | The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices, irrespective of their political opinion.  |
| Racial group               | The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices, irrespective of their racial group.       |
| Age                        | The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help young people into employment and promote good employment practices.                                     |
| Marital status             | The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices, irrespective of their marital status.     |
| Sexual orientation         | The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices, irrespective of their sexual orientation. |

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <p><b>Men and women generally</b></p> | <p>The Further Education Strategy will ensure that Colleges in Northern Ireland will continue to offer provision across a range of occupations, to ensure that opportunities are created which appeal to both male and female learners.</p>   |
| <p><b>Disability</b></p>              | <p>The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices, irrespective of whether or not they have a disability.</p> <p>Under the strategy the Department will continue to provide funding to assist the six Further Education colleges to support students with disabilities through the Additional Support Fund.</p>              |
| <p><b>Dependants</b></p>              | <p>There is existing provision via the colleges for young people who require assistance with childcare, in the form of financial support under the Department's Care to Learn scheme. There are no plans to change this.</p> <p>The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices, irrespective of if they have dependants.</p> |

## Part 2. Screening questions

### Introduction

In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, the public authority should consider its answers to the questions 1-4 which are given on pages 10-12 of this Guide.

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

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

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

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

### In favour of a 'major' impact

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

concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;

- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

### **In favour of 'minor' impact**

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

### **In favour of none**

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

Taking into account the evidence presented above, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy, in any way, for each of the equality and good relations categories, by applying the screening questions given overleaf and indicate the level of impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.



## Screening questions

| 1 What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? minor/major/none |   |                                   |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| Section 75 category  | Details of policy impact  | Level of impact? minor/major/none |
| Religious belief   | The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices, irrespective of their religious beliefs. | None                              |
| Political opinion  | The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices, irrespective of their political opinion. | None                              |
| Racial group   | The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices, irrespective of their racial group.      | None                              |
| Age  | The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help young people into employment and promote good employment practices.                                    | None                              |
| Marital status   | The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good  | None                              |

|                                |   |      |
|--------------------------------|---|------|
|                                | employment practices, irrespective of their marital status.   |      |
| <b>Sexual orientation</b>      | The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices, irrespective of their sexual orientation.  | None |
| <b>Men and women generally</b> | The Further Education Strategy will ensure that Colleges in Northern Ireland will continue to offer provision across a range of occupations, to ensure that opportunities are created which appeal to both male and female learners.  | None |
| <b>Disability</b>              | <p>The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices, irrespective of whether or not they have a disability.</p> <p>Under the strategy the Department will continue to provide funding to assist the six Further Education colleges to support students with disabilities through the Additional Support Fund.</p>              | None |
| <b>Dependants</b>              | <p>There is existing provision via the colleges for young people who require assistance with childcare, in the form of financial support under the Department's Care to Learn scheme. There are no plans to change this.</p> <p>The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices, irrespective of if they have dependants.</p> | None |

| 2 Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories? |                                 |   |
|---|---------------------------------|---|
| Section 75 category   | If <b>Yes</b> , provide details | If <b>No</b> , provide reasons  |
| Religious belief  |                                 | The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices, irrespective of their religious beliefs. |
| Political opinion   |                                 | The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices, irrespective of their political opinion. |
| Racial group  |                                 | The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices, irrespective of their racial group.      |
| Age   |                                 | The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help young people into employment and promote good employment practices.                                    |
| Marital   |                                 | The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal  |

|                         |  |  |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| status                  |  | development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices, irrespective of their marital status. (Mention part-time courses?)   |
| Sexual orientation      |  | The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices, irrespective of their sexual orientation.   |
| Men and women generally |  | The Further Education Strategy will ensure that Colleges in Northern Ireland will continue to offer provision across a range of occupations, to ensure that opportunities are created which appeal to both male and female learners.   |
| Disability              |  | <p>The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices, irrespective of whether or not they have a disability.</p> <p>Under the strategy the Department will continue to provide funding to assist the six Further Education colleges to support students with disabilities through the Additional Support Fund.</p> |
| Dependants              |  | The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices, irrespective of if they have dependants.  |

