

SOUTHERN EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD



Final Draft

EQUALITY SCHEME

**Drawn up in accordance with Section 75 and
Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998**

This document can also be made available, on request, in alternative formats including in large print, in Braille, by e-mail, on computer disc, on audio-cassette and in minority languages to meet the needs of those people who are not fluent in English.

29th July 2011

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FOREWORD

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act), requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations across a range of categories outline in the Act¹.

In our Equality Scheme, we set out how the Southern Education and Library Board (the Board) proposes to fulfil the Section 75 statutory duties.

This Scheme is important because as well as being a statement of compliance, it outlines a plan for the more effective mainstreaming of equality issues, thus ensuring that they are central to the whole range of policy decision-making within the Board.

We will commit the necessary resources in terms of people, time and money to make sure that the Section 75 statutory duties are complied with and that the Equality Scheme is implemented effectively, and on time.

We commit to having effective internal arrangements in place for ensuring our effective compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties and for monitoring and reviewing our progress.

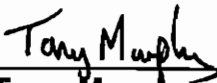
We will develop and deliver a programme of communication and training with the aim of ensuring that all our staff and Board members are made fully aware of our Equality Scheme and understand the commitments and obligations within it. We will develop a programme of awareness-raising for our consultees on the Section 75 statutory duties and our commitments in our Equality Scheme.

As Chairman and Chief Executive of the Southern Education and Library Board, we are fully committed to effectively fulfilling our Section 75 statutory duties across all our functions (including service provision, employment and procurement) through the effective implementation of our Equality Scheme.

We realise the important role that the community, voluntary sector and general public have to play to ensure Section 75 statutory duties are effectively implemented. Our Equality Scheme demonstrates how determined we are to ensure there are opportunities, for people affected by our work, to positively influence how we carry out our functions in line with our Section 75 statutory duties. It also offers the means, whereby persons directly affected by what they consider to be a failure on our part to comply with our Equality Scheme, can make complaints.

On behalf of the Board and our staff we are pleased to support and endorse this Equality Scheme which has been drawn up in accordance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Commission guidelines.


Mr Plunkett Campbell
Chairman


Mr Tony Murphy
Chief Executive

¹ See section 1.1 of our Equality Scheme

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

- 1.1** Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires the Board to comply with two statutory duties:

Section 75 (1)

In carrying out our functions relating to Northern Ireland we are 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; and
- persons with dependants and persons without.

Section 75 (2)

In addition, 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.

How we propose to fulfil the Section 75 duties in relation to the relevant functions of the Board

- 1.2** Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (1) of the Act requires the Southern Education and Library Board as a designated public authority to set out in an Equality Scheme (the Scheme) how it proposes to fulfil the duties imposed by Section 75 in relation to its relevant functions. Under Section 98 (1) of the Act, 'Functions' include the 'powers and duties' of a public authority. This includes our employment and procurement functions. A detailed explanation of our functions is set out at paragraphs 1.4 and 1.5.

This Equality Scheme is intended to fulfil our statutory requirements under the Act. It is both a statement of our arrangements for fulfilling the Section 75 statutory duties and our plan for their implementation.

- 1.3** The Board is committed to the discharge of its Section 75 obligations in all parts of our organisation and we will commit the necessary available resources in terms of people, time and money to ensure that the Section 75 statutory duties are complied with and that it's Equality Scheme can be implemented effectively.

Who we are and what we do

- 1.4** The Southern Education and Library Board ('the Board') was established in 1973, following the reorganisation of Local Government in Northern Ireland. It is a corporate body, established under statute as the local authority for education. Its

functions and responsibilities are derived from statute. Its central activities² support the provision of:

- Pre-school, primary and secondary education;
- Special education; and
- Youth services

throughout the geographical area encompassed by the Board.

The Board is also responsible for ancillary, supplementary and often complementary functions such as:

- Pre-school Education;
- Primary Education;
- Secondary Education;
- Special Education;
- Maintenance of Maintained Schools;
- Youth Services;
- School Attendance;
- Suspension and Expulsion of Pupils;
- Student Support;
- School Transport;
- School Meals and related facilities;
- Employment of Teachers in Controlled Schools and Peripatetic Teachers;
- Employment of non-teaching staff in Controlled and Maintained Schools;
- Curriculum Support;
- Open Enrolment and Transfer;
- Financing of Controlled and Maintained Schools;
- Governor Training;
- Behavioural Support;
- Exceptional Provision.

1.5 To give effect to its functions the Board engages in a range of corporate activities which include the recruitment of staff, the maintenance of the Board's estate, the delivery and development of services and the procurement of services, goods and equipment. In keeping with the Equality Commission's Guidance, these activities are included in the concept of 'functions' for the purposes of this Scheme.

1.6 An organisational structure of the Board is contained at Appendix 1.

² Under the Review of Public Administration, Library Services transferred to the Northern Ireland Library Authority on 1 April 2009

- 1.7 Comprehensive information on the Board's Services is available on the Board's website, in its Annual Accounts Reports and its Annual Equality Progress Reports which are available at: <http://www.selb.org/publications/index.htm>.

CHAPTER 2 - ARRANGEMENTS FOR ASSESSING COMPLIANCE WITH THE SECTION 75 DUTIES [Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (2) (a)]

- 2.1 This chapter explains the Board's arrangements for assessing its compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties. Other compliance issues are further outlined in other relevant parts of this Scheme. In the chapters regarding consultation arrangements (pages 6-7); assessing the impact of policies (pages 9-11); ensuring public access to information and services (pages 16-17); and the Board's complaints procedure (page 18).

Responsibilities and Reporting

- 2.2 We are committed to the fulfilment of our Section 75 obligations in all parts of our work.
- 2.3 Responsibility for the effective implementation of our Scheme rests with the Chair of the Board, Mr Plunkett Campbell and the Chief Executive, Mr Tony Murphy. The Chief Administrative Officer, Ms Louise Ayling, is accountable to the Board for the development, implementation, maintenance and review of the Scheme in accordance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Act, including any good practice or guidance that has been or may be issued by the Equality Commission.
- 2.4 Each member of the Senior Management Team is responsible to the Chief Executive for ensuring that his/her Business Unit fully complies with this Scheme.
- 2.5 The first point of contact for the Scheme is Mr Kieran Shields. If you have any questions or comments regarding our Scheme, please contact Mr Shields at the address below and we will respond to you as soon as possible.

Name	Kieran Shields
Contact Details	3 Charlemont Place, The Mall, Armagh. BT61 9AX
Email	kieran.shields@selb.org
Telephone	02837 415381

- 2.6 Objectives and targets relating to the statutory duties will be integrated into our strategic and operational business plans.
- 2.7 Employees' job descriptions and appraisals reflect their contribution to the discharge of the Section 75 statutory duties and implementation of the Scheme, where relevant. Appraisal plans are subject to an annual performance review.
- 2.8 The Board will prepare an annual report on the progress it has made on implementing the arrangements set out in this Scheme to discharge its Section 75 statutory duties (Section 75 Annual Progress Report).

The Section 75 Annual Progress Report will be sent to the Equality Commission by 31 August each year and will follow any guidance on annual reporting issued by the Equality Commission.

Progress on the delivery of Section 75 statutory duties will be contained in the Board's annual report.

- 2.9** The latest Section 75 Annual Progress Report is available on our website at <http://www.selb.org/publications/index.htm> or by contacting Mr Kieran Shields, Equality Manager, paragraph 2.5 provides his contact details.
- 2.10** The Board will liaise closely with the Equality Commission to ensure that progress on the implementation of our Scheme is maintained.
- 2.11** Regular progress reports will be provided to the Board on the implementation of the Section 75 duties.

