**Equality Screening Template**

**INTRODUCTION**

The information contained in this Equality Screening Form has been extracted from the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland’s Guide for Public Authorities (2010). Additional information about the 5 parts of the form and a flowchart to demonstrate the process of completion is detailed in [**Appendix 1**](#Appendix1) of the form.

This template document and further guidance can be found by clicking the following link - [www.equalityni.org/S75duties](https://www.equalityni.org/S75duties)

**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 Policy** | Flexible Working |
| **Is it existing, revised or a new policy?** | Existing |
| **What is it trying to achieve?**  **(Intended aims/outcomes)** | Outlining the policy details that provide an opportunity for individual employees to submit a request to change their working hours or working patterns so that they can have work arrangements that may better suit their personal circumstances such as a reduction in hours, or particular shift pattern.  These requests may be received for a number of different reasons such as childcare restraints, carer responsibilities, personal work life balance choice, medical grounds (as example).  Requests are reviewed by the line manager on an individual basis and consideration for the effect on the organisation are given. There are limitations outlined in legislation to decline a flexible working request which are to be provided to the employee, where applicable. |
| **Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy? If so, explain how.** | Former legislation meant that only those employees with specific caring responsibilities for a dependant were permitted to request a flexible working pattern. And it would still be typically seen in reasons given for a request that one of the more common reasons to request a change in working hours/pattern is due to childcare or being a carer to another dependant, which would mean that this policy could be of benefit to those with dependants. However, in accordance with legislation changes in 2015, the reason of being a carer is no longer required to make a request for flexible working and therefore this policy would not exclusively benefit that category of employee. |
| **Who initiated or wrote the policy?** | HR Services Manager |
| **Who owns and who implements the policy?** | Human Resources |

**Implementation Factors**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes | X | No |  |

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

If yes, are they: (Select all applicable)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Financial |
| X | Legislative |
|  | Other – please specify: |  |

**Main stakeholders affected**

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| X | Staff |
|  | Service Users |
|  | Other Public Sector Organisations |
|  | Voluntary/ Community/ Trade Unions |
|  | Other – please specify: |  |

##### [Other policies with a bearing on this policy](#Onefour):

|  |
| --- |
| * Time off for Dependants Policy * Career Break Policy * Job Sharing Policy * Parental Leave Policy * Shared Parental Leave Policy * Maternity Leave Policy * Paternity/Partners Leave Policy |

**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** |
| Religious belief | **Internal data from register of those who have formally lodged flexible working requests in 2017-2019** and the current fair employment monitoring data. Showing of the 35 requests made during the outlined timeframe:  27 were from Protestants  6 were from Roman Catholics  1 was Other |
| Political opinion | This data is not specifically obtained, but the data of religious belief would be deemed a proxy for political opinion. |
| Racial group | No evidence available to indicate correlation between this category and requirement to request a Flexible Working Arrangement |
| Age | **Internal data from register of those who have formally lodged flexible working requests in 2017-2019** of which there were 35 applicants (5 have no current age range data available due to no longer being an employee). Of the 30 that data was available the age ranges were:  25-34 = 4  35-45 = 14  46-54 = 6  55+ = 6 |
| Marital status | **NI Census 2011 Data** shows that 31.30% of lone parents (i.e. with dependant children) work part time, but there is no comparable data relating to how many married/civil partnership/co-habiting couples have one or more parents working part time.  **Internal data** -This is an optional category regarding fair employment and so data is limited but there is no evidence available to indicate correlation between this category and requirement to request a Flexible Working Arrangement. |
| Sexual orientation | **Internal data** - This is an optional category regarding fair employment and so data is limited but there is no evidence available to indicate correlation between this category and requirement to request a Flexible Working Arrangement |
| Men and women generally | **Northern Ireland Census Data 2011**: Shows only 5.16% of men (between 16-74) work part time, compared to 20.83% of women.  **NISRA Women in Northern Ireland Report** – Dec 2018: Indicates that only 10% of men in 2018 worked part time, compared to 39% of women.  **Internal information about employees who have requested Flexible Working in 2017 -2019**. Shows 35 employees requested flexible working - 15 were female and 20 were male. This equates to 2.4% of female workforce and 0.5% of male workforce have requested flexible working between 2017-2019. So whilst the numbers on their own look like a similar figure requesting flexible working, the percentages show fives time as many females request to work part time compared to males, which is similar in expectation with the NI statistics showing that four times as many women work part time compared to men.  **Translink’s current headcount** shows 14% of its workforce are female. Approximately 7% (302) employees (Male and female) work part time hours (hours below 36 per week) and 33% (102) of those working part time are female (2.4% of the entire employee workforce) |
| Disability | **Internal information about employees who have requested Flexible Working in 2017 -2019** of the 35 requested flexible working,none of these are logged as having a disability in that timeframe.  **Fair employment monitoring data** regarding employees who have recorded that they have a disability and their respective working hours (making an assumption using the data, that most flexible working arrangements involve a reduction in working hours compared to full contractual hours of a comparable employee). This information indicates that all Translink employees logged as having a disability work part time/reduced hours. |
| Dependants | **Internal information about employees who have requested Flexible Working in 2017 -2019** has very limited information regarding reasons for requests for flexible working, however, where this information has been noted for 17 employees (of the 35), 13 (i.e. 76% of these requests) of those are recorded as ‘childcare’ reasons indicating that those with child dependents are a main category to make use of the Flexible Working policy. |

