



## **QiSS National Database 'Survey Thing'**

**User guide to the Quality in Study Support and  
Extended Services (QiSS) On-line Survey Tool**



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## What is Survey Thing?

The QISS National Database Survey Thing, is a free tool for the development of on-line surveys and questionnaires. It has been developed by QISS (Quality in Study Support and Extended Services), who are part of Canterbury Christ Church University. It is therefore open to all those who wish to develop questionnaires and surveys for use in research or to collect feedback.

Access for survey construction and result viewing is protected by a password and user name, obtainable from QISS [qiss.enquiries@canterbury.ac.uk](mailto:qiss.enquiries@canterbury.ac.uk)

Users are responsible for the construction of their questionnaires and the management of their data, although QISS can offer guidance and support if requested.

Please note that QISS reserves the right to remove any questionnaires or data that contravene professional or ethical standards or are in contravention of Data Protection legislation.

## Finding Survey Thing

There are two ways to access Survey Thing via the QISS national Database (see i, which is the long way) or by using the URL address of Survey Thing (see ii, which is the quick way!).

### i. Access through the QISS National Database (the long way)

This can be accessed through the database's URL address <http://www.qissnationaldatabase.org.uk/> log in and then follow the links

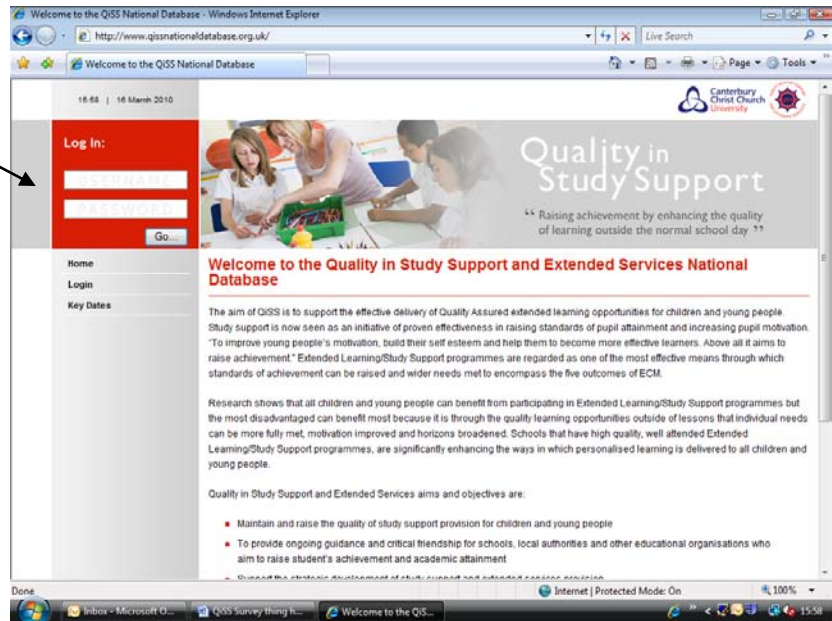
Or access the database via the QISS web site [www.canterbury.ac.uk/qiss](http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/qiss)



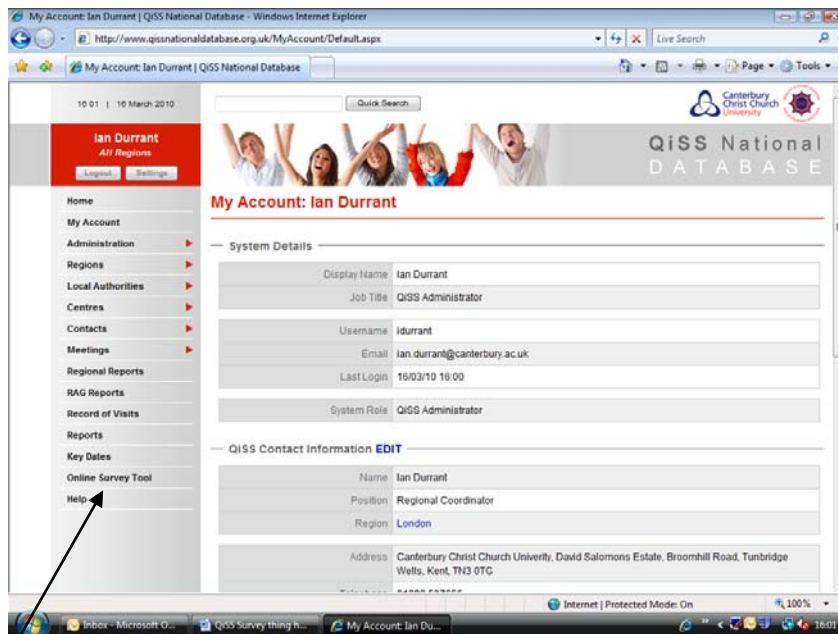
The screenshot shows the Canterbury Christ Church University website. The main navigation bar includes links for Home, Study here, Research, Business services, About us, Departments, StudentNET, and StaffNET. Below this is a red banner for 'Quality in Study Support and Extended Services'. The page content is divided into several sections: 'Faculty of Education' with a sub-section for 'Quality in Study Support Home', 'About Us', 'Our Services', 'Recognition Schemes', 'Case Studies', 'Consultancy', 'Teaching and Training', 'Research and Evaluation', 'News and Events', 'Critical Friend Conference', 'Partnerships', 'Links', 'Staff and Contacts', and 'Contact'. The 'Quality in Study Support and Extended Services' section features a large image of students and a circular logo with the text 'QUALITY IN STUDY SUPPORT AND EXTENDED SERVICES'. Below this image is a 'QISS Database' section with a link to 'Visit the QISS National Database'. A box with an arrow points to this link, containing the text 'Log into the database'.

Log into the database

Log in to the QISS database



The QISS National Database

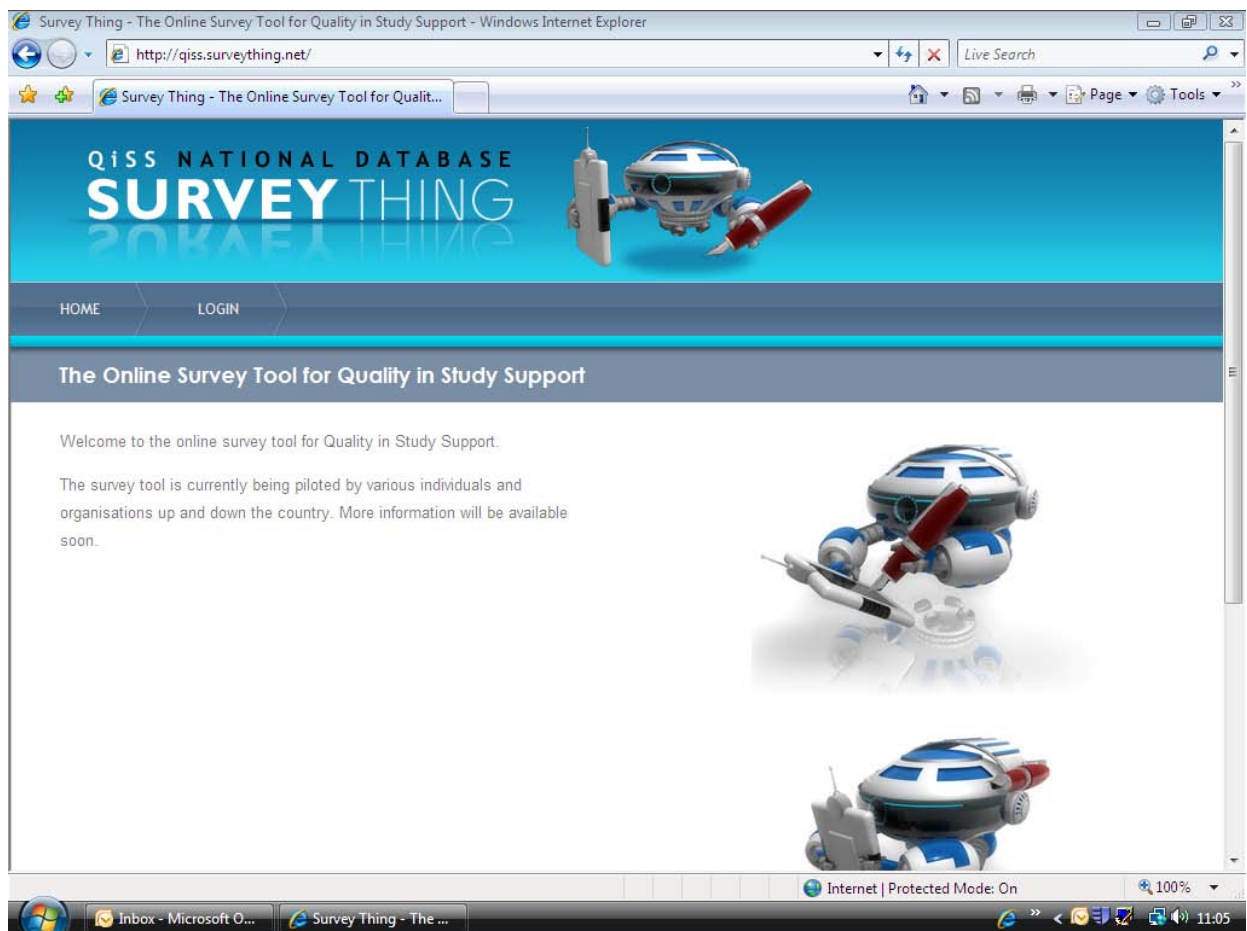


Link to the On-line survey

ii **Direct Access: Type in the URL address of Survey Thing directly into a browser (the quick way!)**

