

Equality Screening Template for Social Media Policy

Date: [Add date screening signed off]



Equality Screening Template

Part 1: Policy Scoping

Information about the policy

Name of the policy: Social Media Policy
Is this an existing, revised or a new policy? Revised Policy
What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes) Social Media plays a major role in the lives of individuals, communities and organisations It is a term used to describe a range of online applications which allow users to create and share content. Social media is the collective of online communications channels dedicated to community-based input, interaction, content-sharing and collaboration The purpose of this policy and the associated guidelines is to set out Libraries NI's overall approach to the use of corporate social media and establish parameters for staff in relation to their personal use of social media in order to protect Libraries NI and individual members of staff. The general principles of this policy are also applicable to Board Members. The Policy helps libraries in managing associated personal and organisational risks.
Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy? If so, explain how. The policy treats all persons using the library service equally.
Who initiated or wrote the policy? The policy was initiated by the Director of library services and drafted by the Head of Strategic Marketing and Communications.
Who owns and who implements the policy? The policy is owned by the Director of Library Services and implemented by all staff within the organisation.

Implementation Factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision? If yes, are they:

x	Financial
x	Legislative
	Other, please specify: _____

Main Stakeholders Affected

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

x	Staff
x	Service Users
x	Other Public Sector Organisations
x	Voluntary/Community/Trade Unions
x	Other, please specify: Service delivery partners

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

- What are they?
- Who owns them?

The policies listed below are owned and implemented by Libraries NI

- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Community Information Policy
- Customer Feedback Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy
- Grievance Procedure
- Harassment Policy
- Media Handling Policy
- Staff Acceptable Use Policy

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

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/information
Religious belief	Libraries NI does not gather evidence of religious belief. The 2021 Census for Northern Ireland reported 42.31% Catholic, 36.98% Protestant, 17.39% no religion, 1.72% and 1.60% not stated.
Political opinion	There is no available evidence on the political opinion of library users / non-users
Racial group	Libraries NI provides the option for members joining to indicate, "to which ethnic group they belong?" Groups listed are in line with those used in the Northern Ireland Census. In relation to ethnicity, Libraries NI statistics determine that the percentage of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) active members in 2023/24 was 3.79% of active members. 58.17% of registered members classed themselves as white and 38.17% did not provide this information.
Age	Public Library Standards 2021/22 shows that approximately 31% of children are active members of the library service. 22% of young people are active library members and approx. 11% of adults are active members. The 2021/22 Continuous Household Survey (CHS) states that adults aged 44 and under were more likely to have used the public library service (19%) than those aged 45 and over (12%). The 2023/24 Libraries NI statistics identifies there are 458,589 registered members, with 258,153 active members (56.29%). The percentage of active library members who are children (0-15) is 37.46%. 44.92 % of the active membership are adults (16 - 59) and 16.04% are Senior Citizen (60 and over). 1.58% of active users are uncategorised by age.
Marital status	Libraries NI does not collect data on the category of marital status

Sexual orientation	Libraries NI does not collect data on the category of sexual orientation. The 2021 Census for Northern Ireland figures indicates that 2.09% of the population identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual or other sexual orientation. 90.04% identify as straight or heterosexual and 7.87% prefer not to say.
Men women generally	The 2021 Census for Northern Ireland state 50.81% of the population are female and 49.19% of the population are male. Library statistics for 2023/24 show that 52.18% of active members were female, and 32.98% of active members were male. There was no data recorded for 14.79% of active borrowers. CHS 21/22 shows that women were more likely to have used the public library service than men (17% and 12% respectively).
Disability	CHS 2021/22 indicates that adults with a disability were less likely to have engaged with culture and the arts compared to those without a disability (54% and 65% respectively). In 2023/24 there were 8,963 library borrowers registered as disabled. This represents 1.95% of the total number of registered borrowers. Of these, 4,598 were active members.
Dependants	Libraries NI does not collect data for this category. According to the 2021/22 CHS adults with dependants were more likely to have used the public library service (18%) compared to adults who do not have dependants (13%).

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 for each of the section 75 categories.

Section 75 category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
Religious belief	The policy applies fairly and consistently to all members of staff and persons using Libraries NI services and facilities. There is no evidence of any different needs, experiences or priorities for this category. Content which might compromise the perception of the library as an open and welcoming space for all will not be permitted or will be removed.
Political opinion	The policy applies fairly and consistently to all members of staff and persons using Libraries NI services and facilities. There is no evidence of any different needs, experiences or priorities for this category. Content which might compromise the perception of the library as an open and welcoming space for all will not be permitted or will be removed.
Racial group	The policy applies fairly and consistently to all members of staff and persons using Libraries NI services and facilities. To ensure that people whose first language is not English have access to this policy, Libraries NI will make it available by use of translation software.
Age	The policy applies fairly and consistently to all members of staff and persons using Libraries NI services and facilities.
Marital status	The policy applies fairly and consistently to all members of staff and persons using Libraries NI services and facilities. There is no evidence of any different needs, experiences or priorities for this category
Sexual orientation	The policy applies fairly and consistently to all members of staff and persons using Libraries NI services and facilities. There is no evidence of any different needs, experiences or priorities for this category
Men women generally	The policy applies fairly and consistently to all members of staff and persons using Libraries NI services and facilities. There is no evidence of any different needs, experiences or priorities for this category

