

Five Year Review Reporting Template

EQUALITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Public Authority Five Year Review Report

This report template includes a number of self assessment questions under the twelve key elements of an equality scheme. Please enter information at the relevant part of each Section in the template and ensure that it is submitted to the Commission electronically (by completing this template) **and** in writing, with a signed cover letter from the Chief Executive or, in his/her absence, the Deputy Chief Executive (or equivalent).

Name of public authority (Enter details below)

Invest NI

Equality Officer name and contact details (Enter details below)

Joanne Stewart
Strategic Management and Planning
Invest NI
3rd Floor, Bedford Square
Bedford Street
Belfast BT2 7ES

Tel: 028 9069 8273
E-Mail: equality@investni.com

Executive Summary

Please provide some main conclusions in terms of:

a) To what extent has your public authority's approved scheme provided a workable basis for mainstreaming the need to promote equality of opportunity and good relations into policy-making over the past five years?

Invest Northern Ireland (Invest NI) was established as a corporate body under the Industrial Development Act 2002 to work in partnership with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) to stimulate and encourage economic development in Northern Ireland.

Invest NI undertakes the activities previously delivered by the Industrial Development Board (IDB), the Local Enterprise Development Unit (LEDU), the Industrial Research and Technology Unit (IRTU), the Business Support Division of the Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment and the business support functions of the Northern Ireland Tourist Board.

Invest NI's Equality Scheme was produced in April 2003 in line with Equality Commission guidelines and approved by the Commission in November 2003. The initial scheme covered a two year period from April 2003-March 2005 to enable Invest NI to be realigned with the other government departments. The scheme was then updated in 2006.

Both the original scheme and the updated scheme have helped to mainstream equality of opportunity throughout Invest NI. In this context the Equality Scheme provided a strong framework and timetable through which standardisation of processes and procedures have been achieved and equality considerations have been embedded as part of the policy development process.

From the outset Invest NI's Board and Senior Management Team have been fully conscious of the agency's Equality and other related responsibilities both within Invest NI and in the agency's dealings with client companies. An important mechanism for the delivery of equality obligations was the establishment, at an early stage of an Equality Unit, which reports to the Director of the Strategic Management and Planning Division. Placement of the Equality Unit within this division was essential as it is responsible for policy development and works closely with the Board and Top Management Team. This ensures a central and very visible position for equality throughout the organisation.

Invest NI has taken part in an Equality and Diversity Working Group (attended by equality practitioners from all DETI divisions and NDPBs) and an internal Equality Advisory Group. It has also established a group of divisional Equality Co-ordinators who ensure that knowledge and understanding of equality of opportunity is disseminated throughout the organisation. In addition Invest NI is represented at senior level on DETI's Equality

and Diversity Steering Group which is chaired at Deputy Secretary level.

We have further strengthened equality awareness through the roll-out of a comprehensive training programme for all staff. Specific sessions have been held on diversity, Section 75 responsibilities and disability awareness. Various Section75/Good Relations events are also highlighted throughout the year to keep staff conscious of changes to legislation and the obligations outlined in the Invest NI Equality Scheme.

The Invest NI Equality Scheme has provided a solid framework which has enabled the organisation to move forward in setting policy. It has been carefully monitored and will continue to be reviewed in line with best practice guidelines.

b) What key lessons have been learnt over the past five years in terms of effectively implementing the approved equality scheme?

Enduring support from Senior and Top Management Teams has been invaluable in the implementation of equality of opportunity and driving forward the equality scheme timetable.

Establishment of an Equality Team to take responsibility for setting and achieving goals and to provide support to the organisation has proven to be the best way to ensure equality remains at the forefront of the organisational agenda.

Specific representation within each division, in the form of Equality Co-ordinators, has been essential in the dissemination of information within an organisation as diverse and wide-ranging as Invest NI.

Investment in good quality training for all Invest NI staff has been crucial in underlining our commitment to equality of opportunity and reinforcing understanding of our obligations throughout all levels of the organisation.

Consultation with key Section 75 groups has proven to be extremely valuable for the policy development process and we have tried as with our latest EQIA on our Draft Corporate Plan 2008-2011 to hold pre-consultation sessions to gather views and feedback before preparation of the policy has begun. This process has ensured that equality of opportunity is a foremost consideration.

c) What more needs to be done to achieve outcomes for individuals from the nine equality categories?

While Invest NI consults with key Section 75 groups on a regular basis, we would hope to review our consultation procedures to ensure maximum feedback. At the same time we need to be mindful of overburdening stakeholders.

Invest NI will also be working on embedding a monitoring strategy for all those who avail of our services. This strategy has been set in place and should provide detailed reporting information in 2009. This process will be straight forward for monitoring individuals who avail of Invest NI assistance however in the main our work focuses on supporting companies and this in itself can prove challenging. We hope however to embed the process with our client companies and build on our breadth of monitoring.

In accordance with our Good Relations duties Invest NI has drawn up a Good Relations Strategy and will continue to implement activities and distribute information to raise awareness within the organisation and throughout client companies. We ultimately have no power to enforce action within client companies but we can reinforce awareness around the good relations categories.

Organisation wide training will also remain at the top of the Invest NI equality agenda. This will include diversity and disability awareness training for all new staff, as well as more in-depth training for Equality Co-ordinators and members of the Equality Team.