Action plan/action measures

- 2.12** The action measures that will make up our action plan will be relevant to our functions. They will be developed and prioritised on the basis of an audit of inequalities. The audit of inequalities will gather and analyse information across the Section 75 categories to identify the inequalities that exist for our service users and those affected by our policies.
- 2.13** Action measures will be specific, measurable, linked to achievable outcomes, realistic and time bound. Action measures will include performance indicators and timescales for their achievement.
- 2.14** We will develop an annual action plan and will align it to our corporate and business planning cycle. Implementation of the action measures will be incorporated into our business planning process.
- 2.15** We will seek input from our stakeholders and consult on our action plan before we send it to the Equality Commission and thereafter when reviewing the plan, paragraph 2.16 refers.
- 2.16** We will monitor our progress on the delivery of our action measures annually and update it as necessary to ensure that it remains effective and relevant to our functions and work.
- 2.17** The Board will inform the Equality Commission of any changes or amendments to our action plan and will also include this information in our Section 75 Annual Progress Report to the Equality Commission. Our Section 75 Annual Progress report will incorporate information on progress we have made in implementing our action plans/action measures.
- 2.18** Once finalised, our action plan will be available at <http://www.selb.org/publications/index.htm> and also on the Board intranet for staff.

If you require it in an alternative format or language including in large print, in Braille, by e-mail, on computer disc, on audio-cassette and in minority languages

to meet the needs of those people who are not fluent in English, please contact Mr Kieran Shields, Equality Manager, paragraph 2.5 provides his contact details.

CHAPTER 3 - ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONSULTING [Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (2) (a) & (b)]

3.1 We recognise the importance of consultation in all aspects of the implementation of our statutory equality duties. We will consult on our Scheme, action measures, equality impact assessments and other matters relevant to the Section 75 statutory duties.

3.2 We are committed to carrying out consultation in accordance with the principles as contained in the Equality Commission's Guidance '*Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 - A Guide for Public Authorities (April 2010)*' and the inter-Board/Staff Commission's '*Equality Consultation Guidelines*'.

3.2.1 All consultations will seek the views of those directly affected by the matter/policy, the Equality Commission, representative groups of Section 75 categories, other public authorities, voluntary and community groups, our staff and their trade unions and professional bodies, and such other groups who have a legitimate interest in the matter, whether or not they have a direct economic or personal interest.

Initially all consultees (see Appendix 2) will, as a matter of course, be notified (by email or post) of the matter/policy being consulted upon to ensure they are aware of all consultations. Thereafter, to ensure the most effective use of the Boards' and consultees' resources, we will take a targeted approach to consultation for those consultees that may have a particular interest in the matter/policy being consulted upon and to whom the matter/policy is of particular relevance. This may include, for example, regional or local consultations, sectoral or thematic consultation etc. This approach will not preclude or exclude other parties with a legitimate interest participating in such consultations.

3.2.2 Consultation with all stakeholders will begin as early as possible. We will engage with affected individuals and representative groups to identify how best to consult or engage with them. We will ask our consultees what their preferred consultation methods are and will give consideration to these. Methods of consultation could include:

- face-to-face meetings;
- focus groups;
- written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing;
- questionnaires;
- information/notification by email with an opportunity to opt in/opt out of the consultation;
- internet discussions; or
- telephone discussions.

This list is not exhaustive and we may develop other additional methods of consultation more appropriate to key stakeholders and the matter being consulted upon.

- 3.2.3** We will consider the accessibility and format of every method of consultation we use in order to remove barriers to the consultation process. Specific consideration will be given as to how best to communicate with children and young people, people with disabilities (in particular people with learning disabilities), and minority ethnic communities. Such methods of consultation may be facilitated through the use of advocates and/or specifically trained facilitators and by making information accessible and providing improved visual signage. We will take account of existing and developing good practice, including the Equality Commission's guidance '*Let's Talk Let's Listen - Guidance for public authorities on consulting and involving children and young people (2008)*'

Information will be made available, on request, in alternative formats in a timely manner, usually within 20 working days. We will ensure that such consultees have equal time to respond.

- 3.2.4** Specific training will be provided to those facilitating consultations to ensure that they have the necessary skills to communicate effectively with consultees.

- 3.2.5** To ensure effective consultation with consultees on Section 75 matters, we will develop a programme of awareness-raising on the Section 75 statutory duties and the commitments in our Scheme by undertaking the following:

- consultation on the development, implementation and review of our revised Equality Scheme, Audit of Inequalities and Action Plan;
- organisation of regular meetings of the Education Sector Joint Consultative Forum to review progress on the Scheme; and the implementation of our Section 75 duties linked to our Board functions;
- publication of regular updates to the Education Sector Joint Consultative Forum members and consultees on our Equality Scheme mailing list.

- 3.2.6** The consultation period lasts for a minimum of twelve weeks to allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves as part of the process of forming a view. However, in exceptional circumstances when this timescale is not feasible (for example implementing EU Directives or UK wide legislation, meeting Health and Safety requirements, addressing urgent public health matters or complying with Court judgements), we may shorten timescales to eight weeks or less before the policy is implemented. We may continue consultation thereafter and will review the policy as part of our monitoring commitments³.

Where, under these exceptional circumstances, we must implement a policy immediately, as it is beyond the Board's control, we may consult after implementation of the policy, in order to ensure that any impacts of the policy are considered.

- 3.2.7** If a consultation exercise is to take place over a period when consultees are less able to respond, for example, over the summer or Christmas break, or if the policy

³ Please see 4.27 to 4.31 below for details on monitoring

under consideration is particularly complex, we will give consideration to the feasibility of allowing a longer period for the consultation.

- 3.2.8** We are conscious of the fact that affected individuals and representative groups may have different needs. We will take appropriate measures to ensure full participation in any meetings that are held. We will consider, for example, the time of day, the appropriateness of the venue, in particular whether it can be accessed by those with disabilities, how the meeting is to be conducted, the use of appropriate language, whether a signer and/or interpreter is necessary, and whether the provision of childcare and support for other carers is required.
- 3.2.9** We will make all relevant information available to consultees in appropriate formats to ensure meaningful consultation. This includes detailed information on the policy proposal being consulted upon and any relevant quantitative and qualitative data.
- 3.2.10** In making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted, we will take into account any assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy.
- 3.2.11** We will provide feedback to consultees in a timely manner. A feedback report is prepared which includes summary information on the policy consulted upon, a summary of consultees' comments and a summary of our consideration of and response to consultees' input. The feedback is provided in formats suitable to consultees who engaged in the process.
- 3.3** A list of our consultees is included in this Equality Scheme at Appendix 2. It can also be obtained from our website at: <http://www.selb.org/publications/index.htm> or by contacting Mr Kieran Shields, Equality Manager, paragraph 2.5 on Page 4 provides his contact details.
- 3.4** Our consultation list is not exhaustive and is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it remains relevant to our functions and policies.

We welcome enquiries from any person/s or organisations wishing to be added to the list of consultees. Please contact Mr Kieran Shields (contact details above) to provide your contact details and have your areas of interest noted or have your name/details removed or amended. Please also inform us at this stage if you would like information sent to you in a particular format or language including in large print, in Braille, by e-mail, on computer disc, on audio-cassette and in minority languages to meet the needs of those people who are not fluent in English.

CHAPTER 4 - ARRANGEMENTS FOR ASSESSING, MONITORING AND PUBLISHING THE IMPACT OF POLICIES [Schedule 9 paragraphs (2) (b - d) and 9. (2)]

This chapter outlines the Board's arrangements for assessing the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted on the promotion of equality of opportunity (Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (2) (b))

What is a policy?

