

Designing an Online Survey in Limesurvey



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# About this booklet

This booklet accompanies a workshop, but can be used independently to find out how to create an online survey using Limesurvey. This is special purpose survey platform with better functionality than the forms that are available in Google or Office.

The School of Psychology maintains its own Limesurvey server

*This guide was prepared in **August 2024** by Jon May*



# Chapter 1

## First steps

### 1.1 Getting an account and logging in

Whenever you are collecting data online, you need to make sure that the system you use is GDPR compliant. All survey respondents should be sure that their responses are anonymous and confidential, while allowing for sharing of non-identifying data to comply with open science practices.

**JISC OS** is a low-cost basic system used widely by UK higher education institutions, and is subscribed to by the University. You can obtain an account from TIS. It is suitable for simple straight-through surveys of undergraduates, with no need for randomisation or pretty layouts. If you want speed and simplicity, use JISC OS.

**Limesurvey** is an open source platform, and offers more professional looking surveys, with greater functionality, but it is correspondingly complicated to use. The school has its own implementation, running on our own servers, administered by the Technical Office. If you need anything more than a simple fixed set of questions, use Limesurvey.

#### 1.1.1 How to get an Account and Login

In a browser, visit <https://psysurvey.plymouth.ac.uk>

Academic staff will have accounts created for them, but students can create their own.

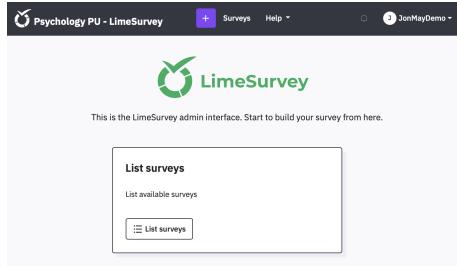
To create your account, click the ‘Forgot your password?’ link and use your UoP email address and password.

If asked for your username, use your email address.

You will be sent an email with a link to create your password. Once you have created a valid password, you can log in.

When you first log in, you will see this screen, allowing you to List the surveys

you have created. If you click the button  you will (of course) see no surveys yet. You can access this list at any time by clicking

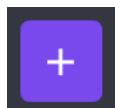


Surveys in the top menu bar.

NB: If you are a member of academic staff you will be able to see all existing surveys.

## 1.2 Create a new survey

Create a new survey using the purple Create new survey button at the top of the window



Give your survey a title (you can edit this later) and then click Create survey

**Create, import, or copy survey**

[Create](#)   [Import](#)   [Copy](#)

Survey title:

Required

Base language:

Survey group:

Administrator: [Default](#)   [Current user](#)   [Custom](#)

[Create survey](#)

Your survey will look like this – Limesurvey automatically creates a Question for you (called ‘Q00’) and puts it into a Question Group called ‘My first question group’. Putting questions in groups lets you organise your survey, and is an essential part of randomisation or presenting questions in a set order. Before editing this question, notice the details on this screen:

Surveys / ... / My first question group / Q00   [Tools | ...](#)   [Preview survey](#)   [Preview question group](#)   [Preview question](#)   [Edit](#)

[Settings](#)   [Structure](#)

[+ Add question](#)   [Add group](#)

My first question group 1 ...

**Question summary Q00 (ID: 521)**

Question group:	(ID: 58)
Code:	Q00 : (Optional question)
Question:	A first example question. Please answer this question.
Help:	This is a question help text.
Type:	Long free text (Type: T)
Mandatory:	No
Encrypted:	No
Condition:	<span style="background-color: #ccc; border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px 5px;">1</span>
Group relevance:	<span style="background-color: #ccc; border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px 5px;">1</span>

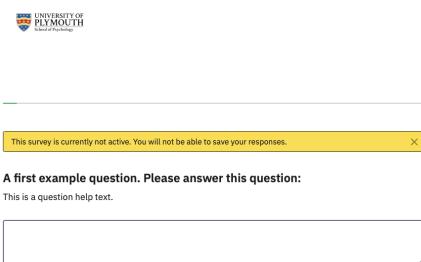
At the top left is the name of your survey, as a link of ‘breadcrumbs’ which you can use to navigate back up to the list of all your surveys, or to other surveys.

Below that are two tabs – the overall **Settings** for your survey and the **Structure** which lists the actual questions. At the moment, you cannot see your Q00 in this list, but if you click the little triangle in the group name, it will be shown. Hiding questions until you need to see them helps keep the view manageable.

The Question Summary gives an overview of the Question text and some settings which we will come onto later. At the top are some buttons that let you preview how the question or group of questions or the whole survey will appear on screen. If you click **Preview Survey**, you should see this **welcome screen**, and then when you click **Next**, the question:



Clicking the green **Next** button takes you to the first question:



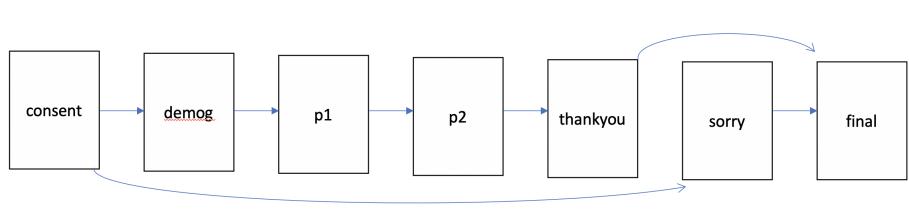
By default all surveys on **psysurvey** include the school logo, as required by the Ethical Committee.

Under that is a progress bar, which again is on by default but which can be turned off. The yellow box appears to let you know that this is a preview and your entry will not be saved anywhere.

Below that is your question. You can also turn off the welcome screen – everything in **Limesurvey** can be controlled.

### 1.3 Structuring your questionnaire

Before you plough into creating questions, think about the basic sections that every survey will need. Don't build your survey as one huge long screen full of questions. Use separate screens with a few related questions on each one.



The horizontal arrows in this figure show how the survey continues when the participant clicks 'Next' on each page. The arcs show how the survey can skip pages using **branching**. You can also use branching to present some sections depending upon answers given earlier. You can also include answers given in

one question in subsequent questions using ‘**piping**’. Branching and Piping are described in later sections.

The first page of any survey must be an information page that explains what the survey is about, why you are asking people to complete it, how long it will take, and what it involves. You will have to provide all of this information to get ethical approval. This information allows people to give informed consent.

If people give consent, then the next page will probably need to collect demographic information: you should only collect information that you will need to report, and which is relevant to your survey. Conventionally, sex and age are always reported, but if your survey is on a particular topic you may need other personal information, such as sexual orientation or height and weight. At the end of the survey, there should be a page that thanks them and gives debriefing information, as appropriate, perhaps explaining any hypotheses that you are testing and other information that could not be provided in the consenting page at the start.

If the respondent does not give consent, then they should be thanked politely, but they should not receive the same debrief. In Limesurvey, you can make questions only appear if an early question has been answered in a certain way – so only if they have given consent, for example. Rather than jumping over questions, they are just not shown.

At the end of a survey, you can redirect the participant to another website (e.g., to another survey, a website or online experiment, or back to SONA to credit their account with a participation point).

For example, you can recruit participants for an online experiment on SONA, and send them to Limesurvey for the consent form and to collect demographic data, before redirecting them to your OpenSesame experiment on JATOS. At the end the experiment can send them to a second Limesurvey survey for the debrief, and perhaps some more scales, and a redirect to SONA to award their point. Each time the participant goes to a new website, their participant number is passed along and recorded in the data for each site. This is described in the final section of this guide.





# Chapter 2

## Add a text-only Information page and Consent question

Every study should start with an information page, where participants can give informed consent, or opt out.

Q00 has been created as a **long free text** entry question, but you can change it to just display text, and then follow it with a simple Yes/No question. Click the green **Edit** button to change these details. When you do , you will see this:

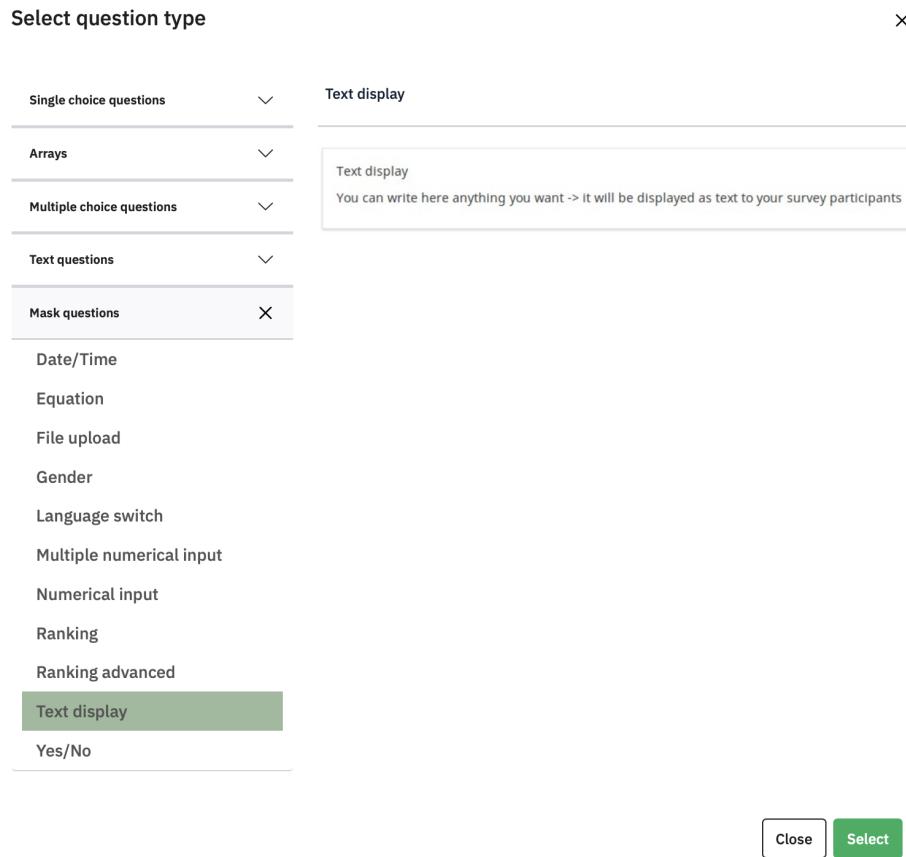
The screenshot shows the Survey Editor interface. At the top, there are buttons for 'Preview survey', 'Preview question group', and 'Preview question'. On the right, there are buttons for 'Close', 'Save and close', and 'Save'. Below these are tabs for 'Settings' and 'Structure'. Under 'Settings', 'My first question group' is selected. In the center, there is a 'Question' tab with a rich text editor containing the text 'A first example question. Please answer this question:'. To the right, a 'General Settings' panel is open with the following fields:

- Code**: Q00
- Question type**: Long free text (this is highlighted in green)
- Question group**: My first question group
- Mandatory**: (checkbox)

### 2.1 Creating a text only question

First, edit the **Code** box to change the name of the question from Q00 to InfoText. Then click the green **Long free text** under **Question Type**, and from the pop up under **Mask Questions** select **Text Display** and then click the **Select** button.

