

## Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland Code of Conduct for Statutory Committee and Scrutiny Committee members

Being a member of a Fitness to Practise [FtP] Committee of the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland requires strict adherence to a Code of Conduct designed to ensure that patients, the public and pharmacists will have confidence in the effectiveness and impartiality of Fitness to Practise Committees. To that end all members must undertake:

1. To attend all FtP hearings, FtP Committee meetings, seminars, training sessions or any other meeting at which their presence is required, unless there is good reason for them being unable to do so.
2. That where they are unable to attend as listed at 1. above, to take all reasonable steps to give advance warning of their absence as soon as is reasonably practical to the organisers of such hearings etc (normally the Committee secretary).
3. To prepare for all events as listed at 1. above at which they are required to attend by reading the agenda and any papers sent to them by the organisers of such hearings etc.
4. To be alert to the possibility of any conflicts of interest, and to declare any such conflicts to the secretary or committee chair as soon as is reasonably practical.
5. To dress in a manner which will maintain the confidence of those appearing on and before the committee.
6. To listen carefully to all the evidence presented at hearings and to read fully all written evidence presented.
7. To ask appropriate questions of witnesses to clarify evidence already presented.
8. To be fair, open-minded and arrive at decisions untainted by bias or prejudice on grounds of gender, race, disability, lifestyle, culture, beliefs, colour, sexuality or age.
9. To have regard to guidance issued by the Council when reaching decisions.
10. To abide by the principles of public life as set out in the Nolan Principles, appended to this document at Appendix 1
11. To observe the confidentiality of information provided in connection with hearings, seminars, training sessions or other meetings and to comply with written procedures for the handling and destruction of written materials as set out in the Data Protection policy
12. To avoid placing themselves under obligation to any individual or organisation which might affect their ability to act impartially and objectively as a Committee member.
13. To declare in the Committee Members register of interests their membership of other bodies or organisations in accordance with the Council's guidance on this matter.
14. To undergo education and training provided or organised by the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland and to participate in any appraisal processes from time to time, so that they are properly informed about their responsibilities and individual performance.

15. To participate fully in any assessment of peers, legal assessors or others and, where necessary, to report any serious anxieties about the conduct of committees or individuals participating in them to the relevant chairman or, in the event of concerns about the Committee chairman, to the secretary.
16. To adhere to the Equality Policy at all times whilst performing their functions on FtP committees, as set out in Appendix D
17. To support the above principles by example.
18. To as soon as they become aware, declare any relevant issues in relation to disqualification or suspension as detailed in the disqualification and suspension procedures set out in appendix A to this Code.

Signed:.....

Print name:.....

Date.....

## **The Nolan Committee Principles of Public Life**

### **1. Selflessness**

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

### **2. Integrity**

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

### **3. Objectivity**

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

### **4. Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

### **5. Openness**

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

### **6. Honesty**

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

### **7. Leadership**

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

These principles apply to all aspects of public life. The Nolan Committee's First Report on Standards in Public Life, 1995 included them for the benefit of all who serve the public in any way.

## Appendix 2 - Membership of Fitness to Practise [FtP] Committees

Regulation 5 of the Council of the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland (Statutory Committee, Scrutiny Committee and Advisers) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012 governs the circumstances when a member of the Statutory or Scrutiny Committee may be disqualified.

It states:

