

Equality Commission

FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

**Public Authority Section 75 Equality Duties
Summary of Annual Progress Reports
2018-19**

**Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
September 2020**

Introduction

Most public authorities operating in Northern Ireland are required to submit an equality scheme to the Equality Commission¹. This is a statement of the public authority's commitment to fulfilling its Section 75 statutory duties and the arrangements for ensuring that these duties are complied with.

Each equality scheme must outline the public authority's arrangements for:

- assessing its compliance with Section 75 statutory duties and for consulting on matters relevant to the duties
- assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity
- monitoring any adverse impact of policies adopted on the promotion of equality of opportunity
- publishing the results of such assessments
- training their staff
- ensuring and assessing public access to information and services provided by the public authority.

The Commission recommends that public authorities include a commitment to conducting an annual review of progress on the implementation of their equality scheme, including progress on the delivery of actions to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. A copy of the annual progress report template is at appendix 2.

A list of current designated public authorities is maintained by the Commission and is available at www.equalityni.org/S75duties.

¹A body is designated as a public authority by inclusion in certain statutory provisions as set out in the NI Act 1998 and listed in Appendix 1.

Summary of Annual Progress Reports 2018-2019

158 public authorities were designated as at **31 March 2019**, of which 141 were due to submit an annual progress report. In total 135 annual progress reports were submitted to the Commission, the majority of which were received by the end of August 2019. The Commission did however include any annual progress reports received up to February 2020.

Table 1 summarises the 158 public authorities into whether or not they were due to submit an annual progress report. The full list of the 158 designated public authorities (**31 March 2019**) is included in Appendix 3.

This report compiles the quantitative information provided by 13 public authorities in their individual annual progress reports for the period 2018 - 2019. Twelve public authorities did not use the Commissions Annual Progress Report template. Data from these annual progress reports have been included where possible.

The individual progress reports provide more detailed information on the progress of each public authority and should be available on public authority websites.

Table 1. Designated public authorities as at 31 March 2019

Submission category	No.
<p>Exempt or application pending (Appeal Officer for Community Interest; The British Library; British Wool Marketing Board; Coleraine Harbour Commissioners; Covenanter Residential Housing; Craigowen Housing Association; Export Credit Guarantee Department; George Cross Foundation; Independent Financial Review; Livestock and Meat Commission; NI NI Police Fund; Office of the Certification Officer; Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator; Regulator of Community Interest Groups)</p>	14
<p>APR not requested (Department for Culture, Media and Sport; Northern Ireland Law Commission and the Youth Council)</p>	3
<p>APR due, but not submitted Electoral Commission for Northern Ireland; Grove Housing Association; Local Government Staff Commission; Ards and North Down PCSP; Northern Ireland Screen; Sports Council for Northern Ireland (Sport NI)</p>	6
<p>APR submitted (12 public authorities did not use the APR template)</p>	135 12
<p>Designated public authorities (31/03/2018)</p>	158

Section 1: Equality and good relations outcomes, impacts and good practice

Question: Has the application of the equality scheme commitments resulted in any changes to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas?

42% (N=52) of public authorities reported that the application of equality scheme commitments had resulted in **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas; 51% (N=63) reported that it had led to no changes; and 7% (N=8) reported that the question was not applicable.

Table 2: Have equality scheme commitments led to changes?

	Number PAs	%
Yes	52	42
No	63	51
Not applicable	8	7
Total	123	100

Question: What aspect of the equality scheme prompted or led to the change(s)?²

42% (N=22 of 52) cited '**other**' reasons;

42% (N=22 of 52) reported that it was as a result of the organisation's **screening of a policy**;

33% (N=17 of 52) reported that it was as a result of analysis from **monitoring impact**;

31% (N=16 of 52) reported that the aspect of the equality scheme leading to change was a result of **changes to access to information and services**; and

² Public authorities may identify a number of aspects of their equality scheme that led to the change(s).

10% (N=5 of 52) reported that it was as a result of what was identified through the **EQIA and consultation exercise**.

Section 2: Progress on equality scheme commitments and action plans/measures

Question: Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions?

41% (N=51) of public authorities reported that the Section 75 statutory duties were integrated within job descriptions **organisation wide**; 28% (N=35) of public authorities reported that the Section 75 statutory duties were integrated within job descriptions in **some departments/jobs**

12% (N=15) of public authorities reported that this action is **scheduled for later** or had already been done. 13% (N=16) reported that this question was **not applicable**. 5% (N=6) reported that the action was **not an equality scheme commitment**.

