# A4 DAERA Logo process.png

**Equality & Disability Duties**

**Screening Template**

# **Screening flowchart and template (taken from Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for public authorities April 2010 *(Appendix 1)).***

**Introduction**

**Part 1. Policy scoping** – asks public authorities to provide details about the policy, procedure, practice and/or decision being screened and what available evidence you have gathered to help make an assessment of the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations.

**Part 2. Screening questions** – asks about the extent of the likely impact of the policy on groups of people within each of the Section 75 categories. Details of the groups consulted and the level of assessment of the likely impact. This includes consideration of multiple identity and good relations issues. This section also includes two questions related to the Disability Duties.

**Part 3. Screening decision** –guides the public authority to reach a screening decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment (EQIA), or tointroducemeasures to mitigate the likely impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

**Part 4. Monitoring** –provides guidance to public authorities on monitoring for adverse impact and broader monitoring.

**Part 5. Consideration of Human Rights** – please note this is not a Human Rights Screening form but rather a prompt that impacts on Human Rights should be considered.

**Part 6. Approval and authorisation** – verifies the public authority’s approval of a screening decision by a senior manager responsible for the policy.

A screening flowchart is provided overleaf.

Policy Scoping

* + Policy
  + Available data

Screening Questions

* Apply screening questions
* Consider multiple identities

Screening Decision: None/Minor/Major

Mitigate

Publish Template

Re-consider screening

Publish Template

for information

Publish Template

EQIA

Monitor

**‘None’**

Screened out

**‘Major’**

Screened in for EQIA

**‘Minor’**

Screened out with mitigation

Concerns raised with evidence

Concerns raised with evidence re: screening decision

**Part 1. Policy scoping**

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy, being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

Public authorities should remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the authority), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the authority).

**Information about the policy**

**Name of the policy**

The Agriculture (Student fees) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024.

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**Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?**

An existing policy.

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

Apply an inflationary increase of 0.9% to all CAFRE HE student fees for academic year 2024/25 \*except fees for GB students that are maintained at same rate as those charged by Queen’s University Belfast and Ulster University.

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

**If so, explain how.**

No

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**Who initiated or wrote the policy?**

Policy Development Branch, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

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**Who owns and who implements the policy?**

Policy Development Branch, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

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**Implementation factors**

**Are there any factors which could contribute to from the intended outcome of the policy?**

**If yes, are they (please delete as appropriate)**

**Financial**

**Legislative**

**Main stakeholders affected**

**Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon? (please delete as appropriate)**

**service users**

**other, please specify**

Provisional figures for 2023/24 show 77% are normally domiciled in rural areas, 23% in urban areas.

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

* **What are they?** Department for the Economy (DfE) HE student fee policy
* **Who owns them?** DfE

**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](https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/Public%20Authorities/S75DataSignpostingGuide.pdf).

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

*Please ensure all data used is the most current and up to date available. You should verify this by contacting the Departmental Statisticians.*

**Religious belief** evidence/information:  
The 2021 Census of Northern Ireland found that 31% of the population belonged to one of the main Protestant Christian churches, 42% of the population belonged to the Roman Catholic church, 7% to an other Christian belief, 1% to other religion and 17% did not belong to any religious belief.

The Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey 2022 found that 33% of respondents regarded themselves as Catholic, 38% as Protestant and 29% as No Religion.

The Northern Ireland Young Life and Times Survey 2023 collects the views of 16-year-olds living in Northern Ireland. It found that 60% of respondents regarded themselves as belonging to a particular religion – 36% Catholic, 19% Protestant, while 6% belonged to another religion. 40% of respondents belonged to no religion.

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) collects data on the enrolments at Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions (excluding the Open University). They found that in the academic year 2021/22 31% belonged to the Protestant religion, 52% belonged to the Roman Catholic religion, 17% belonged to another religion, unknown or no religion.

CAFRE upgraded its Learner Management System (LMS) in February 2023 to move to online applications and enrolments for CAFRE courses, bringing the college in line with other Further and Higher Education establishments. As this is the first report from the new LMS and quality checks are ongoing, the CAFRE Equality monitoring figures below should be regarded as provisional.

Detailed information on all Section 75 categories is collected as part of CAFRE student registration, however the special category questions are not mandatory, and the applicant/student can still submit an application without providing this information. Of the 599 students enrolled on CAFRE Higher Education courses in 2023/2024, 95% (568) enrolled using the new online system and 66% (377) completed the question on religion.

Student Equality Monitoring Data 2023/2024 found that at undergraduate and postgraduate level 52% identified as Protestant, 31% identified as Roman Catholic, 16% as Other (including other Christian, non-Christian and no religion).

Admission to higher education courses at CAFRE is based solely on academic ability. A student’s religious belief is not a consideration in their entrance to CAFRE, the level of tuition fee charged or the award of financial support.

The Department gathers monitoring data for all students attending CAFRE. The Department will continue to monitor relevant data on an ongoing basis based upon the new online Learner Management System.

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**Political Opinion** evidence/information:

The Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey 2022 found that 31% identified as Unionist, 26% as Nationalist and 28% as Neither.

The Northern Ireland Young Life and Times Survey 2022 collects the views of 16-year-olds living in Northern Ireland. It found that 26% of respondents identified as Unionist, 29% as Nationalist and 24% as Neither.

CAFRE upgraded its Learner Management System (LMS) in February 2023 to move to online applications and enrolments for CAFRE courses, bringing the college in line with other Further and Higher Education establishments. The political opinion question was not asked however data from 2022/23 reported that of the 557 students enrolled on CAFRE Higher Education courses in 2022/2023, 44% (243) completed monitoring forms.

Student Equality Monitoring Data 2022/2023 found that at undergraduate level

39% identified as Unionist, 15% as Nationalist, 46% preferred not to say. At postgraduate level 35% identified as Unionist, 24% as Nationalist and 16% preferred not to say.

This question will be incorporated into the new LMS system for 2024/25 enrolments.

Admission to higher education courses at CAFRE is based solely on academic ability. A student’s political opinion is not a consideration in their entrance to CAFRE, the level of tuition fee charged or the award of financial support.

The Department gathers monitoring data for all students attending CAFRE. The Department will continue to monitor relevant data on an ongoing basis based upon the new online Learner Management System.

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**Racial Group** evidence/information:

The 2021 Census of Northern Ireland found that 97% of respondents identified as white and 3% as Other.

The Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey 2022 found that 96% of respondents identified as White and 4% as Other.

The Northern Ireland Young Life and Times Survey 2023 collects the views of 16-year-olds living in Northern Ireland. It found that 94% of respondents identified as being White and 6% as being Other.

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) collects data on the enrolments at Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions (excluding the Open University). They found that in the academic year 2021/2022 92% identified as being White, 5% identified as Other and 3% of sample was Unknown.

CAFRE upgraded its Learner Management System (LMS) in February 2023 to move to online applications and enrolments for CAFRE courses, bringing the college in line with other Further and Higher Education establishments. As this is the first report from the new LMS and quality checks are ongoing, the CAFRE Equality monitoring figures below should be regarded as provisional.

Detailed information on all Section 75 categories is collected as part of CAFRE student registration, however the special category questions are not mandatory, and the applicant/student can still submit an application without providing this information. Of the 599 students enrolled on CAFRE Higher Education courses in 2023/2024, 95% (568) enrolled using the new online system and 63% (356) completed the question on ethnicity.