1. A general introductory statement specifying the purpose of the scheme and the public authority's commitment to the statutory duties.

Invest NI's Equality Scheme was drawn up in April 2003 and approved by the Equality Commission in November 2003. There was subsequently an update to the scheme in 2006. Both the original scheme and the update have clearly set out how Invest NI aims to achieve equality of opportunity in its processes and procedures and specific commitments in relation to carrying out equality screenings, EQIAs, consultations and training.

1a) To what extent were senior management involved in ensuring scheme compliance over the 5 year period and what further steps could be undertaken to ensure effective internal arrangements?

Prompts – Identify any changes to arrangements for managing scheme implementation, and what were the lessons learnt in terms of enablers and impediments to monitoring scheme implementation?

The Invest NI Senior and Top Management teams have been closely involved in ensuring scheme compliance over the past 5 year period not only giving support in mainstreaming equality issues but also in actively amending and contributing to policy documents. Further arrangements have included:

- Establishment of a dedicated Equality Team to co-ordinate and implement the goals as set out in the Equality Scheme. Placement of this team within the Strategic Management and Planning division has ensured that the equality agenda has been incorporated into the policy and corporate governance structure at the highest level and highlighted throughout the organisation.
- Inclusion in the Equality and Diversity Steering Group which is chaired at Deputy Secretary level. The role of this group is to guide strategic decisions on implementation of Equality Schemes.
- Attendance at an Equality and Diversity Working Group made up of Heads of Branches from DETI and its NDPBs. The role of

this group is to discuss equality-related issues, best practice and the delivery of statutory equality duties at Branch level.

- An Equality Advisory Group was established in 2003/04. This group was chaired by the Director of the Strategic Management and Planning division and is comprised of representatives from Invest NI's Operating Divisions.
- Formation of an internal group of 21 Equality Co-ordinators to ensure provision of sound equality advice within their own divisions has proven an excellent way of disseminating information and knowledge and receiving feedback.
- Support from top management to run training and make it compulsory for all staff, to enable awareness raising of not only diversity and our obligations under Section 75 but also disability awareness. Over the past year staff have also been supported in attending a training course run in conjunction with the Institute of Leadership and Management and Business in The Community. This course covers the topics of equality of opportunity and the importance of diversity in the workplace. It also gives staff the chance to work on a "Business in The Community" corporate social responsibility event which aims to address inequality and deprivation. Many teams have completed work with under-resourced schools and youth groups in the region.
- The inclusion of Invest NI equality commitments in corporate and divisional business planning objectives.
- The inclusion of equality updates in Invest NI's Newsweekly internal e-mail staff brief and also in the Invest NI internal magazine.
- The development and publication of Annual Progress Reports to the Equality Commission which are cleared at Chief Executive level.
- The Invest NI Top Management team have been instrumental in supporting and facilitating recent work around engaging ethnic minorities which would not have progressed without their involvement and commitment.

1b) Outline annual direct expenditure of resources to ensure that the statutory duties were complied with, in terms of staff and money over the past 5 years, and comment on the extent that all necessary resources were allocated.

Prompts – Identify costs related to equality unit staff, use of consultants, allocation of budgets to training/publications/research, extent of in-year bids and/or reallocation of resources. What were the lessons learnt in terms of enablers and impediments to monitoring resourcing? What could the public authority do in future to ensure effective allocation and monitoring of necessary resources?

Staff Resources

When the Equality Unit was established in 2003 it was staffed by an EO1, a Deputy Principal and overseen by a Grade 7. As the equality agenda was implemented within the organisation for the first time the staffing resource grew to facilitate this.

As equality has become embedded the number of staff has slightly reduced as the Equality Team is now able to operate in a more strategic capacity. Setting targets and providing advice and guidance to divisions within the organisation ensures that awareness is being raised in relation to relevant legislation and commitments.

Screenings and EQIAs are carried out by the relevant business area with the assistance of the Equality Co-ordinator responsible for that division. There are therefore further staffing costs associated with carrying out Section 75 related activities which are not possible to estimate outside of those associated with the Equality Team itself.

Programme Resources

Year	Full Time Equivalent Staff	£'s
2003/04	2.5	14,000
2004/05	3.5	20,000
2005/06	3	30,000
2006/07	2	30,000
2007/08	2	30,000

The annual budgets listed in the table above refers to programme funds made available to the Equality Team for the promotion of Section 75 and other equality related projects such as the Engaging Ethnic Minority Enterprise conference organised and hosted internally. The above budget also includes any expenditure on consultants, which of course is kept to a minimum.

In addition to the above expenditure we have also conducted training on diversity and disability awareness for the whole organisation which will continue for any new staff. More in-depth external training courses have also been provided for members of the equality team and for Equality Co-ordinators. All training expenditure is provided through our human resources budget and so is not included in the amounts listed in the table above. Expenditure for training over the past five years has amounted to approximately £22,000.

2. An outline of how the public authority intends to assess its compliance with the Section 75 duties and for consulting on matters to which a duty under that section is likely to be relevant.

2a) Outline impacts and outcomes (for the public authority and/or individuals from the nine equality categories) over the past five years and what further steps could be undertaken to build on these or address underreporting?

