



# Guidelines for Surveys Proponents

## University of Otago

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## 1. Surveys Approval Process

This section describes the steps involved in getting a survey project approved by the Surveys Coordination Group.

### Advice for Survey Proponents

While it is not a formal requirement for survey proponents to read the accompanying document titled **Advice for Survey Proponents** it is strongly recommended that applicants make themselves familiar with its content, especially if they are not familiar with the process of managing surveys in the context of the University of Otago. It is advisable to read the **Advice for Survey Proponents** document as early as possible in the application process as it should assist proponents with their application.

### The Survey Proposal Form

All surveys proponents are required to fill a **Survey Approval Form** to have their application considered by the Surveys Coordination Group (SCG). The form should be filled in by the principal investigator and signed by the relevant Head of Department before submission to the SCG. In cases where the Head of Department is the principal investigator the form will need to be signed by an appropriate senior staff member in the department.

Some of the questions included in the form are compulsory while others are not (compulsory questions are marked with an asterisk). While it is recommended to fill an application as thoroughly as possible it is acknowledged that in some cases applicants may not be able to answer all the questions included in the form. When an applicant is unable to answer a non-compulsory question it should be indicated clearly on the form. Applications will need to provide answers to all the compulsory questions to be considered by the SCG for approval.

### The Surveys Coordination Group

The Surveys Coordination Group draws its members from the Quality Advancement Unit, Alumni & Development Office, Funding and Planning Office, HEDC & the Library it is chaired by the Director, Quality Advancement.

The Surveys Co-ordination Group will consider the following matters in deciding whether to approve a survey and register it in the Surveys Schedule:

- Whether or not the information sought may be obtained by other means, such as adding items to a previously approved survey.
- The stated purpose of the survey and its alignment with the University's strategic direction and associated imperatives
- Whether or not the information sought already exists (with reference to the Surveys Database)
- The proposed survey questions and instrument (with reference to form, content, length and formatting)
- The proposed timing of the survey (with reference to the scheduling of core and previously approved surveys so that surveys targeting the same population are not run at the same time or in close proximity, as well as taking into account significant academic and administrative events such as graduation, examinations, course approval)

- The target population (with reference to the number of existing or previously approved survey proposals to prevent over-surveying)
- The intended mode of delivery
- The communication plan with regards to sharing of survey findings

## 2. Approval

### Obtaining Approval

The SCG will meet ten times per year to consider applications. Meetings will be held on the third Wednesday of every month except January and December. To be considered applications will have to have been submitted prior to 5:00pm Thursday of the week preceding a meeting. Dates of the SCG meetings and cut-off dates for submitting applications can be found on the SCG webpage. Urgent applications which require a faster turnaround should be addressed to the Surveys and Project Co-ordinator, Romain Miroso, [romain.miroso@otago.ac.nz](mailto:romain.miroso@otago.ac.nz)

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application via email within two working days of the SCG meeting taking place. Following a meeting of the SCG the group will grant approval or initiate further communication with applicants. No application will be declined without an initial attempt to negotiate modification of the project with the surveys proponents.

An application can be declined if after negotiation between the SCG and the survey proponents no agreement can be reached. If an application is declined by the SCG survey proponents should not proceed with their survey.

### If the application is declined

If an application is declined following negotiation with the SCG survey proponents have the possibility to place an appeal of the decision to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic & International). The decision of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic & International) is final.

## 3. After Approval

### Surveys Schedule

All surveys approved by the SCG will be registered in the Survey Schedule. The Survey Schedule will list all the past SCG approved surveys as well as the SCG-approved surveys for the following two years to assist survey proponents with their planning. Survey proponents of surveys not covered by the scope of the policy (for example staff surveys) may also choose to voluntarily register their survey on the Survey Schedule.

The information contained in the Schedule will be made available to the University community on the SCG webpage.

Survey Name	Timing	Frequency	Target Population	Size of Population	Contact	Response Rate	Other Information
College Residents Survey	01 May – 31 May 2013	Annual	All College Residents	4000	bernard.morrison@otago.ac.nz	TBC	<<link to pdf report>>

Additional information (in addition to the fields presented above) on projects may also be stored in a non-publicly accessible part of the Survey Schedule and can be requested by contacting directly the Surveys and Project Co-ordinator or the contact person for the project.

No Survey data will be directly held in the Survey Schedule.

### Survey Proponents' Responsibilities

- Surveys proponents are responsible to ensure that information provided by them is accurate and up-to-date.
- Survey proponents are responsible to ensure that all necessary approvals have been obtained by them. These may include Ethics Approval, Departmental/Divisional Approval, Approval to use contact details...
- Survey proponents are expected to report the final response rate and or number of responses of the survey to the SCG.

The SCG would welcome receiving as much information as possible on the outcomes of the survey, including its findings but providing this information is not a requirement for survey proponents. There is no requirement to release copies of the instrument used or of data collected.

### Modify an Approved Project

It is acknowledged that in some situations the parameters of a project may have to be modified after having already received approval from the SCG. In this case it is the responsibility of the survey proponents to seek advice from the SCG on the process to follow. If the modifications are substantial, particularly if the timing or target population has changed, proponents may have to get their project re-approved by the SCG. The SCG reserves itself the right to decline or modify a previously approved project if substantial modifications are proposed.

## 4. Who to contact

If you seek general advice about the policy or the Surveys Coordination Group please contact any member of the SCG or the generic email address for the SCG:

[surveys.coordination@otago.ac.nz](mailto:surveys.coordination@otago.ac.nz)

Contact details of the Survey Coordination Group members can be found on the SCG webpage.

For enquiries regarding the status of a particular application, questions about the Proposal Form and any other questions please contact:

Romain Miroso  
Surveys and Projects Coordinator

Quality Advancement Unit  
[romain.mirosa@otago.ac.nz](mailto:romain.mirosa@otago.ac.nz)

or

Bernard Morrison  
Survey Data and Research Analyst  
[bernard.morrison@otago.ac.nz](mailto:bernard.morrison@otago.ac.nz)

## **5. Other relevant policies**

Human Ethics Committee webpage

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/committees/otago000864.html>

Email Policy

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago003150.html>

Student email and Digital Screen communication Policy

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago045034.html>

## **6. FAQs**

To be updated in the coming months.

# Survey Approval Process

