Ref: 0003 Analysis

*Source: "*Things to think about before designing a survey*", 13/05/2016*

- Web-based questionnaires are just one of many tools available to the social researcher.
- They should be used as part of an overall project design.
- The research needs to be planned and thought out as rigorously as any other research project.
- An online survey is not necessarily easier to implement than a paper based one: there are some advantages but there are also problems.
- Technical computing expertise is needed, in addition to the analytical skills necessary for any research.
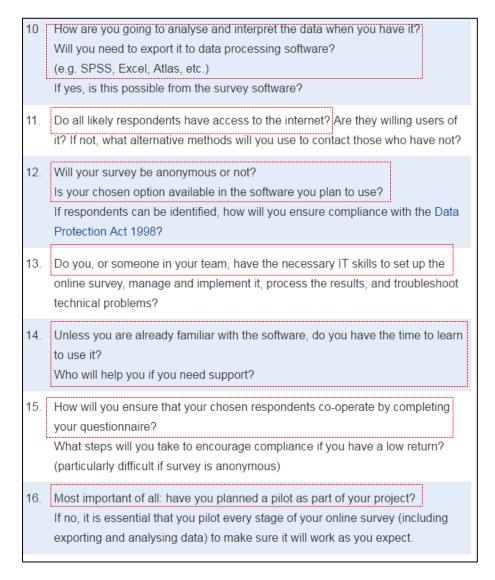
While I knew how to write a survey, I wanted to insure that it would be of a high quality and decided to look for some trustworthy information. That I how I came about this information- it's for the UCL website, I believe that to be a valid source.

When reading this introduction, it reminded me that paper based surveys were also a valid option, all the other information just seemed like common sense to someone who is doing a survey to gather information for a Computer Science Controlled Assessment.

1. What is the purpose of your project?

2. What are the research questions?

3. What data do you need to collect in order to answer the questions?

4. Is it actually possible to get some of the data you need from respondents? (e.g. is it legal? ethical? will they be willing to give it? can they express it in a way you can capture?)

5. What are the likely sources of data? (there will probably be several, and not just people)

6. What relevant information is already available? (e.g. management and admin records, test results, attendance sheets, previous research etc.)

7. Match up the data sources in 5 and 6 above with the research questions: which sources will have the answers to which questions?

I was already perfectly aware of the purpose of my project. On the other hand, while I did have a few ideas about the type of questions I was going to including in the survey I had no real way of

deciding just how important each one is. As for the other sections, I knew I had to get this data myself and even if I hadn't finalised the questions, my target audience was Key Stage 3, although I decided that I may get some interesting conflicts if I included Year 9- who had just finished their first year of GCSE.

10 How are you going to analyse and interpret the data when you have it?
    Will you need to export it to data processing software?
    (e.g. SPSS, Excel, Atlas, etc.)
    If yes, is this possible from the survey software?

11. Do all likely respondents have access to the internet? Are they willing users of it? If not, what alternative methods will you use to contact those who have not?

12. Will your survey be anonymous or not?
    Is your chosen option available in the software you plan to use?
    If respondents can be identified, how will you ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998?

13. Do you, or someone in your team, have the necessary IT skills to set up the online survey, manage and implement it, process the results, and troubleshoot technical problems?

14. Unless you are already familiar with the software, do you have the time to learn to use it?
    Who will help you if you need support?

15. How will you ensure that your chosen respondents co-operate by completing your questionnaire?
    What steps will you take to encourage compliance if you have a low return?
    (particularly difficult if survey is anonymous)

16. Most important of all: have you planned a pilot as part of your project?
    If no, it is essential that you pilot every stage of your online survey (including exporting and analysing data) to make sure it will work as you expect.

I already knew that I was going to use Excel to analyse the data as that was all I have avaiable at school. The idea of people without internet access was negelited as my target adiuance is bound within my own school- a place where everyone can acess a computer at some point during the week. I also had no reason to keep any personal information, so it was a clear choice to keep the survey anonymous.

After deciding that it would be beneficial to make this survey digitally- the only known option for an online survey service would be Survey Monkey. While I was not familiar with the site, I was certain that I could pick it up while digitallising the survey I had started planning (it was mostly just questions written down).