



**PUBLIC PROSECUTION SERVICE**

**Section 75**

**EQUALITY SCREENING FORM**

**ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SERIOUS CRIME  
UNIT**

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### PPS POLICY EQUALITY SCREENING FORM

#### The Legal Background

Under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the PPS is required to **have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:**

- between person of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally;
- between persons with a disability and persons without; and,
- between persons with dependants and persons without<sup>1</sup>.

Without prejudice to the obligations set out above, the PPS is also required to:

- **have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group; and**
- **meet legislative obligations under the Disability Discrimination Order and the Human Rights Act.**

#### Introduction

1. This form should be read in conjunction with the Equality Commission's revised Section 75, "A Guide for Public Authorities" April 2010 and available via the following link [S75 Guide for Public Authorities April 2010](#). **Staff should complete a form for each new or revised policy for which they are responsible (see page 6 for a definition of policy in respect of section 75).**
2. 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 will help improve the organisation's service provision through a systematic review of all services, policies, procedures, practices and/or

decisions. It will also help determine whether an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is necessary.

<sup>1</sup>A list of the main groups identified as being relevant to each of the section 75 categories is at Annex A of the document.

Screening should be introduced at an early stage when developing or reviewing a policy.

3. 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 work areas; and
  - key stakeholders.
4. The first step in the screening exercise, is to gather evidence and relevant data 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 equality impact assessment or 'screened out' from an equality impact assessment.
5. 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.
6. 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.

7. The Equality Commission has developed a series of four questions, included in Part 3 of this screening form with supporting sub-questions, which should be applied to all policies as part of the screening process. The questions should assist in identifying those policies that are likely to have an impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

### **Screening decisions**

8. 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**

9. The Equality Commission recommends that a policy is 'screened in' for equality impact assessment 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 equality impact assessments are inappropriate in this context.

**Staff should complete a form for each of new or revised policy for which they are responsible (see page 6 for a definition of policy in respect of section 75).**

If you have any questions regarding the screening exercise or S75 in general please contact the Equality Officer in Central Management Unit at the address given below.

## Part 1

### **Definition of Policy**

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 further screening or an EQIA needs to be carried out in respect of those policies cascading from the overarching strategy.

### **Overview of Policy Proposals**

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.

### **Policy Scoping**

10. 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.
11. Public authorities should remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the authority), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the authority).

## Information about the policy

Name of the Policy
<u>Establishment of the Public Prosecution Service's Serious Crime Unit</u>
Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?
<u>This is a new initiative, established on 4 January 2016.</u>
What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes)
<p>The aim of the Serious Crime Unit (SCU) is to be a centre of excellence and deliver a first class service to all who have an interest in cases conducted by the Serious Crime Unit.</p> <p>The objectives of the SCU are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To be visible representatives of the SCU and build confidence and trust in it by exhibiting the highest standards of performance and conduct.</li><li>2. To build the confidence and satisfaction levels of victims or, in the case of deceased victims, their families, through proactive engagement and the giving of detailed reasons where required.</li><li>3. To build the confidence of investigators by proactive engagement throughout the case, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prosecutorial and pre-charge advice;</li><li>• Advising within the prosecutor's proper remit regarding investigative strategy;</li><li>• Advising as to the use of proportionate evidence;</li><li>• Guidance regarding effective case building.</li></ul></li><li>4. To deliver proportionate and effective prosecutions through proactive engagement with the defence.</li></ol>

5. To improve performance by applying the Ards Indictable Cases process to an agreed range of offence types.
6. To attend court as advocates to ensure case progression as required.
7. To effectively manage the relationship with and monitor performance of independent counsel throughout the case.
8. To identify opportunities to engage effectively with external stakeholders, including the media, proactively and reactively, to increase confidence in the SCU.
9. To deliver a range of measurable benefits, including quality improvements, across all offence types within the SCU.
10. To work with partners and influence continuing improvements in quality, performance and value for money across the PPS and the wider Criminal Justice System.

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy? If so, explain how.

All Section 75 categories are expected to benefit from this initiative. It will ensure consistency in the quality of services provided to all groups.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

At the request of the Director and Deputy Director, the policy was developed by the Assistant Director of the SCU.

Who owns and who implements the policy?

The Public Prosecution Service owns the Policy. It will be implemented by the Assistant Director SCU, SCU Senior Public Prosecutors, administrative support staff and independent counsel who are instructed to act on the behalf of the PPS.