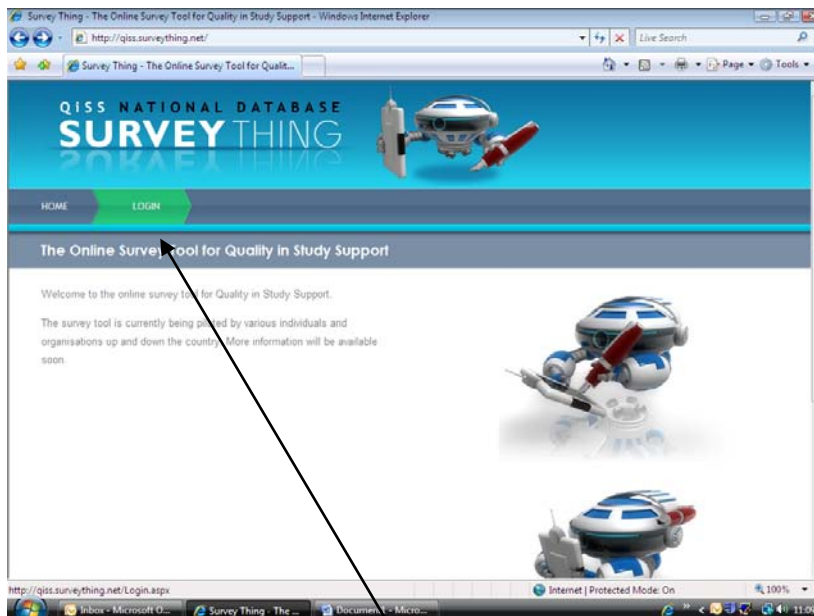
The address is **qiss.surveything.net** (no need for www.)

This should present you with the following screen:



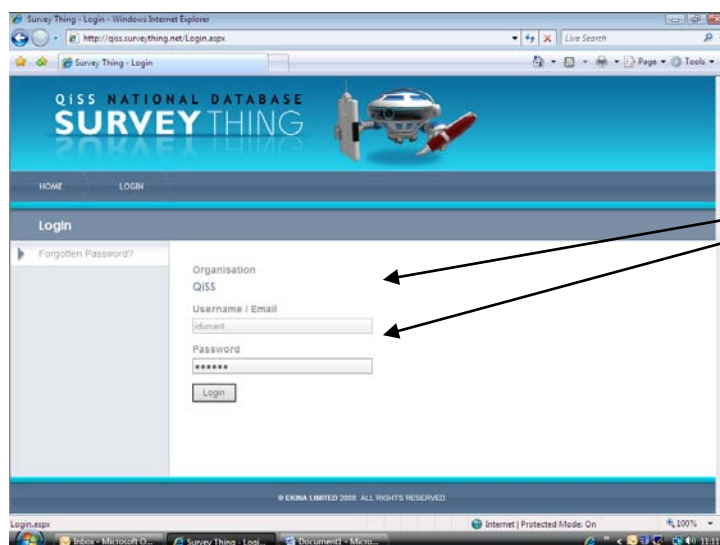
## 1. Login

To login, click on the login button



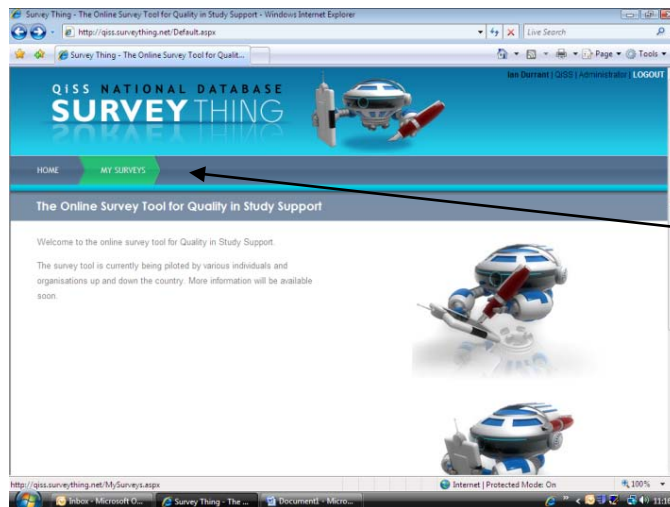
Login

Use the same user name and password which allows you to access the QISS National Database.



User name & Password

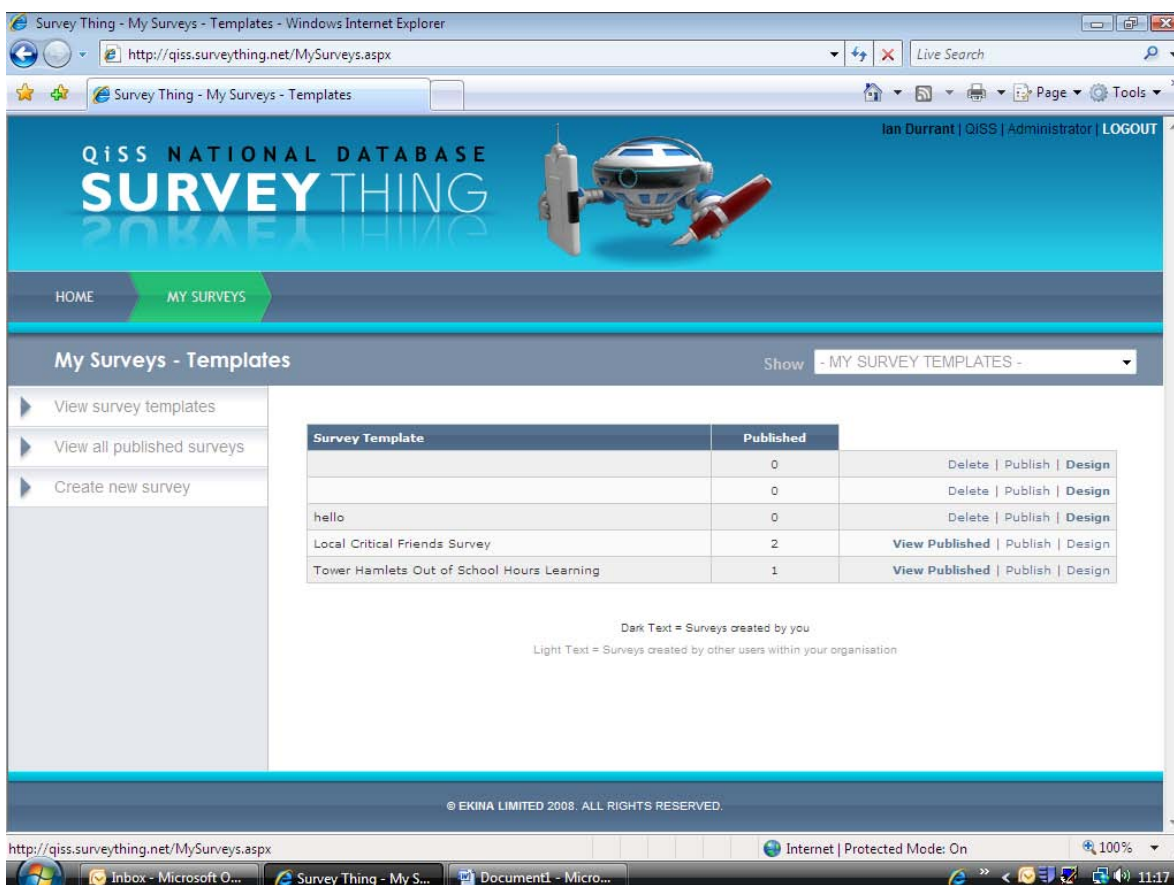
- You will then be presented with a generic screen. To access either surveys that have previously been written or to create new surveys click on 'my surveys'.



