#### **Quick Guide - Equality Analysis**

This document is a Quick guide to Equality Analysis. For comprehensive guidance and resources, please visit the EDU website:

#### [Conducting Equality Impact Analysis | Equality and Diversity Unit (ox.ac.uk)](https://edu.web.ox.ac.uk/conducting-equality-impact-analysis#collapse4925171)

* [Equality Impact Assessment Template with Guidance | Equality and Diversity Unit (ox.ac.uk)](https://edu.web.ox.ac.uk/equality-impact-assessment-template-with-guidance)

#### **What is Equality Analysis?**

Equality analysis is a process used to assess how university policies, procedures, and decisions (the ‘practice’) may affect different groups of students, staff, and the wider community, particularly those with protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, marriage/civil partnership, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation). It helps ensure that institutional decisions do not inadvertently discriminate against or disadvantage any group and that opportunities to promote equality are maximised.

#### **Why Is Equality Analysis Important?**

* Under the Equality Act 2010, specifically the **Public Sector Equality Duty**, the University must give consideration as to how its practices affect people, and how it can develop its practices to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity and/or foster good relations between people who share a particular protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
* It **promotes inclusion** by ensuring that all members of the university community, including students, staff, and visitors, are treated fairly and have equal access to opportunities.
* It **promotes inclusive decision-making** through understanding the potential impact of decisions, and adopting better, more inclusive practices that reflect the diversity of its community.
* Conducting equality analysis ensures legal compliance, minimises risk of discrimination claims, and strengthens the university’s commitment to diversity and inclusion.

#### **Benefits of Conducting Equality Analysis**

Equality analysis:

* **Prevents unintended discrimination** by identifying and addressing practicesthat may unintentionally disadvantage certain groups.
* **Enhances participation by improving access** to university resources and services by considering the needs of all groups, fostering a more inclusive environment.
* **Improves outcomes** for students and staff by ensuring diverse needs are considered in decision-making.
* **Supports University goals** by aligning with strategic objectives related to equality, diversity, and inclusion, enhancing the university’s reputation as an equitable institution.

#### **The Role of Equality Screening Tools and Equality Impact Assessments (EIA)**

An **Equality Screening Tool** is a preliminary assessment used to identify if a practice is likely to have an impact on equality. It helps decide whether a more detailed **Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)** is needed. If impacts are identified, a full EIA is conducted to examine how the decision may affect different groups and what adjustments can be made to mitigate any negative impacts. The primary purpose of equality analysis is to prevent or eliminate discrimination, Screening and/or EIA. It should happen before decisions are made and implemented *in order to* inform decision-making. It should not be retrospective or undertaken near the end of a process. Equality analysis should not be carried out retrospectively.

#### **Quick Guide - Conducting Equality Impact Assessments**

For in-depth guidance on completing an Equality Impact Assessment see here:[Equality Impact Assessment Template with Guidance | Equality and Diversity Unit (ox.ac.uk)](https://edu.web.ox.ac.uk/equality-impact-assessment-template-with-guidance)

**Step 1: Identify the overarching practice** Start by identifying the policy, practice, or decision (the ‘practice’) you are assessing. This could be a new policy, a procedure change, or an existing program. Ensure that all areas of impact—students, staff, and the wider university community—are considered.

**Step 2: Determine the Need for Equality Analysis** Use the **Equality Screening Tool** to quickly assess whether a full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is required. This involves a basic review to determine if the policy might affect individuals with protected characteristics (eg, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation,) or other relevant groups (e.g., part-time staff, parents, carers, socio-economic background).

If no impacts are found, the screening can conclude the process. If there are potential impacts, move to the full EIA.

**Step 3: The background to the practice, data and evidence** Briefly describe the background to the proposed or revised practice, collect relevant data and evidence to understand how different groups are affected by the practice. This can include:

* Demographic data on staff and students.
* Feedback from relevant stakeholders, such as consultations, surveys, or focus groups.
* Research on similar policies or decisions in other institutions.

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| Very high | Requires extensive analysis due to the highest likelihood of impact on equality | Strategic planning, allocation of significant financial or other resources, major organisational changes, construction or renovation projects, changes to conduct and disciplinary policies, health and safety, people-related strategies, EDI-related strategies or initiatives targeting under-representation |
| High to very high | Requires a thorough analysis to ensure impact on equality is fully assessed | Admissions policies, staff recruitment, development and promotion policies, major curriculum changes |
| Moderate to High | Requires a balanced level of analysis, reflecting a moderate-high impact | Minor curriculum changes, new or changed staff or student services, policy updates or revisions |
| Low to moderate | Requires a level of analysis sufficient to demonstrate that equality analysis has been carried out | Routine communications, facilities maintenance, procurement processes, administrative tasks, events planning |
| None | PSED does not apply, equality analysis is not required | Activities which do not have the potential for bias or discrimination to affect the development or implementation of practices |

**Step 4: Who will be affected?** Ensure that all areas of impact—students, staff, and the wider university community—are considered.

**Step 5 & 6: Assess the Impact** Analyse how the practice will impact different groups. Consider both **positive** and **negative** impacts for each group. Ask:

* Will the practice eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and/or foster good relations for any group?
* Will the practice disadvantage any group?
* Could any unintentional barriers be created?

**Step 7: Identify and Address Negative Impacts** If negative impacts are identified, consider ways to mitigate or eliminate them:

* **Adjust the Policy**: Modify aspects of the policy to reduce or remove barriers.
* **Provide Support**: Offer additional support or accommodations to affected groups.
* **Develop Alternative Approaches**: Explore other ways to achieve the same goals while minimising negative effects.

Summarise findings, outlining actions to address identified negative impacts.

**Step 8: Monitoring arrangements:** Determine how the development and implementation of the practice will be monitored and reported on, how regularly, by whom.

**Step 9: Implement and Review** After implementing the practice, monitor and review its impact to ensure it remains fair and inclusive. Collect ongoing feedback from affected groups and adjust the practice as needed, the following monitoring tools may be helpful:

* + Periodic surveys or focus groups
  + Data analysis on outcomes or usage of services
  + Regular policy reviews

**Step 10: Review and Sign Off** Ensure the equality analysis is reviewed and approved by relevant stakeholders or decision-makers.

**Step 11: Documentation** Document the entire process, including the data used, the impacts identified, and the actions taken to address them. Update records as practices develop or if unintended impacts arise. Keep records to demonstrate compliance with equality legislation and institutional commitments to diversity and inclusion.

**Best Practice for Effective Equality Analysis**

* **Involve stakeholders**: Engage with those affected to get direct feedback on potential impacts.
* **Focus on proportionality**: Match the depth of analysis to the significance of the policy’s impact—more complex policies require more thorough analysis.
* **Regular reviews**: Even after implementation, regularly review and update the equality analysis to address any emerging issues.