



Northern
Ireland
Office

SECTION 75

EQUALITY SCREENING FORM

**PORTRAITS OF HIS MAJESTY THE KING FOR
UK PUBLIC AUTHORITIES:**

PORTRAITS IN THE NIO OFFICE

Version: July 2022

SECTION 75 – THE LEGAL BACKGROUND

Under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the NIO is required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:

- persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation
 - men and women generally
 - persons with a disability and persons without
 - persons with dependants and persons without.
2. In addition, and without prejudice to the obligations above, in carrying out our functions in relation to Northern Ireland we are required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. The NIO is also required to meet our legislative obligations under the Disability Discrimination Order.
3. A list of the main groups identified as being relevant to each of the Section 75 categories is at **Annex A** of this document.

INTRODUCTION

4. This form should be read in conjunction with the Equality Commission's Section 75 guidance "A Guide for Public Authorities" April 2010, available on the Equality Commission's website (www.equalityni.org). **Staff should complete a form for each new or revised policy for which they are responsible (see page 4 for a definition of a policy in respect of Section 75).**
5. The purpose of screening is to identify those policies that are likely to have an impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations and so determine whether an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is necessary. Screening should be introduced at an early stage when developing or reviewing a policy.
6. The lead role in the screening of a policy should be taken by the policy decision-maker who has the authority to make changes to that policy and should involve in the screening process:
- other relevant team members;
 - those who implement the policy;
 - staff members from other relevant areas of work; and
 - key stakeholders.
7. A flowchart which outlines the screening process is attached at **Annex B**.

8. The first step in the screening exercise is to gather evidence to inform the screening decisions. Relevant data may be either quantitative or qualitative or both (this helps to indicate whether or not there are likely equality of opportunity and/or good relations impacts associated with a policy). Relevant information will help to clearly demonstrate the reasons for a policy being either 'screened in' for an EQIA or 'screened out'.

9. The absence of evidence does not indicate that there is no likely impact but if none is available, it may be appropriate to consider subjecting the policy to an EQIA.

10. Screening provides an assessment of the likely impact, whether 'minor' or 'major', of its policy on equality of opportunity and/or good relations for the relevant categories. In some instances, screening may identify the likely impact is none.

11. The Equality Commission has developed a series of four questions, included in Part 2 of this screening form with supporting sub-questions, which should be applied to all policies as part of the screening process. They identify those policies that are likely to have an impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

SCREENING DECISIONS

12. Completion of screening should lead to one of the following three outcomes. The policy has been:

- i. 'screened in' for equality impact assessment;
- ii. 'screened out' with mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted; or
- iii. 'screened out' without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.

SCREENING AND GOOD RELATIONS DUTY

13. The Equality Commission recommends that a policy is 'screened in' for EQIA if the likely impact on **good relations** is 'major'. While there is no legislative requirement to engage in an equality impact assessment in respect of good relations, this does not necessarily mean that EQIAs are inappropriate in this context.

FURTHER INFORMATION

15. In addition to the Equality Commission's published guidance, further information on equality, including a copy of the NIO Equality Scheme, can be found on the NIO Intranet under the [Governance, Sponsorship and Public Appointments Hub](#). If you have any questions regarding the screening exercise or Section 75 in general please contact the Governance Team.

16. When you have completed the form please retain on file in the branch for record purposes, and send a copy to the s75 equality advisor.

PART 1 – POLICY SCOPING

DEFINITION OF POLICY

1.1. There have been some difficulties in defining what constitutes a policy in the context of Section 75. To be on the safe side, it is recommended that you consider any new initiatives, proposals, schemes or programmes as policies or changes to those already in existence. It is important to remember that even if a full EQIA has been carried out in an “overarching” policy or strategy, it will still be necessary for the policy maker to consider if a further EQIA needs to be carried out in respect of those policies cascading from the overarching strategy.

OVERVIEW OF POLICY PROPOSALS

1.2. The aims and objectives of the policy must be clear and terms of reference well defined. You must take into account any available data that will enable you to come to a decision on whether or not a policy may or may not have a differential impact on any of the s75 categories.

SCOPING THE POLICY

1.3. 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.

1.4. Remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the NIO), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the NIO).

