

## EQUAL ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION FOR ALL

### WHAT IS THE EQUAL ACCESS SURVEY?

The Equal Access Survey is an annual, voluntary set of questions asked of first year full-time and part-time undergraduate students to Higher Education Authority (HEA)-funded institutions. The questions are asked as part of the registration process at the start of the academic year.

### WHO CONDUCTS THE EQUAL ACCESS SURVEY?

The Equal Access Survey is conducted by your institution and data from the survey is returned to the HEA for analysis purposes. Only aggregate anonymous data is published.

### WHY IS THE EQUAL ACCESS SURVEY CONDUCTED?

With information obtained from the Equal Access Survey, the HEA can measure progress on national targets relating to equity of access to higher education and can develop the evidence base to inform policy in this area.

### WHAT INFORMATION IS COLLECTED?

To help progress the goal of equal access to higher education for all, information is gathered on the disability, ethnicity (including members of the Irish Traveller and Roma communities), lone parenthood status and commute time of students to higher education. The information gathered is protected by robust data protection policies in your institution and in the HEA, in full

compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and data protection legislation, and subject to oversight by the Data Protection Commission. Please see the HEA's Data Privacy Notice at [https://hea.ie/about-us/data\\_protection/](https://hea.ie/about-us/data_protection/).

#### IS COMPLETING THE EQUAL ACCESS SURVEY MANDATORY?

While all students are encouraged to complete the Equal Access Survey, it is not mandatory. However, answering the survey questions will help in developing a better understanding of the student population and their needs. Non-response may impact institutional funding allocations.

#### FURTHER INFORMATION

Through the [National Access Plan](#), the HEA promotes equality of access for groups who are underrepresented in higher education including people who are socioeconomically disadvantaged, members of Irish Traveller and Roma communities, and people who have disabilities, including intellectual disabilities. The HEA also administers the Fund for Students with Disabilities, the Student Assistance Fund, the Programme for Access to Higher Education and the Springboard+ initiative. If you would like further information, please contact [access@hea.ie](mailto:access@hea.ie).