

Equality and Human Rights Screening Template

The RQIA 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 information (evidence, data, research etc.) on the Section 75 equality groups see the Equality and Human Rights Information Bank on the BSO website: [BSO Equality Unit - Home](#)

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.

(1) INFORMATION ABOUT THE POLICY OR DECISION

1.1 Title of policy or decision

RQIA Information Governance Suite of policies

1.2 Description of policy or decision

- **what is it trying to achieve? (aims and objectives)**
- **how will this be achieved? (key elements)**
- **what are the key constraints? (for example financial, legislative or other)**

RQIA's suite of IG policies set out how RQIA should manage and secure its information in line with the requirements of data protection legislation, and in line with the requirements set out in freedom of information / environmental information regulations.

These policies outline for staff a consistent procedure on how information should be handled.

Relevant legislation includes

- The Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation
- The Access to Health Records (Northern Ireland) 1993
- The Freedom of Information Act 2000
- The Environmental Information Regulations 2004
- The Common Law Duty of Confidentiality
- The Caldicott Guardian Manual 2010
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Public Records Act (Northern Ireland) 1923
- The Disposal of Documents Order 1925
- The Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015
- The Electronic Communications Act 2000
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- The Computer Misuse Act 1990
- The Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- The Investigatory Powers Act 2016
- Department of Health (DoH) Good Management Good Records (GMGR)
- Health and Social Care (HSC) Code of Conduct
- DoH Code of Practice on Protecting the Confidentiality of Service User Information

- DoH Information Management Assurance Checklist (IMAC)
- Guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)
- The Data Use and Access Act 2025

1.3 Main stakeholders affected (internal and external)

For example staff, actual or potential service users, other public sector organisations, voluntary and community groups, trade unions or professional organisations or private sector organisations or others

- (i) Members of the Public – Service Users/Former Service Users
- (ii) Staff
- (iii) Community, Voluntary Organisations, or Politicians (MLAs, MPs, Councillors), acting as advocates

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

- **what are they?**
- **who owns them?**

These policies are reviews of existing policies, based on relevant legislation and best practice guidance. These policies are derived from BSO's Regional Information Governance Policies and updated by RQIA's PDG.

(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:

- Census 2021 and 2011 data published by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA).
- Section 75 equality profile of our staff (Sept 2024)
- Internal directorate/team meetings, Executive Management Team (EMT) and RQIA Authority engagement.
- Human Resources statistics and workforce data for RQIA.
- McBride, R.S. (2011): Healthcare Issues for Transgender People Living in Northern Ireland. Belfast.
- Equality Commission NI, 2006.
- <http://www.carersuk.org/northernireland/news-ni/facts-and-figures>
- http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/stats-public-health.htm - Health Survey NI 2012-13.
- Research Reports including from GIRES (Gender Identity Research and Education Society) and [Getting and staying in work - LLTI 2001 - Research Report \(nisra.gov.uk\)](#)
- Previous screening and equality impact assessment analysis where equality issues were highlighted.

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. Also give consideration to multiple identities.

Category	<i>What is the makeup of the affected group? (%) Are there any issues or problems? For example, a lower uptake that needs to be addressed or greater involvement of a particular group?</i>
Gender	General Population Profile Mid-year population estimate (2022; published)

The size of the resident population in Northern Ireland at 30 June 2022 was 1,910,543.

Just over half (50.8 per cent) of the population were female, with 970,596 females compared to 939,947 males.

**From The Gender Identity Research and Education Society (GIRES):
2021 Census**

For the first time 2021 UK Census asked people aged over 16:

**“Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?”
45.7 million (94.0% of the population aged 16 years and over) answered
the question.**

45.4 million (93.5%) answered “Yes” and 262,000 (0.5%) answered “No”.

2.9 million (6.0%) did not answer the question.

Of the 262,000 people (0.5%) who answered “No”, indicating that their gender identity was different from their sex registered at birth:

**118,000 (0.24%) answered “No” but did not provide any further
information**

48,000 (0.10%) identified as a trans man

48,000 (0.10%) identified as a trans woman

30,000 (0.06%) identified as non-binary

18,000 (0.04%) wrote in a different gender identity

Data from other sources indicate that the Census figures may understate the size of the trans and gender diverse population.

Internal surveys conducted in 2017 by the Solicitors Regulatory Authority and the BBC indicated **2%**.