Student Equality Monitoring Data 2023/2024 found that at undergraduate level 99% of students identified as being White, 1% identified as being mixed or ‘other’ ethnic group. At postgraduate level 100% of students identified as being White.

Admission to higher education courses at CAFRE is based solely on academic ability. From which racial group a student belongs is not a consideration in their entrance to CAFRE, the level of tuition fee charged or the award of financial support.

The Department gathers monitoring data for all students attending CAFRE. The Department will continue to monitor relevant data on an ongoing basis based upon the new online Learner Management System.

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**Age** evidence/information:

The 2021 Census of Northern Ireland found that the age profile of the population was;

0-14yrs: 19%

15-24yrs: 12%

25-39yrs: 19%

40-49yrs: 13%

50-64yrs: 20%

65+: 17%

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) collects data on the enrolments at Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions (excluding the Open University). They found that in the academic year 2021/2022 57% under the age of 25 while 43% were over the age of 25.

CAFRE upgraded its Learner Management System (LMS) in February 2023 to move to online applications and enrolments for CAFRE courses, bringing the college in line with other Further and Higher Education establishments. As this is the first report from the new LMS and quality checks are ongoing, the CAFRE Equality monitoring figures below should be regarded as provisional.

Detailed information on all Section 75 categories is collected as part of CAFRE student registration, however the special category questions are not mandatory, and the applicant/student can still submit an application without providing this information. Of the 599 students enrolled on CAFRE Higher Education courses in 2023/2024, 95% (568) enrolled using the new online system and 100% (568) completed the question on age.

Student Equality Monitoring Data 2023/2024 found that the age profile at undergraduate and postgraduate level is;

0-15yrs: 0%

16-25yrs: 75%

26-40yrs: 16%

41-50yrs: 6%

51-65yrs: 2%

65+: 0%

Admission to higher education courses at CAFRE is based solely on academic ability. A student’s age is not a consideration in their entrance to CAFRE, the level of tuition fee charged or the award of financial support.

The Department gathers monitoring data for all students attending CAFRE. The Department will continue to monitor relevant data on an ongoing basis based upon the new online Learner Management System.

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**Marital Status** evidence/information:

The 2021 Census of Northern Ireland found that around 56% of the population were married or in a civil partnership.

The Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey 2022 found that 51% of respondents were married, 34% Single (never married) and 14% Other (separated, divorced or widowed).

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) collects data on the enrolments at Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions (excluding the Open University). They found that in the academic year 2021/2022 10% were married or in a civil partnership.

CAFRE upgraded its Learner Management System (LMS) in February 2023 to move to online applications and enrolments for CAFRE courses, bringing the college in line with other Further and Higher Education establishments. As this is the first report from the new LMS and quality checks are ongoing, the CAFRE Equality monitoring figures below should be regarded as provisional.

Detailed information on all Section 75 categories is collected as part of CAFRE student registration, however the special category questions are not mandatory, and the applicant/student can still submit an application without providing this information. Of the 599 students enrolled on CAFRE Higher Education courses in 2023/2024, 95% (568) enrolled using the new online system and 61% (349) completed the question on marital status.

Student Equality Monitoring Data 2023/2024 found that at undergraduate and postgraduate level around 8% were married or in a civil partnership and 89% were single, never married.

Admission to higher education courses at CAFRE is based solely on academic ability. A student’s marital status is not a consideration in their entrance to CAFRE, the level of tuition fee charged or the award of financial support.

The Department gathers monitoring data for all students attending CAFRE. The Department will continue to monitor relevant data on an ongoing basis based upon the new online Learner Management System.

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**Sexual Orientation** evidence/information:

The 2021 Census of Northern Ireland found that 90% of the population identified as being straight or heterosexual while 2% identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual or other sexual orientation.

The Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey 2022 93% identified as heterosexual, 6% as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual.

CAFRE upgraded its Learner Management System (LMS) in February 2023 to move to online applications and enrolments for CAFRE courses, bringing the college in line with other Further and Higher Education establishments. As this is the first report from the new LMS and quality checks are ongoing, the CAFRE Equality monitoring figures below should be regarded as provisional.

Detailed information on all Section 75 categories is collected as part of CAFRE student registration, however the special category questions are not mandatory, and the applicant/student can still submit an application without providing this information. Of the 599 students enrolled on CAFRE Higher Education courses in 2023/2024, 95% (568) enrolled using the new online system and 63% (356) completed the question on sexual orientation.

Student Equality Monitoring Data 2023/2024 found that at undergraduate and postgraduate level 96% of students identify as heterosexual, 1% as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Other and 2% preferred not to say.

Admission to higher education courses at CAFRE is based solely on academic ability. A student’s sexual orientation is not a consideration in their entrance to CAFRE, the level of tuition fee charged or the award of financial support.

The Department gathers monitoring data for all students attending CAFRE. The Department will continue to monitor relevant data on an ongoing basis based upon the new online Learner Management System.

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

The 2021 Census of Northern Ireland found that 51% of the population were female and 49% were male.

The Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey 2022 found that 51% of respondents were male and 49% were female.

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) collects data on the enrolments at Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions (excluding the Open University). They found that in the academic year 2021/2022 41% were male and 59% were female.

CAFRE upgraded its Learner Management System (LMS) in February 2023 to move to online applications and enrolments for CAFRE courses, bringing the college in line with other Further and Higher Education establishments. As this is the first report from the new LMS and quality checks are ongoing, the CAFRE Equality monitoring figures below should be regarded as provisional.

Detailed information on all Section 75 categories is collected as part of CAFRE student registration, however the special category questions are not mandatory, and the applicant/student can still submit an application without providing this information. Of the 599 students enrolled on CAFRE Higher Education courses in 2023/2024, 95% (568) enrolled using the new online system and 100% (568) completed the question on sex.

Student Equality Monitoring Data 2023/2024 found that at undergraduate level 64% are female, 36% are male. At postgraduate level 81% are female and 19% are male.

Admission to higher education courses at CAFRE is based solely on academic ability. A student’s gender is not a consideration in their entrance to CAFRE, the level of tuition fee charged or the award of financial support.

The Department gathers monitoring data for all students attending CAFRE. The Department will continue to monitor relevant data on an ongoing basis based upon the new online Learner Management System.

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**Disability** evidence/information:

The 2021 Census of Northern Ireland found that around 11% of the population found their day to day activities to be limited a lot due to a disability and around 13% found their activities limited a little.

The Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey 2022 found that 31% of respondents indicated that they have a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more.

The Northern Ireland Young Life and Times Survey 2023 collects the views of 16-year-olds living in Northern Ireland. It found that 19% of respondents indicated that they have a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more.

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) collects data on the enrolments at Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions (excluding the Open University). They found that in the academic year 2021/2022 14% recorded having a disability and 86% recorded having no disability.

CAFRE upgraded its Learner Management System (LMS) in February 2023 to move to online applications and enrolments for CAFRE courses, bringing the college in line with other Further and Higher Education establishments. As this is the first report from the new LMS and quality checks are ongoing, the CAFRE Equality monitoring figures below should be regarded as provisional.

Detailed information on all Section 75 categories is collected as part of CAFRE student registration, however the special category questions are not mandatory, and the applicant/student can still submit an application without providing this information. Of the 599 students enrolled on CAFRE Higher Education courses in 2023/2024, 95% (568) enrolled using the new online system and 85% (480) completed the question on disability.

