

## Designing a Questionnaire

A **questionnaire** is a data collection technique commonly used by geographers. They can be an easy way to collect large amount of both quantitative and qualitative data if designed and executed well.

Here are some top tips to get the most out of your questionnaire:

The questionnaire should be **no more than eight questions long** - any more than that and people may give up part way through, resulting in incomplete data.

Choose a combination of **open and closed questions** - starting with the former and ending with the latter.

Avoid **ambiguous phrasing** or ways of saying things that only a geographer would understand.

To avoid embarrassing them, only ask respondents questions to which they would **most likely know an answer**.

Never ask **personal questions** that would undermine a respondent's sense of personal security.

Only ask questions that you know you will need the data from - there is no point '**padding out**' a questionnaire with details of someone's age or gender unless it is necessary.

Think about how you will **administer** the questionnaire - will you read it out or let respondents read it and fill it in themselves?

Be sensitive to questions that people may find **uncomfortable** or to which they **might not tell the truth**, such as sexuality or income.

Always watch the '**GAPS**': Be **G**rateful, Look **A**pproachable, Be **P**olite and **S**mile!

Think about using **large scale separate print outs** of any lists or photos that you might want respondents to comment on.

Run a **pilot questionnaire** - test it on family and friends and people who are not geographers.

Try to get **as many responses as possible** - fewer than thirty in total can make it difficult to carry out statistical analyses and make your results meaningful.