Prompt – Were outcomes delivered for all of the nine equality categories? Were annual progress reports critically reviewed before or after submission to the Commission? What examples of good practice from other public authorities could be adopted?

Over the past five years Invest NI has worked to the timetable which was set out in the Equality Scheme approved by the Equality Commission. Through this scheme we have completed four major Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA) which have helped to ensure we are making our programmes and policies accessible to all nine of the Section 75 categories, (please refer to Annex B for further details). This has also been backed up by a number of screening exercises which have been completed and are detailed in Annex A.

Indeed the latest EQIA which we carried out was on our Draft Corporate Plan 2008-2011 and this has helped to ensure that full consideration of equality of opportunity is built into our planning processes at this strategic level.

Specific outcomes with regards to the nine section 75 groupings which have been delivered to date include:

- Promotion of better knowledge and understanding of Age Discrimination legislation at six Best Practice Clubs held around the region and a further six clubs dealing with more general equality of opportunity issues.
- Development and promotion of the “Prime” programme to put in place positive action measures in relation to engaging those in the over 50 age group in entrepreneurial development.
- Evolution of programmes such as “Advantage NI” and work with the “Prince’s Trust Business Programme” all aim to advance the exposure of young people to the possibilities of starting a business.
- Placement of a link on the “Employers’ Forum on Disability” website to highlight current job vacancies within Invest NI. This came as a result of the consultation held on our Disability Action Plan. It is seen as a positive action measure which we hope will result in increased applications from this Section 75 grouping.
- Promotion of the MENCAP “SNAP” exhibition within Invest NI headquarters and the Human Rights exhibition, “Animate Your Rights”. We have also actively promoted “Anti-Racist Workplace Week”, “International Migrants Day” and “Intercultural and Anti-Racism Week” to all staff.

- Invest NI has supported Disability Action in the launch of its “Business Support Scheme” aimed at encouraging NI businesses to work in partnership with Disability Action to assist them in their approach towards good practice on disability issues.
- A joint DETI/Opportunity Now Working Group with Invest NI input focused on establishing a business case for gender equality with employers and demonstrated the economic imperative of maximising women’s contribution to the Northern Ireland economy. Invest NI has also actively contributed to the cross-departmental “Vital Voices” initiative aimed at increasing women’s participation in the economy.
- Invest NI has developed the “Investing in Women” initiative primarily aimed at accelerating female entrepreneurship throughout the region. The programme aims to raise awareness of enterprise and to encourage more women in Northern Ireland to consider starting a business. It involves a range of activities including role model promotion, programmes and events and the provision of funding to the business women's networks.
- Work with DETI and the “Women’s Stakeholder Forum” helped to identify issues relevant to the under-representation of women and to design activities aimed at promoting female entrepreneurs.
- Placement of an article within our latest “Invest In” magazine which goes to client companies detailing how childcare voucher schemes can benefit both employers and employees.
- In 2004/05 we commissioned research, in conjunction with Ormeau Business Park, into the minority ethnic community in South Belfast. This project commenced in the autumn of 2004 with the key aim of identifying more effective ways of engaging with minority ethnic communities in relation to enterprise.
- Promotion of entrepreneurial programmes among ethnic minority groups. This year we held an “Engaging Ethnic Minority Enterprise” seminar in conjunction with NICEM to

better promote access to Invest NI services and different routes to starting a business.

- Invest NI have also worked to establish and promote the “nibusinessinfo.co.uk” website which offers extensive advice and guidance to individuals and companies on diversity and equality of opportunity. This site is double “A” compliant with plans to be triple “A” compliant by December 2009. It also provides clear links to organisations such as the Equality Commission, Labour Relations Agency and Equality and Human Rights Commission. The site has proven to be a very wide reaching and effective resource for employers and employees alike and from April 2007 up until the present, the prevention of discrimination and promotion of diversity pages have had 1583 hits.
- Development of an equality monitoring strategy to further assess if there are any impediments to the Section 75 groupings taking up any of the programmes or services Invest NI offer.

Annual Reports to the Equality Commission

Invest NI’s annual reports to the equality commission were co-ordinated by the Equality Team and signed off at Chief Executive Officer level. All reports were critically reviewed before being signed off and forwarded to the Equality Commission.

Sharing Good Practice

Good practice is shared across the NI departments and the Non-departmental Public Bodies through attendance at interdepartmental groups. These include the Equality and Diversity Working Group and the Equality and Diversity Steering Group. These groups have provided the opportunity to share good practice, discuss issues and on occasion liaise/co-operate on equality-related consultations and other equality related activities.

Areas of best practice have also been shared with a number of Education and Library Boards and Local Councils, particularly in relation to conducting EQIAs, Section 75 monitoring and development of Good Relations Strategies.

2b) Outline the number of equality scheme related consultation exercises undertaken by your authority over the past five years. Set out the number and percentage related to screening exercises and to EQIAs and indicate the extent that your scheme helped you to engage with external stakeholders.

Prompt – Identify your authority’s most and least successful means of consultation in relation to s75 categories. Why were some means of consultation more or less successful in relation to particular equality categories?

Invest NI has carried out 4 formal consultation exercises, on each of the EQIAs. As well as these, consultations have also been held on our Equality Scheme and all of the screened out policies/programmes listed in Annex A.