Student Equality Monitoring Data 2023/2024 found that at undergraduate and postgraduate level 11% recorded having a disability and 89% recorded having no disability.

Whether a student has or has not a disability is not a consideration in the level of tuition fee charged at CAFRE. Additional financial support through Student Finance NI is available for eligible CAFRE students with a disability.

The Department gathers monitoring data for all students attending CAFRE. The Department will continue to monitor relevant data on an ongoing basis based upon the new online Learner Management System.

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**Dependants** evidence/information:

The 2021 Census of Northern Ireland found that around 29% of all households had one or more dependent children. The census also found that on census day 11% of people were providing unpaid care to family members, friends, neighbours or others because of their long term physical or mental ill health or disability, or problems related to age.

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) collects data on the enrolments at Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions (excluding the Open University). They found that in the academic year 2021/2022 12% had a child or an elderly person as a dependant and 86% had no dependants.

Dependants’ data has not been collected as part of the CAFRE student registration process in 2023/24 due to an upgrade of the previous Unit-E system to CIVICA Resource Education Management System (REMS). This is due to be reviewed in advance of the 2024/25 student intake.

Student Equality Monitoring Data 2022/2023 found that at undergraduate level 6% had children as dependants, 1% had an elderly person as a dependant, 1% had a dependant with a disability and 92% recorded no children or adults as dependants. At postgraduate level 22% had children as dependants and 78% recorded no children or adults as dependants.

Admission to higher education courses at CAFRE is based solely on academic ability. Whether a student has or has not caring responsibilities is not a consideration in their entrance to CAFRE or the level of tuition fee charged. Additional financial support through Student Finance NI is available for those students with caring responsibilities.

The Department gathers monitoring data for all students attending CAFRE. The Department will continue to monitor relevant data on an ongoing basis based upon the new online Learner Management System.

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**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***

DAERA’s policy on HE student fees at CAFRE and these Regulations will neither actively promote, nor adversely affect, equality of opportunity between different section 75 groups.

The new Regulations make the necessary changes to reflect the expected increase of HE student fees at CAFRE in line with inflation. The fees will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students independent of whether they identify as Protestant, Roman Catholic or Other.

DAERA's policy position on HE student fees at CAFRE is to maintain parity with the amounts that are charged to students studying for degrees at other FE colleges and HE Institutions in Northern Ireland by adhering to the DfE HE tuition fee framework.

Based on the response rate (66%) of the equality monitoring forms from currently enrolled CAFRE HE students, the data provided shows that the revised student fees impacts on a greater number of Protestants than on others. However, it should be noted that 34% did not answer this question.

There is no evidence that those of differing religious beliefs have different needs, experiences or priorities in respect of DAERA’s HE student fees policy or these Regulations.

However, financial assistance, by way of the tuition fee loan from Student Finance NI, is available to all eligible CAFRE students regardless of their religious belief. The maximum amount of tuition fee loan available to eligible CAFRE students will cover the revised HE student fees at CAFRE.  
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***Political Opinion***

DAERA’s policy on HE student fees at CAFRE and these Regulations will neither actively promote, nor adversely affect, equality of opportunity between different section 75 groups.

The new Regulations make the necessary changes to reflect the expected increase of HE student fees at CAFRE in line with inflation. The fees will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students independent of whether they identify as Unionist, Nationalist or Other.

DAERA's policy position on HE student fees at CAFRE is to maintain parity with the amounts that are charged to students studying for degrees at other FE colleges and HE Institutions in Northern Ireland by adhering to the DfE HE tuition fee framework.

There is no evidence that those with differing political opinion have different needs, experiences or priorities in respect of DAERA’s HE student fees policy or these Regulations.

However, financial assistance, by way of the tuition fee loan from Student Finance NI, is available to all eligible CAFRE students regardless of their political opinion. The maximum amount of tuition fee loan available to eligible CAFRE students will cover the revised HE tuition fees at CAFRE.

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***Racial Group***

DAERA’s policy on HE student fees at CAFRE and these Regulations will neither actively promote, nor adversely affect, equality of opportunity between different section 75 groups.

The new Regulations make the necessary changes to reflect the expected increase of HE student fees at CAFRE in line with inflation. The fees will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students independent of whether they identify as White or from any other racial group.

DAERA's policy position on HE student fees at CAFRE is to maintain parity with the amounts that are charged to students studying for degrees at other FE colleges and HE Institutions in Northern Ireland by adhering to the DfE HE tuition fee framework.

Based on the response rate (63%) of the equality monitoring forms from currently enrolled CAFRE HE students, the data provided shows that the revised student fees impacts on students who identify as White (100% of respondents) than any other racial group. This data is closely representative of the wider Northern Ireland population based on the 2021 census.

There is no evidence that those with differing racial groups have different needs, experiences or priorities in respect of DAERA’s HE student fees policy or these Regulations.

However, financial assistance, by way of the tuition fee loan from Student Finance NI, is available to all eligible CAFRE students regardless from which racial group they come. The maximum amount of tuition fee loan available to eligible CAFRE students will cover the revised HE student fees at CAFRE.

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***Age***

DAERA’s policy on HE student fees at CAFRE and these Regulations will neither actively promote, nor adversely affect, equality of opportunity between different section 75 groups.

The new Regulations make the necessary changes to reflect the expected increase of HE student fees at CAFRE in line with inflation. The fees will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students independent of their age.

DAERA's policy position on HE student fees at CAFRE is to maintain parity with the amounts that are charged to students studying for degrees at other FE colleges and HE Institutions in Northern Ireland by adhering to the DfE HE tuition fee framework.

Based on the response rate (100%) of the equality monitoring forms from currently enrolled CAFRE HE students, the data provided shows that the revised student fees impacts on a greater number of young people, within the 16-25 year old age range, than older students.

There is no evidence that those from different age ranges have different needs, experiences or priorities in respect of DAERA’s HE student fees policy or these Regulations.

However, financial assistance, by way of the tuition fee loan from Student Finance NI, is available to all eligible CAFRE students regardless of their age. The maximum amount of tuition fee loan available to eligible CAFRE students will cover the revised HE student fees at CAFRE.

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***Marital status***

DAERA’s policy on HE student fees at CAFRE and these Regulations will neither actively promote, nor adversely affect, equality of opportunity between different section 75 groups.

The new Regulations make the necessary changes to reflect the expected increase of HE student fees at CAFRE in line with inflation. The fees will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students independent of their marital status.

DAERA's policy position on HE student fees at CAFRE is to maintain parity with the amounts that are charged to students studying for degrees at other FE colleges and HE Institutions in Northern Ireland by adhering to the DfE HE tuition fee framework.

Based on the response rate (61%) of the equality monitoring forms from currently enrolled CAFRE HE students, the data provided shows that the revised student fees impacts on a greater number of single people than on others.

There is no evidence that those with differing marital status have different needs, experiences or priorities in respect of DAERA’s HE student fees policy or these Regulations.

However, financial assistance, by way of the tuition fee loan from Student Finance NI, is available to all eligible CAFRE students regardless of their marital status. The maximum amount of tuition fee loan available to eligible CAFRE students will cover the revised HE student fees at CAFRE.

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***Sexual orientation***

DAERA’s policy on HE student fees at CAFRE and these Regulations will neither actively promote, nor adversely affect, equality of opportunity between different section 75 groups.