My Surveys

### 3. My Surveys

The 'My Surveys' page gives you a number of options. To view survey templates (surveys in development), view all published surveys (surveys that have been written and released), and to create new survey (design a survey from scratch).



#### 4. To View Survey Templates

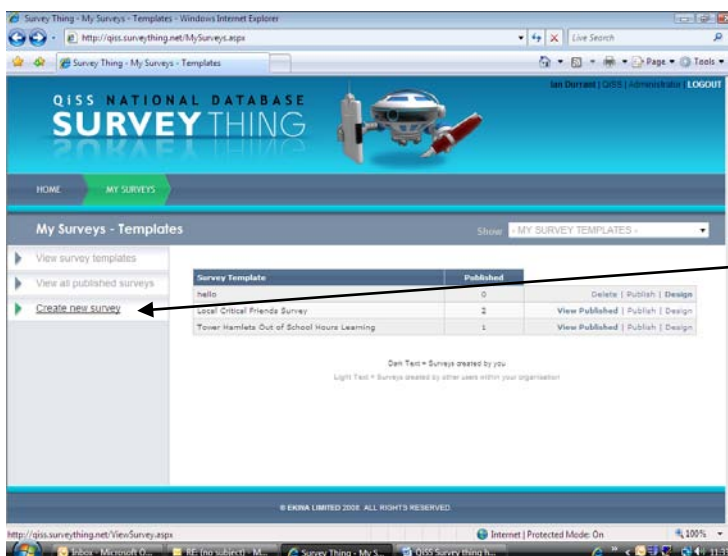
This is all the surveys that have currently been developed. You can view either those you have created or all those that have been created by all system users.

You may wish to use one of these as a basis for your own survey. If you do, remember to change details, like organisational names and the dates when it is available, also remember to save it as a different survey!

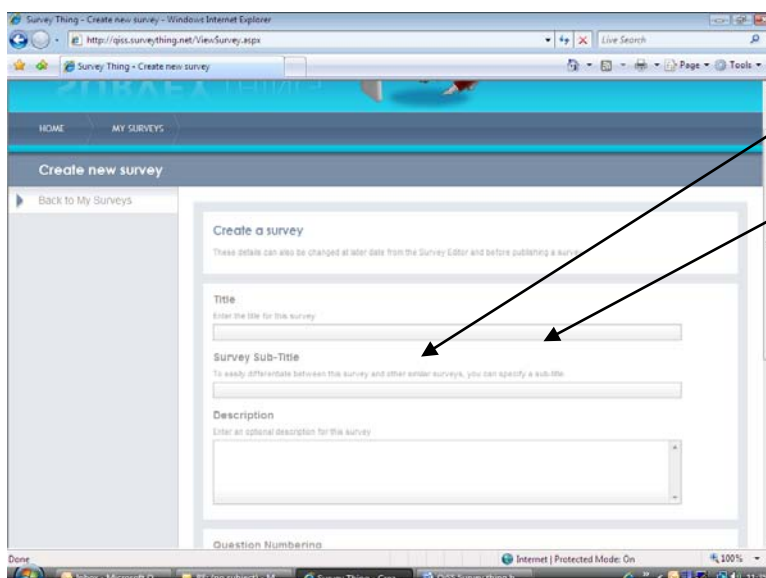
However, this function will only let you edit an existing survey. If you press 'update' you will overwrite this survey currently stored.

#### 5. To Create a New Survey

Click on the 'Create New Survey' tab.



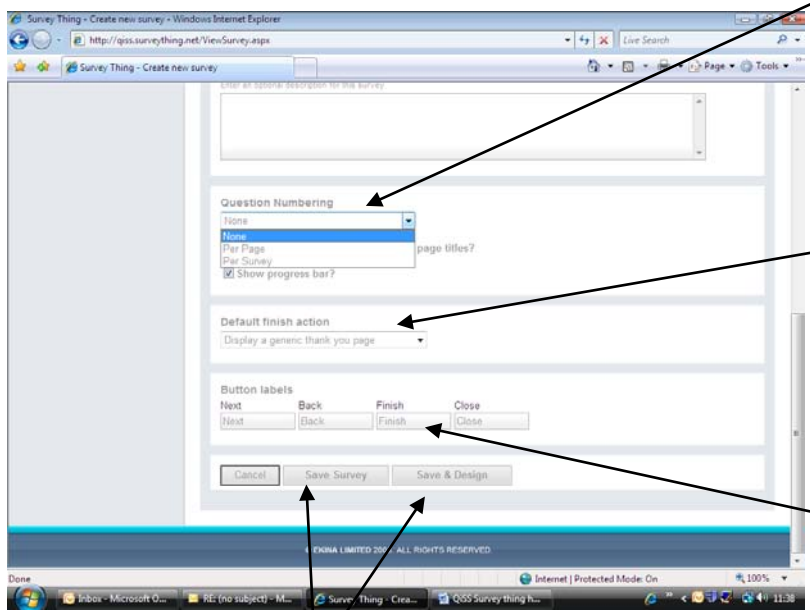
You will then be presented with a number of options



Give the survey a title as you want it to appear to users

A sub title, might be useful to qualify the title

A description, which is the text you want participants to read. This might include context, instructions or information about how the survey will be used.



How you want the question numbers to appear to the participants

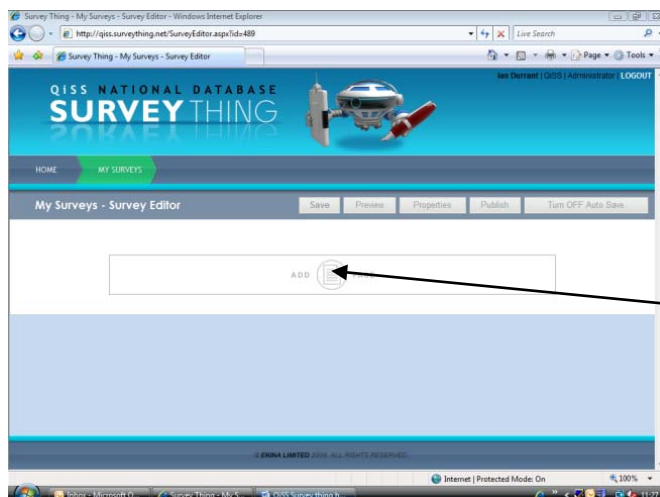
What you want the final message to say, i.e. a generic thank you or more information i.e contact information

How you want the buttons to look (what will be written on them, in later versions we will have 'smiley faces' available)

Once you have made these decisions click 'Save & Design' if you are ready to move onto the questions or just click 'save', if you want to stop working on the survey

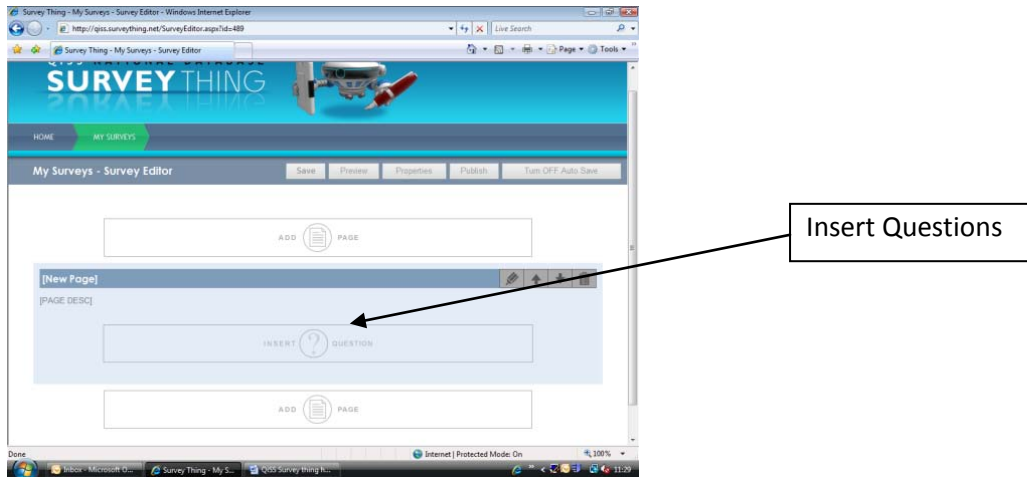
## 6. Adding Pages

Once you have clicked on 'Save and Design', you will be presented with the following screen to add pages.