## Implementation factors

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

If yes, are they

financial

The current SCU staffing resource is based upon projected workflows and the estimated time required to deliver new case management processes, which involve more intensive engagement by the prosecuting team. At implementation stage it was not possible to determine the exact resource requirement, particularly as the re-designed processes had not been activated. The resource requirements will become clear once the SCU is active, and there has been sufficient case throughput to allow evaluation. If resource does not match demand, this could compromise some of the SCU's objectives.

legislative

other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

The rollout of the ICP processes, committal reform and other key DoJ led initiatives are expected at a future date. Whilst the ICP process delivers benefits to victims and witnesses, it is considered to have an adverse resource impact upon PPS. The necessary resources will be required to ensure effective rollout of ICP processes, otherwise this too may adversely affect the achievement of the SCU's objectives.

## **Main stakeholders affected**

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

- staff
- service users
- other public sector organisations
- voluntary/community/trade unions
- other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

## **Other policies with a bearing on this policy**

- what are they?

The main policies that are relevant are:

PPS Code for Prosecutors

Victims and Witnesses Policy

PPS Code for Prosecuting Cases of Rape

PPS Code for Prosecuting Cases of Human Trafficking

PPS Guidelines on Diversion

Victim Charter

Internal PPS Staff Instructions and related Guidance

- who owns them?

Public Prosecution Service / Department of Justice

**Available evidence**

- 14. Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data.
- 15. What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

Section 75 Category	Details of evidence/information
All	<p>The policy was informed by the PPS’s corporate commitment to improving the services for victims and witnesses. Having analysed the ‘Starmer Review’, Omnibus Survey data, PPS internal management information data, media reporting and from knowledge and experience, the Director sought proposals for the establishment of a ‘Serious Crime Unit’, to bring together a group of experienced Senior Public Prosecutors to prosecute and manage certain serious offence types centrally.</p> <p>Consideration was given to the s.75 categories and their specific needs that may need to be addressed to ensure their engagement with the PPS and the criminal justice process.</p> <p>Two principle areas of concern arose;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) impact of centralisation and</li> <li>(ii) meeting communication requirements.</li> </ul> <p>Individual victim/witness/defendant needs are identified by PSNI at the start of a case and</p>

	<p>shared with PPS in a form designed for this purpose (the 'Prosecutor Information Form') upon a suspect being charged or reported.</p> <p>Thereafter the Victim &amp; Witness Care Unit (VWCU) which is jointly staffed by PPS and PSNI personnel, conducts Needs Assessments at appropriate points in the prosecution process to identify individual needs during the case. Victims and Witnesses are assigned a single point of contact who is specifically trained to identify their needs and establish how these can best be met.</p> <p>The impact of SCU cases being dealt with centrally in Belfast rather than regionally is mitigated where possible by SCU prosecutors meeting victims and witnesses at the location most convenient to them. When meetings take place in Belfast, these are often facilitated by PSNI or other services and are arranged at times to suit the victim/witness. Alternatively, where appropriate, discussions can take place by telephone/letter/email to avoid victims/witnesses making unnecessary journeys. Reasonable travel expenses are met when meetings take place and within PPS buildings, suitable rooms and the necessary adjustments are available for those who may require them, such as disabled access, availability of interpreters and registered intermediaries</p> <p>Reports (CJINI 2011) have shown that the key concerns for witnesses relate to poor communication, delay in case progression and feelings of isolation.</p>
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	<p>Taking into account the experiences of some victims/witnesses and others in the s.75 groups, certain areas of concern were identified before the initiative commenced. Consideration was also given to the recent inspection report of HMCPsI with regard to communicating with victims. It identified key areas of concern with regard how the CPS were communicating with victims and this was used to inform the style, format and content of communications issued by the SCU, to ensure they could be clearly understood by the user.</p> <p>The initiative also takes direction from the recommendations made by Sir Keir Starmer in his report dated May 2015 (Independent Review of the Prosecution of related sexual abuse and terrorism cases). The policy highlights the emphasis that the PPS now places on consistent communication with victims and witnesses and clearly identifies when and how they can expect such communication to be made with them.</p> <p>All staff within SCU have received extensive training and are due to receive further training in August/September in relation to victim/witness care and communications. In all rape cases for example, the prosecutor will offer the complainant a meeting at pre-decision stage to discuss either the prosecution process (in prosecution cases) or the reasons why a prosecution cannot proceed. In murder/manslaughter cases, there is a requirement to communicate with the deceased's next of kin at key stages and to be available to meet as required.</p>
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## Needs, experiences and priorities

