

# Student Survey Procedure

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<b>Approval authority:</b>	Chief Learner Experience Officer
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## Purpose

Student Surveys provide the University with important feedback for planning, delivering and improving our services. This procedure ensures that surveys feedback distributed under Federation University branding and/or sent from Federation University email addresses or profiles, follow the appropriate planning, design and implementation steps to enable:

- coordination of the timing and quantity of surveys based on the target respondents, thereby managing the survey load of particular groups and avoiding survey fatigue;
- avoidance of excessive 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 student survey using Federation University Australia branding, or sent from a Federation University email address or profile, to: past, current, potential students, graduates and alumni.

This includes surveys conducted by third parties, including benchmarking surveys, on behalf of Federation University Australia. It is applicable to all surveys, including where the survey is distributed by post, email, social media, learning management system, face-to-face or distributed by hand-out.

Surveys which are also governed by other University policies and/or procedures include:

- Surveys which are also 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 Procedure \(Higher Education\)](#);
- *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 surveys:

- that are not actively distributed, 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 conducted as part of the Nation-wide Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire (PREQ);
- that are part of the Annual Progress Reports and SEPP (please refer to the HDR Candidature Management Policy)

## Legislative Context

- [Federation University Australia Act 2010](#)
- [Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 \(Victoria\)](#)
- [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research \(2018\)](#)

## Definitions

Term	Definition
Survey Developer	The Federation University Australia staff member responsible for the delivery of the Survey.
Student Survey Coordinator	The Federation University Australia staff member responsible for approving the delivery of the Survey.
Research survey	A Survey that is deemed to require ethical approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee
General Survey	A Survey with the purpose of either evaluating the performance of student related services or for planning the future delivery of student related services.
HREC	Human Research Ethics Committee

QILT	Department of Education and Training funded Quality Indicators of Learning and Teaching
PREQ	Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire
Marketing Survey	These include surveys targeted at graduates and alumni as well as prospective students, i.e. students that are not actively studying nor have accepted an offer to study at a Federation University campus.

## Actions

### 1. Proposing a new Survey

	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	STEPS
A.	Determine the purpose, outcomes, data and timing of the survey	Survey Developer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify the purpose and required outcomes of the survey.</li> <li>2. Identify the data required to achieve the outcomes of the survey.</li> <li>3. Identify the date that the outcomes are required by.</li> </ol>
B.	Engage stakeholders	Survey Developer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify other possible stakeholders, i.e. other units / teams within the university who may: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. have existing survey analysis that could satisfy the outcomes of the proposed survey;</li> <li>b. have similar interests in the survey analysis or may benefit from receiving the completed survey analysis.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Consult with the identified stakeholders who may provide input to the questions required to achieve shared outcomes.</li> </ol>
C.	Complete Survey Proposal Form	Survey Developer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete all questions on the Survey Proposal Form.</li> <li>2. Submit the Survey Proposal Form by emailing it to <a href="mailto:surveys@federation.edu.au">surveys@federation.edu.au</a></li> </ol>

### 2. Approving the student survey proposal

	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	STEPS
A.	Review the Survey Proposal Form	Student Survey Coordinator	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review the proposed purpose, outcomes, data and timing of the survey with the Survey Developer.</li> <li>2. Review the survey proposal against the guiding questions for a <i>Research Survey</i> below:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Is the data being collected expressly for a purpose other than maintaining standards or identifying areas for improvement?</li> <li>b. Is the data being collected for the purpose of research? See the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007 for further information.</li> <li>c. Is the data being collected and analysed linked to individuals?</li> <li>d. Does the survey potentially infringe the privacy or professional reputation of participants, providers or the University?</li> <li>e. Does the survey involve targeted analysis of data involving minority/ vulnerable groups whose data is to be separated out of that data collected or analysed as part of the main QA/evaluation activity?</li> <li>f. Will the results be submitted for publication, included in a student Thesis or publicised external to the University?</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Consider the survey as classified as a <i>Research Survey</i> if the answer to any of the above questions in (2) are in the affirmative.</li> </ol>