**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** |
| Religious belief | Whilst the data shows some imbalance in requests made, there is no indication from the data that religious belief has any purpose in the requests made.  As the reason for all flexible working requests is not recorded we cannot presume that some requests under the policy may be to request non-Sabbath or non-religious days working patterns to allow someone to practice their religious beliefs. However, there is no limitation or criteria within the Flexible working policy to restrict any such request. |
| Political opinion | As appropriate religious belief would be seen to be a proxy of this category. |
| Racial group | There is no information to indicate that this category has any needs or priorities in relation to the Flexible Working Policy. |
| Age | The data shows that the flexible working policy is more likely to impact younger employees between 25-45. This may be due to childcare or carer responsibilities or that younger employees may wish to undertake further education to develop their career.  Those over 55 can avail of flexible retirement and so this may be the reason for lower numbers in this category regarding flexible working requests as this would be recorded separately under the retirement policy. |
| Marital status | There is no information to indicate that this category has any needs or priorities in relation to the Flexible Working Policy. |
| Sexual orientation | There is no information to indicate that this category has any needs or priorities in relation to the Flexible Working Policy. |
| Men and women generally | The internal data shows a higher number of men submitting a request for flexible working than women, but on reflection of the male to female workforce ratios, there was a smaller percentage of males submitting a request compared to female. This data of 5:1 (female:male) requests is in line with the NI Census data that a wider population of women work part time compared to men (approx. 4:1). This is based on internal data that ‘most’ FW requests are to reduce working hours.  There is no restriction in the policy on whether men or women meet eligibility. |
| Disability | Internal data of those employees that are recorded as having a disability show that all work reduced hours. However, whilst this may be in accordance with the Flexible Working Policy, the policy would be superseded by Disability Discrimination legislation which would require consideration of reasonable adjustment, flexible working criteria would not be applicable and ‘less’ consideration would be given to commercial requirements. Also, as employees may not log a disability on the fair employment monitoring this data is may not be a full reflection.  Therefore, whilst the data available has been reviewed, an employee who has a disability can request flexible working hours as a reasonable adjustment without having to make a formal flexible working application and therefore will not necessarily avail of this policy. |
| Dependants | The data reviewed indicates that a main reason for flexible working requests is related to childcare needs and therefore those with child dependants have a need for the policy. However, since change in legislation in 2015 a subsequent policy revision has seen that ‘caring responsibilities’ are no longer required to be outlined to submit a flexible working request for consideration. |

**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 the Guide: <https://www.equalityni.org/S75duties>

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.

**Impact: Major / Minor / None**

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.

**In favour of ‘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. |

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 ‘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. |

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.