- 5) *A person is disqualified from appointment as a member of the Statutory Committee or Scrutiny Committee if that person—*
  - a) *has at any time been subject to any investigation or proceedings concerning that person's professional conduct (including fitness to practise) conducted by any licensing body, other than the Society, the final outcome of which was—*
    - i) *the person's suspension from a register held by that licensing body, and that suspension has not expired or been terminated,*
    - ii) *the person's erasure from a register held by that licensing body or a decision that had the effect of preventing the person from practising the profession licensed or regulated by that licensing body, or*
    - iii) *a decision that had the effect of only allowing the person to practise that person's profession subject to conditions, and those conditions have not expired or been terminated;*
  - b) *has at any time been subject to any investigation or proceedings concerning that person's professional conduct (including fitness to practise) by the Society, the final outcome of which was—*
    - i) *the person's entry in the Register was suspended (including by an interim suspension order), and that suspension has not expired or been terminated,*
    - ii) *the person's name being struck off the Register, or*
    - iii) *the person's entry in the Register was made subject to an order imposing conditions with which the person must comply (including an order for interim conditional entry), and those conditions have not expired or been terminated;*
  - c) *has at any time been subject to any investigation or proceedings relating to an allegation that the person's entry in the Register was fraudulently procured—*
    - i) *in the course of which the person's entry in the Register was suspended, and that suspension has not expired or been terminated, or*
    - ii) *the final outcome of which was the person's name being struck off the Register;*
  - d) *has at any time been subject to any investigation or proceedings concerning the person's professional conduct (including fitness to practise) by—*
    - i) *the Society, or*
    - ii) *any other licensing body,*

*and the Council is satisfied that the person's membership of the Statutory Committee or Scrutiny Committee would be liable to undermine public confidence in the regulation of pharmaceutical chemists;*

*e) has at any time been convicted of an offence—*

*i) in the United Kingdom where the final outcome of the proceedings was a sentence of imprisonment or detention, and the conviction is not spent,*

*ii) in the United Kingdom where the final outcome of the proceedings was not a sentence of imprisonment or detention, the conviction is not spent, and the Council is satisfied that the person's membership of the Statutory Committee or Scrutiny Committee would be liable to undermine public confidence in the regulation of pharmaceutical chemists, or*

*iii) outside the United Kingdom and the Council is satisfied that the person's membership of the Statutory Committee or Scrutiny Committee would be liable to undermine public confidence in the regulation of pharmaceutical chemists;*

*f) has received a formal caution for a criminal offence in the United Kingdom and the Council is satisfied that the person's membership of the Scrutiny Committee would be liable to undermine public confidence in the regulation of pharmaceutical chemists;*

*g) has at any time been included in—*

*i) any barred list within the meaning of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006,,or*

*ii) any barred list within the meaning of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007*

*unless that person was removed from the list either on the grounds that it was not appropriate for that person to have been included in it or as a result of a successful appeal;*

*h) is included in the children's list or the adult's list maintained under the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007*

*i) has at any time been adjudged bankrupt, or sequestration of the person's estate has been awarded, and—*

*i) the person has not been discharged, or*

*ii) the person is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or an interim bankruptcy restrictions order under Schedule 4A to the Insolvency Act 1986 or Schedule 2A to the Insolvency (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 or sections 56A to 56K of the Bankruptcy (Scotland) Act 1985*

*and the Council is satisfied that the person's membership of the Statutory Committee or Scrutiny Committee would be liable to undermine public confidence in the regulation of pharmaceutical chemists;*

*j) is a person to whom a moratorium period under a debt relief order Part VIIA of the Insolvency Act 1986 (debt relief orders) applies, or is the subject of a debt relief restrictions order or an interim debt relief restrictions order under Schedule 4ZB to that Act (debt relief restrictions order and undertaking), and the Council is satisfied that the person's membership of the Statutory Committee or Scrutiny Committee would be liable to undermine public confidence in the regulation of pharmaceutical chemists;*

