



Researcher Guidance for the Transition of Qualtrics to QuestionPro

IRB/HRPP FAQ

1. If I am in the middle of my study and must switch from Qualtrics to QuestionPro, do I need to submit a protocol amendment to the IRB/HRPP?

Yes, you will need to submit an amendment to your protocol to indicate the change in software. In order to support researchers during this transition, the IRB and HRPP will prioritize protocol amendments for the change from Qualtrics to another survey software.

We encourage you to submit your amendments early rather than waiting until the **May 31, 2022** deadline.

2. If I move my survey data from Qualtrics to my Virginia Tech owned and managed machine or cloud service, do I need to submit a protocol amendment to the IRB/HRPP?

No. If you move your data from Qualtrics to a Virginia Tech owned and managed machine or cloud service you do not need to amend your protocol.

However, if you move your data to a personal machine, an external hard drive, or a cloud service not managed by Virginia Tech, you will need to submit a protocol amendment. You can get more information on cloud service options by reaching out to the Privacy and Research Data Protection Program at PRDP@vt.edu.

3. What types of data can I collect and store in QuestionPro? For example, can I collect and store personally identifiable information (PII), sensitive PII, protected health information, student education records?

Yes. QuestionPro has features that allow surveys to meet privacy requirements of:

- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA)
- Payment Card Industry's Data Security Standards (PCI - DSS)
- Section 508 (US Federal Accessibility Guidelines)
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

Researchers must comply with the Virginia Tech standards and guidelines when collecting the personal identifiers listed below.

- Name
- Email address
- University or health identification number
- Credit card/procurement card information
- Banking information (account/routing detail)
- Social security number (SSN)
- Driver's license number
- Visa number
- Passport number
- TIN/vendor ID numbers that are SSN
- Biometric identifiers (fingerprint, iris scan, palm print, ear lobe map, etc.)
- Personal health information (including but not limited to HIPAA-protected data)

You can find more information on the Virginia Tech guidelines for personal information here [Protecting Sensitive Data | security | Virginia Tech](#).

4. Does QuestionPro have privacy and confidentiality protections that are acceptable to the IRB/HRPP?

Yes, QuestionPro has privacy and confidentiality protections that are similar to Qualtrics and RedCap which meet the requirements of the IRB/HRPP with respect to privacy protection. These features include encryption to securely transfer and store data within the system databases. QuestionPro uses Single Sign-on (SSO) to allow end-users to access their QuestionPro account using their Virginia Tech credentials. In addition, QuestionPro has system tools to generate audit records and monitor access, failed authentication attempts, and other auditable events.

5. Are the IRB members and HRPP staff familiar with the privacy and confidentiality features of QuestionPro?

The HRPP staff are familiar with the privacy and confidentiality features of QuestionPro and will be working closely with IRB members to secure approvals. Keep in mind that depending on the type of data you are collecting and the specific requirements of your project, additional data security, compliance, or technology systems may be required. You can get additional guidance by contacting prdp@vt.edu.

6. What do I need to include in my research protocol about QuestionPro's privacy and confidentiality features to ensure that the reviewers are comfortable with the way it protects the data?

Provide the name of the system and the setting that may impact the privacy of the data. Specific areas to consider include:

- The collection of the IP address. An Internet Protocol (IP) address is a unique, potentially identifying number assigned to every networked device. Because QuestionPro might collect a participant's IP address by default, explain why you need this identifier, or that you will disable the feature if not necessary for your research.
- Explain the platform's security levels and settings to protect data during transmission. Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) and Transport Layer Security (TLS) are standard security technologies for encryption between a web server and a browser. You will see them in a URL as "https://."
- Describe whether you will create one general survey link to send to all subjects from your personal email account, or if you will email the survey through the QuestionPro platform, where individual survey links will be created and tracked. If you do not need to track if a specific individual responds to the link, please use a general link.
- If offering compensation, consider if the method you selected identifies individual participants. Will you send the participant a physical gift card, which would require an identifiable address? Will you create a second survey for the entry of participant information for compensation so that the personal information will not link to their survey responses?

7. What do I need to include in my consent form or information sheet about QuestionPro's privacy and confidentiality features to ensure that research participants are informed about the way it protects the data?

