Department for Communities
www.communities-ni.gov.uk

Section 75 Screening Form

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

The Universal Credit, Personal Independence Payment, Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance (Claims and Payments) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?

Revised

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

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) laid the Universal Credit, Personal Independence Payment, Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance (Claims and Payments) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2026 on 1 September 2026, with a coming into force date of 22 September

2026 to coincide with the Jobs Guarantee which is a funded employment scheme in GB. Under the principle of parity, the Department for Communities will lay equivalent regulations: The Universal Credit, Personal Independence Payment, Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance (Claims and Payments) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026

When an individual's Universal Credit (UC) award is reduced to nil due to the level of earnings for five assessment periods, they may be treated as making a new UC claim after this period.

This legislation will extend this period for those who have been referred onto a wage subsidy scheme until the assessment period after they complete the scheme. This will mean that individuals who complete a relevant funded employment scheme, and do not continue in employment, do not need to make a new claim to UC as their claim will automatically go back into payment if their income drops.

The intended outcome of these regulations is to ensure that claimants participating in a funded employment scheme are protected from financial hardship if they do not continue in employment when the scheme ends.

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

Yes

If Yes, explain how.

This change will allow existing claimants to UC to be re-awarded UC upon cessation of earnings from a funded employment scheme without having to make a new claim and wait 5 weeks for a payment.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

The policy proposals originate from corresponding changes being progressed in Great Britain by the Department for Work and Pensions. The Northern Ireland Regulations have been developed by the Department for Communities in line with the principle of parity, where appropriate, with the social security system in Great Britain.

Who owns and who implements the policy?

The Department for Communities owns and will implement the policy in Northern Ireland. Implementation will involve relevant operational delivery areas in the Department.

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 and who owns them?

N/A

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.

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	The Department for Communities does not collect data relating to religious belief. As the Regulations do not differentiate between claimants based on religious belief, no adverse impact on people of different religious belief is expected.
Political opinion	The Department for Communities does not collect data relating to political opinion. As the Regulations do not differentiate between claimants based on political opinion, no adverse impact on people of different political opinion is expected.
Racial group	The Department for Communities does not hold information in relation to a person's racial group. As the Regulations do not differentiate between claimants based on racial group, no adverse impact on people of different racial groups is expected.
Age	The Department for Communities holds some information, but not a complete dataset in relation to age groups for the NI population.

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/information
	In February 2026[1], 272,280 claimants were in receipt of UC. 237,490 were under 60 and 34,790 were either 60+ or their age was unknown. As these regulations do not differentiate between claimants based on their age, no adverse impact on people of different ages is expected. *Note: Due to rounding of figures to the nearest 10, totals may not equal the sum of their component parts.
Marital status	The Department for Communities holds some information, but not a complete dataset in relation to marital status for the NI population. As the Regulations do not differentiate between claimants based on marital status, no adverse impact on people of different marital status is expected.
Sexual orientation	The Department for Communities holds some information, but not a complete dataset in relation to sexual orientation for the NI population. As the Regulations do not differentiate between claimants based on sexual orientation, no adverse impact on people of different sexual orientation is expected.
Men and women generally	The Department for Communities holds some information, but not a complete dataset in relation to gender for the NI population. In February 2026[2], 272,280 claimants were in receipt of UC. 113,820 were male, 158,310 were female and 150 claimants' gender was unknown.

[1] Universal Credit Statistics - February 2026 | Department for Communities
[2] Universal Credit Statistics - February 2026 | Department for Communities

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/information
	As the Regulations do not differentiate between claimants based on gender, no adverse impact on people of different gender is expected. *Note: Due to rounding of figures to the nearest 10, totals may not equal the sum of their component parts.
Disability	The Department for Communities holds some information, but not a complete dataset in relation to disabilities for the NI population. In February 2026[3], 226,590 households were in receipt of payment of UC. 121,680 of these households were receiving a Limited Capability for Work (LCW) element. As the Regulations do not differentiate between claimants with or without disabilities, no adverse impact is expected. *Note: Due to rounding of figures to the nearest 10, totals may not equal the sum of their component parts.
Dependants	The Department for Communities holds some information, but not a complete dataset in relation to dependants for the NI population. As the Regulations do not differentiate between claimants based on whether they have dependants, no adverse impact on people with dependants is expected.

Note to reader - If you are aware of and would like the Department to take into account any further evidence or information relevant to this policy, please send this to:

The Department for Communities
Social Security Policy and Legislation Division
Causeway Exchange

[3] Universal Credit Statistics - February 2026 | Department for Communities

Level 3
1-7 Bedford Street
Belfast
BT2 7EG
E-mail: SSPLD@communities-ni.gov.uk

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 for **each** of the Section 75 categories

Section 75 category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
Religious belief	There is no evidence to suggest that people of different religious beliefs have different needs, experiences or priorities in relation to these Regulations.
Political opinion	There is no evidence to suggest that people of different political opinions have different needs, experiences or priorities in relation to these Regulations.
Racial group	There is no evidence to suggest that people of different racial groups have different needs, experiences or priorities in relation to these Regulations.
Age	There is no evidence to suggest that people of different age groups have different needs, experiences or priorities in relation to these Regulations.
Marital status	There is no evidence to suggest that people of different marital status have different needs, experiences or priorities in relation to these Regulations.
Sexual orientation	There is no evidence to suggest that people of different sexual orientation have different needs, experiences or priorities in relation to these Regulations.

Section 75 category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
Men and women generally	There is no evidence to suggest that men or women generally have different needs, experiences or priorities in relation to these Regulations.
Disability	There is no evidence to suggest that people with disabilities have different needs, experiences or priorities in relation to these Regulations.
Dependants	There is no evidence to suggest that people with dependants have different needs, experiences or priorities in relation to these Regulations.

