

DEPARTMENT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE

SECTION 75 EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY SCREENING ANALYSIS FORM

The purpose of this form is to help you to consider whether a new policy (either internal or external) or legislation will require a full equality impact assessment (EQIA). Those policies identified as having significant implications for equality of opportunity must be subject to full EQIA.

The form will provide a record of the factors taken into account if a policy is screened out, or excluded for EQIA. It will provide a basis for quarterly consultation on the outcome of the screening exercise, and will be referenced in the biannual review of progress made to the Minister and in the Annual Report to the Equality Commission.

Further advice on completion of this form and the screening process, including relevant contact information, can be accessed via the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Intranet site.

HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

When considering the impact of this policy, you should also consider if there would be any Human Rights implications. Guidance is at:

- <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/articles/human-rights-and-public-authorities>

Should this be appropriate, you will need to complete a Human Rights Impact Assessment. A template is at:

- <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/human-rights-impact-assessment-proforma>

Don't forget to Rural Proof.

Part 1. Policy scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

Public authorities should remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the authority), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the authority).

Information about the policy

Name of the policy

Driver & Vehicle Agency (DVA) Business Plan for 2026-27

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?

New – Annual Business Plan

What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes)

This is an annual business plan that sets out DVA's performance targets for the year 2026-27 across a range of services we provide.

The plan outlines the services that DVA will provide to citizens and which account for the vast majority of its work. Our focus for 2026-27 will be on three priorities: namely, our Services, our Infrastructure and Assets, and our Organisation.

Our main priority is to deliver all our services to the highest possible standards and at maximum capacity.

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?

If so, explain how.

Yes - The achievement of Business Plan targets are expected to benefit many members of society, including those in section 75 (s75) groups.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

DVA Financial Management & Corporate Services

Who owns and who implements the policy?

The Chief Executive and DVA Strategic Management Board

Background

The DVA is responsible for the delivery of driver licensing, passenger transport licensing and enforcement, driver and vehicle testing, and maintenance of the Department's registers of Approved Driving and Motorcycle Instructors.

In fulfilling these responsibilities, the following services are provided by the Agency:

- driver and vehicle testing;
- driver licensing – issuing and, where appropriate, withdrawing licences in respect of drivers of cars, motorcycles, lorries, buses, etc;
- driving and riding instructor registration – assessing the suitability of applicants, checking tuition standards, the delivery of Compulsory Basic Training and taking appropriate action when instructors fail to meet required standards;
- passenger transport licensing – issuing and, where appropriate, withdrawing licences in respect of bus and taxi operators and taxi drivers, and licensing public service vehicles for both the bus and taxi industries;
- compliance audits and enforcement of licensing, roadworthiness and other legal requirements for goods and passenger carrying operators and their vehicles; and
- technical driver and vehicle standards – ensuring the Department fulfils its legal obligations in respect of the provision of statutory driver and vehicle tests,

providing technical advice to Driving, Vehicles and Road Safety Policy Division (DVRSPD) to assist in the development of legislation, reviewing legislative changes that may affect the driving and vehicle testing environment, and developing and implementing appropriate standards.

The Business Plan outlines the targets that will ensure we fulfil our responsibilities outlined above.

Implementation factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?

If yes, are they (please delete as appropriate)

Financial

Legislative

other, please specify

Main stakeholders affected

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

Service users

Staff

Other public sector organisations

Voluntary and community groups/trade unions

Business partners

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

- What are they?
 - Programme for Government 2024-2027
 - Department's statutory duties towards the citizen
 - Department's Strategic Framework and Corporate Plan

- Who owns them?
 - The Northern Ireland Executive
 - Department for Infrastructure (DfI)

Available evidence

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data. The Commission has produced this guide to [signpost to S75 data](#).

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

DVA services seek to ensure that road users can travel in safety by providing key services. For example, the testing of vehicles to ensure they are roadworthy, and conducting driving tests to certify that applicants meet the standard to drive vehicles.

During 2024-25 DVA carried out 1.16M (1,163,600) vehicle tests and 68,700 driving tests. In overall terms it achieved 12 of 14 key performance targets, with the 2 financial targets not achieved. Full details of the DVA's performance against the business plan targets for 2024-25 were published at [DVA Annual Report and Accounts 2024-25 | Department for Infrastructure](#) Figures for 2025-26, when available, will be published on the Department's website (www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk).

No direct feedback was received on the DVA Business Plan for 2024-25 or 2025-26. Numerous pieces of correspondence were received in respect of MOT

and driving test waiting times. Targets for MOT and driving test waiting times have been outlined in the Business Plan for 2026-27.

