

## 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>

## 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

Increase to Driving Test Fees

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?

Revised

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

The revised policy proposes increasing the fees paid for driving tests. This is necessary because of the rising cost of delivering driver testing services. Increasing the fees will increase the income collected which will be used to pay the costs of delivering the service.

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

If so, explain how.

No

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

DfI - Driver & Vehicle Agency

Who owns and who implements the policy?

DfI - Driver & Vehicle Agency

## **Background**

The DVA is responsible for driver testing - ensuring effective systems are in place to check whether learner drivers have the competence necessary to drive safely on public roads. The powers to do this are derived from The Road Traffic (Northern Ireland) Order 1981. The form of the driving test is prescribed in The Motor Vehicle (Driving Licences) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996.

The DVA operates a Trading Fund, which is required to generate sufficient revenue to cover its outgoings, in line with the Financial Provisions Order 1993. The Department of Finance guidance on fees and charges within 'Managing Public Money Northern Ireland' requires the DVA to recover in full the costs associated with delivering its driver testing services. This fee increase is necessary to address the current and projected fees deficit and will ensure that the DVA meets its financial and statutory obligations in the future.

The majority of driving test fees have not increased for well over a decade. Until recently, we have been able to avoid increases to the fees for practical driving tests however the rising cost of delivering the service means we are facing a shortfall in income. Staff costs, IT costs and contracted services costs have increased, which means the current fees no longer cover all of the costs. In addition, since the majority of driving test fees were last increased, we have improved and modernised the driving test booking and information systems and invested in new technology. For example, we are now using tablets to record driving test results.

The aim of this policy is to increase the fees for practical driving tests for all categories, in order to ensure that the cost of delivering practical driving tests, is fully covered from the income received.

In most instances the proposed fees are broadly in line with what they would be if an annual inflationary increase had been applied since fees were last increased in 2009. The increases are broadly in line with what they would have been if inflationary increases had been applied each year, although some are slightly lower and some slightly higher. In most cases the fees have not increased since 2009.

The fees will increase for all categories of practical driving test. In all cases the increase reflects the costs associated with delivering those

particular tests. The increases range between £14 and £44 approximately, depending on which test is being undertaken.

The proposed increase to the car practical driving test, which comprises over 80% of the volume of practical driving tests conducted in Northern Ireland, is £19.50.

Category	Current fee £	Proposed fee £
Car	45.50	65.00
Car (premium)	62.50	95.00
Car and Trailer	66.00	87.00
Car and Trailer (premium)	99.00	137.00
Motorcycle	58.00	80.00
Motorcycle (premium)	71.00	110.00
Motorcycle extended test	116.00	160.00
Motorcycle Manoeuvres test	31.00	45.00
Motorcycle Manoeuvres test (premium)	43.00	60.00
Car extended test	91.00	130.00
Lorry and Bus (driving ability)	66.00	87.00
Lorry and Bus (driving ability - premium)	99.00	137.00
Tractor	45.50	65.00
Taxi	60.00	70.00
Taxi (premium)	90.00	109.00

In 2022-23, 82% of driving tests delivered by the DVA were car tests. The table below shows the volume of driving tests by category for the last five years. Volumes were reduced due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in the two years following 2018-19.

Volume of Driving Tests Conducted							
Year	Car	Motorcycle	LGV	PCV	Taxi	Misc.	Total
2018-19	47,079	2,942	2,880	802	512	3,731	57,946
2019-20	45,369	2,833	2,737	500	547	3,457	55,443
2020-21	6,721	2,036	354	49	1	341	9,502
2021-22	53,588	3,185	3,754	338	250	4,073	65,188
2022-23	56,132	3,696	3,671	661	553	3,827	68,540

Source: DfI Driver, Vehicle, Operator, and Enforcement Statistics - 2022-23 - Quarter Four

### Cost of learning to drive

There is no definitive assessment of the cost of learning to drive. New Driver NI estimates that on average the learner driver in Northern Ireland needs 45 driving lessons before being test ready, and that the typical cost of a driving lesson in Northern Ireland is between £28 and £32 per lesson.

An online search in May 2023 shows many driving schools in Northern Ireland charging between £33 and £35 per lesson. If a learner driver needed 40 lessons at £30 per lesson, this would cost £1,200. Other costs include a provisional driving licence (£62.50), paying for the use of the instructor's car before and during the test (typically £100), and paying for temporary car insurance to allow them to take private practice with family and friends.

