Sample Questionnaire
A Complete Research Survey

A complete example questionnaire for a dissertation or thesis, taking one study from the consent page to the codebook. It shows how a research survey fits together: what your ethics board will expect on the information page, how to screen participants, how to lay out rating scales, and how to code every answer before you collect it. A short note beside each part explains what it's for.

Your workload *(wl1–wl5)*. How much do you agree or disagree with each statement?

Statement	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
wl1. I have more work than I can finish in a normal working day.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
wl2. Keeping up with my tasks means rushing some of them.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
wl3. My workload leaves little time to plan or think ahead.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
wl4. I regularly work beyond my contracted hours to keep up.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
wl5. My role has more work than one person can reasonably do.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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This PDF shows the full template. The Word version is free, and you can type straight into it.

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Section 1: Participant information and consent

Template note: use your university's approved wording. Most universities and ethics boards give you a participant information sheet and consent form to use, and many require their exact wording. **If yours has one, use it**, and treat this section as a checklist of what it should cover. Nothing below is approved wording.
Start with the key information: what the study is, what taking part involves, how long it takes and the main risks. It helps every reader, and if your study is covered by the US Common Rule, consent must begin with "a concise and focused presentation of the key information" (45 CFR 46.116(a)(5)(i)).
Under the Common Rule, the basic elements include a statement that the study involves research, with its purpose, how long taking part takes and what it involves; any foreseeable risks or discomforts; any expected benefits; how confidentiality will be kept; whom to contact with questions; that taking part is voluntary, and refusing or stopping involves no penalty or loss of benefits; and either that identifiable data might, once identifiers are removed, be used in future research without asking again, or that it won't be (45 CFR 46.116(b)). Your ethics board will tell you which apply to your study.
In the UK and EU, you also need to tell people how their personal data will be handled: who is responsible for it and how to contact them, the purpose and legal basis for processing, who else receives it (your survey platform, for example) and whether it leaves the country, how long it will be kept, and their rights over it (UK GDPR, Article 13). Your university's data protection template will cover these.

Participant information

Study title. [Your study title]

Researcher. [Your name, program and university; your email address]

Supervisor. [Your supervisor's name and email address]

What this study is about. [A statement that this is a research study, then one or two sentences, in plain English, on what you're studying and why]

What taking part involves. [An online questionnaire of about [X] minutes. No preparation needed.]

Do I have to take part? [Taking part is voluntary. You can stop at any point by closing the survey, without giving a reason and without any penalty or loss of benefits you're otherwise entitled to. Explain whether answers can be withdrawn after submission; an anonymous survey usually cannot identify them to remove.]

Risks and benefits. [Any foreseeable risks or discomforts, such as questions about stress at work, and any expected benefits. If there are no direct benefits, say so.]

Confidentiality and your data. [Whether responses are anonymous; what personal data you collect; where it is stored and who can see it; how long it is kept; and either that, once identifiers are removed, your data may be used in future research without asking you again, or that it won't be used in future research at all]

Data protection (UK/EU). [The data controller and their contact details; the data protection officer's contact details; the legal basis for processing; who else receives the data, such as your survey platform, and whether it is transferred outside the UK or EU; your rights over your data; how to complain]

Ethics approval. [The approving committee and reference number]

Questions or concerns. [Your contact details; an independent contact, such as the ethics office, for concerns about the study]

Consent

[Replace these statements with your university's approved consent wording.]

Please answer Yes or No to each statement.

Statement	Yes	No
I have read the information above and have had the chance to ask questions.	☐	☐
I understand that taking part is voluntary and that I can stop at any time without giving a reason.	☐	☐
I am aged 18 or over.	☐	☐
I agree to take part in this study.	☐	☐

Template note: consent routing. In your survey tool, send anyone who answers **No** to any consent statement straight to the end of the survey, with a short thank-you. Don't show them the questions.

Section 2: About your role

Template note: screening questions. Screening questions check that each person fits your sample before they answer anything else. Ask only what your eligibility criteria need, and route anyone who doesn't qualify to a polite end page. Say in your methodology chapter how many people were screened out.

1. Are you currently in paid employment?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No [end the survey]

2. How long have you been in your current role?

- ☐ Less than 1 year
- ☐ 1 year to less than 2 years
- ☐ 2 years to less than 3 years
- ☐ 3 years or more [end the survey]

3. Which sector do you work in?

- ☐ Education
- ☐ Healthcare
- ☐ Social care
- ☐ Other [end the survey]

Section 3: Your work and how you feel about it

Template note: use a validated scale where one exists. The statements below were written for this template, to show a clean layout. They have **not been tested for reliability or validity**, so don't use them as they stand in your own study.
For most constructs, someone has already published a scale with evidence that it measures what it claims to. Using one makes your results easier to defend and to compare with earlier studies. Look in the methods sections of the key studies in your literature review.
Many published scales are copyrighted, and some are sold under license. Before you use one, read the terms in the original article or on the publisher's or author's page, and ask for permission in writing if they aren't clear. Keep the reply for your appendix.
Use the scale exactly as published: the same items, the same response options and the same scoring. If you must change it, say so in your methodology and explain why.

Template note: labels and order. Respondents don't need to see construct names such as "Burnout" or "Intention to leave", which can nudge their answers. Use neutral headings like the ones below. The variable names in brackets are for you; hide them in your survey tool.

Your workload *(wl1–wl5)*. How much do you agree or disagree with each statement?

Statement	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
wl1. I have more work than I can finish in a normal working day.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
wl2. Keeping up with my tasks means rushing some of them.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
wl3. My workload leaves little time to plan or think ahead.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
wl4. I regularly work beyond my contracted hours to keep up.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
wl5. My role has more work than one person can reasonably do.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

How you work *(au1–au4)*. How much do you agree or disagree with each statement?

