

Participant Information Sheet

- **What is the project about?**

The NSW Post-School Destinations Survey (the survey) collects information to provide up-to-date research and informed advice to schools, the NSW Department of Education, the NSW Minister for Education and other education agencies on what young people in NSW do after they leave school. The survey collects information on the education pathways, destinations, attainment, further education and training and aspirations of school leavers.

The research helps the NSW Government to better understand how to improve educational and career outcomes achieved by school students in NSW. It collects important information on the factors that may influence the engagement, retention and pathway choices of secondary students.

The survey is now in its tenth year, and 25,000 young people took part in the survey in 2020. Reports from previous years are available on the CESE website www.cese.nsw.gov.au.

- **Who is involved in the project?**

The NSW Department of Education, through the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation (CESE), has engaged the Social Research Centre (SRC) to manage and conduct the survey. CESE will be undertaking all analysis and reporting components of the survey. This research project is supported by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA), Catholic Schools NSW and the Association of Independent Schools of NSW.

- **Why have I been invited to participate?**

You have been invited to participate in the research because administrative records show that you may have left school in 2020. The survey is voluntary. You can choose not to take part in the survey at any time and it won't change your relationship with the researchers or anyone else. If you do not want to take part in the survey you can either: advise SRC through one of the methods discussed at the end of this information sheet by 6 August 2021 or let SRC know that you do not want to participate when they contact you to complete the survey.

- **What will the researchers do and when?**

If you are contacted to participate, you can choose to complete the survey yourself online or by a telephone interview. The survey will take about 10 minutes of your time and will be conducted from August to December 2021. You will be entered into a prize draw after taking part in the survey.

- **What are the research steps?**

Sample frame: NESA, in conjunction with the Department of Education, will create a sample frame that includes student administrative data of recent school leavers. NESA will provide this sample frame to the department's contractor SRC, who will use the sample frame to conduct the opt-out process for the survey. The final sample frame for the survey will consist of former students who do not opt-out of the survey during this initial opt-out period. This sample frame component of the survey will be led by SRC.

Fieldwork: SRC will invite former students who did not opt out of the survey to take part in the survey. SRC may send this invitation via email, text or mail. You will be asked to complete the survey either online or via the phone. You can also choose to opt-out of the survey when you are contacted by SRC to take part in the survey. You will be asked information about your post-school destinations and experiences by an interviewer from SRC. This may include some basic information about your background and family characteristics (such as level of education and occupation of parents/carers). NESA will then provide SRC with NAPLAN and HSC data if you take part in the survey.

Prior to completing the survey you will be asked if you consent to having identifiers included with your survey responses so that CESE can link your survey responses to other data about you that the NSW Department of Education holds (including disability, HSC minimum standard, education and employment information). The linked data will be used for measuring post-school outcomes and informing school policy. This will help schools to better support students to achieve positive post-school pathways. If you consent to having student identifiers included with your survey responses, you will be asked to re-confirm your consent at the conclusion of the survey. If you do not agree, but still want to participate in the survey, SRC will de-identify your survey responses prior to providing this data to CESE. The fieldwork component of the survey will be led by SRC.

Research: CESE will use the datasets provided by SRC to analyse and report on the research. Only aggregated findings will be reported, with no individual student survey responses reported. This research component of the survey will be led by CESE.

- **What data will be linked through student identifiers?**

Should you provide your consent, data linkage will be conducted using the separation principle. Access to identifying information will be restricted to a specialised linkage team within CESE who will create the link, while CESE researchers will analyse and manage the de-identified survey data. Linkage officers will not have access to survey data, while researchers will not have access to any personal identifying information.

