Department of Finance
An Roinn Airgeadais
www.finance-ni.gov.uk

DoF Screening template

Screening is the first of two methods by which the necessary level of "regard" is demonstrated as being paid to the statutory equality goal, as set out in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The DoF Equality Scheme commits us to screening our policies. This includes our strategies and plans, policies, legislative developments; and new ways of working such as – the introduction, change or end of an existing service, procedure, policy etc.

This screening template is designed to help business areas consider the likely equality and human rights impacts of their proposed decisions on different groups of customers, service users, staff and visitors.

Detailed information about the Section 75 equality duties and what they mean in practice is available on the Equality Commission's website: http://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/S75GuideforPublicAuthoritiesApril2010.pdf

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 accessible on the DoF website as soon as possible following completion and made available in alternative formats on request.

All Section 75 consultees should be advised of the screening exercise once the final policy decision has been taken.

The screening template has 4 sections to complete. These are:

Section A - details about the policy / decision that is being screened.

Section B - 4 key questions that require you to outline the likely impacts on equality groups, and all supporting evidence.

Section C - 4 key questions in relation to obligations under the Disability Discrimination Order and the Human Rights Act.

Section D - the formal record of the screening decision.

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SECTION A

Information about the policy

This 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 on a step-by-step basis.

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

Is this a new or revised policy?

New

a) Name of the policy

NI Civil Service Critical Roles Toolkit

b) Brief Description of the policy

The Civil Service Critical Roles Toolkit is an internal workforce planning and risk management tool designed to support Departments in identifying roles where vacancy, loss of capability or lack of resilience could create disproportionate risk to delivery, business continuity or organisational objectives. The Toolkit is supported by Guidance and Frequently Asked Questions to promote a consistent, evidence-based Civil Service approach while allowing Departments to apply it within their own operational context.

The Toolkit assesses roles and functions rather than individual employees. It is not intended to assess individual performance, capability, potential or conduct, or to determine individual employment decisions.

c) Aims of the policy/ Rationale behind the changes

The aim of the Toolkit is to strengthen Strategic Workforce Planning, organisational resilience and business continuity by helping Departments identify critical workforce dependencies, assess areas of vulnerability and consider appropriate workforce planning responses. The approach contributes

to delivery of Recommendation 5 of the Northern Ireland Audit Office report Leading and Resourcing the NICS by supporting Departments to identify critical roles, understand workforce vulnerabilities and strengthen organisational resilience.

d) Who will the policy affect?

The Toolkit will primarily affect Civil Service Departments and those involved in Strategic Workforce Planning, workforce risk management and related governance arrangements. Its outputs may inform departmental workforce planning activity, including succession planning, knowledge transfer and organisational resilience actions. The Toolkit assesses roles and functions rather than individual employees and does not assess individual performance, capability, potential or conduct.

e) Is this a NICS wide policy?

Yes. The Toolkit is intended to support a consistent approach across the Civil Service, while enabling Departments to apply it in the context of their own functions, workforce structures and service delivery responsibilities.

f) Who will implement the policy?

Civil Service Departments will be responsible for applying the Toolkit within their own operational context. People and Organisational Development, Strategic Workforce Planning Branch, is responsible for developing the Toolkit, Guidance and supporting materials and promoting a consistent approach across Departments.

g) Will this policy or revision address an existing inequality? **No**

If yes, please give details.

h) Will this policy or revision benefit any Section 75 categories? **No**

If yes, please give details.

i) Will this policy or revision have an adverse differential impact upon any of the Section 75 groupings? **No.**

If yes, please give details.

Section B

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? Set out all evidence below along with details of the different Section 75 groups you have met and / or consulted with to help inform your screening assessment. Please also provide details of priorities and needs identified for each Section 75 group.

- **Religious belief**

  No category-specific evidence has been identified. The Toolkit assesses the criticality of roles and associated workforce risks rather than the personal characteristics or performance of individual employees.