	Low Estimate	Medium Estimate	High Estimate
Provisional licence	£62.50	£62.50	£62.50
Theory test	£23.00	£23.00	£23.00
Lessons	(35@£28) £980	(40@£30) £1200	(45 @ £32) £1440
Use of instructor's car for driving test	£100	£100	£100
Current practical driving test fee (car)	£45.50	£45.50	£45.50
Current cost including practical driving test fee	£1,211	£1,431	£1,671
Proposed increase to practical driving test fee	£19.50	£19.50	£19.50
% increase with practical driving test fee increase	1.6%	1.4%	1.2%

Individual experiences will differ. It might be possible to reduce amounts spent in some areas. Subsequent insurance for a newly qualified driver is likely to be higher than for a more experienced driver and the cost of a vehicle could range from a few hundred to thousands of pounds.

Taken as part of the overall cost of becoming and remaining a driver, with the costs of training, insurance and running a vehicle, the driving test (including the proposed fees increase), is a small proportion of that cost. Using the medium estimate figures in the table above, the proposed increase of the car driving test fee from £45.50 to £65 would increase the overall cost of learning to drive by 1.4%.

Furthermore, as set out above, the proposed increases are broadly in line with what they would have been if they had been increased each year in line with inflation.

### **Implementation factors**

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

Yes, financial and legislative.

#### Financial

The DVA's driver test fees are not covering the costs for delivering the driver testing services. If costs continue to increase further than projected, this would mean the aim of the policy decision to increase fees to the proposed levels would not be achieved. A subsequent review of fees would then be necessary.

#### Legislative

If fees are not increased the DVA would not be able to meet its costs for conducting current and future tests in compliance with The Road Traffic (Northern Ireland) Order 1981 and the related Motor Vehicle (Driving Licences) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996.

In addition, the DVA would fail to meet its statutory obligations to ensure full cost recovery in compliance with 'Managing Public Money Northern Ireland' and the Financial Provisions Order 1993.

In the absence of a sitting NI Assembly, the Department's Permanent Secretary may approve the policy decision to increase driving test fees

under powers contained in the Northern Ireland (Executive Formation etc) Act 2022.

### **Main stakeholders affected**

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

The fee increases will impact on service users i.e., learner drivers who wish to take a practical driving test in all categories.

### **Other policies with a bearing on this policy**

The Draft Road Safety Strategy for NI to 2030.

The Draft Road Safety Strategy for NI to 2030 sets out the following targets:

- To reduce the number of people killed in road collisions by at least 50% by 2030 (a target of fewer than 35 people killed in road collisions)
- To reduce the number of people seriously injured in road collisions by at least 50% by 2030 (a target of fewer than 376 people seriously injured in road collisions)
- To reduce the number of children (aged 0-15) killed or seriously injured in road collisions by 60% by 2030 (a target of fewer than 29 children killed or seriously injured)
- To reduce the number of young people (aged 16-24) killed or seriously injured in road collisions by 60% by 2030 (a target of fewer than 79 young people killed or seriously injured)

The driver testing services provided by the DVA will make a positive contribution to achieving these targets.

### **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.

People learn to drive for a variety of reasons including driving to or for work, transporting dependents, gaining independence, socialising, leisure activities, public transport limitations, and general convenience.

**Religious belief** evidence / information:

Driving test applications do not require data on Religious Belief.

The table below shows information from the Northern Ireland Census 2021.

Religion Brought Up In

Total Population	Catholic	Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related)	Other Religions	No Religion
1.9M	45.7%	43.48%	1.5%	9.32%

Source: NI Census 2021

There is no data to determine impact on this group however it is possible that those who fall into this group and apply for a driving test may be impacted by the fee increase, as all applicants will be impacted by the fee increase.

**Political Opinion** evidence / information:

In Census 2021, 814,600 people (42.8%) living here identified solely or along with other national identities as 'British'. This is down from 876,600 people (48.4%) in 2011. The Census also found, 634,600 people (33.3%) living here identified solely or along with other national identities as 'Irish'. This is up from 513,400 people (28.4%) in 2011. Finally, the Census 2021, identified 598,800 people (31.5%) living here as solely or along with other national identities 'Northern Irish.' This is up from 533,100 people (29.4%) in 2011.