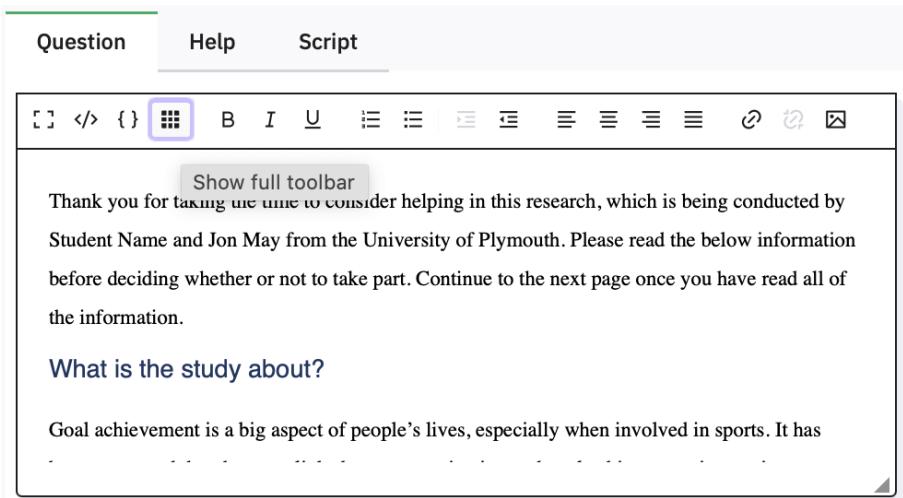
## 14 CHAPTER 2. ADD A TEXT-ONLY INFORMATION PAGE AND CONSENT QUESTION



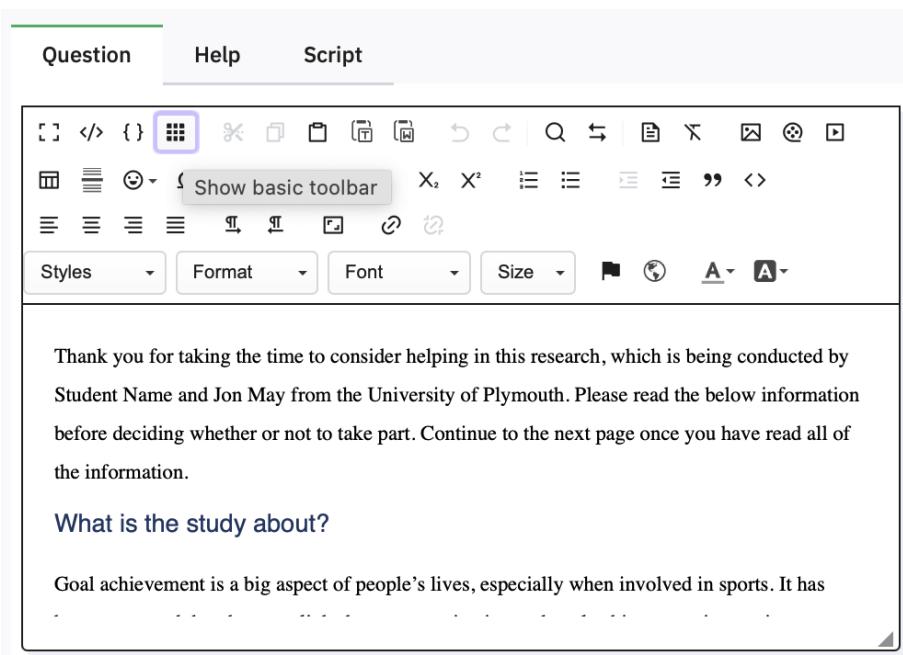
This popup shows you the large range of different question types you can choose between, with whatever you have chosen previewed on the right.

In Appendix 1 is an example of some text you might want to include in a structured consent page. You can also find a copy of this alongside this guide on the DLE

Paste the text into the box where it says 'A first example question. Please answer this question'. You can use the icons at the top of the box to format the text. If you click the little grid icon you'll see the full range of formatting available.



The screenshot shows the Limesurvey editor interface. At the top, there is a menu bar with 'Question', 'Help', and 'Script'. Below the menu is a toolbar with various icons for text editing, including bold, italic, underline, and alignment tools. A tooltip 'Show full toolbar' points to the first icon in the toolbar. The main content area contains a paragraph of text: 'Thank you for taking the time to consider helping in this research, which is being conducted by Student Name and Jon May from the University of Plymouth. Please read the below information before deciding whether or not to take part. Continue to the next page once you have read all of the information.' Below this, a section titled 'What is the study about?' is present, followed by a descriptive paragraph: 'Goal achievement is a big aspect of people's lives, especially when involved in sports. It has'.



The screenshot shows the Limesurvey editor interface with a more extensive toolbar. The toolbar includes icons for text, tables, images, and other document functions. A tooltip 'Show basic toolbar' points to the first icon. Below the toolbar, the content area contains the same text as the previous screenshot: 'Thank you for taking the time to consider helping in this research, which is being conducted by Student Name and Jon May from the University of Plymouth. Please read the below information before deciding whether or not to take part. Continue to the next page once you have read all of the information.' The 'What is the study about?' section and its descriptive paragraph are also present.

 Save

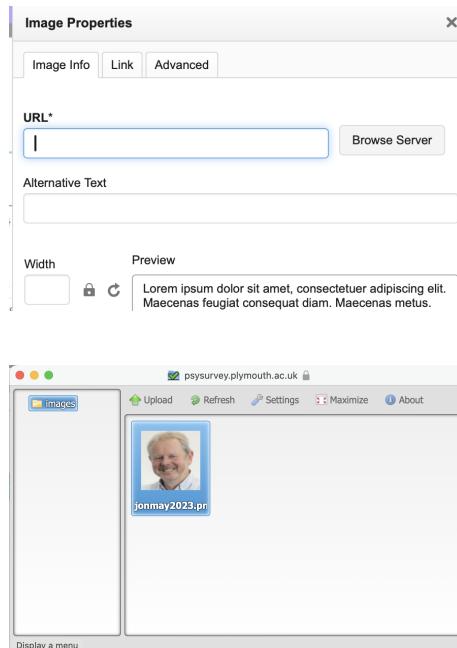
Remember to click the  button whenever you have made changes. Limesurvey does not Autosave, so if you mess things up, you can Close and reopen to revert to your previous content.

## 2.2 Previewing

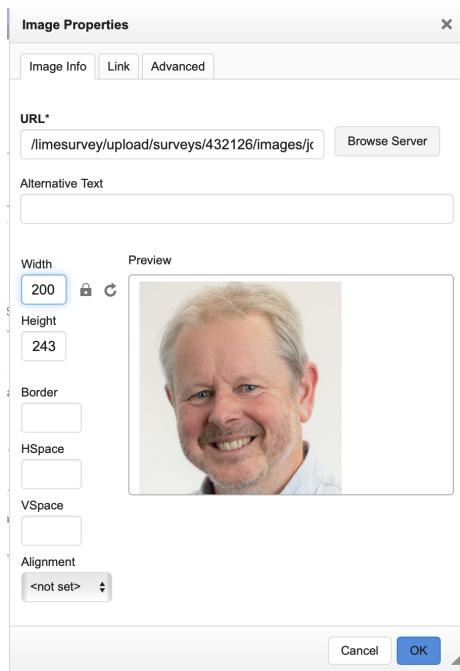
Previewing is helpful to spot any mistakes you have made in understanding the formatting, so you should do it frequently, and especially before duplicating questions or sections of your survey (to avoid having to correct all of the copies!)

## 2.3 Adding Images or Movies

If you ever need to add an image or movie to a question (or to Text) then there are three buttons on the toolbar that allow you to do this. They either need to be stored elsewhere on the internet (so you can provide a URL) or you can upload them to psyserver. For example, adding a simple image can be done by clicking the  button. In the dialog that appears, click **Browse Server** to get the  option and find a file on your computer to upload:



To select the image you have uploaded, double-click it. Depending on its size, it might not all show in the preview box of the Image dialog, so you can enter a sensible display width or height (the other will be calculated):



When you have added a picture to the top of your Information Text, click the green **Save** button and then **preview question**.



## My first question group



Thank you for taking the time to consider helping in this research, which is being conducted by Student Name and Jon May from the University of Plymouth. Please read the below information before deciding whether or not to take part. Continue to the next page once you have read all of the information.

### What is the study about?

Goal achievement is a big aspect of people's lives, especially when involved in sports. It has been suggested that there are links between motivation and goal achievement in certain sports. This study aims to investigate these links, and whether or not it is linked with the personality trait Grit.

## 2.4 Adding Yes/No Questions

At the bottom of the consent page, you will need to add a single question that allows the participant to give their informed consent, or not:

**Having read the information above, do you consent to take part?**



**Add question**

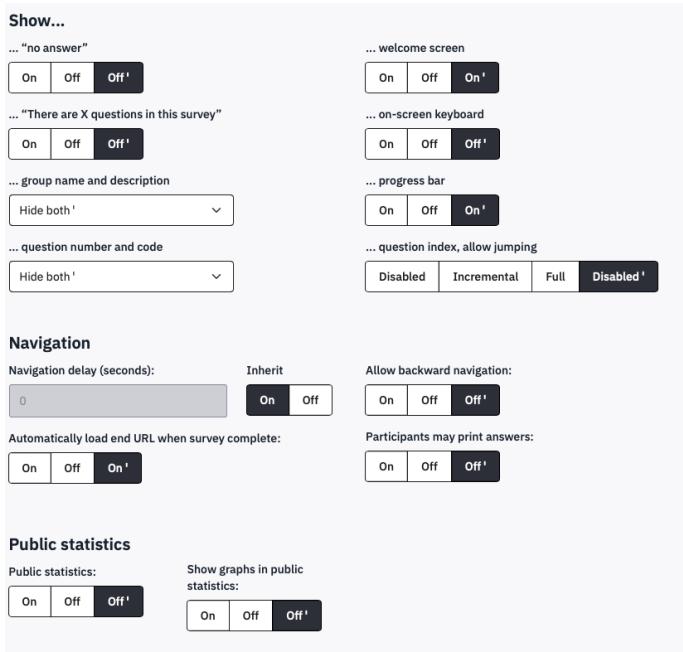
To add this new question, click the **Add question** button at the left. You can then select the question type – from **Mask**, select **Yes/No**. In **Code**, change its name to Consent, set **Mandatory** to **On**, and then type the Question text in the large box.

General Settings	
Code	Consent
Question type	<input checked="" type="button"/> Yes/No
Question group	My first question group
Mandatory	On

Click **Save and Close**, and then **Preview Question**.

## 2.5 Customising the appearance of the survey

It is not necessary for participants to see the Welcome screen with the name of your survey. To stop these being shown, click **Settings** and then **Presentation**. Here are the current default settings (the ' mark indicates a default setting):



The top right option controls the display of the Welcome screen. To stop the welcome screen being shown, click **Off** and then **Save**. Return to the Structure tab to continue editing.

Another setting you may wish to change is in **General Settings**. The Format setting controls whether every question is shown on a separate page, or whether all the questions in a group are shown on a single page, or whether the entire survey is shown in one long page. The default setting is to start a new page for each group (**Group by group**), which is most useful, but if you do want to change it, now you know where. If you have the appropriate permissions, you can also change the Theme of your survey, but if you do not use the default School of Psychology theme you will have to add the logo manually.

**Format:**

<b>Question by question</b>	<b>Group by group</b>	<b>All in one</b>	<b>Group by group'</b>
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**Theme:**

Inherit [School of Psychology]

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# Chapter 3

## Creating questions

### 3.1 Age and Sex

After the consent page, it is common to ask for demographic variables such as age and sex. It is better to collect these at the start of the survey, and not at the end, in case people drop out during the survey. You can run statistical tests for selective drop out by sex or age (etc.) if you collect the information at the start of the survey.

### 3.2 Make a new Group of questions

To show these on a new page, click **Add Group**, and give the Group the **Title** Demographics. Here is no need to add a **Description**.

Click **Save**, and then **Add Question**. Name your new question Sex.

### 3.3 Always Name your questions

**Naming questions is essential.** These names will be used as the columns in your data file, and in using other survey features, so they should be short, informative and not contain spaces or other punctuation. If you need to use more than one word, or need to add numbers, then use an underscore e.g., ‘Scale\_Before’ and ‘Scale\_After’. Using an underscore as a ‘delimiter’ makes it easy to preprocess the data in statistical software such as R or Jamovi.