Table 3: Integration of Section 75 within job descriptions

	Number PAs	%
Yes, organisation wide	51	41
Yes, some departments/jobs	35	28
No, this is not an equality scheme commitment	6	5
No, this is scheduled for later in the equality scheme, or has already been done	15	12
Not applicable	16	13
Total	123	100

Question: Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans?

45% (N=55) of public authorities reported that the duties had been integrated within performance plans **organisation wide**; 29% (N=36) reported that the Section 75 statutory duties had been integrated within performance plans in **some departments/jobs**.

10% (N=12) of public authorities reported that this action is **scheduled for later** or had already been done, while 7% (N=9) reported that this action is not an equality scheme commitment. 9% (N=11) reported that this question was **not applicable**.

Table 4: Integration of Section 75 within performance plans

	Number PAs	%
Yes, organisation wide	55	45
Yes, some departments/jobs	36	29
No, this is not an equality scheme commitment	9	7
No, this is scheduled for later in the equality scheme, or has already been done	12	10
Not applicable	11	9
Total	123	100

Question: Were objectives/ targets/ performance measures relating to the Section 75 statutory duties integrated into corporate plans, strategic planning and/or operational business plans?³

52% (N=64 of 123) public authorities reported that objectives/ targets/ performance measures relating to the Section 75 statutory duties were integrated through organisation wide **annual business planning**;

33% (N=41 of 123) reported that it was integrated through work to prepare or develop the **new corporate plan**; 18% (N=22 of 123) reported that it was integrated in **some departments/jobs**.

24% (N=30 of 123) public authorities reported that objectives/ targets/ performance measures were **already mainstreamed** through the organisation's ongoing corporate plan;

3% (N=4 of 123) reported that integration **did not coincide with the organisational planning cycle**. A further 3% (N=4 of 123) reported that this question was **not applicable**.

³ Public authorities may identify a number of ways in which objectives/targets, performance measures were integrated.

Equality action plans/measures

Question: In your equality action plan indicate the number of actions completed, ongoing, expected to commence:

Public authorities reported that during the 2018-19 reporting period 882 of equality action plan/measures had been **completed**; 803 actions were **ongoing** and 133 actions were **yet to commence**.

Table 5: Status of Actions

	Number of responses from 134 ⁴ public authorities
Actions completed	882
Actions ongoing	803
Actions to commence	133
Total	1818

⁴ Includes data from 11 public authorities that used a different reporting template

Question: In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures, the following have been identified:⁵

80% (N= 99 of 123) public authorities reported that they were continuing action(s), **to progress the next stage** addressing the known inequality;

20% (N= 24 of 123) reported action(s) **to address newly identified inequalities/recently prioritised inequalities;**

20% (N= 24 of 123) reported they were progressing action(s) to address the known inequality **in a different way;** and

20% (N= 24 of 123) reported that measures to address a prioritised inequality **had been completed.**

⁵ Public authorities may identify a range of actions.

Arrangements for consulting

Question: Following the initial notification of consultations, a targeted approach was taken – and consultation with those for whom the issue was of particular relevance.

52% (N=64) of public authorities reported that **following the initial notification** of consultations a targeted approach was taken, and consultation with those for whom the issue was of particular relevance occurred **all the time**; 33% (N=40) reported that this process **occurred sometimes**; 9% (N=11) reported that this **never happened**; and 7% (N=8) gave **no answer**.

Table 6: Consultation with those for whom the issue was of particular relevance

	Number PAs	%
All the time	64	52
Sometimes	40	33
Never	11	9
No answer given	8	7
Total	123	100

Question: Which consultation methods were most frequently used by consultees?⁶

65% (N=87 of 134) of public authorities reported that **written documents** with the opportunity to comment in writing were the most frequently used consultation method;

69% (N=93 of 134) reported **face to face meetings**;

53% (N=71 of 134) reported **questionnaires**;

43% (N=58 of 134) reported information/notification **by email** with an opportunity to opt in/out;

54% (N=73 of 134) reported **focus groups**;

19% (N=26 of 134) of public authorities reported that **telephone consultations** were the most frequent method of consultation used; and

7% (N=10 of 134) reported that **internet discussions** were the most frequent method used.