Religious belief evidence / information:

In the 2021 Census out of a population of 1.9 million the following statistics were recorded for the main current religions in Northern Ireland: Catholic 45.7%, Protestant and other Christian (including Christian related) 43.5%, Other Religions 1.5% and No Religion 9.3%.

Data is not held on the religious belief of the customers who avail of DVA services nor is there evidence that there are any differential impacts of the DVA Business Plan on religious belief.

Political Opinion evidence / information:

In the General Election Results 2024 the following statistics were recorded for political opinion in Northern Ireland; 'Unionist' (40.6%), 'Nationalist' (40.2%) and 'Other' (19.2%).

Data is not held on the political opinion of the customers who avail of DVA services nor is there evidence that there are any differential impacts of the DVA Business Plan on political opinion.

Racial Group evidence / information:

In the 2021 Census out of a population of 1.9 million the following statistics were recorded for ethnic groups in Northern Ireland: White 96.6%, Asian 1.7%, Black 0.6%, Mixed 0.8%, Other 0.4%.

There is anecdotal evidence provided by DVA front line staff who work directly with the public, that some customers in this group may have difficulty in accessing some DVA services. The major barrier for these customers is language, as English is not always a first language. For some customers this results in not understanding our services and what is required by and from them.

In complying with the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, DfI has developed a "Guide to Making Information Accessible" and DVA defers to this guide. DVA addresses issues relating to the language barrier in a number

of ways. For example, translation and interpreter services are available for practical and theory driving tests respectively.

In relation to driving theory tests, 89,836 took place during 2024-25 (excluding Advanced Driving Instructor (ADI)/Advanced Motoring Institute (AMI) as foreign language facilities are not provided for these test types). Of these, 2,788 tests were Foreign Language Assisted, which represents 3.12% of all eligible theory tests.

The DVA offers candidates an opportunity to bring along a friend or colleague to translate for them during a practical driving test. We do not have figures for the number of candidates who availed of this facility.

There is no evidence that there are any differential impacts of the DVA Business Plan on racial group.

Age evidence / information:

In the 2021 Census out of a population of 1.9 million the following statistics were recorded for age groups in Northern Ireland: 0-15 years 20.4%, 16-24 years 10.6%, 25-34 years 12.7%, 35-44 years 13.1%, 45-54 years 13.3%, 55-64 years 12.7%, 65+ years 17.2%.

Research has shown that the population of Northern Ireland (NI) is ageing, with approximately 400,894 of the population expected to be aged 65 and over by 2030.

Whilst the DVA does not hold data on gender or age, there is evidence that some customers in the S75 age group, particularly older people, may have difficulty in accessing some DVA services via the online facility. This was borne out during a pilot exercise DVA conducted with Libraries NI in March 2022. We publicised events in some libraries and invited citizens in those areas to come and find out how to use our online services. The majority of customers who attended were of an older age group and they articulated their difficulties in using online services.

The DVA retains a telephone service, to allow the public to make a phone call to book an MOT, driving test or theory test appointment or have an enquiry addressed. Customers can also apply for their driving licence by post. In 2024-25, almost 99% of driving tests and over 96% of vehicle tests were booked online, with the remainder booked via the Contact Centre.

Marital Status evidence / information:

In the 2021 Census out of a population of 1.5 million (those aged 16 and over), the following statistics were recorded for marital status in Northern Ireland: single (38.1%), married (45.6 %), in a civil partnership (0.2%), Separated (3.8%), divorced / dissolved partnership (6%) and widowed (6.4%).

Data is not held on the marital status of DVA customers and there is no evidence that there will be any differential impacts from the Business Plan based on marital status.

Sexual Orientation evidence / information:

In the 2021 Census out of a population of 1.5 million (those aged 16 and over), the following statistics were recorded for sexual orientation in Northern Ireland: straight or heterosexual (90%), gay, lesbian, bisexual or other (2%), prefer not to say or not stated (7.9%).

Data is not held on the sexual orientation of DVA customers and there is no evidence that there will be any differential impacts from the Business Plan based on sexual orientation.

Men & Women generally evidence / information:

In the 2021 Census out of a population of 1.9 million the following statistics were recorded for gender in Northern Ireland: females were 50.8% of the population and males were 49.2% of the population.

There is no evidence that there will be any differential impacts of the Business Plan on men and women generally.

Disability evidence / information:

In the 2021 Census out of a population of 1.9 million the following statistics were recorded for gender in Northern Ireland: females were 50.8% of the population and males were 49.2% of the population.