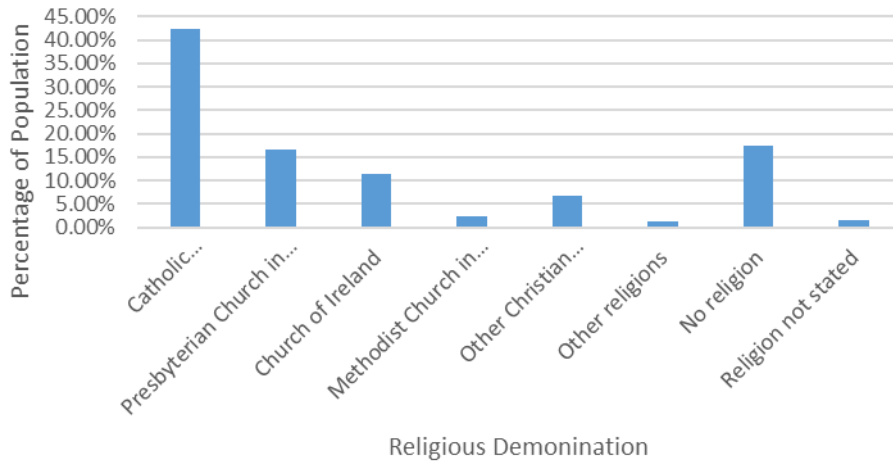
An Ipsos survey carried out in 2022 resulted in **3.1%** of people saying they were trans, non-binary, gender queer or gender fluid, Agender or another gender that was not male or female.

RQIA staff data as of September 2025:

Male	25.00%
Female	75.00%

Age	General population Age profile of the NI population (Census 2021): Age band Population Percentage:																									
	<table border="1"> <tr><td>0-14</td><td>365,200</td><td>19.2%</td></tr> <tr><td>15-64</td><td>1,211,500</td><td>63.7%</td></tr> <tr><td>15-39</td><td>594,400</td><td>31.2%</td></tr> <tr><td>40-64</td><td>617,100</td><td>32.4%</td></tr> <tr><td>65+</td><td>326,500</td><td>17.2%</td></tr> <tr><td>65-84</td><td>287,100</td><td>15.1%</td></tr> <tr><td>85+</td><td>39,400</td><td>2.1%</td></tr> <tr><td>All ages</td><td>1,903,200</td><td>100%</td></tr> </table>	0-14	365,200	19.2%	15-64	1,211,500	63.7%	15-39	594,400	31.2%	40-64	617,100	32.4%	65+	326,500	17.2%	65-84	287,100	15.1%	85+	39,400	2.1%	All ages	1,903,200	100%	
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Community Background	General population Census 2021 Current Religion:																									
	'no religion'	17.4%																								
	'religion not stated'	1.6%																								
	Catholic	42.3%																								
	Presbyterian Church in Ireland	16.6%																								
	Church of Ireland	11.5%																								
	Methodist	2.4%																								
	Other Christian denominations	6.9%																								
	Other non-Christian Religions	1.3%																								

Census Results 2021 - Religious Denomination



RQIA staff data as of December 2024:

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%

Political Opinion

General population Census 2021

National identity (nationality based) (Number – Percentage)

- British 814,600 42.8%
- Irish 634,000 33.3%
- Northern Irish 598,800 31.5%
- English 16,800 0.9%
- Scottish 10,200 0.5%
- Welsh 2,000 0.1%
- Other national identities 113,400 6.0%

National identity (person based) (Number – Percentage)

- British only 606,300 31.9%
- Irish only 554,400 29.1%
- Northern Irish only 376,400 19.8%

- British & Northern Irish only 151,300 8.0%
- Irish & Northern Irish only 33,600 1.8%
- British, Irish & Northern Irish only 28,100 1.5%
- British & Irish only 11,800 0.6%
- English only/Scottish only/Welsh only 16,200 0.9%
- Other combination of British/Irish/Northern Irish/English/Scottish/Welsh only 11,700 0.6%
- Other national identities 113,400 6.0%
- Polish only 23,900 1.3%
- Lithuanian only 11,900 0.6%
- Romanian only 7,100 0.4%
- Portuguese only 6,900 0.4%
- Bulgarian only 4,300 0.2%
- Indian only 4,100 0.2%
- Other national identity with one or more of British/Irish/Northern Irish/English/Scottish/Welsh only 12,700 0.7%
- Other national identities 42,600 2.2%
- All usual residents 1,903,200 100.0%

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

General population

Census 2021:

- 38.1% single (never married/civil partnered)
- 45.6% married
- 0.2% in a civil partnership
- 3.8% separated
- 6.0% divorced
- 6.4% widowed