INFORMATION ABOUT THE POLICY

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of the policy | Official Portraits of His Majesty the King |
| Is this an existing, revised or new policy? | Existing Policy |
| What is it trying to achieve (intended aims/outcomes)? | <p>The Portrait scheme overall is a government-funded scheme to provide, free of charge, a portrait of The King to certain public authorities at their request.</p> <p>The scheme is UK wide, and those public authorities in scope are: ministerial and non-ministerial government departments, executive agencies, executive and advisory NDPBs, councils (excluding town and parish), schools (excluding private or non-maintained), prisons, courts, police forces, fire and rescue services, and a small number of 'other' public authorities not captured by other definitions.</p> <p>Each public authority is eligible to request one portrait free of charge.</p> <p>The NIO falls within the scope of the scheme to receive a free portrait of His Majesty the King for the Office. The purpose of this assessment is to determine whether the NIO avails of a portrait and where the portrait should be hung.</p> <p>An additional portrait is also being offered to Secretaries of State within the UK Government to hang within their Ministerial Office</p> |
| Are there any s75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy? If so, explain how. | <p>Those of certain Political or Religious beliefs</p> <p>Religious belief - Protestants are more likely to hold a Unionist political opinion and are more likely to be receptive to</p> |

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| | <p>viewing a portrait of His Majesty the King in a Northern Ireland Office (NIO) office.</p> <p>Political Opinion - Unionists and Loyalists are more likely to welcome a portrait of His Majesty the King in the NIO Offices</p> |
| Who initiated or wrote the policy? | The Cabinet Office. |
| Who owns and who implements the policy? | <p>The overarching Portrait Scheme is owned by the Cabinet Office and it is aimed at all public authorities across the UK.</p> <p>The NIO owns the policy on whether it avails of the scheme and if so where a portrait would be displayed within its offices.</p> |

IMPLEMENTATION FACTORS

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| Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision? | <p>Yes.</p> <p>The Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement contains provisions on parity of esteem for all communities.</p> <p>As a workplace and a public authority under s.75 of the Northern Ireland Act, the Northern Ireland Office has specific duties and a broader role as an exemplar in promoting a harmonious working environment, equality of opportunity and good relations.</p> <p>The Equality Commission has produced guidance on what is considered a '<i>Good and Harmonious Workplace</i>' referring to symbols which may disrupt the workplace and have the potential to make those of a different identity feel uncomfortable or unwelcome.</p> <p>The guidance states that, "employers may find it preferable to facilitate diverse</p> |
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| | expressions of identity in a sensitive way which does not disrupt a good and harmonious working environment. Such an approach should be founded on choices that are reasonable, fair and appropriate at that time and in that place.” |
| If yes, are they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - financial - legislative - other (please specify) | N/A |

MAIN STAKEHOLDERS AFFECTED

| | |
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| Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - staff - service users - other public sector organisations - voluntary/community/trade unions - other (please specify) | <p>NIO Staff who work at either 1HGR or Erskine House on a daily basis</p> <p>Visitors to either Erskine House or 1 HGR including representatives from other public sector organisations, voluntary/ community/ trade unions from all religious or political backgrounds</p> |
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OTHER POLICIES WITH A BEARING ON THIS POLICY

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| What are they? | <p>The Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement.</p> <p>The Agreement created a new power-sharing arrangement in Northern Ireland, including an Executive and Assembly, and was based on a series of fundamental principles including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the parity of esteem of both communities • the principle of consent underpinning Northern Ireland’s constitutional status • the birthright of the people of Northern Ireland to identify and be accepted as British or Irish, or both, and to hold both British and Irish citizenship |
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| Who owns them? | The NIO |
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AVAILABLE EVIDENCE

1.5. Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Please ensure that your 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 s75 categories.

| Section 75 category | Details of evidence/information |
|---------------------|---|
| Religious belief | <p>The Majority of the Northern Ireland Office's (NIO) stakeholders are based in Northern Ireland, however there are a number of stakeholders residing in the rest of the UK, therefore the evidence details below includes surveys from both regions as the NIO has two offices, one in Belfast and one in London.</p> <p>The 2021 Northern Ireland Census results demonstrate that 42.3% of residents identify as being of a Catholic religious belief, 16.6% Presbyterian Church in Ireland, 11.55% Church of Ireland, 2.35% Methodist, 6.85% other Christian. 17.3% were of no religion and 1.6% did not state a religion</p> <p>According to the Northern Ireland Life and Times survey (NILT) from 2022, 28% of participants indicated that they were of no religion, 32% identified as Catholic, 11% Church of Ireland/Anglican/Episcopal, and 13% Presbyterian. The remaining percentage of respondents were a mixture of Free Presbyterian, Brethren, Pentecostal Non-subscribing Presbyterian, Other Protestant, Other Christian, Islam/Muslim or Other religion</p> <p>Respondents to the 2022 NILT survey were asked what religion and Nationality they identified with. The results are below:</p> |