We have found that while written consultations can be cumbersome, for some organisations this would be our most successful format for ensuring we receive responses.

We have in the past organised presentations and arranged for face-to-face meetings with consultees. However this yields a very low response rate and on two occasions consultee meetings organised, have been cancelled due to lack of engagement.

2c) Indicate if your list of consultees was amended during the 5 year period and what further steps could be taken to develop your level of engagement and consultation?

Prompt - Outline the extent your authority did or did not move away from formal consultation and on what criteria was any such consultation targeted? To what extent were requests to be included and/or objections from those not included in the consultation process received and how were these addressed?

Invest NI’s initial consultee list was derived from those organisations detailed in the Equality Commission guidance. Over the past five years this list has been changed and adapted at the request of our consultees. We have subsequently added

interested parties who have provided us with invaluable feedback on our consultations.

As indicated above our consultations primarily focus on written methods. This continues to be the most rewarding mechanism for Invest NI. For future consultations we will review this methodology and change or adapt the approach as required by our consultees.

2d) To what extent did your authority consult directly with directly affected individuals as well as with representative groups, particularly in relation to young people and those with learning disabilities, and was this sufficient?

Prompt – How effective was your authority at providing feedback to consultees as a result of consultation exercises? What were the lessons learnt in terms of enablers and impediments to consulting directly with affected individuals? What could your authority do in future to provide effective consultee feedback?

All of our consultation exercises focus on our consultee list which in the main includes contact details for Section 75 representative groups rather than names of individuals. There has been little direct contact with individuals, however, at each consultation we advertise in the three main Northern Ireland newspapers seeking feedback and responses from the whole community.

In the future we will give consideration to further ways in which we may be able to more effectively engage with specific groupings.

As a rule we provide feedback to all of those who respond to our consultations. The Results Reports on our EQIAs either carry a detailed section on consultee feedback and our response to that or a specific letter is sent to the consultee addressing the feedback they have supplied.

3. The authority's arrangements for assessing and consulting on the impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted on the promotion of equality of opportunity.

3a) Outline and discuss the number of policies your authority subject to screening over the past five years, setting out the number and percentage of 'policies screened in' on the basis

of equality considerations and the percentage 'screened in' on the basis of the good relations duty.

Prompt - What were the lessons learnt in terms of enablers and impediments to screening in terms of, screening criteria and priority factors? Are there any other criteria which could usefully be included? What lessons are there regarding responsibility for screening at regional level and subsequent screening of local policy? What could your authority do in future to ensure effective screening arrangements? Set out in an appendix a list of all policies screened out during scheme implementation.

When Invest NI was formed in April 2002 a number of policies and programmes were already carried through the EQIA process by DETI our parent department.

Invest NI then went on to screen in and carry out EQIAs on a number of its programmes and policy areas. All of the programmes falling into the Entrepreneurial Development Team's remit were covered in the Accelerating Entrepreneurship EQIA. All programmes offered to client companies were amalgamated and covered by the Business Development Solutions EQIA and our latest EQIA has been conducted on our Draft Corporate Plan 2008-2011.

All of the above programme and policy areas were screened in and an EQIA carried out on the basis of equality considerations.

A further 76 programmes or policies have been screened out for consultation over the past 5 years and all of these are detailed in Annex A.

The screening form we have developed has been an excellent tool in helping to standardise the screening process and in highlighting programmes/policies which need to go through an EQIA. The Equality Team defer all screening exercises to programme and policy managers while still offering advice and guidance and acting in a monitoring capacity.

A new system has also been developed to enable knowledge management and improve access to the screenings and these are all now held on our intranet pages and broken down by division. This allows Equality Co-ordinators an easy method of checking

and updating relevant screenings. While this system has been embedded throughout the organisation we realise that there will be turnover of staff and Equality Co-ordinators. We therefore hold a screening training session once a year as a means of training new staff and as a refresher course for existing staff.

In terms of impediments to the screening (and EQIA) process, the main difficulty has been accessing appropriate data on all Section 75 categories to support the decision making process. The Equality Commission has been helpful in previous years by supplying monitoring data which they have gathered and which we can apply to some of our client companies.

Going forward however we have put in place our own monitoring strategy, which will, from 2009 onward, provide us with more detailed and specific information with regards to client companies who have received interventions from Invest NI.

3b) To what extent did your authority's consideration of the screening criteria not identify equal opportunity implications on any of s75 categories, but for which consultees then highlighted problems?

Prompt –Identify the extent the collection of quantitative and qualitative data informed screening processes. Outline the extent consultations with representative groups produced data to inform the screening process which was not otherwise available to your authority. Outline any difficulties in identifying policies and equality implications using the definition of policy set out in the Guide to the Statutory Duties.

Consultation on screened out policies/programmes has to date produced no negative feedback or data that was not otherwise available to the organisation.

As an organisation we understand that policy as defined by the guidance covers all policies both written and unwritten. The difficulty we would encounter would be at which level to screen – either at a policy level or at a more strategic level.

Given that this is the case and that our high level strategies have now been subjected to an EQIA process, our operating plans will not be subject to separate scrutiny at this time. In particular the EQIAs conducted on the Corporate Plan, the Accelerating Entrepreneurship Strategy and Business Development Solutions suite of programmes have already addressed both the strategic and operational aspects of Invest NI's work.

