



Policy Screening Template

SIB has a statutory duty under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 to screen all policies as they are being developed or when they are being revised. This template is designed to assist you to consider the likely equality impacts of proposed policies on different groups of people.

Part A: Policy scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy to clarify the background and context and set out the aims and objectives. Scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as additional opportunities.

1. The policy

Name of the policy and brief description

Maternity policy

The policy provides contractual maternity leave and pay arrangements in addition to statutory rights. It is based closely on the NICS policy but is being updated by SIB to relax the rules on eligibility to allow those on temporary contracts and those on fixed term contracts of less than two years to benefit from the policy, provided that the unexpired term of the contract will allow the employee to return to work for at least one calendar month. This screening focuses on the changes to the policy, as the original policy was screened in 2006.

What is the policy trying to achieve (intended aims and outcomes)?

To provide additional support to SIB employees before and after the birth of a child and encourage them to return to work. SIB has traditionally employed more males than females (although the gap has reduced substantially in recent years) and this policy will assist with attracting and retaining female employees.

Are there any Section 75 categories that might be expected to benefit particularly from the policy? (If so, explain how.)

The policy is designed to benefit female employees, and the revisions will have particular benefits for those on temporary and fixed term contracts.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

The policy was initiated by SIB but is based closely on the NICS policy.

Who owns and who implements each element of the policy?

SIB

Are there any other policies with a bearing on this policy?

The policy forms part of a suite of complementary HR policies.

2. Implementation factors

Are there any factors that could contribute to or detract from the intended aims and outcomes?

Financial factors?

Financial resources are already in place.

Legislative factors?

The policy provides benefits in addition to statutory rights.

Other factors?

None

3. Main stakeholders

Who are the main internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon and how will it affect them?

Staff

The changes to the policy will provide additional benefits to female staff on temporary and fixed term contracts.

Other public authorities

No

Voluntary and community groups

No

Others

No

4. Available evidence

What evidence or information have you gathered to inform this policy? (Specific details for each of the relevant Section 75 categories.)

	Details of evidence
Religious belief	The annual FE monitoring return (1 Jan 2014) shows that, of a total of 70 full time and 13 part time posts, 36% were held by people from a Protestant community background, 45% were held by people from a Catholic community background and 19% by people whose background was not determined.
Political opinion	
Racial group	
Age	
Marital status	
Sexual orientation	
Gender	The annual FE monitoring return (1 Jan 2014) shows that, of the 70 full time posts, 26 (37%) were held by women. Of the 13 part time posts, 8 (62%) were held by women. Of the staff in temporary or fixed term posts, 45% were female. Staff in temporary or fixed term posts represented just over 60% of the workforce.
Disability	
Dependants	

Taking this information into account, what are the different needs, experiences or priorities of people in each of the Section 75 categories in relation to this policy?

	Details of needs, experiences or priorities
Religious belief	
Political opinion	
Racial group	
Age	
Marital status	
Sexual orientation	
Gender	The changes to the policy will principally affect female employees of

	child bearing age in temporary and fixed term posts (i.e. a maximum of 26 staff at the present time).
Disability	
Dependants	

Part B: Screening questions

Taking into account the earlier evidence, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy, by applying the following questions. You should also identify whether the impact is likely to be major or minor.

1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 categories?

	Details of policy impact	Major, Minor or None
Religious belief	It is not expected that the policy will result in any differential impact on staff by reason of their religious belief.	None
Political opinion	See above	None
Racial group	No data is available on the racial composition of current female staff. It is not expected that the revised policy will result in any differential impact on staff by reason of their racial group.	None
Age	No data is available on the age groups of current female staff. The changes to the policy will apply only to female staff of child bearing age in temporary or fixed term posts but it is not expected that this will create a negative impact on those in older age groups.	None
Marital status	No data is available on the marital status of current female staff. It is not expected that the revised policy will result in any differential impact on staff by reason of their marital status.	None
Sexual orientation	No data is available on the sexual orientation of current female staff. It is not expected that the revised policy will result in any differential impact on staff by reason of their marital status.	None