The new Regulations make the necessary changes to reflect the expected increase of HE student fees at CAFRE in line with inflation. The fees will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students independent of their sexual orientation.

DAERA's policy position on HE student fees at CAFRE is to maintain parity with the amounts that are charged to students studying for degrees at other FE colleges and HE Institutions in Northern Ireland by adhering to the DfE HE tuition fee framework.

Based on the response rate (63%) of the equality monitoring forms from currently enrolled CAFRE HE students, the data provided shows that the revised student fees impacts on a greater number of people that identify as heterosexual than Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual.

There is no evidence that those with differing sexual orientations have different needs, experiences or priorities in respect of DAERA’s HE student fees policy or these Regulations.

However, financial assistance, by way of the tuition fee loan from Student Finance NI, is available to all eligible CAFRE students regardless of their sexual orientation. The maximum amount of tuition fee loan available to eligible CAFRE students will cover the revised HE student fees at CAFRE.

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***Men and Women Generally***

DAERA’s policy on HE student fees at CAFRE and these Regulations will neither actively promote, nor adversely affect, equality of opportunity between different section 75 groups.

The new Regulations make the necessary changes to reflect the expected increase of HE student fees at CAFRE in line with inflation. The fees will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students independent of their gender.

DAERA's policy position on HE student fees at CAFRE is to maintain parity with the amounts that are charged to students studying for degrees at other FE colleges and HE Institutions in Northern Ireland by adhering to the DfE HE tuition fee framework.

Based on the response rate (100%) of the equality monitoring forms from currently enrolled CAFRE HE students, the data provided shows that the revised student fees impacts on a greater number of women than on men.

There is no evidence that those with differing genders have different needs, experiences or priorities in respect of DAERA’s HE student fees policy or these Regulations.

However, financial assistance, by way of the tuition fee loan from Student Finance NI, is available to all eligible CAFRE students regardless of their gender. The maximum amount of tuition fee loan available to eligible CAFRE students will cover the revised HE student fees at CAFRE.

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***Disability***

DAERA’s policy on HE student fees at CAFRE and these Regulations will neither actively promote, nor adversely affect, equality of opportunity between different section 75 groups.

The new Regulations make the necessary changes to reflect the expected increase of HE student fees at CAFRE in line with inflation. The fees will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students independent on whether they have or have not a disability.

DAERA's policy position on HE student fees at CAFRE is to maintain parity with the amounts that are charged to students studying for degrees at other FE colleges and HE Institutions in Northern Ireland by adhering to the DfE HE tuition fee framework.

Based on the response rate (85%) of the equality monitoring forms from currently enrolled CAFRE HE students, the data provided shows that the revised student fees impacts on a greater number of students without a disability than on those students with a disability.

There is no evidence that those with a disability than with no disability have different needs, experiences or priorities in respect of DAERA’s HE tuition fee charging policy or these Regulations.

However, financial assistance, by way of the tuition fee loan from Student Finance NI, is available to all eligible CAFRE students regardless of whether they have or have not a disability. The maximum amount of tuition fee loan available to eligible CAFRE students will cover the revised HE student fees at CAFRE.

Disabled Students’ Allowances, through Student Finance NI, is available for eligible CAFRE students with a disability. This financial assistance helps to remove any financial barriers to higher education by helping to meet the disability specific costs of undertaking higher education, this includes the provision of non-medical helpers, equipment and travel costs. As an existing DfE policy this has previously been subject to screening and is considered to be compliant.

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***Dependants***

DAERA’s policy on HE student fees at CAFRE and these Regulations will neither actively promote, nor adversely affect, equality of opportunity between different section 75 groups.

The new Regulations make the necessary changes to reflect the expected increase of HE student fees at CAFRE in line with inflation. The fees will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students independent on whether they have or have not any dependants.

DAERA's policy position on HE student fees at CAFRE is to maintain parity with the amounts that are charged to students studying for degrees at other FE colleges and HE Institutions in Northern Ireland by adhering to the DfE HE tuition fee framework.

There is no evidence that those with caring responsibilities or those without caring responsibilities have different needs, experiences or priorities in respect of DAERA’s HE student fees policy or these Regulations.

However, financial assistance, by way of the tuition fee loan from Student Finance NI, is available to all eligible NI Students regardless of whether they have caring responsibilities or not. The maximum amount of tuition fee loan available to eligible CAFRE students will cover the revised HE student fees at CAFRE.

Childcare Grant, Adult Dependants’ Grant and Parents’ Learning Allowance, through Student Finance NI, is available to eligible CAFRE students. This financial assistance helps to remove any financial barriers to higher education by helping to meet specific costs of undertaking higher education. As an existing DfE policy this has previously been subject to screening and is considered to be compliant.

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**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.

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**

1. The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
2. 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;
3. 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;
4. 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;
5. The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
6. The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

**In favour of ‘minor’ impact**

1. The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
2. 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;
3. 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;
4. By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

**In favour of none**

1. The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
2. 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.

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

Based on the response rate (66%) of the equality monitoring forms from currently enrolled CAFRE HE students, the data provided shows that the revised student fees impacts on a greater number of Protestants than on others.

DAERA's policy position on HE student fees at CAFRE is to maintain parity with the amounts that are charged to students studying for degrees at other FE colleges and HE Institutions in Northern Ireland.

The new Regulations make the necessary changes to reflect the expected increase of HE student fees at CAFRE in line with inflation. The fees will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students independent of whether they identify as Protestant, Roman Catholic or Other.

Admission to higher education courses at CAFRE is based solely on academic ability. A student’s religious belief is not a consideration in their entrance to CAFRE, the level of student fee or the award of financial support.

Financial assistance, by way of the tuition fee loan, maintenance loan and grants from Student Finance NI, is available to all eligible CAFRE Students regardless of their religious belief. The maximum amount of tuition fee loan available to eligible CAFRE students will cover the revised HE student fees at CAFRE.

DAERA’s policy on HE student fees at CAFRE and these Regulations will neither actively promote, nor adversely affect, equality of opportunity between different section 75 groups.

DAERA has developed a 3 year Widening Access and Participation Plan (WAPP) for academic years 2023/24 to 2025/26 that includes measures (including HE Access Bursaries) that help under-represented groups in HE including those from the most deprived backgrounds to continue to undertake HE.

**What is the level of impact?**

Minor

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

Based on the response rate of 44% completed monitoring forms.

in 2022/2023 found that at undergraduate level 39% identified as Unionist, 15% as Nationalist, 46% preferred not to say. At postgraduate level 35% identified as Unionist, 24% as Nationalist and 16% preferred not to say. Given the low response rate and the high number of people preferring not to say it is difficult to draw any meaningful conclusion on impact on political opinion.

This question will be incorporated into the new LMS system for 2024/25 enrolments.

DAERA's policy position on HE student fees at CAFRE is to maintain parity with the amounts that are charged to students studying for degrees at other FE colleges and HE Institutions in Northern Ireland.

The new Regulations make the necessary changes to reflect the expected increase of HE student fees at CAFRE in line with inflation. The fees will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students independent of whether they identify as Unionist, Nationalist or Other.

Admission to higher education courses at CAFRE is based solely on academic ability. A student’s political opinion is not a consideration in their entrance to CAFRE, the level of student fee or the award of financial support.