B.	Provide feedback on the proposed survey.	Student Survey Coordinator	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Advise the Survey Developer if the survey is considered a <i>Research Survey</i>. Suggest how the survey could be developed as a <i>general Survey</i>, and/or advise the Survey Developer to contact the Human Research Ethics Committee for approval before proceeding with the survey.</li> <li>2. Identify if survey analysis exists that could satisfy the outcomes of the proposed survey. If so, discuss with the Survey Developer the opportunity to utilise this analysis to either eliminate or reduce the need for data collection.</li> <li>3. Suggest alternative survey dates to the Survey Developer where the proposed survey timeline conflicts with core university surveys, e.g. SELT surveys and QILT surveys is proposed for identified times of high student workload, or if the prospective cohort already has surveys scheduled for the proposed time (e.g. other prospective students campaigns, or research surveys targeting the same or similar cohorts).</li> <li>4. Advise the Survey Developer if the proposed survey is likely to gain approval to proceed, and where approval is likely to be denied, provide reasons why the survey may be declined.</li> <li>5. Provide the Survey Developer with the opportunity to amend and resubmit the Survey Proposal Form where any changes are suggested to the proposal.</li> </ol>
C.	Amend the survey proposal	Survey Developer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Make amendments to the Survey Proposal Form if required as advised by the</li> </ol>

			<p>Federation University Survey Coordinator.</p> <p>2. Submit the amended Survey Proposal Form to <a href="mailto:surveys@federation.edu.au">surveys@federation.edu.au</a></p>
D.	Approve or decline the survey proposal	Student Survey Coordinator	<p>1. Determine if the proposal to conduct the survey will be approved or declined. To approve the proposal, the following items must be provided to the Federation University Survey Coordinator's satisfaction:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. If the survey classifies as a research survey, HREC permission has been sought and granted.</li> <li>b. The outcomes of the survey should not readily be satisfied with data already available.</li> <li>c. The implementation phase of the survey should not impinge on the delivery of the University's core surveys (e.g. SELT, QILT) or other surveys and activities planned during or surrounding the proposed timeframe.</li> </ol> <p>2. Advise the Survey Developer in writing of the outcome of the application via email:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Where the survey is approved, provide any restrictions that accompany the approval. (e.g. timeframe for conducting the survey.)</li> <li>b. Where the survey is declined, provide all reasons for declining the survey and provide recommended changes, if any, which can be made in order for the survey proposal to achieve approval status.</li> </ol>

### 3. Reviewing the student survey proposal outcome

	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	STEPS
A.	Review the survey proposal outcome	Survey Developer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review the approval decision provided by the Federation University Survey Coordinator.</li> <li>2. Proceed to ACTION 4 if approval has been given.</li> </ol>
B.	Re-submit the Survey Approval Form	Survey Developer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Make the recommended changes and resubmit the Survey Application Form and survey questions where the survey approval is declined and recommendations have been made for changes.</li> <li>2. Procedure recommences at ACTION 2.</li> </ol>
C.	Appeal the approval decision	Survey Developer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Request that the decision is reviewed by the Director of Student Services and Registrar where a survey is still declined following the resubmission and the Survey Developer wishes to escalate.</li> <li>2. Provide to the Director of Student Services and Registrar a copy of the <i>Survey Proposal Form</i>, reasons why the survey was declined and reasons for appealing the decision.</li> </ol>
D.	Determine final decision on appeal	Director of Student Services and Registrar	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review the appeal, the reasons why the survey was declined and the reasons for appealing the decision.</li> <li>2. Make a final determination to approve or decline the survey proposal.</li> <li>3. Communicate the decision to the Survey Developer and Federation University Survey Coordinator.</li> </ol>

### 4. Developing the Student Survey

	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	STEPS
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A.	Determine the method of collection and distribution	Survey Developer	1. Determine the medium in which the survey questions will be developed and the method of distribution. (Please note that Qualtrics is the University's primary licensed, supported and endorsed survey distribution tool. For further information about Qualtrics please refer to the attached <a href="#">link</a> .)
B.	Identify the target recipients.	Survey Developer	1. Identify the target recipients for the survey. (e.g. Students commencing in a Mathematics program). 2. Determine how the contact data for the survey recipients will be obtained. (e.g. existing Campus Solutions query, Student HQ etc.)
C.	Include the mandatory survey elements	Survey Developer	1. Access the document <i>Mandatory elements of a Federation University Australia Survey</i> and include all required text in the survey.
D.	Develop survey questions.	Survey Developer	1. Determine the survey questions by aligning each with the proposed purpose and outcomes of the survey. 2. Develop the questions in line with the <i>Federation University Australia Survey Quality Guidelines</i> . 3. Produce a full draft copy of the survey.