### 3.4 Create a single choice question

When you select the **Question Type**, you will see that in **Mask** there is a predefined **Gender** question, which you can use later if you like, but for now please use **Single Choice Questions** and choose **List (radio)** (radio means that it used ‘radio buttons’ which only allow one option to be chosen, unlike checkboxes, which allow several options to be chosen).

Select question type X

Single choice questions	Gender
Arrays	Gender
Multiple choice questions	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Female
Text questions	<input type="radio"/> Male
Mask questions	<input type="radio"/> No answer
Date/Time	
Equation	
File upload	
Gender	
Language switch	

### Select question type

Single choice questions	X	List (radio)
5 point choice		List (Radio)
Bootstrap buttons		<b>Choose one of the following answers</b>
Bootstrap dropdown		<input type="radio"/> Burgers
Image select list (Radio)		<input type="radio"/> Pizza
List (dropdown)		<input type="radio"/> Pasta
List (radio)		<input type="radio"/> Other: <input type="text"/>
List with comment		<input checked="" type="radio"/> No answer
Arrays	▼	

Make the question something like ‘What sex are you?’.

Enter the options in the **Answer options** section under the **Question** box.

**Answer options**

Code	Answer options	Actions
A001	Some example answer option	

**Load label set** **Save label set** **Quick add**

Change the text ‘Some example answer option’ to ‘Female’, then click the green



and type ‘Male’.

Before continuing, change the **Code** boxes too. This is not essential, but it is a very good thing to do because it will make your data file more readable and makes later things easier to do as well. The shorter your Code is while still being meaningful the better, so lets use F, M and DNS.

**Answer options**

Code	Answer options	Actions
F	Female	
M	Male	
DNS	Do not wish to say	

**Load label set** **Save label set** **Quick add**

What other options apart from Male and Female might you want to add? Obviously it is possible that you might have participants who do not want to identify themselves as either female or male, but do you want to specify lots of possible options in this question, trying to guess their preferred description?

Consider how you would report this in your write-up: you would probably not want to use a lot of space on this, and would just write ‘67 female, 48 male, and two others’. You could therefore add a ‘Do not wish to say’ option.

If you want to have an Other option that allows people to type their own response then on the right hand side, set **Other** to On. Click **Save** and **Preview the Question**:

## What sex are you?

*Choose one of the following answers*

Female

Male

Do not wish to say

Other:

### 3.5 Mandatory questions

Should you make this question Mandatory? Forcing a response can avoid getting missing data if a respondent misses a question by mistake, but it can also annoy people who don't want to answer one item but might do the rest of your survey, so think carefully about how essential it is to obtain the data you are asking for and use it sparingly. In this case, leave **Mandatory** at Off (in analysis, you can recode missing answers as 'Do not wish to say')

### 3.6 Asking for a number

Age is more complicated than sex. You would not want to use a question with every possible age listed, and you need to collect more exact details than 'age groups' such as 'under 18', '18 to 24', and so on or you cannot report the mean and range.

You could ask them to type their age, but you want to make sure they only enter a number, not text. Text entries would be very difficult to analyse – you cannot find a mean from text.

To force people to enter a number, create a new question and select **Mask questions, Numerical input**

### Select question type

The screenshot shows a sidebar menu with several options: Single choice questions, Arrays, Multiple choice questions, Text questions, Mask questions, Date/Time, Equation, File upload, Gender, Language switch, Multiple numerical input, and Numerical input. The 'Numerical input' option is highlighted with a green background. To the right of the sidebar, there is a main panel titled 'Numerical input' which contains a text input field and a note: 'Only numbers may be entered in this field.'

Name this question Age, and then enter the question text ‘How old were you at your last birthday (whole years)’.

While editing this question, you can change the amount of space provided for the answer from the whole width of the screen to a smaller size – in the settings on the right, click **Display**, and change the **Text input box width** to 17%.

The screenshot shows a nested dropdown menu structure. The top level is 'General Settings' with a downward arrow. Below it is a second level 'Logic' with a downward arrow. The third level, which is currently selected and highlighted with a light gray background, is 'Display' with a large 'X' icon to its right. This indicates that the displayed settings are for the 'Display' category.

**General Settings** ▾

**Logic** ▾

**Display** X

**Answer prefix** ⓘ

**Answer suffix** ⓘ

**Hide tip** ⓘ

**Text input box width** ⓘ

Relative width of the text input wrapper element

17% ▾

### 3.7 Dropdown lists

A dropdown list is an alternative way of presenting answer options that can be useful when you have a lot of options that would otherwise take up a lot of screen space. They have a disadvantage, in that the participant has to click and drag to the right answer rather than just click, so some people find them harder to use. *Avoid dropdown lists if space is not an issue.*

Change Sex into a dropdown list by editing it and changing the Question type from **List (radio)** to **List (dropdown)**.

#### Select question type

The screenshot shows a user interface for selecting a question type. On the left, under 'Single choice questions', there is a list of options: '5 point choice', 'Bootstrap buttons', 'Bootstrap dropdown', 'Image select list (Radio)', and 'List (dropdown)'. The 'List (dropdown)' option is highlighted with a green background. On the right, under 'List (dropdown)', there is a note: 'Choose one of the following answers' followed by a dropdown menu with the placeholder 'Please choose...'. At the bottom left, there is a small letter 's'.

### 3.8 Buttons

A third way to present items is as a row of buttons. Change Sex to Bootstrap buttons, click Save, and the preview question:

### Select question type

The screenshot shows a user interface for selecting a question type. On the left, under 'Single choice questions', there is a list of options: '5 point choice', 'Bootstrap buttons', 'Bootstrap dropdown', 'Image select list (Radio)', 'List (dropdown)', 'List (radio)', and 'List with comment'. An 'X' icon is located next to the title 'Single choice questions'. On the right, under 'Bootstrap buttons', there is a sub-section titled 'Choose one of the following answers' with four green buttons labeled '1', '2', '3', and 'Other'. Below these buttons is a text input field labeled 'Other:'.

### What sex are you?

*Choose one of the following answers*

The screenshot shows a multiple-choice question with four options: 'Female', 'Male', 'Do not wish to say', and 'Other'. Each option is enclosed in a rectangular box with a thin border.

As you can see, the longer answer looks a bit ugly, so take care with this style.

## 3.9 Multiple Answer Questions

Single answer lists have round ‘radio buttons’ that toggle on and then off if people press another one. If you ask people whether they had cornflakes or toast for breakfast, and they had both, they may be frustrated with your survey.

Make a new group ‘Questions’, set its Condition to Consent==“Y” and click Save.

Add a new question Breakfast which asks ‘What did you have for breakfast’, and under Question Type click **Multiple choice questions**, and select **Multiple Choice**.

We will add several items that you might have for breakfast. Instead of adding them one at a time, click **Quick add**. Then add some things they might have had.

**Quick-add labels**

X

Enter one label per line. You can provide a code by separating code and label text with a semicolon or tab. For multilingual surveys you add the translation(s) on the same line separated with a semicolon or tab. Please remember to use the save button after applying the changes.

```
toast;Toast
cereal;Cereal
muesli;Muesli
bread;Bread
miso;Miso Soup
jam;Jam or Marmalade
marmite;Marmite
eggs;Eggs
sausage;Sausage
bacon;Bacon
```

Cancel
Replace
Add

As the help information says, here we are naming the option as well as entering the text to display, separating them with a semicolon (no spaces). When you click **Add**, they will all be filled in for you.

Notice that we still have the example row though – Add will Add to the existing options. If you had clicked **Replace**, it would have replaced them. You can remove the example by clicking



Click Save and preview the question.

This format uses checkboxes which show ticks if selected:

**What did you have for breakfast?***Select all that apply*

- Toast
- Cereal
- Muesli
- Bread
- Miso Soup
- Jam or Marmalade
- Marmite
- Eggs
- Sausage
- Bacon

Ten items take up a lot of space, so you could format them in columns – under Display, set Display columns to 3. Save and preview!

Radio buttons and checkboxes are universally used conventions in computer interface design, so you should not need to add explanatory text.

From a data point of view, each option becomes a separate yes/no question, so the data file becomes correspondingly larger, *and you should use these sparingly*.



# Chapter 4

## A matrix of items using a Likert scale

### 4.1 Likert Rating Scales

Most questionnaires will use some form of rating scale, where people have to select one of several ordinal responses. Common examples are Likert-type scales, such as:

Strongly Disagree – Disagree – Neither – Agree – Strongly Agree

Not at all like me – somewhat like me – very like me

0 (not at all) – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 – 10 (Constantly)

These can be thought of as horizontal single choice questions, and there are a variety of **Array question** types for them, but the basic **Array** is suitable for most cases.

Select question type ×

Single choice questions ▼

Arrays X

**Array**

Array using flexible labels

6 – I like it very much	5	4	3	2	1 – I do not like it at all	No answer
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

• This is an array-type question using a flexible label set. Each label set contains X answers.

Add a question, and select the **Array** question type. Name the question **Foods**, set the **Question** to ‘How much do you like...?’ and use **Quick add** to

create (and name) five subquestions.

Subquestions		Answer options	Relevance		
Code	Subquestion		equation	Action	
☰	choc	Chocolate	<input type="button" value="✎"/>	1	<input type="button" value="+"/> <input type="button" value="-"/>
☰	pizza	Pizza	<input type="button" value="✎"/>	1	<input type="button" value="+"/> <input type="button" value="-"/>
☰	crisps	Crisps	<input type="button" value="✎"/>	1	<input type="button" value="+"/> <input type="button" value="-"/>
☰	cake	Cake	<input type="button" value="✎"/>	1	<input type="button" value="+"/> <input type="button" value="-"/>
☰	natto	Natto	<input type="button" value="✎"/>	1	<input type="button" value="+"/> <input type="button" value="-"/>

Did you remember to avoid a space between the code, semicolon, and Subquestion text? If you didn't, please edit the spaces out before proceeding.

Whenever you have several consecutive items using the same answer scale then they can be presented as a matrix to make them easier to answer and use less screen space.

Click Answer options to define a 5 point Likert response scale, with the Codes 0 to 4 (you can use Quick add).

Subquestions		Answer options	Actions		
Code	Answer options				
☰	0	Strongly dislike	<input type="button" value="✎"/>	<input type="button" value="+"/> <input type="button" value="-"/>	
☰	1	Dislike	<input type="button" value="✎"/>	<input type="button" value="+"/> <input type="button" value="-"/>	
☰	2	Neutral	<input type="button" value="✎"/>	<input type="button" value="+"/> <input type="button" value="-"/>	
☰	3	Like	<input type="button" value="✎"/>	<input type="button" value="+"/> <input type="button" value="-"/>	
☰	4	Strongly like	<input type="button" value="✎"/>	<input type="button" value="+"/> <input type="button" value="-"/>	

Using numbers for the codes here can make scoring the data easier later. Once again, make sure there are no spaces after the numbers or before the Answer

options. Save and preview!

If you are writing a lot of surveys, you can save a frequently used scale like this by clicking Save label set. You can then reload it later using Load label set.

## 4.2 Semantic Differential questions

Semantic differential questions are those where you put an adjective on the left and its opposite on the right, and so rate the same statement on several dimensions.

Describe your favorite chocolate:

Dark	<input type="radio"/>	Milk
Bitter	<input type="radio"/>	Sweet
Thin	<input type="radio"/>	Thick

In Limesurvey this is just an Array, but you put the left and right labels in the Subquestion text, separated by the vertical bar character | . The | might take you some time to locate on your keyboard, but it should be there.

Subquestions	Answer options	
Code ⓘ	Subquestion ⓘ	
≡	DM	Dark Milk
≡	BS	Bitter Sweet
≡	PF	Plain Flavoured

For the answer options, on separate lines type the values 0 to 10 (for the Codes) followed by a semicolon, and nothing else.