There has been a historical tendency for voting preferences to closely reflect the religious affiliations of the population. Statistics for first preference votes in the 2022 NI Assembly Election showed 42% unionist, 42% nationalist and 16% other. This implies that any issues



and differentials identified in relation to people of different religion may also impact on people of different political opinion.

There is no data to determine impact on this group however it is possible that those who fall into this group and apply for a driving test may be impacted by the fee increase, as all applicants will be impacted by the fee increase.

**Racial Group** evidence / information:

Driving test applications do not require data on Race.

Total population data

Ethnic Group Table population: All usual residents

<b>Total</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Irish Traveller</b>	<b>Roma</b>	<b>Indian</b>
1.9M	96.55%	0.14%	0.08%	0.52%
	<b>Chinese</b>	<b>Filipino</b>	<b>Pakistani</b>	<b>Arab</b>
	0.50%	0.23%	0.08%	0.10%
	<b>Other Asian</b>	<b>Black African</b>	<b>Black Other</b>	<b>Mixed</b>
	0.28%	0.42%	0.16%	0.76%
	<b>Other Ethnicities</b>			
	0.19%			

Source: NI Census 2021

There is no data to determine impact on this group however it is possible that those who fall into this group and apply for a driving test may be impacted by the fee increase, as all applicants will be impacted by the fee increase.

**Age** evidence / information:

At Census 2021 the age of all usual residents was as follows:

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>0-14</b>	<b>15-24</b>	<b>25-44</b>	<b>45-64</b>	<b>65+</b>
Number	365,219	224,575	491,970	484,825	326,585
%	19.19%	11.8%	25.85%	26%	17.16%

Source: NI Census 2021

The table below shows the age profile and number of applications for practical driving tests received in the financial year 2021-22, by driving test category:

Driving Test Category Year 2021-22	Age 17-25	Age 26-46	Age 46-65	Age Over 66
Car	50,560	14,730	2,196	143
Car and Trailer	698	1,709	47	0
Motorcycle	282	901	308	8
Motorcycle extended test	0	1	0	0
Motorcycle Manoeuvres test	409	1342	501	16
Car extended test	126	310	71	8
Lorry and Bus (driving ability)	1,074	2,545	735	4
Tractor	7	0	0	0
Taxi	18	178	91	3

Source: DVA Booking and Rostering Service Management 2023

This indicates that young people in the age bracket 17-25 make up the largest proportion (75%) of those who apply to take the car driving test and so are more likely to be impacted by the fee increase than other age groups. Those aged 25-46 have a higher likelihood of being impacted by the increase in fees for the other categories of driving tests.

Using estimated figures, it is anticipated that on average the proposed increase would add 1.4% to the overall cost of learning to drive. In addition, the cost of learning to drive is often borne by parents or guardians rather than the learner driver themselves. There are requirements to have held a full car licence and be a minimum age before being able to apply for provisional entitlement for other categories such as bus, or lorry.

**Marital Status** evidence / information:

Driving test applications do not require data on marital status.

Total population data

Marital and Civil Partnership Status Table population: All usual residents aged 16 and over.

	Number	%
All usual residents aged 16 and over	1,514,743	100.00%
Single (never married or never registered civil partnership)	576,708	38.07%
Married	690,509	45.59%
In a civil partnership	2,742	0.18%
Separated (but still legally married or still legally in a civil partnership)	57,272	3.78%
Divorced or formerly in a civil partnership which is now legally dissolved	91,128	6.02%
Widowed or surviving partner from a civil partnership	96,384	6.36%

Source: NI Census 2021

There is no data to determine impact on this group however it is possible that those who fall into this group and apply for a driving test may be impacted by the fee increase, as all applicants will be impacted by the fee increase.

### **Sexual Orientation** evidence / information:

Driving test applications do not require data on sexual orientation.

In terms of total population data, the 2021 NI Census data indicates that 2.1% of the household population in Northern Ireland identify as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual.

There is no data to determine impact on this group however it is possible that those who fall into this group and apply for a driving test may be impacted by the fee increase, as all applicants will be impacted by the fee increase.

