

Youth Work Policy Paper – Paper 9

The Youth Service exists to support and encourage young people to mature and reach their potential as valued citizens. It is composed of the Statutory and Voluntary Sector; the statutory sector is under the control of the Education and Library Boards. The voluntary Sector is made up of a great variety of organisations, with over 20,000 volunteers. Participation by young people is voluntary, and Youth Service activities, which are firmly rooted in social education, are generally out of school or work time and non-formal.

Youth Services will remain part of the education system and a revised model, which provides a set of organisational arrangements intended to support a rapid programme of reform and modernisation, is required. The new arrangements include:

- abolishing the five ELBs replacing them with a new Education and Skills Authority which will be responsible for delivering and commissioning, education services including youth services, and for performance managing those services, ensuring that services are accessible, responsive, high quality and efficient;**
- a restructured Department of Education with some functions transferring from it to the new Authority. The Department's primary function will be to set policy and targets and it will be a significantly smaller, more tightly focused body;**
- Establishment of a Northern Ireland Network for Youth to ensure the participation of young people and their communities and ensuring that their voice is heard in the decisions taken about youth service planning and provision and wider government agenda**
- Incorporating the Youth Council into the new Authority**

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION POLICY SCREENING FORM

The Legal Background

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

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

Without prejudice to the obligations set out above, the Department is also required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

Screening

In order to determine whether an EQIA is necessary, all policies must be screened. This form is intended to assist with the screening of any policies for which you take the lead and to record the outcome in respect of each policy. It should also be used as a prompt when considering legislative proposals.

The screening procedure should lead to one of these conclusions:

- **the policy being screened has an insignificant impact on equality of opportunity; or**
- **the policy being screened has (or is likely to have) a significant impact on equality of opportunity. Policies falling into this category will need to be considered further and may require an Equality Impact Assessment.**

Officials should complete a form for each of the new or revised policies for which they are responsible. When you have completed the form it should be retained on file in the branch for record purposes.

1. POLICY TO BE SCREENED

What is a policy?

The Equality Commission has defined 'policies' as '**all the ways a public authority carries out or proposes to carry out its functions relating to Northern Ireland**'. The Act defines 'functions' as including powers and duties.

These definitions cover all Departmental policies, strategies, schemes, procedures and functions. If in doubt please contact the Equality Unit for advice.

1.1 Title of policy to be screened:

Youth Work

1.2 Brief description of policy to be screened:

Angela Smith the then Education Minister's Statement of November 2005 confirmed youth services as a continuing responsibility of the Department of Education. It also confirmed the establishment of a single education authority to assume the functions of the Education and Library Boards and Youth Council NI. This is the basis on which policy requirements have been taken forward. The policy paper sets out the arrangements for the establishment of a single education authority to assume the functions of the Education and Library Boards and Youth Council for Northern Ireland.

1.3 Aims of policy to be screened:

To facilitate the continued development of the youth service, as set out in the Youth Work Strategy, along with a clear focus on economy, effectiveness and efficiency. The themes of inclusion and participation are core to a successful modern youth service that meets the needs of young people in Northern Ireland today and in the future. In addition, the strong ethos of a collaborative approach, particularly across the statutory and voluntary sectors, that has been developed through the YSLF, needs to be maintained. This approach is central to ensuring that the Education and Skills Authority (ESA), which will be both a deliverer and commissioner of youth services, is a gateway to effective services and not a gatekeeper.

*It is essential that **all** the aims of the policy be clearly and fully defined.*

1.4 Branch responsible for devising and delivering policy:

Youth Service Branch

You should indicate if responsibility is shared with another Government Department or Departments.

1.5 Name of and contact details for person carrying out screening:

Louise Warde Hunter Cathy Galway	Grade 5 Principal	Senior Responsible Officer Project Manager
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2. SCREENING ANALYSIS

When proceeding to screening “proper”, the Equality Commission has stated that there are four criteria to be considered. These are listed at 2.1 – 2.4 below. You are asked to consider the criteria/question in relation to the Section 75 groups and to answer the questions accordingly.

“Don’t know?” “No Evidence?”

The questions ask for evidence in relation to the Section 75 categories. You should not think of the “don’t know” column in the form as the easy option to respond to any of the questions. In cases where you don’t know and you don’t have data on file, you will need to make a pragmatic judgement based on experience as to whether the policy you are screening may have an impact on any of the categories. If your judgement is that the policy may have a differential adverse impact on any of the Section 75 groups (i.e. it affects them differently and less favourably than other people), you should seek to obtain evidence. You should note that evidence can be qualitative – i.e. drawn from the experience of individuals from their perspective - as well as quantitative. Officials must give consideration to steps that they could reasonably be expected to take to obtain evidence and thereby inform their decision making. Such steps could include meeting with a representative group or selective consultation.

Where there is little or no evidence, and common sense indicates that a differential impact may be expected, you should discuss this with the Equality Unit.