- k) *is subject to—*
- i) *a disqualification order or disqualification undertaking under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986*
  - ii) *a disqualification order under Part II of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1989*
  - iii) *a disqualification order or disqualification undertaking under the Company Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002, or*
  - iv) *an order made under section 429(2) of the Insolvency Act 1986 (disabilities on revocation of a county court administration order);*
- l) *has at any time been removed from the office of charity trustee or trustees for a charity by an order made by the Charity Commissioners, the Charity Commission, the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland or the High Court on the grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of the charity—*
- i) *for which that person was responsible or to which that person was privy, or*
  - ii) *which was contributed to, or facilitated by, that person's conduct;*
- m) *has at any time been removed from being concerned with the management or control of any body in any case where removal was by virtue of—*
- i) *section 7 of the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Act 1990 (powers of Court of Session to deal with management of charities), or*
  - ii) *section 34(5)(e) of the Charities and Trustees Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 (powers of Court of Session);*
- n) *has at any time been removed from office as the chair, or a member, convenor or director of any public body on the grounds that it was not in the interests of, or conducive to the good management of, that body that the person should to continue to hold that office; or*
- o) *has at any time made a composition or arrangement with, or granted a trust deed for, the person's creditors and the person has not been discharged in respect of it.*

Regulation 6 of the same Regulations sets out the circumstances when a Member of the Statutory Committee or Scrutiny Committee may or must be removed or suspended. It states:

**6.—(1) The Council must remove from the Statutory Committee or Scrutiny Committee any member—**

- (a) who resigns from membership of the Statutory Committee or Scrutiny Committee in accordance with these regulations;*
- (b) whose term of office has expired;*
- (c) who, in the case of a registered person, has ceased to be registered;*
- (d) who, in the opinion of the Council,—*

- (i) has ceased to be an appropriate person to be a member of the Statutory Committee or Scrutiny Committee (for example, by reason of misconduct or a criminal conviction)*
  - (ii) has seriously or persistently failed to meet the standards of performance, conduct, attendance or participation in training required of a member of the Statutory Committee or Scrutiny Committee in the ordinary course of a member's duties,*
  - (iii) is unable to perform the duties of a member because of ill health,*
  - (iv) has improperly disclosed confidential information obtained by the member in the course of membership of the Statutory Committee or Scrutiny Committee,*
  - (v) has brought the Society into disrepute,*
  - (vi) has failed to comply with the code of conduct for Statutory Committee and Scrutiny Committee members,*
  - (vii) should no longer continue to be a member of the Statutory Committee or Scrutiny Committee in the public interest.*
- (2) The Council may suspend a member of the Statutory Committee or Scrutiny Committee while investigations are being undertaken into the member's suitability to remain as a member of that committee.*
- (3) The Council must afford any member of the Statutory Committee or Scrutiny Committee who is under investigation the opportunity to make written and oral representations before reaching a decision as to whether to remove that member from the relevant committee.*
- (4) The procedure for the suspension or removal of a member of the Statutory Committee or Scrutiny Committee is to be prepared by the Council and a copy must be given to every member of the Statutory Committee and Scrutiny Committee.*

### Appendix 3: The procedure for the suspension or removal of a member of the Statutory Committee or Scrutiny Committee

1. This procedure will apply where a complaint is made or a concern raised which suggests a Committee member may have breached the Code of Conduct for Statutory Committee and Scrutiny Committee members or may be subject to disqualification, suspension or removal.
2. If a Committee member has a concern that another Committee member may have breached the Code, they have a duty to raise their concerns with the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland . All such disclosures must be made in good faith as they will be fully investigated where appropriate.
3. Minor breaches of the Code of Conduct for Statutory Committee and Scrutiny Committee members will, in the first instance, be dealt with informally by the Registrar. Where there is evidence of a serious, deliberate or continued breach of the Code, formal action may be taken against the Committee member concerned, including suspension or removal.
4. The object of an informal stage is to resolve complaints or concerns fairly, quickly and simply with the minimum of formality. For that reason, the Registrar will have discretion as to how a complaint will be investigated and determined.
5. The informal stage may be used to assist Committee members to maintain appropriate standards of conduct and performance. In many cases the appropriate first steps will be for the issue to be discussed with the Committee member, explore any factors which may have affected the Committee member's conduct or performance, provide clarification about the Committee member's role and offer appropriate training or other support.
6. The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland will keep a record of each complaint or concern and, where resolution is achieved informally, how it was resolved.
7. If it is suggested that there has been a serious, deliberate or continued breach of the Code a more formal process will be adopted. The formal process will also apply where it is thought that a Committee Member may be subject to disqualification under Regulation 5 or suspension or removal under Regulation 6 of Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland (Statutory Committee, Scrutiny Committee and Advisers) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012.
8. The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland will send a written notice to the Committee member concerned, setting out the complaint or reason for disqualification and inviting the Committee member to submit any representations that the Committee member may wish to make. The notice must set a date by which any representations are to be received, which must be not less than 28 days from the date of the notice.
9. Under Regulation 6(2) the Council may suspend a member of the Statutory Committee or Scrutiny Committee while investigations are being undertaken into the member's suitability to remain as a member of that committee.
10. Once the time in which the Committee member may make representations has elapsed (and whether or not any representations have been provided) two members of the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland Council will consider and determine the matter.
11. One option available to the two members is to recommend to Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland Council that the Committee member be disqualified, suspended or removed.



