Langara College Survey Guidelines

1. Context and Purpose

Langara College relies on surveys to collect feedback from students, employees, and other key partners to inform planning, evaluate programs and services, and support continuous improvement. These guidelines establish a consistent and coordinated approach to survey activity across the College. They ensure that surveys are ethical, privacy-compliant, and scheduled to minimize duplication and survey fatigue. Oversight for survey coordination, registration, and approval rests with the Office of Integrated Planning and Accountability (IPA).

2. Definitions

- Survey: Any activity designed to collect information or feedback from individuals through questionnaires or similar instruments, regardless of delivery method (e.g., online, paper, telephone, or in-person).
- Authorized Survey: A survey that has been reviewed and registered with IPA.
- Survey Administrator: The department, faculty, or external organization responsible for conducting a survey.
- Exempt Survey: A survey that does not require IPA review (see Section 5).
- Exempt Administrator: A unit or external body that is permitted, by institutional arrangement, to conduct certain surveys without full IPA review; though such surveys still require registration or notification to IPA (see Section 5).
- Populations: These guidelines apply to surveys targeting **prospects, applicants, students (current/formerly enrolled), alumni, faculty, staff/employees**, and in some cases key external partners (vendors, community partners) when surveying these constituencies.

3. Oversight and Coordination

IPA is responsible for:

- Reviewing and approving all institutional surveys of students and employees, except those specifically exempted.
- Maintaining a survey calendar and registry to coordinate timing and minimize overlap.
- Providing methodological advice and ensuring compliance with ethics, privacy, and accessibility requirements.
- Managing access to the College's enterprise survey platform and related tools.

IPA may provide survey design, deployment, and analysis support services on request and as required.

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All surveys targeting the defined populations (prospects, applicants, students, alumni, faculty, staff) – whether internal or external – must be registered with IPA before data collection begins, unless fully exempt (see Section 5). Some surveys will be exempt from approval but still require notification and registration to ensure coordination.

4. Relationship to Research Ethics

Surveys conducted for research purposes involving human participants are subject to review by the Langara Research Ethics Board (LREB) in accordance with Policy B5007 Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans and the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS 2). These requirements supersede the College Survey Guidelines.

- Institutional surveys that are administrative, evaluative, or operational in nature may be exempt from LREB review but still require registration and coordination with IPA.
- Research requiring LREB approval must obtain ethics clearance before proceeding. Once LREB approval is granted, survey administrators are encouraged (but not required) to register their survey with IPA for coordination and support. IPA approval is not required for research projects that have LREB approval.

If in doubt, contact LREB for ethics requirements and IPA for coordination guidance.

5. Exempt Surveys

Certain small-scale, routine, or operational surveys are exempt from full IPA review.

Exempt surveys fall into two categories:

1) *Fully exempt*: Short, localized surveys used for immediate service improvement or learning feedback within a certain context.

   These do **not** require IPA notification, registration, or approval. There is no need to contact or coordinate with IPA (unless support services are required).

   Examples include:

   - Feedback forms, polls, or evaluations conducted within a course, event, or service point (e.g., workshop evaluations, internal polls within a unit, bookstore or cafeteria feedback forms).
   - Surveys conducted for internal operational or academic governance purposes to inform program, curriculum, or departmental decision-making (e.g., soliciting Program Advisory Committee feedback, departmental consultation on policy or curriculum changes).
   - Curriculum and learning assessment surveys conducted by the Teaching and Curriculum Development Centre (TCDC).
   - Surveys conducted by labour unions, student associations, or employee groups for their internal purposes (e.g., CUPE, LFA, LSU).

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2) ***Exempt from Approval (Registration Required)***: Surveys that are aligned with approved institutional activities or external requirements, and which do not require formal IPA approval, but **must be registered or notified to IPA** to ensure coordination and reduce overlap.

Examples include:

- Surveys conducted as part of approved external reporting or accreditation requirements (e.g., BC Student Outcomes, CBIE International Student Survey, Nursing accreditation surveys).
- Employee engagement or service review surveys administered by People & Culture.
- Academic review and quality assurance surveys conducted in support of Academic Excellence.
- Prospective student surveys conducted by Langara Global for recruitment or communication purposes.

Survey administrators who are planning *exempt from approval* surveys are requested to notify IPA of survey topic, population, and timing to minimize overlap and ensure consistent communication with the College community (see Survey Proposal Form).

6. Roles and Responsibilities

- Integrated Planning and Accountability (IPA): Provides central oversight, survey registry, methodological advice, coordination, and administration of enterprise survey tools.
- Survey Administrator: Defines purpose and audience, prepares instruments, secures necessary approvals, collects and manages data responsibly, and shares results with IPA (in some cases).
- Langara Research Ethics Board (LREB): Reviews applied research surveys involving human participants; advises on ethics exemptions.
- Information Technology: Manages access control and platform maintenance.
- Manager, Privacy and Records Management: Advises on compliance with FIPPA and institutional privacy standards as needed.

7. Survey Approval and Registration Procedure

When planning a survey, the following steps should be taken:

1. Determine Review Requirements: Consult IPA by email (ipa@langara.ca) early in the planning process to confirm whether the survey requires:
   a. LREB review, IPA approval, IPA registration only, or exemption under Section 5.
   b. Any support that may be required from IPA on survey design, development, deployment, or analysis.

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2. Submit Survey Proposal: Complete the [Survey Proposal Form](#) at least 30 days before the planned launch date. Provide: purpose, target population and timing, draft instrument, data plan, and results-sharing plan.

3. Review by IPA: IPA will review the proposal for alignment with institutional priorities, duplication with existing surveys, appropriate design, and compliance with privacy, accessibility, and ethical standards.

4. Approval and Registration: Upon approval, IPA notifies requestor and registers the survey in the institutional survey calendar and confirms authorized access to the College's survey platform if needed.

8. Access to the Enterprise Survey Tool

Requests for new accounts for the College's survey tool must be submitted to IPA by email (ipa@langara.ca). IPA will assess requests based on purpose, security, and alignment with institutional needs, and will coordinate with IT to set up accounts for approved users. Approval must come from the Director, Integrated Planning and Accountability, or the Director's designate.

9. Data Governance, Management, and Reporting

Survey data are institutional information assets and must be collected, stored, and managed in compliance with FIPPA and the College's data governance program. Even if fully exempt, survey administrators must:

- Limit collection to necessary information only.
- De-identify results before analysis or sharing.
- Store data on secure College-approved systems.
- Dispose of identifiable data after the retention period.
- In some cases: Share key findings or reports with IPA for institutional records.

Contact datagov@langara.ca with questions or for further guidance on handling of institutional data.

10. Contact

For questions about survey registration, design, or coordination, contact: Integrated Planning and Accountability (IPA) at ipa@langara.ca.

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Appendix A – Quick Reference Checklist

o   Confirm whether LREB review/approval or IPA registration/approval is required.

o   Submit a [Survey Proposal Form](#) to IPA at least 30 days in advance.

o   Consider survey purpose, target group, timing, draft questions, and data plan.

o   Review privacy, accessibility, and consent text.

o   Obtain IPA approval where required before distribution.

o   Store and manage data securely.

o   Consult with IPA if questions come up or additional services are required.

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