| | <p>Results for people of different religions</p> <table><tr><th></th><th colspan="3">%</th></tr><tr><th></th><th>Catholic</th><th>Protestant</th><th>No religion</th></tr><tr><td>Unionist</td><td>1</td><td>66</td><td>19</td></tr><tr><td>Nationalist</td><td>64</td><td>3</td><td>17</td></tr><tr><td>Neither</td><td>30</td><td>28</td><td>59</td></tr><tr><td>Other answer</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Don't know</td><td>4</td><td>2</td><td>3</td></tr></table> | | % | | | | Catholic | Protestant | No religion | Unionist | 1 | 66 | 19 | Nationalist | 64 | 3 | 17 | Neither | 30 | 28 | 59 | Other answer | 0 | 1 | 3 | Don't know | 4 | 2 | 3 |
|-------------------|---|------------|-------------|--|--|--|----------|------------|-------------|----------|---|----|----|-------------|----|---|----|---------|----|----|----|--------------|---|---|---|------------|---|---|---|
| | % | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Catholic | Protestant | No religion | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Unionist | 1 | 66 | 19 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Nationalist | 64 | 3 | 17 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Neither | 30 | 28 | 59 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Other answer | 0 | 1 | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Don't know | 4 | 2 | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | <p>The Northern Ireland Life and Times survey (NILT) 2022 asked respondents whether they felt that they could be open about their cultural identity in the workplace. 45% of respondents said that yes, definitely with a further 30% saying yes probably.</p> <p>The 2021 Census of England and Wales found that 46.2% of people identified as “Christian” which remains the most common response. However for the first time this figure dropped to below half of the population.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Political opinion | <p>The Majority of the Northern Ireland Office’s (NIO) stakeholders are based in Northern Ireland, however there are a number of stakeholders residing in the rest of the UK, therefore the evidence detailed below includes surveys from both regions given the NIO has offices in both Belfast and London.</p> <p>The 2021 NI Census respondents identified as: British 31.86% Irish 29.13% Northern Irish 19.78% British and Irish only: 0.62% British and Northern Irish only: 7.95% Irish and Northern Irish only: 1.76% British, Irish and Northern Irish only: 1.47% Other: 7.43% (Table MS-B15)</p> <p>The 2022 Northern Ireland Life and Times survey asked individuals about their political attitudes. 31% of respondents thought of themselves as Unionists, 26% Nationalists, 38% saw themselves as neither. With 5% answering “Other” or “Don’t Know”</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| | <p>However, a research update report written by ARK, Northern Ireland's social policy hub, highlights the relative size of the groups identifying as nationalist (26%), unionist (31%) or 'neither' (38%) has become closer, but there has been a particular strengthening of nationalist identities since 2016.</p> <p>Equally, the same report highlights that 48% of respondents continue to believe that the long-term policy should be for Northern Ireland to remain part of the UK – the same as the previous year's survey (2021). Support for a united Ireland as a long-term policy has also not significantly changed (31%).</p> <p>It also states that the <i>"time series data on this question shows that support for devolution within the UK has fallen quite dramatically in recent years (from 54% in 2016 to 35% in 2022). Support for direct rule has remained on average 14 per cent during that time (12% in 2016 and 12% in 2022). However, there has been a significant and steady rise in support for Irish unity: from 14 per cent in 2015 to 31 per cent in 2022"</i></p> <p>The 2021 Census found that 90.3% of the population (53.8 million people) in England and Wales identified with at least one UK national identity (English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, British, and Cornish).</p> <p>LucidTalk ran a survey in Spring 2023 in which they asked members of the public in NI whether they support the UK Monarchy. 42% of respondents said yes they supported the Monarchy, 33% responded with no and a further 25% stated that they either didn't know/ had no opinion or felt no connection to the UK Monarchy.</p> <p>A YouGov survey undertaken ahead of the Coronation of King Charles III states that <i>"ahead of the coronation, six in ten Britons say we should continue to have a monarchy, while one in four say we should have an elected head of state"</i></p> <p>The findings also show that attitudes towards the monarchy differ most by age, with <i>"young Britons far less likely to support keeping the royals than their elders"</i>. 79% of over-65s, to 36% for the 18-24 year olds</p> |
| Racial group | It is not expected that this Section 75 group will be affected in a major way. |
| Age | It is not expected that this Section 75 group will be affected in a major way. |