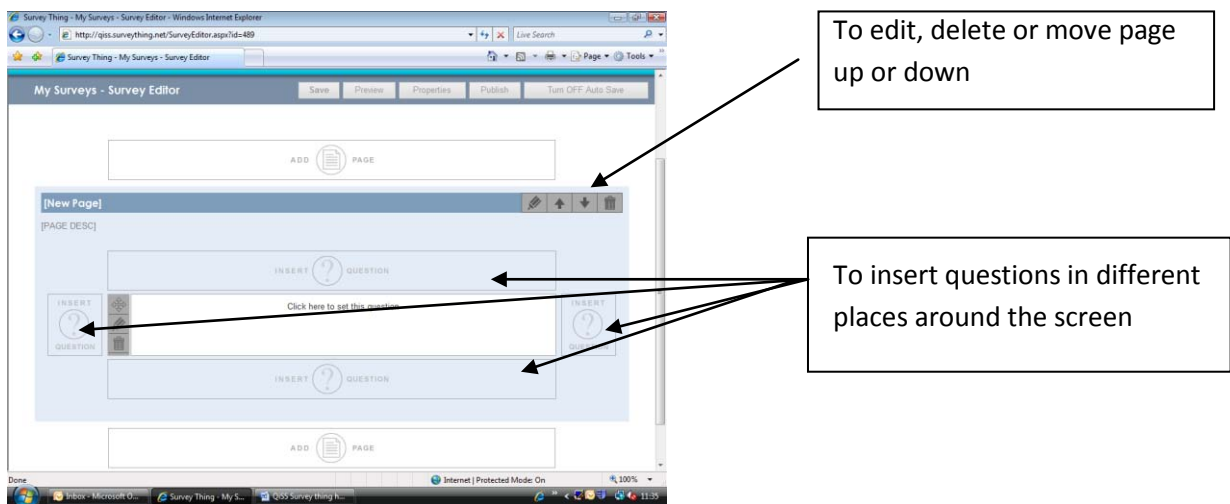
Add Page

Click on 'Add page' in the centre and a new page will opened with the option to add questions or a new page. Click 'Insert Questions'.

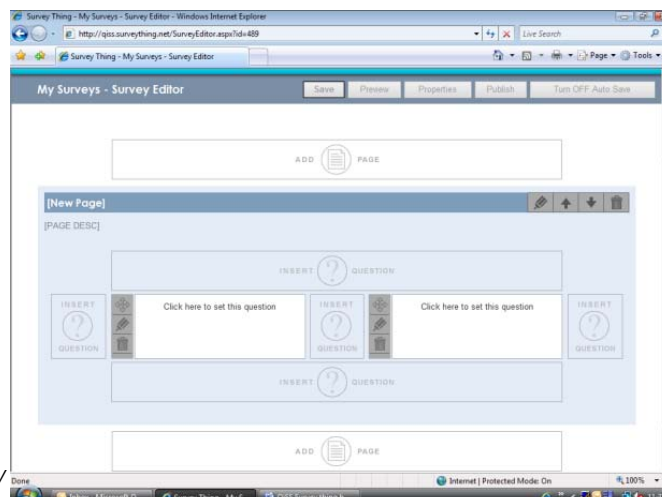


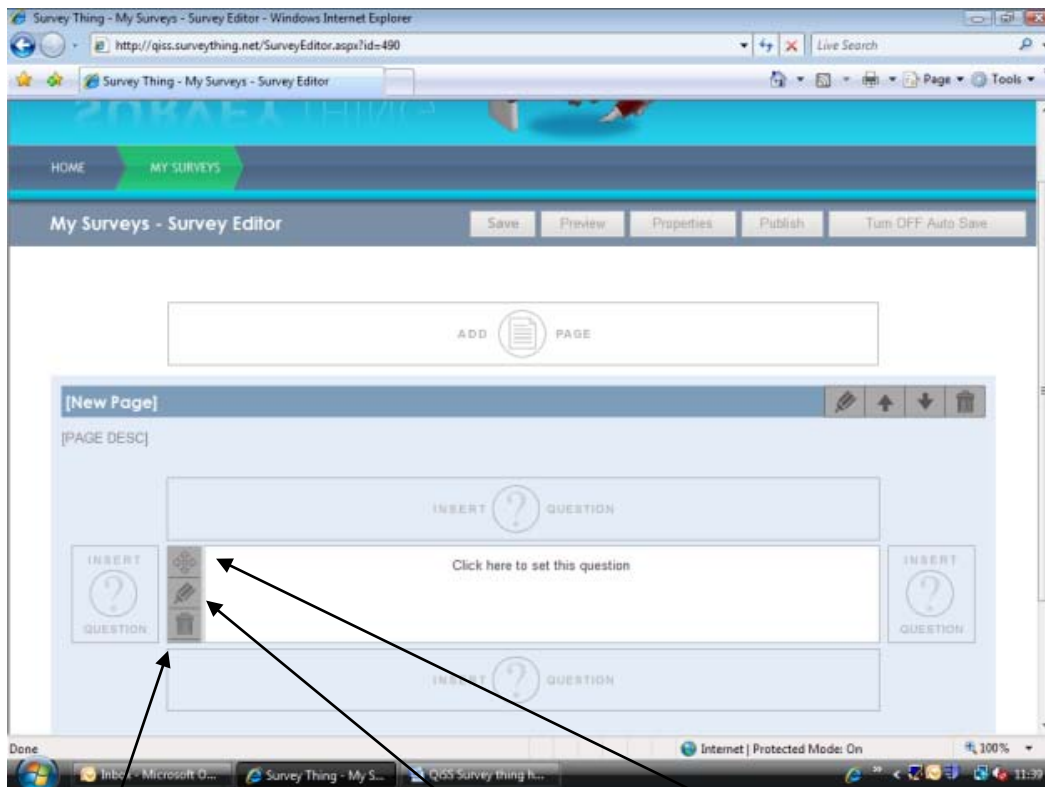
### 7. Adding Questions

Once you have clicked on 'Insert Questions', you will be presented with a further box with a number of options.