Gender	The policy will provide additional benefits to female employees before and after the birth of a child. SIB has relaxed the NICS rules on eligibility for contractual maternity benefits to allow those on temporary contracts and those on fixed term contracts of less than two years to benefit from the policy, provided that the unexpired term of the contract will allow the employee to return to work for at least one calendar month. This will result in a major positive impact on female staff of child bearing age in temporary and fixed term posts.	Major positive benefit
Disability	No data is available on current female staff in terms of whether they are disabled or non-disabled. It is not expected that the revised policy will result in any differential impact on disabled or non-disabled staff.	None
Dependants	No data is available on current female staff in terms of whether they have dependents or not. It is not expected that the revised policy will result in any differential impact on people with or without dependents.	None

2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people in any of the Section 75 categories?

	If YES, provide details	If NO, provide reasons
Religious belief		The changes to the policy have no effect on staff by reason of their religious belief
Political opinion		The changes to the policy have no effect on staff by reason of their religious belief
Racial group		The changes to the policy have no effect on staff by reason of their religious belief
Age		The changes to the policy have no effect on staff by reason of their religious belief
Marital status		The changes to the policy have no effect on staff by reason of

		their religious belief
Sexual orientation		The changes to the policy have no effect on staff by reason of their religious belief
Gender	The changes to the policy will assist SIB to attract and retain female employees	
Disability		The changes to the policy have no effect on staff by reason of their religious belief
Dependants		The changes to the policy have no effect on staff by reason of their religious belief

3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

	Details of policy impact	Major, Minor or None
Religious belief		None
Political opinion		None
Racial group		None

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

	If YES, provide details	If NO, provide reasons
Religious belief		The revisions to the policy have no impact on good relations
Political opinion		The revisions to the policy have no impact on good relations
Racial group		The revisions to the policy have no impact on good relations

Part C: Disability Duties

1. Does the policy provide an opportunity to better promote positive attitudes towards disabled people? (If so, explain how.)

No

Note: Promoting positive attitudes can include taking steps to portray disabled people in a positive role, as well as taking steps to eliminate ignorance and prejudice towards disabled people.

2. Does the policy provide an opportunity to actively increase participation by disabled people in public life? (If so, explain how.)

No

Note: Encouraging participation in public life can include taking measures to involve disabled people in public policy decision making, as well as encouraging their participation in political life (e.g. as members of consultative groups, as elected representatives or as voters).

Part D: Screening decision

In the light of the above analysis, please select one of the following four options:

1. The policy should not be subject to an EQIA and no mitigating measures are required. Give reasons for this conclusion.

The policy should not be subject to an EQIA as there are no potential negative impacts. The revisions will have a positive impact on female staff of child bearing age in temporary and fixed term posts. It is not considered that there are any additional equality categories where there will be any impact and no particular needs have been identified that will require mitigating measures.

2. The policy should not be subject to an EQIA but mitigating measures should be implemented. Give reasons for this conclusion and details of mitigating measures.

3. The policy should be subject to an EQIA immediately. Give reasons for this conclusion.

4. The policy should be subject to an EQIA at a later date. Give reasons for this conclusion.

Note: Mitigating measures include revisions to the policy and/ or additional actions to eliminate or minimise any adverse impacts for people in one of more of the Section 75 equality categories.

Part E: Monitoring

Effective monitoring will help identify any future adverse impacts arising from the policy and should be carried out even when an EQIA is not deemed necessary.

1. How will the policy's impact on equality of opportunity be monitored?

Uptake of the revised policy will be monitored in terms of the nature of each post-holder's contract (i.e. permanent, temporary or fixed term). Through recruitment monitoring and additional voluntary staff surveys, SIB will be able to determine the equality categories within which successful applicants fall.

2. How will the policy's impact on good relations be monitored?

Not applicable

3. How will the policy's impact on promoting positive attitudes to disabled people be monitored?

Not applicable

4. How will the policy's impact on encouraging participation by disabled people in public life be monitored?

Not applicable

Part F: Approval and authorisation

Screened by:	Job Title	Date
Denise Wheatley	Equality Consultant	4 Sep 2014
Approved by:		
Ursula Doherty	Human Resources Manager	8 Sep 2014

A copy of this screening template should be published on the SIB website as soon as possible following approval and made available on request (in accessible alternative formats as necessary).