

DEPARTMENT FOR THE ECONOMY

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

Policy Title (in full):	The Department for the Economy's Proposed Resource Departmental Expenditure Limit (RDEL) Budget 2021/22 Internal Allocations
Policy Aim	To provide the Business Areas within the Department for the Economy with a RDEL Budget for 2021/22 based on the Draft RDEL Budget allocations announced by the Minister for Finance on 18 January 2021.
Decision (delete as appropriate)	Policy screened out without mitigation or an alternative policy adopted
Business Area:	Finance Division
Contact:	Sharon Hetherington
Date of form completion:	16 th March 2021

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.

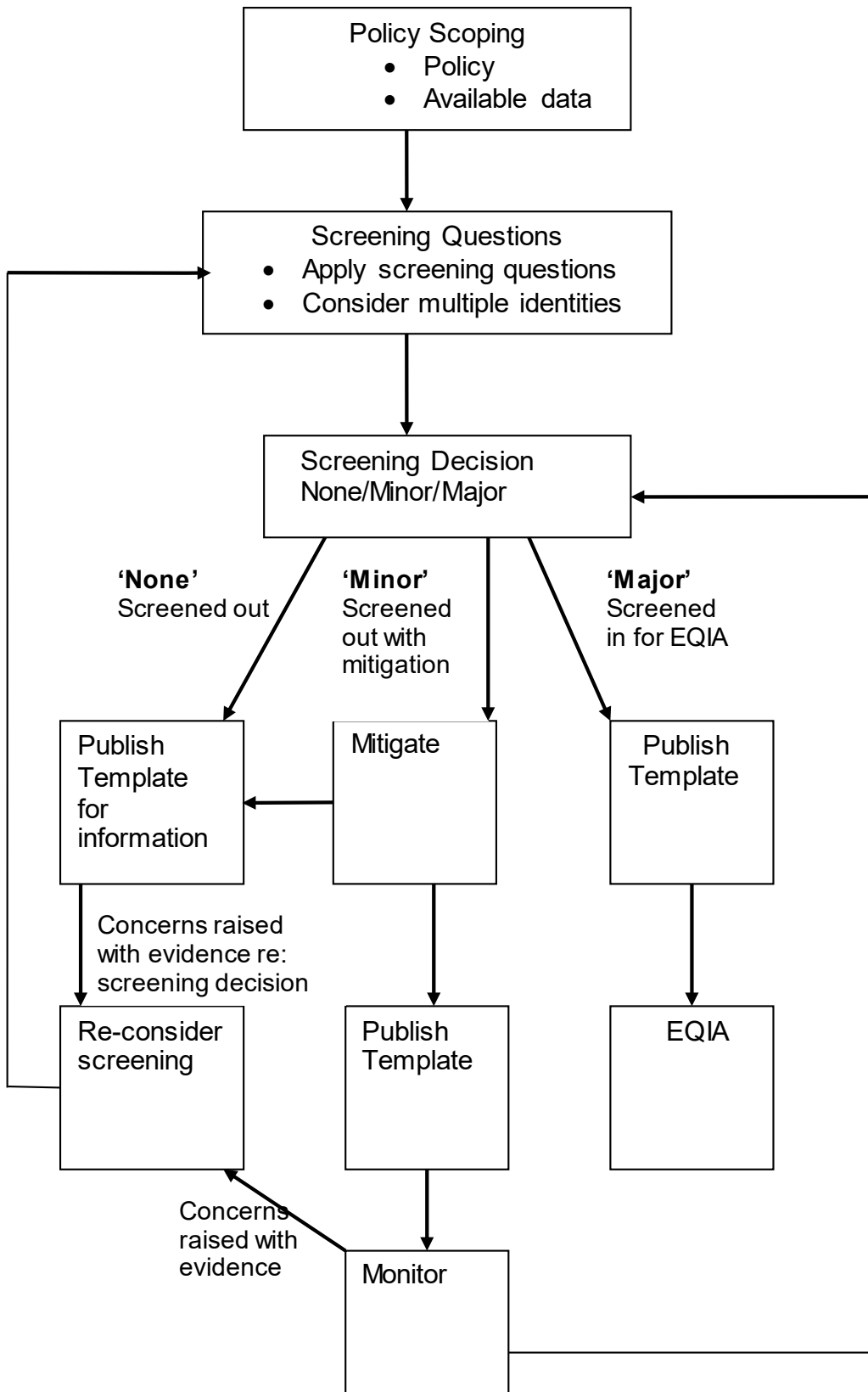
Part 2. Screening questions – asks about the extent of the likely impact of the policy on groups of people within each of the Section 75 categories. Details of the groups consulted and the level of assessment of the likely impact. This includes consideration of multiple identity and good relations issues.