Financial assistance, by way of the tuition fee loan, maintenance loan and grants from Student Finance NI, is available to all eligible CAFRE Students regardless of their political opinion. The maximum amount of tuition fee loan available to eligible CAFRE students will cover the revised HE student fees at CAFRE.

DAERA’s policy on HE student fees at CAFRE and these Regulations will neither actively promote, nor adversely affect, equality of opportunity between different section 75 groups.

DAERA has developed a 3 year Widening Access and Participation Plan (WAPP) for academic years 2023/24 to 2025/26 that includes measures (including HE Access Bursaries) that help under-represented groups in HE including those from the most deprived backgrounds to continue to undertake HE.

**What is the level of impact?**

Minor

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

Based on the response rate (63%) of the equality monitoring forms from currently enrolled CAFRE HE students, the data provided shows that the revised student fees impacts on a greater number of students who identify as White than any other racial group. This data is representative of the wider Northern Ireland population based on the 2011 census.

DAERA's policy position on HE student fees at CAFRE is to maintain parity with the amounts that are charged to students studying for degrees at other FE colleges and HE Institutions in Northern Ireland.

The new Regulations make the necessary changes to reflect the expected increase of HE student fees at CAFRE in line with inflation. The fees will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students independent of whether they identify as White or from any other racial group.

Admission to higher education courses at CAFRE is based solely on academic ability. From which racial group a student belongs is not a consideration in their entrance to CAFRE, the level of student fee or the award of financial support.

Financial assistance, by way of the tuition fee loan, maintenance loan and grants from Student Finance NI, is available to all eligible CAFRE students regardless from which racial group they come. The maximum amount of tuition fee loan available to eligible CAFRE students will cover the revised HE student fees at CAFRE.

DAERA’s policy on HE student fees at CAFRE and these Regulations will neither actively promote, nor adversely affect, equality of opportunity between different section 75 groups.

DAERA has developed a 3 year Widening Access and Participation Plan (WAPP) for academic years 2023/24 to 2025/26 that includes measures (including HE Access Bursaries) that help under-represented groups in HE including those from the most deprived backgrounds to continue to undertake HE.

**What is the level of impact?**

Minor

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

Based on the response rate (100%) of the equality monitoring forms from currently enrolled CAFRE HE students, the data provided shows that the revised student fees impacts on a greater number of young people, within the 16-25 year old age range, than older students.

DAERA's policy position on HE student fees at CAFRE is to maintain parity with the amounts that are charged to students studying for degrees at other FE colleges and HE Institutions in Northern Ireland.

The new Regulations make the necessary changes to reflect the expected increase of HE student fees at CAFRE in line with inflation. The fees will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students independent of their age.

Admission to higher education courses at CAFRE is based solely on academic ability. A student’s age is not a consideration in their entrance to CAFRE, the level of student fee or the award of financial support.

Financial assistance, by way of the tuition fee loan, maintenance loan and grants from Student Finance NI, is available to all eligible CAFRE students regardless of their age. The maximum amount of tuition fee loan available to eligible CAFRE students will cover the revised HE student fees at CAFRE.

DAERA’s policy on HE student fees at CAFRE and these Regulations will neither actively promote, nor adversely affect, equality of opportunity between different section 75 groups.

DAERA has developed a 3 year Widening Access and Participation Plan (WAPP) for academic years 2023/24 to 2025/26 that includes measures (including HE Access Bursaries) that help under-represented groups in HE including those from the most deprived backgrounds to continue to undertake HE.

**What is the level of impact?**

Minor

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

Based on the response rate (61%) of the equality monitoring forms from currently enrolled CAFRE HE students, the data provided shows that the revised student fees impacts on a greater number of single people than on others.

DAERA's policy position on HE student fees at CAFRE is to maintain parity with the amounts that are charged to students studying for degrees at other FE colleges and HE Institutions in Northern Ireland.

The new Regulations make the necessary changes to reflect the expected increase of HE student fees at CAFRE in line with inflation. The fees will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students independent of their marital status.

Admission to higher education courses at CAFRE is based solely on academic ability. A student’s marital status is not a consideration in their entrance to CAFRE, the level of student fee or the award of financial support.

Financial assistance, by way of the tuition fee loan, maintenance loans and grants from Student Finance NI, is available to all eligible CAFRE students regardless of their marital status. The maximum amount of tuition fee loan available to eligible CAFRE students will cover the revised HE student fees at CAFRE

DAERA’s policy on HE student fees at CAFRE and these Regulations will neither actively promote, nor adversely affect, equality of opportunity between different section 75 groups.

DAERA has developed a 3 year Widening Access and Participation Plan (WAPP) for academic years 2023/24 to 2025/26 that includes measures (including HE Access Bursaries) that help under-represented groups in HE including those from the most deprived backgrounds to continue to undertake HE.

**What is the level of impact?**

Minor

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

Based on the response rate (63%) of the equality monitoring forms from currently enrolled CAFRE HE students, the data provided shows that the revised student fees impacts on a greater number of people that identify as heterosexual than Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual.

DAERA's policy position on HE student fees at CAFRE is to maintain parity with the amounts that are charged to students studying for degrees at other FE colleges and HE Institutions in Northern Ireland.

The new Regulations make the necessary changes to reflect the expected increase of HE student fees at CAFRE in line with inflation. The fees will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students independent of their sexual orientation.

Admission to higher education courses at CAFRE is based solely on academic ability. A student’s sexual orientation is not a consideration in their entrance to CAFRE, the level of student fee or the award of financial support.

Financial assistance, by way of the tuition fee loan, maintenance loan and grants from Student Finance NI, is available to all eligible CAFRE students regardless of their sexual orientation. The maximum amount of tuition fee loan available to eligible CAFRE students will cover the revised HE student fees at CAFRE.

DAERA’s policy on HE student fees at CAFRE and these Regulations will neither actively promote, nor adversely affect, equality of opportunity between different section 75 groups.

DAERA has developed a 3 year Widening Access and Participation Plan (WAPP) for academic years 2023/24 to 2025/26 that includes measures (including HE Access Bursaries) that help under-represented groups in HE including those from the most deprived backgrounds to continue to undertake HE.

**What is the level of impact?**

Minor

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

Based on the response rate (100%) of the equality monitoring forms from currently enrolled CAFRE HE students, the data provided shows that the revised student fees impacts on a greater number of women than on men.

DAERA's policy position on HE student fees at CAFRE is to maintain parity with the amounts that are charged to students studying for degrees at other FE colleges and HE Institutions in Northern Ireland.

The new Regulations make the necessary changes to reflect the expected increase of HE student fees at CAFRE in line with inflation. The fees will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students independent of their gender.

Admission to higher education courses at CAFRE is based solely on academic ability. A student’s gender is not a consideration in their entrance to CAFRE, the level of student fee or the award of financial support.

Financial assistance, by way of the tuition fee loan, maintenance loan and grants from Student Finance NI, is available to all eligible CAFRE students regardless of their gender. The maximum amount of tuition fee loan available to eligible CAFRE students will cover the revised HE student fees at CAFRE.

DAERA’s policy on HE student fees at CAFRE and these Regulations will neither actively promote, nor adversely affect, equality of opportunity between different section 75 groups.

DAERA has developed a 3 year Widening Access and Participation Plan (WAPP) for academic years 2023/24 to 2025/26 that includes measures (including HE Access Bursaries) that help under-represented groups in HE including those from the most deprived backgrounds to continue to undertake HE.

