

Section 75 Policy Screening Form

Part 1. Policy scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy, being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

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

Information about the policy

Name of the policy:

Boosting Business

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?

Revised

What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes)

The suite of STES programmes were screened out in terms of the necessity for an EQIA in May 2011, however in order to bring greater clarity to the scheme and to increase awareness of the changes being introduced, we have decided that, moving forward, the Short Term Employment Scheme will simply be known as "The Jobs Fund".

In addition a range of actions have been pulled together under a number of themes – Jobs, Exporting, Research and Development, New Technology and Skills. These new measures have now been rebranded as BOOSTING BUSINESS.

The programme aims to :-

The Boosting Business measures focus on helping businesses to create and protect jobs; to build the skills of their workforce; to use new technology to improve their competitiveness; to create new products and take them to new markets.

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

If so, explain how.

No specific group. Boosting Business has been designed to provide a range of

advice, guidance (available to all businesses) and financial support (eligible businesses –manufacturing and tradable service businesses that have export potential).

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

Invest NI.

Who owns and who implements the policy?

The new Boosting Business team, Operating Divisions and Regional Economic Development Teams within Invest NI

Implementation Factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?

If yes, are they

financial

Employment Grant assistance will be available to all eligible Invest NI clients.

Legislative - No

other, please specify _____

Main stakeholders affected

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon?

staff

service users

other public sector organisations

voluntary/community/trade unions

other, please specify _____

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

- what are they?

Businesses, large and small, throughout Northern Ireland face a wide range of challenges on a daily basis. A decline in the demand for products and services, increased competition both at home and abroad, a lack of bank lending, inflexible credit terms, employee skills gaps and shortages, the high cost of insurance, taxes and health and safety, reduced economic activity and the adverse impact this can have on cashflow and supply chains.

Many businesses have had to make difficult choices. The key to survival lies in their ability to revise their business plan according to the changing economic and business conditions, and successfully differentiate their business from the competition. Invest NI can offer a comprehensive range of support measures. Many of these are new, whilst others already available to our customers have had their eligibility criteria broadened to make them available to businesses that are not currently Invest NI customers.

The Boosting Business Measures have been developed to help businesses succeed in these difficult times, whether they want to build the skills of their workforce, use new technology to improve competitiveness, break into new markets, develop new products, or create jobs. Available through a combination of financial, capability development support, advisory services and regional seminars and workshops, Invest NI support has been structured under five key themes:

- [Boosting Business through Jobs](#)
- [Boosting Business through R&D](#)
- [Boosting Business through Exports](#)
- [Boosting Business through Technology](#)
- [Boosting Business through Skills](#)

- who owns them?

Invest NI Boosting Business Team, Operating Divisions and Regional Economic Development Teams within Invest NI.

Available evidence

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data.

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/information
ALL	This is a positive action measure which is not envisaged to have an adverse impact on any S75 group. The continued impact of the global downturn is affecting businesses, large and small, throughout Northern Ireland. Many face challenges and difficult choices. Invest NI can help businesses, including existing client companies as well as the wider business base, to access a range of advice, guidance and support – available under five themes: <u>Jobs</u> , <u>R&D</u> , <u>Exports</u> , <u>Technology</u> and <u>Skills</u> - that will help businesses to survive the impact of the economic downturn and secure their position for the future.

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories

Section 75 category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
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Part 2. Screening questions

Introduction

In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, the public authority should consider its answers to the questions 1-4 which are given on pages 66-68 of this Guide.

If the public authority's conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then the public authority may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, a public authority should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

If the public authority's conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

If the public authority's conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories and/or good relations categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:

- measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
- the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of a 'major' impact

- a) The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
- b) Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;
- c) Potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged;
- d) Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;

- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

In favour of 'minor' impact

- a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
- b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;
- c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;
- d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of none

- a) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
- b) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

Taking into account the evidence presented above, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy, in any way, for each of the equality and good relations categories, by applying the screening questions given overleaf and indicate the level of impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.

Screening questions

1 What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? minor/major/none		
Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? minor/major/none
Religious belief	This programme is likely to have a positive impact on marginalised groups attached to this category and is likely to help ameliorate disadvantage	Minor
Political opinion	This programme is likely to have a positive impact on marginalised groups attached to this category and is likely to help ameliorate disadvantage	Minor
Racial group	This programme is likely to have a positive impact on marginalised groups attached to this category and is likely to help ameliorate disadvantage	Minor
Age	This programme is likely to have a positive impact on marginalised groups attached to this category and is likely to help ameliorate disadvantage	Minor
Marital status		
Sexual orientation		

Men and women generally		
Disability	This programme is likely to have a positive impact on marginalised groups attached to this category and is likely to help ameliorate disadvantage	Minor
Dependants		
2 Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories?		
Section 75 category	If Yes , provide details	If No , provide reasons
All	Boosting Business in general provides this opportunity.	

• 3 To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? minor/major/none		
• Good relations category	• Details of policy impact	• Level of impact minor/major/none
• Religious belief	• Through this programme, which aims to provide a range of advice, guidance and financial support to businesses, it is hoped that good relations will improve. Admittedly there may not be a direct corollary	Minor

	but it is likely to be a side benefit.	
Political opinion	Through this programme, which is aiming to provide a range of advice, guidance and financial support to businesses, it is hoped that good relations will improve. Admittedly there may not be a direct corollary but it is likely to be a side benefit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor.
Racial group	Through this programme, which is aiming to provide a range of advice, guidance and financial support to businesses, it is hoped that good relations will improve. Admittedly there may not be a direct corollary but it is likely to be a side benefit.	Minor.

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

Additional considerations

Multiple identity

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?

(For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).

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

Nothing further to add

Part 3. Screening decision

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

Not felt necessary at this time.

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment the public authority should consider if the policy should be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced.

As this is a positive action measure there is no need at this stage to amend the policy, however we do commit to continuing to monitor and review the programme, particularly with regard to uptake by S75 groups.

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

N/A

All public authorities' equality schemes must state the authority's arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity. The Commission recommends screening and equality impact assessment as the tools to be utilised for such assessments. Further advice on equality impact assessment may be found in a separate Commission publication: Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment.

Mitigation

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is 'minor' and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

If so, give the **reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.

N/A

Timetabling and prioritising

Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment.

If the policy has been '**screened in**' for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Priority criterion	Rating (1-3)
Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations	
Social need	
Effect on people's daily lives	
Relevance to a public authority's functions	

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the public authority in timetabling. Details of the Public Authority's Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the quarterly Screening Report.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?

If yes, please provide details

Part 4. Monitoring

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

The Commission recommends that where the policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, the public authority should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

Effective monitoring will help the public authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

Please detail proposed monitoring arrangements below:

A new Enquiry Handling Team (EHT) has been established within Invest NI to deal with all enquiries (telephone, online, text or people coming into Invest NI offices). All enquiries will be logged onto the Invest NI Client Contact Management System (CCMS) irrespective of whether or not they receive financial support. As part of the introductory process all enquirers are asked to confirm that they are content to be included in future Invest NI mailing lists.

Businesses that receive support specifically through The Jobs Fund will be asked to complete a Data Capture Form (DCF) prior to the payment of any grant assistance. The DCF will require grant recipients to provide information on Gender, Age, Racial Group, Disability and Previous Labour Market Status. All other participating companies and individuals will also be subject to monitoring through the annual equality monitoring procedures in place within Invest NI.

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

Screened by:	Position/Job Title	Date
Pamela Mason	Equality Manager.	6/12/11
Approved by:		
Donald Durkan	Director	6/12/11.

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be 'signed off' and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made easily accessible on the public authority's website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.