Further guidance from the Commission on this aspect of screening and the EQIA process would however be welcome.

3c) Outline over the past five years how many EQIAs your authority commenced as a result of i) initial screening and ii) as a result of screening new/revised policies subsequently, and discuss the extent that your authority has become more effective at identifying equality of opportunity dimensions in its policies.

Prompt – Were changes made to the screening process? Outline any examples of any changes made to policies to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations, rather than to address any perceived differential impact, as a result of screening policies that were 'screened out'?

It is important to note that all of Invest NI's policy areas were originally included for Equality Impact Assessment and none were screened out. The majority of Invest NI's programme/policy areas have been equality impact assessed through the implementation of a sustained EQIA programme schedule.

When the organisation was formed in 2002 and the Equality Scheme finalised in 2003, four areas were identified for EQIA as follows:

- Innovation Services
- Existing Client Businesses
- Business Birth Rate Strategy
- Internal Services/HR

Our Recruitment and Selection EQIA fell under internal services, and the Business Birth Rate Strategy (now the Invest NI Accelerating Entrepreneurship Strategy) looked at all of our

entrepreneurial programmes. EQIAs on these two strategies have now been completed. The areas of support for innovation and existing client companies were impact assessed under the Business Development Solutions EQIA.

Recently we conducted an EQIA on our Draft Corporate Plan 2008-2011, was sent out for consultation in January 2008.

Over the past five years we have also adapted and modified our screening forms and the screening process to encourage a more detailed submission, and we have recently added in our commitments under the two new disability duties.

3d) Outline over the past five year period the percentage of your authority's initial EQIA timetable that reached i) stage 6 of the EQIA process i.e. decision making, and ii) stage 7 of the EQIA process i.e. annual monitoring & publication of results, and indicate the extent that your authority has become more effective at progressing EQIAs.

Prompt – Explain any slippage that occurred and what was done to rectify it. To what extent did you notify representative groups of this slippage and what was their reaction? What were the lessons learnt in terms of enablers and impediments to monitoring EQIAs?

At present both our Business Development Solutions EQIA and our Draft Corporate Plan 2008-2011 EQIA are at stage 6 of the process. The Accelerating Entrepreneurship Strategy and Recruitment and Selection EQIAs are at stage 7.

There was slippage in the production of the Business Development Solutions EQIA as this covered such a wide and diverse client offering. The Commission was notified at the time that this would be the case and the EQIA has now been completed. The first report on progress against recommendations will be available in December 2008.

In the coming months we will be looking at continuing work on our Communications and Access EQIA.

There has been a myriad of lessons learnt in terms of monitoring for EQIAs and the organisation has put in place a robust process

for carrying out reports on progress against recommendations. While there is sound monitoring evidence in place for internal employees and for some of the entrepreneurial programmes we are currently putting in place a specific strategy for collating information on client companies, who receive interventions. This will further enhance the monitoring process.

4. The authority's arrangements for monitoring any adverse impact of policies adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity.

4a) To what extent were sufficient arrangements put in place to collect data relating to the nine equality categories to monitor the impact of policies and what could your authority do in future to develop monitoring arrangements?

Prompt - What were the lessons learnt in terms of enablers and impediments to monitoring and developing new/additional quantitative data over the past five years? Did your authority consult its own employees or collaborate with other authorities to collect data? Did your authority engage with representative groups to develop monitoring arrangements?

Internal Staff Monitoring

With regards to internal monitoring of staff on the Section 75 categories our Human Resources Department has conducted monitoring in line with the Fair Employment and Treatment Order requirements. This process has now been revised and the monitoring questionnaire will be extended to cover all nine of the Section 75 categories.

Client Monitoring

In previous years the organisation conducted employment monitoring which tracked the organisation's impact on employment in disadvantaged areas via questionnaires issued to client companies post-receipt of financial assistance. This covered 7 of the 9 Section 75 categories (excluding political opinion and sexual orientation). Return on this monitoring was not extensive and is now under review.

The organisation has subsequently obtained monitoring information from the Commission which it related back to client companies and successfully used as evidence in EQIAs. However this monitoring merely reflected a portion of our client base and was only detailed in terms of religious background.

Invest NI has now put in place a new client contact management system and a monitoring strategy has been developed to enable collection of four of the nine Section 75 categories, collated for client companies receiving an intervention. This will further enhance our ability to monitor and should produce results in 2009.

5. The authority's arrangements for publishing the results of equality impact assessments and of monitoring any adverse impact of policies adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity.

5a) Indicate the number of reports published outlining the results of EQIAs and monitoring over the past five years, and outline what your authority could do in future in relation to improving the publication of EQIA results and monitoring.

Prompt – Identify the number of reports that were provided in alternative formats. What were the lessons learnt in terms of enablers and impediments to publishing the results of EQIAs and monitoring?

All four of our completed EQIAs have been produced and published in accordance with guidance given by the Equality Commission. We produced our third progress report against recommendations on our Recruitment and Selection EQIA in August 2008. Our second progress report on our Accelerating Entrepreneurship EQIA recommendations was produced in July 2008 and our first report against recommendations contained in the Business Development Solutions EQIA will be due in December 2008 (see Annex B for full details).