Since web-based surveys differ from traditional, paper-based surveys, consent forms and information sheets must be adjusted to fit the method. Below are a few elements to consider when developing consent forms and information sheets:

- The consent form or information sheet should appear as the first screen after the participants click an emailed web link, scan a QR code, etc. Submit your consent form or information sheet in protocol management as a separate document. Once approved, you will insert the consent form or information sheet as the survey's first page at the site.
- While you need to use a secure platform and protect responses, you cannot absolutely control third-party access during transmission. Therefore, be certain to include a statement that through the use of the survey tool that confidentiality cannot be promised. In the "What happens to the information collected for the research?" section of the consent document, include the statement: "While we will make every effort to limit the use and disclosure of personal information only to people who have a need to review this information, we cannot promise complete confidentiality." You can find more information about consent form or information template wording here [Templates for Human Research | Research and Innovation | Virginia Tech](#).
- Research participants have the option to withdraw at any time, even after their activities have ended. With anonymous surveys, however, it is not possible for participants to withdraw later, because you won't be able to identify specific responses. Therefore, explain in your consent that participants can withdraw at any time before they submit their responses, but once they submit the survey, data cannot be removed (e.g., "You may withdraw at any time before you submit. To do so, close your browser.").

IT/OPERATIONAL FAQ

8. Why is Virginia Tech no longer purchasing the Qualtrics license for the university?

The cost of Qualtrics to the university has substantially increased so that beginning in May 2022, the funding model for Qualtrics will change and

departments that wish to continue using Qualtrics will need to purchase a departmental license.

Pricing for departmental Qualtrics licenses can be requested from the Division of Information Technology. Please see the [update](#) from the Division of Information Technology for more information on licensing.

9. What does the move from Qualtrics mean for research I am planning to conduct in the future?

Consider using other approved survey options including: QuestionPro or RedCap. You can find a complete listing of approved software here [CobbleStone - Virginia Tech Information Technology Contracts Portal](#).

If you need to continue using Qualtrics, you will need to purchase a school or departmental license. For pricing and purchase information, please reach out to IT Procurement and Licensing Solutions patty.branscome@vt.edu (540) 231-9471.

10. How does the move from Qualtrics impact previous studies conducted using Qualtrics?

If you have completed a study using Qualtrics in the past, you will need to export your data from the system before **May 31, 2022**. Follow the steps below to extract your data from Qualtrics.

1. In the Data & Analysis tab, click on Export & Import located on the far right.
2. Click Export Data.
3. In the export menu, select from the different available data file formats along the top. These include CSV and SPSS, among others. You can find more information about extracting data here: [Data Export Options](#).

11. What happens if I am still collecting data with Qualtrics when the license expires?

ITPALS is currently working with Qualtrics to see how we can prevent an interruption in data collection. More information will be made available in January 2022.

12. What is the last day I can access data I have stored in Qualtrics?

May 31, 2022

13. What happens if I don't get a copy of my data before the license expires?

Data not removed from Qualtrics prior to the final access date (**May 31, 2022**) will *not* be recoverable.

14. How can I remove my data from Qualtrics?

You will need to extract your data from Qualtrics; it will not be done automatically. You can find instructions on how to extract your research data here [Data Export Options](#).

15. Into what formats can I extract my data?

Your data can be extracted into a variety of formats, including Excel, SPSS, comma separated values (CSV), and others. You can find more information about the available formats here: [Data Export Formats](#).

16. How do I import my data from Qualtrics into QuestionPro?

QuestionPro has a specific system tool to facilitate migrating your data from Qualtrics to QuestionPro. In QuestionPro go to: Login » Surveys » Integration » Qualtrics Data Import and follow the prompts to import your data. You can find more information about the import tool here [Qualtrics Data Import | QuestionPro Help Document](#)

17. Will these formats allow me to load the data into SPSS or other data analysis solutions?

Yes. SPSS/PC+, .xls, .csv, and txt files exported from Qualtrics can be opened in SPSS and other data analysis solutions. You can find more information about SPSS compatible formats here: <https://www.ibm.com/docs/en/spss-statistics/24.0.0?topic=files-data-file-types>

18. What can I use for my survey software if Qualtrics is not available to me?

Virginia Tech supports the use of a variety of survey solutions that can be used for research data including RedCap and QuestionPro. Please contact prdp@vt.edu if you have questions about what software will best support your study's requirements.

19. Is QuestionPro available to me now?

QuestionPro is currently available at no cost to faculty, staff, and students. More information on how to access QuestionPro can be found here [QuestionPro | IT Procurement and Licensing Solutions](#).

20. Can I get training on how to use QuestionPro?

The University Libraries and IT Procurement and Licensing Solutions (ITPALS) have collaborated to offer a series of online [QuestionPro training sessions](#). Please see the [QuestionPro information page](#) for more information.

21. Does QuestionPro have similar features to Qualtrics?

QuestionPro has features similar to Qualtrics and RedCap with the ability to send surveys to research participants and report on their responses. You can learn more about QuestionPro here: [QuestionPro | IT Procurement and Licensing Solutions](#).

22. What can I do if the features I need are not in QuestionPro?

If there are features of QuestionPro that are not available in the Virginia Tech licensed version, please contact the Director, IT Procurement and Licensing Solutions patty.branscome@vt.edu (540) 231-9471.