12. The two members of the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland who have considered the matter will make a written record of the determination and the reasons for it and a copy will be sent to the Committee member within seven days of that decision being made. Where the outcome is a recommendation that the Committee Member be disqualified, suspended or removed the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland Council shall meet to consider the matter.
13. Where there is a recommendation that the Committee Member be disqualified or removed they shall be afforded the opportunity to make written and oral representations before the Council reaches a decision as to whether to remove that member from the relevant committee.
14. The Council may disqualify a Committee Member under Regulations 5 (d) or (i) of Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland (Statutory Committee, Scrutiny Committee and Advisers) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012. where, in the prescribed circumstances, the Council is satisfied that the person's membership of the Statutory Committee or Scrutiny Committee would be liable to undermine public confidence in the regulation of pharmaceutical chemists
15. The Council may suspend or remove a Committee member under Regulation 6(d) where, in the opinion of the Council, the member:
  - a. has ceased to be an appropriate person to be a member of the Statutory Committee or Scrutiny Committee (for example, by reason of misconduct or a criminal conviction)
  - b. has seriously or persistently failed to meet the standards of performance, conduct, attendance or participation in training required of a member of the Statutory Committee or Scrutiny Committee in the ordinary course of a member's duties,
  - c. is unable to perform the duties of a member because of ill health,
  - d. has improperly disclosed confidential information obtained by the member in the course of membership of the Statutory Committee or Scrutiny Committee,
  - e. has brought the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland into disrepute,
  - f. has failed to comply with the code of conduct for Statutory Committee and Scrutiny Committee members,
  - g. should no longer continue to be a member of the Statutory Committee or Scrutiny Committee in the public interest.
16. Where the Committee member is a registered person or a member of another regulated profession the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland reserves the option to refer the matter to the relevant regulatory body.

Appendix C - Membership of Fitness to Practise [FtP] Committees

Procedures for handling and destruction of written materials received in connection with service on ftp committees

INSERT from Data Protection Policy

## **Equality and Diversity Policy**

The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland is firmly committed to eliminating discrimination and promoting diversity in all areas of our work. We believe that we have much to learn and profit from diverse cultures, experiences and perspectives, and that diversity will make our organisation more effective in meeting the needs of all our stakeholders.

The Equality and Diversity Policy underpins all our other policies and procedures. All organisation policies, remuneration opportunities, hours of work, performance review schemes, disciplinary or other procedures, and benefits are designed to promote equal opportunity and protection for all staff, contractors and volunteers.

We believe that diversity is a means to achieve our ambitions. Diversity is about outreach, inclusion and service delivery as well as the people we employ and involve in our work.

Whilst the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland is not a public authority, and therefore not subject to Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the organisations seeks to maintain high standards in the application of equality and diversity to all its functions.

