

## POLICY TEMPLATE



### Policy on Administrative Student Surveys

Category:

Approval: *Vice Principals Operations Committee*

Responsibility: *Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic)*

Date: *Date initially approved: August 31, 2015*  
*Date of last revision:*

### ***Definitions:***

Administrative student surveys: are student surveys undertaken by and/or for administrative units to inform services, programs and planning; or by and/or for academic units for non-academic (i.e. non-faculty research and non-course/curriculum assessment) purposes.

Course/curriculum assessment: is assessment led by faculty members and/or faculty members serving in administrative capacities focused on the student learning experience including USAT, SEOTEQ and blended learning assessment; and assessment for the purposes of academic program review and accreditation.

Faculty research: is disciplinary-based research undertaken by faculty members as part of their research program. Faculty research also includes research undertaken by graduate and undergraduate students as a component of their academic program or research activity, when such research is approved by the faculty supervisor/professor.

GREB: is the General Research Ethics Board.

HSREB: is the Health Sciences Research Ethics Board.

OIRP: is the Office of Institutional Research and Planning.

REBs: are unit-specific research ethics boards.

Survey fatigue: is a decline in survey response rate due to repeated requests for survey participation and/or prior completion of other survey(s).

## ***Purpose/Reason for Policy:***

This policy is intended to facilitate efficient, effective and high quality student survey operations at Queen's and protect student survey responses as a university planning resource.

## ***Scope of this Policy:***

This policy governs several aspects of administrative student surveys at Queen's as defined above.

This policy is distinct from those followed by unit research ethics boards, the General Research Ethics Board and the Health Sciences Research Ethics Board, each of which approves individual survey projects; this policy addresses issues associated with the administration of multiple administrative student surveys.

For clarity, this policy does not apply to student surveys undertaken as a component of faculty research; student subject/participant pools or student contact lists maintained by academic units and used to construct focus groups or similar student response pools for the purposes of academic or curricular assessment; or to applicant or alumni surveys.

This policy is focused on (a) avoiding content duplication, sample overlap, survey fatigue and scheduling conflicts among student surveys, and (b) ensuring that information about student surveys planned and underway is available to all survey researchers to inform their own planning and scheduling activities.

## ***Policy Statement:***

Administrative student surveys provide critical information supporting decision making, assessment and planning at Queen's. Administrative student surveys must conform to certain criteria and must follow certain procedures to ensure the integrity and sustainability of student survey operations across the University.

## ***Responsibilities:***

### Overall Authority

1. This policy falls under the authority of the Provost and Vice Principal (Academic) who delegates operational and administrative responsibilities, as specified below, to the Office of Institutional Research and Planning.

### Student Survey Sample Generation

2. The Office of Institutional Research and Planning has sole authority to generate student samples for administrative student surveys where such samples are obtained from central student records system(s).

*Rationale: Student sample overlap can only be prevented when all samples are generated using a single point of contact.*

### Survey Platform Usage

3. All administrative student surveys (excluding those undertaken by external providers) are expected to utilize Queen's survey software (currently FluidSurveys) unless the researcher(s) and the Office of Institutional Research and Planning agree that special circumstances warrant use of another system.

*Rationale: FluidSurveys is branded as a Queen's system and its use ensures students recognize the authenticity and legitimacy of survey invitations and experience consistent and professional survey administration.*

### Information Sharing re: Administrative Student Surveys

4. Units and/or researchers will inform the Office of Institutional Research and Planning of their intention to undertake administrative student surveys and their sample requirements as soon as possible in the planning process.

*Rationale: Information sharing well in advance of fieldwork provides the foundation for coordinating multiple student surveys and ensuring against conflict, to the benefit of all survey researchers.*

### The Office of Institutional Research and Planning

5. OIRP will develop and maintain a web site containing
  - a. an up-to-date multi-year master schedule of student surveys indicating the investigator/unit, project status, population to be surveyed, gross sample size and scheduled/anticipated fieldwork dates based on information generated by (4) above and (7) below;
  - b. a description of the FluidSurveys system and system documentation/user support information (and/or links to same);
  - c. this policy and procedures document;
  - d. information about the survey services provided by the Office as in (6) below.
6. OIRP will provide support to individuals undertaking administrative student surveys and (when requested) faculty members undertaking student surveys including sample design and sample size determination, unique sample draws, fieldwork scheduling support, information on best practices in response rate improvement, survey-to-central system data linkage and periodic FluidSurveys training.
7. The Office of Institutional Research and Planning will work with unit REBs, GREB and HSREB to develop and implement mechanisms to share information about student surveys (to inform (5a) and (6) above). Information flows from OIRP to the Boards and from the Boards to OIRP will be explored, recognizing the confidentiality of certain types of research information.

*Rationale: Administrative student survey investigators (and, though not governed by this policy, faculty researchers as well) will benefit from survey services provided by OIRP and from an awareness of other survey activity that may affect their own research.*

8. When generating samples for administrative student surveys, OIRP will consider minimum net sample requirements, expected response rate and relationship to other surveys underway and will discuss these issues with the survey researcher.
9. OIRP will lead an ongoing consultative process with Queen’s administrative units to investigate consolidation and/or integration of student surveys and the development of new multi-purpose surveys; to share best practices; and to monitor the student survey environment at the University.

Dispute Resolution

10. When student survey scheduling or other fieldwork issues cannot be resolved through discussion between OIRP and individuals undertaking administrative student surveys, the Provost and Vice Principal (Academic) will make a decision with respect to the survey(s) in question.

<b>Contact Officer</b>	<i>Chris Conway</i>
<b>Date for Next Review</b>	<i>Year / Month / Day</i>
<b>Related Policies, Procedures and Guidelines</b>	<i>n/a</i>
<b>Policies Superseded by This Policy</b>	<i>n/a</i>