2.1 Is there any evidence of higher or lower participation or uptake by different groups? If so, please indicate below.

CATEGORY	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Gender	[]	[X]	[]
Sexual orientation	[]	[X]	[]
Religion	[]	[X]	[]
Political opinion	[]	[X]	[]
Disability (physical and learning)	[x]	[]	[]
Race or ethnic origin (includes Travellers)	[]	[]	[X]
Age	[]	[X]	[]
Dependant responsibilities	[]	[X]	[]
Marital status	[]	[X]	[]

If **YES** give details, including source:

Although not specific to the review of RPA or Paper 9 some stakeholders in
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youth have expressed concerns that some children with special needs find it difficult to access youth services. To address these and other concerns, the needs of Sexual Orientation, Gender and Disability are being addressed through the Youth Outreach Workers currently working regionally across Northern Ireland. focusing on Disability Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender. Gender Equality based in Youth Action.

2.2 Is there any evidence that different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular policy?

CATEGORY	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Political opinion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability (physical and learning)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race or ethnic origin (includes Travellers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dependant responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marital status	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If **YES** give details, including source:

No consultees have expressed concern in relation to Section 75 issues.

Although not specific to the review of RPA some stakeholders in youth have expressed concerns that some children with special needs find it difficult to access youth services. To address these and other concerns, the needs of

Sexual Orientation, Gender and Disability are being addressed through the Youth Outreach Workers currently working regionally across Northern Ireland.

2.3 Is there an opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity or better community relations by altering the policy or working with others in Government or in the larger community?

CATEGORY	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Gender	[]	[X]	[]
Sexual orientation	[]	[X]	[]
Religion	[]	[X]	[]
Political opinion	[]	[X]	[]
Disability (physical and learning)	[x]	[X-]	[]
Race or ethnic origin (includes Travellers)	[]	[]	[x]
Age	[]	[X]	[]
Dependant responsibilities	[]	[X]	[]
Marital status	[]	[X]	[]

If **YES** give details, including source:

This question has been interpreted as meaning will the change in policy lead to better promotion of equality of opportunity or better community relations.

Youth work in its very nature is inclusive and participative. Outreach workers attempt to reach out to those marginalised in society.

No consultees have expressed concern in relation to Section 75 issues.

Although not specific to the review of RPA some stakeholders in youth have expressed concerns that some children with special needs find it difficult to access youth services. To address these and other concerns, the needs of Sexual Orientation, Gender and Disability are being addressed through the Youth Outreach Workers currently working regionally across Northern Ireland.

2.4 Have consultations with relevant groups, organisations or individuals indicated that particular policies create problems, which are specific to them?

CATEGORY	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Gender	[]	[x]	[]
Sexual orientation	[]	[x]	[]
Religion	[]	[]	[]
Political opinion	[]	[X]	[]
Disability (physical and learning)	[x]	[]	[]
Race or ethnic origin (includes Travellers)	[]	[]	[x]
Age	[]	[X]	[]
Dependant responsibilities	[]	[X]	[]
Marital status	[]	[X]	[]

If **YES** give details, including source:

No consultees have expressed concern in relation to Section 75 issues.

Although not specific to the review of RPA some stakeholders in youth have expressed concerns that some children with special needs find it difficult to access youth services. To address these and other concerns, the needs of Sexual Orientation, Gender and Disability are being addressed through the Youth Outreach Workers currently working regionally across Northern Ireland.

If the answer to **any** of the questions in respect of any of the categories is “YES”, you – in discussion with the Equality Unit - will have to consider whether the policy has a significant impact on equality of opportunity and, therefore, should be subject to an equality impact assessment.

If the answer to **all** the questions in section 2 is NO an equality impact assessment is not required.

If the answer to any of the above questions is **DON'T KNOW**, and common sense and experience indicate that a differential impact may be expected, you will need to discuss this with the Equality Unit.

It may be that a policy has an adverse differential impact on certain people in one or more of the categories as a consequence of targeting or affirmative action to combat an existing or historical inequality. If this is the case, please give details below and contact the Equality Unit if you are in doubt:

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3. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT RECOMMENDATION

Equality Impact Assessment procedures are confined to those policies considered likely to have significant implications for equality of opportunity.

3.1 If screening has indicated that a policy is having an adverse differential impact, how would you categorise it?

Please tick.

Significant impact	<input type="checkbox"/>	
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Low impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
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3.2 Do you consider that this policy needs to be submitted to a full equality impact assessment?

YES	NO
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

If NO but the policy has significant impact, please give reasons for your recommendation:

In response to the consultation on Paper 9, no consultees have expressed concern in relation to differential impacts for Section 75 groups. However, outside of this consultation on the future of youth services under RPA, DE has been told that certain Section 75 groups can find it difficult to access youth services. This does not alter the policy of youth services remaining with DE and the other elements of the youth policy paper. The Department will be developing 'Priorities for Youth' over the next 6-9 months and will ensure that the consultation will address all of the areas within Section 75.
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