**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. |

**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 | There is no identified content that would affect a person’s religious belief in order to adhere to the Flexible Working Policy. | None |
| Political opinion | There is no identified content that would affect a person’s political opinion in order to adhere to the Flexible Working Policy. | None |
| Racial group | There is no impact identified regarding any racial group in adhering to the Flexible Working Policy. | None |
| Age | The data supports that this policy is likely to have more impact on younger employees, however there no content to restrict or limit its usage to the younger workforce. The criterion is balanced and reasonable across all age groups within the workforce. | None |
| Marital status | There is no impact identified regarding any marital status in adhering to the Flexible Working Policy. | None |
| Sexual orientation | There is no impact identified regarding any sexual orientation in adhering to the Flexible Working Policy. | None |
| Men and women generally | The data shows that in a numerical form that more men requested to avail of the policy than women, however compared to number of men in the total workforce it was a very small percentage that made such use of the policy compared to women. However, as this data is similar to the national statistics regarding part time/flexible working, and there is no content that restricts its usage to either gender (generally) then there is no impact identified to either men or women. | None |
| Disability | There is no impact identified regarding disability in adhering to the Flexible Working Policy. | None |
| Dependants | The data indicates that those with dependants (particularly children) are more likely to make a request in accordance with the Flexible working policy, however there is no content to identify any impact on such a category. | None |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **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 |
| Religious belief |  | No, as this policy has no impact on this group |
| Political opinion |  | No, as this policy has no impact on this group |
| Racial group |  | No, as this policy has no impact on this group |
| Age |  | No, as this policy has no impact on this group |
| Marital status |  | No, as this policy has no impact on this group |
| Sexual orientation |  | No, as this policy has no impact on this group |
| Men and women generally |  | No, as this policy has no impact on this group |
| Disability |  | No, as this policy has no impact on this group |
| Dependants |  | No, as this policy has no impact on this group |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **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 | There is no identified content that would affect a person’s religious belief therefore no impact on good relations between those of different religious belief. | None |
| Political opinion | There is no identified content that would affect a person’s political opinion therefore no impact on good relations between those of different political opinion. | None |
| Racial group | There is no impact identified relating to racial group or good relations between different races. | None |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **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 |  | No, as this policy has no impact on this group |
| Political opinion |  | No, as this policy has no impact on this group |
| Racial group |  | No, as this policy has no impact on this group |

**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).

|  |
| --- |
| No impact identified for anyone that falls into multiple categories. |

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

|  |
| --- |
| N/A |

**Part 3 - Screening Decision**

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

|  |
| --- |
| No impact assessment required as little to no impact on any category was identified in relation to the Flexible Working Policy. |

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.

|  |
| --- |
| No mitigation has been identified as required and an alternative policy is not required. The current policy is acceptable. |

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:

|  |
| --- |
| **N/A** |

**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.

**Part 5 - Approval and authorisation**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Policy Title:** | **Flexible Working Policy** | **Version No:** |  |
| **Print Name** | **Signature** | **Position/Job Title** | **Date** |
| **Screened By:** | | | |
| Kerri Adams |  | HR Compliance & Governance Officer | November 2020 |
| **Approved by:** | | | |
| Paula Ludlow |  | HR Services Manager | 22nd January 2021 |

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.

**Equality Screening Template**

**Introduction**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Part** | **Part Title** | **Description** |
| **1** | **Policy Scoping** | Asks public authorities to provide details about the policy, procedure, practice and/or decision being screened and what available evidence you have gathered to help make an assessment of the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations |
| **2** | **Screening Questions** | Asks about the extent of the likely impact of the policy on groups of people within each of the Section 75 categories. Details of the groups consulted and the level of assessment of the likely impact. This includes consideration of multiple identity and good relations issues. |
| **3** | **Screening Decision** | Guides the public authority to reach a screening decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment (EQIA), or tointroducemeasures to mitigate the likely impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations. |
| **4** | **Monitoring** | Provides guidance to public authorities on monitoring for adverse impact and broader monitoring. |
| **5** | **Approval and Authorisation** | Verifies the public authority’s approval of a screening decision by a senior manager responsible for the policy. |

Policy Scoping

* + Policy
  + Available data

Screening Questions

* Apply screening questions
* Consider multiple identities

Screening Decision None/Minor/Major

Mitigate

Publish Template

Re-consider screening

Publish Template for information

Publish Template

EQIA

Monitor

**‘None’**

Screened out

**‘Major’**

Screened in for EQIA

**‘Minor’**

Screened out with mitigation

Concerns raised with evidence

Concerns raised with evidence re: screening decision