Questions can be in different orientations





To delete a question

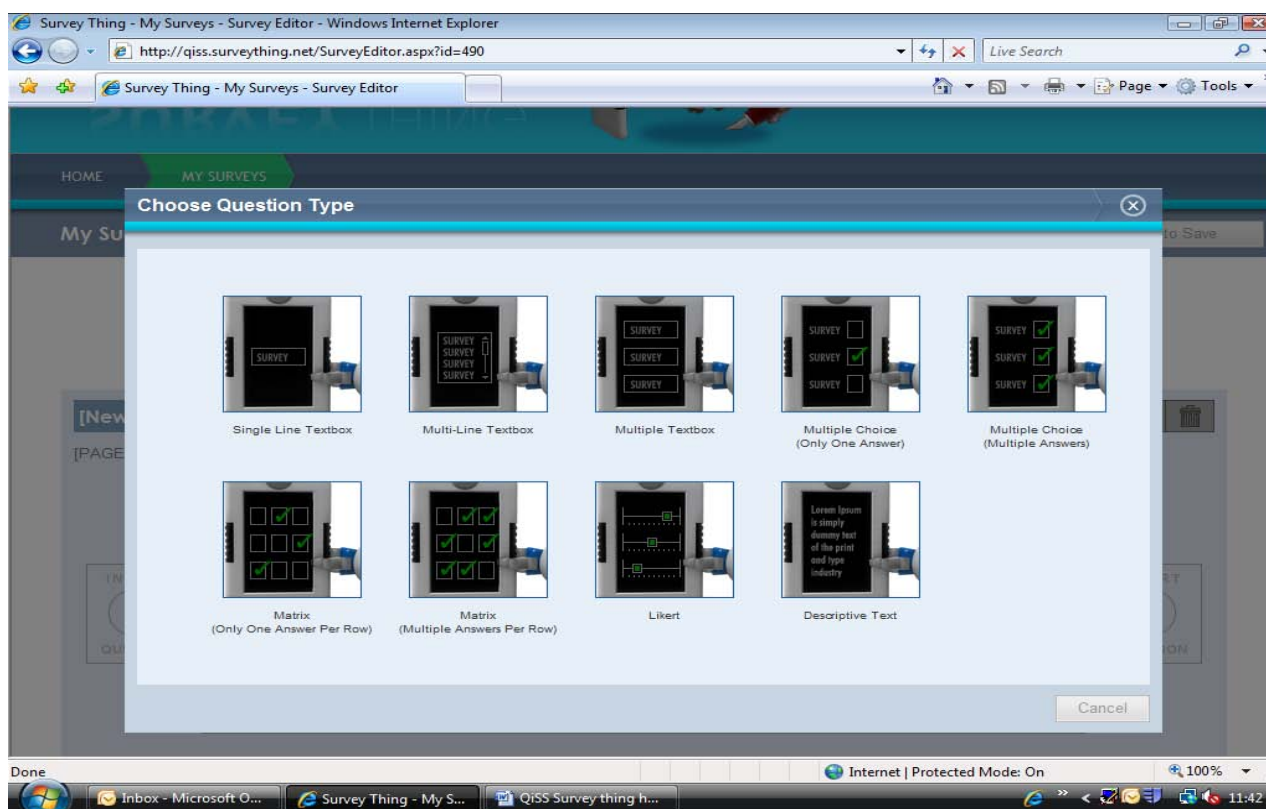
To edit an existing question

To move a question  
(i.e. change the order)

## 8. To Set the Design of a Question

Click on the white box : 'Click here to set this question'

This gives you the choice of a number of types of question.



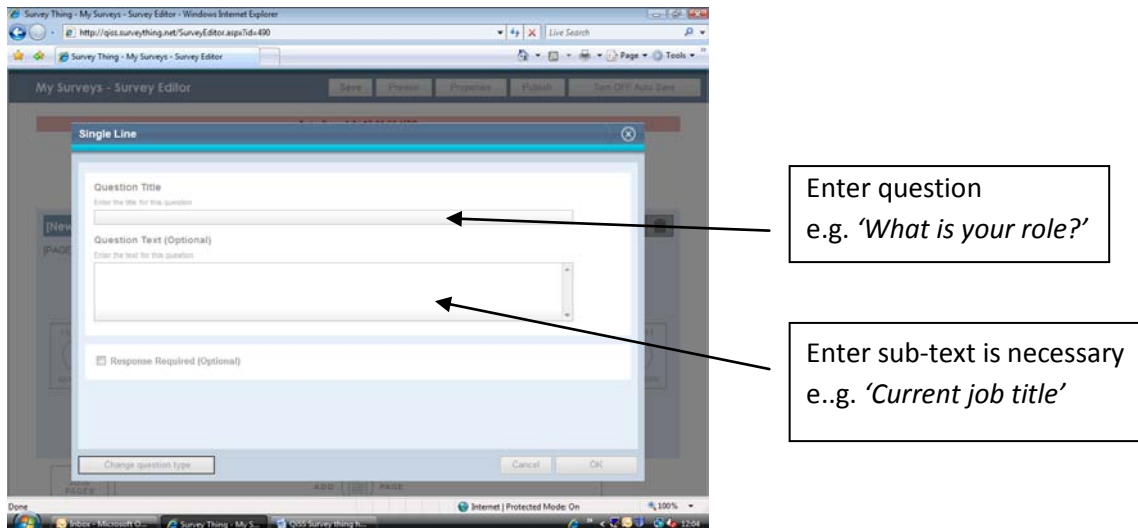
Type of Question	Brief Description
Single Line Text Box	<b>Open Ended</b> , questions for a brief reply. e.g. Job title, name
Multi Line Text Box	<b>Closed Ended</b> , but with options expressed as extended text options. e.g. a choice of statements to select or options to choose
Multiple Choice (Only One Answer)	<b>Closed Ended</b> , only one possible response. e.g. Age (as expressed in ranges)
Multiple Choice (Multiple Answer)	<b>Closed Ended</b> , one or multiple choices possible. e.g. clubs participate in
Matrix (Only One Answer Per Row)	<b>Closed Ended</b> , but with combinations. e.g. satisfaction across the top, with list of services, one for each row
Matrix (Multiple Answers Per Row)	<b>Closed Ended</b> , but with multiple combinations. e.g. availability expressed as day of week across the top, time of day for each row
Likert	<b>Closed Ended</b> , range scale. e.g. Excellent to Poor, Very Good to Very Bad
Descriptive Text	<b>Open Ended</b> , which can include additional description to the question. e.g. Outline proposal for future development which participants would then comment upon or person's opinion, suggestions for future improvement

## 9. Writing Questions

Clicking on each of the black boxes, under 'Choose Question Type', will allow you to enter text and descriptions. You do not need to enter the question number since Survey Thing will number them automatically in the published survey.

### Open Ended Questions

Open ended questions as their name suggests allow respondents to say anything they wish. Therefore if the information you want is specific, for example job title, ensure that this is clearly asked for. Asking a person something like 'Role', may confuse them and you may not get the answer you expect! Open ended questions can also relate to some form of narrative, e.g. people's opinions on an event, suggestions for future improvement, what they learnt etc. Once again you may wish to give guidance, as to what information you want. Such guidance might include a reassurance of confidentiality if appropriate.



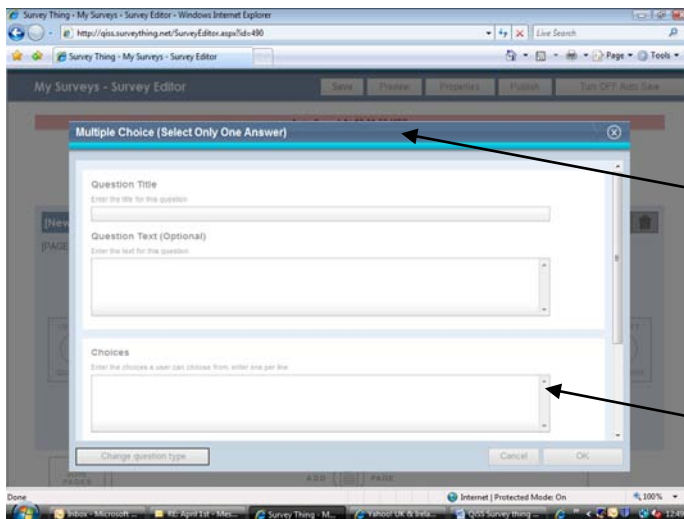
### Closed Ended Questions

Closed ended questions have a limited set of responses and tend to be quantifiable. They can be limited to 'Yes/No' answers or more complex choices, using for example a Likert scale or a matrix.

It is important to select the appropriate form of response, it could be very frustrating if the only options are 'Yes/No' and a person wants to put 'Depends' or 'Sometimes'. It is therefore often a good idea to supply a 'Don't Know' or 'Not Applicable' option. It is also a good idea to follow such questions, or a series of such question with a comments box, inviting respondents to make comments on the question(s).

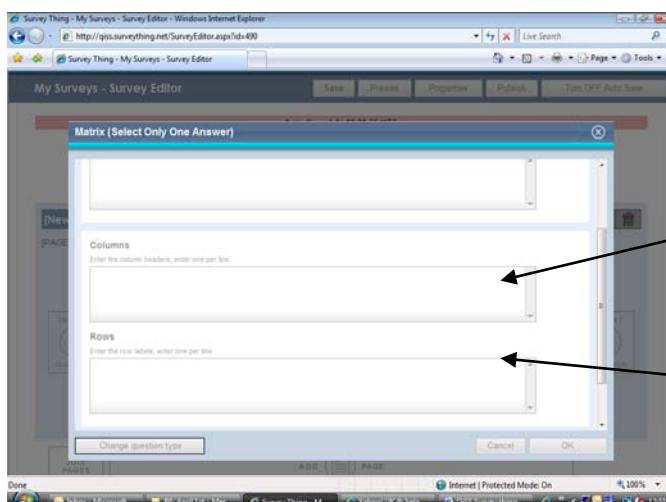
## Single or Multiple Responses

With closed ended questions, it may be desirable to ‘force’ respondents into a response or limit their ability to respond. If a person can tick both ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ or more than one age group, analysis becomes impossible, so limiting possible responses is clearly sensible. Similarly in a rating scale, you would not want people to be able to tick ‘Very Good’ and ‘Poor’ in response to the same element (this sometimes happens with paper based questionnaires because a person wants to express opinions related to different elements. For example they have enjoyed one speaker, but not another, but only have one question related to the ‘quality of the speakers’). However, if a comments box is included, the participants are able to highlight such issues, without affecting your ability to analyse the data. Such issues are also often highlighted by Piloting a questionnaire, see below.



