Vendor risk assessment [1]

University schools, departments and business units sometimes contract for data services with outside parties or service providers; of concern are those circumstances where service providers process or hold University data. While Duke University has taken steps to help ensure that its data is protected, service providers must also exercise appropriate controls to minimize the risk of exposing the data to potential unauthorized access and loss. (Note: Duke Health requires a separate review process. Please contact security@duke.edu [2] for more information.)

Duke provides a Service Provider Security Assessment to:

- Establish communications and promote constructive dialogue between Duke and the potential service provider
- Help identify business, technical, security, compliance, legal, and other control factors
- Determine the level of risk inherent to the processing of data beyond the University’s physical controls

A security assessment is required in all instances where:

- University data is shared with a service provider
- A service provider captures data for subsequent use by the University

Performing an assessment

The school, department, or business unit provides the service provider with the links to the instructions for completing the security assessment (this page) and to the security assessment document. Service providers are encouraged to respond fully to the questions, and return the completed assessment and any supporting materials to the Duke University IT Security Office for review and scoring. The results of the review are provided to the requesting school or business unit, the Office of General Counsel, and Procurement Services. Please note this process can take up to two weeks.

Protected data

Where the University’s "Sensitive" and/or "Restricted" data is held or processed by a service provider, there is a potentially higher risk where unauthorized access or loss occurs, so additional weight is appropriately applied to those circumstances.
Required forms

As part of the risk assessment process, vendors must submit the following:

- **A security self-assessment.** To accommodate documentation a vendor may already have prepared, Duke will accept any of the following three options:
  - A full HECVAT [3] (learn more about the Higher Education Community Vendor Assessment Toolkit (HECVAT) [4]).
  - A SOC 2 Type 2 report [5] performed within the past two years for the vendor itself (not a cloud service provider such as Amazon Web Services or Microsoft Azure), plus either a HECVAT Lite [6] or Duke SPSA-SOC2 [7].
  - Duke’s Service Provider Security Assessment (SPSA). [8]
- **Shibboleth Readiness Profile** [9]. Duke requires SAML authentication to securely integrate with Duke’s Shibboleth authentication service for single sign-on. Vendors must complete this form to determine the level of effort required to integrate a vendor product with Duke’s Shibboleth environment.

**Instructions for the vendor (Duke SPSA)**

Please answer all questions fully.

- The Customer as described is Duke University.
- The Service Provider as described is the vendor or outside party that will receive University data or capture data for subsequent use by the University.

Use **Response** fields to indicate:

- **Yes:** The Service Provider has established and can provide evidence of the control(s) described in the query
- **Partially:** The Service Provider has not fully established the level of controls described in the query
- **No:** The Service Provider has not established the level of control(s) described in the query
- **N/A:** Not Applicable, the control described in the query is not applicable to the Service Provider or its process

Use **Comments/Description** fields to answer questions and provide details or explanations of conditions.

- Where the Service Provider’s Response is **Partially**, this field should be used to provide a description as to the degree or level the control has been implemented.
- Where the Service Provider's Response is **N/A (Not Applicable)**, this field should be used to provide a reason why the query does not apply.
- Review the Request For Documentation listing and assemble the documents requested.

**Use of third-party cloud hosting**

If the Service Provider uses a third party such as Amazon Web Services or Microsoft Azure, the
Service Provider will need to work with that third party to answer questions specific to how and where Duke University data is accessed and/or stored. Answers of N/A are not appropriate for questions affected by such a hosting arrangement.

**Please note:** All forms and supporting documentation should be returned to the IT Security Office for processing. Duke University will review carefully the responses you provide. The University’s decision regarding which providers to select is based, in part, on the information included in your response.

Accordingly, should our discussions proceed to the point of contract negotiation, Duke University will expect you to (i) warrant that the services you provide will be in substantial conformity with the information provided in the response to the Service Provider Security Assessment form; (ii) inform Duke promptly of any material variation in operations from that reflected in your response; and (iii) agree that any material deficiency in operations from those as described in your response will be deemed a material breach.

**Source URL:** https://security.duke.edu/vendor-risk-assessment

**Links**
[1] https://security.duke.edu/vendor-risk-assessment  
[2] mailto:security@duke.edu  