## Quick-add labels

Enter one label per line. You can prov  
multilingual surveys you add the tran  
use the save button after applying the

```
0;  
1;  
2;  
3;  
4;  
5;  
6;  
7;  
8;  
9;  
10;
```

You should end up with an unlabelled semantic differential like this:

**Describe your favourite chocolate:**

Dark	<input type="radio"/> Milk
Bitter	<input type="radio"/> Sweet
Plain	<input type="radio"/> Flavoured

The alignment of the left hand side is not great; it needs to be right-aligned. We can fix this by adding HTML tags to the subquestion text.

Subquestions	Answer options	
<b>Code</b> ●	<b>Subquestion</b> ●	
☰ DM	<p align="right">Dark</p> <p>Milk</p>	
☰ BS	<p align="right">Bitter</p> <p>Sweet</p>	
☰ PF	<p align="right">Plain</p> <p>Flavoured</p>	
<b>Load label set</b>		<b>Save label set</b>

Describe your favourite chocolate:



### 4.3 Continuous Sliders

An alternative to discrete ordinal Likert scales, sliders provide a continuous rating between two values, a bit like the ‘visual analogue scales’ used in physical questionnaires. These are hidden away under the **Mask question** type **Multiple numerical input**.

Select question type X

Single choice questions	Multiple numerical input
Arrays	Multiple numerical Input <small>Only numbers may be entered in these fields. The sum must be between 1 and 50.</small>
Multiple choice questions	
Text questions	Apples Oranges Bananas Total: 15
Mask questions	X
Date/Time	
Equation	
File upload	
Gender	
Language switch	
<b>Multiple numerical input</b>	
Numerical input	
Ranking	

Create a **Multiple numerical input** question called **Slider**, with the **question** ‘How much would you pay for...’ and the **Subquestion** ‘...a bar of chocolate?’

To make it a slider, open the bottom option on the right hand menu, **Slider**. Set **Use slider layout** to On. Set the **minimum** value to 0, the **maximum** to 100, and the **accuracy** to 1. Turn On the **Display slider min and max value**.

#### How much would you pay for...

Only numbers may be entered in these fields.  
Your answer must be between 0 and 100

...a bar of chocolate?  100

S

You can now add more items as different subquestions

### How much would you pay for...

*Only numbers may be entered in these fields.  
Your answer must be between 0 and 100*

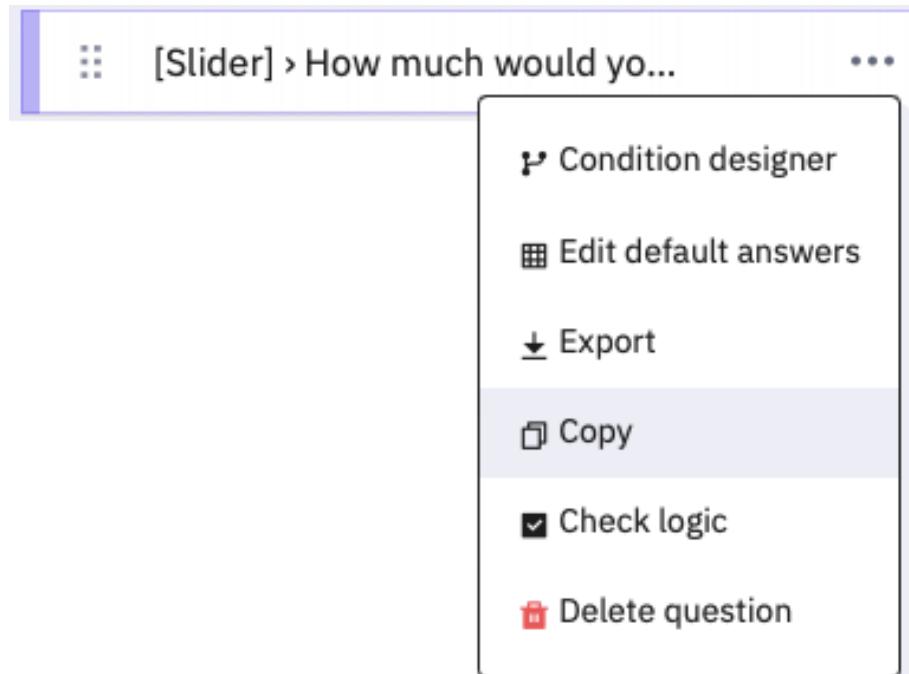


## 4.4 Duplicating questions

Often your surveys will consist of lots of similar questions. You can save time by getting one question exactly the way you want it, and then duplicating it, so all you have to do is edit the content.

For example, the Slider question had a lot of settings which would take time to replicate. If you wanted to ask a slightly different question using a slider, you could replicate it and just change the question text.

Hover over the Slider question and click the **three dots** that appear to the right, and select **Copy** to duplicate it.



Notice that you have options about what to copy over. Leave them all as **Yes**, and click **Save and close**. Edit the SliderCopy question and change the question to ‘How long would it take you to eat...’.



# Chapter 5

## Randomising items, questions and blocks

If you have several questions each with a number of nominal options and always present everything in the same order, then there may be some systematic bias in the way they are answered. As the survey goes on, perhaps people get riskier, or more conservative, or more prone to choose the middle option.

It is therefore good practice to randomise the order of options within questions (provided that they are not ordinal, of course) and to randomise the order of questions (so long as they do not follow on from each other).

### 5.1 Randomising items in a question

Consider the Breakfast multiple-answer question, which has lots of items that people might have eaten for breakfast. If people read through this in order, they might all tend to pick the first thing they come across that they ate, and ignore later possible matches.

To turn on within-question randomisation, **Edit** the question and click **Display**. Set **Random order** to Yes.

While you are here, you could also hide the italic help text that is appearing in every question, by setting **Hide tip** to On.

**What did you have for breakfast?**

- |   |                                  |                                    |
|---|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jam or Marmalade | <input type="checkbox"/> Sausage | <input type="checkbox"/> Miso Soup |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cereal           | <input type="checkbox"/> Eggs    | <input type="checkbox"/> Marmite   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toast            | <input type="checkbox"/> Bread   |                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bacon            | <input type="checkbox"/> Muesli  |                                    |

In the Foods question, you have also created a matrix of items rated on a Likert scale. These could also appear in random order.

Randomise the order of the Foods items within the Likert-scale question, and Hide tip. Do the same for Chocolate, and the two Sliders.

## 5.2 Randomising the order of questions

To randomise the order of questions, they need to be in the same group, and associated within a Randomization group.

Edit Breakfast, and in the **Logic** section, set **Randomization group name** to **rg1**. Then do the same for Foods, Chocolate and Slider, but not SliderCopy. rg1 is just an arbitrary name – you can use anything.

### Randomization group name



```
rg1
```

Each person who responds to your survey will now see a different presentation of the first four questions, but the ‘How long would it take you to eat...’ questions will always come last.

If you ‘Preview’ the survey a few times, then you should see this working. You might have to preview the whole survey, not just the group.

Even when people do question in a different order, and the items are also in a different order, when you download the data, all the responses and questions will be in the same order that you have listed them in the survey.

## 5.3 Randomising blocks

If you have several blocks, then these can also be presented in random order.

Edit the Demographics group and set its Randomisation group to **qrg** (an arbitrary name, again). Do the same for Questions.

### Randomization group:

**qrg**

When you preview your survey now, you'll find that it is a right jumble.

## 5.4 Randomise participants into conditions

Sometimes you might want to randomly allocate people to one of two sets of questions, or have a third in each of three conditions. This can be useful if you want to compare different ways of framing questions, or ask about different topics.

To do this you need to create a random number (e.g., 0 or 1, or 1,2, or 3), and then make the Group condition match one of the values.

One of the Question types is an Equation, which can be used to generate random numbers.

Create a new question called random and set its question type to **Mask question - Equation**

Select question type ×

Single choice questions Arrays Multiple choice questions Text questions Mask questions Date/Time <b>Equation</b> <span style="background-color: #c8e6c9; padding: 2px 5px;"> </span> File upload Gender	<b>Equation</b>  <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;">         How tall are you? (cms)  <small>Only numbers may be entered in this field.</small>  <input type="text" value="200"/> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;">         Your weight? (kgs)  <small>Only numbers may be entered in this field.</small>  <input type="text" value="125"/> </div> <div style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 5px; background-color: #fff;">         Weight: 125          Height: 200          Your Body Mass Index (BMI) is 31.25       </div>
---	---

In the **Question** type `{rand(0,4)}`. The curly brackets tell limesurvey that this

is computer code to be evaluated, and `rand(x,y)` is a function that generates integers in the range `x` to `y` inclusive. Our question will therefore create the numbers 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4. To stop this question appearing in the survey, set **Display – Always hide this question** to On. Save and close. In the question summary,

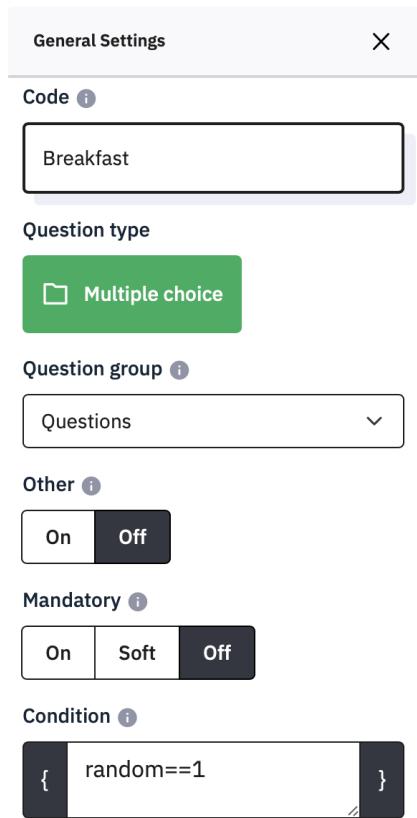
The screenshot shows the Limesurvey question editor interface. On the left, there's a toolbar with various icons. Below it is a code input field containing `{rand(0,4)}`. On the right, a settings panel titled "General Settings" is open. It includes fields for "Code" (containing `random`), "Question type" (set to "Equation"), "Question group" (set to "My first question group"), and a "Mandatory" checkbox.

In **Structure**, move **random** to be the very first question in the survey. In the question summary, you should see the `rand` function in blue, to confirm that it has been recognised by limesurvey. If you hover over it, you will see an explanation of what it does.

The screenshot shows the "Question summary" for question ID 562. It displays the following details:

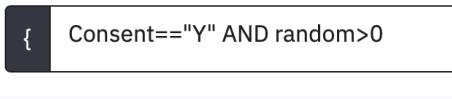
- Question group:** (ID:88)
- Code:** random : (Optional question)
- Question:** `rand(0, 4)`
- Help:** (None)

Now set a different **Condition** for each of the first four questions in **Questions**. Set **breakfast**'s condition to be `random==1`, **foods** to `random==2`, **chocolate** to `random==3`, and **Slider** to `random==4`. You do not need the brackets now because they are automatically added to the left and right of the Condition. When you **Preview survey** a few times, you will see just one of these questions and **SliderCopy**. Sometimes, when `random` is 0, you'll only see **SliderCopy**.



Although this example has randomly chosen one question, you can also set a Group conditions to match one of the random values. If you edit the **Condition** of Questions to Consent=="Y" AND random>0 then when random is 0 none of the questions in this block will be shown.

**Condition:**





# Chapter 6

## Branch to different pages depending on participants answers

You may often want to skip a question or more depending upon a respondent's answers to a question. For example, if they answer No to the consent question you need to skip the whole survey. If you have used other survey platforms you may know this as Skip Logic or Branching.

With Limesurvey's ability to conditionally display questions depending upon the value of previous answers, there is no need for branching – you just set a question or group's condition so that it is not displayed.

Even better, you can make questions appear when another question has been answered, as we did when we made Sex dependent upon the value of Age that people entered.

In this respect, Limesurvey is much simpler and more flexible than other platforms.