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%

Dependent

General population

<p>Status</p>	<p>Census 2021</p> <p>Table 17: Provision of unpaid care (‘Provision of unpaid care’ covers looking after, giving help or support to anyone because they have long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses, or problems related to old age. It excludes any activities carried out in paid employment.)</p> <p>Northern Ireland All usual residents aged 5 and over 1,789,348 Percentage of usual residents aged 5 and over who provide:</p> <p>No unpaid care 87.58% 1-19 hours’ unpaid care per week 5.63% 20-34 hours’ unpaid care per week 1.38% 35-49 hours’ unpaid care per week 1.57% 50+ hours unpaid care per week 3.84%</p> <p>Carers UK (State of Caring 2025 report)</p> <p>There are over 232,000 people providing some form of unpaid care for a sick or disabled family member or friend in Northern Ireland (Carers UK (2025)..)</p> <p>Of those participating in the survey...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 82% identified as female and 18% identified as male. • 3% are aged 25-34, 64% are aged 35-64, 33% are aged 65+. • 30% have a disability. • 90% described themselves as White British <p>RQIA staff data as of September 2025:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="331 1346 847 1464"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>13.89%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Not assigned</td> <td>80.00%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>6.11%</td> </tr> </table>	Yes	13.89%	Not assigned	80.00%	No	6.11%
Yes	13.89%						
Not assigned	80.00%						
No	6.11%						
<p>Disability</p>	<p>General population</p> <p>UK disability statistics: Prevalence and life experiences</p> <p>An estimated 16.1 million people in the UK had a disability in 2022/23. This represents 24% of the total population. The prevalence of disability rises with age: around 11% of children were disabled, compared with 23% of working age adults and 45% of adults over State Pension age.</p> <p>The prevalence of disability rises with age: in 2022/23 around 11% of children in the UK were disabled, compared with 23% of working-age adults and 45% of adults over State Pension age. 3 Two thirds (67%) of people aged 85 or over reported a disability. Census 2021</p> <p>There are more disabled women than men, as illustrated by the table below, which</p>						

shows disability prevalence by age and gender over the three-year period 2020/21 to 2022/23. The only exception is among children under the age of 15

Disability prevalence by age and gender

UK: 2020/21 – 2022/23

Age	Male respondents		Female respondents	
	Number (millions)	% male population	Number (millions)	% female population
0 to 14	0.7	12%	0.3	5%
15 to 24	0.5	14%	0.7	19%
25 to 44	1.2	14%	1.7	20%
45 to 64	2.1	25%	2.7	30%
65 to 79	1.7	39%	1.9	40%
80+	0.7	54%	1.1	61%
Total	7.0	21%	8.5	25%

Note: Data is presented as an average over three years as there are small sample sizes for some age groups by gender. Analysis is based on rounded data, meaning totals may not sum.

The breakdown of the various long-term conditions as outlined in the 2021 Census is:

Type of long-term condition	Percentage of population with condition %
Deafness or partial hearing loss	5.75
Blindness or partial sight loss	1.78
Mobility of Dexterity Difficulty that requires wheelchair use	1.48
Mobility of Dexterity Difficulty that limits basic physical activities	10.91
Intellectual or learning disability	0.89
Learning difficulty	3.5
Autism or Asperger syndrome	1.86
An emotional, psychological or mental health condition	8.68
Frequent periods of confusion or memory loss	1.99
Long – term pain or discomfort.	11.58
Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing	10.29
Other condition	8.81

RQIA staff data as of September 2025:

No	34.44%
Not assigned	63.89%
Yes	1.67%

Ethnicity

General population

In the general population the 2021 Census indicated that 3.4% (65,600) of the usual resident population belonged to minority ethnic groups.

Ethnic Group

Ethnic Group Number Percentage

White 1,837,600 96.6%
Minority Ethnic Group 65,600 3.4%
Black 11,000 0.6%
Indian 9,900 0.5%
Chinese 9,500 0.5%
Filipino 4,500 0.2%
Irish Traveller 2,600 0.1%
Arab 1,800 0.1%
Pakistani 1,600 0.1%
Roma 1,500 0.1%
Mixed Ethnicities 14,400 0.8%
Other Asian 5,200 0.3%
Other Ethnicities 3,600 0.2%
All usual residents 1,903,200 100.0%

Country of birth

Country of birth Number Percentage

Northern Ireland 1,646,300 86.5%
Great Britain 92,300 4.8%
England 72,900 3.8%
Scotland 16,500 0.9%
Wales 2,800 0.2%
Republic of Ireland 40,400 2.1%
Outside United Kingdom and Ireland 124,300 6.5%
Europe (other EU countries) 67,500 3.5%
Europe (other non-EU countries) 3,700 0.2%
Other Countries in the World 53,100 2.8%
All usual residents 1,903,200 100.0%