### **Men & Women generally** evidence / information:

#### Total Population Data

All residents	Male	Female
1,903,175	49.19%	50.81%

Published statistics for the number of category B (car) driving tests delivered in Northern Ireland show that the gender breakdown of

candidates taking their driving test varies from year to year. The fee increase will be the same for all users of the service.

#### Category B (car) Driving Tests conducted:

Year	Male	Female	Overall
2019/20	21,704	23,665	45,369
2020/21	3,207	3,514	6,721
2021/22	27,203	26,385	53,588
2022/23	29,287	26,845	56,132

Source: DfI Driver, Vehicle, Operator, and Enforcement Statistics – 2022-2023 – Quarter 4

There is no robust data to determine impact on this group however it is possible that those who fall into this group and apply for a driving test may be impacted by the fee increase, as all applicants will be impacted by the fee increase.

#### **Disability** evidence / information:

In terms of total population data, the NI Census 2021 indicated that almost one in four of the usually resident population (24.33%) had a long-term health problem which limited their day-to-day activity to some extent. This drops to 12.74% within the age range of 15-39 years, which the majority of driving test candidates would fall within.

Applications contain a question asking if applicants have any special requirements to take their test.

The DVA offers facilities for candidates with special needs or physical disabilities. If a candidate is deaf, has severe hearing problems, is restricted in their movements, or have any disability that may affect their driving, they should call the practical driving test booking line and DVA will arrange a suitable appointment.

When a candidate books their test, they should let the operator know that they are calling about a 'Driving test for a candidate with a disability,' and tell them specifically if they:

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

No matter how serious the candidate's disability might be, they will still take the same driving test as every other test candidate. However, more time may be allowed for the test. This is to allow the examiner to talk to the candidate about their disability and any adaptations fitted to their vehicle.

There is no data to determine impact on this group however it is possible that those who fall into this group and apply for a driving test may be impacted by the fee increase, as all applicants will be impacted by the fee increase.

**Dependents** evidence / information:

Driving test applications do not require data on dependents.

The 2021 NI Census indicated that 29% per cent of households in Northern Ireland contained dependent children and 45% contained at least one person with a long-term health problem or disability; made up of those households with dependent children (9.2%) and those with no dependent children (31%).

There is no data to determine impact on this group however it is possible that those who fall into this group and apply for a driving test may be impacted by the fee increase, as all applicants will be impacted by the fee increase.

**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 services provided by the Driver & Vehicle Agency are universal in nature, and the fee increases will apply to all test categories, therefore no specific needs for people of different religious beliefs have been identified.

This policy is estimated to increase the overall amount a learner driver (for a car) will invest into becoming a qualified driver by approximately 1.4%.

### **Political Opinion**

The services provided by the Driver & Vehicle Agency are universal in nature, and the fee increases will apply to all test categories, therefore no specific needs for people of different political opinions have been identified. This policy is estimated to increase the overall amount a learner driver (for a car) will invest into becoming a qualified driver by approximately 1.4%.

### **Racial Group**

The services provided by the Driver & Vehicle Agency are universal in nature, and the fee increases will apply to all test categories, therefore no specific needs for people of different racial groups have been identified. This policy is estimated to increase the overall amount a learner driver (for a car) will invest into becoming a qualified driver by approximately 1.4%.

### **Age**

The services provided by the Driver & Vehicle Agency are universal in nature, and the fee increases will apply to all test categories, therefore no specific needs for people of different ages have been identified.

As 75% of category B (car) candidates are aged between 17-25, this policy may impact on this age group more. It increases the amount they will invest overall into becoming a qualified driver by approximately 1.4%. The proposed fee increase for the car driving test is £19.50, which is less than the average cost of one driving lesson.

### **Marital status**

The services provided by the Driver & Vehicle Agency are universal in nature, and the fee increases will apply to all test categories, therefore no specific needs for people of different marital status have been identified. This policy is estimated to increase the overall amount a learner driver (for a car) will invest into becoming a qualified driver by approximately 1.4%.

## **Sexual orientation**

The services provided by the Driver & Vehicle Agency are universal in nature, and the fee increases will apply to all test categories, therefore no specific needs for people of different sexual orientation have been identified. This policy is estimated to increase the overall amount a learner driver (for a car) will invest into becoming a qualified driver by approximately 1.4%.