To demonstrate how this works, we will make people who do not consent skip past the questions to see a Sorry message, and add Thank you people for people who did consent and who have done the survey.

### 6.1 Make a question group conditional

If you preview your survey, you will find that even if you say No to the consent question, the survey carries on to ask you your Sex and Age.

We need to set a condition for the Demographics group, and any other questions,

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so that it is only shown when Consent has been given and the answer recorded is Y.

The screenshot shows a software interface for managing survey questions. At the top, there are two tabs: "Settings" and "Structure". Below the tabs are two buttons: "Add question" (green) and "Add group" (grey). To the right of these buttons are two icons: a gear and a lock. The main area displays a hierarchical structure of question groups:

- My first question group** (2 items):
  - [InfoText] > Thank you for tak...
  - [Consent] > Having read the in...
- Demographics** (2 items):
  - [Sex] > What sex are you?
  - [Age] > How old were you at yo...

To do this, click the Demographics group name to see the Group Summary, and then click **Edit**. At the bottom of the page, set the **Condition**

A modal window titled "Condition:" is open. It contains a single line of code: `{ Consent=="Y"`. The code is enclosed in curly braces, indicating it is a conditional expression.

You are entering some computer code that specifies the question name on the left, and the value it has to have on the right. Be careful to get these exactly correct – case matters.

Also make sure to use plain straight “quote” marks, not “smart” or curly quotes.

There are two things that might seem odd here:

- 1) You need two equals signs because in computer coding, two == is a comparator that tests whether two things have the same value, but one = sign is an operator that *makes* something be equal to a value.
- 2) The buttons said Yes and No, but the value recorded is Y or N

When you click **Save and close** to return to the summary, it now shows this:

## Group summary

<b>Title:</b>	Demographics (89)
<b>Description:</b>	
<b>Condition:</b>	Consent == "Y"

If you make mistakes, you may see this instead – the red box shows that Limesurvey does not know of a question called ‘consent’ with a little c

## Group summary

<b>Title:</b>	Demographics (89)
<b>Description:</b>	
<b>Condition:</b>	consent = "Yes"

If you hover the mouse over the red = sign, it will tell you that you are assigning a new value to a variable instead of comparing it. It lets you get the value wrong though – nothing it can do about that.

When you are writing conditions, do take a moment to check this helpful diagnostic information.

## 6.2 Making an individual question conditional

Setting a Condition at the Group level means that it applies to all the questions in that group. It is easy to change, and most surveys will not have many Groups.

You can also set the Condition at a Question level. If you click on Sex, to see the Question Summary, you can see that it has inherited the Group relevance setting from the group's Condition. Consent is now green to show that it is a valid question name. The Sex question's condition is set to 1, which means 'TRUE' or 'Always' show, provided that the Group is being shown.

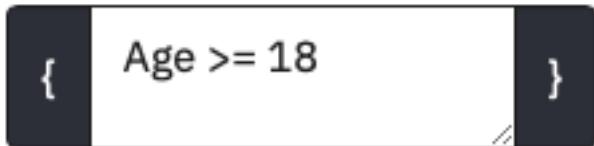
**Question summary** *Sex (ID: 524)*

---

<b>Question group:</b>	(ID:89)
<b>Code:</b>	Sex : ( <i>Optional question</i> )
<b>Question:</b>	What sex are you?
<b>Help:</b>	
<b>Type:</b>	List (radio) (Type: L)
<b>Mandatory:</b>	No
<b>Encrypted:</b>	No
<b>Condition:</b>	1
<b>Group relevance:</b>	Consent == "Y"
<b>Position for</b>	end
<b>'Other:' option:</b>	

Edit the Sex question, and in General Settings, change the Condition to Age  $\geq 18$

### Condition ⓘ



Preview the survey and give consent, and you should then see the Age question. Enter an Age value of 18 or more, and the Sex question will appear. Change the Age to under 18, and it will vanish. Any value you chose for Sex will still be there – all that is changing is whether or not the Question is displayed.

Being able to make any question's display conditional on other answers, even if they are on the same screen, is a powerful feature of Limesurvey.

## 6.3 Re-ordering questions and groups

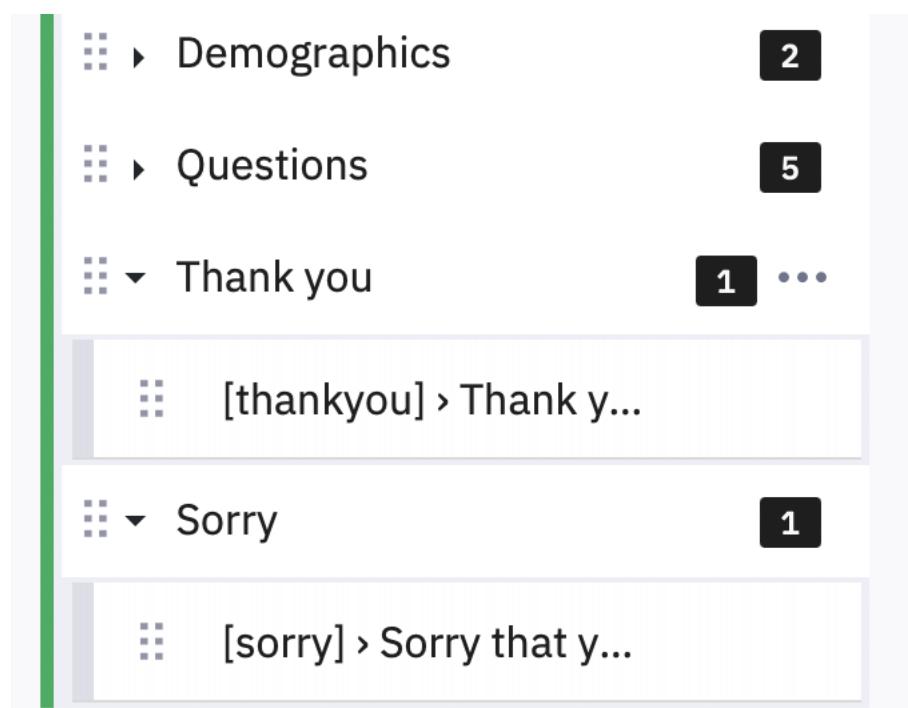
Normally, you would want a conditional question to appear *after the* one it depends on, not *before*. You can reorder questions in the Structure by dragging them – click the matrix of six dots to the left of the Question name, and drag Age above Sex. Now when you preview the survey, and enter an Age of 18 or more, the Sex question appears in a sensible place.

You can also re-order Groups by dragging their title up or down, and can move questions between groups.

## 6.4 Add a Thank You and Sorry Message

Add a new group at the end of the survey and name it **Thank you**.

- Set Condition to Consent==“Y”
- Add a Text Display question **thankyou** to say ‘Thank you! Please do not close the browser until you have returned to SONA to receive your credit!’
- Add another block and name it **Sorry**.
- Set Condition to Consent==“N”
- Add a Text Display question **sorry** to this block to say ‘Sorry that you do not want to participate. Please close the browser window now.’



Preview your survey and try giving and not giving consent.

# Chapter 7

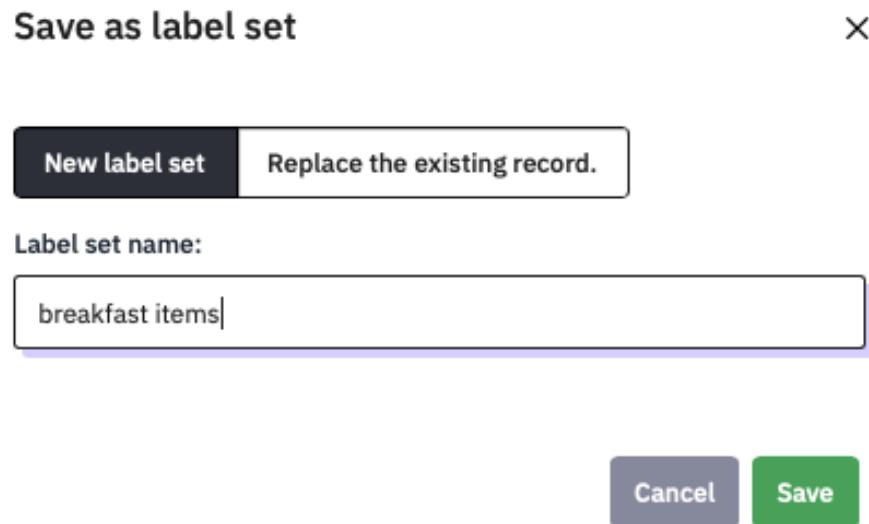
## Pipe answers from one question into a later question

You might want to include one answer in a subsequent question, e.g., after asking ‘What do you crave most’, and having them choose ‘chocolate’, you might want to ask ‘How often do you crave chocolate?’. You don’t want to write a different question for every option in the first question, but to replace chocolate with whatever they answered. This is called Piping.

Make a copy of Breakfast, name it Favourite, and turn it into a Single choice question **List (radio)**. Oh no, all the sub-questions have vanished! Save and close.

### 7.1 Saving lists of subquestions and answer options for reuse

Return to Breakfast and **Edit** it. Click **Save Label set** underneath the sub-questions – choose **New label set** and name it breakfast items.



Return to Favourite, and click **Load label set**, then select breakfast items (the example here shows other label sets I've saved previously).

## Manage label sets

A screenshot of the "Manage label sets" interface. At the top, it says "Label sets list". Below that is a dropdown menu. Underneath the dropdown is a section labeled "--Label sets--" containing several options: "Strongly disagree - Strongly agree", "Very negative - Very positive", "Agree (6 point)", "vividness010", and "breakfast items". To the right of the list are three buttons: "Format" and "Font" with dropdown arrows, and a "Delete" button.

The Answer options should be filled with the list you had saved. Save and preview.

**Which is your favourite breakfast item?**

- |                              |  |                               |
|------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Toast  | <input type="radio"/> Miso Soup        | <input type="radio"/> Sausage |
| <input type="radio"/> Cereal | <input type="radio"/> Jam or Marmalade | <input type="radio"/> Bacon   |
| <input type="radio"/> Muesli | <input type="radio"/> Marmite          |                               |
| <input type="radio"/> Bread  | <input type="radio"/> Eggs             |                               |

## 7.2 Piping a List question answer

Insert a new **Single choice question** named Frequency, and make it a **List (radio)**

Make the text ‘How many days a week do you eat {Favourite.shown}’ and set **Hide tip** to On. Save and close, then preview the Group.

The screenshot shows the 'Question' editor interface. At the top, there are tabs for 'Question', 'Help', and 'Script'. Below the tabs is a toolbar with various icons for text editing. The main content area contains the question text: "How many days a week do you eat {Favourite.shown}?"

Below the text area is a section titled "Answer options". It has a table with three rows:

Code	Answer options	Actions
1	one day a week	<span style="color: green;">+/-</span>
2to5	two to five days a week	<span style="color: green;">+/-</span>
6or7	six or seven days a week	<span style="color: green;">+/-</span>

At the bottom of the "Answer options" section are buttons for "Load label set", "Save label set", and "Quick add".

Before you click an option in Favourite, the Frequency question is just ‘How

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often do you eat?'. As soon as you select an option, that answer is pasted in. If you change your selection, the Frequency question updates too.

When you are using piping, make sure that every possible answer works grammatically. Problems can be caused by options that vary in number, or questions that have 'a' or 'an' before the piped text, e.g. *What are you most afraid of, spiders or an elephant?* followed by '*What would you do if you saw a [piped text]*'

Putting the name of a question followed by 'shown' in curly brackets as in the List question example will generally work, unless there are multiple questions for an answer, as in an Array or Multiple Choice question.

### 7.3 Piping answers from a multiple choice or array question

Where there are more than one answer for a question, you need to include the name of the subquestion in the piping, e.g., {Breakfast\_toast.shown} – notice that the question and subquestion are separated by an underscore.