Remember to select either ‘Only One Answer’ allowed or ‘multiple answers allowed’, when selecting the type of question

In multiple choice questions type in the choices to be selected

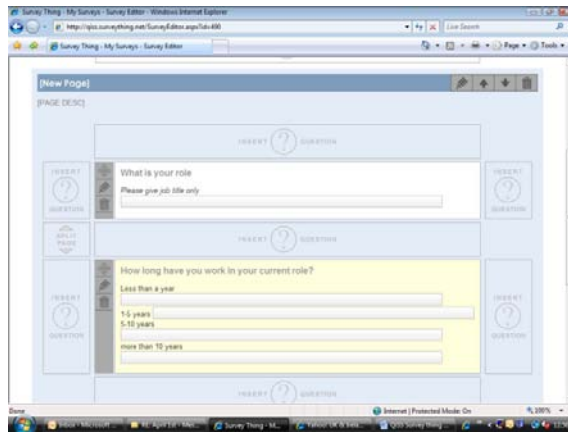


In a Matrix enter the column headings e.g. day of the week

And the row headings e.g. time of day

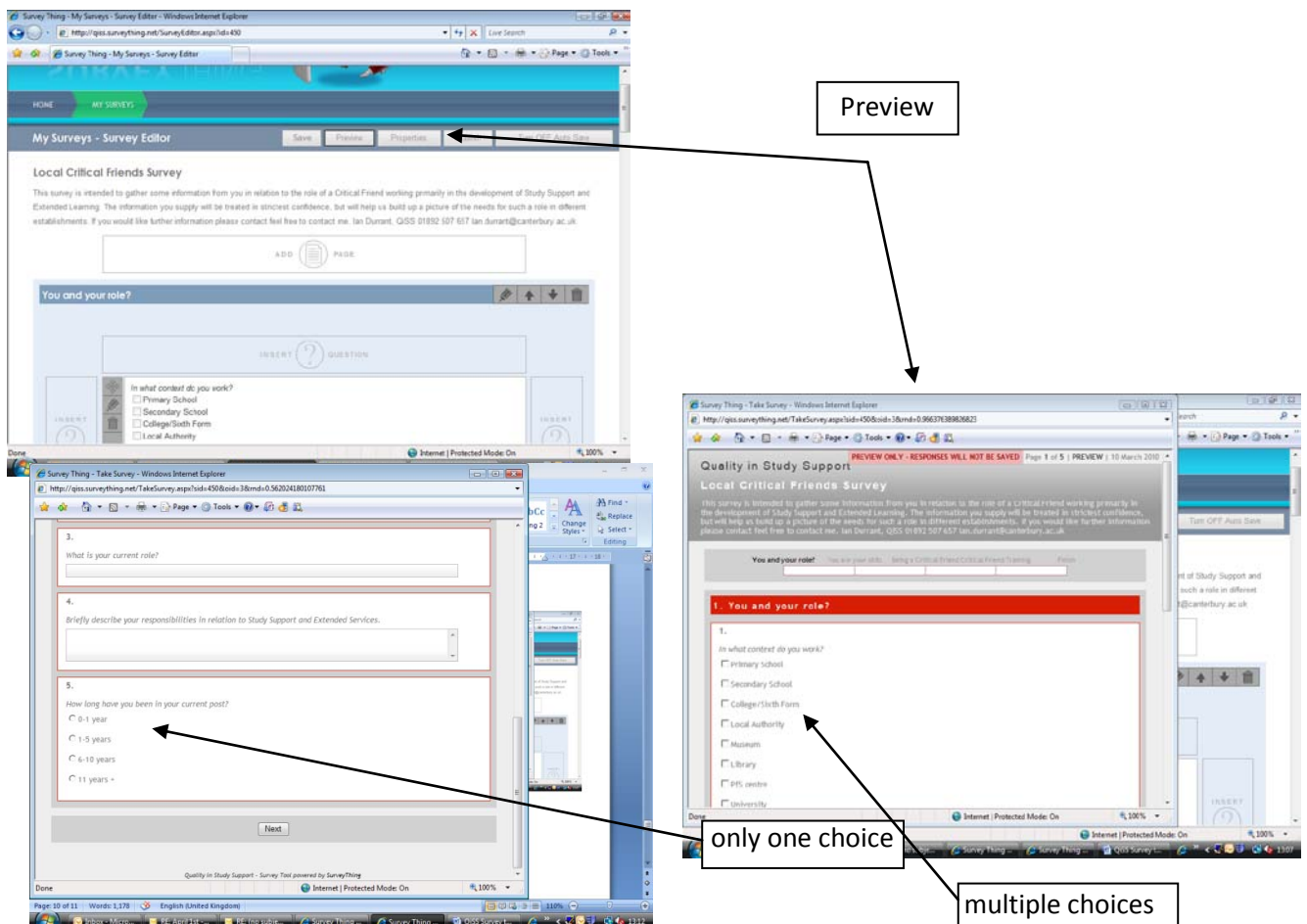
## 10. Previewing the Survey

The screen for writing the questions, allows many edit functions and as such is not the view respondents will see of the questionnaire as they complete it.



Edit screen for question development

If you wish to preview the survey, to see it as the respondents will see it, press preview in the tool bar at the top of the screen and the red version shows how it will be seen. You can also answer the questions to check for clarity and to ensure the responses are in the form you intended. Note square check boxes indicate that multiple answers can be checked for that question, round ones indicate only one per answer can be checked.



## 11. Piloting the Survey

Before releasing a survey it is very important to Pilot or test out a questionnaire. This is to ensure two things. Firstly that your questions are unambiguous. Questions such as ‘Do you engage in study support?’ may be clear to you, but not to a person who does not use the term in the way you do. It is also very easy to write multiple questions, without realising it, for example; ‘What is the hardest part of your job and what do you do to make things easier?’ is in fact two questions and respondents might answer all, part or none of it. Not only can the questions be ambiguous but so can the answers. For example, ‘Did you think the aims of the course were fulfilled?’ ‘ Answer choices: ‘Excellent, Good, Poor, Very Poor’.

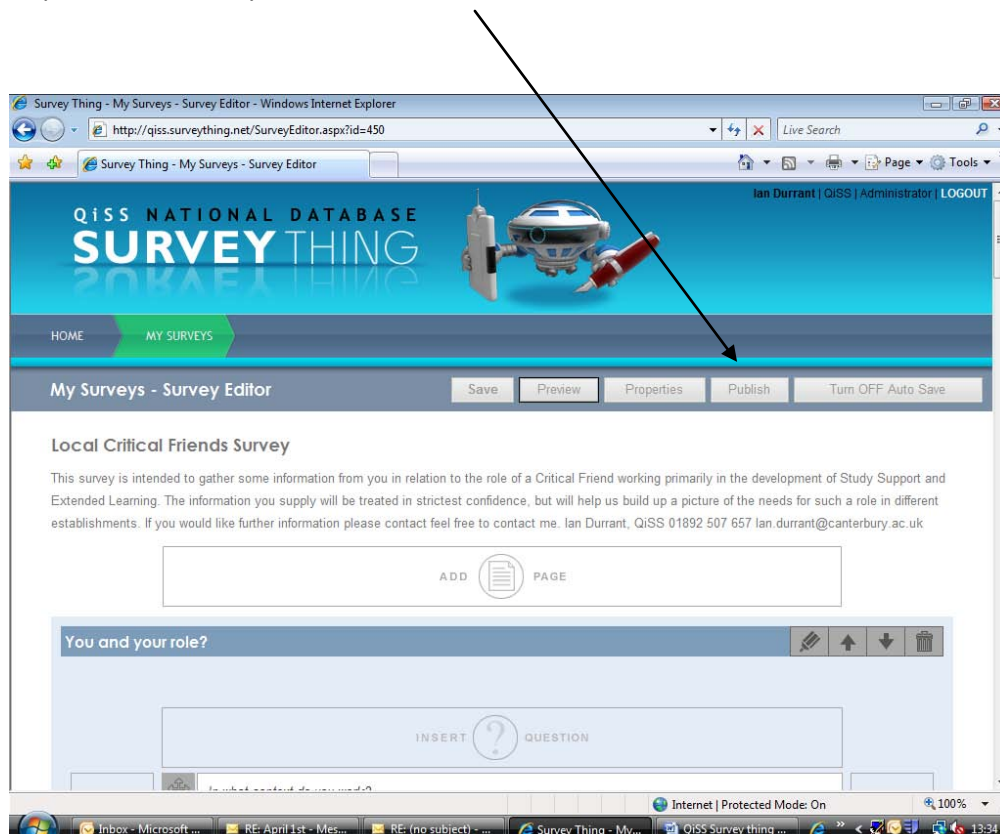
Secondly you need to ensure that all the areas you want addressed have been included and investigate if the questionnaire is too long or appears overwhelming.

