

Comparison of UF-Available Tools for Electronic Informed Consent

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) has issued guidance regarding the use of electronic informed consent. This table compares tools available to the UF community and highlights relevant features to support compliance with these guidelines. This information reflects tool capabilities at the time of assessment and is intended as a general reference, not a formal compliance determination. Features are subject to change as vendors update their products.

OHRP requirement	Comparison Summary	Qualtrics (Q)	REDCap (RC)	DocuSign (DS)	Terracotta (T)
Explanation of the research/Study Description presentation	Similar approach for Q and RC. Others unique.	Text/Graphic question or embed a PDF into it or Signature question	Text/Graphic question or embed a PDF into a descriptive text field or embed PDF into the eConsent Framework.	Document can be uploaded and signature field are created on top of it	PDF upload and HTML editor available
Electronic signature (including agreement indicators recognized by state law)	Similar approach for Q and RC. DS uses eSignature tech. T is “I agree to participate” radio button.	Signature drawing question with Force response setting	Patients/subjects can sign their consent by typing in their name or by utilizing RC's 'Signature' field type (i.e., 'wet signature') on the survey.	Signature field is always required whenever added. A personal signature may be a preselected font, drawn or uploaded. Digital certificate is produced upon execution.	Does <i>not</i> provide an electronic signature feature. It uses agree/do not agree radio buttons for “In consideration of the above, will you participate in this research study?”
Participant identity verification	Similar approach for all but T, which is only SSO.	SSO or send a unique survey link to a specific email address providing an audit trail of identity (does not have biometric, KB, or ID cross-reference verification)	SSO or send a unique survey link to a specific email address providing an audit trail of identity (does not have biometric, KB, or ID cross-reference verification)	SSO or send a unique survey link to a specific email address providing an audit trail of identity (Standard UF account does not have biometric, KB, or ID cross-reference verification)	Relies on Canvas SSO to verify participants' identity.
Typed Name	Similar approach for Q, RC, and DS. T is metadata only.	SSO metadata or Text field question	SSO metadata or Text field question	Name field option (w/ Power Forms: will prepopulate based on sender's envelope entry or signer entry)	Names are always populated automatically from Canvas SSO identity.

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Timestamp recording	Similar approach for all except T which is metadata only.	Metadata capture, Calendar question , Text entry question, or Piping Date/Time	Metadata capture, Calendar question, Text entry question, or Date/time action tags that enter the date/time autopopulate.	Metadata always captured for date and time. Date field option too.	Metadata always captures date and time after participants complete consent submission.
Participant copy	RC and DS have easier access to a holistic final document, even when multiple forms are signed, but all elements are present with Q too. T provides unsigned only for download and electronic access to timestamped response.	1) In Survey Options > Security > Uploaded files access > setting should be “Anyone with the link to the file” 2) If the Study Description is a PDF, provide a download link 3) Set-up a Workflow for a Confirmation Email trigger that includes the option settings for “Include Response Report” and “Show Full Question Text”	Participants can download a signed copy upon submitting the consent survey, download an unsigned copy while on the consent survey with a download link, and/or be emailed a fully signed copy of the consent via Survey Confirmation Emails and/or Alerts & Notifications. Multiple forms are merged into a single file for participant download.	Participant can immediately download signed copy as a PDF and are emailed a link to it too. They can download an unsigned copy from the signing interface. Each person has the choice to download the Certificate of Completion metadata in combination with the original document or kept separate.	Does not generate a downloadable signed PDF. Participants can view their consent status with timestamp in Canvas. A downloadable unsigned PDF can be made available there too. Instructors/researchers can only export records for consenting students, to ensure anonymity of opt-outs.

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Secure storage and Generating a non-editable record of the consent and audit trail	All have some clearance for Restricted data (RC by request). DS does not have long-term storage and requires custom auto-export to SharePoint by IT admin.	<i>Anonymize responses</i> in Survey Options > Security should be “Off” (needed for audit trail, can link to another survey for anonymized responses to research questions). ISO 27001 Certification FedRAMP Authorization HIPAA Compliance Restricted data solution for PII, FERPA, & VetMed. Permitted with risk request opened for HIPAA & SSN.	Sensitive data solution. Restricted data upon request per project, then REDCap can be installed in a variety of environments for compliance with such standards as HIPAA, 21 CFR Part 11, FISMA (low, moderate, high), and international standards. eConsent Framework and PDF Snapshots Provides a review page to prompt users to certify their information was entered correctly. Multiple forms are merged into a single file for participant download. Versioning feature present. Fee required for data retention after 1 year (bulk export available for alternative storage location).	Restricted data solution for HIPAA, RIHSR, PII, SSN, FERPA, VetMed. UFDocuSign is not for storing documents. All completed, declined or voided DS documents are deleted after 90 days. IT ticket needed to create a rule for auto-export of envelope to SharePoint folder with restricted access permissions.	Restricted data solution (Project ID 337958) with FERPA addendum confirmed. Audit trail provided by someone other than the signer themselves would require re-identification of IC by data storage manager at Indiana University.
System saves progress for later completion	Yes, some variant exists for all	Yes, saves each page	Yes	User has to select “Finish later” before exiting	Progress is always saved until submission.