- 4.1** In the context of Section 75, 'policy' is very broadly defined and it covers all the ways in which we carry out or propose to carry out our functions in relation to Northern Ireland. In respect of this Scheme, the term policy is used for any (proposed/amended/existing) strategy, policy initiative or practice and/or decision, whether written or unwritten and irrespective of the label given to it, e.g. 'draft', 'pilot', 'high level' or 'sectoral'.
- 4.2** In making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted, we take into account any assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy, as required by Schedule 9 paragraph 9 (2) of the Act.
- 4.3** The Board uses the tools of **screening** and **Equality Impact Assessment** to assess the likely impact of a policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations. In carrying out these assessments we will relate them to the intended outcomes of the policy in question and will also follow:
- the guidance on screening, as detailed in the Equality Commission's Guidance '*Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 - A Guide for Public Authorities (April 2010)*' and the inter-Board/Staff Commission '*Equality Screening Toolkit*' developed in consultation with consultees on our mail list; and
 - on undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment, the Equality Commission's detailed guidance '*Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment (February 2005)*'

What is Screening?

- 4.4** The purpose of screening is to identify those policies that are likely to have an impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations.
- 4.5** Screening is completed at the earliest opportunity in the policy development/review process. Policies should normally be screened prior to presentation to the Board and adoption or implementation. For more detailed strategies or policies that are to be put in place through a series of stages, we will screen at various stages during implementation.
- 4.6** The lead role in the screening of a policy is taken by the policy decision maker who has the authority to make changes to that policy. However, screening will also involve other relevant team members, for example, equality specialists, those who implement the policy and staff members from other relevant work areas. Where possible we will include key stakeholders in the screening process.

4.7 The following questions are applied to all our policies as part of the screening process:

- 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)
- Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equality categories?
- To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of a different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? (minor/major/none)
- Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of a different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

4.8 In order to answer the screening questions, we will gather all relevant information and data, both qualitative and quantitative. In taking this evidence into account we will consider the different needs, experiences and priorities for each of the Section 75 equality categories. Any screening decision will be informed by this evidence.

4.9 Completion of screening, taking into account our consideration of the answers to all four screening questions set out in 4.7 above, will lead to one of the following three outcomes:

1. The policy has been 'screened in' for Equality Impact Assessment;
2. The policy has been 'screened out' with mitigation⁴ or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted;
3. The policy has been 'screened out' without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.

4.10 If our screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is 'minor' in respect of one or more of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, we may on occasion decide to proceed with an Equality Impact Assessment, depending on the policy. If an EQIA is not to be conducted, we will nonetheless consider measures that might mitigate the policy impact as well as alternative policies that might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

Where we mitigate we will outline in our screening template the reasons to support this decision, together with the proposed changes, amendments or alternative policy.

This screening decision will be 'signed off' by the appropriate policy Lead Officer within the Board.

4.11 If our screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is 'major' in respect of one or more of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, we will consider whether the policy should be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.

⁴ Mitigation - Where an assessment (screening in this case) reveals that a particular policy has an adverse impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations, a public authority must consider ways of delivering the policy outcomes which have a less adverse effect on the relevant Section 75 categories.

This screening decision will be 'signed off' by the appropriate policy Lead Officer within the Board.

- 4.12** If our screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is 'none', in respect of all of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, we may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, we will give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

This screening decision will be 'signed off' by the appropriate policy Lead Officer within the Board.

- 4.13** As soon as possible following the completion of the screening process, the screening template, signed off and approved by the senior manager responsible for the policy, will be made available on our website at <http://www.selb.org/publications/index.htm> and on request from Mr Kieran Shields, Equality Manager, paragraph 2.5 on Page 4 provides his contact details.
- 4.14** If a consultee, including the Equality Commission, raises a concern about a screening decision based on supporting evidence, we will review the screening decision.
- 4.15** Our screening reports are published quarterly (see paragraphs 4.20 - 4.22 and 4.23 below for details)

What is an Equality Impact Assessment?

- 4.16** An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is a thorough and systematic analysis of a policy, whether that policy is formal or informal, and irrespective of the scope of that policy. The primary function of an EQIA is to determine the extent of any impact of a policy upon the Section 75 categories and to determine if the impact is an adverse one. It is also an opportunity to demonstrate the likely positive outcomes of a policy and to seek ways to more effectively promote equality of opportunity and good relations.
- 4.17** Once a policy is screened and screening has identified that an EQIA is necessary, we will carry out the EQIA in accordance with the Equality Commission's Guidance '*Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment*' and the inter-Board Guidance '*A Recommended Approach to Conducting an Equality Impact Assessment*'. The EQIA will be carried out as part of the policy development process, normally before the policy is implemented.
- 4.18** Any EQIA will be subject to consultation at the appropriate stage(s) (For details see Chapter 3 '*Arrangements for Consulting*').

Arrangements for publishing the results of the assessments of the likely impact of policies we have adopted or propose to adopt on the promotion of equality of opportunity [Schedule 9 paragraphs 4 (2) (d); 9 (1)]

- 4.19** We will make publicly available the results of our assessments (screening and EQIA) of the likely impact of our policies on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations.

What do we publish?

4.20 Screening Reports

These are published quarterly. Screening reports detail:

- all policies screened by the Board over the three month period.
- a statement of the aim(s) of the policy/policies screened;
- consideration given to measures which might mitigate any adverse impact identified;
- consideration, as appropriate given to alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity;
- screening decisions, i.e.:
 - whether the policy has been 'screened in' for EQIA;
 - whether the policy has been 'screened out' with mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted;
 - whether the policy has been 'screened out' without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted;
- Where applicable, a timetable for conducting EQIA;
- A link to the completed screening template(s) on our website at <http://www.selb.org/publications/index.htm>

4.21 Screening Templates

For details on the availability of our screening templates please refer to 4.13.

4.22 Equality Impact Assessments

EQIA reports are published once the impact assessment has been completed. These reports include:

- a statement of the aim of the policy assessed;
- information and data collected;
- details of the assessment of impact(s);
- consideration given to measures which might mitigate any adverse impact;
- consideration given to alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity;
- consultation responses;
- the decision taken;
- future monitoring plans.

How do we publish the information?

4.23 All information the Board publishes is accessible and can be made available in alternative formats on request. Paragraph 6.3 below refers.

Where do we publish the information?

- 4.24** The results of our assessments (screening reports and completed templates, the results of EQIAs) are available on our website at <http://www.selb.org/publications/index.htm> and by contacting Mr Kieran Shields, Equality Manager, paragraph 2.5 on Page 4 provides his contact details.
- 4.25** In addition to the above, screening reports (electronic link or hard copy on request if more suitable for recipients) which include all policies screened over a 3 month period will also be sent directly to all consultees on a quarterly basis.
- 4.26** We will inform the general public about the availability of this material through communications such as press releases where appropriate.

Arrangements for monitoring any adverse impact of policies we have adopted on equality of opportunity [Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (2) (c)]

- 4.27** Monitoring can assist us to deliver better public services and continuous improvements. Monitoring Section 75 information involves the processing of sensitive personal data (data relating to the racial or ethnic origin of individuals, sexual orientation, political opinion, religious belief, etc.) In order to carry out monitoring in a confidential and effective manner, the Board follows guidance from the Office of the Information Commissioner and the Equality Commission.
- 4.28** We monitor any adverse impact on the promotion of equality of opportunity of policies we have adopted. We are also committed to monitoring more broadly to identify opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations in line with Equality Commission guidance.
- 4.29** The systems we have established to monitor the impact of policies and identify opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations are:
- the collection, collation and analysis of existing relevant primary quantitative and qualitative data across all nine equality categories on an ongoing basis;
 - the collection, collation and analysis of existing relevant secondary sources of quantitative and qualitative data across all nine equality categories on an ongoing basis;
 - an audit of existing information systems within one year of approval of this Equality Scheme, to identify the extent of current monitoring and take action to address any gaps in order to have the necessary information on which to base decisions;
 - undertaking or commissioning new data if necessary.
- 4.30** If, over a two year period, monitoring and evaluation show that a policy results in greater adverse impact than predicted, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, we will ensure that the policy is revised to achieve better outcomes for relevant equality groups.