Main language of usual residents aged 3 and over

Main language Number Percentage

English 1,751,500 95.4%
Main language not English 85,100 4.6%
Polish 20,100 1.1%

	<p>Lithuanian 9,000 0.5% Irish 6,000 0.3% Romanian 5,600 0.3% Portuguese 5,000 0.3% Arabic 3,600 0.2% Bulgarian 3,600 0.2% Other languages 32,200 1.8% All usual residents aged 3 and over 1,836,600 100.0%</p> <p>RQIA staff data as of September 2025:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="328 629 847 869"> <tr><td>Not assigned</td><td>80.00%</td></tr> <tr><td>White</td><td>20.00%</td></tr> <tr><td>Other</td><td>0.00%</td></tr> <tr><td>Black African</td><td>0.00%</td></tr> <tr><td>Indian</td><td>0.00%</td></tr> <tr><td>Chinese</td><td>0.00%</td></tr> </table> <p>We recognise that within the category of 'White' a range of nationalities are represented. This is important in the context of specific needs (see section 2.4 below).</p>	Not assigned	80.00%	White	20.00%	Other	0.00%	Black African	0.00%	Indian	0.00%	Chinese	0.00%
Not assigned	80.00%												
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Indian	0.00%												
Chinese	0.00%												
Sexual Orientation	<p>General population [Please note: Census 2021 data relating to sexual orientation has not yet been released (as of the date of this screening)]</p> <p>RQIA staff data as of December 2024:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="328 1339 847 1541"> <tr><td>Do not wish to answer</td><td>0.56%</td></tr> <tr><td>Not assigned</td><td>80.56%</td></tr> <tr><td>Opposite sex</td><td>16.67%</td></tr> <tr><td>Both Sexes</td><td>0.00%</td></tr> <tr><td>same sex</td><td>2.22%</td></tr> </table>	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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2.3 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
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 have no information regarding gender identity within RQIA.
Age	Within the general population 67% are over 40 years of age. Within RQIA 80% of staff are over 40 years of age.
Religion	There is no known impact.
Political Opinion	The majority of RQIA staff have not recorded a political opinion. There is no known impact.
Marital Status	The majority of RQIA staff have not recorded a marital status. There is no known impact.
Dependent Status	It is possible that staff members may have a loved one for whom they provide(d) care who is now in a hospital or care facility.
Disability	It is possible that staff members may have a disability which may require them to avail of services which RQIA inspect.
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.

2.4 Making Changes

Based on the equality issues you identified in 2.2 and 2.3, 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's 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 formats on request to meet the needs of people with a disability who may need information in an accessible format</p>	<p>Consideration will be given to converting these policies into a variety of formats to include; easy read; audio; brail, accessible PDF and a variety of languages.</p>

<p>RQIA will also consider the need to provide some support to those wishing to avail of these policies, and/or signpost them to an advocacy services such as the Patient Client Council, who could assist them through the complaint process.</p> <p>RQIA is also able to avail of the regional (HSCNI) interpreting contract.</p>	
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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)

Group	Impact	Suggestions
Religion	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Political Opinion	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Ethnicity	Not Applicable	Consideration will be given to converting these policies into a variety of formats to include; easy read; audio; brail, accessible PDF and a variety of languages.

(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)

Please tick:

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

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

Please tick:

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

Please give reasons for your decisions.

RQIA's Core Purpose is to secure and to improve the safety and quality of health and social care services in Northern Ireland.

RQIA's suite of IG Policies is a fundamental aspect of the above. Due consideration has been given to those individuals within Section 75, of the Northern Ireland Act (1998), particularly those from a different ethnic background and those who have disabilities.

(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>
Not Applicable	Not Applicable

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>
Not Applicable	Not Applicable

(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 punishment without law	No
Article 8 – Right to respect for private & family life, home and correspondence.	Yes
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?	Does this raise legal issues?*
			Yes/No
Article 8	Yes	<p>Any concerns raised in regard to applicable legislation will need to be investigated, and this necessitates sharing correspondence (etc.) with relevant teams in RQIA, as well as potentially with other organisations.</p> <p>Similarly, any requests for information will need to be responded to.</p>	<p>No. RQIA has a clear lawful basis under article 6 and/or 9 of the UK GDPR to process personal data. RQIA also has a legal duty, as documented in law and its own policies, to safeguard and correctly process personal data.</p> <p>It could be argued that RQIA's stringent approach to data protection actually enhances the rights as set out in Article 8.</p>

** 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.

Human rights are promoted by having a 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
<p>RQIA currently monitors the level and type of requests made. As requests are motive and applicant blind, the DPO’s view is that there is little scope – or right – for RQIA to collect additional information in this regard.</p> <p>RQIA will monitor such requests through the Office of the Chair and Chief Executive and maintain a log.</p>	<p>Any concerns raised regarding issues in accessing the suite of policies will be considered by the IG Office.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>

Aaron Addidle

Approved Lead Officer: _____

Position: Business Support Officer

Date: 9 October 2025

Policy/Decision Screened by: _____

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, BSO, 2nd Floor, James House, 2-4 Cromac Avenue, Belfast, BT7
2JA.