## **Principles of the Equality and Diversity Policy**

The Equality and Diversity Policy is based on the following fundamental principles:

- All staff members, Council members, committee members, registered persons and members of the public are entitled to be treated fairly, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, age, parental or marital status, disability, religion, colour, race, ethnic or national origins, or socio/economic background
- All registered persons and members of the public should be afforded equal opportunity to access the services of the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland
- It is the responsibility of everyone in the organisation to ensure that no form of discrimination is tolerated
- No individual (and/or their family) who raises a concern in good faith should be treated unfairly as a result of raising the concern

## **Aims of the Equality and Diversity Policy**

The overall aim of the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland's Equality and Diversity policy is to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Ensure that we treat all individuals fairly, with dignity and respect
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote equality of access

- Provide a safe, supportive and welcoming environment - for staff, contractors, Council Members, registered persons, visitors and the public at large.
- Integrate our values into our work

This policy applies to every employee, prospective employee, Council and Committee Member or person connected with the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland, and to the services we provide to registered persons and the public.

### **Equality and Diversity Policy in the workplace**

The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and demonstrating that we value the diversity of our workforce. In order to ensure that equality underpins all aspects of our employment policies, procedures and practices, we will:

- Not unfairly discriminate against any job applicant or employee and, when recruiting, only consider factors which are relevant to someone's ability to perform the job well
- Treat all employees and job applicants fairly in relation to all our employment policies and procedures and meet any reasonable and appropriate additional needs they may have
- Value and respect the identities and cultures of our staff
- Maintain a workplace that is free from discrimination, bullying and harassment and act promptly on any complaints of discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation
- Provide a safe working environment, in which individual differences and contributions of all our staff are recognised and valued
- Make the workplace, and information about work, as accessible as we can for all our employees
- Give our employees clear information about job selection and training and encourage all employees to reach their full potential
- Make sure that we work according to the relevant employment legislation and statutory codes of practice
- Continue to develop good practice employment policies and procedures over and above those required by legislation

- Apply this Equality and Diversity Policy through the organisation's recruitment and selection process; training programmes; grievance procedures and all other employment policies
- Apply this Equality and Diversity Policy through the organisation's registration, education and fitness to practise procedures
- Do all we can to give employees and job applicants, registered persons and the public, Council members and prospective Council Members, access to complaint procedures if they feel unfairly treated

### **Equality and Diversity policy for registered persons and the public**

Service users and potential service users can expect the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland to:

- Design and deliver appropriate, accessible and effective services to all members of the community
- Work in partnership with others to promote equality and diversity
- Make sure that we provide services that comply with relevant legislation and statutory codes of practice
- Continue developing good practice policies and procedures over and above that required by legislation
- Act promptly if we receive any complaints about the way we provide services

### **Status of the Equality and Diversity policy**

This policy forms part of the formal contract of employment for staff and part of the formal declaration of conduct of Council and Committee members upon taking up office. All members of the organisation must abide by this policy - albeit that those in senior or managerial positions or with specific responsibilities for recruitment, selection, training, appraisal and promotion should be especially mindful of the policy. Any failure to comply could result in disciplinary proceedings.

### **Implementing the Equality and Diversity policy**

The Pharmaceutical Society of Northern will make its Equality and Diversity Policy fully effective by:

- Actively promoting it
- Regularly monitoring and reviewing all job selection procedures and criteria and amending them if they result in unfair discrimination
- Making sure that all employees and job applicants, Council and Committee Members and prospective Council Members know about this policy
- Taking appropriate action, using agreed procedures, if any employee Council or Committee Member breaches this policy

## **Means of Assessing Equality and Diversity Impacts**

Equality of opportunity will be promoted between:-

- persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status and sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally;
- persons with a disability and persons without; and
- persons with dependants and persons without

When reviewing policy, procedures and services for their impact on equality, it is with these categories in mind that an assessment will be produced.

More information on the definition of these equality categories can be found in the “examples of equality categories” section of this policy.

## **Managerial Responsibility for implementing the policy**

The Chief Executive has lead responsibility for implementing and monitoring this policy, but all employees, ftp and other committee members and Council Members have a responsibility to adhere to it in all areas of their work, individually and collectively.

Managers must ensure that their staff are aware of the Equality and Diversity policy.