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

Section 75 Category	Details of evidence/information
Religious belief	None identified.
Political opinion	None identified.
Racial group	<p>PSNI and the single point of contact in VWCU should identify from the outset those persons within different racial groups who, for example, may experience language or cultural barriers to participation in the criminal process. Prosecutors are also trained to identify and meet such needs. Effective communication is ensured through the use of interpreters and other alternative formats. Prosecutors have also received training in relation to offence types that are more likely to pertain to certain racial groups, such as Female Genital Mutilation and to be aware of the cultural context in which such offending may occur.</p>
Age	<p>It is recognised that age is a factor when dealing with issues of vulnerability. This is reflected in the Needs Assessments conducted by VWCU and is conveyed in the policy through the provision of information on special measures, registered intermediaries, and support given to carers and parents/guardians. Prosecutors within SCU are</p>

	<p>experienced in conducting cases involving persons in young and older age groups and in the communication skills required to achieve the victim/witnesses fullest level of participation in the criminal process. In practical terms, prosecutors endeavour to meet young and older victims/witnesses in a location convenient to them ensuring that they have the necessary support available.</p>
Marital status	None identified.
Sexual orientation	None identified.
Men and Women generally	None identified.
Disability	<p>Those victims and witnesses with disabilities will usually be identified at an early stage by either PSNI or the Case officer in VWCU, ensuring that adequate steps are taken to ensure that support mechanisms are in place at an early stage. The Victim and Witnesses policy outlines numerous measures that are available to such persons, including; travel and attendance at court arrangements, provision of expenses for carers, special measures for those suffering from mental health concerns, registered intermediaries for those with communication concerns.</p>
Dependants	<p>The Victim and Witnesses policy highlights the services available to those acting on behalf of victims, including nominated representatives, parent/ guardians and appropriate adults and how they can be accessed. This includes provision of</p>

	<p>the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Expenses: to cover the cost of attending court, including those expenses for parents/ guardians, nominated representatives and appropriate adults;</li><li>- Childcare costs: to alleviate the concerns of those with dependents and allow them to attend court;</li><li>- Employer contact: to address any issues with regard victims and witnesses being absent from work.</li></ul>
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**Part 2(a)**

**17. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**Articles as identified by European Convention of Human Rights.**

- Article 2 - Right to life
- Article 3 - Prohibition of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment
- Article 4 - Prohibition of slavery and forced labour
- Article 5 - Right to liberty and security
- Article 6 - Right to fair and public trial
- Article 7 - Right to no punishment with law
- Article 8 - Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence
- Article 9 - Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- Article 10 - Right to freedom of expression
- Article 11 - Rights to freedom of assembly and association
- Article 12 – Right to marry and to found a family
- Article 14 – The prohibition of discrimination
- Protocol 1 Article 1 – Protection of Property
- Protocol 1 Article 2 - Right to education

**Definitions of degree of risk of infringement of each article:**

**High risk** – It is foreseeable that this policy is very likely to breach this Article.

**Medium risk** – This policy is likely, in certain circumstances, to breach this Article.

**Low risk** – It is possible, though very unlikely, that this policy will breach this Article.

**18. Indicate any potential Human Rights implications associated with this policy, the perceived degree of risk (see above) and who the victim may be.**

	Has this policy the potential to infringe the rights (Please Tick)		If yes indicate here the degree of risk – High, Medium or Low (See definitions above)	If yes indicate here who the potential victim(s) would be
	Yes	No		
Article 2		<b>No</b>		
Article 3		<b>No</b>		
Article 5		<b>No</b>		
Article 6		<b>No</b>		
Article 8		<b>No</b>		
Article 9		<b>No</b>		

Article 10		No		
Article 11		No		
Article 12		No		
Article 14*		No		
Article 1 of Protocol 1		No		
Article 2 of Protocol 1		No		

**19. Outline any justification for any infringements identified:**

N/A

**20. Are any alternatives available which may not infringe Human Rights?**

Yes

No

**If yes, and the decision has been taken NOT to pursue the alternatives, please give a rationale for this decision.**

**21. Outline any action which could be taken to reduce the level of infringement.**

N/A

**22. Are there actions that can be taken that would promote human rights?**

Yes

No

**Please specify:**

Awareness of Human Rights issues is repeatedly raised during SCU training sessions, both during training delivered and received. The SCU legal team is fully aware of the relevant provisions and their application.