Try adding a question called Chosen as a **Long Free Text** item, with all ten of the breakfast items on separate lines, and move it immediately after the Breakfast question.

The screenshot shows the Question editor interface. On the left, the main content area displays a list of breakfast items: {Breakfast\_toast.shown}, {Breakfast\_miso.shown}, {Breakfast\_marmite.shown}, {Breakfast\_jam.shown}, {Breakfast\_cereal.shown}, {Breakfast\_muesli.shown}, {Breakfast\_eggs.shown}, {Breakfast\_bacon.shown}, {Breakfast\_sausage.shown}, and {Breakfast\_bread.shown}. Below this list is the question 'Can you explain why?'.

On the right, the 'General Settings' panel is open, containing the following fields:

- Code:** Chosen
- Question type:** Long free text (selected)
- Question group:** Questions
- Mandatory:** Off
- Condition:** { 1 }
- Encrypted:** Off

If you preview the group, then you will see the item text of all checked items appear in the list as soon as you select them. If they are unselected, there isn't even a blank line.

## 7.4 Piping answers from one question into another

Previous answers can be included in lots of other places, such as subquestions, answer options and conditions. For example, this question lets people list five Universities and records them in the fields Uni1 to Uni5

The screenshot shows a survey editor interface with two main sections: a question editor on the left and a general settings panel on the right.

**Question Editor:**

- Header:** Question, Help, Script.
- Content:** A text area containing the instruction: "Please list the Universities that you applied to through UCAS below, one at a time - the order does not matter". Below the text area are rich text editing tools.
- Subquestions:** A table titled "Subquestions" with columns: Code, Subquestion, Relevance equation, and Action. It lists five subquestions named Uni1 through Uni5, each with the text "Some example subquestion".
- Buttons:** Load label set, Save label set, Quick add.

**General Settings:**

- Code:** UCAS
- Question type:** Multiple short text (highlighted)
- Question group:** Universities
- Mandatory:** Off
- Condition:** { 1 }
- Encrypted:** Off
- Input validation:** RegExp
- Save as default values:** Off
- Logic:** (dropdown menu)

The question looks like this in the survey:

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**Please list the Universities that you applied to through UCAS below, one at a time  
- the order does not matter**

You can then use these answers anywhere else in your survey, for example, in the conditions for a later question:

### Question summary Visit1 (ID: 428)

<b>Question group:</b>	(ID:72)
<b>Code:</b>	Visit1 : (Optional question)
<b>Question:</b>	Did you visit <b>UCAS_Uni1</b> at any of the following (select all that apply)
<b>Help:</b>	
<b>Type:</b>	Multiple choice (Type: M)
<b>Option 'Other':</b>	No
<b>Mandatory:</b>	No
<b>Encrypted:</b>	No
<b>Condition:</b>	<code>!is_empty(UCAS_Uni1)</code>
<b>Group relevance:</b>	<code>Consent == "Yes"</code>
<b>Exclusive option:</b>	None; Other
<b>Randomization</b>	visits
<b>group name:</b>	

The condition `!is_empty(UCAS_Uni1)` means ‘if UCAS\_Uni1 is not empty’, so this question would only be shown if the box for Uni1 had been filled in. This avoids the question ‘Did you visit at any of the following’ being displayed when Uni1 is left empty.

# Chapter 8

## Redirect to another website or SONA

When a participant has finished your survey, you may want them to do something else, or grant them participation credit by returning to SONA.

If you want them to do an experiment, you might want to send them to a URL for your study, on JATOS.

### 8.1 Using Limesurvey with SONA

If you are using the SONA participant pool, then every person who signs up to do your survey is given a unique participant ID number. You can send this to Limesurvey, then get Limesurvey to send the ID back to SONA at the end of the survey so that SONA can grant credits.

On SONA, change the Study URL so it includes &id=%SURVEY\_CODE% in the URL. So if the LimeSurvey URL is:

<https://psysurvey.plymouth.ac.uk/index.php?r=survey/index&sid=/651365&/lang-en>

then change it to

[https://psysurvey.plymouth.ac.uk/index.php?r=survey/index&sid=/651365&/lang-en&id=%SURVEY\\_CODE%](https://psysurvey.plymouth.ac.uk/index.php?r=survey/index&sid=/651365&/lang-en&id=%SURVEY_CODE%)

**About URLs:** when you put a ? at the end of a URL, everything that follows is a sequence of parameter names and values which the receiving web page can use. In this case, we are just sending one parameter, called id, and it takes the value %SURVEY\_CODE% - this is actually replaced by SONA with the participant's unique participant ID.

The Study Information on SONA now also displays a URL labeled “LimeSurvey End URL”.

In LimeSurvey, configure the survey to accept the id number, as URL Parameter named id. To do this, go to **Settings > Survey menu > Panel Integration** and click **Add URL parameter**. name it id and leave the target question unspecified. Remember to use lower-case as this is case-sensitive.

**Add URL parameter**

**Parameter name:**

**Target (sub-)question:**

(No target question)

**Cancel** **Save**

Screenshots below show the 'Edit survey panel integration' page with the 'Add URL parameter' button and a table with a row for 'id'.

To return the information to SONA, you need to add an End URL. This is the ‘Limesurvey End URL’ value shown in SONA. It will be something like this one:

```
https://uopsop.sona`-systems.com/
webstudy_credit.aspx?experiment_id=123&credit_token=4e48f9b638a&
survey_code={PASSTHRU:id}
```

Copy it, go back to Limesurvey’s **Settings > Text Elements**, find the **End URL** field, and paste.

---

End URL:

```
https://uopsop.sona-systems.com/webstudy_credit.aspx?experiment_id=123&credit_token=4e48f9b638a&sl
```

There is a problem here though – people who do not consent will also receive credit. To fix this we need to turn this into some evaluated code with a condition:

```
{if(Consent=="N", "https://uopsop.sona-systems.com/",
"https://uopsop.sona-systems.com/
webstudy_credit.aspx?experiment_id=123&credit_token=4e48f9b638a&
survey_code={PASSTHRU:id}")}
```

This is a bunch to type, but if you just paste

```
{if(Consent=="N", "https://uopsop.sona-systems.com/", "
onto the front, and
")}
```

onto the end it is done. If you try to do this in Word, beware Word's helpful smart quotes feature which will turn the straight quotes into curved ones, which will not work in Limesurvey.

## 8.2 Using Limesurvey with JATOS and OpenSesame

Sending a participant to JATOS instead of SONA is done in the same way, except that you will paste in the URL for your experiment on JATOS instead.

You can pass the participant id using the ?id={PASSTHRU:id} option.

In your OpenSesame experiment, you need to have added inline javascript as the first event to receive the parameters and copy them into JATOS variables, so that they are saved in the data file:

```
try{vars.participant_URL_ID =
jatos.urlQueryParameters.id}catch(e){vars.participant_URL_ID =0}
```

At the end of your experiment, you need to send the code back to SONA (or to another survey), e.g.

```
try{jatos.endStudyAndRedirect("https://uopsop.sona-systems.com/
webstudy_credit.aspx?experiment_id=4221&
credit_token=84720f17f1724a69b9c23b1a1ae945d9&survey_code=" +
vars.participant_URL_ID);}catch(e){}
```

If you are able to write OpenSesame experiments and use the JATOS server, then you can probably work out how to do this, so I am just including the info here to let you know that it is possible and it does work.

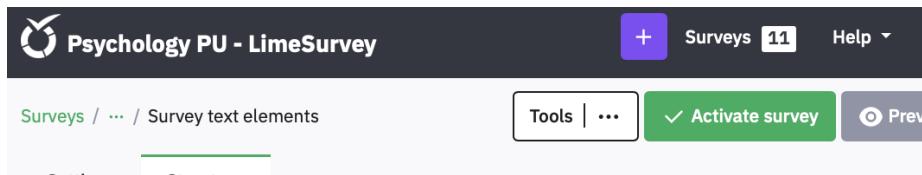


# Chapter 9

## Running your survey

Previewing the survey does not collect data (that annoying yellow bar has told you that).

It is safe to activate your survey while you are developing it. Click the green Activate survey button to do so.



Despite the scary warnings in the next pop up, you can add and delete things, if you deactivate the survey again, though this will delete any data you've collected in the meantime so you should not actually collect real data until you have thoroughly pilot tested the survey and checked its data file. Check that **Date stamp** is On, so you can work out when each participant did the survey. Leave the rest Off. You do want **Open-access mode** unless you are using a Limesurvey Panel to invite people from a mailing list you have set up (not in this guide).

**Activate survey** ×

**Please keep in mind:**  
 Once a survey has been activated you can no longer add or delete questions, question groups or subquestions.  
 Editing questions, question groups or subquestions is still possible. The following settings cannot be changed once a survey has been activated.

Anonymized responses ⓘ	Date stamp ⓘ
<input type="button" value="On"/> <input type="button" value="Off"/>	<input type="button" value="On"/> <input type="button" value="Off"/>
Save IP address ⓘ	Anonymize IP address ⓘ
<input type="button" value="On"/> <input type="button" value="Off"/>	<input type="button" value="On"/> <input type="button" value="Off"/>
Save timings ⓘ	Save referrer URL ⓘ
<input type="button" value="On"/> <input type="button" value="Off"/>	<input type="button" value="On"/> <input type="button" value="Off"/>

---

Do you want your survey to be public for everyone (open-access mode) or invite only (closed-access mode)?

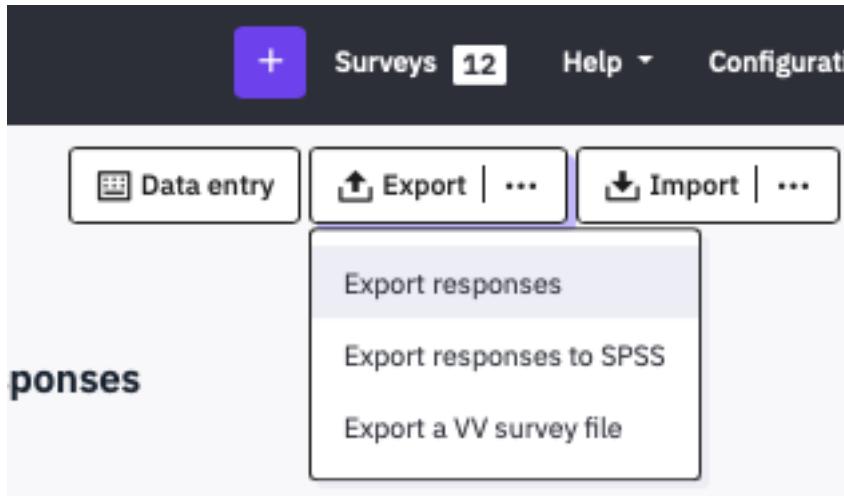
<input type="button" value="Open-access mode"/>	<input type="button" value="Closed-access mode"/>
---	---

Cancel Save and activate

## 9.1 Downloading data

You can download your data at any time from the **Settings – Survey** menu option **Responses**.

Clicking this brings up a screen with information about how many responses you have and some options to display them on-screen. However, you simply need to click the **Export** button at the top of the screen, and choose Export responses.



