

The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland



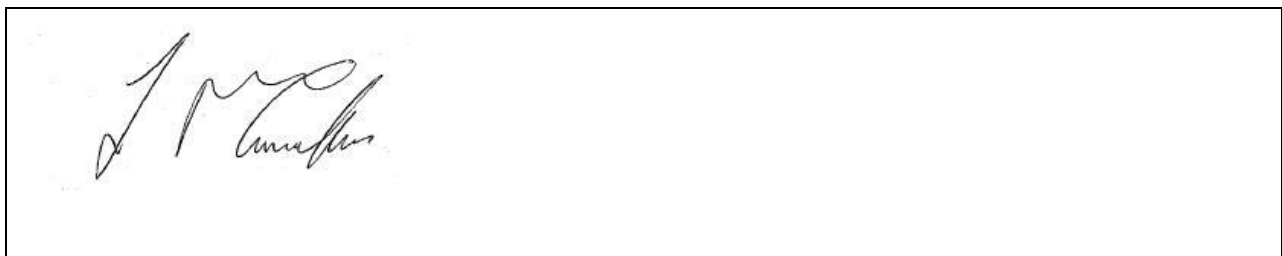
**Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties
Annual Progress Report 2014-15**

Contact:

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Action Plan	As above <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Name: Telephone: Email:

Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:
www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/about-us/equality/

Signature:



This report has been prepared using a template circulated by the Equality Commission.

It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and good relations duties, and implementing Equality Scheme commitments and Disability Action Plans.

This report reflects progress made between April 2014 and March 2015

PART A – Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Scheme

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

- 1** In 2014-15, please provide **examples** of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved.

Please relate these to the implementation of your statutory equality and good relations duties and Equality Scheme where appropriate.

The year 2014/15 was one of significant progress for the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (the Commission) with the registration of 1306 charities, the first publication of the outcome of a statutory inquiry and consultations on our Participation strategy and Equality guidance for charities.

During the year, a range of policies and guidance documents were developed. A full list is available at Appendix 2. All policy and guidance developments involved a written analysis of the policy's effects on equality of opportunity, good relations and the disability duties. We held a range of events across this period and, at every one, we have made sure accessibility needs were considered and invited feedback from participants. [Equality Scheme 3.2]

To promote the mainstreaming of equality into the work of the Commission, all staff received internal training on the equality and disability duties. A full list is available at Appendix 2. Each team also held a follow up session to identify how these would be incorporated into the work of that team. Additionally, in 2014/15, the Commission incorporated an introduction to equality, the disability duties and the equality scheme and action plan into the induction process for new staff. Understanding of equality and disability duties is also part of the training needs analysis which is undertaken annually by staff. [Equality Scheme 5.3]

The internal system which enables the Commission to monitor the implementation of the equality scheme and action plan and to monitor our response to charities and members of the public has been fully implemented and maintained. This consists of a monthly review of equality being undertaken by all programme and project teams and a quarterly report on equality sent to the Senior Management Team (SMT). The quarterly report includes a list of policies developed in the quarter, screening decisions and information on any screening that has been undertaken, with rationale posted on the website. From Quarter 1 2015/16 it is intended that these reports will provide a link to the equality screening in question.

During this year the Commission's website has been redesigned, to W3C standards, and includes a number of features to enhance accessibility for a wide range of individuals. These include: the logo on each page acting as a quick way back to the home page, a crumb line to enable the user to retrace the pages they have visited, and colour contrast and text resize options.

Finally, the work of the Commission in promoting public trust and confidence in charities, through the creation of an accessible and transparent register of charities, is a very positive step in helping to promote equality of opportunity and good relations more broadly. During 2014 -15 over 100 organisations working with specific S75 groups as well as those generally promoting equality and human rights were added to the register of charities.

Outcomes and Improvements achieved

The outcome of these developments has been strongly positive, however, the Commission is still a relatively new organisation and much of what we do now will have impact in years to come.

