

# A guide on using free on-line surveys

A great way to collect quantitative  
and qualitative data for your research



Produced by Learning Services

An on-line survey is a great way to collect quantitative and qualitative data for your research.

A quick search on the internet will bring up several options of on-line surveys. The free versions of surveys may come with some limitations, particularly in terms of:

- the number of surveys you can create
- the number of questions you can ask on each survey
- the number of responses you can collect
- the way in which you can control how people fill in your survey
- the ability to export the survey results

Please refer to the comparison chart of some options available on-line. Apart from identifying what design features each one offers, think about what your survey will look like and how you will be able to access the data collected. For example:

- the number of questions you want your survey to cover
- the types of questions available
- the ability to download the responses
- the compatibility with the mobile devices

### Getting started:

Once you have identified the survey tool you would like to use, simply register for the service. Before you start, however, it can be useful to spend some time mapping out your survey on paper. Some providers offer survey templates which you can adapt to create your own survey. Alternatively, you can create your own survey by selecting a theme, defining your own questions and answer choices.

### Question types:

Most online surveys will provide a choice of question types ranging from multiple-choice and scaled questions through to open questions.

**An open question** - where respondents can write whatever they like, for example:

How has our service helped you over the last year?

**A multiple-choices question** - where respondents select one or more options from a list that you present to them, for example:

Please tell us which of the following services you have used in the last six months:

- |                      |                          |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Weekly support group | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| On-line forum        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Information leaflets | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### Question types:

**A matrix of multiple responses** - where respondents can select only one answer in each row, for example:

Did our project help you....	yes	no	not sure
Cope better with your situation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make new friends?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feel more confident?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**A scaled question** - where respondents select one option from a scale, for example:

How helpful were the following services....	Very	Quite	Not very	Not at all	Not sure	Did not use
weekly support group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
online forum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information leaflets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Data Protection:

Remember to comply with Data Protection legislation. Data Protection legislation is concerned with the processing of personal data and applies to anyone involved in the collection, processing and use of the data. Please refer to the Information Commissioner's Office for further information on Data Protection and Cloud computing: online surveys here: <http://ico.org.uk/about-us/research/data-protection>

## Free on-line survey tools – Comparison Chart

Overview	Surveygizmo	SurveyMonkey	SmartSurvey	Quicktap Survey	KwikSurveys	Sogosurvey
Number of surveys per account	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	1 per month	Unlimited	15
Number of questions per survey	Unlimited	10	Unlimited	50	Unlimited	75
Number of Responses allowed	400 per month	100 per survey	50 per month	50	Unlimited	200
Data exporting	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Compliance	Complies with US-EU 'safe harbour' framework*	Complies with US-EU 'safe harbour' framework* (UK based)	Complies with Data Protection Act (Canada based)	Does not comply with Data Protection Act (US & UK based company)	Complies with Data Protection Act	Complies with US-EU 'safe harbour' framework*
Export data to Excel, CSV, Word, etc	CSV, Excel	N/A	Word	Excel, CSV	CSV, Excel, Word	Excel, CSV, Word
Ability to edit once launched	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Skip logic	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
Mobile Ready	Yes	Optimised for iOS devices only	Yes	Yes	No – not optimised for Mobile devices	Yes

\* See: <http://export.gov/safeharbor/eu/index.asp> for more information