- **Political opinion**

  No category-specific evidence has been identified. The Toolkit assesses the criticality of roles and associated workforce risks rather than the personal characteristics or performance of individual employees.

- **Racial group**

  No category-specific evidence has been identified. The Toolkit assesses the criticality of roles and associated workforce risks rather than the personal characteristics or performance of individual employees.

- **Age**

  No category-specific evidence has been identified. The Toolkit assesses the criticality of roles and associated workforce risks rather than the personal characteristics or performance of individual employees.

- **Marital status**

  No category-specific evidence has been identified. The Toolkit assesses the criticality of roles and associated workforce risks rather than the personal characteristics or performance of individual employees.

- **Sexual orientation**

  No category-specific evidence has been identified. The Toolkit assesses the criticality of roles and associated workforce risks rather than the personal characteristics or performance of individual employees.

- **Men & women generally**

  No category-specific evidence has been identified. The Toolkit assesses the criticality of roles and associated workforce risks rather than the personal characteristics or performance of individual employees.

- **Disability**

  No category-specific evidence has been identified. The Toolkit assesses the criticality of roles and associated workforce risks rather than the personal characteristics or performance of individual employees.

- **Dependents**

  No category-specific evidence has been identified. The Toolkit assesses the criticality of roles and associated workforce risks rather than the personal characteristics or performance of individual employees.

If you have no evidence held, outline how you will obtain it:

The assessment has been informed by the purpose and intended application of the Civil Service Critical Roles Toolkit, supporting Guidance and FAQs; engagement with Departments during development; pilot activity undertaken within Land and Property Services and the Public Prosecution Service; consultation with TUS; and the related Rural Needs Impact Assessment and DPIA screening exercise. The materials were refined following Departmental engagement, piloting and consultation.

The Toolkit is an internal workforce planning and risk management tool which assesses roles and functions rather than individuals. It is not designed to assess individual performance, capability, potential or conduct, or to determine individual employment decisions.

At present, no category-specific evidence has been identified because the Toolkit assesses roles rather than individuals. Following implementation of new Finance and HR system (Integr8), it may be possible, subject to system functionality and available data, to review the characteristics of staff occupying roles designated as critical. This could help identify any unintended or emerging equality impacts and inform future review of the Toolkit.

Screening questions

There are 4 essential screening questions:

1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the nine Section 75 categories? (minor/major/none)

   None. No differential impact has been identified for any Section 75 category.

2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 categories? (yes/no)

   No. The Toolkit is a workforce planning and risk management tool which assesses roles and functions rather than individuals and does not assess individual performance, capability, potential or conduct.

3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact upon good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? (minor/major/none)

   None. No differential impact has been identified in relation to religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

4. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between these three groups? (yes/no)

   No. No specific opportunity to promote good relations has been identified within the scope of the Toolkit.

Are there likely impacts on Section 75 Categories?

- **Religious belief**:
  No differential impact has been identified in relation to religious belief.

- **Political opinion**:
  No differential impact has been identified in relation to political opinion.

- **Racial group**:
  No differential impact has been identified in relation to racial group.

- **Age**:
  No differential impact has been identified in relation to age.

- **Marital status**:
  No differential impact has been identified in relation to marital status.

- **Sexual orientation**:
  No differential impact has been identified in relation to sexual orientation.

- **Men and women generally**:
  No differential impact has been identified in relation to men and women generally.

- **Disability**:
  No differential impact has been identified in relation to disability.

- **Dependants**:
  No differential impact has been identified in relation to dependants.

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).*

No. The Department's assessment is that the Civil Service Critical Roles Toolkit is not likely to have an impact on people with multiple identities. The Toolkit is an internal workforce planning and risk management tool which assesses roles and functions rather than individuals, and no differential impact has been identified in relation to any Section 75 category.

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

Not applicable. No differential impact identified.

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.

Alternatively there may already be policies in place which would mitigate any adverse impact identified.