Managers who deal with breaches to this policy must do so seriously, speedily, sensitively and confidentially

## **Individual Responsibility for implementing the policy**

All employees, ftp and other committee members and Council Members have responsibility for implementing, monitoring and promoting this policy.

All employees Council and Committee Members should:

- Ensure that they understand the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland's Equality and Diversity policy and are clear about its implications i.e. that any breach of the policy will be treated seriously and may lead to disciplinary action not excluding the sanction of dismissal;
- Ensure that they do not discriminate in any matter of employment, decision-making, or service provision by treating all individuals or groups fairly and respectfully;
- Not discriminate against, harass, abuse, intimidate or victimise other employees or service users;
- Not induce or attempt to induce other employees to discriminate against, harass, intimidate or victimise other employees or service users;

- Take appropriate action if there are apparent breaches of the Equality and Diversity Policy

If an employee does not follow these and other requirements of the Equality and Diversity Policy it will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure. For Breaches by Council and Committee members the relevant disciplinary procedure shall be followed.

### **Monitoring the Policy**

The Chief Executive, or his appointed deputy will review the Equality and Diversity Policy at least annually, to ensure it is appropriate and responsive to relevant legislation. Amendments to the Policy will be made, where appropriate, in the light of experience or changes in guidance and/or legislation.

### **Legislative Guidance**

The Equality and Diversity Policy has been developed within the framework of existing equality and diversity legislation. The above commitment to continual evaluation of the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland's equality and diversity policy will ensure that all new or anticipated legislation will be reviewed and incorporated within the policy as appropriate.

Existing legislation within which the policy has been developed include:

- The Equal pay Act 1970
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (&1986)
- The Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendments 2000 & 2003)
- The Employment Protection (Consolidation) Act 1978
- The Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Amendments 2004)
- The Employment Rights Act 1996
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Children Act 1998
- The Northern Ireland Act 1998
- The Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998
- The Employment Relations Act 1999
- The Employment Act 2002
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- The Gender Recognition Act 2004
- The Civil Partnership Act 2004
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

## Examples of Equality Categories Used in Equality Impact Assessments

Below are examples of groups included within the equality categories that will be referred to in any equality impact assessment conducted by the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland. It is to be stressed that this is presented by way of illustration and is not intended to be exhaustive or definitive. The examples are largely cited from guidance from the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland for bodies conducting equality assessments in Northern Ireland and the particular circumstances that exist therein.

Category	Examples of Groups
<b>Age</b>	<p>For most purposes, the main categories are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those under 18;</li> <li>• people aged between 18 and 65; and</li> <li>• people over 65.</li> </ul> <p>However, the definition of agegroups will need to be sensitive to the policy under consideration. For example, (i) in relation to employment policies the middle aged are often a vulnerable group, pensionable age is different for men and women and legal ages for working and voting vary; (ii) in relation to policies concerning young people narrower age bands are likely to be more appropriate.</p>
<b>Marital status</b>	Married people; unmarried people; divorced or separated people; widowed people.
<b>Men and women generally</b>	Men (including boys); women (including girls); transgender people; transsexual people.
<b>Persons with a disability</b>	Persons with a disability as defined in Sections 1 and 2 and Schedules 1 and 2 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
<b>Persons with dependants</b>	Persons with primary responsibility for the care of a child; persons with personal responsibility for the care of a person with a disability; persons with primary responsibility for the care of a dependant elderly person.



<b>Political opinion</b>	Unionists generally; Nationalists generally; members/supporters of any political party; other.
<b>Racial group</b>	Chinese; Irish Traveller; Indian; Pakistani; Bangladeshi; Black African; Black Caribbean; White; mixed ethnic group; any other ethnic group; nationality.
<b>Religious belief</b>	Protestant; Catholic; Hindu; Jewish; Islam / Muslim; Sikh; Buddhist; other religion; people of no religious belief.
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	Gay; lesbian; bisexual; heterosexual.

