

## Guidance for safe use of online audience response tools.

The University of Nottingham has made a commitment to be an anti-racist University. This commitment, reinforced as part of our [Race Equality Charter](#) submission, aims to ensure that our teaching and learning environments are spaces free from racial discrimination and harassment.

In Spring 2020 a serious incident took place where a racist word was displayed on a lecture screen during a teaching session. This occurred during the use of an online learning technology to support student engagement. [Details of the incident](#) have been published on the EDI website.

An investigation took place into the incident, and highlighted three issues associated with the use of the technology:

- Students were not required to login with a traceable identifier to use the system. Therefore, the individual responsible for writing the racist word could not be identified
- The system allowed the use of free text input
- The system displayed the words instantly, meaning that both the students and the lecturer saw the offensive text at the same time, and during the learning session.

As a result of these issues being highlighted by this incident, the following recommendations are now being made:

1. Session leads should consider carefully whether the use of a learning technology which allows free text input is required to achieve the required student experience and learning objectives
2. If free text input is desirable, session leads are encouraged to use systems which require a unique and identifiable login.
3. Session leads should also be aware of the risk of sharing real time displays of free text content, and are advised to avoid real time screen sharing (in both face to face and remote teaching) if students are not identifiable through individual login details. It is also appropriate to remind students using these technologies of the University's commitment to inclusion and lack of tolerance for harassment and discrimination.
4. If inappropriate words or phrases are used and cannot be obscured or removed, session leads are asked not to display the material, and to explain to students that inappropriate phrases or words have been used as part of the exercise.
5. The use of which systems allow the adoption of 'usernames' which may allow individuals to use free text input to describe themselves in inappropriate terms is discouraged; in most cases, use of automatically generated names is available as an alternative.

**Appendix 1** below outlines relevant information about a range of online engagement tools that are currently in use across the University, and some of the precautions that can be taken.

It should be noted that the University is currently exploring alternative platforms for audience response tools, and that work will give due consideration to mitigating the risks outlined above.

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## Appendix 1 – Online engagement tools

### 1. Mentimeter

Mentimeter has a moderation feature which is part of the plan that users will need to pay for. The moderation feature is also limited in that the presenter can only approve or dismiss incoming questions or word cloud comments before the audience are able to upvote. What the presenter cannot do is to identify the originator of the comments because they don't set voting IDs or require contributors to login. The free version of Mentimeter includes access to a [Profanity filter](#) which can be set when a question is created. The unpaid version only allows the [removal of undesirable content](#) from Word Clouds and Open-ended questions after it has appeared on screen. The following link provides further information: <https://help.mentimeter.com/en/articles/410525-how-to-identify-participants> .

### 2. Poll Everywhere

This tool has [three ways of identifying participants](#):

- a) By enabling '[Screen names](#)', participants will be prompted for a self-reported name before moving onto your poll. You will then be able to see the name associated with each response on the poll response page and/or reports. This feature is available in the free version. The disadvantage is that students can put any screen name they choose. The 'Screen names' option is default you can however turn this option off in which case auto-generated IDs will be used to track responses. Word Cloud contributions made by students can be seen when the presenter views the response history to the word cloud.
- b) The reports tab is only available in the paid version and enables presenters to create an [open-ended poll](#) that asks participants to submit their name, a student ID, a pseudonym, their mobile phone number, or any other identifying information. You can then ask other multiple choice or open-ended questions as usual. By adding the identifying open ended poll and any other polls to a report, you will see how each person answered each question. The 'participant response history' report is particularly useful for this. The disadvantage to this is that it is only text message responses that will identify the student and this will be from the last 4 digits of the mobile number. Web responses will not have any identifier.  
[https://www.polleverywhere.com/faq#how\\_do\\_i\\_display\\_partial\\_identities\\_next\\_to\\_free\\_text](https://www.polleverywhere.com/faq#how_do_i_display_partial_identities_next_to_free_text)
- c) Registering Participants is only available with paid plans. The presenter invites participants (students) by email or distributes a registration link. Students then verify their mobile phone number and create a participant login for Poll Everywhere. The presenter can then see who has made the comment regardless of their device. Account administrators can invite participants to register under the Account tab.  
<https://www.polleverywhere.com/guides/presenter/managing-responses-and-participants>