Anecdotal evidence, provided by DVA front line staff who work directly with the public, outlines that some customers who are disabled, particularly those with mobility conditions, may have difficulty in accessing some DVA services. DVA has implemented a range of measures to mitigate these difficulties. For example, whilst drivers are normally asked to exit the vehicle before a vehicle

test, it is possible to facilitate a disabled driver to remain in the vehicle, where DVA is made aware of the disability in advance.

Where a candidate is deaf or has severe hearing difficulties, a British Sign Language (BSL) on-screen video is provided for the car and bike tests. If this is not suitable, they may use a sign language interpreter or lip speaker via an approved agency to allow them to take the theory test. There is no extra charge for this service. There were no lip speakers during the 2024-25 year.

The total number of theory tests utilising BSL in the 2024/2025 year was 540.

In respect of practical driving tests, customers are asked to let the Agency know, when booking (both via the online system and telephone booking) if they have a disability and state specifically if they:

- are deaf or have severe hearing difficulties;
- are in any way restricted in their movements; or
- have any physical disability.

Whilst the candidate will undergo the same test as everyone else, the DVA examiner may allow more time to talk to the candidate about their disability and any adaptations fitted to the vehicle. Similar provisions are in place for theory test customers.

There is no evidence that there will be any differential impacts of the Business Plan on people with a disability.

Dependants evidence / information:

In the 2021 Census out of a population of 1.9 million the following statistics were recorded for dependents in Northern Ireland: 30.7% per cent of households in Northern Ireland contained at least one dependent child and 44.9% contained at least one person with a long-term health problem or disability; made up of those households with dependent children (10.1%) and those with no dependent children (34.8%).

Data is not held on whether DVA customers have/have not or are dependants. There is no evidence that there will be any differential impacts from the Business Plan based on the Dependants category.

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 DVA annual business plan sets out our key performance targets for the year 2026-27 in each of the services we provide. The services outlined in the plan account for most of our work.

The key priority is to ensure services are at maximum capacity thereby contributing to the overall Road Safety Strategy for Northern Ireland. This will continue to be a challenge given the high level of demand for DVA services and current limits on our capacity across the DVA existing network. That said, there is no evidence, at this time, to suggest different needs, experiences, or priorities for those identifying in the religious belief group.

Political Opinion

As outlined above.

Racial Group

Evidence shows that some customers who fall within the racial group have specific needs in relation to availing of a number of DVA services. Some examples include:

- In relation to the theory test, voiceovers are provided in several languages (Arabic, Cantonese, English, Farsi, Polish, Portuguese and Turkish). For other languages, candidates can avail of an interpreter via an approved agency and are required to arrange and pay for this service themselves.
- For practical driving tests, candidates may bring their own interpreter to accompany them on the test.
- The NI Direct website recommends 'Google Translate' be used to translate the web content.

- The NI Direct Contact Centre, which provides the call handling service for the DVA and other NICS Departments, offers a translation service to ensure that callers are given correct advice or have their request dealt with efficiently.

Age

Some customers in this group, in particular older people, may have difficulty in accessing DVA's online services. The telephone booking and enquiry service remains and is an alternative to the online services. Customers can also apply for their driving licence by post.

Marital status

As outlined at religious belief above.

Sexual orientation

As outlined at religious belief above.

Men and Women Generally

As outlined at religious belief above.

Disability

As mentioned in the Available Evidence section, some customers who are disabled need additional support to avail of DVA services and this is provided where reasonably practicable.

Dependants

As outlined at religious belief above.

Part 2. Screening questions

Introduction

In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, the public authority should consider its answers to the questions 1-4 which are given on pages 66-68 of this Guide.

If the public authority's conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then the public authority may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, a public authority should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

If the public authority's conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

If the public authority's conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories and/or good relations categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:

- measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
- the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of a 'major' impact

- a) The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
- b) Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;
- c) Potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged;
- d) Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are

concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;

- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

In favour of 'minor' impact

- a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
- b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;
- c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;
- d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of none

- a) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
- b) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

Taking into account the evidence presented above, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy, in any way, for each of the equality and good relations categories, by applying the screening questions given overleaf and indicate the level of impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.

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?

Please provide details of the likely policy impacts and determine the level of impact for each S75 categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

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

The Business Plan sets out a range of key targets that DVA seeks to achieve. The Business Plan will not impact on people's religious belief.

What is the level of impact? None

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

As outlined in religious belief above.