## **Men and Women Generally**

The services provided by the Driver & Vehicle Agency are universal in nature, and the fee increases will apply to all test categories, therefore no specific needs for men or women have been identified. This policy is estimated to increase the overall amount a learner driver (for a car) will invest into becoming a qualified driver by approximately 1.4%.

## **Disability**

The services provided by the Driver & Vehicle Agency are universal in nature, and the fee increases will apply to all test categories, therefore no specific needs for candidates with a disability have been identified. This policy is estimated to increase the overall amount a learner driver (for a car) will invest into becoming a qualified driver by approximately 1.4%.

## **Dependents**

The services provided by the Driver & Vehicle Agency are universal in nature, and the fee increases will apply to all test categories, therefore no specific needs for candidates with dependents have been identified. This policy is estimated to increase the overall amount a learner driver (for a car) will invest into becoming a qualified driver by approximately 1.4%.

## **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.

The impact of an increase in the fees will be across all Section 75 groups. There will be no specific impact on Equality of Opportunity for this Section 75 Group as all will be subject to the same driving test fee increase.

Research completed by the Department in the Travel Survey 2020 showed that 65% of people used a car for journeys than any other form of transport. This dependence on a car as a primary means of travel to access employment (80%), education and social opportunities. An increase in fees therefore has the potential to impact on some of the most vulnerable consumers that have no alternative means of transport, irrespective of their religious belief, political opinion, racial group, marital status, sex or sexual orientation.

The Statistics sourced from Northern Ireland Household Expenditure Tracker Q4 2022 indicated the following expenditure in relation to lowest earning households in Northern Ireland:

- Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas & Other Fuels 20.8%
- Food & Non-Alcoholic Beverages 20.2%
- **Transport 12.8%**
- Furniture, Equipment & Routine House Repair 8.3%
- Other Expenditure Items 6.7%
- Miscellaneous Goods & Services 6.0%
- Clothing & Footwear 6.0%
- Communication 5.1%
- Alcoholic Beverages, Tobacco & Narcotics 4.7%
- Recreation & Culture 4.1%
- Health 3.0%
- Hotels, Cafes & Restaurants 2.1%
- Education 0.1%

As outlined in the background section, the increase in fees is to address the current and projected fees deficit and ensure that the DVA meets its financial and statutory obligations. The proposed fee increase will increase the overall cost of learning to drive (a car) by approximately 1.4%. In the absence of a fees increase the DVA will be unable to meet its financial and statutory obligations and the financial sustainability of the DVA could be impacted in future years, which ultimately, could impact the Department's financial position.

Anyone over the age of 17 can apply for a provisional driving licence and then apply for a theory test and following that the practical driving test.

If the policy is not taken forward, there is the possibility that services would have to be reduced or stopped to minimise losses. The reduction or stopping of driver testing services would have an even more adverse impact upon all S75 categories, potentially creating road safety issues. Given that most of the proposed fee increases are below inflationary levels, and the potential alternatives, i.e., reduction to and/or cessation of services, it is considered that this policy revision will have a minor impact.

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

The impact of an increase in the fees will be across all Section 75 groups. There will be no specific impact on Equality of Opportunity for this Section 75 Group as all will be subject to the same driving test fee increase.

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

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

The impact of an increase in the fees will be across all Section 75 groups. There will be no specific impact on Equality of Opportunity for this Section 75 Group as all will be subject to the same driving test fee increase.

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

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

The impact of an increase in the fees will be across all Section 75 groups. There will be no specific impact on Equality of Opportunity for

this Section 75 Group as all will be subject to the same driving test fee increase.

What is the level of impact? [Minor negative](#)

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

The impact of an increase in the fees will be across all Section 75 groups. There will be no specific impact on Equality of Opportunity for this Section 75 Group as all will be subject to the same driving test fee increase.

What is the level of impact? [Minor negative](#)

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

The impact of an increase in the fees will be across all Section 75 groups. There will be no specific impact on Equality of Opportunity for this Section 75 Group as all will be subject to the same driving test fee increase.

What is the level of impact? [Minor negative](#)

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

The impact of an increase in the fees will be across all Section 75 groups. There will be no specific impact on Equality of Opportunity for this Section 75 Group as all will be subject to the same driving test fee increase.

What is the level of impact? [Minor negative](#)

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

The impact of an increase in the fees will be across all Section 75 groups. There will be no specific impact on Equality of Opportunity for this Section 75 Group as all will be subject to the same driving test fee increase.