Therefore it is always useful to ask a small sample of the potential participants to complete the questionnaire and ask them for their impressions. Then undertake a quick analysis of the answers they gave to see if they make sense before publishing the survey.

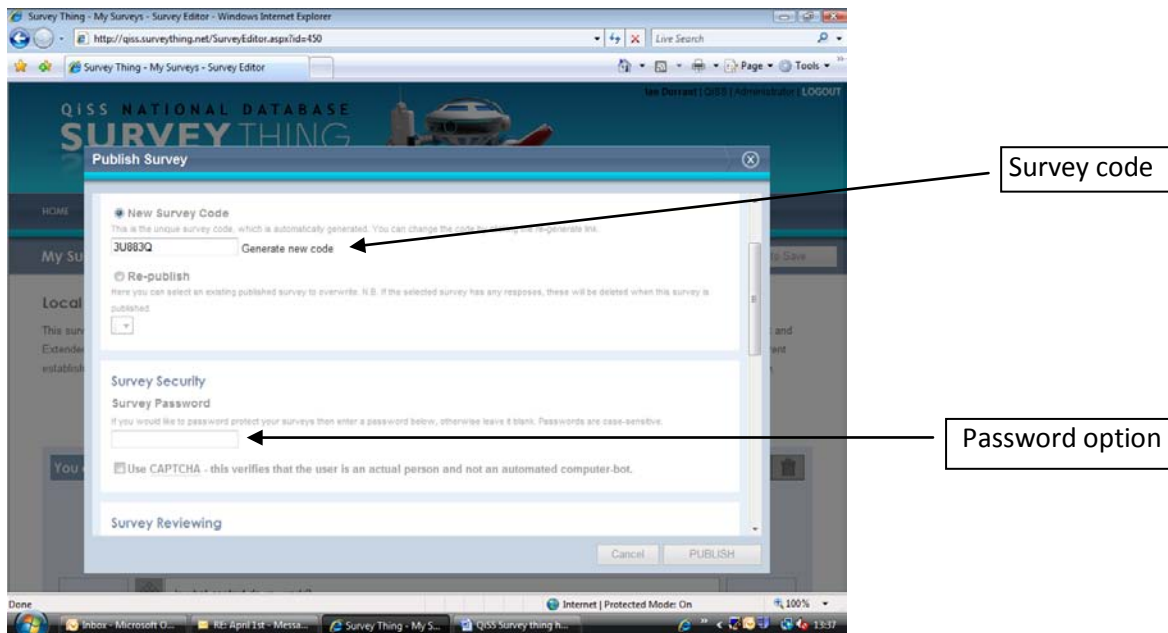
**If the questionnaire has to be modified, it is then important to pilot the modified version.**

## 12. Publishing the Survey

To publish the survey, click the ‘Publish’ button on the tool bar.

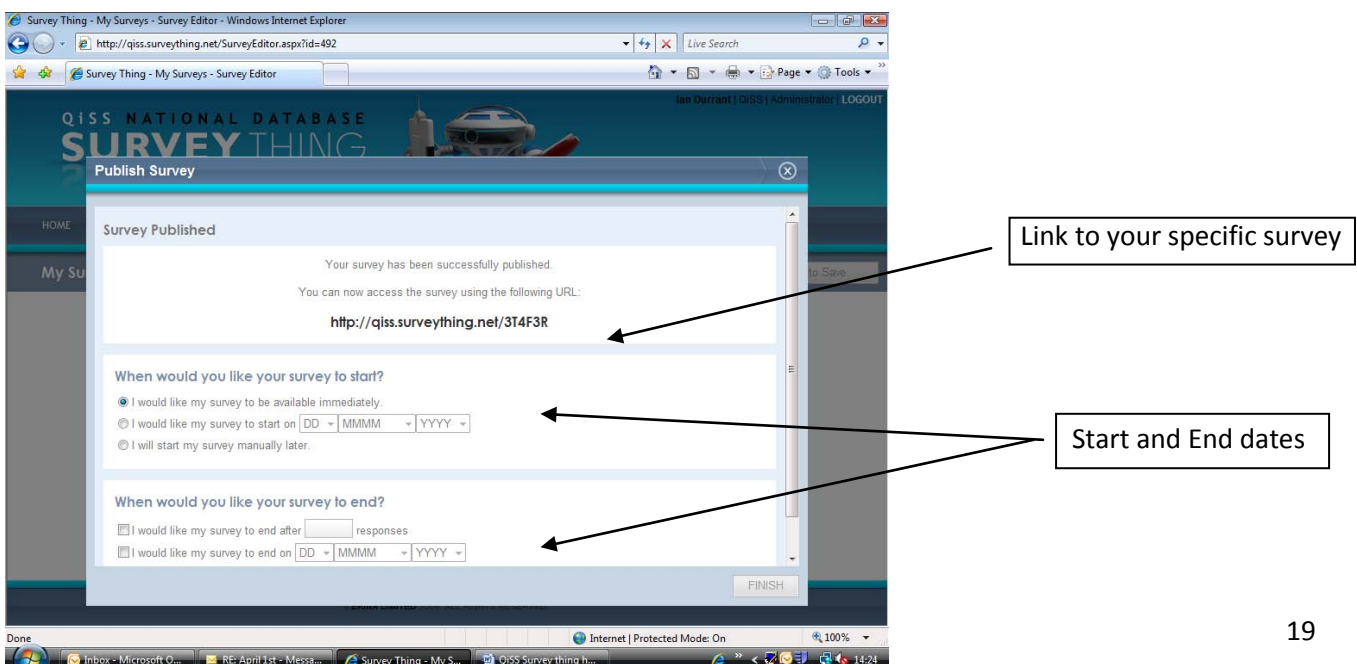


This will generate a new dialogue box with a unique number for that survey. Note you can also use this screen to insert a password if you want only select people to be able to complete the questionnaire. This would usually only be necessary if the link to the survey is placed on a general forum, like a school web-site. If you are going to email the survey link directly to participants, this password is unnecessary. However, if you use a password remember to include it in any correspondence to the participants!

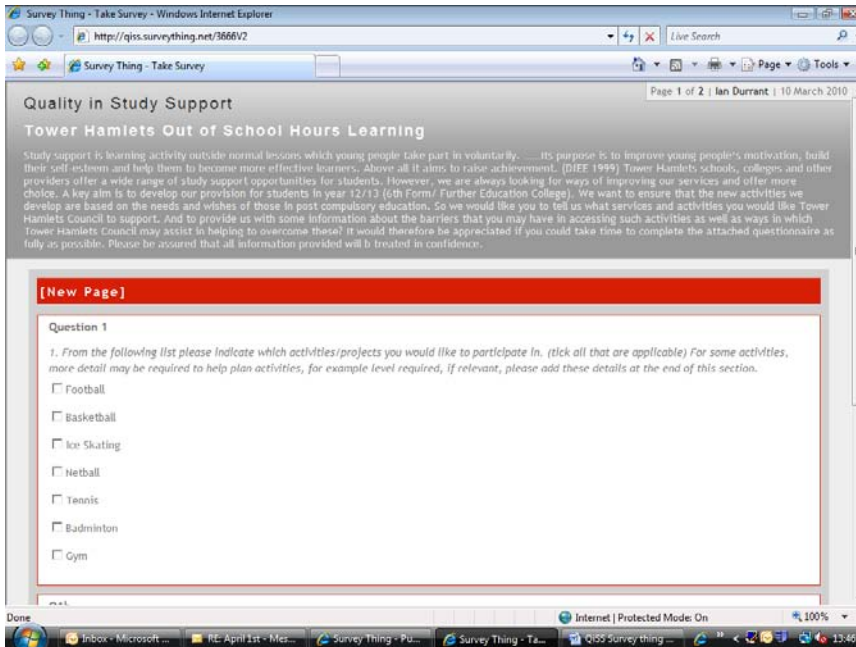


Then press the 'Publish' button

This will then generate a Survey Summary, including the electronic link to your survey. It will also allow you to specify when it is open and when it will close (dates around which new entries will not be accepted by the system). Again if you use this function, remember to inform participants!