The Government held data that will be linked to your survey responses includes:

- School records of disability adjustments (including data collected under the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on Students with Disability) (For Government students only)
 - HSC minimum standard total scores (For Government students only)
 - Government school enrolments
 - Record of School Achievement (RoSA) / Higher School Certificate (HSC)
 - Government funded VET enrolments, including Apprentices and Trainees
 - Medicare Enrolment Database (demographic data only, for purposes of linkage to the ABS data below)
 - ABS-held databases from the Multi-Agency Data Integration Project (MADIP) (Social Security and Related Information, Personal Income Tax Payment Summaries, Census of Population and Housing 2020, Higher Education data and VET activity)
- **What will happen to my information?**

All information and data associated with the survey will be handled in accordance with privacy and other relevant legislation¹. Individuals who take part in the survey will not be identified in any report or publication. Although we are using students' identifiers to link the data, your individual results will not be identified in any reporting from the survey: we will only report de-identified, aggregated results.

The survey and government data will be collected in a well-governed secure NSW Department of Education data server for analysis by the authorised CESE researchers for linking. Once the data has been linked, the student identifiers will be securely disposed of, so that only the de-identified data remains for further analysis.

You have the right of access to personal information held about you by the NSW Department of

¹ For CESE and NESAs - *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (NSW); *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002* (NSW); *Education Standards Authority Act 2013* (NSW). For the SRC: *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth)

Education, the right to request correction and amendment of it, and the right to make a complaint about a breach of the Information Protection Principles as contained in the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (NSW). Further information on how the NSW Department of Education protects personal information is available in the NSW Department of Education's Privacy Management Plan: www.srcentre.com.au/EduNSWPrivacyManagementPlan

To ensure confidentiality of your information, each participant will receive a unique survey login. Your personal information will be used to invite you to participate in the survey this year and to send reminders. Your details will be kept by SRC for the purposes of maintaining any request to opt-out of the survey or if SRC is legally required to disclose information collected as part of the survey.

- **How will my data be used?**

All data will be de-identified and reported in aggregate. De-identified data may be used to:

- Report on the findings of the survey. The report for the 2021 survey will be published on the NSW Department of Education website in 2022.
- Advise the NSW government on education and career outcomes for NSW school leavers.
- Advise the NSW government about the post-school destinations of students with disability.
- Inform policy and program decisions to improve the post-school outcomes of recent school leavers.
- Report high-level information back to schools about the post-school destinations of their recent school leavers to improve post-school outcomes of students at a school level.
- Advise the NSW government of the impact of the HSC minimum standard on students' post-school destinations.

All information collected for the study will be managed in accordance with *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (NSW) and NSW State Records legislation.

- **Is there anything that might make me upset if I take part in the survey?**

This survey is not likely to be upsetting. If you feel uncomfortable during the survey, you can choose to stop the survey at any time. You can skip any questions if you prefer not to answer. If you feel worried or anxious, please contact the researchers or seek help from your family, friends or health professionals. Alternatively, there is free counselling available 24 hours a day by phone through Lifeline on phone 13 11 14.

- **Who should I contact for more information or to make suggestions?**

For information about the research project, please contact the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation (CESE) on 1300 679 332 or email cese@det.nsw.edu.au
More information: www.cese.nsw.gov.au

For information about the opt out process or survey, please contact the Social Research Centre (SRC) on 1800 023 040 (free hotline) or email studentdestinations@srcentre.com.au
More information: www.srcentre.com.au/NSWdestinationsurvey

- **Who should I contact with my concerns or to make a complaint?**

If you have concerns about privacy issues, in the first instance you can contact the organisation that you believe holds the information. If you have concerns about privacy issues in relation to this letter, please contact the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation (CESE) on 1300 679 332 or email cese@det.nsw.edu.au.

If you remain dissatisfied, you can write to the Information and Privacy Commissioner, GPO Box 7011, Sydney NSW 2001 or phone 1800 472 679 or ipcinfo@ipc.nsw.gov.au.

If you have concerns about privacy issues in relation to the survey, you can contact the Social Research Centre. If you remain dissatisfied, you can write to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner, GPO Box 5218 Sydney NSW 2001 or call 1300 363 992.