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? minor/major/none**

Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? minor/major/none
Religious belief	The Statutory Rule makes technical amendments to extend the period that a claimant can be considered as claiming UC while they undertake a funded employment scheme and therefore does not have any adverse implications for equality of opportunity. It is not expected that there will be any adverse impact on equality of opportunity for people of different religious belief.	None
Political opinion	The Statutory Rule makes technical amendments to extend the period that a claimant can be considered as claiming UC while they undertake a funded employment scheme and therefore does not have any adverse implications for equality of opportunity. It is not expected that there will be any adverse impact on equality of opportunity for people of different political opinion.	None

Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? minor/major/none
Racial group	The Statutory Rule makes technical amendments to extend the period that a claimant can be considered as claiming UC while they undertake a funded employment scheme and therefore does not have any adverse implications for equality of opportunity. It is not expected that there will be any adverse impact on equality of opportunity for people of different racial groups.	None
Age	The Statutory Rule makes technical amendments to extend the period that a claimant can be considered as claiming UC while they undertake a funded employment scheme and therefore does not have any adverse implications for equality of opportunity. It is not expected that there will be any adverse impact on equality of opportunity for people of different ages.	None
Marital status	The Statutory Rule makes technical amendments to extend the period that a claimant can be considered as	None

Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? minor/major/none
	claiming UC while they undertake a funded employment scheme and therefore does not have any adverse implications for equality of opportunity. It is not expected that there will be any adverse impact on equality of opportunity for people of different marital status.	
Sexual orientation	The Statutory Rule makes technical amendments to extend the period that a claimant can be considered as claiming UC while they undertake a funded employment scheme and therefore does not have any adverse implications for equality of opportunity. It is not expected that there will be any adverse impact on equality of opportunity for people of different sexual orientation.	None
Men and women generally	The Statutory Rule makes technical amendments to extend the period that a claimant can be considered as claiming UC while they undertake a funded employment scheme and therefore does not have any adverse	None

Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? minor/major/none
	implications for equality of opportunity. It is not expected that there will be any adverse impact on equality of opportunity for men and women generally.	
Disability	The Statutory Rule makes technical amendments to extend the period that a claimant can be considered as claiming UC while they undertake a funded employment scheme and therefore does not have any adverse implications for equality of opportunity. It is not expected that there will be any adverse impact on equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.	None
Dependants	The Statutory Rule makes technical amendments to extend the period that a claimant can be considered as claiming UC while they undertake a funded employment scheme and therefore does not have any adverse implications for equality of opportunity.	None

Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? minor/major/none
	It is not expected that there will be any adverse impact on equality of opportunity for people with dependants.	

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

Section 75 category	If **Yes**, provide details	If **No**, provide reasons
Religious belief		This policy does not offer any opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity for people of different religious beliefs.
Political opinion		This policy does not offer any opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity for people of different political opinions.
Racial group		This policy does not offer any opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity for people of different racial groups.

Section 75 category	If **Yes**, provide details	If **No**, provide reasons
Age		This policy does not offer any opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity for people of different ages.
Marital status		This policy does not offer any opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity for people of different marital status.
Sexual orientation		This policy does not offer any opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity for people of different sexual orientation.
Men and women generally		This policy does not offer any opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity for men and women generally.
Disability		This policy does not offer any opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.
Dependants		This policy does not offer any opportunity to better promote equality of

Section 75 category	If **Yes**, provide details	If **No**, provide reasons
		opportunity for people with dependants.

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

Good relations category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact minor/major/none
Religious belief	The Regulations are likely to have no impact on good relations between people of different religious beliefs.	None
Political opinion	The Regulations are likely to have no impact on good relations between people of different political opinions.	None
Racial group	The Regulations are likely to have no impact on good relations between people of different racial groups.	None

4. **Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?**

Good relations category	If **Yes**, provide details	If **No**, provide reasons
Religious belief		This policy does not offer any opportunity to better promote good relations between people of different religious beliefs.
Political opinion		This policy does not offer any opportunity to better promote good relations between people of different political opinions.
Racial group		This policy does not offer any opportunity to better promote good relations between people from different racial groups.

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).*

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

It is not envisaged that people who fall into more than one of the Section 75 categories will be adversely affected by the proposed policy.

Part 3. Screening decision

In light of your answers to the previous questions, do you feel that the policy should: (please underline one)

1. **Not be subject to an EQIA**
2. **Not be subject to an EQIA (with mitigating measures /alternative policies)**
3. **Be subject to an EQIA**

If 1 or 2 (i.e. not be subject to an EQIA), please provide details of the reasons why:

The Department considers that this policy is technical in nature with the making of a Statutory Rule to extend the period that a claimant can be considered as claiming UC while they undertake a funded employment. As the amendment will ensure claimants are not adversely affected financially after the completion of a funded employment scheme it is expected to have a positive impact on all Section 75 groups.

If 3. (i.e. to conduct an EQIA), please provide details of the reasons:

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?
No

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

N/A

Part 4. Monitoring

Effective monitoring will help identify any future adverse impacts arising from the policy which may lead you to conduct an EQIA, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

You 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, then you should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

Please detail proposed monitoring arrangements below:

The Department will monitor the operation of the Regulations through existing benefit management information, operational assurance processes, decision-making feedback, complaints, appeals, stakeholder feedback and equality screening review arrangements. Where operational evidence identifies unexpected or adverse impacts on any Section 75 group, the Department will consider whether further mitigation, guidance, communication or equality analysis is required.

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

Screened by:	**Position/Job Title**	**Date**
James Tumilty	Staff Officer	7/9/26
Approved by:		
David Tarr	G5	13/11/26

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.