# Consent for questionnaires/surveys

If participants are provided with enough information about the questionnaire for them to make an informed decision about whether or not to participate it may be sufficient for consent to be *implied* by the questionnaire being completed and returned.

For questionnaires that poses a minimal risk to participants having an introductory paragraph that contains the same sort of information as the consent form (eg voluntary participation, risks, [confidentiality/anonymity](http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/ConfidentialityAnonymisation), and right to withdraw) is usually sufficient.

Consider how sensitive or controversial the information collected will be.

Consider whether it could be possible to identify participants from the completed forms and whether or not this would be necessary.

The [Research Participant Privacy Notice](https://dataprotection.leeds.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/48/2019/02/Research-Privacy-Notice.pdf) should be made available to participants alongside the Information Sheet, either electronically or as a hard copy. Further guidance is available at <http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/involvingresearchparticipants>  and at <https://dataprotection.leeds.ac.uk/information-for-researchers>.

[UK Data Archive guidance and examples](http://www.data-archive.ac.uk/create-manage/consent-ethics/consent?index=4)

## Online questionnaires

It should be noted that the policies underpinning third party survey software companies differ (Survey Monkey, Online Survey), and researchers must make themselves aware of the policies of their chosen survey tool. In addition to the way material will be collected, the researcher must be aware of how the survey software provider will store the collated information and who can access it and, as appropriate, convey this information to participants. Researchers should be specifically aware when collecting personally identifying data that this falls under the Data Protection Act, the restrictions for which include constraints on the export of data about EU citizens outside of the country; for more information, see <http://www.data-archive.ac.uk/create-manage/consent-ethics/legal>. The recommended online survey tool is Bristol Online Survey which the University subscribes to.

See also <http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/info/71/good_research_practice/106/research_data_guidance/2>

<http://it.leeds.ac.uk/info/173/database_and_subscription_services/206/bristol_online_survey_accounts>

<http://it.leeds.ac.uk/info/236/want_to_get_views_and_opinions/831/how_to_run_a_survey>

## Example opening statement for an online questionnaire

*You are being invited to participate in a research study titled [Name of your research]. This study is being done by [Name of Researcher(s)] from the University of Leeds.*

*The purpose of this research study is [provide participants with a short statement about the research], and will take you approximately [XX] minutes to complete. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and [explain withdrawal arrangements]. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to.*

*We believe there are no known risks associated with this research study; however, as with any online related activity the risk of a breach is always possible. To the best of our ability your participation in this study will remain confidential, and only anonymised data will be published. We will minimise any risks by [describe how anonymity will be secured, maintained, and when raw data will be destroyed]. Further information is available via the University of Leeds* [*Privacy Notice*](https://dataprotection.leeds.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/48/2019/02/Research-Privacy-Notice.pdf)*.*