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

<p>Name of the policy</p> <p>The Department for the Economy's Proposed RDEL Budget 2021/22 Internal Allocations.</p>
<p>Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?</p> <p>Revised</p>
<p>What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes)</p> <p>The 2021-22 Resource baseline for the Department for Economy (DfE) is the same as 2020-21, £805.4 million. £15.9m of additional non-baseline funding has been provided for specific initiatives, this was also received last year, so it is not an increase in funding. Therefore the development of the 2021-22 Resource Budget for the DfE is based on living within an allocation of £821.3 million with the aim of an effective budget being set and delivered. In addition the Department has been allocated £12.2 million for the Operation of the NI Protocol.</p> <p>The Draft 2021-22 budget position includes no allocation for Covid-19 response measures. The Executive are considering these allocations outside of the Draft Budget therefore this document has been completed excluding the impact of Covid-19 funding. The budget will need to be re-screened following Covid allocations if inescapable Covid pressures are not met.</p> <p>This is an extremely challenging time for the NI economy. 2021/22 will see the Northern Ireland economy reposition itself following EU Exit and the implementation of the NI Protocol, while dealing with the economic consequences of Covid-19. Continued and increased investment in the economy is vital to stimulate economic growth.</p>

The Draft Budget position is based on DfE living within its current baseline excluding Covid related expenditure.

To manage and deliver DfE's core activities alone within a flat cash baseline will be extremely challenging due to the high levels of funding already committed for 2021-22. £17.3m of non-Covid related inescapable pressures have been identified which is in effect represents a cut of 2% for DfE year on year.

This policy is intended to minimise the impact of these budget pressures by reducing areas that have not fully committed their baseline budget for 2021-22.

The largest pressure is Further Education pay and price inflation, the draft budget allocation is based on reprioritisation within the Skills and Education Group to ensure this inescapable pressure is met with the least impact.

Areas have been asked to continue to absorb their historic and future pay pressures within their existing allocation. Uncommitted expenditure has also been released across the department to meet committed pressures.

The table below outlines the allocations across DfE.

Draft RDEL Budget 2021/22 Internal Allocations	£m
Business Areas:	
Higher Education & Student Finance	312.7
Further Education	211.4
Business Engagement	117.7
Apprenticeship, Careers and Vocational Education	67.6
Tourism and Telecoms	33.6
Business and Employment Regulations	19.2
European Fund Management	12.6
Central Services	7.0
Finance	5.5
Skills Strategy	4.9
Heat Policy & Legislation	6.0
Corporate Governance	3.6
Strategic Policy	3.7
Energy Strategy	3.6
Insolvency Service	2.3
Analytical Services	1.2
Energy Markets and European Relations	0.6
Quality Improvement	0.3
Portfolio Management	0.1
EU Exit Funding	12.3
Unallocated Pay Pressures	2.7
Non Ring-fenced Resource DEL Draft Budget	828.6
Total RDEL Non Ring-fenced Baseline	821.3
Overcommitted to be managed in year	(7.3)
Funding for the Operation of the NI Protocol	12.2

These draft allocations are made to maximise departmental contribution to the draft Programme for Government outcomes which the Department leads on and departmental responsibilities:

DfE will contribute to the following Draft PfG 2021 Outcomes:

- Our children and young people have the best start in life;
- We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment;
- We all enjoy long, healthy, active, fulfilled lives;
- Everyone can reach their potential;
- Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon-neutral;
- We have a caring society that supports people throughout their lives; and
- People want to live, work, and visit here.

Responsibilities include:

- Wider economic policy, including specific areas like Energy, Tourism and Telecoms;
- The operation of a range of employment and skills programmes;
- Oversight and funding of the further and higher education sectors; various aspects of employment law; and
- The management and operation of various EU funding programmes.

DfE has undertaken Equality considerations on the consequences of living within the resource baseline budget, following confirmation of draft 2021-22 budget.

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?

If so, explain how.

The policy will impact on society as a whole across all Section 75 groups, and all groups will benefit from policies and programmes supported by the departmental budget 2021-22.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

The Department for the Economy's Finance Division through liaison with the Senior Management Team and Departmental Business Areas has provided draft RDEL budget allocations for the Minister to agree the policy, subject to equality considerations. Final RDEL budget allocations can then be made.