16% (N=22 of 134) of public authorities reported that they used 'other' methods for consultation.

A number of public authorities left the question blank because no consultations had taken place during the reporting year.

⁶ Public authorities may identify a range of consultation methods.

Question: Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the equality scheme?

31% (N=42) of public authorities reported that they had carried out awareness raising activities for consultees **on the commitments in the equality scheme**, 50% (N=67) of public authorities carried out **no awareness raising activities**. 14% (N=19) of public authorities reported that this **action was not applicable**, 4% (N=6) gave **no answer**.

Table 7: Awareness-raising activities for consultees

	Number PAs ⁷	%
Yes	42	31
No	67	50
Not applicable	19	14
No answer given	6	4
Total	134	100

⁷ Includes data from 11 public authorities that used a different reporting template

Question: Was the consultation list reviewed?

62% (N=83) of public authorities **reviewed** the consultation list during 2018-19, while 25% (N=34) of public authorities **did not review** their lists. 10% (N=14) of public authorities indicated that this was **not an equality scheme commitment**. 2% (N=3) gave **no answer**.

Table 8: Consultation list reviewed

	Number PAs ⁸	%
Yes	83	62
No	34	25
Not applicable – no commitment to review	14	10
No answer given	3	2
Total	134	100

⁸ Includes data from 11 public authorities that used a different reporting template.

Arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies

Question: Please provide the number of policies screened (as recorded in screening reports).

Public authorities reported that they had **screened 1481 policies** during the year (as recorded in screening reports).

Question: Please provide the number of assessments that were consulted upon during 2018-19

96% (N=410) of policy consultations were **conducted with the screening assessment** present; 4% (N=16) policy consultations were **conducted with an equality impact assessment**. Only 1 consultation we **conducted for an EQIA alone**.

Table 9: Type of Assessment

	No. of assessments ⁹	%
Policy consultations conducted with screening assessment present	410	96
Policy consultations conducted with an equality impact assessment (EQIA)	16	4
Consultations for an EQIA alone	1	0
Total	427	100

⁹ Includes data from 11 public authorities that used a different reporting template. One policy consultation with an EQIA was conducted jointly it has only be counted once.

Question: Were any screening decisions (or equivalent initial assessments of relevance) reviewed following concerns raised by consultees?

6% (N=7) of public authorities reported that screening decisions were **reviewed following concerns** raised by consultees; 32% (N=40) of public authorities reported that **no concerns were raised** by consultees; 17% (N=21) reported **no screening decisions** were reviewed and 41% (N=51) reported that this question was **not applicable**. 3% (N=4) gave **no answer**.

Table 10: Screening assessments reviewed

	Number PAs ¹⁰	%
Yes	7	6
No concerns were raised	40	32
No screening decisions reviewed	21	17
Not applicable	51	41
No answer given	4	3
Total	123	100

¹⁰ Includes data from 11 public authorities that used a different reporting template.

Arrangements for publishing the results of assessments

Question: Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published?

4% (N=5) of public authorities reported that the results of EQIAs **were published** during the 2018-19 reporting period; 24% (N=32) of public authorities reported that **no results of EQIAs were published**; and 69% (N=93) of public authorities reported this question was **not applicable**. Three percent (n=4) of public authorities left this question blank.

Table 11: Results of EQIA's published

	Number PAs	%
Yes	5	4
No	32	24
Not applicable	93	69
Blanks	4	3
Total	134	100

Arrangements for monitoring and publishing the results of monitoring

Question: From the equality scheme monitoring arrangements, was there an audit of existing information systems?

15% (N=20) of public authorities **carried out an audit** of existing information systems during the 2018-19 period; 20% (N=27) reported that the **audit was scheduled** to take place at a later date. 34% (N=45) of public authorities had **already carried out an audit**; and 28% (N=38) reported that this question was **not applicable** and 3% (N=4) gave **no answer**.

Table 12: Audit of existing information systems

	Number PAs ¹¹	%
Yes	20	15
No, already taken place	45	34
No, scheduled to take place at a later date	27	20
Not applicable	38	28
No answer given	4	3
Total	134	100

¹¹ Includes data from 11 public authorities that used a different reporting template.

Question: In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies?

44% (N=59) of public authorities reported that following the analysis of monitoring information gathered, **no action was taken** to change/review policies; 14% (N=19) reported that **action was taken**; and 39% (N=52) reported that this question was **not applicable** and 3% (N=4) gave **no answer**.

