


**STAGE 4**
**PARTICIPATIVE DIALOGUE**
**Purpose**

A crucial part of implementing the TEFCE Toolbox is to engage in a participative discussion with university staff, students and community representatives on the findings of the mapping report. The aim of this process is to first validate the findings of the report (or supplement the report with new findings) and then to critically reflect on the strengths, areas for improvement and the opportunities and threats to making such improvements. This stage of the TEFCE Toolbox differentiates it most from other, primarily indicator-based and desk-based assessment methods and should result in greater ownership of the process by all stakeholders.

**Timing**

Month 5 of the TEFCE Toolbox implementation.

**Tool: SLIPDOT analysis**

**The fourth and final tool provides a customised ‘SWOT’ analysis to facilitate self-reflection discussions (via workshops or focus groups) between all stakeholders about the results of the implementation of the entire TEFCE Toolbox process. Its purpose is to validate the conclusions, acknowledge achievements and define areas for improvements.**

As a tool to structure such discussions, the ‘SLIPDOT analysis’ was developed by the TEFCE project team. Following the structure of a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats), the SLIPDOT analysis replaces ‘Weaknesses’ by two categories: ‘Lower Intensity’ and ‘Potential for Development’. It also re-frames Opportunities and Threats as not only being external, but also as encompassing elements that are *internal* to the university, but that are outside the control of community-engaged practitioners (meaning that they mostly refer to university management).


**TOOL 4**
**SLIPDOT ANALYSIS**

Areas of Strength	Areas of Lower Intensity	Areas with Potential for Development
Areas where the university is doing particularly well in terms of community engagement.	Areas of community engagement that are not highly developed at the university (due to it not yet being a priority, due to limited capacity or other reasons).	Areas of community engagement that the university could realistically improve in the future.
Opportunities		Threats
<u>Internal</u> : e.g. Level of support among leadership and academic staff		<u>Internal</u> : e.g. Level of support among leadership and academic staff
<u>External</u> : e.g. Level of community support; in line with national policy; availability of funds and programmes (at the national and European level)		<u>External</u> : e.g. Level of community support; in line with national policy; availability of funds and programmes (at the national and European level)

## Instructions

The self-reflection is carried out in a participative form through workshop-style discussions between university management, staff, students and community representatives and/or through focus groups.

**Step 1** in the self-reflection stage is therefore to discuss the ‘mapping report’ (or ‘background report’) drafted in the previous stage with participants of the meeting. This stage is usually carried out dimension by dimension, with meeting participants having the opportunity to provide comments or additions to the report. The aim of the meeting is to confirm whether the report findings (and proposed levels of engagement/institutional heatmap) are fair and accurate.

**Step 2** in the self-reflection stage is to carry out the SLIPDOT analysis. The SLIPDOT can be carried out for each dimension or for clusters of dimensions (e.g. teaching/learning and research; service/knowledge exchange and students), with overall conclusions feeding into a single SLIPDOT analysis. Using the template below, each university can organise a workshop with university management, staff, students and community representatives to discuss the mapping report. Alternatively, such discussions can be held with focus groups by the University Community Engagement Team. The areas with potential for development and the identified opportunities can provide the recommendations for improvements and future plans.

## Illustrative example

Areas of <b>Strength</b>	Areas of <b>Lower Intensity</b>	Areas with <b>Potential for Development</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community-based learning is integrated into study programmes at several departments.</li> <li>There are examples throughout the university of communities’ and citizens’ inclusion in research.</li> <li>...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The primary thematic focus of the university is technology and industry. This means that engagement with other groups in order to address broader societal needs has not been as high a priority so far.</li> <li>...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The university could consolidate and better interlink existing community-engagement initiatives.</li> <li>The university could adopt more bottom-up level engagement with external communities with fewer resources.</li> <li>....</li> </ul>
Opportunities		Threats
<p><i>Internal:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The university is currently in a strategic planning phase for the period until 2030, which provides an opportunity to strengthen the position of community engagement.</li> <li>...</li> </ul>		<p><i>Internal:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The university might decide to focus only on societal impact through engaging with business and industry, rather than harder-to-reach groups.</li> <li>....</li> </ul>
<p><i>External:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The societal impact of research and higher education generally is becoming increasingly prominent in policy debates. Prioritising community engagement is a pathway towards achieving such an impact.</li> <li>...</li> </ul>		<p><i>External:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The pressure of ensuring adequate funding for universities presents an obstacle to community engagement that does not have a clear funding stream.</li> <li>...</li> </ul>

## Template

A template for the SLIPDOT analysis is available in the Appendix to this publication.