## Part 2(b)

### **OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ORDER**

Under section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, public authorities, when carrying out their functions must have due regard to the need to:

- **promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and**
- **encourage participation by disabled people in public life.**

Questions 5 and 6 below relate to these two areas.

#### **Consideration of Disability Duties**

23. Does this proposed policy / decision provide an opportunity for PPS to better promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?

#### **Explain your assessment in full**

The initiative ensures that services are available to enable those with a disability to participate fully in the criminal justice process. This includes practical arrangements and support that will be put in place for attendance at legal consultations and court, support through legal mechanisms such as provisions for registered intermediaries and delivering a service that is tailored to the individual's needs. All staff are trained to ensure that the victim/witness is capable of giving their 'best evidence'. By promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people it is hoped that this initiative may result in an increased level of participation in the criminal justice process.

24. Does this proposed policy / decision provide an opportunity for PPS to actively increase the participation by disabled people in public life?

#### **Explain your assessment in full**

The policy does provide an opportunity for the PPS to actively increase the participation by disabled people in public life. Staff within SCU ensure that victims and witnesses who have a disability are aware of the enhanced services available to allow them to fully participate in the criminal justice system. SCU staff work closely with VWCU staff to ensure that all necessary services are provided. Those with physical disability or mental health issues will be assisted by the structured Needs Assessments at key stages in the process and the mechanisms put in place tailored to an individual's specific needs, including for example special measures, registered intermediaries, NSPCC or VSNI support, home visits, court visits.

## Part 3

### SCREENING QUESTIONS

#### Introduction

25. In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, consider questions 1-4 listed below.
26. If the conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then the decision maybe to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, give details of the reasons for the decision taken.
27. If the 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.
28. If the 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:
- introduce measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
  - the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

#### Factors that would indicate a conclusion in favour of a 'major' impact

29. (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.

**Factors that would indicate a conclusion in favour of ‘minor’ impact**

30. (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.

## **Factors that would indicate a conclusion in favour of none**

31. (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.
32. 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

<p>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</p>		
Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? Minor/Major/None
Religious belief	None identified	None
Political opinion	None identified	None
Racial group	<p>PSNI and the single point of contact in WVCU should identify from the outset those persons within different racial groups who, for example, may experience language or cultural barriers to participation in the criminal process. Prosecutors are also trained to identify and meet such needs to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for those within such groups. Effective communication is ensured through the use of interpreters and other alternative formats. Prosecutors have also received training in relation to offence types that are more likely to pertain to certain racial groups, and to be aware of the cultural context in which such offending may occur, to ensure equality of opportunity.</p>	Minor (+ve)

	The initiative is supported by other policies which outline the PPS's commitment to provision of services and information to those victims and witnesses whose first language is not English, including the availability of interpreters and alternative formats.	
Age	<p>The research project with The Commissioner for Older People highlighted the increased anxiety held by older victims involved in the prosecution process. The availability of a single point of contact by the Prosecutors within SCU will meet with vulnerable victims as required to explain the process and assist with any questions/concerns.</p> <p>Victim and Witness Care Unit staff are also available to identify particular needs by virtue of young/older age and identify measures to meet or mitigate those concerns and ensure equality of opportunity.</p>	Minor (+ve)
Marital status	None identified	None
Sexual orientation	None identified	None
Men and Women generally	None identified	None

Disability	Those with physical disability or mental health issues will be assisted by the needs assessments and the enhanced services provided in response to their individual needs.	Minor (+ve)
Dependants	None	None

<p>2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories?</p>		
Section 75 category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons
Religious belief		No specific equality issues have been identified.
Political opinion		No specific equality issues have been identified.
Racial group	Access to alternative formats will improve the information provided to those who do not have English as their first language.	
Age	It is recognised that age appropriate information may be required and therefore alternative formats of communication should be made available as required eg use of large print.	
Marital status		No specific equality issues have been identified.
Sexual orientation		No specific equality issues have been identified.
Men and Women generally		No specific equality issues have been identified.