Tangibly, we can point to overwhelmingly positive feedback from events and training held as endorsing our efforts to be an open and accessible organisation. We have received no complaints in line with our equality scheme in this period. Our internal training for staff attracted 100% positive feedback in terms of empowering staff to understand more about equality of opportunity and good relations.

Through the regular equality assurance undertaken at project and programme teams we have ensured that all decision making has been evidence based and resulted in no negative impacts on individuals or organisations with specific S75 characteristics.

Due to business constraints a planned Equality screening questionnaire for registration applicants has not been put into operation. We have, however, continued to use the feedback received from a voluntary post-registration questionnaire to monitor stakeholder experience of the accessibility of our services.

Through this questionnaire we gathered the following information:

- 49% of respondents were female and 50% male with a small percentage choosing not to state their gender
- 30% of respondents fell within the 56-65 years age band, 70% of respondents were aged 46 or over and only 1% of respondents were aged between 19-25 years
- 6% of respondents identified themselves as having a disability
 - o 21 individuals stated their disability as physical
 - o 4 individuals stated their disability as visual
 - o 7 individuals stated their disability as relating to hearing
 - o 2 individuals stated that they have a learning disability
 - o 6 individuals stated they have a progressive health condition
 - o 6 individuals stated they have a mental health issue
 - o Some individuals have identified themselves as having multiple disabilities.

In accordance with the integrated Equality Scheme approved in April 2013, the Commission will continue to take forward the action plan which sets out the main initiatives designed to promote equality of opportunity, good relations, positive attitudes towards people with disabilities, and the participation of people with disabilities in public

life.

In keeping with our commitment to explore and develop routes of engagement and other possible sources of information that could provide an evidential base for our decision-making the Commission is:

- implementing the recently consulted upon Participation strategy
- consulting on new Equality guidance for charities
- continuing to provide a written analysis for new policies and guidance stating their effects on equality of opportunity, good relations and the disability duties as part of the screening form
- continuing to provide training for staff on the equality and disability duties including promoting the participation of people with a disability in public life
- reviewing our communications, customer charter, website and other materials to include positive and non-stereotyped images, for example, not always representing disability as a person using a wheelchair ongoing as part of website review and creation of new documents.

In the coming year, we will continue to seek advice and guidance from the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

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- 2** Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2014-15 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

Appendix 1 sets out the Commission's equality action plan, performance indicators and progress against them.

PART A

3 Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2014-15 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

Yes No (go to Q.4) Not applicable (go to Q.4)

Please provide any details and examples:

Through our Equality Scheme commitments we have begun to add subtitling to the online tutorial video. [Equality Scheme 3.2]

3a With regard to the change(s) made to policies, practices or procedures and/or service delivery areas, what **difference was made, or will be made, for individuals**, i.e. the impact on those according to Section 75 category?

Please provide any details and examples:

When completed, as a result of the changes made people who are deaf or hearing impaired will have greater access to advice on applying for registration by viewing the subtitled video.

3b What aspect of the Equality Scheme prompted or led to the change(s)? *(tick all that apply)*

As a result of the organisation's screening of a policy *(please give details):*

As a result of what was identified through the EQIA and consultation exercise *(please give details):*

As a result of analysis from monitoring the impact *(please give details):*

Feedback from individuals with hearing impairments and sign language interpreters at a workshop events.

As a result of changes to access to information and services *(please specify and give details):*

Other *(please specify and give details):*

Genreal feedback from workshops and events.

Section 2: Progress on Equality Scheme commitments and action plans/measures

Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)

4 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2014-15 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes, organisation wide
- Yes, some departments/jobs
- No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The Commission has been in negotiations with staff and Trade Union representatives concerning recognition of a Trade Union. These negotiations were successfully concluded near the close of 2014/15 year.

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2014-15 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes, organisation wide
- Yes, some departments/jobs
- No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Some members of staff, for example the Policy and Research Officer, have Section 75 statutory duties integrated within their performance plans. Section 75 statutory duties form an integral part of the Commission's Corporate and Business plans. Staff are involved in the development and review of the Commission's plans through staff days and staff sessions throughout the year. At induction all staff are also alerted to the importance of these duties to the work of the Commission.