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| Marital status | It is not expected that this Section 75 group will be affected in a major way. |
| Sexual orientation | It is not expected that this Section 75 group will be affected in a major way. |
| Men and women generally | It is not expected that this Section 75 group will be affected in a major way. |
| Disability | It is not expected that this Section 75 group will be affected in a major way. |
| Dependants | It is not expected that this Section 75 group will be affected in a major way. |

NEEDS, EXPERIENCES AND PRIORITIES

1.6. 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 s75 categories.

| Section 75 category | Details of needs/experiences/priorities |
|---------------------|---|
| Religious belief | <p>Users of either Erskine House, Belfast or 1 Horseguards Road, London include employees, Ministers, PSNI close protection officers, political parties, stakeholders, suppliers and visitors. They all come from a range of religious backgrounds, and could have sight of the portrait of His Majesty the King when visiting the office.</p> <p>The Northern Ireland Office's policy on displaying a portrait of His Majesty the King should balance the needs, experiences and priorities of all communities, however, visitors of a Protestant Unionist identity in Northern Ireland are more likely to support the hanging of a portrait of His Majesty the King in a public space than those from a Catholic, Nationalist background.</p> |

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| Political opinion | <p>Users of either Erskine House, Belfast or 1 Horseguards Road, London include employees, ministers, PSNI close protection officers, political parties, stakeholders, suppliers and visitors will come from a range of political backgrounds, and could have sight of a portrait of His Majesty the King when visiting the office.</p> <p>Those that identify as British or British and Northern Irish are more likely to be receptive to the hanging of a portrait of His Majesty the King in a communal area in the Northern Ireland Office offices. Those visiting the London office, by nature of the location of the office, are more likely to support the hanging of a portrait in that building given that the 2021 Census identified that 90.3% of the population in England and Wales identified with at least one UK national identity (English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, British, and Cornish) as opposed to the same 2021 Census conducted in Northern Ireland found that a lower percentage of the population identified as either British (31.86%), Northern Irish (19.78%) or British and Northern Irish only: (7.95%)</p> <p>However, although the overall percentage of those identifying as having UK identity in Northern Ireland is lower than in England and Wales, this percentage remains higher than those who identify as being Irish or Irish and Northern Irish or other meaning that there is a higher probability of those working in or visiting Erskine House supporting the hanging of a Portrait of His Majesty the King in the office.</p> |
| Racial group | There are no specific needs, experiences or priorities for this group. |
| Age | There are no specific needs, experiences or priorities for this group. |
| Marital status | There are no specific needs, experiences or priorities for this group. |
| Sexual orientation | There are no specific needs, experiences or priorities for this group. |
| Men and women generally | There are no specific needs, experiences or priorities for this group. |

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| Disability | There are no specific needs, experiences or priorities for this group. |
| Dependants | There are no specific needs, experiences or priorities for this group. |

PART 2 – SCREENING QUESTIONS

INTRODUCTION

2.1. In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an EQIA, please give consideration to your answers to the questions 1-4 which are given on pages 66-68 of the Equality Commission's "A Guide for Public Authorities".

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

2.3. If your 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.

2.4. If your 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:

- take measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
- introduce 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.

2.5. 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 | <p>This assessment of the impact is on the decision by the NIO to hang a portrait of His Majesty the King in its offices - not the scheme as a whole.</p> <p>Groups within this s.75 category may be more impacted by the policy than others.</p> <p>According to the Northern Ireland Life and Times survey from 2022, people of Catholic belief continue to be more likely to identify as Irish or “More Irish than British”. These results indicate that Catholic individuals are less likely to engage or be receptive to British Culture or support the Union and therefore hanging a portrait may cause controversy within this community.</p> <p>The impact of portraits being hung in the Northern Ireland Office offices may be reduced by the portrait being hung in a non-communal area such as a Ministerial office.</p> | Minor - with mitigations |
| Political opinion | <p>This assessment of the impact is on the decision by the NIO to hang a portrait of His Majesty the King in its offices - not the scheme as a whole</p> <p>One of the principles of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement is the birthright of the people of Northern Ireland to identify and be accepted as British or Irish, or both, and to hold both British and Irish citizenship with the Agreement creating a new power-sharing arrangement in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Those who identify as Irish Only are significantly less likely to be receptive to the scheme as those who identify as British Only and as Unionist.</p> | |

