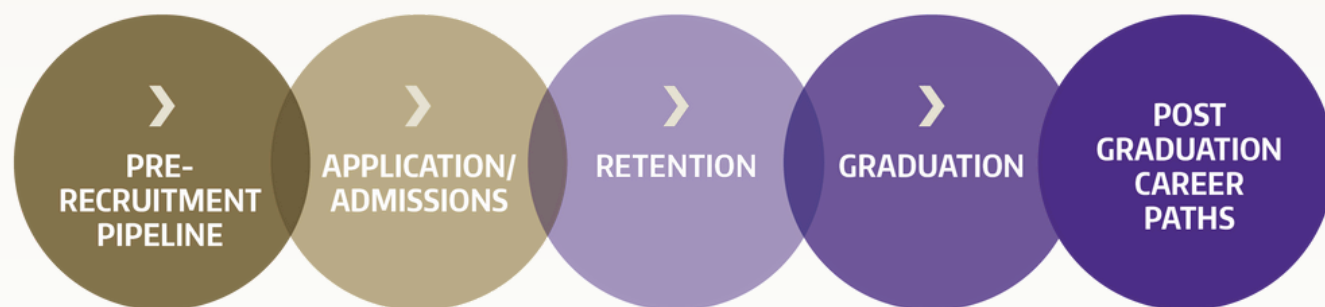


# The Graduate Excellence Progress Tool

## AN OVERVIEW & FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



The University of Washington's Graduate School works to create more inclusive systems in graduate education. We collaborate with faculty, staff, students, and administrators across the Bothell, Tacoma and Seattle campuses of the UW to transform individual and institutional barriers of exclusion. As a part of this mission, our office is developing an Excellence Progress Tool for departments and programs to empirically and systematically assess the support systems in place for all graduate students, particularly those with diverse or underrepresented perspectives and experiences. Through robust analyses and implementation of the theories, practices, and data to build cultures of inclusive excellence, as well as engagement in difficult dialogues within hierarchical systems, the UW Graduate School aims to equip students, staff and faculty with best practices and strategies to develop and sustain a lens of inclusive excellence in their departments and beyond.

### What is the Excellence Progress (EP) Tool?

The Excellence Progress (EP) Tool is designed to assist units/departments in pinpointing strengths as well as areas for growth in efforts to create an inclusive environment for students at every stage of their graduate career, from pre-recruitment to post-graduation. The tool provides both assessment of and resources to improve each stage of the graduate student life cycle.

The EP Tool is used to review and assess a program, department, or unit's efforts and strategies to build a culture of inclusive excellence in graduate education as well as existing policies, practices, and written materials. The EP Tool includes questions about recruitment, retention, and support for all students, particularly those with underrepresented and diverse perspectives as well as sections on curricula, faculty demographics, and program culture.

#### After completing each stage of the assessment, participants receive:

1. A score for each stage of the graduate student lifecycle, sorted into following phases based on their commitment to the principles and practices for fostering a culture of inclusive excellence: phase 1 (beginning) to phase 2 (evolving), phase 3 (transforming), and phase 4 (innovating).
2. Resources and support that are targeted at the necessary areas of growth for each stage. The EP Tool will help administrators, faculty, and staff reflect and make structural change through both qualitative and quantitative assessment, and cutting-edge research and resources for change. We initially adapted the EP Tool from a rubric developed by UW Human Resources that focuses on staff inclusion and access.

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## Who should use the EP Tool?

This tool is intended for administrators, faculty and staff invested in developing and fostering a culture of inclusive excellence in the recruitment, retention, and graduation of graduate students, particularly for those with diverse perspectives and experiences. The Excellence Progress (EP) Tool can be used by faculty, staff, or anyone in your department or unit who has the decision-making power to influence and/or enact change.

We encourage each unit undertaking the EP Tool to designate a team of approximately three people (to avoid singular viewpoints). The team should be comprised of a mixed group of faculty and staff who are familiar with practices, policies, and procedures related to graduate student education at UW (both inside and outside their unit), and best practices, policies, and procedures for building and sustaining a culture of inclusive excellence.

### We suggest that the team be comprised of:

1. the Department Chair or equivalent;
2. the staff Graduate Program Administrator (or equivalent); and
3. the faculty Graduate Program Coordinator/Director of Graduate Studies (or equivalent).

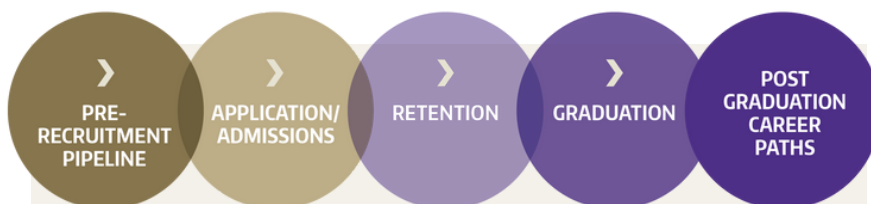
We also recommend that teams confer with graduate students throughout the process, and perhaps even include a graduate student as a part of their team.

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## How should the EP Tool be used?

The Graduate Excellence Progress (EP) Tool is a Qualtrics survey, with results and internal and external resources displayed for each stage of the graduate student life cycle. We suggest that teams engage with the tool using the following procedure:

### 1. PRE-EP TOOL: Meet as a team to:

- align on definitions of inclusive excellence as well as positionality when filling out the EP Tool (i.e. who “department leadership” refers to in questions)
- divide up the data-gathering tasks for the survey (you might want to have one team member in charge of collecting data)
- create a schedule to complete assessment, including team meetings after each section completion deadline

**2. EP TOOL: Individually complete** the appropriate section of the Excellence Progress (EP) Tool.

**3. EP TOOL: Analyze results** at team meetings to reflect on similarities and differences between results. Discuss and plan how to implement resources provided.

**4. POST-EP TOOL: Once the entire EP Tool is complete, generate a list of priorities for change.**

**5. POST-EP TOOL: Work with leadership** in your department to develop and implement next steps.

**6. POST-EP TOOL: Share your results** — we suggest that you share your completed assessment with faculty, staff, and graduate students in your unit. You might want to consider hosting a department/unit-wide listening session or town hall to process the results. Your Excellence Progress (EP) Tool should be a step — but not the only step — on your journey towards equitable changemaking. Revisit this EP Tool annually or every other year to evaluate your progress and reassess the effectiveness of your equity-focused programming and strategies.

### QUESTIONS? > Please contact [gradoej@uw.edu](mailto:gradoej@uw.edu)

*The EP Tool and its connected resources were developed by Ralina L. Joseph, Maxine Wright, Cheyenne Evans, and data analysts Emily Beylerian, Kari Brothers, and LizAnne Ngo. EP Tool support is offered by the Office of Graduate Student Success.*