Table 13: Action taken to change/review policies

	Number PAs ¹²	%
Yes	19	14
No	59	44
Not applicable	52	39
No answer given	4	3
Total	134	100

Complaints

This section quantifies the number of times an individual or group has contacted a public authority to raise a complaint about the application or implementation of the Equality Scheme. Information provided is to be in accordance with the procedure set out in each equality scheme.

Question: How many complaints in relation to the Equality Scheme have been received during 2018-19?

Twelve public authorities reported receiving 27 complaints during the reporting period.

¹² Includes data from 11 public authorities that used a different reporting template

Appendix 1. Meaning of Public Authority for the purposes of the Public Sector Equality Duties

75(3) In this section “public authority” means—

- (a) any department, corporation or body listed in Schedule 2 to the Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1967 (departments, corporations and bodies subject to investigation) and designated for the purposes of this section by order made by the Secretary of State;
- (b) any authority (other than the Equality Commission, the board of governors of a grant-aided school, the Comptroller and Auditor General, a general health care provider or an independent provider of health and social care) listed in Schedule 3 to the Public Services Ombudsman Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (listed authorities);
- (cc) ... the Chief Constable of the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland;
- (cd) the Director of Public Prosecutions for Northern Ireland;
- (ce)
- (cf)
- (d) any other person designated for the purposes of this section by order made by the Secretary of State.

(3A) An order under subsection (3)(a) or (d) may provide that the designated department, corporation, body or other person –

- (a) is not subject to, or is only subject to, specified obligations under subsection (1) or (2), or
- (b) is not subject to, or is only subject to, specified obligations under subsection (1) or (2)-
 - i. when exercising a specified function, or
 - ii. when exercising a specified function in specified circumstances or for specified purposes

(3B) In subsection (3A) “specified” means specified in the order.¹³

¹³ Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014

Appendix 2.

- [Download a copy of the Annual Progress template](#) [Word.docx, 50kb]
- PART B - Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) and Disability Action Plans - see page 12-16 of the [Annual Progress template](#) [Word.docx, 50kb]

Appendix 3. List of public authorities as at 31 March 2019

Public Authority	2018/19 APR
Abbeyfield and Wesley Housing Association Ltd	Received
Agri-Food & Biosciences Institute	Received
Alpha Housing (NI) Ltd	Received
Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council	Received
Antrim and Newtownabbey Policing and Community Safety Partnership	Received
Apex Housing Association	Received
Appeal Officer for Community Interest Companies	Exempt
Ards and North Down Policing and Community Safety Partnership	APR overdue
Ark Housing Association (NI) Ltd	Received
Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council	Received
Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon Policing and Community Safety Partnership	Received
Arts Council of Northern Ireland	Received
Belfast City Council	Received
Belfast Harbour Commissioners	Received
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust	Received
Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership	Received
Belfast, East District Policing and Community Safety Partnership	Received
Belfast, North District Policing and Community Safety Partnership	Received
Belfast, South District Policing and Community Safety Partnership	Received
Belfast, West District Policing and Community Safety Partnership	Received
Board of Trustees of the National Museums and Galleries of Northern Ireland	Received
British Council, The	Received
British Library, The	Exempt
British Wool Marketing Board	Exempt
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council	Received
Causeway Coast and Glens Policing and Community Safety Partnership	Received
Charity Commission for Northern Ireland	Received
Chief Constable of the Police Service of Northern Ireland	Received
Chief Electoral Officer For Northern Ireland, The	Received
Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice in Northern Ireland	Received
Choice Housing Ireland Ltd.	Received
Civil Service Commissioners for Northern Ireland	Received

