Student Survey Policy

Policy Code: SS2013

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Purpose

Student surveys provide the University with important feedback to assist in the planning, delivery and improvement of services available to students across the University.

The objectives of this policy are to ensure that student surveys have a clearly defined purpose, are appropriately planned, designed and implemented and the acquired data achieves that purpose, thereby enabling:

- coordination of the timing and quantity of student surveys, thus managing the student survey load;
- avoidance of excessive student surveying through the provision of shared data and survey analysis;
- quality assurance on the questioning, sampling, delivery, data collection, privacy and storage of surveys;
- identification of surveys where Human Research Ethics approval is required.

Scope

This procedure applies to all Federation University Australia staff distributing a new or existing general student survey to Federation University Australia students studying at Federation University Australia campuses.

A general student survey is a student survey where the purpose is to generate feedback on the provision of a service provided to students. This includes student surveys conducted by third parties, including benchmarking surveys, on behalf of Federation University Australia. It is applicable to all surveys where the survey is distributed to the student body or a cohort of the student body, including by post, email, social media, learning management system, face-to-face or distributed by hand-out.

Student surveys which are primarily governed by other University policies and/or procedures include:

- surveys where the purpose is to evaluate teaching and learning practices, which is primarily governed by the Student Evaluation of Learning and Teaching Policy and Student Evaluation of Learning and Teaching Procedure;
- Research Surveys requiring Human Research Ethics approval, which is primarily governed by the Applying for Human Research Ethics Procedure.

This procedure does not apply to student surveys:
• that are not distributed to students, such as optional feedback forms provided in a static location, e.g. on a 
service counter;
• that are conducted as part of the Australian Government QILT survey suite;
• that are marketing surveys targeted at prospective students, i.e. students that are not actively studying nor have 
accepted an offer to study at a Federation University campus

Legislative Context

• Federation University Australia Act 2010
• Information Privacy Act 2000 (Victoria)
• Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007)

Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Survey Developer</td>
<td>The Federation University Australia staff member responsible for the delivery of the student survey.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Survey Coordinator</td>
<td>The Federation University Australia staff member responsible for approving the delivery of the student survey.</td>
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<tr>
<td>research survey</td>
<td>A student survey that is deemed to require ethical approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>general student survey</td>
<td>A student survey with the purpose of either evaluating the performance of student related services or for planning the future delivery of student related services.</td>
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<tr>
<td>QILT</td>
<td>Department of Education and Training funded Quality Indicators of Learning and Teaching</td>
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Policy Statement

Federation University Australia is committed to obtaining feedback from students to continually improve the provision of its services.

This policy provides a set of principles to ensure student surveys are conducted in an ethical manner, run to a coordinated schedule and follow best practices in their design and delivery.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Demonstrated by:</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| The purpose and outcomes of a student survey are clearly defined | • ensuring survey purposes and outcomes are articulated before the survey is designed  
  • ensuring surveys are approved by the Survey Coordinator before the survey is designed |
| Student surveys are conducted in an ethical manner        | • identifying surveys that require Human Research Ethics Committee approval and are governed by the **Applying for Human Research Ethics Procedure**.  
  • ensuring survey questions are approved by the Survey Coordinator before the survey is conducted |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Demonstrated by:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The quantity and scheduling of student surveys is coordinated to prevent student survey fatigue and reduce the impact on response rates of core university surveys.</td>
<td>• coordinating the scheduling of student surveys across the academic year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student surveys request data that is otherwise unavailable from previous survey analysis or data sources</td>
<td>• reviewing previously available survey data</td>
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<tr>
<td>Survey questions align with the purpose and outcomes of the survey</td>
<td>• providing <em>Federation University Australia Student Survey Quality Guidelines</em> to the Survey Developer</td>
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<tr>
<td>The survey preface is consistent across all general student surveys and maintains a standard set of introductory information</td>
<td>• providing the document <em>Mandatory Elements of a Federation University Australia General Student Survey</em> to the Survey Developer</td>
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<td>The survey and question design are consistent with best practices</td>
<td>• providing <em>Federation University Australia Student Survey Quality Guidelines</em> to the Survey Developer</td>
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<td>Survey data is collected, managed and stored according to data classification, management and privacy principles</td>
<td>• ensuring survey questions are approved by the Survey Coordinator before the survey is conducted</td>
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<tr>
<td>• de-identifying the survey data to ensure anonymity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• classifying the data in accordance with the Federation University Data Classification and Usage Policy and Procedure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• storing the data in accordance with Federation University Data Storage Policy and Procedure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey analysis is distributed to all identified stakeholders</td>
<td>• distributing the survey analysis to all identified stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• sending the survey analysis to the Survey Coordinator for collation</td>
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</table>

**Supporting Documents**

- [Student Survey Procedure](#)
- Mandatory Elements of a Federation University Australia General Student Survey
- Federation University Australia Student Survey Quality Guidelines
- [Student Evaluation of Learning and Teaching Policy](#)
- [Ethical Conduct of Research Policy](#)
- [Applying for Human Research Ethics Procedure](#)
- Master Data Management Policy
- [Data Classification and Usage Procedure](#)
- [Data Storage Procedure](#)
- Student Survey Proposal Form
- [Information Privacy Policy](#)
- [Information Privacy Procedure](#)
Responsibility

- DVC Learning and Quality *(as the Approval Authority)* responsible for monitoring the implementation, outcomes and scheduled review of this procedure
- Director of Strategic Planning *(as the Policy Sponsor)* responsible for maintaining the content of this procedure as delegated by the DVC Learning and Quality
- Federation University Survey Coordinator is the person responsible for the administration support for the maintenance of this procedure as directed by the Director of Strategic Planning

Promulgation

The [Student Survey Policy](#) will be communicated throughout the University via:

1. Announcement Notice via FedNews website and on the ‘Recently Approved Documents’ page on the ‘Policies, Procedures and Forms @ the University’ website to alert the University-wide community of the approved Procedure;
2. Distribution of e-mails to University staff;
3. Notification to Faculties.

Implementation

The [Student Survey Policy](#) will be implemented throughout the University via:

1. An Announcement Notice via FedNews website and on the ‘Recently Approved Documents’ page on the ‘Policies, Procedures and Forms @ the University’ website to alert the University-wide community of the approved Procedure;
2. Training sessions for existing survey owners;
3. Instructional video.