## 5. Approving the Survey

	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	STEPS
A.	Submit a draft copy of the survey for review	Survey Developer	1. Send a draft copy of the survey to the Federation University Survey Coordinator at <a href="mailto:surveys@federation.edu.au">surveys@federation.edu.au</a>
B.	Approve or decline the survey	Student Survey Coordinator	1. Determine if the survey will be approved or declined for distribution. To approve the survey, the following items



			<p>must be provided to the Student Survey Coordinator's satisfaction:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The survey must include the mandatory text items from the <i>Mandatory elements of a Federation University Australia Survey</i></li> <li>b. The questions must align with the purpose and outcomes of the survey.</li> <li>c. The questions should be of sound structure and where appropriate, follow the conventions outlined in the <i>Federation University Australia Survey Quality Guidelines</i>.</li> <li>d. The survey should be of appropriate length to achieve its purpose and outcomes.</li> </ol> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Advise the Survey Developer in writing of the outcome of the approval via email: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Where the survey is approved, provide any restrictions that accompany the approval. (E.g. changes to questions.)</li> <li>b. Where the survey is declined, provide all reasons for declining the survey and provide recommended changes, if any, which can be made in order for the survey to achieve approval status.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
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## 6. Reviewing the Survey approval outcome

	<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>STEPS</b>
A.	Review the survey approval outcome	Survey Developer	1. Review the approval decision provided by the Student Survey Coordinator

B.	Re-submit a copy of the survey for review	Survey Developer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Make the recommended changes and resubmit the survey questions where the survey is declined and recommendations have been made for changes.</li> <li>2. Procedure recommences at ACTION 5B.</li> </ol>
C.	Appeal the approval decision	Survey Developer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Request that the decision is reviewed by the Director of Student Services and Registrar where a survey is still declined following the resubmission and the Survey Developer wishes to escalate.</li> <li>2. Provide to the Director of Student Services and Registrar a copy of the survey questions, reasons why the survey was declined and reasons for appealing the decision.</li> </ol>
D.	Determine final decision on appeal	Director of Student Services and Registrar	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review the appeal, the reasons why the survey was declined and the reasons for appealing the decision.</li> <li>2. Make a final determination to approve or decline the survey questions.</li> <li>3. Communicate the decision to the Survey Developer and Student Survey Coordinator.</li> </ol>

## 7. Generating the survey distribution list

	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	STEPS
A.	Define the characteristics of the students the survey is to be distributed to	Survey Developer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Put together a comprehensive list of the characteristics of the students the survey is targeted to. E.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all first year HN5 students</li> <li>• Bachelor of Business students studying at Mt Helen</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Communicate these characteristics to the Student Survey Coordinator</li> </ol>

B.	Create distribution list	Student Survey Coordinator	1. Use the characteristics supplied by the Survey Developer to create a distribution list.
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## 8. Conducting the survey

	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	STEPS
A.	Test the survey	Survey Developer	1. Send a trial version to a colleague or colleagues to review the format and typographic elements of the survey.
B.	Open and distribute the survey	Student Survey Coordinator	1. Send the survey to the distribution list, using the invitation text supplied by the Survey Developer.
C.	Send reminders to complete the survey	Student Survey Coordinator	1. Schedule reminders on the dates specified, and content supplied, by the Survey Developer. 2. Reminders should be sent 7-10 days after the survey has opened, and if required, within 2-3 days of the survey closing. No more than 2 reminders may be sent to students.
D.	Close the survey	Student Survey Coordinator	1. Close the survey on the closing date and time. 2. Accept no more responses after the closing date and time.

## 9. Collating and storing the survey data

	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	STEPS
A.	De-identify the survey data	Survey Developer with support from the Student Surveys Coordinator	1. Where the survey responses can be traced back to the individual student, e.g. by a name or email address. The data will be de-identified by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extracting the survey data from the survey tool.</li> </ol>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Deleting or separating identifying data from the extracted data.</li> <li>c. Saving the extract without the identifying data.</li> <li>d. Deleting or destroying the original collected data within the survey instrument.</li> </ul>
B.	Classify the survey data	Survey Developer	1. Classify the data in accordance with the Federation University Data Classification and Usage Policy and Procedure.
C.	Store the data	Survey Developer	1. Store the data in accordance with Federation University Data Storage Policy and Procedure.