Public Authority	2018/19 APR
Clanmil Housing Association Ltd	Received
Coleraine Harbour Commissioners	Exempt
Commission for Victims and Survivors for Northern Ireland	Received
Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland	Received
Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland	Received
Connswater Homes Ltd	Received
Construction Industry Training Board	Received
Council for Catholic Maintained Schools	Received
Covenanter Residential Association Ltd	Exempt
Craigowen Housing Association	Exempt
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	Not requested
Department for Infrastructure	Received
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Development	Received
Department for Communities	Received
Department of Education	Received
Department for the Economy	Received
Department of Finance	Received
Department of Health	Received
Department of Justice	Received
Derry City and Strabane District Council	Received
Derry City and Strabane Policing and Community Safety Partnership	Not requested
Director of Public Prosecutions	Received
Education Authority	Received
Electoral Commission for Northern Ireland	APR overdue
Exports Credit Guarantee Department	Exempt
Fermanagh and Omagh District Council	Received
Fermanagh and Omagh Policing and Community Safety Partnership	Received
Food Safety Promotion	Received
General Consumer Council	Received
General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland	Not requested
George Cross Foundation	Exempt
Governing Body of Belfast Metropolitan College	Received
Governing Body of North West Regional College	Received
Governing Body of Northern Regional College	Received
Governing Body of South Eastern Regional College	Received
Governing Body of South West College	Received
Governing Body of Southern Regional College	Received

Public Authority	2018/19 APR
Governing Body of Stranmillis University College	Received
Grove Housing Association	APR overdue
Habinteg Housing Association	Received
Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland	Received
Health and Social Care Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority	Received
HM Revenue and Customs	Received
Independent Financial Review Panel	Exempt
Information Commissioner	Received
Intertradelreland	Received
Invest Northern Ireland	Received
Labour Relations Agency	Received
Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council	Received
Lisburn and Castlereagh Policing and Community Safety Partnership	Received
Livestock and Meat Commission	Exempt
Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland	APR overdue
Londonderry Port and Harbour Commissioners	Received
Loughs Agency	Received
Maze/Long Kesh Development Corporation	Received
Mid and East Antrim Borough Council	Received
Mid and East Antrim Policing and Community Safety Partnership	Received
Mid Ulster District Council	Received
Mid Ulster Policing and Community Safety Partnership	Received
National Heritage Memorial Fund	Received
Newington Housing Association	Received
Newry Mourne and Down District Council	Received
Newry Mourne and Down Policing and Community Safety Partnership	Received
NI Law Commission	Not requested
NI Police Fund	Exempt
North Belfast Housing Association Ltd	Received
North Down and Ards District Council	Received
North/South Language Body, The	Received
Northern Health and Social Care Trust	Received
Northern Ireland Ambulance Service	Received
Northern Ireland Assembly Commission	Received
Northern Ireland Audit Office	Received

Public Authority	2018/19 APR
Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation	Received
Northern Ireland Blood Transfusion Service Agency	Received
Northern Ireland Community Relations Council	Received
Northern Ireland Co-Ownership	Received
Northern Ireland Council for The Curriculum Examinations and Assessment	Received
Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue	Received
Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority	Received
Northern Ireland Guardian Ad Litem Agency	Received
Northern Ireland Housing Executive	Received
Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission	Received
Northern Ireland Library Authority	Received
Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee	Received
Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency	Received
Northern Ireland Museums Council	Received
Northern Ireland Office	Received
Northern Ireland Policing Board, The	Received
Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council for Nursing & Midwifery	Received
Northern Ireland Screen	APR overdue
Northern Ireland Social Care Council	Received
Northern Ireland Tourist Board	Received
Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company	Received
OFCOM	Received
Office of The Certification Officer	Exempt
Office of The Qualifications and Examinations Regulator	Exempt
Open University, The	Received
Patient and Client Council	Received
Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland	Received
Police Rehabilitation and Retraining Trust	Received
Probation Board for Northern Ireland	Received
Queen's University of Belfast, The	Received
Radius Housing	Received
Regional Agency for Public Health and Social Wellbeing	Received
Regional Business Services Organisation	Received
Regional Health and Social Care Board	Received
Regulator of Community Interest Companies	Exempt
Rural Housing Association	Received
Safeguarding Board	Received
South Eastern Health and Social Care	Received

Public Authority	2018/19 APR
South Ulster Housing Association Ltd	Received
Southern Health and Social Care Trust	Received
Special EU Programmes Body, The	Received
Sports Council for Northern Ireland	APR overdue
St Mary's University College	Received
St Matthew's Housing Association	Received
Strategic Investment Board Ltd	Received
The Executive Office	Received
Triangle Housing Association Ltd	Received
Ulster Supported Employment Ltd	Received
University of Ulster	Received
Warrenpoint Harbour Authority	Received
Waterways Ireland	Received
Western Health and Social Care Trust	Received
Woodvale and Shankill Community Housing	Received
Youth Council for Northern Ireland	Not requested