



Screening

Policy scoping

Information about the policy

Policy name	Initial Handling and Categorisation of Material Policy
Existing/Revised/New policy	New
What is the policy trying to achieve	Process for the initial handling of material coming into the Commission, ensuring it is appropriately marked under the Government Security Classifications Policy (GSCP) and according to its sensitivity under the NI Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023.
Policy author	Data and Information Security Team.
Policy owner	Commissioner for Investigations

Are there any S75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy? If so, explain how.

No. It applies equally to all.

Implementation factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision? No

Main stakeholders affected

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

Staff: Information Recovery Team	Actual
People who use our service	n/a

Other public sector organisations including Relevant Authorities	n/a
Voluntary/community/trade unions	n/a
Other, please specify	n/a

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

Name	Who owns
Intelligence and Sensitive Information Handling Policy	Commissioner for Investigations
Information Security Classification Policy	Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Need to Know Guidance	Commissioner for Investigations
CHIS Guidance	Commissioner for Investigations
Data Protection Policy	Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Clue User Policy	Commissioner for Investigations
Clue Management Policy	Commissioner for Investigations

Available evidence

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

Please note policy written before any staff employed so no internal information available.

Religious Belief	Northern Ireland is traditionally split between those identifying as Protestant (around 42%) and Catholic (about 41%), with increasing numbers identifying as having no religion or other religions.
Political Opinion	The political landscape in Northern Ireland is unique, with political opinions often aligning with religious or national identity.

	Political affiliations in Northern Ireland often correlate with religious and national identity, with Unionists (typically Protestant) and Nationalists (typically Catholic) making up the largest groups. However, no precise statistics on political opinions are routinely collected due to sensitivities surrounding this information.
Racial Group	Around 98% of Northern Ireland's population identifies as white, with 2% belonging to minority ethnic groups (e.g., Black, Asian, Mixed). The 2021 Census data also revealed growth in the minority ethnic population. Within the time period in which the deaths and serious harm which the ICRIR can investigate occurred, the percentage of the population which identifies as white was even higher.
Age	Northern Ireland's workforce generally reflects an aging population, with approximately 18% of the population being over 65 and about 20% under 15. In the public sector, the average age of employees is typically between 35–55. Age-related issues in employment could include older employees facing challenges in adapting to new technologies or younger employees feeling underrepresented in leadership roles. Surveys from sources like the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) show concerns about intergenerational fairness and age-based discrimination in the workplace, including opportunities for younger workers to access training and promotions, and challenges older workers may face when adapting to evolving work practices. ICRIR has the remit to investigate deaths and serious injuries related to the Troubles/Conflict in the period between 1 January 1966 and 10 April 1998 which caused serious physical or mental harm. A victim or survivor can request that the Commission investigates an incident involving a serious injury to them. A close family member of the deceased can ask the Commission to investigate an incident involving a death. Given the time period in which these deaths or serious crimes occurred, Requesting Individuals are likely to be older than the general population.
Marital Status	The most recent Northern Ireland Census shows a declining trend in marriage rates, with more people opting for civil partnerships or remaining single.

	Northern Ireland Census 2021 data shows a decline in marriage rates, with 42% of adults married, 11% divorced, and an increasing number of people opting for civil partnerships or remaining single.
Sexual Orientation	Sexual orientation data indicates around 2% of the population identifies as LGB (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual) based on NISRA's Continuous Household Survey.
Men and Women Generally	The Northern Ireland Census 2021 produced the following demographic breakdown for Northern Ireland: • Female 50.81% • Male 49.19% Census 2021 main statistics demography tables – age and sex
Disability	According to the NISRA, around 21% of Northern Ireland's population lives with a disability. This percentage increases with age. Requesting Individuals who have themselves suffered serious harm as a result of a serious injury related to the Troubles / Conflict will be more likely than the general public to be living with a disability.
Dependants	No information available.
Gender Reassignment (required under Equality Act 2010):	Data on individuals who have undergone or are undergoing gender reassignment is scarce due to privacy concerns. However, estimates suggest that around 1% of the UK population identifies as transgender or non-binary. (Not required for section 75 but is required under the Equality Act)

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision?