### 3. Polly

The free version includes a [non-anonymous function](#) as default, (this can be changed to anonymous. which results in the name of the student appearing next to their comment in the chat function in Microsoft Teams. This is a reflection of the fact that the student is a member

of the Team. [The free version](#) allows a maximum of 25 responses per calendar month (a response is one survey eg a 5 question survey only counts as one response).

#### 4. Padlet

By default, your Padlet's privacy will be set to '[Secret](#)' (the Padlet will have a public link, but the link will be hidden from Google and public areas of Padlet) which means that all student posts will be anonymous. Participants can be identified if the walls settings are changed from 'Secret' to 'Private' then adding email addresses (or Padlet usernames). Change '[Attribution](#)' to display author name above each post. Also '[Require approval](#)' is possible with the free version which requires comments to first require moderator approval. A profanity filter is available with the free version which replaces bad words with nice emojis. The free version also enables you to create up to 3 Padlet boards at a time. You can erase and create new ones to stay under the limit.

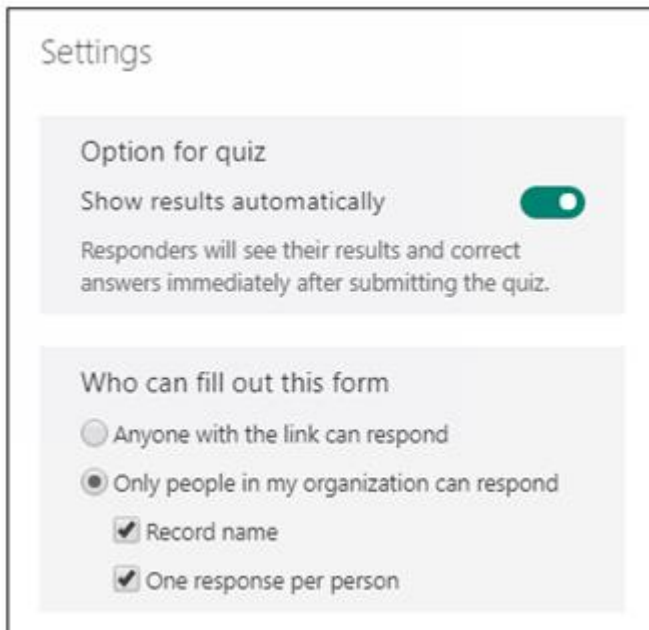
#### 5. Slido

By default, the free version enables students to ask their questions anonymously. The paid version is needed to [disable the 'Anonymous questions' option](#). The paid version is also needed in order to [turn moderation on](#) and to enable capturing names (students can put any name they want) and emails by setting '[Require authentication](#)'.