4.31 We review our EQIA monitoring information on an annual basis. Other monitoring information is reviewed on an annual basis for example complaints monitoring, maintenance of a compendium of research literature.

Arrangements for publishing the results of our monitoring [Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (2) (d)]

4.32 Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (2) (d) requires us to publish the results of the monitoring of adverse impacts of policies we have adopted. However, we are committed to monitoring more broadly and the results of our policy monitoring are published as follows:

4.33 EQIA monitoring information is published as part of our Section 75 Annual Progress Report (see 2.16).

4.34 Monitoring information is also published and made available on the Board's website <http://www.selb.org/publications/index.htm>.

4.35 All information published is accessible and can be made available in alternative formats including in large print, in Braille, by e-mail, on computer disc, on audio-cassette and in minority languages to meet the needs of those people who are not fluent in English, on request from Mr Kieran Shields, Equality Manager, paragraph 2.5 on Page 4 provides his contact details.

CHAPTER 5 - STAFF TRAINING [(Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (2) (e))]

Commitment to Staff Training

5.1 We recognise that awareness raising and training play a crucial role in the effective implementation of our Section 75 statutory duties.

5.2 The Board is committed to positively communicating its commitment to the Section 75 statutory duties, both internally and externally. To this end we have introduced an effective communication and training programme for all staff and will ensure that our commitment to the Section 75 statutory duties is made clear in all relevant publications.

Training Objectives

5.3 The Board will draw up a detailed training plan for its staff which will aim to achieve the following objectives:

- to raise awareness of the provisions of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, our Scheme commitments and the particular issues likely to affect people across the range of Section 75 categories, to ensure that our staff fully understand their role in implementing the Scheme;
- to provide those staff involved in the assessment of policies (screening and EQIA) with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively;

- to provide those staff who deal with complaints in relation to compliance with our Scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to investigate and monitor complaints effectively;
- to provide those staff involved in consultation processes with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively;
- to provide those staff involved in the implementation and monitoring of the effective implementation of the Board's Scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively.

Awareness raising and training arrangements

5.4 The following arrangements are in place to ensure all our staff and Board members are aware of and understand our equality obligations:

- we will develop a summary of this Scheme and make it available to all staff;
- we will provide access to copies of the full Scheme for all staff, and ensure that any queries or questions of clarification from staff are addressed effectively;
- staff in the Board will receive a briefing on this Scheme, within six months, following its approval by the Equality Commission;
- the Section 75 statutory duties form part of induction training of new staff;
- focused training is provided for key staff within the Board who are directly engaged in taking forward the implementation of our Scheme commitments (for example, those involved in research and data collection, policy development, service design, conducting EQIAs, consultation, monitoring and evaluation);
- where appropriate, training will be provided to ensure staff are aware of the issues experienced by the range of Section 75 groups;
- when appropriate and on an ongoing basis, arrangements will be made to ensure staff are kept up to date with Section 75 developments.

5.5 Training and awareness raising programmes will, where relevant, be developed in association with the appropriate Section 75 groups and our staff:

In order to share resources and expertise, the Board will, where possible, work closely with other bodies and agencies in the development and delivery of training.

Monitoring and evaluation

5.6 Our training programme is subject to the following monitoring and evaluation arrangements:

- an evaluation of the extent to which all participants in this training programme have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve each of the above objectives;
- the extent to which training objectives have been met will be reported on as part of the Section 75 Annual Progress Report, which will be sent to the Equality Commission.

CHAPTER 6 - ARRANGEMENTS FOR ENSURING AND ASSESSING PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND SERVICES WE PROVIDE [Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (2) (f)]

- 6.1** The Board is committed to ensuring that the information we disseminate and the services we provide are fully accessible to all parts of the community in Northern Ireland. We keep our arrangements under review to ensure that this remains the case.
- 6.2** We are aware that some groups will not have the same access to information as others. In particular:
- people with sensory, learning, communication and mobility disabilities may require printed information in other formats;
 - members of ethnic minority groups, whose first language is not English, may have difficulties with information provided only in English;
 - children and young people may not be able to fully access or understand information.

Access to information

- 6.3** To ensure equality of opportunity in accessing information, we provide information in alternative formats on request, where reasonably practicable. Where the exact request cannot be met we will ensure a reasonable alternative is provided.

Alternative formats may include Easy Read, Braille, audio formats (CD, mp3 or DAISY), large print or minority languages to meet the needs of those for whom English is not their first language.

The Board will respond to requests for information in alternative formats in a timely fashion usually within 20 working days.

The Board liaises with representative of young people and disability and minority ethnic organisations and takes account of existing and developing good practice.

Specific consideration will be given and advice sought from those with specialist knowledge in this area as to how best the Board can communicate with young people, those with learning disabilities, ethnic groups and others e.g. older persons and persons who have a mental illness – this will be facilitated through the use of specially trained staff and/or advocates.

- 6.4** In disseminating information through the media we will seek to advertise in the press where appropriate.
- 6.5** We seek to ensure that our website is accessible and provides information in an accessible format. The Board will use its website, the Board's Corporate Plan and the Section 75 Annual Progress Report in order to disseminate information.

Access to services

6.6 The Board is committed to ensuring that all of our services are fully accessible to everyone in the community across the Section 75 categories.

The Board also adheres to the relevant provisions of current anti-discrimination legislation.

6.7 The Board provides interpreters for those not competent in English and those who require sign language interpreters and will also provide accessible buildings.

Accessing public access to information and services

6.8 We monitor on an ongoing basis across all our functions, in relation to access to information and services, to ensure equality of opportunity and good relations are promoted.

6.9 These include:

- provision of interpreting/translation services –quarterly reports;
- monitoring of complaints – ongoing and annually;
- reasonable adjustments - ongoing and annually;
- satisfaction surveys – periodically;
- Article 55 Review – every three years.

CHAPTER 7 - TIMETABLE FOR MEASURES WE PROPOSE IN THIS EQUALITY SCHEME [Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (3) (b)]

7.1 Appendix 3 outlines our timetable for all measures proposed within this Equality Scheme. The measures outlined in this timetable will be incorporated into our business planning processes.

7.2 This timetable is different from and in addition to our commitment to developing action plans/action measures to specifically address inequalities and further promote equality of opportunity and good relations. We have included in our Scheme a commitment to develop an action plan. Accordingly, this commitment is listed in the timetable of measures at Appendix 3. For information on these action measures please see paragraph 2.12 - 2.18 above

CHAPTER 8 - COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE [Schedule 9 paragraph 10.]

8.1 The Board is responsive to the views of members of the public. We will endeavour to resolve all complaints made to us. Section 75 complaints are integrated into a general complaints procedure within the Board in the interests of mainstreaming.

8.2 Schedule 9 paragraph 10 of the Act refers to complaints. A person can make a complaint to the Board if the complainant believes he or she may have been directly affected by an alleged failure of the Board to comply with its approved Scheme. If the complaint has not been resolved within a reasonable timescale, the complaint can be brought to the Equality Commission.

8.3 A person wishing to make a complaint that the Board has failed to comply with its approved Scheme should contact the Chief Executive:

Contact details: Mr Tony Murphy
Chief Executive
Southern Education & Library Board
3 Charlemont Place, The Mall
Armagh. BT61 9AX
Email: tony.murphy@selb.org
Tel: 028 37 512000

8.4 In accordance with our Complaints Procedure, the Board will, in the first instance, acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 3 working days.