What is the level of impact? [Minor negative](#)

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

The impact of an increase in the fees will be across all Section 75 groups. There will be no specific impact on Equality of Opportunity for this Section 75 Group as all will be subject to the same driving test fee increase.

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

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

The impact of an increase in the fees will be across all Section 75 groups. There will be no specific impact on Equality of Opportunity for this Section 75 Group as all will be subject to the same driving test fee increase.

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

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

**No**

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

**Religious Belief -**

If No, provide reasons:

DVA uses its fee income to cover the costs associated with delivering driver testing services across all of Northern Ireland. As such, it already promotes equality of opportunity across this S75 group.

**Political Opinion -**

If No, provide reasons:

**As outlined above.**

**Racial Group -**

If No, provide reasons:

**As outlined above.**

**Age -**

If No, provide reasons:

As outlined above.

**Marital Status -**

If No, provide reasons:

As outlined above.

**Sexual Orientation -**

If No, provide reasons:

As outlined above.

**Men and Women generally -**

If No, provide reasons:

As outlined above.

**Disability -**

If No, provide reasons:

As outlined above.

**Dependents -**

If No, provide reasons:

As outlined above.

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**:

DVA uses its fee income to cover the costs associated with delivering driver testing services across all of Northern Ireland. The fee increase is unlikely to impact on good relations between people in this S75 group. What is the level of impact? **None**

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

DVA uses its fee income to cover the costs associated with delivering driver testing services across all of Northern Ireland. The fee increase is unlikely to impact on good relations between people in this S75 group.

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

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

DVA uses its fee income to cover the costs associated with delivering driver testing services across all of Northern Ireland. The fee increase is unlikely to impact on good relations between people in this S75 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 -**

If No, provide reasons:

The services provided by the DVA are universal in nature, and the fee increases will apply to all test categories referred to in the above table containing volumes of driver tests conducted. There is no evidence available of any opportunity to better promote good relations for people within any Section 75 Group.

**Political Opinion -**

If No, provide reasons

As outlined above.

**Racial Group -**

If No, provide reasons

As outlined above.

## **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.

There is no evidence that the policy has any impact on people with multiple identities.

Even though the majority of the proposed fee increases are below inflation, given the important role that driver testing has to play in ensuring road safety, this revised policy decision is likely to impact multiple S75 identities. However, conversely, if the revised policy is not taken forward, there is the possibility that the driver testing services may have to be reduced or stopped to minimise losses being incurred by the DVA. Such an action may have a much greater impact on S75 groups.



### **Part 3. Screening decision**

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

The screening decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment on this revised policy.

The likely impact is considered to be minor negative given that the majority of fees remain below inflation and have not been increased since 2009.

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.

This has been considered in the context of the DVA's statutory obligations, and the policy is justified as no undue impact will fall on any particular Section 75 groups, therefore no mitigation is required.

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.

This draft Equality Screening will be included with the public consultation on the proposed fee increases, and respondents will be asked for their views on the assumptions and draft outcome. The draft Equality Screening will be reviewed in light of feedback received during the consultation exercise.

## 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.

As set out above, the Department considers the impact of the fees increase to be minor negative and in fact without the additional income this will generate, there is the possibility that driver testing services would have to be reduced and have a major impact on road safety. Such an action would have a major impact on S75 groups.

In the absence of a fees increase the DVA will be unable to meet its financial and statutory obligations and the financial sustainability of the DVA could be impacted in future years, which ultimately, could impact the Department's financial position.

## 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 **Rating 1, 2 or 3**

Social need **Rating 1, 2 or 3**

Effect on people's daily lives **Rating 1, 2 or 3**

Relevance to a public authority's functions

**Rating 1, 2 or 3**

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?

No

If yes, please provide details.

N/A

## 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: Claire Devlin  
Position/Job Title: Head of Driver & Vehicle Standards  
Date: 05/06/2023

Approved by: Siobhan Lynn  
Position/Job Title: Acting Director of Financial Management & Corporate Services  
Date: 05/06/23

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: 19.05.23  
Amendments Requested: Yes / No Yes  
Date Returned to Business Area: 25.05.23  
Date Final Version Received / Confirmed: 08.06.23  
Date Published on DfI's Section 75 webpage: 08.06.23