#### 6. Microsoft Forms

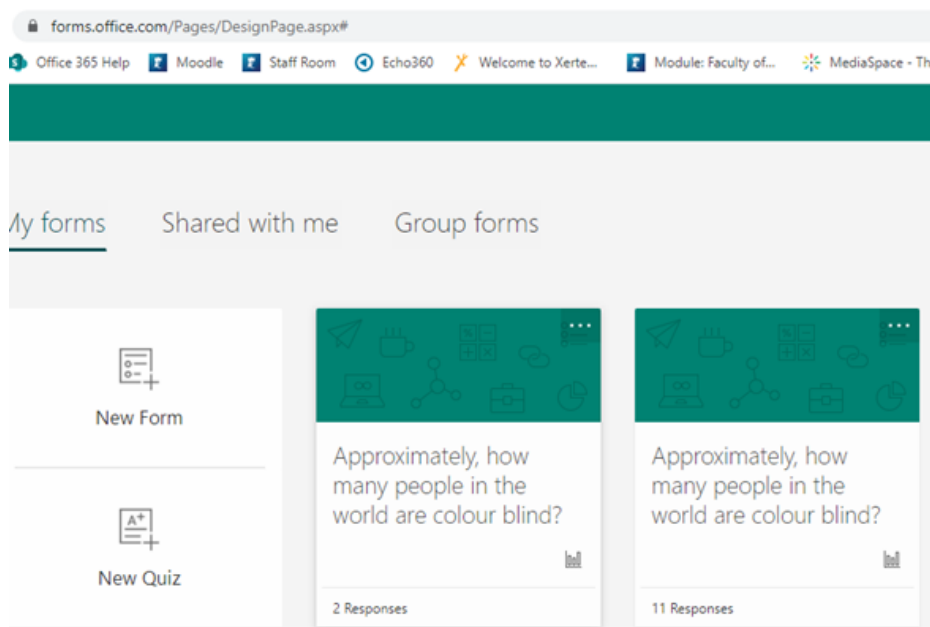
MS Forms is fully supported in being able to trace the author of a comment (participant identification) made in a form or quiz.

A settings pane (see screenshot below) accompanying each form enables the organiser to only allow people in the organisation to respond to the form or quiz by opting for the '**Only people in my organisation can respond**', and if the '**Record Name**' option is chosen then the organiser can keep track of those who have responded to the form or quiz without the responders having to complete a field. The organiser can also opt to allow '**Anyone with the link can respond**' and keep '**Record Name**' in which case a field is added asking the responder to fill in their name. The expectation here is that the responder provides their correct name.



The following link provides more information on adjusting form / quiz settings in Microsoft forms <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/adjust-your-form-or-quiz-settings-in-microsoft-forms-f255a4ba-e03c-4e12-b880-f7e8b62e0665>

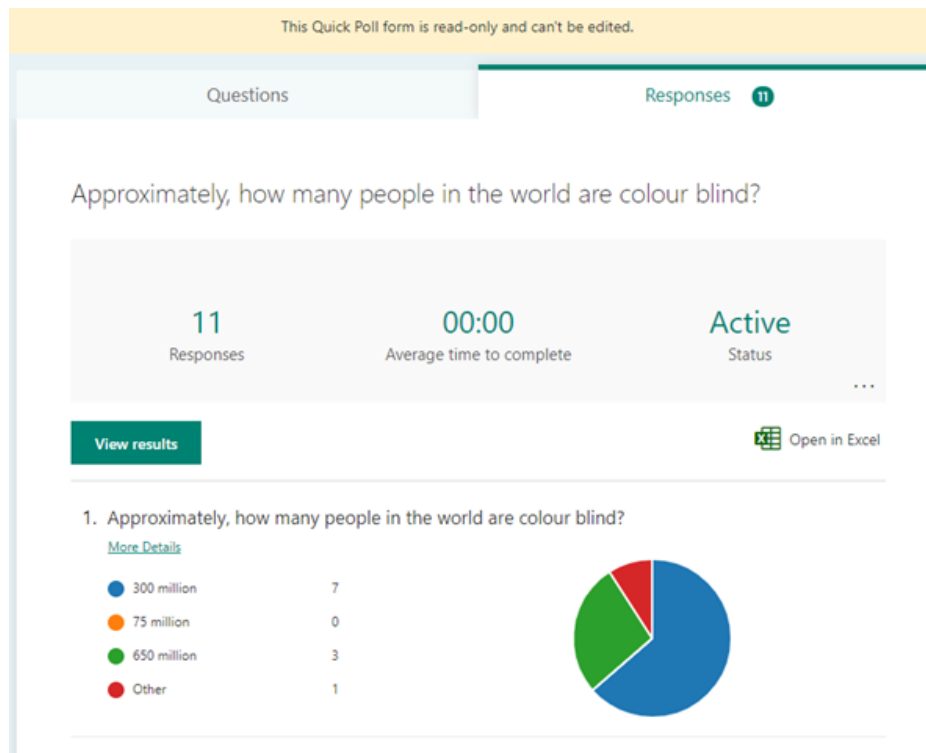
Microsoft Forms provides analytics that include response summary information and individual results for forms and quizzes. This can be accessed by going to **forms.office.com** and logging in (see below)



