



Respondent Anonymity Information for HEDS Climate Surveys

This information sheet provides you with detailed information about the steps that the [Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium \(HEDS\)](#) takes to ensure your anonymity when you take one of our campus climate surveys.

How We Work with Your Institution

Your college or university has contracted with HEDS to administer a campus climate survey on your campus. Your institution sent us your contact information so that we can invite you to take and/or grant you access to the survey through our survey engine, [Qualtrics](#). This contact information allows us to make sure that each survey response is unique to the person invited to take the survey. Your institution *does not* have access to the survey instrument or data in Qualtrics. Once HEDS provides anonymous data to your institution, it is your institution's responsibility to practice confidentiality with the responses. We expect the contacts with whom we work to seek institutional review board (IRB) approval for a climate survey administration and for the procedures by which they will handle the data with appropriate care.

Information Connected to Your Name and Email Address

The HEDS staff can check a Qualtrics history of delivered emails and survey access if you received an email message with a unique link to the survey. If you have a question about whether your invitation email was successfully delivered or whether your unique link was used to start or complete the survey (e.g., you want to confirm that you already took the survey), we can check this history to determine the status of your email invitation and access to the survey. We only share this information with our survey contact at your institution if we have documented permission from you. Please note that this information on being contacted to take the survey and whether you have started or completed the survey is completely independent of your *responses* to the survey. No one has the ability to see survey responses in connection to names or email addresses. We activate the Qualtrics "[Anonymize Response](#)" feature, which removes personal identifiers (names, email addresses, IP addresses, and unique links or logins to survey) from *all* responses, both partial and complete. Therefore, your response is anonymous even to the HEDS staff.

Questions on Demographic Information and Reporting

Our campus climate surveys ask you for demographic information so that we can do analyses that will help your institution get a better picture of how an individual's characteristics are related to their experiences. Like all other questions in the survey, you may choose to skip the demographic questions. HEDS staff will take the additional steps of removing data for particular questions or collapsing some categories for the data file that we share with your institution. For instance, on the question asking whether people reported an incident of discrimination, harassment, or assault to campus officials, few survey takers indicate that they have made a formal report, so this may be identifiable information. Therefore, we do not include it in the data file. Another example: we collapse response options for sexual orientation into broader categories (heterosexual and not heterosexual) for the file we share with your institution.

Open-Ended Responses

HEDS staff will read all text responses for open-ended survey questions to ensure that no one accused of discrimination, harassment, or assault is identified by name or by information detailed enough to identify them. We also ensure that no one self-identified by name. We review and redact responses accordingly before sharing the text entries with your institution. We do not include open-ended responses in the same file with the rest of the survey results.

Questions or Concerns

Please contact Nicole Seidler (nicole.seidler@hed consortium.org 765-361-6381) if you have any questions about how HEDS ensures respondent anonymity for our climate surveys.