

BRACE self-assessment questionnaire for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) maturity

Introduction

The Birmingham, RAND and Cambridge Evaluation (BRACE) team aims to produce timely evidence that informs the design and delivery of health and care services. Within BRACE, we are committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) within our partnership and across our portfolio of rapid evaluation studies.

This commitment involves a continuous effort to develop and sustain the conditions for EDI within the BRACE team through our culture, relationships, practices, processes and competences. In support of this effort, we developed an EDI maturity self-assessment questionnaire for BRACE that aims to support the BRACE team to critically reflect on the way EDI is embedded in BRACE and how this can be improved.

The BRACE EDI maturity self-assessment questionnaire was developed as a reflective tool by BRACE based on six established EDI maturity models¹⁻⁶ and an iterative process of consolidation and BRACE-specific adaptation. It has not been validated for maturity measurement purposes.

Suggested citation: Spitters, S.J.I.M., Sidhu, M.S., Brennan, S., Dent, H. on behalf of NIHR BRACE (2025). The Birmingham, RAND, and Cambridge Evaluation (BRACE) self-assessment questionnaire for equality, diversity and inclusion maturity (v1.0 08 OCT 2025). Available at: [BRACE EDI maturity self assessment](#)

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EDI maturity questionnaire landing page

This self-assessment questionnaire aims to help BRACE better understand how well we are currently fostering equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) within the Centre and across the portfolio of rapid evaluations. We would like to gather the views of colleagues from across the BRACE collaboration including team members, advisory panel members, and partners. The questionnaire is based on established EDI maturity models¹⁻⁶, which provide a structured framework for evaluating current practices and progress in creating an equitable, diverse, and inclusive workplace. Through this questionnaire we hope to identify and prioritise areas for improvement.

You will be shown 18 statements related to equality, diversity and inclusion. Please rate each statement based on your experience in and/or your impression of the BRACE Centre. Most importantly, you will have the option to elaborate on your rating with examples, reflections, comments or actions. Your comments help us to understand your rating, so we can take appropriate action. At the end of the questionnaire, you are invited to share any other comments, concerns or ideas related to EDI in BRACE.

The questionnaire will be processed confidentially by the BRACE EDI lead. However, if you choose so, your comments may be shared with the team to facilitate a group discussion about EDI in BRACE, what issues are experienced currently, and what improvements could be implemented. Please indicate if you prefer for any comments not to be shared, for example, because they reveal your identity.

If you want to discuss any issues or reflections personally, you can contact the BRACE EDI lead, Sophie Spitters at s.j.i.m.spitters@bham.ac.uk

EDI maturity questionnaire template

The online BRACE self-assessment questionnaire for EDI maturity consists of 18 statements grouped across 7 domains. All statements are:

- **assessed based on a Likert-scale:** ‘Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree, Don’t know’;
- **accompanied by a reflective question:** ‘Please write down any comments, reflections, examples, or suggested actions: [text box]’; and
- **accompanied by a confidentiality question:** ‘Please tick if applicable: [tick box] I don't want my comments to be shared with the BRACE team’.

The questionnaire statements and domains are presented below:

BRACE culture

- 1 I feel comfortable being myself in BRACE
 - 2 I can share concerns and complaints about discriminatory attitudes, behaviours, and processes. I feel confident that these issues are taken seriously and addressed appropriately.
 - 3 Our team takes an inclusive approach. We respect, value and consider each other's perspectives and opinions. Diversity is seen as a strength.
 - 4 Input is actively sought from across our team (the core team, advisors and collaborators) to improve the organisation, culture and activities of BRACE
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Professional development

- 5 The BRACE core team and PPIE advisors are supported with training and development opportunities relevant to their goals and circumstances.
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Equality, diversity and inclusion training and development

- 6 I reflect on my attitudes and behaviours and how they might disadvantage people from underserved or marginalised groups
 - 7 I am encouraged and supported to learn about the impact of structural discrimination on health and care outcomes
 - 8 I know what Equality Impact Assessments are, and how to apply them in BRACE rapid evaluation projects
 - 9 I feel confident that I can work effectively with PPIE advisors and research participants from underserved or marginalised groups
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BRACE rapid evaluation projects