After that the flexibility makes it look complicated, but if you leave everything at their defaults you will get a plain CSV file that anything can read. The main choice you need to make is on the right, under **Headings : Export questions as:**

Here is an example of how a survey's data exports with each option:

Question Code:

H	I	J	K	L
SLI[ideal]	SLI[conditions]	SLI[satisfied]	SLI[accomplishment]	SLI[regrets]
slightly disagree	agree	agree	slightly agree	disagree
slightly agree	slightly agree	slightly agree	agree	slightly disagree
strongly agree	strongly agree	agree	strongly agree	slightly agree

Abbreviated question text:

H	I	J	K	L
Please rate how.. [In most ways my..]	Please rate how.. [The conditions..]	Please rate how.. [I am satisfied..]	Please rate how.. [So far, I have..]	Please rate how.. [If I could live..]
slightly disagree	agree	agree	slightly agree	disagree
slightly agree	slightly agree	slightly agree	agree	slightly disagree
strongly agree	strongly agree	agree	strongly agree	slightly agree
slightly agree	agree	agree	slightly agree	disagree

Full question text:

H	I	J	K	L
Please rate how much you disagree or agree with each of these statements: [In most ways my life is close to my ideal]	Please rate how much you disagree or agree with each of these statements: [The conditions of my life are excellent]	Please rate how much you disagree or agree with each of these statements: [I am satisfied with my life]	Please rate how much you disagree or agree with each of these statements: [So far, I have gotten the important things I want in life]	Please rate how much you disagree or agree with each of these statements: [If I could live my life over I would change almost nothing]
slightly disagree	agree	agree	slightly agree	disagree
slightly agree	slightly agree	slightly agree	agree	slightly disagree
strongly agree	strongly agree	agree	strongly agree	slightly agree
slightly agree	agree	agree	slightly agree	disagree
slightly agree	agree	agree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree

Question code and question text:

H	I	J	K	L
SLI[ideal]. Please rate how much you disagree or agree with each of these statements: [In most ways my life is close to my ideal]	SLI[conditions]. Please rate how much you disagree or agree with each of these statements: [The conditions of my life are excellent]	SLI[satisfied]. Please rate how much you disagree or agree with each of these statements: [I am satisfied with my life]	SLI[accomplishments]. Please rate how much you disagree or agree with each of these statements: [So far, I have gotten the important things I want in life]	SLI[regrets]. Please rate how much you disagree or agree with each of these statements: [If I could live my life over I would change almost nothing]
slightly disagree	agree	agree	slightly agree	disagree
slightly agree	slightly agree	slightly agree	agree	slightly disagree
strongly agree	strongly agree	agree	strongly agree	slightly agree
slightly agree	agree	agree	slightly agree	disagree

The last option, **Question code and question text**, is the best from an Open-Science point of view, especially if you leave **Export responses** as Full answers, as I have here.

This data file is fully comprehensible in its own right, without needing a copy of the survey to consult to understand what was asked or what the answers mean. For analytic purposes, the header row cells start with the Question name, the subquestion code in brackets, followed by the Question text, and then the subquestion text in brackets.

It is possible to split this text up in a program like R to keep the codes as variable names (e.g., MTF\_01 and MTF\_02 while preserving the question and subquestion text as a vector for labelling output).

For example, here is some R code to do this:

```
data<-read.csv("results-survey352368.csv") # read the limesurvey data

var.item<-tibble(cols=colnames(data)) %>% # make a tibble from data's columnnames
```

```

mutate(cols=str_replace_all(cols,"[","_"), # replace [ with _
      cols=str_replace_all(cols,"]","",") # delete ]
var=str_extract(cols, "[A-Za-z0-9_]*."), # select all text up to first dot
var=str_sub(var, 1, -2), # delete the dot
item=str_sub(cols, str_length(var)+3,-1)) # select everything after the dot

colnames(data)=var.item$var # set columnnames in data to var

```

It is also advisable to export the **full answer text**, rather than Answer codes. Answer Codes turns the data into whatever you had entered in the Codes field of the question or numerical values if you had left them blank, as here:

H	I	J	K	L
SLI[ideal]. Please rate how much you disagree or agree with each of these statements: [In most ways my life is close to my ideal]	SLI[conditions]. Please rate how much you disagree or agree with each of these statements: [The conditions of my life are excellent]	SLI[satisfied]. Please rate how much you disagree or agree with each of these statements: [I am satisfied with my life]	SLI[accomplishments]. Please rate how much you disagree or agree with each of these statements: [So far, I have gotten the important things I want in life]	SLI[regrets]. Please rate how much you disagree or agree with each of these statements: [If I could live my life over I would change almost nothing]
3	6	6	5	2
5	5	5	6	3
7	7	6	7	5
5	6	6	5	2
5	6	6	4	5
6	6	6	7	2
4	6	5	5	3

Answer codes look easy to analyse, but what do they mean? Which ones need to be reverse coded? Text is meaningful, so export it and make the effort to recode it to numbers in your analysis script. Putting the data and script together makes your research transparent, and mistakes can be spotted and corrected.

For example, this R code finds all items beginning MTF, recodes their likert scale to numbers, reverse codes some items, and finds the mean for each participant:

```

mtf<-data %>% select(participant, starts_with("MTF")) %>% # select ID and MTF vars
pivot_longer(-participant) %>% # make longer (participant, name, value)
mutate(rating=case_when( # create a new variable called rating
  value=="Strongly agree" ~ 5, # matching each text to a number
  value=="Agree" ~ 4,
  value=="Neither agree nor disagree" ~ 3,
  value=="Disagree" ~ 2,
  value=="Strongly disagree" ~ 1,
  T ~ NA), # anything else is NA
rating = ifelse(name %in% c("MTF_01", "MTF_03", "MTF_09"), # if the name is in this list
  6-rating, # reverse-code the item
  rating) # else leave it alone
) %>%
group_by(participant) %>% # for each ID
summarise(mtf=mean(rating, na.rm=T)) # find mean rating, removing NA

```

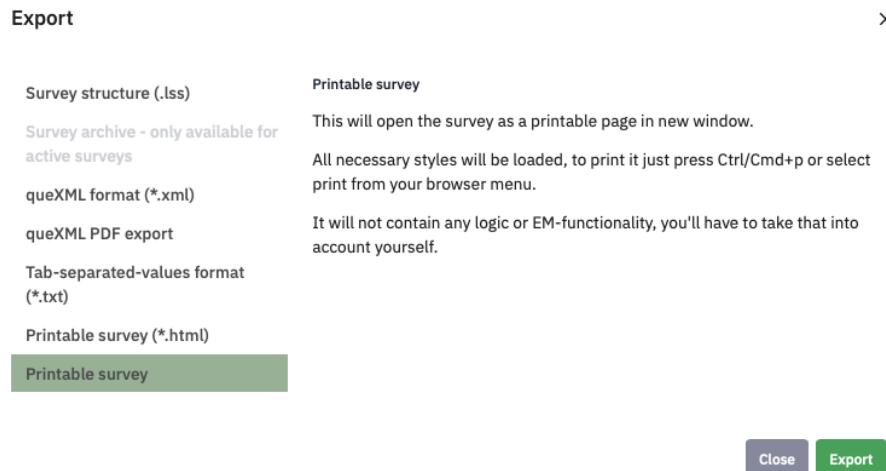
## 9.2 Printing a copy of your survey

You may need to create a PDF of your survey to attach to an Ethics application or to include as an appendix in a report. This is easy to do within the survey.

To get a printable copy of the survey, click the Export button at the top of the screen :



Then select Printable from the options available. This will let you print or save a copy of your survey (print to PDF).



## 9.3 Sharing your survey with colleagues

Nobody can see your survey or data except you and the local site administrators. If you are working in a group you might want other Limesurvey users to be able to view or edit your survey or access the data. You can add users to a survey from the **Settings** menu, under **Survey Permissions**. Select a User from the **User: Please choose...'** dropdown list, and click **Add User**.

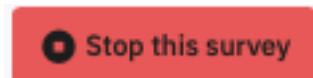
This allows them to see ('read') the survey but nothing else. You also need to grant them 'permissions' by clicking the ... icon at the right of their row in the list of users and select **Edit permissions**. Set them like this by checking the **General** box on a row (the others are then filled in for you)

Permission	General	Create	View/read	Update	Delete	Import	Export
Permission to create, view, update, delete assessments rules for a survey	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Permission to create, view, update, delete quota rules for a survey	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Permission to create(data entry), view, update, delete, import, export responses	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						
Permission to view statistics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Permission for survey access. Read permission is a requirement to give any further permission to a survey.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Permission to activate, deactivate a survey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Permission to create, view, update, delete, import, export the questions, groups, answers & conditions of a survey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						
Permission to view, update the survey text elements, e.g. survey title, survey description, welcome and end message	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Permission to modify survey security settings	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Permission to view, update the survey settings including survey participants table creation	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Permission to create, update, delete, import, export participants	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Permission to view & update the translations using the quick-translation feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

There is also an option to add a whole Group of users, but we advise against doing this because you can only remove people one at a time and the edit permissions screen is currently buggy.

## 9.4 Stopping your survey

When you have finished piloting your survey and need to make changes, or when you have run it properly and finished collecting data, you can Stop the survey to prevent any more responses being made. When it is running the green Activate Survey becomes a red button:

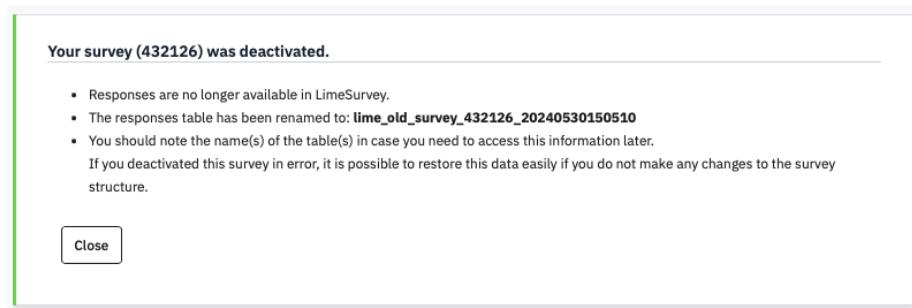


Clicking this brings up a choice:

If you have indeed finished collecting data, then the left hand **Expire Survey** is a sensible option to make. Your data is easy to access, but you cannot make many changes to the survey.

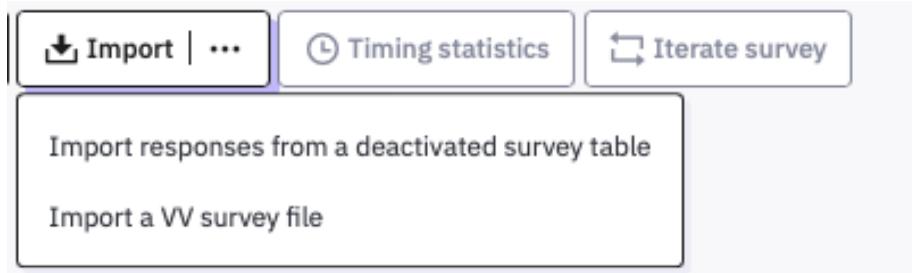
If you have just finished piloting and not yet run the survey, then you want to take the right-hand option, to **Deactivate survey** – but this will make the data harder to find (it is not deleted). Choose this one if you have been piloting to collect test data, and you have already exported the fully labelled Question code & question text version with Full answers.

If you do deactivate, then you'll see this:



Do save a screen shot of this and name it sensibly, in case you do want to find that data. All those numbers are a code for the survey, and then a date and timestamp.

To load it up again, **Activate the survey**, go to **Responses**, and click **Import**. Choose **Import responses from a deactivated survey table**.



I've tried this and it works – if there is more than one old dataset then you can choose which you want to reload. Note the warnings though – only some editing changes to the survey can be managed. If you've made other changes, the data may be lost or mangled.

Import responses from a deactivated survey table

Source table 2024-05-30 15:13:03 (35 responses) ▼

Import timings (if exist)

Preserve response IDs

⚠ Please be aware that tables including encryption should not be restored if they have been created in LimeSurvey 4 before version 4.6.1

💡 You can import all old responses that are compatible with your current survey. Compatibility is determined by comparing column types and names, the ID field is always ignored.

Using type coercion may break your data; use with care or not at all if possible.

