



**CCEA**

**Section 75  
Screening Report**

**April to June 2011**

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 As a designated public authority for the purposes of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Northern Ireland Curriculum for Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), is required to comply with two statutory duties:

### **Equality of Opportunity Duty (1)**

Under the first duty, CCEA is required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between the nine category categories:

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

### **The Good Relations Duty (2)**

Under the second duty, CCEA is required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial group.

The duties are designed to ensure that equality and good relation considerations are made central to policy development. The Equality Commission recommends that public authorities should carefully consider those policies that may have implications for equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

- 1.2 In its Equality Scheme, CCEA has set out how it proposes to fulfil the Section 75 statutory duties. The Section 75 duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for CCEA), as well as external policies (relating to those who area, or could be, served by CCEA).

To help assess the likely impact of a policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations, screening and equality impact assessments are used. The assessments are related to the intended outcome of the policy.

- 1.3 A review of CCEA policies is being undertaken. This report sets out the:
- Role of CCEA;
  - Screening Process;
  - Function of an EQIA;
  - Policies Screened;
  - Results of Screening.

## 2. Role of CCEA

CCEA employs around 350 staff.

CCEA's broad purposes are:

- Advising Government – on what should be taught in Northern Ireland's schools and colleges;
- Monitoring Standards – to ensure that the qualifications and examinations offered by awarding bodies in Northern Ireland are of an appropriate quality and standard;
- Awarding Qualification – as Northern Ireland's leading awarding body we offer a diverse range of qualifications, such as GCSE's, including the new GCSE Double Award specifications in vocational subjects, GCE A and AS levels, Entry Level Qualifications, and Graded Objectives in Modern Languages.

CCEA's principal functions are:

- To keep under review all aspects of the curriculum, examinations and assessment;
- To advise the Department of Education on matters concerned with the curriculum, assessment, examinations and external qualifications;
- To publish and distribute, or secure or assist the publication and distribution of, information relating to the curriculum, examinations and assessment;
- To carry out statutory consultations;
- To develop and publish criteria for the accreditation of relevant external qualifications;
- To accredit appropriate qualifications;
- To conduct examinations and assessments, ensuring that standards are recognised as equivalent to the standards of examinations and assessments conducted by other bodies or authorities exercising similar functions elsewhere in the United Kingdom;
- To produce, or secure, or assist the production of, teaching materials in connection with the curriculum and assessment;
- To carry out such other activities as the Department of Education may direct in connection with its other statutory functions.

### **3. Screening Process**

Screening is completed at an early stage when developing or reviewing a policy. Policies are screened by the policy lead (someone who has authority to make changes to the policy), an equality specialist and those who will implement the policy.

The main screening steps are outlined below:

- Policy scoping – provides details about the policy being screened and what available evidence has been gathered to help make an assessment of the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations.
- Screening questions – these ask about the likely impact of the policy on groups or people within each of the Section 75 categories and includes consideration of multiple identity and good relations issues.
- Screening decision – a decision is reached as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment (EQIA), or to introduce measures to mitigate the likely impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations. This decision is informed by the answers to the screening questions.

If screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is ‘major’ in respect of one, or more, of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, it will normally be subjected to an EQIA.

### **4. The Function of an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)**

An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is a thorough and systematic analysis of a policy, whether that policy is formal or informal, and irrespective of the scope of that policy. The primary function of an EQIA is to determine the extent of any impact of a policy upon the Section 75 categories and to determine if the impact is an adverse one. It is also an opportunity to demonstrate the likely positive outcomes of a policy and to seek ways to more effectively promote equality of opportunity and good relations. Any EQIA will be subject to consultation at the appropriate stage.

## **5. Policies Screened**

The following policies were screened within the period April to June 2011:

### **Human Resources**

- Maternity Policy
- Redundancy Policy

## **6. Results of Screening**

6.1 CCEA's initial screening decision is that both policies should be 'screened out'. It has assessed that the policies should not be subject to an EQIA on the grounds that they:

- Do not present a significant risk to our obligation to have due regard to the need to promote better equality of opportunity; and
- Do not require changing to better promote equality of opportunity.

6.2 An appendix to this report sets out:

- The scope of each policy;
- Screening decisions, ie:
  - Whether the policy has been 'screened in' for an EQIA;
  - Whether the policy has been 'screened out' with mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted;
  - Whether the policy has been 'screened out' without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.

Policy	Scope of Policy (Intended aim/outcome)	Screening Decision	Rationale for not conducting an EQIA
Maternity Policy	To comply with statutory entitlements and responsibilities regarding maternity and to set out employee rights throughout their maternity, before, during and after childbirth.	Screened out	<p>Taking into account the answers to the screening questions ie level of impact 'none' in respect of all the categories, it has been concluded that there is no need to carry out an equality impact assessment.</p> <p>It has also been concluded that the policy cannot be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality or opportunity and/or good relations.</p>
Redundancy Policy	The policy has been reviewed in line with current legislation to ensure all individuals are treated equally and fairly in the event of redundancy situations arising. The policy takes into account steps for individual and collective redundancy.	Screened out	<p>Although it has been concluded that there is a 'minor' impact in respect of four of the Section 75 equality of opportunity categories, it has been decided not to conduct an EQIA for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redundancy entitlements are in line with legislation and, in fact, CCEA has</li> </ul>

			<p>enhanced the statutory redundancy payment;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The policy will be reviewed and any adverse impacts will be taken into consideration.</li></ul> <p>It has also been concluded that the policy cannot be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality or opportunity and/or good relations.</p>
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