Disability	<p>Those victims and witnesses with disabilities will usually be identified at an early stage by either PSNI or the Case officer in VWCU, ensuring that adequate steps are taken to ensure that support mechanisms are in place at an early stage and there is equality of opportunity. The Victim and Witnesses policy outlines numerous measures that are available to such persons, including; travel and attendance at court arrangements, provision of expenses for carers, special measures for those suffering from mental health concerns, registered intermediaries for those with communication concerns. Access to alternative formats will improve the information provided to people with a disability. Practical assistance and support will be available as required.</p>	
Dependants		No specific equality issues have been identified.

<p><b>3.</b> 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</p>		
<b>Good relations category</b>	<b>Details of policy impact</b>	<b>Level of impact Minor/Major/None</b>
Religious belief		None identified
Political opinion		None identified
Racial group		None identified

<p><b>4.</b> Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?</p>		
<b>Good relations category</b>	<b>If Yes, provide details</b>	<b>If No, provide reasons</b>
Religious belief		None identified
Political opinion		None identified
Racial group		None identified

## **Additional considerations**

### **Multiple Identity**

33. 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).*

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

## Part 4

### Screening decision

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

The principal change is the centralisation of services that were formerly regionally based. Actions as set out in paragraph 15 have been taken to mitigate and neutralise the effect of this change for s75 groups. It is clear that if the aim and objectives of the SCU are achieved, this will have positive impacts on all section 75 categories, as it will assist them to engage fully with the PPS and the wider criminal justice system.

This policy has been screened out.

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

N/A

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

N/A

38. Further advice on equality impact assessment may be found in a separate Commission publication: Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment.

## Mitigation

39. When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is 'minor' and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.
40. Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?
41. If so, give the **reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.

## Timetabling and prioritising

42. Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment.
43. 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.
44. 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.

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

45. Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the public authority in timetabling. Details of the Public Authority’s Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the quarterly Screening Report.
46. Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?
47. If yes, please provide details.

## Part 5

### Monitoring

48. Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).
49. The Commission recommends that where the policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, the public authority should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).
50. Effective monitoring will help the public authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

## Part 6

### Approval and authorisation

Screened by:	Position/Job Title	Date
	Assistant Director Serious Crime Unit	5 August 2016
<b>Approved by:</b>		
I am satisfied that this policy has been properly screened for both equality impact and human rights infringement, and I agree with the screening decision made. <b>Authorised by:</b> (Head of Division)	Senior Assistant Director, Serious Crime and Regional Prosecutions	15 September 2016

**Note:** A copy of the Screening Template should be made easily accessible on the public authority's website as soon as possible following completion. This will be undertaken by the Equality Officer on receipt as per below. Hard copies should also be made available on request.

#### **The screening exercise is now complete.**

When you have completed the form please retain a record in your branch and send a signed copy for information to:

Equality and Corporate Governance Officer

Central Management Unit

10<sup>th</sup> Floor

Linum Chambers

2 Bedford Square

Bedford Street

BT2 7BS

 44870

**and** e-mail an electronic version to [anna.scott@ppsni.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:anna.scott@ppsni.gsi.gov.uk)

If any EQIA **is** required, the Equality Officer should be contacted for further advice if necessary.

Further information on equality, including a copy of the PPS Equality Scheme, yearly progress reports on equality to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, information on data sources and other useful links may be found on the PPS Intranet under the Equality Scheme section.

**MAIN GROUPS IDENTIFIED AS RELEVANT TO THE SECTION 75  
CATEGORIES**

Category	Main Groups
Religious belief	Protestants; Catholics; people of other religious belief; people of no religious belief
Political opinion	Unionists generally; Nationalists generally; members/supporters of any political party
Racial group	White people; Chinese; Irish Travellers; Indians; Pakistanis; Bangladeshis; Black Africans; Afro Caribbean people; people of mixed ethnic group, other groups
Men and Women generally	Men (including boys); women (including girls); trans-gender and trans-sexual people
Marital/Civil Partnership status	Married people; unmarried people; divorced or separated people; widowed people; civil partnerships
Age	For most purposes, the main categories are: children under 18; people aged between 18 and 65. However the definition of age groups will need to be sensitive to the policy under consideration. For example, for some employment policies, children under 16 could be distinguished from people of working age
Persons with a disability and persons without	Persons with a physical, sensory or learning disability as defined in Schedules 1 and 2 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
Persons with dependants and persons without	Persons with primary responsibility for the care of a child; persons with personal responsibility for the care of a person with a disability; persons with primary responsibility for a dependent elderly person.
Sexual orientation	Heterosexuals; bisexual people; gay men; lesbians