Who owns and who implements the policy?

The Department for the Economy owns this policy. Finance Division are responsible for implementation.

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

Non-statutory Training Organisations

Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

- what are they?

Covid 19 Allocations

- who owns them?

The Executive with the Department for the Economy contributing.

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.

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/information
Religious belief	The following Business Areas provided equality screenings for input to a departmental-level equality screening: Further Education, Higher Education, Apprenticeships, Careers and Vocational Education, Business and Employment Regulations, European Fund Management, European Exit Preparation and Transition, Skills Strategy, Corporate Governance, InvestNI and NI Screen. Influence upon all other Business Areas' by the proposed budget allocations for 2021/22 were considered immaterial.
Political opinion	As above
Racial group	As above
Age	As above
Marital status	As above
Sexual orientation	As above
Men and women generally	As above
Disability	As above
Dependants	As above

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

Section 75 category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
Religious belief	Higher Education. Funding is provided to the HE Institutions for Widening Access & Participation as a contribution towards support required by under-represented groups regardless of religious belief. Under-represented groups include but are not limited to students from low socio-economic backgrounds, care experienced, students with disabilities and adult returners.
Political opinion	Policies and programmes funded via the Department's 2021-22 budget, will support persons of all political opinion
Racial group	Policies and programmes funded via the Department's 2021-22 budget, will support persons of all political opinion
Age	Apprenticeships NI is accessible to participants primarily within the 16-24 age group. Funding for those aged 25 and over is set at 50% (and available for Economically Important Sectors only). The emphasis to target the 16-24 age group is intentional and is designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people e.g. Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) who are over-represented among unemployed people.
Marital status	Policies and programmes funded via the Department's 2021-22 budget, will support persons of all marital status.
Sexual orientation	Policies and programmes funded via the Department's 2021-22 budget, will support persons of all sexual orientation
Men and women generally	Policies and programmes funded via the Department's 2021-22 budget, will support persons of all Section 75 groups

<p>Disability</p>	<p>Higher Education. Disabled Students' Allowances help to remove any financial barriers to higher education by helping to meet the disability specific costs of undertaking higher education, this includes the provision of non-medical helpers, equipment and travel costs. Funding is also provided to the HE Institutions for Widening Access & Participation as a contribution towards support required by disadvantaged groups, including students with disabilities</p>
<p>Dependants</p>	<p>Higher Education. Student Support, including loans and grants is a statutory right under The Education (Student Support) (No, 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009, all eligible students can avail of their entitlement regardless of background. Also, student support grants are provided to assist with the additional cost of being a carer, these include: childcare grants; parent's learning allowance and adult dependants' grants.</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	None of the Department's Business Areas identified impacts upon persons of any particular religious belief.	None
Political opinion	None of the Department's Business Areas identified impacts upon persons of any particular political opinion.	None
Racial group	None of the Department's other Business Areas identified impacts upon persons of any particular racial groups.	None
Age	None of the Department's Business Areas identified impacts upon persons of any particular age groups.	None
Marital status	None of the Department's Business Areas identified impacts upon persons of any particular marital status group.	None
Sexual orientation	None of the Department's Business Areas identified impacts upon persons of any particular sexual orientation group.	None
Men and women generally	None of the Department's Business Areas identified impacts upon persons of any particular gender group.	None
Disability	None of the Department's Business Areas identified impacts upon persons of any particular disability group.	None

Dependants	None of the Department's other Business Areas identified impacts upon persons with any particular group of dependants	None
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2 Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories?		
Section 75 category	If Yes , provide details	If No , provide reasons
Religious belief		None of the Department's other Business Areas identified impacts upon persons with any particular group of dependants
Political opinion		As above
Racial group		As above
Age		As above
Marital status		As above
Sexual orientation		As above
Men and women generally		As above
Disability		As above
Dependants		As above

3 To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? minor/major/none		
Good relations category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact minor/major/none
Religious belief		None
Political opinion		None
Racial group		None

4 Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?		
Good relations category	If Yes , provide details	If No , provide reasons
Religious belief		No
Political opinion		No
Racial group		No

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).

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

No impacts upon multiple identity groups were identified by the Department's other Business Areas.
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Part 3. Screening decision

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

The decision is to 'screen-out' the policy, and an equality impact assessment is not considered necessary. Any minor adverse impacts upon Section 75 groups can be addressed by the routine in-year budgetary monitoring process, through reallocation and reprioritization of the budget.