Only one of our screening consultations has been requested in large print, although we make clear that publications produced are available in other formats on request. The only other requests we have received were for general corporate documentation in alternative formats.

An enabler in producing EQIAs and conducting monitoring on progress has been the placement of an Equality Co-ordinator in each division. This has helped immensely in giving a point of contact who co-ordinates with the equality team and who is also versed in the work of the division.

6. A commitment that in making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted by it, that the public authority shall take into account any equality impact assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy.

6a) In terms of the number of EQIAs that reached stage 6 i.e. decision making to what extent were mitigation measures and alternative policies adopted?

Prompt - Outline the extent to which your authority produced EQIAs that did not identify adverse impact on any of s75 categories, but which consultees then gave an indication of adverse impact of s75 category and/or proposed mitigation measures or alternative policies.

Regarding the EQIAs Invest NI carried out on its Recruitment and Selection Policy, Accelerating Entrepreneurship Strategy and Business Development Solutions Programmes, the organisation received a number of responses. None of the comments, however, identified significant adverse equality impacts.

Comments were received on our Draft Corporate Plan 2008-2011 with regards to there being an absence of a gender perspective in the plan. This has now been amended accordingly.

Comment was also made that specific women's initiatives should be detailed in the Corporate Plan. Given the strategic nature of the plan though this would not have been viable and this level of detail will instead be provided in Invest NI's operating plan.

6b) To what extent did consideration of EQIAs and consultations contribute to a change in policy, as opposed to policy decisions which would probably have been made in any event by your authority?

Prompt - Set out any key examples. What were the lessons learnt in terms of enablers and impediments to making a decision and taking into account an EQIA and consultation? What could your authority do in future to ensure decision making effectively takes these issues into account?

None of the policies which underwent EQIA were significantly changed as a consequence of comments received during the assessment and consultation process with the exception of the Corporate Plan 2008-2011. This has now been amended to include more of a gender perspective.

With regards to the other EQIAs which have been conducted we have made some adjustments to the delivery of policies and programmes after receiving advice from Section 75 groups.

These changes have in the main been around accessibility of information. For example we now have a procedure in place to ensure all staff are aware of job vacancies and we have a link on the Employers' Forum for Disability website to make job vacancies more accessible for this Section 75 grouping.

7. The authority's arrangements for training staff on issues relevant to the duties.

7a) To what extent were sufficient arrangements put in place to develop and deliver a training programme in accordance with scheme commitments?

Prompt - Was the training programme focused on the initial period of scheme implementation or did it effectively cover all five years? To what extent were outside trainers from representative groups used in designing or delivering training? Was focused training for staff in management and roles associated with aspects of scheme implementation provided on an ongoing basis?

When Invest NI was first formed the Section 75 agenda was incorporated into overall induction training which all members of staff completed within one month of joining the organisation. This

was consolidated in the following year with regular updates communicated to all staff on Section 75 issues. A training needs analysis was then undertaken and as a result, targeted training was provided to senior management and appointed Equality Co-ordinators. Targeted training on equality screening was also conducted with the relevant staff.

In 2005/2006 the equality unit, in conjunction with Human Resources, set up a training package named “It Isn’t Fair Training”. This training was mandatory for all staff and included Section 75, Equality and Diversity training. As new cohorts of staff were recruited to Invest NI they also enrolled to receive this training. This is now fully imbedded in our induction process.

The appointed Equality Co-ordinators undergo refresher training once a year to enable them to fully support colleagues as they carry out screening exercises and EQIAs.

In the past year the entire organisation has also undergone Disability Awareness training and as with the “It Isn’t Fair Training” this is rolled out to all new staff coming into Invest NI to ensure they are fully aware of our obligations and commitments in this area.

As a result of implementing our Disability Action Plan, we are considering providing sign language training for individuals within the organisation and more focused practical training on disability for our client facing staff.

7b) Have all staff received awareness training and what could your authority do in future to deliver an effective training programme?

Prompt – Does the authority have evidence that over the past five years staff understood their role in implementing the scheme? What were the lessons learnt in terms of enablers and impediments to communication and training?

Invest NI has ensured that Section 75 awareness training and Disability Awareness training have been available to all new and existing staff.

In addition the Equality Co-ordinators will continue to receive specialist and refresher training to enable them to more fully guide colleagues in their statutory duties.

Current training courses running for new and existing managers in conjunction with “Business in the Community” and the “Institute of Leadership and Management”, also contain training on diversity and its importance in the workplace.

Training has been supplemented by regular information briefings on our EQIAs, screenings, Disability Action Plan and Good Relations duties all of which have helped to raise general equality of opportunity awareness throughout the organisation.

Members of the Equality and Human Resources teams have also undertaken Equality Commission training as well as more specialist courses.

8. The authority’s arrangements for ensuring and assessing public access to information and to services provided by the authority.

8a) To what extent were sufficient arrangements put in place to ensure and assess public access to information and to services provided by the authority?

Prompt - Was an audit of information provision undertaken? To what extent did you provide accessible formats without specific requests? What were the lessons learnt in terms of enablers and impediments to ensuring and assessing public access to information and to services? What could your authority do in future to ensure equality of opportunity in public access to information and to services?