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| | The impact of a portrait being hung in the NIO offices on these groups may be mitigated by a portrait being hung in a non-communal area such as a Ministerial office. This would reduce the level of impact on those that do not identify as being British or part of British Culture. | |
| Racial group | We do not anticipate a differential impact on equality of opportunity for people from this group. | |
| Age | We do not anticipate a differential impact on equality of opportunity for people from this group. | |
| Marital status | We do not anticipate a differential impact on equality of opportunity for people from this group. | |
| Sexual orientation | We do not anticipate a differential impact on equality of opportunity for people from this group | |
| Men and women generally | We do not anticipate a differential impact on equality of opportunity for people from this group. | |
| Disability | We do not anticipate a differential impact on equality of opportunity for people from this group | |
| Dependants | We do not anticipate a differential impact on equality of opportunity for people from this group | |

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 | <p>Recognising the sensitivities surrounding images of members of the Royal Family, the Northern Ireland Office can better promote equality of opportunity for those of different religious opinions when implementing this policy by giving due consideration to the sensitivities of the scheme in determining where any portrait is hung by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Not hanging a portrait in the main public spaces in the office. Instead hanging a portrait in a Ministerial office where only those visiting that particular Ministerial office will view it. Visitors to the office will therefore have the choice whether they view it. 2) Disseminating specific staff communications to explain the policy and its purpose 3) Sensitively handling key stakeholders, if required, to ensure the policy and any mitigations are understood 4) Avoiding proactive publicity (eg. social media posts) prevent this becoming a focal point of difference between those of different political opinions 5) Reviewing this policy in the event of a substantial change to working arrangements | <p>In relation to the decision to avail of any portrait, the Northern Ireland Office is part of the UK Government.</p> <p>The Crown has a fundamental role in the Constitution of the UK. The King plays a constitutional role in opening and dissolving Parliament and approving UKG Bills before they become law, including those on reserved matters which will affect NI.</p> <p>The Secretary of State already has a portrait of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in His Office therefore there is precedent for displaying images of the Royal Family in the Ministerial Offices</p> |
| Political opinion | <p>Recognising the sensitivities surrounding images of members of the Royal Family, the Northern Ireland Office can better promote equality of opportunity for those of different political opinions when implementing this policy by:</p> | <p>In relation to the decision to avail of a portrait, the Northern Ireland Office is part of the UK Government.</p> <p>The Crown has a fundamental role in the Constitution of the UK. The</p> |

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| | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not hanging a portrait in the main public spaces in the office. Instead hanging a portrait in a Ministerial office therefore only those that are visiting that particular Ministerial office will view it. Visitors to the office will therefore have the choice whether they view it. 2. Disseminating specific staff communications to explain the policy and its purpose 3. Sensitively handling key stakeholders if required to ensure the policy and any mitigations are understood 4. Avoiding proactive publicity (eg. social media posts) prevent this becoming a focal point of difference between those of different political opinions 5. Reviewing this policy in the event of a substantial change to working arrangements | <p>King plays a constitutional role in opening and dissolving Parliament and approving UKG Bills before they become law, including those on reserved matters which will affect NI .</p> <p>The Secretary of State already has a portrait of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in His Office therefore there is precedent for displaying images of the Royal Family in the Ministerial Offices .</p> |
| Racial group | We do not anticipate a differential impact on equality of opportunity for people from this group | There is no evidence to suggest that this policy will have a significant impact on people of different ethnic origins |
| Age | We do not anticipate a differential impact on equality of opportunity for people from this group | There is no evidence to suggest that this policy will have a significant impact on people of different ethnic origins |
| Marital status | We do not anticipate a differential impact on equality of opportunity for people from this group | There is no evidence to suggest that this policy will have a significant impact on people of different ethnic origins |

