

Equality Monitoring – Frequently Asked Questions

Why do you want to know this information about me?

We do not want to intrude in your personal life. We want to ensure that all our employees have the opportunity to work in a safe and welcoming environment that allows them to fulfil their potential free from discrimination. We therefore need to measure diversity, from different communities of interest amongst our employees, so that we can be sure our policies, processes and systems are fair and equitable.

We also have a number of legal obligations, including consideration of the Equality Act 2010 and the named 'protected characteristics'.

Protected characteristics relate to the groups of individuals protected by law under the Equality Act 2010. All staff members will fall under at least one of the characteristics.

These are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity

Currently some areas of information regarding our workforce are very low (e.g. data about disability, the sexual orientation, and religion and belief of our workforce), so we are particularly keen to get more data on these and be able to understand and respond to any issues more effectively.

We will never report in a manner that allows the identification of an individual but we do understand if you prefer not to answer.

Why do I have to attach a label to myself?

Some of us may feel uncomfortable about being asked to label ourselves, claiming that what matters is people's experience, abilities and skills, which should be judged on equal terms for all staff.

This is true – it shouldn't matter.

However in our experience, people's ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, etc. do often affect how they are treated.

Evidence from monitoring often highlights these differences and can then act as a catalyst for positive change and for addressing intentional or unintentional bias.

What are the benefits?

Benefits to the University:

- it will enable us to gain a clear picture of our workforce which will help with the planning of activities and support structures and help us to respond to the diverse needs and expectations of the workforce
- it will enable us to cross-reference equality data with other staff data (e.g. recruitment and promotions) to provide an indication of whether some groups of staff are potentially being disadvantaged
- it sends a signal to staff and potential job applicants that we are committed to equality and to supporting a diverse workforce
- it allows us to satisfy our legal obligations in relation to monitoring and reporting requirements such as to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

Benefits to staff:

- enabling you to contribute to a pool of information that will help the University to respond to the diverse needs of staff, as more complete monitoring information enables us to make better judgements about issues that should be tackled.
- you have access to and control of your information
- this creates a safe environment for staff to define themselves and demonstrates to other staff and students that this is valued and welcomed

Do I have to provide this information?

No, you do not have to give this information, but it will greatly assist the University if you do.

For example, we will be able to verify whether or not the profile of our staff is sufficiently diverse and check that no groups of staff are experiencing unfair disadvantage.

We will be able to identify unfair outcomes and take appropriate action that may benefit you personally, benefit affected groups, and benefit the University as a whole.

How do I have to provide this information?

Equality information is kept centrally on our Human Resources (HR) database with your other employment information.

To update your information, log into MyView and from the Personal Details section, select Equality Data.

We will be reminding employees at regular intervals to check the information is correct and update anything that may have changed.

We need to keep the information centrally and be able to hold it in such a way that we can use it to analyse the effectiveness of all the University's functions, policies, processes and procedures.

If this information is on my HR record, how can I be sure it remains confidential?

We must stress that this information will be treated sensitively, with strict confidentiality and in accordance with the terms of data protection legislation. It can only be viewed by a small number of authorised people in HR.

When any reports are produced, they will only contain high level information and individuals will not be identifiable. Managers will not have access to your equality data. We encourage you to share appropriate information with your manager and/or HR, so that any workplace adjustments required can be agreed and put into place.

How do I check that the University will do what they say?

Equality and Diversity is one of the core objectives in the University Strategy 2015-2025.

All our workforce equality information will be published annually. We will also send out a communication telling you of the response to the data monitoring exercise and actions we will take. We will never publish any data where an individual may be identified.

Only aggregated information will be used for planning purposes

Who can I contact for more information?

If you have any questions or concerns about the equality data collection process you can contact Equality and Diversity by sending an email to equality@bradford.ac.uk