- 10 BRACE rapid evaluation projects consider and respond to inequalities in health and care that are present in our society
 - 11 I actively engage with people from underrepresented and marginalised groups in the design and delivery of BRACE rapid evaluation projects
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Leadership

- 12 We share and learn from EDI experiences across the team and the wider rapid evaluation community

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- 13 The BRACE Exec team visibly champions EDI. They are open to learning about EDI, and they demonstrate accountability for improvements in equality, diversity and inclusion in BRACE
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Partnerships and Engagement

- 14 Relationships with BRACE advisors and BRACE collaborators are established and sustained through continued engagement and dialogue.
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- 15 In BRACE, we appreciate and recognise the value of patient and public involvement (PPIE), and of involving people from marginalised and underserved groups
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BRACE policies and practices

- 16 In BRACE, we use culturally sensitive and best-practice strategies to attract and recruit diverse people into the BRACE core team and onto the BRACE rapid advisory panels.
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- 17 In BRACE, equality, diversity, and inclusion goes above and beyond compliance with legal policies. I am aware of the EDI initiatives in BRACE and how they attempt to help colleagues from across the BRACE team (the core team, advisors, and collaborators)
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- 18 Equality, diversity, and inclusion is central to the values, culture and organisation of BRACE. There is an EDI strategy accompanied by clear plans, actions, and timeframes to improve EDI.
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Methodological development

The BRACE EDI maturity self-assessment questionnaire was developed as a reflective tool to explore collectively with the BRACE team how well EDI is embedded within BRACE and what areas require improvement. The methodological process for developing the questionnaire followed four phases:

- 1) **Rapid search for EDI maturity models:** six EDI maturity models¹⁻⁶ were identified through a non-systematic rapid search of academic and grey literature. The search aimed to identify established examples of EDI maturity models for health research, education and public sector settings. They included a mix of validated and unvalidated maturity models.
- 2) **EDI maturity model familiarisation:** reviewing, comparing and contrasting statements (n=97) across maturity models.

- 3) **Developing EDI maturity statements:** combining, rephrasing and adapting statements to the BRACE context (n=35) and grouping them in EDI maturity domains (n=7).
- 4) **Selecting and refining EDI maturity statements:** BRACE team members with EDI-related expertise (n=5) were asked to select up to 15 statements to include in the BRACE EDI maturity questionnaire; to identify what statements should be excluded; and to propose any additional statements they saw necessary. They were also asked to comment on the clarity of statements and to suggest edits. Following an iterative discursive process with this group the BRACE EDI maturity self-assessment statements (n=18) were finalised.

The BRACE self-assessment questionnaire for EDI maturity is a reflective tool that has not been validated for maturity measurement purposes.

References for EDI maturity models

The six EDI maturity models cited below have informed the development of the BRACE EDI maturity self-assessment questionnaire.

1. Nishii, L. H. The Benefits of Climate for Inclusion for Gender-Diverse Groups. *Academy of Management Journal* 56, 1754–1774 (2013).
2. Jansen, W. S., Otten, S., van der Zee, K. I. & Jans, L. Inclusion: Conceptualization and measurement. *Eur J Soc Psychol* 44, 370–385 (2014).
3. Drew Harris, Oonagh McPhillips, David Gilbride, Doncha O’Sullivan & Catherine Egan. *Our Public Service 2020: Promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*. (2021).
4. SafetyNet. *SafetyNet EDI Maturity Model*. <https://psrc-network.nihr.ac.uk/inclusion-and-involvement/equity-diversity-and-inclusion/safetynet-edi-maturity-model/> (2024).
5. Cartwright, N. *Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Data Maturity Framework: A Change Model for Higher Education Institutions*. (2023).
6. Faluyi, D. et al. NIHR Race Equality Framework: development of a tool for addressing racial equality in public involvement. *Res Involv Engagem* 10, 44 (2024).