In accordance with the good practice guidance produced by OFMDFM, Invest NI developed its “Making Information More Accessible” guidelines document in 2004. This document was distributed throughout the organisation and brought to the attention of the corporate communications team who publish all corporate documentation. The guidelines were also published on our intranet site to make them easily accessible at any time to all staff.

The equality team led this project, working closely with Invest NI's Communications team. In parallel to the development of these guidelines, the equality team continued to advise individual teams on event management; sponsorship agreements; translations and corporate communications in relation to access issues. As part of these guidelines a system was put in place to formally monitor requests for alternative formats.

In March 2005 Invest NI also met with representatives from the Employers Forum on Disability. The meeting involved ways to explore how we might promote their message and services and as a result, we agreed to send out information packs on their behalf to all attendees at Invest NI People Excellence "Employment Law" workshops.

We also state on all of our publications that we will make them available in alternative formats including Braille, disk and audio cassette, and in minority languages to meet the needs of those who are not fluent in English. However the provision of information in advance in accessible formats can pose problems over cost and timing. Generally, therefore, accessible formats are provided on request.

In past years we have had requests for documents in Braille, audio cassette and in large print which we have provided promptly and free of charge. Signers are also made available for corporate events if requested.

Our building has been built to specific disability regulations and we worked in conjunction with a member of Disability Action to improve upon legislative requirements to ensure we have a fully accessible building and working environment.

Invest NI has also taken onboard feedback from our consultation on our Disability Action Plan. This has led to the organisation placing a link on the Employers Forum for Disability website which advertises job vacancies within Invest NI.

While our website currently meets "single A" accessibility guidelines we have made the commitment through our Disability Action Plan that we will be working to improve upon this in the forthcoming year.

Also as a result of our Disability Action Plan we have met with Disability Action over the past year to discuss accessibility to our organisation and we will be implementing the outcomes of this meeting over the forthcoming year.

We will also be undertaking a Communications and Access EQIA within the next year to look at just how accessible our organisation is and to get feedback on this from the public and the Section 75 representative groups. This will help to properly inform any changes we need to make going forward.

9. The authority's timetable for measures proposed in the scheme.

9a) Outline the extent to which measures set out in the original timetable have been implemented. Any detailed information should be included as an appendix to the report.

Prompt – Update any progress previously reported as underway or delayed. Has a mechanism been developed to report by exception i.e. on specific issues that have not been progressed?

The timetable which was proposed in Invest NI's Equality Scheme has largely been adhered to, although some slippage and adjustment has occurred with regards to the EQIA timetable.

In the main this was in regards to the publication of the BDS EQIA. This EQIA took longer to complete than expected due to the fact that it was a highly comprehensive assessment of all of Invest NI's intervention programmes for existing businesses. The Equality Commission's Statutory Duty Unit was made aware of this and was understanding of the complexities and the vast amount of information to be analysed.

We have also recently deferred the commencement of the Communications and Access EQIA for a few months. From a strategic perspective, we feel that this delay is necessary in order to allow the Corporate Plan sufficient time to become embedded before undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment of this aspect

of our business. We anticipate that this EQIA will now be carried out during 2009.

9b) If your authority was to be reconstituted in the next five years what would be the main scheme actions/equality considerations that an incoming authority should address? Any detailed information should be included as an appendix to the report.

Prompt – Outline what arrangements could be put in place to transfer equality scheme knowledge.

The Invest NI Equality Unit has a full set of procedural documents in place along with timetables detailing Equality Scheme progress requirements over the forthcoming years.

All past and current publications are also kept in an easily accessible electronic filing system to enable knowledge management throughout the organisation. All of these measures will ensure sound Equality Scheme knowledge transfer should the need arise in the future.

10. Details of how the scheme will be published.

10a) Were scheme commitments in this section delivered and what evidence supports this view?

Commitments given in Invest NI's first and revised Equality Schemes regarding publication have been delivered. The finalised Scheme was made available to all internal staff members; it was placed on the organisation's website and is available in alternative formats on request.

Advertisements were placed in the press and copies of the documentation for consultation were sent out directly to all those listed in Invest NI's Equality Scheme. This process is also followed for all EQIA and screening consultations.

11. The authority's arrangements for dealing with complaints arising from a failure to comply with the scheme.

11a) Outline the number and nature of complaints received by your authority, and what your authority could do in future to develop its complaints handling process and learn from complaints.

Prompt – Outline the nature of complaints and scheme element e.g. screening, consultation. What effect did complaints have on the operation of your scheme?

Complaints received in relation to Section 75 issues are investigated in line with the Invest NI Customer Feedback Procedure. Under this procedure the complainant receives a reply within 4 weeks of submitting the complaint. Issues arising are fully investigated.

The following 4 complaints have been raised against Invest NI in the past five years.

- **Mr Hussein Jabbar Kadhum v Invest NI**

The complainant alleged discrimination on the grounds of race and/or religious belief/political opinion in relation to an Invest NI Smart award. The case was heard in The County Court in February 2005. On 11th November 2005 the Court's decision was heard and a decision given against Invest NI. The plaintiff was awarded the sum of £12,630.30 from Invest NI.

