YouGovPolimetrix

How to Format your Questionnaire for CCES

As you prepare your team questionnaire for CCES, please do your best to satisfy the following guidelines.

- Identify one person as the PI for your team. This person will be responsible for formatting your questionnaire and delivering it to Sam. If edits are recommended by the operations team at YouGov/Polimetrix, the PI is responsible for making and communicating decisions about the questionnaire.

- Please adhere to the 10 minute/5 minute pre/post survey time frame for the content of your survey. The operations team at YouGov/Polimetrix will time your survey and if it is too long, you will have to cut questions. The best way to time your survey is to have someone (preferably not on your team) actually take the survey – either with an interviewer reading the question or by reading the questions themselves. Your survey should not take longer than 10 minutes/5 minutes for respondents to complete. If there are questions that only a portion of the sample will answer, you should factor those in if more than 50% of the sample is likely to have to answer the question. At the end of this document, we have included the timing algorithm.

- Visit this link to see examples of the different types of questions that YouGov/Polimetrix can implement and what they will actually look like in the survey.

  http://isurvey.pollingpoint.com/refer/alldemo

- Your variables should be identified by a 3-letter prefix and a number. Your prefix should identify your team's primary institution in some way. For example, if you are at UCLA, you might choose UCL as your prefix. You can label the variables anything you'd like.

- As you prepare your questionnaire, please write your questions in the following form:

UCL5
Variable Name

Interest in Politics
Variable Label

SINGLE CHOICE
Variable Type

Special instructions to survey programmers here. For example: Please randomize the order of the outcome categories; or only ask if answer to UCL2 was "YES"; etc . . .
Any special instructions for programmers

How interested are you in politics?
Question Text

Outcome	Outcome Label and instructions in { }
1	Very interested
2	Somewhat interested
3	Not much interested
9	{FIXED} I'm not sure

For questions using a grid:

UCL5, UCL6, UCL7, UCL8
Variable Names (one for each item in the grid)

Things R watches on TV
Variable Label

GRID
Variable Type

Special instructions to survey programmers here.
Special instructions for programmers

How often do you watch the following TV programs?
Question Text

Columns:

1 Very Often
2 Somewhat Often
3 Not Often
4 Never

Rows:

UCL5 The Flintstones
UCL6 Jeopardy
UCL7 Law and Order
UCL8 60 Minutes

A few things to keep in mind about writing survey questions for the programmers:

- If you want a category for Don't Know or Not Sure, you have to specify it. These are not automatically offered. Please indicate exactly how you would like these variables to be presented (e.g., "don't know" vs. "not sure", or "Prefer not to say" vs. "Refused").

- If you want your questions randomized please explain this explicitly in the *special instructions* section and put it in italics. This means outcome categories aswell as split half samples, or experimental designs with probability allocations. Please keep randomizations as simple as possible.

- Randomization terminology - YouGov/Polimetrix has three basic types of randomizations that can be implemented. They are:

    - "Randomize" presents the response options in random order
    - "Reverse" takes the response options and display them 1:last or last:1 at random. Often used for ordinal scales.
    - "Rotate" maintains the order of the response list, while cycling through which item is displayed first

    Using these terms will help communicate to the programmers which type of randomization you wish to use. Also if you want a randomization fixed across a group of questions, please be sure to specify it.

- If you use a question with a pop-up window (see the web site demo for an example of this, it's nice for follow up questions), please identify the pop-up as separate variable using the same format above.

If you've never written an Internet questionnaire before, here are a few thoughts about writing questions for a cooperative Internet survey:

- YouGov/Polimetrix has a lot of widgets that make taking surveys more interesting for respondents. Please consider using the widgets. Some of our favorites are the feeling thermometer widget (which shows an actual thermometer that people click and drag on to answer), the ruler widget (which is basically a sideways feeling thermometer); the ranking widget (in which respondents drag and drop items into a ranked order column to the right), and the color-picker (which puts outcome categories in colored boxes and asks respondents to click on the boxes to choose outcomes).

- Respondents often get tired of reading endless text on the screen. Doing whatever you can to minimize the amount of text people have to read will payoff with higher completion and retention rates. Also, consider **bolding** and <u>underlining</u> relevant words when appropriate.

- Internet surveys don't really need the "narrative tone" that phone or in-person surveys often use since no one is talking to the respondent. On the Internet, you may not need introductions throughout the survey like, "Now we are interested in your opinions on global warming, please tell us whether you agree or disagree with the following statements." This can minimize unnecessary text. Also, it is neither necessary nor desirable to put the response options in the question text, since doing so forces the respondent to read them twice.

- *Please* read the questions on the Common Content before you draft your instrument. Respondents get annoyed and drop off if they are asked the same questions over and over again. Please do your best not to exactly repeat questions in your module that were asked in the Common Content. You can branch off of Common Content answers in your module. You can populate questions in your module with respondents' answers to questions from the Common Content. However, you cannot insert your questions immediately after particular questions in the Common Content.

If you have any questions about the format or wording of questions, please don't hesitate to ask us. We look forward to working with everyone and learning about your research interests over the next year.

Length of Interview Algorithm

Polimetrix uses a simple scoring algorithm as a guideline for estimating length of interview without a questionnaire in hand.

Calculate the "points" for each question and sum them:

- Single-choice question: 10 pts + 1 pt for each item. + 1 extra point for any item with a textbox (e.g., Other (please specify))
- Multiple-choice/dichotomy: 10 pts + 2 pts for each item.
  Grid/scale questions: 10 pts + 5 pts for each item.
- Large text boxes: 25 pts
- Short text boxes: 15 pts
- Ranking questions: 10 pts + 5 pts for each item to be ranked
- Placement questions: 10 pts + 5 pts for each item to be placed
  Video/Audio: 1.5 points * Number of seconds of the video
- Extensive reading: For a long reading section, 1 point for every 4 words

For the purposes of rough estimation, points are the equivalent of 1.5 seconds.