Specify details of the needs, experiences and priorities for each of the Section 75 categories below:

Religious belief	The policy applies consistently across systems and processes and does not introduce differential access, decision-making, or
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	treatment of individuals or groups. Therefore, this policy has no direct or indirect impact on any Section 75 equality group.
Political Opinion	The policy applies consistently across systems and processes and does not introduce differential access, decision-making, or treatment of individuals or groups. Therefore, this policy has no direct or indirect impact on any Section 75 equality group.
Racial Group	The policy applies consistently across systems and processes and does not introduce differential access, decision-making, or treatment of individuals or groups. Therefore, this policy has no direct or indirect impact on any Section 75 equality group.
Age	The policy applies consistently across systems and processes and does not introduce differential access, decision-making, or treatment of individuals or groups. Therefore, this policy has no direct or indirect impact on any Section 75 equality group.
Marital status	The policy applies consistently across systems and processes and does not introduce differential access, decision-making, or treatment of individuals or groups. Therefore, this policy has no direct or indirect impact on any Section 75 equality group.
Sexual orientation	The policy applies consistently across systems and processes and does not introduce differential access, decision-making, or treatment of individuals or groups. Therefore, this policy has no direct or indirect impact on any Section 75 equality group.
Men and Women generally	The policy applies consistently across systems and processes and does not introduce differential access, decision-making, or treatment of individuals or groups. Therefore, this policy has no direct or indirect impact on any Section 75 equality group.
Disability	The policy applies consistently across systems and processes and does not introduce differential access, decision-making, or treatment of individuals or groups. Therefore, this policy has no direct or indirect impact on any Section 75 equality group.
Dependants	The policy applies consistently across systems and processes and does not introduce differential access, decision-making, or treatment of individuals or groups. Therefore, this policy has no direct or indirect impact on any Section 75 equality group.

Part 2. Screening questions

Introduction

1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy for each of the Section 75 equality categories?

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Religious belief**:

Level of Impact	Major	Minor	None
			x

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**:

Level of Impact	Major	Minor	None
			x

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Groups**:

Level of Impact	Major	Minor	None
			x

Details of the likely policy impacts on **age**:

Level of Impact	Major	Minor	None
			x

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Marital Status**:

Level of Impact	Major	Minor	None
			x

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Sexual Orientation**:

Level of Impact	Major	Minor	None
			x

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Men and Women**:

Level of Impact	Major	Minor	None
			x

Details of the likely policy impacts on **disability**:

Level of Impact	Major	Minor	None
			x

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Dependants**:

Level of Impact	Major	Minor	None
			x

2. **Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories?**

No. The policy sets out the process by which the Commission will categorise, and store, material received from Relevant Authorities and other sources. It operates to safeguard data received by the Commission. As such, it provides no opportunity to promote equality of opportunities for people within any of the defined Section 75 equality groups.

Detail opportunities of how this policy could promote equality of opportunity for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

Religious Belief - If Yes, provide details:

Political Opinion - If Yes, provide details:

Racial Group - If Yes, provide details:

Age - If Yes, provide details:

Marital Status - If Yes, provide details:

Sexual Orientation - If Yes, provide details:

Men and Women generally - If Yes, provide details:

Disability - If Yes, provide details:

Dependants - If Yes, provide details:

3. **To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?**

Please provide details of the likely policy impact and determine the level of impact for each of the categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Religious belief**:

What is the level of impact? None.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**:

What is the level of impact? None.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**:

What is the level of impact? None.

4. **Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?**

Detail opportunities of how this policy could better promote good relations for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

The policy is technical in nature and is designed to be applied uniformly, ensuring fairness and alignment with statutory, government and organisational requirements. As such, the policy provides no opportunities better promote good relations between people of different religious beliefs, political opinions or racial groups.

Additional considerations

Multiple identity

The Commission recognises that people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. However, the purpose of this policy is to categorise and safeguard data received by the Commission, ensuring that it is ingested and stored securely according to its security classification. As the policy is essentially technical in nature, it has no direct or indirect impact on any Section 75 equality group.

Part 3. Screening decision

Screening Outcome: Screened out

Decision: The decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment for the Initial Handling and Categorisation of Material Policy.

Mitigation

There is no mitigation as the policy applies equally to all as it is purely technical in nature. The policy will have no likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

Approval and authorisation

Screened by: Information Security Team

Date: September 2024

Screened by: Operational Policy Assurance and Compliance

Date: 20 January 2026

Approved by: Commissioner for Investigations

Date: 1 May 2026