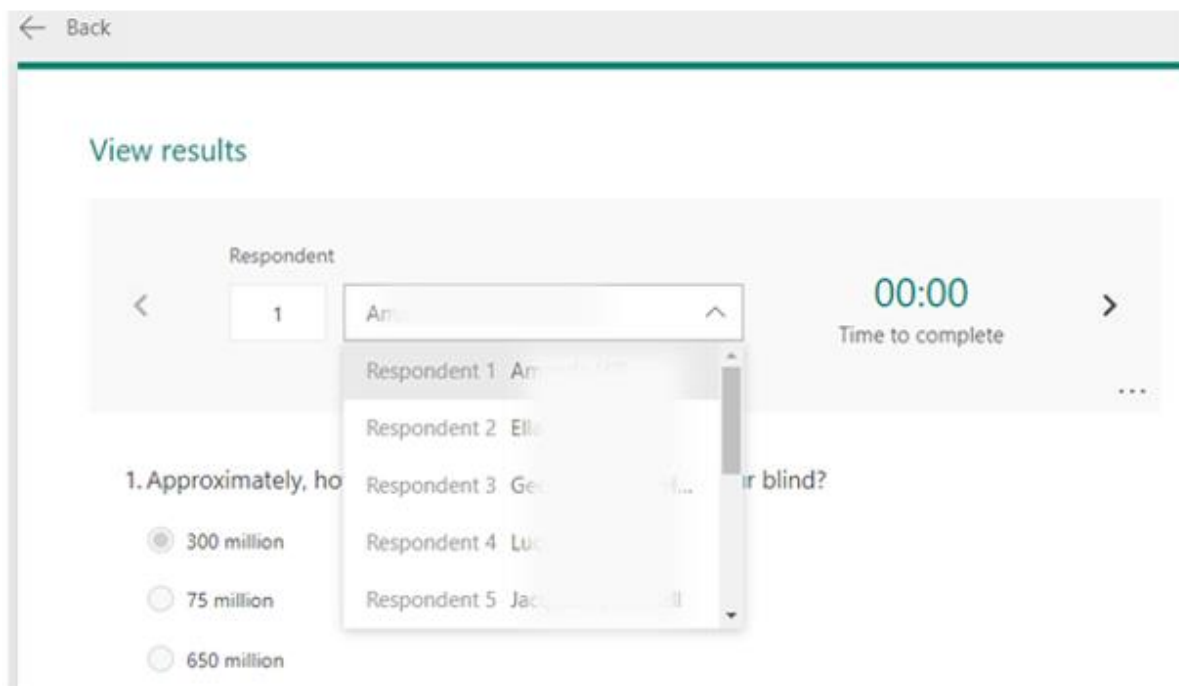
For example, the organiser creates a poll in a channel or chat in Microsoft Teams then goes to **forms.office.com** and logs in.

A screen with all the polls that the organiser has created appears, e.g. 'Approximately, how many people in the world are colour-blind?'

Clicking on the relevant question tile provides a breakdown of responses (see below)



Selecting **View results** identifies the individual details for each respondent (see below)



All of the response data for a form / quiz can be viewed in Microsoft Excel by clicking **Open in Excel** on the **Responses** tab.

The following link provides more information as to how form / quiz results can be checked <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/check-and-share-your-form-results-02859424-341d-406f-b32a-9a0fbaf357af>