8.5 The Equality Manager will carry out an internal investigation of the complaint and the Chief Executive will respond substantively to the complainant within one month of the date of receiving the letter of complaint. Under certain circumstances, if the complexity of the matter requires a longer period, the period for response to the complainant may be extended to two months. In those circumstances, the complainant will be advised of the extended period within one month of making the complaint.

8.6 During this process the complainant will be kept fully informed of the progress of the investigation into the complaint and of any outcomes.

8.7 In any subsequent investigation by the Equality Commission, the Board will co-operate fully, providing access in a timely manner to any relevant documentation that the Equality Commission may require.

Similarly, the Board will co-operate fully with any investigation by the Equality Commission under sub-paragraph 11 (1) (b) of Schedule 9 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

8.8 The Board will make all efforts to implement promptly and in full any recommendations arising out of any Equality Commission investigation.

CHAPTER 9 - PUBLICATION OF OUR EQUALITY SCHEME [Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (3) (c)]

- 9.1** The Board is committed to ensuring that its Equality Scheme is widely published and in a manner which will ensure equality of access. The Scheme will be made available to its staff, service users, individuals and representatives of Section 75 organisations. An Equality Scheme Summary will be available and an Easy Read version will also be available. The Board's Equality Scheme is available free of charge in print form and alternative formats from Mr Kieran Shields, Equality Manager, paragraph 2.5 on Page 4 provides his contact details.
- 9.2** Our Equality Scheme, Summary and Easy Read version is also available on our website at <http://www.selb.org/publications/index.htm>.
- 9.3** The following arrangements are in place for the publication of our Scheme in a timely manner to ensure equality of access:
- the Board will make every effort to communicate widely the existence and content of its Equality Scheme. This may include press releases, prominent advertisements in the press, and the internet and direct mail shots to groups representing the various categories in Section 75.
 - we will email a link to our approved Equality Scheme to our consultees on our consultation lists. Other consultees, without email, will be notified by letter that the Scheme is available on request. We will respond to requests for the Equality Scheme in alternative formats in a timely manner, usually within 20 working days.
 - our Scheme is available on request in alternative formats such as Braille, large print, audio formats (CD, mp3, DAISY) and in minority languages to meet the needs of those not fluent in English.
 - specific consideration will be given and advice sought from those with specialist knowledge as to how the Board can communicate with children and young people, people with disabilities (in particular people with learning disabilities), minority ethnic communities, and others e.g. older persons – this may be facilitated through the use of specifically trained staff and/or advocates.
- 9.4** For a list of our stakeholders and consultees please see Appendix 2 of this Scheme.

CHAPTER 10 - REVIEW OF OUR EQUALITY SCHEME [Schedule 9 paragraph 8 (3)]

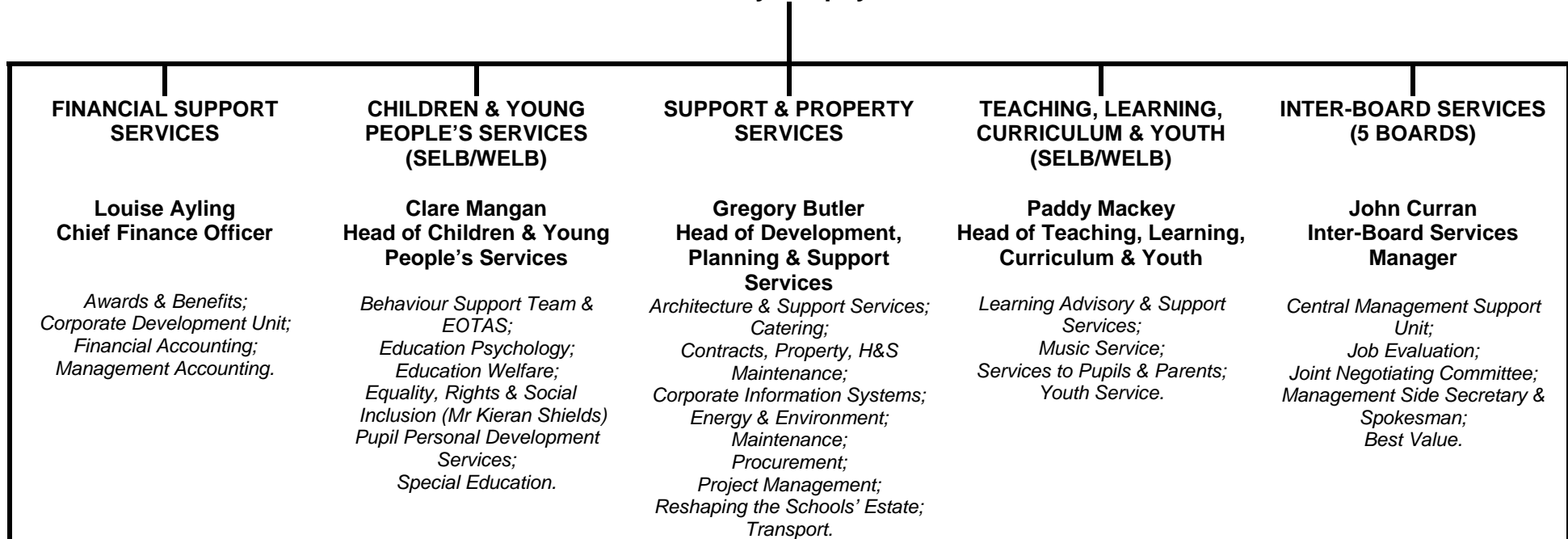
- 10.1** As required by Schedule 9 paragraph 8 (3) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Board is committed to conducting a thorough review of this Equality Scheme. This review will take place either within five years of submission of this Equality Scheme to the Equality Commission, or within a shorter timescale to allow alignment with the review of other planning cycles.

The review will evaluate the effectiveness of our Scheme in relation to the implementation of the Section 75 statutory duties relevant to our functions in Northern Ireland.

- 10.2** In undertaking this review we follow any guidance issued by the Equality Commission.
- 10.3** A report of this review will be made public through the Board's website at <http://www.selb.org/publications/index.htm>, sent to the Equality Commission and issued to consultees on the Board's Equality Scheme mail list, Appendix 2 refers.

APPENDIX 1 - ORGANISATION CHART

CHIEF EXECUTIVE & ACCOUNTING OFFICER - (Reporting Officer for 5 Board Central Management Support Unit)
Tony Murphy



