



OFFICIAL [PUBLIC]

INITIAL EQUALITY SCREENING/ASSESSMENT FORM

Department: Professional Standards Department **Branch:** Service Vetting Unit

Name of Policy/Decision/Practice to be Equality Screened/Assessed

Service Vetting

Is it New or Revised? Revised

Who Does the Policy Effect: Officers and Staff and members of the public who work for or on behalf of PSNI

Question 1 – Define the aim of the Policy. What is the Policy trying to achieve? (Intended aims/outcomes)

This service instruction outlines the various forms of Vetting that apply to Police Officers, Police Staff and Non Police Personnel (NPP), depending upon their role. There are two distinct types of vetting within the police community namely Police In-Service Vetting and National Security Vetting (NSV). NSV has 3 levels - Counter Terrorist Check (CTC), Security Clearance (SC) and Developed Vetting (DV). In-Service Vetting is carried out on all Police Officers, Police Staff and NPPs. It remains valid for 10 years in line with National Guidance based on the College of Policing Vetting Code of Practice and HMIC.

There are different and distinct levels of vetting process is comprised of two stages of vetting; police vetting and national security vetting. Police Vetting specifically provides a level of assurance, which NSV cannot provide, as to the integrity of individuals who have access to the police estate, its assets and or infrastructure. SVU will use the CTC questionnaire for both CTC and Police Vetting. Only when an individual passes Police Vetting will they enter the CTC process.

Anyone who fails their vetting check has the right of appeal via Professional Standards Department. Again in respect of appeals there are different panels for internal and external. The Recruitment Panel has been set up as a result of Police Recruitment Legislation 2002 where there is a requirement for all potential recruits who do not meet vetting requirements to be assessed by the Panel. It is made up of officers and staff from Police College, Discipline, Anti-Corruption, Service Vetting Unit, Legal Services, HR and Independent Member appointed by NIPB. The other internal Panels are for NPP and higher levels of vetting (SC/DV) and are comprised of SVU, ACU, Security Branch officers and staff.

Recruitment appeal process – Panel assess if someone fails, appeal to Independent Assessor for review, final decision made by C/Supt PSD.

If a potential recruit fails vetting they will not be appointed.

If a non-police personnel member of public fails vetting they will be unable to work for or on behalf of PSNI

If an officer or staff member fails (SC/DV) they will be unable to work in a post that requires that level of clearance.

Question 2 – Does the Policy have the potential to have an impact on the promotion of equality of opportunity for any of the Section 75 groupings? No

Provide a brief explanation for your answer below.

A previous EQIA of the policy in 2015 provided no evidence that the vetting procedures themselves unfairly discriminate on Section 75 grounds. The EQIA identified that the number of applicants who are denied clearance were very low. Between January 2012 and December 2014, a total of 15,891 individuals were vetted by PSNI, including both police personnel and others. Of these, only 429 (2.69%) had clearance denied, and there is little evidence to suggest that this small minority reflects significantly on any particular Section 75 ground of difference. Where there are differences in clearance rates between groups, they tend to be small and not significant.

A further analysis was carried out on 1509, 17109 and 1810 competitions and no significant difference in the headline merit pool population in respect of Section 75.

With regard to the revised SI the only notable change is the introduction of In-Service Vetting for police officers that was introduced in November 2018. This provides additional assurances that existing police, police staff and NPP meet the vetting standards

Consideration of Available Data/Research

Question 3 – What evidence is there available – statistics or perception – to help you decide who the Policy might affect the most? ie What evidence, qualitative or quantitative, have you gathered to inform your decision making

All Police, Police Staff and NPP are subject to this policy. There is no evidence to suggest that this impacts adversely on any of the Section 75 categories. PSNI aims to have a workforce representative of the community we serve. The table below gives a breakdown of police officers and staff by community background, gender and ethnicity. Information is correct as of 01/02/2022.

	Police Officers	Police Staff
% Perceived Protestant	66.55	77.66
% Perceived Roman Catholic	32.10	20.06
% Not Determined	1.35	2.28
% Female	30.81	56.94
% Male	69.19	43.06
% Ethnic Minority	0.58	0.69
Total	7059	2592

Assessment of Impact

Question 4 – Explain if what you plan to do is likely to be perceived as having a high, medium or low impact upon the 9 Equality groupings according to their needs. Also if what you are planning to do is likely to be perceived as having a positive or negative effect upon the 3 different groups in relation to the promotion of good relations.

9 Equality Groups	Perceived Impact High – (H) Medium - (M) Low – (L)	Why this rating?	Promotion of Good Relations (Yes/No)	Why this rating?
Religious Belief	L	See Q3	Yes	See Q6
Racial/Ethnic Group	L	See Q3	Yes	See Q6
Political Opinion	L	See Q3	Yes	See Q6
Age	L	See Q3	-	See Q6
Gender	L	See Q3	-	See Q6
Marital Status	L	See Q3	-	See Q6
Sexual Orientation	L	See Q3	-	See Q6
Disability	L	See Q3	-	See Q6
Dependants	L	See Q3	-	See Q6

Opportunities to better promote Equality of Opportunity

Question 5 – Are there steps which could be taken to reduce any adverse impact upon the Section 75 groups as identified in Question 4?

PSNI continue to monitor the impact of the SI after each recruitment process, by relevant Section 75 grounds. All vetting panel members have received equality training.

Good Relations

Question 6 – Is there an opportunity in what you are trying to do to better promote Good Relations between the 3 groupings as identified in Question 4?

The current SI with a significant portion of the information being transferred to easier to accessible platforms including PoInt were guidance documents, contact details and information about all levels are available.

The results of ongoing monitoring by relevant Section 75 grounds is carried out on an annual basis. If the monitoring and analysis of results show that the policy results in greater adverse impact than predicted, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, PSNI will ensure that the SI is further revised to achieve better outcomes for the relevant equality groups.

Consultation

Question 7 – Tell us about who have talked to about your proposals internally or externally to help you decide if the Policy needs further or no further equality investigation.

Section 75 Manager – Equality and Diversity Unit
Head of Police Officer and Police Staff Recruitment
Analyst - PSD

Question 8 – In light of the above should the Policy be

Screened Out – No Equality Issues – Please provide rationale for this decision.

This is a proactive measure to ensure current procedures are provided in an easier accessible format and continuous monitoring of results is maintained.

Screened Out with some adjustments. – What adjustments have you made?

Screened In for a deeper level of analysis of what is being considered or intended to be undertaken. (EQIA) – Please provide rationale for this decision.

Signed: _____ Service No. _____ Date: _____
Policy Owner

Approved: _____ Service No. _____ Date: _____
Head of Branch

Accepted by Section 75 Manager
On behalf of Equality, Diversity
and Inclusion, Human Resources Name: _____ Service No. _____

Modifications made? Yes Date: _____

Accepted by Section 75 Manager
On behalf of Equality, Diversity
and Inclusion, Human Resources Name: _____ Service No. _____

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Modifications made?

Yes

Date: _____

Accepted by Section 75 Manager
On behalf of Equality, Diversity
and Inclusion, Human Resources

Name: _____

Service No. _____