Currently we detect and handle the following changes:

- Question is moved to another group (result is imported correctly).
- Question is removed from target (result is ignored).
- Question is added to target (result is set to database default value).

# Chapter 10

## Data handling and security

### 10.1 Confidentiality

An advantage of using our own Limesurvey implementation is that the data is saved within the University computing environment, so there are no third party data protection concerns.

Nevertheless, you must be very careful to avoid collecting personal data within the survey that could identify the respondent, unless you absolutely have to.

You must **never** ask for details such as names, initials, place of birth, mother's maiden name, student ID or email address.

If you are using SONA then you can identify your participant using the unique Participant identifier that SONA can send to the survey (see previous section). You can look up your participants in the Download Participant List option in SONA to pair up the SONA id with an individual. For this reason, your Limesurvey data is classed as 'linked anonymous'.

If you have a list of email addresses to send the survey invitation to, then you can link that to a code number and include the code number in the survey.

**Remember:** Never ask anyone to enter their email address in the main survey.

### 10.2 Chaining to another survey

If your survey is open to all anonymously, and you want to be able to invite people to a follow-up survey, then you should forward them to a second survey that does nothing other than record their email address, so that it is not associated with their answers.

Make a new survey that has one question asking for an email address  
Validate the response to check that it is an email address

Make the practice survey link to this new survey when it is completed

You can use the End URL to send the participant's random id code from the first survey to another, standalone survey, where you can create a separate survey that uses a **Short Free Text** question to record email addresses. The second survey will also have to be set up to receive the id, just as the first one was, using Panel Integration.

### 10.3 Deleting Data from the platform

If you have pilot or testing data that you do not want to keep in the datafile, then you can selectively delete the whole attempt before opening the survey. Alternatively you can keep the test data and filter it out during analysis (safer, in my view).

To remove individual responses from the data, click **Responses** to see the data collected so far. Check the box next to the row you want to delete, and then from the Selected response(s)... menu at the bottom of the window, select **Delete**. You will then need to click a scary red box.

	id ↴	seed ↴	lastpage ↴
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	520158428	
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	1818540940	2
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	1895780376	
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	189291991	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	896613309	2
<input type="checkbox"/>	6	458564594	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	7	805645074	2
<div><span>Delete</span><span>Delete attachments</span><span>Download files</span><span>Export</span></div>			
<div><span>Selected response(s)...</span><span>▼</span><span>[ ]</span></div>			

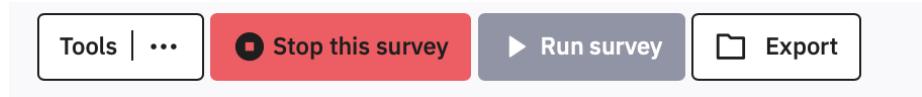
Arguably, once a survey is finished, and you have downloaded the data, responses should be deleted from the survey platform.

To delete ALL of the data, for example at the end of the study once you have downloaded the data, select all of the rows at once by checking the box at the top of the column.

## 10.4 Archiving and deleting old surveys

When you have completed a survey, downloaded the data, and are sure you will not run it again, then you should download it for safe keeping. You can then delete it from psysurvey to keep the list of your surveys manageable, and to avoid the server filling up.

To download an archive for safekeeping, click the Export button at the top of the screen :



Alternatively, you can export surveys from the Survey list page by checking the box next to the survey and clicking Edit selected surveys.

	Status:	Title:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 862678	Inactive	Test of EM question attributes
<input type="checkbox"/> 14272	Inactive	Test of EM question attributes
<input type="checkbox"/> 262683	Inactive	test

If your study is still active, then you can download a limesurvey archive (.lsa) that includes the data you have collected. If it is not active, you can just download a

limesurvey structure file (.lss) that only contains the survey. The latter version is fine, as you will already have downloaded your data separately.

Once you have exported it, you can delete it from the Survey list page by selecting Delete from this page..

If you ever want to run the survey again, or make a modified version of it, then you would use the purple Create Survey button and import an .lsa or .lss file from your computer:

**Create, import, or copy survey**

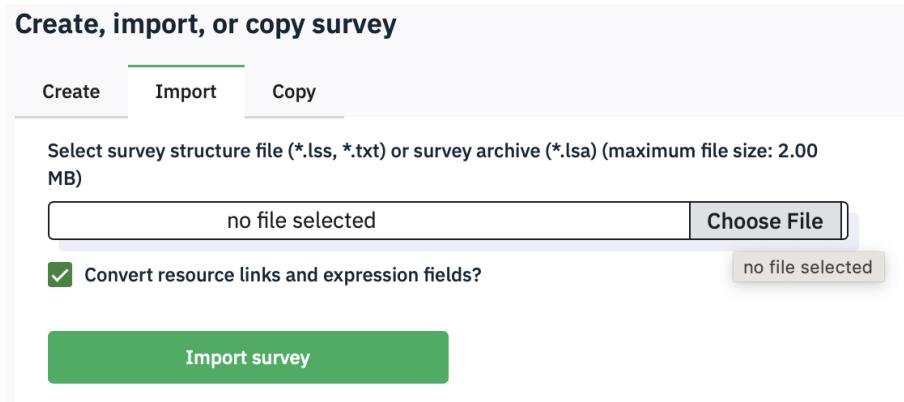
[Create](#)   [Import](#)   [Copy](#)

Select survey structure file (\*.lss, \*.txt) or survey archive (\*.lsa) (maximum file size: 2.00 MB)

no file selected [Choose File](#)

Convert resource links and expression fields?  no file selected

[Import survey](#)





# Appendices

## 10.5 Appendix 1: example structured consent page

Thank you for taking the time to consider helping in this research, which is being conducted by Student Name and Jon May from the University of Plymouth. Please read the below information before deciding whether or not to take part. Continue to the next page once you have read all of the information.

### **What is the study about?**

Goal achievement is a big aspect of people's lives, especially when involved in sports. It has been suggested that there are links between motivation and goal achievement in certain sports. This study aims to investigate these links, and whether or not it is linked with the personality trait Grit.

### **What will I have to do if I take part?**

This survey consists of several pages which contains rating scales about your attitudes towards taking part in sport. Some of the questions are novel, but most are based on existing and tested questionnaires. You will be asked to report your age and sex so that we can ensure our sample is representative of the population. We have tested this survey and it should take you no longer than **ten minutes** to complete.

### **Will the information collected during the study be kept confidential?**

The study will be conducted in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (2018) and the guidelines of the British Psychological Society. All information collected about you during the study will be anonymised. Your personal details will be stored securely at the University of Plymouth, accessible only by members of the study team. When this project is being written up, no identifying information will be used.

### **What are the benefits and risks of taking part in this study?**

There are no direct benefits of taking part in this study. You will not receive any motivational training as part of this study, but the results may influence

training that may be made available in the future. There should be no risks involved with taking part in this study.

#### **What if I have more questions?**

If you have any more questions or don't quite understand something regarding this study then please email Student Name at student.name@students.plymouth.ac.uk. If they cannot answer your questions satisfactorily, then you can contact the Research Supervisor, Professor Jon May, at jon.may@plymouth.ac.uk, or the Faculty Ethical Committee directly at hhsethics@plymouth.ac.uk.

#### **What happens now if you don't want to take part?**

Your participation is voluntary so you do not have to take part, nor do you have to give a reason why. If you don't choose to take part this will not affect any further opportunities that may arise. Simply close this window. You can also stop at any point in this survey by closing the browser window.

Thank you for considering taking part in this project.

## **10.6 Appendix 2: codes for piping from different question types**

**Question code name** (e.g., for an Array type named qArray with subquestions F1 to F3)

**Piping text to use** (e.g., to show the chosen or entered answer, insert this text)

```
qArray_F1
{qArray_F1.shown}
qArray_F2
{qArray_F2.shown}
qArray_F3
{qArray_F3.shown}
q5pointChoice
{q5pointChoice.shown}
qListDropdown
{qListDropdown.shown}
qListDropdown_other
{qListDropdown_other.shown}
qListRadio
```

```
{qListRadio.shown}  
qListRadio_other  
{qListRadio_other.shown}  
qListWithComment  
{qListWithComment.shown}  
qListWithComment_comment  
{qListWithComment_comment.shown}  
qArray10Point_L1  
{qArray10Point_L1.shown}  
qArray10Point_L2  
{qArray10Point_L2.shown}  
qArray10Point_L3  
{qArray10Point_L3.shown}  
qArray5Point_1  
{qArray5Point_1.shown}  
qArray5Point_2  
{qArray5Point_2.shown}  
qArray5Point_3  
{qArray5Point_3.shown}  
qArrayISD_1  
{qArrayISD_1.shown}  
qArrayISD_2  
{qArrayISD_2.shown}  
qArrayISD_3  
{qArrayISD_3.shown}  
qArrayNumbers_list1_min  
{qArrayNumbers_list1_min.shown}  
qArrayNumbers_list1_max  
{qArrayNumbers_list1_max.shown}  
qArrayNumbers_list1_avg  
{qArrayNumbers_list1_avg.shown}
```

```
qArrayTexts_hp_1st
{qArrayTexts_hp_1st.shown}
qArrayTexts_hp_2nd
{qArrayTexts_hp_2nd.shown}
qArrayTexts_hp_3rd
{qArrayTexts_hp_3rd.shown}
qArrayYNU_1
{qArrayYNU_1.shown}
qArrayYNU_2
{qArrayYNU_2.shown}
qArrayYNU_3
{qArrayYNU_3.shown}
qArrayByColumn_1
{qArrayByColumn_1.shown}
qArrayByColumn_2
{qArrayByColumn_2.shown}
qArrayByColumn_3
{qArrayByColumn_3.shown}
qArrayDualScale_money_0
{qArrayDualScale_money_0.shown}
qArrayDualScale_money_1
{qArrayDualScale_money_1.shown}
qDate
{qDate.shown}
qFileUpload
{qFileUpload.shown}
qFileUpload_filecount
{qFileUpload_filecount.shown}
qGender
{qGender.shown}
qLanguage
```

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```
{qLanguage.shown}  
qMultipleNumerical_self  
{qMultipleNumerical_self.shown}  
qMultipleNumerical_mom  
{qMultipleNumerical_mom.shown}  
qMultipleNumerical_dad  
{qMultipleNumerical_dad.shown}  
qNumerical  
{qNumerical.shown}  
qRanking_1  
{qRanking_1.shown}  
qRanking_2  
{qRanking_2.shown}  
qRanking_3  
{qRanking_3.shown}  
qTextDisplay  
{qTextDisplay.shown}  
qYesNo  
{qYesNo.shown}  
qHugeText  
{qHugeText.shown}  
qLongText  
{qLongText.shown}  
qMultipleShort_friend  
{qMultipleShort_friend.shown}  
qMultipleShort_family  
{qMultipleShort_family.shown}  
qMultipleShort_work  
{qMultipleShort_work.shown}  
qShort  
{qShort.shown}
```

```
qMultipleChoice_Hawaii  
{qMultipleChoice_Hawaii.shown}  
qMultipleChoice_Bahamas  
{qMultipleChoice_Bahamas.shown}  
qMultipleChoice_Europe  
{qMultipleChoice_Europe.shown}  
qMultChoiceComment_junk  
{qMultChoiceComment_junk.shown}  
qMultChoiceComment_junkcomment  
{qMultChoiceComment_junkcomment.shown}  
qMultChoiceComment_rtv  
{qMultChoiceComment_rtv.shown}  
qMultChoiceComment_rtvcomment  
{qMultChoiceComment_rtvcomment.shown}  
qMultChoiceComment_ex  
{qMultChoiceComment_ex.shown}  
qMultChoiceComment_excomment  
{qMultChoiceComment_excomment.shown}
```

## 10.7 Appendix3: expression script examples

[https://manual.limesurvey.org/ExpressionScript\\_examples/en](https://manual.limesurvey.org/ExpressionScript_examples/en)