APPENDIX 2

MAILING LIST FOR THE BOARDS'/STAFF COMMISSION'S REVISED EQUALITY SCHEME

****Please note an email address list has been compiled for the majority of the organisations listed.***

1. Nine Equality Categories

Religious Belief

Political Opinion

Racial Group

Age - Young and Old

Marital Status

Sexual Orientation

Gender

Disability

Dependents

2. Equality and Good Relations (Agencies/Groups)

3. Multi-dimensional Community and Voluntary Organisations

4. Education Bodies

5. Universities

6. Further Education Colleges

7. All Schools (direct communication through C2K), as appropriate.

Controlled Primary/Secondary

Maintained Primary/Secondary

Voluntary Grammar

Integrated

Irish Medium

Others

8. Youth Clubs and Youth Centres, as appropriate

9. Trade Unions

10. District Councils

11. Health Trusts

12. Other Government Departments

13. Other Public Bodies

<p>Religious Belief Bahai Community of Belfast Baptist Union of Ireland Belfast Hebrew Congregation Bishop of Down and Connor Bishop of Derry Church of Ireland Board of Education (NI) Church of Ireland Board for Social Responsibility Diocesan Office, Armagh Diocesan Office, Clogher Diocesan Office, Dromore Dr Desi Alexander Elim Pentecostal First Larne Presbyterian Church Free Presbyterian Church Methodist Church in Ireland Belfast Islamic Centre Transfer Representative Council Presbyterian Church in Ireland Presbyterian Housing Association NI Ltd</p> <p>Racial Group Al-Nisa Association Al-Nur Craigavon Asian Association An Munia Tober Chinese chamber of Commerce Chinese Welfare Association Craigavon Travellers' Support Committee Embrace Indian Community Centre Italian Society Mandarin Speaking Association Multicultural Group - Windsor Women's Centre Multi-Cultural Resource Centre Polish Association NI NI African Cultural Centre NICEM NI Filipino Association NI Filipino Community in Action NI Muslim Family Association Oi Kwan Chinese Women's Group Oi Yin Bangor Chinese Women's Group Pobal Wah Hep Chinese Community Association South Tyrone Empowerment Programme (STEP) Southern Travellers Early Years Partnership Ulster Scots Agency</p>	<p>Political Opinion Alliance Party Democratic Unionist Party Green Party NI Unionist Party Sinn Fein HQs PUP Central Office Ulster Unionist Party SDLP Labour Party Traditional Unionist Voice UK Independence Party Workers Party Education Committee of the NI Assembly Women into Politics Counteract</p> <p>Age – Young & Old Barnardos Barnardos Tuar Ceatha Project Boys' Brigade, Belfast Battalion Challenge for Youth Children in Northern Ireland Child Poverty Group Children's Law Centre Guide Association Include Youth National Children's Bureau NI National Society Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) Playboard NIPPA NI Youth Forum NUS USI Save the Children Youth Council for NI Youth Action NI Youthnet Youth Link NI Age Concern/Help the Aged Newry & Mourne Senior Citizen's Consortium</p> <p>Marital Status Mediation N I Relate NI</p>
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Sexual Orientation

Belfast Butterfly Club
 Carafriend
 Coalition on Sexual Orientation
 Foyle Friend
 Gay and Lesbian Youth NI
 Lesbian Line
 NIGRA
 NI Gay Rights Association
 Press for Change
 Queer Space
 The Rainbow Project

Gender

Atlas Women's Centre
 Ballybeen Women's Centre
 Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid
 Derry Well Women
 Down Advocacy Movement
 Federation of Women's Institutes NI
 Fermanagh Women's Network
 Magherafelt Women's Group
 Newry & Mourne Women
 NI Women's Aid Federation
 NI Women's European Platform
 The Men's Project
 Omagh Women's Area Network
 Training for Women Network Ltd
 The Women's Centre
 Women's Resource and Development Agency
 Women's Forum NI
 Women's Information Group
 Women's Tec Charity
 Women's Support Network
 Family Planning Association

Disability

Action Mental Health
 Agencies in Consortium for Education & Training (ACET)
 Alzheimer's Society
 Appleby Trust
 Arts and Disability Forum
 ArtAbility NI Ltd
 Arthritis Care NI
 Arts and Disability Forum
 Association of Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus
 Ballymena Access Group
 Employers' For Disability
 British Deaf Association (NI)
 British Epilepsy Association
 Cedar Foundation

Disability Action
 Disability Sports NI
 Disabled Drivers Association
 Down and Lisburn Forum on Learning Disability
 Down's Syndrome Association
 Dyslexia Assessment & Advice Service
 Face Inclusion Matters
 Fermanagh Voluntary Association of the Disabled
 Fibromyalgia Support NI
 Friends of Millview
 Friends of Mitchell House
 Headway Belfast
 Guide Dogs for the Blind Association
 IPSEA
 Lisburn Access Group
 MENCAP
 Mindwise
 MS Society
 Multiple Sclerosis Society NI
 Muscular Dystrophy Campaign
 Muscular Dystrophy Group
 National Deaf Children's Society
 NI ADD Support Centre
 NI Association for Mental Health
 NI Chest, Heart & Stroke Association
 NI Disability Council
 NI ME Association
 NI Dyslexia Association
 NI Institute for the Disabled
 North West Forum of People with Disabilities
 NI Music Therapy Trust
 NI Union of Supported Employment
 Parkinson's Disease Society NI
 Parent's Education as Autism Therapists
 Parents & Professionals and Autism Praxis Mental Health
 Open Arts
 Orchardville Society
 Sense NI
 Royal National Institute for the Blind (NI)
 Royal National Institute for the Deaf (NI)
 Stroke Association
 Share Holiday Village
 Skill Northern Ireland
 Ulster Supported Employment Ltd.

<p>Dependents CARE in Northern Ireland Carers in Northern Ireland Glenluce Quality Caring Centre Gingerbread NI</p> <p>Equality & Good Relations (Agencies/Groups) Equality Commission NI Human Rights Commission Labour Relations Agency Community Relations Agency NI Ombudsman NI Children's Commissioner Information Commissioner Equality Coalition Committee on the Administration of Justice Equality Forum Equality 2000 Confederation of Community Groups Community Change NI Community Development & Health Community Arts Forum Community Relations Training & Learning Consortium NI Council for Voluntary Action Co-operation Ireland Incore Conflict Resolutions Ltd. Confederation of Community Groups East Belfast Community Development Agency Falls Community Centre Survivors of Trauma South West Belfast Community Forum North West Community Network Oakleaf Rural Community Network Rural Community Network Rural Development Council Rural Support Willowbank Community Resource Centre Divis Community Centre Breakthru</p> <p>Multi-dimensional Community & Voluntary Organisations Belfast Charitable Society Circles Network NI Council for Homeless (NI) Cruise Bereavement Care NI Education Guidance Service for Adults</p>	<p>Extern HIV Support Centre Library Association NI Anti-Poverty Network NIACRO NI Council for Voluntary Action NI Open College Network Ulster People's College Volunteer Development Agency West Belfast Economic Forum</p> <p>Education Bodies Comhairle na Gaelscolaiochta Conradh na Gaelge Department of Culture, Arts & Leisure Department of Education Department of Employment & Learning ESAIT General Teaching Council Governing Bodies Association NICIE Trustee Support Service NI/NI Commission for Catholic Education</p> <p>Universities Queens University University of Ulster, Newtownabbey University of Ulster, Coleraine Stranmillis University College St Mary's University College The Open University</p> <p>Further Education Colleges Association of NI Colleges Belfast Metropolitan College Northern Regional College North West Regional College South Eastern Regional College Southern Regional College South West Regional College</p> <p>All Schools (<i>communication can be through C2K</i>), as appropriate Controlled Primary/Secondary Maintained Primary/Secondary Integrated Irish Medium Voluntary Grammar Others</p>
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All Youth Clubs/Centres (as appropriate)**Trade Unions**

Association of Education Psychologists
Association of Teachers and Lecturers
GMB
Irish Congress of Trade Unions
Irish National Teachers
National Association of Educational
Inspectors, Advisors & Consultants
National Association of Head Teachers
National Association of Social Workers in
Education
NASUWT
NIPSA
NIPSA (Retired Members' Group)
Ulster Teachers' Union
UNISON
UNITE
University & College Union

District Council

Antrim Borough Council
Ards Borough Council
Armagh City Council
Ballymena Borough Council
Ballymoney Borough Council
Banbridge District Council
Belfast City Council
Carrickfergus Borough Council
Castlereagh Borough Council
Coleraine Borough Council
Cookstown District Council
Craigavon Borough Council
Derry City Council
Down District Council
Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council
Fermanagh District Council
Larne Borough Council
Limavady Borough Council
Lisburn City Council
Magherafelt District Council
Moyle District Council
Newry & Mourne District Council
Newtownabbey Borough Council
North Down Borough Council
Omagh District Council
Strabane District Council
Local Government Staff Commission
NI Local Government Association

Health Trusts

Belfast Health & Social Care Trust
Northern Health & Social Care Trust
Southern Health & Social Care Trust
South Eastern Health & Social Care
Trust
Western Health & Social Care Trust
Health & Social Care Board
Health Promotion Agency

