

Further Information on the StudentSurvey.ie

1. Introduction

StudentSurvey.ie, whose full name is the Irish Survey of Student Engagement, aims to ask students at different stages of their time in higher education about their experience there. Responses from students within each institution are used to inform improvement activities within that institution. National datasets are also made to inform national policy discussions.

Your participation in the survey is entirely voluntary, although participating institutions will actively encourage their students to take part. Please see <https://studentsurvey.ie/blog/studentsurveyie-list-participating-institutions> for a list of the participating institutions.

Should you require further information on how your personal data is processed, please refer to the StudentSurvey.ie privacy notice, which is located here <https://studentsurvey.ie/privacy-statement>.

2. Management of StudentSurvey.ie

StudentSurvey.ie is managed as a national collaboration of higher education institutions, national agencies and the Union of Students in Ireland. The specific organisations involved are the Higher Education Authority (HEA), Irish Universities Association (IUA), Technological University Authority (TUA) and AMLE, formerly the Union of Students in Ireland (USI).

The HEA is the statutory planning and policy development body for higher education and research in Ireland. The HEA Act 1971 states in section 11 that: “An institution of higher education shall supply to An tÚdarás all such information relative to the institution as An tÚdarás may require for the purpose of performing its functions”. Section 13 states that “An tÚdarás may institute and conduct studies on such problems of higher education and research as it considers appropriate and may publish reports of such studies.” What this means is that the HEA is legally allowed to request data be shared for the purpose of StudentSurvey.ie.

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) Act 2022 mandates regular student surveys to gather insights into the student experience in higher education. These surveys are designed to

inform improvements in teaching, learning, and assessment, as well as to understand student perspectives on broader higher education policies.

The HEA continues to review and update its data protection policy and best practice on an ongoing basis in order to ensure full compliance with data protection legislation. It is required to process certain personal data in order to fulfil its purpose and comply with its legal obligations. Here is the address, phone number and website address for the HEA:

Higher Education Authority, 3, Shelbourne Buildings, Crampton Ave., Ballsbridge, Dublin, D04 C2Y6. Tel: +353 01 231 7100 Email: info@hea.ie

3. Survey Company

The survey is conducted by an external survey company that has been contracted by the HEA in order to conduct the survey. The company currently contracted to conduct the survey is a company called i-graduate, which is based in the United Kingdom.

4. How the StudentSurvey.ie works

The HEA regularly collects a range of data from institutions it works with. Students in institutions that take part in StudentSurvey.ie are presented at registration with the HEA data collection notice which explicitly names StudentSurvey.ie.

Some non-sensitive personal background data, collected by the institutions for the purposes of (among others) sharing with the HEA for the 'Student Record System', is sent by the institutions directly to the survey company.

Students who fall into the categories being included in the survey (students in first year, final year, postgraduate students) are invited to take part through an email sent by the survey company on behalf of your institution. Participation is voluntary but is encouraged by your institution. Students who choose to participate in the survey may click on a personalised link from the email to a purpose-built website. Alternatively, you may access the survey through a general link on the StudentSurvey.ie website and enter some identifier information. These steps are taken to ensure each student's personal background data are matched to their answers on the survey. Students may then complete the survey.

Responses are saved regularly. This allows you to complete part of the survey at one time and complete it at another time. It also means your answers are taken into consideration even if you do not finish the survey.

The Survey Company undertakes the survey and removes identifiable information (name, student number and the date of birth is limited to year only) and assigns each student with a unique ID. The Survey Company then sends the data in this format to the StudentSurvey.ie for further quality checks before it is returned to the Survey Company, who in turn make it available securely to the individual institution of each student.

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5. Questions and Complaints

If you have a questions, comment please contact the StudentSurvey.ie Team at info@studentsurvey.ie. You can also contact your local student union or your local institution representative (please see www.studentsurvey.ie to find out who that is).

Changes to this Information Booklet We will update this Information Booklet from time to time. Please visit this page periodically for updates. Updated July 2025.