

Equality and Human Rights Screening Template

The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority is required to address the 4 questions below in relation to all its policies.

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

Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equality categories?

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

Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of a different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

As part of the audit trail, documentation needs to be made available for all policies and decisions examined for equality and human rights implications. The screening template is a pro forma to document consideration of each screening question.

For advice and support on screening contact:

Equality Unit
Business Services Organisation
2 Franklin Street
Belfast, BT2 8DQ
Tel: 028 9536 3961
Email: equality.unit@hscni.net

SCREENING TEMPLATE

See [Guidance Notes](#) for further information on the ‘why’ ‘what’ ‘when’, and ‘who’ in relation to screening, for background information on the relevant legislation and for help in answering the questions on this template (follow the links).

(1) INFORMATION ABOUT THE POLICY OR DECISION

1.1 Title of policy or decision

Safeguarding Policy

1.2 Description of policy or decision

RQIA provides independent assurance about the quality, safety and availability of Health and Social Care (HSC) services, including independent sector services in Northern Ireland, while encouraging continuous improvements in these services and assisting with safeguarding the rights of services users.

This policy sets out RQIA’s commitment and responsibilities to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of Adults and Children.

The policy outlines how RQIA will work to recognise and respond appropriately to concerns and will ensure safeguarding is embedded in all aspects of their work.

1.3 Main stakeholders affected (internal and external)

Internal Stakeholders

- RQIA Employees
- RQIA Chief Executive and Senior Management Team
- RQIA Chair and Authority Members
- RQIA Committees and Groups

External Stakeholders

- Current Service Users and their relatives
- Providers
- HSC Trusts and health and social care organisations
- Voluntary sector
- Trade Unions
- DoH

1.4 Other policies or decisions with a bearing on this policy or decision

- **What are they?**

1. Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership
2. Adult Safeguarding Operational Procedures
3. Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland
4. The Health and Personal Social Services (Quality, Improvement and Regulation) (Northern Ireland) Order 2003
5. The Mental Health (Northern Ireland) Order 1986
6. Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) Procedures Manual

- **Who owns them?**

1. DoH
2. NI Adult Safeguarding Partnership
3. DoH
4. RQIA
5. DoH
6. SBNI

(2) CONSIDERATION OF EQUALITY AND GOOD RELATIONS ISSUES AND EVIDENCE USED

2.1 Data Gathering

What information did you use to inform this equality screening? For example, previous consultations, statistics, research, Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs), complaints. Provide details of how you involved stakeholders, views of colleagues, service users, staff side or other stakeholders.

Other sources of equality data include:

- Section 75 RQIA equality staff profile (September 2025)
- Census 2021 data for the General Population as a whole (NI)
<https://hscni.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/HSCNI-BSO-EqualityUnit/ES6uqr0um6tPtsOdTeHxqBgBVz5ABAaNXkO3JIVtQGI2Eq?e=9yY5mG>
- Department for Communities 2019/2020

2.2 Quantitative Data

Who is affected by the policy or decision? Please provide a statistical profile. Note if policy affects both staff and service users, please provide profile for both.

