**Questionnaires**

**What are they?**

Questionnaires are used to collect demographics, opinions, feedback and suggestions. They can take place online, by post or in person.

**Advantages**

* Can reach large numbers of people, providing a broad range of information
* Can be administered online, via post or in person
* Numerous questions can be asked, and answers kept anonymous.
* Can be cheap and easy to administer, and complete
* Responses can be kept anonymous

**Disadvantages**

* Not everyone may be motivated to take a questionnaire, especially if online
* Unsuitable for those with literacy issues, and translations may be needed for those who are unfamiliar with English.
* Without careful design and testing, questionnaires can lead to misinterpretation and low response rates.

**How to use?**

When designing a questionnaire, it is important to think carefully about the questions you are asking. What do you want to find out and why, and do the questions capture this? Start by introducing the questionnaire clearly, giving people information such as:

* Information about your organisation and who you are
* The purpose of the questionnaire
* who to contact for any questions/concerns
* how long approximately it will take to complete
* what will happen to the data (is it anonymous? Where is it stored?). Include a link to your organisational privacy statement if appropriate.
* where the results be published
* how to return (if by post etc)
* the end date

It is advisable that you make questions skippable, as some people may not want or be able to provide answers (for example, if they are sensitive in nature). When developing questions, it is important to word them correctly:

* **Avoid using loaded or leading words or questions** (questions that presume a specific response e.g. use “Tell me about your experiences of this service” instead of “do you have any problems with this service?”)
* **Placement of questions** (put broad questions at the beginning as a warm up, then more specific questions followed by demographics)
* **Keep the language simple** (avoid using jargon or acronyms. Simple language will ensure respondents have understood the question fully)
* **Each question should relate to one point only** (Ask only one question at a time. For example “how would you rate the speed and friendliness of the team” is asking two questions, so separate them out)

Once you have your questions, it is important to test them out before they go live. Give them to a small amount of people to test and give feedback. Once finalised, the questionnaire will be ready to distribute.

Questionnaires can be hosted online using a free survey software, such as Survey Monkey or paid software such as Smart Survey. Alternatively, surveys can be printed off and given to people to complete in person (or via post).

For an example of a questionnaire, and links to survey software, please visit the companion website: https://bit.ly/2UXC2Xk