- **Daily Ireland Ltd v Invest NI**

In this case the complainant served Invest NI with a "Complaint of Unlawful discrimination by the Daily Ireland Ltd" who were part of the Andersonstown News Group. The case was scheduled to be heard in April 2008 however the complainant withdrew the complaint.

- **'A' vs. Invest NI**

The Claimant, an Administrative Officer in Invest NI, made a complaint to the Industrial Tribunal alleging bullying and harassment on the grounds of her sexual orientation.

On settlement of the case in February 2007, Invest NI agreed to pay the Claimant £12,500 without admission of liability. Invest NI reaffirmed its commitment to the principle of equality of opportunity

in the workplace and agreed to liaise with the Equality Commission to review its equal opportunities policies and procedures, to communicate these to its staff and to provide training for staff as recommended by the Commission.

- **Thompson vs. Maybin, Oliver Corr and Invest NI**

The Claimant in this case was an employee of Maybin Security Ltd who was deployed at Invest NI's site at Lisburn. He alleged unfair dismissal and discrimination on grounds of his disability. His original complaint was against Maybin Security Ltd, but he subsequently moved to join Invest NI and its Premises Officer at Lisburn, Oliver Corr, in the case.

The case was settled in April 2008 on terms which are confidential between the parties.

12. A commitment to conducting a review of the scheme within five years of its submission to the Equality Commission and to forwarding a report of this review to the Equality Commission.

12a) What has been your authority's experience of conducting this review? To what extent has the Commission's guidance been useful in undertaking the review?

The review has proven to be a timely opportunity to reflect on progress and to identify the areas which still need to be addressed.

We have notified all internal staff and those groups on our consultees list that our Equality Scheme is coming to the end of its lifecycle. Any relevant feedback has also been requested. After our twelve week consultation period we received no negative feedback, some acknowledgements of receipt and a number of positive comments.

However going forward we will be concentrating on embedding Section 75 monitoring throughout the organisation and looking more closely at how accessible we are to all of the Section 75 groupings. We will also hope to update our own Good Relations Strategy and raise further awareness of this throughout Invest NI.

Screening Exercises Carried out by Invest NI

2003-2004

- Office Relocation – North West Regional Office
- Office Relocation – Eastern Regional Office

2004-2005

- North West Business and Technology Zone
- Social Entrepreneurship Programme
- Social Economy Policy
- Corporate Plan 2005-2008
- Physical Location of INI Headquarters
- Sectoral Strategy Screenings which covered:
 - Aerospace Sector
 - Agri-Engineering Sector
 - Bioscience and Health Technologies Sector
 - Construction Sector
 - Creative Industries Sector
 - Electronics Sector
 - Fish Processing Industry Sector
 - Domestic Furniture Sector
 - Horticulture Sector
 - Network Services Sector
 - Print and Packaging Sector
 - Software Services Sector
 - Textiles and Clothing Sector
 - Tourism Sector
 - Vehicle Engineering Sector

2005-2006

- Export Network Club
- Women Making Innovation Work
- Property Solutions Assistance
- Office Relocation – Southern Regional Office
- Independent Financial and Marketing Appraisal
- SME Broadband Programme

2006-2007

- Enterprise Week – Go For It Campaign
- Prime Initiative

- Women's International Leadership Boston Visit
- Western Innovation Network
- Renewing Communities
- North West Action Plan
- Entrepreneurship Education Initiative

2007-2008

- Innovation Voucher Scheme
- EU RTD Directorate Service
- Innovation Advisory Service
- Making Northern Ireland a Leading Provider of World Class Service
- People Excellence Solutions
- Process Excellence Solutions
- Animal Feedstuffs and Domestic Pet Food Strategy
- Bakery Sector Strategy
- Clusters and Collaborative Networks
- Digital Content Strategy
- Interim Managers' Programme
- Futures Programme
- Business to Business Bridge
- Non-Executive Directors
- Innovative Pathways to Female Entrepreneurship
- SME Energy Grant Scheme
- National Industrial Symbiosis Programme
- Sustainable Development Envirowise Programme
- Draft Corporate Plan 2008-2011
- Acquisition, Development and Sale of Property for Industrial Development Purposes
- Start a Business Programme Budget
- Taxi Tender Policy
- Growth Accelerator Programme
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Special Leave Policy
- Expenditure on Gifts and Hospitality Policy
- Private Health Insurance Policy
- Excess Fares Policy
- Maternity Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Attending Work Related Social Functions Policy
- Career Break Policy

- Visual Display Units Policy
- Paternal Leave Policy
- Redundancy Policy
- Age Retirement Policy
- Staff Development Policy
- Childcare Vouchers Policy
- Transfer Policy
- Overtime Policy
- Representation on Outside Bodies Policy

Annex B

Equality Impact Assessment Progression

EQIA	Published for Consultation	Results Report Published	1 st Year Progress Report	2 nd Year Progress Report	3 rd Year Progress Report
Recruitment and Selection EQIA	September 2004	September 2005	May 2006	August 2007	August 2008
Accelerating Entrepreneurship EQIA	July 2005	May 2006	July 2007	July 2008	
Business Development Solutions EQIA	June 2007	December 2007			
Corporate Plan EQIA	March 2008	August 2008			