## 10. Analysing the survey data

	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	STEPS
A.	Analyse the survey data	Survey Developer	1. Perform the analysis on the data, matching the analysis to the defined purpose of the survey.
B.	Distribute the analysis to stakeholders	Survey Developer	1. Distribute the analysis to all identified stakeholders, including providing a copy to the Student Survey Coordinator at <a href="mailto:surveys@federation.edu.au">surveys@federation.edu.au</a>

## 11. Principles to ensure student surveys are conducted in an ethical manner, run to a coordinated schedule and follow best practices.

	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	STEPS
A.	The purpose and outcomes of a student survey are clearly defined	DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ensuring survey purposes and outcomes are articulated before the survey is designed</li> <li>2. ensuring surveys are approved by the Survey Coordinator before the survey is designed</li> </ul>

B.	Student surveys are conducted in an ethical manner	DO	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. identifying surveys that require Human Research Ethics Committee approval and ensuring that approval has been granted by the by the Human Research Ethics Committee before approving a survey</li> <li>2. ensuring survey questions are approved by the Survey Coordinator before the survey is conducted</li> </ol>
C.	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.	DO	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. coordinating the scheduling of student surveys across the year</li> </ol>
D.	Student surveys request data that is otherwise unavailable from previous survey analysis or data sources	DO	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. reviewing previously available survey data</li> </ol>
E.	Survey questions align with the purpose and outcomes of the survey	DO	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. providing <i>Federation University Australia Survey Quality Guidelines</i> to the Survey Developer</li> <li>2. ensuring survey questions are approved by the Survey Coordinator before the survey is conducted</li> </ol>
F.	The survey preface is consistent across all general student surveys and maintains a standard set of introductory information	DO	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. providing the document <i>Mandatory Elements of a Federation University Australia Survey</i> to the Survey Developer</li> </ol>
G.	The survey and question design are consistent with best practices	DO	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. providing <i>Federation University Australia Survey Quality Guidelines</i> to the Survey Developer</li> <li>2. ensuring survey questions are approved by the Survey Coordinator before the survey is conducted</li> </ol>
H.	Survey data is collected, managed and stored according to data classification, management and privacy principles	DO	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. having the Student Survey Team collate, store and maintain student contact information for survey distribution</li> </ol>

			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. ensuring survey questions are approved by the Survey Coordinator before the survey is conducted</li> <li>3. de-identifying the survey data to ensure anonymity</li> <li>4. classifying the data in accordance with the Federation University Data Classification and Usage Policy and Procedure</li> <li>5. storing the data in accordance with Federation University Data Storage Policy and Procedure</li> </ol>
I.	Survey analysis is distributed to all identified stakeholders	DO	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. distributing the survey analysis to all identified stakeholders</li> <li>2. sending the survey analysis to the Survey Coordinator for collation</li> </ol>

## Supporting Documents

- [Students and Support for Students Policy](#)
- Mandatory Elements of a Federation University Australia Survey
- Federation University Australia Survey Quality Guidelines
- [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007 \(updated 2018\)](#)
- Ethical Conduct of Research Policy
- Applying for Human Research Ethics Procedure
- Information Technology Services Operations Manual - Master Data Management, Data Classification and Usage, and Data Storage
- [Information Privacy Procedure](#)

### Forms.

- [Mandatory elements of a Federation University Australia Survey](#) (DOCX 219.9kb)
- [Survey Proposal Form \(Right Click, Save Link As and Open Form in Adobe Reader\)](#) (PDF 173.5kb)

## Responsibility

- Chief Learner Experience Officer (*as the Approval Authority*) responsible for monitoring the implementation, outcomes and scheduled review of this procedure.
- Director, Retention, Innovation and Student Experience (*as the Document Owner*) responsible for maintaining the content of this procedure as delegated by the Approval Authority.
- Student Survey Coordinator is the person responsible for the administration support for the maintenance of this procedure as directed by the University Registrar.

## Promulgation

The [Student Survey Procedure](#) will be communicated 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. Distribution of e-mails to University staff;
3. Notification to Schools

## Implementation

The [Student Survey Procedure](#) 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.