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| Sexual orientation | We do not anticipate a differential impact on equality of opportunity for people from this group | There is no evidence to suggest that this policy will have a significant impact on people of different ethnic origins |
| Men and women generally | We do not anticipate a differential impact on equality of opportunity for people from this group | There is no evidence to suggest that this policy will have a significant impact on people of different ethnic origins |
| Disability | We do not anticipate a differential impact on equality of opportunity for people from this group | There is no evidence to suggest that this policy will have a significant impact on people of different ethnic origins |
| Dependants | We do not anticipate a differential impact on equality of opportunity for people from this group | There is no evidence to suggest that this policy will have a significant impact on people of different ethnic origins |

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 | <p>The approach taken to hanging a portrait in the Northern Ireland Office Offices may carry sensitivities for those of certain religious background with those of a Protestant or other religions background being generally more supportive than those of a Catholic identity.</p> <p>Mitigations will reduce the impact for both staff and visitors to either office.</p> <p>A portrait hung in a Ministerial office would not be in a prominent location and would therefore not impact the majority of staff and visitors to the Northern Ireland Office on a day to day basis.</p> | Minor - With mitigations |
| Political opinion | <p>The approach taken to hanging a portrait of His Majesty the King carries specific sensitivities for those of both Unionist and Nationalist political backgrounds.</p> <p>Mitigations will reduce the impact for both staff and visitors to either office. A portrait hung in a Ministerial office would not be in a prominent location and would therefore not impact the majority of staff and visitors to the Northern Ireland Office on a day to day basis.</p> | Minor - with mitigations |
| Racial group | N/A | |

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 |
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| <p>Religious belief</p> | <p>The approach taken to displaying a portrait of His Majesty the King in an NIO office may carry sensitivities for those of both Protestant and Catholic political backgrounds.</p> <p>Without mitigations outlined below, the impact on good relations could be greater.</p> <p>Impact on good relations between staff and visitors could be limited through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Not hanging a portrait in the main public spaces in the office, this would help keep the main office space politically neutral, reflecting the “Impartiality” and “Integrity” values outlined in the Civil Service code. 2) Hanging the portrait in a Ministerial office would mean that most visitors to the office will therefore have the choice to view it. 3) Disseminating specific staff communications to explain the policy and its purpose 4) Sensitively handling key stakeholders if required to ensure the policy and any mitigations are understood | <p>In relation to the decision to avail of a portrait, the Northern Ireland Office is part of the UK Government.</p> <p>The Crown has a fundamental role in the Constitution of the UK. The King plays a constitutional role in opening and dissolving Parliament and approving UKG Bills before they become law, including those on reserved matters which will affect NI.</p> <p>The Secretary of State already has a portrait of Her Late Majesty the Queen Elizabeth II in His Office therefore there is precedent for displaying images of the Royal Family in the Ministerial Offices</p> |
| <p>Political opinion</p> | <p>The approach taken to displaying a portrait of His Majesty the King in an NIO office may carry sensitivities between those who carry differing political views such as those who identify as Unionist and Nationalist.</p> <p>Without the mitigations outlined below, the impact on good relations could be greater.</p> <p>Impact on good relations between staff and visitors of different political</p> | <p>In relation to the decision to avail of a portrait, the Northern Ireland Office is part of the UK Government.</p> <p>The Crown has a fundamental role in the Constitution of the UK. The King plays a constitutional role in opening and dissolving Parliament and approving UKG Bills before they become law, including those</p> |

| | | |
|--------------|---|--|
| | <p>backgrounds could be limited through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Not hanging a portrait in the main public spaces in the office, this would help keep the main office space politically neutral, reflecting the “Impartiality” and “Integrity” values outlined in the Civil Service code. 2) Hanging the portrait in a Ministerial office would mean that visitors to the office will have the choice whether they view it. 3) Disseminating specific staff communications to explain the policy and its purpose 4) Sensitively handling key stakeholders if required to ensure the policy and any mitigations are understood | <p>on reserved matters which will affect NI.</p> <p>The Secretary of State already has a portrait of Her Late Majesty the Queen Elizabeth II in His Office therefore there is precedent for displaying images of the Royal Family in the Ministerial Offices</p> |
| Racial group | N/A | N/A |

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.

As mentioned previously in this assessment, there is a correlation between those identifying as protestant and Unionist and those who identify as Catholic and Nationalist within Northern Ireland.

[The 2022 NILT](#) found that 66% of Protestants define themselves as Unionist. Those members of staff or visitors to the Northern Ireland Office of a Catholic religious background and Nationalist political identity visiting the Northern Ireland Office may be less receptive to a portrait being displayed as they do not identify as being British.