**What is the level of impact?**

Minor

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

Based on the response rate (85%) of the equality monitoring forms from currently enrolled CAFRE HE students, the data provided shows that the revised student fees impacts on a greater number of students without a disability than on those students with a disability.

DAERA's policy position on HE student fees at CAFRE is to maintain parity with the amounts that are charged to students studying for degrees at other FE colleges and HE Institutions in Northern Ireland.

The new Regulations make the necessary changes to reflect the expected increase of HE student fees at CAFRE in line with inflation. The fees will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students independent on whether they have or have not a disability.

Whether a student has or has not a disability is not a consideration in the level of student fee at CAFRE.

Financial assistance, by way of the tuition fee loan, maintenance loan and grants from Student Finance NI, is available to all eligible CAFRE students regardless of whether they have or have not a disability. The maximum amount of tuition fee loan available to eligible CAFRE students will cover the revised HE student fees at CAFRE.

Disabled Students’ Allowances, through Student Finance NI, is available to eligible CAFRE students. This financial assistance helps to remove any financial barriers to higher education by helping to meet the disability specific costs of undertaking higher education, this includes the provision of non-medical helpers, equipment and travel costs. As an existing DfE policy this has previously been subject to screening and is considered to be compliant.

DAERA’s policy on HE student fees at CAFRE and these Regulations will neither actively promote, nor adversely affect, equality of opportunity between different section 75 groups.

DAERA has developed a 3 year Widening Access and Participation Plan (WAPP) for academic years 2023/24 to 2025/26 that includes measures (including HE Access Bursaries) that help under-represented groups in HE including those from the most deprived backgrounds to continue to undertake HE.

**What is the level of impact?**

Minor

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

Dependants’ data has not been collected as part of the CAFRE student registration process in 2023/24 due to an upgrade of the previous Unit-E system to CIVICA Resource Education Management System (REMS). This is due to be reviewed in advance of the 2024/25 student intake.

DAERA's policy position on HE student fees at CAFRE is to maintain parity with the amounts that are charged to students studying for degrees at other FE colleges and HE Institutions in Northern Ireland.

The new Regulations make the necessary changes to reflect the expected increase of HE student fees at CAFRE in line with inflation. The fees will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students independent on whether they have caring responsibilities or not.

Admission to higher education courses at CAFRE is based solely on academic ability. Whether a student has or has not any caring responsibilities is not a consideration in their entrance to CAFRE, the level of student fee or the award of financial support.

However, financial assistance, by way of the tuition fee loan, maintenance loan and grants from Student Finance NI, is available to all eligible CAFRE students regardless of whether they have caring responsibilities or not. The maximum amount of tuition fee loan available to eligible CAFRE students will cover the revised HE student fees at CAFRE

Childcare Grant, Adult Dependants’ Grant and Parents’ Learning Allowance, through Student Finance NI, is available to eligible CAFRE students with caring responsibilities. This financial assistance helps to remove any financial barriers to higher education by helping to meet specific costs of undertaking higher education. As an existing DfE policy this has previously been subject to screening and is considered to be compliant.

DAERA’s policy on HE student fees at CAFRE and these Regulations will neither actively promote, nor adversely affect, equality of opportunity between different section 75 groups.

DAERA has developed a 3 year Widening Access and Participation Plan (WAPP) for academic years 2023/24 to 2025/26 that includes measures (including HE Access Bursaries) that help under-represented groups in HE including those from the most deprived backgrounds to continue to undertake HE.

**What is the level of impact?**

Minor

1. **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 Yes, provide details:**

N/A

**If No, provide reasons:**

There are no opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories within these Regulations.

DAERA's policy position on HE student fees at CAFRE is to maintain parity with the amounts that are charged to students studying for degrees at other FE colleges and HE Institutions in Northern Ireland.

The new Regulations make the necessary changes to reflect the expected increase of HE student fees at CAFRE in line with inflation. The fees will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students and on that basis it has no differential impact.

***Political Opinion* - If Yes, provide details:**

N/A

**If No, provide reasons:**

As above – see “Religious Belief” section.

***Racial Group* - If Yes, provide details:**

N/A

**If No, provide reasons:**

As above – see “Religious Belief” section.

***Age* - If Yes, provide details:**

N/A

**If No, provide reasons:**

As above – see “Religious Belief” section.

***Marital Status* - If Yes, provide details:**

N/A

**If No, provide reasons**

As above – see “Religious Belief” section.

***Sexual Orientation* - If Yes, provide details:**

N/A

**If No, provide reasons:**

As above – see “Religious Belief” section.

***Men and Women generally* - If Yes, provide details:**

N/A

**If No, provide reasons:**

As above – see “Religious Belief” section.

***Disability* - If Yes, provide details:**

N/A

**If No, provide reasons:**

As above – see “Religious Belief” section.

***Dependants* - If Yes, provide details:**

N/A

**If No, provide reasons:**

As above – see “Religious Belief” section.

1. **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*:**

No impact

**What is the level of impact?**

None

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

No impact

**What is the level of impact?**

None

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

No impact

**What is the level of impact?**

None

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

**No**

Detail opportunities of how this policy could better promote good relations for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

***Religious Belief* - If Yes, provide details:**

N/A

**If No, provide reasons:**

There are no opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group within these Regulations.

DAERA's policy position on HE student fees at CAFRE is to maintain parity with the amounts that are charged to students studying for degrees at other FE colleges and HE Institutions in Northern Ireland.

The new Regulations make the necessary changes to reflect the current HE fee structure while also addressing the expected increase of HE student fees at CAFRE in line with inflation. The fees will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students and on that basis it has no differential impact.

***Political Opinion* - If Yes, provide details:**

N/A

**If No, provide reasons**

As above – see “Religious Belief” section.

Racial Group **- If Yes, provide details:**

N/A

**If No, provide reasons**

As above – see “Religious Belief” section.

**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?  If so, please detail below.

(*For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).*

Yes, under certain circumstances.

However, DAERA's policy position on HE student fees at CAFRE is to maintain parity with the amounts that are charged to students studying for degrees at other FE colleges and HE Institutions in Northern Ireland.

This increase in HE student fees will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students and on that basis it has no differential impact and no potential impacts on people with multiple identities.

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

DAERA also has legislative obligations to meet under the Disability Discrimination Order. Questions 5 – 6 relate to these.

Consideration of Disability Duties

1. **Does this proposed policy or decision provide an opportunity for DAERA to better *promote positive attitudes* towards disabled people?**

No.

There is no facility in the policy/Regulations proposal to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.

6. **Does this proposed policy or decision provide an opportunity to actively *increase the participation* by disabled people in public life?**

No.

There is no facility in the policy/Regulations proposal to increase the participation of disabled people in public life.

**Part 3. Screening decision** (Please delete as appropriate)

“Screened out” without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.

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

DAERA's policy position on HE student fees at CAFRE is to maintain parity with the amounts that are charged to students studying for degrees at other FE colleges and HE Institutions in Northern Ireland by adhering to the DfE HE tuition fee framework.

The new Regulations make the necessary changes to reflect the expected increase of HE student fees at CAFRE in line with inflation.

The revised HE student fees policy will be applicable from academic year 2024/25 to students ordinarily resident in Northern Ireland (and excepted others) – the increases will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students and on that basis it has no differential impact and will not challenge Section 75. On this basis, no mitigation of this policy or no alternative policy is required to be introduced.