6 In the 2014-15 reporting period were **objectives/ targets/ performance measures** relating to the Section 75 statutory duties **integrated** into corporate plans, strategic planning and/or operational business plans? *(tick all that apply)*

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- Yes, through the work to prepare or develop the new corporate plan
- Yes, through organisation wide annual business planning
- Yes, in some departments/jobs
- No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisation's ongoing corporate plan
- No, the organisation's planning cycle does not coincide with this 2013-14 report
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Corporate objective 6.2 (e): Deliver the Equality Scheme and Action Plan commitment to equality and good relations. Actions: (i) Ongoing promotion and consideration of equality and good relations obligations in policy making. (ii) Implement and approved integrated equality scheme and action plan.

Equality action plans/measures

7 Within the 2014-15 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed: Actions ongoing: Actions to commence:

Please provide any details and examples (*in addition to question 2*):

See Appendix 1 attached

8 Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2014-15 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

N/A

9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2014-15 reporting period, the following have been identified: (*tick all that apply*)

- Continuing action(s), to progress the next stage addressing the known inequality
- Action(s) to address the known inequality in a different way
- Action(s) to address newly identified inequalities/recently prioritised inequalities
- Measures to address a prioritised inequality have been completed

Arrangements for consulting (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 3)

10 Following the initial notification of consultations, a targeted approach was taken – and consultation with those for whom the issue was of particular relevance: *(tick one box only)*

- All the time Sometimes Never

11 Please provide any **details and examples of good practice** in consultation during the 2014-15 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:

We have implemented changes to our Participation strategy as a result of the feedback from consultation. These changes include:

- 2.5 When will we consult

This section has been expanded to make explicit that, in addition to our statutory obligations to consult, we will also consider consulting where we feel this would be relevant to our Section 75 duties and will always consult where a policy is screened in for an Equality Impact Assessment.

- 3.1 Participation methods

This section has been expanded to include a suggestion from a respondent that the Commission develop more interactive ways of consulting.

- 3.2 Consultation duration and periods

This section has been expanded to make clear that any decision to conduct a consultation of less than twelve weeks will only be taken in very exceptional circumstances and the reasons will be recorded and made available on request.

12 In the 2014-15 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently used by consultees**: *(tick all that apply)*

- Face to face meetings
- Focus groups
- Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing
- Questionnaires
- Information/notification by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation
- Internet discussions
- Telephone consultations

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Other (*please specify*):

Please provide any details or examples of the uptake of these methods of consultation in relation to the consultees' membership of particular Section 75 categories:

We do not have specific information correlating uptake of methods of consultation with consultees' membership of particular Section 75 categories.

In the Participation strategy consultation 54% of respondents opted to participate using the online survey, 24% attended a focus group and 12% opted for a telephone interview. 5% participated in a face to face interview, and a further 5% made a written submission.

Of the 42 respondents to the Participation strategy consultation, including those who participated in the focus group, 27 were female and 15 were male. Information on age and disability were gathered from the individual and organisational responses only. All age categories from 18 to 65+ were included with a majority of respondents (65%) identifying their age as being 46 years or over. Four respondents described themselves as a person with a disability.

The Commission's registration workshops have an almost 50:50 attendance rate of males and females. As the Commission continues to collect information during registration, events and consultations, we will be able to discover the correlations between choice of consultation response and consultees' membership of particular Section 75 categories.

13 Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2014-15 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

N/A

14 Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2014-15 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

Yes No Not applicable – no commitment to review

Arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

[www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/about-us/equality/]

15 Please provide the **number** of policies screened during the year (*as recorded in screening reports*):

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18

16 Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2014-15:

0	Policy consultations conducted with screening assessment presented.
0	Policy consultations conducted with an equality impact assessment (EQIA) presented.
0	Consultations for an EQIA alone.

17 Please provide details of the **main consultations** conducted on an assessment (as described above) or other matters relevant to the Section 75 duties:

Participation strategy

Equality guidance for charities consultation opened and closed after year end.