The same [NILT survey](#) found that 67% of Protestants identify as “British not Irish” or “More British than Irish”. Those of a Protestant religious background and Unionist political identity may be more likely to be receptive to the display of a portrait owing to their British identity.

The section 75 assessment has explored the impacts on the specific categories of Religious and political identity.

PART 3 – SCREENING DECISION

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

Based on the evidence outlined above, an equality impact assessment is not required on the decision by the NIO to avail of portraits of His Majesty the King as part of this scheme as hanging a portrait in the office does not have a disproportionately unlawful impact on equality and good relations for those visiting the office given that the Northern Ireland Office is part of His Majesty's Government.

The NIO's decision as to where portraits are hung will be considerate of the impacts identified on the specific s.75 groups identified in this screening. The impacts, subject to the mitigations outlined in section 3.2 have been assessed as minor.

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

Whilst an equality impact assessment is deemed not required in this instance, the mitigations, as outlined in section 3.2, will be implemented in relation to where any portrait of His Majesty the King may be hung.

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

N/A

3.1. All public authorities' equality schemes must state the 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 Equality 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 the Equality Commission publication: "Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment".

MITIGATION

3.2. If you have concluded that the likely impact is ‘minor’ and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, you 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.

If a decision to avail of portraits is made by the NIO, the portraits, in line with the mitigations highlighted above could be hung in Ministerial Offices rather than in a communal space.

The policy outlined in the [criteria set out by the Cabinet Office](#) around displaying the portrait states that: *“It is anticipated that the portrait may be hung in reception areas, function rooms, boardrooms and similar locations where the portrait may be on display to staff and visitors of that building”* This criteria can be interpreted to cover Ministerial offices. Whilst not in a communal area and therefore immediately visible to those working in the wider office through the course of the working day; or to those stakeholders visiting officials, the portrait can still be considered to be hung in a place where staff and visitors are able to view it should they be present in the Ministerial Office.

This decision would better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations as the portrait would not be immediately on display as staff/ visitors entered the office.

TIMETABLING AND PRIORITISING

3.3. 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 | N/A |
| Social need | N/A |
| Effect on people's daily lives | N/A |
| Relevance to the NIO's functions | N/A |
| Total rating score (total of 12) | N/A |

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 you in timetabling. Details of the NIO'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?

N/A

If yes, please provide details.

N/A

PART 4 – MONITORING

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

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

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

PART 5 - APPROVAL AND AUTHORISATION

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Screened by: | Caroline Rowley |
| Grade/Branch/Group: | External Relations |
| Date: | 05/03/24 |
| Approved by Deputy Director: | Dr Deborah Magill |
| Date: | 05/03/24 |

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 and made available on request.

Any screening forms completed within the Department will be published on a six monthly basis in line with our Departmental Equality Policy monitoring arrangements. Such information will be collated and published by the Corporate Governance Team.

ANNEX A – MAIN GROUPS IDENTIFIED AS RELEVANT TO THE SECTION 75 CATEGORIES

| Category | Example Groups |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Religious Belief | <p>Buddhist; Catholic; Hindu; Jewish; Muslims; people of no religious belief; Protestants; Sikh; other faiths.</p> <p>For the purposes of Section 75, the term “religious belief” is the same definition as that used in the <i>Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order</i>. Therefore, “religious belief” also includes any <i>perceived</i> religious belief (or perceived lack of belief) and, in employment situations only, it also covers any “<i>similar philosophical belief</i>”.</p> |
| Political Opinion | Nationalists generally; Unionists generally; members/supporters of other political parties. |
| Racial Group | Black people; Chinese; Indians; Pakistanis; people of mixed ethnic background; Polish; Roma; Travellers; White people. |
| Men and women generally | Men (including boys); Trans-gendered people; Transsexual people; Women (including girls). |
| Marital Status | Civil partners or people in civil partnerships; divorced people; married people; separated people; single people; widowed people. |
| Age | Children and young people; older people. |
| Persons with a disability | Persons with disabilities as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. |
| Persons with dependants | Persons with personal responsibility for the care of a child; care of a person with disability; or the care of a dependant older person. |

Sexual orientation

Bisexual people; heterosexual people; gay or lesbian people.

ANNEX B – SCREENING FLOWCHART