Category	What is the makeup of the affected group? (%) Are there any issue or problems? For example, a lower uptake that needs to be addressed or greater involvement of a particular group?																				
Gender	<p>RQIA staff data as of September 2025:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Male</td> <td>25.00%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Female</td> <td>75.00%</td> </tr> </table> <p>The Census 2021 data for the General Population as a whole (NI) demonstrated the proportion of females in 2021 was 50.8% (967,043) and of males was 49.2% (936,132) (total population of 1,903,175), this data hence demonstrates under representation of male employees in RQIA which requires future consideration. GIRES 2014 estimate the number of gender nonconforming employees is not yet considered but needs to be in the future, when this data is captured within Section 75.</p>	Male	25.00%	Female	75.00%																
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Female	75.00%																				
Age	<p>RQIA staff data as of September 2025:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>16-24</td> <td>0.56%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25-29</td> <td>4.44%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>30-34</td> <td>6.11%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>35-39</td> <td>10.56%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>40-44</td> <td>11.11%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>45-49</td> <td>8.89%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>50-54</td> <td>18.89%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>55-59</td> <td>16.11%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>60-64</td> <td>16.67%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>>=65</td> <td>6.67%</td> </tr> </table>	16-24	0.56%	25-29	4.44%	30-34	6.11%	35-39	10.56%	40-44	11.11%	45-49	8.89%	50-54	18.89%	55-59	16.11%	60-64	16.67%	>=65	6.67%
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Community Background	<p>RQIA staff data as of September 2025:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Perceived Protestant</td> <td>0.56%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Protestant</td> <td>30.00%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Perceived Roman Catholic</td> <td>1.11%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Roman Catholic</td> <td>35.56%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Neither</td> <td>2.78%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Perceived Neither</td> <td>0.00%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Not assigned</td> <td>30.00%</td> </tr> </table>	Perceived Protestant	0.56%	Protestant	30.00%	Perceived Roman Catholic	1.11%	Roman Catholic	35.56%	Neither	2.78%	Perceived Neither	0.00%	Not assigned	30.00%						
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Political Opinion	RQIA staff data as of September 2025:	
	Broadly Nationalist	4.44%
	Other	2.78%
	Broadly Unionist	2.22%
	Not assigned	81.67%
	Do not wish to answer	8.89%
Marital Status	RQIA staff data as of September 2025:	
	Divorced	2.78%
	Mar/CP	32.78%
	Other	0.00%
	Separated	0.00%
	Single	7.22%
	Unknown	56.67%
	Widow/R	0.00%
	Not assigned	0.56%
Disability	RQIA staff data as of September 2025:	
	No	34.44%
	Not assigned	63.89%
	Yes	1.67%
Dependent Status	RQIA staff data as of September 2025:	
	Yes	13.89%
	Not assigned	80.00%
	No	6.11%
Ethnicity	RQIA staff data as of September 2025:	
	Not assigned	80.00%
	White	20.00%
	Other	0.00%
	Black African	0.00%
	Indian	0.00%
	Chinese	0.00%
Sexual Orientation	RQIA staff data as of September 2025:	
	Do not wish to answer	0.56%
	Not assigned	80.56%
	Opposite sex	16.67%
	Both Sexes	0.00%

	Same sex	2.22%
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2.2 Qualitative Data

What are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the categories in relation to this policy or decision and what equality issues emerge from this? Note if policy affects both staff and service users, please discuss issues for both. Also give consideration to multiple identities (such as single parents for example)

Category	Needs and Experiences
Religion	The majority of RQIA staff have not recorded their religion. We will encourage staff disclosure through awareness and assurance of confidentiality to improve data quality.
Political Opinion	The majority of RQIA staff have not recorded a political opinion. We will encourage staff disclosure through awareness and assurance of confidentiality to improve data quality.
Marital Status	The majority of RQIA staff have not recorded their marital status. We will encourage staff disclosure through awareness and assurance of confidentiality to improve data quality.
Dependent Status	It is possible that RQIA staff members may have children and/or a loved one for whom they provide(d) care for.
Disability	RQIA is committed to ensuring that all individuals, including those with disabilities, can access information relevant to this policy. Where required, information will be provided in an accessible and/or alternative format compatible with assistive technologies, upon request. This approach supports equality of access and inclusion throughout the development, approval, implementation, and review of policies.
Ethnicity	It is recognised that the RQIA staff profile does not reflect the broader general population regarding ethnicity.
Sexual Orientation	It is recognised that the RQIA staff profile does not reflect the broader general population regarding sexual orientation.

Gender	It is recognised that the RQIA staff profile does not reflect the broader general population regarding gender as three quarters of our staff are female. We currently have no information regarding gender identity within RQIA.
Age	Within the general population, 67% are over 40 years of age, within RQIA 78%of staff are over 40 years of age.

2.3 Multiple Identities

Are there any potential impacts of the policy or decision on people with multiple identities? For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people.

As per section 2.2

2.4 Making Changes

Based on the equality issues you identified in 2.2, what changes did you make or do you intend to make in relation to the policy or decision in order to promote equality of opportunity?

<i>In developing the policy or decision what did you do or change to address the equality issues you identified?</i>	<i>What do you intend to do in future to address the equality issues you identified?</i>
<p>RQIA accessible formats policy outlines how those developing information should consider alternative formats, and how information and publications can be requested in alternative formats.</p> <p>RQIA will consider provision of alternative/accessible formats on request to meet the needs of people with a disability or where English is not their first language who may need information in an assessable format.</p> <p>RQIA is also able to avail of the regional (HSCNI) interpreting contract.</p>	<p>Consideration will be given to converting this policy into a variety of formats to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy Read • Audio • Brail • Accessible PDF • Font size • Variety of languages

2.5 Good Relations

What changes to the policy or decision – if any – or what additional measures would you suggest to ensure that it promotes good relations? (refer to guidance notes for guidance on impact)

<i>Group</i>	<i>Impact</i>	<i>Suggestions</i>
As per section 2.4	As per section 2.4	As per section 2.4

(3) SHOULD THE POLICY OR DECISION BE SUBJECT TO A FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT?