18 Were any screening decisions (or equivalent initial assessments of relevance) reviewed following concerns raised by consultees? *(tick one box only)*

Yes No concerns were raised No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

N/A

Arrangements for publishing the results of assessments (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

19 Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published during the 2014-15 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

No EQIAs were conducted during this reporting period.

Arrangements for monitoring and publishing the results of monitoring (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

PART A

20 From the Equality Scheme monitoring arrangements, was there an audit of existing information systems during the 2014-15 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes No, already taken place
 No, scheduled to take place at a later date Not applicable

Please provide any details:

Information system for equality issues.

21 In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The screening format used by the Commission was changed to increase clarity and readability of the information for those accessing the screening reports online.

22 Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2014-15 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

Monitoring has shown an increase, across most departments in the Commission, of requests for reasonable adjustments. During 2014/15 the Commission received 40 requests for special circumstances. These requests have changed from requests for paper application forms (9, in the previous year) to a wider range of adjustments including requests from those for whom English is a second language, sign language interpreters, and adjustments for those with sensory impairments or physical disability. The Commission believes that responding to these requests has decreased potentially adverse impacts on a range of stakeholders. More details are available under question 26.

23 Please provide any details or examples of monitoring that has contributed to the availability of equality and good relations information/data for service delivery planning or policy development:

Feedback is gathered from all Commission events such as workshops and information events. These record over 80% satisfaction with accessibility of these events. This information informs planning for service delivery and, the Commission believes, ensuring the accessibility of events increases our impact on good relations and equality.

Staff Training (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 5)

- 24** Please report on the activities from the training plan/programme (section 5.4 of the Model Equality Scheme) undertaken during 2014-15, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

Between 21 October 2014 and 4 November 2014 100% of staff attended an annual internal training session outlining the S75 duties of the Commission and the disability duties. Teams fed back that the training helped them to understand how to integrate equality considerations into their day to day work.

The statutory equality, good relations and disability duties form part of the induction training for new staff.

The Policy and research officer attended a seminar on older people accessing online public services at QUB on 29 May 2014. She also attended training on Disability Action plans, provided by ECNI, at Malone House, on 3 December 2014.

- 25** Please provide any examples of relevant training shown to have worked well, in that participants have achieved the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the stated objectives:

In house equality training has increased awareness of staff and increased their ability to anticipate and respond to issues which may arise from members of particular Section 75 categories. For example casework officers have proactively offered face to face meetings with applicants for whom English is not a first language and increased the size of font in email correspondence with applicants who have a visual impairment.

Public Access to Information and Services (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 6)

- 26** Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2014-15, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

The Commission deals primarily with organisations rather than individuals, however, where we do deal with individuals, the Commission ensures all materials, information and events are accessible. In our communications we also ask to be informed of any special circumstances and a process is in place to deal with requests for information in alternative formats. The Commission considers each request on a case by case basis. During 2014 - 2015 the Commission received 40 requests for special circumstances and dealt with these on a case by case basis providing a range of adjustments including: sign language interpreters, face-to-face meetings, additional persons accompanying applicants to workshops and targeted advice. 30 of these requests were for paper application forms. No paper forms were issued as the rationale for the request arose from a preference rather than an inability to use the online system. The provision of additional guidance with links to the online system addressed the needs raised to the satisfaction of the applicants. A network of helper groups, which have received training from the Commission, are also available to assist people in these circumstances. Between 1 April 2014 and 31 March

2015, we received 707 responses to an online questionnaire which was available to be completed voluntarily by those who had submitted an online registration application. Of those 707, 14% were aged 66 years and over, with a further 30% being in the 56-65 years age bracket. A broadly equal percentage of men and women completed the survey, 50% compared with 49%. 7 individuals indicated that English was not their first language. None of those respondents found the online registration system to be 'very difficult' or 'fairly difficult' to use, rating it instead as 'very easy', 'fairly easy' or 'neither easy nor difficult'. We continue to monitor this information closely as more is gathered to take feedback on board and identify where we can opportunities to improve the ease with which the online system can be accessed and used.