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.

The routine in-year budgetary monitoring process will provide the Department with the opportunity to reallocate and reprioritize the budget as the financial year 2021-22 progresses. This will provide a means to address any minor adverse impacts upon Section 75 groups, and further mitigation or alternative policies are not considered necessary.

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

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.

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	N/A
Social need	N/A
Effect on people's daily lives	N/A
Relevance to a public authority's functions	N/A

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.

The formal 2021-22 in-year budget monitoring process (monitoring rounds) will represent an opportunity to collect relevant data as the Department and its NDPBs may seek to address any adverse impacts of the opening 2021-22 budget by bidding for additional funding. Monitoring will take into consideration feedback from individuals/groups representing the interests of people within the Section 75 Categories.

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

Screened by:	Position/Job Title	Date
Johanna Park	Grade 7	4/3/21
Approved by:		
Sharon Hetherington	Finance Director	4/3/21

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.

2021/22 Draft Resource Budget Summary Equality Screening Proforma

1. Department:

DEPARTMENT	DfE	£m
Department for the Economy	Non Ring-fenced Resource Departmental Expenditure Limit (RDEL)	821.3

2. Overview:

The Department for the Economy (DfE) was established in May 2016.

The vision, mission and strategic objectives developed for the Department are set out below. The strategic objectives have been designed to align with the Pillars for Growth outlined in the draft Industrial Strategy whilst also covering the Department's regulatory, governance and resource management responsibilities.

OUR VISION

A globally competitive economy that works for everyone.

OUR MISSION

To develop and implement agile policies and programmes which promote a competitive, sustainable and inclusive economy through investment in:

- skills
- economic infrastructure
- research and innovation; and
- business development.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Accelerate innovation and research.
2. Enhance education, skills and employability.
3. Drive inclusive, sustainable growth.
4. Succeed in global markets.
5. Build the best economic infrastructure.
6. Deliver a regulatory environment that optimises economic opportunities for business and commerce, while also protecting consumers and workers.
7. Ensure the Department has effective governance, including programme and project management arrangements, and manages its resources, both financial and staff.

Promoting Equality

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 regard to the desirability of promoting good relations across a range of categories outlined in the Act.

The Department's Equality Scheme (2016-21) sets out how we fulfil the Section 75 statutory duties, including our procedures to promote equality of opportunity.

DfE uses the tools of Screening and Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) to assess the likely impact of a policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations. In carrying out these assessments we relate them to the intended outcomes of the policy in question and also follow Equality Commission guidance:

- the guidance on screening, including the screening template, as detailed in the Commission's guidance '*Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for Public Authorities (April 2010)*'; and
- Guidance on undertaking an EQIA as detailed in the Commission's guidance '*Practical guidance on equality impact assessment (February 2005)*'.

The purpose of screening is to identify those policies and wider activities that are likely to have an impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations. Screening is completed at the earliest opportunity in the policy development/review process. Policies which we propose to adopt are subject to screening prior to implementation. More detailed strategies or policies that are to be put in place through a series of stages are screened at appropriate stages during implementation.

The lead role in the screening of a policy is taken by the policy decision maker who has the authority to make changes to that policy. However, screening also involves other relevant team members, for example, equality specialists, those who implement the policy and staff members from other relevant work areas. Where possible we include key stakeholders in the screening process.

All of our screenings and EQIAs are published on a quarterly basis on the Department's website, and a list of stakeholder consultees is routinely e-mailed to notify them of the publication.

The key equality challenges

Section 75 guidance issued by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland recommends that public authorities undertake an audit of inequalities to identify inequalities, across the nine Section 75 categories, relevant to its functions and also to inform the development of an action plan to promote equality of opportunity and good relations.

The audit of inequalities provides a strategic picture of inequalities, rather than considering inequalities on a policy by policy basis, through screening or equality impact assessments for example. Therefore, such a broad audit of inequalities may result in a strategic picture beyond the capability of a public authority to influence.