A full equality impact assessment (EQIA) is usually confined to those policies or decisions considered to have major implications for equality of opportunity.

How would you categorise the impacts of this decision or policy? (refer to guidance notes for guidance on impact)

Do you consider that this policy or decision needs to be subjected to a full equality impact assessment?

Please tick:

Major impact	<input type="checkbox"/>
Minor impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No further impact	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please tick:

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please give reasons for your decisions.

It is not thought that subjecting the Policy to an EQIA will further identify opportunities to promote equality of opportunity which have already been outlined at sections 2.2, 2.4 and 2.5.

RQIA recognises the need to consider the impact on Section 75 groups of this Policy and procedure in the course of its work.

Due consideration has been given to those individuals within Section 75, of the Northern Ireland Act (1998), particularly those individuals from ethnically diverse groups, including age, sexual orientation, religion, political opinion, disability, gender, marital status, dependent status and ethnicity

(4) CONSIDERATION OF DISABILITY DUTIES

4.1 In what ways does the policy or decision encourage disabled people to participate in public life and what else could you do to do so?

<i>How does the policy or decision currently encourage disabled people to participate in public life?</i>	<i>What else could you do to encourage disabled people to participate in public life?</i>
N/A	N/A

4.2 In what ways does the policy or decision promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and what else could you do to do so?

<i>How does the policy or decision currently promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?</i>	<i>What else could you do to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?</i>
N/A	N/A

(5) CONSIDERATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

5.1 Does the policy or decision affect anyone's Human Rights?
Complete for each of the articles

ARTICLE	Yes/No
Article 2 – Right to life	No
Article 3 – Right to freedom from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment	No
Article 4 – Right to freedom from slavery, servitude & forced or compulsory labour	No
Article 5 – Right to liberty & security of person	No
Article 6 – Right to a fair & public trial within a reasonable time	No
Article 7 – Right to freedom from retrospective criminal law	No

& no punishment without law	
Article 8 – Right to respect for private & family life, home and correspondence	No
Article 9 – Right to freedom of thought, conscience & religion	No
Article 10 – Right to freedom of expression	No
Article 11 – Right to freedom of assembly & association	No
Article 12 – Right to marry & found a family	No
Article 14 – Prohibition of discrimination in the enjoyment of the convention rights	No
1 st protocol Article 1 – Right to a peaceful enjoyment of possessions & protection of property	No
1 st protocol Article 2 – Right of access to education	No

*If you have answered no to all of the above, please move on to **Question 6** on monitoring*

5.2 If you have answered yes to any of the Articles in 5.1, does the policy or decision interfere with any of these rights? If so, what is the interference and who does it impact upon?

List the Article Number	Interfered with? Yes/No	What is the interference and who does it impact upon?	Is it legal? Yes/No

** It is important to speak to your line manager on this and if necessary seek legal opinion to clarify this*

5.3 Outline any actions which could be taken to promote or raise awareness of human rights or to ensure compliance with the legislation in relation to the policy or decision.

All staff attend Human Rights Training, with recent RQIA guidance issued (2026)
Human Rights are promoted by having transparent and accessible policies in place.

(6) MONITORING

6.1 What data will you collect in the future in order to monitor the effect of the policy or decision on any of the categories (for equality of opportunity and good relations, disability duties and human rights?)

Equality & Good Relations	Disability Duties	Human Rights
RQIA will commit to encouraging all staff to complete equality monitoring data on an ongoing basis.	RQIA will commit to encouraging the completion of equality monitoring data on an ongoing basis.	RQIA will commit to encouraging the completion of equality monitoring data on an ongoing basis.

Approved Lead Officer: Karen Harvey

Position: Professional Advisor (Social Work)

Date: 16/04/26

Policy/Decision Screened by: Karen Harvey

Please note that having completed the screening you are required by statute to publish the completed screening template, as per your organisation’s equality scheme. If a consultee, including the Equality Commission, raises a concern about a screening decision based on supporting evidence, you will need to review the screening decision.

Please forward completed template to: Equality.Unit@hscni.net

Any request for the document in another format or language will be considered.
Please contact the Equality Unit:

Equality Unit equality.unit@hscni.net