Statement	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
au1. I can choose which task to tackle first.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
au2. I'm trusted to do my tasks in my own way.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
au3. I can adjust my working hours when I need to.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
au4. Most decisions about my day-to-day work are made for me by others.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Template note: reverse-worded items. Item au4 is worded in the opposite direction to the rest of its scale, so agreeing with it means **less** autonomy. Before you add up a scale score, reverse-score items like this one (on a 1 to 5 scale, the new score is 6 minus the old). If a validated scale you use has reverse-scored items, its scoring instructions will name them.

Support at work *(su1–su4, ac1)*. How much do you agree or disagree with each statement?

Statement	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
su1. My manager makes time to talk when I need help.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
su2. My manager notices when I'm under pressure.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
su3. I get useful feedback from my manager on my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
su4. My manager backs me up when problems come up.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
ac1. To show you're reading carefully, please select "Disagree" for this statement.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Template note: attention checks. Item ac1 is an attention check: a statement with one right answer, to flag people who are clicking through without reading. Decide before you collect any data what you'll do with people who fail it, write that rule down, and report it in your methodology. Check your ethics board is comfortable with it, and use no more than one or two in a short survey.

How you've been feeling about work *(bo1–bo6)*. Thinking about the past month, how much do you agree or disagree with each statement?

Statement	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
bo1. By the end of a working week, I have little energy left for anything else.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bo2. I find it hard to stop thinking about work when I'm off duty.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bo3. I care less about my work than I used to.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bo4. Small problems at work feel bigger than they used to.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bo5. I dread going in to work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
bo6. However hard I try, I seem to get less done.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Your plans *(il1–il3)*. How much do you agree or disagree with each statement?

Statement	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
il1. Leaving this organization is on my mind a lot.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
il2. I would take a similar job elsewhere if one were offered.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
il3. I expect to be working for a different employer two years from now.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. Are you seriously considering leaving your current employer within the next year? *(considering_leaving)*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

[Your validated scale]

Template note: placeholder for a published scale. Replace this block with the scale you've chosen, once you have permission. Give its name and source here for your own records, copy the instructions and items exactly, and use its own response options, even if they differ from the five-point scale above.

[Scale name] ([Author, Year]). [Number] items. Response options: [as published]. Permission: [received from … on …].

[Instructions to respondents, exactly as published]

Statement	[Option 1]	[Option 2]	[Option 3]	[Option 4]	[Option 5]
[Item 1]	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
[Item 2]	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
[Item 3]	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section 4: About you

Template note: demographics. Ask only for the characteristics you'll use, to describe your sample or in your analysis, and offer "Prefer not to say" wherever a question is personal. We've put this section near the end so the survey opens with the topic people agreed to help with; some programs prefer it first, and either is fine. Use answer bands that match the table you'll report.

5. How do you describe your gender?

- ☐ Woman
- ☐ Man
- ☐ Non-binary
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe: _____
- ☐ Prefer not to say

6. What is your age?

- ☐ 25 or under
- ☐ 26 to 30
- ☐ 31 to 35
- ☐ 36 or over
- ☐ Prefer not to say

7. Do you work full-time or part-time?

- ☐ Full-time
- ☐ Part-time
- ☐ Other or varies

8. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your workload or your plans? *(optional)*

End of survey

Thank you for taking part. [Say what happens next, for example when results will be available and how to get a summary.]

If any of the questions raised concerns for you, [support details: for example, your employer's employee assistance program, or a national helpline relevant to your participants].

If you have questions about the study, contact [your name and email address]. For concerns about how the study was run, contact [the independent contact, such as your ethics office].

Template note: the end page. Include support information whenever your questions touch on stress, health or other sensitive topics. Your ethics board may ask for specific services; use the ones that serve your participants' country.

Appendix: Codebook

Template note: why a codebook. A codebook lists every variable in your data file, what it means and how it's coded. Build it before you collect data, use it to label your variables in SPSS, R or Excel, and put a version in your dissertation's appendix. Delete this note, not the table.

Variable	Question	Values	Notes
consent_1 to consent_4	Consent statements (Section 1)	1 = Yes, 0 = No	Must all be 1 to continue
employed	Currently in paid employment (Q1)	1 = Yes, 0 = No	Screening
years	Time in current role (Q2)	1 = less than 1 year, 2 = 1 to less than 2, 3 = 2 to less than 3	Screening; 3 or more ends the survey. Reported as first, second and third year
sector	Sector (Q3)	1 = Education, 2 = Healthcare, 3 = Social care	Screening; Other ends the survey
wl1 to wl5	Workload items (Section 3)	1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree	Scale score = mean of items
au1 to au4	Autonomy items (Section 3)	1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree	au4 is reverse-scored (6 − score)
su1 to su4	Supervisor support items (Section 3)	1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree	Scale score = mean of items
bo1 to bo6	Burnout items (Section 3)	1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree	Scale score = mean of items
il1 to il3	Intention to leave items (Section 3)	1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree	Scale score = mean of items
ac1	Attention check (Section 3)	1 to 5; correct answer = 2	Rule for failures set before data collection
considering_leaving	Considering leaving within a year (Q4)	1 = Yes, 0 = No	
gender	Gender (Q5)	1 = Woman, 2 = Man, 3 = Non-binary, 4 = Self-described, 9 = Prefer not to say	Self-description in gender_text. Combine small groups for reporting, as the APA tables template does
age	Age band (Q6)	1 = 25 or under, 2 = 26–30, 3 = 31–35, 4 = 36 or over, 9 = Prefer not to say	
contract	Full-time or part-time (Q7)	1 = Full-time, 2 = Part-time, 3 = Other or varies	
comments	Open comments (Q8)	Text	Optional

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