However, the audit provides an opportunity to take stock of those social and economic inequalities that provide the context for the activities of the public authority. This information may then be applied to consider how the Department may intervene through policies, programmes and services to reduce inequalities. The Department produced such an Audit of Inequalities and an associated Action Plan, which is derived from the strategic overview of inequalities. The following extract from the Equality Action Plan summarises the key equality challenges for the Department over the period 2016-21:

Equality Challenges

- Lack of essential skills is a barrier to employment and a richer quality of life;
- People with a disability have greater difficulty in accessing further and higher education;
- Under representation of disadvantaged groups in further education and training (e.g. young people at risk of becoming involved in paramilitarism);
- Under representation of disadvantaged groups in higher education (e.g. students from disadvantaged backgrounds and students with learning difficulties and disabilities);
- In April 2019 74% of participants in entry level training had a disability and 57% of participants in level 1 training had a disability.;
- The proportion of young people not in employment, education or training (as measured by the Labour Force Survey);
- Differentials of economic social inclusion among groups within the working age population;
- Under representation of people with disabilities in the workforce (Labour Force Survey results for Jan – Dec 2015 shows that 32% of working aged people with a disability were in employment – compared with 78% for those without a disability);
- Increase the numbers of women, people with disabilities and people from ethnic minorities applying for the Department’s public appointments; and
- Groups at a disadvantage in the labour market who are unemployed /economically inactive (e.g. young people aged 16-24 who are not in employment, education or training, people with a disability, females returning to the work place).
- The economic impact of COVID-19 is unprecedented. Huge economic impacts that might normally take months or years to unfold occurred within weeks as a result of lockdown and industry shutdowns. Analysis completed by DfE has suggested that the number of individuals claiming unemployment benefits could exceed 100,000 before the end of 2020 – levels not seen since the 1980s. ¹
- Work is ongoing across DfE and its ALBs to consider the interventions which will be required over the coming months and years to support the economy and deliver on the Rebuilding a Stronger Economy agenda. ¹

¹ Covid allocations are outstanding and DfEs ability to respond to impact of Covid 19 has not been considered in this document.

Key Spending Areas:

The Department is structured into five main business groups as follows:

1. EU Exit Preparation and Transition Group;
2. Economic Strategy Group;
3. Management Services and Regulation Group;
4. Skills and Education Group; and
5. Energy Group.

3. Impact of 2021/22 Draft RDEL Budget Allocation on the 9 Section 75 areas:

Draft RDEL budget allocations for 2021-22 is based on DfE living within existing baselines. Business Areas have completed full screening exercises to support the below summary.

Section 75 Group	Impact of 2020/21 Budget Allocations
Persons of a different religious belief	Negligible adverse differential impacts have been identified for this Section 75 group.
Persons of a different political opinion	Negligible adverse differential impacts have been identified for this Section 75 group.
Persons of a different racial group	Negligible adverse differential impacts have been identified for this Section 75 group.
Age	Negligible adverse differential impacts have been identified for this Section 75 group.
Persons of different marital status	Negligible adverse differential impacts have been identified for this Section 75 group.
Persons of a different sexual orientation	Negligible adverse differential impacts have been identified for this Section 75 group.
Gender	Negligible adverse differential impacts have been identified for this Section 75 group.
Persons with a disability	Negligible adverse differential impacts have been identified for this Section 75 group.
Persons with dependants and persons without	Negligible adverse differential impacts have been identified for this Section 75 group.

4. Additional Information:**Multiple Identities**

No impacts have been identified that are particular to people with multiple identities.

Additional information

DfE's proposed 2021/22 RDEL Baseline is £805.4 million, a flat line budget with no increase on 2020/21. Additional funding of £15.9m for specific initiatives has been allocated to DfE, the largest of these £12.3 million is ring-fenced for EU Exit Staff Pressures.

An additional amount of £12.2m has been allocated for the operation of the NI Protocol.

The normal budget monitoring process will afford DfE the opportunity to reallocate and reprioritise their budgets as the financial year progresses. Monitoring will take into consideration feedback from individuals/groups representing the interests of people within the Section 75 Categories.

The Department's policies promote equality of opportunity for Section 75 groupings. The overall Budget outcome for the Department will assist in promoting economic growth, employability, skills development, employment opportunities and tourism activity. It has therefore the potential to impact positively on each of the Section 75 Groupings.

The Minister has also had due regard to advice from the Equality Commission¹ which provides that:

- Section 75 does not prevent difficult decisions being taken, nor does it stop decisions which affect one group more than another; and
- It enables financial decisions to be made which are informed by evidence of the impact they are likely to have, where mitigation and alternative policies have been considered, and which are transparent and accountable.

The budget will need to be re-screened following Covid allocations if inescapable Covid pressures are not met.

¹Source: Equality Commission for Northern Ireland: "Budgets and Section 75: A Short Guide" June 2015