What is the level of impact? None

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

Some customers within this group require additional support to avail of DVA services. Where possible, DVA will put in place supporting mitigations as outlined in previous sections.

What is the level of impact? Minor positive

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

Some customers in this group require additional support to avail of DVA services. Where possible, DVA will put in place supporting mitigations as outlined in previous sections.

What is the level of impact? Minor positive

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

As outlined in religious belief above.

What is the level of impact? None

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

As outlined in religious belief above.

What is the level of impact? **None**

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

As outlined in religious belief above.

What is the level of impact? **None**

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

Some customers in this group require additional support to avail of DVA services. Where possible, DVA will put in place supporting mitigations as outlined in previous sections.

What is the level of impact? **Minor positive**

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

As outlined in religious belief above.

What is the level of impact? **None**

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

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

Religious Belief - No

The DVA provides services focused on road safety for all road users. There is no opportunity to promote equality of opportunity for this Section 75 category.

Political Opinion - No

As outlined above in Religious Belief.

Racial Group - Yes

By providing translations and interpreters to those who require this service, the DVA is ensuring customers whose first language is not English are being treated equally.

Age - Yes

By continuing to provide a telephone booking and enquiry service and postal service for driving licence applications, the DVA is ensuring that those who feel unable or cannot use the online services, are being treated equally.

Marital Status - No

As outlined above in Religious Belief.

Sexual Orientation - No

As outlined above in Religious Belief.

Men and Women generally - No

As outlined above in Religious Belief.

Disability - Yes

By providing additional support to people with disabilities, the DVA is ensuring customers who are disabled are being treated equally.

Dependants - No

As outlined above in Religious Belief.

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**:

The Business Plan will have no impact on good relations for this group.

What is the level of impact? None

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

The Business Plan will have no impact on good relations for this group.

What is the level of impact? None

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

The Business Plan will have no impact on good relations for this 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:

Religious Belief - No

Such is the nature of the work carried out by the DVA, there are no opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief.

Political Opinion - No

Such is the nature of the work carried out by the DVA, there are no opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different political opinion.

Racial Group - No

Such is the nature of the work carried out by the DVA, there are no opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different racial group.

Additional considerations

Multiple identity

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?

(For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).

The Agency is committed to complying with its statutory obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The activities that will be delivered via the DVA Business Plan 2026-27 are subject to scrutiny of the Agency's Strategic Management Board, Business Area Heads and DfI Equality Unit.

The Agency will also comply with its Equality Scheme commitments to promote equality of opportunity and good relations with regard to any policies or programmes emerging from these activities.

Rigorous assessment, consultation and analysis by business areas will be undertaken before any policy changes are implemented. Information or data on the impact of an individual policy on people with multiple identities will be addressed at this time.

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

As above

Part 3. Screening decision

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

The Business Plan acknowledges the budgetary challenges faced by the Agency at the present time and seeks to prioritise the continued provision of essential services.

Any new policies during the lifetime of this Business Plan will be subject to individual screening by the relevant business areas.

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment the public authority should consider if the policy should be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced - please provide details.

Where impacts have been identified there are already mitigations in place to support those impacted.

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

N/A

All public authorities' equality schemes must state the authority's arrangements for 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. The Commission recommends screening and equality impact assessment as the tools to be utilised for such assessments. Further advice on equality impact assessment may be found in a separate Commission publication: Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment.

Mitigation

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is 'minor' and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

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.

Where this form reflects 'minor' impacts, mitigations are already in place as part of our services for those Section 75 groups.

Timetabling and prioritising

Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment.

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 [Author pick 1 2 or 3 if a full EQIA is to take place]

Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations **N/A**

Social need **N/A**

Effect on people’s daily lives **N/A**

Relevance to a public authority’s functions **N/A**

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 the public authority in timetabling. Details of the Public Authority’s 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

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

The Commission recommends that where the policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, the public authority should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

Effective monitoring will help the public authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

Screened by: [John McAuley](#)
Position/Job Title: [Head of Chief Executive's Office](#)
Date: [3/3/26](#)

Approved by: [Siobhan Lynn](#)
Position/Job Title: [Director of Financial Management & Corporate Services](#)
Date: [29/9/26](#)

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 public authority's website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.

For Equality Team Completion:

Date Received: [04/03/26](#)
Amendments Requested: [Yes](#)
Date Returned to Business Area: [05/03/26 – 01/10/26](#)
Date Final Version Received / Confirmed: [01/10/26](#)
Date Published on DfI's Section 75 webpage: [02/10/26](#)