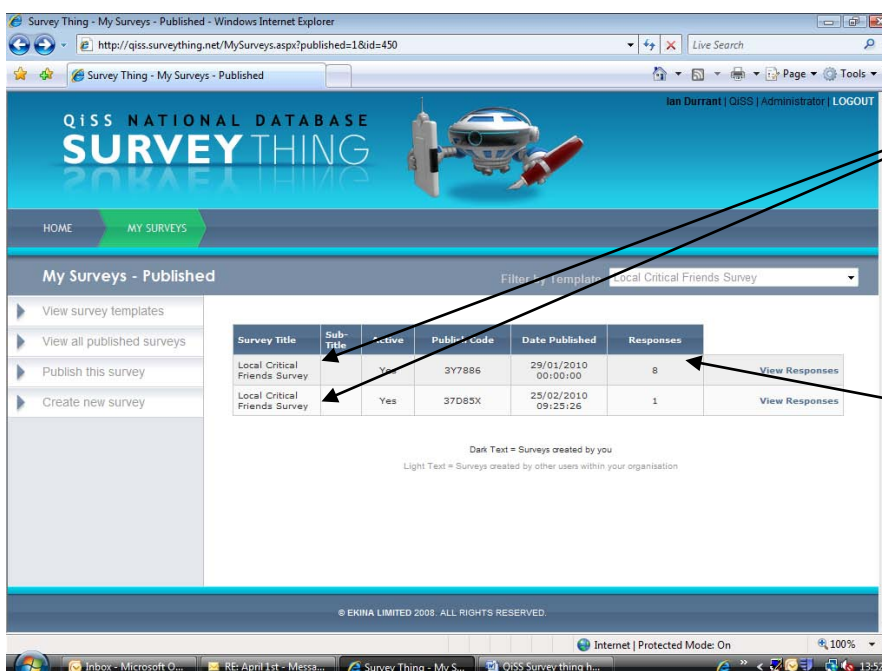
This link can then be either sent in an email to each participant (who should be instructed to click on this link to be taken to the survey) or posted on a web-site and participants invited to click onto it and taken the survey.



The first page of the survey, from the user's point of view

### 13. Viewing Responses

As the responses come in, you can view how many there are. Do this, by logging into Survey Thing, clicking on 'My Surveys' and then clicking on the particular survey you are interested in.



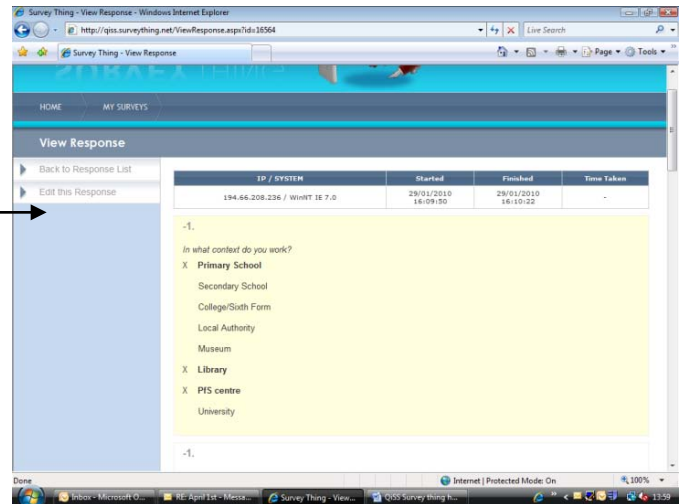
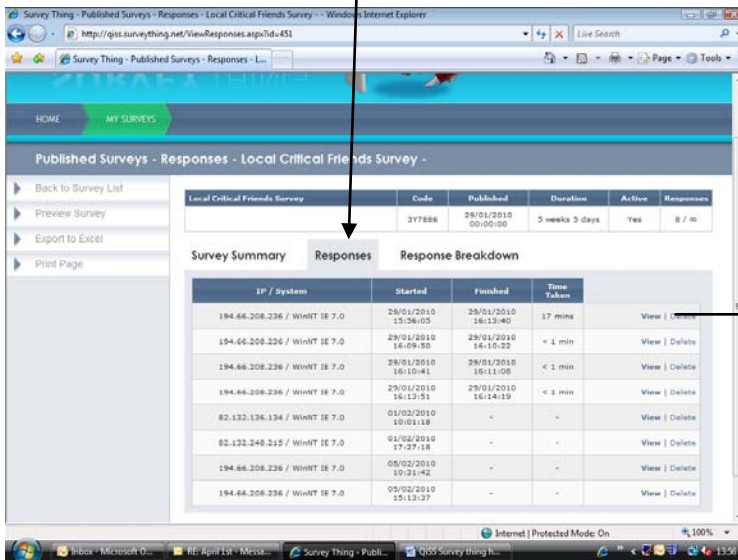
Two versions of the same questionnaire (this might represent two different runs over two consecutive years)

The number of responses for each

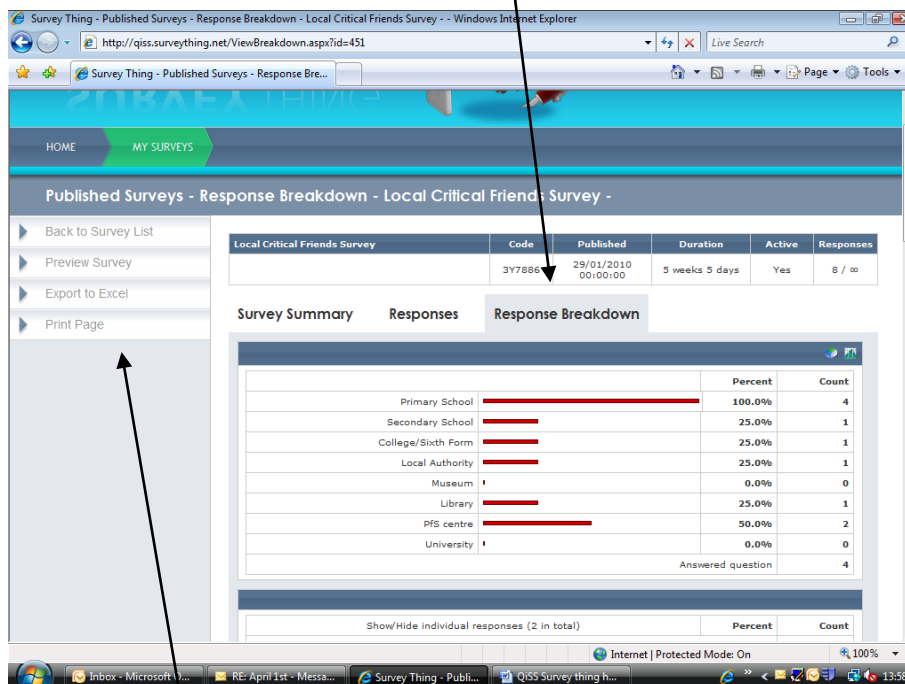
Click on 'view responses' to see in more detail and 'view' to see a breakdown of an individual's responses.

Responses by time taken and if completed

Responses by one participant



To see a summary of all responses click onto 'Responses Breakdown'



Note you can also print these pages and export into Excel (which in turn will allow exporting into more sophisticated data analysis packages)

## 14. Ethics and Data Protection

**Security and Confidentiality.** Note that all creators of questionnaires and surveys are responsible for the ethical treatment of participants. Therefore any data that is collected should be kept securely. Unless there is a very good reason it is often not advisable to ask for personal details such as names and addresses. If they are recorded, they should be removed from any published analysis. Researchers also should take care to ensure that individuals cannot be easily identified. For example, if a school has one Librarian and a summary reports that 100% of the Librarians do not like their manager, then it would not be difficult to construe whose opinion this was.

**Informed Consent.** Participants should always be given as much information as practically possible in relation to the aims of the research and what the data will be used for, including who will see it. In this way they can decide whether to participate or not.

**Right to Withdraw.** All participants have the right to withdraw their data and it is the researchers responsibility to ensure this is undertaken should it be requested. This means that at ANY STAGE in the process, if a participants ask for their responses to be removed [from the research, this should be undertaken](#).

## 15. Support

If you have any questions or concerns in regard to the use of the QISS National Database 'Survey Thing' or the use of questionnaires and surveys, please contact;

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