Financial assistance, by way of the tuition fee loan, maintenance loan and grants from Student Finance NI, is available to all eligible CAFRE students regardless of their Section 75 grouping. The maximum amount of tuition fee loan available to eligible CAFRE students will cover the revised HE student fees at CAFRE.

Disabled Students’ Allowances, through Student Finance NI, is available to eligible CAFRE students with a disability. This financial assistance helps to remove any financial barriers to higher education by helping to meet the disability specific costs of undertaking higher education, this includes the provision of non-medical helpers, equipment and travel costs. As an existing DfE policy this has previously been subject to screening and is considered to be compliant.

Childcare Grant, Adult Dependants’ Grant and Parents’ Learning Allowance, through Student Finance NI, is available to eligible CAFRE students with caring responsibilities. This financial assistance helps to remove any financial barriers to higher education by helping to meet specific costs of undertaking higher education. As an existing DfE policy this has previously been subject to screening and is considered to be compliant.

DAERA has developed a 3 year Widening Access and Participation Plan (WAPP) for academic years 2023/24 to 2025/26 that includes measures (including HE Access Bursaries) that help under-represented groups in HE including those from the most deprived backgrounds to continue to undertake HE.

**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.**

DAERA's policy position on HE student fees at CAFRE is to maintain parity with the amounts that are charged to students studying for degrees at other FE colleges and HE Institutions in Northern Ireland by adhering to the DfE HE tuition fee framework.

The new Regulations make the necessary changes to reflect the expected increase of HE student fees at CAFRE in line with inflation.

The revised HE student fee policy will be applicable from academic year 2024/25 to students ordinarily resident in Northern Ireland (and excepted others) – the increases will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students and on that basis it has no differential impact and will not challenge Section 75. On this basis, no mitigation of this policy or no alternative policy is required to be introduced.

Financial assistance, by way of the tuition fee loan, maintenance loan and grants from Student Finance NI, is available to all eligible CAFRE students regardless of their Section 75 grouping. The maximum amount of tuition fee loan available to eligible CAFRE students will cover the revised HE student fees at CAFRE

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Childcare Grant, Adult Dependants’ Grant and Parents’ Learning Allowance, through Student Finance NI, is available to eligible CAFRE students with caring responsibilities. This financial assistance helps to remove any financial barriers to higher education by helping to meet specific costs of undertaking higher education. As an existing DfE policy this has previously been subject to screening and is considered to be compliant.

DAERA has developed a 3 year Widening Access and Participation Plan (WAPP) for academic years 2023/24 to 2025/26 that includes measures (including HE Access Bursaries) that help under-represented groups in HE including those from the most deprived backgrounds; disabled students; young men from deprived backgrounds; care experienced students; and adult learners to continue to undertake HE.

**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: [A Practical Guide to Equality Impact Assessment](https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/PracticalGuidanceonEQIA2005.pdf?ext=.pdf)

**Mitigation**

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is ‘minor’ and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

**Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?**

No

The revised HE student fees policy will be applicable from academic year 2024/25 to students ordinarily resident in Northern Ireland (and excepted others) – the increases will apply equally across all HE CAFRE students and it has no differential impact and will not challenge Section 75. On this basis, no mitigation of this policy or no alternative policy is required to be introduced.

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

N/A

**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** | **Rating (1-3)** |
| --- | --- |
| Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations |  |
| Social need |  |
| Effect on people’s daily lives |  |
| Relevance to a public authority’s functions |  |
| **Total score** |  |

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?**

**If yes, please provide details.**

N/A

**Part 4. Monitoring**

Section 75 places a requirement on DAERA to have equality monitoring arrangements in place in order to assess the impact of policies and services etc; and to help identify barriers to fair participation and to better promote equality of opportunity. Please note the following excerpt from The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland in relation to monitoring:

*A system must be established to monitor the impact of the policy in order to find out its effect on relevant groups. The results of ongoing monitoring must be reviewed on an annual basis. The public authority is required to publish the results of this monitoring. And they must be included in the public authorities´ annual review on progress to the Equality Commission. The Equality Scheme must specify how and where such monitoring information will be published. It is therefore essential that monitoring is carried out in a systematic manner and that the results are widely and openly published.*

*If the monitoring and analysis of results over a two year period show that the policy results in greater adverse impact than predicted, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, the public authority must ensure that the policy is revised to achieve better outcomes for the relevant equality groups.*

Further advice on monitoring can be found at: [ECNI Monitoring Guidance for Public Authorities](https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/S75MonitoringGuidance2007.pdf?ext=.pdf)

Outline what data you will collect in the future in order to monitor the impact of this policy or decision on equality, good relations and disability duties.

**Equality:**

CAFRE collects and analyses equality monitoring data on all students at the commencement of their course. CAFRE will continue to monitor relevant data on an ongoing basis via the new online Learner Management System and seek ways to maximise the level of response rate.

**Good Relations:**

Other than the equality monitoring data for new students, no specific data will be collected.

**Disability Duties:**

CAFRE responds to any special education/disability needs identified by students.

**Part 5. Consideration of Human Rights**

1. **The Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998 brings the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into UK law and it applies in N Ireland. Indicate below by deleting Yes/No as appropriate, any potential *adverse impacts* that the policy or decision may have in relation to human rights issues.**

See Annex A for brief synopsis on each of the Human Rights Articles & Protocols

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Right to Life | **Article 2** | No |
| Prohibition of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment | **Article 3** | No |
| Prohibition of slavery and forced labour | **Article 4** | No |
| Right to liberty and security | **Article 5** | No |
| Right to a fair and public trial | **Article 6** | No |
| Right to no punishment without law | **Article 7** | No |
| Right to respect for private and family life, home  and correspondence | **Article 8** | No |
| Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion | **Article 9** | No |
| Right to freedom of expression | **Article 10** | No |
| Right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association | **Article 11** | No |
| Right to marry and to found a family | **Article 12** | No |
| The prohibition of discrimination | **Article 14** | No |
| Protection of property and enjoyment of possessions | **Protocol 1 Article 1** | No |
| Right to education | **Protocol 1 Article 2** | No |
| Right to free and secret elections | **Protocol 1 Article 3** | No |

8. **Please explain any adverse impacts on human rights that you have identified**

No adverse impact on human rights have been identified.

9. **Please indicate any ways which you consider the policy positively promotes human rights**

None

**Part 6 - Approval and authorisation**

# **Screening Checklist**

Before signing off this screening template please confirm that you have completed all the actions listed below.

I can confirm that all the actions listed below have been completed –

* I have explained any technical issues in plain English (easily understood by a 12 year old)
* I have used the most relevant, current & up to date data available
* I have added evidence and explained my assessments in full
* I have provided a brief note to justify my decision to ‘Screen In’ or ‘Screen Out’
* A copy of this screening template and the final decision has been sent to the Equality Unit for their consideration before it has been forwarded for sign-off

**Screening assessment completed by (Staff Officer level or above) -**

**Name: Chloe Robinson** **Grade:** DP

**Branch:** Policy Development Branch

**Date: 29/03/2024**

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**Signature:**

**Screening decision approved by (must be Grade 3 /Deputy Secretary or above) –**

**Name: Norman Fulton**  **Grade:** 3

**Branch:** Food and Farming Group

**Date: 15/4/24**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Signature:** |  |

****

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.