| 3 To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?<br>minor/major/none |   |                                  |
|--|---|----------------------------------|
| Good relations category  | Details of policy impact  | Level of impact minor/major/none |
| Religious belief   | The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices, irrespective of their religious beliefs. The Department is not aware of any evidence, which suggests that the proposals within the strategy will adversely impact on good relations between people of different religious beliefs. | None                             |
| Political opinion  | The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices, irrespective of their political opinion. The Department is not aware of any evidence, which suggests that the proposals within the strategy will adversely impact on good relations between people of different political opinion. | None                             |
| Racial group   | The proposals contained within the strategy are intended to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and help people into employment and promote good employment practices, irrespective of their racial group. The Department does not envisage any impact on good relations between people of different religious beliefs.   | None                             |

| 4 Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? |  |                                |
|---|--|--------------------------------|
| Good relations category   | If <b>Yes</b> , provide details  | If <b>No</b> , provide reasons |
| Religious belief  | While the proposals within the strategy are not directly related to the promotion of good relations between persons of different religious beliefs, the Further Education sector has a tradition of attracting students from all sections of society, in terms of religious belief, and educating them in a genuinely shared educational environment. An indirect consequence of the strategy could be to improve good relations between people of different religious beliefs by continued integration within the Further Education sector.                     |                                |
| Political opinion   | While the proposals within the strategy are not directly related to the promotion of good relations between persons of different political opinion, the Further Education sector has a tradition of attracting students from all sections of society, including those of differing political opinions, and educating them in a genuinely shared educational environment. An indirect consequence of the strategy could be to improve good relations between people of different political opinions by continued integration within the Further Education sector. |                                |
| Racial group  | While the proposals within the strategy are not directly related to the promotion of good relations between persons of different racial groups, the Further Education sector has a tradition of attracting students from all sections of society, including those from various racial groups, and educating them in a genuinely shared educational environment. An indirect consequence  |                                |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  | <p>of the strategy could be to improve good relations between people from different racial groups by continued integration within the Further Education sector..</p> |  |
|--|--|--|

## **Additional considerations**

### **Multiple identity**

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

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

The Department is not aware of any evidence, which suggests that that the proposals within the strategy will adversely impact on people with multiple identities.

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

The Department does not envisage any adverse impact on people with multiple identities.



### Part 3. Screening decision

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

The aim of the revised Further Education Strategy is to help promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; help people into employment and promote good employment practices. As the expected outcome of the strategy is a positive impact contributing to overall equality of opportunity, an equality impact assessment is not required.

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment the public authority should consider if the policy should be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced.

Mitigation or alternative policies are not required as the revised Further Education Strategy's aim can make a positive contribution to overall equality of opportunity.

If the decision is to subject the policy to an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

Not applicable – equality impact assessment not required.

All public authorities' equality schemes must state the authority's arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity. The Commission recommends screening and equality impact assessment as the tools to be utilised for such assessments. Further advice on equality impact assessment may be found in a separate Commission publication: Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment.

## Mitigation

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

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

If so, give the **reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.

As the revised Further Education Strategy can make a positive contribution to overall equality of opportunity, therefore mitigation or an alternative policy is not required.

While this strategy is not directly related to the promotion of good relations it would be hoped that by helping to integrate more people into sustained work, a consequence of this could be to improve good relations for people of within the relevant Section 75 groups. Therefore mitigation or an alternative policy is not required.

## Timetabling and prioritising

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

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

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

| Priority criterion                                   | Rating (1-3)                              |
|--|---|
| Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations | Not Applicable<br>(Strategy Screened Out) |
| Social need  | Not Applicable<br>(Strategy Screened Out) |
| Effect on people’s daily lives                       | Not Applicable<br>(Strategy Screened Out) |
| Relevance to a public authority’s functions          | Not Applicable<br>(Strategy Screened Out) |

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

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

If yes, please provide details

## Part 4. Monitoring

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

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

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

## Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

| <b>Screened by:</b> | <b>Position/Job Title</b>                          | <b>Date</b> |
|---------------------|--|-------------|
| Shauna Mullan       | Deputy Principal,<br>Further Education<br>Strategy | 03/07/2015  |
| <b>Approved by:</b> |  |             |
| Dr Mary McIvor      | Director of Further<br>Education Division          | 03/07/2015  |

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be 'signed off' and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made easily accessible on the public authority's website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.