

Equality Screening Template for Customer First Strategy

Date: [Add date screening signed off]

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Equality Screening Template

Part 1: Policy Scoping

Information about the policy

Name of the policy: Customer First Strategy
Is this an existing, revised or a new policy? New Policy
What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes) The aim of the strategy is to provide customers with an inclusive, aspirational, unique physical and virtual library experience. The objective is to: • create a unique customer experience • promote brand loyalty and ensure library use becomes a 'habit' • increase and retain an active customer base reflective of the NI population • increase participation in library programming, events and activities • widen access to library spaces, facilities, resources and collections
Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy? If so, explain how. Libraries NI will be inclusive in its approach to customers and all section 75 categories.
Who initiated or wrote the policy? The policy was initiated by Head of Service with responsibility for Customer Experience. The Service Development Manager with responsibility for Customer Experience wrote the policy.
Who owns and who implements the policy? Overall responsibility for the development and delivery of the Customer Experience Strategy is with the Head of Service North and West. Operational responsibility is with the Service Development Manager responsible for Customer Experience.

Implementation Factors

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

✓	Financial
✓	Legislative
	Other, please specify: _____

Main Stakeholders Affected

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?
- Who owns them?

• Children and Young People's Services Policy • Safe and Welcoming Libraries • Community Information Policy • Customer Feedback Policy • Library Computers Conditions of Use Policy and Staff Guidance • Digital Inclusion Policy • Information and Learning Services Policy • Partnership Policy • Procurement Policy • Social Media Policy. The policies listed above are owned and implemented by Libraries NI
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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 indicate 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	No evidence of different needs, however, Libraries NI seeks to promote shared understanding of different backgrounds.
Political opinion	No evidence of different needs, however, Libraries NI seeks to promote shared understanding of different backgrounds.
Racial group	There is anecdotal evidence that people from some minority ethnic backgrounds do have different needs regarding not having English as a first or main language. Libraries NI engages with the Migrant Forum, Councils and other organisations to improve customer experience, provides reading collections in a number of languages other than English. The use of other available resources in libraries, such as Reachdeck and Say Hi app support individuals and groups within this category.
Age	There is evidence that children have different needs and experiences in terms of learning styles and services needed. Age appropriate resources and activities are provided through the network of service points within Libraries NI to support these user groups.
Marital status	Libraries NI does not collect data on the category of marital status. There is no evidence of different needs in relation to stock provision and services provided.
Sexual orientation	There is no evidence of different needs, however, the Customer First Strategy seeks to promote a shared understanding of different sexual orientations through collections and services provided.
Men women generally	There is no evidence of different needs or priorities for these groups.

Disability	There is some evidence that people with disabilities have different needs, both in terms of accessing services and of service delivery Libraries NI continue to make resources and Library buildings accessible to all.
Dependants	There is no evidence of any different needs, experiences or priorities for this category.

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	Libraries NI will be inclusive in approach to the selection, procurement and development of services and resources.	None
Political opinion	Libraries NI will be inclusive in approach to the selection, procurement and development of services and resources.	None
Racial group	Libraries NI will be inclusive in approach to the selection, procurement and development of services and resources.	Minor
Age	Libraries NI will continue to be inclusive in approach to the procurement and promotion of resources and services beneficial to all section 75 categories. Libraries NI will continue to provide resources and services to support different stages of language development and learning styles.	None
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	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

Men women generally	Libraries NI will be inclusive in procurement and promotion of services and resources benefiting all section 75 categories	None
Disability	Libraries NI will be inclusive in procurement and promotion of services and resources benefiting all section 75 categories	Minor
Dependants	Libraries NI will be inclusive in procurement and promotion of services and resources benefiting all section 75 categories	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	Yes, an opportunity to promote positive images of people with different religious beliefs	
Political opinion	Yes, an opportunity to promote positive images of people with different political beliefs.	
Racial group	Yes, an opportunity to promote positive images of people from different racial backgrounds.	
Age	Yes, an opportunity to provide and promote resources and services for people of all ages	
Marital status		There is no evidence of different needs or opportunities for marital status
Sexual orientation	Yes, an opportunity to promote resources and services of people with different sexual orientation in a positive manner	

Men women generally		There is no evidence of different needs or opportunities for marital status
Disability	Yes, an opportunity to promote positive images of people with different disabilities reflected in a range of services and to ensure equality of access to information	
Dependants		There is no evidence of different needs or opportunities

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	Promotion of shared understanding through the development, provision and management of resources and services.	Minor
Political opinion	Promotion of shared understanding through the development, provision and management of resources and services	None
Racial group	Promotion of shared understanding through the development, provision and management of resources and services	Minor

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	Yes, through the selection, development, preservation, management and promotion of library resources and services.	
Political opinion	Yes, through the selection, development, preservation, management and promotion of library resources and services	
Racial group	Yes, through the selection, development, preservation, management and promotion of library resources and services	

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

There is no evidence of impact on people with multiple identities however, the Collections First Strategy is to provide resources and services which meet the needs of communities and individuals within Northern Ireland.

Part 3. Screening Decision

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

There is no evidence of adverse impact on any of the section 75 categories.

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

No mitigation or alternative policy required.

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)
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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:

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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 Manager	17/01/2025

 		
Approved by:		
	Director of Library Services	6 March 2025

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.