

Equal Opportunities Monitoring

Monitoring is recommended to eliminate all forms of discrimination whether intentional or unintentional. As well as ensuring that there is no present discrimination within an organisation, the results can be used to influence future decisions on policies and procedures.

What is Equal Opportunities Monitoring?

Equal opportunities monitoring simply means getting hard evidence about representation in your organisation to support your equality work.

There are basic questions that you should ask when ascertaining the profile of any specific group. These questions will ask about specific individual's gender, ethnicity, disability, age, faith and sexual orientation.

Depending on the reason for gathering information and who you are monitoring, there may be other relevant questions to ask. For example if the monitoring is being done as part of your recruitment and selection policy you may also wish to ask about where the applicant saw the position advertised or if it in relation to coaching or volunteering you may wish to ask how long the individual has been involved.

Why Monitor?

There can be several purposes for monitoring. All relate to analysing patterns and understanding how effective your practice is, be that in relation to delivering sporting activities or training and deploying coaches or your own staffing.

Governing Bodies and sports organisations can benefit hugely from knowing the demographic profile of their sport or organisation. This information can not only be used to identify gaps in representation, but to help you to ensure that provision is appropriate to your current and future audiences.

Developing a clear picture of who currently participates in your sport or is involved with your

organisation will also enable you to clearly monitor the impact of policies, programmes and procedures in relation to equality.

In relation to employment within the sports sector and individual organisations equality policies monitoring is also incredibly important as a tool to ensure that legislative requirements are met. In the longer term, with the advent of the Single Equality Bill the monitoring of all participants may be required by all organisations either directly or indirectly in receipt of public monies.

How to Monitor?

The most accurate way to monitor is by identifying everyone you wish to audit (the population) and getting them all to respond to your monitoring form. However, partial audits can be acceptable if it would be impossible to survey everyone and the sample size is significant enough.

Sampling can either be random or representative, however random sampling could lead to skewing of the data. Representative samples are designed to give a true reflection of the population. Your sample size will depend on the level of accuracy you want and the type of survey that you are doing.

You may not get a 100% response rate, but compare the response rate to the sample size. You may also not get a response for every question, so response rates for individual questions should be taken into consideration. Researchers recommend a minimum 30% response rate for there to be confidence in the analysis (unless the sample size is very small). If



your response rate is relatively low you need to ensure that you have confidence in the surveys robustness and the consequent findings.

It is quite likely that some people may not understand why you want to know potentially private information, so to encourage as many people as possible to respond the following measures are recommended;

- Ensure anonymity of respondents where possible.
- Be clear that the forms are completely voluntary and individuals do not have to complete every section if they are not happy to do so.

- Be clear that forms are submitted in the strictest confidence, and that individual responses will not be published (in accordance with the Data Protection Act).
- Be clear as to why you want the information and what the information will be used for.
- Make sure the survey/ questionnaire is clear and easy to complete
- Make sure it's easy to respond e.g. use email or provide pre paid envelopes.

What to Monitor

Equal opportunities monitoring is one way of demonstrating your organisation's commitment to equality. Ensuring that your sport or activity is as accessible to all as possible and that all are being treated fairly.

Your monitoring form should be asking the individual completing it for the following information;

Age – It is unlawful for an individual's age to be the cause of less favourable treatment in the workplace or any training provision.

Gender – Women, men and transgender people should not be treated unfairly because of their gender, because they are married or because they are raising a family.

Disability – Those with a physical or mental impairment have specific rights protecting against discrimination. Employers and service providers are therefore obliged to make appropriate adjustments where necessary.

Race – Regardless of where people are born or their colour they have a right to be treated fairly. Anything different could be deemed unlawful.

Religion and belief – An individual's religion or belief should not impact on their right to be treated fairly at work or while accessing public services.

Sexual Orientation – Whether people are gay, lesbian, bisexual or straight should not put them at a disadvantage. Further information on monitoring for sexual orientation is available on the Stonewall website. www.stonewall.org.uk

For further information on equality and discrimination in relation to the 6 different strands outlined above please visit the Equality and Human Rights Commission website.

www.equalityandhumanrights.com

The form itself should be clear and easy to complete. You may also wish to include some sort of statement advising that completion of the form or sections of the form of it is not

compulsory and that all responses are anonymous. If the response rate is low for particular questions you should also consider whether it is appropriate to report on them.

Sample equal opportunities monitoring forms can be found on the Equality Standard website www.equalitystandard.org within the section on the foundation level of the standard.

Please note: specific information on equality monitoring for Scottish and Northern Irish sports organisations is available from the respective home country Sports Council and can also be found on the Equality Standard website.

Monitoring children under 16

Monitoring children can be just as important as auditing adults for many sports and clubs. However it presents its own sensitivities. You should always ensure that parental or guardian approval for the monitoring is gained, and in most circumstances it will be appropriate for the parent or guardian to complete the form on behalf of the child. Children under 16 should never be asked about their sexual orientation.

What to do with the Information

How you use your equal opportunities monitoring data is the important bit.

In the first instance you may wish to benchmark your organisation against national population statistics and may choose to use tools like census data.

In the longer term you should also be looking at how you can use the findings of your survey to better understand and address participation, employment, training and leadership trends in your sports.

You may wish to conduct research to better understand the profile of your organisation and the reasons for this. Or you may wish to initiate positive action to address this as part of your wider commitment to equality.

When to Monitor

Establishing plans and mechanisms for regular monitoring (for most organisations annually is suitable) will ensure that you can track trends in the data and identify whether the activities you are undertaking are ensuring that your organisation is becoming more representative of the whole community,

Be clear that the forms are completely voluntary; they are in the strictest confidence, and that individual responses will not be published

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