Other Government Departments

Department of Agriculture & Rural
Development
Department of Enterprise Trade &
Investment
Department of the Environment
Department of Finance & Personnel
Department of Health, Social Services
and Public Safety
Department of Social Development
Department of Regional Development
Northern Ireland Office
Office of the First Minister and Deputy
First Minister

Other Public Bodies

British Council
Law Centre (N)
Law Society of NI
NI Housing Executive
NI Library Authority
NI Museums Council
Northern Ireland Sports Forum
PSNI HQs

TIMETABLE FOR MEASURES PROPOSED WITHIN THE SCHEME
[Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (3) (b)]

Measure	Action Taken/ To Be Taken	Lead Responsibility	Timetable
ARRANGEMENTS FOR ASSESSING OUR COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 75 DUTIES			
Have in place appropriate structures and reporting mechanisms	Structures and reporting mechanism established.	Chief Executive Senior Management Team	Structures in place.
Ensure Section 75 duties are mainstreamed within the Board	Section 75 objectives and targets will be integrated into annual operational business plans	Chief Executive Senior Management Team	In line with planning cycle [April 2012 onwards]
	Employees' job descriptions and staff performance plans as appropriate	Human Resources Manager	Annually
Prepare Section 75 Annual Progress Report and include section in Board's own Annual Report	Information collated throughout the year for inclusion in the Annual Progress Report Article written for inclusion in Boards' Annual Report	Inter-Board Statutory Duty Group Equality Manager	31 August (annually) Annually
Progress Reports provided to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association of Chief Administrative Officers • Board members • Joint Negotiating Council/Teachers' Salaries and Conditions of Service Committee • Education Sector: Joint Consultative Forum 	Reports compiled on an inter/intra Board basis as appropriate	Inter Board Statutory Duty Group Equality Manager	Monthly Quarterly " "
ACTION PLAN			
Development of an Action Plan to include anticipated outcomes and timescales, and aligned to corporate planning cycle	Conduct an audit of Inequalities	Inter-Board Statutory Duty Group Association of Chief Administrative Officers	April – June 2011
	Consult with voluntary/community sector on the findings of the Audit		July – October 2011
Consultation on draft Action Plan	Consult with stakeholders before submission to Equality Commission	Inter-Board Statutory Duty Group	Sept. - December 2011

Measure	Action Taken/ To Be Taken	Lead Responsibility	Timetable
Publish Action Plan	Publish on Board's website and intranet and advise of its availability; take account of alternative formats etc.	Equality Manager	January 2012
Deliver on Action Plan	Implement and deliver actions contained within the Action Plan	Senior Management Team/Heads of Dept./Equality Manager	Annually
Arrangements for monitoring progress in place	Identify whether targets have been met – update plan as necessary	Equality Manager in conjunction with Senior Management Team	Every August in line with Annual Progress Report
ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONSULTING			
Consultation list reviewed and updated	All current consultees written to and contact details and preferred method/format of communication updated on central consultation list	Inter-Board Statutory Duty Group	May 2011 and annually thereafter
Consultation Skills Training	Specific training provided for those conducting consultations	Inter-Board provision delivered in partnership with Disability Action	Training Pack developed in partnership with Disability Action
Undertake programme of awareness raising to ensure effective consultation with consultees	Develop pack for dissemination via Education Sector Joint Consultative Forum	Inter-Board Equality Duties Group	October 2011
Conduct consultation as part of the policy-making process	Review Screening Toolkit	Senior Management Team	Publish screening reports on a quarterly basis on Board's website
Provide feedback report to consultees in timely manner in formats suited to consultees	As per consultation list in their preferred format Review feedback received Publicise and communicate decisions made	Lead Policy Officer/ Equality Manager	Mechanisms in place to provide feedback
SCREENING			
Implement new screening toolkit to reflect revised Guidance	Develop screening toolkit in association with Section 75 Groups	Screening Panel/ Equality Manager	October 2011

Measure	Action Taken/ To Be Taken	Lead Responsibility	Timetable
	Provide training on revised screening method. Monitor screening of policies. Publish quarterly review reports.		
EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS			
Produce an EQIA timetable	Provide advance notice of scheduled EQIAs	Inter-Board Statutory Duty Group	On-going
Conduct EQIAs in accordance with Equality Commission Guidance and inter-Board 'Recommended Approach to Conducting an EQIA'	EQIA Project Team appointed Training provided to EQIA Project Team EQIA consultation reports and results of EQIAs published on the internet Information issued to consultees, as appropriate, in their preferred format as per the Equality Scheme and Equality Commission Guidelines	EQIA Project Team	As each consultation exercise ends
MONITORING			
Revision of policies as a result of monitoring	Collect and analyse qualitative and quantitative data in order to monitor adverse impact of policies adopted. Identify opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations through the policy-making monitoring processes.	Lead Policy Officer/ Equality Manager	On-going
Publication of monitoring information	Publish monitoring information in our Section 75 Annual Progress Report and on the Board's website	Equality Manager	Annually
STAFF TRAINING			
Draw up a training plan	To cover briefing on the revised scheme, and focused training for staff involved in data collection, policy development, service design, conducting consultations, screening	Board's Training Officer/ Equality Manager	October 2011

Measure	Action Taken/ To Be Taken	Lead Responsibility	Timetable
	EQIAs, monitoring and evaluation, and dealing with complaints, as appropriate		
Prepare a summarised version of the scheme	Summary Scheme currently being revised and will be issued to all staff	Equality Manager	September 2011, subject to approval by the Equality Commission
Provide access to full copy of Scheme to all staff	Full Scheme to be published on intranet and internet and made available in alternative formats on request	Equality Manager	September 2011, subject to approval by the Equality Commission
Evaluation of training	Assess the extent to which those being trained have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to undertake screening, conduct EQIAs, etc Provide refresher training	Training Manager Equality Manager	Mechanisms in place i.e. Policy Leads undertake screening and EQIAs As required
ARRANGEMENTS FOR ENSURING AND ASSESSING PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND SERVICES WE PROVIDE			
Ensure information we disseminate and services we provide are fully accessible to all parts of the community in Northern Ireland`	Update of Section 75 consultation list will ask for preferred methods and formats of communication Provide information in alternative formats on request	Equality Manager	Mechanisms in place
Ensure buildings are accessible	Access audits have been conducted and remedial works undertaken where buildings were not found to be accessible to include more loop systems, touch-pad doors, lifts etc New builds take account of all access requirements	Estates Services Department	Further works undertaken as required
Assessing access to information and services	We will monitor uptake of interpreting services and requests for translations and alternative formats	Equality Manager	Quarterly reports produced
Provide reasonable adjustments	As above, buildings are accessible to all service users, using reasonable adjustments where necessary for both service users and staff members	Equality Manager	Reasonable adjustments provided when required by service users and staff
Monitor complaints	We will monitor complaints received to identify areas	Complaints Officer/ Equality Manager	Analyse quarterly to

Measure	Action Taken/ To Be Taken	Lead Responsibility	Timetable
	where equality of opportunity and good relations could be improved		identify any trends
COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE			
Ensure arrangements are in place to deal with complaints under the Equality Scheme	The Board has a complaints procedure and information has been made available in alternative formats e.g. various languages Complaints regarding failure to adhere to our Equality Scheme are acknowledged and responded to within the terms of the Complaints Procedure	Chief Administrative Officer/ Equality Manager.	May 2010 All complaints dealt with according to prescribed timescales
PUBLICATION OF OUR EQUALITY SCHEME			
Revised Equality Scheme to be published on the Board's website and intranet	Current Scheme and Annual Progress Report on our website	Equality Rep.	Draft Scheme uploaded when approved by the ECNI. Annual Progress Reports uploaded each August
Communication of revised Equality Scheme to consultees and staff	Once approved, we will communicate the new Equality Scheme via the Education Sector Joint Consultative Forum, Trade Union Negotiating Machinery and through the Equality Scheme mail list with internet link	Inter-Board Equality Duties Group	October 2011, subject to approval by the Equality Commission
Produce Scheme in alternative formats on request	We will produce the Scheme in alternative formats on request as per the Scheme	Equality Manager	October 2011, subject to approval by the Equality Commission
REVIEW OF EQUALITY SCHEME			
Scheme will be reviewed within five years of submission to the Equality Commission or within a shorter timescale to allow alignment with the review of other planning cycles	Annual review conducted in accordance with corporate planning process	Equality Manager	August 2016

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Action plan

A plan which sets out actions a public authority will take to implement its Section 75 statutory duties. It is a mechanism for the realisation of measures to achieve equality outcomes for the Section 75 equality and good relations categories.