During this same period we received 4 requests concerning English as a second language. Two individuals requested a face to face meeting, one sought information on the submission of accounts in Irish and one asked for a sign language interpreter to translate Commission guidance materials into sign language and then translate application questions from sign language back into English. The face to face meetings were accommodated. The Commission considered the query regarding submission of accounts in Irish and identified that accounts must be submitted in English as this is the working language of the Commission but that accounts may be dually submitted and published in English and another language. This decision will be reviewed and may change if the proposed Irish Language Bill is passed.

The Commission refused to fund a sign language interpreter to translate documents, as requested, instead we offered a range of other adjustments including sign language interpretation at a workshop and to answer questions by textphone and email.

Other special circumstances which were brought to the attention of the Commission included:

- 7 adjustments for people with sensory impairments and one person with a physical disability.
- An individual commented on Twitter regarding the requirement for previous names on the application form as being potentially uncomfortable for transgendered people. The Commission liaised with the Equality Commission and identified that this information is required and the Commission is on a sound legal basis asking for it. Information is held securely by the Commission however the issue was raised with staff and the need for sensitivity reiterated.
- The Commission also addressed a general query relating to the ability of individuals with learning disabilities to be charity trustees.

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

27 How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2014-15?

Insert number here:

0

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

N/A

Section 3: Looking Forward

28 Please indicate when the Equality Scheme is due for review:

2017

29 Are there areas of the Equality Scheme arrangements (screening/consultation/training) your organisation anticipates will be focused upon in the next reporting period? *(please provide details)*

Publishing Equality guidance for charities

Publishing screening results along with the quarterly screening report

Subtitling of the online tutorial video

30 In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next (2015-16) reporting period? *(please tick any that apply)*

- Employment
- Goods, facilities and services
- Legislative changes
- Organisational changes/ new functions
- Nothing specific, more of the same
- Other (please state):

PART B

PART B - Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) and Disability Action Plans

1. Number of action measures for this reporting period that have been:

Fully achieved

Partially achieved

Not achieved

2. Please outline below details on all actions that have been fully achieved in the reporting period.

2 (a) Please highlight what **public life measures** have been achieved to encourage disabled people to participate in public life at National, Regional and Local levels:

Level	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs ⁱ	Outcomes / Impact ⁱⁱ
National ⁱⁱⁱ			
Regional ^{iv}			
Local ^v			

2(b) What **training action measures** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1			

PART B

2			

2(c) What Positive attitudes **action measures** in the area of **Communications** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1			
2			

2 (d) What action measures were achieved to ‘**encourage others**’ to promote the two duties:

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1			
2			

2 (e) Please outline **any additional action measures** that were fully achieved other than those listed in the tables above:

	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact

PART B

	measures)		
1			
2			

3. Please outline what action measures have been **partly achieved** as follows:

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestonesvi / Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
1				
2				

4. Please outline what action measures **have not been achieved** and the reasons why.

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1		
2		

PART B

5. What **monitoring tools** have been put in place to evaluate the degree to which actions have been effective / develop new opportunities for action?

(a) Qualitative

(b) Quantitative

6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions has your organisation either:

- made any **revisions** to your plan during the reporting period or
- taken any **additional steps** to meet the disability duties which were **not outlined in your original** disability action plan / any other changes?

Please select

If yes please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1			
2			
3			
4			

PART B

5			
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7. Do you intend to make any further **revisions to your plan** in light of your organisation's annual review of the plan? If so, please outline proposed changes?

ⁱ **Outputs** – defined as act of producing, amount of something produced over a period, processes undertaken to implement the action measure e.g. Undertook 10 training sessions with 100 people at customer service level.

ⁱⁱ **Outcome / Impact** – what specifically and tangibly has changed in making progress towards the duties? What impact can directly be attributed to taking this action? Indicate the results of undertaking this action e.g. Evaluation indicating a tangible shift in attitudes before and after training.

ⁱⁱⁱ **National** : Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments

^{iv} **Regional**: Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level

^v **Local** : Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local fora.

^{vi} **Milestones** – Please outline what part progress has been made towards the particular measures; even if full output or outcomes/ impact have not been achieved.