

Policy 8720: Selkirk Management of Surveys

A. PURPOSE

Given the increased emphasis on planning, accountability and evidence-based decision making in recent years, there has been a substantial growth in the number of research projects and surveys conducted at Selkirk College. While the practice of hearing from our community and making informed decisions is welcomed, there is also a need for coordination to ensure:

- Appropriate timing of research or surveys;
- Research or survey methodology and design follow best practices in order to produce results that are reliable and meaningful;
- Data collection efforts are not duplicated;
- Maximizing response rates by preventing redundancy and avoiding survey fatigue;
- That all surveying at Selkirk College is in compliance with the:
 - *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act of British Columbia (BC)*;
 - Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans; and
- A suitable survey tool is used. Data must be stored on servers located in Canada.
- Effective communication and use of research or survey results.

B. SCOPE / LIMITS

This policy applies to any broad sampling or census of members of the College community at Selkirk that involves direct requests to individuals for information. Surveys covered by this policy include those administered by the College, through research projects within or outside the College or by outside agencies.

Certain surveys of a small scale and focused purpose are exempted from this Policy. Examples of exempted surveys are provided in the Definitions section of this policy.

The mandate of the Institutional Research Office is to:

- a) Receive and evaluate applications requesting approval to survey.
- b) Ensure the design and methodology is appropriate for the survey's purposes and conforms to accepted survey practices.
- c) Ensure the survey and methodology is in compliance with Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans.
- d) Ensure the survey and methodology is in compliance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act of BC*. Some non-licensed survey software is not in compliance with this Act.

Policies and Procedures

- e) Ensure the appropriateness of proposed dissemination of survey results; monitor implementation.
- f) Ensure that, if required, surveys have received Research Ethics Committee approval.
- g) Maintain a record of surveys administered to various College community target groups.
- h) Assess the effectiveness of approved surveys once they are completed; e.g. track response rates, review outcome of new survey methodologies, etc.
- i) Consider and recommend procedural improvements for the administration of surveys.

C. PRINCIPLES

1. To best serve the College community and to meet its accountability needs, Selkirk requires the ability to collect reliable data and information from its applicants, students, alumni, employees and other members of the College community.
2. The College has an obligation to protect those members of the College community who are potentially subject to surveys from burdensome and unnecessary requests for information.
3. The College has an obligation to ensure that surveys are conducted in an ethical manner and protect the personal information in compliance with Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act of BC and Policy 8700 Research Involving Human Participants.
4. The College has an obligation to ensure that the personal information provided through surveys is collected, used, and stored in compliance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act of BC.

D. DEFINITIONS

1. **Policy Exempt Surveys:** Surveys exempt from this policy are those that are of a small scale such as a poll taken within a single class and evaluations of teaching and those surveys not involving the College community. Surveys of its own members carried out by a labour union or a student society are also excluded but only where they do not use Institutional Research and Planning resources.

Third party contracted survey projects will be exempt provided Institutional Research is aware of the survey for the purpose of the annual survey calendar and if resources do not offer data storage within Canada, a disclaimer is provided to the invited participant that data will be stored outside of Canada.

The term policy-exempted survey does not imply that a survey initiative is exempt from the requirements of Policy 8700: Research Involving Human Participants and the Freedom of Information and Protective of Privacy Act of BC.

Policies and Procedures

2. **Surveys:** Surveys include all data and information gathering techniques either in paper, oral, online, telephone or other formats.
3. **College Community (General):** For the purpose of this policy, College Community includes all current, prospective, and past employees or students as well as members of various College committees, visitors, contractors, their employees and agents and any other persons on Selkirk College premises and at Selkirk sponsored and sanctioned face-to-face or online activities and events, both domestically and abroad.

E. OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

1. Selkirk Policies:
 - a) Policy 8700: Research Involving Human Participants
2. Legislation:
 - a) *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act of BC (FIPPA)*
 - b) Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS)

Responsibility, Recommendation and Approval Dates

Executive Responsibility: Vice President Students & Advancement

Administrative Responsibility: Manager of Institutional Research & Planning

Recommended by Policy Review Committee: 2020-09-16

Recommended/Approved by Education Council: N/A

Approved by President: 2020-10-02

Linkage to Board Policy: E40, EL 100