Action measures and outcomes

Specific measures to promote equality and good relations for the relevant Section 75 and good relations categories, linked to achievable outcomes, which should be realistic and timely.

Adverse impact

Where a Section 75 category has been affected differently by a policy and the effect is less favourable, it is known as adverse impact. If a policy has an adverse impact on a Section 75 category, a public authority must consider whether or not the adverse impact is unlawfully discriminatory. In either case a public authority must take measures to redress the adverse impact, by considering mitigating measures and/or alternative ways of delivering the policy.

Audit of inequalities

An audit of inequalities is a systematic review and analysis of inequalities which exist for service users and those affected by a public authority's policies. An audit can be used by a public authority to inform its work in relation to the Section 75 equality and good relations duties. It can also enable public authorities to assess progress on the implementation of the Section 75 statutory duties, as it provides baseline information on existing inequalities relevant to a public authority's functions.

Consultation

In the context of Section 75, consultation is the process of asking those affected by a policy (i.e. service users, staff, the general public) for their views on how the policy could be implemented more effectively to promote equality of opportunity across the 9 categories. Different circumstances will call for different types of consultation. Consultations could, for example, include meetings, focus groups, surveys and questionnaires.

Differential impact

Differential impact occurs where a Section 75 group has been affected differently by a policy. This effect could either be positive, neutral or negative. A public authority must make a judgement as to whether a policy has a differential impact and then it must determine whether the impact is adverse, based on a systematic appraisal of the accumulated information.

Equality impact assessment

The mechanism underpinning Section 75, where existing and proposed policies are assessed in order to determine whether they have an adverse impact on equality of opportunity for the relevant Section 75 categories. Equality impact assessments require the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data.

Equality of opportunity

The prevention, elimination or regulation of discrimination between people on grounds of characteristics including sex, marital status, age, disability, religious belief, political opinion, dependants, race and sexual orientation. The promotion of equality of opportunity entails more than the elimination of discrimination. It requires proactive measures to be taken to secure equality of opportunity between the categories identified under Section 75.

Equality Scheme

A document which outlines a public authority's arrangements for complying with its Section 75 obligations. An Equality Scheme must include an outline of the public authority's arrangements for carrying out consultations, screening, equality impact assessments, monitoring, training and arrangements for ensuring access to information and services.

Good relations

Although not defined in the legislation, the Commission has agreed the following working definition of good relations: 'the growth of relations and structures for Northern Ireland that acknowledge the religious, political and racial context of this society, and that seek to promote respect, equity and trust, and embrace diversity in all its forms'.

Mainstreaming equality

The integration of equality of opportunity principles, strategies and practices into the every day work of public authorities from the outset. In other words, mainstreaming is the process of ensuring that equality considerations are built into the policy development process from the beginning, rather than being bolted on at the end. Mainstreaming can help improve methods of working by increasing a public authority's accountability, responsiveness to need and relations with the public. It can bring added value at many levels.

Mitigation of adverse impact

Where an equality impact assessment reveals that a particular policy has an adverse impact on equality of opportunity, a public authority must consider ways of delivering the policy outcomes which have a less adverse effect on the relevant Section 75 categories; this is known as mitigating adverse impact.

Monitoring

Monitoring consists of continuously scrutinising and evaluating a policy to assess its impact on the Section 75 categories. Monitoring must be sensitive to the issues associated with human rights and privacy. Public authorities should seek advice from consultees and Section 75 representative groups when setting up monitoring systems.

Monitoring consists of the collection of relevant information and evaluation of policies. It is not solely about the collection of data, it can also take the form of regular meetings and reporting of research undertaken. Monitoring is not an end in itself but provides the data for the next cycle of policy screening.

Northern Ireland Act

The Northern Ireland Act, implementing the Good Friday Agreement, received Royal Assent on 19 November 1998. Section 75 of the Act created the statutory equality duties.

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission

A statutory body established under Section 68 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, which works to ensure that the human rights of everyone in Northern Ireland are fully protected in law, policy and practice.

Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency (NISRA)

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) is an Executive Agency within the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP).

They provide statistical and research information regarding Northern Ireland issues and provide registration services to the public in the most effective and efficient way.

OFMDFM

The Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister is responsible for providing advice, guidance, challenge and support to other NI Civil Service Departments on Section 75 issues.

Policy

The formal and informal decisions a public authority makes in relation to carrying out its duties. Defined in the New Oxford English Dictionary as 'a course or principle of action adopted or proposed by a government party, business or individual'. In the context of Section 75, the term **policy** covers all the ways in which a public authority carries out or proposes to carry out its functions relating to Northern Ireland. Policies include unwritten as well as written policies.

Positive action

This phrase is not defined in any statute, but the Equality Commission understands it to mean any lawful action that a public authority might take for the purpose of promoting equality of opportunity for all persons in relation to employment or in accessing goods, facilities or services (such as health services, housing, education, justice, policing). It may involve adopting new policies, practices, or procedures; or changing or abandoning old ones. *Positive action* is not the same as *positive discrimination*.

Positive discrimination differs from positive action in that *positive action* involves the taking of lawful actions whereas *positive discrimination* involves the taking of unlawful actions. Consequently, *positive action* is by definition lawful whereas *positive discrimination* is unlawful.

Qualitative data

Qualitative data refers to the experiences of individuals from their perspective, most often with less emphasis on numbers or statistical analysis. Consultations are more likely to yield qualitative than quantitative data.

Quantitative data

Quantitative data refers to numbers, typically derived from either a population in general or samples of that population. This information is often analysed by either using descriptive statistics, which consider general profiles, distributions and trends in the data, or inferential statistics, which are used to determine 'significance' either in relationships or differences in the data.

Screening

The procedure for identifying which policies will be subject to equality impact assessment, and how these equality impact assessments will be prioritised. The purpose of screening is to identify the policies which are likely to have a minor/major impact on equality of opportunity so that greatest resources can be devoted to improving these policies. Screening requires a systematic review of existing and proposed policies.

Schedule 9

Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 sets out detailed provisions for the enforcement of the Section 75 statutory duties, including an outline of what should be included in an Equality Scheme.

Section 75

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act provides that each public authority is required, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, 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 and sexual orientation;
- men and women generally;
- persons with a disability and persons without; and
- persons with dependants and persons without.

Without prejudice to these obligations, each public authority in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland must also have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

Section 75 investigation

An investigation carried out by the Equality Commission, under Schedule 9 of the NI Act 1998, arising from the failure of a public authority to comply with the commitments set out in its approved Equality Scheme.

There are two types of Commission investigation, these are as follows:

1. An investigation of a complaint by an individual who claims to have been directly affected by the failure of a public authority to comply with its approved Equality Scheme;
2. An investigation initiated by the Commission, where it believes that a public authority may have failed to comply with its approved Equality Scheme.