Disability	The policy applies fairly and consistently to all members of staff and persons using Libraries NI services and facilities. To ensure people with disabilities have access to this policy, for example, by making it available in a variety of formats.
Dependants	The policy applies fairly and consistently to all members of staff and persons using Libraries NI services and facilities. There is no evidence of any different needs, experiences or priorities for this category. Appropriate permissions must be obtained regarding children.

Part 2. Screening Questions

1 What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories?		
Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? Minor/major/none
Religious belief	Content that could compromise the perception of the library as an open and welcoming space will not be permitted or will be removed.	Minor
Political opinion	Content that could compromise the perception of the library as an open and welcoming space will not be permitted or will be removed.	Minor
Racial group	Content that could compromise the perception of the library as an open and welcoming space will not be permitted or will be removed.	Minor
Age	Content that could compromise the perception of the library as an open and welcoming space will not be permitted or will be removed.	Minor

Marital status	Libraries NI does not collect data on the category of marital status. There is no evidence of different needs in relation to library provision.	None
Sexual orientation	Content that could compromise the perception of the library as an open and welcoming space will not be permitted or will be removed.	Minor
Men women generally	Libraries NI does not collect data on the category of marital status. There is no evidence of different needs in relation to library provision.	None
Disability	Content that could compromise the perception of the library as an open and welcoming space will not be permitted or will be removed.	Minor
Dependants	Libraries NI does not collect data on the category of marital status. There is no evidence of different needs in relation to library provision.	None

2 Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equality categories?		
Section 75 category	If yes, provide details	If no, provide reasons
Religious belief		Content that could compromise the perception of the library as an open and welcoming space will not be permitted or will be removed.
Political opinion		Content that could compromise the perception of the library as an open and welcoming space will not be permitted or will be removed.

Racial group		Reachdeck Translation service is available for users who do not have English as their first language, this allows these users to access Libraries NI social media.
Age		Content that could compromise the perception of the library as an open and welcoming space will not be permitted or will be removed.
Marital status		The policy does not impact on the equality of opportunity for this category
Sexual orientation		Content that could compromise the perception of the library as an open and welcoming space will not be permitted or will be removed.
Men women generally		The policy does not impact on the equality of opportunity for this category
Disability		Library IT services are designed to facilitate disabled users, libraries provide information that can assist disabled users to access social media
Dependants		The policy does not impact on the equality of opportunity for this category

3 To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? Minor/major/none		
Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact Minor/major/none
Religious belief	N/A	None
Political opinion	N/A	None
Racial group	N/A	None

4 Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?		
Section 75 category	If yes, provide details	If no, provide reasons
Religious belief		No, the scope of the policy does not offer opportunities to better promote good relations. The policy does not permit content that might compromise the perception of the library as an open and welcoming space to all.
Political opinion		No, the scope of the policy does not offer opportunities to better promote good relations. The policy does not permit content that might compromise the perception of the library as an open and welcoming space to all.
Racial group		No, the scope of the policy does not offer opportunities to better promote good relations. The policy does not permit content that might compromise the perception of the

		library as an open and welcoming space to all.
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Additional Considerations

Multiple identity

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

Children and adults who use Libraries NI buildings or services may have multiple identities: they may be from a different ethnic background, they may have hidden or obvious disabilities, they may be responsible for dependants. These were considered when the policy was developed to allow all users to access library services across the network.

Part 3. Screening Decision

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

The policy does not have an adverse impact on any of the Section 75 categories. It has a positive impact on all users and those wishing to avail of public libraries.

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

The policy is available in print format in all branches for those with no access to ICT equipment such as older people, there is software available on library computers to provide access to the policy in different languages and for people with disabilities such as visual impairment.

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

N/A

Mitigation

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

If so, give the **reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.

N/A

Timetabling and Prioritising

If the policy has been 'screened in' for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

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

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 in timetabling. Details of the Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the quarterly Screening Report.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?

If yes, please provide details:

Part 4. Monitoring

[Specify details of how the policy will be monitored for effectiveness/impact. See the Commission's Monitoring Guidance For Use By Public Authorities (July, 2007)].

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Part 5. Approval and Authorisation

Screened by:	Position/Job Title:	Date:
Bríd Steele  Ciara Gault 	Service Development Managers	13 May 2025
Approved by:		

Note: A copy of the Screening template, for each policy screened should be 'signed off' and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made easily accessible on the website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.