Mitigation measures proposed:

No adverse impact has been identified. No mitigation measures are considered necessary at this stage.

Section C

DoF also has legislative obligations to meet under the Disability Discrimination Order and the Human Rights Act . The following questions relate to these two areas.

Consideration of Disability Duties

Does the proposed policy / decision provide an opportunity for DoF to better **promote positive attitudes** towards disabled people?

No. The Department's assessment is that the Civil Service Critical Roles Toolkit is not likely to have an impact on disabled people. The Toolkit assesses roles and functions rather than individuals, and no differential impact in relation to disability has been identified.

Does the proposed policy / decision provide an opportunity to actively **increase the participation** by disabled people in public life?

No.

Consideration of Human Rights

The Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998 brings the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into UK law and it applies in N Ireland. Articles 3 and 4 are classified as "absolute" rights ie the State can never withhold or take away these rights. All others are either "qualified" or "limited". Further information is available via the following link

http://www.nicshumanrightsguide.com/

Indicate any potential ***adverse impacts*** that the policy / decision may have in relation to human rights issues.

		Adverse Impact (delete as appropriate)
Right to Life	**Article 2**	**No**
Prohibition of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment	**Article 3**	**No**
Prohibition of slavery and forced labour	**Article 4**	**No**
Right to liberty and security	**Article 5**	**No**
Right to a fair and public trial	**Article 6**	**No**
Right to no punishment without law	**Article 7**	**No**
Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence	**Article 8**	**No**
Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion	**Article 9**	**No**
Right to freedom of expression	**Article 10**	**No**
Right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association	**Article 11**	**No**
Right to marry and to found a family	**Article 12**	**No**

The prohibition of discrimination	**Article 14**	**No**
Protection of property and enjoyment of possessions	**Protocol 1 Article 1**	**No**
Right to education	**Protocol 1 Article 2**	**No**
Right to free and secret elections	**Protocol 1 Article 3**	**No**

Please indicate any ways which you consider the policy positively promotes human rights.

No specific human rights impacts have been identified.

Please explain any adverse impacts on human rights that you have identified.

Not applicable.

If you have identified any adverse impacts on human rights through this screening you must complete a Human Rights Impact Assessment: https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/human-rights-impact-assessment-proforma.

Monitoring Arrangements

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007): http://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/S75MonitoringGuidance2007.pdf

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.

Please detail proposed monitoring arrangements below:

No specific equality monitoring arrangements are proposed, as no differential impact has been identified. Implementation of the Toolkit will be kept under review through ongoing engagement with Departments and the Strategic Workforce Planning Community of Practice. Any equality issues identified through departmental application of the Toolkit will be considered as part of that ongoing review. Subject to the availability of suitable data through Integr8, periodic analysis of the characteristics of staff occupying roles designated as critical may be undertaken to identify any emerging or unintended equality impacts.

Section D - Formal Record of Screening Decision

Title of Proposed Policy / Decision being screened:

Civil Service Critical Roles Toolkit

I can confirm that the proposed policy / decision has been screened for (i) equality of opportunity, (ii) good relations disabilities duties and (iii) human rights issues

On the basis of the answers to the screening questions, I recommend that this policy / decision is –

Screened Out – No EQIA necessary (no impacts)

Provide a brief note to explain how this decision was reached:

The screening assessment has identified no likely adverse impact on equality of opportunity, good relations, disability duties or human rights. The Civil Service Critical Roles Toolkit is an internal workforce planning and risk management tool which assesses roles and functions rather than individuals. It does not assess individual performance, capability, potential or conduct. On that basis, the policy has been screened out and no EQIA is considered necessary.

Screening assessment completed by -

Name Nora Cunningham

Grade DP

Date 28/08/26

And approved by –

Name Olivia Martin

Grade Grade 5

Date 1/9/2026

Central Support Team Notified	(insert date)
Equality Contacts advised	(insert date)
Screening uploaded to DoF website	(insert date)