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Institutional Control

Tutorial Script

2024-25 Data Collection

This tutorial explains institutional control and its impact on other IPEDS survey components.

Control is reported in the Institutional Characteristics component and refers to how an institution is governed.

Institutional control falls into one of four categories: public, private for-profit, private not-for-profit independent, and private not-for-profit religiously affiliated. Answering a few questions will help determine which control category you should select.

To begin, how are the individuals governing your institution appointed and how is your institution funded? Public institutions are operated by publicly elected or appointed school officials and are supported primarily with public funds. Private institutions are operated by private individuals who are not elected, or a non-governmental agency. They are supported primarily by private funds.

If your institution is private, there are two more important questions to answer. Does your institution operate with the goal of making a financial profit? If yes, your institution is for-profit. If no, your institution is not-for-profit.

Finally, your institution may be religiously affiliated. If it is not, your institution is labeled an independent institution. If your institution is religiously affiliated, the survey component will ask you to identify the affiliation.

Correctly identifying your institution's control is important. First, institutions with different types of control use different accounting standards and forms for the IPEDS Finance component. Second, many IPEDS reports use control, along with level, to present national data on postsecondary institutions. Incorrect reporting of control can skew national statistics about postsecondary institutions. Finally, control and level are used to create the groups for the College Affordability and Transparency lists. Incorrect reporting of control could cause your institution to be placed in the wrong group, which could cause it to incorrectly appear as a high tuition or high net price institution.

For more information on the material presented in this tutorial, please contact the IPEDS Help Desk.