Please save the final signed version of the completed screening form in the CM container (AE2-19-11940) below as soon as possible after completion and forward the CM link to Equality Branch at [equality@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:equality@daera-ni.gov.uk). The screening template must be saved to the container in **HTML format** (not PDF) in order to comply with accessibility requirements. The screening form will be placed on the DAERA website and a link provided to the Department’s Section 75 consultees.



For more information about equality screening, contact –

DAERA Equality Unit

Equality, Diversity & Public Appointments Branch

Ballykelly House

111 Ballykelly Road

LIMAVADY  
BT49 9HP

Email: [equality@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:equality@daera-ni.gov.uk)

Tel: 028 7744 2027



**Annex A**

**Synopsis of Human Rights Act Articles & Protocols**

***Article 2***

**E+W+S+N.I.*Right to life***

1. Everyone’s right to life shall be protected by law. No one shall be deprived of his life intentionally save in the execution of a sentence of a court following his conviction of a crime for which this penalty is provided by law.**E+W+S+N.I.**
2. Deprivation of life shall not be regarded as inflicted in contravention of this Article when it results from the use of force which is no more than absolutely necessary:**E+W+S+N.I.**

(a) In defense of any person from unlawful violence;

(b) In order to effect a lawful arrest or to prevent the escape of a person lawfully detained;

(c) In action lawfully taken for the purpose of quelling a riot or insurrection.

***Article 3***

**E+W+S+N.I.*Prohibition of torture***

No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

***Article 4***

**E+W+S+N.I.*Prohibition of slavery and forced labour***

1. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude.**E+W+S+N.I.**
2. No one shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour.**E+W+S+N.I.**
3. For the purpose of this Article the term “forced or compulsory labour” shall not include:**E+W+S+N.I.**

(a) Any work required to be done in the ordinary course of detention imposed according to the provisions of Article 5 of this Convention or during conditional release from such detention;

(b) Any service of a military character or, in case of conscientious objectors in countries where they are recognised, service exacted instead of compulsory military service;

(c) Any service exacted in case of an emergency or calamity threatening the life or well-being of the community;

(d) Any work or service which forms part of normal civic obligations.

***Article 5***

**E+W+S+N.I.*Right to liberty and security***

1. Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be deprived of his liberty save in the following cases and in accordance with a procedure prescribed by law:**E+W+S+N.I.**

(a) The lawful detention of a person after conviction by a competent court;

(b) The lawful arrest or detention of a person for non-compliance with the lawful order of a court or in order to secure the fulfilment of any obligation prescribed by law;

(c) the lawful arrest or detention of a person effected for the purpose of bringing him before the competent legal authority on reasonable suspicion of having committed an offence or when it is reasonably considered necessary to prevent his committing an offence or fleeing after having done so;

(d ) the detention of a minor by lawful order for the purpose of educational supervision or his lawful detention for the purpose of bringing him before the competent legal authority;

(e) The lawful detention of persons for the prevention of the spreading of infectious diseases, of persons of unsound mind, alcoholics or drug addicts or vagrants;

(f) The lawful arrest or detention of a person to prevent his effecting an unauthorised entry into the country or of a person against whom action is being taken with a view to deportation or extradition.

1. Everyone who is arrested shall be informed promptly, in a language which he understands, of the reasons for his arrest and of any charge against him.**E+W+S+N.I.**
2. Everyone arrested or detained in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1(c) of this Article shall be brought promptly before a judge or other officer authorised by law to exercise judicial power and shall be entitled to trial within a reasonable time or to release pending trial. Release may be conditioned by guarantees to appear for trial.**E+W+S+N.I.**
3. Everyone who is deprived of his liberty by arrest or detention shall be entitled to take proceedings by which the lawfulness of his detention shall be decided speedily by a court and his release ordered if the detention is not lawful.**E+W+S+N.I.**
4. Everyone who has been the victim of arrest or detention in contravention of the provisions of this Article shall have an enforceable right to compensation.**E+W+S+N.I.**

***Article 6***

**E+W+S+N.I.*Right to a fair trial***

1. In the determination of his civil rights and obligations or of any criminal charge against him, everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law. Judgment shall be pronounced publicly but the press and public may be excluded from all or part of the trial in the interest of morals, public order or national security in a democratic society, where the interests of juveniles or the protection of the private life of the parties so require, or to the extent strictly necessary in the opinion of the court in special circumstances where publicity would prejudice the interests of justice.**E+W+S+N.I.**
2. Everyone charged with a criminal offence shall be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law.**E+W+S+N.I.**
3. Everyone charged with a criminal offence has the following minimum rights:**E+W+S+N.I.**

(a) To be informed promptly, in a language which he understands and in detail, of the nature and cause of the accusation against him;

(b) To have adequate time and facilities for the preparation of his defense;

(c) To defend himself in person or through legal assistance of his own choosing or, if he has not sufficient means to pay for legal assistance, to be given it free when the interests of justice so require;

(d) To examine or have examined witnesses against him and to obtain the attendance and examination of witnesses on his behalf under the same conditions as witnesses against him;

(e) To have the free assistance of an interpreter if he cannot understand or speak the language used in court.

***Article 7***

**E+W+S+N.I.*No punishment without law***

1. No one shall be held guilty of any criminal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a criminal offence under national or international law at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the criminal offence was committed.**E+W+S+N.I.**
2. This Article shall not prejudice the trial and punishment of any person for any act or omission which, at the time when it was committed, was criminal according to the general principles of law recognised by civilised nations.**E+W+S+N.I.**

***Article 8***

**E+W+S+N.I.*Right to respect for private and family life***

1. Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.**E+W+S+N.I.**
2. There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.**E+W+S+N.I.**

***Article 9***

**E+W+S+N.I.*Freedom of thought, conscience and religion***

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.**E+W+S+N.I.**
2. Freedom to manifest one’s religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.**E+W+S+N.I.**

***Article 10***

**E+W+S+N.I.*Freedom of expression***

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. This Article shall not prevent States from requiring the licensing of broadcasting, television or cinema enterprises.**E+W+S+N.I.**
2. The exercise of these freedoms, since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary.**E+W+S+N.I.**

***Article 11***

**E+W+S+N.I.*Freedom of assembly and association***

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.**E+W+S+N.I.**
2. No restrictions shall be placed on the exercise of these rights other than such as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. This Article shall not prevent the imposition of lawful restrictions on the exercise of these rights by members of the armed forces, of the police or of the administration of the State.**E+W+S+N.I.**

***Article 12***

**E+W+S+N.I.*Right to marry***

Men and women of marriageable age have the right to marry and to found a family, according to the national laws governing the exercise of this right.

***Article 14***

**E+W+S+N.I.*Prohibition of discrimination***

The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.

**Protocol 1**

***Article 1***

**E+W+S+N.I.*Protection of property***

Every natural or legal person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions. No one shall be deprived of his possessions except in the public interest and subject to the conditions provided for by law and by the general principles of international law.

The preceding provisions shall not, however, in any way impair the right of a State to enforce such laws as it deems necessary to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest or to secure the payment of taxes or other contributions or penalties.

**Protocol 1**

***Article 2***

**E+W+S+N.I.*Right to education***

No person shall be denied the right to education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions.

**Protocol 1**

***Article***

***3* E+W+S+N.I.*Right to free elections***

The High Contracting Parties undertake to hold free elections at reasonable intervals by secret ballot, under conditions which will ensure the free expression of the opinion of the people in the choice of the legislature